The Comic History of England



GILBERT ABBOTT À BECKETT

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THE COMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND ***

THE COMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND

Volumes One and Two

By Gilbert Abbott A'Beckett

With Reproductions of the 200 Engravings by JOHN LEECH

And Twenty Page Illustrations

1894

George Routledge And Sons, Limited

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Landing of Julius Cæsar.

Original Size



Henry VIII.th meeting Francis 1st

Original Size

THE COMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY
GILBERT ABBOTT A'BECKETT



CLIO INSTRUCTING THE YOUNG BRITISH LION IN HISTORY.

WITH REPRODUCTIONS OF THE 200 ENGRAVINGS
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PREFACE.

IN commencing this work, the object of the Author was, as he stated in the Prospectus, to blend amusement with instruction, by serving up, in as palatable a shape as he could, the facts of English History. He pledged himself not to sacrifice the substance to the seasoning; and though he has certainly been a little free in the use of his sauce, he hopes that he has not produced a mere hash on the present occasion. His object has been to furnish something which may be allowed to take its place as a standing dish at the library table, and which, though light, may not be found devoid of nutriment. That food is certainly not the most wholesome which is the heaviest and the least digestible.

Though the original design of this History was only to place facts in an amusing light, without a sacrifice

of fidelity, it is humbly presumed that truth has rather gained than lost by the mode of treatment that has been adopted. Persons and tilings, events and characters, have been deprived of their false colouring, by the plain and matter-of-fact spirit in which they have been approached by the writer of the "Comic History of England." He has never scrupled to take the liberty of tearing off the masks and fancy dresses of all who have hitherto been presented in disguise to the notice of posterity. Motives are treated in these pages as unceremoniously as men; and as the human disposition was much the same in former times as it is in the present day, it has been judged by the rules of common sense, which are alike at every period.

Some, who have been accustomed to look at History as a pageant, may think it a desecration to present it in a homely shape, divested of its gorgeous accessories. Such persons as these will doubtless feel offended at finding the romance of history irreverently demolished, for the sake of mere reality. They will-perhaps honestly though erroneously-accuse the author of a contempt for what is great and good; but the truth is, he has so much real respect for the great and good, that he is desirous of preventing the little and bad from continuing to claim admiration upon false pretences.

THE COMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. THE BRITONS—THE ROMANS—INVASION BY JULIUS CÆSAR.

IT has always been the good fortune of the antiquarian who has busied himself upon the subject

of our ancestors, that the total darkness by which they are overshadowed, renders it impossible to detect the blunderings of the antiquarian himself, who has thus been allowed to grope about the dim twilight of the past, and entangle himself among its cobwebs, without any light being thrown upon his errors.



Original Size

But while the antiquarians have experienced no obstruction from others, they have managed to come into collision among themselves, and have knocked their heads together with considerable violence in the process of what they call exploring the dark ages of our early history. We are not unwilling to take a walk amid the monuments of antiquity, which we should be sorry to run against or tumble over for want of proper light; and we shall therefore only venture so far as we can have the assistance of the bull's-eye of truth, rejecting altogether the allurements of the Will o' the Wisp of mere probability. It is not because former historians have gone head oyer heels into the gulf of conjecture, that we are to turn a desperate somersault after them. *

** Some historians tell us that the most conclusive of things that have happened is to be found in the*

of the Times. This source of information is, howe
closed against us, for the Times, unfortunately, h
reporters when these isles were first inhabited.

The best materials for getting at the early history of a country are its coins, its architecture, and its manners. The Britons, however, had not yet converted the Britannia metal—for which their valour always made them conspicuous—into coins, while their architecture, to judge from the Druidical remains, was of the wicket style, consisting of two or three stones stuck upright in the earth, with another stone laid at the top of them; after the fashion with which all lovers of the game of cricket are of course familiar. As this is the only architectural assistance we are likely to obtain, we decline entering upon the subject through such a gate; or, to use an expression analogous to the pastime to which we have referred, we refuse to take our innings at such a wicket. We need hardly add, that in looking to the manners of our ancestors for enlightenment, we look utterly in vain, for there is no Druidical Chesterfield to afford us any information upon the etiquette of that distant period. There is every reason to believe that our forefathers lived in an exceedingly rude state; and it is therefore perhaps as well that their manners—or rather their want of manners—should be buried in oblivion.



Time Bowling out the Druids.

Original Size

It was formerly very generally believed that the first population of this country descended from Æneas, the performer of the most filial act of pick-a-back that ever was known; and that the earliest Britons were sprung from his grandson—one Brutus, who, preserving the family peculiarity, came into this island on the shoulders of the people. * Hollinshed, that greatest of antiquarian *gobemouches*, has not only taken in the story we have just told, but has added a few of his own ingenious embellishments. He tells us that Brutus fell in with the posterity of the giant Albion, who was put to death by Hercules, whose buildings at Lambeth are the only existing proofs of his having ever resided in this country.

** The story of Brutus and the Trojans has been tol*
a variety of ways, that it is difficult to make ei
or tail of it. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that Brut
Britain deserted, except by a few giants—from whic
to be presumed that Brutus landed at Greenwich abc
time of the fair. Perhaps the introduction of troy
into our arithmetic may be traced to the immigrati
Trojans, who were very likely to adopt the measure
not the weights—with which they had been familiar.

Considering it unprofitable to dwell any longer on those points, about which all writers are at loggerheads, we come at once to that upon which they are all agreed, which is, that the first inhabitants were a tribe of Celtæ from the Continent: that, in fact, the earliest Englishmen were all Frenchmen; and that, however bitter and galling the fact may be, it is to Gaul that we owe our origin. We ought perhaps to mention that Cæsar thinks our sea-ports were peopled by Belgic invaders, from Brussels, thus causing a sprinkling of Brussels sprouts among the native productions of England.

The name of our country—Britannia—has also been the subject of ingenious speculation among the antiquarians. To sum up all their conjectures into one of our own, we think they have succeeded in dissolving the word Britannia into Brit, or Brick, and tan, which would seem to imply that the natives always behaved like bricks in tanning their enemies. The suggestion that the syllable tan, means tin, and that Britannia is synonymous with tin land, appears to be rather a modern notion, for it is only in later ages that Britannia has become emphatically the land of tin, or the country for making money.

The first inhabitants of the island lived by pasture, and not by trade. They as yet knew nothing of the till, but supported themselves by tillage. Their dress was picturesque rather than elegant. A book of truly British fashions would be a great curiosity in the present day, and we regret that we have no *Petit Courier des Druides*, or Celtic *Belle Assemblée*, to furnish *figurines* of the costume of the period. Skins, however, were much worn, for morning as well as for evening dress; and it is probable that even at that early age ingenuity may have been exercised to suggest new patterns for cow cloaks and other

varieties of the then prevailing articles of the wardrobe.

The Druids, who were the priests, exercised great ascendancy over the people, and often claimed the spoils of war, together with other property, under the plea of offering up the proceeds as a sacrifice to the divinities. These treasures, however, were never accounted for; and it is now too late for the historians to file, as it were, a bill in equity to inquire what has become of them.

Cæsar, who might have been so called from his readiness to seize upon everything, now turned his eyes and directed his arms upon Britain. According to some he was tempted by the expectation of finding pearls, which he hoped to get out of the oysters, and he therefore broke in upon the natives with considerable energy.



Cæsar looking for the Pearls for which Britain was formerly celebrated.

Original Size

Whatever Caesar looking for the Pearls for which Britain was formerly celebrated, may have been

Caesar's motives the fact is pretty well ascertained, that at about ten o'clock one fine morning in August —some say a quarter past—he reached the British coast with 12,000 infantry, packed in eighty vessels. He had left behind him the whole of his cavalry—the Roman horse-marines—who were detained by contrary winds on the other side of the sea, and though anxious to be in communication with their leader, they never could get into the right channel. At about three in the afternoon, Cæsar having taken an early dinner, began to disembark his forces at a spot called to this day the Sandwich Flats, from the people having been such flats as to allow the enemy to effect a landing. While the Roman soldiers were standing shilly-shallying at the side of their vessels, a standard-bearer of the tenth legion, or, as we should call him, an ensign in the tenth, jumped into the water, which was nearly up to his knees, and addressing a claptrap to his comrades as he stood in the sea, completely turned the tide in Caesar's favour. After a severe shindy on the shingles, the Britons withdrew, leaving the Romans masters of the beach, where Cæsar erected a marquee for the accommodation of his cohorts. The natives sought and obtained peace, which had no sooner been concluded, than the Roman horse-marines were seen riding across the Channel. A tempest, however, arising, the horses were terrified, and the waves beginning to mount, added so much to the confusion, that the Roman cavalry were compelled to back to the point they started from. The same storm gave a severe blow to the camp of Cæsar, on the beach, dashing his galleys and transports against the rocks which they were sure to split upon. Daunted by these disasters, the invaders, after a few breezes with the Britons, took advantage of a favourable gale to

return to Gaul, and thus for a time the dispute appeared to have blown over.

Cæsar's thoughts, however, still continued to run in one, namely, the British, Channel. In the spring of the ensuing year, he rigged out 800 ships, into which he contrived to cram 32,000 men, and with this force he was permitted to land a second time by those horrid flats at Sandwich. The Britons for some time made an obstinate resistance in their chariots, but they ultimately took a fly across the country, and retreated with great rapidity. Cæsar had scarcely sat down to breakfast the next morning when he heard that a tempest had wrecked all his vessels. At this intelligence he burst into tears, and scampered off to the sea coast, with all his legions in full cry, hurrying after him.



Cæsar receiving Intelligence of the Destruction of his Fleet.

Original Size

The news of the disaster turned out to be no exaggeration, for there were no penny-a-liners in those days; and, having carried his ships a good way

inland, where they remained like fish out of water, he set out once more in pursuit of the enemy. The Britons had, however, made the most of their time, and had found a leader in the person of Gassivelaunus, *alias* Caswallon, a quarrelsome old Gelt, who had so frequently thrashed his neighbours, that he was thought the most likely person to succeed in thrashing the Romans. This gallant individual was successful in a few rough off handed engagements; but when it came to the fancy work, where tactics were required, the disciplined Roman troops were more than a match for him. His soldiers having been driven back to their woods, he drove himself back in his chariot to the neighbourhood of Chertsey, where he had a few acres of ground, which he called a Kingdom. He then stuck some wooden posts in the middle of the Thames, as an impediment to Cæsar, who, in the plenitude of his vaulting ambition, laid his hands on the posts and vaulted over them.

The army of Cassivelaunus being now disbanded, his establishment was reduced to 4000 chariots, which he kept up for the purpose of harassing the Romans. As each chariot required at least a pair of horses, his 4000 vehicles, and the enormous stud they entailed, must have been rather more harassing to Cassivelaunus himself than to the enemy.

This extremely extravagant Celt, who had long been the object of the jealousy of his neighbours, was now threatened by their treachery. The chief of the Trinobantes, who lived in Middlesex, and were perhaps the earliest Middlesex magistrates, sent ambassadors to Cæsar, promising submission. They also showed him the way to the contemptible cluster of houses which Cassivelaunus dignified with the name of his capital. It was surrounded with a ditch,

and a rampart made chiefly of mud, the article in which military engineering seemed to have stuck at that early period. Cassivelaunus was driven by Cæsar from his abode, constructed of clay and felled trees, and so precipitate was the flight of the Briton, that he had only time to pack up a few necessary articles, leaving everything else to fall into the hands of the enemy.

The Roman General, being tired of his British campaign, was glad to listen to the overtures of Cassivelaunus; but these overtures consisted of promissory notes, which were never realised. The Celt undertook to transmit an annual tribute to Cæsar, who never got a penny of the money; and the hostages he had carried with him to Gaul became a positive burden to him, for they were never taken out of pawn by their countrymen. It is believed that they were ultimately got rid of at a sale of unredeemed pledges, where they were put up in lots of half a dozen, and knocked down as slaves to the highest bidder.



Original Size

Before quitting the subject of Caesar's invasion, it may be interesting to the reader to know something of the weapons with which the early Britons attempted to defend themselves. Their swords were made of copper, and generally bent with the first blow, which must have greatly straitened their aggressive resources, for the swords thus followed

their own bent, instead of carrying out the intentions of the persons using them. This provoking pliancy of the material must often have made the soldier as ill-tempered as his own weapon. The Britons carried also a dirk, and a spear, the latter of which they threw at the foe, as an effectual means of pitching into him. A sort of reaping-hook was attached to their chariot wheels, and was often very useful in reaping the laurels of victory.

For nearly one hundred years after Cæsar's invasion, Britain was undisturbed by the Romans, though Caligula, that neck-or-nothing tyrant, as his celebrated wish entitles him to be called, once or twice had his eye upon it. The island, however, if it attracted the Imperial eye, escaped the lash, during the period specified.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. INVASION BY THE ROMANS UNDER CLAUDIUS—CARACTACUS—BOADICEA—AGRICOLA—-GALGACUS—SEVERUS—VORTIGERN CALLS IN THE SAXONS.

IT was not until ninety-seven years after Cæsar had seized upon the island that it was unceremoniously clawed by the Emperor Claudius. Kent and Middlesex fell an easy prey to the Roman power; nor did the brawny sons of Canterbury—since so famous for its brawn—succeed in repelling the enemy. Aulus Plautius, the Roman general, pursued the Britons under that illustrious character, Caractus. He retreated towards Lambeth Marsh, and the swampy nature of the ground gave the invaders reason to feel that it was somewhat too

"Far into the bowels of the land
They had march'd on without impediment."

Vespasian, the second in command, made a tour in the Isle of Wight, then called Vectis, where he boldly took the Bull by the horns, and seized upon Cowes with considerable energy. Still, little was done till Ostorius Scapula—whose name implies that he was a sharp blade—put his shoulder to the wheel, and erected a line of defences—a line in which he was so successful that it may have been called his peculiar *forte*—to protect the territory that had been acquired.

After a series of successes, Ostorius having suffocated every breath of liberty in Suffolk, and hauled the inhabitants of Newcastle over the coals, drove the people of Wales before him like so many Welsh rabbits; and even the brave Caractacus was obliged to fly as well as he could, with the remains of one of the wings of the British army. He was taken to Rome with his wife and children, in fetters, but his dignified conduct procured his chains to be struck

off, and from this moment we lose the chain of his history.

Ostorius, who remained in Britain, was so harassed by the natives that he was literally worried to death; but in the reign of Nero (a.d. 59), Suetonius fell upon Mona, now the Isle of Anglesey, where the howlings, cries, and execrations of the people were so awful, that the name of Mona was singularly appropriate. Notwithstanding, however, the terrific oaths of the natives, they could not succeed in swearing away the lives of their aggressors. Suetonius, having made them pay the penalty of so much bad language, was called up to London, then a Roman colony; but he no sooner arrived in town, than he was obliged to include himself among the departures, in consequence of the fury of Boadicea, that greatest of viragoes and first of British heroines. She reduced London to ashes, which Suetonius did not stay to sift; but he waited the attack of Boadicea a little way out of town, and pitched his tent within a modern omnibus ride of the great metropolis. His fair antagonist drove after him in her chariot, with her two daughters, the Misses Boadicea, at her side, and addressed to her army some of those appeals on behalf of "a British female in distress," which have since been adopted by British dramatists. The valorous old vixen was, however, defeated; and rather than swallow the bitter pill which would have poisoned the remainder of her days, she took a single dose and terminated her own existence.

Suetonius soon returned with his suite to the Continent, without having finished the war; for it was always a characteristic of the Britons, that they never would acknowledge they had had enough at the hands of an enemy. Some little time afterwards, we find Cerealis engaged in one of those attacks

upon Britain which might be called serials, from their frequent repetition; and subsequently, about the year 75 or 78, Julius Frontinus succeeded to the business from which so many before him had retired with very little profit.

The general, however, who cemented the power of Rome—or, to speak figuratively, introduced the Roman cement among the Bricks or Britons—was Julius Agricola, the father-in-law of Tacitus, the historian, who has lost no opportunity of puffing most outrageously his undoubtedly meritorious relative.



Portrait of Julius Agricola.

Original Size

Agricola certainly did considerable havoc in Britain. He sent the Scotch reeling oyer the Grampian Hills, and led the Caledonians a pretty dance.

Portrait of Julius Agricola. He ran UP a kind of rampart between the Friths of Clyde and Forth, from which he could come forth at his leisure and complete the conquest of Caledonia. In the sixth year of his campaign, a.d. 83, he crossed the Frith of Forth, and came opposite to Fife, which was played upon by the whole of his band with considerable energy. Having wintered in Fife, upon which he levied contributions to a pretty tune, he moved

forward in the summer of the next year, a.d. 84, from Glen Devon to the foot of the Grampians. He here encountered Galgacus and his host, who made a gallant resistance; but the Scottish chief was soon left to reckon without his host, for all his followers fled like lightning, and it has been said that their bolting came upon him like a thunderbolt.

Agricola having thoroughly beaten the Britons—on the principle, perhaps, that there is nothing so impressible as wax—began to think of instructing them. He had given them a few lessons in war which they were not likely to forget, and he now thought of introducing among their chiefs a tincture of polite letters, commencing of course with the alphabet. The Britons finding it as easy as A, B, C, began to cultivate the rudiments of learning, for there is a spell in letters of which few can resist the influence. They assumed the toga, which, on account of the comfortable warmth of the material, they very quickly cottoned; they plunged into baths, and threw themselves into the capacious lap of luxury.

For upwards of thirty years Britain remained tranquil, but in the reign of Hadrian, a.d. 120, the Caledonians, whose spirit had been "scotched, not killed," became exceedingly turbulent. Hadrian, who felt his weakness, went to the wall of Agricola, * which was rebuilt in order to protect the territory the Romans had acquired. Some years afterwards the power of the empire went into a decline, which caused a consumption at home of many of the troops that had been previously kept for the protection of foreign possessions. Britain took this opportunity of revolting, and in the year 207, the Emperor Severus, though far advanced in years and a martyr to the gout, determined to march in person against the barbarians. He had no sooner set his foot on English

ground than his gout caused him to feel the greatest difficulties at every step, and having been no less than four years getting to York, he knocked up there, a.d. 211, and died in a dreadful hobble. Caracalla, son and successor to the late Emperor Severus, executed a surrender of land to the Caledonians for the sake of peace, and being desirous of administering to the effects of his lamented governor in Rome, left the island for ever.

** The remains of this wall are still in existence, furnish food for the Archeologians who occasionall the bricks, which have become venerable with the c ages. A morning roll among the mounds in the neigh where this famous wall once existed, is considered delicate repast to the antiquarian.*



The Emperor Severus leads his Army against the Northern Barbarians.

Original Size

The history of Britain for the next seventy years may be easily written, for a blank page would tell all that is known respecting it. In the partnership reign

of Dioclesian and Maximian, a.d. 288, "the land we live in" turns up again, under somewhat unfavourable circumstances, for we find its coasts being ravaged about this time by Scandinavian and Saxon pirates. Carausius, a sea captain, and either a Belgian or Briton by birth, was employed against the pirates, to whom, in the Baltic sound, he gave a sound thrashing. Instead, however, of sending the plunder home to his employers, he pocketed the proceeds of his own victories, and the Emperors, growing jealous of his power, sent instructions to have him slain at the earliest convenience. The wily sailor, however, fled to Britain, where he planted his standard, and where the tar, claiming the natives as his "messmates," induced them to join him in the mess he had got into. The Roman eagles were put to flight, and both wings of the imperial army exhibited the white feather. Peace with Carausius was purchased by conceding to him the government of Britain and Boulogne, with the proud title of Emperor.

The assumption of the rank of Emperor of Boulogne seems to us about as absurd as usurping the throne of Broadstairs, or putting on the imperial purple at Herne Bay; but Carausius having been originally a mere pirate, was justly proud of his new dignity. Having swept the seas, he commenced scouring the country, and his victories were celebrated by a day's chairing, at which he assisted as the principal figure in a procession of unexampled pomp and pageantry. The throne, however, is not an easy *fauteuil*, and Carausius had scarcely had time to throw himself back in an attitude of repose, when he was murdered at Eboracum (York) (a.d. 297), by one Alectus, his confidential friend and minister. In accordance with the custom of the period, that the

murderer should succeed his victim, Alectus ruled in Britain until he, in his turn, was slain at the instigation of Constantius Chlorus, who became master of the island. That individual died at York (a.d. 306), where his son Constantine, afterwards called the Great, commenced his reign, which was a short and not a particularly merry one, for after experiencing several reverses in the North, he quitted the island, which, until his death in 337, once more enjoyed tranquillity.

Rome, which had so long been mighty, was like a cheese in the same condition, rapidly going to decay, and she found it necessary to practise what has been termed "the noble art of self-defence," which is admitted on all hands to be the first law of Nature. Britain they regarded as a province, which it was not their province to look after. It was consequently left as pickings for the Picts, * nor did it come off scot free from the Scots, who were a tribe of Celtæ from Ireland, and who consequently must be regarded as a mixed race of Gallo-Hibernian Caledonians. They had, in fact, been Irishmen before they had been Scotchmen, and Frenchmen previous to either. Such were the translations that occurred even at that early period in the greatest drama of all—the drama of history.

** "The Picts," says Dr. Henry, "were so called fro a plunderer, and not from picti, painted." History assigning the latter origin to their name, has fai exhibit them in their true colours.*

Britain continued for years suspended like a white hart—a simile justified by its constant trepidation and alarm—with which the Romans and others might enjoy an occasional game at bob-cherry.

Maximus (a.d. 382) made a successful bite at it, but turning aside in search of the fruits of ambition elsewhere, the Scots and Picts again began nibbling at the Bigaroon that had been the subject of so much snappishness.

The Britons being shortly afterwards left once more to themselves, elected Marcus as their sovereign (a.d. 407); but monarchs in those days were set up like the king of skittles, only to be knocked down again. Marcus was accordingly bowled out of existence by those who had raised him; and one, Gratian, having succeeded to the post of royal ninepin, was in four months as dead as the article to which we have chosen to compare him. After a few more similar ups and downs, the Romans, about the year 420, nearly five centuries after Cæsar's first invasion, finally cried quits with the Britons by abandoning the island.

In pursuing his labours over the few ensuing years, the author would be obliged to grope in the dark; but history is not a game at blind-man's-buff, and we will never condescend to make it so. It is true, that with the handkerchief of obscurity bandaging our eyes, we might turn round in a state of rigmarole, and catch what we can; but as it would be mere guesswork by which we could describe the object of which we should happen to lay hold, we will not attempt the experiment.

It is unquestionable that Britain was a prey to dissensions at home and ravages from abroad, while every kind of faction—except satisfaction—was rife within the island.

Such was the misery of the inhabitants, that they published a pamphlet called "The Groans of the Britons" (a.d. 441), in which they invited Ætius, the

Roman consul, to come over and turn out the barbarians, between whom and the sea, the islanders were tossed like a shuttlecock knocked about by a pair of battledores. Ætius, in consequence of previous engagements with Attila and others, was compelled to decline the invitation, and the Britons therefore had a series of routs, which were unattended by the Roman cohorts.

The southern part of the island was now torn between a Roman faction under Aurelius Ambrosius, and a British or "country party," at the head of which was Vortigern. The latter is said to have called in the Saxons; and it is certain that (a.d. 449) he hailed the two brothers Hengist and Horsa, * who were cruising as Saxon pirates in the British Channel. These individuals being ready for any desperate job, accepted the invitation of Vortigern, to pass some time with him in the Isle of Thanet. They were received as guests by the people of Sandwich, who would as soon have thought of quarrelling with their bread and butter as with the friends of the gallant Vortigern. From this date commences the Saxon period of the history of Britain.

** Horen, means a horse; and the white horse, even appears as the ensign of Kent, as it once did on t of the Saxons. It is probable that when Horsa came London, he may have put up somewhere near the pres of the White Horse Cellar. Vide "Palgrave's Rise a Progress of the English Commonwealth."*

CHAPTER THE THIRD. THE SAXONS—THE HEPTARCHY.

IN obedience to custom, the etymologists have been busy with the word Saxon, which they have derived from *seax*, a sword, and we are left to draw the inference that the Saxons were very sharp blades; a presumption that is fully sustained by their fierce and warlike character. Their chief weapons were a battleaxe and a hammer, in the use of which they were so adroit that they could always hit the right nail upon the head, when occasion required. Their shipping had been formerly exceedingly crazy, and indeed the crews must have been crazy to have trusted themselves in such fragile vessels. The bottoms of the boats were of very light timber, and the sides consisted of wicker, so that the fleet must have combined the strength of the washing-tub with the elegant lightness of the clothes' basket. Like their neighbours the wise men of Gotham, or Gotha, who went to sea in a bowl, the Saxons had not scrupled to commit themselves to the mercy of the waves, in these unsubstantial cockle-shells. The boatbuilders, however, soon took rapid strides, and improved their craft by mechanical cunning.

Another fog now comes over the historian, but the gas of sagacity is very useful in dispelling the clouds of obscurity. It is said that Hengist gave an evening

party to Vortigern, who fell in love with Bowena, the daughter of his host—a sad flirt, who, throwing herself on her knee, presented the wine-cup to the king, wishing him, in a neat speech, all health and happiness. Vortigern's head was completely turned by the beauty of Miss Bowena Hengist, and the strength of the beverage she had so bewitchingly offered him.



Rowena and Vortigern.

Original Size

A story is also told of a Saxon *soirée* having been given by Hengist to the Britons, to which the host and his countrymen came, with short swords or knives concealed in their hose, and at a given signal drew their weapons upon their unsuspecting guests. Many historians have doubted this dreadful tale, and it certainly is scarcely credible that the Saxons should have been able to conceal in their stockings the short swords or carving-knives, which must have been very inconvenient to their calves. Stonehenge is the place at which this cruel act of the hard-hearted and stony Hengist is reported to have occurred; and as antiquarians are always more particular about dates when they are most likely to be wrong, the 1st

of May has been fixed upon as the very day on which this horrible *réunion* was given. It has been alleged, that Vortigern, in order to marry Bowena, settled Kent upon Hengist; but it is much more probable that Hengist settled himself upon Kent without the intervention of any formality.

It is certain that he became King of the County, to which he affixed Middlesex, Essex, and a part of Surrey; so that, as sovereigns went in those early days, he could scarcely be called a petty potentate. The success of Hengist induced several of his countrymen, after his death, to attempt to walk in his shoes; but it has been well and wisely said, that in following the footsteps of a great man an equally capacious understanding is requisite.

The Saxons who tried this experiment were divided into Saxons proper, Angles, and Jutes, who all passed under the common appellation of Angles and Saxons. The word Angles was peculiarly appropriate to a people so naturally sharp, and the whole science of mathematics can give us no angles so acute as those who figured in the early pages of our history.

In the year 447, Ella the Saxon landed in Sussex with his three sons, and drove the Britons into a forest one hundred and twenty miles long and thirty broad, according to the old writers, but in our opinion just about as broad as it was long, for otherwise there could have been no room for it in the place where the old writers have planted it. Ella, however, succeeded in clutching a very respectable slice, which was called the kingdom of South Saxony, which included Surrey, Sussex, and the New Forest; while another invading firm, under the title of Cerdic and Son, started a small vanquishing business in the West, and by conquering Hampshire and the Isle of

Wight, founded the kingdom of Wessex. Cerdic was considerably harassed by King Arthur of fabulous fame, whose valour is reported to have been such, that he fought twelve battles with the Saxons, and was three times married. His first and third wives were carried away from him, but on the principle that no news is good news, the historians tell us that as there are no records of his second consort, his alliance with her may perhaps have been a happy one. The third and last of his spouses ran off with his nephew Mordred, and the enraged monarch having met his ungrateful kinsman in battle, they engaged each other with such fury, that, like the Kilkenny cats, they slew one another.

About the year 527, Greenwine landed on the Essex flats, which he had no trouble in reducing, for he found them already on a very low level. In 547, Ida, with a host of Angles, began fishing for dominion off Flamborough head, where he effected a landing. He however settled on a small wild space between the Tyne and the Tees, a tiny possession, in which he was much teased by the beasts of the forest, for the place having been abandoned, Nature had established a Zoological Society of her own in this locality. The kingdom thus formed was called Bernicia, and as the place was full of wild animals, it is not improbable that the British Lion may have originally come from the place alluded to.

Ella, another Saxon prince, defeated Lancashire and York, taking the name of King of the Deiri, and causing the inhabitants to lick the dust, which was the only way they could find of repaying the licking they had received from their conqueror. Ethelred, the grandson of Ida, having married the daughter of Ella, began to cement the union in the old-established way, by robbing his wife's relations of all their

property. He seized on the kingdom of his brother-in-law, and added it to his own, uniting the petty monarchies of Deiri and Bemicia into the single sovereignty of Northumberland.



Ida quitting his Kingdom.

Original Size

Such were the several kingdoms which formed the Heptarchy. Arithmeticians will probably tell us that seven into one will never go; but into one the seven did eventually go by a process that will be shown in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH. THE

UNION OF THE HEPTARCHY UNDER EGBERT.

IF it be a sound philosophical truth, that two of a trade can never agree, we may take it for granted that, *à fortiori*, seven in the same business will be perpetually quarrelling. Such was speedily the case with the Saxon princes; and it is not improbable that the disturbed condition, familiarly known as a state of sixes and sevens, may have derived its title from the turmoils of the seven Saxon sovereigns, during the existence of the Heptarchy. Nothing can exceed the entanglement into which the thread of history was thrown by the battles and skirmishes of these princes. The endeavour to lay hold of the thread would be as troublesome as the process of looking for a needle, * not merely in a bottle of hay, but in the very bosom of a haystack. Let us, however, apply the magnet of industry, and test the alleged fidelity of the needle to the pole by attempting to implant in the head of the reader a few of the points that seem best adapted for striking him.

** "A needle in a bottle of hay," is an old Englis*
of which we cannot trace the origin. Bottled hay m
been sad dry stuff, but it is possible the wisdom
ancestors may have induced them to bottle their gr
in the present day bottle our gooseberries.

We will take a run through the whole country as it was then divided, and will borrow from the storehouse of tradition the celebrated pair of seven-leagued boots, for the purpose of a scamper through

the seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

We will first drop in upon Kent, whose founder, Hengist, had no worthy successor till the time of Ethelbert. This individual acted on the principle of give and take, for he was always taking what he could, and giving battle. He seated himself by force on the throne of Mercia, into which he carried his arms, as if the throne of Kent had not afforded him sufficient elbow-room. This, however, he resigned to Webba, the rightful heir: but poor Webba (*query* Webber) was kept like a fly in a spider's web, as a tributary prince to the artful Ethelbert. This monarch's reign derived, however, its real glory from the introduction of Christianity and the destruction of many Saxon superstitions. He kept up a friendly correspondence with Gregory, the punster pope, and author of the celebrated *jeu de mot* on the word Angli, in the Roman market-place.*

** The pun in question is almost too venerable for repetition, but we insert it in a note, as no Hist England seems to be complete without it. The pope, the British children exposed for sale in the marke Rome, said they would not be Angles but Angels if been Christians. Non Angli sed Angeli forent si fu Christiani.*



"Non Angli sed Angeli forent si fuissent Christiani."

Original Size

Ethelbert died in 616, having been not only king of Kent, but having filled the office of Bretwalda, a name given to the most influential—or, as we should call him, the president or chairman—of the sovereigns of the Heptarchy. His son, Eadbald, who succeeded, failed in supporting the fame of his father. It would be useless to pursue the catalogue of Saxons who continued mounting and dismounting the throne of Kent—one being no sooner down than another came on—in rapid succession. It was Egbert, king of Wessex, who, in the year 723, had the art to seat himself on all the seven thrones at once; an achievement which, considering the ordinary fate of one who attempts to preserve his balance upon two stools, has fairly earned the admiration of posterity.

Let us now take a skip into Northumberland—formed by Ethelred in the manner we have already alluded to, out of the two kingdoms of Deiri and Bemicia—which, though not enough for two, constituted for one a very respectable sovereignty. The crown of Northumberland seems to have been at the disposal of any one who thought it worth his while to go and take it; provided he was prepared to

meet any little objections of the owner by making away with him. In this manner, Osred received his *quietus* from Kenred, a kinsman, who was killed in his turn by another of the family: and, after a long series of assassinations, the people quietly submitted to the yoke of Egbert.

The kingdom of East Anglia presents the same rapid panorama of murders which settled the succession to all the Saxon thrones; and Mercia, comprising the midland counties, furnishes all the materials for a melodrama. Offa, one of its most celebrated kings, had a daughter, Elfrida, to whom Ethelbert, the sovereign of the East Angles, had made honourable proposals, and had been invited to celebrate his nuptials at Hereford. In the midst of the festivities Offa asked Ethelbert into a back room, in which the latter had scarcely taken a chair when his head was unceremoniously removed from his shoulders by the father of his intended.

Offa having extinguished the royal family of East Anglia, by snuffing out the chief, took possession of the kingdom. In order to expiate his crime he made friends with the pope, and exacted a penny from every house possessed of thirty pence, or half-a-crown a year, which he sent as a proof of penitence to the Roman pontiff. Though at first intended by Offa as an offering, it was afterwards claimed as a tribute, under the name of Peter's Pence, which were exacted from the people; and the custom may perhaps have originated the dishonourable practice of robbing Paul for the purpose of paying Peter.

After the usual amount of slaughter, one Wiglaff mounted the throne, which was in a fearfully rickety condition. So unstable was this undesirable piece of Saxon upholstery that Wiglaff had no sooner sat down upon it than it gave way with a tremendous

crash, and fell into the hands of Egbert, who was always ready to seize the remaining stock of royalty that happened to be left to an unfortunate sovereign on the eve of an alarming sacrifice.

The kingdom of Essex can boast of little worthy of narration, and in looking through the Venerable Bede, we find a string of names that are wholly devoid of interest.

The history of Sussex is still more obscure, and we hasten to Wessex, where we find Brihtric, or Beortric, sitting in the regal armchair that Egbert had a better right to occupy. The latter fled to the court of Offa, king of Mercia, to whom the former sent a message, requesting that Egbert's head might be brought back by return, with one of Offa's daughters, whom Beortric proposed to marry. The young lady was sent as per invoice, for she was rather a burden on the Mercian court; but Egbert's head, being still in use, was not duly forwarded.

Feeling that his life was a toss up, and that he might lose by heads coming down, Egbert wisely repaired to the court of the Emperor Charlemagne. There he acquired many accomplishments, took lessons in fencing, and received that celebrated French polish of which it may be fairly said in the language of criticism, that "it ought to be found on every gentleman's table."

Mrs. Beortric managed to poison her husband by a draft not intended for his acceptance, and presented by mistake, which caused a vacancy in the throne of Wessex. Egbert having embraced the opportunity, was embraced by the people, who received him with open arms, on his arrival from France, and hailed him as rightful heir to the Wessexian crown, which he had never been able to get out of his head, or on

to his head, until the present favourable juncture. In a few years he got into hostilities with the Mercians, who being, as we are told by the chroniclers, "fat, corpulent, and short-winded," soon got the worst of it. The lean and active droops of Egbert prevailed over the opposing cohorts, who were at once podgy and powerless. As they advanced to the charge, they were met by the blows of the enemy, and as "it is an ill wind that blows nobody good," so the very ill wind of the Mercians made good for the soldiers of Egbert, who were completely victorious.



Battle between the Mercians and Egbert.—*Cotton MS.*

Original Size

Mercia was now subjugated; Kent and Essex were soon subdued; the East Angles claimed protection; Northumberland submitted; Sussex had for some time been swamped; and Wessex belonged to Egbert by right of succession. Thus, about four hundred years after the arrival of the Saxons, the Heptarchy was dissolved, in the year 827, after having been in hot water for centuries. It was only when the spirit of Egbert was thrown in, that the hot water became a strong and wholesome compound.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. THE DANES—ALFRED.



An Illuminated Letter.

Original Size

CARCELY had unanimity begun to prevail in England, when the country was invaded by the Danes, whose desperate valour there was no disdaining. Some of them, in the year 832, landed on the coast, committed a series of ravages, and escaped to their ships without being taken into custody. Egbert encountered them on one occasion at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire, but having lost two bishops—who, by the bye, had no business in a fight—he was glad to make the best of his way home again.

The Danes, or Northmen, having visited Cornwall, entered into an alliance with some of the Briks, or Britons, of the neigh-bourhood, and marched into

Devonshire; but Egbert, collecting the cream of the Devonshire youth, poured it down upon the heads of his enemies. According to some historians, Egbert met with considerable resistance, and it has even been said that the Devonshire cream experienced a severe clouting. It is certainly sufficient to make the milk of human kindness curdle in the veins when we read the various recitals of Danish ferocity. Egbert, however, was successful at the battle of Hengsdown Hill, where many were put to the sword, by the sword being put to them, in the most unscrupulous manner. This was the last grand military drama in which Egbert represented the hero. He died in 836, after a long reign, which had been one continued shower of prosperity.

Ethelwolf, the eldest son of Egbert, now came to the throne, but misunderstanding the maxim, *Divide et impera*, he began to divide his kingdom, as the best means of ruling it, and gave a slice consisting of Kent and its dependencies to his son Athelstane.

The Scandinavian pirates having no longer an opponent like Egbert, ravaged Wessex; sailed up the Thames, which, if they could, they would have set on fire; gave Canterbury, Rochester, and London a severe dose, in the shape of pillage; and got into the heart of Surrey, which lost all heart on the approach of the enemy. Ethelwolf, however, taking with him his second son Ethelbald, met them at Okely—probably in the neighbourhood of Oakley Street—and at a place still retaining the name of the New Cut, made a fearful incision into the ranks of the enemy. The Danes retired to settle in the isle of Thanet, to repose after the settling they had received in Surrey, at the hands of the Saxons. Notwithstanding the state of his kingdom, Ethelwolf found time for an Italian tour, and taking with him

his fourth son, Alfred the Great—then Alfred the Little, for he was a child of six—started to Rome, on that very vague pretext, a pilgrimage. He spent a large sum of money abroad, gave the Pope an annuity for himself, and another to trim the lamps of St. Peter and St. Paul, which has given rise to the celebrated *jeu de mot* that, "instead of roaming about and getting rid of his cash in trimming foreign lamps, he ought to have remained at home for the purpose of trimming his enemies."

On his return through France, he fell in love with Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald, the king of the Franks, who probably gave a good fortune to the bride, for Charles being known as the bald, must of course have been without any heir apparent. When Ethelwolf arrived at home with his new wife, he found his three sons, or as he had been in the habit of calling them, "the boys,"—indignant at the marriage of their governor. According to some historians and chroniclers, Osburgha, his first wife, was not dead, but had been simply "put away" to make room for Judith. It certainly was a practice of the kings in the middle age, and particularly if they happened to be middle-aged kings, to "put away" an old wife; but the real difficulty must have been where on earth to put her. If Osburgha consented quietly to be laid upon the shelf, she must have differed from her sex in general.

Athelstane being dead, Ethelbald was now the king's eldest son, and had made every arrangement for a fight with his own father for the throne, when the old gentleman thought it better to divide his crown than run the risk of getting it cracked in battle. "Let us not split each other's heads, my son," he affectingly exclaimed, "but rather let us split the difference." Ethelbald immediately cried halves when

he found his father disposed to cry quarter, and after a short debate they came to a division. The undutiful son got for himself the richest portion of the kingdom of Wessex, leaving his unfortunate sire to sigh over the eastern part, which was the poorest moiety of the royal property. The ousted Ethelwolf did not survive more than two years the change which had made him little better than half-a-sovereign, for he died in 867, and was succeeded by his son Ethelbald. This person was, to use an old simile, as full of mischief "as an egg is full of meat," and indeed somewhat fuller, for we never yet found a piece of beef, mutton, or veal, in the whole course of our oval experience. Ethelbald, however, reigned only two years, having first married and subsequently divorced his father's widow Judith, whose venerable parent Charles the Bald, was happily indebted to his baldness for being spared the misery of having his grey hairs brought down in sorrow to the grave by the misfortunes of his daughter. This young lady, for she was still young in spite of her two marriages, her widowhood, and divorce, had retired to a convent near Paris, when a gentleman of the name of Baldwin, belonging to an old standard family, ran away with her. He was threatened with excommunication by the young lady's father, but treating the menaces of Charles the Bald as so much balderdash, Mr. Baldwin sent a herald to the Pope, who allowed the marriage to be legally solemnised.

We have given a few lines to Judith because, by her last marriage, she gave a most illustrious line to us; for her son having married the youngest daughter of Alfred the Great, was the ancestor of Maud, the wife of William the Conqueror.

Ethelbald was succeeded by Ethelbert, whose

reign, though it lasted only five years, may be compared to a rain of cats and dogs, for he was constantly engaged in quarrelling. The Danes completely sacked and ransacked Winchester, causing Ethelbert to exclaim, with a melancholy smile, to one of his courtiers, "This is indeed the bitterest cup of sack I ever tasted." He died in 866 or 867, and was succeeded by his brother Ethelred, who found matters arrived at such a pitch, that he fought nine pitched battles with the Danes in less than a twelvemonth. He died in the year 871, of severe wounds, and the crown fell from his head on to that of his younger brother Alfred. The regal diadem was sadly tarnished when it came to the young king, who resolved that it should not long continue to lack lacker; and by his glorious deeds he soon restored the polish that had been rubbed off by repeated leathering. He had scarcely time to sit down upon the throne when he was called into the field to fulfil a very particular engagement with the Danes at Wilton. They were compelled to stipulate for a safe retreat, and went up to London for the winter, where they so harassed Burrhed the king of Mercia, in whose dominions London was situated, that the poor fellow ran down the steps of his throne, left his sceptre in the regal hall, and, repairing to Rome, finished his days in a cloister.

The Danes still continued the awful business of dyeing and scouring, for they scoured the country round, and dyed it with the blood of the inhabitants. Alfred, finding himself in the most terrible straits, conceived the idea of getting out of the straits by means of ships, of which he collected a few, and for a time he went on swimmingly.

He taught Britannia her first lesson in ruling the waves, by destroying the fleet of Guthrum the Dane,

who had promised to make his *exit* from the kingdom on a previous defeat, but by a disgraceful quibble he had, instead of making his *exit*, retired to Exeter. From this place he now retreated, and took up his quarters at Gloucester, while Alfred, it being now about Christmas time, had repaired to spend the holidays at Chippenham. It was on Twelfth-night, which the Saxons were celebrating no doubt with cake and wine, when a loud knocking was heard at the gate, and on some one going to answer the door, Guthrum and his Danes rushed in with overwhelming celerity. Alfred, who had been probably favouring the company with a song—for he was fond of minstrelsy—made an involuntary shake on hearing the news, and ran off, followed by a small band, in an allegro movement, which almost amounted to a galop.



Guthrum pays an Evening Visit to Alfred.

Original Size

The Saxon monarch finding himself deserted by his

coward subjects, and without an army, broke up his establishment, dismissed every one of his servants, and, exchanging his regal trappings for a bag of old clothes, went about the country in various disguises. He had taken refuge as a peasant in the hut of a swineherd or pig-driver, whose wife had put some cakes on the fire to toast, and had requested Alfred to turn them while she was otherwise employed in trying to turn a penny.

His Majesty being bent upon his bow, never thought of the cakes, which were burnt up to a cinder, and the old woman, looking as black as the cakes themselves, taunted the king with the smallness of the care he took, and the largeness of his appetite. "You can eat them fast enough," she exclaimed, "and I think you might have given the cakes a turn." * "I acknowledge my fault," replied Alfred, "for you and your husband have done me a good turn, and one good turn, I am well aware, deserves another."

** Though all the historians have given this anecdo*
vary in the words attributed to the old woman, and
allusion to the reply of Alfred. So accomplished a
would hardly have found nothing at all to say for
and though he did not turn the cakes, he most prob
turned the conversation in the manner we have desc

The monarch retired to a swamp, which he called AEthelingay—now Athelney—or the Isle of Nobles, and some of his retainers, who stuck to their sovereign through thick and thin, joined him in the morasses and marshes he had selected for his residence. Alfred did not despair, though in the middle of a swamp he had no good ground for hope, until he heard that Hubba, the Dane, after making a

hubbub in Wales, had been killed by a sudden sally in an alley near the mouth of the Tau, in Devonshire. Alfred, on this intelligence, left his retreat, and having recourse to his old clothes bag, disguised himself as the "Wandering Minstrel," in which character he made a very successful appearance at the camp of Guthrum. The jokes of Alfred, though they would sound very old Joe Millerisms in the present day, were quite new at that remote period, and the Danes were constantly in fits; so that the Saxon king was preparing, by splitting their sides, to eventually break up the ranks of his enemy. He could also sing a capital song, which with his comic recitations, conundrums, and charades, rendered him a general favourite; and his vocal powers may be said to have been instrumental to the accomplishment of his object.

Having returned to his friends, he led them forth against Guthrum, who retreated to a fortified position with a handful of men, and Alfred, by a close blockade, took care not to let the handful of men slip through his fingers.

Guthrum, tired of the raps on the knuckles he had received, threw himself on the kind indulgence of a British public, and appeared before the Saxon king in the character of an apologist. Alfred's motto was, "Forget and Forgive;" but he wisely insisted on the Danes embracing Christianity, knowing that if their conversion should be sincere, they would never be guilty of any further atrocities. He stood godfather himself to Guthrum, who adopted the old family name of Athelstane, and all animosities were forgotten in the festivities of a general christening. A partition of the kingdom took place, and Alfred gave a good share, including all the east side of the island, to his new godson. The Danes settled tranquilly in

their new possessions, though in the very next year (879), a small party sailed up the Thames and landed on the shores of Fulham; but finding the hardy sons of that suburban coast in a posture of defence, the Northmen took to their heels, or rather to their keels, by returning to their vessels. The would-be invaders repaired to Ghent to try their luck in the Low Countries, for which their ungentle-manly conduct in violating their treaties most peculiarly fitted them.

Alfred employed the period of peace in building and in law, both of which are generally ruinous, but which were exceedingly profitable in his judicious hands. He restored London, over which he placed his son-in-law, Ethelred, as Earl Eolderman or Alderman, and he established a regular militia all over the country, who, if they resembled the militia of modern times, must have kept away the invaders by placing them in the position familiarly known as "more frightened than hurt."

In the year 893, however, the Danes under Hasting, having ravaged all France, and eaten up every morsel of food they could find in that country, were compelled to come over to England in search of a meal. A portion of the invaders in two hundred and fifty ships, landed near Romney Marsh, at a river called Limine, and there being no one to oppose them in Limine, they proceeded to Appledore. Hasting, with eighty sail, took Milton; but he was soon routed out, and cutting across the Thames, he removed to Banfleet, which was only "over the way;" where he was broken in upon by Alderman Ethelred at the head of some London citizens. The cockney cohorts seized the wife and two sons of Hasting, who would have been killed but for the magnanimity of Alfred, though it has been hinted that in sending them back to his foe, the Saxon king calculated that

as women and children are only in the way when business is going forward, their presence might add to the embarrassments of the Danish chieftain. That such was really the case, may be gleaned from the fact that on a subsequent occasion Hasting and his followers were compelled to leave their wives and families behind them in the river Lea, into which the Danish fleet had sailed when Alfred ingeniously drew all the water off, and left the enemy literally aground. This manouvre was accomplished partially by digging three channels from the Lea to the Thames, and partially by the removal of the water in buckets, though the bucket got very frequently kicked by those engaged in this perilous enterprise.

The river Lea would have been sufficiently deep for the purposes of Hasting had not Alfred been deeper still, and the fleet, which had been the floating capital of the Danes, became a deposit in the banks for the benefit of the Saxons. In the spring of 897 Hasting quitted England; but several pirates remained; and two ships being taken at the Isle of Wight, Alfred, on being asked what should be done with the crews, exclaimed, "Oh! they may go and be hanged at Winchester!" The king's orders having been taken literally, the marauders were carried to Winchester, and hanged accordingly.

Alfred, having tranquillised the country, died in the year 901, after a glorious reign of nearly thirty years, and is known to this day as Alfred the Great, an epithet which has never yet been earned by one of his successors.

The character of this prince seems to have been as near perfection as possible. His reputation as a sage has not been injured by time, nor has the mist of ages obscured the brightness of his military glory. He was a lover of literature, and a constant reader of

every magazine of knowledge that he could lay his hands upon. An anecdote is told of his mother, Osburgha, having bought a book of Saxon poetry, illustrated according to the taste of our own times, with numerous drawings. Alfred and his brothers were all exclaiming, "Oh give it me!" with infantine eagerness, when his parent hit on the expedient of promising that he who could read it first should receive it as a present. Alfred, proceeding on the modern principle of acquiring "Spanish without a Master," and "French comparatively in no time," succeeded in picking up Anglo-Saxon in six self-taught lessons. He accordingly won the book, which was, no doubt, of a nature well calculated to "repay perusal."

Nor were war and literature the only pursuits in which Alfred indulged; but he added the mechanical arts to his other accomplishments. The sun-dial was probably known to Alfred; but that acute prince soon saw, or, rather, found from not seeing, that a sun-dial in the dark was worse than useless. Not content with being always alive to the time of day, he became desirous of knowing the time of night, and used to burn candles of a certain length with notches in them to mark the hours. * These were indeed melting moments, but the wind often blew the candles out, or caused them to burn irregularly. Sometimes they would get very long wicks, and, if every one had gone to bed, no one being up to snuff, might render the long wicks rather dangerous. In this dilemma he asked himself what could be done, and his friend Asser, the monk, having said half sportively, "Ah! you are on the horns of a dilemma," Alfred enthusiastically replied, "I have it; yes; I will turn the horns to my own advantage, and make a horn lanthorn." Thus, to make use of a figure of a recent

writer, Alfred never found himself in a difficulty without, somehow or other, making light of it.

** The practice of telling the time by burning canc ingenious, but could not have been always convenie must have been very awkward when a thief got into candles, thus exposing time to another thief besic procrastination. After Alfred's invention of the l it might have been worn as a watch, in the same ma the modern policeman wears the bull's-eye.*

He founded the navy, and, besides being the architect of his own fortunes, he studied architecture for the benefit of his subjects, for he caused so many houses to be erected, that during his reign the country seemed to be let out on one long building lease. He revised the laws, and his system of police was so good, that it has been said any one might have hung out jewels on the highway without any fear of their being stolen. Much, however, depends on the kind of jewellery then in use, for some future historian may say of the present generation, that such was its honesty, precious stones,—that is to say, precious large stones,—might be left in the streets without any one offering to take them up and walk away with them.

Alfred gave encouragement not only to native, but to foreign talent, and sent out Swithelm, bishop of Sherbum, to India, by what is now called the overland journey, and the good bishop was therefore the original Indian male—or Saxon Waghom. He brought from India several gems, and a quantity of pepper—the gems being generously given by Alfred to his friends, and the pepper freely bestowed on his enemies.

He died on the 26th of October, 901, in the fifty-

third year of his age, and thirtieth of his reign, having fought in person fifty-six times; so that his life must have been one continued round of sparring with one or other of his enemies. All the chroniclers and historians have agreed in pronouncing unqualified praise upon Alfred; and unless puffing had reached a perfection, and acquired an effrontery which it has scarcely shown in the present day, he must be considered a paragon of perfection who never yet had a parallel. It is certain we have had but one Alfred, from the Saxon period to the present; but we have now a prospect of another, who, let us hope, may evince, at some future time, something more than a merely nominal resemblance to him who has been the subject of this somewhat lengthy chapter.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. FROM KING EDWARD THE ELDER TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.



Original Size

N the death of Alfred, his second son, Edward, took possession of the throne, when he was served with a notice of ejectment by his cousin Ethelwald. Preparations were made for commencing and defending an action at Wimbum, when Ethelwald, intimidated by the strength of his opponent, declined to go on with the proceedings, and judgment, as in case of a nonsuit, was claimed on Edward's behalf. Subsequently, however, Ethelwald moved, apparently with a view to a new trial, towards Bury, where some of the Kentish men had ventured; and an action having come off, he incurred very heavy damage, which ended in his paying the costs of the day with his own existence. Edward derived much aid from Ethelfleda, a sister, who acted as a sister, by assisting him in his wars against his enemies. This energetic specimen of the British female inherited all the spirit of her father, as well as his mantle, which we find in looking into our own Mackintosh. * She is called "The Lady of Mercia" by the old chroniclers; but as she was always foremost in a fight, there seems something slyly satirical in giving the name of lady to a person of the most fearfully unladylike propensities. She beat the Welsh unmercifully, filling their country with wailings as well as covering their backs with wails, and she took prisoner the king's wife, with whom it may be presumed she came furiously to the scratch before the capture was accomplished. Ethelfleda died in the year 920, and

her brother in 925, the latter being succeeded by his natural son, Athelstane, who had no sooner got the crown on his head, than he found several persons preparing to have a snatch at it. He, however, defeated all his enemies, and devoted his time to polishing his throne, adding lustre to his crown, and giving brightness to his sceptre. It was in this reign that England first became an asylum for foreign refugees, to whom Athelstane always extended his hospitality. Louis d'Outremer, the French king, and several Celtic princes of Armorica or Brittany, played at hide-and-seek in London lodgings, while keeping out of the way of their rebellious subjects.

** Sir James Mackintosh's "History of England," Vol ii., p. 49,*

It is probable that the part of the metropolis called Little Britain, may have derived its name from the princes having established a little Brittany of their own in that locality. Athelstane appears also to have taken a limited number of pupils into his own palace to board and educate, for Harold, the king of Norway, consigned his son Haco to the care and tuition of the Saxon monarch.

Athelstane died in the year 940, in his forty-seventh year, and was succeeded by Edmund the Atheling, a youth of eighteen, whose taste for elegance and splendour obtained for him the name of the Magnificent. He gave very large dinner parties to his nobles, and at one of these his eye fell upon one Leof, a notorious robber, returned from banishment, one of the Saxon swell mob who had been transported, but had escaped; and who, from some remissness on the part of the police, had obtained admission to the palace. Edmund commanded the

proper officer to turn him out, but Leof—tempted no doubt by the sideboard of plate—insisted on remaining at the banquet. Edmund, who, as the chroniclers tell us, was heated by wine, jumped up from his seat, and forgetting the king in the constable, seized Leof by his collar and his hair, intending to turn him out neck and crop. Leof still refusing to "move on," the impetuous Edmund commenced wrestling with the intruder, who, irritated at a sudden and severe kick on his shins, drew a dagger from under his cloak, and stabbed the sovereign in a vital part. The nobles, who had formed a circle round the combatants, and had been encouraging their king with shouts of "Bravo, Edmund!"

"Give it him, your majesty!" were so infuriated at the foul play of the thief, and his un-English recourse to the knife, that they fell upon him at once, and cut him literally to pieces.



Edmund and Leof.

Original Size

Edred, the brother and successor of Edmund,

though not twenty-three years of age, was in a wretched state of health when he came to the throne. He had lost his teeth, and of course had none to show when threatened by his enemies; and he was so weak in the feet, that he literally seemed to be without a leg to stand upon. Nevertheless he succeeded in vanquishing the Danes, who could not hurt a hair of his head; but, as the chroniclers tell us that every bit of his hair had fallen off, his security in this respect is easily accounted for. The vigour that marked his reign has, however, been attributed to Dunstan, the abbot, who now began to figure as a political character.

Edred soon died, and left the kingdom to his little brother Edwy, a lad of fifteen, who soon married Elgiva, a young lady of good family, and took his wife's mother home to live with them. On the day of his coronation he had given a party, and the gentlemen, including Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Dunstan, the monk, were still sitting over their wine, when Edwy slipped out to join the ladies. Odo and Dunstan, who were both six-bottle men, became angry at the absence of their royal host, and the latter, at the suggestion of the former, went staggering after the king to lug him back to the banquet-room. Edwy was quietly seated with his wife and her mother in the boudoir—for it being a gentlemen's party, no ladies seem to have been among the guests—and the monk, hiccuping out some gross abuse of the queen and her mamma, collared the young king, who was dragged back to the wine-table.

Though this outrage may have been half festive, interlarded with exclamations of "Come along, old boy," "Don't leave us, old chap," and other similar phrases of social familiarity, Edwy never forgave the

monk, whom he called upon to account for money received in his late capacity of treasurer to the royal household. Dunstan being what is usually termed a "jolly dog," and a "social companion," was of course most irregular in money matters; and finding it quite impossible to make out his books, he ran away to avoid the inconvenience of a regular settlement.

Dunstan, nevertheless, resolved to pay his royal master off on the first opportunity; and a rising having been instigated by his friend and pot-companion, Archbishop Odo, Edgar, the brother of Edwy, was declared independent sovereign of the whole of the island north of the Thames. Dunstan returned from his brief exile; but, in the mean time, Edwy had been deprived of his wife, Elgiva, by forcible abduction, at the instigation of the odious Odo. The lovely unfortunate had her face branded with a hot iron, and the most cruel means were taken to deprive her of the beauty which was supposed to be the cause of her ascendancy over the heart of her royal husband. Some historians have attributed this outrage to the designs of Dunstan, and among the many irons that monk was known to have had in the fire, may have been the very irons with which this horrible barbarity was perpetrated. Her scars were, however, obliterated by some Kalydor known at the time, and probably the invention of some knightly Sir Rowland of that early era. She was on the point of rejoining Edwy at Gloucester, when she was savagely murdered by the enemies of her husband, who did not long survive her, for in the following year, 958, he perished either by assassination or a broken heart.

Edgar, a mere lad, of whom Dunstan had made a ladder for his own ambition, now succeeded to his brother's dignities, if a series of nothing but

indignities can deserve to be so called. The wily monk had now become Archbishop of Canterbury, and encouraged the new king to make royal progresses among his subjects, in the course of which he is said to have gone up on the river Dee, in an eight-oared cutter, rowed by eight crowned sovereigns. In this illustrious water party Kenneth, king of Scotland, pulled the stroke oar, their majesties of Cumbria, Anglesey, Galloway, Westmere, and the three Welsh sovereigns, making up the remainder of the royal crew, over which Edgar himself presided as coxswain.

Though the young king gave great satisfaction in his public capacity, his private character was exceedingly reprehensible. His inconstancy towards the fair got him into sad disgrace, and his friend Dunstan on one occasion administered to him a severe reprimand. The monk, however, finished by fining him a crown, prohibiting him from putting on, during a period of seven years, that very uncomfortable article of the regalia. As the head is proverbially uneasy which wears a crown, the sentence passed upon the king must have been a boon rather than a punishment.

Among the events connected with the reign of Edgar, his marriage with Elfrida must always stand conspicuous. He had heard much of a provincial beauty, the daughter of Olgar, or Ordgar, Earl of Devonshire, and the king sent his favourite, the Earl of Athelwold, to see this rustic *belle*, with a view of ascertaining whether the flower would be worth transplanting to the palace of the sovereign. Athelwold, on seeing the young lady, fell in love with her himself, from her extreme beauty; but wrote up to Edgar, declaring that she might well be called "the mistress of the village plain," for her plainness

was absolutely painful; and indeed he added in a P.S., "She is so disfigured by a squint, as to give me the idea of the very squintes-sence of ugliness." Athelwold attributed her reputation for beauty to her fortune, and declared that her money turned her red hair into golden locks, causing her to be well "worthy the attention of Persons about to Marry."

Edgar soon gave his consent to Athelwold's espousing the lady, on the ground of her being a good match for him; but she proved more than a match for him a short time afterwards. Edgar, at the expiration of the honeymoon, proposed to visit his friend, who made excuses as long as he could, inasmuch that he was seldom at home, and that he could not exactly say when his majesty would be sure of catching him. The king, however, good-naturedly promising to be satisfied with pot-luck, fixed a day for his visit; ana Athelwold, confessing all to his wife, begged her to disguise her charms, by putting on her shabbiest gown, and to behave herself in such a manner as to make the king believe he had lost nothing in not having married her.

"I should like to see myself appearing as a dowdy before my sovereign," was the lady's feminine reply, and she paid more than usual attention to her *toilette* in order to attract the favourable notice of Edgar. The monarch finding himself deceived by Athelwold, asked him to come and hunt in a wood, when, without any preliminary beating about the bush, and exclaiming, "You made game of me, thus do I make game of you," he stabbed the unfortunate earl, and returned home to marry his widow. Edgar did not live many years after this ungentlemanly conduct, but died at the early age of two-and-thirty. Though he had been favourable to priestcraft, and patronised the cunning foxes of the Church, he was an enemy to

wolves, and offered so much per head for all that were killed, until the race was exterminated, and the cry of "Wolf" became synonymous with a false alarm of danger.

Edgar was succeeded (a.d. 975) by Edward, his son by his first wife, who was not more than fourteen or fifteen years old; and thus, at that age before which an individual in the present day is not legally qualified to drive a cab, this royal hobbledehoy assumed the reins of government. His mother-in-law, Elfrida, endeavoured to grasp them for her own son Ethelred, an infant of six, but Dunstan having at that moment the whip hand, prevented her from reaching the point she was driving at.

Edward, who acquired the name of the Martyr, was accordingly crowned at Kingston, where coronations formerly came off; but he did not long survive, for hunting one day near Corfe Castle, he made a morning call on his mother-in-law, Elfrida, and requested that a drop of something to drink might be brought to him. As Elfrida was offering him the ale in front, her porter dropped upon him in the back, and inflicted a stab which caused him to set spurs to his horse; but falling off from loss of blood, he was drawn—a lifeless bier—for a considerable distance. Elfrida has been acquitted by some of having been the instigator of this cruel act, but as it is said she whipped her little son Ethelred for crying at the news of the death of his half-brother Edward, we can scarcely admit that there is any doubt of which we can give her the benefit. Both mother and son became so exceedingly unpopular that an attempt was made to set up a rival on the throne, to the exclusion of Ethelred, and the crown was offered to the late king's natural daughter, whose name was Edgitha.

Edgitha, however, having observed that the regal diadem was looked upon as a target, at which any one might take the liberty to aim, preferred the comfortable hood of the nun—for she was the inmate of a monastery—to the jewelled cap of royalty. The crown was accordingly placed by Dunstan, at Easter, a.d. 979, on the weak head of Ethelred; and it is said that the monk was in such a fit of ill-temper at the coronation, that he muttered some frightful maledictions against the boy-king, while in the very act of crowning him, The youthful sovereign was also indebted to Dunstan for the nickname of the Unready, which was probably equivalent to the term "slow coach," that is sometimes used to denote a person of sluggish disposition and not very brilliant mental faculties.



Coronation of Ethelred the Unready.

Original Size

Ethelred was wholly incompetent to wear the crown, which was so much too heavy for his weak head, that he appeared to be completely bonneted under the burden. It sat upon him more like a

porter's knot than a regal diadem; while the sceptre, instead of being gracefully wielded by a firm hand, was to him no better than a huge poker in the fragile fingers of a baby.

During the early part of his reign, his mother Elfrida exercised considerable influence, but she at length retired from government, and took to the building business, erecting and endowing monasteries in order to expiate her sins. She became a sort of infatuated female Gubitt, and at every fresh qualm of conscience ran up another floor, which was, familiarly speaking, the "old story" with persons in her unfortunate predicament. The money expended in the erection of religious houses was thought to be an eligible investment in those days for sinners, who having no solid foundation for their hopes, were glad to take any ground to build upon.

The Danes had for some time been tranquil, but their natural fearlessness, made them ready for anything, and seeing Ethelred in a state of utter unreadiness on the throne, they indulged the hope of driving oft the "slow coach" in an early stage of his sovereignty.

It happened that young Sweyn, a scapegrace son of the king of Denmark, had been turned out of doors by his father, and having become by the injudicious step of his parent a gentleman at large, amused himself by occasional attacks upon the kingdom of Ethelred. This sovereign, who, instead of being born with a silver spoon in his mouth, appears to have been born one entire spoon of the real fiddleheaded pattern, * commenced the dangerous practice of paying the foe to leave him alone, which was of course holding out the prospect of a premium to all who took the trouble to bully him. He paid down £10,000 in silver to the sea-kings, on condition of

their retiring from his country, which they did until they had spent all the money, when they returned, threatening to pay him off, or be paid off themselves, an arrangement that Ethelred three times mustered the means of carrying into operation.

** Others think this royal spoon was not fiddle hea that he was the earliest specimen of the king's pa his enemy. Emma, who was called the "Flower of Nor consented to transplant herself to England, and be acknowledged daisy of the British Court.*

Young Sweyn had now become king of Denmark, and had made friends with Olave, king of Norway, the son of old Olave, a deceased pirate, who had made his fortune by sweeping the very profitable crossing from his own country to England. These two scamps ravaged the southern coast in 994, and Ethelred, the unready king, was obliged to buy them off with ready money. In the year 1001, they made another demand of £24,000, which left the sovereign not a single dump, except those into which he naturally fell at the draining of his treasury.

Ethelred, who, if he was unready for everything else, appears to have been always ready for a quarrel, had contrived to fall out with Richard the Second, Duke of Normandy, and he was on the point of taking up arms, when he laid his hand at the feet of Emma.

We would willingly take an enormous dip of ink, and letting it fall on our paper, blot out for ever from our annals the Danish massacre, which occurred at about the period to which our history has arrived. Unfortunately, however, were we to overturn an entire inkstand, we should only add to the blackness of the page, which tells us that the Danes were

savagely murdered at a time when they were living as fellow-subjects among the people.

It was on the feast of St. Brice, soon after his marriage with Emma, that the order to commit this sanguinary act was given by Ethelred. It is true that the Danish mercenaries had given great provocation by their insolence. They had, according to the old chroniclers, * sunk into such effeminacy that they washed themselves once a week and combed their heads still more frequently. We cannot perhaps accuse the chroniclers of being over nice in their objections to the Danish habits of cleanliness, but we really are at a loss to see the effeminacy of taking a bath every seven days, and preventing the hair from becoming in appearance little better than a quantity of hay in a state of unraked roughness. It was on the 15th of November, 1002, which happened to be one of their weekly washing days, that the Danes were surprised and treated in the barbarous manner we have alluded to. The Lady Gunhilda, the sister of Sweyn, and the wife of an English earl of Danish extraction, was one of the victims of the massacre, and died fighting to the last with that truly feminine weapon, the tongue, predicting that her death would be followed by the downfall of the English nation. This act of ferocity naturally exasperated Sweyn, who resolved on invading England, and he prepared a considerable fleet, the vessels belonging to which appear to have been got up much in the same style as the civic barges on the Thames, for they were gaily gilded, and had all sorts of emblematical devices painted over them. Sweyn himself arrived in the *Great Dragon*, a boat made in the inconvenient form of that disagreeable animal. Had the patron saint of England been at hand to do his duty at that early period, the great dragon would have been

speedily overcome, but it is a familiar observation, that people of this-sort are never to be found when they are really wanted.

** Wallingford, p. 547.*

The invaders landed at Exeter, which was governed by a Norman baron, a favourite of the queen; but, as frequently happens in the course of events as well as on the race-course, the favourite proved deceptive when the enemy took the field, and resigned the place to pillage. The Danish foe marched into Wiltshire, and in every town they passed through they ordered the best of everything for dinner, when, after eating to excess of all the delicacies of the season, they had the indelicacy to settle their hosts when the bill was brought to them for settlement. To prevent even the possibility of old scores being kept against them, which they might one day be called upon to pay off, they burned down the houses, thus making a bonfire of all the property, including account books, papers, and wooden tallies that the establishment might contain. The entertainers or land-lords had no sooner presented a bill; than it was met by a savage endorsement on their own backs; and, though drawing and accepting may be regarded as a very customary, commercial transaction, still, when the drawer draws a huge sword the acceptor is likely to get by far the worst of it.



Settling the Bill.

Original Size

An Anglo-Saxon army was, however, organised at last, to oppose the Danes; but Alfric the Mercian—an old traitor, who had on a former occasion played the knave against the king—was put at the head of it. Ethelred had punished the first treachery of the father by putting out the eyes of the son; but this castigation of the "wrong boy," the young one instead of the old one, had not proved effectual. His majesty must have been as blind as he had rendered the innocent youth, to have again entrusted Alfric with command; and the consequences were soon felt, for the old impostor pretended to be taken suddenly ill, just as his men were going into battle. He called them off at the most important moment; and instead of stopping at home by himself, putting his feet in warm water, and laying up while the battle was being fought under directions which he could just as easily have given from his own room, he shouted for help from the whole army; and by sending some for salts, others for senna, a cohort here for a pill, and a legion there for a leech, he managed to keep the whole of the forces occupied in running about for him.

Sweyn in the meantime got clear off with all his

booty, and by the time that Alfric announced himself to be a little better, and able to go out, the enemy had vanished altogether from the neighbourhood.

An appetite for conquest was not however the only appetite which the Danes indulged, for their voracity in eating was such that they created a panic wherever they showed themselves. They ravaged Norfolk, and having reduced it to its last dumpling, they fell upon Yarmouth, whose bloaters they speedily exhausted, when they tried Cambridge, having probably been attracted thither by the fame of its sausages. Subsequently they advanced upon Huntingdonshire and Lincolnshire, where they continued as long as they could find a bone to pick with the inhabitants. They then crossed the Baltic (a.d. 1004), having been obliged to quit England on account of there being literally nothing to eat; so that a joint occupation with the natives had become utterly impossible. Those only, who from its being the land of their birth, felt that they must always have a stake in the country, could possibly have mustered the resolution to remain in it. The vengeance of Sweyn being unsatisfied, he returned in the year 1006, when he carried fire and sword into every part, and it has been said with much felicity of expression, that amidst so much sacking the inhabitants had scarcely a bed to lie down upon.



Original Size

Unable to offer him any effectual check, the Great Council tried what could be done with ready money, and £36,000 was the price demanded to pay out this formidable "man in possession" from the harassed and exhausted country. The sum was collected by an income-tax of about twenty shillings in the pound, or even more, if it could be got out of the people by either threats or violence. Such as had paid the Danes directly to save their homes from destruction were obliged to pay over again, like a railway traveller who loses his ticket; and the natives seem to have got into a special train of evils, in which every engine of persecution was used against them.



Original Size

In 1008 new burdens were thrown upon the people, who for every nine nides of land were bound to find a man armed with a helmet and breastplate. This would seem no very difficult matter, considering that two or three such men are found annually at the Lord Mayor's show; but in former times they had something more difficult to do than walk in a procession. Though two shillings and his beer will, it is believed, secure the services of an ancient knight, armed *cap-d-pie* at an hour's notice in our own day, such a person was not to be had so cheap in the time of Ethelred. In addition to this infliction, every three

hundred and ten hides of land were bound to build and equip a ship for the defence of the country; but it seems, after all, nothing but fair, that the hides should club together to save themselves from tanning. The fleet thus raised was, however, soon rendered valueless, in consequence of the various commanders having refused to row in the same boat, or rather insisting on pulling different ways, to the utter annihilation of their master's interest.

Ethelred had selected for his favourite a low fellow of the name of Edric, who was exceedingly eloquent, and had not only talked one of the king's daughters into accepting his hand, but had even talked the monarch himself into sanctioning the unequal marriage. Edric had obtained for his brother Brightric a high post in the navy, as commander of eight vessels; but the latter got into a quarrel with his nephew, Wulfnoth, who was known by the odd appellation of the "Child of the South Saxons," or the Sussex lad, as we should take the liberty of calling him. The "child" determined on flight; but with a truly infantine objection to run alone, he got twenty of the king's ships to run along with him. Brightric cruised after him with eighty sail, but the tempest rising, and the rudders at the stem refusing to act, he was driven on shore by stem necessity. Wulfnoth, who had done a little ravaging on his own private account along the southern coast, returned to make firewood of the timbers of Brightric, which fortune had so cruelly shivered.

Ethelred was completely panic-stricken at the news of this reverse, and hurried home as fast as he could to summon a council, but every resolution that was passed no one had the resolution to execute. To add to the king's embarrassments, "Thurkill's host" came over, com-prising the flower of the Scandinavian

youth, which planted itself in Kent, and caused a sad blow to the country. Various short peaces were purchased by the Saxons at so much a piece; but, as Pope Gregory would have had it, every arrangement was not a sale, but a sell on the part of Thurkill, who continued sending in a fresh account for every fresh transaction. Ethelred was now in the very midst of traitors, and it was impossible that he should ever be brought round in such a circle. He had not a single officer to whom a commission could be safely entrusted. Edric, his favourite, having taken offence, joined the enemy in an attack upon Canterbury, which had lasted for twenty days, when some one left the gate of the city ajar, either by design or accident.

Alphege, the good archbishop, who had defended the place, was instantly loaded with chains; and though he felt himself dreadfully fettered, he declined to purchase his ransom, for the very best of all reasons, namely, that he had not the money to pay for it. The old man, wisely making a virtue of necessity, proclaimed his determination not to part with a shilling, "and indeed," said he, "I couldn't if I would; for to tell you the truth, I haven't got it."

The venerable prelate turning his pockets inside out, proved that he was penniless, when they offered to release him if he would persuade Ethelred to subscribe handsomely to the Danish rent, as we are fully justified in calling it. The archbishop, however, grew exceedingly saucy, when they pelted him with the remains of the feast, throwing bones, bottles, and bread, in rapid succession at the primate, who meekly bowed his head—or perhaps bobbed it up and down—to the treatment he experienced. The good old man remained for some time unshaken, till a shower of marrow-bones threw him on his knees,

and one of the ruffians with a coarse pun exclaiming —"Let us make no more bones about it, but despatch him at once," brutally realised his own ferocious suggestion.



Thurkill's little Account.

Original Size

Thurkill now sent in another account of £48,000 as the price of his promised allegiance, which was certainly not worth a week's purchase, but Ethelred somehow or other found and paid the money. Sweyn, on hearing of this proceeding, pretended to be very angry with Thurkill, and fitted out a formidable fleet, with the avowed intention of killing with one stone two birds—namely, the Danish crow, and the Saxon pigeon. The ships of Sweyn were elaborately carved for show, and consequently not very well cut out for service. Nevertheless they were quite strong enough to vanquish the dispirited Saxons, who would have been overawed at the sight of a Danish oar, and might have been knocked down with a feather.

Sweyn landed at York, and leaving his fleet in the

care of his son Canute, carried fire and sword into the north; but as the inhabitants were all favourable to his cause, he had no more occasion to take fire into the north, than to carry coals to Newcastle. The king had sought refuge in London, which refused to give in until Ethelred sneaked out, when the citizens having been threatened, according to Sir Francis Palgrave, * with damage to their "eyes and limbs," threw open their gates to the conqueror. The unready monarch made for the Isle of Wight, but finding apartments dear and living expensive, he packed off his wife and children to his brother-in-law, Richard of Normandy, who lived in a court at Rouen. The duke made them as çomfortable as he could, and the lady Emma having fished for an invitation for her husband, at length succeeded in getting him asked, to the infinite delight of old "Slowcoach," who for once got ready at a very short notice to avail himself of the asylum that was offered him. Sweyn was now king of England, a.d. 1013, but after a reign of six weeks, entitling him to only half a quarter's salary, he died at Gainsborough, very much lamented by all who did not know him. The Saxon nobles who had so recently sent Ethelred away, now wanted him back again. They despatched a message, however, to the effect that, if he would promise to be a good king, and never be naughty any more, they would be glad to accept him once more as their sovereign. Ethelred turning his son Edmund into a postman, forwarded a letter by hand, promising reform, but stipulating that there should be no "fraud or treachery," or in other words, no humbug on either side. This arrangement, though growing out of mutual distrust, and being little better than a provision which each party thought necessary in consequence of the dishonesty of both, must be

regarded as highly important in a constitutional point of view, for it is evidently the germ of those great compacts, which have since been occasionally concluded between the sovereign and the people.

** Chap. xiii., p. 310,*



Ethelred despatching a Letter by his Son.

Original Size

Ethelred, on his arrival at home, found that Canute, the son of Sweyn, having been declared king by the Danes, had coolly set himself up as landlord of the Crown and Sceptro at Greenwich. Ethelred and Canute continued for three years like "the Lion and the Unicorn, fighting for the Crown," with about equal success, when death overtook "Slowcoach," after a long and inglorious reign. He died on St. George's Day, 1016, having been for five-and-thirty years man and boy, on and off the throne of England.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.
EDMUND IRONSIDES—CANUTE

—HAROLD HAREFOOT—HARDICANUTE—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR—HAROLD—THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

ON the decease of Ethelred the citizens of London offered the throne to his son Edmund, who had got the strange nickname of Ironsides. He obtained this appellation from his extreme toughness; for it has been said by a contemporary that if you gave him a poke in the ribs they rattled like the bars of a gridiron, or the railings round an area. There can be no doubt that Edmund had strength on his side, as far as he was personally concerned, but Canute, or as some called him, C'nute and 'Cute, often overreached young Ironsides in cunning.

In one of their battles—the fifth of a series—the Danes were on the point of defeat, when Edric, whom Edmund, however hard in the ribs, was soft enough in the head to trust after former treachery, raised the cry that the young leader had fallen. By some ingenious contrivance, Edrio had cut off somebody's head which resembled Edmund in features, and, perhaps, improving the likeness with burnt cork or other preparations, raised it on a spear in the field, exclaiming "Flee, English! flee, English! dead is Edmund." * The whole army became paralysed at the sight, and even Ironsides himself was completely put out of countenance, for he was unable to tell at the moment whether his head was really upon his own shoulders. How Edric could have

had the face to practise such an imposition may puzzle the reader of the present day; but it was exceedingly likely that the trick would be aided by Edmund undergoing, as he no doubt would at the moment, a sudden change of countenance.

** These are the very words, exactly as they have b preserved,—Vide Sir F. Palgrave, chapter xliii. pa*



"Flee, English! dead is Edmund!"

Original Size

Ironsides, though for the moment put to flight, having been as it were frightened at his own shadow, found on reflection, in the first piece of water he came to, that his head was in its right place, though his heart had slightly failed him, and he

consequently paused in his retreat, and met Canute face to face, on the road to Gloucestershire. Ironsides, stepping forward in front of his army, made the cool proposition to Canute that instead of risking the lives of so many brave men, they should settle the quarrel by single combat. Considering that Edmund had not only the advantage of patent-safety sides, which rendered him nearly battle-axe proof, but was also about twice the height of his antagonist, it is not surprising that Canute declined coming in immediate contact with the metallic plates, which would have acted as a powerful battery upon the diminutive Dane. Had he accepted the crafty challenge, every blow inflicted on Ironsides would have been a severe rap on the knuckles to Canute, who might as well have run his head against a brick wall as engage in a single combat with a person of such undoubted metal. It was, however, agreed that they should divide the realm, and though as a general rule it is not advisable to do anything by halves, this arrangement was decidedly beneficial to all parties. The armies were both delighted at the proposal, and their joy affords proof that their discretion formed a great deal more than the better part of their valour.

Canute took the north, and Edmund the south, with a nominal superiority over the former, so that the crown is said by the chroniclers to have belonged to Ironsides. It was certainly better that the ascendency should have been given to one of the two, for if their territory had been equal the crown must have been divided, and he that had the thickest head might have claimed the larger share of the regal diadem. Edmund lived only two months after the agreement had been signed, and as Canute took the benefit of survivorship, it has been good-

naturedly suggested that he must have been either the actual or virtual murderer of Ironsides. There are only one or two facts which spoil this ingenious and amiable theory; the first of which is, that there is no proof of his having been killed at all,—an uncertainty that is quite sufficient to allow the benefit of the doubt to those who have been named as his murderers. Hume has, without hesitation, appointed Oxford as the scene of the assassination, and has been kind enough to select two chamberlains as the perpetrators of the deed, but we have been unable to collect sufficient evidence to go to a jury against the anonymous chamberlains, whom we beg leave to dismiss with the comfortable assurance that they quit these pages without any stain on their characters.

Canute, as the succeeding partner in the late firm of Edmund and Canute, found himself, in 1017, all alone in his glory on the British throne. His first care was to call a public meeting of "bishops," "duces," and "optimates," at which he voted himself into the chair; and he caused it to be proposed and seconded that he should be king to the exclusion of all the descendants of Ethelred. There can be no doubt that the meeting was packed, for every proposition of Canute was received with loud cries of "hear," and repeated cheers. Strong resolutions were passed against Edwy, the grown-up brother of Edmund Ironsides. Proceedings were instantly commenced; he was declared an outlaw, and was soon taken in execution in the then usual form.

Edmund and Edwy, the two infant sons of Ironsides, were protected by the plea of infancy; but Canute sent them out to dry-nurse to the king of the Swedes, with an intimation that if their mouths could be stopped by Swedish turnips, or anything else, the

arrangement would be satisfactory to the English monarch. His Swedish majesty, whether moved by pity or actuated by the feeling of "None of my child," sent the babies on to Hungary, where they were taken in, but not done for, as Canute had desired. The little Edmund died early, but his brother Edward settled respectably in life, married a relation of the Emperor of Germany, became a family man, and one of his daughters was subsequently a Mrs. Malcolm, the lady of Malcolm, king of Scotland.

Edmund and Alfred, the other sons of Ethelred by Emma of Normandy, who were still living with their uncle Robert, had a sort of lawyer's letter written in their name to Canute, threatening an action of trover for the sceptre, unless it were immediately restored.

After offering a moiety—being equal to a composition of ten shillings in the pound—he proposed to settle the matter by marrying their mamma, who consented to this arrangement; and the claims of the infants were never heard of again. Neglected by their mother, they forgot their mother tongue—they grew up Normans instead of Saxons, say the old chroniclers, which seems to be going a little too far, for a Saxon cannot become a Norman by living in Normandy, any more than a man becomes a horse by residence in a stable.

After triumphing over his enemies, Canute somewhat altered for the better, and became a quiet, gentlemanly, but rather jovial man. He was fond of music, patronised vocalists, and occasionally wrote ballads, one of which is still preserved. As it was said of a certain performer, that he would have been a good actor if he had been possessed of figure, voice, action, expression, and intelligence; so we may say of Canute, that if he had known anything of sense or syntax, if he had been happy at description, or

possessed the slightest share of imagination, he would have been a very fair poet.

A portion of one of Canute's once popular ballads has been preserved, and if the other verses resembled the one that has come down to us, there is no reason to regret that the rest is out of print and that nobody has kept the manuscript.

The following is the queer quatrain which remains as the sole specimen of his majesty's poetical abilities:—

"Merrily sing the monks within Ely,
When C'nute King rowed there by;
Row, my knights, row near the land,
And hear we these monks sing."

This dismal distich is said to have been suggested by his hearing the solemn monastic music of the choir as he rowed near the Minster of Ely; but we suspect the song must have been rather of a secular kind, or the term merrily would have been exceedingly inappropriate. *

** Some writers have endeavoured to justify the roy*
or vindicate the characters of the monks of Ely, b
that in those days "merry" meant "sad." These gent
might just as well argue that black meant white—a
proposition some people would not hesitate to put
plea for the errors of royalty.



Canute performing on his favourite Instrument.

Original Size

About the year 1017, Edric, the royal favourite, evinced some disposition to strike for an advance of salary, when Canute resisting the demand, the king and the courtier came to high words. Eric of Northumbria, who happened to be sitting in the room with his battle-axe,—which was in those days as common a companion as an umbrella or a walking-stick in the present age,—got up, on a hint from the king, and axed the miserable Edric to death.

Canute, who was also king of the Danes, the Swedes,—whose sovereign was his vassal—and of the Northmen, had many turbulent subjects abroad as well as at home, but he was in the habit of employing one against the other, so that it was utterly immaterial to him which of them were slain, so that he got rid of some of them. He kept a strong hand over his Danish earls, and even his nephew, "the doughty Haco,"—though why he should have been called "doughty," is a matter of much doubt—was exiled for disregard of the royal authority.

The Swedes, who were always boiling over, got at last completely mashed by Earl Godwin; and the

kings of Fife, who, although mere *piccoli*, were monarchs of some note, having exerted themselves in a melancholy strain for independence, at length fell, for the sake of harmony, into the general submission to Canute. Six nations were now reduced into one general subordi——nation to the English king, who of course became the object of the grossest flattery, and upon one memorable occasion was nearly sacrificed to the puffing system of his injudicious friends. One day, when in the plenitude of his power, he caused the throne to be removed from the throne-room and erected, during low tide, on the sea-shore. Having taken his seat, surrounded by his courtiers, he issued a proclamation to the ocean, forbidding it to rise, and commanding it not, on any account, to leave its bed until his permission for it to get up was graciously awarded. The courtiers backed the royal edict, and encouraged with the grossest adulation this first great practical attempt to prove that Britannia rules the waves. Such a rule, however, was soon proved to be nothing better than a rule *nisi*, which it is impossible to make absolute when opposed by Neptune's irresistible motion of course. Every wave of Canute's sceptre was answered by a wave from the sea, and the courtiers, who were already up to their ankles in salt water, began to fear that they should soon be pickled in the foaming brine.

At length the monarch himself found his footstool disposed to go on swimmingly of its own accord, and there was every prospect that the whole party would undergo the ceremony of an immediate investiture of the bath. The sovereign, who was very lightly shod, soon found that his pumps were not capable of getting rid of the water, which was now rising very rapidly. Having sat with his feet in the sea for a few

minutes, and not relishing the slight specimen of hydropathic treatment he had endured, he jumped suddenly up, and began to abuse his courtiers for the mess into which he had been betrayed by their outrageous flattery.



Canute reproving his Courtiers.

Original Size

One of the attendants who had remained at the back of the others during this ridiculous scene, observed drily, that the whole party would have been inevitably washed and done for, if Canute had not made a timely retreat. The sovereign was so humbled by this incident, that he took off his crown upon the spot, made a parcel of it at once, forwarded it to Winchester Cathedral, and never wore it again.

Water, as we all know, can subdue the strongest spirit, and though the spirit of Canute could bear a great deal of mixing, it is evident that the sea had shown him his own weakness. In the year 1030 he went on a pilgrimage to Rome, with no other staff than a wooden one in his hand; and instead of a valet to follow him, he had a simple wallet at his

back. From a letter he wrote to his bishops while abroad, it would seem that he received presents of "vases of gold and vessels of silver, and stuffs, and garments of great price;" so that by the time he got home again, his wallet must have been a tolerable burden for the royal back. He died at Shaftesbury, in 1035, about three years after his return from Rome, and was buried at Winchester; so that he finally laid his head where his crown had been already deposited.

On the death of Canute there was the usual difficulty as to what was to be done with the British crown; for there were two or three who thought the cap fitted themselves, and who consequently claimed the right to wear it. There is no doubt that Hardicanute, the only legitimate son of the late king, would have tried it on had it not been left by will to Harold, while his brother Sweyn was the legatee of Norway. A compromise was, however, effected, by which Harold took everything north of the Thames, including, of course, the Baker Street and Finsbury districts, while Hardicanute, to whom Denmark had been bequeathed, took the territories on the south shore, commencing in the Belvidere Road, Lambeth, and terminating at the southern extremity of the kingdom. He however, left his English dominions to the management of his mother and Earl Godwin, while he himself lingered in Denmark; on account of the convivial habits of the Scandinavian chiefs; for Hardicanute drank, as the phrase goes, "like a fish," though the liquid he imbibed was very different from that which the finny tribe are addicted to.

Edward and Alfred, the two sons of Ethelred, had come over to be in the way in case of anything turning up on the death of Canute, but Edward finding himself rather too much in the way, and

fearing an unpleasant removal, took a return ticket for himself and party for Normandy. Alfred, after vainly attempting to land at Sandwich, happily thought of Heme Bay, and though it was in the height of the season, he of course found no one there to resist his progress. Having ventured up to Guildford on the invitation of Godwin, Alfred and his soldiers found a sumptuous repast and comfortable lodgings prepared for them. But Godwin had been more downy even than the beds, and the soldiers having been seized and imprisoned found wet blankets thrown on their hopes of hospitable treatment. Edward himself was cruelly murdered, and Harold, who was called Harefoot, from the speed with which he could ran, was now able to walk over the course, for there was no opposition to him in the race for the stakes of Royalty. He was fond of nothing but hunting, and as he could catch a hare by his own velocity he generally had the game in his own hands. He died a.d. 1040, after a short reign of four years; and though, if he had lived to old age, he might have proved a good sovereign in the long-run, he was certainly not happy in the walk of life where fortune had placed him.

Hardicanute, a name signifying Canute the Hardy, or the tough, came over on the death of Harold; but with all his toughness he evinced or assumed some tenderness at the cruel fate of his brother Alfred. He showed his sympathy for one by brutality towards another, and subjected Harold's memory to the most barbarous indignities.

Godwin, fearing that he might share the obloquy of his former master, propitiated Hardicanute by giving him a magnificent toy, consisting of a gilt ship, with a crew of eighty men, each having a bracelet of pure gold weighing sixteen ounces, and

dressed in the most valuable habiliments. The new king no doubt melted the gold very speedily in drink, to which he was so much addicted, that he actually died intoxicated at a party given at Clapham, by one Clapa, from whose name, or home, that suburb was called. His majesty was, according to the chroniclers, "on his legs," and the waiters had of course left the room, when Hardicanute unable to get further than "Gentlemen," staggered into his seat, and was carried out—mortally inebriated. *

** Other historians say in so many words, that "he drunk." We prefer using the milder expression of 'inebriated,"*



A frightful Example. Death of Hardicanute.

Original Size

The throne being now vacant, Edward, the half-brother of the late king, who happened to be on the spot, was induced to step up and take a seat, though

he was the senior of the late sovereign. In those days, however, the rules of hereditary descent were not very rigidly followed, for it was success that chiefly regulated succession. Edward's cause had, however, derived much support from Earl Godwin, the most extraordinary teetotum of former times. He had practised the political *chassez croisser* to an extent that even in our own days has seldom been surpassed. He had turned his coat so frequently that he had lost all consciousness of which was the right side and which the wrong; but he always treated that side as the right which happened to be uppermost.

Godwin had, it is said, commenced life as a cowboy, but he soon raised himself above the low herd, and eventually succeeded in making his daughter Editha the queen of Edward. The king, who had lived much in Normandy, and had derived some assistance from Duke William, afterwards the Conqueror, had formed many Norman predilections, which created jealousy among his Saxon subjects. In 1061, he had received as a visitor his brother-in-law, one Eustace, Count of Boulogne, who, on returning home with his followers through Dover, insolently demanded gratuitous lodgings of one of the inhabitants. The Dover people, who are still remarkable for their high charges, and who seldom think of providing a cup of tea under two shillings, or a bed for less than half-a-crown, resisted the demands of Eustace and his friends, when a fight ensued, and the Normans were compelled to make the best of their way out of the neighbourhood.

Eustace, still smarting under the blows he had received, ran howling to Edward, like a boy who, upon receiving a thrashing, flies to his big brother for redress. The king desired Godwin, who was governor of Dover, to chastise the place; but the earl

positively refused, and insisted that the Count of Boulogne could not complain if, when he required to be served gratuitously, he had got regularly served out. Edward, irritated at this message, prepared for war, and Godwin, who was joined by his sons, Sweyn and Harold, had collected a powerful army; but when it came to the point, the soldiers on both sides gave evident symptoms of a desire to see the matter amicably arranged. As the king's forces consisted chiefly of the fryd or militia, there can be little doubt where the panic commenced; and Godwin's men, recognising among the foe some of their fellow-countrymen trembling from head to foot, immediately commenced shaking hands, so that there was an end to all firmness on both sides. A truce was consequently concluded, and the disputes of the parties referred to the arbitration of the Witenagemote; who doomed Sweyn to outlawry, and Godwin and Harold to banishment. Thus the "king's darlings," as they had been called, were disposed of, and the pets became the object of petty vengeance. Editha, the daughter of Godwin, shared in the general disgrace of her family; for the king, her husband, "reduced her," say the chroniclers, "to her last groat;" and with this miserable fourpence she was consigned to a monastery, where she was waited on by one servant of all-work, and controlled by the abbess, who was the sister of her royal tyrant.

Edward being now released from the presence of Godwin, began to think of seeing his friends, and invited William of Normandy to spend a few months at the English court. He came with a numerous retinue, and finding most of the high offices in the possession of Normans, he was able to feel himself perfectly at home. On the conclusion of his stay he departed, with a gift of horses, hounds, and hawks;

in fact, a miniature menagerie, which had been presented to him by his host, without considering the inconvenience occasioned by adding "a happy family" to the luggage of the Norman visitor.

Edward was not allowed much leisure, for his guest had no sooner departed, than he found himself threatened by Earls Godwin and Harold, who sailed up to London, and landed a large army in the Strand. This important thoroughfare, which has been in modern times so frequently blockaded, was stopped up at that early period by men who were paving their way to power; so that paviours of some kind have for ages been a nuisance to the neighbourhood.

Edward agreed to a truce, by which Godwin and his sons were restored to their rank; but the earl, while dining soon afterwards with Edward at Windsor, was, according to some, choked in the voracious endeavour to swallow a tremendous mouthful. Thus perished, from an appetite larger than his windpipe, one of the most illustrious characters of his age. Harold, his son, succeeded him in his titles and estates; but as the latter are said to have consisted chiefly of the Goodwin Sands, the legatee could not hope to keep his head above water on such an inheritance.

Harold commenced his career by worrying Algar, a rival earl, who got worried to death (a.d. 1059), and he then turned his attention to the father-in-law of his victim, one Griffith, a Welsh sovereign, whose army not liking the bother of war, cut off his head and sent it as a peace-offering to the opposite leader. This unceremonious manner of breaking the neck of a difficulty by decapitating their king, says more for the decision than the loyalty of the Welsh people.



Unpleasant Position of King Harold.

Original Size

It was not long after this circumstance, that Harold, going out in a fishing-boat on the coast of Sussex with one or two bungling mariners, got carried out to sea, and was ultimately washed ashore like an old blacking-bottle in the territory of Guy, Count of Ponthieu. Having been picked up by the count, poor Harold was treated as a waif, and impounded until a heavy sum was paid for his ransom. William of Normandy, upon hearing that an earl and retinue were pawned in the distinguished name of Harold, good-naturedly redeemed them, at a great expense, but made the English earl solemnly pledge himself to assist his deliverer in obtaining the English crown at the death of Edward. The king expired on the 5th of January, 1066, leaving the crown to William, according to some, and to Harold, according to others; but as no will was ever found, it is probable enough that he agreed to leave the kingdom first to one and then to the other, according to which happened to have at the moment the ear of the sovereign. *

** This Edward was generally called the Confessor, got the name we are unable to say with certainty. been ingeniously suggested that it was on the lucu lucendo principle, and that he was called the Coni from his never confessing anything.*

Harold, forgetting the circumstance of his awkward predicament in the fishing-boat, and ungrateful of William's services, immediately assumed the title of king, and got his coronation over the very same evening. It is even believed by some that the ceremony was so hastily performed as to have been a mere *tête-à-tête* affair between Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the new sovereign.

When William received the news of Harold's accession he was having a game with a bow and arrows in his hunting-ground near Rouen. His trembling knees suddenly took the form of his bow, and his lip began to quiver. He threw himself hastily into a skiff, and crossing the Seine, never stopped till he reached his palace, where he walked up and down the hall several times, occasionally sitting down for a moment in the porter's chair, then starting up and resuming his promenade up and down the passage. On recovering from his reverie he sent ambassadors to demand of Harold the fulfilment of his promise; but that dishonest person replied, that he being under duress when he gave his word, it could not be considered binding.



William inspecting the Volunteers previous to the Invasion of England.

Original Size

William accordingly called a public meeting of Normans, at which it was resolved unanimously, that England should be invaded as speedily as possible. A subscription was immediately entered into to defray the cost, and volunteers were admitted to join the expedition without the formality of a reference. Tag from Maine ana Anjou, Rag from Poitou and Bretagne, with Bob-tail from Flanders, came rapidly pouring in; while the riff of the Rhine, and the raff of the Alps, formed altogether a mob of the most miscellaneous character. Those families who are in the habit of boasting that their ancestors came in with the Conqueror, would scarcely feel so proud of the fact if they were aware that the companions of William comprised nearly all the roguery and vagabondism of Europe.

A large fleet having been for some time in readiness at St. Valery, near Dieppe, crossed in the autumn of 1066, and on the 28th of September the Normans landed without opposition at Pevensey, near Hastings. William, who was the last to step on shore, fell flat upon his hands and face, which was at first considered by the soldiers as an evil omen; but opening his palm, which was covered with mud, he gaily exclaimed, "Thus do I lay my hands upon this

ground—and be assured that it is a pie you shall all have a finger in." This speech, or words to the same effect, restored the confidence of the soldiers, and they marched to Hastings, where they waited the coming of the enemy.



The Landing of William the Conqueror.

Original Size

Harold, who had come to London, left town by night for the Sussex coast, and halted at Battle, where the English forces kept it up for two or three days and nights with Bongs and revelry. At length, on Saturday, the 14th of October, William gave the word to advance, when a gigantic Norman, called Taillefer, who was a minstrel and a juggler, went forward to execute a variety of tricks, such as throwing up his sword with one hand and catching it with the other; balancing his battle-axe on the tip of his chin; standing on his head upon the point of his spear, and performing other feats of pantomimic dexterity. He next proceeded to sing a popular ballad, and having asked permission to strike the first blow, he succeeded in making a tremendous hit;

but some one happening to return the compliment, he was very soon quieted. The men of London, who formed the bodyguard of Harold, made a snug and impenetrable barrier with their shields, under which they nestled very cosily. *

** Some of them, who were buried under their buckle have been inhabitants of Bucklersbury, which may h derived its name from the practice we have descrik*

From nine in the morning till nine in the afternoon the Normans continued watching for the English to emerge from under their shields, as a cat waits for a mouse to quit its hiding-place. As the mouse refuses to come to the scratch, so the Londoners declined to quit their snuggery, until William had the happy idea of ordering his bowmen to shoot into the air; and they were thus down upon the foe, with considerable effect, by the falling of the arrows. Still the English stood firm until William, by a pretended retreat, induced the soldiers of Harold to quit their position of safety. Three times were the Saxon snails tempted to come out of their shells by this crafty manouvre, but their courage was still unshaken, until an arrow, shot at random, hit Harold in the left eye, when his dispirited followers fled like winking.

The English king was carried to the foot of the standard, where a few of his soldiers formed round him a little party of Protectionists. William fought with desperate valour, and was advancing towards the banner, when an English billman drew a bill which he made payable at sight on the head of the Duke of Normandy. Fortunately the precious metal of William's helmet was sufficient to meet the bill, which must otherwise have crushed the Norman leader. Harold, whose spirit never deserted him,

observed with reference to the wound in his eye, that it was a bad look-out, but he must make the best of it. At length he fell exhausted, when the English having lost their banner, found their energies beginning to flag, and William became the Conqueror.

BOOK II. THE PERIOD FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE DEATH OF KING JOHN.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

BEFORE entering on our account of the reign of William the Conqueror, a bird's-eye view of the early biography of that illustrious person may be acceptable. He was born in 1024, of miscellaneous parents, and was a descendant of the illustrious Rollo, who wrested Normandy from Charles the Simple, whose simplicity consisted no doubt in his submitting to be done out of his possessions. William had been in his early days one of those intolerable nuisances, an infant prodigy, and at eight years old exhibited that ripeness of judgment and energy of action for which the birch is in our opinion the best remedy. He had quelled a disturbance in his own court, when very young; but a beadle in our own day can do as much as this, for a disturbance in a court is often quelled by that very humble officer. His marriage with Matilda, daughter of the Earl of Flanders, gave him the benefit of respectable connection, so useful to a young man starting in life; and after trying with all his might to acquire Maine, his success in obtaining it added to his influence.

Such was the man whom we left in our last chapter on the field of Battle, and on our return to him we find him building Battle Abbey in memory of his victory. He caused a list or roll to be made of all the nobles and gentlemen who came over with him from Normandy, and many of them were men of mark, if we are to judge by their signatures. This earliest specimen in England of a genuine French roll was preserved for some time under the name of the roll of Battle Abbey, but the monks were in the habit of making it a medium for advertisement, by allowing the insertion of fresh names, to gratify that numerous class who are desirous of being thought to

have come in with the Conqueror. The roll of Battle Abbey was no longer confined to the thorough-bred, but degenerated into a paltry puff, made up in the usual way, with paste—and scissors.

William, instead of going at once to London, put up for a few days at Hastings, expecting the people to come and ask for peace; but though he remained at home the greater part of the day, the callers were by no means numerous. He accordingly took his departure for Romney, which he savagely rummaged. He then went on to Dover, which Holinshed describes as the lock and key of all England, but the inhabitants, finding the lock and key in hostile hands, sagaciously made a bolt of it.

William's soldiers had no sooner taken possession of Dover than they were all seized with severe illness, but whether they availed themselves of the celebrated Dover Powders is exceedingly dubious. The Conqueror at length went towards London, where the Witan had proclaimed as king a poor little boy of the name of Edgar Atheling, the son of Edmund Ironsides. William, however, nearly frightened the Witan out of its wits by burning Southwark, and a deputation started from town to Berkhampstead, to make submission to the Conqueror. Young Edgar made a formal renunciation of the throne, which was not his to renounce, and indeed, when he sat upon it the child fell so very far short, that for him to feel the ground under his feet was utterly impossible.

After these concessions, the day was fixed for William's coronation in Westminster Abbey, on the 26th of December, 1066, when the ceremony was performed amid enthusiastic cheering which lasted for several minutes.

The Normans outside not being accustomed to Saxon habits, mistook the applause for disapprobation, and thinking that their duke was being hooted, or perhaps pelted, with "apples, oranges, nuts, and pears," they began to avenge the fancied insult by taking it out in violence towards the populace. Houses were burnt down in every direction, when the noise made without became audible to those within, who rushed forth to join in the row, and William, it is said, was left almost alone in the abbey, to finish his own coronation. He, however, went through the whole ceremony, and even added a few extemporaneous paragraphs to the usual coronation affidavit, by the introduction of an oath or two of his own, after the interruption of the ceremony.

The Conqueror having taken some extensive premises at Barking, went to reside there for a short time, and was visited by several English families, among whom that of the warrior Coxo—since abbreviated into Cox—was one of the most illustrious. William found considerable difficulty in satisfying the rapacity of his followers, who thought nothing of asking for a castle, a church, an abbey, or a trifle of that kind by way of remuneration for their services. He scattered those articles right and left, according to the chroniclers; but it would be difficult to say where he got them from, were it not that the chroniclers are so skilled in castle-building that they have always a stock on hand to devote to the purposes of history.

After six months' residence in England, William, having got his half-year's salary as king, was in funds to enable him to take a trip to Normandy. He took with him a complete sideboard of English—not British—plate, and with the treasures of this country

dazzled the eyes of his continental friends and subjects. A party of Young England gents who accompanied him attracted also, by their long flowing hair, the admiration of foreigners.

Odo, William's half-brother, who had been left at home to rule in the absence of the king, soon—as the reader may anticipate from the obvious pun that must ensue—rendered himself utterly odious. His treatment of the conquered people was cruel in the extreme; he filled the cup of misery not only to the brim, but degradation was kept continually on draft, every new blow being a fresh tap for the victims of tyranny. The very smallest beer will, however, ferment at last if kept continually bottled up; and though the Entire of England had been for a time rendered flat, there was a good deal of genuine British stout at bottom. A general effervescence broke out on the departure of William, who had acted hitherto as a cork; but Odo evinced a disposition to play the screw, by drawing out whatever he could in the absence of his superior.

A general conspiracy seemed to be on the point of breaking out, when William, who had allowed letter after letter to remain unanswered which had been sent to entreat him to come home, started late one night for Dieppe, on his return to England. His first care was to assuage the discontent, and he had already learned the acknowledged trick, that the shortest way of stopping a British mouth, is by liberally feeding it. He accordingly gave a series of Christmas dinners, and he invited several Saxon earls, to meet a succession of bovine barons. If the banquets were intended as a bait, there is no doubt that the English very readily swallowed them. By way of further propitiating the people, he published a law in the Saxon tongue, decreeing "that every son

should inherit from his father," or in other words, should take after him. If, however, he was liberal in his invitations to dinner, he took care that the people should pay the bill, for he had scarcely finished entertaining them, when he began taxing them most oppressively.

William did not acquire the title of Conqueror quite so speedily as has been generally imagined, for he was occupied at least seven years in running about the country from one place to the other, wiping out, by many severe wipes, the remaining traces of insubordination to his government. In the year 1068 he besieged Exeter, where Githa, the aged mother of Harold, was leading a quiet life, surrounded by a bevy of venerable gossips. The Conqueror routed them out, and they repaired to Bath, where their taste for tittle-tattle might have been indulged, but meeting with rudeness from the celebrated Bath chaps, they hastened to Flanders. William now sent for his wife Matilda, whom he had not brought over until he could form some idea how long he was likely to remain in his new quarters. A cheap coronation was got up for her at Winchester, the contract having been taken by Aldred, Archbishop of York, who it is believed found all the materials for the ceremony, without extra charge; and as the queen was rather short, we may presume that everything was cut down to a low figure. A little after this event, Harold's two sons, Godwin and Edmund, with a little brother, facetiously called Magnus, came over from Ireland, and hovered about the coast of Cornwall, where young Magnus, being a minor, perhaps hoped for sympathy. They planted their standard, expecting that the inhabitants would fly to it, but they only flew at it, to tear it in pieces. Poor Magnus, with infantine tenderness, cried like a

baby over the insulted bunting. Tired with their ill success, the three brothers eventually went over as suppliants to Denmark, where the unhappy beggars were received by Sweyn with amiable hospitality.

In the ensuing year, William turned Somerset so completely upside down that it could not have known whether it stood on its head or its heels; and in every shire he took, he built a castle, by way of insuring the lives of himself and his followers in the county. According to Hollinshed, the greatest indignities were passed upon the conquered people. They were compelled even to regulate their beards in a particular fashion, from which the youngest shaver was not exempt. They were obliged to "round their hair," which probably means that they were obliged to keep it curled, and thus even in their *coiffure* they were ruled by a rod of iron. In addition to this, they were forced to "frame themselves in the Norman fashion," which must have made them the pictures of misery.



William refusing his Daughter to Edwin.

Original Size

William had, in one of his amiable moods,

probably over a bottle of wine, promised Edwin, the brother-in-law of Harold, his daughter in marriage. When, however, the earl came to claim his fair prize, the Conqueror not only withdrew his consent, but insulted the suitor, and a scene ensued very similar to the common incident in a farce, when a testy old father or guardian flies into a passion with the walking gentleman, exclaiming "Hoity-toity!" and calling him a young jackanapes. Edwin, irritated at this treatment, collected an army in the north, and waited near the river Ouse; but the courage of his soldiers soon oozed out when the Conqueror made his appearance. William was victorious; but he had much to contend against during the first few years of his reign, and an invasion of the Danes, under Osborne, was a very troublesome business.

The Normans, having shut themselves up in York, set fire to some of the houses outside the city, to check the approach of the foe; but the flames catching the minster, a "night wi' Burns" seemed to be inevitable. Not wishing to remain to be roasted, they risked the minor inconvenience of being basted, and made a very lively sally out of the city. They were nearly all killed, and the Danes took possession of York; but the place being reduced to ashes, was little better than an extensive dust-hole. Osborne and his followers not wishing to winter among the cinders, retired to their ships, and William thus had time to make further arrangements.

The Conqueror was hunting in the Forest of Dean when he heard of the catastrophe, and having his lance in his hand, he swore he would never put it down until he had exterminated the enemy. This must have been a somewhat inconsiderate vow, for though it may have been chivalrous to declare he would never put down his lance until a certain

remote event, the weapon must have been at times a very inconvenient companion, as he did not commence his campaign until the spring; but as his vow came into operation immediately, the lance must have been a dead weight in his hand during the whole of the winter season. At length he mounted his horse, and rode rough-shod over the people of York, after which he took Durham, and ultimately repaired to Hexham, to which he administered a regular Hexham tanning.

Bobbery, under the less obnoxious name of confiscation, now became very general, and William commenced the wholesale subtraction of lands, with a view to their division among his Norman followers. The conquered English had nearly all their property seized, and those who had but little shared the lot of the wealthiest in the spoliation to which all were subjected. William de Percy profited largely in purse; and if in those days manners made the man, he must have been a made man indeed, for he got no less than eighty manors. Several other names will be found in Domesday Book, drawn up about fifteen years after the conquest, from whicn some of our oldest ancestors may learn full particulars of their early ancestors.

The title of Richmond had its origin from a Breton ruffian of the name of Allan, who having got a mount near York as his share of the plunder, gave it the name of Riche-Mont, or Rich-Mount; and the first Earl of Cumberland was a low fellow named Reuouf Meschines, the latter title being no doubt derived from *mesquin*, to express something mean and pitiful in this individual's character. The boast of having come in with the Normans is equivalent to a confession of belonging to a family whose founder was a thief, or at least a receiver of stolen articles.

The resistance to the Conqueror was, in many parts of England, exceedingly obstinate, and Hereward of Lincoln, commonly called "England's Darling," or the Lincoln pet, was one of the most resolute of William's enemies. Such was the impetuosity of the pet, that the Normans imagined he must be a necromancer: and William, in order to turn the superstitions of the people to his own account, engaged a rival conjuror, or sorceress, who was placed with much solemnity on the top of a wooden tower, among the works that were proceeding for the defence of the invader's army. Hereward, however, seizing his opportunity, set fire to the wizard's temple, and the unfortunate conjuror being puzzled, terminated his career amidst a grand pyrotechnic display, which proved for Hereward and his party a blaze of triumph.

The English had established a camp of refuge at Ely, but the hungry monks, whose profession it was to fast, were the first, when provisions ran short, to grumble at the scarcity. Their vows were evidently as empty as themselves, and though they had pledged themselves to abstinence, they began eating their own words with horrible voracity. They betrayed the isle to the Conqueror; but Hereward refusing to submit, plunged, like a true son of the soil, into the swamps and marshes, where the Normans would not venture to follow him. Protected to a certain extent in the bosom of his mother earth, he carried on a vexatious warfare, until William offered terms which took the hero out of the mud, and settled him in the estates of his ancestors.

It has been customary with historians to cut the conquest exceedingly short, as if *Veni, vidi, vici*, had been the motto of William; and that, in fact, the Anglo-Saxons had surrendered at his nod,—overcome

by the waving of his plume—if he ever wore one; or in other words, knocked down with a feather. Such, however, was not the case; for it took seven years' apprenticeship to accustom the hardy natives of our isle to the subjection of a conqueror.

While William was in Normandy, whither he had been called to protect his possessions in Maine—for, as we are told by that mad wag, Matthew Paris, he never lost sight of the Main chance,—Philip of France offered some assistance to Edgar Atheling. This individual accordingly set sail, but the unlucky dog had scarcely got his bark upon the sea, when the winds set up a dismal howl, and he was driven ashore near Northumberland. Edgar and a few friends escaped to Scotland, and at the advice of his brother-in-law, Malcolm sought a reconciliation with the Conqueror, who allowed the Atheling his lodging in the palace of Rouen, with a pound's worth of silver a day for his maintenance.

The king was soon recalled to England by an insurrection, got up by Roger Fitz Osborn, who, together with a large number of persons who were all subject to Fitz, determined on resisting the insolent oppression of the Conqueror. Young Roger, whose father, William Fitz Osborn, had been of great service to the Norman invader, was engaged to Emma de Gael, a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk, when the banns were most unreasonably forbidden by the sovereign. The young couple, however, determined not to be foiled, had made a match of it; and at the wedding feast, which was given at Norwich, some violent speeches were made, in the course of which William was denounced as a tyrant and a humbug, amid repeated shouts of "hear, hear," from the whole of the company.

The grand object of the Norman rebels was to

bring round Earl Waltheof, and having taken care to heat him with wine, they did succeed in bringing him round in a most wonderful manner. He assented to every proposition, and his health was drunk with enthusiasm, followed, no doubt, by the usual complimentary chorus, attributing to him the festive virtues of jollity and good fellowship. The next morning, however, after "a consultation with his pillow," according to the Saxon chroniclers—from which we are to infer that he and his pillow laid their heads together, on the principle of goose to goose—he began to think he had acted very foolishly at the party of the previous night, and, jumping out of bed, packed off a communication to those with whom he had promised to co-operate. After presenting his compliments, he "begged to say, that the evening's amusement not having stood the test of the morning's reflection, he was under the painful necessity of withdrawing any consent he might have given to any enterprise that might have been proposed at the meeting of the day preceding."

The conspiracy, which had commenced in drinking, ended, very appropriately, in smoke; nearly all who took a part in the Norwich wedding were killed, and it has been well said by a modern writer that a share in the Norwich Union was not in those days a very profitable matter. It was about the year 1077 that William began to be wounded by that very sharp incisor—the tooth of filial disobedience. When preparing for the conquest of England he had promised, in the event of success, to resign Normandy to his son Robert, and had even taken an oath—clenched, probably, with the exclamation, "So help me, Bob!"—that if Robert assisted in his father's absence the boy should have the Duchy.

Having conquered England, the Governor

returned, and wanted Normandy back again, observing, with coarse quaintness, that he was "not going to throw off his clothes till he went to bed," or, in other words, insisting that Robert, who had got into his father's shoes, should instantly evacuate the paternal high-lows. Robert was brave, but by no means foppish in his dress, ana had acquired the nickname of Robert Curt-hose or Short-stockings. He probably derived this appellation from a habit of wearing socks, and it is not unlikely that he was familiarly known as Bob Socks among his friends and acquaintances. Young Socks, who had always been irritable, was on one occasion roused to a pitch of passion by having the contents of a pitcher pitched upon his head by his two brothers, from the balcony of his own lodging. He became mad with rage, and, irritated by the water on the brain, he ran upstairs with a drawn sword in his hand, when the king, hearing the row among the three boys, rushed to the spot, and succeeded in quelling it in a manner not very favourable to young Socks, who ran away from home towards Rouen. Through the intercession of his mother, he was persuaded to return home, and it is probable that "B. S."—the initials of Bob Socks—was "entreated to return home to his disconsolate mother, when all would be arranged to his satisfaction." Nevertheless, his pocket-money continued to be as short as his hose, and his companions declared it to be a shame that he never had a shilling to spend in anything. He accordingly went to his father, and demanded Normandy, but the monarch refused him, reprimanded him for his irregular habits, and recommended him to adopt "the society of serious old men,"—the "heavy fathers" of that early period. Robert declared irreverently that the old pumps were exceedingly dry companions, and reiterated his

demand for Normandy. The king wrathfully refused, when young Socks announced his determination to take his valour to the foreign market, and place it at the service of any one who chose to pay him his price for it.

He visited various localities abroad, where he recounted his grievances, and borrowed money, making himself a sort of begging-letter impostor, and going about as if with a board round his neck, inscribed "Turned out of doors," or "Totally destitute." Though he collected a good round sum, he spent the whole of it in minstrels, jugglers, and parasites, so that he divided his time between the enjoyment of popular songs, conjuring tricks, and paid paragraphs, embodying the most outrageous puffs of his own character. After leading a vagabond life for some time, he was set up by Philip of France, in a castle on the confines of Normandy; but as he was only allowed lodging, he had to find his board as he could, by plundering his neighbours. One day he had sallied forth in search of a victim, when he found himself engaged in single combat with a tall gentlemanly man in a mail coat and a vizor, forming a sort of iron veil, which covered his countenance. The combatants had been for some time banging at each other with savage vehemence, when Robert delivered "one, two, three," with such rapid succession on the head of his antagonist, that the latter, unable to resist so many plumpers coming at once to the pole, retired from the contest.

The stalwart knight being regularly knocked up, was glad to knock under, and fell to the earth with a piteous howl, in which Robert recognised the *falsetto* of his own father. Young Socks, who had a good heart, burst into tears, and instead of falling on his antagonist to finish him as he had designed, he fell

upon his own knee to ask forgiveness of his parent. William, who would have been settled in one more crack, took advantage of his son's assistance, but went away muttering maledictions against Young Socks, who subsequently finding the vindictiveness of his father's character, declined any further communication with the "old gentleman," and never saw him again.

In the reign of William the Church was always disposed to be militant, and among the most pugnacious priests was Walcher de Lorraine, the Bishop of Durham, who, it is said, often turned his crozier into a lance, by having, we presume, a long movable hook at the end of it. He divided his time between preaching and plunder, correcting the morals of the people one day, and on the next picking their pockets. He was, in fact, alternately teaching and thrashing them, as if the only way to impress them with religious truth, was to beat it regularly into them.

At length, however, the right reverend robber having become very unpopular in his neighbourhood, agreed to attend a public meeting of the inhabitants at Gateshead, to offer explanations on the subject of the murder of one Liulf, a noble Englishman, and on other miscellaneous business. The attendance was far more numerous than select, and the old bishop becoming exceedingly nervous, ran away into the church with all his retinue. The people declared that if he did not come out they would smoke him out, by setting fire to the building; and they had proceeded to carry their threats into execution, when, half suffocated with the heat, the bishop came to the door with his face muffled up in the skirts of his coat, and addressed a few words to the mob in so low a tone, that our reporters being at

a considerable distance—almost eight centuries off—have not succeeded in catching them. The bishop, however, caught it at once, for he was slain after a short and rather irregular discussion. The words "Slay ye the bishop," were distinctly heard to issue from a voice in the crowd, and the speaker,—whoever he was,—having put the question, the ayes and the bishop had it.



The Bishop of Durham.

Original Size

William selected one bishop to avenge another, and chose the furious Odo, who in spite of cries for mercy, and piteous exclamations of "O! don't, Odo!" killed every one that came across his path, without judicial forms, or, familiarly speaking, without judge or jury. This ambitious butcher looked with a pope's eye at the triple crown of Rome, and set out for Italy, with plenty of gold, to carry his election to the papal chair by corruption and bribery. The virtues of the cardinals might not have proved so strong as the cardinal virtues; but Odo, the bishop of Bayeux, had no chance of trying the experiment, for he was stopped in his expedition to Rome, at the Isle of Wight, by his brother-in-law, the Conqueror. William

ordered his arrest; but no one volunteering to act as bailiff, the king seized the prelate by the robe, and took him into custody. "I am a clerk—a priest," cried Odo, endeavouring to get away. "I don't care what you are," exclaimed William, retaining his hold upon his prisoner. "The pope alone has the right to try me," shrieked the bishop, getting away, and leaving a fragment of his robe in the king's hand. "But I've got you, and don't mean to part with you again in a hurry," muttered William, after darting forward and effecting the recapture of Odo, who was immediately committed to a dungeon in Normandy.

The king soon after this incident lost his wife Matilda, and he became, after her decease, more cruel, avaricious, and jealous of his old companions-in-arms, than ever. One of the worst acts of his reign was the making of the New Forest in Hampshire, which he effected by driving away the inhabitants without the smallest compensation, from a space of nearly ninety miles in circumference. He appointed a bow-bearer, whose office still exists as a sinecure, with a salary of forty shillings a year, for which the gentleman who holds the appointment swears "to be of good behaviour towards the sovereign's wild beasts," and of course, in compliance with his oath, would Feel bound to touch his hat to the British Lion.

After founding the New Forest, the king enacted the most oppressive laws; placing on the killing of a hare such penalties as are enough to cause "each particular hair to stand on end," by their extreme barbarity.



William departing for France.

Original Size

Towards the end of the year 1086 William, who had grown exceedingly fat, started for France, to negotiate with Philip about some possessions, when the latter indulged in some small puns at the expense of the corpulency of the Conqueror. By comparing him to a fillet of veal on castors, and suggesting his being exhibited at a prize monarch show, Philip so irritated William that the latter swore, with fearful oaths, to make his weight felt in France; and he kept his word, for falling upon Mantes, he succeeded in completely crushing it. Having, however, gone out on horseback to see the ruins, the gigantic animal he was riding stepped on some hot ashes, which set the brute dancing so vigorously that the pummel of the saddle gave the Conqueror a fearful pummelling. He was so much shaken by this incident that he resolved never to ride the high horse, or indeed any other horse again; and he was soon after removed, at his own request, to the monastery of St. Gervas, just outside the walls of Rouen. Becoming rapidly worse, his heart softened to his enemies, most of whom he pardoned, and he then proceeded to make his will, by which he left Normandy to his son Robert, and bequeathed the crown of England to be fought for by

William and Henry, with a significant wish, however, that the former might get it. Henry exclaimed emphatically, "What are you going to give me?" and on receiving for his answer, "Five thousand pounds weight of silver out of my treasury," ungraciously demanded what he should do with such a paltry pittance. "Be patient," replied the king; "suffer thy elder brothers to precede thee—thy time will comc after theirs;" but Henry, muttering "It's all very well to say 'be patient,'" hurried out of the room, drew the cash, weighed it carefully, and brought a strong box to put it in. *

** For further particulars of Henry's conduct, vide Orderic, every prospect of the Conqueror being lei city of Rouen to be buried by the parish, when a t clergy began to think of the funeral. The Archbish that it should take place at St. Stephen's, in Cae none of the family being present, the undertaker a came down upon a poor good-natured old knight, who himself rather prominently forward as a sort of pr committee-man. How the affair was settled we are u state, but we have it on the authority of Oderic, the Bishop of Evreux had pronounced the panegyric, the crowd jumped up, declaring the Conqueror was a thief, and that he—the man in the crowd—claimed th on which they were then standing. Many of the pers cheered him in his address, and the bishops, for t decency, paid out the execution from the Conqueror for sixty shillings.*

To think of an iron chest at such a moment proved the possession of a heart of steel; and William, the elder son, was nearly as bad, for he hastened to England to look after the crown before his father had expired.

It was on the 9th of September, 1087, that the

Conqueror died, and his last faint sigh was the signal for a rush to the door, in which priests, doctors, and knights joined with furious eagerness. In vain did a diminutive bishop ask a stalwart warrior "where he was shoving to?" and the expostulations of a prim doctor to the crowd, entreating them to keep back, as there was "plenty of time," were utterly disregarded. The scene resembled that which may be witnessed occasionally at the pit door of the Opera, for the whole of William's attendants were eager to get home for the purpose of being early in securing either some place or plunder. The inferior servants of the royal robber—like master, like man—commenced rifling the king's trunks and drawers of all the cash, jewels, and linen. There seemed scarcely more than it deserves, for there is no doubt that he was cruel, selfish, and unprincipled. It is, however, a curious fact, that what receives blacking from one age gets polished by the next: and this may account for the brilliance that has been shed in this country over the name of one who introduced the feudal system, the Game Laws, and other evils, the escape from which has been the work of many centuries. Though a natural son, he was an unnatural father, and the result was, that being an indifferent parent, his children became also indifferent. He had a violent temper, and was such a brutal glutton that he aimed a blow at Fitz-Osborne, his steward, for sending to table an under-done crane, when Odo interfered to check his master's violence. Of his personal appearance we have an authentic record in a statue placed against one of the pillars of the church of St. Stephen, at Caen; but as the figure is without a head, we have tried in vain to form from it some idea of the Conqueror's countenance. From the absence of the face in the statue we can only infer

that William wore an expression of vacancy.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.
WILLIAM RUFUS.



Original Size

ILLIAM, the son of the Conqueror, had obtained the nick-name of Rufus, from his red hair, and these jokes on personal peculiarities afford a lamentable proof of the rudeness of our ancestors. Having left his father at the point of death, he hastened to England, where he pretended to be acting for the king; resorting to what, in puffing phraseology, is termed the untradesmanlike artifice of "It's the same concern," and doing business for himself in the name of the late sovereign. One of his first steps was, of course, towards the treasury, from which he drew

sixty thousand pounds in gold and silver. Having received from his father a letter of introduction to Archbishop Lanfranc, he rushed, with the avidity of a man who has got a reference to a new tailor, and presenting it to the primate, requested that measures might be taken for putting the crown on his head as soon as possible. Lanfranc, having secured the place of Prime Minister for himself, issued cards to a few prelates and barons, inviting them to a coronation on Sunday, the 26th of September, 1087, when the event came off rather quietly.

When Curt-hose—whom the reader will recognise as our old friend Socks—first heard of his father's death, he was living on that limited but rather elastic income, his wits, at Abbeville, or in some part of Germany. He, however, repaired to Rouen, where he was very well received; while Henry, the youngest brother, stood like a donkey between two bundles of hay, not knowing whether he should have a bite at Britain or a nibble at Normandy.

Rufus had, at the commencement of his reign, to contend with a conspiracy got up by his uncle Odo, to place Robert on the throne of England as well as on that of Normandy; for the great experiment of sitting on two stools at once had not then been sufficiently carried out to prove the folly of attempting it.

Odo took rapid strides, but as Robert, if he took any stride at all, must have attempted one from Rouen to Rochester, he remained in his Duchy, leaving his followers to follow their own inclination at their own convenience. They had fortified Rochester Castle, but being besieged, and a famine threatening, they were glad to find a loop-hole for escape, which they effected by capitulating on certain conditions, one of which, proposed by Odo,

was a stipulation that the band should not play as the vanquished party left the Castle. Rufus, feeling that a procession without music would go off flatly, refused his assent to this proposal, and the band accordingly struck up an appropriate air at each incident.



Odo dismissed from Rochester Castle.

Original Size

As Odo left the Castle the "Rogue's March" resounded from tower to tower and battlement to battlement, while the people sang snatches of popular airs, among which "Go, Naughty Man," and "Down among the Dead Men," were perhaps the greatest favourites. Odo was eventually banished, and the insurrection was at an end, for Curt-hose had neither the money nor the inclination to carry on the war; and, like a defunct railway scheme, the plan took its place amongst the list of abandoned projects.

In the year 1088 Lanfranc, the king's adviser, died, and was succeeded by a Norman clergyman, named

Ralph, who was called also Le Flambard, or the Torch, from his being a political incendiary, who had been ever ready to light up the flame of discontent at a moment's notice. His nominal offices were treasurer and chaplain, but his real duty was to raise money for the king, extort for his majesty a large income, and help him to live up to it. As a taxgatherer and a *bon vivant* he was unexceptionable; but we regret that we cannot say so much for him as a bishop and a gentleman.

This person, however, succeeded only to the political, not to the ecclesiastical dignities of Odo; for the king, finding the revenues of Canterbury very acceptable, determined on acting as his own archbishop. He professed a desire to improve the see by using his own eyes, but his real view was to get all he could for the indulgence of his pleasures. Ralph le Flambard seems to have possessed the talent of extortion to a wonderful degree, and he even set at nought the proverb as to the impossibility of making "a silk purse out of a sow's ear;" for he certainty extracted immense sums by getting hold of the ear of the swinish multitude.



Robert Curt-hose trying to get a Bill discounted.

Original Size

William Rufus, having been successful against the friends of Robert in England, determined (a.d. 1089) on attacking the unfortunate and improvident Curt-hose on his own ground in Normandy. Socks had no money to carry on the war, for he had not only cleared out his coffers to the last farthing, but was up to his neck in promises which he never could hope to realise. His bills were flying like waste-paper about every Exchange in Europe, and the boldest discounters shook their heads when a document with the familiar words "Accepted, R. Curt-hose," was shown to them. He applied, therefore, for aid to the king of the French, his feudal superior, who sent an army to the confines of Normandy, but sent a messenger at the same time to the English king, stating the terms on which the army might be bought off and induced to march back again.

Rufus willingly paid the money, and Socks, in a fit of desperation, applied to his brother Henry, who had already lent him three thousand pounds, taking care, however, to get a third of the duchy by way of security for his money. He accordingly came to Rouen, where he put down a large sum of money: and what was better still, he put down a conspiracy to deliver up the city to the enemy. One Conan, a burgess, who was to have handed over the keys, was condemned to imprisonment for life; but Henry taking him up to the top of a tower under the pretence of showing him the scenery, brutally threw him over. The unhappy captive was beginning to expatiate on the softness of the landscape below, when Henry, seizing him by the waist, savagely recommended him to test the reality of so much apparent softness, by throwing himself on the kind

indulgence which the verdant landscape appeared to offer him. The burgess had no time to reply, before he found himself half-way on his down journey.

It is difficult in these days to fancy the brother of the sovereign visiting a condemned culprit in his prison, and taking a walk with him up to the top of the building, to point out to him the beauties of the surrounding prospect. That the royal visitor should suddenly turn executioner in the most barbarous manner, is still more unaccountable. Henry must surely have received a large quantity of the burgess's sauce before he could have been provoked to an act which redounds so much to his discredit in the pages of history.

In the year 1091, William and Robert settled their differences, after which they began to take advantage of their little brother Henry, whom they robbed of everything he possessed, until his suite was reduced to one knight, three esquires, and one chaplain. His flight was a series of rapid movements, to which this miserable quintette formed a kind of running accompaniment; but Henry, in spite of every *contretemps*, behaved himself with dignity as the leader and conductor of his little band.

Rufus, on his return to England, found it overrun by Malcolm, the Scotch king, who, however, made a regular Scotch mull of his enterprise. After a peace as hollow as the "hollow beech tree" which the woodpecker keeps continually on tap, poor Malcolm was invited to Gloucester, where he fell into an ambush—a bush in which he was tom to pieces by the sharp thorns of treachery.

Duke Robert having made repeated applications to his brother, William Rufus, for the settlement of his claims upon England, at length put the matter into

the hands of his solicitor, Philip of France; who, after soliciting justice for Curt-hose, marched an army into Normandy. Rufus, knowing costs to be the only motive of Philip, who, on being handsomely paid, would certainly throw his client overboard, determined on raising a large sum; which he accomplished by levying twenty thousand men as soldiers, and allowing them to buy their discharge at ten shillings a head, an arrangement which nearly all of them gladly fell into. The proceeds of this transaction being handed over to Philip, that monarch shifted his forces from Normandy, leaving Robert to shift for himself; so that poor Socks was again driven to the most wretched extremities.

Rufus was now troubled by the Welsh, who had overrun Cheshire, probably on account of its cheeses, for the Welsh were attached to their rabbits even so early as the eleventh century. The Red King pursued them over hill and dale, but they daily obtained advantages over him, and on reaching Snowdon he saw that it would be the height of folly to proceed further. After a few ups and downs over the mountains, he retreated with shame, and found occupation at home, a.d. 1094—5, in quelling a conspiracy headed by Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, aided by Richard de Tunbridge, with a variety of Johns, Williams, and Thomases de What-d'ye-call-'em and So-and-So. Some of the conspirators were imprisoned, and some hanged; but a few, in anticipation of the fatal bolt, ran away for the purpose of avoiding it.

Immediately after these events, Robert, roused by the preaching of Peter the Hermit, familiarly known as *Pietro L'Eremita*, determined on giving up business as Duke of Normandy and starting as a crusader for Palestine. In order to raise money for his travelling

expenses, and after having vainly entreated discount for his bills, he proposed to sell his dukedom to his brother for ten thousand pounds, including the good-will of the house of Normandy, the crown, which was not a fixture, the throne with its appropriate hangings, the sceptre the sign of royalty, and all the palace furniture. The unscrupulous Rufus agreed to purchase, but being without a penny of his own, he made a demand on the empty pockets of his subjects.

Several bishops and abbots having already sold all the treasures of their churches, told the king in plain terms they had nothing more to give him, when the sovereign replied, "Have you not, I beseech you, coffins of gold and silver full of dead men's bones?" thus insinuating, according to Holinshed, "that he would have the money out of their bones if they did not pay him otherwise." The bishops and abbots were induced to take the hint of the king; and the term "boning" may have had its origin from this species of robbery.

Having paid the ten thousand pounds, Rufus went to take possession of his new purchase, and met with no resistance except from one Helie, Lord of La Flèche, who professed to have a previous mortgage on part of the property. Rufus treated him as a mortgagee so far as to pay him off in the current coin of the age, though a year or two after (a.d. 1100) as the Bed King was hunting in the New Forest, he heard that Helie had surprised the town of Mans, and of course astonished the men of Mans very unpleasantly.

William turned his horse's head towards the nearest seaport, which happened to be Dartmouth, plunged into the first vessel he found there, and ordered the sailors to start at once for Normandy. The crew suggested that it was a very odd start to

think of setting off in a gale of wind; but his majesty began to storm with as much violence as the elements. He asked—if they ever knew of a king being drowned?—and if the adage applies to those who deserve hanging as well as to those who are born for that ceremony, Rufus might have relied on exemption from a watery terminus. He arrived safely at Harfleur, after one of the most boisterous passages in his life, which was one of considerable turbulence. The bare news of his arrival sufficed to frighten Helie, who first ordered his troops to fall in, and immediately ordered them to fall out, for he had no further use for them. Helie took to his heels, and William became sole master of Normandy.

We now come to one of the most remarkable incidents in English history, and in our desire for accuracy we have grubbed about the records of the past with untiring energy. We have blown away the dust of ages with the bellows of research, and have, we think, succeeded in investing this portion of our annals with a plainness of which the very pike-staff itself might be fairly envious.

It was on the 1st of August, in the year 1100, that William was passing the night at Malwood Keep, a hunting-lodge in the New Forest. Had there been a Court Circular in existence in those days, it would have recorded the names of Henry, the king's brother, and a host of sporting fashionables who were present, to share the pleasures of their sovereign. His majesty was heard at midnight to be talking loudly in his sleep, and his light having gone out, he was crying lustily for candles. His attendants rushed to his room, and found him kicking and plunging under a nightmare, from which he was soon released, when he requested them to sit and talk to him. When their jokes were on the point of

sending him to sleep, their songs kept him awake: and in the morning an artisan sent him six arrows as a specimen, with an intimation that there would be a large reduction on his taking a whole quiver. The king took the half-dozen on trial, keeping four for himself, and giving two to Sir Walter Tyrrel, with a complimentary remark that "good weapons are due to the sportsman that knows how to make a good use of them."



Reading the Dream.

Original Size

During a boisterous *déjeûner d la fourchette*, at which the Red King greatly increased his rubicundity by the quantity of wine he consumed, a postman arrived with a dream, from the Abbot of St. Peter's, at Gloucester, done up in an envelope. "Read it out," exclaimed Rufus, after having glanced at its contents; and on its being found to forbode a violent death to the king, he ordered a hundred pence to be given to the dreamer, which, supposing him to have been taking "forty winks," would have been at the liberal rate of twopence-halfpenny a wink for his rather disagreeable doze over the destiny of his sovereign. Rufus laughed at the prediction, and repaired to the

chase, accompanied by Sir Walter Tyrrel, when a hart, in all its heart's simplicity, came and stood between the illustrious sportsmen. The extraordinary hilarity of the bounding hart attracted the attention of Rufus, who drew his bow, but the string broke, and Rufus not having two strings to his bow, called out to Tyrrel to shoot at the bald-faced brute for his bare-faced impudence. Sir Walter instantly obeyed; but the animal, bobbing down his head, allowed the arrow to go through his own branches towards those of a huge tree, when the dart, taking a somewhat circuitous route, avoided the body of the hart and went home to the heart of the sovereign. Tyrrel ran towards his master, and attempted to revive him; but though there was plenty of harts-horn in the forest, none could be made available. The unfortunate regicide, merely muttering to himself some incoherent expressions as to his having "done it now," galloped to the sea coast, and tied to France—taking French leave of his country, according to the usual custom of malefactors.



Flight of Sir Walter Tyrrel. Horse of the Period.

Original Size

The royal remains were picked up soon after by one Mr. Purkess, a respectable charcoal-burner, whose descendants still reside upon the spot, and who carted Henry off on his own responsibility to Winchester, where the king was honoured by a decent funeral. Though there were plenty of lookers-on, there were very few mourners; and in a portrait of the tomb * which has been preserved, we recognise economy as the most prominent feature. Henry, the king's brother, made the usual rush to the treasury, where he filled his pockets with all the available assets; and the members of the hunting party, finding that the game was up, started off as fast as they could in pursuit of their own interests.

** The tomb still stands in the middle of the choir Winchester Cathedral.*

The character of Rufus is not one which the loyal historian will love to dwell upon. The philologist may endeavour to prove the brutal licentiousness of the king by deriving from Rufus the word ruffian; but the philologist will, however, be as much in error as the antiquarian who declared that Rufus, or Roofus, was so called from his being the builder of Westminster Hall, of which the roof was the most conspicuous ornament. The Red King died a bachelor, at the age of forty-three, after a very extravagant life, in the course of which he exhibited strong symptoms of the royal complaint—which shows itself in a mania for constructing and altering palaces. He would erect new staircases, and indulge in the most extravagant flights; but if this had been accompanied by a few steps taken in the right direction, Posterity would not have judged very harshly what are, after all, the mere whims of

royalty.

CHAPTER THE THIRD. HENRY THE FIRST, SURNAMED BEAUCLERC.



Original Size

N returning to Henry, we find him at the porter's lodge, imperiously demanding the keys of the treasury. While he had just succeeded, by alternate bribery and bluster, in obtaining the desired bunch from the hesitating janitor, William de Breteuil, the treasurer, came running out of breath, and protested, as energetically as the state of his wind would allow, against the money being carried away, when Robert, the elder brother, had a prior right to it. Henry, having tried a little argument, of which he got decidedly the worst, suddenly drew his sword, and

threatened to perforate the treasurer, or any one else who should oppose his progress. A mob of barons having collected round the disputants, took part with the new king, in expectation, no doubt, of getting a share of the plunder. William de Breteuil was compelled therefore to look on at the pocketing of the cash and jewels by Henry and his supporters, the treasurer occasionally entering a protest by mildly observing "Mind, *I've* nothing to do with it." Having made use of the cash in buying the adherence of some of those mercenary weathercocks—from whom it is considered an honour, in these days, to be descended—Henry got himself crowned on the 5th of August, in the year 1100, at Westminster.

Finding his throne rather rickety, he tried a little of the "soft sawder" which has always been found serviceable as a cement between the sovereign and the people. He mixed up a tolerably useful compound in the shape of a charter of liberties, and by laying it on rather thick to the Church, he obtained the support of that influential body. He restored ancient rights, and promised that when he had to draw money from his people he would always draw it as mild as possible.

Henry's next "dodge" was to try the effect of an English marriage, and he therefore sent in a sealed tender for the hand of Miss Matilda Malcolm, or Maud, the daughter of the king of Scots, as she is commonly called in history. She had already refused as many offers as would have filled a moderate-sized bonnet-boxy and sent word back that she was "o'er young to marry yet," in answer to the application of the English sovereign. She was, however, advised that it would be a capital thing for the two countries, if she would consent to the match; and as it is one of the penalties of royalty to wed for patriotism instead

of from choice, she was soon persuaded to agree to the union.

Such instances of devotion are, however, only found among royal families; for we doubt whether a fair Jemima Jenkins, or a bewitching Beatina Brown, would consent to become the wife of young Johnson in an adjacent street, for the sake of healing a parochial feud, or curing the heartburn of an entire neighbourhood.

The marriage between Maud and Henry was very nearly being prevented by a report that the young lady had formerly been a nun; but it was proved that her aunt had been in the habit of throwing over her head something in the shape of a veil or a pinafore, to prevent the Normans from staring at her when she went out walking. Miss Matilda had the candour to acknowledge that she always took off the unbecoming covering directly she got a little way from home, and it is evident she was not unwilling to have a sly peep at the Normans, when her aunt was not watching her. Her marriage was celebrated on the 11th of November; but Anselm, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who officiated, came out of the Abbey before the ceremony, and in order to answer all false reports, stuck an enormous poster on the door, intimating that Maud was "No Nun," in tremendous capitals.

Henry also obtained some popularity by expelling all the improper characters that his brother had patronised; but it does not seem that they were replaced by persons of a much more reputable order. Henry, however, affecting the estimable qualities of a new broom, began by sweeping clean, and scavenged the court of all his brother's minions. Ralph le Flambard, the late king's tax-gatherer, was sent to the Tower, where he became one of the lions of the

place, and by his wit captivated the keepers who were charged with his captivity. Henry on being urged to get rid of him, happened to say accidentally, "No, no, give the fellow sufficient rope and he will hang himself," upon which one of the courtiers taking his majesty at his word, sent an enormous quantity of stout cord to the prisoner. Flambard having reduced the guards to the state in which tipplers wish to be who love their bottles, took the rope, and hanging himself by the waist, lowered himself into the moat beneath, from which he escaped to Normandy.

Robert Curt-hose, who had turned crusader a year or two before, came back (a.d. 1101) with a perfect shrubbery of laurels from Palestine. The Normans, delighted at seeing their chief smothered in the evergreens of glory, were easily persuaded to join him in an attack upon England. The followers of Curt-hose, however, soon began to waver, and after having received several terrific stripes, their leader agreed to take 3000 marks, by way of annuity, as a compromise for all his claims upon England. Robert was true to his part of the engagement, but Henry, under various pretexts, soon discontinued his payments to Socks, who nevertheless lived in a style of great extravagance. He filled his court with bad characters, who not only emptied his pockets, but sold or pawned his clothes; and he is represented as often lying in bed for want of the necessary articles of attire to enable him to get up to breakfast. With the crown on his toilet table, and the regal robe hanging across the back of a chair—for these insignia of royalty were always left to him—he was still without the minor but indispensable articles of dress; and he often observed to his minister, "I can't very well go about with nothing on but that scanty robe

and that hollow bauble." We can imagine him being reduced to the necessity of offering to pledge his crown, and being met by the depreciatory observation, "that the article was second-hand, had been a good deal worn, and seemed very much tarnished."



The Effects of Extravagance.

Original Size

At length, in the year 1105, Henry, taking advantage of Robert's reduced circumstances, made an attack upon Normandy. The troops of Curt-hose were ill-paid, ill-clad, ill-conditioned, and ill-tempered. In vain did Curt-hose attempt to rally them; for they only rallied him on his poverty, and many of them deserted, leaving him to fight his own battles. His personal valour served him for a short time; he struck out right and left with enormous vigour, but his almost solitary efforts became at length absolutely absurd, and he was ultimately "removed in custody." He was subsequently committed to Cardiff Castle, where he died, in the year 1134, at the advanced age of nearly eighty; and it was said by a wag of the day, that Curt-hose had

such a facility of running into debt that he ran up four scores with Time before the debt of Nature was satisfied.

Henry was now master of Normandy, whither he on one occasion took his son and heir, William, a lad of eighteen, to receive the homage of the barons. This was an idle ceremony, for the barons seldom kept their words; and homage, or hummage, was frequently a mere hum on the part of those who promised it. The English king was about returning from the port of Barfleur, when Thomas Fitz-Stephen, a sailor, originated the disgraceful touting system, by thrusting his card into Henry's hands, and offering to take the royal party over cheap, in a well-appointed vessel. His majesty replied, "I have already taken my own passage in another ship, but the prince and his suite have to be conveyed, and I shall be happy to hear what you will undertake it for, per head, provisions, of course, included." The terms were soon arranged, and the dangerous practice of overcrowding having, even at that time, prevailed among mercenary speculators, three hundred people were packed into a craft which might have comfortably accommodated about twenty. The prince and his gay companions insisted on having a party on board the night previous to starting, and the crew, as well as the captain, were more than half-seas-over before they started from the shore of Normandy. Fitz-Stephen was in such a state at the wheel, that it seemed to him continually turning round, and the men employed in looking-out thought the *Bas de Catte*—a well-known rock—had been doubled, when in fact the vessel was driving rapidly on to it. This recklessness soon led to a wreck, and the sole survivor was one Berold, a butcher of Rouen, who has reported the catastrophe with so much

accurate minuteness as to have deserved, though he never got it until now, the proud title of the father of the penny-a-liners. When Henry heard the news he fainted away, and never "smiled as he was wont to smile" from that day to the present. Being deprived of his only legitimate son, he became anxious to secure the throne to his daughter, the widow Maud, or Matilda, relict of the Emperor Henry the Fifth; and on Christmas-day, 1126, the bishops, abbots and barons were assembled at Windsor Castle to swear to maintain her succession. These parties—the respectable families that "came in with the Conqueror"—were all guilty of the grossest perjury; which, a few years ago, would have rendered them all liable to the pillory, and would in the present day expose them to serious punishment. A quarrel arose between Stephen, Earl of Boulogne, the king's legitimate nephew, and Robert, Earl of Gloucester, his illegitimate son, as to which was entitled to swear first; the real object being to decide which, upon breaking their oaths as they both fully intended to do —would take precedence as the successor of Henry. After a good deal of desultory discussion, a division settled the point in the nephew's favour. Anxious to see his daughter settled in life, Henry got her married, rather against her will, to Geoffrey, Earl of Anjou; who, from an odd custom he had of wearing a piece of broom in his cap, instead of a feather, acquired the nickname of Plantagenet. The marriage was celebrated at Rouen, and Henry issued a proclamation ordering everybody to be merry. Long faces were thus entirely prohibited, there was a penalty on black looks, and persons unable to laugh on the right side of their mouths were made to laugh upon the other.

Some anxiety was, however, occasioned to Henry

by the existence of his nephew, William Fitz-Robert, the son of Curt-hose, who had pretensions to the throne through Matilda, his grandmother, which of course gave him a claim on the friendship of the house of Baldwin, between whom and the grandmother there was a close relationship. The apprehensions of Henry were aroused by William Fitz-Henry being made Earl of Flanders, but the young man was unfortunately killed by receiving a poke from a pike; and though the wound was only in the finger, it grew worse from being placed in the hands of ignorant practitioners. Finding it did not get better, he observed that it was "really very mortifying," and so it was, for mortification ensued almost immediately. He died at St. Omer, on the 27th of July, 1128, in the twenty-sixth year of his age; and if his epitaph had been written, it would have run thus:

"Here lies a young prince, whose life was cut shor
By medical quacks overturning the sand of it;
His finger was wounded, but who could have thought
The doctors would make such a very bad hand of it?

Henry's latter days were employed in listening to the quarrels of his his daughter, Matilda, and her husband, who were never out of pickles, by reason of their family jars, which were very numerous. The king had resided four years abroad, and had been hunting, on the 25th of November, for the purpose of chasing sorrow as well as the game, when, on his return home, he insisted on eating a lamprey, against the orders of his physicians. The king did not agree with the doctors, and the lamprey did not agree with the king, who died on the 1st of December, 1135, at the age of sixty-seven.

Henry's chief merit was his love of learning, which had got him the name of Beau-clerc, or the pretty scholar. He loved the society of men of letters, and of wild beasts; but the literary lions were, perhaps, his greatest favourites. He nevertheless desired that these lions should only roar in his praise; for he punished Luke de Barré, a poet, very severely for having written some satirical verses, in which the king was made a laughing-stock. The poet, according to Orderic, burst from the executioners and dashed out his brains, which had been the cause of giving offence to his sovereign.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.
STEPHEN.

IF the oaths of the bishops and barons had been worth even the ink expended in alluding to them, there might have been some chance of Matilda coming quietly to the throne on the death of Henry. The Anglo-Normans, however, had as little respect for truth as for property, and were even destitute of the humbler virtue of gallantry towards the fair, for they began to clamour loudly against the notion of a

woman reigning over them.

Stephen, the late king's nephew, and Robert, Earl of Gloucester, the illegitimate son of Henry, were the two favourites in the race for the throne; but the betting was at least ten to one upon the former, in consequence of his having married Maud, the daughter and heir of Eustace, Count of Boulogne.

On the arrival of Stephen in England, he made at once for the treasury, which he cleared completely out, and he devoted the proceeds to purchasing the fidelity, or rather the mercenary adherence, of the barons, prelates, and people. Having bribed a sufficiently numerous party, he procured a decent attendance at his coronation, which took place on St. Stephen's day, December 22, 1135, at Westminster. He sent a good round sum to the pope, Innocent the Second, whose innocence seems to have been chiefly nominal, for he was guilty of accepting a bribe to give a testimonial in favour of Stephen's title. As long as the money lasted the barons were tolerably faithful; but "no plunder no allegiance" was the ordinary motto of the founders of those families whose present representatives trace themselves up, or rather bring themselves down, to the days of the Conquest.

The Norman nobles complained that their perjury had not had its price, and began seizing various castles belonging to Stephen, who, by purchasing the services of other mercenaries, got his property back again. At length, however, a coalition was effected between Robert, Earl of Gloucester, and Matilda, his half-sister, who landed in England on the 1st of September, 1139, with a retinue of one hundred and forty knights, an empty purse, and very little credit. Several Normans ran to meet Matilda on her arrival; but these high-minded founders of our very first

families, hearing that there was no cash, returned to the side of Stephen.

Matilda went on a visit to the Queen Dowager, Adelais, or Alice, at Arundel Castle, which was besieged by the king, who, however, respected the property on account of its owner, and sent Matilda in safety to join her half-brother Robert, at Bristol, whither he had gone with twelve followers in search of Bristol board—and lodging. Stephen, having exhausted the materials for making the golden links which had hitherto bound the Normans to his side, found them rapidly adhering to Matilda, whose expectations were not bad, though her present means were limited.

On the 2nd of February, 1141, the king was besieging Lincoln when the whole of his cavalry wheeled round to the side of the enemy. Relying on his infantry, he put himself at their head, but treachery was on foot as well as on horseback. He nevertheless fought desperately, breaking his sword and battle-axe over the backs of his foes, till he was left fighting with the hilt of one weapon and the handle of the other. Having lost the use of his arms, he was surrounded by the enemy, but he continued alive and kicking till the last, when he was taken prisoner. He was cruelly thrown into a dungeon at Bristol, and in order that his muscular activity might be checked, he was loaded with irons. He still retained his cheerfulness, and may probably have been the original composer of the celebrated "hornpipe in fetters," which is occasionally danced by dramatic prisoners.



King Stephen in Prison.

Original Size

Matilda now scraped together all the money she could, to purchase that very marketable commodity, the allegiance of the Norman nobles and prelates. Among the latter was Stephen's own brother, the Bishop of Winchester, who renounced his unfortunate relative, swore fidelity to Matilda, cursed all her enemies, and, as the price of all this swearing and cursing, received a large amount of church patronage. Not only did he crown his new mistress at Winchester, but he crowned his own baseness by a slashing speech against his own brother, winding up with a fulsome puff for the new queen, whom he hailed as "the sovereign lady of England and Normandy." Matilda was by no means successful in handling the sceptre, which required a stronger arm and more dexterity than she was mistress of. The Londoners, in particular, showed symptoms of revolt, and the Bishop of Winchester having got all he could from the queen, turned round once more in favour of his brother. This episcopal roundabout was the first to set the example, so frequently followed in the present day, of blocking up the city; and it is an odd fact that paving was his

pretext, for he stopped up the London thoroughfares in order to pave the way for the return of his brother to power.



A Clerical Weathercock.

Original Size

Matilda, who was in town—probably for the season—contrived to make her escape by the western suburb, with a small retinue. Some of her knights quitted her at the bridge which still retains their name; an earl or two followed her as far as Earl's Court; some turned off at Turaham Green; but by the time she had reached the little Wick of Chis, her party had dwindled down into absolute insignificance. Her brother Robert was taken prisoner, and Stephen being also in captivity, the two parties were brought to a deadlock for want of leaders. By negotiating a sort of Bill of Exchange, Robert was released, and Stephen was paid over, in the shape of "value received," to his own party.

The Bishop of Winchester, who appears to have been an exceedingly plausible mob orator, now made another speech, in which he showed a wonderful amount of face by regularly turning his back upon himself, and unsaying all that he had said in favour of Maud, and against his brother on a former

occasion. He swore and cursed as before, merely altering the name of the objects of his oaths and execrations, for he now swore allegiance to his brother instead of to Maud, and cursed the former's, instead of the latter's enemies.

Stephen was accordingly raised, by the crane of circumstances, from the depth of his dungeon, and lifted on to his throne; but he found a new rival in the person of Matilda's son, Prince Henry, so that he had now a woman and a boy, instead of a mere woman to fight against. Henry, in a spirit of calculation far beyond his years, married Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis the Seventh; but it was only for the sake of her money, which he expended in getting together an army for an attack upon England. The opposing forces met, but having already received their pay, they evinced a disposition to shirk their duty, and—like gentlemen of the bar, who having got their fees, propose that the matter should be referred to arbitration—the soldiers of Stephen and Henry recommended a quiet compromise.

Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Stephen, Bishop of Winchester, were appointed referees, and it was agreed that Stephen should wear the crown with remainder over to Henry. A good deal of homage was interchanged, for Henry swore fealty to Stephen, and the son of the latter swore ditto to Henry. The king in fact cut off his own tail for the benefit of his former enemy, and Henry took a kind of *post obit* as a consideration for his not pressing his claims to abbots, also exchanged affidavits, and swore in direct opposition to what they had sworn before, making altogether a mass of perjury that would have kept the Central Criminal Court occupied for half-a-dozen entire sessions. Stephen, however, died at Dover, on

the 25th of October, 1154, so that he did not live long under the new arrangement.

The historian often finds himself awkwardly situated when called upon to give a character to a king, and there being a natural objection to written characters, the difficulty is greater on that account. It maybe said for Stephen, that he was sober and industrious, tolerably honest, not addicted to gluttony, or given to drink like many of his predecessors, and of course, therefore not so much accustomed to wait at table. He had a pleasing manner, and a good address, except while confined in prison, when his address was none of the pleasantest. On the whole, when we look at him as the paid servant of the public, we think him ill adapted for a steward, since England was always in confusion while under his care; and as a coachman he was even worse, for he was quite unfitted to hold the reins of power.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. HENRY THE SECOND, SURNAMED PLANTAGENET.



Original Size

HENRY, who was amusing himself with besieging a castle in Normandy when he heard of Stephen's death, soon repaired to England with his middle-aged wife, Eleanor. They were crowned on the 19th of December, 1154; but he had no sooner got the crown on his head, than he went to business, and commenced a series of sweeping reforms. Finding the coinage reduced to a state of almost unutterable baseness, he issued a good supply of new money, and thus gave a fearful smash to the smashers. He drove out a quantity of foreign scamps, who had been made earls and barons in the reign of Stephen. After having enjoyed the fee-simple of castles and estates, they were sent back to take possession of the plough in tail, and to till as serfs the earth's surface. Finding the royal income very much reduced, Henry restored it by taking back what his predecessors had given away; an operation he performed with so much impartiality, that he deprived his friends and his foes indiscriminately of all their possessions.



Henry the Second dismissing the Foreign Barons.

Original Size

The policy of Henry the Second, on coming to the throne, seems to have differed from that of most of his predecessors; for while they had usually bought the allegiance of all the knaves and rogues about the court, he preferred the less costly process of rendering them perfectly powerless. He demolished many of the castles which had been erected by the barons, as fences rather than defences, for they were little better than receptacles for stolen property. Nor was he less vigorous in his measures against the clergy, for, like a skilful chess-player, he felt that it is better for the king that the bishops and the castles should be got out of the way when they are likely to prove troublesome. So far, therefore, from encouraging the exactions of the priesthood, he seems to have kept a supply of industrious fleas, for the purpose of putting one now and then into the ear of such of the clergy as came to make unreasonable requests to him. It is said that, on one occasion, the prior and monks of St. Swithin's threw themselves prostrate before the king imploring his protection against the Bishop of Winchester, who had cut off three meals a day from the ravenous fraternity. Henry perceiving that the monks were in tolerable

condition, inquired how many meals were still left to them. "Only ten!" roared the prior, in recitative, while the rest of the party took up the words in dismal chorus.

How they could have contrived to demolish thirteen meals a day is an enigma to us; but the fact is a wondrous proof of monkish ingenuity. In the days of ignorance all classes were prepared, no doubt, to swallow a great deal, but thirteen meals must have required a power of digestion and a force of appetite that throw into the shade even the aldermanic attainments of a more civilised period. Henry, who took nothing but his breakfast, dinner, and tea, was shocked and startled by the awful avowal of gluttony on the part of the monks of St. Swithin, whom he placed at once on a diet similar to his own, by reducing them to three meals *per diem*. It is probable that the monks crammed into three repasts the quantity they had consumed in thirteen, and thus eluded the force of the royal order.

By a rigorous determination to "stand no nonsense," either with the clergy or the nobles, and by ordering the Flemish mercenaries of the army to the "right about," Henry seemed to commence his reign under very encouraging auspices.

Not content with his successes at home, he sought to increase his influence abroad by taking Nantes, and he sent Thomas à Becket to Paris to bamboozle the French court, lest his encroachments should excite jealousy in that quarter, Thomas à Becket was the son of Mr. Gilbert à Becket, a respectable tradesman of the city of London; and as his appears to be the first mercantile name on record, we are justified in calling him the Father of British Commerce. The chronicles of the Times—and we are justified in relying on the united evidence of the

Times and *Chronicle*—relate that Gilbert à Becket, in the way of business, followed the army to Palestine. What his business could have been we are unable to guess, but as it took him to the camp, he may perhaps have been a dealer in camp stools, or tent bedsteads. Mr. Gilbert à Becket unfortunately became a prisoner, and being sold to a rich Mussulman, fell in love with a young Mussul girl, his master's daughter. The affection was mutual, and the child of the Mussulman strained every muscle, or, at all events, every nerve to effect the escape of Gilbert à Becket, who, in the hurry of his departure, forgot to take the lady away with him. It is not unlikely that he had got half-way to London before he missed the faithful girl, and it would then have been the height of imprudence to return for the purpose of repairing the oversight. His *inamorata* made the best of her way after him, and arriving in London, ran about the streets, exclaiming, "Gilbert! Gilbert!" thus acting as her own crier, instead of putting the matter into the hands of the regular bellman.

The fact of a young woman continually traversing the great metropolis with Gilbert in her mouth, soon reached the ears of Mr. à Becket, who found the female in distress and his own Saracen maid to be the same individual. One of those frantic recognitions occurred, in which a rapid dialogue of "No!" "Yes!" "It can't be!" "It is!" "My long-lost Sara—!" "My Gil—!" is spasmodically were through, and the couple having rushed into each other's arms, gone soon bound together by that firmest of locks familiarly known as wedlock. The fruit of their union was the celebrated Thomas, of whose career we are enabled from peculiar sources to furnish some interesting particulars.

Gilbert was determined to give his boy Tom a good

education, and sent him to school at Merton Abbey, where a limited number of young gentlemen from three to eight were lodged, boarded, and birched—when necessary—at a moderate stipend. Young Tom was removed from Merton to a classical and commercial academy in London, which he quitted for Oxford, and he was ultimately sent to Paris to undergo the process of French polishing. While yet a young man, he got a situation in the office of the sheriff, and became, of course, a sheriff's officer; in which capacity he arrested, among other things, the attention of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. His patron took young à Becket from the *ad captandum* pursuits in which he had been engaged, put him into the Church, gave him rapid preferment, and introduced him to the parties at the palace, which had, in those days, sufficient accommodation for the family and friends of royalty. Mr. à Becket became chancellor of the kingdom, though he never held a brief, or had even been called to the bar; and he was appointed tutor to the Royal Family, in which office he no doubt had the assistance of the Usher of the Black Rod. Of course, with his multiplicity of offices and occupations, it may be presumed that Mr. à Becket made a very excellent thing of it. His house was a palace, he drank nothing but the best wine, employed none but the best tailors, and when he went to Paris he took four-and-twenty changes of apparel—which may, perhaps, have been after all nothing more than two dozen shirts—so that he had a different costume for every hour of the day. In his progress through France he was preceded by two hundred and fifty boys, or charity children, singing national songs. These were followed by his dogs, in couples, who no doubt gave tongue, and made a sort of barking accompaniment to the music that went

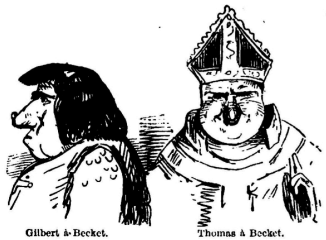
before.

Eight waggons came next, carrying his clothes and his crockery, his cooking apparatus, his bed and bedding, and his suite; when after a few led horses, some knights with their esquires, and some monkeys *à cheval* with a groom behind, on his knees, came à Becket himself and his familiar friends. * His entry into a town was more like that of an equestrian troop about to establish a circus than that of the Chancellor of England travelling in his master's behalf. He lived on terms of the closest intimacy with the king, who made him Archbishop of Canterbury, but not until thirteen months after the death of Theobald the First, for Henry always kept a good appointment open as long as he could, that he might put the revenues into his own pocket.

** Vide Fitz-Stephen, Secretary and Biographer of T Becket.*

From the time of his promotion to the see of Canterbury, à Becket became an altered man. He cut his gay companions, discharged his *chef de cuisine*, discontinued his dealings with his West-End tailor, and took to a kind of cheap blouse made of the coarsest sackcloth. He abandoned his sumptuous mode of living and drank water made unsavoury by herbs, victimising himself probably with cups of camomile tea, and copious doses of senna. But the most serious change in à Becket's conduct, was his altered behaviour to the king, whom he had previously backed in all his attacks on the Church revenues. The new archbishop stood up for all the privileges of the clergy, and a difference of opinion between à Becket and the king, as to the right to try a delinquent clergyman in the civil courts, led to the

summoning of a council of nobles and prelates (a.d. 1164) at Clarendon. Some rules were drawn up, called the "Constitutions of Clarendon," which à Becket reluctantly agreed to sign; but Pope Alexander having rejected them, the archbishop withdrew his name from the list of subscribers.



Original Size

Finding the vengeance of the king likely to prove too much for him, à Becket quitted the kingdom, and was very hospitably entertained during his stay on the Continent.

After an absence of about seven years, he returned in consequence of the king of France and others having persuaded Henry to make it up, though the reconciliation was never very cordial. Though à Becket was received with shouts of approbation by the mob, he was greeted, on his arrival, with menacing signs and abusive language from the aristocracy.

There was a strong party against him at court, and one evening, at about tea-time, Henry and a few nobles were sitting round the palace fire, gossiping over the subject of à Becket's awful insolence. The

king burst into a furious diatribe, stigmatising the archbishop as a beggar, and winding up with the suggestive observation that, "Not one of the cowards I nourish at my table—not one will deliver me from this turbulent priest." Four knights who were present took the royal hint, and gave the archbishop a call at his house in Canterbury, where having seated themselves unceremoniously on the floor, they got to high words very speedily. The archbishop refused to yield to low abuse, and went in the evening to vespers as usual. The feelings of the historian will not allow him to dwell much upon the *dénouement* of the drama in which à Becket had played the principal character. Suffice it to say, he was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral by four assassins, of whom Fitzurse—the son of a bear—was one, and Mireville, a name suggestive of mire and villainy was another. The two remaining butchers were Britto, of Saxon descent, a low fellow, familiarly termed the Brick, and Tracey, who is not worth the trouble of tracing.

When Henry heard of this dreadful deed, he went without his dinner for three days, during which period he shut himself up in his own room, and refused to be "at home" to anyone.

By way of diverting his melancholy, he determined on joining in an Irish row, and finding the chiefs of the five principalities into which Ireland was divided at cross purposes, he espoused the cause of Dermot Mc Murrough, who seems to have been what the Milesians would term the "biggest blackguard" amongst them. Henry gave him a letter authorising him to employ any of the subjects of England that happened to be disengaged; and three ruined barons, with damaged reputations, chancing to be out of work in the neighbourhood of Bristol, were offered

terms by Dermot. This precious trio consisted of two brothers, named Robert Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, and Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, surnamed Strongbow, though, as he was greatly addicted to falsehood, Longbow would have been a more appropriate name for him.

After talking the matter over for some time without any arrangement being come to, Strongbow cut the matter short by exclaiming, "I'll tell you what it is. If I'm to fight for your kingdom, I must have it myself when you have done with it. You must make me your heir, and, as a security that you will perform your part of the agreement, I must marry your daughter." Dermot, though rather taken aback by this proposal, invited Strongbow to a quiet chop, over which the latter's terms were acceded to; and the ruined baron, feeling that it was "neck or nothing" with him, succeeded in making it "neck" by the ardour with which he entered into the contest. Though he set to work in the spring of the year, his vengeance was truly summary, and in a few months he had restored everything to Dermot, who happened conveniently to die, and Strongbow came in for all that he had been fighting for.

Henry having become jealous, Strongbow thought it good policy not to overshoot the mark, and came to England to offer allegiance. The king at first refused to see him, and on calling at Newnham, in Gloucestershire, where Henry was staying, he was kept for some time eating humble-pie in the passage with the hall-porter. Strongbow having been sufficiently bent by this treatment, was at length asked to step up, and it was arranged that he should accompany the king to Ireland, surrender his possessions, and consent to hold them as the vassal of the English sovereign.

On his return to England, Henry, who had four sons, began to find "the boys" exceedingly troublesome. Their mother, once the middleaged, but now the ancient Eleanor, had grown cross as well as venerable; and being exceedingly jealous of her husband, encouraged his own sons to worry him. Her jealousy had become a perfect nuisance; and jealousy is unfortunately one of those nuisances which never get abated.

A story is told of a certain Fair Rosamond; and, though there is no doubt of its being a story from beginning to end, it is impossible to pass it over in an English History. Henry, it is alleged, was enamoured of a certain Miss Clifford—if she can be called a certain Miss Clifford, who was really a very doubtful character. She had been the daughter of a baron on the banks of the Wye, when, without a why or a wherefore, the king took her away, and transplanted the Flower of Hereford, as she well deserved to be called, to the Bower of Woodstock. In this Bower he constructed a labyrinth, something like the maze at Rosherville; and as there was no man stationed on an elevation in the centre to direct the sovereign with a pole which way to go, nor exclaim,

"Right, if you please!"

"Straight on!"

"You're right now, sir!"

"Left!"

"Right again!" etc. etc., his majesty had adopted the plan of dragging one of Rosamond's reels of silk along with him when he left the spot, so that it formed a guide to him on his way back again.

This tale of the silk is indeed a most precious piece of entanglement; but it was perhaps necessary for the winding up of the story. While we cannot receive it

as part of the thread of history, we accept it as a means of accounting for Eleanor having got a clue to the retreat of Rosamond.

The queen, hearing of the silk, resolved naturally enough to unravel it. She accordingly started for Woodstock one afternoon, and, suspecting something wrong, took a large bowl of poison in one hand, and a stout dagger in the other. Having found Fair Rosamond, she held the poignard to the heart, and the bowl to the lips of that unfortunate young person, who, it is said, preferred the black draught to the steel medicine.



Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamond.

Original Size

That such a person as Fair Rosamond existed is perfectly true, for she was buried at Godstow, near Oxford. The sensitive heart, which is ever anxious to inundate the page of sorrow with a regular Niagara of tears, is however earnestly requested to turn off

the rising supply from the main of pity, for it is agreed on all hands that the death of Rosamond was perfectly natural. It has been convenient for the romancists to cut short her existence by drowning it in the bowl; but truth compels us to add, that there is no ground for such a conclusion.

Henry devoted the remainder of his life to quarrelling, first with one of his children, then the other, and every now and then with all of them. He fully intended to divide his possessions among them; but they most unreasonably required to be let into possession before the death of the governor. The eldest ran away to France, and Eleanor had actually put on male attire, with the intention of abandoning Henry, when, unfortunately for him, he was silly enough to have her imprisoned for the purpose of stopping her. "Why didn't you let her go?" was the frequent exclamation of his intimate friends to the king, and a melancholy "Ha! I wish I had," was the only reply he was able to make them.

Finding himself threatened on all sides, and when he had exhausted every other expedient, he resolved on trying what penitence could do for him. His conscience no doubt often reminded him of the murder of poor à Becket, to whose shrine the king determined on making a pilgrimage. Purchasing some split peas, he put about a pint in each of his stockings, and started for Canterbury, where he threw himself madly upon à Becket's tomb, sobbing, yelling and shrieking in the most pitiable manner. Nor was this enough, for he threw off his robe, and insisted on receiving the lash from about eighty ecclesiastics. Though they administered the punishment so lightly that the cat caused only a few scratches, the peculiar circumstances attending it cause it to stand out in history as *par excellence* "the

great flogging case."

The ecclesiastical authorities at Canterbury taking advantage of Henry's softened heart, which seems to have been accompanied by a sad softness of head, succeeded in extracting from him a promissory note to pay forty pounds a year for keeping lights constantly burning on the tomb of à Becket. There can be no doubt that the contract for lighting was taken cheaply enough by some tradesman of the town, and that the surplus went into the clerical coffers. Posterity regards with disgust the effrontery of the monks in making—for the sake of a few dips—such an enormous dip into the purse of the sovereign.

From this time affairs began to mend; and it would seem that the whipping his majesty had suffered had whipped his misfortunes completely out of him. If the king had been an old carpet the beating he received could not have proved more beneficial than it did, for it seemed to revive the brighter colours of his existence. He employed the peace he now enjoyed in carrying out some political reforms, divided England into six circuits, so that Justice might be brought home to every man's door; though, like everything else that is brought home to one's door, it must be paid for—sometimes after a little credit, but sometimes on delivery. He abolished the criminal tariff, by which it had been allowable for the rich to commute their offences, according to a certain scale of charges. Family quarrels unfortunately called him away from these wholesome pursuits, and his eldest son died of a fever brought on in consequence of a disagreement with his younger brother, Richard. Prince Henry expired on the 11th of June, 1183, in the twenty-seventh year of his age. Such was his remorse, that,

according to Roger Hoveden, he insisted on his attendants tying a rope to his foot and taking him in tow, until they dragged him out of his bed, in order to deposit him on a bed of ashes. This particular desire to die in a dusthole was accompanied by a request for a reconciliation with his father, who sent a ring as a token of forgiveness, with a message that he hoped the invalid might come, like the ring, completely round.

On the death of their elder brother, Richard and Geoffrey still continued to show fight against their father; who at length got so much the worst of it, that he was obliged to make the best of it by coming to a compromise. By one of the conditions he was to pardon all the insurgent barons, and having called for a list of them, found at the bottom of it the name of his favourite son John. This was too much for the persecuted parent, who flew into a furious passion, which he vented in the customary manner of royalty at that period, by pouring out a volley of execrations with frightful fluency. He jumped on to his bed, and, falling back upon it, turned round to the wall, exclaiming "Now then, let everything go—— as it will." Several ministers, priests, bishops, prelates, and barons were in attendance, under pretence of receiving his last sigh, but really with the intention of robbing him of his last shilling, for they rifled his pockets directly life was extinct.

The reign of Henry, though not very comfortable to himself, was undoubtedly beneficial to his country. He introduced many improvements into the law, and was the first to levy a tax on the goods of nobles as well as commoners, for the service of the state. He died at the Castle of Chinon, near Saumur, on the 6th of July, 1189, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. He left behind him a good name, which those

who stole his purse were fortunately not able to filch from him. His wife caused all the quarrels in his family, showing that a firebrand may grow out of a very bad match. Eleanor was indeed a female Lucifer, lighting up the flame of discord between parent and children, until death gave her husband the benefit of a divorce.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. RICHARD THE FIRST, SURNAMED COUR DE LION.



Original Size

ICHARD having secured the crown began to look after the cash, and pounced upon an unhappy old man named Stephen, of Tours, who had acted as treasurer to Henry the Second. The new king, not satisfied with cashiering the cashier, arrested him and threw him into prison, until he had given up not only all the late king's money, but had parted with every penny of his own, which was extracted in the shape of costs from the unfortunate victim.

Richard, on arriving in England, made for Winchester, where the sovereigns were in the habit of keeping their plate and jewels, all of which were turned at once into ready money in order to enable

him to carry on the war, which he was very anxious to do, as a crusader in Palestine. It would seem that the treasury was regularly emptied at the commencement of every new reign, and filled again as speedily as possible by exactions on the people.

The coronation of Richard, which took place on the 3rd of September, 1189, was disgraced by an attack upon the Jews, who came to offer presents, which were eagerly received; but the donors were kicked out of Westminster Hall with the most ruthless violence. Nearly all the Jews in London were savagely murdered, all their houses were burnt and all their property stolen; when Richard issued a proclamation, in which he stated that he took them under his gracious protection: an act which would have been more gracious if it had come before instead of after the extermination of the ill-used Israelites.

How to go to Palestine was, however, the king's sole care; and to raise the funds for this trip he sold everything he possessed, as well as a great deal that rightfully belonged to others. He put up towns, castles, and fortresses to public auction, knocking down not only the property itself but those also who offered any remonstrance, or put in any claim to the goods he was disposing of. Such was his determination to clear off everything without reserve, that he swore he would put up London itself if he could find a bidder—an assertion that was very likely to put up the citizens.

Some of the castles he sold two or three times over, leaving the purchasers to settle among themselves which should be the possessor of the property that had been paid for by every one of them. It is not unlikely that he caused glowing advertisements to be prepared, of "Little Paradises,"

standing "in their own fortifications;" and that he would have described a dead wall with a moat before it as "Elysium on a small scale," entrenched behind its own battlements. There can be little doubt that he would also have dilated in glowing terms upon the wealth of the neighbourhood offering unlimited pillage to an enterprising purchaser.

Richard's presence-chamber was, according to Sir Francis Palgrave, a regular market-overt, in which prerogatives and bounties were to be purchased by any one coming with the money to pay for them. We can fancy a table laid out with a number of patents of nobility, labelled with a large ticket, announcing, "All these titles at an enormous sacrifice." We can imagine a row of velvet robes and coronets hanging up under a placard inscribed "Dukedoms at a considerable reduction;" while we can contemplate a quantity of knights' helmets lying in the window, marked at a very low figure, after the manner of the five thousand straw bonnets offered to the public by some dashing haberdasher at the commencement of the spring season.

Richard even went so far as to announce the stock of vacant bishoprics as "selling off;" and it is not improbable that he may have caused tasteful arrangements of mitres and lawn sleeves to be arranged in different parts of the presence-chamber, to tempt the ambition of ecclesiastical purchasers. He likewise sold his own good-will for three thousand marks to his half-brother Geoffrey, who had been elected Archbishop of York; and wherever there was a penny to be turned, Richard had the knack of turning it.

Having left the regency in the hands of one Hugh Pudsey, the king repaired to France to meet Philip, who was to be his companion to Palestine. Their

united forces amounted to a hundred thousand men; but Richard and Philip did not travel together farther than Lyons, and indeed it was as well they did not, for they were almost continually quarrelling. Numerous adventures befel Richard on his way; but the most awkward was his being dunned by the cardinal bishop of Ostia—where he had put in to repair—for a debt due to the see of Rome, on account of bulls and other papal articles.

Cour de Lion, instead of discharging the bill, abused and ill-treated the applicant, and made the best of his way to Naples, before there was time for ulterior proceedings. He went thence to Sicily, where his quarrel with Philip was renewed, and the latter demanded an explanation of Richard's refusal to marry the princess Aliz, the French king's sister. Cour de Lion, who had really formed another attachment, excused himself by blackening the character of the lady to whom he had been engaged, and her chivalrous brother agreed to take two thousand marks a year, as a compromise for the breach of promise of marriage which Richard had committed. "Such," exclaims Hume—and well he may—"were the heroes of this pious enterprise."

The Princess Aliz or Alice, having been regularly thrown overboard by the bargain between her own brother ana her late lover, the latter was at liberty to follow his inclination by marrying Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre, with whom he had had a flirtation as early as during his residence at Guienne. Taking with him his latest affianced, he set sail for Palestine; but his ship being cast ashore at Cyprus, and plundered by the natives, he waited to chastise the people, and imprison an elderly person named Isaac, who called himself the emperor. He then ran off with the old man's only daughter, in

addition to the princess of Navarre, whom he had the coolness to marry on the very spot from which he had seized this new addition to the female part of his establishment. The only reparation offered to the father was a set of silver fetters to wear instead of the common iron he had at first been thrown into.

Richard at length arrived in Palestine, and was not long in getting to work against the forces of Saladin, who, leading forth his battalions, mounted on their real Jerusalem ponies, proved exceedingly harassing.



Terrific Combat between Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin.

Original Size

Among the events of the crusade undertaken for the promotion of Christianity, on the side of the Lion Heart, his beheading of five thousand Turkish prisoners stands conspicuous. This act of barbarity arose out of some misunderstanding on the subject of a truce, and Saladin, by way of making matters square, slaughtered about an equal number of captive Christians. Such were the heroic defenders of the Cross on one side and the Crescent on the other. It is generally a libel to compare a human being to a brute, but in giving the title of Lion Heart to Richard, the noble beast is the party scandalised.

It is surprising that the British lion has never cited this as one of his numerous grievances, for he would certainly have a capital action for defamation if he were to sue by his next friend or *in forma pauperis* for this malicious imputation on his noble character.

On the 7th of September, 1191, the two chiefs came to a general engagement, near Azotus, about nine miles from Ascalon. Richard's prowess was tremendous; but, after himself, the most striking object was his battle-axe. This wondrous weapon had been forged in England by the very best Smiths, and there were twenty pounds of steel in the head, formed into a tremendous nob, which fell with fearful force on the nobs of his enemies. His battle-axe divided with him the attention of all beholders, and he divided the turbans of the foe with his battle-axe. The weapons of the Crusaders were certainly better adapted for havoc than those of the Saracens, who seem to have fought with an instrument less calculated for milling men than for milling chocolate. The armour of the knights was also more effective than that of their adversaries; for while the former had their heads comfortably secured in articles made on the principle of rushlight shades, with holes for seeing and breathing through, the partisans of the Crescent wore little more upon their heads than might have been supplied by the folding of a sheet or tablecloth into the form of a turban. The result was that Baladin was compelled to fly, with a loss of seven thousand men and thirty-two emirs, which so diminished his stock of officers that he was almost reduced, according to an old chronicler, to his very last emir-gency.

Richard went on to Jaffa, where he was delayed by an artful proposition to negotiate until the rainy weather set in; and he had to start off during

November, in the midst of incessant showers. The Crusaders got regularly soaked; and being caught in the middle of the plain of Sharon with no place, not even a doorway, they could stand up under, they tried to pitch a tent, which was instantly pitched down by the fury of the elements. Their arms became perfectly rusty, and their horses, not liking the wet, got rusty also. Their provisions were all turned into water *souchet*, and indeed the spirit of the Crusaders became weakened by excessive dilution in the pelting showers.

The energies of Richard and his companions were of course considerably damped; but a positive inundation would scarcely have quenched the fire of chivalry. Cour de Lion retreated to Ascalon, the fortifications of which he found had been dismantled; but he worked to restore them like a common mason, mixing mortar on his shield for want of a hod, and using his axe as a substitute for a trowel. All the men of rank followed his example, except the Duke of Austria, who declared that he had not been brought up to it; upon which Cour de Lion kicked him literally through the breach in the fortification he had refused to repair, and turned him out of the town with all his vassals.

After a most uncomfortable sojourn in Palestine, Richard opened a negotiation with Saladin; and the ardour of both having been rather cooled, a truce was concluded. It was to last three years, three months, three weeks, and three days, the discussion on the subject occupying about three hours, the writing out the agreement three minutes, and the signing three seconds.

Taking advantage of the truce, Richard quitted Palestine for England; but sending the ladies home in a ship, he started to walk in the disguise of a pilgrim

by way of Germany. Though his costume was humble his expenditure was lavish; and having sent a boy into the market-place of Vienna to buy some provisions, the splendid livery of the page, and his abundance of cash, excited suspicion as to the rank of his master. The secret of the Lion Heart was kept for some time by the faithful tiger, but he was at length forced into a confession, and Richard was arrested on the 20th of December, 1193, by the very Duke of Austria whom he had some time before kicked unceremoniously out of Ascalon.

The Emperor Henry the Sixth claimed the royal captive as a prize, and Richard was locked up in a German dungeon with German shutters, and fed alternately on German rolls and German sausages, while his enemies were doing their worst at home and abroad to deprive him of his sovereignty.



Blondel, the Minstrel, under the Walls of Richard's Prison.

Original Size

There is a legend attached to the incident of Richard's captivity: which has the slight disadvantage of being altogether fabulous, and We therefore insert it—under protest—in the pages of our faithful history. The story runs that the Lion Heart, who was fond of music, and had a tolerable voice, used to amuse himself and his gaolers by singing some of the most popular ballads of the period. It happened that Blondel, one of his favourite minstrels, of whom he had probably taken lessons in happier hours, was on an ambulatory tour, for professional purposes, when he chanced to tune his clarionet and clear his throat, with the intention of "striking up" under the walls of Richard's prison. At that moment the Lion Heart had just been called upon for a song, and his voice issued in a large octavo volume from the window of his dungeon. The tones seemed familiar to the minstrel, but when there came a tremendous trill on the low G, followed by a succession of roulades on A flat, with an abrupt modulation from the minor to the major key, Professor Blondel instantly recognised the voice of his royal pupil. The wandering minstrel, without waiting for the song to terminate, broke out into a magnificent *sol fa*, and the king at once remembering the style of his old master, responded by going through some exercises for the voice which he had been in the habit of practising. Blondel having ascertained the place of his sovereign's confinement, had the prudence to "copy the address," and went away, determining to do his utmost for the release of Richard. "I wish," thought the professor, as he retired from the spot, "that those iron bars were bars of music, for then I could show him how they are to be got through; or would that any of the keys of which I am master would unlock the door of his prison!" With these two melancholy puns, induced by

the sadness of his reflections, Blondel hastened from the spot, and repaired to England with tidings of the missing monarch.

Such is the romantic little story that is told by those greatest of story-tellers, the writers of history.

Richard was at length brought up for examination before the Diet of Worms; and though several charges were alleged against him, he pleaded his own cause with so much address, that he was discharged on payment of a fine of one hundred and fifty thousand marks, being about three hundred thousand pounds of our money. He at once put down thirteen and fourpence in the pound, giving good bills and hostages for the remainder; but the amount was soon raised by taxes and voluntary contributions from the English people. Churches melted down their plate, people born with silver spoons in their mouths came forward with zeal, whether the article happened to be a gravy, a table, a dessert, or a tea; and the requisite sum was raised to release him from captivity. He arrived in England on the 20th of March, 1194, and was enthusiastically welcomed home, where he got up another coronation of himself, by way of furnishing an outlet for the overflowing loyalty of the people. As if desirous of taming it down a little, he made some heavy demands upon their pockets; but nothing seemed capable of damping the ardour of the nation, which appeared ready to give all it possessed in change for this single sovereign.

About the middle of May, 1194, Richard revisited Barfleur, with the intention of chastising his brother John—who had shown symptoms of usurpation in his absence—and the French king, Philip. John, like a coward, flew to his mamma—the venerable Eleanor—requesting her to intercede for him. The

old lady wrote a curt epistle, consisting of the words, "Dear Dick—Forgive Jack. Yours ever, Nell;" and John having fallen at the feet of Richard, was contemptuously kicked aside with a free pardon. Against the French king, however, several battles were fought, with fluctuating success, though Richard's fortunes now and then received a fillip which caused Philip to get the worst of it. A truce was concluded on the 23rd of July, 1194, but London beginning to rebel, cut out fresh work for Lion Heart. The discontented cockneys had for their leader one William Fitz-Osbert, commonly called Longbeard, who complained of the citizens having been so closely shaved by taxation; and Longbeard even dared to beard the sovereign himself, by going to the Continent to remonstrate with Richard. The patriot made one of those clap-trap speeches (or which mob-orators have in all ages been famous), and demanded for the poor that general consideration which really amounts to nothing particular. Richard promised that the matter should be looked into, but nothing was done—except the people and their advocate. In the year 1196 Longbeard originated the practice of forming political associations, and got together no less than fifty-two thousand members, who swore to stand by him as the advocate and saviour of the poor; an oath which ended in heir literally standing by him and seeing him savagely butchered by his enemies. He was taking a quiet walk with only nine adherents, when he was dodged by a couple of citizens, who had been watching him for several days, and who pretended to be enjoying a stroll, until they got near enough to enable them to seize the throat of Longbeard. This movement instantly raised his choler, and drawing his knife, he succeeded in

cutting completely away. He sought refuge in the church of St. Mary of Arches, which he barricaded for four days, but he was at last taken, stabbed, dragged at a horse's tail to the Tower, and forwarded by the same conveyance to Smithfield, where he was hanged on a gibbet, with the nine unfortunates who had been the companions of his promenade. The mob, who had stood by him while he was thus cruelly treated, pretended to look upon him as a martyr directly he was dead. This, however, seems to have been the result of interested motives, for they stole the gibbet, and cut it up into relics, which were sold at most exorbitant prices; so that, by making a saint of him, they gave a value to the gallows which they purloined. It is possible that they were not particular as to the genuineness of the article, so long as there was any demand for little bits of Longbeard's gibbet.

Richard was now engaged in almost continual quarrels with Philip, which were only suspended by occasional want of money to pay the respective barons, who always struck, or rather, refused to strike at all, when they could not get their wages. In the year 1198, hostilities were renewed with great vigour, and a battle was fought near Gisors, where Philip was nearly drowned by the breaking of a bridge, in consequence of the enormous weight of the fugitives. In his bulletin, Richard insultingly alluded to the quantity of the river the French king had been compelled to drink, and hinted, that as he was full of water it was quite fair to make a butt of him.

This was Cour de Lion's "positively last appearance" in any combat. A truce was concluded, and Richard quitted Normandy for the Limousin, where it was said in one of the popular ballads of the

day, that the point of the arrow was being forged for the death of the tyrant. Many dispute the point, and believe the story to be forged; but certain it is, that Henry, the father of Richard, had frequently been shot at by an arrow, and had had, according to a lame pun of the period, many a-n-arrow escape from the hands of his secret enemies. According to the usual version of Cour de Lion's death, it seems that he went with an armed force to demand of Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, a treasure, said to have been found in the domains of the latter. The viscount claimed halves, which Richard refused, and with a loud cry of "All or none," threatened to hang every man of the garrison. The king was surveying the walls to ascertain an eligible place for the assault, and had just raised his eyes, exclaiming—"Here's a weak point," when the point of an arrow came whizzing along and stuck in his left shoulder. Richard making some passing allusion to this novel mode of shouldering arms, took little notice of the wound, but went on with the assault, and soon seized the Castle.

The business of the the day being concluded, he sent for a surgeon, who took out the point of the arrow somewhat clumsily, causing Richard to remark, in allusion to the bungling manner in which the operation had been performed, that it could not be called a very elegant "extract." The wound, though slight, became worse from ill-treatment; and the king, feeling that there were no hopes of his recovery, would only reply to the encouraging remarks of his attendants by pointing mournfully yet significantly over his left shoulder.



Bertrand de Gourdon before Richard.

Original Size

It is said that he sent for Bertrand de Gourdon, the youth that inflicted the wound, and let him off for letting off the bow; but it is impossible to say what truth there is in this anecdote. The MS. chronicle of Winchester says that Richard's sister Joan expressed a truly female wish to have the prisoner given to her, that she might "tear his eyes out," and that she literally put in force this threat which so many women are heard to make, but which not one of the sex was ever known to execute.

Richard died on Tuesday, the 6th of April, 1199, after a reign of ten years, not one of which had been passed in England, for he had led the life of a royal vagabond. He died at forty-two, and it is a remarkable fact, says one of the chroniclers—whom for the sake of his reputation we will not name—that, though Richard lived to be forty-two, forti-tude was the only virtue he had ever exhibited. He loved the name of Lion Heart, and he certainly deserved a title that indicated his possession of brutish qualities. The British lion might, in justice to his own character, repudiate all connection with this contemptible Cour de Lion, who had at least as much

cruelty as courage, and who had murdered many more in cold blood when prisoners than he had ever killed on the field of battle. His slaughter of the three thousand Saracen captives must be regarded as a proof, that, whatever of the lion he might have, had in his disposition, he had not much of the heart. This, however, such as it was, he never gave to England in his lifetime, and he left it to Rouen at his death, being certainly the very smallest and most valueless legacy he could possibly have bequeathed.



Arrival of Richard's Legacy at Rouen.

Original Size

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH. JOHN, SURNAMED SANSTERRE, OR LACKLAND.



Original Size

JOHN, who was in Normandy when Richard died, made every effort to secure that gang of humbugs, the mercenaries, by sending over to offer them an increase of salary, with the view of preventing them from taking engagements in the cause of his nephew, Arthur, the child of his elder brother, Geoffrey. Hubert Walter, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was despatched to England, to obtain the services of the barons by the usual means; and John himself repaired to Chinon, to ransack the castle where Richard had kept his treasures. Having chastised a few citizens for supporting Arthur, he repaired to Rouen, where on Sunday, the 25th of April, 1199, he was bedizened with the sword and coronal of the duchy. The English were not much disposed to favour the claims of John, but Archbishop Hubert purchased a few oaths of allegiance from the barons and prelates, who for the usual consideration were always ready to swear fealty to anyone.

John landed at Shoreham on the 25th of May, and on the 27th he knocked at the church door of St. Peter's, Westminster, to claim the crown. He seems to have encountered a tolerably numerous congregation, whom he endeavoured to convince by pulling out of his pocket an alleged will made in his favour by his brother Richard, and some other documents, which, backed by a speech from Archbishop Hubert, set everybody shouting "Long live the king!"

Poor little Arthur was completely overlooked in this arrangement, for he had scarcely anyone to take his part but a noisy scolding mother, who bore the name of Constance, probably on account of her shameful inconstancy. She had married a third husband while her second was still living; and it is even said that she contemplated adding trigamy to bigamy, for which purpose she sent her son to be out of the way at Paris, with Philip, the French king. The poor child had his interests fearfully sacrificed on all sides, for a treaty was agreed upon between John and Philip, according to which there would be nothing at all left for the unfortunate boy when the two sovereigns had helped themselves to their respective shares of the booty.

In the summer of the year 1200, John made a royal progress into France where he evinced a familiar and festive humour, which made him a favourite with a few of the "jolly dogs," but did not win the respect of the more sober classes of the community. He did not at all improve upon acquaintance; and he completed his unpopularity by running away with Isabella, the wife of the Count of La Marche, whom he married and brought to England, in spite of his having already a wife at home, and the lady's having also a husband abroad.

A second coronation was performed in honour of his second marriage; but he seems to have soon got tired of his new match, for he marched into Aquitaine without his wife, under the pretence that he had business to attend to, but he really did no business at all. Little did he anticipate when he started *en garçon* on his tour, that the historian nearly seven centuries afterwards would be recording the manner in which he passed his time, and proving the hollowness of the excuse for leaving his wife behind him when he took his trip to Aquitaine.



Prince Arthur requires his Grandmother to surrender.

Original Size

Young Arthur, who was but fifteen years of age, was advised by Philip (a.d. 1202) to try his hand in a military expedition. "You know your rights," said Philip to the youth, "and would you not be a king?"

"Oh! wouldn't I, just?" was the boy-like reply, and the French king counting off two hundred knights, as

if they were so many bundles of wood, handed them over to the prince, telling him to go and make an attack upon some of the provinces. Arthur was recommended to march against Mirabeau, the residence of his grandmother, Eleanor, a violent old lady who had always been unfavourable to his claims. Arthur took the town, but not his grandmother, who, on hearing of the lad's intentions, exclaimed, "Hoity toity! would the urchin teach his grandmother to suck eggs, I wonder?"

"No, but I would teach my grandmother to sue cumb," was the dignified reply of the prince, when the message of his venerable relative was brought to him. The sturdy old female, who was rather corpulent, made, literally, a stout resistance, having thrown herself into a strong tower, which set rather tight upon her, like a corsage, and in this position she for some time defied the assaults of the enemy. Encased in this substantial breastwork, she awaited the threatened lacing at the hands of her grandson, when John came to her rescue. In the night between the 31st of July and the 1st of August, he took the town, dragged Arthur out of his bed, as well as some two hundred nobles who were "hanging out" at the different lodgings in the city. After cruelly beating them, he literally loaded them with irons, giving them cuffs first, and hand-cuffs immediately afterwards. Twenty-two noblemen were thrown into the damp dungeons of Corfe Castle, where they caught severe colds, of which they soon died, and they were buried under the walls of Corfe without coffins. * Young Arthur's tragical end has been the subject of various conjectures. Several historians have tried their hands at an interesting version of the young prince's death, but Shakspeare has given the most effective, and not the least probable, account of

the fate of Arthur. The monks of Margan believe that John, in a fit of intoxication, slew his nephew; but we have no proof that Lackland was often in that disgraceful state, which in these days would have rendered him liable to the loss of a crown—in the shape of the five-shilling fine for drunkenness.

** Matthew Paris. It is to be regretted that the st a fact sometimes involves the necessity for a pun, present instance. The faithful historian has, howe such an occasion, no alternative. Fidelity must nc sacrificed even to a desire for solemnity.*

Ralph, the abbot of Coggeshall, who agrees with Shakspeare in many particulars, says that Arthur had been removed to Rouen, where his uncle called for him on the night of the 3rd of April, 1203, in a boat, to take a row on the river. It being time for all good little children to be in bed and asleep, Arthur was both at the moment of the avuncular visit. Boy-like, he made no objection to the absurd and ill-timed excursion, for it is a curious fact, that infants are always ready to get up at the most unseasonable hours, if anything in the shape of pleasure is proposed to them. Arthur was soon in the boat for a row up the Seine with his uncle John and Peter de Maulac, Esquire, one of the unprincipled "men about town" at that disreputable period.

They had not proceeded far when either John or Mr. de Maulao seized the boy, as if he were so much superfluous ballast, and cruelly pitched him overboard. Some say that the squire was the sole executioner, while others hint that he turned squeamish at the last moment, and left the disgraceful business to John; but they doubtless shared the guilt, as they were both rowing in the

same boat, and were in point of private character "much of a muchness." Shak-speare, as everybody knows, makes the young prince meet his death more than half-way by leaping on to the stones below his prison window, with a hope that they might prove softer than the heart of his uncle. It is not improbable that a child so young may have been foolish enough to jump to such a conclusion.

The rumour of the murder naturally occasioned the greatest excitement; and if we are to believe the immortal bard, five moons came mooning out upon the occasion, which may account for the moonstruck condition of the populace.

The Britons, amongst whom Arthur had been educated, were furious at the murder of their youthful prince, whose eldest sister, Eleanor, was in the hands of her uncle John. This lady was called by some, the Pearl of Brittany; but if she was really a gem, she must have been an antique, for she spent forty years of her life in captivity. The Britons, therefore, rallied round a younger heroine, her half-sister, Alice, and appointed her father, Guy de Thouars, the regent and general of their confederacy. De Thouars was a Guy only in name, for he was extremely handsome, and had attracted the attention of the lady Constance, whose third and last husband he had become. Guy went as the head of a deputation to the French king, who summoned John to a trial; but that individual instead of attending the summons, allowed judgment to go by default, and was sentenced to a forfeiture of his dominions.

John for some time treated the steps taken against him with contempt, and remained at Rouen, until he thought it advisable to go over to England, to prepare for his defence by collecting money, for it was always by sucking dry the public purse, that

tyrants in those days were accustomed to look for succour.

It was by his efforts to extract cash from his people that he excited among his nobles the discontent which has rendered the discontented barons of his reign, *par excellence, the* discontented barons of English history. He continued to mulct them every day, and his reign was a long game of forfeits, in which the barons were always the sufferers. Still they refused to quit the country for the defence of their tyrant's foreign possessions.

By dint of threats and bribery he at last contrived (a.d. 1206) to land an army at Rochelle, and a contest was about to commence, when John proposed a parley. Without waiting for the answer, he ran away, leaving a notice on the door of his tent, stating that he had gone to England, and would return immediately, which, in accordance with the modern "chamber-practice," was equivalent to an announcement that he had no intention of coming back again.

John, who could agree with nobody, now began to quarrel with the pope by starting a candidate for the see of Canterbury, in opposition to Stephen Langton, the nominee of old Innocent. His holiness desired three English bishops to go and remonstrate with the king, who flew into a violent passion, and used the coarsest language, winding up with a threat to "cut off their noses," which caused the venerable deputation to "cut off" themselves with prompt King John threatens to cut off the Noses of the Bishops.

The bishops, however, soon recovered from the effects of their ill-treatment, and determined by the aid of the people to punish with papal bulls the royal bully.



King John threatens to cut off the Noses of the Bishops.

Original Size

On Monday, the 23rd of March, 1208, they pronounced an interdict against all John's dominions; but, like children setting fire to a train of gunpowder and running away, the bishops quitted the kingdom, as if afraid of the result of their own boldness. This was soon followed by a bull of excommunication against John, but the wary tyrant, by watching the ports, prevented the entrance of this bull, which would have made it a mere toss up whether he could keep possession of his throne.

John employed the year 1210 in raising money, by stealing it wherever he could lay his hands upon it; for, says the chronicler, "as long as there was a sum he could bone, he thought it the *summum bonum* to get hold of it." With the cash he had collected he repaired to Ireland, and at Dublin was joined by twenty robust chieftains, who might have been called the Dublin stout of the thirteenth century. Returning to England in three months with an empty pocket, he

became alarmed at hearing of a conspiracy among his barons. He shut himself up for fifteen days in the castle of Nottingham, seeing no one but the servants, and not permitting the door to be opened even to take in the milk, lest the cream of the British nobility should flow in with it.

At length, in the year 1213, Innocent hurled his last thunderbolt at John's head, with the intention of knocking off his crown. The pope pronounced the deposition of the English king, and declared the throne open to competition, with a hint to Philip of France that he might find it an eligible investment. He prepared a fleet of seventeen hundred vessels at Boulogne, but some of the vessels must have been little bigger than butter-boats if seventeen hundred of them were crammed into this insignificant harbour. John, by a desperate effort, got together sixty thousand men, but they were by no means staunch, and he was as much afraid of his own troops as of those belonging to the enemy. Pandulph, the pope's legate, knowing his character, came to Dover, and frightened him by fearful pictures of the enemy's strength, while Peter the Hermit, * who was rather more plague than prophet, bored the tyrant with predictions of his death. John, who was exceedingly superstitious, was so worked upon by his fears that he agreed to Pandulph's terms, and on the 15th of May, 1213, he signed a sort of cognovit, acknowledging himself the vassal of the pope, and agreeing to pay a thousand marks a year, in token of which he set his own mark at the end of the document.

** Some writers have called Peter the Hermit a hare recluse As his head was closely shaved the epithet brained" seems to have been sadly misapplied.*

He next offered Pandulph something for his trouble, but the legate raising his leg, trampled the money under his foot. The next day was that on which Peter the Hermit had prophesied that John would die, and the tyrant remained from morning till night watching the clock with intense anxiety. Finding himself alive at bedtime, he grew furious against Peter for having caused him so much needless alarm, and the Hermit was hanged for the want of foresight he had exhibited. He died, exclaiming that the king should have been grateful that the prediction had not been fulfilled; "but," added he, as he placed his head through the fatal noose, "some folks are never satisfied." The French king was exceedingly disgusted at the shabby treatment he had received; but Philip expended his rage in a few philippics against Pandulph, who merely expressed his regret, and added peremptorily, that England being now under the dominion of the pope, must henceforth be let alone. Philip alluded to the money he was out of pocket, but the nuncio politely observing that he was not happy at questions of account, withdrew while repeating his prohibition.

John, who had so lately eaten humble pie, soon began to regard his promises as the pie-crust, which he commenced breaking very rapidly. Wishing, however, to carry the war into France, he required the services of his barons, who were very reluctant to aid him, and he had got as far as Jersey, when happening to look behind him, he perceived that he had scarcely any followers. He had started with a tolerable number, but they turned back sulkily by degrees, without his being aware of it until he arrived at Jersey, when he was preparing to turn himself round, and perceived that his *suite* had dwindled down to a few mercenaries, who hung on

to his skirts merely for the sake of what he had got in his pockets. Becoming exceedingly angry, he wheeled suddenly back, and vented his spite in burning and ravaging everything that crossed his path. He was in a flaming passion, for he set fire to all the buildings on the road till he reached Northampton, where Langton overtook him, and taxed him with the violation of his oath. "Mind your own business," roared the king, "and leave me to manage mine;" but Langton would not take an answer of that kind, and stuck to him all the way to Nottingham, where the prelate, according to his own quaint phraseology, "went at him again" with more success than formerly. John issued summonses to the barons, and Langton hastened to see them in London, where he drew up a strong affidavit by which they all swore to be true to each other, and to their liberties.

John was still apprehensive of the hostility of the pope, which might have been fatal at this juncture, had not Cardinal Nicholas arrived in the nick of time, namely, on the 12th of September, 1213, to take off the interdict. The court of Rome thus executed a sort of *chassez-croisez*, by going over to the side of John, but Langton did not desert his old partner, liberty. In the following year the English king was defeated at the battle of Bouvines, one of the most tremendous affrays recorded in history. Salisbury, surnamed Longsword, was captured by that early specimen of the church militant, the Bishop of Beauvais, who, because it was contrary to the canons of the Church for him to shed blood, fought with a ponderous club, by which he knocked the enemy on the head, and acquired the name of the stunning bishop. He banged about him in such style, that he might have been eligible for the see of Bangor, had his ambition pointed in that direction. John obtained a truce; but

the discontented barons had already placed a rod in pickle for him, and on the 20th day of November, they held a crowded meeting at St. Edmund's Bury, which was adjourned until Christmas. At that festive season, John found himself eating his roast beef entirely alone, for nobody called to wish him joy, or partake his pudding.



The Bishop of Beauvais capturing Salisbury.

Original Size

After dining by himself, at Worcester, he started for London, making sure of a little-gaiety at boxing-time, in the great metropolis.

Nobody, however, took the slightest notice of him until one day the whole of the barons came to him in a body, to pay him a morning visit. Surprised at the largeness of the party, he was somewhat cool, but on hearing that they had come for liberty, he declared that he would not allow any liberty to be taken while he continued king of England. The party remained firm with one or two exceptions, when John began to shiver as if attacked with ague, and he went on blowing hot and cold as long as he could, until

pressed by the barons for an answer to their petition. He then replied evasively, "Why—yes—no; let me see —ha! exactly—stop! Well, I don't know, perhaps so —'pon honour;" and ultimately obtained time until Easter, to consider the proposals that were made to him. The confederated barons had no sooner got outside the street-door than John began to think over the means of circumventing them. As they separated on the threshold, to go to their respective homes, it was evident from the gestures and countenances of the group that there had been a difference of opinion as to the policy of granting John the time he had requested. A bishop and two barons, who had turned recreants at the interview, and receded from their claims, were of course severely bullied by the rest of the confederates, on quitting the royal presence. At length the day arrived, in Easter week, when the barons were to go for an answer to the little Bill—of Rights—which they had left with John at the preceding Christmas. They met at Stamford, where they got up a grand military spectacle, including two thousand knights and an enormous troop of auxiliaries. The king, who was at Oxford, sent off Cardinal Langton, with the Earls of Pembroke and Warrenne, as a deputation, who soon returned with a schedule of terrific length, containing a catalogue of grievances, which the barons declared they would have remedied.



Original

Size

John flew into one of his usual passions, tearing his long hair, and rapidly pacing his chamber with the skirt of his robe thrown over his left arm, while, with his right hand, he shook his fist at vacancy. The deputation could merely observe calmly, "We have done our part of the business: that is what the barons want;" and a roll of parchment was instantly allowed to run out to its full length at the foot of the enraged sovereign. John took up the document and pretended to inspect it with much minuteness, muttering to himself, "No, I don't see it down," upon which Langton asked the sovereign what he was looking for. "I was searching," sarcastically roared the tyrant, "for the crown, which I fully expected to find scheduled as one of the items I am called upon to surrender." This led to some desultory conversation, in the course of which the king made some evasive offers, which the barons would not accept, and the latter, appointing Robert Fitz-Walter as their general, at once commenced hostilities.

They first marched upon the castle of Northampton, but when they got under the walls they discovered that they had got no battering-rams, and after sitting looking at the castle for fifteen days, they marched off again. At Bedford, where they went next, the same farce might have been enacted, had not the inhabitants opened the gates for them. Here they received an invitation from London, and stopping to rest for the night at Ware—on account, perhaps, of the accommodation afforded by the Great Bed—they arrived on Sunday, the 24th of May, 1215, in the City. Here they were joined by the whole nobility of England, while John was abandoned by all but seven knights, who remained near his person, the seven knights forming a weak

protection, to the sovereign. His heart at first failed him, but he was a capital actor, and soon assumed a sort of easy cheerfulness. He presented his compliments to the barons, and assured them he should be most happy to meet them, if they would appoint a time and place for an interview. The barons instantly fixed the 19th of June at Runny-Mead, when John intimated that he should have much pleasure in accepting the polite invitation.

At length the eventful morning arrived, when John cantered quietly down from Windsor Castle, attended by eight bishops and a party of about twenty gentlemen. These, however, were not his friends, but had been lent by the other side, "for the look of the thing," lest the king should seem to be wholly without attendants. The barons, who had been stopping at Staines, were of course punctual, and had got the pen and ink all laid out upon the table, with a Windsor chair brought expressly from the town of Windsor for John to sit down upon. It had been expected that he would have raised some futile objections to sign; but the crafty sovereign, knowing it was a *sine qua non*, made but one plunge into the inkstand, and affixed his autograph. It is said that he dropped a dip of ink accidentally on the parchment, and that he mentally ejaculated "Ha! this affair will be a blot upon my name for ever." The facility with which the king attached his signature to Magna Charta—the great charter of England's liberties—naturally excited suspicion; for it is a remark founded on a long acquaintance with human nature, that the man who never means to take up a bill is always foremost in accepting one. Had John contemplated adhering to the provisions of the document he would have probably discussed the various clauses, but a swindler seldom disputes the

items of an account, when he has not the remotest intention of paying it.

Though Magna Charta has been practically superseded by subsequent statutes, it must always be venerated as one of the great foundations of our liberties. It established the "beautiful principle" that taxation shall only take place by the consent of those taxed—a principle the beauty of which has been its chief advantage, for it has proved less an article for use than for ornament. The agreeable figure that everyone who pays a tax does so with his own full concurrence, and simply because he likes it, is a pleasing delusion, which all have not the happiness to labour under. It was also provided that "the king should sell, delay, or deny justice to none," a condition that can scarcely be considered fulfilled when we look at some of the bills of costs that generally follow a long suit in that game of chance which has obtained the singularly appropriate title of Chancery. It may be perhaps argued, that the article delayed and sold is law, whereas Magna Charta alludes only to Justice. This, we must admit, establishes a distinction—*not* without a difference.

Though John had kept his temper tolerably well at the meeting with the barons, he had no sooner got back to Windsor Castle, than he called a few foreign adventurers around him, and indulged in a good hearty swearing fit against the charter. He grew so frantic, according to the chroniclers, that he "gnashed his teeth, rolled his eyes, and gnawed sticks and straws," though he could scarcely have done all this without sending for the umbrella-stand, and having a good bite at its contents, or ordering in a few wisps from the stable.

That John was exceedingly mad with the barons for what they had made him do, is perfectly true, but

we do not go the length of those who look upon a truss of straw as essential to a person labouring under mental aberration.

John now went to reside in the Isle of Wight, and tried to captivate the fishermen by adopting their manners. There is nothing very captivating in the manners of the fishermen of the Isle of Wight at the present day, whatever may have been the case formerly; but it is probable that the king became popular by a sort of hail-fellow-well-met-ishness, to which his dreadful habit of swearing no doubt greatly contributed. Having imported a lot of mercenaries from the Continent, he posted off to Dover to land the disgraceful cargo, and with them he marched against Rochester Castle, which had been seized by William D'Albiney. The larder was wretchedly low when D'Albiney first took possession, and the garrison was soon reduced to its last mouthful of provisions. This consisted of a piece of rind of cheese, which everybody had refused in daintier days, when provisions were plentiful. D'Albiney bolted the morsel and unbolted the gate nearly at the same moment, when John, rushing in, butchered all the supernumeraries and sent the principal characters to Corfe Castle.

John, who always grew bold when there was no opposition, committed all sorts of atrocities upon places without defence, and the barons shut up in Lincoln, held numerous meetings, which terminated in a resolution to offer the crown to Louis, the son of Philip of France, provided the young gentleman and his papa would come over and fight for it. Louis left Calais with six hundred and eighty vessels, but he had a terribly bad passage across to Sandwich, where the "flats," as usual, permitted the landing of an enemy. John, who had run round to Dover with a

numerous army, fled before the French landed, and committed arson on an extensive scale all over the country. Every night was a "night wi' Burns," and the royal incendiary seems to have put himself under the especial protection of Blaise, as the only saint with whom the tyrant felt the smallest sympathy. John ultimately put up at Bristol, and the neighbourhood of Bath seems to have quenched for a time his flaming impetuosity.

Louis having besieged Rochester Castle, which seems in those days to have been very like a copy of the *Times* newspaper, which some one was always anxious to take directly it was out of hand, marched on to London. He arrived there on the 2nd of June, 1216, where he was received with that enthusiasm which the hospitable cockneys have ever been ready to bestow on foreigners of distinction. Nearly all the few followers that had hitherto adhered to John now abandoned him, and he was left almost alone with Gualo, the pope's legate, who did all he could to revive the drooping spirits of the tyrant. Vainly however did Gualo slap the sovereign on the back, inviting him to "cheer up," and ply him with cider, his favourite beverage. "Come! drown it in the bowl," was the constant cry of Gualo. "Talk not of bowls," was the reply of John; "what is life but a game at bowls, in which the king is too frequently knocked over?"

Louis, in the meantime, growing arrogant with success, commenced insulting, the English and granting their property to his foreign followers. The barons began to think they had made a false step with reference to their own country by allowing the French prince to put his foot in it. This for a moment brightened the prospects of John, who started off and went blazing away as far as Lynn, where he had got

a *dépôt* of provisions, and of course a change of linen. Hence he made for Wisbeach, and put up at a place called the "Cross Keys," intending to cross the Wash, which is a very passable place at low water.

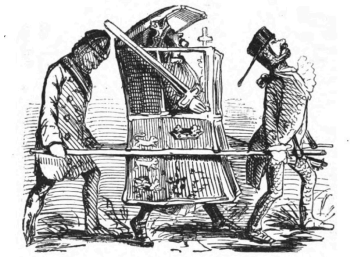
John was nearly across when he heard the tide beginning to roar with fearful fury. Knowing that tide and time wait for no man, he felt he was tied to time, and hurried to the opposite shore with tremendous rapidity. He succeeded in reaching land; but his horses, with his plate, linen, and money were not so fortunate, for he had the mortification of seeing all his clothes lost in the Wash, and the utter sinking of the whole of his capital.

Venting his sorrow in cursory remarks and discursive curses, he went on to Swineshead Abbey, where he passed the night in eating peaches and pears, and drinking new cider. * The cider of course added to the fermentation that was going on in his fevered frame; and even without the peaches and pears, the efforts of his physicians might have proved fruitless. He went to bed, but could not sleep, for his conscience continued to impeach him in a series of frightful dreams, to which the peaches no doubt contributed. He nevertheless made an effort to get up the next morning, and mounted his horse on the 15th of October; but he was too ill to keep his seat, and his attendants, putting him into a horse-box, got him as far as Sleaford. Here he passed another shocking night, but the next day they again moved him into the horse-box, and dragged him to Newark, where he requested that a confessor might be sent for. The abbot of Crocton, who was a doctor as well as a divine, immediately attended, and this leech was employed in drawing a confession from the lips of the tyrant. He named his eldest son, Henry, his successor, and dictated a begging-letter to the new

pope, imploring protection for his small and helpless children. He died on the 18th of October, 1216, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the seventeenth of one of the most uncomfortable reigns recorded in English history. From first to last he seems to have been cut by his subjects, for we find him eating his Christmas dinner alone in the very middle of his sovereignty, and dragged about the country in a horse-box within a day of his death, when such active treatment could not have been beneficial to the royal patient in an advanced stage of fever.

** Matthew Parin, point of accommodation than the h gentleman. His case reminds us of an individual, w finding himself in a sedan with neither top nor bo it, came to the conclusion that he might as well h but for "the look of the thing." So it may be saic that deprived of all the substantial advantages of he might but "for the name of the thing" have just been a private individual.*

The character of John has been so fully developed in the account of his reign that it is quite unnecessary to sum him up on the present occasion. If he harassed the barons, they certainly succeeded in returning the compliment; for he seems to have had a most unpleasant time of it. He had the title of king, but was often worse off.



Original Size

BOOK III. THE PERIOD FROM THE ACCESSION OF HENRY THE THIRD, TO THE END OF THE REIGN OF RICHARD THE SECOND. A.D. 1216—1399.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. HENRY THE THIRD, SURNAMED OF WINCHESTER.



Original Size

HENRY, the eldest son of John, was a child under ten years of age at the time of his father's death, but his brother-in-law, the Earl of Pembroke, brought him to Gloucester and got him crowned by Gualo, who had always acted as a friend of the family. The coronation, which took place on the 28th of October, 1216, was very indifferently got up, for the crown had not come from the Wash, where it had been lying in soak ever since John's unfortunate expedition across the water from Wisbeach. Gualo therefore took a ring from his finger, and put it on the young king's head, as a substitute for the missing diadem. The coronation party consisted of three earls, three bishops, and four barons, with a sprinkling of abbots and priors, comprising altogether a retinue of about thirty individuals.

The clergy of Westminster and Canterbury complained bitterly of the ceremony having been "scamped," by which their rights had been invaded, or, in other words, by which they had been done out

of their perquisites. The first coronation was therefore treated as a mere rehearsal, and a more regular performance afterwards took place, with new machinery, dresses, decorations, and all the usual properties.

On the 11th of the following November, Pembroke was appointed *rector Regis et Regni*—ruler of the king and kingdom—so that Henry the Third was sovereign *de jure* with a *de facto* viceroy over him. This arrangement was made at a great council held at Bristol, where Magna Charta was revised with a view to the publication of a new and improved edition.

Louis, on hearing of John's death, puffed himself up with a certainty of success, but he only realised the old fable of the French frog and the British bull; for, becoming inflated with pride, he was not long in bursting like an empty bubble.

As Christmas, 1216, was close at hand, a truce was arranged, to enable each party to enjoy the holidays. Louis took advantage of the vacation to go to Paris to consult his father Philip, who, like a modern French king of the same name, was remarkable for his tact in doing the best for his own family. On his return to England, Louis encountered some hostility from the hardy mariners of the Cinque Ports—the Deal and Dover boatmen of that day—but reaching Sandwich, he got over the flats with the usual facility. He however spitefully burned the town to the ground, merely because it was one of the Cinque Ports, which had turned crusty at his approach, though it was hardly fair of him to mull the only port that did not prove too strong for him. Hostilities were continued on both sides with varying success, until the Count de la Perche, a French general, flushed with a recent triumph at Mount Sorel, in Leicester, determined to attack the Castle of Lincoln. He would probably have

succeeded, but for the resistance of a woman, the widow of the late keeper of the castle, who, with the obstinacy of her sex, refused to surrender. The Count de la Perche, ashamed of being beaten by one of the gentler sex, continued the attack, and refusing to quit the town, found himself involved in a series of street rows of the most alarming character.

Pembroke having collected a large force, sent part of it into the castle by the back garden gate, and the other part into the town, so that poor de la Perche found it impossible to move either one way or the other. The English literally gave it him right and left till he died; and after falling upon the almost defenceless French, they gave the name of "the fair of Lincoln" to a battle about as unfair as any recorded in the pages of history.

This event, which came off on the 20th of May, 1217, was followed in June by a conference which, like Panton Square, led to nothing. Louis made one more attempt upon Dover, but he had no means to carry on the war, and he was obliged to raise the siege, as he could not raise the money. He hastened to London, which he had no sooner entered than the English shut the gates and locked him in; while the pope sent a tremendous bull down upon him, to add to his annoyances. Louis began to feel that he had had quite enough of it, and being anxious for a little peace, he proposed one to Pembroke. The terms were soon agreed upon, but Louis was detained in town some little time for want of the money to pay his debts and his journey home again. The citizens of London forming themselves into a loan society, advanced a few pounds to the French prince, who deserves some credit for not having taken French leave of his creditors. By the terms of the treaty he surrendered all his claims upon the English crown,

which seems to have been rather a superfluous sacrifice, as he had been trying it on for some time, and found that the cap never fitted.

As Louis went out of London at the East End, to embark for France, Henry, who had been at Kingston, came in at Hyde Park Corner. Pembroke, the regent, made him exceedingly popular by advising him to confirm Magna Charta, and to add a clause or two for the purpose of freshening it up, so that the new edition might repay perusal. Unfortunately for the prospects of the kingdom, Pembroke died, in May, 1219, and was buried in the Temple Church, where his tomb is still to be seen by anyone who can obtain a bencher's order. The regent's authority was now divided between Hubert de Burgh and Peter—or, as Rapin christens him—William des Roches, the Bishop of Winchester. These two individuals, though jealous of each other, agreed in the propriety of another coronation, probably on account of the patronage it gave to those who happened to be in power; and as the couple in question had just taken office, they were anxious to realise some of the profits at the earliest opportunity. In the quarrels between these two worthies, Des Roches was getting rather the upper hand, when Hubert de Burgh, in 1223, got the pope to declare that the king, who was only sixteen years of age, had attained his majority. Thus, like the dog in the manger, Hubert determined that no one else should enjoy a position which he himself was unable to profit by. This was an "artful dodge" of the cunning Hubert, to get the game into his own hands, for Henry on being pronounced "of age," having received a surrender of various castles and fortified places from the barons, gave back those which he had no occasion for to the wily minister. The barons, finding

themselves bamboozled, became exceedingly angry with the king and Hubert, but the latter went on, alternately hanging and excommunicating, until he had settled the obstreperous and quelled the turbulent.

The year 1225 must ever be remarkable for the refusal of Parliament—a name that was then coming into use—to grant supplies without asking any questions. This had formerly been the usual practice, but when Hubert coolly proposed a grant of a fifteenth of all the movable property in the kingdom for the use of the king, the Parliament said it was all very well, but if the money was given there ought to be something to show for it. Henry accordingly gave another ratification of Magna Charta, which was a good deal like the old superfluous process of putting butter upon bacon, for he had already twice ratified that important document. In those days, however, there was no objection to giving the lily an extra coat of paint, or treating the refined gold to an additional layer of gilding.

In the year 1228, Henry had collected an army at Portsmouth to sail for France, but Hubert de Burgh, who seems to have held the place of First Lord of the Admiralty as well as his other offices, had not provided a sufficient number of vessels. When the troops were about to embark it was found impossible to stow them away even with the closest packing. Henry flew into a violent passion with Hubert, accusing him of pocketing the money he ought to have laid Goode out in ships, and the king had drawn his sword, intending to run the minister through, when the Earl of Chester ran between them, exclaiming "Hold!" with intense significance.



The Earl of Chester interposing between Henry the Third and Hubert de Burgh

Original Size

This fine dramatic situation told exceedingly well; for Hubert de Burgh got off, though the king did not, and the expedition was postponed until the year following. He passed over into Normandy, a.d. 1229, but he preferred feasting to fighting, and the only advance he made was by continually running away, which kept him constantly ahead of the enemy. He, however, threw all the blame of the failure on Hubert, whose shoulders must have been tolerably broad to have borne all that his master chose to cast on to them.

The king returned to England very much out of pocket and completely out of spirits. He applied to his old paymaster, the Parliament, but his conduct had excited so much disgust, that instead of money, or as it was then called, blunt, he got a blunt refusal. His majesty, whose tone had hitherto been that of command, now assumed the humble air of the mendicant, and he adopted the degraded clap-trap of his being "a real case of distress," in order to obtain a subsidy. He declared his inability to pay his way, but as his way was never to pay at all, this argument availed him very little. He was, however, getting rapidly shorter and shorter every day, when fearing that he would perhaps compromise the dignity of the

crown by pawning it, or sell the regalia for the purpose of regaling himself, the Parliament agreed to let him have a trifle for current expenses. This consisted of three marks for every fief held immediately of the crown, * which was little enough to give him an excuse for not paying his debts, and yet sufficient to allow him to rush into fresh extravagances. In the year 1232, Henry, having of course spent every shilling of his small supply, renewed his application to Parliament, alleging that he was desirous of discharging the liabilities incurred in his expedition to France, but the barons firmly, and not very respectfully, refused any further pecuniary assistance. They urged in effect, that they had already been doubly robbed of their services and their cash, for they had never been paid for the one, and had been almost drained of the other. The nobles, who had derived nearly all they possessed from plunder, could not see the justice of the principle, that as they had done to others they deserved to be done, and they peremptorily refused to comply with the attempted exactions of the sovereign.

** Rapin's Histoire d'Angleterre, tome ii., p. 386 second edition where he turned in to the priory. T first determined to have him out, dead or alive, a of upwards of twenty thousand people, says Rapin, about to start with the Mayor of London to take th minister into custody. How such a crowd was got to those days out of the mere superfluous idlers of t is not known, ana we are equally in the dark how t that this mob continued doing nothing, while the k listened to remonstrances from various quarters ag violence of his measures.*

Having failed in his attack on the pockets of his

Parliament, Henry looked with an envious eye on the comfortably lined coffers of his minister. Hubert de Burgh, though he enjoyed the reputation of a trusty servant, had taken care to feather his nest, nor did the feathers lie very heavily on his conscience, for in those days the greatest weight that could be placed upon the mind was always portable. The tonnage of Hubert's conscience appears to have been considerable, for though he carried a good cargo of peculation, he seems never to have evinced any disposition to sink under his burden. Henry became jealous of the good fortune of his minister, and resolved, for the purpose of getting his savings, to effect his ruin. Presuming Hubert to have been a dishonest man, and granting that there is policy in the recommendation to "set a thief to catch a thief," the king could not have done better than to send for Des Boches, the Bishop of Winchester, to assist in cleaning out the favourite. Poor De Burgh was in the first instance charged with magic and enchantment; which may be considered equivalent to an impeachment of the minister of the present day for phantasmagoria and thimble-rig.

In these enlightened times we cannot conceive the Premier being sent to the Tower on a suspicion of jack-a-lantern and blind hookey, though it was for offences of this class that Hubert was at first arraigned on the prosecution of his sovereign. These frivolous charges having fallen to the ground, the king called upon him for an account of all the money that had passed through his hands; when the minister having kept no books and being wholly without vouchers, cut a very pretty figure. As he had been in the habit of cutting figures all through his career, this result was not to be wondered at. He, however, rummaged among his papers and found an

old patent, given him by John, absolving him from the necessity of rendering any account, but his enemies replied, that this was only a receipt in full up to the time of Henry's accession. Hubert finding he could not get out of the scrape, determined, if possible, to get out of the country; but he proceeded no further on the road than Merton, London mobs must have been rather more tractable in the thirteenth than in the nineteenth century, for the twenty thousand people dispersed when it was understood, after considerable negotiation, that their services would not be required. Indeed, according to a more recent historian, they had actually started when a king's messenger was despatched to call them back again.

Hubert, who had found the priory at Merton exceedingly slow, started off to St. Edmund's Bury to see his wife, who resided there. He had got as far as Brentwood, and had gone to bed, when he was roused by a loud knocking at the door, which caused him to put his head out of the window and inquire who or what was wanted. "Is there a person of the name of Hubert de Burgh stopping here?" exclaimed the captain of the troop; but the wily minister, for the sake of gaining time, pretended to misunderstand the question. "Hubert de What?" he exclaimed, as he slipped on a portion of his dress; but the soldier repeated the name with a tremendous emphasis on the syllable Burgh, which caused a shudder in the frame of Hubert. He, however, had the presence of mind to direct them to the second door round the corner. Having got them away from the front of the cottage by this manouvre, he ran downstairs into the street, and made his way to the chapel. Here he was seized by his pursuers, who placed him on a horse, and tied his feet together under the animal's

stomach. Hubert must have had legs of a most extraordinary length, or the horse must have been a very genteel figure to have permitted this arrangement, which we find recorded in all the histories.

It is possible that the brute upon which De Burgh was secured may have been a donkey, in which case the legs of the ex-favourite might have been long enough to admit of their being tied in a double knot —and perhaps even in a bow—under the animal's stomach. In this uncomfortable position he was trotted off to the Tower; but the clergy being incensed at the violation of sanctuary, Hubert was remounted in the same style, and trotted back again. He was placed in the church as before, but all communication with it was cut off, a trench dug round it, and Hubert was left without any food but that which is always so plentiful under similar circumstances—namely, food for reflection.

After "chewing the bitter cud" until there was nothing left to masticate, he intimated from the steeple his desire to surrender. He had remained forty days shut up without food, fire, or any other clothing but the wrapper in which he had made his escape from his lodgings at Brentwood. The once burly De Burgh had, of course, become dreadfully thin, and the thread of existence seemed to be inclosed in a mere thread-paper. In this state he was taken to the Tower; but he was soon released to take his trial before his peers, who would have condemned him to death, but the king, looking on the minister as a golden goose, merely seized the accumulated eggs, and sent him to prison at the Castle of Devizes, until some other means were devised of getting hold of the remainder of his property.

Hubert had scarcely been in prison a year, when he took advantage of a dark night to drop himself over one of the battlements. He however found that one good drop deserved another, for he had fallen into a ditch containing a good drop of water, in which he remained absorbed for several seconds. Having crawled out, he commenced wringing his hands and his clothes, but feeling there was no time to be lost, he made his way to a country church, whither he was traced by the drippings of his garments, which had left a mark something like that of a water-cart, along the path he had taken. Though captured by one party, he was set at liberty by another, with whom the king had become very unpopular, and Hubert was carried off to Wales, where a sect of discontents, who, had they lived in these days, would have been called the Welsh Whigs, had long been gathering. Hubert in about a year and a half, obtained a return of part of his estates, and was even restored to his honours; but the king still kept him as a sort of nest-egg to plunder as occasion required. Hubert finally compromised the claims of the sovereign by surrendering four castles, in which Hollinshed is disposed to believe that Jack Straw's and the Elephant could not have been included.

The Bishop of Winchester, or as he is termed in history, the Poictevin bishop, succeeded to power on the downfall of Hubert, and Des Boches soon filled the court with foreign adventurers. Two of a trade never agree; and the nobility, who had originally been foreign adventurers themselves, objected to the importation of any more scamps from abroad, on the principle, perhaps, that England had got plenty of that sort already. The Poictevin bishop was particularly hostile to the son of the late regent, the young Earl of Pembroke, who inherited some of his

father's virtues, and what was far more interesting to old Des Boches, the whole of his father's property. Young P. was in Ireland, where he had large estates, which the Poictevin bishop desired the governors of that country to confiscate. He promised them a slice, and the governors being—as Rapin has it—*avides d'un si bon morceau*—(ravenous for such a tit-bit) determined on getting hold of it. Treachery was accordingly resorted to, and Pembroke was basely stabbed in the back whilst sitting unsuspectingly at his own Pembroke table. This was more than the barons could bear; and they told Henry very plainly, through Edmund, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, that if Des Roches was not dismissed, the sovereign himself would be sent forthwith about his business. The Poictevin was ordered off to Winchester, with directions to limit his views to his own see; and the patriotic Canterbury, who had of course only been anxious for the good of his country, obtained the power from which his predecessor had been cleverly ousted.

The Bishop of Winchester was soon afterwards called to Rome by the pope, who pretended to require his advice, but really had an eye to his money. Des Boches imagined that he was invited for protection, but he was in fact wanted for pillage. The Poictevin was glad to escape from English *surveillance*, and was quite content to eat his mutton under the pope's eye, though he was hardly prepared for the process of picking to which he was subjected. The predecessor of Urban * was, however, all urbanity, and thus made some amends to Des Boches, who, like the majority of mankind, found victimisation a comparatively painless operation when performed by the gentle or light-fingered hands of an accomplished swindler.

** According to some authorities Celestine was pope period, and Urban did not reach the papal dignity time afterwards.*

In the year 1236, Henry married Eleanor of Provence, with immense pomp and another coronation—a ceremony the frequent repetition of which in former times was a proof of the uncertainty of regal power, for the crown could not be very firm that so often required re-soldering. The king's marriage formed, perhaps, a reasonable excuse for placing an extra hod of cement between the monarch's poll and the hollow diadem. The marriage festivities were followed by the summoning of a Parliament at Merton, where Henry passed a series of statutes that became famous under the name of the Statutes of Merton; and where he also pocketed, in the shape of-subsidies, a considerable sum of money.



Marriage of his most Gracious Majesty Henry the Third and Eleanor of Provence.

Original Size

Eleanor, the new queen, brought with her to England a quantity of needy and seedy foreigners,

most of whom were immediately promoted. One of her uncles, "named Boniface," says Matthew Paris, "from his extraordinary quantity of cheek," was raised to the see of Canterbury. She invited over from Provence a quantity of *demoiselles a marier*, whom she got off by palming them upon rich young nobles, of whom her husband held the wardship. The court was turned into a kind of matrimonial bazaar, where the wealthy scions of English aristocracy were hooked by the portionless but sometimes pretty spinsters of Provence. Nor was this all, for Isabella, the queen mother, sent over her four boys, Guy, William, Geoffrey, and Aymer, her sons, by the Count de la Marche, to be provided for. England was in fact regarded as an enormous common, upon which any foreign goose or jackass might be turned out to grass, provided he was patronised by a member of the reigning family. Henry, who was the victim of his poor relations, soon found himself short of cash, and he was obliged to get money in driblets from the Parliament, who never allowed him much at a time, and always exacted conditions which were invariably broken as soon as the cash was granted.

Henry had been married about a year, when he had the coolness to ask the nation for the expenses of his wedding. The barons declared that they had never been consulted about the match, and that the king up to the last hour of his remaining a single man had acted with great duplicity. Finding it useless to command, he resorted to the old plan of humbug, and fell back upon his old friend Magna Charta, which he confirmed once more, for about the fifth or sixth time, and of course got the money he required. This great Bill of Rights was to him a sort of stereotyped bill of exchange, upon which he could always raise a sum of money by going through the

formality of a fresh acceptance.

The history of this reign for the next few years would furnish fitter materials for the accountant than the historian, and Henry's career would be better told in a balance-sheet than in the form of narrative. Had his schedule been regularly filed it would have disclosed a series of insolvencies, from which he was only relieved by taking the benefit of some act of generosity and credulity on the part of his Parliament. At one moment he was so fearfully hard up that he was advised to sell all his plate and jewels. * "Who will buy them?" he exclaimed; —"though," he added, glancing at his four awkward half-brothers, "if anyone would give mo anything for that set of spoons, I should be glad to take the offer." He was told that the citizens of London would purchase plate to any amount, at which he burst into violent invectives against "the clowns," as he termed them, probably on account of the presumed capacity of their breeches pockets. He made every effort to annoy the citizens, and showed his appreciation of their superfluous cash by helping himself to ten thousand pounds of it by open violence.

** Matthew Paris, Mat. West. Chron. Duncl.*

In the year 1253, Henry was once more in a fix, and again the Parliament had the folly to promise him a supply if he would go through another confirmation of Magna Charta. On the 3rd of May he attended a general meeting of the nobility at Westminster Hall where he found the ecclesiastical dignitaries holding each a burning taper in his hand, intending probably that the melting wax should make a deep impression on the sovereign. Some are of opinion that this process was illustrative of the

necessity sometimes said to exist for holding a candle to a certain individual. Henry took the usual quantity of oaths, and the priests dashed to the ground their tapers, which went out in smoke, and were so far typical of the king's promises. On receiving the money he went to Guienne, from which he soon came back—as a popular vocalist used to say by way of cue to his song—"without sixpence in his pocket, just like—Love among the roses."

The pope now brought in a heavy bill of £100,000 for money lent, of which Henry declared he had never enjoyed the benefit. The pope merely observed, that he was clearing his books and must have the matter settled. The king turned upon the clergy, upon whom he drew bills, one of which was addressed to the Bishop of Worcester, who declared they might take his mitre in execution for the amount, and the Bishop of Gloucester said they might serve his the same; but if they did he would wear a helmet. Richard, the king's brother, who was very wealthy, hearing that the German empire was in the market for sale, made a bold bid for it. There was another competitor for the lot in the person of Alphonso, king of Castile, but Richard put down £700,000 and was declared the purchaser. This liberality was of course at the expense of poor England, which was so completely drained of cash that when Henry met his Parliament on the 2nd of May, 1258, he found the barons in full armour, rattling their swords, as much as to say, that these must furnish a substitute for the precious metals.

Henry was alarmed at the menacing aspect of the assembly, but one of his foreign half-brothers began vapouring, in a mixed *patois* of bad French, to the bent down, but not yet broken, English. The king himself resorted to his old trick of promising, and

pledged his word once more with his usual success, though it was already pawned over and over again for a hundred times its value. The barons, however, were still ready to take it in; though they had got by them already an enormous stock of similar articles, all unredeemed, and daily losing their interest. The leader of the country party was at this time Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, a Frenchman, who had married Eleanor, the king's sister. He had quarrelled and made it up with Henry once or twice, and the following conversation is recorded to have taken place, in 1252, between the earl and his sovereign:—

"You are a traitor," said the king.

"You are a liar!" replied the courtier.

After this brief and decisive dialogue Leicester went to France, but his royal brother-in-law soon invited him back again.

On the 11th of June, 1258, there met, at Oxford, an assembly to which the Royalists gave the name of the Mad Parliament. There was a good deal of method in the madness of the members, for they appointed twenty-four barons and bishops as a committee of government. There was some insanity in the proposition to hold three sessions in a year, but it is doubtful whether Dr. Winslow, or any other eminent physician would have found, in the statutes passed at the time sufficient to form the foundation of a statute of lunacy. Henry seems to have been most in want of Dr. Winslow's care, for his majesty was exceedingly mad at the decisive measures of the barons, and would have been glad of an asylum where he would have been safe from their influence.

The Oxford Parliament, which was certainly an odd compound of good and bad, or light and dark—the regular Oxford mixture—passed some measures

of a very miscellaneous character. The annual election of a new sheriff, and the sending to Parliament of four knights, chosen by the freeholders in each county, were judicious steps; but in some other respects the barons abused their power, and got a good deal of abuse themselves in consequence. The queen's relations and the king's half-brothers were literally scared out of the kingdom; but only to make way for the advancement of the friends and relatives of the Mad Parliament.

Soon after it met, Richard, who had emptied his pockets in Germany, wanted to come to England to replenish them. He was met at St. Omer by a messenger, stating that there would be no admittance unless he complied with the new regulations made by the barons. To this he reluctantly consented, and he joined his brother the king, with the full intention of organising an opposition, which he found already commenced by the Earl of Gloucester, who had grown jealous of Leicester's influence. Even at that early period the struggles between the "Ins and the Outs," which form the chief business of political life, had already commenced, and there was the same sort of shuffling from side to side, and principle to principle, which the observer of statesmanship at the present day cannot fail to recognise.

There was among all parties a vast protestation of regard for Magna Charta, which served the same purpose then as has since been answered by the British Constitution and the British lion. Henry, seeing with delight the divisions of the barons, got a bull from the pope to serve as a piece of india-rubber for his conscience, by rubbing out all the oaths he had taken at Oxford.

On the 2nd of February, 1261, he announced his

intention of governing without the aid of the committee, and immediately went to the Tower, of which he took possession. He then dropped in at the Mint, where he emptied every till, and even waited, according to some, while a shilling, which was in the course of manufacture, got cool in the crucible. The Mint authorities were of course exceedingly obsequious, and may probably have offered to send him home a batch of new pennies that were not quite done, if his majesty desired it. "No, thank you," would have been Henry's reply, "I'll take what you've got;" and so he did, for off he marched with the whole of it.

The arbitrary conduct of the barons had somewhat disgusted the people, many of whom had discovered that one tyrant was not quite so bad as four-and-twenty. London declared for Henry, and Leicester ran away; but the vacillating cockneys soon declared for Leicester, which brought him back again. The king, who had been at such pains to secure the Tower, had the mortification to find it secured him, for he was safely locked up in it. Prince Edward, his son, flew to Windsor Castle, and the queen, his mother, was going down to the stairs at London Bridge to take a boat to follow him. She had shouted "Hi!" to the jack-in-the-water, and was stepping into a wherry, when she was recognised by the mob, who called after her as a witch, and pelted her with mud and missiles. The Lord Mayor, who happened to be passing, gallantly offered her his arm, walked with her to St. Paul's, and left her in the care of the doorkeeper. This anecdote is circumstantially given by all the chroniclers, among whom we need only mention Wykes, West, and Trivet—the correctness of the last being so remarkable that "right as a Trivet" is to this day a proverb. After a prodigious quantity of

quarrelling between Henry and Son on one part, and Leicester and Co. on the other, the matters in dispute were referred to the arbitration of the French king, Louis the Ninth, who made an award in favour of Henry, which the barons of course refused to abide by. A civil war broke out with great fury, in which the Jews were victimised by both parties, though opposed to neither. They were slaughtered by the barons for being attached to the king, and were also slaughtered by the king's party for being attached to the barons. If they were attached to either it certainly was one of the most unfortunate attachments we ever heard of, and the strength of the attachment must have been great which could have survived such horrible treatment.

On the 14th of May, 1264, the king's party and that of Leicester met in battle. His majesty was at Lewes, in a hollow, where he thought himself deep enough to have got into a position of safety. The earl was upon the Downs, which Wykes calls a "downy move," for the spot was raised and commanded a view of the movements of the sovereign.

Leicester commenced the attack, which soon became general. Prince Edward charged the London militia, who could have charged pretty well in return if they been behind their counters; but they had no idea of selling their lives at any price. They accordingly fled in all directions and the prince paid them off all he owed them for the manner in which they had served his mother. Leicester concentrated his force upon the king to whom he gave personally a sound thrashing.

Having cudgelle the king to his heart's content, he took him into custody. Prince Edward was seized, but the latter escaped on the Thursday in Whitsun week, 1265, and raised a powerful force, with which

he marched to Evesham against his father's enemies.

Leicester had formed a camp near Kenilworth, and having got the king still in his possession, he encased the poor old man in armour, put him on a horse, and turned him into the field on the morning of the battle. The veteran was soon dismounted, and was on the point of being killed, when he roared out "Hollo! stop! I am Henry of Winchester!" His son recognising his voice, seized him and literally bundled him into a place of safety. "What do you do here?" muttered Edward, somewhat annoyed, but the aged Henry could not explain a circumstance which might have played old Harry with the cause of the Royalists. Leicester's horse fell under him, but the earl bounding to his feet, continued to fight, until finding the matter getting serious, he paused to inquire whether the Royalists gave quarter. "There is no quarter for traitors," was the only reply he received, followed by a poke in the shape of a home-thrust from the sword of one of the enemy. Deprived of their leader, Leicester's followers had nothing to follow, and the Royalists obtained a victory. The king was now restored to power, but there were still a few rebels in the forest of Hampshire, one of whom, named Adam Gourdon, came to a personal contest with Prince Edward, who got him down, placed his foot on his chest, and generously restored him to liberty. Gourdon was introduced to the queen the same night as a sort of prize rebel, and became a faithful adherent to the royal family.

Henry was now left at home all by himself, his son Edward having gone to Palestine. The old man often wrote to request the prince to return, for his majesty found himself unequal to the bother of ruling a people still disposed to be occasionally turbulent. A sedition had broken out at Norwich, which Henry

had gone to quell, and he was on his way back to London, when he was laid up at St. Edmund's Bury by indisposition. Being considered a slight illness, it was at first slighted, but the royal patient became worse, and he died on the 16th of November, 1272, at the respectable age of sixty-eight, according to one historian, * sixty-four according to a second, ** and sixty-six according to a third. *** The last seems to be the nearest to the truth, for Henry had been a king about fifty-six years, and he was about ten when he came to the throne. He was buried at Westminster Abbey, where for nothing on Sundays and for twopence on week days, posterity may see his tomb.

** Macfarlane.*

*** Hume.*

****Rapin.*

The character of Henry the Third was an odd compound, a species of physiological grog, a mixture of generous spirit and weak water, the latter predominating over the former in a very considerable degree. He was exceedingly fond of money, of which he extracted such enormous quantities from his subjects, that if the heart and the pocket were synonymous, as they have sometimes been called, Henry would have had the fullest possession of the hearts of his people. His manner must have been rather persuasive; for if the Parliament refused a subsidy at first they were always talked over by his majesty, and made to relax their purse-strings before the sitting closed. Some gratitude may perhaps be due to him on account of his patronage of literature, for he started the practice

of keeping a poet, in an age when poets found considerable difficulty in keeping themselves. The bard alluded to was one Master Henry, who received on one occasion a hundred shillings, * and was subsequently "ordered ten pounds;" but, considering the unpunctuality of the king in money matters, it was doubtful whether the order for ten pounds was ever honoured. The persecution of the Jews was among the most remarkable features of the career of the king, who used to demand enormous sums of them, and threatened to hang them if they refused compliance. In this he only followed the example of his father, John, who, it is said, demanded ten thousand marks of an unfortunate Jew, one of whose teeth was pulled out every day, until he paid the money. It is said by Matthew Paris ** that seven were extracted before the cash was forthcoming. This was undoubtedly the fact, but it is not generally known, that, with the cunning of his race, the Jew contrived to get some advantage out of the treatment to which he was subjected. It is said that he exclaimed, after the last operation had been performed, "They don't know it, but them teeth was all decayed. There's not a shound von among the lot, so I've done 'em nicely;" and with this piece of consolation, he paid the money.

** Madox, p. 208.*

*** Page 160.*

To his reign has also been attributed the origin of the custom of sending deputies to Parliament to represent the commons, a practice that we find from looking over the list of the lower house, is liable to be in some cases greatly abused. "Take him for all in

all," as the poet says, "we shall never"—that is to say, we hope we shall never—"look up on his like again."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.
EDWARD THE FIRST,
SURNAMED LONGSHANKS.



Original Size

EDWARD was the first king who came to the throne like a gentle-man, without any of that indecent clutching of the crown and sacking of the treasury which had been practised by almost every one of his predecessors. Perhaps his absence from England was the chief cause of this forbearance; but it is at all events refreshing to meet with a sovereign whose accession was not marked by a burglary upon the premises where the public treasure happened to

be deposited.

On the 20th of November, 1272, four days after his father's death, Edward was proclaimed king by the barons at the New Temple. It was probably under the shade of the old fig-tree in Fig-Tree Court, that they read his titles of King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine. Edward had been engaged in the crusades, as one of those fighting missionaries who conveyed "sermons in stones" through the medium of slings, and knocked unbelief literally upon the head with the Christian battle-axe. One day he nearly lost his life, by the hands of an assassin, disguised as a postman from the Emir of Jaffa, who, feigning a wish to be converted, had opened a correspondence with Edward.

The English prince was lying in his *robe-de-chambre* on a couch, when the usual salaam—the emir's postman's knock—was made at the door of his apartment. The messenger had brought a letter, of which Edward had scarcely broken the wax, when his doom was nearly sealed by a blow from a dagger, hidden in the postman's sleeve. The prince parried the attack with his arms, which were his only weapons, until, wresting the dirk from his assailant's hands, he used it to put a period to the existence of the would-be murderer, by a process of punctuation which no grammarian has attempted to describe.

Edward's wound was not deep, but his enemies had been deep enough to introduce some venom into it. When he heard the fact he gave himself up to despair, for he considered that his existence was irretrievably poisoned. A romantic story is told of Queen Eleanor having sucked the poison from her husband's arm, but it is quite certain that such succour was never afforded him, and the anecdote is therefore not worth the straw that the operation

would have required.



Edward's Arm in the hands of his Medical Advisers.

Original Size

The prince owed his recovery to the prompt attendance of an English surgeon, who happened to be settled at Acre, and to some drugs supplied by the Grand Master of the Templars, who opened his heart and his chest—of medicine—for the relief of the suffering Edward. There is no doubt that Eleanor had sufficient affection for her husband, to have prompted her to draw the poison into her mouth had it ever entered her head; but the fact appears to be that the remedy was never thought of until a century after the infliction of the wound, which was a little too late to be of service to the patient, though nothing is ever too late to be made use of by the chroniclers. The notion was too good to be rejected by these very credulous gentlemen, who are easily induced to convert might have been, into has been, when the latter course is better adapted for exciting an agreeable interest.

Feeling tolerably secure of the throne, he was in no hurry to take possession, but enjoyed an agreeable tour before returning to England. He paid

a visit to the new pope, his old friend Theobald, though there was some difficulty in getting into Theobald's road, for his holiness had left Rome for Civita Vecchia. Edward spent some time in Italy, for among the many irons he had in the fire were two or three Italian irons, which he desired to look after before arriving in his own country. He next visited Paris, and instead of coming straight home with the diligence that might have been expected, he turned back to Guienne, where he was invited by the Count of Chalons to a tournament.

'"Twas in the merry month of May," in the year 1274, "When bees from flower to flower did hum," exactly as they do in the present day, that the parties met lance to lance, each attended by a host of champions. Edward brought one thousand with him, but the Count of Chalons came with two thousand, an incident which at once raised a suspicion that the chivalrous knight intended foul play towards his royal antagonist. A tournament in sport soon became a battle in earnest, and the count rushed upon Edward, grasping him by the neck to embrace the opportunity of unhorsing him. Nothing, however, could make him resign his seat, and the Count of Chalons was soon licking the dust, or rather, the saw-dust spread over the arena in which the tournament was given. Edward was so angry at the trick which had been played, that he hit his antagonist several times while down, and kept hammering at the armour of the count like a smith at an anvil. The Count of Chalons roared out lustily for mercy, but Edward refusing to grant it, continued to "give it him" in another sense for several minutes. At length the count offered to surrender his sword, which was igno-miniously rejected by the English king, who called up a common foot soldier to take away the

dishonoured weapon.



Edward and the Count of Chalons.

Original Size

It was not till the year 1274 that Edward thought of returning to England, and he sent over to order his coronation dinner on a scale that would have done honour to a mayoral banquet. The bill of fare included so many heads of cattle, that the shortest way to get through the cooking would have been to light a fire under Leadenhall Market, and roast the whole of the contents by a single operation. If such a feast had really taken place, it was enough to put the times out of joint for a twelvemonth afterwards. On the 2nd of August, 1274, Edward arrived at Dover, and on the 19th of the same month he was crowned at Westminster Abbey, with his wife, Eleanor. This was the wonderful woman who was erroneously alleged to have sucked the poison from her husband's arm, a feat that has had no parallel in modern times, if we except the individual who undertook to swallow liquid lead and arsenic before a generous British public, and who, by surviving the operation, gave great offence to a portion of the enlightened audience. Edward, on coming to England, found

plenty of loyalty, but very little cash; and though he had no objection to reign in the hearts of his people, he felt the necessity of making himself also master of their pockets. A crown without money would have been a mere tin kettle, tied to the head, instead of the tail, of the unlucky dog who might be compelled to wear it.

The king turned his attention to the unfortunate Jews, who seemed to be tolerated in England as human bees, employed in collecting the sweets of wealth only for the purpose of having it taken away from them. Edward literally emptied them out of the kingdom, for the purpose of plundering their hives more effectually. He allowed some of them their travelling expenses out of England, but even this was more than they required in many cases, for the inhabitants of the ports saved the Jews the cost of their journey by most inhumanly drowning them.

Edward, however unjust himself, disliked injustice in others; and indeed, with the common jealousy of dealers on a very large scale, he seemed to desire a monopoly of all the robbery and oppression practised within his own dominions. In the year 1289, the judicial bench was disgraced by a set of extortioners whose existence we can scarcely comprehend in the present age, when a corrupt judge would be as difficult to find as the philosopher's stone, or as that desirable but impossible boon to the briefless barrister, perpetual motion. The Chief Justice of the King's Bench had actually encouraged his own servants to commit murder, for the sake of the fees that would accrue upon the trial, and, of course, the acquittal of the culprits. The Chief Baron of-the Exchequer had kept all the money paid into court upon every action that had been tried, and was even discovered going disgraceful snacks with the usher in

illegal charges upon suitors. As to the puisnes, they had been detected in selling their judgments *in banco* at so much a folio, and even hiring pickpockets to rob the leading counsel as they went out of court with their fees in their pockets. The Chancellor had spent the money of nearly all his wards, and would never fix a day for a decree until he was positively forced, when he would pronounce a decision unintelligible to all parties. These disgraceful proceedings were made a pretext by the king for taking eighty thousand marks from the judges, his majesty observing, that if he took from them all the marks they possessed, he could not remove the stains from their characters. This shallow sophism, though it might have satisfied the king himself, was not consolatory to the judges, nor was it calculated to reimburse the people for the losses sustained by judicial delinquency. It is said that the first clock placed opposite the gate of Westminster Hall was purchased with a fine of eight hundred marks upon the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and the popular saying "that's your time of day" is supposed to have arisen from a sarcasm that used to be addressed by the crowd outside to the judicial delinquent.

As a measure of further extortion, Edward became suddenly very particular as to the titles by which the nobles held their estates, and sent round commissioners to demand the production of the deeds by which the barons acquired their property. Earl de Warenne was called upon among the rest, and desired that the commissioners might be politely shown in to him. "So, gentlemen," he mildly observed, "you wish to see the title by which I hold my property."

"Exactly so," was the reply, which was followed by a commonplace expression of sorrow at being

obliged to trouble him, "It is no trouble in the least," rejoined Earl de Warenne, drawing a tremendous sword, which he brandished before the eyes of the commissioners, and begged their close inspection of the title by which his ancestors had acquired his possessions.



Earl de Warenne producing his title to the Commissioners

Original Size

"You see, gentlemen," he continued, "there is no flaw to be detected, and if after looking at my title you want a specimen of my deeds, I can very speedily give you the satisfaction you require." The historian need scarcely add that the commissioners backed out, with an observation, "that a mere abstract of the title—a drawing of the sword out of its scabbard—was all that could possibly be required." Edward having other fish to fry, had hitherto neglected Wales, but that land of mountains was a scene of frequent risings, which he now determined to "put down" with promptitude and vigour. Llewellyn, the Prince of North Wales, was summoned to London to do homage as a tributary to the English crown, but his ambition having been

fired by some prophecies of the famous Merlin, the fiery Welshman sent word that he would not come so far to see Edward, which was equivalent to a declaration that he would see him further. The English king having resolved to punish so much insolence, about Easter, 1277, crossed the Dee—not the sea, as some historians have alleged—with a large army and blocked poor Llewellyn up in his own principality. His brother David having been made an English baron, and married to the daughter of an English earl, was at first devoted to the English, but his native breezes fanned the still dormant flame of patriotism, and he joined his brother in resisting the foreign enemy. Edward occupied Anglesey, but in crossing over to the mainland he found himself in the most dreadful straits at the Menai. He lost several hundred men, and was obliged to fly for protection to one of his castles, but a king in those days could make every Englishman's house his castle, by unceremoniously walking into it. Llewellyn was somewhat emboldened by partial success, and foolishly advanced to the valley of the Wye, without anyone knowing wherefore. Roger, the savage Earl of Mortimer, was immediately down upon him, and sacrificed him before he had time even to put on his armour, in which he was only half encased when he was cruelly set upon by the enemy. He had buckled on his greaves, and was in the act of putting on his breast-plate over his head when he was decapitated with the usual disregard which was at that time continually shown to the heads of families. His brother David kept cutting about the country with his sword in his hand for at least six months, until he was basely betrayed into the hands of the English. He was condemned to die the death of traitors, which included a series of barbarities too revolting to

mention. This sentence, which formed a precedent in the punishment of high treason for many ages, is one of the most disgraceful facts of our history. It casts a stigma upon every Parliament and every generation of the people in whose time this fearful penalty either was or might have been inflicted.

The leek of Wales was now entwined with the rose of England, and Edward endeavoured to propitiate his newly acquired subjects by becoming a resident in the conquered country. His wife Eleanor gave birth to a son in the castle of Caernarvon, and he availed himself of the circumstance to introduce the infant as a native production, giving him the title of Prince of Wales, which has ever since been held by the eldest son of the English sovereign.



King Edward introducing his Son as Prince of Wales, to his newly acquired Subjects.

Original Size

After remaining about a year in Wales, Edward was enabled by the tranquillity of the kingdom to take a Continental tour, in the course of which he

was often appealed to as a mutual friend by sovereigns between whom there was any difference. He acted as arbitrator in the celebrated cause of Anjou against Aragon; but while settling the affairs of others, his own were getting rather embarrassed, and he was compelled in the year 1289 to return to England.

Upon reaching home he found that Scotland was in that state of weakness which offered an eligible opportunity to a royal plunderer. The king, Alexander the Third, had died, leaving a little grandchild of the name of Margaret, as his successor. This young lady was the daughter of Eric, king of Norway, who wrote over to Edward, requesting he would do what he could for her in case of her title being disputed. The English sovereign, with a cunning worthy of a certain French old gentleman whom we need not name, recommended a marriage with his son as the best mode of protecting the royal damsel. The preliminaries were all arranged, and Eric had agreed to forward the little Margaret, who was only eight years of age, by the first boat from Norway to Britain. The child had been shipped and regularly invoiced, when she fell ill, and being put ashore at one of the Orkney Islands, she unfortunately died.

On the death of the queen being made known, claimants to the Scottish crown started up in all directions, and it was necessary to find the heir by hunting among the descendants of David of Huntingdon. John Baliol was the grandson of David's eldest daughter, and John's grandmother therefore gave Baliol a right to the crown, which was disputed by Bruce and Hastings, the sons of the youngest daughters of Huntingdon senior, whose only son, Huntingdon junior, died without issue. An opening

was thus left to the female tranches, and the introduction of those charming elements of discord—the ladies—into the question of succession, created, of course, all the confusion that arose.

Edward, having advanced to Norham, a small town on the English side of the Tweed, which, as everyone knows, forms a kind of Tweedish wrapper for Scotland, appointed a conference, which took place on the 10th of May, 1291, at which he distinctly stated that he intended regulating the succession to the Scotch throne. At this meeting Edward himself proposed the first resolution, which pledged the assembly to a recognition of the right of the English king not only to do what he liked with his own, but to do what he liked with Scotland also, which did not belong to him. One gentleman, in the body of the assembly, who remains anonymous to this day, ventured to suggest by way of amendment, that no answer could be made while the throne was vacant, and an adjournment until the next morning was agreed upon. No business was, however, done on the morrow, but a further postponement till the 2nd of June was eventually carried. When that day arrived the attendance was numerous and highly respectable, for on the platform we might have observed no less than eight competitors for the crown. Robert Bruce, who was there in excellent health and spirits, publicly declared his readiness to refer his claims to Edward's arbitration, and all the other claimants did the same. On the next day, Baliol made his appearance and followed the example of the others, and it was agreed that one hundred and four commissioners should be appointed to inquire and report to Edward previous to his giving his final award. There is little doubt that this enormous number of commissioners could only have been

intended to mystify the case, and to leave Edward at liberty to settle it his own way; a suspicion that is still further justified by his having reserved the right to add, without any limit or restriction, to the number of commissioners, and thus make "confusion worse confounded" should occasion require.

The wily Edward, pretending that it was necessary to the performance of his duty as arbitrator, got the kingdom, the castles, and other property surrendered into his hands on the 11th of June; though the Earl of Angus refused to give up Dundee and Forfar without an indemnity, which he stoutly stuck up for, and eventually obtained. None of the clergy joined in this disgraceful concession but the Bishop of Sodor, who ought to have been the very first to effervesce. The king himself went to the principal towns in Scotland with the rolls of homage, which were allowed to lie for signature, and he sent attorneys, empowered to take affidavits, into the various villages.

At length, on the 3rd of August, the commissioners met for the despatch of business, and, of course, came to no decision. In the year following they tackled the subject again, but it was found that the more they talked about it, the more they differed. Edward, by way of complicating the affair still further, summoned a Parliament to meet at Berwick on the 15th of October, 1292, at which Bruce and Baliol were fully heard, when the assembly laid down a general proposition that the lineal descendant of the eldest sister, however remote in degree, was preferable to the nearer in degree, if descended from a younger sister. This decision left everything undecided, and accordingly Edward gave judgment that Baliol should be king of Scotland, with the simple proviso that Edward should be king of

Baliol. The whole affair having been "a sell" got up between the English sovereign and the Scottish claimant, there was no demur on the part of the latter, who swore fealty, as he would have sworn that black was white, had such been the purport of the oath that his master required.

Edward took every opportunity of bullying Baliol, and even ordered him to come all the way to Westminster to defend an action brought against him for money due from Alexander the Third, his greatgrandfather. He was also served with process in the paltry suit of self *ats* Macduff; and other writs, to which he was forced to appear in person, were continually served upon him. For the smallest pecuniary claim the Scotch king was compelled to come to England to plead, until his patience at last gave way, and he turned refractory.

Edward was now at war with Philip of France, whom Baliol agreed to serve by harassing their mutual enemy. The Scotch king, who was at heart a humbug and a coward to the core, became exceedingly insolent, from the belief that Edward was somewhat down, and the proper time had arrived for hitting him. The English sovereign, who had been harassed at first by the Scotch cur, soon brought him howling for mercy, which was accorded on condition of his resigning the kingly office, a proposition which Baliol basely submitted to. Edward made a triumphal progress through Scotland, and taking a fancy to an old stone, upon which the kings had sat to be crowned at Scone, caused the very uncomfortable coronation chair to be removed to Westminster. * The people of Scotland had always considered this block to be the corner-stone of their liberties, and its removal seemed to take away the only foundation that their hopes of regaining their

independence were built upon. As long as it was in their country, they believed it would bring them good fortune; but they dreaded the reverse if the stone should be removed even so far as a stone's throw from the borders of Scotland. Edward having appointed the Earl de Warenne governor of the vanquished kingdom, and given away all the appointments that were vacant to creatures of his own, returned in triumph to England.

** Hemingford.*

In the year 1297 William Wallace, commonly known as the hero of Scotland, made his first appearance on the stage of history as a supernumerary, carrying a banner, for we find him engaged in unfurling the standard of liberty. He was at first merely the captain of a small band of outlaws —a sort of first robber—in the great drama in which he was soon to sustain a principal character. He was the second son of Sir William Wallace, of Ellerslie, and had all the qualities of a melodramatic hero, so far at least as we are enabled to judge by a description of him written a hundred years after his death with that minuteness which the old chroniclers were so fond of adopting when they knew that no one had the power of contradicting them. The celebrated Bower, who continued the Scotichronicon of Fordun, tells us that Wallace was "broad-shouldered, big-boned, and proportionately corpulent," so that his shoulders were broad enough to bear the burden he undertook; and his being corpulent gave him this advantage over his enemies, that if they had fifty thousand lives, he had undoubtedly "stomach for them all."



Portrait of William Wallace, from an old Wood Block.

Original Size

Mr. Tytler, who will perhaps excuse us for venturing on Tytler's ground, informs us in his History of Scotland that "Wallace had an iron frame," so that we have the picture of the man at once before us. For a quarrel with an English officer he had been banished from his home, and by living in fastnesses he acquired some of those loosenesses which are inseparable from a roving character. His followers comprised a few men of desperate fortunes and bad reputation, who had turned patriots, as gentlemen in difficulties generally do; for it is a remarkable fact, that the men who endeavour to discharge a debt to their country are those who never think of discharging the debts which they owe to their creditors. Success, however, covers a multitude of sins, and Wallace with his little band of outlaws, having achieved one or two small triumphs, soon found out the fact that the world which sneers at the very noblest cause in its early struggles, will always be ready to join it in the moment of victory. Wallace having been fortunate in his efforts, soon had the co-operation of Sir William Douglas and all his vassals;

just as Mr. Cobden and the Anti-Corn-Law League, after having been denounced as turbulent demagogues, and threatened with prosecution, were assisted on the eve of the fulfilment of their object by the leaders of the Opposition and the principal members of the Government.

Edward, who had been in Flanders during the commencement of the Scotch rebellion, now returned to England, and by way of propitiating his subjects, he summoned a Parliament, at which Magna Charta was again voluntarily confirmed. It is true he made a cunning effort to insert at the end of it the words "saving always the rights of our crown," * which would have been almost equivalent to striking out all the other clauses of the document. The Parliament hotly opposed the crafty suggestion, which was accordingly withdrawn, and supplies for carrying on the war against the Scotch insurgents were readily granted. In the summer of 1298, Edward came in person to Scotland at the head of a large army. Wallace, instead of waiting for a battle, retired slowly before the forces of the English king, clearing off all the provisions on the way, and thus aiming a blow at the stomach of the enemy. The invaders advanced, but there was nothing to eat; or as Mr. Tyler well expresses it, "they found an inhospitable desert" where—he might have added—they had occasion for a hospitable dinner. Wallace was now at Falkirk, from which he meditated an attack upon the king, but Edward, having been apprised of his intention, reflected that it was a game at which two could play, and he thought it as well to secure the first innings. The English king accordingly, finding the ball at his foot, took it up immediately, and at once bowled out the Scottish hero. The battle of Falkirk, was fought on the 22nd

of July, 1298, and the Scotch loss is variously stated at ten, fifteen, and sixty thousand men. In ordinary matters it is sometimes safe to believe half that we hear, but it would be more judicious to limit one's trust to ten per cent, in the records of history.

** Rapin, vol. iii., p. 72, second edition, quarto,*

The Scotch war had of course been a very expensive business, and Edward had been sponging upon his subjects to an alarming extent during its continuance. In 1294 he had taken from the clergy half their incomes and nearly all their eatables. His purveyors first emptied their granaries, then robbed their farm-yards and ultimately pillaged their pantries; so that the king having already ransacked their pockets, the "reverend fathers," as he insultingly termed them, were in a very pretty predicament. Their larders were laid waste, their safes were no longer safe, they could not preserve their jam, their corn was instantly sacked, and even their joints of meat, from the leg to the loin, were walked off or pur-loined by the order of the sovereign. The pope, who had been applied to for protection when they were being deprived of their cattle, sent over a bull, which proved of very little use, for he soon despatched a second, by which the first was recalled in all its most important provisions.

The trading classes were not so easily robbed, for when the king began to deal with them in his own peculiar fashion, he found them rather awkward customers. Some wool had been prepared for shipping by the London merchants, when the king's agents came woolgathering to the wharfs, and carried it off with a high hand for the use of the sovereign. It is true they promised to pay, and

ordered the owners to put it down to the bill; but the traders determined that they could not do business in that manner. They were joined by some of the nobles, and among others by Hereford, the constable, and Norfolk, the marshal of England, who had a joint audience of his majesty, who threatened to hang them if they did not do his bidding. "I will neither do so, nor hang, sir king," was Norfolk's reply, in which Hereford acquiesced; so that it was evident Edward could neither trample on the marshal, nor any longer overrun the constable. Thirty bannerets and fifteen hundred gentlemen whom the king had dubbed knights joined the two nobles in their refusal to dub up, * and Edward was left almost alone. In this dilemma he appealed to the people by the old trick of an effective speech, interlarded with those clap-traps which he knew so well how to employ. He caused a platform to be erected at the door of Westminster Hall, and appeared upon it, supported by his son Edward, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Earl of Warwick. Like the schoolmaster who never administered a flogging without saying it hurt him a great deal more than the boy, the king told the people that it was more grievous to him to exact taxes from his dear people than it could be to them to bear the burden. "I am going," he exclaimed, "to expose myself to all the dangers of war for your sakes," and here he pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, behind which he winked at the Archbishop of Canterbury, who thrust his tongue into his cheek to show the prelate's relish for his master's hypocrisy.

** Heming.*

"If I return alive," continued the royal humbug, "I

will make you amends for the past; but if I fall, here is my dear son (step this way, Ned), place him on the throne (hold your head up, stupid), and his gratitude (bow, you blockhead) will be the reward of your fidelity." Here he fairly swamped his face in tears, while the archbishop turned on a couple of fountains, which came gushing through his eyes, and the meeting was literally dissolved by the practice of this piece of crying injustice towards the people. Not only had he melted the hearts of the traders by this manouvre, but he drew streams of coin for the liquidation of his debts from their pockets. With the cash thus collected he started to join Guy, Earl of Flanders, against Philip le Bel, a very pretty sort of fellow, between whom and Edward there was a contest for the possession of the daughter of the Guy, the fair Philippa. The English king had, as early as 1294, contracted a marriage for the Prince of Wales with this young lady, who was only nine when the match was agreed upon. The happiness of the Flemish infant of course went for nothing in the game of craft and ambition which was being played by the intriguing French king, who had no other object but the extension of his personal influence. Though he may have been the first, he was certainly not the last Philip on the throne of France to force the inclinations of royal children on the subject of marriage for his own purposes.

Edward the Fourth had expended a large amount of English money in purchasing the support of foreign mercenaries, who had no sooner spent their wages than they discontinued their services. The English king, finding he was likely to get the worst of it, concluded a truce in the spring of 1298, and left the unfortunate Guy to fight his own battles.



Tax Collecting in the Reign of Edward the First.

Original Size

Before Edward's return home, the London citizens refused to pay the taxes, on the ground of their not having been imposed by the consent of Parliament. Many a tax-gatherer lost his time and his temper in going from door to door, and was told, tauntingly, to collect himself, when he sought to collect money for the royal treasury. The king, who was at Ghent, tried the never-failing experiment of another confirmation of Magna Charta, with the addition of what he called —in a private letter to his son—"a little one in," namely, a confirmation of the Statute *de Tallagio non concedendo*, which was an act declaring that no talliage or aid should be levied without the consent of the Parliament. This was the first occasion upon which the nation was formally invested with the sole right of raising the supplies, but the investment, after all, was not particularly eligible, as the sole right of raising the supplies carries with it the sole duty of finding the money. Not content with his confirmation of the charter, Edward, in May, 1298, was called upon to ratify, at York, the confirmation itself, and

thus spread with additional butter the constitutional bacon. This he for some time evaded by a series of paltry excuses, in which "head-ache," "previous engagement," and "out of town," were pleaded from time to time, until the barons, by following him up, got him into a *cul de sac* from which there was no escaping. He consented at last to ratify, but, in the most dishonourable manner, he contrived while signing to smuggle in a clause at the end, which, by saving the right of the Crown, rendered the whole document a wretched nullity. This was a trick he was much addicted to, for he had tried the paltry subterfuge on a previous occasion. The barons, when they saw the addition, merely shook their heads, murmured something about "a do," and returned to their homes; but Edward thought he should find no difficulty in coming over the citizens. He accordingly called a meeting in St. Paul's Churchyard, when the confirmation was read over, amid cheers, and cries of "Hear" at the end of every clause, until the last, when the shouts of "Shame!" "No, no!" "It's a dead swindle!" and "Don't you wish you may get it?" became truly terrible. Edward retained his usual self-possession during the meeting, but expressed, in side speeches to his attendants, his fears that the citizens were not such fools as he had taken them for. Making a virtue of necessity—though, by the way, virtues made out of that material very seldom appear to fit, but sit very awkwardly on the wearer—he withdrew the offensive clause at a Parliament that was held soon after Easter.

Edward and Philip, finding it convenient to make up their differences, threw overboard their respective allies, the French king giving up the Scots, and the English sovereign completely sacrificing the poor old Guy of Flanders. This earl has got the name of the

Unfortunate, but he better deserves the title of the soft Guy, the silly Guy, or the Guy that, if there happened to be a difficulty within his reach, was sure to blunder into it. He had twice been fool enough to accept an invitation from Philip, and had twice been detained as a prisoner. We therefore have little sympathy with him when we hear of his being deserted by Edward; for "the man who" will continually run his head into a noose, must expect to find the stringency of the string at some time or another.

Peace was made between the French and English kings by means of two marriages; but it seems rash to calculate upon matrimony as a source of quietude. Edward, who was a widower, married Philip's sister, Margaret, and the Prince of Wales was affianced to little Isabella, aged only six years, the daughter of the French sovereign. A treaty was concluded between the two countries on the 20th of May, 1303, by which Edward took Guienne, and gave up Flanders. The unhappy Guy was sent thither to negotiate a peace with his own subjects, but, like everything else he undertook, the poor old man made a sad mess of it. Returning to Philip with the news of his failure, he was committed to prison, which really, considering all things, seems to have been the best place for him. He was, at all events, out of harm's way, and prevented from doing mischief to himself and others by his provoking stupidity. He remained in custody till he died, but it was said of him by a contemporary that he was never known to "look alive" during the whole of his existence.

Edward, having settled his dispute with France, had time to turn his attention to Scotland, which had always been his "great difficulty," as Ireland became

the "great difficulty" to England at a later period. The English king advanced against the Scotch in a sort of hop-scotch style, first making for the North, then returning to the South, or going to the East, in a zig-zag direction. The Scots soon surrendered, and were allowed to go scot-free, with a very few exceptions. Stirling Castle proved itself possessed of sterling qualities. It held out against the besiegers with determined obstinacy, and Edward himself came to assist by throwing stones, which caused the remark to be made that the king had been brought to a very pretty pitch through the audacity of the Scotch rebels. When the provisions were exhausted, the garrison made an unprovisional surrender, and the governor gave out that he gave in, with all his companions. Wallace, having been betrayed into Edward's power, was cruelly murdered; but within six months of his death, Liberty, like a new-born infant, was in arms once more in Scotland. Robert Bruce, the grandson of old Bruce, was the new champion of his native land, and intrusted his scheme to Comyn. The latter proved treacherous, and Bruce, seeing what was Comyn, or rather, what Comyn was, killed him right off out of the way, in a convent at Dumfries. Young Bruce having mustered a party of about a dozen friends, took an excursion with them to Scone, where, in the course of a kind of picnic party, he was crowned on the 27th of March, 1306, with some solemnity. Edward was at Winchester when he heard the news, and, though very far from well, he determined on being carried to Scotland. Like John, who had been dragged about the country in a horse-box till within a few hours of his death, Edward was packed on a litter and conveyed with care to Carlisle, whence he wished to be forwarded to Scotland. Making a desperate effort,

he mounted his horse, and went six miles in four days, a pace which could only have been performed by an equestrian prodigy; for the slowest animal, unless he were a determined jibber, could scarcely have accomplished a task so difficult. * This anything but "rapid act of horsemanship" was the last act of Edward's reign, for having got to Burgh upon the Sands, he found the sand of his existence had run out, on the 7th of July, 1307. He had lived sixty-eight years, and had reigned during half that time; so that for him the stream of life had been a sort of half and half—an equal mixture—crowned by a frothy, foamy diadem. His remains were, some short time afterwards, sent to Westminster, *via* Waltham, and were buried on the 8th of October, with those of his father Henry.

** It is possible that the horse hired by the king*
occasion may have been accustomed to draw a fly, t
of which may have been in the habit of charging by

The character of Edward has been generally praised, but we are compelled to tender a bill of exceptions to the report of previous historians. He certainly added to his dominions, but if this is a merit, it may be claimed for any man who, by fraud or violence, increases his own property at the expense of his neighbours. The improvements effected in his reign were rather in spite of him than owing to his sense of justice or his liberality. He had the talent of talking people out of their money, but this quality he has only shared with many equally accomplished, but less exalted, swindlers. His attempt to smuggle a clause into Magna Charta, before the face of the citizens, was an act calculated to ruin him in the City, where putting one's hand to

paper is a proceeding that must not be trifled with. His treatment of Wallace proves him to have been a cruel and vindictive enemy; his abandonment of the poor Earl of Flanders shows that he was an insincere and treacherous friend: he was constant to his hatreds, and fickle in his likings: his animosity had the strength of fire, but in him the milk of human kindness was greatly diluted with water. He made some good laws, such as the statute of mortmain, which was first passed in his reign, but so far from there being any truth in the proverb, *necessitas non habet legem*, it is certain that necessity produced nearly every good law that Edward gave to his people.

In person, he was a head taller than the ordinary size, with black hair that curled naturally, and eyes that matched the hair in colour. * His legs were too long in proportion to his body, which gained him the nickname of Longshanks, though it would have been more respectful to have called him Daddy Long-legs, in allusion to his being the father of his people.

He observed the outward decencies of life, but in this he evinced the strength of his hypocrisy rather than the extent of his morality. It may be worthy of remark, that the title of baron, which had hitherto been common to all gentlemen who held lands of the crown, was in this reign restricted to those whom the king called to Parliament. ** During the monarchy of Edward, Roger Bacon lived and died; but as we have already expressed our antipathy to putting butter upon Bacon, we refrain from any eulogy upon that illustrious character.

** Rapin, vol. iii., p. 88.*

*** The last of the Non-Parliamentary barons is the known Baron Nathan of Kennington. He still claims among the Piers of Gravesend and Rosherrille.*

CHAPTER THE THIRD. EDWARD THE SECOND, SURNAMED OF CAERNARVON.



Original Size

EDWARD the Second was, in common phraseology, a very nice young man when he came to the throne, being twenty-three years of age, and tolerably good-looking, though he turned out eventually, according to one of the chroniclers of the times, "a very ugly customer." His first step on coming to the throne was to send for a scamp named Piers Gaveston, a Gascon youth who was full of gasconade, and had been sent

out of England by the late king as an improper character. Young Edward, who had been much attached to this early specimen of the gent., recalled Piers Gaveston, and made him a nobleman by creating him Duke of Cornwall, but never succeeded in making him a gentleman. This step was in direct violation of a solemn promise to Edward the First, who had warned his son against Gaveston, as a bad young man and by no means a desirable acquaintance for an English sovereign. Directly Piers arrived, he and his young master began to play all sorts of tricks and, by way of change, dismissed the Chancellor, the Treasurer, the Barons of the Exchequer, and all the Judges. The whole of the judicial staff of the kingdom being thrown out of employ, a panic was created in all the courts, and some of their lordships, being unable to meet the demands upon them, were compelled to go to prison. Many were stripped of all their property by the king, at the instigation of Gaveston, and the Chancellor not only lost the seals, but nis watch, and a number of other articles of value. Edward and his friend were determined to pay off those who had been instrumental to the latter's disgrace, ana among others, Langton, the Bishop of Lichfield, was put into solitary confinement, no one being allowed to speak to him, so that the unfortunate Lichfield found himself literally sent to Coventry. Gaveston, who was a dashing young spark, nearly sent England in a blaze by his return, for he was very far from popular. He could dance and sing, was passionately fond of bagatelle, and as to wine, when he took it into his head he could always drink his bottle.

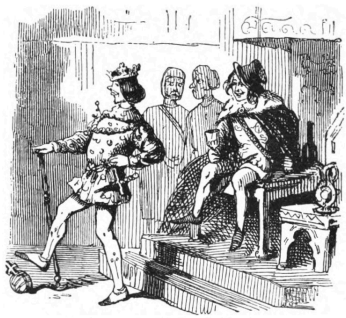
Edward went over to Boulogne, in January, 1308, to get married to Isabella, the daughter of the king of France, and left Gaveston regent of the kingdom. His

majesty soon got tired of a French watering-place, and returned to England for his coronation, which took place on the 24th of February, at Westminster. All the honours were showered upon Gaveston, and instead of giving the perquisites to the proper officers, the king handed them over, one by one, to the favourite. "Put that in your pocket, Piers, my boy," exclaimed Edward, as he transferred to his disreputable friend each article that some officer of state was entitled to. The English nobility, as they saw everything passing into the hands of the Gascon, could only murmur to each other, "What a shame!"

"That's mine, by rights!" and "Well, I never! Did you ever?" But the Bishop of Winchester gave his majesty a dose, by mixing up a pretty strong oath and making him swallow every word of it. He undertook of course to confirm the Charter, which really becomes quite a bore to the historian, who cannot help feeling something of the satiety induced by *toujours perdrix*, and he draws the humiliating conclusion that his countrymen, having got hold of a good thing, never knew when they had had enough of it. Gaveston's conduct became so overbearing, that a regular British cry of "Turn him out!" resounded from one end of the kingdom to the other. Englishmen seldom do things by halves, and having once raised a shout, they did not desist from it, but to the howl of "Turn him out," they added a demand for the sovereign to "Throw him over!" With this requisition Edward reluctantly complied, and Gaveston was expelled from England; but only to be made Governor of Ireland, until the king could get the permission of the barons to allow the favourite to come back again. This, with their usual imbecility, they speedily agreed to, and Piers soon returned to the court, which he filled with buffoons and

parasites. Any mountebank who could make a fool of himself was sure of an engagement at the palace. The king's horse-collars were worn out with being grinned through, and the family circle of royalty was never without a clown to the ring, under the management of Piers Gaveston. The favourite himself became so arrogant that he would dress himself up in the royal jewels, * wearing the crown instead of his own hat, and turning the sceptre into a walking-stick.

** Il joignoit à cela une vanité ridicule, en effec porter sur sa personne les joyaux du Roi et delà c me.—Rapin, vol. iii., p. 94.*



Edward the Second and his Favourite, Piers Gaveston.

Original Size

Edward, being in want of supplies, called a Parliament in 1309, but the Parliament would not come, which caused him to call again; and the more he kept on calling the more they kept on not coming, until the month of March, 1310, when they came in

arms, for they were determined no longer to submit to Gaveston's insolence. He had offended their order by giving them all sorts of nicknames, which are less remarkable for their wit than their coarseness. He called the Earl of Lancaster an old hog, or, perhaps, a dreadful bore; to Warwick he gave the name of the Black Dog, in reply, perhaps, to an insinuation that he, Gaveston, was a puppy; and the Earl of Pembroke was alliteratively alluded to as "Joe the Jew," * by the abusive but not very facetious favourite.

In August, 1311, Edward met the barons at Westminster. Their lordships would seem to have all got out of bed on the wrong side on the morning of the assembly, for their surliness and ill-temper were utterly unparalleled. They prepared forty-one articles, to which they insisted on having the consent of his majesty. Of course, in the catalogue of claims our old friend Magna Charta was not forgotten. This glorious instrument of our early liberties, was once more touched up, and a new clause introduced, which imparted freshness to the document. It provided "that the king should hold a Parliament once a year, or twice if need be," as if the barons had been impressed with the idea that "the more the merrier" was a sound maxim of politics. The banishment of Gaveston was, however, the grand desideratum, and this was at length consented to by Edward, who on the 1st of November, 1311, took leave of the favourite. His majesty retired to York, but soon began to ask himself—"What's this dull town to me?" in the absence of Piers, who, in less than two months, was again sharing the dissipations of his sovereign. The royal party had gone for a change to Newcastle, when the cry of "somebody coming" disturbed the revels of the king and his courtiers. This unwelcome "somebody" was no less a

personage than Edward's cousin, the Earl of Lancaster, who had arrived with a few barons for the purpose of, as they said, "giving it" to Gaveston. The king and the favourite escaped from Newcastle in a ship—probably a collier—but the sovereign was heartless enough to leave his wife behind him with the utmost indifference. It was *sauve qui peut* with the whole court, and the queen was lost in the general scamper. The favourite, after running as hard as he could, threw himself, quite out of breath, into Scarborough Castle, which was strong in everything but eatables, for the supply of provisions was perfectly contemptible. Piers Gaveston, who had never been accustomed to short commons, went to the window of the castle, and calling out to the Earl of Pembroke, who was waiting outside, proposed to capitulate. "Can we come to any terms?" cried Piers; but the earl would at first hear of nothing short of an unconditional surrender.



Parley between Piers Gaveston and the Earl of Pembroke.

Original Size

After some parleying, Pembroke exclaimed, "I'll tell you what I'll do for you. If you choose to place yourself in my hands, I'll promise to take you to your own castle at Wallingford."

"You're not joking?" cried Gaveston, as he looked through the rusty bars of the fortress. "Honour bright," was the substance of the earl's reply, and Piers put himself at once into the hands of Pembroke. It was arranged that the king should meet the favourite at Wallingford; but one morning, on the road, he was ordered out of bed at an unusually early hour, when whom should he see, upon going downstairs, but the grim Earl of Warwick! Gaveston began to feel that it was all up with him. Putting him on a mule, they conveyed him to Warwick Castle, where a hurried council was got up—the Duke of Lancaster in the chair—for his trial. He was, of course, condemned, when he threw himself for pardon at the feet of Lancaster, who kicked him aside, and all the rest gave him a lesson on the Lancastrian system by a similar indignity. A proposition was made in the body of the hall to spare his life, but somebody exclaimed that "Gaveston had been the cause of all their difficulties, and that, when a difficulty came in the way, the best plan was to break the neck of it." The stem justice of this remark was instantly acknowledged, and amid savage cries of "Bring him along!" they dragged the favourite off to Blacklow Hill, where, by removing his head from his shoulders, they made what may be called short work of him. Upon hearing the news, the king cried for grief and then cried for vengeance. After reconciling himself to his loss, he reconciled himself to the barons, and the double reconciliation was greatly assisted by the barons having given up to him (a.d. 1313) the plate and jewels of the deceased

favourite.

Edward, on looking round him, found that the "Scots whom Bruce had often led" were making considerable progress. The English king at once ordered an army to meet him at Berwick, and by a given day one hundred thousand men had assembled. Bruce had got scarcely forty thousand, so that the chances were more than two to one against him. He took them into a field near Bannockburn, and spread them out so as to make the very most of them. On Sunday, the 23rd of June, 1314, Edward and his army came in sight. After some desultory fighting, the monotony of the day's proceedings was relieved by a somewhat curious incident. Bruce, who seems to have been rather eccentric in his turn-out, was riding on a little bit of a pony, quite under the duty imposed upon it, in front of his troops. He wore upon his head a skullcap, over that a steel helmet, and over that a crown of gold, while in his hand he carried an enormous battle-axe. He and his Shetland were frisking about, when an English knight, one Henry de Bohun, or Boone, came galloping down, armed at all points, upon a magnificent British dray-horse. Bruce, instead of getting out of the way, entered into the unequal combat amid cries of "Go it, Bob!" from his own followers. He instantly fell upon and felled to the earth the English knight, amid the acclamations of the surrounding soldiers. The battle was very vigorously fought on both sides, and victory seemed doubtful, when suddenly there appeared on a hill, at the back of the Scotch, an immense crowd that looked like a new army. The group, in reality, consisted of nothing but a mob of suttlers and camp-followers, who had been kept back by Bruce to look like a tremendous reserve, and who might be called the heavy scarecrows of the Scotch army. The plan

succeeded admirably, for although the English did not receive a single blow, they were completely panic-struck, which had the same effect as the severest beating. They fled in all directions, with the Scotch in hot pursuit; and it is said that Edward himself had to run for it as far as Dunbar, a distance of sixty miles, with the enemy after him.

According to the Scotch historians, the results of this victory were truly marvellous, for the number of prisoners alleged to have been taken is actually greater than the number of the combatants. The chariots and waggons, it is also said, would have extended for many leagues, if drawn up into a line; but this is merely one of those lengths which are too frequently gone to by the old chroniclers. Though it is impossible that the Scotch could have killed fifty thousand, and made double the number of prisoners out of one hundred thousand men (unless they manufactured fifty thousand additional foes as readily as Vauxhall can put forth its fifty thousand additional lamps), it is, nevertheless, certain that on this occasion England experienced the severest defeat it had encountered since the establishment of the monarchy. Such was the effect created by the battle of Bannockburn, that for some time after three Scotchmen were considered equivalent to a hundred Englishmen. There is every reason to believe that the Scotch were exceedingly vigorous in coming to the scratch at that early period.

Encouraged by the success of his brother Robert in Scotland, Edward Bruce thought that the crown of Ireland was a little matter that would just suit him, and he accordingly passed over to the Green Isle, in the hope of finding it green enough to accept him as its sovereign. He was, for a time, successful in his project, and was actually crowned at Carrickfergus

on the 2nd of May, 1316. But after knocking about the country, and being knocked about in the country, for a year and a half, he got a decisive blow from the English on the 5th of October, 1318, at Fagher, near Dundalk. Though he had landed in Ireland with only five hundred Scotchmen, he was left dead in the field with two thousand of his fellow-countrymen. He had been joined, no doubt, by several after his first arrival, but if he had not, it would have been all the same to the chroniclers, who would not have scrupled to kill the same individuals four times over to make a total sufficiently imposing for historical purposes. The historians would have been invaluable to a minister of finance, for they could always create an enormous surplus out of a vast deficiency.

The Scotch continued their successes until a truce was agreed upon for two years, and thus Edward had leisure to look after domestic affairs, which had been fearfully neglected. Since the death of Gaveston, the royal favourite, there had been just room for one in the not very capacious heart of the English sovereign. A certain Hugh Spencer had been introduced to the court by the barons, as a sort of page, to act as a spy upon the king, and it is a curious fact, that the spencer, or jacket, has been the characteristic of the page from that time to the present. Hugh Spencer had a shrewd father, who advised his son to care no more for the barons, who had got him his place, but to work it to his own advantage, and make the most of the perquisites.

Young Hugh, taking the parental hint, determined on booking himself for the inside place in Edward's heart, which has been already alluded to as vacant. Not only did he succeed in his design, but contrived to take up his old father, and carry him along as a sort of outside passenger. Riches and promotion were

showered on the Spencers, who adopted a coat of arms, and made themselves Despencers, by prefixing the syllable *de*, which can impart a particle of aristocracy to the most plebeian of patronymics. The Despencers had obtained such influence over the king that he allowed them to do as they pleased; and as they took all the good things to themselves, the nobles—who were getting nothing—began to evince considerable anxiety for the public interest.

The Earl of Lancaster, a prince of the blood, felt his order insulted by the promotion of the two plebeians, and he one day energetically exclaimed, "that Spencers could not have anything in tail, though the king might try to fasten it on to them." Lancaster marched upon London, and pitched his tent in Holborn, among the hills that abound in that locality. He gave out jocularly, that "he had come to baste a couple of Spencers, by trimming their jackets," but he was saved the trouble by a Parliament, which met armed at Westminster, and passed on the two Despencers a sentence of banishment.

They were accordingly exiled in August, but came back in October, presenting an instance of a quick return without the smallest profit. Lancaster retired to the north, and was met at Boroughbridge by Sir Simon Ward and Sir Andrew Barclay, a couple of stout English knights, who stopped up the passage. Lancaster endeavoured to swim across the river, but the tide had turned against him, and he was taken prisoner. The unfortunate earl having been tried, was condemned to an ignominious death, and the mob were allowed to pelt him with mud on his way to execution,—a privilege of which a generous public took the fullest advantage.

Edward had now to encounter opposition from a

new quarter, or rather from two quarters, for his better half, Isabella, the sister of Charles le Bel, was now plotting against him. She left him under the pretence of going to settle some business for him in France, and then refused to return to him. Some ambassadors volunteered to bring her back, but the ambassadors never came back themselves, for they had been in league with the queen, and only wanted an opportunity of joining her.

Their conduct brings to mind the anecdote of a scene that once passed in the shop of a shoemaker. A stranger had tried on a pair of shoes, and another stranger had been trying on a pair of boots at the same moment. Suddenly the shoes decamped without payment, when the boots standing upon their professed swiftness, offered to go in pursuit of the unprincipled shoes; and as neither shoes nor boots were ever seen again by the tradesman, it is probable that the "false fleeting perjured Clarences" are still being pursued by the immortal Wellingtons. Thus the Earl of Kent, the king's own brother, the Earl of Richmond, his cousin, and others, who had undertaken to go after the queen to bring her back, remained with her, until she returned as an enemy to her own husband. Edward was now compelled to run away in his turn from his angry wife; and rather than encounter the fury of a domestic storm, he got into a ship with young Despencer, to brave the elements. Old Despencer was taken and hanged, without the ceremony of a trial.

The Prince of Wales was appointed guardian of the kingdom on account of the absence of his father, who had been regularly advertised, but had declined to come forward lest he should hear of something to his disadvantage. Having been tossed about upon the waves for several days, he came ashore on the coast

of Wales, and hid himself for some weeks, with young Despencer and another, in the mountains of Glamorganshire. His two companions were one day startled by a cry of "We've got you!" and were instantly seized, upon which, Edward exclaiming, "It's no use: you've got the two birds in the hand, and may as well have the one in the bush," rolled out of a hedge and gave himself up to his pursuers.

Young Despencer was taken to Hereford, and hanged at once, upon a gallows fifty feet high; but why severity was carried to such a height is a question we have no means of answering. It has been brutally said by an annotator that the culprit had been accustomed to the high ropes during his life, and it was therefore determined that they should accompany him even to the gibbet.

The king was sent in custody to Kenilworth Castle, and Parliament met on the 7th of January, 1327, to consider what should be done with him. His deposition was a preliminary step; for it was the custom in those days to punish first and try the culprit afterwards. It was determined to place his son upon the throne in his stead, and on the 20th of January, 1327, a deputation went to Kenilworth to receive his abdication, if he liked to give it, or take it by force if he should prove refractory. The king, seeing Sir William Trussel, the Speaker, at the head of his enemies, observed calmly, but sadly, "Alas! the Trussel I depended upon for support has joined in dropping me." He renounced the regal dignity, and on the 24th of January, Edward the Third was proclaimed king, and crowned on the 29th at Westminster.


Fancy Portrait of Inspector Hallcl.

Original Size

This proceeding is on many accounts remarkable, and of the utmost value, as settling a point of constitutional practice, which had never before been recognised. It established a precedent for dissolving under extraordinary circumstances the compact between the king and the people. It negatived the alleged "right divine of kings to govern wrong," and proved that it was not always necessary to take violent means for ridding a country of a tyrant. It showed that the crown might be removed from the head without taking off the head and all, which had been hitherto the recognised mode of effecting a transfer of the royal diadem.

The unhappy Edward was kept for a time at Kenilworth; but ultimately by command of Lord Mortimer, who had entire influence over the queen, the deposed king was removed to Berkeley Castle. Here it is believed he was most cruelly murdered, though it was given out by his keepers that his death was perfectly natural. He died on the 21st of September, 1327, in the forty-third year of his age, and the nineteenth of his reign. No inquiry took place, and although no coroner's inquest was held, "Wilful Murder against some person or persons unknown" is the almost unanimous verdict of posterity.

The character of this king has been said to have been chiefly disfigured by feebleness of judgment,

which prevented him from knowing what was good for him. He managed, nevertheless, to find out what was bad for his subjects, and he was never at a loss to secure the means of enjoyment for himself and his favourites, at the expense of his people.

In the reign of Edward the Second the order of Knights Templars was abolished, a circumstance which arose from the king of France being short of cash, and casting a longing eye upon the rich possessions of the order. In France they were put to the torture to force them into confessions of crimes they had never committed; but in England the same effect was produced by imprisonment; for instruments of cruelty were never recognised by English laws, or encouraged as articles of British manufacture. The Archbishop of York finding nothing of the kind in the country, wished to send abroad for a pattern, * but it must be spoken to the credit of our ancestors, that though, in a pecuniary sense, they were famous for applying the screw, the thumb-screw was never popular.

** Vide Rapin, vol. iii., p. 95, and also a Note ir*

Rapin mentions among the great events of this reign, a tremendous earthquake, but it can have been no great shakes, for we do not find any details of its destructive effects in the old chronicles. It occurred on the 14th of November, 1320, to the unspeakable terror of all classes; but it did not swallow up half as much as is swallowed up annually on the 9th of November at the Mansion House in London.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.
EDWARD THE THIRD.

THE young king did not upon his father's death come to the throne, for he had taken his seat upon the imperial cushion eight months before the decease of his by no means lamented parent. Mortimer had caused a medal to be struck in celebration of the accession of Edward the Third, in which he was represented receiving the crown, with the motto, "*Non rapit sed recipit*," which we need scarcely translate into "He did not snatch it, but got it honestly." * A council of regency was appointed, to which Mortimer, with affected modesty, declined to belong, but he and the queen did as they pleased with the affairs of government. Her majesty got an enormous grant to pay her debts, but knowing the extravagant and dishonest character of the woman, we have reason to believe that she pocketed the money and never satisfied the demands of her creditors. She obtained, also, an allowance of twenty thousand a year, which was better than two-thirds of the revenues of the crown; so that a paltry six-and-eightpence in the pound was the utmost that young Edward could have to live upon. The Earl of Lancaster was appointed guardian, and began doing the best for himself, after the approved fashion of the

period. The attainders against the great Earl of Lancaster were of course reversed, and the confiscation of the estates of the Despencer, afforded some very pretty pickings to the party that was now dominant.

** It is a curious fact that Mortimer should bare*
the medal line, a business in which his namesake c
house of Store and Mortimer has since become so il

Though the king was too young to govern, his admirers persuaded him that he was quite old enough to fight, and he was recommended to try his hand against Bruce, who was getting old; so that, in the language of the ring, the British pet was not very ill matched against the Scottish veteran. The Caledonian Slasher, as Bruce might justly have been called, had broken the truce agreed upon with Edward the Second, and had sent an army into Yorkshire, which plundered as it went every town and village. The stealing of sheep and oxen was carried on to such an extent by the Scotch troops that their camp resembled Smithfield market, or a prize cattle show. Sixty thousand men gathered round the standard of Edward, but the foreign and native troops quarrelled with such fury among themselves that they had little energy left to be expended on the enemy. Fortunately for the English king the vastness of his army made up for its want of discipline. Bruce, directly he saw the foe, waited only to take their number, and retired with the utmost rapidity, amusing himself with the Scotch favourite Burns, by setting fire to all the villages.

The English, instead of following the enemy, waited a night upon the road for some provisions expected by the Parcels Delivery, which had been

delayed by some accident. The Scotch were thus allowed to get ahead, and Edward sent a crier through his camp, offering a hundred a year with the honour of knighthood, to anyone who would apprise him of the place where he should find the opposing army. Thomas of Rokeby, so called from his habit of rokeing about, was successful in the search, and came galloping into the English camp with a loud cry of Eureka, and a demand of "money down," with knighthood on the spot, before he divulged his secret. "You're very particular, sir," said Edward, flinging him a purse, containing his annuity for the first year, and dubbing him a knight by a blow on the head from the flat of the sword, administered with unusual vehemence.



Thomas of Rokeby receiving the honour of Knighthood.

Original Size

Thomas of Rokeby having pocketed the money, and secured the dignity, pointed to a hill three leagues off, observing, "There they are!" an

observation which caused a general exclamation of "Well, it's very funny! To think that they should have been so near us all the while and we not aware of it!" The English having made for the spot, sent a challenge, inviting the Scotch to meet them in a fair open field, but the proposition was declined, with thanks and compliments. The English, on the return of the herald, went to sleep, for the presence of the herald always had a soporiferous influence. Edward was exceedingly severe upon the occasion, and commented upon the herald's news, which the king declared was always most unsatisfactory. For three days and three nights, the English lay by the side of the river, having been thrown by the herald into a state of dreamy inactivity. At length, on the fourth day, they woke from their transient trance, when they found that the Scotch had once more changed their position. Edward moved higher up, keeping opposite to the foe, and the two armies lay facing each other for eighteen days and nights, like two great cowardly boys, both afraid of "coming on," but each assuming a menacing attitude. There is every reason to believe that the herald had mesmerised the whole of the English troops, for they allowed the Scotch to go away in the dead of the night for want of proper vigilance. The probability, however, is that both armies were illustrating the proverb, that "none are so blind an those who won't see," and that their aversion to "come on," was mutual.

A truce was concluded, and Edward, according to Froissart, returned "right pensive" to London; but his "right pensiveness" may have been accounted for by the fact that he was on the eve of marriage. His mother had, during her visit to the Continent, arranged to wed him to Philippa of Hainault, a lady who, to judge from her portrait on her tomb in

Westminster Abbey, was one of those monsters commonly called a "fine woman." This fineness in the female form consists of excessive coarseness, which is better adapted to the laundry than the domestic circle. She, however, made Edward an excellent better half—or perhaps a better two-thirds is a more suitable term to indicate the relative proportions of the royal couple. She was brought to London by her uncle John, surnamed of Hainault, and, it being Christmas-time, she was taken out to enjoy all the amusements of the festive season. Jousts and tournaments, balls and dinnerparties, were given in her honour during her stay in town; and on the 24th of January, 1328, the nuptial ceremony was performed with great solemnity.

Edward being now married, was desirous of avoiding that roving life which the constant pursuit of Bruce had rendered necessary. The English king thought it better to settle down into the domestic habits of a family man, which was impossible as long as he was compelled to be out all night, watching the foe and bivouacking with his soldiers. Bruce, who had grown old and gouty, was also eager for peace, which was concluded on the condition of his little boy, David, aged five, being married to Edward's little sister Joanna, aged seven. The English king gave up all claim to the sovereignty of Scotland, causing even the insignia of Scotch royalty to be carefully packed and forwarded to Bruce, who, on opening the parcel, was delighted to find himself in possession of the crown and sceptre of his predecessors. He did not, however, get quite the best of the bargain, for he undertook to pay thirty thousand marks into Edward's court as compensation, in the form of liquidated damages, for the mischief that the Scotch invaders had committed.

Bruce had obtained a sort of letter of licence, allowing him to take three years for the payment of the sum agreed upon. A more formidable creditor, however, took him in execution, for he was called upon to pay the debt of nature within the ensuing twelvemonth. Mortimer, who had advised the peace with Scotland, which was by no means popular, got himself created Earl of March, for it is the policy of crafty politicians to obtain rewards for their most objectionable measures.

It will be remembered that the Earl of Lancaster had been appointed guardian of the young king, but no scapegrace in a comedy ever made such an undutiful ward as the youthful Edward. He remained with his mother and Mortimer, the latter of whom was particularly distasteful to Lancaster, who endeavoured to get up a party to oppose the favourite. This association was joined by the Earls of Kent and Norfolk, two of the king's uncles, as well as by some other gentlemen, who set forth in an advertisement the reason of their having combined. The statement of grievances was drawn up with the usual tact of red-hot patriots, who always put down a few impossibilities in the list of things to be achieved, for the impracticability of their objects prevents their trade from being suddenly brought to a dead stand-still. There were eight articles in the Lancastrian manifesto, which chiefly aimed at Mortimer and the queen, who soon persuaded Edward that the real object of the advertisers was to deprive him of his crown. "I thought you were the parties pointed at," said the young king to his mother and her paramour; but the latter merely observing, "My dear fellow, they mean you, as sure as my name's Mortimer," soon taught Edward to believe that he was the object of the hostility of the

rebellious nobles. Preparations were being made to chastise them, when Kent and Norfolk abandoned Lancaster, who justly complained of having been trifled with. The humiliated and humbugged Lancaster was glad to accept a pardon, and pay down a considerable sum towards the expenses which had been incurred in preparing for his own discomfiture. Mortimer did not forgive the parties who had contemplated his overthrow, but formed a determination to get hold of them when a good opportunity offered.

He received a number of anonymous letters, informing him that his brother, the late king, was alive in Corfe Castle. "Pooh, pooh," said Kent to himself, as he perused the first three or four epistles; "I'm not quite such a fool as to be taken in upon that point. I'm not going to believe my brother is alive, when I happen to have been present as chief mourner at his funeral." Every post, however, brought such a pile of correspondence upon the subject that he first began to believe that half of what he was told might possibly be true; and when credulity admits one half of a story, the other half soon forces an entrance. Kent's anonymous correspondents, not content with declaring the late king to be alive, gave the circumstantiality to their statement which is generally resorted to in the absence of truth, and indicated Corfe Castle as the place where the second Edward was "hanging out" at that very moment. The credulous Kent, being in doubt as to the fate of his brother, wrote at once to ask him whether he was really dead or alive, saying to himself, as he put the epistle into the post, "There! I've written to him now, and so we shall soon settle that question one way or the other."

The party being deceased, the letter came back to

the dead-letter office, and fell into the clutches of Mortimer. Everything was done to humour the delusion of poor Kent, who, having been told that his brother was confined in Corfe Castle, sent a confidential messenger to make inquiries in the neighbourhood. It is even said that a sort of optical illusion, a jack-o'-lantern, or phantasmagoria, or dissolving-view, had been resorted to, for the purpose of showing a representation of Edward the Second sitting in Corfe Castle at his luncheon, * with a waiter or two in attendance, as a mark of respect to the unhappy sovereign.

** Rapin, tom. iii., p. 152.*

The messenger returned with the news to Edmund, who determined to use his own eyes, by going to Corfe Castle and judging for himself. When he arrived and saw the governor, that wily official pretended to be much surprised at the secret having been divulged. He did not deny that Edward was at the castle, but merely remarked that the captive could not be seen. "At all events, you can give him this letter," said Edmund, putting into the governor's hands a *douceur* and a communication directed to the deceased monarch, offering to aid him in his escape from captivity.

The governor took the *billet* to the queen, and Edmund was arrested on a charge of endeavouring to raise a deceased individual to the throne. Poor Kent was put upon his trial, and his own letter having been produced, with witnesses to prove his handwriting, the case against him was complete. The whole proceeding was disposed of with the rapidity of an undefended cause; speedy execution was asked for and granted, but the headsman was nowhere to

be found, though persons were sent to look for him all over Winchester. A delay of four hours was occasioned, and the generous British public began to expect that they should lose the spectacle they had assembled to witness, when a convicted felon came forward in the handsomest manner, at a moment's notice, to prevent disappointment, by undertaking the part of headsman. Thus, at the early age of twenty-eight, perished Prince Edmund, on the charge of having sought to put a sceptre in the hands of a spectre, and raise a phantom to the throne. He left two sons and two daughters, one of whom was a beauty whom we will not attempt to paint, for our inkstand is not a rouge-pot, and if it were we should be sorry to apply its contents to so fair a countenance. She married eventually the eldest son of Edward the Third, who became so celebrated as the Black Prince, and who was born at about the period (1330) to which our history has arrived. The king finding himself a father, determined to be no longer a child in the hands of a tyrannical mother, and he longed for some assistance from his subjects, to enable him to throw off the maternal yoke as soon as possible.

Edward at last opened his mind—a very small recess—to Lord Montacute. A Parliament was being held at Nottingham, where Mortimer and the queen had lodgings in the castle, while the bishops and barons took apartments in the town and suburbs. How to get hold of Mortimer was the great difficulty, for Queen Isabella had the keys of the castle brought up to her every evening, and placed at her bedside. * Her majesty had gone round as usual to see everything safe, and all the candles out; but of course, like other sagacious people, who examine minutely the fastenings of the doors, she never gave

a thought to the cellars. Through one of these the governor (who, like all the great officers of that period—the founders of our illustrious families—was a sneaking knave, ready to do anything for money) admitted Montacute and his followers. They crawled along a dark passage, at the end of which they were met by Edward, who conducted them up a staircase into a room adjoining his mother's chamber. The queen had gone to bed, but Mortimer, the Bishop of Lincoln, and one or two others, were sitting—probably over their grog—in an apartment close at hand. Their language had all the earnestness that might be expected from the time of night, and the manner in which they were occupied. They were, in fact, all talking at once, when Montacute and party rushed in, knocking down two knights * who sat near the door, and seized Mortimer, in spite of the entreaties of Isabella, who ran screaming out of bed on hearing the noise and confusion.

** Homing, Knyght, Holinshed.*

The favourite was dragged off to the nearest station-house, and Edward issued a proclamation the next morning, announcing his intention to try his own hand at government forthwith. A Parliament met at Westminster on the 26th of November, 1330, by which Mortimer was tried and condemned, though a short time before he enjoyed the command of a large majority. The favourite had, however, fallen into disgrace, and the old proverb, "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," was literally realised.

After the death of Mortimer, Queen Isabella was shut up in a place called the Castle of Risings, on a pension of three thousand a year, according to one historian, four thousand according to others, while

Rapin unceremoniously cuts her down to the paltry pittance of five hundred per annum. It is probable that the last named sum is the nearest the mark, for all agree in saying that "she lived a miserable monument of blighted ambition," and it is obvious that a miserable monument would not require an outlay of three or four thousand a year to keep it in condition during an existence of rather better than a quarter of a century.

Though Edward had agreed to a truce with the Scotch, he did not scruple to take a favourable opportunity of breaking it. Though his sister was married to little Master David Bruce, the nominal king, Edward did not hesitate to turn that young gentleman off the throne, to make way for his creature, Edward Baliol. Young David was sent to France, while Baliol kept up a kind of semblance of royalty, but his rebellious subjects took every opportunity, when the backs of the English were turned, to fall upon and baste the bewildered Baliol. Edward was soon compelled to leave his vassal to get on as he could, for the entire throne of France appeared to be open to the ambition of the English sovereign. The French crown seemed to be "open to all parties and influenced by none," when Edward of England and Philip of Valois became candidates for the vacancy. The former claimed as grandson of Philip the Fourth, the latter as grandson of Philip the Third, and each party endeavoured to complicate the matter as much as he could by producing a number of perplexing and unintelligible pedigrees. Philip claimed through his grandfather, who was thought to be a sure card for the French king to depend upon; but Edward tried to play something stronger, in the shape of what he affectionately called that "fine old trump his mother." She, however, was objected to as

a female, and the question was, to save further trouble, referred to the arbitration of the peers and judges of France, and was decided in favour of Edward's opponent. The English king declared the French judges were no judges at all, and refused to be bound by the award; for it was the royal practice of those days to abide by an agreement only so long as might be convenient.

Edward having appointed the Earl of Brabant his agent, coolly demanded, through that individual, the French crown. The English seconded their sovereign in his preposterous request, and he took advantage of their acquiescence to squeeze out of them all he could in the shape of subsidies, tallages, and forced loans. He raised money by the most disgraceful means, and even pawned the crown with the Archbishop of Treves, who after trying the purity of the gold with the usual test, unpicking the velvet cap, to examine the setting of the jewels, and submitting it to as many indignities as a hat in the hands of an old clothesman, consented to lend about one tenth of its value on the degraded diadem.



Edward pawning the Crown with the Archbishop of Treves.

Original Size

The conversation between the parties, though it has not been authentically handed down by the chroniclers, may be very easily imagined. It is probable that Edward, forgetting the dignity of the king in the meanness of the borrower, may have familiarly asked the Archbishop to "make it a trifle more" than the sum at first offered. It may be presumed that the greedy ecclesiastic would have objected that the crown had been very ill-used; that it got badly treated in the time of John, and that even Edward himself had had a good deal of hard wear out of it, which had rubbed off very much of its pristine brilliancy. But it was not to the comparatively honest expedient of pawning his own property that the king had recourse, for replenishing his exhausted treasury. When he had got all he could by pledging his own honours, and deposited the sceptre and single ball at the sign of the three, he began the old royal trick of plundering his people.

From the inhabitants of Cornwall Edward took nearly all their tin, and every part of England allowed itself to be fleeced for the purpose of affording one man the means of attempting to gratify his ambition at the expense of an entire people. The money thus obtained was devoted to the payment of foreign mercenaries, so that he robbed his own subjects for the double purpose of corruption and usurpation. To enable him to oppress the French, he bribed the Germans with money obtained by plundering the English.

He sailed on the 15th of July, 1338, with an army rather more select than numerous, and landed at Antwerp, where he had secured himself a friendly reception by sending emissaries before him to

marshal the peasantry into enthusiastic groups, and "get up" the spectacle without regard to outlay. The burghers were called to numerous rehearsals before the appointed day, and on the arrival of the English king they were tolerably perfect in the parts assigned to them.

Edward engaged a few foreign potentates—principally small Germans—to aid him in his audacious enterprise. Louis of Bavaria, Emperor of Germany, came to terms; the Dukes of Brabant and Gueldres did not refuse his money; the Archbishop of Cologne consented to add a few pounds to his salary; while the Marquis of Juliers, and the Counts of Hainault and Namur, jumped at a moderate stipend for their services. Every adventurer who was to be had cheap, found instant employment, and James von Artaveldt, a brewer of Ghent, the Barclay or Perkins of his time, made an arrangement for farming out a few of his stoutest draymen. Philip availed himself of a couple of kings in reduced circumstances—those of Navarre and Bohemia—besides securing a few dukes who were in want of a little cash for current expenses. A rope of sand could scarcely have been more fragile than Edward's band of hired followers. Like a Christmas-pudding made of plums and other rich ingredients without any flour to bind it, his supporters, though comprising a compound of dukes, marquises and counts, with even an archbishop and an emperor, was not likely to hold together as long as it was deficient in the flower of an army, a zealous soldiery. The Flemings and Brabanters having spent his money sneaked off with a promise to meet him *next* year, and 1338 was consequently lost in doing nothing. By the middle of September, 1339, there was another muster of the mercenaries, with whom Edward started for

Cambray, but happening to look back when he got to the frontiers of France, he saw the Counts of Namur and Hainault disgracefully backing out of the expedition. Having in vain hallooed to them, and finding that the more he kept on calling the more they persisted in not coming, he pushed on as far as St. Quentin, when the rest of his allies struck, and declared they would not go another step without an advance of wages. Edward, who had spent all his own money and a good deal of somebody else's—for he was fearfully in debt—could only say "Very well, gentlemen, I'm in your hands," and turn into the town of Ghent, where he took lodgings for a limited period. While here he amused himself by taking the title of King of France, and he had the French lily quartered on his arms; which, as Philip said when he heard of it, was "like the fellow's impudence."

Edward had previously endeavoured to draw his adversary into a battle, but the latter shirked the contest under various pretexts. Some say that he was ready for a terrific combat and was "just going to begin" when he received a letter predicting ill luck, from the king of Naples, who was looked upon as a sort of Wizard of the South, or royal conjuror. No fight took place, and Edward ran across to England in the middle of February, 1340, to make a call upon the pockets of his people. The Parliament foolishly throwing good money after bad, granted immense supplies, for which the king thanked them in the fulness of his heart, for the fulness of his pocket. Returning to Flanders, he met the enemy at the harbour of Sluys, on the 24th of June, 1340, when a battle ensued, in which Edward astonished his own followers by his most successful *début* in a naval character. He gave orders to the sailors as freely as if he had been playing in nautical dramas and dancing

naval hornpipes from the days of his infancy. So complete was the victory of the English that nobody dared inform the French king of the extent of his calamity, until the court jester was fool enough to put the news in the shape of a conundrum to Philip. The latter was enjoying his glass of wine and his nut, when the buffoon in waiting declared that he had a nut to crack which would prove somewhat too hard for his royal master. "Were it a pistaccio or a Brazil," cried the king, "I would come at the kernel of it." When, however, the riddle was put * and the sovereign had guessed it, the unhappy fool found it no joke, for he was sorely punished for his ill-judged pleasantry.

** Rapin, vol. iii., p. 178. We have used every pos exertion to obtain a copy of this celebrated riddl without having succeeded. The nearest Approach we to it is an old conundrum in the fly leaf of the S Large, which is nearly as follows:—"What was the g fillip to the success of Edward!" There is no answ but there can be little doubt that some allusion t loss giving a fillip to Edward is intended.*

Edward's success brought round him troops of friends, and finding himself strong, he wrote a letter addressed to Philip of Valois, offering to tackle him singly in a regular stand-up fight man to man, to pit a hundred soldiers against a hundred on the other side, or to pitch into each other's armies by a pitched buttle, embracing the entire strength of their respective companies. The French king, who was not disposed to give battle, which he thought might end in his taking a thrashing, evaded the matter, by saying that he had seen a letter addressed to Philip of Valois, but as it could not be meant for him, he should certainly decline sending an answer. This

shabby subterfuge succeeded in baffling the English king, who consented to a truce and returned to his own country.



Edward's arrival at the Tower.

Original Size

Edward arrived in London late one night in November, without a penny in his pocket. He went at once to the Tower, where everybody had gone to bed, for he was not expected, and where there were signs of culpable negligence. There was no fire in his room, and nothing to eat; which put him into such an ill-humour, that he had three of the judges called up to be thrown into prison, he turned out the Chancellor, the Treasurer, and the Master of the Bolls, besides committing to gaol a number of subordinate officers. Those who had been employed in collecting the revenue, were the especial objects of his rage, for he expected to have received a large sum, and was irritated beyond measure at the contemptible amount of available assets. Stratford, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on hearing of the

king's arrival at the Tower—in what has perhaps been since called a "towering passion," from the historical fact—observed to his informant, "Oh! indeed. Well, I shall be off out of his way," and fled to his official residence. The king sent him a summons, which he refused to attend, and threatened with excommunication any rascally officer who might attempt to execute the process. Want of money soon softened Edward's heart, and Parliament refused a grant until there had been another confirmation of Magna Charta, which served the double purpose of a blister to draw the people's cash and a plaster to heal their wounded liberties.

In the year 1341, little David of Scotland came over with a little money and a few troops lent to him by the king of France, and with this assistance the Bruce made a tolerably decent appearance in his own country. Edward having projects of wholesale robbery abroad, gave up Scotland as a piece of retail plunder, that was wholly beneath his attention, and concluded a truce with David, who compromised with Baliol, by appointing him to keep watch and ward against the Scottish borderers. A situation in the police seems to have been a sorry compensation for one who had aspired to a throne, but it is probable that the pride of Baliol was in some degree consulted by nominating him A 1 in his Dew capacity.


Fancy Portrait of Inspector Bullet.

Original Size

One would have thought that Edward had had enough of Continental warfare, and that "look at home" would have been his motto for the remainder of his reign, but he was soon induced to join in a squabble that had arisen about the crown of Brittany. John the Third, the late duke, had lately died, leaving one brother and a niece named Jane, who having the misfortune to be lame, had got brutally nicknamed *La Boiteuse*, in accordance with the coarse and unfeeling practice of that chivalrous period. The contest for the duchy was between this young lady, who had married Charles de Blois, the French king's nephew, and her uncle John de Montfort, who professed to have a superior claim, and who savagely pooh-poohed her pretensions by allusions to her infirmity. "Hers is indeed a lame case," he would fiendishly exclaim. "Why, by my troth, she hasn't got a leg to stand upon." This argument was the old rule of grammar, that the masculine is worthier than the feminine; but this arrangement *La Boiteuse* determined to kick against. Charles de Blois, her husband, did homage to his uncle Phil for the duchy —Brittany being a fief of France—while John de Montfort propitiated Edward by doing homage to him as the lawful sovereign. Philip and Edward thus became bottleholders to the two competitors; but through the tardiness of the English king in supporting his man, De Montfort was taken prisoner.

This gentleman had the advantage—or the disadvantage as the case may be—of being married to a high-spirited woman. It is fortunate for a man wedded to a vixen wife, when the affectionate virago, instead of making a victim of him, vents her fury upon his enemies.

Mrs. de Montfort had, according to Froissart, "the courage of a man and the heart of a lion." In addition to these fascinating qualities she had the tongue of a true woman. She went about with her child in her arms, holding forth in a double sense, for she held forth her infant, and was continually holding forth on the subject of her husband's wrongs to the populace. A pretty woman, who takes to public speaking, is always sure of an approving audience; but when she began to give recitations in character, by putting a steel casque on her head and a sword in her hand, the effect was truly marvellous. She took a provincial tour, with the never-failing motto of "Female in Distress" as her watchword; and a host of young men engaged themselves as assistants under her banner. She threw herself into a place called Hennebon, where she was besieged by the French, but she ran up and down the ramparts with all the agility of a young tigress. She stood firmly among a shower of arrows, and though danger darted across her every now and then—so much that her casque got a rapid succession of taps—she merely observed that she had never been afraid of a living beau and would certainly not shrink from a bow without vitality. Aid was expected from the English, but as it did not arrive the Bishop of Leon began to croak most horribly, and proposed to capitulate. The bishop had been to the larder, and finding provisions running exceedingly low, declared there was nothing left for them but to eat humble pie as speedily as

possible. He had succeeded in raising an *émeute d'estomac* in the garrison, when the countess, who had begged the troops to hold out a little longer, Saw the English fleet from the window of her dressing-room. "Here they are!" cried she as she ran downstairs; and the whole of the inhabitants were soon watching the arrival of the boats with intense interest. Sir Walter Manny commanded the squadron, and after a good night's rest and a capital dinner the next day, which concluded amid a slight shower from the French battering-ram, he declared that he would not run the risk of having any more batter pudding from the same quarter. "That ram," he exclaimed, "must not again disturb me over my mutton;" and he had no sooner dined than he went forth, followed by a few select soldiers, and broke the instrument to pieces.

The French, having raised the siege of Hennebon, left Lady de Montfort leisure to go over to England for the purpose of getting a present of troops that Edward had promised her. She was returning to France with her reinforcements when she fell in with a French fleet, and they fell out as a natural consequence. De Montfort's wife rushed on deck in a coat of mail over her petticoat of female, and fought with tremendous vigour.



Madame de Montfort astonishing the French Fleet.

Original Size

One of the foe tauntingly told her the needle was a fitter instrument for her than the sword, when she rushed upon him, exclaiming, "I want no needle, fellow, to trim your jacket." She cut the thread of several existences, and there is no doubt that had the gun cotton been discovered in those days, she would have used it for the purpose of whipping, basting, hemming in, felling to the earth, and, in a word, sewing up her unfortunate antagonists. Darkness having set in upon this fearful set out, the battle was cut short, for night dropped her curtain in the middle of the act, and brought it to an abrupt conclusion.

Edward now came over to superintend the war in person, and he began by looking the danger in the face, which he accomplished by lying several weeks opposite the foe—an example that was followed by the other side; and thus the two armies continued to take sights at each other during the entire winter. At length a truce for three years and eight months was agreed upon; but its conditions were not attended to.

John de Montfort was to have been released from prison, according to the agreement; but Philip, by pitiful quibbles, found excuses for keeping him in closer custody. At length, the old gentleman escaped in the disguise of a pedlar; but he was cruelly hounded by his enemies, and with a pack at his back was for some time hunted about, until, by dint of the most dogged perseverance, he arrived safely in England. Coming to the door of his own house, he set up a faint cry of "Stay-lace, boot-lace, shoe-tie," in a disguised voice, which brought the mistress of the establishment to the window; but she merely shook her head, to indicate that nothing was wanted. Upon this the supposed pedlar threw off his hat and wig, and being instantly recognised, was dragged into the hall, to the surprise of the various servants, until the words, "It's your master come back," furnished a clue to the mystery. His wife's joy at meeting her "old man," as she affectionately called him, was extreme; but the excitement was too much for the veteran, who went bang off, like an exhausted squib, while Lady de Montfort fell in an explosion of grief by the side of her husband.

The fortune of war had been oscillating with the regularity of a pendulum between England and France, when the Earl of Derby threw himself into the scale with tremendous weight, and turned it completely in England's favour. In the emphatic language of the day, he was "down upon the French like a thunderbolt." Edward went off to Flanders to treat with the free cities for their allegiance, and, in fact, ascertain the price of those friends of Liberty. Louis the Count, though deprived of nearly all his revenue, kept up his independence, and refused to pay allegiance or anything else to Edward. The English king tried to effect a transfer of the loyalty of

the Flemings from Louis, the Count of Flanders, to his own son, Edward the Black Prince; and with this view he obtained the support of his old friend James von Artaveldt, the brewer, whose stout gave him a great ascendency over the actions of the people. He addressed to them a good deal of frothy declamation, and endeavoured to brew the storm of revolution; but it ended in very small beer, amid which Artaveldt himself was eventually washed away through the impetuosity of the stream he had himself set in motion. A popular insurrection broke out, and the brewer behaved with great gallantry. He wore a casque on his head which pointed him out as a butt for the malice of his enemies. He was cruelly murdered, and Edward vowed vengeance when he heard that the lifeless bier was all that remained of his friend the brewer.



Assassination of Artaveldt the Brewer.

Original Size

In 1346 the English king landed on the coast of Normandy, with an army containing not only the flower of his own troops, but a regular bouquet, in which the English rose was blended with the Welsh

leek and a sprig of the Irish shillalah. He marched towards Paris, and his van had even entered the suburbs of that city; but, without attacking the capital, he contented himself with a little arson in the small towns in the neighbourhood. His antagonist was not inactive, and succeeded in getting the English into a corner, from which escape seemed almost impossible. It was necessary to cross the Somme; but Philip and the river were rather too deep for Edward and his soldiers. Having waited till the tide went down, they took a desperate plunge, and the foe having also resolved on making a splash, the two armies met in the middle of the stream, where they fought with an ardour that was not damped by the surrounding element. Edward and his troops found as much difficulty in reaching the Bank as if they had made the attempt in an omnibus during one of the blockades of Fleet Street. At length they succeeded, and after travelling for some distance, they put up in the neighbourhood of the village of Cressy. On the 26th of August, 1346, the English sovereign took an early supper, and went to bed, having given instructions for his boots to be brought to his door by dawn the following morning. The whole army slept well, considering it was the first night in a strange place; and, having been called by that valuable valet, the lark, everyone was up and down by the hour of daybreak.



Edward the Third on the morning of the Battle of Cressy.

Original Size

Breakfast was scarcely concluded when Edward ordered the army to arms, and sent for the herald in the hopes of getting the news; but from this quarter he learned nothing. At length he took up his post, and chose three leaders, a column being assigned to each of them. The first was under the command of his young Bon, Edward the Black Prince, a youth of fifteen, who held very high rank in the army, having been included in every brevet, notwithstanding the brevity of his service. Two experienced captains—the Earls of Warwick and Oxford—were employed under him to do the work, so that the boy prince had nothing to do but to reap the glory of his position. Heaping laurels under such circumstances was a common practice in those days; and the vulgar expression "with a hook" may have originated in allusion to the reaping of the harvest created by another's merit. It must, however, be stated in justice to the Black Prince, that he proved himself quite equal to the position in which fortune had placed him. If we examine his character, we shall find in it many good points, and it may fairly be said that the Black Prince was by no means so black as history has painted him. The three divisions took up their position on the hill, and the archers stood in front,

forming a semicircle or bow, from which they could more effectually discharge their arrows. The Battle of Cressy is perhaps one of the most interesting in English history; and though part of it was fought in a tremendous shower of rain, which has caused some frivolous writer of the period to give it the name of Water Cressy, we are not induced by this idle and impotent play upon words to lose our respect for one of the greatest exploits of our countrymen.

Philip slept at Abbeville on the 25th of August, and rising in a terrible ill-humour, set out early in the morning to give battle. He started off in such a fit of sulkiness that he did not even give the word to "march," and breaking suddenly into a run, his impatience carried him far in advance of his army. By the time he came in sight of the foe, he was ever so much ahead of his own troops, and was obliged to sit down quietly until they had come nearly up to him. By some mismanagement, the troops at the back started off quicker than those in front, who began to hesitate still more as they approached the enemy; and thus, one part of the army beginning to back while those behind pressed forward, a state of confusion which can only be described as a dreadful squeege was the immediate consequence. "Now then, stupid," resounded from rank to rank, and comrade addressed comrade with the words "Where are you shoving to?" The king got hurried head foremost almost into the English camp, in spite of the vehement cries of "Keep back!" which, however, were no sooner acted upon than the rear ranks were seized with a panic, and the soldiery began tumbling over each other like those battalions in tin which in youthful days have fallen prostrate beneath the power of the peashooter.

Philip, who had never intended to take the honour

of a foremost rank, was pushed willy-nilly into the front place, like a gentleman who happened to be walking down the Haymarket on an opera night, and found himself suddenly engulfed in a stream which washed him off his legs, and left him high and dry in a stall to which he had been driven by the impetuosity of the torrent. Finding himself in the heat of an engagement in which he had not intended to be so closely engaged, his French majesty called to the Genoese crossbow-men to advance, but they pleaded sudden indisposition and fatigue, when Philip's brother deeply offended them by exclaiming —"See what we get by employing such scoundrels, who fail us in our need!" The Genoese were rather nettled—that is to say, somewhat stung—by this remark, and made a rush which was worth no more than a rush, for they were really worn out with their morning's walk, and felt fitter to be in bed than in battle. Though their arms and legs were tired, they still had the full use of their lungs, and began to shout out with tremendous vehemence, in the hope of frightening the English. This horrible hooting had no effect, and a Scotch veteran, by happily exclaiming "Hoot awa!" turned the laugh in favour of the English. Upon this, the Genoese gave another fearful yell, when one of Edward's soldiers inquired whether the crossbow-men wanted to frighten away the birds, and gave them the nickname of the heavy scarecrows. They advanced a step, when the English archers sent forth a volley of arrows, which fell like a snowstorm upon the Genoese, who, converting their shields into umbrellas, tried to take shelter under them. Philip was so disgusted with this pusillanimous conduct, that he cried out in a fury, "Kill me these scoundrels, for they stop our way without doing any good!" And the poor Genoese caught it severely from

both sides.



Edward the Third at the Battle of Cressy.

Original Size

During the battle, Edward sat on the tip top of a windmill, situated on the summit of a lofty hill, where, completely out of harm's way, he could watch the progress of the action. While in this elevated position, he was asked by a messenger to send a reinforcement to the Prince of Wales, who was performing prodigies of valour. "I'm glad to hear it," said the affectionate father; "but," he added, "return to those who sent you, and tell them they shall have no help from me. Let the boy win his spurs," continued the old humbug, who was too selfish to put himself out of the way to assist his son, and would rather have let him perish than make any sacrifice to aid him in his arduous struggles.

When these unaided exertions came to a triumphant issue, the father endeavoured to gain a reflected glory from the brilliance of his son's

achievements. It is, however, due to the reputation of the latter to assert that the glory was all his own; for his selfish father had taken care of himself, while the son fought the battle alone, and won it without any assistance that it was in the power of his parent to have afforded him.

Poor Philip fought desperately as long as he could, till John of Hainault, who had several times advised him to "go home and go to bed, for it was of no use," went up to the horse of the French king, seized the bridle, and quietly led him off in the direction of the nearest green-yard. Seeing it was a bad job, Philip requested to be taken to the castle of La Broye, but the gates were shut, and the chatelain, looking out of window, inquired who was knocking him up at such an unreasonable hour. "Me," cried Philip, in the grammar of the period; but "Who's me?" was the only response of the governor. "Why, don't you know me? I'm Philip, the fortune of France."

"Pretty fortune, indeed!" muttered the chatelain, as he came downstairs, keys and candle in hand, to admit his unfortunate sovereign. The king's suite had dwindled down to five barons, * who turned in anywhere for the night, on sofas and chairs, while Philip took the spare bed usually kept for visitors.

Thus ended the memorable Battle of Cressy, from our account of which we must not omit the incident of the king of Bohemia, who, old and blind, was perverse enough to tie the bridle of his horse to those of two knights, and with them he plunged into the midst of the battle. Considering that he could not have seen his way, there is something very rash, though perhaps very valiant, in this behaviour. Nor should we in our admiration of the bravery of the king of Bohemia, forget to sympathise with the two knights, upon whom he must have been a precious

drag, by tying his horse's bridle to theirs, and making them no doubt the victims of a most unfortunate attachment. The king of Bohemia of course fell, for the union he had formed was anything but strength, and the Prince of Wales picking up his crest—a plume of ostrich feathers—adopted it for his own, with the celebrated motto of *Ich Dien.* ** The literal meaning of this motto is simply "I serve," but it has been very naturally suggested that "I am served out" would have been a more appropriate translation of the phrase, as long as it appertained to the unfortunate king of Bohemia. Rapin, the French historian, who is naturally anxious to make the best case he can for his countrymen, attributes their defeat at Cressy to the use of gunpowder by the English, who introduced, for the first time in war, a small magazine of this startling novelty. Such a *magasin des nouveautés* of course would have taken the French by surprise, and would easily have accounted for any little deficiency of valour they might have exhibited. When the battle was over, Edward sneaked out of his windmill, where he professed to have been "overlooking the reserve," and joined his successful son, whom he warmly congratulated on his position.

** Froissart.*

*** Doubts have been lately cast on this old story. Cabinet Portrait Gallery of British Worthies, vol. 81,*

The night after the battle was of course a gala night with the English, who lighted fires, torches, and candles, including probably "fifty thousand additional lamps," in celebration of the victory. So

excellent, however, were the regulations on the occasion, that we have not heard of a single instance of disturbance or accident. The day after the battle was disgraced by a series of attacks on some French unfortunates, who not knowing of the defeat of their king, were coming to his assistance. It happened that, as if to make the English quite at home, a regular English fog set in, and some French militia, not being able to see their way very clearly, mistook a reconnoitring party of the enemy for their own countrymen. The French hastened to join their supposed comrades, but soon found out their mistake from the cruel treatment they experienced. Other stragglers who had missed their way in the mist, were also savagely attacked, and when Edward heard the facts, he sent out Lords Cobham and Stafford, with three heralds, to recognise the arms, and two secretaries to write down the names of those that had fallen. The party returned in the evening, with a list of eleven princes, eighty bannerets, twelve hundred knights, and thirty thousand commoners. We can only say that the herald of those days could not have been such a very slow affair as the *Herald* of these, and the secretaries must have written not merely a running but a galloping hand to have in so few hours deciphered the arms, and made a list of the names of such an enormous number of individuals.

Having remained over Sunday at Cressy, Edward set out on Monday morning for Calais, with the intention of besieging it. While he was occupied abroad, his enemy, little David Bruce, at the instigation of Philip, attempted to disturb England. After a brief campaign, in which the Scotch king was joined by the Earls of Monteith and Fife, David Bruce was placed in custody. Monteith lost his head for

showing his teeth, and Fife would have had a stop put to him, but for his relationship to the Royal Family, his mother having been niece to the first Edward.

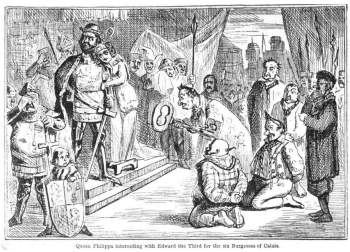
Calais was kept in a state of blockade, for the English king had resolved upon hemming in and starving out the inhabitants. John de Vienne, who was the governor, finding provisions getting low, turned what he called the "useless mouths" out of the place, and among these "useless mouths" were a number of women, who must have been rare specimens of their sex to have kept their mouths in a state of uselessness. The brutal policy of John de Vienne was to continue weeding the population as long as he could by turning out the old and helpless, the women and the children. Seventeen hundred victims were thrust from the town and driven towards the English lines by the Governor of Calais, who was reckless of the lives of the citizens so long as the sacrifice enabled him to hold out and gain a character for bravery.

It is easy for a military commander to win a reputation for extreme heroism if he is utterly regardless of the expense, and chooses to pay for it in the blood of those under his control; but it is the duty of the historian to audit the accounts and justly strike the balance. In looking into the case of John de Vienne we adjudge him guilty of fraudulent bankruptcy in his reputation, for he sought to establish himself in the good books of public opinion by trading on the lives of the citizens of Calais, which were his only capital. If he were now before us, we should assume the part of a commissioner, and should say to him, "Go, sir. We cannot grant you your protection from the heavy responsibilities you incurred when you wasted human life which you

were bound to preserve as far as you were able. You have violated a sacred trust; and we must therefore adjourn your further examination *sine die*, for it is quite impossible to grant you your certificate."

As long as John de Vienne could find anything to eat, and could have his table tolerably well provided, he held out; but when starvation threatened himself as well as the citizens, he asked permission to capitulate. Edward, annoyed by the obstinacy of the resistance, refused to come to any terms short of an unconditional surrender, but he at length consented to spare the town on condition of six burgesses coming forth naked in their shirts, with halters round their necks, and without anything on their legs, as a proof of their humiliation being utterly inexpressible. When John de Vienne was apprised of this resolution, he called a meeting in the market-place, and stated the hard condition which Edward had imposed, but the governor had not the heroism to propose to make one of the party required for the sacrifice. He was exceedingly eloquent in urging others to come forward, and was loud in his protestations that such an "eligible opportunity," such an "opening for spirited young men" would never occur again; but the citizens turned a deaf ear to all his arguments. No one seemed inclined to set a noble example, but all the inhabitants gave way to a piteous fit of howling, until Eustace de St. Pierre, a rich burgess, drying his eyes and mopping up his emotion with the cuff of his coat, offered himself as the first victim. Five others followed his example, and the six heroes, taking off their trousers, prepared to throw themselves into the breach, and slipping off their slippers, went barefooted into the presence of the conqueror. He eyed the miserable objects with malicious pleasure, and according to Froissart,

insulted the unhappy burgesses by a series of grimaces, like those with which the clown accompanies the ironical inquiry of "How are you?" which he always addresses to his intended victim in a pantomime. The wretched state of the burgesses shivering in their shirts—but not shaking in their shoes, for they were barefooted—had a softening influence on all but Edward, who with a clownish yell of "I've got you!" desired that the headsman might be sent for immediately.



Queen Philippa interceding with Edward the Third for the six Burgesses of Calais.

Original Size

The queen threw herself on her knees, and representing that she had never asked a favour of Edward in her life, entreated him to spare the trembling citizens. "Look at them!" exclaimed her majesty, as she dragged one forward and turned him round and round to show what a miserable object he was. "Look at them! and observe how piteously they implore mercy; for though their tongues do not speak, their teeth are constantly chattering." Edward looked at his wife, and then at the citizens. "I wish," said he to the former, "that you had been—— somewhere else; but take the miserable beggars and do what you can with them." Philippa instantly took

the coil of rope from the necks that were so nearly on the point of "shuffling off the mortal coil," and told them to go and get rigged out in a suit of clothes each, which made the oldest of them observe that "the rigger of the queen was much less formidable than the rigour of the king, with which they had been so lately threatened."

The imbecility to which fear had brought their minds is fearfully shadowed forth in this miserable piece of attempted pleasantry, and it was perhaps fortunate that Edward did not overhear a pun, the atrocity of which he might have been justified in never pardoning. The six citizens having received their dressing, in a more agreeable shape then they had expected, and having sat down to an excellent dinner, provided at the queen's expense, were dismissed with a present of six nobles each, that they might not be without money in their pockets. As they partook of the meal prepared for them, the wag of the party, whose vapid jokes had already endangered the lives of himself and his companions, ventured to observe that he should look upon the ordinary as one of the most extraordinary events in his life; but as none of the king's servants were at hand to overhear the miserable *jeu de mot*, it was not followed by the fatal consequences we might otherwise have been compelled to chronicle.

On the 3rd of August, 1347, Edward and his queen made their triumphant entry into Calais, which was transformed into an English colony; and as the residents of that early period were debtors to the generosity of the sovereign, the place has become a favourite resort for debtors even to the present moment.

Edward having returned to England began to try the squeezability of his Parliament, and got up

various pretexts for demanding money. He pretended to ask advice about carrying on the war with France, but the Parliament suspecting his intention declined giving any answer to his message. He next had recourse to intimidation, by spreading a report that the French contemplated invasion; and though it was little better than a cry of "Old Bogey," it had the desired effect. There is no doubt that Edward was guilty of obtaining money under false pretences, for he and Philip had agreed between themselves for a truce, and yet each taxed his subjects under the pretence that war might be imminent.



Origin of the Order of the Garter.

Original Size

About the year 1344, according to some, but in the year 1350, on the authority of Stowe, the celebrated Order of the Garter was founded. If we may put faith in an old fable, it originated in the Countess of Salisbury having danced her stockings down at a court ball; when the king seeing her garter dangling

at her heels, took hold of it and gave it to her, exclaiming, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, which was a cut at some females who pretended to be shocked at the incident. Their smothered exclamations of "Well, I'm sure!"

"Upon my word!" and "Well, really I never! Did you ever?" were thus playfully rebuked by Edward the Third, who afterwards made the words we have quoted the motto of the Order. We need scarcely tell our readers in this enlightened age that *Honi soit qui mal y pense* is equivalent to saying that those who see harm in an innocent act, derive from themselves all the evil that presents itself.

Edward's old enemy, Philip of France, was now dead, but his son and successor, John, continued the truce, or renewed the accommodation bill, which was entered into for the purpose of stopping proceedings on either side. In state affairs, as in pecuniary matters, these temporary arrangements are seldom beneficial, for they cause a frightful accumulation of interest, which must some time or other be paid off or wiped out at a fearful sacrifice.

The Continental successes of the English king were marred by the trouble that Scotland gave to him, and he was often heard to say that "though he could make the French poodle—by whom he meant the king of France—do as he pleased, he hated the constant barking at his heels of the Scotch terrier." He therefore determined on attempting to buy the country out and out. So, going over to Roxburgh, he asked Baliol point-blank what he would take for the whole concern, exactly as it stood, including the throne, the title-deeds of the kingdom, and the crown and sceptre. "Let me see. What has it cost me?" said Baliol, evidently contemplating a bargain; but Edward interrupting him with "A precious deal more

than it is worth," somewhat modified the figure that was on the tip of the tongue of the Scotch sovereign. "Will fifty thousand marks be too much?" observed the vendor, with an anxious look. But Edward's rapid "Oh, good morning!" instantly told the wary Scot the shrewdness of his customer. "Stop, stop," said Baliol; "I like to do business when I can. What will you give? for I'm really tired of the thing, and would be glad to accept any reasonable offer." Edward resumed his seat, made a few calculations on a scrap of vellum with a pocket-stile, and then, jumping up, exclaimed, "I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll give you five thousand marks down, and an annuity of £2000 per annum."

The bargain was struck. With the title-deeds laden, Edward joyfully flew to his own country, and he had scarcely turned his back when "Adieu!" said Baliol; "you are not the first humbug who, coming to cheat, have got cheated yourself." The fact was, that the Scotchman, with characteristic cunning, got the best of the bargain, for the crown had been fearfully ill-used, the sceptre had got all the glitter worn off by the hard rubs it had endured, and the throne would cost more to keep in substantial repair than twice its value.

Edward having bought up the country, began to exercise the right of ownership by setting fire to little bits of it. He marched through the Lothians, where he met with loathing on every side, and set Haddington as well as Edinburgh in flames, which caused Scotland to be prophetically called the Land of Burns by a sage of the period.

While the king was thus engaged at home, his son Edward, the Black Prince, so called from the colour of his armour, which he had blackleaded to save the trouble of keeping it always bright, was occupied in

France, where he fought and won the famous battle of Poictiers. The truce had, with the customary faithlessness of royalty in those days, been broken. Young Edward, having a small force, made a most earnest appeal to his army, and said something very insinuating about "his sinewy English bowmen."

Before the commencement of the battle, a diplomatist of the name of Talleyrand, who seems to have been worthy of his celebrated modern successor, rode from camp to camp trying to arrange the affair, and making himself very influential with both parties. John was, however, so confident in the superiority of his numbers that he declined a compromise, except on the most humiliating terms, to the Black Prince, who looked blacker than ever when the degrading proposition was made to him.

On the 19th of September, 1356, the battle began with a duet played by two trumpets—one on each side—but this did not last long, for neither party desired to listen to overtures. The French commenced the attack, but they came to the point a little too soon, for they actually ran upon the arrows of the English bowmen. The Constable of France tried to inspire courage into the troops on his side by roaring out "Mountjoy! St. Denis!" but a stalwart Briton, telling him to hold his noise, felled him to the ground. A strong body of reserve, who carried their reserve to downright timidity, fled without striking a blow. They had scarcely drawn their swords, and received the word of command to "cut away," when they did literally cut away, and having cut refused to come again. John of France flourished his battle-axe with ferocious courage; but at last he received two tremendous blows in the face which brought him to the ground. His son Philip, a lad of sixteen, fought by his side, encouraging him with cries of "Give it 'em,

father!" which aroused the almost exhausted John, and caused him to recover his legs. Every kind of verbal insults was offered to him by the enemy, and particularly by the Gascons, who indulged in a great deal of their usual gasconade. "Stand and surrender!" cried a voice; to which John replied, "If I could stand, I would not surrender, but I suppose I must fall into your hands." With this he tottered into a circle of English knights, by whom he was nearly torn to pieces in the scramble that arose for the royal captive. Some among the crowd of his victors endeavoured to induce his majesty to place himself under their charge, and one or two began to talk to him in bad French, when Sir Denis, a real Frenchman, who had been dismissed from the service of his own country and entered that of England, addressed the monarch politely in his native tongue. John was in the act of offering up his glove to this gentleman as a token of surrender, when the royal gauntlet was torn to pieces by the surrounding knights, who all wanted to have a finger in it. Everyone was eager to claim the French monarch, who seemed on the point of being torn to pieces like a hare by a pack of ill-bred hounds. "I took him," exclaimed fifty voices at once, when the Earl of Warwick, rushing into the front, thundered forth in a stentorian voice, "Can't' you leave the man alone?" and drawing John's arm within his own, led off the conquered king to the camp of Edward. Warwick took little Philip by the hand, and presented father and son to the Black Prince, who received them with much courtesy. *



Edward, the Black Prince, conducting his Prisoner.

Original Size

He invited them both to supper, waited on the French king at table, and soothed his grief with probably such kind expressions as "Poor old chap!"

"Never mind, old fellow!" and other words of respectful sympathy. The Black Prince made them his companions to London, which they entered in the character of his prisoners, on the 24th of April, 1357. The pageant was very magnificent, the citizens hanging out their plate to do honour to the occasion; and the windows were filled with spoons, just as they are when a modern Lord Mayor's show is to be seen within the city. Edward had now a couple of kings in custody; but in November, 1357, one of them, David Bruce, was released, upon drawing a bill for one hundred thousand marks on his Scotch subjects. There can be no doubt that the latter were regularly sold by their weak-minded monarch, who had become the mere creature of the English sovereign. John remained in captivity in London, while Edward carried the war into France; but

having got nearly as far as Paris, he was caught in a shower, which completely wet him down, and diluted all the spirit he had, up to that point, exhibited. * The wind was terrific; but it was not one of those ill winds that blow nobody good, for the blow it inflicted on the courage of Edward made good for those he came to fight against. The French justly hailed the rain as a welcome visitor, for it completely softened Edward by regularly soaking him. On the 8th of May, 1360, peace was concluded, and John was set at large on condition of the payment of three million crowns of gold, which was rather a heavy sum forgetting one crown restored to him. Some hostages were given for the fulfilment of the bargain; but poor John found he had undertaken more than he could perform, and though he did not exactly stop payment, it was because he had never commenced that operation. He was exceedingly particular in money matters, and it annoyed him not to be able to fulfil his pecuniary arrangements. Some of his bail having bolted, he could bear the degradation no longer, and he voluntarily went over to London, where he put himself in prison, as a defaulter, though others say it was a love affair in England, rather than his honesty as a debtor, which brought him up to town. The royal insolvent did not long survive, for he died in the month of April, 1364, at the Palace of the Savoy; and it was tauntingly said of him by a contemporary buffoon, that the debt of nature was the only debt he had ever paid.

** Froissart, Knyght, Rynier, and Company.*

The Black Prince, who had been created Duke of Aquitaine, governed for his father in the South of France, but was induced to espouse the cause of one

Pedro, surnamed the Cruel, who, for his ferocious conduct, had been driven from the throne of Castile. Bertrand du Gueselin, a famous knight in his day, and Don Enrique, the illegitimate brother of the tyrant, had expelled him from his dominions, when the Black Prince, tempted by offers of an enormous salary, undertook to restore Pedro to his position. Edward fought and conquered, but could not get paid for his services; and, as he had undertaken the job by contract, employing an army of mercenaries at his own risk, he was harassed to death by demands for which he had made himself liable. Captains were continually calling to know when he intended to settle that little matter, until he got tired of answering that it was not quite convenient just now; and he that had never turned his back upon an enemy, ran away as hard as he could from the importunity of his creditors. Pedro, abandoned by his chief supporter, agreed to a conference with his half brother Enrique; but cruelty seems to have been a family failing, for the couple had scarcely met when they fell upon each other with the fury of wild beasts, and Pedro the Cruel was stabbed by Enrique the Crueller, who threw himself at once upon the throne. *

** Froissart.—Mariana.*

Charles of France now thought that the harassed mind and declining health of the Black Prince afforded an eligible opportunity of attacking him. His Royal Highness resisted as well as he could; but he was so exceedingly indisposed that he was carried about on a litter from post to post, as if he had been compelled to rest at the corner of every street through sheer exhaustion. He marched, or rather was

jostled, towards Limoges, the capital of the Limousin, which he stormed in two places at once; and at the sight of the pair of breaches he had made, the women fled in inexpressible terror and confusion. His conduct to these poor defenceless creatures was merciless in the extreme; and this one incident in the life of the Black Prince is sufficient to give to his name all the blackness that is attached to it. Some allowance may, however, be perhaps made for the state of his health, which now took him to England to recruit—not in a military but in a physical sense—but it was too late, for he died at Canterbury, on the 8th of January, 1376, to the great regret of his father, who only kept the respect of the people through his son's popularity.

Edward the Third had been for some time leading a very disreputable life, and had been captivated by one Alice Perrers, to whom he had given the jewels of the late queen, and who had the effrontery to wear them when abroad in the public thoroughfares. Among other freaks of his dotage was a tournament which he gave in Smithfield—the origin, no doubt, of the once famous Bartholomew Fair—where Alice Perrers figured in a triumphal chariot, as the Lady of the Sun, the king himself appearing in the character of the Sun, though it was the general remark that, as the couple sat side by side, the Sun looked old enough to be the father.

It was towards the close of this reign that Wycliffe, the celebrated precursor of Huss, Luther, and Calvin, as well as the curser of popery, began preaching against the abuses of the Catholic clergy. His cause was espoused by the Duke of Lancaster, who had been in power since the death of the Black Prince, and who is said to have taken Wycliffe's part so ardently, as to have threatened to drag the Bishop of

London by the hair of his head out of St. Paul's Cathedral. Considering that the priest was all shaven and shorn, it would have been difficult for Lancaster to have carried out his threat by tugging out the bishop in the manner specified. It is a curious fact that this alleged attack on one of the heads of the church was soon followed by a general burden on the national poll, in the shape of a poll-tax, which was imposed to provide for the renewal of the war, as the truce in existence was on the point of expiring.

Edward had now become old and miserable; for having done nothing to gain the affection of others, he was abandoned at the close of his life, by even the members of his own family. One or two sycophants clung to him, in the hope of getting something; but his children had all separate interests of their own, for the cold and selfish conduct of their parent had driven them quite away from him. He endeavoured to give decency to the close of his existence, by a general amnesty for all minor offences; but it was now too late to gain him friends, and the wretched old man was left alone with Alice Perrers. He died in her arms at his villa at Sheen, near Richmond, on the 21st of June, 1377, and she took advantage of being by his side at his death, to rob him of a valuable ring, which she took from his finger in his last moments, when he was too weak to resist the robbery. Were the shade of Edward the Third to present itself before us for a testimonial, we should advise the spectre, for its respectability's sake, not to ask us for a character.

Much good was done in the reign we have been describing; but this is only another illustration of the well-known truth that the prosperity of a country does not always depend on the virtues of the sovereign. Perhaps the most valuable measure passed

by Edward was an act limiting to three principal heads the cases of high treason, of which a hundred heads, all filled with teeth, might until then have been considered symbolical. This wholesome statute had at least the effect of changing a Hydra into a Cerberus. The leash of crimes that this Cerberus was empowered to hunt down were, conspiring the death of the king, levying war against him, or adhering to his enemies. A curious question arose some time afterwards under the last of these three divisions, when a loyal subject was nearly being condemned for adhering to the king's enemies, though it appeared he had adhered only in the sense of sticking to them, with a view to punish them.

The conduct of Edward the Third to David Bruce, his brother-in-law, was unjust in the extreme; and though the Black Prince made his way by his own talents, he does not appear to have owed his advancement to any assistance that his father ever afforded him. Some useful alterations were made in the law, and the power of the Commons advanced; but the taxes were fearfully increased, as if the liberality of the people was expected as an equivalent for the liberality of the Government. The money collected was not altogether wasted in war, for some of it went in the building of Windsor Castle, of which William of Wickham was the architect. The first turnpike ever known in England, was started also under Edward the Third, between St. Giles's and Temple Bar, where to this day the successor of the ancient pikeman rushes forth to levy a toll on carts that enter the city. On the same principle, that out of evil good often comes, Edward the Third may be regarded as a benefactor to his subjects.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. RICHARD THE SECOND, SURNAMED OF BORDEAUX.



Original Size

F little and good were always identical. Richard the Second would have been a very good king, for he was a little boy of eleven years of age when the crane of circumstances hoisted him on to the throne of his grandfather. Young Richard was the only surviving son of Edward the Black Prince, and out of compliment to the juvenile monarch, his coronation in Westminster Abbey was made as gaudy as possible. No expense was spared in dresses and decorations; but the ceremony not being over till it was high time all children should be in bed and asleep, the boy king was completely exhausted before the spectacle was half over. Stimulants were

administered to keep the child up; but when the heavy crown was placed on his brow, the diadem completely overbalanced a head already oscillating from side to side with excessive drowsiness. His attendants tumbled him into a litter, and hurried him into a private room, where, by dint of the most scarifying restoratives held to his nose, he so far recovered as to be enabled to create four earls and nine knights, partake of a tremendous supper, dance at a ball, and listen to a little minstrelsy. * It was at the coronation of Richard the Second that we first find mention in history of a champion rushing into Westminster Hall, throwing his gauntlet on the ground, and offering to fight any number—one down and another come on—who may dispute the title of the sovereign. The gallantry of the challenge is not very considerable, for it is a well-understood thing beforehand that the police will keep all suspicious characters out of the Hall, and the only difficulty required is in backing out of the Hall on horseback; as, if a claimant to the throne should actually appear, the champion would no doubt back cleverly out of his challenge. Even this trifling merit must, however, be assigned to the horse, who is generally a highly-trained palfrey from the neighbouring amphitheatre, and is let out, trappings and all included, to the Champion of England for the performance in which his services are required.

** We get these facts from Walsingham, who gives ar account of the coronation. Walsingham says, they w till all was blue, which means, until the coerulea began to make its appearance.*



Fancy Portrait of the Champion of England.

Original Size

Though Richard was not too young for the position of king, it was not to be supposed that a boy of his age could be of any use whatever, and twelve permanent councillors were therefore appointed, to do the work of government. It was expected that the Duke of Lancaster, *alias* John of Gaunt, would have been appointed regent, but not one of the king's uncles was named, and John, looking gaunter * than ever, withdrew in stately dudgeon to his Castle of Kenilworth.

** John of Gaunt was not so called from his gaunt s some suppose, but from Ghent, or Gand (then calle where the gent, was born,*

The truce with France having expired, without renewal, some attacks were made on the English coast, and advantage was taken of the circumstance to ask the Parliament for a liberal supply. Every appeal to the patriotism of the people was in those days nothing more than an attack upon their pockets; and it is not improbable that, by an understanding among the various kings of Europe, one of them

should be threatened with attack if he required a pretext for obtaining a subsidy from his subjects.

Notwithstanding the money taken from the public purse for the national defence, the work was so utterly neglected by the Government, that John Philpot, a shipowner and merchant of London, equipped a small fleet of his own, with which he captured several of the enemy's vessels. The authorities feeling the act to be a reflection on their own shameful dereliction of duty, censured Philpot for his interference; but the worthy alderman, by replying—"Why did you leave it to me to do, when you ought to have done it yourselves?" effectually silenced all remonstrance.

Young Richard, or those who acted for him, continued to make ducks and drakes of the money of the English, which was being constantly wasted in wanton warfare. The setting up of a duke here, or the taking down of a king there, though the English felt no interest whatever in either the duke or the king, became a pretext for levying a tax on the people. In order that none should escape, so much per head was imposed on every one from the highest to the lowest. The tax varied with the rank of the person; and while a duke or archbishop was assessed at six 'thirteen four (£6 13s. 4d.) a lawyer was mockingly mulcted of six and eightpence. Such was the unpopularity of the poll-tax, that a regular pollish revolution speedily broke out, which was fomented by the exactions of some mercenary speculators to whom the tax had been farmed out by the Government. Commissioners were sent into the disturbed districts to enforce payment, and one Thomas de Bampton, who sat at Brentwood in Essex, with two serjeants-at-arms, was glad to take to his legs, to escape the violence of the populace, who sent him flying all the way to London,

where he rushed with his two attendants into the Common Pleas, and asked for justice. Sir Robert Belknape, the chief, was sitting at Nisi Prius, when Bampton begged permission to move the court as far as Essex. The judge followed by clerks, jurors, and ushers, consenting to the motion, went off to Brentwood, where they had no sooner arrived, than poor Belknape was seized by the nape of the neck and forced to flee, while the clerks and jurors were much more cruelly dealt with.

Leaders were all that the people wanted, when a notorious priest who got the name of Jack Straw—from his being a man of that material—put himself at the head of the discontents. The throwing up a straw will often tell which way the wind blows, and the elevation of Jack certainly indicated an approaching hurricane. During the excitement, one of the tax-gatherers called upon one Walter the Tyler, of of Dartford, in Kent, to demand fourpence, due as Miss Walter's Poll-tax. Mrs. Walter, with the vanity of her sex, wishing to make herself out younger than she really was, declared that the girl was not of the age liable by law to the imposition. The collector made a very rude remark on that very tender point, the age of the elder lady, when she screamed out to her husband, who was tiling a house in the neighbourhood, to come and "punish the impertinent puppy." Walter, who had still his trowel in his hand, replied by crying out "Wait till I get at you;" and the tax-gatherer insolently calling out "What's that what you say, Wat?" so irritated Walter, that he at once emptied a hod of mortar on to the head of the collector. The functionary was, of course, dreadfully mortar-fied at this incident, but the trowelling he got with the trowel completely finished him. Everybody applauded what Wat had done, and he was soon

appointed captain of the rebels. They released from prison a Methodist parson named John Ball, or Bawl, whom they called their chaplain. A nucleus having been formed, the mob increased with the rapidity of a snowball, picking up the scum of the earth at every turn, until it arrived at an alarming magnitude. The Tyler first visited Canterbury, where he played some practical jokes upon the monks, and then came to Blackheath, where, finding the young king's mother —the widow of the Black Prince—he gave the old lady a kiss, and in this operation nearly every rebel followed his leader. Such were the liberties taken by the mob in their zeal on behalf of liberty, which they often affect to pursue by means of the vilest tyranny, cruelty, cowardice, and oppression. The insurgents made for London, when Walworth, the mayor, endeavoured to oppose their entrance; but his efforts were vain, and several parts of the city were burnt and plundered. The Temple was destroyed by fire, and the lawyers running about in their black gowns amid the flames suggested a very obvious comparison. Newgate and the Fleet prisons were broken into, when all the scamps from both places at once assumed the character of patriots, and joined the cause of the people.

It is astonishing how easily a scamp who is unfit for any honest occupation can at once become a friend of the masses. The prisons might at any time contribute a fresh supply, when the stock of lovers of liberty on hand may seem to be diminishing. Rapine and murder were pursued with impunity for some time, the Government leaving matters to take their chance; until a formal demand having been made by the mob for the heads of the Chancellor and Treasurer, it was thought high time to effect a compromise. A proclamation was issued announcing

the king's intention to be at Mile End by a certain hour, and the people were politely requested to meet him there. On his reaching the spot where he intended to talk things over with his subjects, he found sixty thousand of them assembled; and as they all began talking at once, a little confusion arose until the appointment of a regular spokesman. At length the demands of sixty thousand tongues were reduced to four heads, and to these the king agreed very graciously. The dispute might have ended mildly at Mile End, but for the violent proceedings of those who kept away from the meeting. These got into the Tower directly Richard's back was turned, and the least of their offences was the rudeness they manifested towards the widow of the Black Prince, who had either dropt in to tea with the Archbishop and Chancellor or was permanently residing there. This lady had got the name of the Fair Maid of Kent, a title that had many local variations, according to the part of the county in which she was spoken of. Sometimes they called her the Dartford Daisy, sometimes the Canterbury Belle, sometimes the Greenwich Geranium, sometimes the Woolwich Wallflower, and occasionally, even the Heme Bay Hollyoak.

The rioters finding her in the Tower, treated the Fair Maid of Kent with excessive rudeness, comparing her lips to Kentish cherries, and making them the subject of the well-known game which is played by what is termed bobbing at the fruit specified. She was, in fact, nearly smothered in the Tower with the kisses of the malcontents. Her ladies were, of course, dreadfully shocked, and their screams of "Mi!" at the treatment of their mistress were truly terrible. When remonstrated with on the liberty they were taking, they declared liberty to be

the sacred object they were bent on furthering. The Fair Maid of Kent was at length dragged away by her attendants, who concealed her in a house called the royal wardrobe, or perhaps put her into a clothes-cupboard, to keep her out of the way of the rioters.

The Mile End charter had been very nicely written out by order of the king, but Wat Tyler and his followers refused to have anything to do with it. Richard tried another charter with more concessions, but this had no effect; and at length he drew up a third, which went still further than the two first, for the king, or those who advised him, cared not how much was promised to answer a temporary purpose, as there was never any difficulty in breaking a pledge that might be found inconvenient. Whether or no Wat suspected the worthlessness of charters, which might be sworn to one day and treated as waste paper the next, he refused to be satisfied with either of the documents offered to his approval. Finding written communications utterly useless, Richard rode into town, with the intention of seeing what could be done by means of a personal interview.

On reaching Smithfield he met Wat Tyler, and drew up opposite the gate of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which was in those days an abbey. The incident which then happened has been variously described by different pens, but unless we had at our command some of the Smithfield pens that happened to be present at the time, we could not vouch for the accuracy of any particular statement. Some say that Tyler came up in a bullying attitude, and flourished a dagger; others allege that he seized the king's bridle, as if he would take out of the royal hands the reins of power; a few hint that Wat was intoxicated, either with brief authority or something equally short; but

all agree that he received his quietus at the hands of one of his majesty's attendants.

The merit or responsibility of the death of Wat Tyler has usually been assigned to Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, who is said to have killed the rebel with his mace; * but it is doubtful whether the civic potentate would be carrying his mace about with him during a morning's ride.

** Others say that the mace in the hands of Walwort*
the official mace, but a mace belonging to a billi
in the mob. It is pretty certain that, wherever th
have come from, the insolence of Tyler furnished t

The fall of the Tyler had a most depressing influence on his followers, and Richard, riding up to them, offered his services as their leader. "Tyler was a traitor," cried the king: "I will be your captain and your guide," when several of the mob consented to transfer themselves, like so many tools, from the hands of Wat to those of Richard. Some of the rioters sneaked quietly away, while those that remained were paralysed; for it was always the characteristic of an English mob, to go on very valiantly as long as they had it all their own way, but to turn tail and flee on the very first symptom of earnest resistance.

Richard, finding himself once more powerful, instead of tempering justice with mercy, threw in a strong seasoning of the most highly -spiced cruelty, and commenced a series of executions, in which there were nearly fifteen hundred victims to royal vindictiveness. As might have been expected from the state of royal honour at the time, he at once revoked all the charters to which he had agreed—an act which proved that Tyler took a very fair view of the worth of the concessions he had rejected. Jack

Straw, one of the rioters, after being tauntingly told by the authorities that he, Straw, deserved to be thrashed, was among the sufferers by the law; and an act was passed by which "riots and rumours and other such things" were turned into high treason. Considering that rumour has an incalculable number of tongues, which are not unfrequently all going at once, there must have been plenty to do under the act by which all rumours were converted into high treason.

In the year 1382, Richard was married to Anne of Bohemia, a most accomplished Bohemian girl, and the daughter of Charles the Fourth, the highly respectable emperor. The king had in the commencement of his reign been surrounded by a low set, placed about him by his mother, the Princess of Wales, for the purpose of excluding his uncles, who could not be expected to mix with ministers and officers whose vulgarity was shocking, and whose meanness was quite detestable. One of these fellows, John Latimer, a Carmelite friar, and an Irishman, gave Richard a parchment containing the particulars of a conspiracy to place the crown on the head of his uncle, the Duke of Lancaster. The duke swore that the whole story was false; his accuser swore the contrary, and the dispute was at length settled by the strangulation of Latimer. Sir John Holland, the king's half-brother, was the alleged perpetrator of the savage act; and indeed this gentleman subsequently disgraced himself by a homicide in the royal camp, for he pounced upon and killed one of the favourites.

"You're no favourite of mine," roared Holland, as he perpetrated the ruffianly act; which proves the holland of that day to have been a very coarse material.

The Duke of Lancaster having gone abroad to urge

a stale, and rather hopeless, claim to the throne of Castile, Richard was left in the power of his more turbulent uncle, the Duke of Gloucester. This unpleasant person at once proposed a permanent Council of Regency, to which the king objected, when, with dramatic effect, one of the commons produced from under his cloak the statute by which Edward the Second had been deposed, and holding it to Richard's head, implied that his consent or his life were his only alternatives. Upon this he gave his consent, but about two years afterwards, at a council held in May, 1389, he suddenly took what is commonly called a new start, and rising up, addressed Gloucester with the words, "I say, Uncle, do you know how old I am?"

"Of course I do," replied Gloucester, a little puzzled at the oddness of the question; "you are in your twenty-second year; and a fine boy you are of your age," continued the crafty duke; "but why so particular about dates at the present moment?"

"Because," replied the king, "I've been thinking if I'm not old enough to manage my own affairs now, I never shall be."



Richard thinks it high time he managed his own affairs.

Original Size

An expression of "hoity toity!" came into the countenance of the duke; but Richard continued, with much earnestness, that all the young men of his age were released from the control of their guardians, and he did not see why he should any longer be kept morally in pinafores. With this he thanked the council for their past services, which, however, he declared he should no longer require. Before there was time to prevent him, he had snatched the seals from the archbishop, and seized the bunch of keys from the Bishop of Hereford. Everybody was completely dumbfounded by this exhibition on the part of a lad who had never before been known to do more than stammer out a bashful "Bo!" to some goose he may have met with in his youthful wanderings. Gloucester was driven from the council, and the whole thing was done before anyone present had time—or if he had time he certainly omitted the opportunity—to say "Jack Robinson." An affecting reconciliation afterwards took place between Gloucester and the king; but we believe the reconciliation itself to have been more affected than

the parties who were concerned in it.

Richard had soon afterwards the misfortune to lose his wife; and in 1394 he went over to Ireland with a considerable army, but, as it would seem, less for the purpose of making war than making holiday. The English king never struck a blow, and the Irish did not resist, so that the whole affair was a good deal like that portion of the performance of Punch, in which one party is continually bobbing down his head, while the other is furiously implanting blows on vacancy. Richard entertained the Irish with great magnificence, and at one of the banquets said the evening was so pleasant he wished he could make several knights of it. Some of the guests taking up the idea, persuaded him to make several knights by knighting them, which he did with the utmost affability.

Richard did not remain very long a widower, for in October, 1396, he married Isabella, the daughter of Charles the Sixth, an infant prodigy, for she was scarcely more than seven, though a prodigy, according to Froissart, of wit and beauty. Our private opinion—which we do not hesitate to make public—is that there must have been some mistake about the infant's age, and that the parents and nurses of that period were not so particular in proving registers and records of birth as they might, could, or should have been. The wit of a child of seven must have been fearfully forced to have been so early developed: and in spite of the tendency there has always been to exaggerate the merits of royalty, we respectfully submit that the *facetiae* of a child of seven must have been of the very smallest description. The king, who had never been cordially reconciled to Gloucester, was annoyed by the opposition of the latter to the royal marriage, and resolved on striking a blow at

his uncle as well as at one or two of his chief partisans. Richard's plan was to ask people to dinner, and in the middle of one of the courses, give a signal to a sheriff's officer, who was concealed under the tablecloth, from which he sprang out and arrested the visitor. He served the Earls of Warwick and Arundel one after the other in this way, having invited them each in turn to a chop, which it was designed that they should eventually get through the agency of a hatchet. *

** This must not be confounded with an old legend, asked his friends occasionally to a chop at Hatche well-known hotel in Piccadilly.*

His uncle Gloucester was not to be caught in this way, and declined several invitations to a *tête-à-tête*, when Richard, determined to accomplish his object, went to Bleshy Castle in Essex, where his uncle was residing. "As you won't come to see me, I've come to see you," were the king's artful words, when he was naturally invited to partake of that *fortune du pot* which is the ever-ready tribute of English hospitality. While Richard was doing the amiable with the Duchess, Gloucester, the Duke, was seized by one of the bailiffs in the *suite*—disguised, of course, as a gentleman of the household—and hurried to the Essex shore, where he was shoved off in a boat, and conveyed, almost before he could fetch his breath, to Calais.

It was the practice of Richard to do things by fits and starts; so that he accomplished an object very often by getting people to aid him without knowing exactly what they were about, in consequence of the suddenness with which he claimed their services. A few days after poor Gloucester had been "entered

outwards" for Calais, the king went to Nottingham Castle, where, taking his uncles Lancaster and York by surprise, he pulled out a document, requesting them to favour him with their autographs. They could not very well refuse a request so strangely made, and it eventually turned out that they had put their names to a bill of indictment against Gloucester, Warwick and Arundel. A Parliament was called to try the traitors, who were condemned, as a matter of course; for Richard, walking into the house with six hundred men-at-arms and a body-guard of archers, was pretty sure of a large majority. Arundel was beheaded, and a writ was issued against Gloucester, commanding him to return from Calais, to undergo the same disagreeable process.

Fortunately, or unfortunately for the duke, he was dead before the writ could be served; but the Parliament, though they could not kill him twice over, indulged the satisfaction of declaring him a traitor after his decease, by which all his property became forfeited. This proceeding was a good deal like robbing the dead; but it was by no means contrary to the spirit of the period. Warwick pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in the Isle of Man—a sort of *lucus a non lucendo*, which was called the Isle of Man from there being scarcely a man to be seen in the place from one week's end to the other.

The peculiar richness of this reign consists in the historical doubts, of which it is so full that the chroniclers are thrown into a state of pleasing bewilderment. Nobody knows what became of Gloucester while in captivity at Calais; and therefore every writer is at liberty to dispose of the duke in any manner that may tempt an imagination inclining to riot and rampancy. The treatment of his Royal

Highness becomes truly dreadful in the hands of the various antiquarians and others who have undertaken to deal with him. By one set of authorities he is strangled, in accordance with the alleged orders of the king: others kill him of apoplexy; a few poison him; ten or a dozen drown him; six or seven smother him; but all agree in the fact that he was, surreptitiously settled. We are the only faithful recorders of the real fact, when we state upon our honour that nobody knows the manner of the duke's death, which is involved in the dense fogs of dim obscurity. Into these we will not venture, lest we lose our own way and mislead the reader who may pay us the compliment of committing himself to our guidance.

Richard having got rid of Gloucester, was anxious for the removal of Norfolk and Hereford, whom he involved in a quarrel with each other, intending that they should realise the legend of the Cats of Kilkenny. When, however, they had entered the lists to decide their dispute by wager of battle, Richard thought it better to run no risk of either of them escaping, and he therefore sentenced both to banishment. Poor Norfolk, a pudding-headed fellow, who might have gone by the name of the Norfolk Dumpling, was soft enough to die of grief at Venice, on his road to Jerusalem, whither he contemplated a pilgrimage. Hereford remained in France, having been promised a pardon, but as it did not arrive he took French leave to return to England, in 1399, after scarcely more than a year's absence. His retinue was so small as to be utterly ridiculous, for it consisted of one exiled archbishop, fifteen knights, and a small lot of servants, who may be put down as sundries in the little catalogue. One fool, however, makes many, and one rebellious earl was soon joined

by a number of other seditious nobles.

The plan of Hereford was that of the political quack who pretends to have a specific for every disease by which the constitution is affected. He published a puffing manifesto declaring that he had no other object but the redress of grievances, and that the crown was the very last thing to which his thoughts were directed. One of his confederates to whom Hereford was reading the rough draft of his proposed address, suggested that the disclaimer of the crown which it contained, might prove inconvenient, when the royal diadem was really obtainable. "Don't you see," replied the crafty Hereford with a smile, "I have not compromised myself in any way. I have only said it is the last thing to which my thoughts are directed, and so indeed it is, for I think of it the last thing at night as well as the first thing in the morning." Thus with the salve of speciousness, did the wily earl soothe for a time the irritations of his not very tender conscience.

The manifesto had its effect, for it is a remarkable fact that they who promise more than it is possible to perform, find the greatest favour with the populace; for an undertaking to do what cannot be done always affords something to look forward to. Expectation is generally disappointed by fulfilment, and the most successful impostors are consequently those who promise the most impracticable things without ever doing anything. The imposition cannot be detected until the impossibility of the thing promised is demonstrated; and this does not often happen, for the difficulty of proving a negative is on all hands admitted. It was therefore a happy idea of Hereford, as a political adventurer, to promise a redress of every grievance; and if he could have added to his pledge of interference *de omnibus rebus* an assurance

of his ultimately applying his panacea to *quodam alia*, there is little doubt that he would have been even more successful than he was in augmenting the number of his followers.

By the time he reached London he had got sixty thousand men of all sorts and sizes about him, for the people in those days were fond of changing their leaders, and Hereford was popular as the latest novelty. The Duke of York—the king's uncle—moved to the West End, as Henry and his forces entered at the East; but Henry of Bolingbroke—alias Hereford, who was also the nephew of York—invited the latter to a conference. After talking the matter over, the worthy couple agreed to a coalition; the conduct of York being very like that of an individual left to guard a house, and joining with the thief who came to rob the premises.



Henry of Bolingbroke and the Duke of York transacting business.

Original Size

Richard, who was in Ireland, knew nothing of what was passing at home, for in consequence of contrary winds, the non-arrival of "our usual express" was for three weeks a standing announcement with all the organs of intelligence. When he received the news from his "own reporter," he started for Milford Haven, where he was almost overwhelmed with disagreeable information from gentlemen who evinced the genius of true penny-a-liners in making the very most and the very worst of every calamitous incident. Richard's soldiers seeing that their king more than ever required their fidelity and aid, immediately, according to the usual practice, ran away from him. "They deserted," says the chronicler, "almost to a man," and it is to be regretted that we have not the name of the "man" who formed the nearly solitary exception to the general apostacy. Whoever he may have been, he must have exercised a great deal of self-command, for he was, of course, his own officer; he must have reviewed himself, as

well as gone through the ceremony of putting himself on duty and taking himself off at the proper periods. We must not, however, take too literally the calculations of the old chroniclers, who reduce the number of Richard's adherents to an almost solitary soldier, for the truth appears to be that the king mustered almost six thousand men out of the twenty thousand he had brought with him from Ireland. Flight was therefore his only refuge, and selecting from his stock of fancy dresses the disguise of a priest, Richard, accompanied by his two half-brothers, Sir Stephen Scroop, the Chancellor, and the Bishop of Carlisle, with nine other followers, set off for the Castle of Conway. There he met the Earl of Salisbury and a hundred men, who had eaten every morsel of food to be found in the place, and Richard was occupied in running backwards and forwards from Conway to Beaumaris, then on to Carnarvon, then back to Conway again, in a wretched race for a dinner.

It is pitiable to find a king of England reduced to the condition described in the old nursery ditty. He went to Conway for provisions; but

"When he got there
The cupboard was bare;"

and the same result followed his visit to Beaumaris and Carnarvon. Notwithstanding the number of bones that his subjects had to pick with him, there was not one in the larders of the three castles he visited. "And so," in the emphatic words of the nursery rhyme, "the poor dog had none." So complete was the desertion of Richard, that the Master of the Household, Percy, Earl of Worcester, called all the servants together, and broke his wand of office,

accompanying the act by exclaiming, "Now I'm off to Chester, to join the Duke of Lancaster." This ceremony was equivalent to a discharge of all the domestics under him, and the king, had he returned to his abode, would have been compelled to "do for himself" in consequence of the disbanding of all his menials. The members of the establishment, fancying they had an opportunity of bettering themselves, did not hesitate to follow the example of their chief, and there is no doubt that a long list, headed *Want Places*, was at once forwarded to the Duke of Lancaster.

Having ransacked every corner of Conway Castle without finding any provisions, Richard had nothing left but an unprovisional surrender. He got as far as Flint Castle, which was only three miles from Chester, but he found the inhabitants had flinty hearts, and he met with no sympathy. Henry of Bolingbroke came to meet him, when Richard, touching his hat, bid welcome to his "fair cousin of Lancaster."

"My lord," replied Henry, somewhat sarcastically, "I'm a little before my time, but, really, your people complain so bitterly of your not having the knack to rule them, that I've come to help you." Richard gave a mental "Umph!" but added, "Well, well, be it as you will," for his hunger had taken away all his appetite for power. After a repast, unto which the king did much more ample justice than he had ever done to his subjects, a hackney was sent for, and Richard rode a prisoner to Chester.



Richard the Second conducted a prisoner to Chester.

Original Size

No one pitied him as he passed, though the spectacle was a truly wretched one. The horse was a miserable hack, while Richard himself was hoarse with a hack-ing cough, caught in the various exposures to wind and weather he had undergone in his vicissitudes. The dismal *cortège* having put up at Litchfield for the king and his horse to have a feed, of which both were greatly in want, Richard made a desperate attempt, while the waiter was not in the room, to escape out of a window. He had run a little way from his guards, but a cry of "Stop thief!" caused him to be instantly pursued, and, when taken, he was well shaken for the trouble he had occasioned. He was treated with increased severity, and on arriving in London was conveyed, amid the hootings of the mob, to the Tower.

Parliament had been appointed to meet on the 29th of September, 1399, and on that day Richard received in his prison a deputation, to whom he handed over the crown and the other insignia of royalty. Not satisfied with the delivery of the sceptre as a proof of the king's abdication, a wish was expressed to have it in writing, and he signed, as

well as resigned, without a murmur. His enemies had, in fact, determined on his downfall, and they seemed anxious to be prepared at all points for dragging the throne from under him. In order to make assurance doubly or trebly sure, an act of accusation against him was brought before Parliament on the following day, when Richard's conduct was complained of in thirty-three, or as some authorities have it, thirty-five * separate articles.

** The Pictorial History of England, which is gener accurate, mentions thirty-three articles. Rapin se substance of thirty-one of the articles, and adds were four others.*

There is no doubt that Richard had behaved badly enough, but the articles, taking the definite and indefinite together, attributed to him a great deal more than he had really been guilty of. His punishment having taken place before his trial, it was of course necessary, for the sake of making matters square, that the offence should be made to meet the penalty. Had he been tried first and judged afterwards, a different course might have been taken, but as he had already been deposed, it was desirable —if only for the look of the thing—that he should be charged with something which would have warranted the Parliament in passing upon him a sentence of deposition. Upwards of thirty articles were therefore drawn up, for the great fact that in laying it on thick some is almost sure to stick, was evidently well known to our ancestors: He was charged with spending the revenues of the crown improperly, and choosing bad ministers, though he might have replied that bad had been the best, and

that he and Hobson were, with reference to choice, in about the same predicament. He was accused, also, of making war upon the Duke of Gloucester, as well as on the Earls of Lancaster and Chester, to which he might have responded that they began it, and that it was only in his own defence he had treated them as enemies. It was alleged against him, also, that he had borrowed money and never paid it back again; but surely this has always been a somewhat common offence, and one which the aristocracy should be the last persons in the world to treat with severity. In one article he was charged with not having changed the sheriffs often enough, and, as if to allow him no chance of escape, another article imputed to him that he had changed the sheriffs too frequently. Some of the counts in the indictment were utterly frivolous, and the twenty-third stated that he had taken the crown jewels to Ireland, as if he could not legally have done what he pleased with his own trinket-box.

It must be presumed that Richard allowed judgment to go by default, for all the accusations were declared to be proved against him. If he had been assisted by a special pleader, he might have beaten his accusers hollow on demurrer, for many of the counts in the declaration were, in legal phraseology, utterly incapable of holding water. * Notwithstanding the weakness of the articles, they were not attacked by any one in Parliament except the Bishop of Carlisle, who, in a miserable minority of one, formed the entire party of his sovereign. The venerable prelate, in a powerful speech, talked of Richard's tyranny, including his murder of Gloucester, as mere youthful indiscretion; and described his excessive use of the most arbitrary power, as the exuberance of gaiety. The bishop's

freedom of speech was fatal to his freedom of person; for he was instantly ordered into custody by the Duke of Lancaster. No one followed on the same side as the prelate, whose removal to prison had the effect of checking any tendency to debate, and the articles were, of course, agreed to without a division. Sentence of deposition was accordingly passed on the king, who had been already deposed, and the people of England revoked all the oaths and homage they had sworn to their sovereign. Such, indeed, was the determination of his subjects to overturn their king, that his deposition was not unlike the practical joke of drawing the throne literally from under him. They knew he had not a leg to stand upon, and they seemed determined that he should not have a seat to sit down upon; for even established forms were overturned in order to precipitate his downfall.

** Mackintosh, who keeps the facts always very dry, inclined to our opinion that the indictment would held water.*

What became of Richard after his having been deposed is a point upon which historians have differed; but the favourite belief is that he was cut off with an axe by one of his gaolers at Pomfret Castle, where he was kept in custody. Some are of opinion that he was starved, and died rather from want of a chop than by one having been administered. Mr. Tytler believes that the unfortunate exmonarch escaped to Scotland, where he resided for twenty years; but the story is doubtful, for even in Scotland it is impossible to live upon nothing, which would have been the income of Richard after his exclusion from the royal dignity.

When we come to weigh this sovereign in the

scale, we can scarcely allow him to pass without noticing his deficiency. He seems to have had originally a due amount of sterling metal, but the warmth of adulation melted away much of the precious ore, as a sovereign is frequently diminished in value by sweating. To this deteriorating influence may be added that of the clipping process, to which he was subjected by his enemies, who were bent on curtailing his power. He had by nature a noble and generous disposition, which might have made him an excellent monarch. But our business is with what he really was, and not with what he might have been. He was alternately cowardly and tyrannical, in conformity with the general rule—applicable even to boys at school—that it is the most contemptible sneak towards the stronger who is towards the weaker the fiercest bully. Wholesome resistance tames him down into the sneak again, and in pursuance of this ordinary routine, Richard, from an overbearing tyrant, became a crouching poltroon, when his enemies got the upper hand of him.



A Practical Joke. Deposition of Richard the Second.

Original Size

It was during this reign that the authority of the pope was vigorously disputed in England, chiefly at the instigation of John Wickliffe, who denied many of the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and protested against its supremacy. Its influence was, moreover, weakened by its being in some sort "a house divided." Avignon had been for some time the papal residence, but the Italian cardinals having persuaded the pontiff to return to Rome, the French cardinals set up a sort of opposition pope, who continued to live at Avignon. Urban did the honours with great urbanity in the Eternal City, while Clement carried on the papal business at the old establishment in France, and Europe became divided between the Clementines and Urbanists.

These two sects of Christians continued to denounce each other to eternal perdition for some years, and their trial of strength seemed to consist chiefly in a competition as to which could execrate the other with the greatest bitterness. This dissension was no doubt favourable to the views of Wickliffe, who, like other great reformers, renounced in his old age the liberal doctrines by which he had obtained his early popularity.

We have alluded in the course of this chapter to a combat which was about to take place between the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk, in pursuance of the practice of Wager of Battle, which was in those days prevalent. It may seem unjust and ridiculous to the present generation, that the strongest arm or stoutest spear should have settled a legal difference, but even in our own times it is frequently the longest purse which determines the issue of a law-suit. The only difference is that litigants formerly knocked about each other's persons, instead of making their assaults upon each other's pockets, and the legal phrase, that

"so-and-so is not worth powder and shot," preserves the allegory of a combat, to which an action-at-law may be compared with the utmost propriety. There has always been something chivalric in entering upon the perilous enterprise of litigation, and we are not surprised that the forensic champions of England should have been originally an order of Knights Templars. The only military title which is still left to the legal corps is that of Sergeant, and the black patch in the centre of their heads is perhaps worn in memory of some wound received by an early member of their order in the days of Wager of Battle. The sword of justice may also be regarded as emblematical of the hard fight that is frequently required on the part of those who seek to have justice done to them by the laws of their country.

Contemporaneously with the Wager of Battle, there was introduced during the reign of Henry the Second a sort of option, by which suitors who were averse to single combat might support their rights by the oaths of twelve men of the vicinage. Thus it was possible for those who were afraid of hard hitting to have recourse to hard swearing, if they could get twelve neighbours to take the oath that might have been required. These persons were called the Grand Assize, and formed the jurors—a word, as everybody knows, derived from the Latin *juro*, to swear—but the duty has since been transferred from the jury to the witnesses, who not unfrequently swear quite as hard as the most unscrupulous of our ancestors.

We have seen that there were very few improvements in the reign of Richard the Second; but we think we may justly say of the sovereign, that though he did no good to his country, yet, in the well-known words of a contemporary writer, "He would if he could, but he couldn't."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. ON THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.



Original Size

BEFORE entering on the fourth book of our history, we may perhaps be allowed to pause, for the purpose of taking a retrospective glance at the condition, customs, candlesticks, sports, pastimes, pitchers, mugs, jugs and manners of the people. It is curious to trace the progress of art, from the coarse pipkin of the early Briton to the highly respectable tankard * found in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, which proves the teeth of the monks to have been decidedly liquorish. We must not, however, plunge prematurely into the pot of a more polished era: but we must go

regularly back to the earthenware of our earliest ancestors.

The furniture of the Britons was substantial rather than elegant. A round block of wood formed their easiest chair, which, we need hardly say, was easier to make than to sit upon. The earth served the purpose of a bed, not only for the parsley but for the people; and in winter they made fires on the floor, till the Romans, who brought slavery in one hand, gave the brasier with the other. Thus did even subjugation tend to civilisation, and the very chains of the conqueror contained links for the enlightenment of the conquered.

The diet of the Britons was as poor as their apartments, and consisted chiefly of wild berries, wild boars, and bisons. We have no record of their cookery, and it is doubtful whether they cooked at all, though some antiquarians have endeavoured to find evidence of a stew, a roast or a curry, and have ended after all in making a mere hash of it. In clothes the Britons were by no means straight-laced, though their intercourse with the Gauls was of inexpressible advantage to them, for it introduced the use of Braccæ, or trousers made of fine wool woven in stripes or chequers. **

** The tankard has no name distinctly bitten into i*

*** It is probable that we get out our own word bra the Braccæ of our forefathers.*

Of the domestic habits of the early tenants of our isle very little is known, and we regret to say there can be little doubt they might most of them have been indicted for polygamy had they lived under our present system of laws, for a plurality of wives was

in those days nothing singular.

Their mode of bringing up children is wrapt in obscurity, but the treatment, if we are to believe a story told by Salinus, * was rather less tender than vigorous; for the first morsel of food was put into the infant's mouth on the point of his father's sword, with the hope that the child would turn out as sharp a blade as his parent. The Saxons brought very material improvements to the mode of living in our island, though we cannot compliment them on the comfort of all their upholstery. Their chairs were a good deal like our camp-stools, without the material which forms the seat; for the Anglo-Saxons were satisfied to sit in the angle formed by the junction of the legs of the article alluded to.

** Pictorial History of England, vol i., book i., c p. 129.*

The drinking-cups in use at this period began to be very elaborate, and were made of gold or silver, while glass was a luxury unknown, though the Venerable Bede, who had a good deal of glass in his family, mentions lamps and vessels of that material. The Anglo-Saxons had beds and bolsters; but from illustrations we have seen in the Cotton MS., we think that if, as they made their beds, so they were obliged to lie, our ancestors could not have slept very pleasantly. Some of the Saxon bedsteads were sexagonal boxes, into which it was impossible to get, without folding one's self up into the form of an S; and another specimen is in the shape of an inverted cocked hat, somewhat smaller than the person by whom it is occupied. Nothing but a sort of human half-moon could have found accommodation in this semilunar cradle, in which to have been "cribbed,

cabined, and confined," could not have been very agreeable.

Costume could scarcely be considered to have commenced before the Anglo-Saxon period, for the Britons persevered in a style of un-dress which was barely respectable. It is therefore most refreshing to find our countrymen at last with stockings to their feet and shirts to their backs, in which improved case they are to be met with in the Anglo-Saxon period. The shoe also stands boldly forward at about the same time, and shows an indication of that polish which was eventually to take a permanent footing. Amid the many irons that civilisation had in the fire at this date, are the curling-irons for ladies' hair, which began to take a favourable turn during the Anglo-Saxon period. The armour worn by the military part of the population was very substantial, consisting chiefly of scales, which gave weight to the soldiery, and often turned the balance in their favour. This species of defence was, however, too expensive for the common men, who generally wore a linen thorax or "dickey," with which they offered a bold front to the enemy.

It would be exceedingly difficult to give an accurate account of Anglo-Saxon life, for there are no materials in existence out of which a statement could be framed; and though some historians do not object to have "their own materials made up," we should be ashamed to have recourse to this species of literary tailoring. We think it better to cut our coat according to our cloth; and we had rather figure in the sparest Spencer of fact, than assume the broadest and amplest cloak, if it were made of a yarn spun from the dark web of ambiguity. What we say, we know, and what we are ignorant of, we know much better than to talk about.



Anglo Saxon Husbandman.

Original Size

The Anglo-Saxon husbandman was little better than a serf who was paid for his labour by the landowner; but the former furnished the base, without which there would have been no *locus standi* for the latter's capital. It was customary in those days to encourage the peasantry by prizes, which did not consist of a coat for a faithful servitude of nearly a life, but a grant of a piece of the land to which the labourer had given increased value by his industry.

The proprietors of the soil had not yet learned the wisdom of trying how much a brute could be made to eat, and how little a human being could exist upon.

With reference to the domestic habits of the period, it has been clearly ascertained that people of substance took four meals a day, and as they took meat at every one, their substance can be no matter of astonishment. The Britons had not been in the habit of dressing their food, which is not surprising, for they scarcely dressed themselves; but the Anglo-Saxons were not so fond of the raw material. With them the pleasures of the table were carried to excess, and drinking went to such an extent, that every monk was prohibited from taking any more

when his eyes were disturbed, and his tongue began to stammer. The misfortune, however, was, that as all who were present at a banquet, generally began to experience simultaneously a disturbance of the eye and a stammering of the tongue, no one noticed it in his neighbour, and the orgies were often continued until the stammering ended in silence, and the optical derangement finished by the closing of the organs of vision.

The chase was a popular amusement with the Anglo-Saxons, but it does not seem to have been pursued with much spirit, if we are to believe an illustration from the Cotton MS. * of the practice of boar-hunting. Two men and one dog are seen hunting four boars, who are walking leisurely two and two, while the hound and the hunters are hanging back, as if afraid to follow their prey too closely. In another picture, from the Harleian MS., seven men are seen huddled together on horseback, as if they had all fainted at the sight of a hawk, who flaps his wings insolently in their faces. Nothing indeed can be more pusillanimous than the sports of the Anglo-Saxons as shown in the illustrations of the period. The only wonder is, that the animals hunted did not turn suddenly round and make sport of the sportsmen.

* *Julius, A. 7.*

The condition of the great body of the people was that of agricultural labourers, who, it is said, were nearly as valuable to their employers or owners as the cattle, and were taken care of accordingly. In this respect they had an advantage over the cultivators of the soil in our own time, who remain half unfed, while pigs, sheep, and oxen, are made too much of

by constant cramming.

The Normans added little to the stock of English furniture, for we have looked through our statistical tables and find nothing that would furnish an extra leaf to our history. It is, however, about this time that we find the first instance of a cradle made to rock, an arrangement founded on the deepest philosophy; for by the rocking movement the infant is prepared for the ups and downs of life he will soon have to bear up against.

The reign of John introduces us to the first saltcellar on record, though, by the way, the first vinegar cruet is of even earlier date, for it is contemporary with the sour-tempered Eleanor, who is reported to have played a fearful game at bowls with the unfortunate Rosamond.

When Fashion first came to prevail in dress, Taste had not yet arrived, and the effect was truly ridiculous. It does not follow, however, that if Fashion and Taste had existed together, they would have managed to agree; for although there is often a happy union between the two, they very frequently remain at variance for considerable periods. Fashion being the stronger, usually obtains the ascendency in the first instance; but Taste ultimately prevails over her wayward rival. In nothing so much as in shoes, have the freaks of Fashion been exemplified. She has often taken the feet in hand, and in a double sense subjugated the understanding of her votaries. In the days of Henry the First shoes were worn in a long peak, or curling like a ram's horn, and stuffed with tow, as if the natural too was not sufficient for all reasonable purposes. The rage for long hair was so excessive that councils * were held on the subject, and the state of the crops was considered with much anxiety. The clergy produced scissors at the end of

the service to cut the hair of the congregation; and it is said of Serlo d'Abon, the Bishop of Seez, that he, on Easter Day, 1105, cut every one of the locks off Henry the First's knowledge-box.

** At Limoges, in 1031, by Pope Gregory the Seventh and at Rouen in 1095,*

We have hinted at the out-of-door amusements of the people, but those pursued within doors may deserve some passing notice. The juggler, the buffoon, and the tumbler were greatly in request, and we see in these persons the germ of the wizards, the Ramo Samees, the clowns, with their "Here we ares," and the various families of India-rubber incredibles, Mackintosh marvels, or Kensington untrustables, that have since become in turns the idols of an enlightened British public. That there is nothing new under the sun, nor in the stars—at least those belonging to the drama—is obvious enough to anyone who will examine the records of the past, which contain all that are declared to be the novelties of the present. Learned monkeys, highly-trained horses, and—to go a little further back—terrific combats, or sword dances, in which deadly foes go through mortal conflicts in a *pas de deux*, are all as old as the hills, the dales, the vales, the mountains, and the fountains. Even the reading-easel—for those who wish to read easily—which was advertised but yesterday, and patented the other day, was a luxury in use as early as the fourteenth century. Even Polka jackets, imported from Cracow in Poland, were "very much worn," and, for what we know, the Polka itself may have been danced in all its pristine purity. In head-dresses we have seen nothing very elegant, for, during Richard the

Second's reign, a yard or two of cloth, cut into no regular pattern, formed a bonnet or hood for a lady, while an arrangement in fur very like a muff, constituted the hat of a gentleman.

Out-of-door sports were much in favour during the fourteenth century, and the priesthood were so much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, that a clergyman was prohibited from keeping a dog for hunting unless he had a benefice of at least ten pounds per annum.



Fox-hunting Bishop of the Period.

Original Size

The foxhunting parson is therefore a character as old as the days of Richard the Second, in whose reign the Bishop of Ely was remarkable for activity in the field, where the right reverend prelate could take a difficult fence with the youngest and best of them. He was particularly active in hunting the wolf, and he often said jestingly, that the interests of his flock prompted him to pursue its most formidable enemy.

We have seen what our ancestors were in their habits, pleasures, and pursuits, none of which differed very materially from those that the people of the present generation are or have been in the habit of following. As the child is father of the man, the infancy of a country is the parent of its maturity. Reproduction is, after all, the nearest approach we can make to novelty, and though in the drama of life "each man in his time plays many parts," there is scarcely one of which he can be called the original representative.

BOOK IV. THE PERIOD FROM THE ACCESSION OF HENRY THE FOURTH TO THE END OF THE REIGN OF RICHARD THE THIRD, A.D. 1399—1485.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. HENRY THE FOURTH, SURNAMED BOLINGBROKE.



Original Size

HE wily Henry had now got the whip hand of his enemies, and had grasped the reins of government. He ascended the throne on the 30th of September, 1399, and began to avail himself at once of the patronage at his disposal by filling up, as fast as he could, all vacant offices. His pretext for this speed was to prevent justice from being delayed, to the grievance of his people; and by pretending there was no time to elect a new Parliament, he continued the old one, which was in a state of utter subservience to his own purposes. At the meeting of the Legislative Assembly, which took place on the 6th of October, Thomas Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, made "the speech of the day," which was a powerful panegyric on the new sovereign. There is no doubt that the whole oration was a paid-for puff, of which the primacy was the price, for the prelate had been restored by Henry to the archiepiscopacy, out of

which Richard had hurried him.

The new candidate for the crown gave three reasons for claiming it; but when a person gives three reasons for anything, it is probable they are all bad, for if one were good the other two would be, of course, superfluous. He declared his triple right to be founded, first on conquest, which was the right of the ruffian who, having knocked a man on the head, steals his purse and runs off with it; secondly, from being the heir, which he was not; and thirdly, from the crown having been resigned to him, which it certainly had been, when the resigning party was under duress, and when his acts were not legally binding. Upon these claims he asked the opinion of Parliament, which, having been cleverly packed by Arundel and his whippers-in, of course pronounced unanimously in Henry's favour. Upon this he vaulted nimbly on to the steps of the throne, and, pausing before he took his seat, he cried out in a loud voice, "Do you mean what you say?" when the *claqueurs* raised such a round of applause, that, whispering to one of his supporters "It's all right," he flung himself on to the regal ottoman. Another round of applause from the privileged orders secured the success of the farce, and the usual puffing announcements appeared in due course, intimating the unanimous approbation of a house crowded to suffocation. This had been certainly the case, for the packing was so complete as to stifle every breath of free discussion.

A week's adjournment took place, to prepare for the coronation, which came off on the 13th of October in a style of splendour which Froissart has painted gorgeously with his six-pound brush, and which we will attempt to pick out with our own slender camel's-hair. On the Saturday before the coronation, forty-six squires, who were to be made

knights, took each a bath, and had, in fact, a regular good Saturday night's wash, so that they might be nice and clean to receive the honour designed for them. On Sunday morning, after church, they were knighted by the king, who gave them all new coats, a proof that their wardrobes could not have been in a very flourishing condition. After dinner, his majesty returned to Westminster, bareheaded, with nothing on, according to Froissart, * but a pair of gaiters and a German jacket. The streets of London were decorated with tapestry as he passed, and there were nine fountains in Cheapside running with white and red wine, though we think our informant has been drawing rather copiously upon his own imagination for the generous liquor. The cavalcade comprised, according to the same authority, six thousand horse; but again we are of opinion that Froissart must have found some mare's nest from which to supply a stud of such wondrous magnitude. The king took a bath on the same night, in order, perhaps, to wash out the port wine stains that might have fallen upon him while passing the fountains. "Call me early, if you're waking," were the king's last words to his valet, and in the morning the coronation procession started for the Abbey of Westminster. Henry walked under a blue silk canopy supported on silver staves, with golden bells at each corner, and carried by four burgesses of Dover, who claimed it as their right, for the loyalty of the Dover people was in those days inspired only by the hope of a perquisite. The king might have got wet through to the skin before they would have held a canopy over him, had it not been for the value of the silver staves and golden bells, which became their property for the trouble of porterage. On each side were the sword of Mercy and the sword of Justice, though these articles must have

been more for ornament than for use in those days of regal cruelty and oppression.

** Vol. ii, p. 699, edition 1842*

Coronation of Henry the Fourth (from the best Authorities):

At nine o'clock the king entered the Abbey, in the middle of which a platform, covered with scarlet cloth, had been erected; so that the proceedings might be visible from all corners of the Abbey. He seated himself on the throne, and was looking remarkably well, being in full regal costume, with the exception of the crown, which the Archbishop of Canterbury proposed to invest him with. The people, on being asked whether the ceremony should be performed, of course shouted "Aye," for they had come to see a coronation and were not likely to deprive themselves of the spectacle by becoming, at the last moment, hypercritical of the new king's merits. We cannot say we positively know there was no "No," but the "Ayes" unquestionably had it; and Henry was at once taken off the throne to be stripped to his shirt, which, in the middle of the month of October, could not have been very agreeable treatment. After saturating him in oil, they put upon his head a bonnet, and then proceeded to dress him up as a priest, adding a pair of spurs and the sword of justice. While his majesty was in this motley costume, the Archbishop of Canterbury, clutching off the bonnet from the royal head, placed upon it the crown of Saint Edward.



Coronation of Henry the Fourth (from the best Authorities).

Original Size

Henry was not sorry when these harassing ceremonies were at an end, and having left the Abbey to dress, returned to the Hall to dinner. Wine continued to play, like ginger-beer, from the fountain; but the jets were of the same paltry description as that which throws up about a pint a day in the Temple. We confess that we are extremely sceptical in reference to all allegations of wine having been laid on in the public streets, particularly in those days, when there were neither turncocks to turn it on, nor pipes through which to carry it. Even with our present admirable system of waterworks, we should be astonished at an arrangement that would allow us to draw our wine from the wood in the pavement of Cheapside, or take it fresh from the pipe as it rolled with all its might through the main of the New River. Whether the liquid could be really laid on may be doubtful, but that it would not be worth drinking cannot admit of a question. Under the most favourable circumstances, our metropolitan fountains could only be made to run with that negative stuff to which the name of negus has been most appropriately given. Let us, however, resume our account of the ceremonial, from which, with our heads full of the wine sprinkled gratuitously over the people, we have been led to deviate.



Entrance of Dymock the Champion, at the Coronation Banquet.

Original Size

Dinner was served for the coronation party in excellent style, but before it was half over it was varied by an *entrée* of the most extraordinary and novel character. It was after the second course that a courser came prancing in, with a knight of the name of Dymock mounted on the top of the animal. The expression of Henry's astonished countenance gave an extra *plat*, in the shape of calf's head surprised, at the top of the royal table. The wonder of Henry was somewhat abated when the knight put into the royal hand a written offer to fight any knight or gentleman who would maintain that the new king was not a lawful sovereign. The challenge was read six times over, but nobody came forward to accept it; and indeed it was nearly impossible, for care had been taken to exclude all persons likely to prove troublesome, as it was very desirable on the occasion of a coronation to keep the thing respectable. The champion was then presented with "something to

drink," in a golden goblet, and pocketed the *poculum* as a perquisite.

Thus passed off the coronation of Henry the Fourth, which is still further remarkable for a story told about the oil used in anointing the head of the new monarch. This precious precursor of all the multitudinous mixtures to which ingenuity and gullibility have since given their heads, was contained in a flask said to have been presented by a good hermit to Henry Duke of Lancaster, the grandson of Henry the Third, who gave it to somebody else, until it came, unspilt, into the possession of Henry of Bolingbroke. We confess we reject the oil, with which our critical acidity refuses to coalesce, and we would almost as soon believe the assertion that it was a flask of salad oil sent from the Holy Land by the famous Saladin.

The day after the ceremony, or as soon after as the disarrangement caused by the preparations for the coronation could be set to rights, the Parliament resumed its sittings. The terrible turncoatery of the last few years gave rise to fearful recriminations in the House of Lords, and the terms "liar" and "traitor" flew from every corner of the building. At one time, forty gauntlets were thrown on the floor at the same moment, as pledges of battle, but there was as little of the *fortiter in re* as of the *suaviter in modo*, and the gloves not being picked up became, of course, the perquisites of the Parliamentary charwoman. Some wholesome acts were passed during the session, but the chief object of the new king was to plant himself firmly on the throne of England. A slip from the parent trunk was grafted on to the Dukedom of Cornwall, and the Principality of Wales, to both of which Henry's eldest son was nominated. No act of settlement of the crown was introduced, for his

majesty wisely thought, that it would only have proclaimed the weakness of his title had he made any attempt to bolster it. Had the question of legitimacy been tried, the young Earl of March would have turned out to be many steps nearer the throne than Henry, who, however, laughed at his claims, and the old saying of "as mad as a March hare," was quoted by a parasite, to prove the insanity of regarding March as a fit heir to the throne of England. Besides, the little fellow was a mere child, and was, of course, a minor consideration in a country which had a natural dread of a long regal minority. "A boy of eight or nine," said one of the philosophers of the day, "cannot sit upon the throne, without bringing the kingdom into a state of sixes and sevens." It was, however, to strengthen the presumed legitimacy of his family that Henry got his son created Prince of Wales, and though the circumstance is said to have weighed but as a feather in the scales, the Prince of Wales's feathers must always go for something in the balance.

Richard, who was still in custody, was kept continually moving about from castle to castle, like a spring van in town or country, until a few of the lords devised the plan of murdering Henry and restoring the late king, just by way of novelty. A tournament was got up, to which the king was politely asked, and the words, "Tilting at two. An answer will oblige," might be found in the corner of the invitation card. Henry "had much pleasure in accepting" the proposal to join the jousting party, but having received an intimation from the Earl of Rutland, his cousin and one of the conspirators, his majesty did not attend the *soirée*. The intention was to have hustled him and killed him on the spot, but he did not come, and the jousting was, of necessity,

carried on for some time by the traitors at the expense of each other. At length, as the day wore on, they began to think it exceedingly odd that Henry had not arrived, when suspecting they had been betrayed, they determined to make for Windsor, where they knew the king had been passing his Christmas holidays. He had, however, received timely warning, and had left for London, so that the conspirators were utterly baffled.

On their arrival at Windsor, they hastened to surprise the Castle; but the greatest surprise was for themselves, when they heard of the escape of their intended victim. Henry had rushed up to town to issue writs against every one of the traitors, who ran away in all directions before he had time to return to Windsor. Some of them attempted to proclaim King Richard in every town they passed through; but they might as well have proclaimed Old King Cole, or any other merry old soul, for they only got laughed at and slaughtered by the inhabitants. Poor Richard was also a sufferer by his injudicious friends, for it was agreed that he would become an intolerable nuisance if he should serve as a point for the rebels to rally round. It was therefore thought advisable to have him abated, and according to the chroniclers of the day, who confess they know nothing about it, he was either starved or murdered. The condition of Richard's young wife, Isabella, a girl of eleven, the daughter of King Charles of France, was exceedingly deplorable. She had brought a large fortune to her husband, and upon his death, her father wished her to be restored to the bosom, and her money to the pockets, of her family. The young lady was promised by an early boat; but Charles insisted that she should be allowed to bring her dowry back with her. Henry, who had spent at least half of it, declined this

proposal, and her papa, who had an eye to the cash, would not receive her without, so that she really seemed on the point of becoming a shuttlecock tossed between two immense battledores in the shape of Dover and Calais. Every kind of paltry excuse was set up to avoid payment of the demand, and the English pretended to find upon their books an old claim for the ransom of the French King, John, who had been taken by Edward the Third, and had never been duly settled for. This plea of set-off was overruled on demurrer by the French, who kept reiterating their applications for Richard's widow and her dowry, with a threat of ulterior proceedings if the demand was not speedily complied with. At length Henry agreed to restore her like a toad, "with all her precious jewels in her head." Her old father received her with the exclamation of "Oh, you duck of diamonds," in allusion, no doubt, to the valuable brilliants she carried about her; and there is every reason to believe that had her teeth been literally pearls, the king would have made copious extracts from the choice collection.

Henry now began to consider the best means for making himself popular, and after thinking it well over he came to the conclusion that a war would be a nice little excitement, of which he might reap the benefit. Upon looking about him for an eligible object of attack, Scotland seemed to be the most inviting; for Robert, the actual king, was old and helpless, while his eldest son David, Earl of Bothsay, was a drunken, dissipated, reckless, but rather clever personage. He had quarrelled with his uncle the Duke of Albey, who had acted as regent during the illness of the king, and who was himself a remorseless ruffian; so that the Scotch royal family consisted of a dotard, a drunkard, and a bully.

Henry, though he wanted a war, wished to get it without paying for it, to prevent the odium he might incur by taxing the people. He therefore tried the old plan of feudal service, by calling upon all persons enjoying fees or pensions to join him in arms at York, under pain of forfeiture. The lay lords were ordered to come at their own charge with their retainers, but the result afforded a strong proof of the fact that a thing is never worth having if it is not worth paying for. Those who came in arms were fearfully out at elbows; and amid the owners of fees with their retainers, was perhaps some unhappy Templar, with his one fee and one retainer, urged by an ordinary motion of course, to appear in the great cause of the king *versus* Bruce, Rothsay and others.

Henry began boldly with a writ of summons directed to Robert, greeting, and ordering him to come to Edinburgh to make submission. The Earl of Rothsay entered an appearance for his father; a declaration of war ensued on Henry's part, when Rothsay, without putting in a plea, took issue at once, and threw himself upon the country. Henry, not expecting the action to come off so speedily, was but ill prepared, and after making a vain attempt at a fight—in the course of which he tried all his earls and failed on every count—he retired from the contest. He endeavoured, nevertheless, to make the best of it, and observed pleasantly to his followers, "Well, gentlemen, I told you we were sure to beat, and so we will yet. Come, let us beat a retreat; that is better than not beating anything." Thus ended, in a pitiable and most humiliating pun, a campaign commenced in pride, confidence, and insolence.

While Henry was fooling away his time and resources in the North, a little matter in the West was growing into a very formidable insurrection.

Owen Glendower, esquire, a Welsh gentleman "learned in the law," who had held a place in the household of Richard the Second, perhaps as standing counsel, became involved in a dispute about some property with Lord Grey de Ruthyn. Mr. Glendower petitioned the Lords, who rejected his suit, which so irritated him that he instantly exchanged the pen for the sword, the forensic gown for the coat of mail, and dashing his wig violently on the floor, ordered a helmet to fit the head and the box hitherto devoted to peaceful horse-hair.

In the course of his legal studies he had learned something of the art of making out a title, and he immediately set to work to prove himself the lineal descendant of the native Welsh princes. By drawing upon fact for some portions, and his imagination for the remainder, he contrived to get up an excellent draft abstract, which he endorsed with the words "Principality op Wales. Grey Ruthyn *ats* self;" and adding the usual formula of "Mr. O. Glendower, to settle and advise, 2 *Guas*.; Clerk, 2s. 6d.;" he placed it among his papers. The Welsh peasants set him down as a magician at the least, and the barrister had no difficulty in placing himself in a little brief authority over them.

Assisted by his clerk the trusty Thomson, Mr. Owen Glendower armed himself for the contest upon which he had determined to enter; and the learned gentleman, who had never used any weapon more formidable than a file, upon which he had occasionally impaled a declaration, now girded on the sword, and prepared to listen to the war-trumpet as the only summons to which he would henceforth pay attention. Taking the somewhat professional motto of "deeds not words," he sallied forth, as he boldly declared, for the purpose of subjecting all his

opponents to special damage.



Mr. Owen Glendower armed by his trusty Clerk.

Original Size

He collected a small band, and made an attack on the property of Grey de Buthyn, for which the king had Mr. Glendower's name published in the next batch of outlaws. Irritated by this indignity, the learned gentleman declared himself sovereign of Wales, observing with much quaintness, "One may as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb, and why not for a Welsh rabbit?" Henry at once marched in pursuit, but the barrister was cautious enough to avoid an action, and led his antagonist all over the Welsh circuit, by which he continually put off the day of trial. Henry, who had a variety of other little matters to attend to, was compelled to allow the cause of himself *versus* Glendower to stand over to an indefinite period.

Among the businesses getting into arrear at home, was an absurd declaration of war by Walleran of Luxemburgh, the Count of Ligny and St. Pol, who had married a sister of the deposed Richard, and was

suddenly seized with a fit of fraterno-legal or brotherly-in-lawly affection, and began to talk of avenging his unfortunate relative. In spite of the recommendations of his best friends, who all urged him "not to make a fool of himself," he insisted on going to sea, where a fate a good deal like that of the three wise men of Gotham appeared to threaten him.

Conspiracies now sprung up on every side, and a rumour was spread, that Richard was alive in Scotland, and was coming presently to England at the head of a large army, to play old Harry with Henry's adherents. Never was a cry of "Bogey" more utterly futile than this assertion, for Richard was really dead, though it suited a certain party of malcontents to resuscitate him for their own purposes. Henry was exceedingly angry at the rumour, and every now and then cut off some half-dozen heads, as a punishment for running about with a false tale, but there was no checking the evil.

At length an army came from Scotland, but Richard was not with it, and the Scotch no longer kept up the delusion, but, like the detected impostor who confessed "It is a swindle, and now do your worst," they acknowledged the hoax they had been previously practising. The Scotch proved mischievous, but impotent; and Henry was not far from the truth when in one of his remonstrances he remarked, "You are doing yourselves no good, nor me either." They were defeated at Nisbet Moor by the English, under the command of a disaffected Scot, the old Earl of March, who was piqued at his daughter Elizabeth having been jilted by the Earl of Bothsay, to whom she had been affianced. The Earl of Bothsay had made another, and let us hope, a better match, so that the action fought at Nisbet Moor was, as far as the Earl of March was concerned,

in reality an action for a breach of promise of marriage. Young Bothsay had united himself to Miss Mariell Douglas, the daughter of old Douglas who had his child the husband—that was for his child the husband—that was to have been—of Earl March's daughter that was, but had also obtained for himself a grant of the estates of the father of Rothsay's ex-intended. Douglas, with ten thousand men at his heels, hurried to take possession, and they soon carried sword and fire—but we believe it was fire without coals—to Newcastle. Having completely sacked this important city—but mark I there were in those days no coals to sack—he returned laden with plunder, towards the Tweed, for which way he went, was—like Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee—a matter of pure indifference. The Duke of Northumberland, aided by his son, the persevering Percy, surnamed Hotspur, with the indignant March, had got an army in the rear, when Douglas, seeing a good position between the two forces, called Homildon Hill, was the first to take possession of it. Harry Percy was about to charge up the hill, when the Earl of March, seizing his bridle, backed him cleverly into the ranks, and advised him to begin the battle with his archers. The advice was taken; they shot up the hill, and success was the upshot. Every arrow told with terrific effect upon the Scotch, who presented a phalanx of targets, and the stalwart troopers became at length so perforated with darts, that they looked like so many fillets of veal, skewered through and through by the enemy. Douglas was wounded in so many places, that he resembled a porcupine rather than a Scottish chief, and he was taken into custody, regularly trussed like a chicken prepared for roasting. Among his fellow-prisoners were the Earls of Moray and Angus, who had tried daughter that

was, but had also in vain to escape; but neither did Moray nor Angus reach their own quarters in time to escape the grasp of the enemy.

The battle of Homildon Hill, which we have thus faintly described, was fought on the 14th of September, 1402, while Henry himself was much less profitably occupied in hunting up his learned friend, or rather his knowing opponent, Owen Glendower. The lawyer-like cunning of this gentleman carried him triumphantly through all his engagements; and though good cause might have been shown against it, yet, by his cleverness and tact in Wales, he was nearly successful in getting his rule made absolute.

Henry's next annoyance was an impertinent letter from a former friend and "sworn brother," the Duke of Orleans, uncle of Isabella, the widow of the late king, and the acknowledged "female in distress," whom it was fashionable for the "recognised heroes" of that day to talk about avenging. The letter of the Duke of Orleans was a mixture of ferocity and facetiousness; it deplored the inactivity prevailing in the military market, and offered to do a little business with Henry, either in "lances, battle-axes, swords, or daggers." He sneeringly repudiated "bodkins, hooks, points, bearded darts, razors, and needles," as if Henry had been in the habit of arming himself with the fittings of a work-box or a dressing-case. An answer was returned in the same sarcastic strain, and an angry correspondence ensued, in which the parties gave each other the lie, offered to meet in single combat, and indeed entered into a short but sharp wordy war, which was followed by no more serious consequences.

Northumbarland, who had struck for the defence of his country, now struck for his wages, which were unsatisfactory, and several other patriotic noblemen

insisted on more liberal terms for their allegiance. Henry having resisted the extortion, gave, of course, great offence to his faithful adherents, who veered, at once, clean round to the scale of the king's enemies. In those days the principles of great men seemed to go upon a pivot, and Northumberland's swivel was evidently in fine working order on the occasion to which we have alluded. Scroop, the Archbishop of York, who might well have been called the Unscrupulous, advised that Henry should be treated as a wrongful heir, and that the young Earl of March should be rallied round, as the rightful heir, by the dissatisfied nobles. They sent a retaining fee to Owen Glendower, and marked upon his brief "With you the Earl of Northumberland and Henry Percy," and appointed a consultation at an early period. Earl Douglas was released from custody without payment of costs, on condition of his leaving the rebels, and O. Glendower, Esquire, married the daughter of his prisoner, Mortimer, the young Earl of March's uncle.

The conspirators having consulted, determined to proceed, and though Northumberland himself was kept at home by indisposition, Hotspur marched to meet Glendower. That learned gentleman, who had probably not received his "refresher," did not come, but young Percy, nevertheless, sent to Henry a written notice of trial. The king proposed referring it to arbitration, but the offer was treated with contempt; and he then rejoined that he had no time to waste in writing, but he would, "by dint of sword and fierce battle." prove their quarrel was false and feigned, "whereupon," as the lawyers have it, "issue was joined." Each army consisted of about fourteen thousand men, and on the morning of the 21st of July, 1403, both being full of confidence, began

sounding their horns or blowing their own trumpets. Hotspur and Douglas led the first charge with irresistible vigour, and one or two gentlemen who had carried their loyalty so far as to wear the royal arms as a dodge, while the king fought in plain clothes, paid with their lives the penalty of their fidelity. Henry of Monmouth, the young Prince of Wales, got several slaps in the face, and once or twice exclaimed, in the Norman-French of the period, "Oh, *Mon mouth!*" but he nevertheless continued to the last, showing his teeth to the enemy. Douglas and Hotspur were not ably supported, and the latter was struck by an arrow shot at random, while Douglas, losing command over his head, took to his heels, and becoming positively flighty in his flight, fell over a precipice. This was his downfall, but not his death, for he was picked up and made prisoner. Old Percy, who had been absent from ill-health, but had now got much better from his illness, was marching to join the insurgents with a considerable force, and had paused on the road to take his medicine, when he was met by a messenger, who, glancing at the physic, exclaimed, "Ah! my lord, I've got a blacker dose than that for you!" With this, he administered two pills in the shape of two separate announcements of the deaths of Hotspur and Worcester, the son and brother of the earl, who, bidding "Good morning" to his retainers, all of whom he dismissed, shut himself up in the castle of Warkworth. The king soon routed him out, when Northumberland, like an old sycophant as he was, pretended that Hotspur had acted against his advice, for the venerable humbug, though eager enough to share in his son's success, was meanly anxious to repudiate him in his misfortunes. By this paltry proceeding, Northumberland was allowed to get off

cheap, and even to win commiseration as the victim of the imprudence of his heir, though the fact was that the latter had been completely sacrificed to his parent's selfishness. In the year 1404, the old cry of "Dick's alive" was renewed, and some people even went so far as to say that they had recently walked and talked with the deposed King Richard. The rumour ran that he was living in Scotland, and one Serle, an old servant, went over to recognise his majesty, but found in his place the court jester, who bore some resemblance to the unfortunate sovereign. Serle, however, determined on playing his cards to the best advantage, and thought it a good speculation to play the fool off in place of the king, a trick which was for a time successful. The buffoon humoured the joke, which was a sorry one for its author, who was executed as a traitor, and it might be as well if the same justice were dealt out to similar delinquents in the present day, for indifferent jokes are the madness of few for the gain of nobody.

Henry was now frightfully embarrassed by the quantity of bills pouring in upon him for carrying on the war in Wales, and every day brought him a fresh account which he had never expected. Even the musicians made a claim, and the king, running his eye down a long list of items, including a drum, a ditto, a ditto, a flute half a day, a pandean pipe, *et caetera, et caetera*, exclaimed mournfully to his treasurer, "Alas! I fear I cannot manage to pay the piper." In fact, the claims on account of the war left him no peace, and he proposed taking a quantity of the property of the church to settle with his creditors.

This proposition raised a perfect flame amongst the whole body of the clergy. The Archbishop of Canterbury instantly took fire, while the inferior

members of the church were fearfully put out, and cold water being thrown on the attempt, it was soon extinguished. Fighting was still the business that Henry had on hand, for as fast as one of his foes was down, another was ready to come on with fresh vigour. Old Northumberland could not keep quiet, but Owen Glendower was perhaps the most troublesome of all the king's enemies. The rapidity of the learned gentleman's motions kept the other side constantly employed, for he never hesitated to change the venue, or resort to a set-off, when he wished to baffle his antagonists. At length, lack of funds, and its customary concomitant, the loss of friends, compelled him not only to stay proceedings, but to keep out of the way to avoid his heavy responsibilities. He is supposed to have been engaged for years in a protracted game at hide and seek, living at the homes of his daughters and friends, but disguised always in a shepherd's plaid, to prevent the servants from knowing him. What became of him was never known, and, unfortunately for the historian, there were in those days no registrars of either births, deaths, or marriages. Some say that Owen Glendower ended his days at Mornington, but they might as well say Mornington Crescent; and the place of his interment is no less doubtful, for where he was buried is now buried in obscurity.

There is a tradition that his tomb is in the Cathedral of Bangor, but this story is of little value to anyone except to the Bangor beadle, who makes an occasional sixpence by calling the attention of visitors to a spot which he, and Common Rumour, between them, have dignified with the title of the tomb of Owen Glendower. We all know the character which Common Rumour bears for an habitual violation of truth; and we are afraid that if she is no

better than she should be, the Bangor beadle is not so good as he ought to be.

Henry was fortunate in overcoming his enemies, but his treatment of them was frequently cruel in the extreme. Poor old Robert, the nominal king of Scotland, was driven about from abbey to abbey, but had no sooner got comfortably settled in one, than a cry of "Here he is! we've got him!" drove him to take refuge in another. At last he hid himself in the Isle of Bute, where he is supposed to have remained to the close of his existence, and it is certain that he never addressed to the Isle of Bute the celebrated apostrophe, "Isle of Beauty, Fare thee well!" His eldest son Rothsay was imprisoned in the castle of Falkland (March, 1402), into which it is supposed he was pitched with a pitcher, containing about a pint of water, and furnished by a crusty gaoler, with a piece of crust. Even this miserable diet is said to have been very irregularly administered, and was of course insufficient for an able-bodied young man like Rothsay. He was treated like a pauper under the new Poor-law, and is believed to have died of inanition; for though the chronicles of that day attributed his death to starvation, the chronicle of our day prefers a genteeler term. The king of Scotland's second son, James, had been shipped by his father for France, to be out of the way, when the vessel was seized by the crews of some English cruisers.

Robert died of grief at the loss of young James, whom he called his precious jewel of a gem, and the little fellow, though a prisoner, was lodged and boarded in comfort, allowed masters, and instructed in all the usual branches of a sound education.

Constitutional liberty had in previous reigns taken very irregular hops, skips, and jumps; but, during the reign of Henry, it began taking rapid strides. During

the latter part of his life the tranquillity of his own country gave him the power to lend out his soldiers to fight the battles of others; but it never paid him, for though there was a good deal owing to him, he was unable to get the money. His second son, the Duke of Clarence, had landed in Normandy with a large army, but finding that he could not get a penny to pay his troops, he began to insist on a settlement. He was insultingly told that he was not wanted and might take his army back again, but he soon brought the people to their senses by a little prompt pillage. The matter was arranged, and the Duke of Orleans brought all the ready money he could raise as the first instalment to the headquarters of the English. It is doubtful whether the payments were regularly kept up, but every possible precaution was taken that bail or bills could afford.

Henry's reign was now drawing to a close, and he became exceedingly sentimental in the latter years of his existence. He had discovered the hollowness of the human heart, together with its propensity for wearing a mask, and the keen perception of this perpetual fancy-dress ball of the finest feelings, rendered him gloomy, solitary, and suspicious. He was also in a wretched state of health, for nothing agreed with him, and he agreed with nobody. He became jealous of the popularity of his son, whom he declared to be everything that was bad, though the after life of the young man gave the perfect lie to the paternal libel. Many anecdotes are related of the low freaks of Henry and his companions, who seem to have been the terror of the police and the people. If we are to believe all that is said concerning them, we should look upon the Prince of Wales and his associates as the foes to that great engine of civilisation the street-door knocker, and the

determined enemies to enlightenment by the agency of public lamps.

Anecdotes are told of their being brought before the Chief Justice Gascoigne, the Denman, Pollock, or Wilde of his day, who took cognizance of a case, which would induce either of these learned and upright individuals to exclaim to a complainant: "You must not come here, sir; we don't sit here to decide upon the merits of street rows," Gascoigne, who was a chief justice and a police magistrate all in one—like an article of furniture intended for both a bedstead and a chest of drawers, but offering the accommodation of neither—Gascoigne committed to prison some of the prince's associates. The learned judge, setting a precedent that might be followed with advantage in the present day, inflicted imprisonment, instead of a fine, on those to whom the latter would have been no punishment. The Prince of Wales, on hearing of the incarceration of his companions, rushed into court, demanding a *habeas corpus*, and drew his sword upon the judge when asked for a case in point. Judge Gascoigne ordered the usher to take the prince into custody, and the officer of the court having hesitated, young Henry, politely exclaiming, "I'm your prisoner, sir," surrendered without a murmur. When the king heard the anecdote, he became mawkishly sentimental, exclaiming, "Happy the monarch to have such a good judge for a justice, and happy the father to have a son so ready to yield to legal authority." If the latter is really a subject for congratulation, what happiness the police reports of each day ought to afford to those parents who have had sons confined in the station-house for intoxication, by whom the penalty of five shillings has been paid with alacrity. We can fancy the respectable sire of some youth who has

formed the subject of a case at Bow Street, and who has submitted to the decision of the Bench; we can imagine the parent exclaiming, with enthusiasm, "Happy the Englishman to have such a magistrate to enforce the law, and such a son to yield obedience to its orders." Another anecdote is told of the amiable feeling existing between the sovereign and his heir, which we insert without vouching for its truth, though it is not by any means improbable. The king was ill in bed, and the Prince of Wales was sitting up with him in the temporary capacity of nurse. The son, however, seemed to be rather waiting for his father's death, than hoping for the prolongation of his life, and the king, having gone off into a fit, the prince, instead of calling for assistance, or giving any aid himself, heartlessly took the opportunity to see how he should look in the crown, which always hung on a peg in the royal bed-chamber. Young Henry was figuring away before a cheval glass, with the regal bauble on his head, and was exclaiming "Just the thing, upon my honour," when the elder Henry, happening to recover, sat up in his bed, and saw the conduct of his offspring. "Hallo," cried the king, "who gave you leave to put that on? I think you might have left it alone till I've done with it!"



Unseemly conduct of Henry, Prince of Wales.

Original Size

The prince muttered some excuse, which was not long needed, for on the 23rd of March, 1413, Henry the Fourth died, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign. The character of Henry the Fourth may be told in a few words, and the fewer the better for his reputation, inasmuch as it is impossible to furnish him with that passport to posterity with which it would give us pleasure to present the whole of our English sovereigns. Other historians have puffed him, but the only puffing we can promise him is a regular blowing up. He was cautious how he gave offence to his subjects, but this was less out of regard to their interests than care for his own. He knew that the hostility existing towards him among the nobles, on account of his usurpation, could only be counteracted by obtaining the support of the people. He therefore refrained from irritating the latter by taxing them heavily for his wars, but he never scrupled to help himself to the goods of the former whenever his exigencies required. The only difference between him and some of his predecessors

in the practice of extortion and robbery, is in the fact that while others plundered principally the people, Henry the Fourth thought it better worth his while to plunder the nobles. Some of our predecessors have praised his prudence, which was unquestionably great; for never was a king more cunning in his attempts to preserve the crown he had unjustly acquired. He was not wantonly barbarous in the treatment of his enemies when he got them into his power, and, in this respect, his conduct presents an honourable contrast to that of the sanguinary monsters who committed the greatest crimes to surmount the smallest obstacles. He did not seek to stop the merest breath of disaffection by the most monstrous murders, nor to rid himself of the annoyance of suspicion by incurring the guilt of slaughtering the suspected. His treatment of his predecessor, Richard, and one or two others, who are yet unaccounted for, and returned "missing" in the balance-sheet of history, must always leave a blot, or, rather, a shower of blots, throwing a piebald aspect upon the character of Henry. Among the distinguished individuals who shed lustre on a reign which derived no brilliance from the sovereign himself, are the poets Chaucer and Gower, as well as William Wickham, and Richard Whittington, the Lord Mayor of London. We have been at some pains to trace the story of the latter, in the hope of being able to find accommodation for his cat in the pages of history. We regret to say that our task has ended in the melancholy conviction that the cat of Whittington must make one in that imaginary family which comprises the puss in boots of the Marquis of Carabas, the rats and lizards of Cinderella, and the chickens of Mother Carey.

Among the distinctions to which this reign is

entitled, we must not omit to mention that it was the first in which the practice prevailed of burning what were called heretics. Had this circumstance occurred to us before we commenced the character of Henry, we think we might have spared ourselves the trouble of writing it. The burning of heretics ought, of itself, to brand his name with infamy.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. HENRY THE FIFTH, SURNAMED OF MONMOUTH.

HENRY the Fifth, on coming to the throne, pursued the policy of conciliation; but it so happened that his first act of magnanimity was bestowed in a quarter where it could do no good and excite no gratitude. The act in question, for which he has been greatly praised, was the removal of the body of Richard the Second from an obscure tomb in the Friars' Church, at Langley, to a place beside his first wife, the good Queen Anne, in the Abbey of Westminster. Had Richard the Second been aware of the honour reserved for him after his death, he might probably have requested the advance of a small

instalment during his lifetime, when it would have been of some use to him. The greatest magnificence that can be lavished on a tomb will scarcely compensate for an hour's confinement within the dreariness of a prison. Had Richard been living, there would have been some magnanimity in restoring him to his proper position, but giving to his remains the honours due to sovereignty was only a confession on the part of Henry that he and his father had usurped the crown of one who, being dead, could no longer claim retribution for his injuries. It was a mockery to pretend to uphold the deposed king by the agency of an upholsterer, and the funeral was nothing more than another black job added to the many that had already arisen out of the treatment of poor Richard.

The release of the Earl of March from captivity, and the restoration of the son of Hotspur to the honours of the Percies, were acts of more decided liberality; but, if we are to believe the gossip of the period, these two young gentlemen were a pair of spoons, wholly incapable of making a stir of any kind. The Earl of March was, it is true, a spoon of the king's pattern, for he was a scion of a royal stock, but he nevertheless had enough of the fiddle-head about him to make it certain that he could be played upon, or let down a peg when occasion required.

From the wildness of Henry's life during his Welsh princedom, it was expected that his career as king would have been a series of practical jokes upon his officers of state and his subjects in general. He had, when a young man, "scrupled not," according to Hume, "to accompany his riotous associates in attacking the passengers in the streets and highways, and despoiling them of their goods; and he found an amusement in the incidents which the tears and regret of these defenceless people produced on such

occasions." It was feared, therefore, that he would have continued to riot in runaway knocks, not only at the doors, but upon the heads of the public. Happily, he disappointed these expectations, for from the moment of his ascending the throne, he became exceedingly well conducted and highly respectable. He did not exactly cut his old friends, but told them plainly that they must reform if they desired to retain the acquaintance of their sovereign. He stated plainly that it would not do for the king of England to be figuring at fancy balls, and kicking his heels about at casinos, as in former times, for he was now no longer a man about town, but the sovereign of a powerful country. Poor Gascoigne, the Chief Justice, had approached the royal presence with fear and trembling, fully expecting to be paid off without any pension for having committed Henry, when Prince of Wales, but, to the surprise of everyone, the king commended the judge for his firmness, and advised him, in the words of the song—

"To do the same thing, were he in the same place,'

should he, the king, be placed to-morrow in another similar position.

In the first year of the new reign a commotion sprung up, which first developed itself in a violent fit of seditious bill-sticking. In the course of a night, some party succeeded in getting out an "effective poster," announcing the readiness of "a hundred thousand men to assert their right by force of arms, if needful." What those rights were the placards did not state, and probably this would have been the very last subject that the hundred thousand men would have proceeded to think about. They were supposed to have been instigated by the Lollards, one of

whom, Sir John Oldcastle, their leader, was sent for by the king to have a little talk, in the course of which the wrongs of the Lollards might perchance be hit upon. Sir John Oldcastle, who was one of the old school, found plenty to say, but he never could find anyone to listen patiently to his rigmaroles. Henry the Fifth was obliged to cut the old gentleman short by hinting that the statute *de heretico comburendo* was in force, and Sir John, who had been about to fire up, cooled down very decidedly on hearing the allusion. Henry, finding nothing could be done with Oldcastle, who was as sturdy and obstinate as his name would seem to imply, turned him over to Archbishop Arundel. The prelate undertook to bring Sir John to his senses, but the junction could not be effected, for the objects were really too remote to be easily brought together. A writ was issued, but Oldcastle kept the proper officer at bay, and assailed him not only with obstructive missiles, but with derisive ridicule. At length, a military force was sent out to take the Oldcastle by storm, when Sir John unwillingly surrendered. Though taken, he refused to be shaken in his obstinate resolves, and he pleaded two whole days before his judges, in the hope of wearing them out and inducing them to stay the proceedings, rather than subject themselves to the fearful blow of his excessive long-windedness. He was, however, condemned, but the king granted a respite of fifty days, during which the old fellow either contrived or was allowed to escape from the Tower; and the probability is, that the gaolers had instructions to wink, in the event of his being seen to pass the portals of his prison.

Oldcastle, or Lord Cobham, as he was also called, had no sooner got out of prison than he rushed into the flames of sedition, and illustrated by his conduct

the process of a leap from the frying-pan into the fire. He appointed a meeting of his followers at Eltham for the purpose of surprising Henry, but the king observing the moves of the knight determined if possible to avoid being check-mated. His majesty repaired to Westminster, when Cobham, changing his tactics, fixed upon St. Giles's Fields as the place of rendezvous. The king thought to himself "Now we've got them there we'll keep them there," and shut the gates of the city. This was on the feast of the Epiphany, or Twelfth Pay, 1414, and in the evening the Lord Mayor of London arrested several disreputable Twelfth-night characters. On the next day, a little after midnight, Henry went forth expecting to find twenty-five thousand men assembled in St. Giles's Fields, but he met only eighty Lollards lolling about, expecting Sir John Oldcastle. Several of them were hanged on the charge of having intended to destroy king, lords, commons, church, state, and all the other sundries of which the constitution is composed, and to turn England into a federal republic, with Sir John Oldcastle as president.



Lord Mayor of the Period arresting a suspicious Twelfth-night Character.

Original Size

The idea of eighty enthusiasts meeting in a field near London to slice their country into republics, and make a bonfire of the crown, the sceptre, the throne, and the other appointments of royalty, is really too ridiculous to be entertained, though it is almost funny enough to be entertaining. Such, nevertheless, was the alarm the Lollards had inspired, that everyone suspected of Lollardism was condemned to forfeit his head first and his goods afterwards, though after taking a man in execution it was rather superfluous cruelty to take his property by the same process. Life, however, was held of so little account in those days that there was considered to be no such capital fun as capital punishment.

Henry had scarcely worn the English crown for a year, when, in the spirit of an old clothesman, who delights in a plurality of hats, he thought the crown of France might furnish a graceful supplement to his own head-dress. He therefore sent in his claim to the French diadem, making out a title in right of Edward the Third's wife, who had no right at all, or if she

had, it is clear that Henry the Fifth had no right to the lady, whose heir was Edward Mortimer. France was in a wretched state when Henry put in his claim; for Paris was in one of its revolutionary fits, and intrigue was rampant in the royal family. The dauphin, Louis, was continually fighting with his mother, and insulting his father, while the Duke of Orleans and his cousin the Duke of Burgundy were perpetually quarrelling. Each had his partisans, and those belonging to the latter were in the habit of declaring that an Orleans plum—alluding, of course, to the duke's vast fortune—was preferable to an entire dozen of Burgundy. In the meantime Paris was infested by a band of assassins, professing to be the friends of liberty, and wearing white hoods, which they forced on to everybody's head; and this act was no doubt the origin of the expression with reference to the hoodwinking of the people.

Before proceeding to arm, Henry proposed a compromise. He demanded two millions in cash, and King Charles's daughter, Catharine, in marriage. The latter offered the lady in full, but only a moiety of the money. This arrangement was scornfully rejected, and Henry held a council on the 17th of April, 1415, at which he announced his determination to go "over the water to Charley." Having resolved upon what to do, the next question was how to do it; and the first difficulty that occurred was the refusal of his soldiers to stir a step without an advance of three months' wages. He first tried the Parliament, and got a good supply, which was further increased by borrowing from or robbing his subjects. Even this would not do, and recourse was had to the common but disgraceful practice of unpicking the crown, for the purpose of sending the jewels to the pawnbroker's. A trusty officer was

despatched to deposit with one of the king's relatives a brilliant, in the name of Bolinbroke. The news of the preparations being made in England, spread terror in France, for the distant roaring of the British Lion came across the main, with portentous fury. The French King, Charles, was utterly useless in the emergency—for he was a wretched imbecile—and several artful attempts were made to get rid of his authority. Every now and then he was made the subject of a commission of lunacy, as a pretext for placing power in the dauphin's hands; and that undutiful son, having turned his mother out of doors, seized the contents of the treasury, which made him at once master of the capital. At one time, while the pusillanimous Charles was lying at Arras, an attempt was made to burn him out, by setting fire to his lodgings; but, having all the essential qualities of a perfect pump, he does not appear to have been of a combustible nature. He certainly was not of a very fiery disposition, and his enemies declared that he owed his escape from the flames to his being utterly incapable of enlightenment. Such was the king of France, and such the feeling entertained towards him by the majority of his subjects, when the English sovereign resolved on his aggressive enterprise.

Henry left London on the 18th of June, 1415, and proceeded to Winchester, where he was met by another offer of a compromise. This he refused, and rudely pushing the deputation aside, he pressed on to Southampton. Here his fleet awaited him, but receiving news of a conspiracy to take his life he, instead of putting off to sea, put off his departure. Sir Thomas Grey, the Lord Scroop, and the Earl of Cambridge were all in the plot; and the two latter having claimed the privilege of being tried by their peers, took very little by their motion, for they were

condemned by a vote of wondrous unanimity. Having heard the heads of the treason, Henry cut off the heads of the traitors, and embarked, on the 10th of August, on board his ship the "Trinity." The scene on the Southampton pier was animated and brilliant when the sovereign placed his foot upon the plank leading to the vessel that was to conduct him to the shores of his enemies.



Embarkation of King Henry the Fifth at Southampton, A.D. 1415.

Original Size

Gentle breezes were in attendance to waft him on his way, and Neptune, who is sometimes ruffled on these occasions, presented an even calmness that it was quite delightful to contemplate. An enthusiastic crowd on the shore burst forth into occasional cheers, which were succeeded now and then by the faint sob of some sentimental trooper, taking leave of the fond maid whose heart—and last quarter's wages—he was carrying away with him. The civic authorities were, of course, active in their demonstrations of loyalty on this occasion; and the Mayor of Southampton, in backing to make one of his sycophantic bows, sent one of the attendants fairly over the bows of the vessel. With this exception, no accident or mischance marked the

embarkation of Henry, which seemed to proceed under the most favourable auspices.

His fleet consisted of more than a thousand vessels, and some swans having come to look at it, he declared this little mark of cygnal attention to be a capital omen. We must request the reader to bear in mind, that though all the authorities justify us in announcing one thousand as the number of the ships constituting Henry's fleet, we should not advise anyone to believe the statement, who has not had an opportunity of counting the vessels. Either the ships in those days were very small, or Southampton harbour has been fearfully contracted by the contractors who have since undertaken to widen it. We have been accustomed to place implicit faith in the rule of arithmetic, that "a thousand into one won't go!" nor do we feel disposed to alter our impression in favour of a thousand of Henry's ships being able to go into Southampton harbour. We suspect that a hundred would have been nearer the mark, for posterity is greatly in the habit of putting on an O, and really believing there is nothing in it.

Whatever the numerical strength of Henry's fleet may have been, it is certain that he entered the mouth of the Seine, which made no attempt to show its teeth, and he landed on the 13th of August, three miles from Harfleur, without any resistance. He severely deprecated all excesses against the peaceful inhabitants, but he nevertheless besieged the fortress of Harfleur with tremendous energy; so that his conduct towards the natives was a good deal like that of the individual who knocked another downstairs with numerous apologies for being under the painful necessity of doing so.

The siege was under the conduct of "Master Giles," the Wellington of the period. Master Giles must have

been somewhat of a bungler, for he was not successful until he had lost nearly all his men, and been six-and-thirty days routing out the garrison. Even then the foe surrendered through being too ill to fight, rather than from having got much the worst of it. Henry's army was also reduced to a pack of invalids, and his ships were turned into infirmaries for his soldiers. Though the troops were wretchedly indisposed, Henry himself was only sick of doing nothing, and he accordingly sent a challenge by a friend to the dauphin of France, inviting him to a single combat.

The feelings of Louis were not in correspondence with those of the English king, whose invitation to a hostile *tête-d-téte* was never answered. The friend sent by Henry was not by any means the sort of person to tempt the representative of Young France to a hostile meeting.



Henry the Fifth sends a Friend to the Dauphin.

Original Size

The bearer of the challenge was, in fact, a walking

pattern of what the dauphin might expect to become in the event of his engaging in a duel. A countenance which looked more like a mug that had been cracked and riveted in twenty places, was the letter of recommendation presented by Henry's second. As the friend was evidently not a man to take a denial, Henry? (Louis) contented himself with scratching off a few hieroglyphics on a sheet of paper—to make believe that he was writing a note—and hastily seizing an envelope, he sealed and delivered the delusive missive. Henry's friend went away satisfied, with the full conviction that he was taking back an acceptance of his master's challenge, but when the communication came to be opened, the English king was indignant at the hoax that had been played upon him.

Finding himself foiled in an attempt to settle his dispute by single combat, Henry called over the muster-roll of his troops, which presented a frightful number of vacancies since the making up of his last army list. He had lost several hands from his first foot, and he was compelled to say to his adjutant, "Really, if we go on at this rate we shall be compelled to notify that *Nobody* is promoted *vice Everybody*, killed, or retired."

His entire force having dwindled down to the mere shadow of its former self, he was advised to get home as speedily as possible. "No," he replied, "I have no notion of coming all this way for nothing, and I shall see a little more of this good land of France before I go back again." The army, which was nearly all under the doctor's hands, seemed, upon being drawn up in marching order, far fitter to go to bed than to go to battle. Every regiment required medical regimen, and when the soldiers should have been sitting with their feet in hot water and comforters

round their throats, they were required, with a callous indifference to their state of health, to march towards Calais.

The journey began on the 6th of October, when the French king and the dauphin had a large force at Rouen, while the Constable of France was in front of the English, with an army consisting of the very pick of Picardy. In passing through Normandy Henry met with no opposition, but his movements were watched by a large force, which kept continually cutting off stragglers, or in military language, clipping the wings of his army. Those who lingered in the rear, or, as it were hung out behind like a piece of a pocket-handkerchief protruding from the skirts of the main body, were cut off with merciless alacrity. The English continued to be dreadfully ill, and were proper subjects for the *Hotel des Invalides*, but they nevertheless pursued their march with indomitable courage. In crossing the river Bresle, beyond Dieppe, they made a decided splash; but the garrison of Eu interrupted them in their cold bath, though with very little effect, for the French leader was killed and his followers were driven back to the ramparts. On reaching the Somme the English army found both banks so strongly fortified, that had they resorted to the most desperate hazard, or played any other reckless game, breaking the banks would have been impossible.

Henry consulted with his friends as to the best means of getting across, but nothing was suggested, except to tunnel under the banks and dive along the bottom of the stream; but this was objected to for divers reasons. Henry kept marching up the left bank of the river, in the hope of finding a favourable opportunity to dash across; but every attempt terminated in making ducks and drakes of his brave

soldiers. Wherever a chance appeared to present itself he tried it, but without success, for the river had been filled with stakes, though the extent of the stakes did not prevent him from carrying on the game as long as possible. At length, on reaching Nesle he hit the right nail on the head, for running across a temporary bridge near the spot, he found the accommodation passable.

The Constable of France, on hearing what had occurred, retired to St. Pol, like a poltroon, and sent heralds to Henry, advising him to avoid a battle, for the French fully intended to give it him. The constable then fell back upon Agincourt, in which direction the English army prepared to follow him. On the 24th of October, Henry and his soldiers came in sight of the enemy's outposts, and their columns served as advertising columns to indicate their position. During the night it is said that the English played on their trumpets, so that the whole neighbourhood resounded with the noise; but as they were all very tired, and had gone to sleep, it is probable that the only music heard by the inhabitants emanated from the nasal organs of the slumbering soldiers. By the French the night was passed in noise and revelry; but the English were chiefly absorbed in repose, or occupied in making their last wills and testaments. These were far more suitable employments than the performance of those concerted pieces which would only have disconcerted the plans of their leaders.

The moon, which on that occasion was up all night, enabled the English officers to ascertain the quality of the ground that the French occupied. The constable stuck the royal banner into the middle of the Calais road, an achievement which the muddy nature of the soil, rendered softer by the drizzly rain,

prevented from being at all difficult. The French took the usual means of counteracting the effect of external wet by internal soaking. "Every man," says the chronicler, "dydde drynke lyke a fyshe," though the simile does not hold, for we never yet found one of the finny tribe who was given to the sort of liquor that the French were imbibing before Agincourt. They passed round the cup so rapidly that, what with the clayey nature of the soil and the whirl of excitement into which their heads were thrown, they found it almost impossible to preserve their respective equilibria. They floundered about in the most disgraceful manner, and there was "many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip" on that memorable occasion. In addition to the excesses of the table, they availed themselves of the resources of the multiplication table, by calculating the amount of ransoms they should receive for the English king and the great barons, whom they made sure of capturing. Thus, in the agreeable but delusive occupation of turning their imaginations into poultry-yards, and stocking them with ideal chickens that were never destined to be hatched, did the French pass the night before the battle. Still, there was a melancholy mixed with the mirth in the minds of many, who, in the midst of the general counting of the phantom pullets, found sad thoughts to brood over. It so happened that there were scarcely any musical instruments among the French, and their horses, it was remarked, never once neighed during the night, which was thought to be ominous of bad, for if a dismal foreboding intruded, there was not even an animal to say "neigh" to it. Some of the older and more experienced officers were seized with gloomy anticipations, but they were either coughed, laughed, or clamoured down; and when the veteran Duke of

Berri ventured to allude to Poictiers, on which occasion the French had been equally sanguine, he was tauntingly nicknamed the Blackberry for his sombre sentiments. To add to the discomfort of the troops, there was a deficiency of hay and straw for the use of the cavalry. The piece of ground where the horses had been taken in to bait was a perfect pool, in which the poor creatures could be watered, it is true, but could not enjoy any other refreshment. The earth had proved itself indeed a toper, according to the song, and had moistened its clay to such a degree that everyone who came in contact with it found himself placed on a most uncomfortable footing. However resolved the French might have been to make a stand on the day of battle, it was impossible for them to make any stand at all on the night preceding it.

At early dawn Henry got up in excellent spirits, and declared himself ready to answer the communication of the French constable, which he had received some time before, advising him to treat or retreat, and which had hitherto remained unresponded to. A movement of astonishment was evinced by his followers at the announcement of the English king's intention to reply to the message he had received, but when he said, "I shall trouble him with three lines, which may extend to three columns," and proceeded to divide his army into that form, the gallant soldiers understood and cheered his meaning. The archers were placed in front, and every one of them had at least four strings to his bow, in the shape of a billhook, a hatchet, a hammer, and a long thick stake, in addition to his stock of arrows.

Having made these preparations, Henry mounted a little grey pony and reviewed his army. He wore his best Sunday helmet of polished steel, which had

received, expressly for the occasion, an extra leathering, and on the top of that he wore a crown of gold richly set with jewels. In this headgear he presented such a dazzling spectacle to the enemy, that it would have been almost as difficult to take an aim at the sun itself as at the blazing and brilliant English leader. As he rode from rank to rank, he had an encouraging word for every soldier; and his familiar "Ha, Briggs," to one; his cheerful "What, Jones, is that you, my boy?" to another; and his invigorating "Up, Smith, and at 'em!" to a third, contributed greatly to increase the confidence of his men and strengthen their attachment to their general. "As for me," he said, "you'll have to pay no ransom for me, as I've fully made up my mind to die or to conquer."



Henry inspecting his Troops before the Battle of Azincourt.

Original Size

On passing one of the divisions, he heard Walter Hungerford—the original proprietor of Hungerford Stairs—regretting there were not more of them. "What do we want with more?" êxclaimed Henry. "I would not have an *extra* man if you would give him

me. If we are to fall, the fewer the better, and if we are to conquer, I would not have one pair of additional hands to pick a single leaf of our laurels." The French were at least six to one of the English, but the former were horridly out of condition on the night before the battle. They wore long coats of steel down to their knees, which gave them the look of animated meat screens, and the armour they carried on their legs served to complete the resemblance. "They wore a quantity of harness on the upper part of their bodies," says M. Nicolas, but he does not tell us whether the harness consisted of horse collars, which by being grinned through would have enabled them to advance towards the foe with a smiling aspect. The ground was remarkably soft, and the French troops being exceedingly heavy, they kept sticking in the mud at every step, while the ensigns, who had the additional weight of their flags, got planted in the ground like a row of standards. The horses were up to their knees in no time, and when they attempted to pull up they found the operation quite impossible. Henry had declared he would roll the enemy in the dust, but the wet had laid all the dust, and he must have rolled them in the mud if he had rolled them in anything. The French are said by a recent historian * to have been suffering under a "moral vertigo," but as the vertigo had been brought on by drinking on the previous night, the morality of the "vertigo" will bear questioning. They had got themselves into a field between two woods, where they had no room to "deploy," and they were tumbling over each other like a pack of cards, or a regiment of tin soldiers. Though they had imbibed a large quantity of wine and spirits, the rain, which fell in torrents, only added water to what they had drunk, and threw them into what is technically

termed a "groggy" condition. Henry compared them to so many tumblers of rum-and-water, so comical was their appearance as they fell about in a state of soaked stupidity. To increase their confusion, the Constable of France was unable to keep order, for several young sprigs of French nobility were all tendering their advice, and thus there were not only cooks enough to spoil the broth, but to make a regular hash of it.

** Macfarlane. Cabinet History, vol. v., p. 21.*

At length, about the hour of noon, Henry gave the word to begin by exclaiming "Banners, advance!" and at the same moment Sir Thomas Erpingham, a grey old knight, who appears to have been a kind of military pantaloon, threw his truncheon into the air with true pantomimic activity. "Now, strike!" exclaimed the veteran, as he performed this piece of buffoonery, and followed it up with the words "Go it!" "At 'em again!" "Serve 'em right!" and "Give it 'em!" The French fought bravely, and Messire Clignet, of Brabant, charged with twelve hundred horse, exclaiming "Mountjoye, St. Denis!" when down he fell, on the soft and slippery ground, like a horse on the wooden pavement. Everywhere the French cavalry cut the most eccentric capers; and even when there was an opportunity of advancing, the advantage seemed to slip from under them, for the ground was as bad as ground glass to stand upon. The English archers rushed among the steel-clad knights, who were as stiff as so many pokers—though not one of them could stir—and they were thus caught in their own steel traps, or trappings. The Constable of France was killed, and the flower of the French chivalry was nipped in the bud, or,

rather, experienced a blow of a fatal character.

"This is a very hard case, indeed," roared one of the victims, as he pointed to his suit of steel, which rendered him incapable of fighting or running away, though he was quite ready for either. But the hardest part of all was the softness of the ground, into which the French kept sinking so rapidly that they might as well have fought on the Goodwin Sands as on the field of Agincourt. The weight of their armour caused them to disappear every now and then, like the Light of All Nations, on the spot we have just named, and an old French warrior—one of the heavy fathers of that day—was seen to subside so completely in the mud, that in a few minutes he had left only his hair apparent. The English, who were lightly clad, kept up wonderfully under the fatigues of the day, and some of them performed prodigies of valour. Henry himself seems to have acquitted himself in a Style quite worthy of Shaw, or Pshaw, the Life Guardsman. His majesty was charged by a band of eighteen knights, whom it is said he overcame, but it is much more likely that finding themselves ready to sink into the earth, they were compelled to knock under.

Their cause was desperate, it was neck or nothing with many; but as they became immersed in the soil by degrees, it was neck first, and nothing shortly afterwards. The Duke of Alençon made a momentary effort to be vigorous, in spite of his steel petticoats, and gave Henry a blow on the head that broke off a bit of the crown which he had been wearing over his helmet. This *embarras des chapeaux*, or inconvenient superfluity of hats, was a weakness Henry was subject to, and there was no harm in his being made to pay for it. The Duke of Alençon had no sooner broken the king's crown than he received a fracture in his own, which proved fatal. The battle was now

over, and the English began to secure prisoners, taking from each captive his cap, or hat, but it is to be presumed giving a ticket to each, by which all would get back their own helmets. Henry having taken it into his head that the battle was going to be renewed, ordered the prisoners to be killed; but he afterwards apologised for his mistake, though posterity has never been satisfied with the excuse he offered. As far as we have been able to learn the particulars of this atrocious blunder, it arose in the following manner. The priests of the English army—with a sort of instinctive tendency to taking care of themselves—were sitting amongst the baggage. Henry, hearing a noise among the reverend gentlemen, looked round, and found them apparently threatened with an attack from what he thought was a hostile force, but which turned out to be a few peasants, who were scrambling with the priests for a share of the luggage. This attempted appropriation of church property was resisted by a vigorous ecclesiastical clamour, which led Henry to believe there had been a rally among the foe, and that the priests were giving the signal. Had he been aware that they were crying out before they were hurt, there is every reason to believe that he would not have issued the mandate which has so much compromised his otherwise fair average character. The French loss at the battle of Agincourt was quite incredible, but not a bit the less historical on that account, for if history were to reject all that cannot be believed its dimensions would be fearfully crippled.



English Soldier securing Prisoner at the Battle of Agincourt.

Original Size

The English, sinking under the weight of their booty, as well as the mud on their boots, marched towards Calais. Henry's army was reduced almost to a skeleton, but he used to say jocosely, that with that skeleton key he would find an opening anywhere. Though rich in conquest, he was short of cash, and as England was always the place for getting money, he determined on hastening thither. The people received him with enthusiasm, and at Dover they rushed into the sea to carry him on shore, so that he literally came in on the shoulders of the people. Proud of this popular pickaback, he made a speech amid the general waving of hats, which was responded to by the gentle waving of the ocean. The tide, however, began to rise, when Henry cut short the proceedings of the meeting between himself and his subjects by exclaiming, "But on, my friends, to the shore, for this is not the place for dry discussion."

On his way up to town each city vied with the other in loyalty. Rochester contended with Canterbury, Chatham struggled with Gravesend, and Blackheath entered into a single combat with Green-

wich; Deptford ran itself into debt, which it retains nominally to this day; and the Bricklayers presented their arms to Henry as he passed into the metropolis. In London he was met by the Lords and Commons, the mayor, aldermen, and citizens; but the sweetest music was that made by the wine as it poured down the streets, and caught a guttural sound as it turned in£o the gutters. Many a bottle of fine old crusted port was mulled by being thrown into the thoroughfare, and though it might have been good enough to have spoken for itself, it ran itself down through the highways with much energy. Nor was this enthusiasm confined to hollow words, for all the supplies which the king requested were freely voted him. It was only for Henry to ask and have, at this auspicious moment; and if, like some children, he had cried for the moon, it is not unlikely that his subjects, in the excess of their loyalty, would have promised to give it him.

In the spring of the year 1416, London was enlivened by a visit from the Emperor Sigismund. He imparted considerable gaiety to the season, and his entry into the city gave occasion for a general holiday. His object was to endeavour to effect a coalition between the two rival popes, and to get the kings of France and England to make it up if possible. He was followed by some French ambassadors who marred the harmony of the procession by looking daggers at the English nobles. Occasionally they proceeded from glances to gibes, which naturally led to pushes, that were only prevented from coming to blows by the sudden turning round of the emperor whenever he heard a disturbance going on amongst those who followed him.

During Sigismund's stay in town, the French

besieged Harfleur, which was guarded by the Earl of Dorset and a most unhealthy garrison. Toothache, elephantiasis, and sciatica, had so reduced the spirit of the English force that the Duke of Bedford, the king's brother, was sent to aid the Earl of Dorset, and the poor old pump was grateful for this timely succour. Bedford having put matters quite straight, returned to England, and Henry proposed a run over to Calais with his imperial visitor, Sigismund. Here a sort of Congress was held at which Henry made himself so popular, that his rights to the French throne were partially recognised. France was at this juncture in a very unpromising condition, for the royal family did nothing but quarrel and murder one another's favourites. Isabella, the queen, lived in hostility with the king, who arrested several of his wife's servants, and had one of them, whose name was Bois-Bourdon, sewn up in a leather-bag and thrown into the Seine, from which the notion of giving a servant the sack, on the occasion of his getting his discharge, no doubt takes its origin.

The Dauphin John having died, he was succeeded by his brother Charles, a boy of sixteen, who was continually fighting with his own mother, and getting a good deal the worst of it. This state of things tempted Henry to bring an army into France in August, 1417, when, after the surrender of a few smaller places, he took Caen by assault, or rather by a good Caen pepper. In the ensuing year he undertook several sieges at once, and played with his artillery upon Cherbourg, Damfront, Lonviers, and Pont de l'Arohe as easily as the musician who plays simultaneously on six different instruments. His next important undertaking was the siege of Rouen, before which he sat down, and having looked at it through his glass, he made up his mind that starving

it out was the only method of taking it. The inhabitants held out for some time on their provisions, but these being exhausted, they began to devour all sorts of trash, that was never intended for culinary purposes. *Soupe au shoe* became a common dish, and though for a brief period they had mutton chop *en papillotes* they were at last reduced to the *papillotes* without the meat, but with their tremendous twists they of course could not be expected to make a satisfactory meal off curl-papers. They accordingly surrendered, and Henry, on the 16th of January, 1419, entered Rouen, where ambassadors from the various factions in France were sent to him. He was, however, quite open to all, but decidedly influenced by none, and had a polite word for each, but a wink for those in his confidence, as he administered the blarney to the various legates. At length it was agreed that he should have an interview with the king and queen of France and the Duke of Burgundy.

The French sovereign was not presentable when the day came, for excessive indulgence in wine had reduced him to a state from which all the soda-water in the world could not, at that moment, have recovered him. Henry, therefore, met the queen, who was attended by her lovely daughter, the Princess Catherine, and her cousin of Burgundy, while the English king was supported by his brothers, Clarence and Gloucester. The meeting was exceedingly ceremonious, and was conducted a good deal in the style of a medley dance, comprising the minuet, the figure *Pastorale* in the first set of quadrilles, and Sir Roger de Coverley. At a signal announced by the striking up of some music, Henry advanced first, performing as it were the *cavalier seul*, when the Princess Catherine and the queen, with the Duke of

Burgundy between them, also advanced, until all met in the centre. Henry bowed to the queen, and took her hand, and then did the same with the Princess Catherine, a movement resembling the celebrated *chaine des dames*—and Burgundy fell in gracefully with what was going on by an occasional *balancez* to complete the action of the second couple.

This was the first occasion upon which Henry had seen his intended bride, and whether in earnest or in sham he appeared to be at once struck by her surpassing beauty. He enacted the lover at first sight with a vigour that would have secured him a livelihood as a walking gentleman, had he lived in our own time, and been dependent for support on his theatrical abilities.



The Duke of Burgundy introducing Queen Isabella and his Daughter to Henry the Fifth.

Original Size

The whole day was spent in formalities, and Henry sat opposite to the princess till the close of the interview, looking unutterable, things, for she was so far off that it would have been vain to have uttered

anything. In two days afterwards Henry and the queen paid each other a second formal visit; but the English king looked in vain for the young lady, who like a true *coquette*, seems to have kept away for the purpose of increasing the impatience of her lover. Her mother, with the tact of an old matchmaker, tried to get the best possible terms from Henry; but with all his affection, he would not stir from his resolution, to insist on having the possession of Normandy and a few other perquisites as the young lady's dowry.

The French queen pretended to take time to consider his proposal, and seven formal interviews were held; but all of them were of so dull, stately, and slow a character, that no progress was made at any one of them. The fact is, that Henry was being humbugged, and if he had suspected as much during the seven first meetings, he was convinced of it at that, which should have been the eighth, for on going to keep his appointment he found neither the queen, the duke, the princess, nor any of the attendants of either of them. All ceremony was at an end, the diplomatic *quadrille* parties were broken up, and Henry, disgusted at having been made to dance attendance for nothing at all, became so angry that his brain began to reel on its own account, and he set off to his own quarters in a *galop*. He ascertained the truth to be, that the queen and Burgundy had made it up with the dauphin, whom they had gone to join, and the precious trio having sworn eternal friendship to each other, added a clause to the affidavit for the purpose of swearing eternal hatred to all Englishmen.

Tired of kicking his heels about to no purpose, Henry determined on practising some entirely new steps; the first of which was to advance upon Pontoise and *chassez* the inhabitants. He then pushed

on towards Paris, when Burgundy, fearful of a *rencontre*, retired from St. Denis, where he had taken up his position. Henry again offered to treat, but in sending in the particulars of his demand he added Pontoise to the list of places he should require to be transferred to his possession.

The alliance between the dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy was as hollow as the hollow beech tree rendered famous by a series of single knocks at the hands, or, rather, at the beak, of the woodpecker. After a little negotiation, and a great deal of treachery, Burgundy, in spite of the warnings of several of his servants, was induced to visit the dauphin at Montereau. The duke went unarmed, on the assurance that he should return unharmed, and instead of his helmet he wore a velvet cap, which one of his attendants declared was a wonderful proof of soft-headedness. Burgundy, on coming into the presence of the heir to the throne of France, bent his knee; when the President of Provence whispered something in the dauphin's ear, and both began winking fearfully at a man with a battle-axe. The man with the battle-axe gave a significant nod, and dropped his weapon, as if by mistake, upon Burgundy; when the Sire de Navailles, a friend of the duke, pointing to the fearful dent the axe had made, exclaimed, "This is not a mere accident." This was immediately obvious; for several others rushed upon poor Burgundy, who devoted his last breath to exclaiming to the dauphin, "You are an ass—ass—" for he died before he could get the word ass—ass— in.

Young Philip, the heir of Jean Sans-peur—-or Jack Dreadnought, as we should have translated this nickname of the Duke of Burgundy—succeeded to his father's estates, as well as becoming residuary legatee

of the affections of most of his subjects. The dauphin's foul deed was execrated on all sides; for though the state of morals was low at the period of which we write, there was always a certain love of fair play inherent in the human character. The younger Burgundy was in a state of effervescence, and though he kept bottled up for a short time, his rage soon spirted out with fearful vehemence. He entered into a coalition with Henry, who stipulated for the hand of the Princess Catherine in possession, with the crown of France in reversion, and a few other trifling contingencies. In the year 1420, one day in the month of April—probably the first—the imbecile Charles, guided by Queen Isabella and the Duke of Burgundy, put his hand to the treaty. The unhappy monarch was in his usual state, when a pen having been thrust into his grasp, and while somebody held the document, somebody else directed the motion of the royal fingers. The treaty thus became disfigured by a series of scratches and blots which were declared to be the king's signature. An appendix to this document contained a fulsome panegyric on the English king, which wound up with a declaration of his fitness to succeed to the French crown, because "he had a noble person and a pleasing countenance." This shallow argument was intended to lead to the conclusion that he would treat his subjects handsomely; or that, at all events, should he ever reign over France, his rule would not be without some very agreeable features.

In May of the same year—1420—Henry started for Troyes, where the young Duke of Burgundy and the French royal family were sojourning. The English king was all impatience to see his bride, and he found her sitting with her papa and mamma in the church of St. Peter. They had intended a little

surprise for their illustrious visitor, and everything being ready beforehand, he was affianced on the spot to the lovely Catherine. They were regularly married. On the 2nd of June, and some of the gay young nobles hoped there would be a series of balls, dinner parties, and tournaments, in celebration of the wedding: Henry, however, declared he would have "no fuss," but that those who wanted to show their skill in jousting and tourneying might accompany him to Sens, which he purposed besieging on the second day after his marriage. He declined participating in the child's play of a tournament when there was so much real work to be done, "and as to feasting," he exclaimed, "let us give the people of Sens their whack, or, at all events, if we are to have a good blow-out, it must be by blowing the enemy out of the citadel." He proceeded at once with his beautiful bride from Troyes, and soon reaching Sens, he in two days frightened the inhabitants out of their Senses. They surrendered, and he then advanced to Montereau, which he took by assault—or rather, as one of the merry old chroniclers hath it, "which he took, not so much by assault as by a pepper." After besieging a few other places in France, Henry, in conjunction with Charles, the French king, made a triumphal entry into Paris. The inhabitants of that city gave him an enthusiastic reception, for, like the populace in every period, they were delighted at anything in the shape of change, and paid the utmost respect to those from whom they had experienced the greatest injury.

In January, 1421, Henry being very short of cash, determined on going home to England, which was even in those days the most liberal paymaster to popular favourites. Having with him a good-looking queen, his reception in his own country was most

gratifying, for the old clap-trap about "lovely woman" was inherent from the earliest periods in the English character. This fascinating female was crowned at Westminster Abbey with tremendous pomp, and the happy couple went "starring it" about the country in a royal progress immediately afterwards. Their success in the provinces was immense; but their pleasant engagements in their own country were soon brought to an end by the announcement that France was still in a state of turbulence, requiring the immediate presence of Henry in Paris.

Having warmed his subjects' hearts, he struck while the iron was hot, and took an aim at their pockets. Parliament was in a capital humour, and came out splendidly with pecuniary votes for a new expedition. He left the queen at Windsor Castle, where she shortly after gave birth to a son; and having landed a large but very miscellaneous army at Calais, Henry marched to Paris, to reinforce the Duke of Exeter, who had been left there as governor. The English were successful at all points, and Queen Catherine having joined her husband, they held their court at the Louvre, where they sat in their coronation robes, with their crowns on their heads, as naturally as if they had formed a part of "the Royal Family at Home" in Madame Tussaud's far-famed collection of wax-work.

In the midst of his victorious career in France, Henry had started off to the relief of a town invested by the dauphin—an investment that was profitable to nobody. The English king had reached Corbeil, when he was taking suddenly ill, and throwing himself on a litter, he declared himself to be literally tired out with his exertions. Having been taken home to the neighbourhood of Vincennes, and put to bed,

he summoned his brother, the Duke of Bedford, and some other nobles, to whom he recommended amity; but, above all, he advised them to continue the alliance with Burgundy, whose habit of sticking to his friends has given the name of Burgundy to the well-known pitch plaster. Having appointed his brothers Gloucester and Bedford regents, the one for England and the other for France, during the minority of his son, he seemed perfectly resigned; but his attendants literally roared like a parcel of children, so that he was compelled to tell them that crying would do no good to anybody. He died on the 31st of August, 1422, aged thirty-four, having reigned ten years with some credit to himself, and in full, as far as conquest may be desirable, with advantage to his country.

On the death of a king, it had been usual for the attendants to rush helter-skelter out of the room, and ransack the house of the deceased monarch, while his successor generally made the best of his way down to the treasury. Henry the Fifth was an exception to the rule, for he had earned so much respect in his lifetime, that at his death there was no indecorum, but a desire was manifested to give him the benefit of a decent, and indeed a magnificent, funeral. When a king of England had died abroad on previous occasions, his remains were seldom thought worthy of the expense of carriage to his own country; but in this instance no outlay was considered too extravagant to bestow on the funeral procession of the sovereign. Hundreds of mutes followed, with that mute solemnity which is the origin of their name: and on this occasion there were hundreds of knights, all in the deepest mourning. Several esquires had their armour black-leaded, and their plumes dyed in ink, while the king of Scotland acted as chief

mourner, and the widow of the deceased sovereign came in at the end of the gloomy retinue. On its arrival in England, when it drew near London, fifteen bishops popped on their pontifical attire, and ran to meet it; while the abbots, taking down their mitres from the hat-pegs in the halls of their houses, sallied forth to join the sad procession. The remains of the king were carried to Westminster Abbey, and consigned to the tomb with every token of esteem, and the reverence it had been customary to show to the rising sun alone, was on this occasion extended to the luminary that had just set in unusual glory. The queen, desirous of evincing her affection for such a prince, caused a silver-gilt statue as large as life to be placed on the top of his monument. This piece of extravagance was, however, before the invention of British Plate, or that "perfect substitute for silver," which is a perfect substitute in everything but value, strength, purity, appearance, and durability.

In painting the character of Henry the Fifth, the English historians have used the most brilliant colours, while the French writers have thrown in some shades of the most Indian-inky blackness. The former have been lavish in the use of *couleur de rose*, while the latter have selected the very darkest hues, and, indeed, produced a picture resembling those dingy profiles which give a hard outline of the features, but render it impossible for us to judge of the aspect or complexion of the original. It is for us to look at both sides, like the apparently inconsistent pendulum, which, by constantly oscillating from right to left, becomes the instrument of furnishing a faithful record of the time.

Henry the Fifth was devoted to the happiness of his people; but he had sometimes an odd way of

showing his attachment, by ill-using the few for the satisfaction of the many. Thus, he persecuted the Lollards in the most cruel manner, out of the purest condescension towards the clergy, who had got up a clamour against the sect alluded to. This obliging disposition may be carried too far, when it urges the commission of an injustice to one party, in order to favour another, and the persecution of the Lollards at the call of the clergy was a good deal like an acquiescence in a cry of "throw him over" got up in the gallery of a theatre, against some unfortunate who may have incurred the momentary displeasure of a "generous British audience."

The military exploits of Henry the Fifth have been praised by English historians, but the French writers have contrived to show that even the battle of Agincourt was nothing more than a mistake, s like the one which happened at Waterloo about four centuries afterwards.

"He ought to have been conquered at Agincourt," say the annalists of France, but we are quite content that his conduct was not precisely what it ought to have been—according to them—on this great occasion.

Some praise, has been given him for his tact in negotiating with the Duke of Burgundy and the dauphin at the same time, but we must confess that our notions of honour do not permit us to approve the act of temporising with two parties for the purpose of joining that which might prove to be the strongest. He was brave, beyond a doubt, but he was cruel in the treatment of some of the prisoners who fell into his hands, and we cannot give him the benefit of the presumption suggested by a French historian, that if he hanged a quantity of unfortunate captives, he had probably very good reasons of his

own for doing so. *

** Pour les autres qui furent exécutés dans le même j'en ignore les raisons, mais il est à présumer, Rapin, tom, iii, p. 504.*

Among the other defects attributed to the character of Henry the Fifth is a degree of shabbiness towards the people in his employ, whom he is said to have paid very inadequately for their services. Considering, however, that the liberality of kings is often practised at the expense of the people, and that Henry was so crippled in his own means that the crown jewels were, on one occasion, pawned, we have no right to blame him for refusing to reward his soldiers with what could only have been the proceeds of plunder.

In person Henry the Fifth was tall and majestic, but his neck was a little too long, which may have given him that supercilious air for which some of his biographers have censured him. In his social habits he resembled the celebrated Mynheer Von Dunk, of antiintoxication notoriety, for Henry "never got drunk," even with success, which is of all things the most fatal to temperance.

CHAPTER THE THIRD. HENRY THE SIXTH, SURNAMED OF WINDSOR.



Original Size

THE SIXTH was not out of his long frocks when he came to the throne, for he had not yet completed the ninth month of his little existence. Though he succeeded peacefully to the crown, he was in arms from the first hour of his reign; and though he was not born literally with a silver spoon in his mouth, he had one there on his accession to the throne, for he was being fed at the very moment that the news of his father's death was announced in the royal nursery. It is easy to conceive the interesting proceedings that took place on its being proclaimed that the child, then in the act of having its food, had

become the king of England. A clean bib was instantly brought, and he was apostrophised as a little "Kingsey Pingsey," a "Monarchy Ponarchy," and was addressed by many other of those titles of affectionate loyalty which are to be found nowhere but in the nursery dialect. A Parliament was summoned to meet in November, 1422, and, the regency being a good thing, there commenced a desperate struggle as to who should be allowed to have and to hold the baby. The Duke of Gloucester claimed the post of nurse, in the absence of his elder brother, the Duke of Bedford. The lords named the latter President of the Council, but while he was away the former was permitted to act as his deputy, and, what was more to Gloucester's purpose, he was allowed to receive the salary of £5333 per annum. Having got the money and the power, Gloucester was not particularly anxious to have the charge of the royal baby, who was accordingly handed over to the Earl of Warwick, jointly with Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, a half-brother of Henry the Fourth, who had also a high seat—convenient, by-the-way, for the infant king—in the council.

This Beaufort was the second son of John of Gaunt, and founder of the illustrious family of the Beauforts, who derive their original nobility from an ancestor who was *beau* and *fort*—strong as well as good-looking. If aristocracy in these days were derivable from the same source, the handsome and brawny drayman might take his seat in the House of Lords, while ticket-porters, coalheavers, railway navigators, and other representatives of the physical force party would constitute an extensive peerage, of what dramatic authors, when they write for the gallery, are in the habit of apostrophising as "Nature's noblemen." The Beauforts, besides the good

looks and strength of their founder, had collateral claims to muscular eminence. The uncle of the first Beaufort was called John of Gaunt, from his gaunt or gigantic stature; and one of the family had been, in 1397, created Duke of Somerset, most likely on account of the somersets he was able to turn by sheer force of sinew.

We beg pardon for this slight digression, but as there are many who take a deep and reverential interest in everything appertaining to rank, it may be gratifying to them to know the precise origin of some of our most ancient and most aristocratic families.

Let us then resume the thread of our history. Bedford was still in France, and, in the month of October, King Charles the Sixth expired at Paris. The dauphin was at Auvergne, with a set of six or seven seedy followers, who could not muster the means of proclaiming him in a respectable manner. They hurried off altogether to a little roadside chapel, and having one banner among the whole lot, with the French arms upon it, they raised it amid feeble shouts of "Long live the king," aided by a few "hurrahs" from some urchins on the exterior of the building. This farce having been performed, and the title given to it of "The proclamation of Charles the Seventh," the party repaired to luncheon at the king's lodgings. Having come into a little money by the death of his father, he went with a few friends to Poictiers, where a coronation, upon a limited scale, was performed, at an expense exceedingly moderate.

While this contemptible affair was going on in a French province, the Duke of Bedford was busy, in Paris, getting up a demonstration in favour of the infant Henry. Fealty was sworn towards the British baby in various great towns of France; and Bedford, anxious to cement the alliance with Burgundy,

married the duke's sister, Anne; though it seems strange that he should have calculated upon a marriage as a source of harmony. He must have had a strong faith in wedded life, to have anticipated a good understanding as the effect of that which so frequently opens the door to perpetual discord.

While Bedford was making strenuous exertions to promote the ascendency of the English in France, the nominal king of that country, Charles the Seventh, had given himself up to selfish indulgences. His energies were diluted in drink; but a few vigorous men, who were about him, forced him occasionally into the field, from which he always sneaked out on the first opportunity. He was compelled to engage in two or three actions, and was defeated in all, though he had the benefit of about seven thousand Scotch, under the command of the Earl of Buchan; and threatened to cure his enemies of their hostility by administering a few doses of Buchan's domestic medicine. After two or three reverses, Charles thought his army strong enough to attempt to relieve the town of Ivry, which, in the summer of 1424, was besieged by the Duke of Bedford.

Charles's force consisted of a strange mixture of Scotchmen, Italians, and Frenchmen, who were all continually giving way to their national prejudices, and quarrelling in broken French, broken Italian, or broken Scotch,—which is a dialect something between a sneeze, a snore, and a howl, spiced with a dash of gutturalism, and mixed together in a whine of surpassing mournfulness. The French declared the Scotch were mercenaries, who had an "itching palm;" but the Scotch savagely replied, that "they came to the scratch with a true itch for glory."

While the three parties were engaged in a vigorous self-assertion, and were loud in praise of their own

valour, they caught a glimpse of the English force—and, halting in dismay, retreated without drawing a sword. The garrison of Ivry, which had been waiting the approach of its friends, who were to do such wonders, and had been watching the scene with intense anxiety from the battlements, could only murmur out the words "pitiful humbugs," and surrender at discretion.

By some lucky chance—or, as other historians have it, by the revolt of the inhabitants—Charles and his mongrel army had got possession of the town of Vemeuil, which was a very strong position. They had scarcely got snugly in, when the Duke of Bedford presented himself before the walls, and a council was instantly held, to consider how they should get out again. Everybody talked at once, and a mixed jargon of Scotch and French, flavoured occasionally with a little Italian sauce, was the only result of the deliberation of the gallant army. At length, by common consent, they ran away, preferring to fight in an open field, if they must fight at all—for there would then be more margin for escape, or latitude for bolting, in the event of their getting the worst of it.

So rapid was their desertion of the town, that they left behind them all their luggage, which was perhaps a wise precaution, for they were thus enabled to run the faster, in case of having to execute a retreat, which was one of the military manouvres in which they had had the most experience.

The two armies were now in presence of each other, and on both sides the feeling was like that of the young lady who "wondered when them figures was a-going to move," at an exhibition of wax-work. The Earl of Douglas, with Scotch caution, wanted to

wait, but the Count of Narbonne, with French impetuosity, was for making a beginning, and rushed forward, shouting "Mountjoye St. Denis!"—which was synonymous, in those days, with "Go it!" in ours. The whole line followed, helter-skelter and pell-mell, so that when they got up to the stakes the English had run into the ground—to show, perhaps, they had a stake in the country—the French were out of breath, out of sorts, and out of order. They were miserably panting, but not panting for glory, and the punches in the ribs they got from the English, made them roar out like so many paviours in full work—as they always are—down Fleet Street. Their temporary want of wind was soon changed into permanent breathlessness, and thus, in spite of all their boasting, there was a miserable end to their puffing.

The battle was very severe, for they had been "at it" for three hours. Douglas, it being before the time when "the blood of Douglas could protect itself," was slain. Buchan, who had been taunted by his allies with being nothing better than a buccaneer, also fell, and the French lost a countless number of counts, as well as a host of miscellaneous soldiers. The Italians, who had boastingly called themselves the Italian cream of the army, turned out to be the merest milksops, and kept as much out of harm's way as possible. The Duke of Bedford ordered the heads of several prisoners to be cut off, and the Bedford executions were so numerous, that the heads-man's axe got the name of "the Bedford level."

The battle of Vemeuil had been fought on the 17th of August, 1424, and Charles the Seventh seemed on the eve of bankruptcy; both in cash and credit. His money was all gone, and his friends had—of course—gone after it. Fortune, however, favoured him, at the expense of his enemies, for they began to

disagree with each other. To say that there was a quarrel is equivalent to saying that there was a woman in the case, and the woman was—upon this occasion—the celebrated Jacqueline of Hainault. This prize specimen of a virago was the daughter of the Count of Hainault, and the niece of John the Merciless, from whom she inherited all that coarse unwomanly bluster, which, in one of the fair sex, is called by courtesy "a proper spirit." She had been married to a little bit of a boy of fifteen, her cousin-german and her godson,—an urchin commonly known as John Duke of Brabant. Jacqueline, who was beautiful and bold, was no match—or, rather, was more than a match—for a stripling not half way through his teens at the time of his marriage. The puny lad had got into bad company, and was surrounded by a set of low favourites. The masculine Jacqueline was not exactly the woman to submit tamely to any injury, and taking offence at one of her boy-husband's friends, she had him murdered.

This stamped her as that most objectionable of characters, an acknowledged heroine, and she became "a woman of strong mind" in all the chronicles of the period. Her liliputian husband was persuaded to retaliate by dismissing all his wife's ladies-in-waiting, upon which Jacqueline became a greater vixen than ever.

After a powerful scene of domestic pantomime, in which she alternately tore her hair and that of her husband, she declared her determination to leave him. "A thplendid riddanthe," lisped the aggravating boy; upon which Jacqueline, making another rush at his hair, and taking a large lock of it in her hands—not, however, to be preserved as a pledge of affection—she hurried off to Valenciennes, and thence to Calais. The runaway next made for England, where

she remained on a visit with Henry's queen, Catherine, at Windsor Castle. Here she soon began flirting with the king's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, and though the poor man was not deeply in love with her, he was persuaded to agree to a marriage.

Jacqueline being already the wife of another, was compelled to seek a dispensation from Pope Martin V., but he looked at the matter with an unfavourable eye, when Jacqueline, making a coarse allusion to her own eye and a female branch of the Martin family, despatched a messenger to the opposition pope, the thirteenth Benedict. Being a Benedict he could not consistently oppose a marriage, and he granted the dispensation immediately.

Gloucester, who had determined on making his new wife profitable, if she could not be pleasant, claimed without delay her possessions in Hainault, Holland, and elsewhere, which she had inherited. It was a few weeks after the battle of Vemeuil, which we have recently described, that Gloucester and his considerably better-half—in quantity if not in quality—started off with a large army to take possession of Hainault. They soon frightened the inhabitants of the capital, of which they made themselves master and mistress, without any previous warning. Philip, Duke of Burgundy, the uncle of the boy-Duke of Brabant, was very angry at the lad's wife coming to cheat the boy, as it were, out of his property. After a good deal of hard struggling to keep his position at Hainault, Gloucester came to the determination that his wife was not worth the bother she occasioned him, and he accordingly went home, leaving her to defend herself as well as she could, when she was instantly besieged, given up to the Duke of Burgundy, by the inhabitants of Mons, and sent to Ghent in close

imprisonment.

Neither bolts nor bars could restrain the impetuosity of this tremendous woman, who burst from her prison, ana putting on male attire, which became her much better than her own, she escaped into Holland. It was not to be expected that a fighting woman would remain very long without followers, and the "Hainault Slasher"—as Jacqueline might justly be called—soon mustered a strong party in her favour. The novelty of going to battle with a woman for a leader told well at first, but as the attraction wore off her soldiers dwindled away by degrees, until her forces became utterly insignificant. Even her chosen Gloucester took advantage of her absence to treat his marriage as a nullity, and to unite himself with Miss Eleanor, the daughter of Lord Cobham. The desertion of the husband she preferred was in some degree compensated by the death of the husband she hated, for the boy-Duke of Brabant lived only until April, 1427, and thus, by the abandonment of one, and the decease of the other, she became doubly dowagered. Still she continued to struggle with the Duke of Burgundy, but she was now advancing in years, and her efforts became perfectly old-womanish.

The summer of 1428 was the means of bringing her to her senses, for she was severely drubbed by the duke, and finally quelled in a career as unbecoming to her age and sex as it was inimical to her interest. She agreed to recognise Burgundy as direct heir, at her death, to all she possessed, and he made her hand over everything at once, which was a capital plan for making sure of his inheritance.

We have, however, devoted to the Hainault vixen more time and space than she is perhaps worth, but we have thought it better to dispose of her off-hand,

to prevent so disagreeable a person from again intruding herself on the pages of our history.

From the time the English took possession of Paris, Orleans, like a ripe and tempting Orleans plum, had been the object of their desires. The French knew the importance of the place, and had concentrated within it ammunition, eatables, and stores of every description. Barrels of beef, and barrels of gunpowder—hams and jams—wine for the garrison and grape for the foe—preserves for themselves and destructives for their enemies, were laid up in abundance in the city of Orleans. In addition to all these articles, enormous supplies of corn had been poured into the place, which contained something superior even to the corn, for it held all the flower of the French nobility. Regardless of these facts, the Earl of Salisbury began to attack the city, and the English commenced an attempt to scale the walls, but having some missiles thrown at them from above, those engaged in the scale soon lost their balance. Salisbury, nevertheless, persevered by attacking some other point; but the garrison determined to pay him off, and having recourse to their shells, they shelled out with such effect as to kill the English leader. Salisbury was succeeded by the Earl of Suffolk, who employed the winter of 1428 in cutting trenches round the city, and throwing up redoubts, which rendered him very redoubtable.

Orleans was thus cut off from the chance of further supplies, and the awful words, "When that's all gone you'll have no more," began to be whispered into the ears of the inhabitants. Charles himself was for surrendering, and several mealy-mouthed courtiers, who feared they should soon be without a meal for their mouths, seconded the king in his pusillanimous project. Others were for holding out instead of giving

in, and Charles's fortune seemed to be at the lowest ebb, when a letter arrived from one of the posts to announce the prospect of an early delivery. This early delivery was not, however, to be looked for by the mail, but by that illustrious female, Joan of Arc, familiarly known as the Maid of Orleans.

Charles, who had little faith in the power of a female to get one out of a scrape, and who believed the tendency of the interference of the sex to be a good deal the other way, burst out into a fit of immoderate laughter at hearing the news that had been brought to him. "Never laughed so much in my life," occasionally ejaculated the French king, as the tears rolled down his cheeks, in double-distilled drops of the extract of merriment. He, nevertheless, granted her permission to give him a look-in when she was coming that way; but it was more from curiosity, or to have another hearty laugh at the Maid's expense, that he consented to an interview. Joan arrived, with her squires and four servants; but even this retinue, small as it was, must have been larger than her narrow circumstances could have fairly warranted. The two squires could have got in the service of two knights a certain sum per day, and the four servants, at a time when war was being waged, might have obtained better wages than a poor and friendless girl would possibly have paid to them. These, or similar reflections, occurred to some of the people about the court of Charles, who, considering that Joan must be an impostor, advised his majesty to have nothing to do with her. At all events, it was deemed as well that her previous history should be known; and as the reader may wish for the character of the Maid, before permitting her to engage even his attention, we will, at once, say what we know concerning her.

Joan was the child of a brace of peasants, in a wild and hilly district of Lorraine, on the borders of Champagne, a country of which she seems in a great degree to have imbibed the qualities. Living in the neighbourhood of the sparkling and effervescing Champagne, her head became turned, or, at least, began to be filled with those bold aspirations which the *genius loci* might have had some share in engendering. It is undeniable that when a mere child, she delighted to roam about for the purpose of drinking at the great fountain of inspiration, which Champagne so abundantly supplies, and she would often go on until she heard voices—or a sort of singing in her ears—which told her she was destined for great achievements. Her birth-place was a short distance from the town of Vaucouleurs, at a little hamlet called Domremy, into which faction and dissatisfaction had so far forced their way, that the children used to pelt the children of the next village with mud and stones, on account of their political differences. Joan's attachment to her native soil caused her to be among the foremost of those who took up earth by handfulls, and threw each other's birthplace in each other's faces. Being in the habit of holding horses at a watering-house on the Lorraine road, she frequently heard the conversation of the waggoners, and, amid their "Gee-wos!" the woes of France were sometimes spoken of. Invisible voices now began to tell her that she was destined to set everything to rights, and to be her country's deliverer.

Though her father called it "all stuff and nonsense," she had talked over an old uncle, a cartwright at Vaucouleurs, whom she persuaded of her fitness to repair the common weal, and the honest cartwright promised to assist her in putting a spoke into it. The

brace of peasants were annoyed at the very high-flown notions of their offspring, and when she talked of going to King Charles, they asked her where the money was to come from for the purposes of her journey. Joan immediately had a convenient dream, appointing the governor of Vaucouleurs, one Sire de Baudricourt, her banker on this occasion.

Under the guidance of her uncle, she visited the Sire, and told him the high honour her visions had awarded him, in naming him treasurer to her contemplated expedition. The Sire, not at all eager to become a banker on such unprofitable terms, refused at first to hear her story, or indeed to allow her to open an account, so that the first check she received was somewhat discouraging. He suggested that she should be sent home to her father with a strong recommendation to him to take a rod and whip all the rhodomontade completely out of her. Joan, however, cared little for what might be in pickle for herself while she was bent on preserving her country. She went constantly to the house of the Sire de Baudricourt, but he never allowed her to be let in, for he verily believed it would only have been opening the door to imposition.

At length, more out of pity to his hall-porter than from any other motive, the Governor agreed to see that troublesome young woman who had given no peace to his bell since the first day of her arrival at Vaucouleurs. After the interview, Baudricourt came to the conclusion that Joan was crazed; but she declared she would walk herself literally off her legs, until they were worn down to the stump, if the Sire refused to stump up for the expenses of the journey. Some of the people beginning to believe the maid's story, she was enabled to get credit in Vaucouleurs for a few trappings as well as for a horse, and at the

same time six donkeys, in the shape of two squires and four servants, consented to follow her.

On the 15th of February, 1429, the Maid began her journey, in the course of which her companions frequently came to the conclusion that she was a humbug, and on arriving at a precipice they often threatened to throw her over. At length, all difficulties being surmounted, she arrived at Chinon, near Orleans, where Charles was residing. "I won't see her," cried the king, upon hearing she had come; "I am not going to be bored to death by a female fanatic. A man who believes himself to be inspired is bad enough, but there is not a greater plague on earth than a woman-prophet." At length, after being pestered for three days, he consented to grant an interview to Joan, who stood unabashed by the sneers of the courtiers. Every word that flowed from her lips had the effect of curling fluid on the lips of those who listened. Some would have coughed her down, others began to crow over her, and the scene was a good deal like the House of Commons during the speech of an unpopular member, when Charles, who was a good deal struck by the assurance of the Maid, took her aside to have a little quiet talk with her.

"Well, my good woman," he observed, "what is all this? Let me know your views as briefly as possible." Joan explained that her views consisted of magnificent visions, but Charles declared them to be mere jack-o'-lanterns of the brain, which were not worth attending to. Nevertheless, the earnestness of her manner had its effect, and the king sent her to Poictiers, where there was a learned university, and, though Joan was rather averse to the fellows, she allowed them to question her. Some of them began to assail her with their ponderous learning, but she

cut them short by acknowledging that she did not know a great A or a little a from a bouncing B. She declared herself, however, ready to fight, and the learned men, who were not anxious for a contest with the Maid in her own style, pronounced a favourable opinion on her pretensions. To raise the siege of Orleans, and take the dauphin to be crowned at Rheims, were the feats she undertook to perform. As one trial would prove the fact, Charles consented to grant it. The soldiers, however, refused to follow her until they had seen how she would manage a horse, and they consequently all stood round her while she went through a few scenes in the circle. One of them, who acted as a kind of clown in the ring, put a lance into her hand, which she wielded with great dexterity, while she was still in the performance of her rapid act of horsemanship.

Joan having passed her examination with success, was invested with the rank of a general officer. In spite of her masculine undertaking, there was still enough of the woman in her disposition to induce her to be very particular in ordering her own armour and accoutrements. She had herself measured for an entirely new suit of polished metal, her banner was white, picked out with gold, and her horse was as white as milk when properly chalked for metropolitan consumption. The Maid looked exceedingly well when made up, and people flocked round her with intense curiosity; for if even the man in brass at the Lord Mayor's Show will attract a mob, a woman regularly blocked in by block tin was a novelty that everyone would be sure to run after. Full of enthusiasm, she started off to the relief of Orleans, and the garrison, encouraged by her approach, sallied out upon the besiegers with unusual vigour, exclaiming "The Maid is come!" and

the result realised the old saying that "where there's a will, there's a way," or in the Latin proverb, *possunt* (they can) *qui* (who) *videntur* (seem) *posse* (to be able).

With the aid of the *posse comitatus* the object was achieved, and it may, perhaps, have happened that the superstitious fears of the English had much to do with the result of the battle. They declared that she was a witch, and some of them pretended to have seen her looking at them with great saucer eyes, which was, in those days, a test of sorcery. The sentinels at night got so nervous, that they used to be startled by their own shadows in the moon, and would run away, declaring that they were pursued by black figures stretched on the ground, from which there was no escaping. Others declared the stars were all out of order, and that they heard the band of Orion playing, out of tune, at midnight. Some declared they had seen a horse galloping along the Milky Way, and they inferred that Joan of Arc sent her steed along it at full speed to keep up his milky whiteness.

The English army had been completely panic-struck by the successes of Joan, which were owing nearly equally to the zeal she inspired in her friends and to the superstition of her enemies. She caused a letter to be written to the latter, in her name, strongly advising them to "give it up," and now she determined to give them a bit of a speech from the ramparts of Orleans. Taking her place on the top of a ladder resting against a high wall, she advised them to "be off;" "that it was no use;" they were "only wasting their time there;" and recommended that, if they had business elsewhere, they had better go and attend to it. Sir William Gladesdale, an English leader, rose to reply amid cries of "Down, down!"

"Off, off!" "Hear him!" "Oh, oh!" and the usual ejaculations which a difference of opinion in a crowd has always elicited. As soon as Sir William could obtain a hearing, he was understood to advise the Maid to "go home and take care of her cows;" upon which Joan cleverly replied, that if "a calf were an object of care as well as a cow, he (Sir William Gladesdale) ought to be placed at once in safe keeping." The knight, finding the laugh against him, sat down without another word, and Joan became more popular than ever after this little incident.

It was part of the plan of the Maid to work upon the imagination of the foe, and an amanuensis was employed to write another threatening letter, in her name, to the English soldiers. The communication was thrown into the midst of them, and Joan, being anxious to know what effect it produced, stood on the ramparts to overhear what they said to it. "Listeners never hear any good of themselves," and the Maid had the mortification of listening to some fearful abuse of herself, which, perhaps, served her right, for her behaviour was, to say the least of it, exceedingly unladylike. Vanity became one of her most powerful incentives, and she took upon herself to disagree with the Governor of Orleans, the great captains, and all the military authorities, on points of military tactics. Joan was, in fact, a very impracticable person, but it was necessary to let her have her way to a considerable extent, on account of her immense popularity with the soldiers. She insisted on making an attack which was considered very premature, and, while leading it in person, she got knocked over into a ditch by a dart, which set her off crying very bitterly. A valiant knight picked her up and placed her in the rear, consoling her by saying, "There, there I you're not a great deal hurt.

Come, come—dry your eyes. Don't cry, there's a good girl," and other words of encouragement. Joan, feeling that it would not do for a heroine to be found roaring and whimpering at the first scratch she received, soon recovered her self-possession, and was soon at the ditch again, but on this occasion it was less for the purpose of fighting herself than of urging on others to battle.

The English, though they did not know whether Joan was a witch or a what, were nevertheless ready to fight her on a fair field, if she would give them the opportunity. Her voices had not, however, given her the word of command, and she found it advisable to put a poultice on her neck, which rendered it necessary that she should keep for some days as quiet as possible. Her voices were often exceedingly considerate in refraining from advising her to go to battle when she might have got the worst of it. In this instance they were accommodating enough to give her the opportunity of nursing her neck for at least a limited period. The English waited a little time for the Maid, expecting that she would prove herself a "maid-of-all-work" by venturing to go single-handed into a very difficult place, but, as she did not make the attempt, they retired with flying colours. These colours, had they been warranted not to run, might never have left Orleans, but on the 8th of May, 1429, the siege was raised, and the reputation of the English army considerably lowered.

On the strength of this event, Joan went to meet King Charles, who received her very affably, and the courtiers proposed inviting her to a public dinner. This honour she politely declined, for—like the celebrated Drummond—she was "averse to humbug of any description" but that which she had made for her own use, and after-dinner speeches were matters

she held in utter abhorrence. She objected strongly to that festive foolery which induces people who never met before to express hopes that they may often meet again, and which is the source of at least twenty proudest moments of about as many existences. Joan, therefore, urged her previous engagements as an excuse for going out nowhere, for she felt assured that if she encouraged a spirit of jolly-doeism among the troops, they would soon become neglectful of all their duties.

Charles, urged by the example of Joan, determined to do a little soldiering himself, and had his armour taken out of his box, the rust rubbed off, the shoulder-straps lengthened, the leggings let down, the breastplate let out, and other alterations made, to adapt it to the change in his figure since he had last worn his martial trappings. Though he took the field, it was in the capacity of an amateur, for his modesty —or some other feeling—kept him constantly in the background, and after the battle of Patay, which was fought and won by the French, the cries of "Where is Charles? What's become of the king?" were loud and general. The Maid found him reposing on his laurels, or, rather, under them, for he had concealed himself in a thick hedge of evergreens, from which he declined to emerge until his question of "Is it all right?" had received from Joan's lips a satisfactory answer. The object of her visit was to persuade him to accompany her to Rheims, to celebrate his coronation in the cathedral of that city. "It's not a bad idea," said Charles, "but premature, I'm afraid, and so at present we will not think of it." Joan would, however, take no refusal. On the 15th of July, 1429, the French king made his solemn entrance into that city. He was crowned two days after, and, though not one of the peers of France were present

at the ceremony, it went off with quite as much spirit as anyone might venture to anticipate.

Philip, the Duke of Burgundy, declined an invitation from the Maid, who pointed out to him the folly of fighting against his own king, when, if he wanted war, the Turks were always ready to fight or be fought, to have their heads cut off, or oblige anyone else by making the thing reciprocal. The Duke of Burgundy still kept aloof, but Joan continued to be successful without his assistance, and took several towns, chiefly from the readiness with which they were given up to her. Many of the people looked upon her as something preternatural, and they even fancied her white banner was always surrounded by butterflies, though truth compels us to state that these fancied butterflies were probably harvest-bugs, which, at about the period of the year when the phenomenon was supposed to have been seen, were most likely to be fluttering blindly and blunderingly about the Maid's standard. Many of the French officers, jealous of her success, attempted to malign her character. No tiger could have stood up for his respectability more furiously than Joan defended her reputation; and, indeed, she made so much fuss, to vindicate her fair fame, that we might have suspected her of impropriety, had not all the historians agreed in coming to an opposite conclusion. It was evident that Joan, having made one or two lucky hits, was anxious to back out before she damaged her reputation by failure. When asked what she would do if allowed to retire, she declared she would return and tend her sheep; nor did the cruel sarcasm of "Oh, yes, with a hook!"—which some courtier would throw in—divert her at all from her humble purpose. Having the rank of a general, she might perhaps have claimed the right to sell out

or retire on half-pay, but she was anxious to return to her lowing herds, which caused Charles to say that for her to go and herd with anything so low, would be indeed ridiculous. Her voices, however, began to confuse her, and perhaps to talk more than one at a time, as well as to say different things; for on one day she would speak of resuming her humble occupations, and on another day would make preparations for smashing the English.

Fortune seemed to have deserted the English in France, and Bedford, the regent—like others of his countrymen, when they found their numbers inferior to those of the foe—had the coolness to propose settling the dispute by single combat. This ingenious device is like that of the gamester who has but a single pound, which he proposes to stake against the pound of him who has a hundred more, with the understanding that if the party who makes the proposition shall win, he shall walk off with all that belongs to his antagonist. Charles was rude enough, to make no reply to this offer, but about the middle of August, 1429, the English and French armies found themselves very unexpectedly in sight of each other, near Senlis. How they came to such close quarters no one seemed to know; but it is agreed on all hands, that both sides would have been very glad to get back again. Neither would venture to begin, and Charles requested to know what Joan of Arc's voices had to say upon such an important occasion. The Maid had unfortunately lost whatever voice she might have had, and could find nothing at all to say for herself. The king was eager to know whether his army might commence the attack, but Joan's voices said not a word, and as their silence was not of the sort which Charles considered capable of giving consent, he did not permit any assault to be begun

by his soldiers. After looking at each other during three entire days, each army marched off the field by its own road, and nothing had taken place beyond the interchange of an occasional "Now then, stupid—what are you staring at?" between the advanced guards of either army.

Though our business, as an historian, has taken us a good deal abroad, we must now return home, lest, in our absence, the thread of our narrative should have got into such a state of entanglement, as to cause ourselves and our readers difficulty in the necessary process of unravelling it. The 6th of November, 1429, was set apart for the coronation of the baby king, at Westminster; and, in a spirit worthy of the rising generation of the present day, his infant majesty insisted on the abolition of the protectorship. The notion that he could take care of himself had got possession of the royal mind; but the sequel of his reign afforded bitter proof of the extent of the fallacy. In 1430, he embarked for France, but the privy purse was again in such a disgraceful state, that the king had not the means of paying for his journey. The usual humiliating step was taken of sending the crown to the pawnbroker. We may here take occasion to remark, that though we frequently hear of the crown being put in pledge, we have no record of its being ever taken regularly and honestly out again. There can be little doubt that the people were unscrupulously taxed to rescue the regal diadem, which was no sooner redeemed than royal extravagance, or necessity, placed it again in its humiliating position. Had the same crown been transmitted regularly from hand to hand—or, rather, from head to head—it would have been perforated through and through by the multiplicity of tickets that from time to time have been pinned on to it.

On this occasion, the jewels went to the pawnbroker's, as well as the crown, so that the regalia were huddled together as if they had been no better than a set of fire-irons. It is surprising, under all the circumstances, that the sceptre never figured in the catalogue of a sale of unredeemed pledges, and we cannot wonder that some of our sovereigns have chosen to rule with a rod of iron, as a cheap and durable, but a most disagreeable substitute. In addition to the means already alluded to, for filling his purse, the young king hit upon another mode of making money. Every one who was worth forty pounds a year, was forced to take up the honour of knighthood, and made to pay exorbitant fees for the undesired privilege. In this manner, many persons were dubbed knights, for the express purpose of making them dub up; and there is every reason to believe that the word "dub" has taken its meaning in relation to pecuniary affairs, from the arbitrary practice we have mentioned. Those illustrious families who trace their genealogy up to some knight who flourished in the time of Henry the Sixth, will not, perhaps, after this disclosure, be so very proud of their origin. We have had in our own day one or two who have been dignified with knighthood by mistake, instead of somebody else, but those who had greatness thrust upon them only for the sake of the fees, were scarcely less contemptible.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH. HENRY THE SIXTH, SURNAMED OF WINDSOR (CONTINUED).



Original Size

EDFORD had for some time been struggling in France under the extreme disadvantage of shortness of cash, for the council being engaged in continual quarrelling at home, had become very irregular in sending remittances. He had gone week after week without his own salary, but he never grumbled at that until he found his army, from getting short of cash, beginning to fail in allegiance. Often, while reviewing the troops, if he complained of awkwardness in the evolutions, he would hear murmurs of "Why don't you pay us?" and on one occasion an insolent fellow, who had been bungling over the easy manouvre of standing at ease, cried out, "It's all very well to say 'Stand at ease,' but how is a man to stand at when he never receives his salary?" Upon another occasion, Bedford had given the word to "Charge!" when a suppressed titter ran through the ranks, and, on his demanding an explanation, he was told respectfully by one of his

aides-de-camp that the troops thought it an irresistible joke to call upon them to "charge," when, if they charged ever so much, there was no prospect of their demand being satisfied. Bedford used to rush regularly every morning to the outpost, in the hope of finding a letter containing the means of liquidating some of the arrears of pay into which he had fallen with his soldiers. He was, however, always doomed to disappointment, for there was either no communication for him at all, or an intimation that "next week"—which never comes—would bring him the cash he was so eagerly waiting for. His repeated visits to the outpost usually ended in a shake of the head from the officer on duty, whose "No, sir; there's nothing for you," had in it a mixture of compassion and contempt, which are not always incompatible.

Bedford, the regent, having left Paris, Charles thought that, the cat being away, the mice might be at play, and that the city would be unprepared if an attack should be made upon it. Beauvais and St. Denis opened their gates, but the Parisians were not so complaisant, and Charles, unwilling to resort to force, tried the effect of flummery. He issued proclamations, full of the most brilliant promises to his "good and loyal city," but the inhabitants replied by hanging out an allegorical banner, representing an individual in the act of offering some chaff to an old bird, who was refusing to be caught by it. Stung by this sarcasm, Charles determined to make an attack, and on the 12th of September he commenced an assault on the Faubourg St. Honoré.

Joan threw herself against the wall, but could make no impression upon it, and she could only lament that among the French artillery there was no mortar to be brought to bear upon the bricks of the city. She then resorted to other steps—or, rather, to a

ladder—and had reached every successive round amid successive rounds of applause from her followers, when she was stopped by a wound, which fairly knocked her over. A friendly ditch received the disabled Joan, who went into it with a splash, which caused all her companions to basely run away, lest they should participate in the consequences of her downfall. Drenched and disheartened, sobbing, and in a perfect sop, the Maid crawled out of the ditch and lay down for a little while; but suddenly rising, and giving herself a shake, she made another rush at the battlements. A few better spirits, ashamed of seeing the weakest thus a second time going to the wall, joined her in her advance, but, meeting with resistance, they rolled back like a wave of the sea, almost swamping the Maid, and carrying her violently away with them.



Joan at the Walls of Paris.

Original Size

Joan's influence had now begun to decline, for, though a heroine is popular as long as she succeeds, a woman who fails in her performance of the part is always ridiculous. She had also lost the favour of the soldiers by attacking them behind their backs, for she had flogged them with the flat of her sword till she broke the blade over their shoulders. They openly called her an impostor, a humbug, and a do; so that, hurt in her feelings as well as in her neck, wounded alike in mind and body, she resolved to quit the army. She even went to the Abbey church, and, fixing up a clothes-line, hung her white armour before the shrine of St. Denis. Charles supposed the articles had been put there to dry after the soaking the Maid had experienced in the ditch, but when he heard that Joan, as well as her coat of mail, was on the high ropes, he determined to take her down a peg as gently as possible. She was persuaded to prolong her stay, or, rather, to renew her engagement; and though, even after her military *début* at the siege of Orleans, she had wished it to be her "positively last appearance on any ramparts," Charles had the satisfaction of announcing that she had in the handsomest manner consented to remain in his company. A constant renewal of an engagement will dim the attraction of the brightest star, and Joan was evidently on the wane as a popular favourite.

In the beginning of 1430 there was a blight cessation of hostilities, and Charles remained at Bourges, where he was suffering under a severe exhaustion of his means and a general sinking in all his pockets. At this juncture, Joan met with a rival in the shape of an opposition prophetess, for it is always the fate of merit and success to become the subject of base and paltry imitation. Catherine of La

Rochelle was the name of the female counterfeit who adapted her inspiration to the exigencies of the time, and, knowing the king to be short of cash, she pretended to have fits of financial foresight. She was, in fact, a visionary Chancellor of the Exchequer, running about with an imaginary budget, and transforming Charles's real deficiency into an ideal surplus. She affected to hear voices and to see visions; but the former were rude shouts of I.O.U., and the latter represented to her certain hidden treasure, which was hidden so well that it has never been found from that time to the present. She had the art of extracting money for the king's use from those who had any money to give, and a single speech from her mouth was sufficient to fill with coin any soup-plate or saucer that might be handed round to the audience. She boasted that she could talk every penny out of the purses of her hearers, and whenever she appeared, there was a general cry of "Take care of your pockets!"

Joan called her an impostor, and was called "another" in return; but it was said by a quaint writer of the period that, whatever the Maid of Orleans might have done with the sword, the tongue of Catherine would give an antagonist a more complete licking than the most formidable weapon. Charles was attracted by the financial fanatic, but, still wishing to propitiate Joan, he ennobled her family, and declared that her native village of Domremy should for ever be exempt from taxes. It thus became one of the greatest rights of this place to forget the whole of its duties.

At the opening of the spring, the French king advanced again towards Paris with two prophetesses in his suite, but, as two of a trade never agree—particularly if they happen to be of the gentler sex—

the two young ladies were constantly quarrelling. It is probable that the presence of Catherine was the cause of putting Joan upon her mettle, for she marched to the relief of Compiegne with all her accustomed spirit. She had made up her mind to a repetition of the hit she had made at Orleans, but Victory did not answer her call or show any disposition to wait upon her. Joan fought with valour, but her soldiers had no sooner met the foe than they agreed that the chances were against them, and that the only way to bring themselves round was to turn immediately back, a manouvre which was performed by one simultaneous movement. Joan tried to rally them, but they were too far gone, and while she kept her face to the enemy, her old disaster befell her, for she backed into one of those ditches in which all her military exploits seemed doomed to ter-minate. There being no humane member of society, or member of the Humane Society, to give her the benefit of a drag from the water in which she was immersed, she was soon surrounded by her enemies. Her own companions had fled into the city and shut the gates upon her, against which she had not the strength to knock, when, mournfully murmuring out, "Alas! I am not worth a rap," she surrendered to her opponents. The sensation created by the capture of Joan of Arc was actually prodigious. The captains ran out of their positions, and the men left their ranks to have a peep at her. Duke Philip paid her a visit at her lodgings, in the presence of old Monstrelet, who was either so deaf, or so stupid, or so thunderstruck, that he could not relate what passed at the interview. The ungrateful French made no effort to release the Maid, and, indeed, there seemed to be a feeling of satisfaction at having got rid of her. Her captors showed a strong

disposition to make much of her by turning the celebrated prophetess to a profit, and the person to whom she had surrendered—the Bastard of Vendôme—sold her out and out to John of Luxembourgh. Friar Martin pretended to have a lien upon her; but John, refusing to have the lot put up again, and resold—in accordance with the usual practice in cases of dispute—cleared her off to a strong castle of his own in Picardy. Another pretended mortgagee of the Maid then started up in the person of the Bishop of Beauvais, who claimed her on behalf of the University of Paris. John of Luxembourgh disposed of her to his holiness for ten thousand francs, rather than have any further trouble.

Poor Joan was committed to prison on the charge of witchcraft, and as a kind of preliminary to the proceedings in her own case, a woman who believed in the Maid was burned, *pour encourager les autres* who might put faith in her inspiration. The fate of Joan was for some time very uncertain; but the learned doctors of the University of Paris, and other high authorities, recommended her being burned at once, which would save the trouble and expense of a previous trial. The Bishop of Beauvais, who had become the proprietor, by purchase, of the illustrious captive, recommended the adoption of regular legal proceedings. Priests and lawyers and lettered men were summoned from far and near; many of the legal gentlemen being specially retained, and all being practised in the art of cross-examination, to which Joan was subjected by those who conducted the case for the prosecution. Her trial was, throughout, a disgraceful exhibition of forensic chicanery, for her opponents attempted to puzzle her with hard words, which, in spite of her being charged with magic spells, she had not the power of spelling. The

pleadings were shamefully complicated; but she defended herself with spirit, and occasionally confounded the doctors, who were confounded knaves, for they tried to take every advantage of her unfortunate position. Sixteen days were consumed in taking the evidence, and Joan sometimes made a point in her own favour, when the Bishop of Beauvais, sinking the dignity of the judge in the temporary office of usher, began to call lustily for silence; and, according to the modern practice of the officer of the court, making more noise than everyone else by the loudness of his vociferations.

The bishop shouted and resorted to other ungentlemanly expedients, during the entire day, to damage the cause of Joan, who, nevertheless, proceeded as if in the midst of that silence which the usher in Westminster Hall is continually disturbing by loudly calling for. It was contended, on the part of the prosecution, that there was magic in her banner; but Joan, who had served the other side with notice to produce the banner, declared there was nothing particular in any part of it. The pole belonging to it was as plain as any other pike-staff, and the banner itself was formed of a cheap material, which Joan declared was all stuff; so that the banner was, of necessity, waived by her enemies. Her judges, nevertheless, declared there was sufficient evidence to support a charge of heresy, and began to deliberate on the manner of her punishment. While some recommended fire, others threw cold water upon it, and French, as well as English writers, have laboured to prove, that their countrymen, at least, were averse to a proceeding from which the term "burning shame" no doubt took the signification it bears at present. Having already found her guilty, her persecutors tried their utmost to urge her to

acknowledge her guilt, for in the absence of proof, it was thought advisable to get at least a confession.

At length, on the 24th of May, 1431, the Maid was brought up to hear her sentence, and the Bishop of Beauvais, taking out a pile of papers, endorsed *re* Joan of Arc, declared himself ready to deliver his judgment. An opportunity was, however, allowed her to stay execution, on giving a *cognovit*, or acknowledgment of every charge brought against her; and such a document being drawn up, she reluctantly permitted Joan of Arc, X, her mark—for she could not write—to be affixed to it. Her punishment was commuted to perpetual imprisonment, with "the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction," which consisted of a stale loaf and a pull at the pump once a day, as her only nourishment.

She found very few crumbs of comfort in her daily crust, and when the water was brought to her, she declared it to be very hard, which was certainly better than soft for drinking. It was a portion of her punishment to resume her female attire, which caused her considerable annoyance, and a soldier's dress having been left in her prison, she was one morning discovered wearing it. Her jailer, on entering, charged her with "trying it on," but added that it was anything but fitting, and told her that she would certainly be overhauled when he reported that he had seen her in a pair of military overalls.



Joan trying it on.

Original Size

The circumstance was instantly turned against her, and the putting on of male attire, which she had worn before, was declared to be a revival of the old suit, to which she had been liable. Her re-appearance in the soldier's dress was looked upon as a proof of uniform opposition to the authorities; and her offence was described as "relapsed heresy," or double guilt, like the "one cold caught on the top of t'other" by the boy who had been suffering under several layers of those disagreeable visitors. Judgment was now finally entered up against the ill-used Maid, who, on the 30th of May, 1431, was brought in a cart to the market-place and burned at Rouen.

We would gladly draw a veil over the fate of poor Joan; but we are unwilling to spare those who were accessory to it, from the odium which increases whenever the facts are repeated. Cardinal Beaufort and some of the bishops who had been instrumental to the murder of the Maid, began to whimper when the ceremony commenced, and to find it more than their susceptible natures could bear to witness. They had ordered the atrocity that was about to take

place; but conscience had made them such arrant cowards, that they had not the courage to witness the carrying out of their own savage suggestions. If persons so hard-hearted as themselves could feel so much affected by the sacrifice they had ordered, we may imagine what opinion ought to be entertained of them for commanding an act of atrocity which they dared not remain to contemplate.

The conduct of Charles in not interfering on Joan's behalf, is even more cruel and despicable than that of her avowed enemies. The French king finding the Maid of no further use, came practically to a free translation of *Non eget arcu* (there is no want of a Joan of Arc), and left her to the fate that awaited her. It would have been nothing but policy to have insured her life, which he might easily have done, even when she was threatened with burning, and her case became doubly hazardous.

The English were very anxious to get up a sensation in France by way of diverting the public mind from the fate of the Maid of Orleans. A coronation, which is always one of the best cards to play, being good for a king or queen at the least, was thought of and resolved upon. The affair was intended to eclipse the ceremony of which Charles had been the hero and Joan of Arc the heroine. Young Henry, who had been crowned already at Westminster, and had therefore rehearsed the part he would be called upon to play, was brought over to Paris with all the scenery, machinery, dresses and decorations, properties and appointments, that had been used before, so that the coronation being in the *répertoire* of costly spectacles, the expense of its revival was moderate. The performance took place in November, 1431; but though the getting-up was very complete, the applause was scanty, and the

attendance was by no means numerous. Cardinal Beaufort occupied a stall, and there was a fair sprinkling of people in the galleries; but' the principal character being a spiritless and most unpromising boy of nine, the spectacle excited very little interest.

Things remaining in France in a very unsatisfactory state, Charles and Philip of Burgundy came to the resolution that it was folly to go on cutting one another's throats, and they consequently effected a compromise. Philip got the best of the bargain, which was solemnised by a great deal of swearing and unswearing; for as the parties had previously exchanged oaths of hostility toward each other, it was necessary to take the sponge and wipe out former affidavits, as well as to supply the blank with new oaths of an opposite character. There was a mutual interchange of perjury; and posterity, on looking at the respective culpabilities of the two parties, can only come to the conclusion, that they were *beaucoup d'un beaucoup*, or much of a muchness.

The Duke of Bedford did not live long after this treaty, but died of indigestion, and considering that he had eaten an enormous quantity of his own words, the result is by no means marvellous. He finished up his existence at Rouen, on the 14th of September, 1435, having swallowed a parcel of his own oaths, some of which are supposed to have stuck in his throat, and caused his dissolution. The English in France soon felt the fatal consequences of being without a chief, for the columns of an army, like the columns of a journal, are incomplete without a leader. Deprived of Bedford, the English soldiers could no longer hold Paris—or, rather, Paris could no longer hold them—and they were consequently forced to surrender. The Duke of York succeeded to

the command in France—if he can be said to have succeeded who failed in almost everything. A succession of reverses was the only thing approaching to success which he experienced; and a supersedeas was soon issued to overturn his commission.

Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, did something towards restoring the English ascendency in France; but Philip of Burgundy thought he would try his hand at a siege, and fixed upon Calais as being the most convenient. The Duke of Gloucester, hearing he had a tremendous army assembled in front of the town, sent over to Philip an offer to fight him. "Only stop there till I get at you," were Gloucester's words; to which Burgundy replied, that he should be happy to wait the English duke's convenience. Four days, however, before the latter landed, the former was seized with a panic—and, taking suddenly to his heels, his thirty thousand men scampered wildly after him. Philip, who had set the example, and must have been flighty to have commenced such an insane flight, was completely run off his legs by the ruck of fugitives in his rear; and he was swept into the very heart of Flanders, before he could ascertain what his soldiers were driving at. Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, did something towards retrieving the failing fortunes of the English; but, as both parties were getting into a nervous state—running away through sheer panics, crying out before they were hurt, and flying before they were pursued—a truce was agreed upon. It was for two years, to expire on the 1st of April, 1446,—and there could not have been a more appropriate day than that devoted to All Fools, to renew hostilities which were injurious to all parties.

Henry, of Windsor, was now twenty-four; but, though a man in years, he was still an infant in

intellect. He was physically full-grown, but mentally a dwarf; and what had been in childhood the gentleness of the lamb, became in manhood downright sheepishness. His conversational powers would not have allowed him to say "bo to a goose," had it been necessary for him to address to that foolish bird that unmeaning monosyllable. Even his mother had turned her back upon him, as a noodle she could make nothing of, and had married Owen Tudor, Esquire, an obscure gentleman of Wales, who boasted, nevertheless, a royal descent, or at least maintained that the Tudors were so called from being not above Two-doors off from such illustrious lineage. The Queen-mother had died, but had left a lot of little Tudors, under the care of O. T., her *bourgeois gentilhomme* of a husband.

Henry being a mere nonentity, it was resolved to try and make something of him by finding him a wife of spirit; as if small beer could be turned into stout by mixing a quantity of gin with it. Margaret of Anjou was selected for the formation of this deleterious compound. She was one of those intolerable nuisances—a fine woman, with a great deal of decision, which means that she was decidedly disagreeable. Her father was a nominal king of Sicily and Jerusalem; but he had no real dominions, and only rented, as it were, a brass plate, or had his name up over the door of the countries specified. He was as poor as a cup of tea after the fifth water, and ruled over about as much land as he could cram into a few flower-pots which adorned the window of his lodging. He kept a minister who answered the bell and the purpose at the same time, and was accustomed to wait at table. His majesty's apartment was furnished with a sort of dresser covered with green baize, which formed a board of green cloth;

and he had several sticks-in-waiting in his umbrella stand. His *robe de matin* was his robe of state; he had a green silk privy purse, and an ormolu cabinet. He had a keeper of the great seal which hung to his watch; and his bureau comprised a secretary for the home department, in which he kept all his washing-bills. He dispensed with a master of the horse by keeping no horse of his own, and he always had plenty of gentlemen-in-waiting, in the shape of creditors. He saved the expense of a paymaster by paying nobody; and though he issued Exchequer Bills, they were not only at very long dates, but wholly unworthy of anyone's acceptance. He was his own Chancellor of his own Exchequer, for he used to declare, with much apparent integrity that his government should never be degraded by useless sinecures. "Whenever there is nothing to do," he would philosophically exclaim, "I consider it my duty to do it." He usually resided in Sicily when he was at home, but he kept in his court—at the back of his lodging—a few Jerusalem artichokes, to represent the interests of his other kingdom of Jerusalem. He used to make a financial statement every now and then, for the sake of clearing himself of his debts, which were the subject of an annual act of which he alone got the benefit. He used upon these occasions to profess a considerable anxiety to rub off as he went on, but his goings on and rubbings off were equally to his own advantage, and the cost of those who had trusted him. Never was political economy carried to such perfection as by the father of Margaret, the king of Sicily and Jerusalem.



The King of Sicily and his Household.

Original Size

It was hopeless to ask for a dower with the daughter of a man who had what is vulgarly termed "a sight of money," which means that he could have put the whole of his income into his eye without any detriment to his vision. Instead of asking anything from a sovereign more fitted to be upon the parish than upon the throne, a trifling settlement was made upon him, that the king of England might not be said to have married the daughter of an absolute monarch and an absolute beggar. Anjou and Maine, which had been taken from him by main force, were restored to him, and a little money was advanced to him on account of his first quarter's revenue, to enable him to cut a respectable figure at his daughter's wedding.

Suffolk brought home the bride to England, where she was, of course, severely criticised. For many she was too tall, and her height was an objection that could not be overlooked very easily. The friends of the Duke of Gloucester—known as the good Duke Humphrey—declared he would have found a better queen; and Duke Humphrey paid her no attention, for he never even asked her to a family dinner, an

omission which gave rise to a saying * that is still current.

** Dining with Duke Humphrey is a process that neec explanation.*

The good Duke Humphrey, though he gave no one a dinner, was anxious to let everyone have his desert, which made his royal highness very unpopular. His enemies began by charging his wife with necromancy, because she was in the habit of consulting the dregs of her teacup when turned out in her saucer—an act that was stigmatised as sorcery. She was also proved to have in her possession a large wax doll, resembling the king, which she was in the habit of placing before the fire for the purpose, it was said, of sweating her sovereign. This was interpreted into a desire to see him waste away, and she was accordingly sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. Had she been able to melt the king himself as she melted his effigy, she might have been pardoned; but though the wax image was soft enough, he only waxed wroth when an appeal in her behalf was made to him. Her husband now became personally an object of persecution, and was arrested on a charge of treason, on the 11th of February, 1447, when he went to take his seat at the opening of Parliament. On the 28th of the same month, he was found dead in his bed, and of course the conclusion was that he had been murdered, though there were no signs of violence. There were various rumours as to the cause of Duke Humphrey's death, and despair, dyspepsia, apoplexy, and unhappy perplexity, or a broken heart, were equally spoken of as having occasioned his dissolution. It is strange that inanition was never thought of as a probable

mode of accounting for the decease of Duke Humphrey, whose stinted diet has given to his dinners an unenviable notoriety.

The old rival and uncle of the good Duke Humphrey did not long survive his nephew, for the grasping prelate died on the 11th of April, 1447, at Winchester, where he had retired to his see, from which he was to the last straining his eyes towards the popedom.

Under the ministry of Suffolk the glory of England rapidly declined, and its possessions in France were daily diminishing. Parliament began to take the matter seriously up, and not a day passed without some awkward motion being made to embarrass the Government. At length, in January, 1450, Suffolk became so exasperated that he challenged his enemies to the proof of their accusations, which was equivalent to asking for a vote of confidence. The Commons replied by requesting the Lords to send him to the Tower, which they declared themselves most happy to do, if the Lower House would only send up a specific charge on which he might be committed. The Commons acceded with the utmost pleasure to the demand, and cooked up an accusation very promptly, for in those days such things were kept almost ready made, to be used at the shortest notice, for the purpose of knocking the head from off the shoulders of a minister. It was laid in the indictment against Suffolk, that he had been furnishing a castle with military stores; or, in other words, ordering a quantity of gunpowder to be sent in for the purpose of assisting France against England. Though the accusation was wretchedly vague, it was sufficient foundation for a warrant, upon which Suffolk was seized by the scruff of the neck, and hurried to the Tower. Fearing that one bill

of impeachment might be insufficient, his enemies published a series of supplements.

In his defence he noticed only the first set of charges, which accused him of a desire to put the crown on the head of his son; a freak that Suffolk never had the smallest idea of practising. On the 13th of March, 1460, he was brought to the bar of the House of Lords, and went down upon his knees like a horse—or rather like an ass—on the wooden pavement. He denied, ridiculed, and repudiated some of the articles in the impeachment, and accused the lords themselves of being his accomplices in some others. A proceeding which we can only characterise as a general row immediately took place, and the House of Lords became a perfect piece of ursine horticulture, or regular bear-garden.

Suffolk, though warmly defended by the court, was furiously attacked by the Commons, who declared they would not vote a penny of the supplies while the minister remained unpunished. The king, as long as it did not affect his pockets, was tolerably staunch towards his friend, but when no money came in, and the royal outgoings continued to be large, it was found expedient to throw the favourite over. Every fresh bill that was placed on the unpaid file at the palace shook the royal resolution; and when the eye of the king glanced over his huge accumulation of unsettled accounts, he began to think seriously whether it was not too great a sacrifice to lose his supplies for the sake of saving Suffolk.

The favourite was gradually getting out of favour, and was sent for by the king to a private interview, in the course of which it was intimated to the duke that he must be dropped, but that he should be "let down" as easily as possible. This private intimation kept Suffolk in a state of suspense considerably

worse than certainty; for it is a well-established fact, given on the authority of those who have tried both, that a bold leap into the fire is preferable to a constant grill on the gridiron, or a perpetual ferment in the frying-pan.

On the 17th of March Suffolk was again brought up in presence of the king, at a sort of judicial "at home," given by hiss majesty. It took place, according to some authorities, in the sovereign's private apartments; but the chroniclers are mute as to which room—whether the two-pair back, the one-pair front, the *salle à manger*, or the *salon*—was the scene of the important interview. Suffolk threw himself once more at the feet of the king, who, it is to be hoped, had no corns; but Henry must have felt hurt at receiving a minister on such a footing. Suffolk, still at his master's feet, endeavoured to hit upon Henry's tender points, but the sovereign was on this occasion influenced by the impression made upon his understanding. He ordered Suffolk into banishment for five years, and gave him till the 1st of May to pack up for his departure.



Banishment of Suffolk.

Original Size

The people were determined not to let the traitor off so easily, and no less than two thousand assembled to take his life, which he wisely abstained from placing at their disposal. He gave a farewell banquet at one of his country seats to his relatives and friends, and, upon his health being duly proposed as the toast of the evening, he swore, of course, that he was perfectly innocent. Finding it necessary to dodge the popular indignation, he started off to Ipswich, when he embarked for the Continent.

On the 2nd of May, as he was sailing between Dover and Calais, his convoy—consisting of a smack and punt for self and retinue—was hailed by a great hulking man-of-war from the hulks, which bore the name of *Nicholas* of the Tower. This was a sad blow to the little smack, which would have gladly gone off had it not been most vigorously brought-to by the larger vessel. The duke was ordered on board the *Nicholas*, and after the ship had stood off and on for three days, it turned out that the vessel was only waiting to take in an axe, a block, and an

executioner. This dismal addition to the freight having at last arrived, it was immediately put in requisition, and, as Suffolk was very unpopular, nobody took the trouble to inquire what had become of him. The only account that could ever be given of him was that he had been taken away by the crew of the *Nicholas*, which was a very old ship, and the announcement that Suffolk had gone to Old Nick was all that was ever said concerning him.

We are soon about to enter upon those Wars of the Roses which planted so many thorns in the bosom of fair England. It is strange that out of *couleur de rose* should have emanated some of the most sombre and melancholy hues that ever darkened the pages of our history. "Coming events cast their shadows before," and the shade in this instance was one Cade, familiarly called Jack Cade by various authorities. This celebrated individual was a native of Ireland, who had served in France in the English army, so that he may be called a kind of Anglo-Irish-Frenchman, a combination that reminds us of the celebrated poly-politician, who, being desirous of being thought "open to all parties," with the vow of being ultimately influenced by one, gave himself out as a conservative-whig-radical. Jack Cade was a jack-of-all-trades, or, at all events, a jack of two, for he had been a doctor first and a soldier afterwards. Some have ironically contended that the change from a medical to a military life was only an extension of the same business, and that, in resigning the bolus for the bullet, the powders for the gunpowder, and the lancet for the sword, he was only enlarging the sphere of his practice. With that remarkable deference for the aristocracy they pretend to despise, which is only too common amongst demagogues, Cade tried to claim relationship even with royalty,

and, giving himself out as a relation of the Duke of York, he assumed the name of Mortimer.

That Cade was a decayed scion of an illustrious stock may be doubted, and some, who have not been ashamed of an anachronism for the sake of a sneer, have gone so far as to say that the Cades were the earliest cads of which there are any records.

It has been well remarked somewhere, by somebody, that the men of Kent, though living near the water, were always very inflammable, and the Kentish fire is to this day proverbial for its intensity. Cade threw himself among these men, who made him their captain, and inarched with him to Blackheath, from which he commenced a long correspondence with the Londoners. The Government, alarmed at an assembly of fifteen or twenty thousand men at a place where large assemblies were unusual, sent to enquire the reason of the good men of Kent having quitted their homes in such large numbers. Cade, who among his other restless habits, appears to have been troubled with a *cacoethes scribendi,* took upon himself to answer for the whole, and embodied their reasons in a document called the "Complaint of the Commons of Kent," which was of a somewhat discursive character. It commenced by alluding to a report that Kent was to be turned into a hunting forest, and remonstrated against the people being made game of in such a fearful manner; it then proceeded to abuse the Government in general terms, which have since been the stereotyped phraseology of nearly all the friends of the people; it complained of others fattening on the royal revenue, which forced the king to supply the deficiency by robbing his subjects, and to take their provisions wholesale as well as retail, without paying a penny for them. Allusion was then

made to the lowness of the company admitted to court, though this seems to have been rather over-nice on the part of Jack and his followers. The document then came to the point, by intimating that the men of Kent had been subjected to extortion and treated with contempt, so that they had been, at the same time, overtaxed and under-rated.

When the court received this elaborate catalogue of ills, it was intimated to Cade and his companions, that it would take some time to prepare the answer; but the authorities thinking that powder and shot would answer better than pen and ink, set to work to collect troops and ammunition in London. Cade could not resist his propensity to scribble, and sent in a second paper, headed "The Requests, by the captain of the great assembly in Kent." In his new manifesto Jack required an entire re-arrangement of the royal household even down to the minutest domestic arrangements; and it was even said, that not a pie came to the king's table without Jack wishing to have a finger in it.

The court was now prepared with an answer in the shape of a large army, which advanced upon Blackheath, and caused Cade to be taken so regularly aback, that he jibbed as far as Sevenoaks. Here he halted, and waited the attack of the royal army, a detachment of which came up and went down like a pack of cards, though as they had lost all heart there is something defective in the comparison. When the main army at Blackheath heard the fate of the detachment at Sevenoaks, the soldiers suddenly began to object to fighting against their own countrymen. The Court then found it time to make concession, and commenced by sending a few of its own party to the Tower, in order to propitiate the malcontents. Lord Say, an obnoxious minister, who

was not merely a say, but a tremendous do, was at once locked up with some others who had rendered themselves unpopular.

Cade now made himself master of the right bank of the Thames from Greenwich to Lambeth, both inclusive, and made the celebrated incision into the latter, which retained the name of the New Cut to a very distant period. Cade took up his own quarters in Southwark, but went into London every morning, where he and his followers behaved very quietly for a few days, returning home regularly every evening to their lodgings in the Borough. Their first act of violence was to insist on the trial of Say, who was not allowed to have his say in his own defence, but was hurried off to Cheapside and beheaded. As too frequently happens with the promoters of the public good, Cade's followers could not keep their hands off private property, and a little pillage was perpetrated. Even Jack himself, who sometimes set a good example to his followers, was tempted to plunder the house at which he usually dined; and the citizens, feeling that as the spoons were beginning to go, their turn would probably be next, became indignant at the outrage. They consequently refused admission to Cade the next morning when he came to transact his city business as usual.

It was next determined by the court to delude the rebels by an offer of a pardon; and Cade caught at the bait with a simplicity less characteristic of a Jack than of a gudgeon. In two days, however, he altered his mind, and refused to lay down his arms or walk off his legs, until Government gave a guarantee for the fulfilment of its promises. With the customary hatred of each other, which too often prevails among the lovers of their country, the patriots commenced quarrelling. Cade began to fear that some

disinterested friend of freedom would sell him for the thousand marks that were offered for his head; and Jack, from the idea of being apprehended, was thrown into a constant state of apprehension. Sneaking quietly downstairs in the night, he found his way to the stable, where he mounted a clever hack, and using what spurs he could to the animal's exertion, put him along at a slapping pace towards the coast of Sussex. He had not proceeded very far, when turning to look back on what he had gone through, he saw at his heels Alexander Iden, Esq. Jack had scarcely got out the words, "Is that you, Alick?" when a lick from Iden's sword revealed the purpose of his mission. "No, you don't!" cried Cade, parrying an attempt to plant a second blow, and putting in a slight poke with his battle-axe very efficiently. Were we to borrow the graphic style of the sporting chroniclers, in describing a fight, we should say that Iden came up smiling, and evidently meaning business, which he transacted by enumerating one, two, three, in rapid succession on Jack's chest, followed up by four, five, six, on the face, and seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, in the stomach. Cade endeavoured to rally, but every effort failed; and Alexander Iden, Esq., claimed the thousand marks that had been advertised. The amount was large for a head with very little in it; but the tail, consisting of the riff-raff led on by Cade, formed the real value of the article.

A dispute now commenced between persons of higher degree; or, rather, it is to be suspected that Cade and his men had been used as the tools of some more exalted malcontent. It very frequently happens that political agitators in an humble rank of life are either cunningly or unconsciously playing the game of a political schemer of more exalted station; and

while they are supposed to be working for the overthrow of one tyrant, they are preparing the way for the establishment of another.

The Duke of York was the individual who, endeavouring to profit by the recent revolt, left Ireland, of which he had been Lieutenant, and forced himself into the king's presence. "Now then, what is it?" cried Henry, annoyed at the sudden intrusion; when York replied he had come to extract something from the mouth of the sovereign. "A tooth, perchance?" ironically remarked the king; but his majesty was informed that a promise to summon a Parliament was the utmost that York required. This was acceded to, and, when Parliament met, one of the members proposed declaring the Duke of York heir apparent to the throne, but the proposer was indignantly coughed down, unceremoniously pulled out, and promptly committed to the Tower. The duke, discouraged at having a minority of one, which imprisonment had reduced to none, in his favour, repaired to his castle at Ludlow, where he collected a large army; but, by way of proving that he had no evil intentions towards the king, he took, every now and then, the oath of allegiance. This periodical perjury had very little effect, for York was better known than trusted, and an army was sent against him. As the forces went one way to meet him, he came up to London by another road, but the gates of the City were slammed in his face just as he came up to them. "Well, I'm sure!" was the indignant murmur of York, to which, according to an Irish chronicler who came from Ireland in the duke's suite, "You can't come in," was the only echo. Foiled in this attempt, he went to Kent, expecting Jack Cade's followers would rally round him, but beyond some half-dozen seedy scamps, belonging to the class excluded from

kitchens under the general order of "No followers allowed," there were no adherents to York's banner. When Henry came up with him at Dartford, both of them, like two little boys who have met to fight and don't know how to begin, were anxious to negotiate. This was agreed to, and the duke having disbanded his army, by which, as the papers say when a theatre closes prematurely, "an immense number of persons were thrown out of employ," he went to Henry's tent for a personal interview.



Quarrel between Somerset and York.

Original Size

The meeting was very unpleasant, for Somerset happening to be seated there, had the bad taste to assail York with a volley of vulgar abuse, which the latter repaid with interest. "You're a felon and a traitor, sir!" cried Somerset, as York came in, which elicited, by way of reply, "You're an old humbug," and other taunts, among which "Who embezzled the taxes?" was rather conspicuous. As the duke was about to depart, a tipstaff tripped up to him, and, begging his pardon, intimated that he was in custody. Somerset would have applied for speedy execution, but York compromised the affair by a

little more perjury, for he swore a good batch—sufficient to last him a whole year—of truth and allegiance. He then retired to his castle, where he may have amused himself with playing at "Beggar my Neighbour" with his porter, as far as we can tell, for his employment while in seclusion at Wigmore is not recorded in history.

Henry's utter incapacity to hold the reins, which were literally dropping out of his hands, began to give great uneasiness to the Parliament. York was wanted back, and Somerset was sent to the Tower, for the two rivals were like the two figures in the toy for indicating the weather. What brought one out sent the other in, and a storm was the signal for the entrance of York, while political sunshine was favourable to

Somerset. On the 14th of February, 1454, York opened Parliament as commissioner for the king, who was personally visited at Windsor by a deputation of peers, desirous of ascertaining his exact condition. They found Henry perfectly imbecile, and incapable of understanding a word or uttering a syllable. The deputation conceiving it possible that his majesty might be merely muddled, retired to give him time to come to, but on their return they found him in the same state as before, and *ditto* repeated on a third visit. The deputation, resolving unanimously that "this sort of thing would never do," reported the facts to Parliament, and Richard, Duke of York, was elected "Protector and Defender of the realm of England." In about nine months Henry was declared to have recovered his senses, such as they were, and the court claimed for him the return of the reins, which had been taken out of his hands by reason of his incapacity. York was instantly put down, and Somerset again taken up

to occupy the box-seat as heretofore.

The ex-protector retired to Ludlow as before, but got together some troops, and poor Henry was put, or carried, or propped up, at the head of an opposing army. The duke having no fear of a force under such a tumble-down leader, met him near the capital, and sent a message, full of loyalty, to the king, but insisting on Somerset being sent back by return, to be dealt with in the most rigorous manner. An answer was returned in the king's name, declaring his determination to perish rather than betray his friend; but it was the friend himself who assigned to his majesty this very disinterested preference. The sovereign was indeed so imbecile that he knew not what he said, and understood nothing of what was said for him, so that when he asked if he would not rather die in battle than hand Somerset over to the foe, an unmeaning grin was the only reply of the royal idiot. A fight of course ensued, and York got the best of it. Somerset was among the slain, and the poor king, who was as innocent of the use of a sword as a child in arms, got a wound in the neck, which sent him howling and reeling away till he took refuge in a tan-yard. York found him hiding among the hides, and pulling him out with gentleness, conducted him to the Abbey of St. Alban's. Every care was taken of the wounded monarch, whose neck was duly poulticed, and whose feet were put in hot water, though indeed they were seldom out of it.

When Parliament met after this affair, theoretical allegiance was sworn to the king and prince, but practical contempt of their position was exercised. York was declared protector until Edward, the heir to the throne, attained his majority; but Henry was superannuated at once, for he was liable, like a hare in the month of March, to fits of insanity. He was

sometimes sensible enough, but no one could elucidate the date of his lucid intervals; and as the sceptre is little better than a red-hot poker in a madman's hands, he was very properly deprived of that powerful instrument.

Things had been thus arranged, when, on the meeting of Parliament, in 1456, after the Christmas recess, Henry, to the surprise of everyone, rushed in, exclaiming—"I'll trouble you for that crown!" and "Oblige me with a catch of that ball!"—alluding to the orb which forms part of the regalia. No one disputed his restoration to sanity, and York resigned the protectorate, looking unutterable things, as if he had just been engaged in a speculation by which he had made a profit of eightpence and incurred the loss of a shilling.

The king now endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between the rival parties, who affected to make it up, but started at once to their respective castles, for the purpose of looking up materials and men for the renewal of hostilities. York sent his sword to the grinder's, his armour to the tin-plate-worker's, to be let out, pieced, and otherwise repaired—while the Lancastrian chiefs were, on their side, resorting to similar arrangements. At length they came to a battle, in September, 1459, and the Yorkists were in the better position, when Sir Andrew Trollop—either from blockheadism, or bribery, or both—deserted, with all his veterans, to the standard of Henry. York, taking a series of hops, skips and jumps over the Welsh mountains, fled into Ireland. He ran so fast, that the muscles of his leg were contracted; and it was said at the time, that the York hams had as much as they could do to keep ahead of the Bath chaps, many of whom were engaged in the battle, from having lived not far from

the neighbourhood. Warwick escaped to Calais, where he was exceedingly popular, and he soon collected forces enough to admit of his landing in Kent, where he stuck up his banner with the view of collecting a crowd, and then touting for followers. The project was successful, and by the time he reached Blackheath he had got thirty thousand men at his heels, according to the old chroniclers, who, it is only fair to say, have a peculiar multiplication table of their own, and who, whatever may be their aptitude at facts, certainly present to us some of the very oddest figures.

Warwick's reception was very enthusiastic. The archbishop ran out of Canterbury to meet him and shake him by the hand, Lord Cobham clapped him amicably on the shoulders, and five bishops, taking off their mitres, waved them as he passed in token of welcome. Warwick made at once for the midland counties, carrying with him the young heir of York, and meeting the Lancastrians at Northampton, a battle was fought which ended in the defeat of the latter. Henry was taken prisoner; but his wife Margaret of Anjou escaped with her son Edward, and encountered one of those adventures which season with a spice of romance the sometimes insipid dish of history. The story we are about to relate is offered with a caution to our readers, but it is too good to be omitted, and we are, moreover, afraid that were we to leave it out for the sake of correctness, we should be blamed for the omission. Use is second nature in literature as well as in anything else; and the public, being accustomed to falsehood, would regard the absence of even the most flagrant hoax as a curtailment of the fair proportions of history. It is, however, only under protest that we can lend ourselves to the gratification of this very morbid

appetite, and we therefore advise the following story on the authority of *De Moleville*, to be taken not merely *cum grano salis*, but with an entire cellar of that very wholesome condiment.

The anecdote runs as follows: Margaret fled with her son into the recesses of a forest, like one of those which we see on the stage, where cut woods, canvas banks, and trees growing downwards from the sky-boarders, furnish an umbrageous recess of the most sombre character. We fancy we see her advancing to slow music, laying her child on a canvas bank, and listening to the rattle of peas accompanied by the shaking of sheet iron, which form the rain and thunder of theatrical life, when suddenly a whistle is heard, and two figures enter whose long black worsted hair, wash-leather gauntlets, drawn broadswords, and yellow ochre countenances, bespeak that they are robbers of the worst complexion. The queen has, of course, all her jewels blazing about her, which the two men proceed to appropriate, and while they are quarrelling about the division of her booty, she contrives to escape.

This brings us to another part of the same forest, where the scenery is not quite so elaborate, but where Margaret, leading on her infant son, stumbles upon a sentimental robber with a drawn sword in his hand, a tear of sensibility in his eye, and in his mouth a claptrap. She appeals to his generosity in favour of a "female in distress;" he replies with some cutting allusions to the "man who—" compares himself to a melon, or a cocoa-nut, or anything else with a rough exterior, but with some sweetness or milk of human kindness within, and by way of climax, she exclaims, "Here, my friend, I commit to your care the safety of the king's son."



Margaret of Anjou and her Child meeting the benevolent Robber.

Original Size

The honest fellow—by whom we mean, of course, the professional thief and casual cut-throat—goes down upon one knee in a fit of loyalty, and according to the scholastic versions of this little incident he is "recalled to virtue by the flattering confidence reposed in him." * He went also a step further, and at once devoted himself to the service of the queen, magnanimously offering to share her fortunes, which considering the desperate nature of his own, was a proposition equally indicative of self-love and loyalty. Her majesty accepted the offer, and embarked for Flanders, of course paying all the expenses of her friend the sentimental robber, who became the companion of her flight, and a pensioner on her pocket.

** Sec Pinnock'a edition of Goldsmith's History of p. 143 of the thirty-second edition.*

Fighting between the adherents of York on one side, and of Lancaster on the other, continued with unabated fury, until York having gained a victory at Northampton, called a Parliament, and walked straight up to the throne. He took hold of the hammer-cloth, as if to mount, and looked round as much as to say, "Shall I?" but no "hears," "cheers," or "bravoes," encouraged him to proceed. Another battle was fought soon after at Wakefield Bridge, when Richard, Duke of York, was killed, and his son Edward succeeded to the title, which was very shortly afterwards exchanged for that of king, at a packed meeting of citizens. The question was put whether Henry was fit to reign, and the "Noes" had it as a matter of course, when a motion that Edward of York should ascend the throne, was carried by a large majority.

Thus he who was not yet of age, and who had been recently nothing more than Earl March, was in early March, 1461, voted to the sovereignty by the acclamation of the people. Rushing into the House of Lords, he vaulted in a true spirit of vaulting ambition on to the throne, from which he delivered a discourse on hereditary right, making out every other right to be wrong, and maintaining his own right to be the only genuine article.

Poor Margaret made a futile attempt to rouse the loyalty of the citizens of London in a letter which she addressed to them, * but the style is so exceedingly vague, that we do not wonder at the document having proved ineffectual. As far as it is possible to collect the meaning of the epistle to which we have referred, it trounces the Duke of York in a style of truly female earnestness. It calls him an "untrue, unsad, and unadvised person," who is "of pure malice, disposed to continue in his cruelness, to the

utterest undoing, if he might," of the fair letter-writer and her offspring. Poor Margaret's state of mind may have accounted for the tremendous topsy-turviness—to use a familiar expression—of her sentences. The bursting heart cannot trammel itself by those fetters which grammarians and rhetoricians have forged to restrain language within its proper limits. That Margaret of Anjou was a woman of business is evident from a copy of one of her wardrobe books now, in a state of perfect preservation, in the office of the Duchy of Lancaster. This private ledger of the royal lady would be a model for the accounts of modern housekeepers.

** This letter, which is to be found in the Harleia No. 543, Fol. 147, is also given in Mary Anne Wooc interesting collection of Letters of Royal and Ill Ladies of Great Britain. The letter of Margaret of forms the thirty-eighth in the first volume of the alluded to.*

It comprises a journal of payments even down to the accuracy of pence; and her gardener's wages, put down at a hundred shillings a year, may be considered a fair criterion of the average scale of her expenditure. She laid out little in clothes, though she kept twenty-seven valets as well as a number of ladies-in-waiting, and "ten little damsels," whose salaries and persons were no doubt equally diminutive. That her economy must have been wonderful, is evident from the fact that she did it all for seven pounds a day, which she regularly paid to the treasurer of the king's household.

It has not often been our lot to begin with a new sovereign until we have finished with the old; but in the present instance we must drop Henry the Sixth

before his death, according to the example set us by his ungrateful people. We have, perhaps, lingered too long over the downfall of Henry, and we are warned by a sort of mental shout of "Edward the Fourth stops the way," that we must drive on with our history.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. EDWARD THE FOURTH.



Original Size

DWARD, like the individual who having got such a thing as a crown about him, fully intended keeping it, lost no time in going into the provinces to enforce his claims. After killing twenty-eight thousand Lancastrians, and threatening a lesson on the

Lancastrian system to anyone who might continue to oppress him, he returned to town, and was crowned on the 29th of June, 1461, in the usual style of magnificence.

Poor Henry, the deposed sovereign, was carried about at the head of his adherents, to give them something to rally round; but they might just as well have had a maypole, or any other inanimate object, for the ex-king was utterly imbecile. He could only be compared to a guy in the hands of the boys on the 5th of November; and sometimes, when his adherents were forced to run for it, they set him down to escape as he could, by which he was occasionally on the point of being taken prisoner.

Edward assembled a Parliament, which cut short all objections to the line of York by declaring that the three last kings of the line of Lancaster were intruders, and the grants they had made were of course reversed, in order to raise a fund for laying in a large supply of new loyalty.

Poor Henry, to whom peace and quietness were necessary, would have been very well satisfied to retire into private life, had not his impetuous wife, the tremendous Margaret, dragged him about with her at the head of a few proscribed and desperate nobles. Shortness of cash cramped the efforts of this impetuous female, who ran over to France, with the intention of begging and borrowing from all her relatives. The Duke of Brittany gave her a trifle, but Louis the Eleventh pleaded poverty, and even produced his books to show that he had not a penny beyond what he required for his own necessities. When, however, she talked of surrendering Calais, he produced twenty thousand crowns, which he had probably put by in an old stocking, and lent her the sum, with a couple of thousand men, under Peter de

Brezé.

With this assistance Margaret burst into the northern counties, and, pushing poor Henry before her wherever she went, thrust him through the gates of a small series of castles which she had taken by surprise. These were soon taken back again, and Margaret, being obliged to fly, lost all her borrowed money in a storm at sea, which washed all her property in one direction and herself in another. After a few minor transactions, the 15th of May, 1464, was rendered famous by the battle of Hexham, at which the hiding or tanning of the Lancastrians was so complete, that Hexham tan is to this day a leading article of commerce. Margaret escaped to her father's court, but poor Henry, after wandering about the moors of Lancashire, had found his way to Yorkshire, where he had gone out to dine at Waddington Hall, when a treacherous servant, or a traitor waiter, delivered him up to his enemies. The unhappy Henry was turned into the Tower, which, under all the circumstances, was the best place for him.

Edward, now adopting the sentiment of the vocalist, who, wishing to introduce a tender song in the character of a hero, modulates into a softer feeling by exclaiming, "Farewell, glory; welcome, love," resolved on paying those devotions to the fair which a necessity for encountering the brave had hitherto rendered impossible. He had intended to marry some foreign princess, and Warwick had engaged him to a young lady named Bona, daughter of the Duke of Savoy and sister to the Queen of France; but the king denied that he had ever given instructions to sue, and declined being bound by the act of his solicitor, who had solicited for him the hand of the fair princess. The truth was, that his

majesty had formed other views, or, rather, other views had been formed for him by an old match-making mother, who exhibited all those manoeuvring qualities which constitute, in the present day, the art of getting a daughter off to the best advantage.



Edward the Fourth meeting Elisabeth Woodville.

Original Size

The king, while hunting at Stony Stratford, pursuing a stag, came suddenly upon a pretty dear, who literally staggered him. The young lady was the widow of Sir Thomas Gray, and the daughter of Jacquetta of Luxemburg by her second husband, Sir Richard Woodville, afterwards Earl of Rivers. There is not the smallest doubt that Lady Gray and her mamma had arranged together this accidental interview. The young lady, who seems to have been a finished pupil in the school of flirtation, entreated the king to reverse the attainder passed on her late

husband, to which Edward replied, that "he must be as stonyhearted as Stony Stratford itself if he could refuse her anything." This rubbish ripened into a real offer of marriage, which was, of course, accepted, and Lady Gray was crowned Queen of England in the year following.

Warwick was rather nettled at being, as he said, "made a fool of" by his royal master, and grew particularly jealous of the influence of the king's wife, who got off her five unmarried sisters upon the heirs of as many dukes or earls. He intrigued with the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence, and both of them, being denounced as traitors, were obliged to go abroad upon an order to travel. They visited France, where King Louis not only supplied them with board and lodging, but put Warwick in the way of a negotiation with Queen Margaret, which, it was thought, would be advantageous to all parties. It was arranged that another push should be made to push Henry on to the throne, but, as Warwick never did business for nothing, he stipulated for the marriage of his daughter with the queen's son, Edward.

Having reduced everything to writing, Warwick took his standard out of his portmanteau for the purpose of planting it, and on the 13th of September, 1479, he landed at Plymouth with a select but sturdy party of malcontents. The people, whose motto was, "Anything for a change," were soon persuaded to join in a cry of "Long live King Henry," and he was taken out of the Tower for the purpose of being dragged about as a puppet to give a sort of legitimacy to Warwick's projects. This nobleman had got the name of the king-maker from a knack he had of manufacturing the royal article with a rapidity truly astonishing. He could coin a sovereign to order with a dispatch that the mint itself might fairly be jealous

of. He could provide a new king at the shortest notice, like those victuallers who profess to have "dinners always ready;" and Edward having got into "very low cut," Henry was "just up" as the latest novelty from the *cuisine* of the ingenious Warwick.

When Edward saw what was going on he thought it high time for himself to be going off, and, with a few adherents who had not a change of linen in their trunks nor a penny in their purses, he got into a ship bound for Holland. The king himself had no money to pay his passage, and offered the captain, says Comines, "a gown lined with martens," as a remuneration for his services. Edward fled to Burgundy, where he persuaded the duke to advance a trifle in the way of ships, money, and men, with which the ousted monarch landed at Ravenspur. On his first arrival the people held back, saying, "Oh, here's the old business over again. We've had enough of this," and employing other expressions of discouragement. He, however, declared he had no intention of unsettling anything or anybody—except his bills, which remained unsettled as a matter of course—and was allowed to enter the capital, where he was once more proclaimed sovereign. It is an old commercial principle in this country, that debt is a sign of prosperity, and Edward's success has been attributed to the fact of his owing vast sums to the London merchants. They were, of course, interested in the well-being of their debtor, and the hypothesis was thus proved to be true, that he who is worse off is in a better position than he who is well-to-do, and the man whose circumstances are tolerably straight, is not so eligibly situated as the individual whose affairs are materially straightened. Edward, though not in clover, was obliged to be in the field, for Warwick fell upon his rear with alarming

vehemence. They fought at Barnet on the 14th of April, 1471, in the midst of a mist, when poor Warwick was not only lost in the fog, but many of his friends were killed, and Edward obtained a decisive victory. The particulars of this battle have never been very accurately given, for the fog and the old chroniclers were almost equally dense; and between them the affair is involved in much obscurity.



Field of Battle (in a Fog) near Barnet.

Original Size

It is easier to quell sixty thousand men than to subdue one troublesome woman, and Queen Margaret still gave "a deal of trouble" to the conqueror. She, however, ultimately fell into his hands, together with her son—one of the "rising generation" of that time—who, on being asked by Edward what he meant by entering the realm in arms, replied pertly, "I came to preserve my father's crown and my own inheritance."—"Did you, indeed, you young jackanapes?" cried Edward, "then take that," and he flicked the boy's nose with the thumb of a large gauntlet. The child set up a piercing yell, but this was not the worst of it, for some attendants,

excited by the brutal example of their master, gave the lad a blow or two, which finished him.

Edward returned to town, and sent Henry, with his queen, to the Tower, from which the latter was ransomed by her relatives; but the former having no friends to buy him off or bail him out, remained in custody. He died a few weeks after his committal, and his death is attributed to the Duke of Gloucester, who from the peculiar conformation of his back, had shoulders broad enough to bear all the stray crimes for which no other owner may have been forthcoming. Accordingly, every piece of iniquity that can be traced to no one in particular, is usually added to Gloucester's huge catalogue of delinquencies.

The Lancastrians were now regularly down, and every opportunity was taken for hitting them. Some were driven into exile, others were got rid of by more decided means, and a few, whose talents were worth saving, got purchased at a valuation, more or less fair, by the now Government. Sir John Fortescue, the Chief Justice to Henry the Sixth and the greatest lawyer of his time, was sold in this disreputable manner; for the judges of those days, unlike the pure occupants of the bench in our own, were as saleable as railway shares, and had their regular market price for anyone by whom such an investment was desired.

The prosperity of the House of York was now only marred by a quarrel between the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence. The latter had married Warwick's eldest daughter, and claimed the whole property of his father-in-law, of which Gloucester naturally wanted a slice, and he struck up to Anne, a younger daughter, in order to derive some claim to a share of the family fortune. Clarence, anxious to baffle his brother, sent the young lady out to service as a cook,

in London, when Gloucester—disguised probably as a policeman—found her out, and ran away with her.



Duke of Gloucester, disguised as a Policeman, discovering Lady Anne.

Original Size

He won her by alleging his heart to be incessantly on the beat, and by promising her the advantages of a superior station. He lodged her in the then rural lane of St. Martin's, and the king ultimately arranged the difference between his brothers by assigning a handsome portion to Lady Anne, and leaving Clarence to take the rest; while the widowed Countess of Warwick, who had brought all the money into the family, was obliged to leave it there, without touching it, for she got nothing.

In 1475 Edward began to form ambitious projects with regard to France, and sent off to Louis the Eleventh one of those claims for the crown which some of the preceding kings of England had been in the habit of forwarding. The letter was written in terms of marvellous politeness, and Louis having read it, desired the herald who brought it to step into the next room, where he was treated with great affability. Louis complimented the letter-carrier in

the most fulsome manner, recommending him to advise his master to withdraw his claim as futile and ridiculous. "Bless you, he don't mind me," was the modest reply of the herald; but Louis remarked that the words of such a sensible fellow must have considerable weight, and slipped three hundred crowns into his pouch, with a wink of intense significance. The herald was regularly taken aback, and his bewilderment increased when his majesty, observing, "Dear me, what a shabby cloak you've got on," ordered three hundred yards of crimson velvet to be cut off from the best piece in the royal wardrobe. Garter—for such was the herald's rank—promised to do the very best he could; for the velvet had softened him down, or smoothed him over, to the side of Louis.

Edward nevertheless made extensive preparations to smash the French king, and strained every nerve to get the sinews of war, which he did by insinuating himself into the favour of his people. He emptied their pockets with considerable grace, and was the first to give the attractive name of Benevolences to those grants which were mercilessly extracted from the Parliament. Edward and Louis, though hating each other with the utmost cordiality, thought it prudent to negotiate—the former from mercenary motives, and the latter for the sake of peace and quiet. An interview was at last agreed upon, to take place at the bridge of Picquigny, near Amiens, across which a partition of railings had been thrown, to prevent treachery on either side. Louis came first, and looked through the bars, when Edward tripped gracefully up to the other side, bowing to within a foot of the ground, and paying a few commonplace compliments. Louis invited Edward to Paris, they shook hands through the bars, and the English king

received a sordid bribe through the grating, "which," says the incorrigible Comines, "was exceedingly grating to the feelings of some of his nobles."

Several cruelties disgraced the latter part of Edward's reign; and one of the worst of his enormities was his treatment of Stacey and Burdett, two officers of the household of the Duke of Clarence. Stacey was accused of having dealings with the devil; but if he had, it was only the printer's devil; for Stacey was a priest of the order of Whitefriars, and learned in the typographic art, which had recently been discovered. No proof unfavourable to Stacey could be produced, but he was put to the torture by being made to set up night and day, which made him curse the author of his misery. Thomas Burdett, another gentleman of Clarence's household, was tried as an accomplice to Stacey, and these unfortunate men, having had their heads cut off, "died," according to the Chroniclers, "protesting their innocence." Clarence himself was the next victim, and on the 16th of January, 1478, he was brought to the bar of the House of Lords on a charge of having dealings with conjurors. It seems hard, in these days, when tricks of magic are exceedingly popular, that a person suspected of conjuring should be pursued with the vengeance of the law; and the hardship of the affair is particularly great in the case of Clarence, who was never known to make a plum-pudding in his hat, or perform any other of the ingenious tricks which have gained money and fame for the wizards of the present era. The unfortunate duke met all the charges against him with a flat denial, but he was found guilty, and sentence of death was passed upon him, on the 7th of February, 1478. His execution was never publicly carried out, and rumour has accordingly been left to

run riot among the thousand ways in which Clarence might have undergone his capital punishment. The usual mode of accounting for his death is by the suggestion, that his brothers left the matter to his own choice, and that he preferred drowning in a butt of Malmsey wine to any other fatal penalty. The only objection to this arrangement appears to be that which occurred to an excellent English king of modern times, when he wondered how the apple got into the dumpling. However capacious the butt may have been in which Clarence desired to be drowned, it is obvious that he never could have entered the cask through its only aperture, the bunghole. When we witness the marvel of an individual getting into a quart-bottle, we shall begin to have faith in the story that Clarence met his death in the manner alluded to. If the wine was already in the cask before Clarence was immersed, there could have been no admission, even on business, except through the bunghole, and it is not likely that the vessel could have been empty before the duke took his place for the purpose of undergoing a vinous shower-bath.

Edward led for some time a life of luxury, which was now and then disturbed by wars with Scotland, though he never thought it worth his while to take the field in person, but always got his big brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, to fight for him. Matters nevertheless took a fresh turn when the Duke of Albany, brother of James the Third, came over and declared he was entitled to the Scotch throne in preference to his elder relative. "I mean to swear he is illegitimate," said Albany, and he offered to give up Berwick to Edward, on condition of an army being lent to depose the reigning sovereign. A marriage with one of the English king's daughters was also proposed by Albany, who "thought it right

to mention that he had two wives already;" but he did not seem to anticipate any objection on that account. Albany and Gloucester were successful in most of their joint undertakings, but they did not fight very frequently, for a treaty was soon concluded. Until this arrangement was carried out, Albany made every warlike demonstration, and produced a wholesome terror by the exhibition of a tremendous piece of artillery, familiarly known to us in these days as a cannon of the period. Its chief peculiarity was its aptitude—according to the engravings we have seen of it—for carrying cannon-balls considerably larger than the mouth of the piece itself, for we have often feasted our eyes upon very interesting pictures of a cannon-ball issuing from a cannon not half the circumference of the projected missile.



Cannon and Cannon-ball of the Period.

Original Size

Whether it is that in those days expanding ammunition was provided, which increased in bulk twofold after leaving the cannon's mouth, we are unable to say at this period; but the illuminations of the time undoubtedly present this striking

phenomenon. The dust of ages lies unfortunately on many of our facts, and though we might, it is true, take up a duster and wipe the dust of ages off, there is a pleasure in the imaginative which the actual could never realise.

Edward having been duped by his allies in France, on some matters almost of a private character, took the deception so much to heart, that he put himself into a violent passion, and died of it with wondrous rapidity. Instead of a raging fever, he caught the fever of rage, and died on the 6th of April, 1483, in the forty-first year of his age, and twenty-first of his reign. The assassination of sovereigns was then so common, that Edward the Fourth lay in state for some days, to show that he had not come to his death by any but fair means, for he was a king that merited severe treatment, at least as much as some of his predecessors; and it was, therefore, presumed that he might have come in for his share of that fatal violence which it was usual to bestow on kings in the early and middle periods of our history. In concluding our account of this reign, we may, perhaps, be expected to give a character of Edward the Fourth; but, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, and upon this principle we are unable to furnish a character for one who had lost in the lapse, or rather in the lap of time, whatever he may once have possessed of that important article.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. EDWARD THE FIFTH.



Original Size

AD the crown been always adapted to the head on which it devolves, the diadem would have been in very reduced circumstances when it descended on the baby brow of the fifth Edward. Almost bonneted by a bauble considerably too large for his head, and falling over his eyes, it was impossible that the boy-king could enjoy otherwise than a very poor look-out on his accession to the sovereignty. He had been on a visit to his maternal uncle, the Earl of Rivers, at Ludlow Castle, but he was now placed under the protection of his paternal uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as a sort of apprentice to learn the business of government. Richard, who was at the head of an army in Scotland at his brother's death, marched with six hundred men to a *maison de deuil*, where he insisted on having ready-made mourning for his followers. The astonished tradesman, exclaiming, in the language of one of our modern poets,

"Five minutes' time is all we ask
To execute the mournful task,"

prepared at once the melancholy outfit. Richard led his adherents to York, where a funeral service was performed, and the troops, looking like so many mutes, completely dumbfounded the populace. Their conduct and their clothes combined—for their designs seemed to be as dark and mysterious as their habits—obtained for these soldiers the unenviable name of the black-guards of the Duke of Gloucester.

Richard's next care was to swear loyalty and fealty to his young nephew—which went far towards proving the absence of both; for those who wish a little of anything to go a great way, generally make the utmost possible display of it. Notwithstanding the continued show of attachment evinced by the uncle for the nephew, it soon began to be noticed that Richard was a good deal like a snowball, for he picked up adherents wherever he moved; and as he went rolling about the country, he soon swelled into a formidable size with the band that encircled him. He, however, calmed suspicion by declaring that he was only collecting supernumeraries for his nephew's coronation. The fact is, that Richard was all the time plotting with that discontented fellow Buckingham, the well-known malcontent, of whom it has been justly said that he liked nothing nor nobody.

Gloucester arrived at Northampton on the 22nd of April, 1483, about the same time that Rivers and Gray had "tooled" the baby-king by easy stages as far as Stony Stratford. The two lords came to Northampton to salute Richard, who asked them to supper at his hotel, when Buckingham dropped in and joined the party. The four noblemen passed the evening together very pleasantly, for the song, the

sentiment, the joke and the jug, the pitcher and the pun, were passed about until long after midnight. Stretchers for two were in readiness, to take home Gray, who looked dreadfully blue, and Rivers, who was half-seas over, while the two dukes, who had kept tolerably sober, remained in secret debate, for they did

"Not go home till morning,
Till daylight did appear."

On the morrow, the whole party started off, apparently very good friends, towards Stony Stratford, to meet the young king, who was immediately grasped by his uncle Gloucester.

The royal infant naturally gave a sort of squeak at the too affectionate clutch of his uncle, who, pretending to think that Gray and Rivers had alienated the boy's affection from himself, ordered them both into arrest, when Gloucester and Buckingham fell obsequiously on their knees before the child, whom they saluted as their sovereign. Their first care was to ascertain who were his favourites, for the purpose of getting rid of them. Two of the royal servants, Sir Thomas Vaughan and Sir Richard Hawse, were dismissed not only without a month's warning, but, as they were sent off to prison at once, "suiting themselves with other situations" was utterly impossible. Young Edward was kept as a kind of prisoner, and Elizabeth, his mother, when she heard the news, set off to Westminster, with her second son and the five young ladies—her daughters—after her. The queen-mother had no party in London, and her arrival with her quintette of girls created no sensation.

In a few days young Edward entered the city, but

more as a captive than as a king, and lodgings were immediately taken for him in the Tower, where he was to be boarded, and, alas! done for by his loving uncle. Gloucester was named protector to the youthful sovereign, and moved to No. 1, Crosby Place, Bishopsgate (the number on the door), where, instead of behaving himself like a gentleman "living private," he held councils, while Hastings, who began to doubt the duke's loyalty, gave a series of opposition parties in the Tower. At one of these, Richard, who had never received a card of invitation, walked in, and voted himself into the chair with the most consummate impudence. In vain did Hastings intimate that it was a private room, or that Gloucester must have mistaken the house for there he sat, exclaiming, "Oh no, not at all," begging the company to make themselves at home, as he fully meant to do. He was particularly facetious to the Bishop of Ely, asking after his garden in Holborn, and proposing to the prelate to send for a plate of strawberries.



The Bishop of Ely presenting a Pottle of Strawberries to the Duke of Glo'ster.

[*Original Size*]

These were soon brought, and Richard indulged in "potations pottle deep" of strawberries and cream, declaring all the while that the fruit was capital, and that of all wind instruments there was none he liked to have a blow out upon so much as the hautboy. The Protector having gone away for a short time, returned in a very ill humour, with his countenance looking exceedingly sour, as if the strawberries he had eaten had disagreed with him and the cream had curdled. He gave his lips several severe bites, and altogether appeared exceedingly snappish. Presently he asked what those persons deserved who had compassed or imagined his destruction. Hastings observed, "Why, that is so completely out of my compass that I can scarcely guess, but I don't mind saying off-hand that death is the least punishment they merit." The Protector declared his brother's wife —meaning the queen—and Mrs. Shore had between them twisted his body, which would, indeed, have been doing him a very bad turn; and, pulling up his sleeve, he exhibited his left arm, declaring there was something not at all right about it. The council agreed that the limb was a good deal damaged, and Hastings added that "*if* Mrs. Shore and the queen had really had a hand in Richard's arm, they certainly deserved grievous punishment."

"What!" roared the Protector, "do you answer me with 'ifs'? I tell you they have, and no mistake." Whereupon he banged his fist down upon the table with tremendous violence, giving himself as well as Hastings a frightful rap on the knuckles. Thereupon a door opened, and "men in harness came rushing in," according to More, and, being in harness, they proceeded to fix the saddle on the right horse immediately. The Protector exclaimed "I arrest thee, traitor," and pointed to Hastings, who cried out "Eh!

What! Oh! Pooh! Stuff! You're joking! Arrest me? What have I done? Fiddlestick!" To pursue the elegant description given by More, we must add that "another let fly at Stanley," who bobbed down his head and crawled under the table.



Arrest of Lord Hastings and Lord Stanley.

Original Size

The officers, after some trouble, pulled him out by the leg—having first drawn off his boot in a futile attempt to secure him—and carried him away in custody. Richard then had another turn at Hastings, who was in a sort of hysterical humour, at one moment treating the matter as a joke, and at another not knowing exactly what to make of it. "You may laugh," at length roared Richard, "but I'll tell you what it is, my Lord Hastings, I've ordered my dinner to be ready by the time I get home, but by St. Paul I'll not touch a mouthful—and I own I'm deuced hungry—until I've seen your head."

Hastings replied that such a condition was easily fulfilled, and thrusting his head into Richard's face exclaimed "There, my lord, you've seen my head, so now go home as soon as you like, and get your

dinner." The Protector pushing him aside, expressed contempt for the paltry quibble, and amended the affidavit by inserting the word "off" after the word "head," and exclaiming "I'll see Hastings' head off before I touch a bit of dinner." Hastings was seized, and the purveyors for the Protector soon brought him the *avant goût* which he had required as a provocative to his appetite. Richard's violence had thus come suddenly to a head, and Earl Rivers, with Sir Thomas Vaughan and Sir Richard Hawse, were executed on the same day at Pontefract.

A few days after these executions, Richard went to the sanctuary at Westminster, arm-in-arm with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and called for the little Duke of York, who, they said, would be wanted for the coronation. Consent was somewhat unwillingly given, and Richard having got the child away, made him a prisoner in the Tower. An affecting anecdote is told of the ruse that was resorted to by Gloucester and his friend, the archbishop, to entrap their juvenile victim into going quietly with them towards the gloomy scene of his destined captivity. They lured him on from place to place by pretending that they were going to treat him to some wonderful show, and they took all sorts of roundabout ways to prevent him from suspecting the point they were really driving at. When the poor child was becoming tired of his walk, and surrounding objects had lost the attraction of novelty, he began crying after his mamma, with that filial force which is peculiar to the earliest period of infancy. Gloucester began to fear they should get a mob after them, if, as he savagely expressed himself, "the brat continued to howl," and the little fellow was promised, for the purpose of "stopping his mouth," that he should see his mother immediately. After walking him nearly off his little

legs through back streets and alleys, they brought him out upon Tower Hill, and Richard, no longer disguising the fact that he was acting the part of the cruel uncle, snatched up in his arms the trembling child, who presently found himself in one of the gloomy apartments of the Tower.

Richard's next artifice was to practise the "moral dodge," which seldom fails to tell upon an indiscriminating multitude. Jane Shore, who had been seduced by the late king, was fixed upon as a mark for plunder and persecution by Richard, who first robbed the poor woman of all she had and then sent her to prison. He professed to be so shocked at some of the incidents of her past life, that, as a moral agent or acting member of society for the suppression of vice, he could not allow her to escape without some heavy punishment. She was proceeded against in the Ecclesiastical Courts, and ordered to walk about London with a lighted rushlight in her hand and wearing nothing but a pair of sheets or a counterpane. The Hammersmith Ghost and Spring-heeled Jack are the only legitimate successors of Jane Shore in this remarkable proceeding, and might have cited her case as a precedent for their own unlawful practices.

Richard also entered into an arrangement with Doctor Shaw, a popular preacher, who was to preach down, or, as it was then called, depreachiate the two young princes. The Reverend Doctor then threw a doubt on their legitimacy, and declared their late father Edward was not a bit like his reputed father, the Duke of York, and pulling out two enormous caricatures from under his gown he asked the crowd whether any likeness could be traced between them. "Instead of the eyes," he exclaimed, "being as like as two peas, these eyes are not even as like as two

gooseberries!" He then asked his hearers to compare notes by comparing the noses of the two portraits he held in his hand; ana, pointing to the picture of Richard, Duke of York, he reminded them that the bridge of the nose was exactly like that of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. "There, my friends," he roared, "there is a bridge that I think there is no possibility of getting over!" The allusion created a laugh, but no conviction; and the failure was rendered more annoying by the Protector not arriving in time, as had been previously arranged, to enable Dr. Shaw to point out the striking likeness. By some mistake Richard missed the cue for his entrance, and did not come in until the comparison had passed, when upon Shaw endeavouring to recur to it, the trick was so obvious that the people only stared at each other, or passed their right thumbs significantly over their left shoulders. The Protector vented his disappointment and anger on the preacher, whom he denounced as an old meddler who did not know what he was talking about, and Doctor Shaw sneaked off, amid derision, shouts of "Pshaw! Pshaw!" and the jeers of the populace.

On the following Tuesday Richard got his friend Buckingham to go down to Guildhall to give him a regular good puff, at a meeting of the citizens. Buckingham's speech was listened to with a deal of apathy, and there were numerous cries of "Cut it short," responded to with a faint shout of "Hear him out," and an occasional ejaculation of "Now then, stupid!" Buckingham persevered, and at the close of his address somebody threw up a bonnet, exclaiming "Long live King Richard!" The bonnet belonged evidently to a person of straw, and excited little more than ridicule.

The speech of Buckingham to the citizens

assembled in Guildhall, was a rare specimen of the eloquence of humbug; and it evidently formed a model for the discourses sent forth by auctioneers from the rostrum at a later period, The whole system, indeed, pursued by the Duke of Buckingham on the memorable occasion of his putting up the claim of Richard to the suffrages of the bystanders, was evidently in accordance with that by which bad lots are frequently got off at the highest prices.

When there was a faint snout of "Long live King Richard," from a solitary individual, Buckingham adroitly multiplied the exclamation by declaring that he heard it "in two places," though he knew perfectly well that a solitary puffer, in his own employ, had been the only one who raised a shout for Gloucester. "What shall I say for Richard?" he lustily vociferated. "Look at him, gentlemen, before you bid. There's nothing spurious about *him*. Come, gentlemen, give me a bidding." At this juncture, one of the duke's touters cried out, from the bottom of the hall, "I'll bid a crown," and a slight titter arising, Buckingham took advantage of the circumstance to assert, that "a crown was bid for Richard in several places at once;" whereupon the tyrant was said to have been accepted at that price, and the business of the day concluded.



The Citizens offering the Crown to Richard.

Original Size

On the next day a deputation was got up to wait on Richard at his lodgings, when he at first declined seeing them. His servant returned to say the gentleman particularly wished an interview, and Gloucester desired they might be shown up, when Buckingham and a few of the deputation were admitted to his presence. They handed him a paper, inviting and pressing him to accept the crown; but he observed, with assumed modesty, "that if he had it, he really should not know what to do with it."

"Clap it on your head, of course," said Buckingham; and, suiting the action to the word, he thrust the bauble on the brow of his friend, observing, "Upon my honour, he looks well in it, don't he, Shaw?" and he turned to the Lord Mayor for approval. Richard, however, shook his head, and remarked that "he could not think of it;" when Buckingham, by a happy turn, suggested that "they had thought of it for him, and therefore, he might as well do it first and think of it afterwards."

"But the little princes," remarked Richard, "whom I love bo much." This caused Buckingham to say, in the name of all present, that "they had determined not to have the little princes at any price." Upon this, Gloucester replied, "that he must meet the wishes of the people, and if they must have him, they must, but he, really, had a good deal rather not;" when, amid a quantity of significant winking on all sides, an end was put to the conference.

This scene was enacted on the 24th of June, 1483, which was the last day of the nominal reign of the fifth Edward. It is impossible to give any character of this unfortunate king, whose sovereignty was almost limited to the walls of his own nursery. He might sometimes have played at sitting on a throne and holding a sceptre in his hand, but he never exercised the smallest power. He may, upon one or two occasions, have been allowed to dissolve Parliament; but it was only in the form of the cake so called, which he might, perhaps, be permitted to dissolve by the force of suction.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.
RICHARD THE THIRD.



Original Size

ICHARD, on coming to the throne, rushed into Westminster Hall, and took his seat on a sort of marble slab or mantel-piece, between the great Lord Howard and the Duke of Suffolk. The precious trio looked like a set of chimney ornaments, of which Richard formed the centre. He declared that he commenced his reign in that place, because it had been once a judgment-seat, and he was anxious to administer justice to his people. Ten days after, on the 6th of July, he was crowned in Westminster Abbey, and to prevent any murmurs at his usurpation, he was lavish of gifts, promotion and bribery. The Duke of Norfolk, the celebrated jockey mentioned by Shakspeare, who had put Richard in training for the throne, became Earl Marshal, and his son was created Earl of Surrey, in honour, perhaps, of the surreptitious manner in which the crown had been obtained for his master Richard. The Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely were set at liberty, "which caused them to dance with joy," according to one of the chroniclers, though we cannot imagine a pair of prelates indulging in Terpsichorean diversions on their release from prison.

In the course of the summer, Richard made a royal progress, and was enthusiastically received, though it

is believed that much of the enthusiasm was got up by frequent rehearsals with a set of supernumeraries, who were sent on before from town to town, to give a reception to the new sovereign. If Richard was expected to arrive anywhere at two, the populace would be called at one, to run through—in rehearsal—the cheers and gestures of satisfaction that were required to give brilliance to the usurper's entry. When he arrived at York, a wish was expressed by the inhabitants to see a coronation; and though the ceremony had already been performed in London, it was announced that the spectacle would be repeated, "by particular desire of several families of distinction."

While Richard's starring expedition was most successful in the provinces, things in London were by no means looking up, for conspiracies were being formed to release the two young princes from the Tower. The usurper, not relishing these proceedings, sent a certain John Green—whose unsuspecting innocence has made viridity synonymous with stupidity ever since—as the bearer of a message, the purport of which he was wholly unconscious of. It was addressed to Sir Thomas Brackenbury, the governor of the Tower, requesting him to put to death the two royal children, by smothering them—in onions, or anything else that might be found convenient. Brackenbury refused the commission, not so much out of regard to the little princes as from fear on his own account, and he sent back the monosyllable "No" as an answer to the sovereign. Green, who knew not the purport of the message, returned with the curt reply, and upon his reiterating "No" as all he was desired to say, Richard angrily desired him "not to show his nose again at court for a considerable period." The tyrant was not, however,

to be daunted, and he called his Master of the Horse, Sir James Tyrrel, whom he desired to go and lock every door in the Tower, and put the keys in his pocket. One night in August, Tyrrel took with him a fellow named Miles Forrest, a professional assassin, and John Dighton, an amateur, a big, broad, square, and strong knave, who, notwithstanding his squareness, was living on the cross for a long period. The precious trio went together to the Tower, and Tyrrel waiting at the door, Miles Forrest entered with John Dighton, who jointly smothered the children in the bedclothes.

Dighton and Forrest entered with savage earnestness into this horrible transaction, and conducted themselves after the cruel fashion of a clown and pantaloon in a pantomime when an infant falls into their formidable clutches. Dighton danced on the bed, while Forrest flung himself across it with fearful vehemence. Tyrrel, who was standing outside, acted the part of an undertaker in this truly black job, and buried the princes at the foot of the staircase.

Various accounts have been given of this atrocious deed, and antiquarians have quarrelled about the form of the bed the princes used to sleep upon. Some declare it was a turn-up, in which the children were suddenly inclosed; whilst others affirm that the princes had the thread of their existence cut on that useful form of bedstead familiarly known as the scissors. Thus, to use the language of the philosopher, a feather-bed and pillows were made to bolster up the title of Richard, who from his artifice was exceedingly likely to have recourse to such a downy expedient. We may be excused for adding from the same high authority we have taken the liberty to quote, that this assassination on a palliasse

was an act that nothing could palliate.



The Duke of Gloucester goes into mourning for his little Nephews.

Original Size

Richard, by whom the outward decencies of life were very scrupulously observed, in order to make up for the inward deficiencies of his mind, determined to go into mourning for the young princes and repaired to the same *maison de deuil* which he had honoured with his patronage on a former occasion, when requiring the "trapping of woe" for himself and his retainers on the death of his dear brother.

Another competitor now appeared for the crown, in the person of Henry Tudor, Esquire, commonly called the Earl of Richmond, who came with a drawn sword in his hand and a pedigree already drawn up in his pocket. He was considered to represent the line of Lancaster by right of his mother, who was a great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt, whose extreme

tallness proved him to be a worthy scion of the house to which the title of Lanky-shire—as it then might have been spelled—was obviously appropriate. In order to strengthen Richmond's party and give him a spice of Yorkism, a marriage was proposed with Elizabeth, of York, on the same principle that beef is sometimes cut with a hammy knife to give it a flavour. Richmond was joined by several nobles hitherto favourable to Richard, and even Buckingham, who had been indebted to him for wealth and office, suddenly turned against him. When Richard heard the news he put a price on the heads of all the leaders of the insurrection; and Buckingham's head, though a very empty one, was ticketed at a considerable figure.

Henry, Earl of Richmond, appeared with a fleet off Devonshire, but finding no one on the coast to meet him, he sailed back to St. Malo. Buckingham, who ought to have been on the look-out, was blundering about the right bank of the Severn, which he was unable to cross in consequence of the rains, when his army, finding themselves short of rations, declined continuing such a very irrational enterprise. Buckingham was left without a man, except his own servant—a fellow of the name of Banister—upon whose fidelity he threw himself. He soon found that he had been leaning upon a fragile prop, for this Banister broke down and betrayed his miserable master. Buckingham was accordingly captured, and sneakingly solicited an interview with Richard the Third, who, on hearing of his being taken, coolly drew on his glove and roared with a stentorian voice, "Off with his head!—so much for Buckingham!"

Richard now came to town, and summoned a Parliament, which was exceedingly complaisant; declaring him the lawful sovereign, by birth, by

election, by coronation, by consecration, and by inheritance. Thus the usual attempt was made to make up by quantity for the deficiency as to quality in the title of the usurper, and the Princedom of Wales was settled on his boy Edward. Attainders were dealt out pretty freely among Richard's opponents, who were pronounced traitors in the usual form, which was kept to be filled up with the name of the unsuccessful party; while oaths of loyalty were always to be had—in blank—for the use of that numerous class which followed the crown with the fidelity of the needle to the pole,—the pole being the head that happened to be wearing—*pro tem*.—the precious bauble.

Richard, being afraid that Richmond would gain strength by the project of marriage with Elizabeth of York, determined on marrying the young lady himself; an idea which both herself and her intriguing old mother most indelicately jumped at. The king being already married, difficulties arose, but it was proposed to poison Lady Anne, which, as quack medicines had not been yet invented, was a somewhat difficult process. There was no specific then in existence for curing every disease, or the matter might have been arranged at once; nor had the fatal art of punning become known, or Richard might have placed the author of the triple *jeu de mot* in attendance upon the Lady Anne, to be, in time, the death of her. The quarrelsome and cat-like disposition of this unhappy female may account for the tenacity of life which she exhibited; and the young Elizabeth kept continually writing up to inquire why the queen took so much time in dying. It was now the middle of February, 1484, and Lady Anne was still alive; but her obstinacy was soon cured by her husband, and in the course of March

she was got rid of. Richard immediately opened to his friends and admirers his scheme for marrying Elizabeth; but they strongly opposed it, and he then pretended that he had never meant anything of the sort, but that the minx—for as such he stigmatised the young lady—had for some time persisted in setting her cap at him.



Henry Tudor, Esq.

Original Size

Henry was now preparing to make a descent upon England, when Richard did all he could to damage him by proclamations, in which Richmond was alluded to as "one Tudor," and his adherents were stigmatised as cut-throats and extortioners. Had this been the fact, it was certainly a case of pot pitching into kettle; and the usurping saucepan poured out its sauce with wondrous prodigality. Numerous were the expedients resorted to for the purpose of damaging the cause of Henry Tudor. Descriptions of his person were issued, and the people were warned against admitting to their confidence the individual of whom a caricature representation, or rather mis-representation, was sent abroad, to give an unfavourable idea of Richmond's exterior. Among other schemes to obtain popularity, Richard affected

the character of a practical man, and personally attended to the administration of justice in a few cases, where, having no interest of his own to serve, he gave somewhat fair decisions.

His efforts were now directed to putting the country in a state of defence, and he sent his friends to the coast to bear the brunt of the first attack, while he smuggled himself up pretty comfortably in the middle of a large army in the centre of the kingdom. Several of his friends betrayed him, while others sent excuses on the score of ill health, and Stanley apologised in a coarse note, declaring he was confined to his bed by "a sweating sickness." Richard merely muttered, "Oh! indeed, and I suppose he sends me a wet blanket to prove the fact;" but he, nevertheless, ordered Stanley to be closely looked after. Henry landed at Milford Haven on the 7th of August, 1484, with about five thousand men, and on the 21st of the month the two armies met in a field near Bosworth. There a battle was fought, of which Shakespeare has furnished a series of pictures, which, on the stage, attempts are frequently made to realise. The contest, according to this authority, appears to have been carried on amid a mysterious flourish of drums and trumpets, to which soldiers, on both sides, kept running to and fro, without doing any serious mischief. Richmond's people, to the extent of about ten, then encountered about an equal number of Richard's adherents, and striking together, harmlessly, the tips of some long pikes, the two parties became huddled together, and retired in the same direction, apparently to talk the matter over and effect a compromise.

The field then seems to have become perfectly clear, when Richard ran across it, fearfully out of breath, fencing with a foil at nothing, and calling

loudly for a horse in exchange for his kingdom, though there was not such a thing as a quadruped to be had for love or money. He then seems to have shouted lustily for Richmond, and to have asserted that he had already killed him five different times, from which it is to be inferred that the crafty Henry had no less than half a dozen suits of armour all made alike to mislead his antagonist. Richard then rushed away, with a hop, skip and jump, after some imaginary foe; and Richmond occupied the field; when Richard, happening to come back, they stood looking at each other for several seconds. We may account for Gloucester's temporary absence by referring to the historical authorities, for he had probably chosen the interval in question to make Sir John Cheney bite the dust, a most unpleasant process for Sir John, who must have ground his teeth horribly with a mouthful of gravel.

The two competitors for the throne then stood upon their guard, and a beautiful fencing-match ensued, to which there were no witnesses. A few complimentary speeches were exchanged between some of the home thrusts, and the combatants occasionally paused to take an artistical view of each other's gallant bearing. Business is, however, business in the long run, which, in this instance, ended in Richard being run through by the victorious Richmond. The soldiers of the latter, who appear to have been waiting behind a hedge to watch in whose favour fortune might turn, ran forward at the triumph of their master being complete, and formed a picture round him, while Stanley, taking the battered crown which Richard had worn in battle, placed it—in its smashed state looking like a gilt-edged opera hat—on the head of Richmond. The manner in which Stanley became possessed of the ill-

used bauble is quite in accordance with the dramatic colouring that tinges and tinfoils this beautiful period of our history. It is said that an old soldier kicked against something in an adjacent field, and began actually playing at football with the regal diadem. Placing his foot inside the rim, he sent it flying into the air, when a ray of sunshine, lighting on one of the jewels, revealed to him that it was no ordinary plaything he had got hold of. Running with it as fast as he could to Stanley, the honest fellow placed it in his lordship's hands, with a cry of "See what I have found!" after the manner of the pantaloon under similar circumstances in a pantomime. Stanley was about to put it in his pocket, when another noble roared out, "Oh, I'll tell!" and a cry of "Somebody coming!" being raised, the diadem was ingeniously dropped on to the head of Richmond. The crown was fearfully scrunched by the numerous heavy blows its wearer had received, and Henry the Seventh, taking it off for a moment to push it a little into shape, exclaimed—half mournfully, half jocularly—"Well, well, to the punishment of the usurper this indenture witnesseth." The Duke of Norfolk—our old friend the jockey—shared his master's fate, or rather had a similar fate all to himself, though as he received the fatal crack, he expressed a wish that he might be allowed to split the difference.

The fierce and interesting battle we are now speaking of was one of those short but sharp transactions, which leave their marks no less upon posterity than upon the heads and helmets of the warriors engaged in the fearful contest. The great importance of the event deserves something more than the prosaic narrative in which we have recorded it; and having sent our boy to the Pierian

spring with a pitcher, for the purpose of getting it filled with the source of inspiration, we proceed to attempt a poetical account of the Battle of Bos-worth. The celebrated Mr. Thomas Babington Macaulay has, we acknowledge, kindled our poetic fire, by his "Lays of Ancient Rome;" and our imagination having been once set in a blaze it must needs continue to burn, unless, by blowing out our brains, we put a suicidal extinguisher on the flame. Philosophy, however, teaches us that "*L'ame est un feu qu'il faut nourrir*" (Voltaire) and *alere flammam* is a suggestion so familiar to our youth, that we do not scruple to throw an entire scuttle of the coals of encouragement upon the incipient flame of our poetic genius. We know that poetry is often an idle pursuit, and that he is generally lazy who addicts himself to the composition of lays, but the Battle of Bosworth Field is an event which fully deserves to have poetical justice done to it. Following the example of the illustrious model, whose style we consider it no humility, but rather an audacity, to imitate, we will suppose the recital to be made some time after the event has occurred, and we will imagine some veteran stage manager giving directions for, or superintending the rehearsal of, a grand dramatic representation of one of the grandest and—if we may be allowed the privilege of a literary smasher in coming a word—the dramaticest battles in English history.

"Ho! trumpets, sound a note or two!
Ho! prompter, clear the stage!
A chord, there, in the orchestra:
The battle we must wage.

Your gallant supers marshal out—

Yes, I must see them all;
The rather lean, the very stout,
The under-sized, the tall:
The Yorkites in the centre,
Lancastrians in the rear,
Not yet the staff must enter—
The stage, I charge ye, clear
Those warriors in the green-room
Must have an extra drill;
Where's Richard's gilt-tipp'd baton?
They charged it in the bill.

Those ensigns with the banners
Must stand the other way,
Or else how is it possible
The white rose to display?"

Thus spoke the old stage manager,
The day before the night Richard and
Richmond on the field Of Bosworth had to fight.
And thus the light-heel'd call-boy
Upon that day began
To read of properties a list—
'Twas thus the items ran

"Four dozen shields of cardboard,
With paper newly gilt,
Six dozen goodly swords, and one
With practicable hilt;
The practicable hilt, of course,
Must be adroitly plann'd,
That when 'tis struck with mod'rate force,
'Twill break in Richard's hand.
Eight banners—four with roses white,
And four with roses red—
Six halberds, and a canopy
To hang o'er Richard's head;
A sofa for the tyrant's tent,
An ironing-board at back,
Whereon the ghosts may safely stand,

Who come his dreams to rack;
A lamp suspended in the air
By an invis'ble wire,
And—for the ghosts to vanish in—
Two ounces of blue fire."

Thus spoke the gallant call-boy,
The boy of many fights;
Who'd seen a battle often fought
Fifty successive nights.

The moment now approaches,
The interval is short,
Before the fearful battle
Of Bosworth must be fought;
Now Richmond's gallant soldiers
Are waiting at the wing,
Expecting soon that destiny
Its prompter's bell will ring;
Now at the entrance opposite
The troops of Richard stand,
Two dozen stalwart veterans—
A small but gallant band.

Hark I at the sound of trumpets,
They raise a hearty cheer,
Their voices have obtained their force
From recent draughts of beer.
Their leader, the false Richard,
Is lying in his tent,
But ghosts to fret and worry him
Are to his bedside sent.

Convulsively he kicks and starts,
He cannot have repose,
A guilty conscience breaks his rest,
By tugging at his toes.

A gentleman in mourning,

With visage very black,
When the tent curtain draws aside,
Is standing at the back;
And then a woman—stately,
But pale as are the dead—
Stood, in the darkness of the night,
To scold him in his bed.

There came they, and there preached they,
In most lugubrious way
Delivering curtain lectures
Until the east was grey;
Or rather, till the prompter,
Who has the proper cue,
Had quite consumed his quantity
Of fire, so bright and blue.

The conscience-stricken Richard
Now kicks with greater force,
Bears up, and plunges from his couch,
Insisting on a horse;
When, hearing from the village cock
A blithe and early scream,
He straightway recollects himself,
And finds it all a dream.

Now, on each side, the leaders
Long for the battle's heat,
But, by some luckless accident,
The armies never meet;
We hear them both alternately
Talking extremely large,
But never find them, hand to hand,
Mixed in the deadly charge.

"March on, my friends!" cries Richmond,
"True tigers let us be;
Advance your standards, draw your swords—
On, friends, and follow me!"

'Tis true, they follow him indeed,
But then, the way they go
Is just the way they're not at all
Likely to meet the foe.
So Richard, with his "soul in arms,"
Is "eager for the fray,"
But, with a hop, a skip, and jump,
Runs off—the other way.

He's to the stable gone, perchance,
Forgetting, in his flurry,

He has kept waiting all this time
His clever cob, White Surrey.
The brute is "saddled for the field,"
But never gains the spot,
For on his way Death knocks him down
In one—the common—lot.

[Illustration: 342]

Richard, a momentary pang
At the bereavement feels;
But, being thrown upon his hands,
Starts briskly to his heels.

And now the angry tyrant
Perambulates the field,
Calling on each ideal foe
To fight him or to yield.

"What, ho!" he cries, "Young Richmond!
But, 'mid the noise of drums,
Young Richmond doesn't hear him—
At least he never comes.

Now louder, and still louder,
Rise from the darken'd field
The braying of the trumpets.

The clang of sword and shields
But shame upon both armies!

For, if the truth be known,
'Tis not each other's shields they smite—
The clang is all their own;
For six of Richmond's people
Are standing in a row
(Behind the scenes), and with their swords
They give their shields a blow.

Wild shouts of "Follow, follow!"
Are raised in murmuring strain,
To represent the slayer's rage,
The anguish of the slain.

But now, in stem reality,
The battle seems to rage;
For Catesby comes to tell the world
How fiercely they engage.

He gives a grand description,
And says the feud runs high:
We won't suppose that such a man
Would stoop to tell a lie.

He says the valiant king "enacts
More wonders than a man; "
In fact, is doing what he can't,
Instead of what he can.

That all on foot the tyrant fights,
Seeks Bichmond, and will follow him
Into the very "throat of Death"—
No wonder Death should swallow him!

Now meeting on a sudden,
Each going the opposite way,
Richard and Richmond both advance,
Their valour to display.

Says Richard, "Now for one of us,
Or both, the time is come."
Says Bichmond, "Till I've settled this,
By Jove, I won't go home."

One, two, strikes Richard with his foil,
When Richmond, getting fierce,
Repeats three, four, and on they go,
With parry, quatre, and tierce.

Till suddenly the tyrant
Is brought unto a stand;
His weapon snaps itself in twain,
The hilt is in his hand.

The gen'rous Richmond turns aside,
Till someone at the wing
Another weapon to the foe
Good-naturedly doth fling.

Richard advances with a rush;
Richmond in turn retires;
Their weapons, every time they meet,
Flash with electric fires.

Posterity, that occupies
Box, gallery, and pit,
Applauds the pair alternately,
As each one makes a hit.

Now "Bravo, Richmond!" is the cry,
Till Richard plants a blow
With good effect, when to his side
Round the spectators go.

As fickle still as when at first,
The nation, undecided,
Was 'twixt the Roses White and Red
Alternately divided,

So does the modern audience
Incline, with favour strongest,
To him who in the contest seems
Likely to last the longest.

Then harsher sounds the trumpet,
And deeper rolls the drum,
Till both have had enough of it,
When Richard must succumb.

Flatly he falls upon the ground,
Declaring, when he's down,
He envies Bichmond nothing else,
Except the vast renown
Which he has certainly acquired
By being made to yield
Himself, that had been hitherto
The master of the field.

And then the soldiers, who have stood
Some distance from the fray,
Bush in to take their portion of
The glory of the day.

And men with banners in their hands,
At eighteen-pence a night,
Some with red roses on the flags,
And some with roses white,
By shaking them together,
The colours gently blend,
And the Battle of the Roses
Is for ever at an end.



Coronation of Henry the Seventh on the Field of Battle.

Original Size

The Battle of Bosworth Field terminated the War of the Roses, or rather brought the roses into full blow, and cut off some of the flower of the English nobility. Richmond was proclaimed king on the field, as Henry the Seventh; and as the soldiers formed themselves into a *tableau* the curtain descended on the tragedy of the War between the Houses of York and Lancaster.

Richard had reigned a couple of years and a couple of months when he received his *quietus* on the field of Bosworth. If ever there was a king of England whose name was bad enough to hang him, this unfortunate dog has a reputation which would suspend him on every lamp-post in Christendom. The odium attaching to his policy has been visited on his person, and it has been asserted that the latter was not straight because the former was crooked. His right shoulder is said by Rouse, who hated him, to have been higher than his left; but this apparent deformity may have arisen from the party having

taken a one-sided view of him. His stature was small; but in the case of one who never stood very high in the opinion of the public, it was physically impossible for the fact to be otherwise. Walpole, in his very ingenious "Historic Doubts," has tried to get rid of Richard's high hump, but the operation has not been successful, in the opinion of any impartial umpire. Imagination, that tyrant which has such a strange method of treating its subjects, has had perhaps more to do than Nature in placing an enormous burden on Richard's shoulders. His features were decidedly good-looking; but on the converse of the principle that "handsome is as handsome does," the tyrant Gloucester has been regarded as one of those who "ugly was that handsome didn't."

It is a remarkable fact that Richard the Third during his short reign received no subsidy from Parliament, though we must not suppose that he ruled the kingdom gratuitously; for, on the contrary, his income was ample and munificent. He got it in the shape of tonnage and poundage upon all sorts of goods, and when money was not to be had he took property to the full value of the claim he had upon it. The result was that his treasury became a good deal like an old curiosity shop, a coal shed, or a dealer's in marine stores, for anything that came in Richard's way was perfectly acceptable. The principle of poundage was applied to everything, even in quantities less than a pound, and he would, even on a few ounces of sugar, sack his share of the saccharine. If he required it for his own use he never scrupled to intercept the housewife on her way from the butcher's and cut off the chump from the end of the chop; nor did he hesitate, when he felt disposed, to lop the very lollipop in the hands of the

schoolboy. This principle of allowing poundage to the king was in the highest degree inconvenient. It rendered the meat-safe a misnomer, inasmuch as it was never safe from royal rapacity.

It has been said of Richard, that he would have been well qualified to reign, had he been legally entitled to the throne; or, in other words, that he would have been a good ruler if he had not been a bad sovereign. To us this seems to savour of the old anomaly—a distinction without a difference. He certainly carried humbug to the highest possible point, for he exhibited it upon the throne, which serves as a platform to make either vice or virtue—as the case may be—conspicuous.

The trick by which he obtained possession of his nephew, the young King Edward, whose liberty was likely to prove a stumbling-block in Richard's own path to the throne, is remarkable for its cunning, and for the intimate knowledge it displayed of the juvenile character. Proceeding to the residence of the baby monarch's mamma, he began asking after "little Ned" with apparently the most affectionate interest. He had previously provided himself with a lot of sweetstuff as he came along, for it was his deep design to intoxicate with brandy-balls the head of the infant sovereign. "Where is the little fellow?" inquired Richard, who would take no excuse for his nephew not being produced, but declared that being in no hurry, he could wait the convenience of the nursery authorities. Finding further opposition useless, Elizabeth reluctantly ordered the boy to be brought down, when Richard asked him "Whether he would like to go with Uncle Dick?" and got favourable answers by surreptitiously cramming the child's mouth with lollipops.



"Would York like to go with his Uncle Dick?"

Original Size

Whenever the little fellow was about to say "He would rather stay with his mamma," the Protector called his attention (aside) to a squib or brandy-ball, and York consented at last to go with his uncle. "Oh! I thought you would," cried the wily duke, as he clutched his little nephew up and jogged with him to the Tower. Such was the artful scheme by which the tyrant originally got possession of the subsequent victim of avuncular cruelty. It has been urged in extenuation of his cruel murder of the little princes, that their deaths were a necessary sequel to those of Hastings and others; but it would have been a poor consolation to the victims had they known that they were only killed by way of supplement. We cannot think that any portion of the catalogue of Richard's crimes should be printed in colours less black because it formed a continuation or an appendix to his atrocities; nor can we excuse Part II. of a horribly bad work because Part I. has rendered it unavoidable.

It is urged by those writers who have defended

him, that the crimes he committed were only those necessary to secure the crown; but this is no better plea than that of the highwayman who knocks a traveller on the head because the blow is necessary to the convenient picking of the victim's pockets. Richard's crimes might have been palliated in some trifling degree, had they been essential to the recovery of his own rights, but the case is different when his sanguinary career was only pursued that he might get hold of that which did not belong to him. It is true he was ambitious; but if a thief is ambitious of possessing our set of six silver tea-spoons, we are not to excuse him because he knocks us down and stuns us, as a necessary preliminary to the transfer of the property from our own to our assailant's possession. The palliators of Richard's atrocities declare that he could do justice in matters where his own interest was not concerned; but this fact, by proving that he knew better, is in fact an aggravation of the faults he was habitually guilty of. It has been insinuated that when he had got all he wanted, he might have improved, but that by killing him after he had come to the throne, his contemporaries gave him no chance of becoming respectable. It must be clear to every reasonable mind that the result, even had it been satisfactory, would never have been worth the cost of obtaining it, and that in tolerating Richard's pranks, on the chance of his becoming eventually a good king, his subjects might well have exclaimed *le jeu n'en vaut pas la chandelle*. In the *vexata questio* of the cause of the death of the princes, the guilt has usually been attributed to Richard, because he reaped the largest benefit from their decease; but this horrible doctrine would imply that a tenant for life is usually murdered by the remainder-man, and that the enjoyer of the interest

of Bank Stock is frequently cut off by the reversioner who is entitled to the principal. We admit there is a strong case against Richard upon other more reasonable evidence: and thus from the magisterial bench of History do we commit him to take his trial, and be impartially judged by the whole of his countrymen.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.
NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LET us now turn from the turmoil of war, and apply our eye-glass to the pursuits of peace; for, having been surfeited for the present with royal rapacity, it will be refreshing to take a glance at national industry.

London was at a very early period famous for the abundance of its wool, and it has been ingeniously suggested that the great quantity of wool may account for a sort of natural shyness or sheepishness among our fellow-countrymen.

The Bill of Exchange was a luxury introduced in the beginning of the thirteenth century, for the accommodation of our forefathers, who had learned

the value of a good name, and perhaps occasionally experienced the inconveniences of a bad one.

There is nothing very interesting in the history of Commerce until the time of Whittington, whose cat, we have already said, was a fabulous animal, though it has taken its place by the side of the British Lion in our English annals. We are inclined to believe that there is some analogy between these two brutes, and that both are meant to be the types respectively of our political and commercial prosperity. We have sometimes thought that the British Lion, from its plurality of lives, ought rather to be called the British Cat, especially from its readiness to come to the scratch when the altar or the throne may seem to be in jeopardy. Whatever may be the exact nature of the beast, it is certainly a very highly-trained and somewhat harmless animal, for any statesman may place his head in the British Lion's mouth, and remove it again without suffering the slightest injury. The creature will roar loudly enough and show an ample expanse of jaw, but it is frequently *vox et praterea nihil* with the noisy brute, whose grumbling is often indicative of his extreme emptiness.

Whittington was certainly three times Lord Mayor of London, and we find him "doing a bill" for Henry the Fourth to the tune of a thousand pounds, and taking the subsidy on wool—out of which the sovereign generally fleeced the people—as collateral security.

In the reign of Henry the Fifth considerable advance was made in the art of ship-building, though from the pictures of the period it would seem that the craft exhibited very little of the workman's cunning. One of the ships of war of the fifteenth century, described in the Harleian MS., has all the appearance of a raft constructed of a few planks,

with a sort of sentry-box at one end for the accommodation of the steersman. In the larger vessels the entire crew will be found always crowding the deck in a dense mass; for the rules against taking more than the number were not enforced, and an ancient ship, like a modern carpet bag, was never so full but something additional could be always crammed into it.

In this age commerce was so highly respectable that even kings carried it on; and the highest ecclesiastics were in business for themselves as tradesmen of the humblest character. Matthew Paris tells us of an abbot of St. Alban's who did a good deal in the fish line, under the name of William of Trumpington.



"Ya-ah! Macker—el!" William of Trumpington, the Abbot of St. Alban's.

Original Size

His chief transactions were in Yarmouth herrings, and the worthy abbot undertook to put upon every breakfast table as good a bloater as money could procure, at a very moderate figure. The benevolent dignitary had come to the conclusion that the cure of herrings would pay him better than the cure of souls, and he accordingly added the former lucrative branch to the latter employment, with a pompous declaration that the two might be considered

analogous. This habit among the churchmen, of making all fish that came to their net, was by no means popular and it was said in a lampoon of the day, that the (chap. viii.) next thing to be done would be the conversion of a prebendal stall into an oyster stall.

Among the other disreputable sources of revenue to which the ecclesiastics devoted themselves we must not omit to mention smuggling, which they carried on to an alarming extent in wool; for after going wool-gathering in all directions, they padded themselves with it and stuffed it under their gowns for the purpose of eluding the Customs' regulations, to which the article was subjected.

Edward the Fourth was a true tradesman at heart, and, had he been a general dealer instead of a king, he would have been quite in his proper station. Nature had fitted him for the counter, though Fortune had placed him on the throne; but even in his commercial transactions he was guilty of acts that were quite unworthy of the high character of the British tradesman. The butt of Malmsey in which he caused his brother to be drowned was, it is believed, actually sold as a full fruity wine with "plenty of body in it," after poor Clarence had been in soak till death relieved him from his drenching. Edward the Fourth had also the disagreeable habit of enriching himself by money which he borrowed from the merchants, and never thought proper to return to them himself; but if he paid them at all, he, by laying on taxes, took it out of the people. It was also a fraudulent propensity of some of our early kings, to depreciate the coin of the realm, and Edward the Third managed to squeeze two hundred and seventy pennies, instead of two hundred and forty, out of a pound, which enabled him to put the odd half-crown

into his own pocket. Henry the Fourth carried the sweating process still further, by diluting a pound into thirty shillings, a trick he excused by alleging the scarcity of money; though the expedient was as bad as that of the housewife who, when the strength of the tea was gone, filled up the pot with water for the purpose of making more of it. Edward the Fourth, considering that his predecessors had not subjected the pound to all the compound division of which it was capable, smashed it into four hundred pennies, which was certainly proving that he could make a pound go as far as anyone.

In speaking of the industry of the people, we may fairly allude to what was regarded at the time as a great drag upon it in the shape of a fearful increase of attorneys, who in 1455 had grown to such an extent in Norfolk and Suffolk, that those places were literally swarming with the black fraternity. In the city of Norwich the attorneys were so plentiful that the evil began to correct itself, for they commenced preying on each other, like the water-lion "Ya-ah! Macker—!" water-tiger in the drop of stagnant fluid viewed through the solar microscope. They were in the habit of attending markets and fairs where they worked people up into bringing and defending actions against each other, without the smallest legal ground for proceedings on either side. A salutary statute cut down the exuberance of the attorneys by limiting their numbers, and six were appointed as a necessary evil for Suffolk; six as a standing nuisance in Norfolk; while two were apportioned under the head of things that, as they "can't be cured must be endured," to the city of Norwich. Such was the state of national industry up to the period at which we have arrived in our history.

CHAPTER THE NINTH. OF THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.



Original Size

NOTWITHSTANDING that in a previous book we

brought down the fashions and furniture of our forefathers to the fourteenth century, in the present chapter we shall have the pleasure of laying before our readers some considerably later intelligence. We left our ancestors lying upon very uncomfortable beds, but the year 1415 introduces us to some luxuries in the way of curtains and counterpanes. The Duke of York set forth his bedding in his will, which bears the date we have named, ana he seems to have died worth some thousands of pounds—of superior goose feathers. At a somewhat later period the sheet burst upon the page of history, and a blank is supplied by the sudden appearance of the blanket.

It was about the same period that clocks with strings and weights began to have a striking influence on the time, and Edward the Fourth used to carry one about with him wherever he went, but we do not believe that he wore it in a watchpocket, from which, instead of key and seals, there hung a couple of weights and a pendulum.

Costume seems to have been curtailed of very little of its exuberant absurdity in the reigns of Henry the Fourth and Fifth, though reform was carried to extremes, for it cut off the surplus hair from the head, and took away at least half a yard from the foot by relieving the shoes of their long points, a fashion which had always been remarkable for extreme pointlessness.

In the reign of Edward the Fourth there appears to have been a practice prevalent of making a shift to go without a shirt, when those who had such a thing to their backs were seized with a spirit of self-assertion, and began to slash open their sleeves for the purpose of showing their possession of that very useful article. The desire to prove the plenteousness and perhaps also the *propreté* of the under linen, led

to a further ripping up of other parts of the dress, and the fops of the day began to outslash each other by opening the seams of their clothes in the most unseemly fashion.

Richard the Third and his "cousin of Buckingham" were notorious for their love of finery, and the term "buck," which is used at the present day, is evidently an abbreviation of Buckingham, Richard, probably, invented the Dicky or false front, which gave him the appearance of having always a clean breast, though the fact is that he was reduced to the expedient of wearing a false front, because the stains of guilt upon his bosom were utterly indelible.

The appetite of the fifteenth century seems to have been uncommonly good, for we find our ancestors eating four meals a day, beginning with breakfast at seven, dinner at ten, supper at four, and a collation taken in bed—oh, the cormorants!—between eight and nine in the evening. The meal taken in bed may have consisted of a *blanquette de veau*, or perhaps now and then a bolster pudding, while the ladies may have indulged themselves with a *côtelette en papillotes*. Earl Percy and his countess used to absorb between them a gallon of beer and a quart of wine, and before being tucked up for the night would tuck in a loaf of household bread, with other trifles to follow. A dinner in the days to which we are reverting generally lasted three hours, but tumblers and dancers were employed to amuse the feasters, so that a kind of caper sauce was served out with every dish that came to table.

Nothing in the whole annals of ancient and modern gluttony can exceed the dinner said to have been given by George Neville, the brother of the King-maker, on his induction to the Archbishopric of York, in the fifteenth century. It opened with a

hundred and four oxen (*au naturel*), six wild bulls (*a la ménagère*), three hundred and four calves (*en surprise*), with innumerable *entrées* of pigs, bucks, stags, and roes, to an extent that is not only almost but quite incredible.

The pictures of the period represent a very inconvenient mode of laying the table, for we find a fish served up in a slop-basin, or rather laid across the top of that article of china-ware, which was much too small to admit the body of the animal. As far as we can discern the intention of the artist, we fancy we recognise in one of his pictures of a feast a duck lying on its back in a sort of sugar-basin or salt-cellar. This and a kind of mustard-pot, with an empty plate and half of a dinner-roll, may be said to constitute the entire provision made for a party of seven, who are standing up huddled together on one side of the table, in an existing representation of a dinner of the period.

The sports of the people were very numerous in the fifteenth century; but if we may judge by the pictures we have seen of the games, there was more labour than fun in the frolics of our forefathers. The contortions into which they seem to have thrown themselves while playing at bowls are quite painful to contemplate; and the well-known game of quarter-staff consisted of a mutual battering of shins and skulls, with a pole about six feet in length and some inches in circumference. Tennis was introduced at this early date, and it is therefore erroneous to assign its invention to Archbishop Tennison,—a report which has been spread by some unprincipled person, whose career of crime commencing in a pun has ended in a falsehood.

The professional fool was a highly respectable character in the middle ages; and the court jester was

a most influential personage, who was allowed to criticise all the measures of the ministry. He was a sort of supplementary premier; but, in later administrations—the present always excepted—the office of fool has merged among the members of the Government. It is a curious fact, that, judging from the portraits which have been preserved, the fools seem to have been the most sensible-looking persons of their own time; and the proverb, that "it takes a wise man to make a fool," was, no doubt, continually realised. The practical jokes of the jester were sometimes exceedingly disagreeable, for they consisted chiefly of blows and buffets, administered by a short wand, called a bauble, which he was in the habit of carrying. It was all very well when the fool's sallies happened to be taken in good part, but a witticism coming *mal-a-propos*, would often prove no joke to the joker, who would get soundly thrashed' for his impertinence. An ancient writer * describes the functions of a fool to have consisted chiefly of "making mouths, dancing about the house, leaping over the tables, outskipping men's heads, tripping up his companions' heels," and indulging in other similar *facetio*, which, though falling under the head of fun for the fool himself, might have been death to the victims of his exuberant gaiety. His life must have been one unbroken pantomime; though its last scene was seldom so brilliant as those bowers of bliss and realms of delight in the island of felicity, which owe their existence to the combined ingenuity of the painter and the machinist.

** Lodge, author of the Wit's Miserie, 4to, 1599.*

The spirit of chivalry had already begun to decline, or rather chivalry had lost its spirit altogether, for

when it once became diluted it took very little time to evaporate. The few real combats that were fought referred chiefly to judicial proceedings, in which points of law were decided by the points of lances. The combatants probably thought they might as well bleed each other as allow themselves to be bled by the hands of the lawyers. The tournaments had dwindled down into the most contemptible exhibitions, for the spears used were entirely headless, and an encounter generally ended in the clashing together of a couple of blunted swords or the flourishing in the air of a brace of huge choppers, so that as the antagonists kept turning about, they might be said to revolve round each others' axes.

Before concluding our chapter on the manners and customs of the people at the date to which our history has arrived we may notice some regulations for apparel, by which it was ordered, not only that every man should cut his coat according to his cloth, but should select his cloth according to the means he had of buying it. Apparel was not the only thing with which the law interfered, but some Acts were passed, fixing the rate of meals to be allowed to servants, and thus ameliorating their condition. Articles of dress were subjected to the most stringent legislation, and tailors were of necessity guided by Parliamentary measures; carters and ploughmen were limited by law to a blanket, so that the lightness of the restrictions permitted a looseness of attire, which was highly convenient. Persons not of noble rank were prohibited from wearing garments of undue brevity; and it was only those of the highest standing to whom the shortest dresses were permitted.

It was in the period to which the present chapter refers, that English pauperism first became the

subject of legislation; and it was an acknowledged principle, that the land must provide the poor with food and shelter, for civilization had not yet required the suppression of destitution by starvation and imprisonment.

We have now brought down our account of the condition of the people, from the highest to the lowest, from the king on his throne to the pauper on his parish, from the royal robber in the palace to the sturdy beggar in the public thoroughfare. We have seen how England was torn to pieces by the thorns belonging to the Roses, and how, after fighting about the difference between white and red, the union of both taught those who had been particular to a shade, the folly of observing so much nicety. Future chapters must develop the influence which this union produced, and will show the effect of that junction between the damask and the cabbage roses, which had only been brought about by dyeing them in the blood of so many Englishmen.

BOOK V. FROM THE ACCESSION OF HENRY THE SEVENTH TO THE END OF THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. HENRY THE SEVENTH.



Coronation of Henry the Seventh on the Field of Battle.

Original Size

THOUGH Henry had got the crown upon his

head, he did not feel quite sure of being able to keep it there, for he knew there was nothing so difficult to balance on the top of a human pole as a regal diadem. He felt that what had been won by the sword must be sustained by that dangerous weapon, though he was not insensible to the fact that edged tools are frequently hurtful to the hand that uses them. He became jealous of Edward Plan-tagenet, a boy of fifteen, the heir of the Duke of York, and grandson of Warwick, the king-maker. This un-happy lad was sent to the Tower, lest his superior right might prove mightier than the might which Henry had displayed on the field of Bosworth.

The Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the Queen Dowager, who was known by the humbler name of Mrs. E. Woodville, was let out of prison, to which she had been consigned by Richard the Third, who kept her closely under lock and key from the moment when he found it impossible to unite her to him in wedlock.

Henry came up to London five days after the battle of Bosworth, and was met at Hornsey by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, all dressed in violet, which caused the new king to exclaim, "Ha! gentlemen, you wish me to take a hint. Your privileges shall be, like yourselves, in-violate!" He then proceeded in a close chariot to St. Paul's, where he deposited his three standards; and it has been suggested, that the celebrated Standard at Cornhill was one of those alluded to. The festivities in London were so numerous at the accession, that the city became crowded to suffocation, and the "sweating sickness," which will be remembered as Stanley's old complaint, broke out among the inhabitants.



Henry the Seventh taking a Chop with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Original Size

When it had abated Henry began to think about his coronation, and he took an early dinner at Lambeth with the Archbishop of Canterbury—Thomas Bourchier—to talk the matter over. The king and the prelate soon came to terms over their chop for the performance of the ceremony, which took place on the 30th of October, 1485, in the usual style of elegance. The good archbishop was an old and experienced hand: for he had crowned Richard the Third only two years before, and indeed the system of the prelate was, to ask no questions that he might hear no falsehoods; but he was always ready to perform a coronation for anyone who could find his own crown, and pay the fees that were usual.

A Parliament was now summoned, but when the Commons came together, it turned out that several of them had been attainted and outlawed in previous reigns without the attainders having been since reversed, and Henry himself was in the same doubtful predicament. The opinion of the judges was required in this disagreeable dilemma, but the

intention in consulting them was only to get these accommodating interpreters of the law to twist it into a shape that would meet existing contingencies. With the usual pliability of the judges of those days, the parties whose opinion was asked gave it in favour of the strongest side, and Henry's having got the crown was declared to have cured all deficiencies of title. The Commons were obliged to have bills passed to reverse their attainders, but the king, like one of those patent fire-places which are advertised to consume their own smoke, was alleged to have cured the defects of his own title by the bare fact of his having got possession of the royal dignity.

Having settled all matters concerning his claim to the throne, he began to think about his intended wife, Elizabeth. "I beg your pardon for keeping you waiting," said he to Miss Woodville; "but, really I have been detained by other engagements." The young lady, who had sometimes feared that her case was one of breach of promise, was glad to disguise her real annoyance, and saying that "It did not at all signify," she prepared for the much retarded nuptials. They were solemnised on the 18th of January, 1486, and they were no sooner over than Henry exclaimed, "Now, Madam, recollect I have married you, but have not married your family." This uncourteous speech had reference to old Mrs. Woodville, who had already written to know what her new son-in-law would do for her. "I will not have her in the house," roared Henry, with savage earnestness; but he settled a small annuity upon her, which he enabled himself to pay by pocketing the whole of her dower.

The queen became anxious for her coronation, as any woman might reasonably be; but Henry put her off day after day, by exclaiming, "Don't be in a hurry; there's time enough for that nonsense." In this

heartless manner he succeeded in adjourning the pageant for an indefinite period.

Henry's new project was to get up his popularity by a tour in the provinces. Happening to put up at Lincoln, he heard that Lord Lovel, with Humphrey and Thomas Stafford "had gone with dangerous intentions no man knew whither." They had much better have remained where they were; for Lord Lovel, after collecting a large body of insurgents, found himself quite unable to pay their wages, and at once disbanded them. He flew into Flanders; but the two Staffords were taken in the very act of concocting an insurrection, for which Humphrey, the elder, was hanged, while Thomas, on account of his youth, was pardoned.

Henry arrived on the 26th of April, 1486, at York, where Richard the Third, though killed on Bosworth Field, was still living in some of the people's memories. The marking-ink, in which the tyrant's name was written on their hearts, being by no means indelible, Henry determined to sponge it out as quickly as possible. He tried soft soap upon some and golden ointment upon others; both of which specifics had so much effect that in less than a month the city rang with cries of "Long live King Henry!"

On the 20th of September, the Court newsman of the day announced the interesting fact that the happiness of the king's domestic circle had been increased by the birth of a son; or, rather, the royal circle had been turned into a triangle by the arrival of an infant heir, who was named Arthur.

We must now request the reader to throw the luggage of his imagination on board the boat, and accompany us to Ireland, where, on landing, we will introduce him, ideally, to a priest and a boy who

have just arrived in Dublin. The priest describes his young charge as Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, which will astonish us not a little, inasmuch as our friend, the reader, will remember that we left the little fellow not long ago a close prisoner in the Tower. How he got out is the question which we first ask ourselves, which we answer by intimating, that he did not get out at all, but he was only "a boy dressed up" to represent the young earl, and he played his part so well that many believed his story to be genuine. He had studied the character he represented, and had got by heart all the adventures of the young prince, together with a fund of anecdote that appeared quite inexhaustible. The juvenile impostor scarcely spoke a sentence that did not begin with "When I was a prisoner in the Tower," which made everyone believe that he had really been an inmate of that gloomy jail; and the trick succeeded to a miracle.

The urchin was proclaimed as Edward the Sixth, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland; for such was the credulity of the Hibernians that they believed every word of the tale that had been told to them.



A Young Pretender.

Original Size

Henry, desirous of exposing the fraud, had the real Plantagenet taken out of the Tower, for exhibition in the London streets; but the Irish declared that the real thing was a mere imposition, and the mock duke the genuine article. They, in fact, illustrated that instructive fable, in which an actor, having been applauded for his imitation of a pig, was succeeded by a rival who went the whole hog and concealed in the folds of his dress a rear brute, whoso squeak was pronounced very far less natural than that of the original representative of the porcine character.

Henry becoming a little alarmed at these proceedings, began rushing into the extremes of levity and severity; now pardoning a host of political offenders, and the next day, packing off the Queen Dowager—marked "Carriage paid, with care,"—to the monks at Bermondsey. Lambert Simnel, for so the impostor was called, held out as long as he could, and even got up, by subscription, one coronation during the season; but upon Henry's taking measures to chastise him he soon shrunk into insignificance. After a battle at Stoke, the pretender and his friend, the priest, were taken into custody, when the latter was handed over to the church for trial, and the former received a contemptuous pardon, including the place of scullion, to wash up the dishes and run for the beer in the royal household. He was at once placed in the kitchen, where his perquisites, probably in the way of kitchen stuff, enabled him to save a little money, and, in order to better himself, he subsequently sought and obtained the office of superintendent of the poultry yard, under the imposing title of the king's falconer. The priest, his tutor, seems to have dropped down one of those gratings of the past which lead to the common sewer

of obscurity, in which it is quite impossible to follow him. We hear of him last looking through the bars of a prison, where he was left till called for, and, as nobody ever called, he never seems to have emerged from his captivity.

The friends of the house of York now became clamorous at the treatment of the Queen Elizabeth, who had been kept in obscurity, and had urged "that little matter of the coronation" over and over again upon the attention of her selfish husband. "How you bother!" he would sometimes exclaim to his unhappy consort, whom he would endeavour to quiet by the philosophical inquiry of "What are the odds, so long as you're happy?"—a question which, as Elizabeth was not happy, she found some difficulty in answering. At length, one morning at breakfast, he said sulkily, "Well, I suppose I shall never have any peace till that affair comes off;" and the necessary orders for the coronation of the queen were immediately given. Henry himself behaved in a very ungentlemanly manner during the entire ceremony, for he viewed it from behind a screen, * which was afterwards brought into the hall, to enable him to sit at his ease out of sight, and take occasional peeps at the dinner. He had refused to honour the proceedings with his presence, having declared the ceremony to be "slow," and alleged the impossibility of his sitting it out after having once suffered the infliction.

It was at about this period of the reign of Henry the Seventh that the court of Star Chamber was established; and though it, ultimately, ** "became odious by the tyrannical exercise of its powers," its intentions were originally as honourable as the most scrupulous of its suitors could have desired. It was founded in consequence of the inefficiency of the

ordinary tribunals to do complete justice in criminal matters and other offences of an extraordinary and dangerous character, *** and to supply a sort of criminal equity—if we may be allowed the term—which should reach the offences of great men, whom the inferior judges and juries of the ordinary tribunals might have been afraid to visit with their merited punishment.

** The old chroniclers affirm that he looked on "fı a lattice." A modern authority has it that the kir on at the dinner from behind a lettuce—spelt latti had a magnificent salad before him during the proc*

*** Vide the valuable work on the Equitable Jurisdı the Court of Chancery» comprising its Rise, Progre Final Establishment. By George Spence, Esq., Q.C. p. 350.*

**** Ditto, p. 351.*

It has been suggested with some plausibility that the court of Star Chamber derived its name from the decorations of the room in which it was held, though it is, perhaps, a more ingenious supposition of a modern authority that the word "Star" was applied to the court in question because within its walls justice was administered in a twinkling. It might, with as much reason, be suggested that the name had reference to the constellation of legal talent of which the tribunal was composed; for those stars of the first magnitude—the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Privy Seal, and the President of the Council, were all of them judges of the court.

We must not, however, detain the reader any longer in a dull court of law, for we find ourselves served, in imagination, with a writ of *Habeas Corpus*,

commanding us to bring him up for the purpose of inquiring by what right we hold him in the disagreeable duress of dry legal detail.

In returning to Henry, we find him offering to act as mediator between Charles of France and the Duke of Bretagne, when, like every meddler in the disputes of others, he is unable to emerge from the position in which he has placed himself without that nasal tweak which is the due reward of impertinence. The taxes he was obliged to impose for the purpose of interference, undertaken, as he alleged, to curb the ambition of the French court, were very exorbitant, and particularly so on account of Henry's avarice, which induced him to put about ten per cent, of every levy into his own pocket. The people were, of course, dissatisfied, and the harshness used in collecting the subsidy irritated them so much in the north, that they took their change out of the unfortunate Duke of Northumberland, whom they killed, because he had the ill-luck to be employed in the invidious office of tax-gatherer.

In 1490 Parliament liberally granted some more money to carry on the war with France, but Henry pocketed the cash, and sent some priests to try and compromise the matter with the enemy. It was not until four years afterwards, in the course of 1494, that he really went to work against the French, but he contrived to make it pay him exceedingly well, for he not only grabbed the subsidies voted for the purpose, but he converted them into so much clear profit, by getting his knights and nobles to bear their own expenses out of their own pockets. He kindly gave them permission to sell their estates without the ordinary fines, and many a gallant fellow sold himself completely up, in the hope of indemnifying himself by what he should be able to take from the

French in battle.

Henry had, however, completely humbugged his gallant knights and nobles, for he never intended them to have the chance of gaining anything in France by conquest, and had, in fact, settled the whole matter at a very early period. He had made up his mind not to spend more than he could help, and had been putting away the subsidies in a couple of huge portmanteaus, which served him for coffers. Under the pretence of doing something, he passed over with his army to France, and "sat down" before Boulogne; but his sitting down proved that he had no intention of making any stand, and a truce was very soon agreed upon. Two treaties were drawn up, one of which was to be made public, for the purpose of misleading the people, and the other was a private transaction between the two sovereigns. The first only stipulated for peace, but the second secured the sum of £149,000 to be paid by instalments to Henry, who must have been under the necessity of ordering another coffer to receive the additional wealth that was thus poured in upon him.

New troubles were, however, commencing to disturb the mind of the king, who received one morning, at breakfast, a despatch announcing the arrival, at the Cove of Cork, of another pretender to the Crown of England. "There seems to be no end to these vagabonds," he mentally exclaimed, as he read the document announcing that a handsome young man had been giving himself out as Richard, Duke of York, second son of Edward the Fourth, and legitimate heir to the monarchy. "Pooh, pooh!" ejaculated Henry; "the fellow was disposed of in the Tower long ago." But on perusing further, he found that the young man had met this objection by alleging that he had escaped, and had been for seven

years a wanderer. It was exceedingly improbable that the royal youth had been so long upon the tramp, but his story was not very rigidly criticised by Henry's enemies. The wanderer introduced himself to the Duchess of Burgundy, who, after some enquiry, pronounced him to be genuine, and embraced him as the undoubted son of her dear brother Edward. She gave him the poetical name of the White Rose of England, but Henry, knowing that "the rose by any other name" would *not* "smell as sweet" in the nostrils of the English, gave out that the "White Rose" was a Jew boy of the name of Peterkin or Perkin Warbeck. It was further alleged that the lad had been recently a footman in the family of Lady Brompton, with whom he had been travelling. Peterkin was materially damaged in public opinion by getting the character of a mere "flunkey," and he was afraid to do more than hover about the coast without venturing to effect a landing. Though Henry had held the pretender up to ridicule, Perkin Warbeck's opposition was in reality no joke, and the king bribed a few of the party to betray their colleagues. Several were at once informed against, among whom were the two Ratcliffes, who denied their guilt in the usual Ratcliffe highway; but their repudiation had no effect, for one of them was at once beheaded. Sir William Stanley, a very old friend of the Richmond family, whose brother, Lord Stanley, had put the battered crown on Henry's brow in the field of Bosworth, became an object of suspicion; and thinking he should get off by a confession, he acknowledged everything he had been guilty of, with a supplement containing a catalogue of offences he had never committed. Thus, by denying too much for confession and owning enough for condemnation, he fell between two stools, one of which was the stool of

repentance, and lost his head at the moment he fancied he was upon a safe footing.

The party of Perkin Warbeck being discouraged by these events, and the people of Flanders having grown tired of the pretender's long visit, he felt that "now or never" was the time for his descent on England. The White Rose having torn himself away by the force of sheer pluck, attempted to transplant himself to the coast of Deal, but he found a Kentish knight ready to repel the Rose, and by a cry of "Go it, my tulips!" encouraging his followers to resist all oppression.

The White Bose and his companions mournfully took their leaves, and as many as could escape returned with press of sail to Flanders. Henry sent a vote of thanks to the men of Kent, with a promise of gold, but the remittance never came to hand from that day to the present.

Mr. P. Warbeck was now becoming such a nuisance in Flanders, that he was told he must really suit himself with another situation immediately. He tried Ireland, but the dry announcement of "no such person known" was almost the only answer to his overtures. As a last resource, and a proof of the desperate nature of his fortune, he actually threw himself upon the generosity of the Scotch, which was almost as hopeless as running his head against a stone wall; but as it was just possible that Perkin Warbeck might be turned to profitable account against England, the Scotch opened their hearts—where there is never any admission except on business—to the adventurous wanderer. James the Third, king of Scotland, chiefly out of spite to Henry, not only received Perkin as the genuine Duke of York, but married him to Lady Catherine Gordon, the lovely and accomplished daughter of the Earl of

Huntley, a relative of the royal house of Stuart. An agreement was drawn up between James of Scotland, of the one part, and Perkin Warbeck, of the other, by virtue of which Perkin was to be pitchforked on to the English throne, and was to make over the town of Berwick-on-Tweed—when he got it—as an acknowledgment to King James for his valuable services. After some little delay, the Scotch crossed the border to enforce Perkin's demand; but when that individual arrived in England, he found himself so thoroughly snubbed that he sneaked back again.

Notwithstanding the utter failure of this enterprise, which had cost Henry not a penny to resist, he sent in a bill as long as his arm for the equipment of his army. The people who had not been called upon to strike a single blow, and always liked to have, what they called "their whack for their money," were enraged at being asked to pay for a battle that had never happened. The men of Cornwall were particularly angry at having to give any of their tin, and came up to Blackheath, under Lord Audley, whose inexperience was so great that he might have furnished the original for the sign of the "Green Man," which so long remained the distinguishing feature of the neighbourhood. The battle of Blackheath was fought on the 22nd of June, 1497, with a good deal of superfluous strength on one side, and consummate bad management on the other. On the side of the insurgents, one Flammock or Flummock, an attorney, was a principal leader, but he would gladly have taken out a summons to stay proceedings, had such practice been allowable. It is probable that this "gentleman one, &c." had been persuaded by some noble client who had an interest in the fight to appear as his attorney in this memorable action.

Henry having gained every advantage in his recent transactions was desirous of completing his arrangements, by purchasing Warbeck, if anyone could be found base enough to sell that unfortunate individual. James of Scotland was too honourable for such a shameful bargain, though he was greatly embarrassed in assisting Warbeck, for whom he had melted down his plate—an act worthy of the most fiddle-headed spoon—besides raising money on a gold chain he used to wear, and to which he was so attached, that he compared it to

"Linked sweetness long drawn out,"

as he drew it forth from his pocket to put it into the hands of the pawnbroker.

It was now intimated to Perkin Warbeck that he "had better go," for his presence had become exceedingly costly and embarrassing. "I've nothing more for you, my good man," were the considerate words of James as he despatched his guest to seek his fortune elsewhere, attended by a few trusty retainers, who stuck to him "through thick and thin," an attachment which, as he could hardly pay his own way, must have been very embarrassing. His wife's fidelity to him in his ill-fortune was a beautiful as well as a gratifying fact, for she had, really, seen much better days, and the sacrifices she made in sharing the fate of a Pretender "out of luck" was quite undeniable.

Perkin Warbeck made first for Cork in the hope of raising the Irish, but as he could not raise the Spanish, the former would have nothing to do with him. He next tried Cornwall, and marching inland he soon found himself at the head of a party of discontented ragamuffins, who happened to be ready

for a row, without any ulterior views of a very definite character. He called himself Richard the Fourth, and penetrated into England as far as Taunton Dean, where Henry's forces had already collected.



Perkin Warbeck and his Army.

Original Size

Warbeck was admirable in all his preliminary arrangements, and it was "quite a picture" to see him reviewing his troops; but picture as he was, the idea of fighting put him into such a fright, that he always lost his colour. He was first-rate on parade, but quite unequal to the business of a battle, and, indeed, to use an illustration founded on a fact of our own times, he would have been invaluable in the Astley's version of Waterloo, though utterly contemptible in the original performance of that tremendous action.

No sooner had Perkin Warbeck ascertained the propinquity of the enemy than he recommended that his forces should all go to bed in good time to be fresh for action early in the morning. Having first

ascertained that all were asleep, he stole off to the stable, saddled his horse, and having mounted the poor brute, stuck spurs into its side until he reached the sanctuary of Beaulieu in the New Forest. When this disgraceful desertion of their leader was discovered the rebels set up a piteous howl and threw themselves on the mercy of Henry, who ordered some to hang, and sent others to starve, by dismissing them without food or clothing. Lady Catherine Gordon, alias Mrs. P. Warbeck, who had been sojourning for safety at St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, was brought before the king, who, touched by her beauty and her tears, experienced in his heart that truly English sentiment which declares, that "the man who would basely injure a lovely woman in distress, is unworthy of the name of a—a—British officer." He therefore sent her on a visit to the queen, who paid every attention to the fallen heroine.



Henry the Seventh and Perkin Warbeck's Wife.

Original Size

The next thing to be done was to rout Perkin

Warbeck out of the hole into which cowardice had driven him. Henry was unwilling to disturb the sanctuary, but he sent his agents to parley with Perkin, who, finding himself regularly hemmed in, thought it better to come out on the best terms he could, and he accordingly emerged on the promise of a pardon. Henry was anxious to get a peep at the individual who had caused so much trouble, but thought it *infra dig.* to admit the rebel into the royal presence. The king, therefore, reverted to his old practice of getting behind a screen, an article he must have carried about with him wherever he went, that he might, unseen, indulge his curiosity. This paltry practice should have obtained for him the name of Peeping Harry, for we find him, at more than one period of his reign, skulking behind a screen, in the most ignoble manner. Perkin was made to ride up to London, behind Henry, at a little distance, and on getting to town he was sent on horseback through Cheapside and Cornhill, as a show for the citizens. There were the usual demonstrations of popular criticism on this occasion, and there is no doubt that amid the gibes and scoffs addressed to the captive the significant interrogatory of "Who ran away from Taunton Dean?" was not forgotten.

After taking a turn to the Tower and back for the accommodation of the inhabitants at the East End, who desired to be gratified with a sight of the Pretender, Perkin was lodged in the palace at Westminster, where a good deal of liberty seems to have been allowed him. He however chose to run away, and being caught again, he was made to stand in the stocks a whole day before the door of Westminster Hall, where he was made to read a written confession, which was interrupted by an occasional egg in his eye, or cabbage leaf over his

mouth, for such are the voluntary contributions which a British public has always been ready to offer to helpless impotence.



Perkin Warbeck Reading his Confession.

Original Size

The next day the same ceremony with the same accessories was repeated at Cheapside, in order to give the East End an opportunity of enjoying the sport which the West End had already revelled in. Perkin Warbeck was then committed to the Tower, where he and the unfortunate Earl of Warwick became what may be termed fast friends, for they were bound tightly together in the same prison. Warbeck, who was in every sense of the word an accomplished swindler, succeeded in winning the good opinion, not only of his fellow captive but of the keepers of the jail, three of whom, it is said, had actually undertaken to murder Sir John Digby, the governor, for the sake of getting hold of the keys,

and releasing the two captives. It was now evident that Warbeck would never be quiet, and Henry, feeling him to be a troublesome fellow, determined to get rid of him. On the 16th of November, 1499, Warbeck was arraigned at Westminster Hall, and being found guilty as a matter of course, was executed on the 23rd of the same month at Tyburn, where, cowardly to the last, he asked the forgiveness of the king, even on the scaffold.

Walpole, in his "Historic Doubts"—a work that throws everything into uncertainty and settles nothing—gives it as his opinion that Perkin Warbeck was really the Duke of York; but had Walpole been able to tell "a sheep's head from a carrot," he would never have been guilty of such a piece of confounding and confounded blundering. We who give no encouragement whatever to Historic Doubts are tolerably sure that Perkin Warbeck was merely a fashionable swindler, for he had none of that personal courage or true dignity which would have redeemed his imposture from the character of mere quackery. He contrived to ruin poor Warwick, or at all events to hasten his destruction by implicating him in a conspiracy, which of his own accord he never would have dreamed of.

When put upon his trial, the hapless earl—who, though only twenty-nine years of age, was from long seclusion in a state of second childhood, if indeed he had ever got out of his first—confessed with piteous simplicity all that had been alleged against him. He was beheaded on Tower Hill the 24th * of November, 1499; and it was said that his death was the most merciful that could be conceived, for in losing his head he was deprived of that which he never knew how to use, and of the possession of which he did not at any time seem sensible.

Warbeck's widow continued to go by the name of the White Rose, when Sir Mathew Cradoc, thinking it a pity that she should be "left blooming alone," offered to graft her on his family tree, and the White Rose consented to this arrangement.

** Hume says the 21st. Another authority says the 2*
not with a mere wish to "split the difference" tha
the medium date of the 24th, but we have good reas
stating that to be the exact day, and Mr. Charles
Macfarlane, in his admirable "Cabinet History of E
has likewise named the 24th of November as the pre
of Warwick's execution.

Henry had long been anxious to marry his daughter Margaret to James of Scotland, and he sent a cunning bishop, most appropriately named Fox, to act the part of a match-maker. The sly old dog brought the matter so cleverly about that the marriage was agreed upon, and this union led to the peaceful union of the two countries about a century afterwards. The young lady got but a small portion from her stingy father, and her husband made a settlement upon her of £2000 a year, but he got her to accept a paltry compromise. The meanness of the arrangements may be judged of by the ridiculous fact that King James and his young bride rode into Edinburgh on the same palfrey.

Henry's eldest son, Arthur Prince of Wales, had been already married to Catherine, fourth daughter of Ferdinand of Spain, who promised two hundred thousand crowns, half of which he paid down, as a wedding portion. The young husband died soon after, and Ferdinand naturally asked for his money and his child back again. The English king had pocketed the greater part of the cash, which he was

not only quite unwilling to refund, but he had serious thoughts of proceeding for the balance of his daughter-in-law's dowry. He therefore consented to affiance her to his second son, Henry, in compliance with the only condition upon which Ferdinand agreed to waive his claim to the cash already in hand, and he even promised to pay the rest of the portion at his "earliest convenience."

Henry himself, or as we may call him for the sake of distinction, the "old gentleman," had lately lost his wife, and he went at once into the matrimonial market to see whether there was anything upon which it might be safe to speculate. He however wanted to conduct his operations with such extraordinary profit to himself that nothing seemed to tempt his avarice. His ruling passion was for "cash down," and to obtain this he fleeced his subjects most unmercifully, though he employed the disreputable firm of Empson and Dudley to collect the amount of the various extortions he was continually practising. These two men were little better than swindlers, though as lawyers they adhered to the rules of law, and indeed they kept a rabble always in the house to sit as jurymen. They had trials in their own office, and would often ring the bell to order up a jury from downstairs, just as anyone in the present day would order up his dinner. Dudley got the name of the Leech, from his power of drawing, and indeed he would have got the blood out of a blood-stone if the opportunity had been afforded him. *

** Empson has been described by Hume as a man of "n*
and brutal temper," who of course, did all the bul
this disreputable firm, while Dudley, who was "bet
better educated, and better bred," acted in the ca
what may be termed the decoy duck of the concern;

other words, the latter snared the game which the savagely butchered.

Henry had now but one formidable enemy left, in the person of young Edmund de la Pole, the nephew of Edward the Fourth, and son and heir to the Duke of Suffolk. This turbulent individual renewed the cry in favour of the "White Rose," which was said by a wag of the day to be raised on a pole, after the fashion of the frozen-out gardeners.

Suffolk soon had the mortification of finding that he had not the suffrages of the people, for the rush to the Pole was anything but encouraging. "Ye Pole theyreforre," says Comines, "dydde cutte his sty eke," and became a penniless fugitive in Flanders. He was ultimately surrendered by Philip, the archduke, who had received Suffolk as a visitor, but gave him up with a lot of sundries he was transferring to Henry, who promised to spare the prisoner's life, and did so, though he left word in his will that his successor had better kill the earl, as he would otherwise prove troublesome.

In the course of the year 1509, Henry's health became very indifferent, and he had repeated attacks of the gout, every one of which put him in ill-humour with himself in particular, and the world in general. Every fresh twinge was paid with interest upon one or more of his unfortunate subjects; and when he got very bad he would be most indiscriminate in his cruelty. He fixed upon a poor old alderman named Harris, who died of sheer vexation at his ill-treatment before his indictment came on; and at this remote period we hope we shall not be accused of injuring the feelings of any of the posterity of poor Harris by saying, that he was literally harassed to death through the unkindness of

his sovereign. During his illness Henry would do justice occasionally between man and man, but a favourable turn in his malady, a quiet night, or a refreshing nap, would bury all his good resolutions in oblivion. At length on the night of the 21st of April, 1509, he died at Richmond, leaving behind him a will in which he bequeathed to his son and heir the delightful task of repairing all his father's errors.

However easy it may be for an executor to pay the pecuniary debts of a testator with plenty of assets in hand, the moral responsibilities which have been left unsatisfied, are not so soon provided for. It is true that a good son frequently makes atonement to society for the mischief done by a bad parent; but this, though it strikes a sort of balance with the world, does not prevent the father from being still held accountable for his deficiencies.

Henry died in the fifty-third year of his age, and had he lived a day longer, he would have reigned twenty-three years and eight months, or as Cocker has it, in the simplicity of his heart, "had he been alive in the year 1700, he would have reigned upwards of two centuries." Our business, however, is not with what he might have done, but what he actually did, and we therefore record the fact, that he died on the 21st of April, 1509, and was buried in the magnificent chapel of Westminster Abbey, which he built, and which is called after him to this very day and hour that we now write upon. *

** A quarter to one, A.M., April 13th, 1847.*

It is often the most painful part of our labours to give characters of some of the sovereigns who pass under our review in the course of this history. To those who have only known Henry the Seventh as

the chivalrous and high-minded prince that fought so gallantly with Richard the Third on the field of Bosworth, it will be distressing to hear that the Richmond of their dramatic recollections is nothing like a true portrait of the actual character. At all events, if he had virtues in his youth they were not made to wear, they became sufficiently threadbare to be seen be seen through.

Even his ambition seems to have been little more than a medium he had adopted for gratifying his avarice, and it is now pretty clear that he rather wanted the crown for what it was worth in a pecuniary point of view, than for the honourable gratification which power when rightly used is capable of conferring on its possessor. Hume tells us that "Henry loved peace without fearing war," which is true enough; for war afforded him a pretext for raising money, while peace, which he generally managed to arrange, gave him an opportunity of pocketing the cash he had collected. War, therefore, was never formidable to him, for he usually manoeuvred to keep out of it; but he made the rumour of it serve as an excuse for taxing his people. He was decidedly clever as a practical man, though exceedingly unprincipled, but several salutary laws were passed in his reign; one of the best of which was an act allowing the poor to sue *in forma pauperis*. Considering how often the law reduces its suitors to poverty, it is only fair that those who are brought to such a condition should still be allowed to go on, for it is like ruining a man and then turning him out of doors to say that the courts shall be closed against such as are penniless.

Another important and useful measure of Henry's reign was that by which the nobility and gentry could alienate their estates, or cut mouth an

occupant of the throne of England off the tail, which limited everything to the head of a family. This apparently liberal act was passed for the benefit of the king himself, who wished his nobles to be able to sell everything they had got for the sake of paying the expenses of the wars, which otherwise must have been prosecuted partly out of Henry's own pocket. He owed more to fortune than to his own merit, and even the conspiracies that were got up against him from time to time helped to sustain him in his high position, as the shuttlecock is kept in a state of elevation by constant blows from the battledore.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. HENRY THE EIGHTH.



Original Size

ENRY the EIGHTH, only surviving son and

successor of Henry the Seventh, took to his father's crown and sceptre on the 22nd of April, 1509, amid general rejoicing, for he was an exceedingly gentlemanly youth of eighteen when he came to the throne, of which his parent had recently been but a bearish occupant. If young Harry had never lived to play old Harry, his popularity might have survived him, for the people had become disgusted with the conduct of his father, and there never was a finer chance for a young man than that which offered itself to the new sovereign.

Nothing could exceed the grossness of the adulation which was poured out upon him at his accession, and the perfection of the art of puffing in England may, perhaps, be ascribed to this period of our history. His countenance was likened to that of Apollo—a falsehood for which, in his features, no apology can be found; his chest was declared to be that of Mars, though it was evidently his pa's, for in early youth his resemblance to his father was remarkable. Clemency was declared to be seated on his ample forehead, equity was pronounced to be balancing itself on the bridge of his nose, intelligence was recognised lurking in ambush among his bushy hair; and even Erasmus attributes to him the acuteness of the needle, with other intellectual qualities of an exalted character. *

** We are indebted to Mr. Tytler, who is generally a tittle, for these interesting particulars.—See h of Henry the Eighth," p. 16 of the 2nd edition.*

It is sad to reflect that the philosopher, when he takes the paintbrush in hand to dash off the portrait of a king, is apt to become a mere parasite, and will not abstain from staining his own character by

daubing with false colours the canvas of history. Thus, even Erasmus used hues his friends would be glad to erase, and has covered over the black spots in Henry's character with that pink of perfection which makes *couleur de rose* of everything. It is not to be wondered at, that in setting out upon the voyage of government, Henry received "one turn a-head"—if we may be allowed a nautical expression—while the engines of flattery were at work on all sides of him. It is to be regretted, for the sake of himself as well as for the good of his subjects, that truth was not at hand to give him that friendly "shove astern" which has saved many from precipitating themselves on the rocks that always lie in the course of greatness and power.

As if determined to begin as he intended to go on, Henry looked out at once for a wife, and, considering how often he was destined to undergo the marriage ceremony in the course of his reign, it was as well that he should lose no time in commencing the career that lay before him. In his first matrimonial adventure he appears to have let others choose for him, instead of making a selection for himself, and Catherine of Aragon, the widow of his elder brother Arthur, was pointed out to him as an eligible *parti* for nuptial purposes.

This marriage was strongly recommended by the political faculty as a saving of expense, for the lady would have been entitled to a large pension as widow of Prince Arthur, and her friends in Spain, had she been returned upon their hands, would have wanted to know something about the 150,000 crowns she had received as a marriage portion. Of course, the whole of it was gone, and it was thought that Henry would be killing a whole covey of birds with one stone if he would consent to take her as his

wife, inasmuch as he would thus extinguish her claims to a pension, and prevent any awkward questions being asked in Spain as to the portion she had brought with her to England. Henry, feeling a sort of intuitive consciousness that he should have plenty of opportunities to select a wife for himself, agreed to take, as a beginning, the one that had been chosen for him by others, and accordingly, on the 3rd of June, 1509, the lady, who was eight years older than himself, became his wife, at Greenwich. The royal couple were not destined to roll down the hill together in after life, whatever they may have done on the day of their union, which was doubtless marked by all those sports of which the locality was susceptible. Catherine, though a little *passée*, looked exceedingly well, for, in order to render her appearance more attractive, she was dressed in white, and "all Greenwich," says Lord Herbert, "did not, on that day, contain a daintier dish of whitebait than the Lady of Aragon." The royal pair were crowned on the 24th of June, 1509, being exactly three weeks after marriage, up to which period, at least, there was no indication of that Bluebeardism which subsequently broke out with so much fury in the royal character.

Henry had on his accession thrown himself into the arms of his grandmother, the old Countess of Richmond, upon whose advice he acted in the selection of his ministers. The old lady died in the same month in which her grandson was married and crowned, at the respectable age of sixty-eight; and it is a curious fact that she had been married three times, so that in his multiplicity of wives, Henry the Eighth may be said to have simply improved upon the example set him by his grandmother. *

** Her friend and counsellor, Jack Fisher, Bishop o*
Rochester, says of her, that "a reddy witte she ha
conceive all thyngs, albeit they were ryghte derke



Henry the Eighth and Catherine of Aragon.

Original Size

The first political act of Henry the Eighth's reign, was to lay the heads of Empson and Dudley upon the scaffold. These rapacious extortioners had been the tools of his father's avarice, but had contrived to feather their own nests tolerably well; and Henry kept them in prison for the purpose of getting out of them the wealth they had acquired by their rapacity. He detained them in the Tower a whole year before he beheaded them, and continued to squeeze out of them everything they possessed, for he was one of those who never threw an orange away without thoroughly sucking it. Having drained it at length completely dry by about the 17th of August, 1510,

he, on that day—to pursue the allegory of the orange—declined allowing them any quarter, but sent them to Tower Hill, where execution was done upon both of them.

Henry finding everything going smoothly in England, fell into the common error of those who having every comfort at home must needs look abroad for the elements of discord. He entered into a league against Louis the Twelfth of France, in favour of Pope Julius the Second and his father-in-law, Ferdinand of Aragon; but the latter kept helping himself to large slices of territory, and made use of his allies for the purpose of furthering his own interests. Henry's troops were therefore compelled to play an ignoble part, being cooped up in a French town, while the other soldiers overran Navarre, and appropriated everything they could lay their hands upon. Amazed at their moderate success upon land they attempted to retrieve themselves by a sea-fight, but the ruler was not then found by which Britannia subsequently learned to rule the waves, and the French fleet escaping into Brest, found shelter in their country's bosom.

In 1513, Henry being anxious to obtain ascendency over the seas, appointed Sir Edward Howard, one of the sons of the Earl of Surrey, to accomplish the grand object. Howard was so exceedingly confident of success that he sent a private note requesting the king to come and see how beautifully he (Howard) would "spifflicate"—for such was the word—the presumptuous enemy. Henry by no means relished the invitation, and replied to it by desiring Howard to "mind his own business" as admiral. This nettled the naval commander, who, during the engagement, jumped into one of the enemy's ships, and could not jump back again; while

Sir John Wallop, upon whom he had relied, exhibited little of that usefulness which his name seems to indicate. Poor Howard was, accordingly, killed; and Henry, flattered by his parasites, came to the resolution that no good would be done till he himself set out for France at the head of an army.

In a few days he arrived off Boulogne, where he instructed the artillery to make as much noise as they could with their guns, in order that he might intimidate the foe, and encourage himself by the roaring of his own cannon. His object was undoubtedly to insinuate to the enemy, "We are coming in tremendous force, and so you had better keep out of the way for fear of accidents."

Henry, who had various other great guns on board besides his artillery, was accompanied by Thomas Wolsey, his almoner, lately risen into favour, together with the celebrated Bishop Fox, and a number of courtiers. He passed his time very pleasantly at Calais for about three months, when he heard that the celebrated Bayard—the *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*—was moving forward. The English king bounded on to his horse with the elasticity of indiarubber, and advanced at the head of fifteen thousand men—Bishop Fox, with characteristic cunning, keeping in the rear, and Wolsey following the Fox at a prudent distance.

Twelve hundred French approached under the cover of a regular English fog, which with a most anti-national spirit favoured the enemies of the country to which it owed its origin. Bayard would have commenced an attack, but he was overruled by some of his companions; and Henry, thinking the foe afraid to "come on," sat himself down in a pavilion made of silk damask, foolishly believing that the art of the upholsterer could uphold the dignity of a

sovereign.



Henry's Tent.

Original Size

Thus he sat, like the proprietor of a gingerbread stall at a fair, until a terrific shower came on, and the silk streamers were streaming with wet, and the satin chairs could no longer be sat-in with comfort or convenience. The tent was turned literally inside out by the wind, like an umbrella in a storm, and Henry was glad to exchange his gaudy booth for a substantial wooden caravan, that was speedily knocked together for his reception. Though the two armies did not fight they commenced operations by mining and countermining, but instead of making receptacles for gunpowder, they were only making gutters for the rain, which took advantage of every opening. The Count of Angoulême (afterwards Francis the First) now arrived at headquarters, and scoured the country, which he was the better able to do from the quantity of water which had fallen on many parts of it.

Henry now received a visit from the Emperor Maximilian, and the English king made the most magnificent preparations for the interview; he equipped himself and some of his nobles in gold and silver tissue—though it was said the latter wore a tissue of falsehoods, for their finery was all sham—and he borrowed every bit of jewellery in his camp for his own personal bedizenment. He had a garniture of garnets in his hat, and even his watch, a tremendous turnip, had a diamond, weighing several carats, on its face, while a magnificent ruby matched with the rubicundity of his forehead, over which the gem was gracefully disposed. The nobles were sprinkled all over with paste, and looked effective enough at the price which Henry had given for their embellishment. Maximilian, who was in mourning, presented a dismal contrast to all this finery, for he wore nothing but a suit of serge, which, however, turned out for more serviceable than the fancy costume of Henry and his courtiers. The rain came on so furiously that unless the silks were washing silks they must have been fearfully damaged by the wet, while the running of the hues one into the other, caused Henry's party to come off with—in one sense—flying colours. It was at length determined to make an attack upon the French, and the Emperor Maximilian having got his old serge doublet trimmed up with a red cross, and pinned an artificial flower in his hat, directed the operations of the English. The French cavalry began pretty well; but whether Maximilian looked so great a guy as to terrify the horses, or through any other cause, it is certain that a panic ran through the ranks, and they commenced a retreat at full gallop, using their spurs with tremendous vehemence.

One of the fugitives, a venerable marshal, broke

his baton in beating a retreat over the back of his charger; and Bayard, who had refused to run, seeing the baton of his comrade broken, exclaimed, "Ha! he has cut his stick!" which afterwards became a by-word to describe the act of a fugitive. The illustrious *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* became a prisoner, but thoroughly enjoyed the joke of his countrymen having run away, and laughingly called it the battle of the spurs, from the energy with which they had plunged their rowels into the flanks of their chargers.

A meeting between Bayard, Maximilian, and Henry, has been described very graphically in the *Histoire de Bon Chevalier*; * and it appears from this authority that the two latter bantered their prisoner in a somewhat uncourteous manner. Bayard contended that he had become captive by a voluntary surrender; upon which the emperor and the king burst out into a fit of rude laughter, as if they would have said, "That's a capital joke;" but Bayard protested that he might have got away had he chosen to run for it. They only replied to him by saying "Well, well, my fine fellow, we've got you, and it matters little whether you took yourself into custody or now else you came here; but here you unquestionably are, and there's an end of the discussion."

** Vol. ii., p. 80.*

After taking Tournay, where he held a number of tournaments, and which was actually sacrificed by the inhabitants for the sake of a bad pun *—worse even than the accidental one in the text—Henry returned to England, and arrived on the 24th of October, 1513, at Richmond.

Thus ended the expedition to France; but

important events had been happening at home, for the Earl of Surrey had been chevying the Scotch over the Cheviot Hills, and at last fought them at Flodden, where James the Fourth unfortunately fell; and the English queen, making a parcel of his coat, hat, and gloves, sent them to Henry as a proof of the dressing the Scotch had experienced.

It had been intended to resume the war with France, but Louis the Twelfth suggested a compromise, by which he married Mary, the sister of the English king, and Mary thus had the honour of mollifying the asperity of the feelings that the two monarchs had hitherto indulged.

We have already mentioned the name of Wolsey, who accompanied Henry abroad in the capacity of almoner; and it is now time that we give some particulars of a person who played one of the most important parts in the drama of history.

Thomas Wolsey was born at Ipswich, in March, 1471, of humble parents; but the popular story of his father having been a butcher is probably a fable, to which the fact of his having had a stake in the country has perhaps given some likelihood. It is doubtful whether he was brought up to the block, though he might have been obliged to give his head to it at a later period of his life, when he incurred his master's displeasure. It has been said that Wolsey senior could not have been a butcher, because he left money to his son by will; but business must have been bad indeed if he could not bequeath a couple of legacies of thirteen-and-fourpence each, with one of six-and-sevenpence, and another of eleven shillings, in addition to a sura of ten marks, which constitute altogether the entire amount of cash that was actually disposed of by the old gentleman to his wife, his son, and his executors, ** If the elder Wolsey was

really a butcher, it is certain that he had not a sharper blade in his establishment than his son Tom, who was sent early to school, and having proceeded to the University of Oxford, got on so well as to acquire the name of the Boy Bachelor. He soon became a fellow, and was one of the cleverest young fellows in the college, where he was intrusted to educate the three sons of the Duke of Dorset. In this capacity, by the application of a great deal of flattery —or, as some would have termed it, Dorset Butter— while at home with the young gentlemen for the Christmas holidays, he got the patronage of their noble father, who presented him with the rectory of Lymington. Here he is said to have disgraced himself by getting into a row at a fair, but we can scarcely believe that the clergyman of the parish would have forgotten himself so far as to give his love of gaiety full swing, and allow him to carry absurdity to the height which such a proceeding seems to indicate. He could not have very far compromised his character, or he would not have been employed by Henry the Seventh, on delicate and important missions which a parson fresh from "the fun of the fair" would never have been allowed to execute. Some of his detractors have broadly asserted that Wolsey was inebriated, and fled in shame from his cure, but we really believe that he was never at any period of his life intoxicated with anything but ambition, which undoubtedly is quicker in turning the head than the strongest juice that ever dropped from the ripest juniper. Fox, the Bishop of Winchester, strongly recommended Wolsey to Henry the Eighth, who, already knowing something of the young man, made him King's Almoner; and on taking Tournay, in France, hesitated whether he should burn it down, or make Wolsey its bishop. The latter

of the two evils fell upon the town, which was placed under the ambitious churchman's ecclesiastical cognizance. He rose rapidly to the sees of Lincoln and York, became Lord High Chancellor of England, and, on the 7th of September, 1515, received his crowning honour, in the hat of a cardinal.

** The pun alluded to was couched in these words, w used by the Citizens:—"Que Tournay n'avoit jamais ni encore ne tournerait."*

*** His will was published by Dr. Fiddes, from the at Norwich.*

We must now put Wolsey by for a little bit, though we shall have to bring him out again and again, for we must not keep others waiting by lingering too long in the accomplished churchman's company. We left the Princess Mary just married to Louis the Twelfth, though her heart had long been given to Charles Brandon, Viscount Lisle, who retained the principal of her affections, though the French king got for a time the interest. He however enjoyed it for only two months when he died, and Brandon, the remainder-man, became the tenant in possession, by marrying Mary after three months' widowhood. Henry was at first very angry with the match, but the young couple rushing into his presence like two repentant lovers in a farce, and Wolsey interceding with all the air of the "smart servant," the king was persuaded to give that cheapest of all donations—his blessing.



Henry pardoning the young Couple.

Original Size

Brandon's good sense and modesty went some way in reconciling Henry, for Viscount Lisle never presumed upon his connection with the family of royalty. He did not talk continually of "My brother-in-law the king," as he might have done; but he took the following motto, in which there is a strong indication of his "knowing his place," and being determined on keeping it.

Cloth of gold do not despise,
Though thou be match'd with cloth of frize;
Cloth of frize be not too bold,
*Though thou be match'd with cloth of gold. **

** "Granger's Biog. Hist.," vol. iv. p. 82.*

Francis the First had succeeded to the French throne and the Archduke Charles of Austria had come in for the whole of the Spanish monarchy by the death of his maternal grandfather, Ferdinand of Aragon. He was a maternal grandfather in a double sense, for he had grown very old womanish, and the

adjective maternal was by no means inappropriate. Francis and Charles became competitors for the empire just vacant by the death of Maximilian, and the countenance of Henry was eagerly sought by both of the disputants. Henry had formerly hoped to have been himself a successful candidate, but finding he had no chance, he wrote to Charles, saying he "wished he might get it," which were the genuine sentiments no doubt of the English sovereign. The election fell upon Charles, and Francis affected to take the consequence as if it had been of no consequence at all, though it was clearly otherwise.

The election for the rank and dignity of Emperor was one of the most disgracefully corrupt proceedings that was ever witnessed, even in the palmiest days of the boroughmongering system in England, some centuries afterwards. The candidates were Francis the First of France, Charles the Fifth, king of Castile, Henry the Eighth of England, and the Elector Frederic of Saxony. The bribery was on a scale of vastness never before heard of, and it is said that Charles scattered his—or his people's—money among the independent electors with frightful prodigality. The electors of Cologne, which was not then in such good odour as might have been expected from the pleasant purity of its *Eau*, pocketed no less than 200,000 crowns; but the mother of Francis the First declared, that "the electors, among them all, had not received from the king, her son, more than 100,000 crowns," * so that the loss of his election is very easily accounted for. Francis, nevertheless, imagined he had secured five electors out of the seven; but those worthies, who were dishonestly receiving bribes from both parties at once, eventually gave to Charles, who paid them best, the benefit of their suffrages. Poor Saxony,

expecting in a contest with such powerful opponents that he might get "double milled," resigned in favour of Charles; and Henry, whose committee had been sitting to conduct his election, until it was clear there would be nothing to conduct, threw his influence into the same scale.

** Ellis's Letters, vol. i. p. 155.*

On the 28th of June, 1519, the polling commenced, and each elector as he came up to give his vote was, no doubt, received with the shouts and salutations that are usual on all similar occasions. When the Elector of Cologne appeared to plump for Charles, after having quite as plumply promised his support to Francis, the jeers of the populace were tremendous, and an egg was even thrown for the purpose of egging on the crowd to acts of violence. The unprincipled elector looked contemptuously on the oval missile, as if he would have said that he did not care about submitting to the yolk, after the extensive "shelling out" that had already taken place for his benefit.

The countenance of Henry was still the object of both their wishes, and Francis asked the English king for an interview, which was arranged to take place in France in the ensuing summer. Upon the appointment having been made, Charles ran over to England, to be the first to get Henry's ear, and seeing Wolsey's influence, did his utmost to win over that wary individual. The latter secretly aspired to the papal chair, and it may perhaps be said that his origin is proved to have been that of a butcher's son, because he began to look at everything with a pope's eye, and hoped to eat his mutton in the Vatican. Such frivolous reasoning is so unworthy the dignity

of history, that we reject it at once, and confine ourselves to the simple fact, that the triple crown of Rome was always running in or about the head of the ambitious churchman.



Original Size

The time now drew near for Henry to meet Francis the First, who, thinking to flatter Wolsey, requested that the management of the gorgeous scene might be left entirely to the taste of the cardinal. Wolsey's reputation as a getter-up of spectacles was exceedingly well deserved, for even when at home, he lived in a style of gorgeous magnificence. Every apartment in his house at Hampton was a set scene of itself, with decorations and properties of the most costly character. He kept eight hundred supernumeraries always about him as servants, "of whom nine or ten were noblemen, fifteen knights, and forty esquires." * Not contented with an ordinary chair, he always sat with a canopy over his head, and he allowed no one to approach him except in a kneeling attitude. His dress matched his furniture, for he wore a crimson satin surtout, with hat and gloves of scarlet, and even his shoes were silver-gilt —like a pair of electrotyped high-lows. His liveries

surpassed even those of the sheriffs of London; and his cook positively wore satin or velvet, so that this functionary was dressed more daintily and delicately than the most *recherché* of his own dinners. Wolsey, when he appeared in public, carried an orange, stuffed with scents, in his hand; for he used to say affectedly that there was always an exhalation from a vulgar crowd, which gave him the vapours.

** Fiddes' "Life of Wolsey," pp, 106,107.*

The preparations for the interview between Francis and Henry having been entrusted to such a master of all ceremonies as Cardinal Wolsey, could not fail to be made on a scale of unprecedented grandeur; and the place where the two monarchs met acquired the name of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," from the extreme gorgeousness of the scene in which they acted. The arrangements were nearly complete, and Henry had removed to Canterbury, for the convenience of the journey to France, when Charles of Spain, being jealous of the anticipated meeting, ran over to the Kentish coast, to say a few words to the English king before he left for the Continent.

Charles was received in a most amicable manner, but happening to see the late Queen Dowager of France, then Duchess of Suffolk, who might, could, would, or should have been his own wife, he turned so spoony and sentimental, that he could take no pleasure in the festivities prepared for him. "No, thank you, none for me!" was his almost uniform answer to every inquiry whether he would have a little of this, that, or the other, that was placed before him. He lost first his spirits, then his appetite, and ultimately his time, for he was fit neither for négociation nor anything else during his stay in

England. Having remained four days, he went home with a "worm in the bud" of his affections, and as he looked at the sea before him, he was overheard muttering that he "should never get over it." His courtiers thought he was alluding to the ocean but he was in reality soliloquising on the loss of his heart, which he left behind him; but happily this is a sort of parcel that can without much difficulty be recovered. On the day he re-embarked for Flanders, Henry set sail for France, having only put off his putting off out of compliment to his illustrious visitor.

A plot of ground between Guisnes and Ardres was fixed upon as the place of meeting, and a temporary palace—of wood, covered with sailcloth—was erected there, for the person and the *suite* of the English sovereign. Cunning workmen had painted the sacking at the top to look like square stones; but it was sacking, nevertheless, as the inmates found out in rainy weather. The walls glittered with jewels, like the gingerbread stalls at a fair, and the tables groaned, or rather creaked, under massive plate, which proves that the wood must have been rather green which had been used in making the furniture. Francis, making up his mind not to be outdone, got an enormous mast, and throwing an immense rickcloth over the top, stuck it up umbrella-ways in the part of the field he intended to occupy. A whirlwind having come on, the old rickcloth got inflated with the height of its position, and was soon carried away by the puffing it experienced. The whole apparatus took, for a moment, the form of a balloon; and the workmen, seeing it was all up, ran away just in time to avoid the consequences of a collapse, which almost instantly happened. Francis was glad to find more substantial lodgings in an old castle near the town of Ardres, where Wolsey

speedily paid him a morning visit. The cardinal, who had only intended to make a short call; remained two days, in which he arranged an additional treaty with the French king, who agreed to pay a large sum for the neutrality of England in Continental matters, and "as to Scotland," said Francis, "you and my mother shall settle that between you!"

"I?" exclaimed Louisa of Savoy, with surprise, "I don't know anything about diplomatic affairs!" but the cardinal flattered the old lady that she did; and by blandly remarking "he was positive that they should not fall out," he persuaded her to join him in the arbitration, for he felt pretty sure he should get the best of the bargain.

Business being concluded, Henry took out of his portmanteau a new dress of silver damask, ribbed with cloth of gold, and in this splendid suit of stripes he went forth to meet his brother Francis. The 7th of June, 1520, and the valley of Andren, were the time and place of their first coming together, when, according to previous arrangement, they saluted and embraced on horseback. Had one waited for the other to dismount and advance, they might have been standing there to this day, but by a clever act of equestrianism, they contrived to go through the form of introduction on the backs of two highly-trained steeds, to the great admiration of the circle in the midst of which they exhibited. Francis spoke first, but confined himself to a commonplace observation on the length of the distance he had come, and an allusion to the extent of his possessions and power. Henry replied somewhat cleverly, that "the power and possessions of Francis were matters quite secondary in importance to Francis himself, whom he, Henry, had come a long way to see," and thus contempt was adroitly blended with compliment.

The royal couple then dismounted, and took a turn arm-in-arm, as if in friendly conversation, after which they went together into a tent and partook of a very sumptuous banquet. Spice and wine were served out in great profusion, in a spirit of liberality equivalent to that which dispenses "hot elder, with a rusk included, a penny a glass," from many modern refectories. There was plenty of a sort of stuff called "*ipocras*," given to the people outside; but as we never tasted any "ipocras" and strongly suspect that it is a decoction from ipecacuanha, we cannot answer for the quality of the article in which the people "outside" were allowed to luxuriate.

CHAPTER THE THIRD. HENRY THE EIGHTH (CONTINUED).

AFTER the banquet, the kings came out of the tent, and Hall, the English annalist, got a near view of the French sovereign. Whether Hall had been immersed too thoroughly in "ipocras" to allow of his taking a clear view of matters in general, or from any

other cause, it is certain that the picture he gives of Francis the First is very unlike the portrait which Titian has left to us. Hall makes the French king "highnosed and big-lipped," with "great eyes and long feet," as if Hall saw everything double while under the influence of "ipocras;" but Titian, by toning down the nose, so as to make its bridge in conformity with the arches of the eyebrows, has turned out a not unpleasing portrait of the great original.

It had been previously announced that jousts would form part of the festivities, and accordingly, on the 11th of June, these entertainments began in a very spirited manner. The "braying" of trumpets made an appropriate introduction to the sports, ana the overture was echoed by braying of a more animated character. Each king fought five battles every day, and, of course, came off victoriously in every one; for the nobles and gentlemen of those times were most complacent in submitting their heads as dummies to aid the amusements of royalty. The season of the Field of the Cloth of Gold terminated with a fancy dress ball, in which Henry made himself very conspicuous by the character and richness of his disguises. The vastness of his wardrobe enabled him to astonish everyone by the effectiveness of his "making-up" and two or three of his masks were models of quaint ugliness.

At the end of a fortnight of foolery and feasting the two monarchs separated, and the memorable meeting of the Field of the Cloth of Gold passed from the hands of the costumier, the carpenter, and the cook, into those of the historian. Its chief result was to beggar many of the French and English nobles who had taken part in it, and gone to expense they could not support to outdo each other in magnificence. Thus did the Field of the Cloth of Gold

prepare the way for a sort of threadbare seediness, into which many belonging to both nations were plunged by their having done themselves up in an insane attempt to outdo each other.

Our account of the great meeting on the Field of the Cloth of Gold would not be complete without the following anecdote. Francis rose very early one morning, and made his way to the quarters of Henry, who was in bed and fast asleep on the arrival of his illustrious visitor. The French king shook the English monarch cordially by the whipcord tassel on the top of his nightcap, when the latter, springing out of bed, responded to the playful summons. "You see," said Francis, "I am up with the lark," to which Henry added, "And I am ready for the bird you have specified." The English king then expressed himself much obliged for such a mark of attention, and cast over the neck of Francis "a splendid collar," being, no doubt, the "false one" taken off on the night previous. It is believed by some that Henry, not knowing the object of the intrusion, collared the intruder at once; but the version of the story which we have already given appears to be the more probable. Francis, in his turn, clasped a bracelet on Henry's arm, or rather, according to an ill-natured reading of the affair, one cuffed the other for the collaring he had experienced. Henry rang his bell for his valet, but Francis would not permit the attendance of any servant, but laid out Henry's clean things with his own hand, taking in his shaving water, putting out his highlows to be cleaned, and taking them in again. *

** The minuteness with which these particulars are may cause a doubt of their veracity, but we refer to Mr. Fraser Tytler's "Life of Henry the Eighth," of which the anecdote we have given is fully reco*

Henry, on his return from the Field of the Cloth of Gold, took Gravelines in his way, and gave a look in upon Charles of Castile, who saw him home as far as Calais. This far-seeing prince saw that Wolsey had it all his own way with the English king, and the emperor took every possible opportunity of trying to "come over" the proud prelate. Charles promised his "vote and interest" to Wolsey, in the event of any vacancy occurring in the papal chair, and gratified his avarice by making him bishop of Placentia and Badajos.

Henry, after making a short stay at Calais, returned to Dover, and reached London, without a penny in his pocket, for both he and his courtiers were completely cleaned out by their recent extravagance. On the king's arrival, Buckingham got himself into trouble by his impertinent remarks on the expedition to France, and the dreadful waste of money that it had occasioned. He particularly pointed his sarcasms against Wolsey as the originator of all the expensive fooleries that had been committed, and he took every opportunity of gain saying all the fooleries that had been committed, and he took every opportunity of occasion, Buckingham had been holding a basin for Henry to wash his hands, when Wolsey, anxious to have a finger in everything belonging to the king, plunged his paws into the same water. The duke, desirous of administering a damper to the cardinal, spilt a quantity of the liquid over his shoes, when Wolsey becoming angry, threatened to "set upon his skirts," which meant in other words, that the cardinal would be down upon him.

There is no doubt that Wolsey took every opportunity of damaging Buckingham; but the duke himself was obnoxious to the king, and gave

particular offence by hiring a servant who had been a member of the royal household. Buckingham had been leading the life of a country gentleman, at what be modestly called his "little place" in Gloucestershire, when he received an invitation to Court; and, foolishly flattering himself that this little attention was shown to him on account of his merits, he unsuspectingly obeyed the summons. When he had proceeded some way on his journey, he found he was dodged by three disagreeable looking fellows in block tin, who turned out to be members of the king's body guard, and who were sure to be at his heels whenever he looked round over his own shoulder.

Having put up at Windsor for the night, he had no sooner been shown to his bedroom than he saw the same three fellows loitering in the yard of the inn he was stopping at. Once or twice, after occasion, Buckingham retiring to rest, he looked out of his window and fancied he saw one of the three knights crouching in a corner beneath his lattice, and he called out to the figure to be off; but the approach of daylight revealed to him the outline of an innocent water-butt, which he had during the hours of darkness imperatively desired to quit the premises. "I know you well," he cried several times to the tub, "and you had better go at once;" but his expostulations were of course disregarded in the quarter to which he was idly addressing them.



The Duke of Buckingham suspects that he is watched.

Original Size

Declining to stop at Windsor, he determined to breakfast the next morning at Egham; but he had no sooner entered the coffee-room than he was insulted by one Thomas Ward, a creature of the Court, which completely took away the appetite of the duke, of whom it was cruelly said that he could eat neither egg nor ham in the hostel at Eg-ham. He then rode on to Westminster, where he got into his barge and 'pulled down with the tide as far as Greenwich, but stopped at Wolsey's house on the way, and sent in his card to the cardinal, who sent out word that he was indisposed, and declined seeing his visitor. "Umph," said the duke, "I'm sorry to hear that, but I'll step in, and take a glass of wine, if you've no objection!" After a good deal of whispering among Wolsey's servants, Buckingham was shown into the cellar, where he took a draught of wine from the wood; but finding no preparations made for him, he changed colour—that is to say, he looked rather blue—and proceeded on his journey. As he continued pulling along the river, a four-oared, manned by yeomen of the guard, whose captain acted as coxswain, hailed

Buckingham in his barge, which was instantly boarded by the crew of the cutter.

The duke having been towed ashore, was at once arrested, and marched in custody down Thames Street, with a mob at his heels, all the way to the Tower. There were a few cries of "Shame!" and other demonstrations of disapproval, but the sympathy of the bystanders having evaporated in a few yells and a mud shower of cabbage leaves, Buckingham was left in the hands of his captors. On the 13th of May, 1521, Buckingham was brought to trial on the charge of tempting Friar Hopkins to make traitorous prophecies. This Hopkins was an old fortune-telling impostor, who had predicted all sorts of good luck to poor Buckingham, none of which ever fell to his lot; so that he had the double mortification of having been cheated out of his cash, for promises that never came true, and being punished for them just as much as if they had all been literally verified. Buckingham defended himself with great courage; and on being convicted as a traitor, he solemnly declared that he was "never none:" an indignant mode of exculpation, in which grammar was sacrificed to emphasis. He died, very courageously, on the 17th of May, 1521, and the barbarous ceremony of his execution created the greatest disgust among the populace.

Almost at the very moment that Henry was being guilty of the enormity we have described, he was putting himself forward as the champion of Religion. He professed the greatest horror of the errors and heresies of Luther, whom, in a letter to Louis of Bavaria, he proposed to burn, books and all, in an early bonfire. Finding that the great Reformer was not to be thus made light of, Henry turned author, and by taking up the pen, he, instead of consigning his antagonist to the flames, regularly burnt his own

fingers. There is no doubt that the royal scribbler had been thoroughly well crammed for the task he undertook; and Leo the Tenth having read the book, was good-natured enough to say, in the language of our old friend the *Evening Paper*, that "it ought to be on every gentleman's table." He published a sort of review of it in a special bull, and made the remark, that the author might fairly be called "The Defender of the Faith," a title which was not only adopted by Henry himself, but has been held, to this very day, by all subsequent English sovereigns.

Francis and Charles, the respective monarchs of France and Spain, had all this time continued their bickering, and they at length agreed to ask the arbitration of Henry. He declined interfering personally, but sent Wolsey in his stead, and the cardinal arrived at Calais on the 30th of July, 1521, with a magnificent retinue. His establishment consisted of lords, bishops, doctors, knights, squires, and gentlemen in crimson-velvet coats, with gold chains round their necks, which gave to the whole party an aspect of exceeding flashiness. Wolsey, notwithstanding the number and splendour of his followers, was at a very trifling expense, for he billeted the whole party at Bruges upon the unfortunate emperor, or rather upon his more unfortunate subjects, who were ordered by their sovereign to find everything that was wanted and put it all down to him in that doubtful document, the bill, which between a potentate and his people seldom meets with settlement. Rations of candles, wine, sugar *, were served out every evening to the whole of Wolsey's suite, so that all who wanted it had the ingredients of grog, while the candles enabled such as were so disposed to make a night of it.



The citizens of Bruges supplying Wolsey's suite with provisions.

Original Size

After spending ten days in the enjoyment of every luxury, at the cost of the contending parties, thus showing that he understood how to make the very most of his position as an arbitrator, Wolsey suddenly declared that he saw no chance of Charles and Francis being reconciled. The wily cardinal, having been regularly got hold of by Charles, drew up a treaty extremely favourable to the emperor, and even arranged that he should marry Henry's daughter Mary, though the young lady had been previously betrothed to the son of Francis.

This alteration in the domestic arrangements of the parties concerned was simply declared to be "for the good of Christendom," ** and Henry agreed to the plan with a nonchalant assurance that he really thought it the best thing that could be done, for he did not see "how his said affairs might have been

better handled." *** Pope Leo the Tenth, who was in league with Wolsey, the emperor, and Henry, in their joint arrangements for smashing France, agreed to give the dispensation for the proposed marriage; but Leo died before the nuptial treaty had been ratified.

** Cavendish.*

*** Galt's "Life of Wolsey," book ii., p. 43.*

****State Papers.*

On the death of Leo the Tenth, Wolsey lost no time in offering himself as a candidate for the vacant popedom. Secretary Pace was sent off at a slapping pace to Rome, to see the members of the conclave, and solicit their votes and interests for the English cardinal. Pace, however, seems to have been too slow to be of any use, and Adrian, Cardinal of Tortosa, who was put up almost in joke, and certainly to create a diversion against Giulio de Medici, one of the other candidates, was returned by a large majority. Wolsey's name does not appear to have been even mentioned on the occasion, and Pace took no step to further his employer's interests.

Francis having been thoroughly disgusted at the treatment he had experienced, tried, in the first place, to win Henry back to his cause by entreaties, and next by intimidation, in pursuance of which he shabbily stopped the pension of the English sovereign. When two kings fall out, their subjects are usually the sufferers; and accordingly, the English in France and the French in England became the objects of royal spitefulness. Francis stopped all the British vessels in his ports, and arrested the merchants, while Henry took his revenge by imprisoning the

French ambassador and making a wholesale seizure of all property belonging to Frenchmen. At length, the English monarch became so angry, that he sent a challenge by the Clarencieux Herald, offering to fight Francis in single combat, that each might have the satisfaction of a gentleman; but whether one refused to go out, or the other drew in, we are not aware, for we only know that the dispute did not end in a duel.

Doubts have been thrown upon the sincerity of Henry in thus inviting Francis to a personal encounter, but there is every reason to believe that, in the words of the *Bell's Life* of the period, "the British Pet meant business, though the Gallic Cock, having already won his spurs in other quarters, was not disposed to place them in jeopardy." Henry, with the customary determination of the English character had, no doubt, put himself regularly into training for the event to come off, and it is not unlikely that he may have frequently amused himself by a little practice on the effigy of his intended antagonist. The skill he thus acquired in planting his blows and putting in the necessary punishment at the proper points would have been highly serviceable had he ever been allowed to meet his man, and it is even said that a bottle of claret was placed in the middle of the head of the figure, so that Henry might fully realise the result of his sparring exercise. We know not how far we may put faith in these ancient records, but we are justified in giving them to the reader, who will separate, no doubt, the wholesome corn of fact from the chaff of mere tradition.



Henry practising previous to challenging Francis.

Original Size

In the meantime, Charles came over on a visit to his intended father-in-law, and was introduced to his infant bride, who was a child in arms, at his first interview. Henry and Charles indulged in a succession of gaieties, for which neither possessed the means, and Charles even borrowed money of Henry, while the latter made up the deficiency by running into debt to a frightful extent with his own people.

The king now began to find that he "must have cash," and he at once applied to Wolsey to assist him in raising more money. On these occasions Henry spoke in the most flattering manner to the cardinal, calling him endearingly his "Linsey Wolsey," in a word, "his comforter." The prelate readily entered into his master's views, but candidly pointed out the difficulties of extracting anything more from the London merchants. They had lately advanced £20,000 in a forced loan, and it was determined to vary the demand upon them, by substituting direct taxation for the empty form of borrowing. Wolsey ordered the mayor, the aldermen, and the most substantial citizens of London to attend at his

chambers, * when he announced to them the fact that the sovereign was hard up, and required pecuniary assistance. "What, again!" cried a voice which the cardinal pretended not to hear, but proceeded to say that he should require a return of the amount of their annual moneys from all of them. This proposition was the origin of that income-tax with which England has since been burdened; and the lovers of antiquity will feel some consolation in the knowledge that they suffer under a grievance which is hallowed by its ancient origin. There is to many a great comfort in being victimised under venerable institutions, and there are individuals who would rather be plundered in conformity with what are termed time-honoured principles, than be fairly dealt with upon any new system.

While, however, we are talking of the simpletons of the present day, the dupes and victims of the period of Henry the Eighth are being kept waiting in the presence of Wolsey. "Gentlemen," said the cardinal, "the country is in danger, ana the king wants your hearts;" an announcement which was received with cheers of assent, until it was followed up by a declaration that he must also try the strength of their pockets. Murmurs of dissent followed this intimation; but Wolsey went on boldly to say that the king would only require one-tenth of what they had, and if they could not live on the other nine-tenths, he did not know how they would ever be satisfied. "How will his majesty take the contribution?" at length exclaimed one of the aldermen. "In money, plate, or jewels," cried the cardinal; "but at any rate the thing must be done, and therefore go about it." ** A promise was made that the money should be repaid out of the first subsidy, which would have been a sort of improvement upon the old practice of

borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, for it would have been picking Peter's two pockets at once, and ransacking one under the pretext of replenishing the other.

** Supposed to have been over the gateway of Inner Lane, where Henry and Wolsey shared the rooms now by their successors, Honey and Skelton the hairdre*

*** Hall, by the salient wit of More, who had a nev every new star, and appropriate puns for all the p was the original author of that brilliant but anci of pleasantries on the "milky whey," which have si so universally popular; and to him may perhaps be the venerable but not sufficiently appreciated rem the music of the spheres must proceed from the bar Orion.*

Henry certainly had the knack of making his people's money go a great way, for it went so far when it passed into his hands, that it never came back again. The enormous sums he had extorted from the citizens soon melted away in dinner parties, pageants, and other expenses, so that he was at last, after a lapse of eight years, obliged to summon a Parliament. It was opened in person by the king, and the Commons elected Sir Thomas More as their speaker.

Sir Thomas More presented one of those rare unions of wisdom and waggery which may occasionally be found, and he was often sent for to the palace to make jokes for his sovereign. The king would often take him out on the leads at night, where after scrambling through the cock-loft, and getting out upon the tiles, Sir Thomas and his royal pupil would stand for an hour at a time, conversing on the subject of astronomy.

The king and Wolsey congratulated each other on having got Tom More as Speaker, for they thought he would act like one of themselves, and that he would soon laugh the people out of all the money they might be required to furnish. Henry and the cardinal foolishly imagined that the man who sometimes made a joke could never be serious; but they found out their mistake, for he proved himself an excellent man of business when occasion required. Wolsey thought to produce an effect by attending the House in person, and making a speech on that most unpromising topic the "crisis," though it was not such a threadbare subject in those days as in our own, when a "crisis" may almost be looked for as a quarterly occurrence. Happily, if we are remarkable for our rapidity in getting a "crisis" up, we have also a wonderful knack of putting it down again with equal promptitude.

The speech of Wolsey was listened to without reply; for, every member of the House considering the cardinal's intrusion a breach of privilege, remained mute and motionless. Irritated by their silence, the crafty churchman called up one of the members by name, and asked him for a speech; but the call might just as well have been for a song, since the individual indicated said nothing more than rise up and sit down again. Finding it impossible to get a good word, or indeed any word at all from the Commons, the cardinal lost his temper, and declared that, having come from the king, he should certainly wait for an answer; but Tom Moore, the Speaker—who, by-the-by, deserved the title, for he was the only one that spoke—began to show his wit by saying that the fact was, the Commons were too modest to open their mouths in the presence of so great a personage. Wolsey withdrew in dudgeon, and

after a few days' debate, it was at length agreed to give the money that had been asked, but to take five years to pay it in. Though Henry would no doubt have been perfectly willing to make a sacrifice for ready money, and allow a considerable discount on a cash transaction, his minister tried to accelerate the mode of payment without offering any equivalent for a restriction of the term of credit.

The autumn of the year 1525 was rendered remarkable by the confusion into which the Londoners were thrown, in consequence of the almanack-makers and astronomers having tried to give an impetus to their trade by throwing into the market a parcel of very alarming prophecies. It was predicted that the rains would be so tremendous as to convert the whole wealth of the metropolis into floating capital; and the merchants, fearing they might not be able to keep their heads above water, ran in crowds to the suburbs. Several parted with everything they possessed, and their foolish conduct in making their arrangements for being swamped formed a precedent, no doubt, for a case of recent occurrence, in which an individual of average income, having been led away by a prophecy that the world had only two more years to run, invested the whole of his property in the largest possible annuity he could procure for two years, being under the firm impression that beyond that time neither he nor his heirs, executors, or assigns would have the opportunity of enjoying a farthing of any surplus. As the world did not keep the appointment that had been made for it by the calculator of its final arrangements, he was left without a penny when the time he had assigned for its duration was up; and thus many had got rid of everything in 1525, under the expectation that all their sorrows and possessions

would be drowned in the inundation that did—not happen.

During the time the panic prevailed, a few of the tradesmen and artificers did their best to put it to a profitable account, and a turner of the time, who was so clever at his business that he could turn a penny out of anything, constructed several thousand pairs of stilts, and, placing them in his window labelled "Stilts for the inundation," he obtained numerous customers.

Wolsey's attention was suddenly called off from matters at home by a fresh vacancy in the popedom, occasioned by the death of Adrian.

The English cardinal immediately despatched a letter to his royal master, saying how unfit he was for the pontificate, when Henry, instantly taking the hint, and saying to himself, "Oh! ah! exactly! I see what Wolsey wants," wrote off strongly to Rome in favour of his election. Powerful efforts were made to secure his return and push him to the top of the poll, but though he got several votes, he was completely beaten by Giulio de Medici, who was elected to the papal chair by a very large majority. Wolsey bore his disappointment, to all appearances, exceedingly well, but the probability is that he saw the policy of keeping on good terms with the new pope, who made the cardinal his legate for life, and granted him a bull empowering him to suppress a number of monasteries, for the purpose of taking the money they possessed to endow his own colleges.



Election of Pope. Getting to the top of the pole.

Original Size

Henry and Wolsey declared that the cash should be devoted to "putting down" that "Monster Luther," as they sometimes called him, or that "fellow Luther," as they spoke of him now and then, by way of change, though his fellow did not exist at the period when the term was applied to him. Among the many irons that Henry now had in the fire was an Italian iron, with which he stood a pretty fair chance of burning his fingers, for he had interfered in the disputes between Francis the First of France and the Emperor Charles, who was at war in Italy. Francis had laid himself down on the pavement before Pavia, resolved to leave no stone unturned to place a curb on the foe and pave his own way to victory. As he lay under the walls, the cream of the Imperial army was poured down upon him with a savage violence that causes the blood to curdle at the bare recital. Thoroughly soured in his hopes, Francis plunged into the very thick of the Imperial cream, and beating around him with his sword in all directions, reduced seven men, with his own hand, to the inanimate condition of whipped syllabubs. His valour availed him little, for he was removed—to adopt the spelling of the period—in custardy. He was kept in captivity in Spain, at the strong fortress of Pizzichitone, from

which he wrote home to his mother—probably for the means of replenishing his *sac de nuit*—and concluded his note with the memorable words,"*Tout est perdu hors l'honneur*," which, for the benefit of that portion of the public who may have learnt their "French without a master," and have, consequently, never mastered it at all, we translate into "All is lost, excepting honour."

Francis being now completely down, Henry and Wolsey proposed to Charles that they should combine in making the very most of the helpless position of their prostrate enemy. Fortunately for the French king, his two opponents were not only deficient in funds, but had begun to quarrel; on the old principle, perhaps, that when Poverty stalks in at the door, Love hops out at the window. The pay of Charles's forces had fallen fearfully into arrear, and they declared they would no longer go on fighting on half salaries. It was therefore determined to bring the military season to a close; and the grand ballet of action, having for its plot the invasion of France—of which Henry had drawn out the scheme, and which was to have put forward the strength of a double company, comprising a powerful combination of the English and Imperial *troupe*—was postponed for an indefinite period.

Henry, who was ready to sell himself to either party, finding Charles too poor to purchase him, offered himself without reserve to Francis. Terms were soon arranged, by which Henry was to receive by instalments two millions of crowns, with a permanent annuity when the chief sum was paid off; and Wolsey was also handsomely provided for—at least in the shape of promises. While the agreement was most solemnly ratified by Francis himself and the chief of the French nobility, the Attorney and

Solicitor-General of France privately popped a protest on to the file, in order that the king, who was particular about his honour, might not have his scruples shocked should he subsequently feel disposed to break his word and fly off from his agreement. He found considerable difficulty in effecting his release without swearing to at least a dozen things he never intended to perform, and when the document was brought to him, full of concessions to Charles, he affixed his signature with the indifference of a man putting his name to a bill, regardless of the amount, which he does not mean to liquidate. He had no sooner got out of custody, and found himself comfortably seated before his palace fire, than Sir Thomas Cheney and Dr. Taylor walked in with a message from Henry the Eighth, to congratulate Francis on his delivery. "If you'll take my advice," said one of the visitors, at the same time handing his card, with

Dr. Taylor,

Jurist.

upon it, to give weight to his words, "you will pay no attention to the liabilities you have entered into with regard to the Emperor."

"Indeed, Doctor, I don't mean to trouble myself upon the subject," was the king's reply; "and in fact I have kept up a running accompaniment of private protests to every obligation I have undertaken." Dr. Taylor explained to him that he was on the safe side, for the bonds he had given were bad in law, having been executed while the king was under duress, and therefore not legally responsible. Thus did the chivalrous Francis, who had written so nobly about

having lost everything except his honour, present an early instance, of which later times have furnished so many, of the largest talkers being the smallest doers, or perhaps rather the greatest dos in the universe.

We have now to relate a curious personal anecdote of Henry the Eighth, which might have caused a considerable abridgment of his reign, much in the same way that the want of strength in the bowl in which the three wise men of Gotha went to sea, put a premature period to their little history. * Henry, in his early manhood, was one day running after a hawk, perhaps to put a little salt on its tail in the idle hope of catching it. The bird was actively retreating before its royal pursuer, and had just quitted a hedge by hopping the twig, when it traversed a ditch on the other side, which Henry endeavoured to clear by the aid of his leaping-pole. The attempt somehow failed, and the monarch pitching on to his head in the soft mud, sunk into it as far as his neck, and became planted with his legs in the air for several seconds. Happily a footman named Edmund Moody—"You all know Tom Moody" though you may never have heard of Edmund—came up at the instant and pulled the king up from the ground by the roots—at least by the roots of his hair—with wondrous promptitude. Had this accident proved fatal, Henry would have been the first instance of a monarch losing his crown by being planted instead of supplanted, which had been the fate of some that had preceded him.

** "Three wise men of Gotha*
Went to sea in a bowl;
Had the bowl been stronger
My story would have been longer."
—Old Nursery Ballad.

Though the fact is not stated, the inference clear that the "wise men" bowled themselves out of exist that rash proceeding.

It is now time for us to speak of the commencement of that spirit of Bluebeardism which ultimately gave the most glaring colouring to Henry's character. He had always been a little flighty and indiscriminate in his attentions to the fair sex, but he had hitherto treated Catherine with respect, until he met with Anne Boleyn, or Bullen, the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was descended from a former Lord Mayor of London, but by a series of clever match-making—a talent for which was inherited by Miss Anne—the family had succeeded in allying itself, by marriage, to some of the proudest aristocracy in the land.

One of their earliest "dodges" had been to repair the plebeian word Bullen, by omitting the U and substituting an O, which got it to Bollen. In the course of time, having been allowed an inch in the way of licence, they took an L, or at least one liquid absorbed another, and the word now stood Bolen. Subsequently a Y, without a why or wherefore, was dropped in, and the Bullens, who had probably acquired their name, originally, from having been landlords, or perhaps potboys, at the "Bull," had now assumed the comparatively elegant title of Boleyn, which has since become so famous in history. Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Nancy, had long lived about the Court, and had been employed as a deliverer of messages, or ticket-porter, for Henry the Eighth, on some important occasions. Anne, who was born in the year 1507, had in very early life gone out to service as maid—of honour—to the king's sister, Mary, who, when going over to be married to Louis the Twelfth, took the girl abroad, where she picked

up a few accomplishments. On Mary's returning home, a widow, Anne Boleyn found another situation with Claude, the wife of Francis the First, but after remaining in another family or two for a short time in France, she returned to England, where we find her, in 1527, engaged as maid of honour to Catherine of Aragon.

Henry having become deeply enamoured of Miss Boleyn, who had shown a strong determination to stand no nonsense, was suddenly seized with religious scruples as to his marriage with the queen; for he found out, seventeen years after the event, that he had done wrong in allying himself with his brother's widow. The fact of her being now an oldish lady of forty-three added no doubt considerably to the pious horror of the king at the step which he had taken. He accordingly began to think seriously of a divorce; and when Wolsey was sounded on the subject, the cardinal, for reasons of his own, yielded a prompt concurrence. He was anxious to pay off Catherine on account of a quarrel he had had with her nephew, the emperor; and thus, in the words of the poet of Dumbarton Castle,

"He sought to consummate his fiendish part
By breaking a defenceless female's heart."

He was sent as an ambassador to Francis, ostensibly to arrange about the marriage of Henry's only daughter Mary, but really, as it is believed, to induce the French king to consent that Wolsey should be a sort of acting pope during the investment of the castle of St. Angelo, where the Spaniards and Germans had made the real pontiff a prisoner.

Poor Clement bore his ill fortune with patience, though, as long as the investment of the castle lasted,

he used to say it was one of the most unprofitable investments in which he had ever been involved, and that nothing but the excessive tightness prevented him from selling out, for he was quite tired of the security.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH. HENRY THE EIGHTH (CONTINUED.)

THE reign of Henry the Eighth would become tedious were it not for the privilege we have assumed in dividing it into chapters; though we shall not follow the example of the melodramatists who suppose fifteen years to have elapsed between each of their acts, and thus carry on their plots by means of the imagination of their audience. It is true that many of the events of Henry's reign are dark enough to cause a wish that we might be allowed to omit them; but we must not give up to squeamishness what we owe to posterity.

We have not yet come to the catalogue of his various female victims, and we have yet to describe those matrimonial freaks upon which we would gladly have put a ban by forbidding the banns, had

we lived three centuries in advance of our present existence. We must, however, speak the truth; and though we might imitate the author of the play called *The Wife of Seven Husbands*, who requested the public to consider that a husband had elapsed between each act, we will not call upon our readers to imagine that a wife of Henry the Eighth has elapsed between each chapter.

We will now resume our narrative, and in the first place look after Wolsey, whom we left under orders to proceed to the French dominions; and as the cardinal must by this time have commenced the passage across, we will take him at once out of his unpleasant position, and land him at Boulogne.

Wolsey's reception in France was like that of a royal personage, and had all the inconveniences of such a compliment; for the firing of the guns at Boulogne frightened his mule, who had not been trained to stand fire, and who indulged in a kick-up of the most, extraordinary character.



Cardinal Wolsey at Boulogne.

Original Size

This interview with Francis resulted in three treaties, which were concluded on the 18th of August, 1527, * by the first of which it was agreed that the Princess Mary should marry young Francis, Duke of Orleans, instead of old Francis, his father, a point that had hitherto been an open question; the second treaty concluded a peace, and the third stipulated that nothing done by the pope during his captivity should take effect, but that as long as Clement was in durance, which it required all his fortitude to endure, Wolsey should have the management of ecclesiastical affairs in England. The pope himself good-naturedly sent over a bull to confirm the cardinal in his new powers; and "here certainly," says Lord Herbert, "began the taste our king took of governing, in chief, the clergy." His lordship might have added with truth that Wolsey had performed the wonderful physical feat of biting off his own nose to be revenged upon the rest of his face, for it is certain that the taste Henry had been encouraged to take of power over the church soon led him to be discontented with a mere snack, for his appetite grew fearfully by what it fed upon. Like the modest dropper-in at dinner-time, who sits down to take "just a mouthful," and is led on to the consumption of a hearty meal, Henry, who at first simply intended to pick a bit from the power of the pope, soon became a cormorant of church influence. Henry's thoughts were seriously occupied with the design of getting a divorce, and he therefore pretended to be in great alarm as to the succession to the throne, in consequence of a "public doubt" as to his marriage being lawful and the Princess Mary being legitimate.

** Lord Herbert's "Life of Henry the Eighth," p. 16*

quarto edition, 1741.

There is no question that the wish was in this instance father to the thought, and that, so far from Henry's desiring to silence all discussion on the point, he was the first to encourage the criticism of his wife's and his daughter's position. Notwithstanding his notorious flirtation with Anne Boleyn, which the forward minx decidedly encouraged, he pretended to be looking out for an eligible *parti* in the event of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon being officially nullified. He had a picture sent over to him of the Duchess of Alanson, sister to Francis, and used to pretend that he should probably set his cap at that lady; but the picture was a mere blind, or probably in a very short time it experienced a worse fate than that of a blind by being turned into a fire-board or consigned to a lumber-room.

The love-making of Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn was a mixture of mawkishness, childishness, hypocrisy, and scholastic pedantry, tinctured with an affectation of religion that was not the least disgusting feature of this disgraceful courtship. Henry used to write love-letters full of extracts from Thomas Aquinas, complaints of headache, reference to pious books, and sickly sentimentalism about "mine own sweet heart," while the good-for-nothing Nancy B. would reply by sending him pretty little toys and pretty little words of encouragement. She had made good use of her time in Wolsey's absence, for, when the cardinal came back, the king, in answer to his own question, "Guess who's the gal of my 'art?" which his friend gave up, enthusiastically responded, "Anne Boleyn."

The already corpulent monarch was stupidly and

spoonily love-sick about this "artful puss," as Catherine might have called her, and he used to leave scraps of paper about the palace scribbled over with charades, conundrums, ana anagrams to the object of his admiration. * Wolsey was a good deal annoyed by this avowal, but, finding his opposition would do no good, he changed his tack and fell in with the sovereign's fancy. Henry ordered him to consult Sir Thomas More, who, not at all liking the job, referred him politely to St. Jerome and St. Augustine, saying it was more in their way than his own, and he felt any interference on his part would be irregular and unprofessional. Wolsey next tried the bishops, who shook their heads and said, "You had better ask the pope," to whom the king at last determined upon a reference.

** One of these has been preserved; it is to the 1 effect:—"My first is the article indefinite (An); is a very useful animal (Bull); my third is the ak hospitality (Inn); and my whole is the 'gal of my An(n) Buli-Inn (Anne Boleyn)."*

The pope, whom we left locked up in the castle of St. Angelo, had been obliged to "come out of that" for want of provisions, and had escaped in the disguise of a gardener, in which a shovel hat may have been of some use to him. He played his cards so well as the one of spades, that, with the assistance of one or two true hearts who turned out trumps, he reached in safety the town of Orvieto, where he expected reinforcement from a French army. Long before the promised aid arrived, he received a card inscribed "Dr. Knight," and he had scarcely time to say, "Doctor Knight? Who is Doctor Knight? I don't know any Doctor Knight," when the king of England's secretary,

who bore that name, rushed into the presence of the pontiff. The doctor, having briefly explained his object in coming, which was to get the pope's consent to Henry's divorce, succeeded in extracting the requisite authority from his holiness, who was very unwilling, but he could not keep back his bull without finding himself on the horns of a worse dilemma. He at all events wished the matter to be kept secret for a short time; but a friend of Wolsey stepped forward to stipulate that an Italian cardinal should be sent to England with Dr. Knight, to prove that the document he took with him was genuine. Poor Clement, being afraid to refuse compliance, pointed to half-a-dozen cardinals standing in one corner, and hurriedly observed, "There, there, Dr. Knight, take any one of those, for the whole six are quite at your service." In conformity with this permission, Cardinal Campeggio was selected to visit England, and he carried with him in his pocket a decree, rendering final any judgment that he and Wolsey might agree upon.

On the arrival of Campeggio a public entry into London was proposed: but he excused himself on the score of gout, which had laid him by the heels, or rather seized him by the great toe, and prevented him from coming into the metropolis on the footing that he might have desired. After spending a few days with his leg in a sling, he was introduced to the king, whom he greatly irritated by advising that the business of the divorce should not be proceeded with. Henry began declaring that he had been deceived, and that the pope was an old humbug, which caused the gouty leg of the legate to tremble in its shoe; and, taking the bull from his pocket, he showed that the pontiff meant business, and had given full authority for transacting it.

Henry's desire for a divorce got soon rumoured about the city, and caused so much dissatisfaction that he called a meeting of the judges, lord mayor, common council, and others, at which it was announced that his majesty would attend to give explanations, and enter into a justification of his conduct. He made an elaborate speech of the most artful and hypocritical kind, in which he asserted that his religious scruples alone made him agitate the question of a divorce, and that if his marriage was valid, nothing would give him greater pleasure than to finish his life in the society of the old lady who had been for many years the partner of his existence. It is notorious that he had made up his mind to desert Catherine for Anne Boleyn; and his speech is therefore a disgusting specimen of low cunning, rendered doubly odious by the religious cant with which it was accompanied.

The unhappy queen, when visited by Wolsey and Campeggio, exclaimed at once, "I know what you have come about." She said she thought it hard to have her marriage doubted after nearly twenty years; and spoke pathetically of those early days when she was in the habit of going out a-Maying with her royal husband.



Original Size

"Ah, madam!" replied Wolsey, "if we could have May all the year round, it would be pleasant enough; but the spring of the year, as well as the spring-time of existence, is not perpetual." Catherine acknowledged she was not so young as she had been, and the English cardinal ventured to hint, that, even in those Maying days, she had the advantage of Henry—at least, if there can be any advantage to a lady who is her husband's senior. Finding pathos of no use, she proceeded to argument, and endeavoured to show that Henry had almost lost his claim to a divorce by mere *laches*, in having so long neglected to apply for one. The two cardinals only shook their heads, as if they would say, "I can't see much in that;" and she then ventured to take another ground for opposing her husband's project. She complained that her husband had paid for the licence and dispensation from the pope, but that the dispensation might be dispensed with as valueless, if one could supersede another at the instigation of the great and powerful against the comparatively friendless and impotent. At length, losing all temper and patience, she turned to Wolsey, taxing him with having "done it all;" when the wily cardinal did nothing but bow and smile in general terms, placing his hand upon his heart, muttering out, "Pon honour!"

"Nothing of the sort!" and giving other similar assurances that he had in no way instigated the conduct pursued by Henry.

The preliminary meeting to which we have referred was held in the Hall of the Black Friars, on the 31st of May, 1529; and an adjournment till the 21st of June having taken place, Wolsey and Campeggio were at their posts at the appointed hour.

Henry and Catherine were both in attendance; and the former, when his name was called, gave a terrific shout of "Here!" which had a startling effect upon the whole assembly. Catherine, though she might be considered upon her trial, was accommodated with a seat on the left of the bench, and was attended by four friendly bishops, who had come in the amiable capacity of moral bottle-holders to this injured woman. When her name was called she refused to answer, or to say a word; but the dignity of the queen soon gave way to the volubility of the woman, and her tongue started off into a gallop of the most touching eloquence. She commenced in the old style of appeal, by throwing herself at the king's feet, presuming perhaps, that if he had a tender point it might be upon his toes, and she should thus make sure of touching it. She then implored his compassion, as a woman and a stranger, concluding with a happy alliterative effect by declaring herself "a friendless female foreigner."

At the conclusion of a very powerful speech she rose slowly, and when it was expected she would return to her seat, she marched deliberately out of the hall, to the great amazement of the quartette of bishops by whom she had been accompanied. Henry was a little staggered by what had occurred; but he nevertheless made a reply, which was partly inaudible from the flurry of the king himself, and the consternation into which the Court had been thrown by the queen's very telling speech, and highly dramatic exit. He was understood to say, that he had a very high respect for the distinguished lady who had just addressed them; that she was a very good wife; that he had in fact no fault to find; but that really his scruples as to the lawfulness of his marriage had made him very uncomfortable. He

remarked that his conscience was so exceedingly delicate that it could not bear the slightest shock; and here indeed he seems to have spoken the truth, for his conscience appears to have died altogether within a very short time of the occurrence we have mentioned.

Catherine's departure from the Court turned out to be final, for nothing could induce her to enter it again; and, being pronounced contumacious, the proceedings were carried on in her absence. The two cardinals, out of regard to her majesty's interests, requested Dr. Taylor—an aged junior in the back rows—to hold a brief for the defendant, and examine the witnesses: a proposition at which the learned gentleman jumped, for he had previously been occupying his own mind and the official ink in sketching the scene before him on the desk, or handing down his name to posterity by cutting it out on the bench with a pocket penknife. Dr. Taylor, if he had practised little before, had quite enough to do on the occasion that brought him into notice, for Lord Herbert, in his "Life and Reign of Henry the Eighth," gives a list of thirty-seven witnesses for the plaintiff, all of whom our venerable junior had the task of cross-examining. Some idea may be formed of the magnitude of this achievement, when it is stated that several of the witnesses were ladies, and that the evidence of the first of them—namely, Mary, Countess of Essex—is summed up in the report as having amounted to "little," though conveyed in "general terms."

There is something truly overwhelming in the idea which this slight summary conveys; for it is impossible that the imagination can set any limits to the "little" a lady can contrive to say when she avails herself of "general terms" to give it utterance.

Cardinal Campeggio evinced a decided reluctance to bring the matter to a decision, though Henry's case was undoubtedly well supported by evidence; and old Taylor being, professionally speaking, a young hand, was able to do little for his absent client. The king at length grew angry at Campeggio's delay, and instructed counsel to move for judgment, which was accordingly done on the 23rd of July in a somewhat peremptory manner. The Italian cardinal refused the motion, and intimated that he would not be bullied by any man, "be he king or any other potentate." He then went on to say, that "he was an old man, sick, decayed, and daily looking for death:" which certainly gave no reason for delay; and a whisper to that effect went no doubt round the bar, and was caught up by Henry's counsel, who "humbly submitted" that "if the Court expected to be soon defunct, there must be the stronger reason for fixing an early day for its decision." Cardinal Campeggio got up somewhat angrily, and intimated that the cause must be made a "*remanet*;" that in fact it must stand over until next term, as he was not disposed to continue his sittings. "Is your lordship aware," asked Sampson, K.C., "that you will throw us over the long vacation? for we are now only in July, and the next term begins in October." The cardinal, who was half-way towards the robing-room, turned sharply round to observe that "the Court was virtually up," and that "he really wished gentlemen of the bar would observe more regularity in their proceedings." Sampson, K.C., had nevertheless got as far as "Will your lordship allow us?" in another attempt to be heard, when Campeggio, growling out furiously, "I can hear nothing now, Mr. Sampson," retired angrily to his private apartment.

** The King's leading counsel was Richard Sampson, was John Bell,—Lord Herbert's "Life of Henry the E p. 205,*



Cardinal Campeggio and Mr. Sampson.—"I can hear nothing now, Mr. Sampson."

Original Size

The Court never met again, and Campeggio left England a few days afterwards, having first taken leave of the king, who kept his temper and behaved very decently. He even gave a few presents to the refractory cardinal, but, as the latter lay at Dover previous to embarkation, his bedroom door was burst open, his trunks were rummaged, and probably all his presents were taken away again.

Wolsey, who had been associated in the hearing of the great cause, Henry versus Catherine, or the Queen at the suit of the King, fell into instant disgrace for the part he had taken, or, rather, for the part he had omitted to take, upon this momentous occasion. Miss Anne Boleyn, who had calculated on his keeping Campeggio up to the mark in pronouncing for the divorce, was especially angry with Wolsey for his apathy. Even the courtiers got up

a joke upon the supineness of the English cardinal by calling him the supine in(h)um, while Campeggio was compared to the gerund in *do*, by reason of his active duplicity, through which he was declared to have regularly done the English sovereign. Many of the nobility attempted to excite the avarice of Henry by hinting to him that Wolsey's overthrow would be a good speculation, if only for the sake of obtaining the wealth he had managed to accumulate; and from this moment the cardinal stood in the precarious position of a turkey that is only crammed to await the favourable opportunity for sacrifice.

Soon after the trial of his cause, in which he thought proper to assume that he was entitled to a verdict, Henry set off on a tour, accompanied by Miss Anne Boleyn, who, in spite of Hume's panegyric on her "virtue and modesty," appears to have been what is commonly called a very pretty character. Wolsey was not invited to be of the party, but he rode after the Court, for he was one of those hangers-on that are not to be shaken off very easily. He came up with the king at Grafton, in Northamptonshire, and was very kindly received, but the next morning he was told distinctly that he was not wanted in the royal suite, and that he might go back to London, after which he never saw his master's face again. * Henry, being anxious to ruin his late favourite *selon les règles*, took the very decisive method of going to law with him. Two bills were filed against the cardinal in the King's Bench, but Wolsey, nevertheless, proceeded to the Court of Chancery to take his seat, just as if nothing had happened. None of the servants of the Court paid him any respect, and it is probable that even the mace-bearer, the ushers, and other officers omitted the customary ceremonies of preceding him with the mace, and crying out, "Pray,

silence!" upon his entrance. On his expressing his readiness to take motions, he was responded to by one general motion towards the door, in which the whole bar joined. Being thus left quite alone, he amused himself by giving judgment in some old suit which had lasted so long that the parties were all dead, and he consoled himself by saying that this accounted for the fact of nobody appearing on either side.

** Cavendish.*

The king, hearing of the cardinal's proceedings, gave orders that he should be forbidden the Court altogether, and when he went to take his seat, as usual, he found the doors closed against him. When he got home to York Place, where he resided, he was told that two gentlemen were waiting to see him, and, on going upstairs, the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk requested to have a few words with him. They told him that the king intended to come and live at York Place, so that Wolsey must "turn out," to which he made no objection; but when they insolently and tauntingly demanded the Great Seal, he declared he would not trust it in their possession without a written authority. "How do I know what you are going to do with it?" cried the cardinal, holding it firmly in his grasp, and returning it to the sealskin case in which he was in the habit of keeping it. The two dukes, having exhausted their vocabulary of abuse, retired for that day, but came back the next morning with an order, signed by the king, for the delivery of the Great Seal, which Wolsey gave up to them, together with an inventory of the furniture and fixtures of the magnificent abode he was about to vacate in favour of his sovereign.



Wolsey surrendering the Great Seal.

Original Size

The catalogue exhibited a long list of luxurious appointments, and commencing with "a splendid set of curtains of cloth of gold," * went on with—a ditto—a ditto—and a ditto, down to the end of the three first pages. The neatness and variety of his table-covers cannot be conceived, and his magnificent sideboard of gold and silver plate was in those days unparalleled. He had got also a thousand pieces of fine Holland; but as the chief use of Holland is, we believe, to make blinds, as must regard the purchase of this material in so large a quantity, as one of those blind bargains which are sometimes the result of excessive opulence. Having made over all those articles to the king, Wolsey left his sumptuous palace, and jumping into a barge, desired the bargeman to drop him down with the tide towards Putney. The river was crowded with boats to see him shove off, and he was assailed with the most savage yells from the populace. As the bargeman gave Wolsey his hand and pulled him on board, the poor cardinal stumbled over a block of Wallsend, when an

inhuman shout of "That's right, haul him over the coals," arose from one unfeeling brute, and was echoed by countless multitudes.

** Herbert's "Life of Henry the Eighth," and Hume's of England."*

On reaching Putney, Wolsey gave the word to "pull her in shore," when he disembarked, with his fool and one or two others who had agreed to share his exile. They had not gone very far when they heard a cry of "Ho! hoi hilly hilly hoi" and looking back, they perceived Sir John Norris coming full pelt after them. The cardinal was mounted on a mule—hired probably at Putney, or picked off the common—and though he endeavoured to put the animal along by giving her first her own head, and then the head of a thick stick, the rise of a hill brought Wolsey to a dead stand-still. Here he was easily overtaken by Sir John Norris, who came, as it turned out, with a present of a ring from the king's own finger, and a "comfortable message." The abject cardinal went into the most humiliating ecstasies, and actually grovelled in the very mud, to show his humble sense of the kindness and condescension of his sovereign. Thinking that Sir John Norris possibly expected something for his trouble in bringing the grateful tidings, Wolsey shook his head mournfully, saying, "I have nothing left except the clothes on my back—but here, take this"—and he tore from his neck an old piece of jewellery. "As for my sovereign," he cried, "I have nothing worthy of his acceptance;" when suddenly his eyes lighted upon his faithful fool, who had been such a thorough fool as to follow a fallen master. "Ha!" exclaimed Wolsey, "I will send to his majesty my jester, who is worth a thousand pounds

to anybody who has never heard his jokes before; but as I am familiar with the entire collection, I have no further use for him." The faithful fool was exceedingly reluctant to go, and it took six stout yeomen * to drag him away—a fact which, as he was full of wit, proves the humour of the period to have been dreadfully ponderous. Some of the jests of our own time are heavy enough, but we doubt whether it would require half-a-dozen porters to carry a professed wag of the present day—including the Durden of his entire stock-in-trade—into the presence of royalty. It is not impossible that the obstinate resistance of the fool to a transfer from the service of a disgraced subject to that of a powerful king, may have been intended as a sample of his style of joking; but we can only say that if this was a specimen of his wit, the value set upon him by his old master was rather exorbitant.

** Lord Herbert, 293.*

Wolsey now lodged at Esher, where his spirits soon fell—if we may be allowed an engineering phrase—to a very dumpy level. Continual sighing had fearfully reduced his size, and he fretted so much that a sort of fret-work of tears seemed to be always hanging to his eye-lashes. His face became wrinkled and pale, as if constant crying had not only intersected his countenance with little channels, but had likewise washed out all its colour. It is not unlikely that he sometimes regretted having parted with his fool, whose dry humour might have mitigated the moisture or subdued the soaking which naturally resulted from the emptying of so many cups of sorrow over the dismal drooping and dripping cardinal. Nothing seemed to rouse him from

his despondency, and the people about him could never succeed in stirring him up to a fit of even temporary gaiety. After dinner they would sometimes ask him to partake of a bowl of sack; but at the mere mention of the word sack he would burst into tears, and sob out, that the sack he had already received had been the cause of all his wretchedness. Upon this he would leave the dinner table, and wander forth to enjoy his solitary whine in the wood, among the thickly planted solitudes in the neighbourhood of Esher. Sometimes he would sit pining for hours under a favourite pine, or would go and indulge in a weeping match with one of the most lachrymose he could find of weeping willows. All this crying brought on a crisis at last, and Wolsey had so damped all his vital energies by the incessant showers of tears he let fall, that he fell into a slow fever.

The king now seemed to take some compassion upon his former friend, and sent down a medical man to see the prostrate cardinal; though we are inclined to attribute this anxiety for his health to a desire to keep him alive until the process was complete for depriving him of all his property. At all events a Parliament was suddenly summoned, and a Bill of impeachment promptly prepared against the fallen and feeble Wolsey.

There were no less than four-and-forty articles in this document, which contained, among a variety of other ridiculous accusations, a charge of having, when ill with fever, "come whispering daily in the king's ear, and blowing upon his most noble grace with breath infective and perilous." This would, indeed, have been convicting him out of his own mouth; but though the Lords passed the bill, it was thrown out in the Commons, through a speech of

Thomas Cromwell, who had been secretary to the unfortunate cardinal.

Wolsey had always felt that when he did fall, he should fall not only as Shakespeare said, "like Lucifer," but like an entire box of lucifers, "never to rise again." Directly the cardinal learned that the bill had been defeated, his appetite returned, his cheeks resumed their colour, the furrows began to fill out, for grief had been at sad work with its plough all over his countenance. He had still a good deal of property left, but the king began tearing it away by handfuls at a time, until Wolsey had nothing left but the bishoprics of York and Winchester. Even these were a good deal impoverished by Henry, who made a series of snatches at the revenues, and divided the amount among Viscount Rochford, the father of Anne Boleyn—who used to say, "I am sure papa would like that," whenever there was a good thing to be had—the Duke of Norfolk, and a few other lay cormorants. Wolsey was at length completely beggared, by treatment that was of such an impoverishing nature as really to beggar description. He had nothing left him but a free pardon, a little plate—including two table-spoons, which his enemies said were more than his desert,—a small van of furniture, comprising, among other articles, an arm-chair, in which he was tauntingly told he might set himself down comfortably for life, and a little cash for current expenses. He was allowed also to move nearer town, and giving up his lodgings at Esher he took an apartment at Richmond, where he was not permitted to remain very long, for Anne and her party—including several knights of the Star and Garter—persuaded Henry to order the cardinal off to his own archbishopric.

The fallen prelate thought this forced journey so

very hard that he tried to soften it by easy stages, and he travelled at the slowest possible pace, in the hope of being sent for back again. At every inn he entered for refreshment on the road he always left a request in the bar, that if anyone should ask for a gentleman of the name of Wolsey, the enquirer should be shown straight up, without the delay of an instant. Not a knock came to the door of his bedroom but he expected it was a messenger from the king; and when he found, in many cases, it was "only the boots," his disappointment would vent itself in terms of great bitterness. Adopting the customary mode of showing grief in those superstitious days, he took to wearing shirts made of horse-hair next his shin, but donkey's-hair would certainly have been more appropriate. He had, however, become so accustomed to hard rubs, that a little extra scarification was scarcely perceptible. On his arrival at York, he endeavoured to make himself neighbourly with the people about him, and became a sort of gentleman farmer, expressing the utmost interest in rural affairs. He made himself an universal favourite, and was the lion of every evening party within twelve miles of his residence. He was, however, scarcely a figure for these *réunions*, in his horse-hair shirt; but he probably concealed the penitential part of his costume by wearing a camel's-hair waistcoat immediately over it.

The clergy were always getting up little *fêtes*, of which he was the hero; and he was invited to the the ceremony of installation in his cathedral, which he promised to go through, on condition of the thing being done as quietly as possible. It was understood that there should be "no fuss," but several of the nobility and gentry sent contributions of cold meat and wine, forming themselves in fact into a

provisional committee, so that the affair partook rather of the character of a picnic than of a pageant. Three days before it was to take place Wolsey was sitting at dinner, when there came a knock at the door, and it was announced that the Earl of Northumberland—his friend and pupil—was waiting in the courtyard. "Let him come up and do as we are doing," exclaimed the cardinal. "Dear me, I wish he had been a little earlier; but he is just in pudding-time, at any rate." As Northumberland entered the room Wolsey seized him by the hand, entreating him to sit down and enjoy a social snack—or, in other words, go snacks in the humble dinner. Northumberland seemed affected, when Wolsey, continuing his meal, observed, "Well, you will not make yourself at home, and I can't make you out, so I may as well finish my dinner." At length Northumberland, with a tottering foot, a trembling hand, a quivering lip, a faltering tongue, and a tearful eye, approached his friend Wolsey, and threw himself with a heavy heart—adding at least a pound to his weight—upon the old man's bosom. Wolsey had scarcely time to exclaim, "Hold up!" when the earl, mournfully tapping the cardinal on the shoulder, murmured, in a voice completely macadamised with sobs, "My Lord—(oh, oh, oh!)—I arrest you" (here his voice became guttural from a perfect gutter of tears) "for high treason." Poor Wolsey remained rooted to the spot, but it was soon necessary to transplant him, and he was speedily removed in custody. His old weakness again came over him, for he began to leak again at both eyes, as if he carried the veritable New River Head under the hat of a cardinal. He of course made himself ill, and indeed he was frequently warned that if he continued much longer in this liquid state, he would

liquidate the debt of nature altogether. The warning was verified very speedily, for on reaching Leicester Abbey, when the monks came to the door with a candle to light him to bed, he observed to the abbot, "Father, I am come to lay my bones among you." He died on the 29th of November, 1530, in the sixtieth year of his age, and was buried in Leicester Abbey.

News of his death was at once dispatched to Henry, who was having a little archery practice at Hampton Court on the arrival of the messenger. The king continued his sport for some time, until the straw man, upon whom he was trying his skill, had become thoroughly trussed with arrows, when his majesty turned round with an abrupt "Now then, what is it?" to the bearer of the sad intelligence. At the tale of Wolsey's death Henry pretended to be much affected, but he soon recovered his spirits sufficiently to inquire whether a sum of £1500 had not been left by the cardinal. The king expressed a desire to administer to his lamented friend's effects, but when the discovery was made, that instead of having £1500 to leave, Wolsey had just borrowed and spent that amount, his royal master thought it as well to have nothing to do with the business. Poor Wolsey had been the unfortunate goose who might have continued laying golden eggs for a considerable time had not Henry out him prematurely up for the sake of immediate profit.

We cannot part with Wolsey until we have dropped a few inky tears to his memory. We have already seen that his talents were considerable, but according to one of his biographers * he had a most elastic mind, or in other words he could "pull out" amazingly when occasion required.

** Galt, p. 199, Rogue's European Library.*

Some time before Wolsey's death a new ministry had been appointed, in which the family and friends of Anne Boleyn got very snug berths; but though in those days "any fool" could have a seat in the cabinet, it was necessary to have a chancellor of good abilities. The woolsack was literally in the market for a few days, until Henry thrust it on to the shoulders of Sir Thomas More, who would have declined the profitable burden, and who was somewhat averse to the Back of wool, because he felt that much of the material was obtained by fleecing the suitors. He, however, was persuaded to accept the dignity, or rather to undertake the burden, and he was even heard to say—by a gentleman who wishes to remain *incog.*—that he wished there were porters' knots for moral responsibilities as well as for actual weights, since it was exceedingly difficult to preserve one's uprightness beneath a load of dignity.

Among the persons recently introduced to Court was Thomas Cranmer, who happened to have met Dr. Gardiner, the king's secretary, and Dr. Fox at a private dinner table. As the party sat over their wine, the divorce of Henry was brought upon the *tapis*, and Cranmer made the sagacious observation, that the proper way would be to have it looked into. Gardiner and Fox exchanged glances, as much as to say "Shrewd fellow, that;" and they both agreed that he was a wonderful man for his age—which it will be remembered was the sixteenth century. They endeavoured to bring him out, and upon a free circulation of the bottle, Cranmer gave it as his opinion that there was "only one course to pursue," that "the thing lay in a nutshell," that "it was as clear as A, B, C;" a series of sentiments which, though

more knowing than conclusive, made a deep impression on Fox and Gardiner. "There's a great deal in that fellow," said Fox after Cranmer had gone home, and indeed there was a good deal in him, no doubt, for scarcely anything had been got out of him. The two doctors hastened to the king to inform him of the enormous catch they had got in Cranmer, whose winks, innuendos, and occasional ejaculations of "I see it all;" "Plain as a pike-staff," etc., etc., had made such a deep impression upon the two doctors. Henry was as much taken with their description of Cranmer as they had been with the original, and the king exclaimed in a perfect rhapsody, "That man has got the right sow by the ear;" * an expression which we are sufficiently pig-headed not to appreciate. It was arranged that Cranmer should be asked to dine at the palace; and after a good deal of desultory conversation, in which "Exactly," "I see it," "No question about it," were Cranmer's running fire of *ad captandum* remarks, Henry got so puzzled that he requested the gentleman to put his opinions in writing at his earliest convenience.

** Todd's "Life of Cranmer," Tytller's "Life of Her Eighth," etc., etc.*

The individual who had thus received instructions to act as pamphleteer in ordinary to the king, was sprung from an ancient family in Nottinghamshire, but he was destined for higher things than dragging out the thread of his existence in Notts, as we shall soon see when we proceed to unravel his history. His early education had been somewhat neglected, for his father was a sportsman, who took more delight in going out to shoot than in teaching the young idea how to follow his example. Young Cranmer's master

was a severe priest, who ruled his pupils with a rod of iron, and thrashed them with a rod of a different material. He snapped many a whip over the young whipper-snappers, as he was in the habit of calling his youthful charges, who, at all events, became hardened by the salutary treatment they experienced.

Cranmer applied himself with diligence to his studies, and in turn took pupils of his own at Cambridge, where he happened to meet one day at dinner with Fox and Gardiner, who, as we have already seen, introduced him to the sovereign. The pamphleteer elect to Henry the Eighth was lodged in the house of the Earl of Wiltshire, the father of Anne Boleyn, who used to lock the author up in a garret, with a pen and ink and something to drink, upon which he received instructions to "fire away" in support of the views of his master. Cranmer soon rattled off a treatise in which he smashed the pope, demolished every objection to Henry's divorce, and proved to the satisfaction of the king that he could do as he liked as to contracting a second marriage. "Would you say as much to the pope himself?" asked Henry of his literary man. "Ay, that I would, as soon as look at him," was the reply; upon which Cranmer was taken at his word, and sent off to Rome with old Boleyn, now the Earl of Wiltshire. As they entered the papal presence, Clement held out his toe to receive the usual homage, but the old earl positively declined to perform the humiliating ceremony, and after the pontiff had stood upon one leg for a considerable time, he found that he and his visitor must meet upon an equal footing. Cranmer, though not allowed a public disputation with the pope, took every opportunity of earwigging the people about him, and got many of them to admit that the king's

marriage was illegal, though they would not acknowledge that his holiness had no power to give it validity. Though Cranmer's pamphlet had proved everything, it had done nothing, and Henry beginning to speak of his exertions as "all talk," another tool was required to carry out the royal project. This tool came originally from a blacksmith's shop in Putney, in the shape of one Thomas Cromwell, of whom it has since been said that he was a sharp file, who would cut right through a difficulty, while Cranmer was active enough in hammering away at a point, but his hitting the right nail upon the head was generally very dubious.

The father of Cromwell did smiths' work in general, but nothing at all in particular, for he had amassed a decent fortune. His son was sent as a clerk to a factory at Antwerp, where he kept the books; but he soon abandoned accounts, in the hope of cutting a figure. He entered the army, and was present when Rome was made a bed of ruins, by getting a complete sacking. He next entered the counting-house of a merchant of Venice, who dealt in Venetian blinds and Venetian carpeting, but young Cromwell soon threw up the one and indignantly laid down the other. On arriving in London, he commenced the study of the law, and took chambers in Inner Temple Lane, which was, even at that early period, the grand mart of legal ability. Wolsey, who had lodgings over the gate hard by,* was in the habit of meeting Cromwell, who eventually became what is professionally termed "the devil" of that ingenious advocate.

** These lodgings still exist as Honey and Skelton' hair-dressers, who have preserved a series of inte historical documents, among which may be seen Wols*

brief, and other curious relics.

On the fall of his senior, Cromwell contrived to keep just far enough off to prevent himself from being crushed by the weight of the unfortunate cardinal, and offering his services to the king, was immediately retained in the great cause of Henry the Eighth versus Catherine of Aragon, ex parte Anne Boleyn. By the advice of Cromwell the authority of the pope was set at defiance, and in 1532 a law was passed prohibiting the payment to him of first-fruits; "which do not mean," says Strype, "the earliest gooseberries, to enable his holiness to play at gooseberry fool, but the first profits of a benefice."

Henry at last determined to cut the Gordian knot, by forming another tie, and in January, 1533, he solved the question of the divorce by marrying Anne Boleyn. The ceremony was performed in a garret at Whitehall, in the presence of Norris and Heneage, who were a couple of grooms, and of Mrs. Savage, the train-bearer of the bride, whose wedding came off much in the style of those clandestine affairs, in which the clerk gives the lady away, and the old pew-opener acts in the capacity of bridesmaid. Cranmer, who had lately arrived in town for the season, found a vacancy in the see of Canterbury, which he consented to fill up, without scrupling to take the usual oaths to the pope, though openly avowing himself a Protestant. Clement himself not only ratified the election of the man he knew was committing perjury, but even consented to make a reduction in the fees that were usual on similar occasions.

Thus did these two precious humbugs humbug each other and their contemporaries; but the historian will not allow them any longer to humbug

posterity. Cromwell swore obedience against his conscience, and intending to break his oath, but intent on obtaining the dignity which he could purchase by perjury, and Clement took a reduced fee, on the principle of half a loaf being better than no bread, from a man who, on the slightest opposition being offered to him, might have snapped his fingers at the papal chair as he did in his heart—if one can snap one's fingers in one's heart—at the papal authority. Thus did the great champions of Protestantism on one side, and Catholicism on the other, agree in a disgraceful arrangement, by which one sold his sacred authority for a pecuniary bribe, and the other bartered his conscience for a temporary dignity.

It has been said by Cromwell's apologists, that he took his false oaths with a mental reservation; but if this excuse were allowed to prevail, the conscience would possess a salve as efficacious as that of the quack which was warranted to cure every disease from apoplexy to chilblains, and prevent the necessity of patients with delicate lungs from exporting themselves abroad to avoid the danger of being left for home consumption.

The contemplation of so much hypocrisy, in such high quarters, having put us so thoroughly out of patience that we are unable to proceed, we break off here with the remark, that tergiversation and treachery have ever been common among even the highest in rank, and so we fear they will continue to be until—ha! ha!—the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. HENRY THE EIGHTH (CONCLUDED).



Original Size

HOUGH Henry the Eighth had already married Anne Boleyn, the little affair of the divorce from Catherine had not been quite settled, and, as it was just possible that his two wives might clash, he resolved to hurry on his legal separation from her, whom we may call, by way of distinction, the "old original." Cranmer, who was a very spaniel in his sneaking subservience to his royal master, was instantly set on to worry, as a cur worries a cat, the unhappy Catherine. A Court was immediately constituted, under the presidentship of Cranmer, to decide on the legality of her marriage, and the lady was cited to appear; but she did not attend, and, though summoned by her judges fifteen times, the more they kept on calling the more she kept on not

coming. Difficult as it is in general to anticipate what a judicial decision will be, the judgment in the case of the King *ex parte* Anne Boleyn *versus* Catherine of Aragon might be foreseen very easily. The marriage was, of course, pronounced illegal, and Cranmer wrote to Henry on the 12th of May, 1533, to say that he had just had the pleasure of pronouncing the "old lady" *vere et manifesté contumax*. The Court declared she had never been married to Henry, but was the widow of the Prince of Wales, to whose title she must in future restrict herself. When the news was brought to her, she exclaimed indignantly, "Not married to the king? Marry come up, indeed!" and the wretchedness of the pun speaks volumes for the misery to which she had been reduced by her enemies.

Henry, wishing to make the work complete, and aware that *finis coronat opus*, determined that a coronation should be the finishing touch of his recent matrimonial manoeuvring. The ceremony was performed with great pomp on the 1st of June, 1533, when, though the regular crown was used, the weak head of Anne was too feeble to bear it, and it was replaced by a smaller diadem, which had been purposely prepared as a substitute. When Clement heard of what had been passing in England, he sent forth a bull, expecting that Henry would be immediately cowed by it. The pontiff ordered the monarch to take back his original wife, but the latter refused to listen to any motion for returns, observing that those who are at Rome may do as Rome does, but that he should entirely repudiate the papal jurisdiction. A Parliament which was held soon after seconded the sovereign's views, and, by way of paying off the pope, he was deprived of all fees, rights, and privileges which he had hitherto enjoyed

as head of the Church of England. The ecclesiastical party in England had been subservient to the whim of Henry, and had assisted in nullifying its own supremacy over the State by cutting off its own head; so that the experiment of amputating one's own nose to be revenged upon one's face was somewhat more than realised.



Birth of the Princess Elizabeth.

Original Size

On the 7th of September, 1533, Anne Boleyn became the mother of a little girl, who was named Elizabeth, and the courtiers of the day already offered to lay heavy bets on the future greatness of Betsy. The king, who had buoyed himself up with the hopes of a boy, was a little angry at the unfavourable issue, and he vented his ill-humour in further insults towards the unfortunate Catherine. Everyone who continued, either by design or accident, to call her queen was thrown into prison, and even a slip of the tongue, occasioned by absence of mind, was followed by absence of body, for the luckless offender was

dragged off to gaol, from the bosom or his family.

Henry having lopped off Catherine as a branch of the royal tree, and grafted Anne Boleyn on the trunk, began to think about the successional crops, in the treatment of which he was assisted by a servile Parliament. Little Mary, Catherine's daughter, was rooted out like a worthless marigold, and Elizabeth was declared to be the rising flower of the royal family. Among the atrocities committed by Parliament on account of its miserable subserviency to the will of the king, was the bill of attainder of high treason, passed against a female fanatic called the Maid of Kent, and some of her accomplices. This person, whose name was Elizabeth Barton, and who resided at Aldington in Kent, was subject to hysterical fits, as well as to talking like a fool, which in those days—as in these—was often mistaken for a symptom of superior sagacity. Extremes are said to meet, and the mental imbecility of Miss E. Barton was thought by many to border on an amount of wisdom which only inspiration could impart, and the semi-natural got credit for the possession of supernatural attributes. Some of her idiotic and incoherent talk having been heard by her ignorant companions, was declared by them to be inspired, because it was something they did not understand; and as knavery is always ready to turn to profit the idea that folly sets on foot, persons were soon found willing to take the Maid of Kent under their patronage for political purposes.

Richard Maister or Masters, the vicar of the place, whom Hume calls "a designing fellow" behind his back, whatever the historian might have said to the reverend gentleman's face, was the first to take an interest in Elizabeth Barton, and introduced her to public notice as a sort of mesmeric prodigy; in which

capacity she brought out a bundle of Sybiline leaves, with the intention, probably, of making a regular business of telling fortunes. Anxious for the recommendation of being able to announce herself as "Prophetess in Ordinary to the King," Miss Barton began predicting all sorts of things with reference to Henry; but unfortunately she had not the tact to make his majesty the subject of happy auguries. She hoped, perhaps, that if she went to work boldly, he would buy her off; for it has sometimes proved a good speculation to establish a nuisance in a respectable neighbourhood, which will often pay the annoyance to remove itself to some other locality. Miss Burton did not, however, manage so well, for instead of getting literally bought up, she was destined to be put down very speedily. Making a bold bid for royal patronage, she prophesied that if Henry put away Catherine he would die a violent death within seven months; and Elizabeth Barton thus made sure that if the king declined treating with her for the stoppage of her mouth, the ex-queen would at least make her some compliment in return for her complimentary prophecy. Henry, who had no objection to her dealing out death either wholesale, retail, or even for exportation, to some of his popish enemies abroad, could not allow such a liberty to be taken with his own name; and accordingly the fortuneteller, who professed to hold consultation with the stars, was brought up before the Star Chamber. She soon found in the president a Great Bear more terrible than the Ursa Major to whom she had been accustomed; and perceiving by the rough manner of the assembled stars of the Star Chamber that theirs was anything but a Milky Way, she was glad to own herself an impostor, for she saw that it would have been useless to plead not guilty before

judges who, according to her own conviction, were resolved on convicting her. She was committed to prison on her own confession; and as the seven months within which Henry would have become due, according to her prediction of his death, had expired, it was to be hoped that he, at least, would have been satisfied without subjecting Miss Barton to further punishment. He however seemed to have become positively irritated at the falsehood of her prophecy; and because he had not died in the proper course, he subjected the maid and six accomplices to a bill of attainder of treason, in pursuance of which they were all executed on the 21st of April, 1534, at Tyburn.

We will not dwell on the disgusting subject of Henry's cruelties towards such excellent men as Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, both of whom fell victims to the ferocity of their royal master. Their conscientious refusal to recognise Henry as the head of the Church had excited his rage, which increased to the height of savageness when the pope offered to send to poor Fisher the hat of a cardinal. The king at first attempted to put a prohibition on the importation of all hats; but anticipating that the *chapeau* intended for Fisher might be smuggled into England, Henry contented himself with the barbarous joke, that the hat would be useless without a head to wear it on. The monarch soon carried out his threat, and then turned his fury upon the unfortunate Sir Thomas More, who had retired into private life in the hope of escaping Henry's tyranny. This, however, was impossible; for though conscience must often have whispered "Can't you leave the man alone?" some evil genius kept ever and anon murmuring the words, "At him again," into the ears of the despot.

Among the petty persecutions to which More was exposed, was the taking away of all writing implements from the good old man, who, deprived of pens and ink, took a coal as a substitute. He at length learned to write with a piece of Wallsend as rapidly as he could use a pen, and, with a coalscuttle for an inkstand, he never wanted the material to keep alive the fire of his genius. Considering how famous he was for the use of "words that burn," we do not see how he could have found a better instrument than a piece of coal for transcribing his sentiments. A pretext was soon found for taking the life of this excellent man, whose facetious bearing at his own execution shall not mislead us into unseemly levity in alluding to it. He made jokes upon the scaffold; but we must admit that they are of so sad and melancholy a description, as to be scarcely considered inappropriate to his very serious position. So much has been said of the wit of More, that we may perhaps be excused for hazarding a word or two concerning it. Judging by some of the *bon mots* that have been preserved, they seem to us hardly worth the expense of their keep; for as horses are said to have eaten off their own heads, so the witticisms of More appear in many instances to have consumed all their own point, or, at all events, the rust of ages has a good deal dimmed their brilliancy. His wife had but little respect for his waggery, and would sometimes ask him "how he could play the fool in a close, filthy prison?" and she evidently thought it was carrying a joke a little too far, when she found her husband would not "drop it" even in the Tower. His allusion to his being obliged to write with coals instead of pens, which caused him to say that "he was but a wreck of his former self, and had better be scuttled at once," seems to us equally deficient in

point and dignity. He was executed on the 6th of July, 1535, after a quantity of badinage with the headsman, which makes us regret, for the sake of More, that any reporters were allowed to be present.

Henry had now come to open war with the Church of Rome, and, under the advice of Cromwell, he determined to make a profit as well as a pleasure of the recent rupture.



Henry is determined not to be bullied.

Original Size

While the pope let loose his bulls upon the king, the latter turned out his bull-dogs, in the shape of emissaries, empowered to pillage the rich monasteries in England. Cromwell acted as whipper-in to this cruel sport, and hounded on the servile dogs at his command, in pursuit of those monastic herds, which had been luxuriating in the rich pastures the church had hitherto afforded.

It is true that many impositions on the public were

discovered by the emissaries of Henry; but one fault does not justify another, and the frauds of the monks afforded no excuse for the robbery committed by the monarch. We may feel indignant at the showman who exhibits on his delusive canvas "more, much more," than his caravan can hold, but we have no right to appropriate to ourselves the whole of his stock because he has been guilty of trickery. Henry did not pocket the whole of the proceeds thus unscrupulously obtained, but gave a few slices to the church, by creating half-a-dozen new bishoprics and establishing a professorship of two in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and he threw them a few crumbs of the good things he had seized, more with the hope of stopping the mouths than satisfying the appetites of the hungry claimants.

Poor Catherine of Aragon died at Kimbolton on the 8th of January, 1536, after writing a letter to the king, which it is said extracted one tear from the sovereign's heart—a circumstance which must have raised hopes at the time, that the process of extracting blood from a stone might not be found impossible.

The year 1536 was marked by a voyage of discovery under the patronage of the king, for the purpose of sending some emigrants on a wild-goose chase to the north-west coast of America. Thirty of the adventurers were gentlemen from the Temple and Chancery Lane, who, thinking anything better than nothing, had probably dashed their wigs to the ground, and thrown themselves on the mercy of that motion of course which the sea was certain to supply them with. It is said, though we know not with how much truth, that the learned wanderers being short of provisions, made each other their prey—a result to be expected when clients were not accessible. It is

added that none of the party returned but a learned gentleman of the name of Ruts, who was so changed that his father and mother did not know him until he pointed to a wart which had not been washed away by the water.

Henry continued his hostility to the pope, absurdly declaring that he would not be bullied, and in defiance of the papal see caused Anne Boleyn, who is said to have exulted over the death of Catherine, to drain the cup of sorrow, or rather to lap it up: for she one day found Jane Seymour, a maid of honour, sitting on the knee of Henry. It was in vain that the monarch and his new favourite endeavoured to laugh the matter off as a mere *lapsus*, for Anne declared that the king must have begun to nurse a new passion.



Henry making love to Jane Seymour.

Original Size

As they who are convicted of a fault themselves are anxious to pick holes in the conduct of others, Henry having been proved to see more in Seymour

than became him as a married man, commenced harbouring suspicions against Anne Boleyn. On May-day, 1536, there had been a royal party at Greenwich—in fact, a regular fair—when suddenly, in the midst of the sports, Henry started up exceedingly indignant at something he had witnessed. The queen did the same, and her husband pretended that he had seen her either winking at one Norris, a groom, or clown to the ring, in which the jousts were going forward, or making signals to Mark Smeaton, a musician in the clerical orchestra. Several persons were seized at once, and sent to the Tower, including poor Smeaton, the member of the band who was accused of acting in concert with men of higher note, to whom he was charged with playing second fiddle.

Poor Anne was taken to the Tower, where a number of scandalous old women were sent about her to talk her into admissions against herself, and to talk her out of anything that they could manage to extract from her simplicity. She wrote what may justly be called "a very pretty letter" to the king, dated the 6th of May, 1536; but if any answer was received it must have come from Echo, who is the general respondent to all communications which receive no attention from the parties to whom they are directed. On the 12th of the same month Norris, Weston, Brereton, and Smeaton were tried and executed, all denying their guilt but the musician, who changed his key note a little before he died, and modulated off from a *fortissimo* declaration of innocence to a most *pianissimo* confession. There is every reason to believe that this composition of Smeaton was a piece of thorough base, which is only to be accounted for on the score of treachery.

On the 15th of May, a building as trumpery as the

charge against her having been knocked together in the Tower, Anne Boleyn was brought up for trial before a court of twenty-six barons, one of whom was her own father, while her uncle the Duke of Norfolk sat as president. It would be imagined that a jury comprising two relatives would have given a positive advantage to Anne; but her uncle being a rogue, and her father a fool, the former was too venal, and the latter too timid, to be of any use to her. She pleaded her own cause with such earnestness, that everyone who heard how she had acquitted herself, thought that her judges must have acquitted her. They, however, found her guilty, to the intense bewilderment of the Lord Mayor, who had heard her defence, and could only go about exclaiming, "Well, I never! did you ever?" for the remainder of his existence.

It would seem that there was something in the mere prospect of the axe, which imparted its sharpness to the intellects of those upon whose heads the instrument was on the point of falling. We have already alluded to the *mots* of More when he was positively moribund, and the quips of the queen became very numerous and sparkling as the prospect of the scaffold opened out to her. She made a sad joke upon the little span of her own neck—in reference, no doubt, to the small span of human existence—and paid a compliment to foreign talent by requesting that she might have the benefit of the services of that sharp blade that had just come from Calais—alluding to the recent arrival of the French executioner.

Henry was on a hunting party in Epping Forest, and was breakfasting on Epping sausages, when the execution took place, the announcement of which he had ordered should be made to him by the firing of a

gun as a distant signal. During the *déjeûner* Henry kept continually exclaiming "hush," and entreating "silence," with all the energy of an usher in a court of law, until a loud bang boomed over the breakfast-table. Henry instantly started up, exclaiming, "Ha, ha! 'tis done!" and ordering the dogs to be let slip while his breakfast-cup was still at his lip, he resumed his sport with even more than his wonted gaiety. On the very next day, he was married to Jane Seymour, there having been a very short lapse of time since she was discovered on the lap of Henry.

A Parliament having been speedily assembled, that servile body passed every act that Henry desired, and began by cancelling, in one batch, the entire issue of his former marriages. The princesses Mary and Elizabeth were declared illegitimate, while the condemnation of Anne Boleyn was legalised by statute; a measure which was a little tardy, considering that she had already lost her head in pursuance, or rather in anticipation of the confirmation of her sentence.

The destruction of monasteries was now carried on with a most brutal rapacity, and a mixture of barbarism and barbarity that disgusted a great portion of the community. Not satisfied with robbing the inmates of the monasteries, Henry's myrmidons destroyed the buildings themselves with the most wanton violence, and it was remarked that they were never contented with emptying a cellar of all its wine, but must always remain to take shots at the bottles. This unprovoked and tasteless taste for mere mischief roused the discontent of the people in many places, and the Lincolnshire fens assumed the offensive with one Mackrel, an odd fish, as the leader of the insurgents. This Mackrel soon got himself into a sad pickle, for he was executed at a very early

period of the insurrectionary movement.



Henry VIII Mad Hunting

Original Size

On the 12th of October, 1537, her majesty Queen Seymour gave birth to a son, an event which made Henry as happy as a king, or at least as happy as such a king, with such a conscience as Henry carried about with him, could possibly make himself. He dandled the royal infant in his arms with all a parent's pride, and sang snatches of nursery ballads in the ear of the baby. The child was called Edward, which Henry fondly translated into Teddy Peddy; and three little coronets—the size of first caps—were instantly made for the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cornwall, and the Earl of Chester, for such was the *tria juncta in uno* formed by the birth of the illustrious little stranger. The queen died in twelve days after giving birth to an heir; but this circumstance did not seem to affect the spirits of Henry, who perhaps felt that there was one more wife out of the way, without the trouble and expense of getting rid of her.



Delight of Henry at having a Son and Heir.

Original Size

The arbitrary monarch now experienced a good deal of trouble from one Pole, whom the tyrant made several attempts to bring to the scaffold. This Pole was remarkable for standing erect, and for his firmness, after once taking his ground, in keeping his position.

He was the son of Sir Richard Pole and Margaret Countess of Salisbury, for the first Pole was a kind of leaping Pole, with a strong tendency to raise not only himself, but all those that belonged to him. Reginald, for such was the name of the Pole that had stirred up the rage of Henry, had received from the pope a cardinal's hat, with the assurance that such a Pole ought not to be bare, but deserved the most honourable covering. Being himself resident abroad, he was as much out of the English tyrant's power as if he had been the old original North Pole, of whom we have all heard; but his brothers and relatives at home were seized upon, and either executed or burnt like so much firewood. Parliament aided the despotism of the king, by passing a suicidal act,

declaring that a royal proclamation should have the force of law; a resolution equivalent to an act of self-destruction; for if the king could do everything by himself, there was, of course, no occasion for Lords and Commons to help him in the task of government.

Henry having become disembarrassed of no less than three wives, began to think so little of the encumbrance of matrimony, that he contemplated a fourth engagement. It was indeed natural enough that he should be fearless of that which might make bolder men afraid, for he had given evidence of a facility in making an escape, and he consequently risked little by braving danger. He advertised, as it were, for a wife, in all the markets of European royalty, and he continued popping a series of questions; but his—to revive a *mot* (we cannot call it a *bon mot*) of the period—was of all pops the most unpopular. "Nobody will have me, by Jingo," he would sometimes mutter to himself; and at length the wily Cromwell proposed to act as matrimonial agent to his majesty.

The Duchess Dowager of Milan was treated with for her hand, but she wrote back to say that if she had a couple of heads, she might listen to Henry's proposal, for he would certainly cut off one, and it would be awkward not having another head to fall back upon. He next sent an offer to the Duchess of Guise, saying that wedlock, coming to him in such a Guise, would be the height of happiness; but this lady politely excused herself, on the ground of a "previous engagement." Somewhat hurt by these repeated rebuffs, he requested Francis the king of France to "trot out" his two sisters for Henry to take his choice; but Frank said frankly that he would have nothing to do with the humiliating business. We have it on the authority of a letter among Cromwell's

correspondence, that Henry was rather taken with Madame de Montreuil, a French lady, who having come from France to Scotland in the suite of Magdalen, first queen of James the Fifth of Scotland, was now on her way back again. Henry appears to have gone to Dover for the purpose of meeting her on the pier or the parade; but he must have found her *passé* as he surveyed her through his glass, for nothing came of their meeting. The lady lingered in England to give him every chance, but Henry could only shake his head, observing "No! by Jove it won't do;" and Madame de Montreuil, pitying his want of taste, was compelled to return to her own country.

At length Cromwell came running one morning to Henry, exclaiming, "I think I've found something to suit your majesty at last," and placed in the king's hand the card of "Anne, second daughter of John Duke of Cleves, one of the princes of the Germanic Confederacy." Henry was not possibly averse to the match, but was wavering, when Cromwell produced a lovely portrait as that of the candidate for the hand of the English sovereign. The king examined the picture with the eye of a *connoisseur*, and being pleased with the sample, ordered the lot to be sent over to him with as little delay as possible. The picture was by Holbein, who had utterly concealed the plain fact, and bestowed upon the German princess such handsome treatment, that he had imparted the lustre of the brilliant to an object which was as inferior to the copy, as German paste is worthless by the side of the diamond. Henry hastened, on her arrival in England, to compare the original with the picture; and having disguised himself, sent forward Sir Anthony Brown to say that a gentleman was coming on to see her, with a new year's present. Poor Brown was fearfully taken aback

at seeing a lady so thoroughly *laide* as Anne of Cleves, but gave no opinion to his royal master. * Henry went tripping into the apartment with all the ardour of a youthful lover; but the first glance was enough, and he shrunk back, muttering to himself, that the princess instead of looking like the picture of Holbein, reminded him rather of the picture of misery. He nevertheless summoned up all his resolution to give her a kiss; but it was clear to all who witnessed the scene, that Henry repented a bargain in which he found himself mixed up with such a decidedly ugly customer. After a few minutes passed in small-talk—the smallness of which limited it to twenty words—Henry went away in deep dudgeon, but he made up his mind to the marriage, lest he might be involved with any of the German powers in an action for a breach of promise.

The evening before the nuptials were solemnised, Henry sat with Cromwell, bewailing—probably over some nocturnal grog—the "alarming sacrifice," that had become unavoidable. The statesman, who had recommended the match, tried hard to soften down some of the most repulsive features of Anne; but Henry coarsely described her as "a great Flanders mare," and Holbein as a "humbug" for having so grossly flattered such a coarse clumsy animal. "By my troth," he exclaimed—for his indignation rose as the liquor in his glass became lower—"you got me into this scrape and you must get me out of it. I shall expect you to find some means of abating for me this frightful nuisance."

Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, the head of the popish party in the church, was, of course, an opponent of Cromwell, and took advantage of the recent matrimonial mistake, to damage him still further in the opinion of his royal master. Gardiner

flattered himself that the train had been already laid, and that the awfully bad match which Cromwell himself had provided, would certainly hasten the explosion that there was good reason to anticipate. The wily Bishop of Winchester introduced Catherine Howard, the lovely niece of his friend the Duke of Norfolk, to the king, who was instantly struck by her beauty, and said warmly, "Ha! the man who has discovered this charming Kate knows how to cater for his sovereign." *

** Strype—who certainly deserves a hundred stripes recording such an atrocity.*

Cromwell's doom was now sealed, and the Duke of Norfolk, on the 10th of June, 1540, had the luxury of taking into custody his political antagonist. A charge of having one day pulled out a dagger, and declared he would stick to the cause of the Reformation, even against the king, was speedily got up, and, by the 28th of July, he was disposed of, at Tower Hill, in the customary manner. While in prison, he wrote a pitiful letter to Henry, with the word "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy!" reiterated thrice as a P.S.; the meanness and tautology of which evinced a poverty in the spirit as well as in the letter.

The king had now determined to marry Catherine Howard, but the old difficulty—another wife living—stood in the way of the desired arrangement. Having consulted his attorney, it was proposed to search for some previous marriage contract in which Anne of Cleves had been concerned; and as everybody is engaged, on an average, at least half-a-dozen times before being married once, there would have appeared little difficulty in accomplishing Henry's wishes.

The excessive ugliness of Anne of Cleves, however, placed great obstacles in the way, for she had clearly been a drug in the matrimonial market, and neither by hook nor by crook could an old offer for her be fished up until something of the kind from the young Prince of Lorraine—entered into before he was old enough to know better—was happily hit upon. A commission was at once issued, the matter tried, and of course decided in Henry's favour. By way of strengthening the king's case, it was urged by his learned counsel that he had married against his will, and therefore ought to be released from his contract. The Court, however, held that the establishment of such a principle would be almost equivalent to the passing of a general divorce act for half the couples in Christendom, and on that point at least the rule for a new trial of Henry's luck was refused accordingly. His suit for a nullification of his contract with Anne of Cleves succeeded on the other point, and both parties were equally gratified by the result which set them both at liberty. The lady felt she had much rather lose her husband's hand than her own head, and Henry began to think he might be wearing out the axe upon his wives before he had half done with it, and if he could find any other means for severing the marriage tie he much preferred doing so. He offered to make her his sister, with three thousand a year, an arrangement with which she expressed herself perfectly satisfied. Both parties were permitted to enter into wedlock again, if they pleased, and the king of course availed himself of the option with his accustomed celerity. The Bill was brought into Parliament on the 12th of July, and the 8th of August found Catherine Howard already publicly acknowledged as the fifth Mrs. Henry Tudor.

It had now become the boast of Henry that he held

the balance with an even hand between the Catholics and the Reformers; but his impartiality was shown in a manner most inconvenient to both of them. He used to deal out what he called equal justice to both, by submitting a few on each side of the question to equal cruelty. He would forward three Catholics at a time to Smithfield, to be hanged as traitors, and by the same hurdle he would send three Lutherans to be burned as heretics.

As we are unwilling to turn our history into a Newgate Calendar, for the sake of recording the atrocities of a sanguinary king, we shall, in our account of the remainder of this odious reign, preserve the heads, and avoid the executions. The murder of the Countess of Salisbury, an old woman upwards of seventy, and the mother of Cardinal Pole, stands out perhaps from some other sanguinary deeds by its peculiar atrocity. The venerable lady, at the last moment, defied the executioner to come on, and a combat of the fiercest character took place upon the scaffold.

Henry, who had frequently tried to inoculate his nephew, James the Fifth of Scotland, with his own predatory propensities, became at length angry that the latter declined turning thief in the name of religion, and plundering the church under the pretext of simply reforming it. A conference had been agreed upon between the English and the Scotch kings; but the latter, at the instigation of Cardinal Beaton, whose olfactory nerves had detected a rat, broke his appointment with his imperious uncle. This ungentlemanly proceeding gave such offence to the English tyrant, that he threatened, with an awful oath, to let the weight of old Henry be felt in Scotland; and the expression that So-and-So purposes "playing old Harry," no doubt took its rise from the

incident to whicn we have alluded.

The Duke of Norfolk was sent, as a low fellow of that period hath it, "to take the shine out of that Jem," who was completely defeated at Solway Moss, through his own troops turning their backs—not upon him, as it is said by some, but upon the enemy. James was so overwhelmed with shame and despair, that he drew his helmet over his eyes, assumed a stoop—a sure sign that he was stupefied—and never raised his head again, but fell a victim to that very vulgar malady, a low fever. He left his kingdom to his daughter, then only eight days old, who came to the throne on the ninth; but as she was not a nine days' wonder, she evinced no miraculous aptitude for the task of government.

Henry had in the meantime been made very uncomfortable by the rumours that his wife, familiarly known as Miss Kate Howard, had not been acting properly. When the king heard the news, he was deeply affected, for he was one of those persons who make up, in feeling for themselves, for their deficiency of feeling with regard to others. He sat down and had a good crocodilian cry, which irrigated his hands to such an extent that he was compelled to wring them to get them dry again. Cranmer and Norfolk were appointed to examine into the truth of the charges against the queen, who, when her guilt was proved beyond doubt, made a virtue of necessity—the only virtue of which she could boast—by boldly confessing it.

This unfortunate young woman had been promised a pardon on condition of her revealing the extent of her transgression; but when she had admitted not only a great deal she had done, but had thrown into the bargain a great deal she had never done at all, Henry, regardless of his pledge, thought that the best

way to get rid of an annoyance was to break the neck of it. Catherine Howard was accordingly beheaded at the Tower, on the 15th of February, 1542, and finding her confession had done her no good, she retracted the greater part of it. "It was not to be supposed," says Mullins, "that a person who had shown himself so double as Henry, could long remain single," and he accordingly threw himself once more upon the matrimonial market. There he was of course no longer at a premium, and he was pretty soon at Parr; and it is a strange fact that he would have commanded a better price had it been certain that he could be had without the *coupon*, which had distinguished the settling days of two of the wives of this shocking bad sovereign. Catherine Parr was a corpulent old lady, fortified by at least forty summers, but she readily listened to the proposals of Henry. Henry entered her at once on his share or *chère* list, and in allusion to her bulk, placed opposite to her name the words "commands a very heavy figure." She was the widow of Neville, Lord Latimer; but, thought Henry, "What care I, if she has even killed her man?—it will not be the first time that I shall have killed my woman."



Henry wooing Catherine Parr.

Original Size

The English king courted her at once, and made much of her; but to have made more of her than there really was, would have been rather difficult. He married her on the 10th of July, 1543, and it is a curious fact that she outlived him, which we can only attribute to the lady partaking the longevity of her namesake old Parr, for there must have been a vigorous adhesion to life in any one who could marry and survive the wife-exterminating tyrant. For some time she humoured Henry, but having a touch of Lutherism, she began meddling with matters of Church and State, which embroiled her with a bishop or two, who ran and told the king what she had been impudent enough to talk about. "Marry come up!" roared Henry, in allusion to his having elevated Catherine Parr by marrying her; "so you are a doctor, are you, Kate?" But having had a hint that her mixing in politics was not agreeable, she only replied, meekly, "No, no, your Kate is no caitiff." This speech had the effect of diverting Henry's wrath, almost as much as it will divert posterity by its delightful quaintness. Gardiner, who had justified his name—

allowing of course for the difference of spelling—by sowing the seeds of dissension between the king and queen, had arranged with the sovereign that her majesty was to be seized next morning by forty guards, headed by Chancellor Wriothesley. This person was not a little astonished at finding himself called "an arrant knave, a foole, and a beastlie foole," * by the king, when he came to execute his mission. He was, in fact, dismissed with an entire earful of fleas, of which Henry had always an abundance on hand for unwelcome visitors.

** Lord Herbert.*

Henry had now become, literally, the greatest monarch that ever sat upon the throne, for he had increased awfully in size, and become irritable at the same time, so that the task of getting round him was, in every sense, extremely difficult. Had there been a prize monarch show, open to the whole world, he must have carried off the palm, for he was too fat to lie down, lest no power should be able to get him up again. It was true he had been born to greatness, but he also had greatness thrust upon him—some say by over-feeding—to such an extent that he was obliged to be wheeled about, on account of his very unwieldiness. It might haye been supposed that Henry would have begun to soften under all these circumstances; but he exhibited no tendency to melt, for he continued his cruelties in burning those whom he chose to denounce as heretics. It is disgraceful to the ecclesiastical character of the age, that the church party that happened to be in power sanctioned the cruelties practised towards the party that happened to be out, and it was said, at the time, that the fires at Smith-field were always being stirred

by some high clerical dignitary, who might be considered the "holy poker" of the period.

The prospect of a speedy vacancy on the throne created a rush of candidates, who commenced literally cutting each others' throats—a desperate game, in which the Howards and Hertfords made themselves very conspicuous. Young Howard, Earl of Surrey, used to sneer at Hertford, who had been recently ennobled, as a "new man," and Hertford would retort unfeelingly upon Howard's father, the Duke of Norfolk, by saying "it was better to be a new man than an old sinner." The Norfolk family got the worst of it, for Norfolk and Suffolk were taken to the Tower on the 12th of December, 1546, on the frivolous charge of having quartered with their own arms the arms of Edward the Confessor. Had they gone so far as to use these arms upon a seal, it ought not to have sealed their doom, nor stamped them as traitors; but the frivolousness of the charge marks the tyrannical character of the period. Commissioners were sent to their country seat at Kuming Hall, to ransack the drawers, pillage the plate chest, and send the proceeds to the king; but the people intrusted with the job either found or pretended to find scarcely anything. They wrote to the king, telling him that the jewels were all either sold or in pawn; but as the tickets never came to hand, it is possible that the searchers were practising a sort of duplicate rascality. They forwarded to the king a box of beads and buttons; but though every bead was glass, Henry does not appear to have seen through it. Surrey was tried at Guildhall for having quartered the royal arms with his own, and on his defence he observed, "By my troth, mine enemies will not allow me any quarter whatever." He was found guilty, of course, and beheaded on the 19th of January, 1547, and his

father's execution had been set down on the peremptory paper for the 28th of the same month, when the proceedings were suddenly stayed just before execution, by the death of Henry.

The tyrant, who had been getting physically as well as morally worse and worse, clung to life with that desperate tenacity that is a sure sign of there being good reason for dreading death in those among whom, after a certain age, such a cowardly fear is manifest. He would often impiously threaten that "he would outlive all the younger people about him yet;" and though his time was evidently not far off, he would not bear to be told of his true condition. Instead of repenting of his past life, he devoted the wretched remnant of his existence to doing all the mischief he could, and venting his malice to the fullest extent that his now failing strength would admit of. Nobody dared muster resolution to tell the unhappy old brute that he must very speedily die, until Sir Anthony Denny, a knight who shared our friend Drummond's * aversion to humbug of any description, boldly told old Harry that he was on the point of visiting his redoubtable namesake.

** "Drummond is so averse to humbug of any descript Vide Tijou.*

Finding all chance of escape cut off, he began confessing his sins; but it was rather too late, for, had his repentance been sincere, the catalogue of his crimes was far too voluminous to allow of his getting through one half of it before his dissolution. He had been in the habit of adjourning that court of conscience existing in his as well as in every man's breast, and he always postponed it *sine die*; but when the time to die actually came, or the die was really

cast, it was rather late to move for a new trial. Henry died on the 29th of January, 1547, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, the thirty-eighth of his reign, and at least the forty-first of his selfishness, baseness and brutality.

He had been married six times, having divorced two of his wives, beheaded two more, and left one a widow. This leaves one more—Jane Seymour—still unaccounted for; and indeed her death was the most wonderful of all, because it was natural. He left behind him three children: but he did not care a pin's head, or even—to name an article of smaller importance to him—a wife's head, for any one of them. Such a very bad man was sure to be a very bad father, and he had declared two of his children illegitimate, for it was the delight of this monster to depreciate his own offspring in the eyes of the world as much as possible. His religious reforms, however wholesome in their results, were brutal in their execution and base in their origin. His insincerity may be gathered from the fact that he appointed masses to be said for his own soul, though he had burnt many persons for popery; and he seemed to think that, by taking up two creeds at once on his death-bed, he could make up for the utter irreligion of his last existence. He is said to have contributed to the cause of enlightenment, and so perhaps he did with all his blackness, as the coal contributes to the gas; and never was a bit of Wallsend half so hard, or a tenth part so black, as the heart of this despicable sovereign. He never had a friend; but he was surrounded by sycophants, whom, one after the other, he atrociously sacrificed.

Cranmer being a man of superior mind, exercised an influence over him, and was sent for to his death-bed, when he pressed the prelate's hand; but whether

the pressure arose from cramp or conscience, rheumatism or remorse, penitence or "pins and needles," must be considered a question to which we will not hazard an answer. We regret that we have been unable to adhere to the excellent motto, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, in this case; but Henry was such a decided *malum in se*, that mischief was bred in the bone, and the *nil nisi bonum* becomes impossible.

Learning certainly advanced in this reign, and Henry himself affected authorship; but every literary man, from the highest flyer in the realms of fancy to the humblest historian of last night's fire or yesterday's police, will be honestly ashamed of his royal fellow-craftsman.

Several colleges and schools were founded in this reign, among the principal of which were Christ Church at Oxford, Trinity at Cambridge, and St. Paul's in London. Here it was that the lowly Lily, of Lily's grammar notoriety, first raised his humble head as the head master of the school; and, though there is something lack-a-daisy-cal in Lily's style, his grammar was at one time the first round of the ladder by which every lad climed the heights of classical instruction.

It may be interesting to the gastronomic reader to be informed that salads and turnips now first came into use, with other roots, towards which the people had shown until then a rooted antipathy. They swallowed spinach without any gammon, and even the carrot, that had formerly stuck in their throat as if they feared it would injure the carotid artery, was consumed with alacrity; and those who had disdained the most delicious of green food, by courageously exclaiming, "Come, *let us* try it," are supposed by some—though we disclaim the monstrous idea—to have given its name to the

lettuce. The cultivation of hops came as if with a hop, skip, and jump across from Flanders, and the trade in wool was brought, under the fostering patronage of Wolsey, to a state of some prosperity.

With the exception of the burning of monasteries and the murder of his wives, there was little to render the reign of Henry remarkable, beyond, perhaps, the invention of beef-eaters. The word beef-eater is known to be a corruption of *buffetier*, and indeed there was corruption, to a certain extent, in everything connected with this detestable tyrant. It is said they were called *buffetiers* from attending at the *buffets*, or sideboard of plate, but it is far more likely that they got the name from the buffeting to which every servant of the royal ruffian must have been occasionally liable. The neck was so often in danger, that any menial of the malignant monarch might be expected to ruff it in the best way he could, and hence the enormous ruffs, which are conspicuous to this day, round the chins of the beef-eaters. The looseness of their habits may be considered characteristic of the Court to which these functionaries were attached, though it has been said by some authorities that the beef-eaters were puffed and padded out to an enormous extent, in order that the monster Henry might not appear conspicuous.

The reign of Henry was also remarkable for the invention of pins, to which somebody had given his own head with intense earnestness. The sharpness of the English had not yet reached so fine a point as to have led to the discovery of the needle, which was doubtless suggested by the pin, to some one who had an eye for improvement. The thimble is a still later introduction, the merit of which is considerable; for though at the present day every sempstress has the thimble at her finger ends, there was a time when no

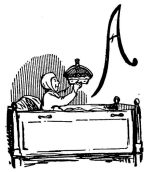
one had thought of this very simple but necessary appendage to the ladies' work-table. If the reign of Henry had never been devoted to anything more objectionable than the discovery of pins and needles we should have had little reason to complain, for a few pricks of conscience, no matter whence they emanated, would have done him good; but the scissors for cutting the thread of existence formed the instruments chiefly in use during this cruel and most disastrous reign.



Shilling of Henry the Eighth.

Original Size

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. EDWARD THE SIXTH.



Original Size

AN enormous weight was taken off the whole country when the late lump of obesity was removed from the throne; but shameful to relate, the first use the nation made of the power of breathing freely was to give a few puffs to the departed tyrant. The chancellor Wriothesley announced the king's death to the House of Lords in tears, and there is said to have been much weeping; but there are tears of joy as well as of sorrow, and the former must have been the quality of the brine in which the memory of Henry was preserved for a few days by his people. The lamentations, whether sincere or hypocritical, were very soon exchanged for joy at the accession of Edward the Sixth, who was only in his tenth year when he woke one morning and found the crown of England over his ordinary nightcap. To rub his eyes and ask "What's this?" were the work of an instant, when, taking off the bauble, drawing aside his curtains, and holding the article up to the light, he at once recognised the royal diadem.

Young Edward was what we should call a little forward chit had he been a common lad, but being a king we must at once accept him as an infant prodigy. He had learnt several tongues from Mr. Cheke, and had been a pupil of Sir Anthony Cook; but many of such cooks would have spoiled the best

"broth of a boy," for Sir Anthony was a pedant, "with five learned daughters"—being equivalent to a couple of pair of blue stockings, and an odd one over.

Henry, in his reluctance to leave to his son what he could no longer hold himself, had fettered the monarchy as much as he could by his will, which was, however, soon treated with the contempt it merited. He had appointed sixteen executors and twelve councillors, but all to no purpose; for all power was placed in the hands of the young king's uncle, Hertford, who was created Duke of Somerset. The vaulting ambition of this man, who turned Somersets over every obstacle that fell in his way, rendered his new title very appropriate. He was invested with the office of Protector, and he very soon set to work, but, still true to the name of Somerset, he went head over heels into a war with Scotland. The object of this proceeding was to demand the hand of Mary, Queen of Scots, for the child Edward; but the idea of a person coming to make love with a fleet of sixty sail and an army of eighteen thousand men, was a little *trop fort* to suit the taste of the Caledonians. They placed a ban upon the marriage, which was equivalent to forbidding the banns, and suggested, that if the young gentleman wanted to come courting, he had better come by himself to pay his addresses. After a little negotiation, which ended in nothing, a battle ensued, which is famous as the battle of Pinkey, where the combatants pinked each other off most cruelly with the points of their swords; and it is added by the inveterate Strype—who deserves two thousand stripes, at least, for this offence—that "on this field, which was within half a mile of Musselburgh, the soldiers on both sides strained every muscle." The

English archers sent their arrows from their bows with destructive effect; and looking, as they did, like so many Cupids in a valentine, it must be confessed that that mode of warfare was, at least, appropriate to a war undertaken in the cause of Hymen.



English Archer of the Period, from such a rare old print.

Original Size

The Scotch were sadly defeated, but they still refused to give up their little queen to the young fellow who sought her hand through his subjects' arms, and she was accordingly sent to finish her education in France; where, though only six years of age, she was betrothed to the Dauphin.

Somerset, instead of following up his successes, made the best of his way home; for he heard that his own brother, Sir Thomas Seymour, the Lord High Admiral, who had been created also Baron Seymour of Sedley, was making himself a great deal too agreeable to the royal ladies in England. Old Kitty

Parr, Henry's widow, was so much taken with Tom Seymour's attentions, that she fell at once in his arms, and became his wife; but poor Parr soon fell to a discount in the eyes of her husband, who had become enamoured of the young Princess Elizabeth. The unhappy old Parr swallowed many a bitter pill at this time, until death put an end to her annoyances. Admiral Seymour was now free to pay his addresses to Elizabeth, but it would seem that he was not more free than welcome, for even during the life of her mother-in-law, that young lady had afforded him every encouragement.

In order to stop his flirtations, which were now becoming serious, he was clapped in the Tower, but his enemies were considerate enough to send a bishop to him to preach patience, and as Ely was selected, who prosed exceedingly, the preaching was accompanied by a practical lesson in patience, with which it is to be hoped that Seymour was sufficiently edified. He was accused of treason, and at a council the boy Edward, who had no doubt been crammed for the occasion, delivered an elaborate judgment, which his parasites puffed as extemporaneous. He regretted being obliged to sacrifice his uncle Seymour to the common weal—a weal that has brought woe to many, and to which the wheel of fortune bears, except in its orthography, a wondrous similarity. Seymour was executed on Wednesday, the 20th of March, 1549, and the last use he made of his head before it was struck off was to shake it, and observe that "'pon his honour, if he had been guilty of any treason against the king it was quite unintentional."

The country was about this time agitated by one of those fits of general discontent which prevail every now and then among the lower orders of society. As

usual there was a good deal of reason mixed with a large amount of unreasonableness in their complaints, and the customary feeling of "not knowing exactly what they really wanted," became alarmingly general. Some cried for this, another for that, and another for t'other, while an almost universal shout for the privilege of ruling themselves was accompanied by a clear manifestation of an utter want of self-control on the part of the people. Their self-styled friends were of course busy in goading them on to acts of violence, and the Protector himself, instead of repressing tumult first, and pardoning it afterwards, pursued the opposite course, which only had the effect of clearing off old scores, that new might be ran up with fresh alacrity.

One of the most prominent ringleaders in the revolt was a tanner of Norfolk, named Robert Ket, of whom it was vulgarly said that such a bob was as good as two tanners; "and hence, perhaps," says my Lord Herbert, or someone else, "two tanners, or sixpences, came to be called in the vernacular equivalent to one bob, or a shilling." Ket had been cruelly provoked in having the mob set upon one of his inclosures by a gentleman who had suffered from the destruction of one of his own hedges; but the tanner retaliated by administering such a leathering to his assailants as they would have remembered to this hour had any one of them been left alive to indulge in such reminiscences. It was found necessary to send over to Scotland for Warwick to go and settle Ket, which was very speedily done, for, finding himself unable to keep upon his legs, he laid down his arms, after having run for his life, and crept into a barn among some corn to avoid an immediate thrashing. He was taken to Norwich and lodged in the castle, whence he wrote to a friend,

saying, "I shall be hanging out for the present at the above address;" and his words were soon verified, for he was hanged out on the top of the building a few days afterwards.

Poor Somerset was now about to take the most formidable somerset in the whole of his career—namely, a fall from the extreme of power to the depths of disgrace, chiefly by the rivalry of Warwick. The Protector found it high time to think about protecting himself, and tried to muster his friends, to many of whom he wrote; but verbal answers of "Not at home," "Mr. So-and-So will send," and similar evasive replies convinced poor Somerset that there was very little hope for him. In the meantime, Warwick and party were meeting daily at Ely Place, Holbom, where they were settling, in that very legal neighbourhood, the draft of a set of charges against the Protector, who was accused among other things of having pulled down a church in the Strand to build Somerset House, and having spent in bricks and mortar the money intrusted him to keep up the wooden walls of old England, by paying the sailors and soldiers their respective salaries. A bill of pains and penalties was issued from Ely Place, which is to this day famous for its art in making out bills, and twenty-eight charges were brought against Somerset, who thought it better to confess every one of them, on a promise that he should be leniently dealt with. This leniency consisted in taking away almost everything he possessed, which caused him to remonstrate on the heaviness of the fine; but, on being told snappishly he might consider himself lucky in having got off with his life, he shrunk back in an attitude of the utmost humility. He was set at liberty and pardoned, but we shall have him at mischief and in trouble again before the end of this

chapter.

Though a mere child was on the throne, the atrocities committed at Smithfield, in the burning of what were called heretics, went on as briskly as ever, the fires being stirred by Cranmer and Ridley in the most savage manner. Mary, the king's eldest sister, gave considerable trouble by insisting on the celebration of mass in her own household; and, though told by the council she mustn't, the truly feminine reply that "she should see if she shouldn't," and that "she would, though; they'd see if she wouldn't," was all that she condescended to say in answer to the requisition.

Somerset, since his liberation, had been still hanging about the Court, and had apparently become reconciled to Warwick, whose eldest son, Lord Lisle, had been married to Lady Ann, one of the daughters of the ex-Protector. Nevertheless, on Friday, the 16th of October, 1551, Somerset found himself once more in the "lock-up," on a charge of treason. He was accused of an intention to run about London crying out "Liberty! Liberty!" and, if that had not succeeded, he was to have gone to the Isle of Wight to try on the same game in that direction. If that had not succeeded there is no knowing what he would have done; but at all events, orders were sent to the Tower to set a watch upon the Great Seal, because Somerset wanted to run away with it. If he had made off with the seal, he might, perhaps, have taken the watch also; but this did not occur to the council. His trial took place at Westminster, on the 1st of December, 1551, at the sittings after Michaelmas term, when he denied everything, and was found guilty of just enough to get a judgment—with speedy execution—against him. His politeness was quite marvellous, for he thanked the Lords who had tried him, ana he

threw as much grace as he could into the bow he was compelled to make on submitting his head to the axe of the executioner. "This," says Fox, on the authority of a nobleman who was present, "came off on Friday, the 22nd of January, 1552," and it is a curious fact, that of every execution that occurred in his reign the boy king had preserved the heads in his private journal.

Warwick, who had got himself promoted to the dukedom of Northumberland, seemed desirous of making government a business for the benefit of himself and family. He took the motto of "anything for peace and quiet," though he had blamed his predecessor, Somerset, for having done the same thing, and he bought off the hostility of France and Scotland by selling Boulogne regularly up, placing a carpet on the lighthouse, dividing the upper and lower town into lots, declaring that he wanted money down on the nail, and to hit the right one on the head he must resort to the hammer. He made excellent marriages for his children, and allied his son, Guildford Dudley, with the royal family of France by wedding him to Lady Jane Grey, a daughter of a son of the old original Mary Tudor of France, to whose descendants the English crown would fall in the event of a failure of a more direct succession.

The young King Edward, who had not yet passed through the ordinary routine of infantile complaints, now took the measles—or, rather, the measles took him—and he had scarcely recovered from this complaint when the small-pox placed him under indentures which seemed much too strong to be cancelled within any reasonable period. He was serving his time to this malady, when another latent illness that had hitherto been playing at hide-and-

seek, set up a cry of "whoop," and his youthful majesty was in for the whooping-cough. Northumberland, taking advantage of the king's weak state, advised him not to leave the crown to his big and bigoted sister Mary. "True," said Edward, "but how about poor little Bet?"

"Why, she," replied the Protector, "is very little better." With such weak sophistry as this, he persuaded the poor invalid king to draw up a settlement of the crown on Lady Jane Grey, and the judges, with all the law officers, were summoned to approve the document. Sir Edward Montague, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, with Sir Thomas Bromley, one of his *puisnes*, came accompanied by the attorney and solicitor-generals, to say that the deed was illegal, and that they, one and all, would have nothing to do with it. Upon this, Northumberland rushed into the room, called Montague a traitor, * banged the door, threatened to bang the judges, and offered to fight in his shirt-sleeves any one of them.

** Burnet he had studied the business of the mint; fairly be replied, that merely looking at the proc coining does not make a sovereign. He is said to h all the harbours in Scotland, England and France, amount of water they were capable of containing—ar this may prove the depth of his research, it is nc particular mark of his ability. He took notes of e he heard; but as sovereigns hear a great deal of t trash, the collection must have been rather tediou elaborate than instructive or entertaining.*



The Duke of Northumberland offers to fight any one of them.

Original Size

He declared that if they could not see the deed in its proper light, he would pretty soon beat it into them, and he was squaring up to the poor *puisne* with an evident intention for mischief, when the judges offered to take the papers home and reconsider them.

The next day, they were again sent for, when, finding Northumberland as pugilistic as ever, and hand in glove with the king, the chief justice consented to the deed; and the *puisne*, on being approached by Northumberland in an attitude of menace, was glad to stammer out, "I am of the same opinion," as rapidly as he could give the words their utterance. The judges were promised that the deeds should be ratified by Parliament, and that they should be pardoned if they had done wrong; for otherwise, from the fists of Northumberland to the hands of the legislature, might have been analogous to getting out of the frying-pan into the fire.

All this row in the palace of an invalid produced the effect that might have been expected, for the

poor boy died a day or two afterwards. A pugilistic encounter between a duke and a judge, was somewhat too much of a stimulant for a child in Edward's weak state, and his physicians having given him up, he was turned over to the treatment of a female quack, who finished him. She did the business on the 6th of July, 1533, when he sunk under a complication of evils, among which his medical attendant was undoubtedly the greatest. He had lived fifteen years, eight months, and twenty-two days, having been upon the throne six years and a half; affording a curious instance of a reign in which the part of the sovereign was so insignificant that it might just as well have been omitted.

This little fellow had been greatly eulogised for his talents, as shown in his journal; but on looking at this juvenile production we regret to say that we could not go the length of our old friend the evening paper, in stating that it is "a very remarkable production." He mentioned certain dinners and suppers with evident gusto, and alludes to the return of the sweating sickness, but misses the obvious point, that he hopes that it will not prove so perverse as to begin sweating sovereigns. Some of the historians of his reign allege that if we are to judge young Edward by the laws passed in his reign, there is no great deal to be said for him. Beggars were declared to be the slaves of those who apprehended them, and iron collars were permitted to be put about the throats of the latter; but this was too much for the pride of the stiff-necked people of England, and the law was repealed, within two or three years of its having been enacted.

There is no doubt that he was a most amiable little fellow, as docile as a lamb, if indeed his gentleness did not amount to absolute sheepishness. His

flatterers say that he could speak five languages, and had a taste for music and physic, in the latter of which predilections we are quite unable to sympathise. We should have said he was a nice child but for the peculiarity to which we have just made allusion. As a quiet young gentleman at a preparatory school kept by ladies, Master Edward Tudor would have done credit no doubt to the establishment in which he might have been placed; but we would as soon select a sovereign from a seminary at once, and take him from the bread-and-butter to the throne, as see the spirt of the monarchy diluted in milk-and-water, and the sceptre dwindling down into a king's pattern spoon.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH. MARY.

NORTHUMBERLAND having got the deed appointing his daughter-in-law the Lady Jane Grey to the throne, began to get rather nervous as to the effect of making known to the people such a preposterous arrangement. He was afraid to advertise the king's death, and walked about the palace at Greenwich, biting his nails, thinking what he should do, or shut himself up in a small apartment, which,

from the colour of its walls, was known as the brown study. He subsequently sent for the Lord Mayor of London, half a dozen aldermen, and a dozen citizens, to whom he communicated, one at a time, but always in a whisper, the decease of the sovereign. "Mind you don't tell," was the precautionary observation he made to each; and a will was then produced, in which the boy-king had appointed Lady Jane Grey his successor. The cockneys expressed their readiness to swear allegiance to the lady, if it was "all right;" and Northumberland pledged his honour as a peer, that he would make it so. This happened on the 1st of July, and two days afterwards Lady Jane was forwarded by water to the Tower of London, some of the corporation, who had been gained over by her father-in-law, rowing in the same boat with her. After her safe arrival, the death of King Edward was publicly announced, and Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed amid very slight applause, accompanied by murmurs of the name of Mary. Poor Jane was sadly *genée* by the position into which she was thrust, for she was a quiet, unaspiring, lovely creature, whose only fault seems to have been that she read Plato in the original Greek, * which appears to us the very alpha and omega of absurdity.

** Roger Ascham.*

In the meantime, Mary, whose sanguinary disposition, and love for cutting off heads in her father's style, fully entitled her to the name of the "chip of the old block," was raising friends to resist the views of Northumberland. Mary, whose Catholic predilections were known, promised those who were favourable to the Reformation, that she would make no change in the religion fixed by Edward; and thus,

though she was understood to have mass celebrated at home, she silenced the scruples of the masses. The proclamation of Lady Jane Grey had been contrived at a packed meeting of the council, on the 10th of July; but it is said that a vintner's lad—or more probably a boy going round with the beer—entered a protest—possibly through an open window—to the arrangement. A policeman was instantly sent after him, and he was at once set in the pillory, where the tops of his ears paid the penalty of a juvenile offence, which he would not have committed had he arrived at the years of discretion. This little incident, trifling as it was, showed that there was a feeling abroad unfavourable to the elevation of Jane; for the pot-boy is always an authority on the subject of public measures. His opportunities of listening to the discussions of the people are great; and though he may hear much frothy declamation, as well as witness a vast tendency to half-and-half principles, in the course of his experience, he is nevertheless capable of judging, to a considerable extent, of the feelings of the multitude.

Northumberland, seeing that opinion was taking a powerful turn in Mary's favour, became fearfully perplexed, and hearing that an adverse force was being collected, came to the resolution that "somebody" must go and oppose the enemy. Who that "somebody" should be, was a very puzzling question, for Northumberland did not like the business himself, and was afraid to trust anyone else with a matter of so much consequence. At length he offered the task to Suffolk, the father of Lady Jane Grey; but that young lady began to cry very bitterly at the idea of her poor papa, who was "wholly unaccustomed to public fighting," being sent into battle. Whether it was an arrangement between

father and daughter it is impossible to say; but it was well known that Suffolk was not over valorous, and even if he did not "cry off," Lady Jane did so for him, by keeping up a constant cry until they found her father a substitute. Northumberland, perceiving that Suffolk had made up his mind not to go, was looking about him for somebody else, when a general interrogatory of, "Why don't he go himself?" seemed to suggest itself to the council. With a reluctance that indicated the feelings in his mind of "Well, I suppose I must," he started off with a small army, which experienced a cold reception in its progress, and the silence of the spectators giving them the air of mutes, invested with the dolefulness of a funeral procession the march of the troops as far as Bury.

Northumberland had no sooner turned his back on the council than they turned their backs on him, by proclaiming Mary as Queen of England; and on a party being sent to besiege the Tower, Lady Jane Grey, by the advice of her own papa, resigned all pretensions to the sovereign dignity. Suffolk not only evinced no disposition to defend his daughter's claims, but turning his sword into a steel-pen, hastened to sign the decrees that were being issued in the name of Mary.

Poor Northumberland, who was waiting for succours which never came, and who was accordingly being victimised by the expenses of his soldiers, who acted as suckers of a different kind, heard of what had taken place in London, and having fallen back upon Cambridge, sent for a herald, or town crier, with whom he bargained for the proclamation of Mary, at the market-place. It has been atrociously hinted, by an old offender, whose family we spare by the suppression of his name, that Northumberland took this humiliating course in the

hope that Mary would be molli-fied. He had scarcely finished the proceeding we have described, when he received a sharp letter from the council in London, desiring him to disband his army; but looking round, he perceived that it had disbanded itself, for all his followers had deserted him. They had, in fact, gone over to the other side, with a canting recantation of their opinions, and a whining declaration that they never should have thought of taking arms against their lawful queen "had not Northumberland made them do it." The unhappy duke himself was hanging about the streets of Cambridge the next day, not knowing whether to give himself up or "run for it," when the Earl of Arundel, coming up and tapping him on the shoulder, observed, "You must come along with me—you're my prisoner." Northumberland burst into a loud bellow, fell upon his knees, and begged for his life; but Arundel, contemptuously desiring an underling to "bring him along," lodged the captive in the Tower. Poor Lady Jane, whose representations of the part of queen had been limited to ten days, was already locked up, and, in fact, the State prison was full to overflowing of her unfortunate partisans. Her father, the Duke of Suffolk, obtained his pardon on the 31st of July, through Mary, who, on the 3rd of August, 1553, made her triumphant entry into London, accompanied by her little sister, afterwards the great Elizabeth. On the 18th of the same month, Northumberland, his eldest son John, Earl of Warwick, and two or three others, were brought to trial at Westminster Hall, when they pleaded the general issue; but the chief prisoner, finding it useless to throw himself upon the country, threw himself on the floor, asking, in the most abject terms, for mercy. This prostration was of no avail, for

sentence of death was speedily passed upon him; the sycophant Suffolk (Lady Jane Grey's own father) being one of the judges who presided at the trial. The Earl of Warwick behaved with more spirit than his parent, and upon hearing that he was to die as a traitor, which would involve the confiscation of his property, he coolly requested that his unfortunate creditors might not be victimised. "Don't pay me off, without paying them off, also," were the chivalrous words of the young nobleman. The Marquis of Northampton, when called upon for his defence, said that he had been out with the hounds and engaged in field sports while the conspiracy was going on, so that he had been quite upon another scent; but this availed nothing for the sly old fox, who was immediately found guilty. Sir John Gates, as well as Sir Henry Gates, both of whom were fearfully unhinged, were also condemned; and Northumberland made a long penitential speech from the scaffold when, as if caught by the example, Sir John Gates opened out with extraordinary eloquence. Poor Gates having been brought to a close by a hint from the headsman, the axe and the curtain fell together upon this fearful tragedy.

Mary soon began to show her papist predilections, and after making Gardiner Chancellor, she proceeded to establish a most rigorous censorship of the press, like a person who, having evil designs, is anxious to get the watch-dog muzzled as speedily as possible. She prohibited all persons from speaking against her, for a time; but putting a prohibition on the press is like throwing coals on a volcano, which gets smothered for a while, but is sure to burst out with a stronger light on account of the attempt to extinguish it.

The fanaticism of Mary is said to have been caused

by the wretchedness of her early life, during which a brutal father was continually threatening to chop off her head or make a nun of her. That unnatural parent was one of those monsters to whom it seems marvellous that children were ever given at all, for he could never appreciate the blessings they were calculated to afford, and he was for ever engaged in trying to mar their happiness. The stock from which she came was, however, so abominably bad, that there is nothing surprising in her cruelty; for when children happen to go wrong, it may be taken as a general rule that they get from their birth one half, and from their bringing-up the other half, of their iniquity. Mary proved herself a worthy descendant of a most unworthy sire, and turned the State prisons at once into warehouses for storing up the fuel of future martyrdom. Cranmer, Latimer, and others were stored away with this view, while the queen herself prepared for a coronation of unusual pageantry at Westminster.

The calm and philosophical Anne of Cleves—who will be remembered as the queen that Henry refused to have at any price—was a visitor to the show, and came to it in the same "fly" with the Princess Elizabeth. The latter, as sister to the queen, carried the crown in the procession, and was complaining of its weight in a whisper—for she was always flirting with somebody—to Noailles, the French Ambassador. "Be patient," replied the polite Parisian; "it will be lighter when it is on your head;" and an interchange of winks proved that the illusion was understood by the future sovereign of England. A parliament was assembled in less than a week, and the legislature that had lately been in favour of protestantism to the fullest extent, now relapsed into all the forms of popery. Both Houses opened with the celebration of

mass, and Taylor, the Bishop of Lincoln, who objected to such flagrant apostacy, was fairly kicked downstairs, like a bill thrown out of the Upper House, where tergiversation was the order of the day throughout the session. Another bishop, of the name of Harley, the low comedian of the episcopal bench, whom Burnet calls a "drie dogge," was also ejected for exhibiting the same honourable consistency; but Harley restored the good nature of the House by throwing a little humour into his forced exit.

A convocation of the clergy was shortly afterwards held, to get rid of the Reformation as far as it had gone, and bring catholicism back again. Some of the bishops conformed to the new regulations laid down for them; but some few, who happened to be married, found that though shaking off an opinion was easy enough, getting rid of a wife was far more difficult. The celibacy of the clergy was, of course, insisted upon; but Holgate, Archbishop of York, however happy he might have been never to have linked himself with Mrs. Holgate at all, soon discovered that a divorce from that good lady was not so easily accomplished as talked about. Several bishops who had got entangled in the connubial noose, were nearly finding it a halter for their necks, inasmuch as they were all deprived of their sees, and some even of their lives, for having committed the offence of matrimony. An attempt was made to save them, by urging that the punishment accompanied the crime, and that it was hard to make those suffer who must already have endured a great deal; but the plea was not allowed to prevail, and deprivation was inflicted on all as an equal punishment. Several of the bishops conformed; and it has been said, in extenuation of their weakness, that their insincerity was not in changing from Protestant to Catholic, but

had consisted in their originally veering round against their wills from Catholic to Protestant. It matters little whether, in turning from popery to the Reformation, they had been robbing Peter to pay Paul, or whether, in changing once more, they were guilty of some additional cheat, in order to restore what they had taken from Peter; but it is not to be denied, that on one occasion or the other they had been guilty of gross apostacy.

On the 13th of November, 1553, Cranmer, Lady Jane Grey, her husband Lord Guildford Dudley, and his brother Ambrose Dudley, were all condemned to die as traitors, by judges many of whom were the very people who had set on poor Jane to play the game, in which she had never taken the smallest interest. After sentence had been passed, execution was stayed. But Cranmer had no sooner been let out upon the charge of treason, than it was found on searching the office there was something else against him, whereupon he was taken and locked up once more upon an accusation of heresy. Lady Jane Grey had the freedom of the Tower presented to her in the shape of a permission to walk about the gardens, while Guildford Dudley and Ambrose were granted a few moderate indulgences—amounting, perhaps, to a set of skittles, a bat, trap and ball, or a couple of hockey-sticks.

This moderation was, however, accompanied by other acts of cruelty; and poor Judge Hales, who had really done nothing but refuse to change his religion, was, though he had stoutly defended the title of the queen, thrown into prison. The poor fellow went out of his mind, and though he was liberated, he had got so fearfully impressed with the idea of being burnt, that he thought to make himself fire-proof by running into the water; but it was so deep, and he

stayed there so very long, that he unfortunately drowned himself.

Mary, who had been disappointed of several husbands—for nobody who saw her would think of having her—now resolved to make use of her position as Queen of England to draw some unhappy victim into a marriage. Comparatively old, exceedingly hard, and totally void of all the milk of human kindness, she was naturally very inflammable, and she had already fallen in love with young Ned Courtenay, a son of the Marquis of Exeter; but the predilection of that young gentleman for her half-sister Elizabeth had somewhat cooled the ardour of Mary, who found it was useless to set her cap at the young Earl of Devon, which was the title she had restored to the courteous Courtenay.

The project of a marriage continued to fill the head of the queen, but as it was evident there would be "nobody coming to marry her," and, indeed, "nobody coming to woo," unless she looked out pretty sharply for herself, she threw aside all scruples of delicacy, and began to advertise through the medium of her ambassadors. The Emperor Charles of Spain had been affianced to her thirty years ago, and though she might once have been accustomed to sing "Charlie's my darling," in her youthful days, that prince had, long ago, grown old enough to know better than to marry her. He nevertheless thought she might be a good match for his son Philip, or rather that the latter might be a match for the lady, inasmuch as the Spanish prince was crafty, cruel, and bigoted. Mary made a last effort to get a husband of her own choice by sending a proposal to Cardinal Pole, who would have nothing to do with her. Thus, even her indelicate eagerness to rush to the pole did not secure her election, and she was obliged to take

Philip "for better, for worse," or rather for worse, for want of a better.

When the Commons heard of her intention they respectfully recommended her to wed an Englishman, but the idea that it was necessary for Mary to "first catch the Englishman" does not seem to have occurred to them. She announced her intention of marrying Philip partly out of old associations, but the oldness of the association was all on her own side, for the gentleman was young in comparison to the lady. It was not to be expected that Philip would make what he might justly have considered an "alarming sacrifice" without some equivalent, and it was agreed that he should have the honour and title of King of England, though he was not to interfere in the government. In case Mary survived him, he was to settle upon her £60,000 a year, but as he always flattered himself that he should, as he said, "see the old girl out," he looked upon this arrangement as merely nominal.

The English people had in those days, as they still have in these, an objection to Spanish marriages, and one Sir Thomas Wyatt, who had been in Spain, gave such a fearful picture of Philip, that the people of Kent, learning to regard him as something between "Old Bogie" and "Spring-heeled Jack," resolved to oppose his landing. Wyatt collected a considerable force at Rochester and marched upon London, when taking the first to the left, then the second to the right, they found themselves masters of Southwark. He had intended to give battle in Bermondsey, and put a cannon at the corner of the street, but it did not go off so well as he expected. In the meantime the queen's forces began pouring upon him some of the juice of the grape, from the Tower, and intimating to his followers that it might affect their

heads, he withdrew as far as Kingston. His object was to march upon London by the other road, and he got about as far as Hammersmith when an accident happened to his largest buss, or blunderbuss—as he called his heaviest gun—and he wasted several hours in getting it, once more, upon its wheels again. By daylight he had got as far as Hyde Park, when he found that the royal forces were in the inclosure of St. James's, waiting to receive him, and having a large reserve in the hollow that now forms the reservoir.

The battle commenced with a noisy overture, consisting of the firing of cannons, loaded only with powder, and doing no harm to anybody. Wyatt's followers had dwindled very materially as he came into town; several of his soldiers having discovered, at Kew, it was not their "cue to fight," and others experiencing at Turaham Green, sufficient to turn 'em pale, and turn 'em back, at the very thought of meeting the enemy. Wyatt was nevertheless undaunted, and rushed upon the enemy, who, falling quietly back, let him regularly in among the troops, with the full intention of never letting him out again. Without looking behind, he charged, at full gallop, along Charing Cross, and continuing his furious career up the Strand, pulled up, at last, at Ludgate Hill, which he found closed against him. Finding no sympathy among the citizens he attempted to back out, and had got as far as the Temple, where, strange to say, his opponents gave him no law, and the unhappy old Pump, being at last caught in Pump Court, surrendered to Sir Maurice Berkeley.



Sir Thomas Wyatt surrendering to Sir Maurice Berkeley.

Original Size

Poor Wyatt was soon afterwards condemned to death, and executed, as well as about four hundred of his followers, but several were brought with ropes round their necks before the queen, who permitted them to find in the halter a loop-hole for escape, by an humble prayer for pardon.

Mary, exceedingly angry at the attempt to shake her throne, vented her animosity on her little sister Elizabeth, who was brought on a litter to London, though she was so ill that the journey might have killed her, had not youth, a good constitution, and some stout porters carried her through the dangerous ordeal. She was accused of having been a party to Wyatt's rebellion, and was taken to the Tower, though not without giving a good deal of trouble to the proper officer, for she insisted on sitting down every now and then upon a stone step in the yard, though the rain was falling heavily.

Mary, whose reign may be considered as the original "reign of terror"—though the brutality that distinguished it was confined to a few, while in the

French edition the whole nation thirsted for blood—who exercised *en détail* the cruelties that France subsequently practised *en gros*, sentenced to death, in rapid rotation, all who did not quite agree with her. The unfortunate Lady Jane Grey and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, were both executed on the same day, and, indeed, the victims were so numerous that we should be inclined to say, "for further particulars see small bills," if we thought that any of the true bills found against the parties were still extant.

A curious commentary on the value of trial by jury was furnished about this time by the extraordinary case of Sir Nicholas Throgmorton—the father of Throgmorton Street, and friend of Sir Thomas Wyatt—who, after making his defence, obtained, to the surprise of everybody, a verdict of acquittal. Sir Thomas Bromley, the chief justice, began to cough and "hem!" and "ha!" as if there must be some mistake, and as though he would have said, "Gentlemen of the jury, do you know what you are doing?" The twelve honest men replied that it was "all right," they "knew what they were about," and persisted in their decision, until the chief justice, who thought every jury box ought to be a packing-case, hinted that the matter was one in which the Crown was interested, and that the Crown would stand no nonsense. The jurymen being still firm, they were hurried off to prison, and were only released upon paying enormous fines—which proved, at least, that the Government set a tremendous price upon their honesty.

On the 19th of July, 1554, Philip landed at Southampton on his way to fulfil his marriage contract with Mary; but he had taken the precaution to send on before him the Count of Egmont, who was

intended to be mistaken for his master, and thus serve as a sort of pilot engine, in case of any collision with the populace. The expedient was very necessary, for the pilot engine—we mean Egmont—got some very hard knocks from several old buffers with whom he came in contact, and Philip, seeing the kind of reception he might expect, came, accompanied by a very long train, by way of escort, to his new station. On the 25th of the same month he was married to the queen, at Winchester, and the pair, whom we must call, by courtesy, "the happy couple," came to London, where a series of festivities, including the rapid descent of Il Diavolo. Somebody along a rope from the top of St. Paul's, * had been prepared in honour of the Royal marriage.

** A fact. See Stowe.*



Philip and Mary.

Original Size

The object of Philip in marrying Mary had been simply the crown, and his conduct, if not his words,

very plainly told her so. Her fondness for him became quite a bore, particularly when he found that she could not get Parliament to agree to the projects he made her propose for his own aggrandisement. She had not long been the wife of Philip when an attack of dropsy was added to her other interesting points, and her heartless husband made her a butt—or, as Strype says, a water-butt—for his unfeeling ridicule. In order to obtain a little popularity, Philip made his wife release Elizabeth, and Courtenay, Earl of Devon, from the Tower, as well as a few other favourites of the public; but the people never took to the husband of the queen, while the quarrels between the Spanish and the English were perpetual. On New-Year's Day, 1555, there was a row among them at Westminster, when a Spanish friar got into the Abbey, and pulled away at the alarum with tremendous fury. He frightened the city almost into fits, and, for thus trifling with the rope, Philip doomed him to the halter, in order to gratify the people, who by no means chimed in with this extraordinary freak of bell-ringing.

The year 1555 was signalised by the revival of all the statutes against heretics, and the Protestants were kept burning night and day, in the neighbourhood of Smithfield. We will not dwell longer than necessary upon this disgraceful portion of our national annals. Among many distinguished persons who suffered death were Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer, who all exhibited firmness worthy of a better fate, and it is said of Cranmer that he put his right hand into the fire first, for having, some time before, signed some documents of recantation, in the nope of saving his life at the expense of his consistency. In three years about three hundred individuals perished at the stake, through refusing to

put their characters at stake by vacillation in the moment of danger.

After the death of Cranmer, Cardinal Pole was installed in the see of Canterbury, for Mary's rage against the Protestants was extreme, and she hoped that the fires of Smithfield would be kept alive by that exalted prelate, though in expecting to stir them up with the long Pole she was somewhat disappointed, for the new archbishop was rather moderate than otherwise in his ecclesiastical policy.

The queen's object was to control England in the war between France and Spain, but Pole, even at the risk of becoming in his turn a scaffold Pole, resisted the royal will to the extent of his power. The fact is that Philip, who had never married for love, was determined to be as plain with his wife as she was plain to him, and told her that unless he could make the union profitable, he should make a slipknot of the nuptial tie, and get away from it altogether. Alarmed at the prospect of being left "a lone woman" on the throne, she sought and found a pretext for declaring a war against France by getting up one of those confessions which in those days a judicious use of the torture could always procure at a few hours' notice.

Some unhappy agitators were detected in a small conspiracy, when the fact or falsehood of their having been encouraged by Henry of France was, after the intense application of the screw, regularly screwed out of them. They were made to fabricate stories to suit the purposes of the queen, and indeed their invention was literally put to the rack by the cruelties to which they were subjected. War against France was now declared, but the revenue was in such a miserable state that Mary was obliged to beg, borrow and steal in every direction for the necessary

funds to commence hostilities. Having at last got together an army of ten thousand men, she found that the troops must be fed, and she accordingly seized all the corn she could find, threatening at the same time to thrash the owners like their own wheat if they had the impudence to ask for the value of the stolen property.

The well-known impolicy of interfering in other people's quarrels was powerfully illustrated by the fate of the English interposition in the dispute between France and Spain, for after a few trifling advantages, one of which was the taking of Ham before breakfast by Philip himself, England sustained a loss, which was at that time regarded as one of the most serious character. Valour, under the guise of the great Duke of Guise, wrested Calais from its masters, and restored it to the French, whose hearts rebounded with boundless joy at the acquisition of this valuable fortress.

The exchequer was reduced to such a beggarly condition by the expenses of the late unfortunate war, that the queen, who never called upon her Parliament unless she wanted something, was compelled to summon the Commons. With their usual squeezability they permitted to flow into the public coffers sufficient to keep the royal head above water; and one Copley, who ventured a few words by way of remonstrance, was pusillanimously committed to that custody from which the old English expression of "cowardy cowardy custard" (*query*, custod.) has been supposed to derive its origin.

Part of the produce of the recent subsidy was laid out in ships, and as the ships came to no good, it was said at the time that this appropriation of the money was very like making ducks and drakes of it. The

fleet, after passing over the bosom of the ocean, came to Brest, but the breastworks were so strong, that the British force had not the heart to make an attack upon them. Some miscellaneous pillage was perpetrated in the neighbourhood by the English who nevertheless came off second best; and Philip, who was getting rather tired of the business, was willing to treat with a view to a treaty.

While thinking how he should retire from foreign hostilities, he received from England tidings that held out the certain prospect of domestic peace, for he got the news of the death of his wife Mary. Miserable and middle-aged, detested and dropsical, this wretched woman was tormented by every kind of reflection, from that presented by the mirror of her own mind, to the dismal prospect shadowed forth in her own looking-glass. She had lost Calais; but, as the audacious Strype has boldly suggested, she might have become callous to that, had she not known the fearful fact, that her husband Philip declared he had had his fill of double cursedness, and intended to try in Spain what a timely return to single blessedness might do for him.



Philip (of England and Spain) hears of his wife's death.

Original Size

All these troubles proved, like herself, unbearable, and on the 17th of November, 1558, she expired, after a short and yet too long a reign of five years, four months, and eleven days. She had reached the forty-third year of her age, and must have made the most of her time, in one way at least; for no woman of her age had obtained so much odium of a durable quality, as she in her comparatively short life had acquired.

If we were to draw a faithful character of this princess, we need do nothing more than upset our inkstand over our paper, and cause the saturated manuscript to be transferred to our pages in one enormous black blot; for we are sure that no printer's type could furnish a type of the person whom we have the horribly black job of handing down—or rather knocking down—to posterity. Those indefatigable readers who are desirous of having the appropriate epithets which Mary's character deserves, are requested to take down the dictionary, and having selected from it all the adjectives expressive of badness that the language contains,

place them in a string or a series of strings, before the name of Mary.

To look for her virtues would require the aid of one of those solar microscopes which give visibility to the merest atom, and the particle, if even discovered, might be deposited in the mental eye without its being susceptible of anything having entered it. She seems to have possessed some sincerity; but this only gave a certain degree of vigour to her evil propensities. She was perhaps susceptible of some attachments, but so is a boa constrictor, though few would conceive it a privilege to be held in the firm embraces of that paragon of tenacity towards those with whose fate it happens to twine itself. She had a certain vigour of mind, just as a tiger has a certain vigour of spring, a parallel the force of which her victims very frequently experienced.

The loss of Calais was, perhaps, one of the most important events of Mary's reign! and it is said to have had such an effect upon her, that she declared, when she died the word Calais would be found engraved upon her heart: though we are quite sure, that if the word had been found at all, it would not have presented itself as an engraving, but as a lithograph. For two hundred years the town had been in the possession of the English, and it was through a miserable economy in cutting down the garrison during the winter months, and trying to work the thing at a reduced expense, that the whole concern fell into the power of the enemy. This paltry system proved, of course, unprofitable in the end; for when the Duke of Guise made his attack, those points that required two or three stout fellows to defend them, were left to the fatal imbecility of "a man and a boy,"—a couple never yet known to

heartily co-operate. It is the unhappy blunder of a man and a boy being left to pull together as unsympathetically as an elephant and an ass, that has impeded the progress of so many of our public works; and it was, unquestionably, the trial of the "man and boy" system at Calais during the winter months, that, in the early part of 1558, caused the loss of the city. The English had been in the habit of trusting during the cold weather to the snow, and the overflowing of the marshes, to keep out the French; but the Duke of Guise was not afraid of getting his feet wet, and besides, as he wittily observed, "I can always rely on the strength of my pumps to keep the water out." He ultimately made a resolute splash, and, though often up to his middle in mud, he drove the English clean out of the citadel.

It may be worth while to mention, that Mary's reign was the first in which friendly relations with Russia were established, through some English traders who found themselves, or rather lost themselves, at Archangel, in the course of a wild-goose search for a north-east passage. The Czar, after asking them what they were doing there, and telling them they had come fearfully out of their way, received them very kindly; but it does not seem that any north-east passage, beyond the old court which used to lead from Holbora Hill to Clerkenwell, was at that time discovered.

Few, if any, salutary laws were passed in her reign, though a bad one was repealed, which had ruined the wool trade, by prohibiting any one from making wool who had not served seven years' apprenticeship. There was of course a great cry and very little wool in consequence of this absurd enactment, which was so decidedly impolitic that we can give Mary very little credit for having done away

with it.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.
ELIZABETH.



Original Size

HE death of Mary was concealed for some hours, since it is only bad news that will travel very fast; but when the truth did come to be generally known, the joy which burst out on all sides took the more decent form of exultation at the accession of the new sovereign. Elizabeth, Betsy, Bessy, or Bess as she has been indiscriminately called, was at Hatfield when her sister died, and she soon moved to London, escorted by one of those patriotic mobs which are always ready to hoot and halloo for any distance the

last new sovereign.

On the 15th of January, 1559, the queen was crowned at Westminster Abbey, but during the ceremony she was compelled to remain bare-headed for a considerable time, as on account of her suspected Protestant predilections, not one of the bishops would invest her with the diadem. In vain did she give appealing looks to the entire bench, until at last a decided ogle took effect on Oglethorpe, the Bishop of Carlisle, who, snatching up the bauble with a shout of "Here goes!" boldly bonneted the royal maiden.

On the 25th of the same month a Parliament assembled, when Cecil and Sir Nicholas Bacon made their *débuts* on the treasury benches. Cecil was chief secretary, or key of the Cabinet, while Bacon was great seal, with instructions to keep continually on the watch in the capacity of Keeper. The first act of the Parliament was to restore many of the laws of religion existing in Edward's reign, and an attempt was made to reinstate such clergymen as had been deprived on account of marriage; but Elizabeth, who began to show anti-matrimonial opinions at the very beginning of her reign, would not accede to such an arrangement. Early in the session the Parliament tried its hand at royal match-making by carrying up an address to the queen, recommending her to take a husband; but in a somewhat rudish tone she expressed at once her horror at "the fellows," and her determination to have nothing to do with them. Her sincerity was soon put to the test by a direct offer from Philip, her late sister's husband; but a playful "go along with you," and a coquettish "a-done, do!" were the utmost words of encouragement he could manage no extract from her.

Parliament broke up on the 8th of May, and on the

15th the bishops and other churchmen of note were summoned to take the oath of conformity to the new statutes. Much to the credit of their consistency they all refused, with the exception of one Kitchen, the bishop of Llandaff, a low fellow, whose name implies his origin. This Kitchen had acquired the rotatory motion of the roasting-jack, as well as a fondness for sops in the pan, for he had been twirling round and having a finger in the ecclesiastical pie since the year 1545, from which time to that of Elizabeth he had, through all changes, stuck to his bishopric. The clergy, who had refused to conform to the Protestant religion, were on the whole gently dealt with, some being exported to Spain amid the luggage of the Spanish ambassador, and a few being quartered upon their successors in England. Most of the inferior clergy seemed to have been made of Kitchen-stuff, that is to say, they appeared to be composed of much the same material as the Bishop Kitchen we have named, and were at all events alive to the necessity of keeping the pot boiling, for out of 9400 persons holding benefices, there were scarcely more than a hundred, exclusive of the fifteen bishops, who quitted their preferments rather than change their religion.

We must now look at Scotland, of which the celebrated Mary was queen when she was suddenly called to France to share the throne which had devolved upon her husband, Francis the Second, or rather upon which he had devolved by the death of his father, Henry. This somewhat elderly gentleman had been playing the fool in a tilting match, which was rather *infra dig.* at his time of life, and ended in his receiving a dig in the eye from a broken lance, which ultimately closed in death both the wounded and its companion optic. In the absence of Mary from

Scotland, Elizabeth did her utmost to advance the Protestant cause in that country, and dealt out some heavy blows through the medium of the celebrated Knox against the Catholics. Mary's mamma, who had remained at home to keep house as it were in her daughter's absence, did not exactly like what was passing, particularly when she found that English emissaries were continually passing to and fro, for the purpose of bribing the Scotch, whose "itching palm" has always been a national characteristic that we decline accounting for. The English were bent on getting the French out of Scotland, but the task was as difficult as expelling the fleas from a hay mattress in which they have once got embedded. After a good deal of desultory fighting, the Queen Regent was worried out of her life, and she was no sooner gone, than some of her most devoted adherents were off like shots to draw up a treaty with the enemy. Peace was proclaimed, and the French Governor of Leith gave the besiegers a dinner, at which salted horse was the only animal food, for there was not even a saddle of mutton to make the horse go off with effect at this truly horsepitable banquet. By the treaty mutual indemnities were exchanged, oblivion of the past was determined upon at Leith, which on that occasion became a veritable Lethe. Elizabeth had two or three flags in Scotland surrendered to her, but religion, which was the ostensible cause of the whole dispute, was permitted to stand over as an open question.

It was not to be expected that such a capital match as the Queen of England would fail to be the subject of several flames, and an old beau, in the person of Eric, now the king of Sweden, together with two or three other suitors, royal as well as noble, sent in the most tender tenders for the hand of Elizabeth. Like a

true coquette, she gave encouragement to all, and even some seedy adventurers among her own subjects were induced to strike up to her.

Mary, who, as great-niece of Henry the Eighth, had in the first instance assumed the arms and title of Queen of England, a measure almost as futile as if Snooks of Surrey should assume the arms and title of Seringapatam, relinquished her nominal pretensions upon the death of her husband, which happened on the 5th of December, 1560. Mary had become so habituated to the splendid formalities of the French Court, that, on returning to Scotland, the substantial barrenness of that bleak country completely disgusted her. Tears, it is said, came into her eyes when she saw the wretched ponies that were about to convey herself and her ladies from the waterside to Holy-rood, while the saddles, made of wood, gave her such a series of bumpers at parting, that she declared the impression made by her reception would never be forgotten.

Mary, who had been born and bred a Catholic, was, of course, anxious for the privilege of following her own religion; but her Scotch subjects, who claimed liberty of conscience for themselves, practised upon their unfortunate sovereign the most brutal and intolerant tyranny. She was insulted on her way to mass, her indulgence in the most harmless amusements was savagely condemned, and she was continually exposed to the hardest raps from Knox, who undertook the task of converting her. This vulgar, but zealous, and no doubt sincere personage endeavoured to effect his purpose by coarse abuse, and always spoke of his queen from the pulpit as Jezebel. In vain did Mary endeavour to quiet her turbulent and libellous assailant by offering him private audiences, but, as if nothing short of mob

popularity would answer his purpose, he rudely declined her invitation, telling her it was her duty to come to him, and continued to make the pulpit the medium of the most malignant assaults on his sovereign. However honest and upright the intentions of Knox may have been, his brutal manner of telling his home truths deprived them of much of their influence; and Knox made very few effective hits in the course of his noisy and vituperative career as a Presbyterian reformer.

Elizabeth saw with unamiable pleasure that her rival, Mary, was having what, very figuratively speaking, may be termed a nice time of it. The English queen busily occupied herself in feathering her own nest in a variety of ways, and, among other measures, she called in all the debased coin; for, as she sometimes said, with a sneer at poor Mary, "I have a great objection to light sovereigns." She filled her arsenals with arms, and had quite a conservatory of grape at the Tower, while, by way of putting the country into a state of defence, she resorted to the very odd expedient of reviewing the militia. She improved the arts of making gunpowder and casting cannon, so that, as she used to say, "every brave brick in my army may have a supply of mortar, with which, in the hour of battle, he may cement the interests of my empire."



Honest Jack Tars of the Period.

Original Size

The increase of the navy occupied her special care, and she laid the foundation of that glorious system which has given immortality to our naval hornpipes ana made our enemies dance at the balls given by our British seamen. It was to Elizabeth we owe the origin of that enthusiasm which induces "honest Jack," as he facetiously calls himself, to spend all his wages in a week, and to conclude a rapid series of lighthearted freaks as the helplessly inebriated fare of a metropolitan cab or the equally inanimate inmate of a London station-house. The interior of Elibabeth's Court was a scene of petty rivalries and jealousies, for she was surrounded with various suitors, and though she gave encouragement to nearly all, the valuable precept, "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam*," seems never to have escaped her memory. She would treat them with easy familiarity, such as thumping their backs and patting their cheeks; but if any of them ventured upon tiring to get on with her at the same slapping pace, she would administer a rap of the knuckles that at once discouraged them from trying their hands at a renewal of such familiarity.

Though not blinded by the adulation of her courtiers, she was very nearly becoming so by the small-pox, against which, however, a good constitution was happily pitted. On her recovery, the Parliament fearing the explosion that might have ensued had she popped off without a successor having been named, entreated her either to marry, or appoint some lady or gentleman to fill the throne in the event of there being a vacancy. With a good deal of that old traditional feeling imputed to the anonymous dog in the very indefinite manger, who was unwilling to relinquish to others what he was unable personally to enjoy, Elizabeth was very reluctant to say who should come after her as queen, but she held out a vague prospect that her marriage would not be impossible, in the event of any very eligible offer happening to present itself. This indirect advertisement of her hand was at once answered by the Duke of Wurtemburg, a small German, whose pretensions were contemptuously pooh-pooh'd I and indeed every post brought letters from various single men of prepossessing appearance, gentlemanly manners, and amiable disposition, who were anxious to take this somewhat unusual method of placing their hands and hearts at the service of the Queen of England. In the very largest field there will generally be one or two favourites, and in Elizabeth's good books the names of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and Ratcliffe, Earl of Sussex, stood so high, that there might have been even betting upon both, with a shade or two, perhaps, in the former's favour.

Mary of Scotland was less indifferent on the subject of marriage than the English queen, and, indeed, the former went so seriously into the matrimonial market, as to consult the latter on the

subject of a judicious selection. Apparently with the intention of throwing the matter back, Elizabeth offered her own favourite, Dudley, Earl of Leicester, as a husband for Mary; but on the latter, after recovering from her surprise, exclaiming, "Well, I don't mind," the virgin Queen of England, mentally responding, "Oh! yes! I dare say," backed out of her proposition. The Earl of Leicester was one of those good-looking scamps who used, in the last century, to go by the name of "pretty fellows," but in our own more enlightened age, would obtain no gentler appellation than "pretty scoundrels." The virtuous Elizabeth liked to have him about her on account of his good looks, but if the homely proverb, that "handsome is as handsome does," had prevailed he would have been thought as little ornamental in person, as in mind he was deformed and hideous. Notwithstanding the pattern of propriety as which the virgin Queen of England has been, by some historians, extolled, she gave encouragement to Leicester, whom she knew to be a married man, until, by murdering his wife, he removed that slight barrier to the accomplishment of his ambitious wishes. He reported that his unfortunate lady had tumbled down stairs, but this was a daring flight of a guilty imagination, and there is little doubt that while staying in the house of her husband's servant, Foster, he forced her either over the balustrade, or got rid of her by some other means of equal violence.

Poor Mary, who was really in need of a protector, becoming impatient at the delay in choosing her a husband, at length selected one for herself, in the person of her cousin, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. This young nobleman was a mere lad in age, but a perfect ladder in height, for he was very tall, and very thin, so that if he could offer Mary no

substantial support, he was, at all events, a person she might look up to, as may be said, familiarly, "at a stretch," in cases of great emergency.



Lord Darnley.

Original Size

He was the son of Henry the Eighth's sister's daughter's second husband, and was accordingly the next heir but one to the English throne, if anyone could be called an heir at all in those days, when might overcame right in a manner somewhat unceremonious.

Darnley, though showy in appearance, was in reality a fool, and it might be said that instead of having been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he was in himself the embodiment of that auspicious article. Though exceedingly tall, he was tremendously shallow, and before he had been married two months, he acted with so much insolence, that Mary could scarcely get a servant to stay with her. His own father, old Lennox, who had got a snug place in the household, packed up his box

at a moment's notice, declaring he would not stop, and the wretched royal spoon found in the glass the only pursuit with which his habits were congenial.

Though neglectful of his young and lovely wife, he claimed the bad husband's privilege of being jealous of the attentions of others, and Signor David Rizzio, the first and only tenor at the Scotch Court, soon furnished ground for Darnley's suspicions of Mary's fidelity. Rizzio had come over in the suite of the ambassador of Savoy, as a professor of the spinette, and a teacher of foreign languages. In his vocal capacity he attended evening parties, and having been introduced at Court, his airs soon wafted him into the favour of his sovereign. His knowledge of the French language caused him to be promoted to the vacant post of French secretary to the queen, when an outcry was raised because a Scotchman was not appointed to the office, though not a soul among the natives had any pretensions to understanding the language in which the services of a secretary were required. Many of them maintained that their broken Scotch would have been an excellent substitute for Rizzio's unintelligible gibberish, and the nobles used to make faces at him, shoulder him, or taunt him as a base-born fiddler even in the presence of his sovereign.

The ill-used musician, who understood scarcely a word of the insulting language that was addressed to him, happening to catch the sound of the word fiddle, gallantly declared that he would be found *toujours fidèle* to the royal lady who had honoured him by her favour. There seems to be good reason for doubt whether the scandalous stories concerning Mary and her French secretary were true, and as in duty bound we give the benefit of the doubt to the accused parties. Poor Rizzio had, however, become

such an object of hatred to the people about the Court, that one evening, as he sat at the side-table taking his supper, as he always did when the queen was present, a party of armed men, headed by Darnley himself, rushed into the chamber where the Duchess of Argyle and Erskine, the Governor of Holyrood, were also present. Rizzio had probably been favouring the company with a song or songs, and was whetting his whistle, with a view perhaps to farther melody, when he was brutally desired to "come out of that" by the ruffian Ruthven, whose *gout* for murder was so excessive that he had left a sick bed to take a part in the sanguinary business. To make a long and painful story short, Rizzio was savagely butchered as he clung to the skirts of Mary's dress in a vain hope to find shelter under petticoat influence. For having caused the death of Rizzio, Mary never forgave Darnley, who took to drink, in the hope of drowning care; but an evil conscience seems to be supplied with corks, which carry it up to the surface of the deepest bowl in which an attempt was ever made to get rid of it.

On the 19th of June, 1566, there appeared, among the births of the day, the announcement of "Mary, Queen of Scots, of a son and heir, at Holyrood." The infant was James the Sixth of Scotland, and subsequently the first of England, who was not a Jem remarkable for any particular brilliancy. It had previously been arranged that Elizabeth should stand godmother to the firstborn of Mary, and intelligence of the interesting event was therefore conveyed to the English queen by special express through that diligent overland male, the faithful Melville. Elizabeth was having a romp after a supper at Greenwich when the news arrived, and was in the midst of a furious fandango, when Cecil whispered

something in her ear which struck her all of a heap, and caused her to leave her fandango unfinished. Speedily, however, regaining her composure, she gave the ambassador something for himself, and charged him with the usual infantine presents for her royal godson.

The question of a successor to Elizabeth now turned up again with increased interest since the birth of little James; but Elizabeth, becoming irritable and ill-humoured, declared she was looking out for a husband, and intended to have an heir of her own, which would put an end to all the airs and graces which other people were exhibiting.

When the Commons grew more urgent on the point, she became angry in the extreme, for the subject must have been rather a delicate one with Elizabeth, who was growing every day a less eligible match, and might not perhaps have succeeded in finding a husband equal in point of station to an alliance with the Queen of England.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.
ELIZABETH (CONTINUED).

MARY and her husband were leading the life familiarly known as cat and dog; but the cat was in this instance getting rather the best of it. She would not allow him to be present at the christening party given in honour of their little son, and he was never permitted to hold the baby, or enjoy any of those privileges of paternity which are rather honorary than agreeable to the individual by whom they are exercised. In ordering a dinner or forming a Cabinet his wishes were equally disregarded, and if he happened to have objected to a particular dish he was very likely to be told there was nothing else in the house; while Murray, Bothwell, and Huntley, whom he hated, were appointed to the ministry. It was at length determined to get him entirely out of the way; and, as he happened to have taken the small-pox, it was agreed that he should sleep out, on account of the baby, who, though very soon cowed in his alter life, had not undergone the process of vaccination, for the simple reason that Dr. Jenner had not invented it. Darnley had consequently a bed at a lonely house called the Kirk-a-field, where he was taken in only that he might be the more effectually done for by his enemies.

An explosion was heard in the middle of the night, and on the next morning the house was found in ruins, with Darnley doubled up under a tree at some considerable distance. It was reported that lightning had been the cause of the event; but it is not likely that lightning would have known how to conduct itself with such precision as to have carried Darnley out of a three-pair of stairs window, and lay him down at a considerable distance from the house, without breaking a bone, or inflicting a bruise of any

description whatever. There is every ground for suspicion that Bothwell and his colleagues were instrumental to Darnley's death; but in order to throw dust—or gold dust—in the public eye, they offered a reward of £2,000 for the murderers. This liberality was cheap enough, for they knew they could not be called upon to pay any reward, they being themselves the parties for whom they advertised. A paper war was nevertheless commenced upon the walls, in which the murderers were advertised for on one side, and pointed out by name upon the other, when fresh rewards were offered, and the bill-stickers warned to beware of the libel they were helping to disseminate. At length, such a stir was created, that, on the 12th of April, 1567, Bothwell was put upon his trial, when by some wilful negligence the counsel for the prosecution had no brief, and was of coarse unable to offer any evidence. The accused was accordingly acquitted, and the ends of Justice were defeated in a manner that sometimes prevails in our own day, by an omission to instruct counsel; which seems to be a failing that may at least claim the merit of antiquity.

Though Bothwell was not to be executed for his crime, he was destined to be married; which, next to the capital penalty, was perhaps the highest he could pay, particularly as Mary, who had already seen out a couple of husbands and a favourite, was the lady destined for his future partner. Bothwell had the audacity to give a supper at a tavern in Edinburgh, at the close of the session of Parliament—an entertainment somewhat similar to our ministerial whitebait arrangement at Blackwall—when he drew from his pocket a recommendation of himself as a fitting husband for the Queen of Scotland. Eight bishops, nine earls, and seven lords, most of whom

were under the influence of toddy, which turned them into toadies of Bothwell, affixed their names to the document; and armed with this instrument, he, at the head of a thousand horse, effected the forcible abduction of Mary on her way from Stirling Castle. An elopement on such an extensive scale was something very unusual, even in those days of extravagance, and it has been doubted whether it was with Mary's own consent that Bothwell ran away with her. It is, however, indisputable that after making him Duke of Orkney on the 12th of May, she married him on the 15th, and a number of fresh raps from Knox followed, as a matter of course, the imprudence she had been guilty of. Her subjects took so much offence at this proceeding, that they rose against her; and Bothwell, abandoning her to her fate by flying to Denmark, left her to settle the matter as she could with her own people. A defenceless woman, and a female in distress, was of course impotent against an army of raw Scotchmen—whose rawness is so excessive, that they can very seldom be done—and Mary was consigned as a prisoner to the island of Lochleven. It may be as well to dispose of Bothwell at once, before we proceed; and, having traced him to Denmark, we meet him picking up a scanty subsistence by doing what we are justified in terming pirates' work in general. The badness of business or some other cause ultimately turned his head, and we find him subsequently an inmate of an asylum for lunatics. Here he took to writing confessions; but some of them were so vague, and all of them so contradictory, that, recollecting the horrid story-teller Bothwell was known to be, we are at a loss to decide how much credit may be attached to his statements. If, as a general rule, we may believe half what is said, we shall believe nothing that

Bothwell has told us; for he has himself contradicted one half of his own story, and the other moiety must be struck off in pursuance of the principle we have just been adverting to. The fact of his death, not having come from his own mouth, may, however, be safely relied upon.

While Mary was a prisoner at Lochleven, her subjects took advantage of her helplessness to make her sign her own abdication, and settle the crown on the head of her baby son, whose first caps had scarcely been laid aside when they had to be replaced by the royal diadem. Her half-brother, Murray, was appointed regent, and coming over to Scotland he was crowned at Stirling, where all who declared themselves sterling friends of poor Mary gave in their adherence to the new ruler.

There was staying with the governor of the prison a young hobble-dehoy of the name of George Douglas, who, being on a visit to his brother, was allowed the privilege of seeing the royal captive. Master George Douglas, in natural accordance with the sentimentality peculiar to seventeen, fell sheepishly in love with the handsome Mary. She gave some encouragement to the gawky youth, but rather with the view of getting him to aid her in an escape, than out of any regard to the over sensitive stripling. Going to his brother's bedroom in the night, the boy took the keys from the basket in which they were deposited, and letting Mary out, he handed her to a skiff and took her for a row, without thinking of the row his conduct was leading to.



Mary's Elopement.

Original Size

When she reached the shore she was joined by several friends, and marched, as the only lady among six thousand men, in the direction of Dumbarton. Murray, however, was instantly on the alert, and meeting her near Glasgow, he gave her such a routing, that she was glad to fly anywhere she could, to get out of the way of his rough treatment. After some little consideration she determined to make for England; and, throwing herself and retinue into a fishing-smack, she sailed smack for Workington, whence she resolved on walking to Carlisle, against the advice of her followers.

Though Elizabeth had expressed some sympathy towards Mary in her struggles, the English queen determined that her Scottish sister was not a person that could be received at the Court of a virgin—and such a virgin—sovereign. The unfortunate woman, who had come over for protection as a fugitive, was at once made a prisoner, first at Carlisle and then at Bolton, when she was virtually put upon her trial for

the purpose of ascertaining whether she was good enough to be visited by that dragon of virtue, the chaste Elizabeth.

In order to inculpate the Queen of Scots, an old melodramatic incident, that then perhaps had the merit of novelty, was resorted to by Murray, who produced, towards the closing scene of the trial, a packet of letters, by which it was pretended that Mary had furnished proofs of her own share in the murder of her husband Darnley. It was not very likely that, if guilty, she would have taken the trouble to commit the fact to paper, or to leave the letters about; and it only wanted a dagger wrapped in rag smeared over with red ochre, to complete the melodramatic *dénouement* that Murray seemed anxious to arrive at. These "properties," if we may be allowed the expression, had an unfavourable effect upon Mary's cause, and a delay having taken place in the proceedings, Murray took advantage of it to offer to wash out the red ochre from the retributive rag, and throw all the letters in the fire, on condition of his being left to do as he pleased with the Scotch regency. To this proposition Mary refused to accede, and defied him to the proof of his charges, which were believed to be chiefly false; and she retaliated upon him by accusing him of having been accessory to the death of Darnley. As Elizabeth candidly acknowledged that she believed neither, she at first thought of punishing both; but at length Murray was furnished with means to return home, while poor Mary was conveyed to Tutbury in the county of Stafford, where it does not appear that even the old woman of Tutbury was allowed to be sometimes the companion of her captivity.

The royal prisoner was now under the supervision of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and was permitted, at last,

to see a few visitors, several of whom were smitten by the charms of one who, though become a little passé, was, from the gentleness of her manners, always sure to be popular. Norfolk was so much taken with her that he offered her his hand, and promised to employ it in handing her on to the throne of England. As there was still an obstacle to the marriage, outstanding in the name of Bothwell, Mary could only consent, subject to that person's approval. The piratical business in Denmark having become slack, he was glad to take a small bonus to agree to a divorce, and an alliance between Norfolk and Mary, Queen of Scots, was understood, in private circles, to be one of the marriages in high life, which the season would soon see solemnised. Unfortunately for the parties interested, Mary had to send a remittance, in the year 1571, to some friends in Scotland, and the post being either irregular or untrustworthy, she had despatched the communication by hand, through one Banister, a confidential servant of the Duke of Norfolk.

Banister, who was not in the secret, went gaping about with the letter in his hand, and, thinking there was something mysterious about it, took it to Lord Burleigh, whose significant shakes of the head have earned him a note of admiration (!) in the pages of history. Burleigh, taking the letter in his hand, and placing his fore-finger on the side of his nose, began to wag his head from side to side, like the pendulum of a clock, as if he would be up to the time of day, according to his usual fashion; when, deliberately holding the letter up to the light, he, in the most ungentlemanly manner, perused every word of it.



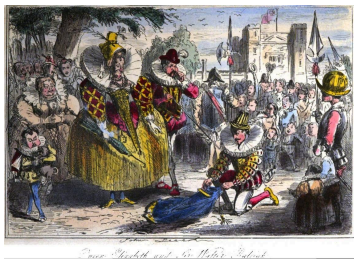
Lord Burleigh.

Original Size

He ascertained that Norfolk and Mary were contriving to drive Elizabeth from the throne, and the duke was accordingly brought to trial. The stupidity of his servants completed his ruin, for his secretary, instead of destroying the evidences of his master's guilt, had merely stowed them away under the door mats, and stuffed them among the tiles, so that the house from top to toe bore testimony to the guilt of its owner. He was beheaded in 1752, Elizabeth declaring, as she always did when it was too late, that she intended pardoning him, but that somehow or other her royal clemency was not forthcoming until it was too late to be of any use to its contemplated object.

The queen was urged by many of her admirers to get rid of Mary at once; but, as a cat delights to play with a mouse, Elizabeth seemed to take pleasure in exercising a feline influence over her unfortunate prisoner. The Protestant cause had, about this time, been violently assailed in France, and Elizabeth encouraged the departure of English volunteers to aid the French Huguenots. Among the British

auxiliary legion that went forth on this expedition were, of course, a number of adventurers, but one of them in particular, was destined to cut a conspicuous figure in the history of his country. This was Walter Raleigh, who had been in the habit of huzzaing at every royal progress, and keeping up a loyal shouting at the side of the carriage of the queen, whenever he met it in the public thoroughfares. In her visits to Greenwich, Raleigh was often found waiting at the stairs to see her land, and on one occasion the queen was about to set her foot in a puddle, when the adventurer, taking off his cloak, converted it into a temporary square of carpeting, to prevent Elizabeth from making a greater splash than she intended, on her arrival at Greenwich. The cloak itself was of no particular value, and a little water was more likely to freshen it up than to detract from its already faded beauty; but the incident flattered the vanity of the queen, and it is said that she never forgot the delicate attention that Walter Raleigh had shown to her.



Original Size

In the year 1571 a rumour got into circulation that

a match was on the *tapis* between Mary and the Duke of Anjou, one of the brothers of the French king; and though the report was unfounded, Elizabeth was so jealous of anyone marrying anybody but herself, that she, for about the twentieth time, threw herself into the European market, as an eligible investment for any one who would venture upon a speculation of such a very awful character. She sent over Walsingham as her ambassador, to see what could be done; but the Duke of Anjou, after sufficient negotiation to put an end to any match that might have been contemplated between Mary and himself, had the firmness to decline the honour of an alliance with Elizabeth. The aged angler next baited a hook for the young Duke of Alençon, the boy brother of the Duke of Anjou, but the friends of the child stepped in to prevent the sacrifice.

It was not long after the events we have described, that a conspiracy to take Mary out of prison, and put Elizabeth out of the world, was by accident discovered. One Babington, a man of ardent mind, was implicated in this disgraceful affair, which was discovered by the dangerous and irregular practice of thrusting letters through chinks in walls,—at a time, however, when the post-office arrangements were not so complete as to afford the comfort and convenience of a regular letterbox. Mary was undeniably implicated in the plot, which was so clumsily carried on that fourteen of the parties concerned were executed before she even knew that the scheme had been detected. She was taking an airing on a palfrey—one of those whose wretched trappings had made her think "comparisons are indeed odious," as she thought of her riding excursions in her dear France—when a messenger from the queen turned her horse's head towards

Fotheringay Castle, in Northamptonshire. Commissioners were instantly sent down to try her for conspiracy, and on the 25th of October, 1586, sentence was pronounced against her in the Star Chamber.

When Elizabeth heard the decision, she affected the utmost reluctance to sign the warrant for Mary's execution; and, indeed, this reluctance seems to have been somewhat sincere, for she wished the death of her rival without any of the odium attaching to a share in an act of so much cruelty. The English queen would have preferred that one of her subjects should have anticipated the effect of a death-warrant, by taking the life of Mary a little in advance; but no one was base or brutal enough to further the obvious wishes of the female tyrant. The signing of the warrant was performed amid sighs and tears, before Sir Robert Cary, Dame Gary, and the little Carys, when some of the children thought they recognised tears of sincerity falling from Elizabeth's eyes; but Mother Cary's chickens we must not depend upon. After some months of delay and duplicity, during which poor Mary was kept in a state of suspense more cruel than death itself, the warrant was signed; but Elizabeth endeavoured, as far as possible, to throw the blame on her ministers. This only aggravates her conduct, for her being ashamed of it, shows she was aware of its enormity, and that she did not consider herself to be merely performing an act of straightforward duty, though a painful one, in consigning to an ignominious death her sister sovereign. Mary was executed on the 7th of February, 1587, in the forty-fifth year of her age; and it is said that when the executioner held up her head by its auburn locks, they came off in his hand, and the grey stubble underneath proved too plainly that

Mary had lived for many years a secret adherent to wig principles.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.
ELIZABETH (CONCLUDED).

A few weeks had elapsed after the execution of poor Mary, when an ambassador, to palaver over the unfortunate queen's only son, James, was sent to Scotland by Elizabeth. When the lad first heard the news he began to roar like a calf, and quiver like an arrow. He vowed vengeance, in a voice of soprano shrillness, and the homely figure of a storm in a slop-basin was faithfully realised.

The ambassador let him have his cry completely out, and then drawing himself up with an air of some dignity, observed, "When you have left off roaring, and can hear me speak, I will tell you the rights of it."

"Nobody has any right to murder my mamma," was the reply of the boy, who again opened the sluices of his grief, and allowed the tears to irrigate his face with a couple of meandering rivulets. At length, silence being obtained, the ambassador declared that

the amputation of Mary's head was accidental as far as Elizabeth was concerned; but, "axe-i-dental, you mean," was the bitter reply of her sobbing offspring. The messenger, nevertheless, persisted that the Queen of England meant nothing by signing the death-warrant; that, in fact, she had been "only in fun"; and as he wound up with the offer of an increased pension to James, the heartless brat dried his eyes, with the observation that "What's done can't be undone," and pocketed a quarter in advance of his enlarged income. That Elizabeth had really been determined upon Mary's death, is a point upon which our sagacious readers will require no enlightenment; for to them the character of the royal catamountain —we use the Johnsonian word, in preference to the old, familiar term of catamaran—will be clear, from the gallons of midnight oil which we have bestowed upon it. How to get rid of Mary was, in fact, a subject of frequent deliberation between the English queen and her creatures—pretty creatures they were —among whom Leicester and Walsingham stood prominent. Leicester had proposed poison, while Elizabeth suggested assassination; but the dagger and bowl, the emblems of legitimate tragedy, were both laid aside for the farce of a trial. When the sanguinary business was done, the chief actors in it threw the blame upon the subordinates, and poor Mr. Secretary Davison was declared by Elizabeth to have been the sole cause of the execution of the Scottish queen, because he had assisted in executing the deed that consigned her to the Scaffold. When Davison was accused of the act, he went about exclaiming, "I! Well, that is the coolest!—'Pon my word! What next?" But he soon found what was next, for he was committed to prison, and fined £10,000, merely to give colour to the accusation. When

confidentially apprised of the cause of his detention, he went into hysterics at the half-ridiculous, half-melancholy, idea of his being impounded to give colour to a charge which was altogether false; and "It only just cleans me out!—ruins me, by Jove!" was the touching remark he made as he paid the entire fine imposed upon him, and quitted the prison.

Philip of Spain was now becoming desirous of an attack upon England, without having any definite views, beyond a desire for mischief, which was inherent in his character. He had got together a very formidable fleet, and Elizabeth taking alarm, tried all sorts of plans to check his warlike purpose. One of the expedients of her ministers—and it was not a bad one—was to throw discredit on a quantity of Philip's bills, in the hope of his finding a difficulty in getting them discounted. Sir Francis Drake was despatched to Cadiz with a fleet of thirty sail, and Elizabeth having on his departure said to him, affectionately, "Go, and do your best, Drake—there's a duck," he dashed into Cadiz Bay, knocked down four castles, sunk a hundred ships—forecastles included—and going home by the Tagus, took a large man-of-war from under the very nose of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, and then made him a polite obeisance from the bow of the vessel.

Philip did not relax in his preparations for invading England, and he got together a very numerous fleet, by hiring vessels wherever he could, and sending his emissaries to engage a whole squadron at a time, like an individual, who, jumping into the first cab on a stand, desires the whole rank to follow him. The Armada—for such it was called—became, of course, rather numerous than select; but there is no doubt that if its quality was queer, its quantity was most respectable.

The naval service of England had been so shabbily provided for, that the British fleet did not exceed thirty-six sail of the line; though by-the-by, as the authorities have just told us that Drake took or demolished one hundred ships at Cadiz, there seems a slight error in figures, which will occasionally happen in the best regulated histories. As it was not known where the enemy was to land, the High Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, was obliged to exclaim—"Now, gentlemen, spread yourselves, spread yourselves!" as he ordered Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher to the command of their various detachments. The gallant Drake took up his station at Ushant, as if he would have said "You shan't!" to any foe who might have come to that point to effect a landing. Hawkins cruised near the Scilly Islands to look out, as he said, for the silly fellows who should come in his-way; and Lord Henry Seymour cruised along the Flanders coast, while other captains vigorously scoured the Chops of the Channel. It was expected that the Spanish Armada would have come down the Thames, and perhaps amused themselves with an excursion to Rosherville, which was strongly fortified, as well as all the places on the river. The Boshervillians threw themselves into the arms of their resident baron; and the peaceful inhabitants of Sheerness prepared to fight, out of sheer necessity. Catholics and Protestants vied with each other in eagerness to repel the invader from their shores; and the gallant fellows living near the Tower, declared in their blunt but expressive language, that "though the foe might pass a Gravesend, outlive a Blackwall, or go in safety through a Greenwich, he would most assuredly never survive a Wapping!"

The queen herself, having driven down in her tilbury to Tilbury Fort, mounted a saddle-horse, and,

flushed by her nautical enthusiasm, she looked a very horse-marine as she cantered about upon, her steed in the presence of her people. The Earls of Essex and Leicester having held her rein, she majestically bridled up, and sent forth among the crowd a volley of clap-traps, declaring she had come among them, as the song says—

"To conquer, to conqu-e-e-er,
To co-o-onquer, or to boldly die-i-i-i-e."

At length it was determined by Philip that the Spanish Armada should set out; and, as Strype pleasantly tells us, "a pretty set-out they made of it." Poor Santa Cruz, the high admiral, made a most unlucky hit to begin with, by falling ill and dying, when his second in command, the Duke of Parma, followed his leader's example, with most inconvenient rapidity.

The chief command was given to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, "who was a very good man, but a very bad sailor," * and knew so little of maritime affairs, that he is reported to have sent to a dealer in marine stores for an outfit. At length the *Invincible Armada* was ready to put to sea, and they succeeded in "shoving her off," on the 20th of May, 1588, from the Tagus. The seas, which evidently had no notion of being ruled by any but Britannia, turned turbulent under the Spanish usurpers, and a generalising of the waves made it a toss-up whether Medina Sidonia and his fleet would ride out the storm in safety. Four of the ships were actually lost, and nearly all the rest dispersed, and when the high admiral called upon his subordinate officers to be "calm and collected," he found that the storm had not allowed them to be either the one or the other. Having got his forces

together again, as well as he could, the Spanish admiral made another start towards the English coast, and appeared off the Lizard Point, with his fleet drawn up in the form of a crescent, being seven miles from horn to horn, and presenting to the enemy the horns of a dilemma. The English were on shore at Plymouth, playing at bowls on the Hoe, and Drake, who was getting the better of the game, declared he would play it out, for there was no hurry, as he could beat his companions first, and the Spaniards afterwards. Having, at length, taken to their vessels, the British watched the foe as they came rolling in their heavy, lumbering ships up the channel. Their guns were planted so high up that they shot entirely over the English vessels, and into one another, while their unwieldy size rendering them unmanageable, several of them being banged to bits by a series of frightful collisions. To add to the confusion, one of the vessels took fire, and was burnt, by an accident of the cook on board, who, it has been ingeniously suggested, was trying to fry some of the celebrated chops of the channel, "which," as Mrs. Markham says, in her very excellent Abridgment, "you know, my little dears, you have all heard talked about."

** Vide George Cruikshank's renowned etching.*

Another large vessel sprung her mast, another sprung a leak, a third burst her binnacle, a fourth shivered her timbers, a fifth lost all her fore part; and the crew were driven by stern necessity into the stem; while on all sides, there prevailed the utmost confusion. Medina Sidonia retired to the back yard of one of his ships, where he sat dejected and alone, and after a good deal of skirmishing, in which the

Spaniards got the worst of it at all points of the compass, the duke made the best of his way home again. He arrived at Santander about the end of September, 1588, with the mere skeleton of the force he had started with, and every sailor he brought back was in himself a complete wreck of what he had been when he quitted his own country. Thus ended the grand design of invading England by means of the Spanish Armada, which, to say the truth, did more mischief to itself than it sustained at the hands of the enemy. Had a public meeting been held at the time to celebrate the victory, we are sure that any English patriot might have proposed a vote of thanks to the Armada, for the "able and impartial manner in which it banged itself almost to pieces, with a total disregard of its own interests, and to the incalculable advantage of England."

On the 4th of September, 1588, Leicester, the queen's favourite, died on his way to Kenilworth; but Elizabeth never felt the loss, for she had already effected a transfer of her affections to Robert Devereux, the young Earl of Essex. Her grief at Leicester's death was so slight that it did not prevent her from putting an execution into his house, sweeping off all he had, under a bill of sale, and submitting it to the public hammer in order to repay herself the sums she had advanced to him in his lifetime. Essex was a mere boy, and the part of favourite to a disagreeable ugly old woman like "our Bessy," was by no means a sinecure. He was expected to appear at all times as the light comedian of the Court, and was compelled to exercise flattery ana gallantry towards a harridan who neither justified the one nor inspired the other. He took the earliest opportunity of getting away from her for a short time, by going to sea against her express orders; but

he would have braved anything for a respite from the society of the royal bore, whose fondness had become odious to its object, though policy restrained him from openly saying so. On his return home, he found himself almost cut out of the queen's good graces by Sir Walter Raleigh, whose name we have already mentioned as that of a young adventurer. Raleigh was a distinguished navigator, which does not mean that he worked on the cuttings of a railway; but that he belonged to a very humble line, is a point there is not a doubt upon. His reputation rests chiefly on the luggage he brought with him after one of his voyages, when some potatoes, and a few ounces of tobacco crammed into his *sac de nuit* were destined to hand him down to immortality. The most popular vegetable the world ever saw, has put Raleigh into everybody's mouth; and when we see the cloud rising from the cigar, our imagination may trace, in the "smoke that so gracefully curls," the name of one whoso renown cannot be whiffed away into the regions of oblivion.

The jealousy of Essex caused Raleigh to be sent into Ireland, where he remained for years; and his long sojourn may account for the hold that the potato had taken upon the affections of the Irish people.

His rival being thus summarily got rid of, Essex was left to make his way with the "virgin queen," who was now verging on old age, and treated her young favourite less as a subject than a son; for she had come to that time of life when anything she could show in the shape of fondness deserved the epithet of motherly. The boy was a fine one of his age, being brave and good-looking; but Burleigh and other wise counsellors, seeing that Essex made a fool of the queen, or rather, that she made a fool of

herself by her partiality for him, took a dislike to the stripling. On one occasion, old Elizabeth getting kittenish and playful, boxed the boy's ears, which tingled with the pain—for her hand had become bony from age—when he laid his hand upon his sword, and was thrown into disgrace, like a child who had been guilty of naughtiness. He was soon recalled, and promising that he would "never do so any more," he rapidly resumed his place in the favour of the royal dotard.

The death of Burleigh, on the 4th of August, 1598, for whom the hurly-burly of politics had been too much, left the entire field to Essex, and he made the most of it, by getting the appointment of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; from which he derived the double advantage of advancing his own views and getting away from Elizabeth. He took with him a considerable force, which he somehow or other frittered away without doing any good whatever: and after losing several of his soldiers by marching them completely off their legs, he determined that he must have "a truce to such an unpleasant sort of thing," and entered at once into a truce with the enemy. Elizabeth, who had calculated upon his settling the Irish question at the point of the sword, was disgusted at his failure, and desired him not to come home till he had subjected his honour to thorough repair, and taken all the stains out of his character. As he had no relish for the task imposed upon him, he suddenly quitted his post, and hastening to England, arrived at the palace covered with mud and dirt, for he had made a regular steeple-chase of the latter part of his journey. Without going home to change his boots, he rushed into the presence-chamber before the queen was up, and, without asking any questions, he pushed his way to her

dressing room. He found her completely *en déshabille*, and started back at finding her hair on a block before her, instead of on her head, for she had got her wig in hand, and was trying to turn and twist it into a becoming form, by means of powder, pomatum, tongs, combs, and curl-papers. Startled by his sudden appearance, she hastened to put herself to rights as well as she could, and was angry at the intrusion; but as he fell at her feet, she contrived to cover the baldness of her head, and then received him more affably. He had no sooner gone than she began to reflect upon his presumption in having thus taken her unawares; and when he returned, after going home to dress, she would have nothing to say to him. He was desired to stay at home, and consider himself a prisoner in his own house; but as the old crone had allowed so many former familiarities, he was quite unprepared for the game of propriety she was now practising. He went home and took to his bed, for it made him perfectly sick to witness the sudden prudery of the queen, who during his illness sent him a daily basin of broth from her own table. She ordered eight eminent physicians to consult on his case; but this calling in of a powerful medical force looks very much as if she had been disposed to get rid of him, and preferred physic to law for once, as a method of destruction. In spite of his eight doctors Essex got better, and sent submissive messages, to which Elizabeth turned a deaf ear; and Essex, by attributing her deafness to age, irritated her beyond expression. He was told that he would find her unbending; when he at once replied that he had found her bent nearly double, when he last had the honour of seeing her, and he was glad to hear that royalty was once more beginning to look up in England, by taking its proper position. These remarks

irritated Elizabeth beyond expression; and having brought him before the privy council, she caused a sentence of banishment to be inflicted upon him, which he sarcastically declared was agreeable to him, as it would keep from him the sight of Elizabeth, whom he now denominated his "old queene." Anxious to try the effect of intimidation upon the nervous septuagenarian who now sat upon the throne, he entered into a conspiracy with Scotland; but it was soon found out, and, rushing with desperate fury into the streets, he tried to raise a mob by addressing inflammatory speeches to the populace. The citizens looked at him and listened to him, but shaking their heads, passed on, when he soon found out that a solo movement unsupported by any concerted piece, rendered him truly ridiculous. At length he was hurried off to the Tower, and having been tried, he was condemned to die, though he fully expected the palsied old creature who held the sceptre in her tremulous hand, would, in a love-sick mood, decree his pardon.

It is said that in "happier days," when Essex had been in the habit of striking "the light, the light, the light guitar," to the tinlike sound of Elizabeth's voice, she had given him a ring, telling him if ever he fell into disgrace, the return of that ring would obtain his pardon. Elizabeth was from day to day listening to every knock, expecting the identical ring, but it never came, and on the 25th of February, 1601, he was actually beheaded. Elizabeth never held up her head again; but, indeed, as she had long contracted a stoop from debility and old age, there is nothing astonishing in the fact we have mentioned. The spectacle of an old woman pining in love after a mere boy, was revolting enough; but the fact is made doubly disgusting by the recollection that she had

herself caused the death of the object of her disreputable dotage.

Some time after the execution of Essex, the Countess of Nottingham was taken ill, and sending for Elizabeth confessed that the favourite had given the ring before his death to be delivered to the queen, but that it had been kept back for party purposes. The sovereign, who was shaking in every limb from ambiguity and agitation, flew at the Countess of Nottingham in her bed, seized her by the shoulder, and administered the most violent cuffs that a female of seventy is capable of bestowing on one who has offended her. "Take that—and that—and that—and that—and that!"—was the cry of the queen, as she suited the action to the word in every instance. The exertion was too much for the tottering fabric of human frailty, who threw herself on the floor when she got to her own room, and refusing to go to bed, rolled about for ten days on a pile of cushions. Being asked to name her successor, she is said by some to have specified James; while others maintain that she said nothing. When she was too exhausted to oppose her attendants, they got her into bed, and on the 24th of March, 1603, she died in the seventieth year of her age, and forty-fifth of her reign.

Many people have a very natural objection to written characters, but we feel compelled to give a written character of Queen Elizabeth; and we are sorry to remark, that we can say very little that will be thought complimentary. In person she was bony, coarse, muscular and masculine. Her hair was red, but this she inherited from her father Henry, and thus her red hair has been said, by that mountebank, Stiype, to have been he-red-hair-tary at that time in the royal family. She endeavoured, by the aid of

dress, to make up for the unkindness of Nature; and she surrounded herself with a quantity of hoops, which, as her figure was rather tub-like, may be considered appropriate. She never gave away her old clothes, and no less than three thousand dresses were found at her death, the bodies of which, it is said, would have covered half London at its then size, while the skirts would have covered all the outskirts. Her portrait is always drawn with an enormous ruff round her neck, which she adopted, it is believed, to hide the roughness of her chin, which showed Nature to be her enemy, for it had bearded her frightfully.

She was exceedingly fond of visiting the houses of the nobility; but she usually ruined all whom she honoured in this way, by the expense they were put to in entertaining her. Lord Leicester, who had her staying with him at Kenilworth, for a few days, nearly ruined himself in bears, of which he took in a great quantity to bait for the amusement of his sovereign.

In disposition, manners and appearance, there was nothing feminine or graceful about Elizabeth; but Hume, who seems very fond of her, tells us, that in weighing her, one ought to sink the female and think only of the sovereign. We cannot, however, understand a person being at the same time a good queen and a bad woman, unless the woman happens to be somebody beside herself, when she is obviously unfit to be trusted with the responsibility of government. Elizabeth had a certain amount of talent; "for she had," says Hume, "both temper and capacity;" but capacity seems to have belonged rather to the bony bulkiness of her unfeminine form, than to the extent of her intellect.

Her private character was exceedingly disreputable; and her amorous propensities, which

seemed rather to increase with her old age, rendered her disgusting to her contemporaries, as well as ridiculous in the eyes of posterity. She was constantly in love with some stripling about the Court, who, when he became *un peu passé*, was thrown aside for some more juvenile admirer.

There can be no doubt that the admirable character of *Mrs. Skewton*, if we may be allowed an irreverent allusion to fiction amidst the awful solemnities of fact, is to be attributed to the extensive historical research of Mr. Dickens, and his intimate acquaintance with the period of the reign of Elizabeth. It may be admitted that she governed with considerable firmness; but the praise, such as it is, of "coming it exceedingly strong," is, after all, a most questionable compliment.

Several of the greatest names in science and literature shed a glory on Elizabeth's reign; but the most magnificent sunshine, by falling on a mean object, does not make the object itself in reality more respectable. Bacon, Shakespeare, Spenser and others, are said to have flourished at the time; but we have examined their autographs with peculiar care, and have seen no symptoms of flourishing about any one of them. To say they all wrote at the period would be true; but to say they flourished is an exaggeration to which we will not lend ourselves.

The reign of Elizabeth was, at least, considerably in advance of our own time in one respect, for it is remarkable for the passing of a Poor Law which, unlike that of the present day, was founded on the principles of humanity. This blot, however, will, we trust, be removed in time for a sixth—though not quite quickly enough for a second, third, fourth or fifth—edition of this work; for the Spirit of the Times has doomed the Poor Law to perdition.

Theatres first came into vogue in Elizabeth's reign; and it is a fact at which our sober reverence for the Swan of Avon takes considerable alarm, that that ever-to-be-lamented bird was in the habit of exercising his quills in the neighbourhood of the New Cut, at a concern called the Globe, where the prices were only twopence to the pit, and one penny in the gallery. The critics sat on the stage, and were furnished with pipes and tobacco—a gentle intimation to them to "draw it mild" in their notices of the performances. It is possible, that through the fumes of the tobacco they got a bird's-eye view of the stage, which was favourable to the performance of their critical duties. The audience used to read, play at cards, smoke, and drink, before the performance began; and perhaps, if the piece happened to be dull, they relieved it by some of those pastimes even during its progress.

Smoking, which has since reached such universality that every man one meets is a chimney, and every boy a flue, is known to have been introduced by Raleigh, who, fearing; that his friends would rally him on the propensity, used to indulge it in secret. One day some smoke was seen to issue from his apartment, and the people about him, fearing he was on fire, inundated him with buckets of water that put him out very seriously, and determined him in future not to smoke the pipe of privacy. The mode of living was not very luxurious in Elizabeth's reign, for a glass of ale and a slice of bread formed the ordinary breakfast, while brawn was an article of general consumption; and, as Elizabeth was very fond of it, her great brawny arms are easily accounted for.

An attempt has been made to attribute various graces and accomplishments to Elizabeth, which,

even after attempting to enlarge our credulity, and stir up our organ of veneration to its fullest extent, we are unable to give her credit for. It is said that she played, sang, and danced tolerably well, though her figure seems to give very weighty testimony against her probable possession of the last of these accomplishments.

She admired dancing among her courtiers, and she is said to have promoted Hatton for his terpsiohorean efforts, she having once seen him practising his steps, when she declared that he held himself so well in the first position, that she would elevate him to the first positions soon as possible. Elizabeth, though profuse in her own indulgences, was stingy in the extreme to others, and her accumulation of old clothes proves a tenacity of bad habits, and a shabbiness towards her *femme de chambre*, that are on a par with the other despicable points in her character.

BOOK VI. FROM THE PERIOD OF THE ACCESSION OF JAMES THE FIRST TO THE RESTORATION OF CHARLES THE SECOND.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. JAMES THE FIRST.



Original Size

HE moment the queen died, Cecil and the other Lords of the Council sneaked out through the back garden gate of the Palace at Richmond at three o'clock in the morning on the 24th of March, 1603, and posted for Scotland to James, whom they hailed as the brightest Jem that had ever adorned the throne. Cecil having long been in correspondence with the Scotch king, had only been waiting to see which way the cat jumped, or, in other words, for the death of the queen, and she had lived so long that he began to think the royal cat had nine lives, whioh delayed her final jump much longer than her minister desired..

Before posting to Scotland, the Lords of the Council had stuck up several posters about London, proclaiming James the First amid those shouts which "the boys" are ever ready to lend to any purpose for which a mob has been got together. The Scotch king was of course glad to exchange the miserable cane-bottomed throne of his own country for the comfortably cushioned seat of English royalty; but he was so wretchedly poor that he could not even start for his new kingdom till it had yielded him enough to pay his passage thither. He tried hard to get possession of the crown jewels for his wife, but the Council would not trust him with the precious treasures. On his way to his new dominions he was received with that enthusiasm which a British mob has always on hand for any new object; but he did not increase in favour upon being seen; for if a good countenance is a letter of recommendation, James carried in his face a few lines that said very little in his favour. His legs were too weak for his body, his eyes too large for their sockets, and his tongue was too big for his mouth; so that his knees knocked without making a hit, his pupils could not be restrained by the lash, while his lingual excrescence caused so many a slip between the cup and the lip, that his aspect was awkward and disagreeable.



James the First on his way to England.

Original Size

During his journey to London he rode on horseback, but he was such a bungling equestrian that he was thrown by a sagacious animal intent on having his fling at the expense of the sovereign. Besides being ungainly in his person, he did not set it off to the best advantage, for he was exceedingly dirty; and thus he appeared to be looking black at everybody, for his face was encrusted in dust, and though his predecessor, Elizabeth, was very objectionable, he could not boast of coming to the throne with clean hands. Power was such a new toy to him that he could not use it in moderation, and he made knights at the rate of fifty a day, which caused Bacon so far to forget himself as to utter the silly sarcasm, that there would be a surfeit of Sirs, if James proceeded in the manner in which he was beginning.

Conspiracies were soon formed against a monarch so weak, and the ambitious. Raleigh, who had been in his youth a mere street adventurer, thought he could vault over official posts as easily as he had

vaulted, over those in the public thoroughfares. His designs being detected, he was deprived of some of the offices he possessed, and among others his monopoly of licensing taverns, and retailing, wines, for which his knowledge of the tobacco business had well fitted him. He plotted with Grey, a Puritan, Markham, a Papist, and Cobham, a Nothingarian, to seize the person of the king; but the tables were turned upon them by the seizure of themselves and their committal to the Tower. Grey, Cobham, and Markham were condemned to die; but just as they had laid their heads on the block, they were axed if they would rather live, and having answered in the affirmative, they were committed to the Tower with Raleigh for the remainder of their lives.

The Puritans having complained of ecclesiastical abuses. James ordered a meeting at Hampton Court between the bishops and their opponents, to talk over their differences. The bishops were allowed the first innings, and they continued running on for several hours, when James took the matter up on the same side, and the Puritans were not allowed to utter a word. After the king had talked himself out of breath, and his hearers out of patience, Doctor Reynolds was permitted to take a turn on behalf of the Puritans; but he was insulted, interrupted, and regularly coughed down before he had spoken twenty words. The king then exclaimed, "Well, Doctor, is that all you have to say?" Upon which the Doctor, being abashed by the unfairness shown towards him, admitted that he was unwilling to proceed. James boasted that he had silenced the Puritans; and so he had, but it was by intimidation and bluster alone that he had succeeded in doing so.

Encouraged by his triumph over a few trembling sectarians, the king called Parliament together,

expecting to overcome that body; but he found he had to deal with some very awkward customers. They questioned his rights, refused his salary, and turned coldly from a proposition to unite England with Scotland, which they resisted with a sneering assertion that oil and vinegar would never agree. Doubting whether he would get much good out of Parliament in the temper in which he found it, he abruptly closed the session.

The Catholics, who were subjected to much persecution, became very angry under it, and a gentleman of the name of Catesby, who had changed his opinions some three or four times, stuck to the last set with such fury, that he resolved to assist them at all hazards. His principles had been a mere matter of toss up, but he had settled down into a Papist at last; and conceiving the idea of destroying King, Lords, and Commons, at one blow, he expressed himself on the subject *avec explosion*, as the French dramatists have it, to Thomas Winter, a gentleman of Worcestershire, who, having been worsted in all his prospects, cottoned at once to the scheme. The Catholics had solicited the mediation of the King of Spain, and Winter passed over to the Netherlands to hear how matters were going on, when he made himself acquainted at Ostend with a fellow named Guido Fawkes, who has been equally misinterpreted by "the boys" and the historians. It has been usual to describe him as a low mercenary who got his name of Fawkes or Forks, from his way of brutally demanding everybody to fork out; but however etymology may encourage such an interpretation of his name, we must denounce it as a cruel libel on his character. * The eagerness of the juvenile mind to adopt any malicious absurdity that is proposed to it, has been exhibited in the boyish

extravagance of making Guido Fawkes a man of straw, though there is little doubt that he was a man of substance, and not the mere Will-o'-the-Wisp that constitutes his portrait as we see him drawn on stone along the paved streets of the metropolis. Guido, whose pretended ugliness has made his abbreviated name of Guy synonymous with a frightful object, was a gentleman, though a fanatic, and it is not true that had Fawkes been invited to dinner, it would have been necessary to look after the spoons as well as the Fawkes with unusual vigilance. Catesby invited Winter and Guido to his lodgings, where they were met by Thomas Percy, a distant relation of the Earl of Northumberland, and by John Wright, an obstinate fellow, who would never own himself wrong. Grog and cigars—the latter being a novelty recently imported by Raleigh—were liberally provided, when Catesby suggested that before business could be regularly gone into, an oath of secresy must be administered. With a melodramatic desire to give the affidavit all the advantages of appropriate scenery, it was suggested that a lone house in the fields beyond Clement's Inn should be the spot where the oath should be administered.

** Some monster or punster in human form, declares called Fawkes or Forks, because he was ready to cc anything sanguinary. The atrocity of this assertic comment.*

In the course of a few days the affidavit had been drawn, perused, settled, and engrossed, when the parties met at the place appointed, and were all sworn in, with due formality. Catesby, acting as a sort of chairman, then proceeded to explain to the meeting his views.

He commenced rather in the shape of innuendos, by hinting that he wished the Parliament further, and he thought he knew a mode of despatching all the Members at once, by a special train. As his associates did not take the hint immediately, he proceeded to expatiate on the expediency of a regular blow up, and getting rid of the whole Parliament "slap bang;" accompanying his observation by dealing on the deal table a tremendous thump, that made a noise resembling the explosion of gunpowder. The action seemed to strike a light in in the eyes of all present, and by putting this and that together, they perceived that Catesby's intention was to act the last scene of the *Miller and his Men*, beneath the walls of Parliament. Percy, who was a gentleman pensioner—though he seems to have been rather more of the pensioner than the gentleman—had an opportunity of banging about the Court, and watching the movements of his intended victims. The first care of the conspirators was to take a house in the neighbourhood; but no one of the lot, except Percy, had sufficient credit to justify his acceptance as a tenant, by any prudent landlord. At length they got hold of a dwelling by the water side, which was occupied by one Ferris—probably a ferryman—who, for a small consideration, vacated the premises in Percy's favour. The back of the house abutted—by means of a water-butt—on the Parliamentary party wall, and they began picking a hole in the wall as soon as they obtained possession. At every move they renewed their oath of secrecy, as if they were mutually better known than trusted among themselves, and a secret which, even in ordinarily honest hands, is tolerably sure to get wind; was very soon known to twenty people at least, through the leakiness of one or more of the

conspirators.

Emboldened by their success, they took a coal shed on the Lambeth side of the river, where one of them, under pretence of going into the potato business, accumulated as large a quantity of coals, coke, and wood, as he could with the small means upon which he was enabled to speculate. The chief scene of their operations was, of course, the house at Westminster, where they laid in a large supply of hard boiled eggs; "the better," says Strype, "to be enabled to hatch their scheme, and to avoid suspicion, by not being compelled to send out for food." The wall offering considerable resistance to their projects it was found advisable to send for the keeper of the potato shed, over the way, to aid in the work, and young Wright, a brother of the same Wright that never would admit himself to be wrong, was admitted to a partnership in the secret.

Vainly did these ninny-hammers go hammering on at the walls of Parliament, which stuck together in a manner very characteristic of bricks, and no impression seemed to be made upon them; while the mine from Lambeth, by means of which they intended under-mining the British Constitution, made scarcely any progress at all. One morning, in the midst of their labours, they were startled by a rumbling noise overhead, when Guido Fawkes, who acted as sentinel, ran to ascertain the cause of the alarming sound. It seemed that one Bright, who carried on the coal business in a cellar immediately below the Parliament, was clearing out his stock, at "an alarming sacrifice," with the intention of moving his business to some more fashionable neighbourhood. Perhaps he was a bad tenant, and being on the eve of ejection, removed his coals in revenge for having got the sack from his landlord;

but, at all events, he had a cart into which he was shooting the Wallsend, though he may have had no intention of shooting the moon at the expense of his creditors.

Percy, knowing the cellar must be vacant, went to look at it, and pronounced it the very thing; though it might, naturally, have excited some surprise that one who had hitherto been considered a man of ton should become a man of chaldrons and hundredweights by going into the coal business, on a scale somewhat limited. A tenancy was nevertheless effected, and several barrels of gunpowder were carried into the vault, under the pretence that the small-beer and bloater business was about to be commenced by the new lessee, in a style of unusual liberality.

Guy Fawkes was despatched to Flanders, to obtain adherents to the scheme, but he got no further than to obtain a promise from Owen that he would speak to Stanley, which seems to have been merely equivalent to an extension of the secret, without any beneficial result to the conspirators. On the return of Guido, he found that while he had been extending the secret abroad, his colleagues had been blabbing —of course confidentially—at home, so that the secret was becoming a good deal like an "aside" in a melo-drama, which comes to the ears of every one but the person most interested in being made acquainted with its purport.

Every arrangement was now made for blowing up the Parliament sky-high, when a prorogation, until the 5th of November, was suddenly announced, and the conspirators began to fear that the secret, which had experienced as many extensions as a railway line, had found its way, by some disagreeable deviation, to the ears of the intended victims. The

expense of the conspiracy had hitherto been borne by Catesby, who paid for all the hard-boiled eggs, the rent of the coal-cellar, with the wood and the coals that had been had in; for, the rest being soldiers of fortune, which means that they were soldiers of no fortune at all, would not have got credit for even the bull's-eye lanthorn, which has since cut such a conspicuous figure in the history of the period. Catesby had, however, spent so much in new-laid eggs and new-laid gunpowder—for he had to support a numerous train—that he was obliged to take in fresh capital, and Sir Edward Digby, with Francis Tresham, were admitted as shareholders in the dangerous secret. Digby put down £1500 on the allotment of a slice of the mystery to himself, and Francis Tresham, who did not much like the speculation, though he consented to enter into it, gave his cheque for £2000, saying that he considered the money thrown away as completely as if he had wasted it in horse-chestnuts, Venetian grog, or raspberry vinegar. His givings were accompanied by fearful misgivings, and he never expected to see the hour when he should have the honour of being sent up to posterity on the wings of a barrel of gunpowder.

The 5th of November was the day that the conspirators had agreed to immortalize, for the benefit of future dealers in squibs, crackers, Catharine-wheels, and all the other "wheels within wheels," that are so completely in character with this complicated project. They used to take blows on the river preliminary to the great blow they had in their eye, and a house at Erith was their frequent place of rendezvous. They also held consultations at White Webbs—not Webb's the White Bear—near Enfield, and here they arranged that Guido Fawkes, after

putting matters in train, should set fire to it, by a slow burning match, which would give him time to escape, though he often said, half jestingly, that to find his match would be exceedingly difficult. As the scheme drew near its intended execution, the "secret" had become so fearfully divided that every one who possessed a share of it had some friend or other he wanted to save; and if each had been allowed to withdraw his man, the residue of the Parliament would scarcely have been worth the powder and shot it had been determined to devote to them. Tresham, for example, was seized with a sudden fit of benevolence towards old Lord Monteagle; while Kay, the seedy and needy gentleman in charge of the house at Lambeth, wanted to save Lord Mordaunt, who had cashed for poor K. an I O U, when the money was of great use to him. Catesby, who was not so tender-hearted, declared it was all very well, but if they were to go on saving and excepting one after the other, there could be no explosion at all, unless they could procure some of that celebrated discriminating gunpowder, which blows up all the villains, in the last scene of a melo-drama, and spares the virtuous characters. He insisted, therefore, on the necessity of leaving the result to a toss-up, in which all would have an equal chance of winning or losing.

Tresham, who combined the wavering of the weathercock with the tremulousness of the tee-to-tum, was still intent on giving a sort of general warning to a number of his friends, and when his blabbing was objected to, he declared the affair had better be put off, as he could find no more money to carry on the conspiracy. Catesby, Winter, and Fawkes objected to delay; whereupon it is supposed that Tresham not only ratted but let the cat out of the bag in a most unwarrantable manner. Lord

Monteagle, who had a country box at Hoxton, was giving a *petit souper* to a few friends on the 26th of October, and he was just finishing the leg of a Welsh rabbit, when his page presented him a letter that had just been left by a tall man who had refused to leave his name or wait for an answer. Lord Monteagle, thinking it might be a bill, desired one of his guests to read it out, when it proved to be a letter written in the characteristic spelling of the period. "I would advyse yowe, as yowe tender yower lyf, to devyse some excuse to shift of vower attendance at this Parleament," said the anonymous scribbler, which threw Monteagle into such alarm that he took the Hoxton 'bus, and went off to Whitehall the same evening to see Cecil. The king was "hunting the fearful hare at Royston," in the most hare-um scare-um style, and it was resolved that nothing could, would, or should be done until the return of the sovereign.

Notwithstanding the letter having been delivered as early as the 26th of October, nothing seems to have been done to stop the conspiracy, for Fawkes went regularly once a day to the cellar, to count the coals, snuff the rushlight, and do any other little odd job that the progress of the conspiracy might require. Cecil and Suffolk having laid their heads together on the subject of the letter, at last fancied they had found the solution of the riddle, which for the convenience of the student, we will throw into the form of a charade, after an approved model.

My first is a sort of peculiar tea;
My second a lawn or a meadow might be;
My whole's a conspiracy likely to blow
King, Commons, and Lords to a place I don't know.

The "peculiar tea" was gunpowder, the "lawn" or "meadow" was a plot—of grass, and the whole was the Gunpowder Plot, which, though it went off very badly at the time, caused an explosion from which the country has not yet quite recovered. Notwithstanding the solution of the mystery, no steps were taken to bring the matter, to an issue, and Fawkes was permitted to be at large about town, paying his diurnal visits to the cellar without attracting the observation of anyone. Tresham and Winter talked the matter over in Lincoln's Inn Fields, or wandered amid the then romantic scenery of Whetstone Park, to consult on the scheme and its probable completion. The timid Tresham proposed flight, but his fellow conspirators, who were not so flighty, resolved on persevering, and the intrepid Fawkes kept up a regular Cellarius, * by dancing backwards ana forwards about the cellar.

** We may as well state, for the benefit of that pc which this work will reach and the Cellarius will the Cellarius is a dance fashionable in the year 1 this history was written.*

The shilly-shallying of all parties with respect to the gunpowder conspiracy is one of the most remarkable features of the period when it occurred; for we find the plotters, with detection staring them in the face, adhering to their old haunts, while the intended victims though made aware of the plot, were as tardy as possible in taking any steps to baffle it. Fawkes continued his visits to the cellar just as confidently as ever; and one would think that ultimately detection was the object he had in view for he lurked about the premises with such obstinate perseverance that his escape was impossible. At

length Suffolk, the Lord Chamberlain, took Monteagle down to the House the day before the opening of Parliament, to see that all was right, and they occupied themselves for several hours in looking under the seats, unpicking the furniture of the throne to see if anyone was concealed inside, and searching into every hole and corner where a conspirator was not likely to secrete himself. Having taken courage from the fact of there being no signs of danger, they determined to go down stairs into the cellar, under pretence of stopping up the rat-holes—for even in those early days rats found their way into the House—and they had no sooner opened the door than they saw in one corner a round substance, which they at first took for a beer barrel. They approached it with the intention of giving it a friendly tap, when the supposed barrel rose up into the height of a water-butt.



Original Size

Suffolk instantly got behind Monteagle, who stood trembling with fear, when the phantom cask assumed the form of a "tall, desperate fellow," who proved to be Fawkes, and the Chamberlain, affecting

a careless indifference, demanded his "name, birth, and parentage." Guido handed his card, bearing the words G. Fawkes, and announced himself as the servant of Mr. Percy, who carried on a trade in coals, coke, and wood, if he could, in the immediate neighbourhood. "Indeed," said Suffolk, "your master has a tolerably large stock on hand, though I think there is something else screened besides the coals, which I see around me." Without adding another word, he and Monteagle ran off, and Fawkes hastened to acquaint Percy with what had happened.

Poor Guido seems to have formed a most feline and most fatal attachment to the place, for nothing could keep him out of the cellar, though he knew he was almost certain of being hauled unceremoniously over the coals, and he went back at two in the morning to the old spot, with his habitual foolhardiness. He had no sooner opened the door than he was seized and pinioned, without his opinion being asked, by a party of soldiers. He made one desperate effort to make light of the whole business, by setting fire to the train, but he had no box of Congreves at hand, and he observed, with bitter boldness, in continuation of a pun which he had made in happier days, that he had at last found his match and lost his Lucifer. Poor Guy Fawkes, having been bound hand and foot, was taken on a stretcher to Whitehall, having been previously searched, when his pocket was found filled with tinder, touch-wood, and other similar rubbish. Behind the door there was a dark lanthorn, or bull's-eye, that had cowed the soldiers at first glance, by its glazed look, but it seemed less terrible on their walking resolutely up to it. Fawkes was taken to the king's bedroom, at Whitehall, and though his limbs were bound and helpless, he spoke with a thick, bold, ropy voice that

terrified all around him. His tones had become quite sepulchral, from remaining so long in the vault, and when asked his name, he scraped out from his hoarse throat the words "John Johnson," which came gratingly—as if through a grating——on the ears of the bystanders. He announced himself as John the footman to Mr. Percy, and he threw himself into an attitude—which was rather cramped by his pinions—which he found anything but the sort of pinions that would enable him to soar into the lofty regions of romance to which he had aspired. He nevertheless boldly announced his purpose, with the audacity of a stage villain; and with that sort of magnanimity which lasts, on an average, about five minutes in the guilty breast, he refused to disclose the names of his accomplices.

One of the Scotch courtiers, who had a natural feeling of stinginess, asked how it was that Fawkes had collected so many barrels of gunpowder, when half the quantity would have done. Upon which Fawkes replied, that his principal had desired him to purchase enough to blow the Scotch back to Scotland. "Hoot, awa, mon!" rejoined the Scot; "but ken ye not that ye might have bought half the powder, and put the rest of the siller in your pocket?" Fawkes sternly intimated that though he would have blown up the Parliament, he would not defraud his principal. "Hoot, mon!" cried the Scotchman, who loved his specie under the pretence of loving his species, and who, it is probable, belonged to the Chambers; "Hoot, mon!" he whined, "dinna ye ken that there are times when you mun just throw your preencipal overboard?" *

** A fact!*

On the 6th of November Fawkes was sent to the Tower, with instructions to squeeze out of him whatever could be elicited by the screw, which was then the usual method of scrutiny. For four days he would confess nothing at all; but his accomplices began to betray themselves by their own proceedings. Several of them fled; but Tresham exhibited the very height of impudence by coming down to the Council and asking if he could be of any use in the pursuit of the rebels. Nothing but the effrontery of the boots which ran after the stolen shoes, crying "Stop thief," and have never returned to this very hour, can be compared with the coolness of Tresham in offering to aid in effecting the capture of the conspirators.

Catesby and Jack Wright cut right away to Dunchurch, Percy filled his purse, and Christopher Wright packed up his kit, to be in readiness for making off when occasion required, while Keyes made a precipitate bolt out of London the morning after the plot was discovered.



Flight of Rookwood.

Original Size

Rookwood, who had ordered relays of fine horses all along the road, went at full gallop through Highgate, and never slackened his pace till he reached Turvey, in Bedfordshire, where he came tumbling almost topsy-turvy over the inhabitants. Arriving at Ashby, St. Legers, with a *légèrete* quite worthy of the race for the St. Leger itself, he had already travelled eighty miles in six hours; but he nevertheless pushed along on his gallant steed—a magnificent dun—who always ran as if he had a commercial dun at his heels, to Dunchurch. Here he found Digby, enjoying his *otium cum dig.*—with a hunting party round him; but the guests guessed what was in the wind, and fearing they might come in for the blow, had vanished in the night-time. When Digby sat down to breakfast the next day, his circle of friends had dwindled to a triangle, consisting of Catesby, Percy, and Rookwood, who, with their host, now become almost a host in himself, took speedily to horse, and rode a regular steeple-chase to the borders of Staffordshire. Here they arrived on the night of the 7th of November, at Holbeach, where they took possession of a house; but by this time Sir Richard Walsh, the sheriff of Worcester, who had got writs out against them all, was close upon them with his officers.

In the morning their landlord, one Littleton, having been let into their secret, let himself out of his bedroom window through fear, and Digby decamped under pretence of going to buy some eggs to suck for breakfast, as well as to look for some succour. Digby had hardly shut the street door when its bang was echoed by a bang up stairs, occasioned by Catesby, Percy, and Rookwood having endeavoured to dry some gunpowder in a frying pan over the fire. Catesby was burnt and blackened,

besides being blown up for having been the chief cause of the accident; and shortly afterwards, to add to their misfortunes, the sheriff, with the *posse comitatus*, surrounded the dwelling. The conspirators endeavoured to parry with their swords the bullets of their assailants, but this was a hopeless job, and keeping up their spirits as well as they could, they exclaimed at every shot fired on the side of the king, "Here comes another dose of James's powder." Catesby, addressing Thomas Winter, roared out, "Now then, stand by me, Tom!" and Winter, suddenly taking a spring to his friend's side, they were both shot by one musket. Their attendants, not being able to get the bullet out, issued a bullet-in to say they were both dead, and the brothers Wright were not long left to bewail the fate of their accomplices. Percy, who had persevered to the last, got a wound which wound him up, and Rookwood had received such a home-thrust in the stomach from a rusty pike, that the pike rust sadly disagreed with him. Digby, whose feelings had run away with him, was overtaken, caught, and made fast, because he had been too slow, while Keyes came to a dead-lock, and the prisoners being all brought to London, were lodged in the Tower.

Tresham, who had never left town, but was strutting about with all the easy confidence of a man with "nothing out against him," was suddenly nabbed, in spite of his remonstrances, conveyed in exclamations of "What have I done?"

"La! bless me! there must be some mistake!" and other appeals of an ejaculatory but useless character.

Poor Guido Fawkes was examined by Popham, Coke, and Wood, whose names may now for the first time be noticed as appropriate to the business they were entrusted with. Popham is surely emblematical

of the series of pops, bangs, and explosions that would have ensued from the Gunpowder Plot; while Coke and Wood are obviously symbolical of the combustibles required for fuel. In vain did these sagacious persons attempt to get anything from Guido, who said "he belonged to the Fawkes and not to the spoons, who might perhaps be made to convict themselves by cross questioning." Popham popped questions in abundance; Coke tried to coax out the truth; and Wood, if he could, would have got at the facts; but neither threats nor promises could prevent Fawkes from showing his metal.

Posterity, in altering his name to Guy Fox, has happily hit upon an appropriately expressed the cunning of his character. He confessed his own share in the business readily enough, but resolutely refused to betray his associates. "I will not acknowledge that Percy is in the plot," he cried; which reminds us of an intimation made by a gentleman just arrested, to his surrounding friends, that "he did not wish the bailiff pumped upon." A nod is as good as a wink in certain cases; and like winking the sheriff's officer was submitted to a course of hydropathic treatment. In the same manner the declaration of Fawkes that "Percy had nothing to do with it—oh, dear no, nothing at all!" was quite enough to put the authorities on the right scent had any such guidance been required.



Guy Fawkes before and after the Torture.

Original Size

Poor Fawkes was so fearfully damaged by the torture he had undergone, that his handwriting was entirely spoiled; and specimens of his mode of signing his name after the torture, contrasted with the copy of his autograph before the cruel infliction, present the reverse of the result which writing-masters of our day boast of producing by their six lessons in penmanship.

Guido Fawkes, however, confessed nothing specifically beyond what the Government already knew, but Tresham and Catesby's servant Bates, a man remarkable for his *bêtise*, confessed whatever the authorities required. Tresham being seized with a fatal illness in prison, retracted his confession, which he declared had been extorted or "extortured"—as Strype has it—from him, and he died after placing his recantation in the hands of his wife to be given to Cecil. The surviving conspirators were brought to trial after some delay, and though they all pleaded not guilty, as long as there was a chance of escape, they were no sooner convicted beyond all hope than they began boasting of their offence, and were all "on

the high ropes" when they came to the scaffold. Garnet the Jesuit was served up by way of garniture to the horrible banquet that the vengeance of the Protestants required. This brilliant character shone with increased lustre as the time for his execution approached, and however glorious had been his rise, the setting was worthy of Garnet in his very brightest moments.

Besides those who were executed for an avowal, or at least, a proved participation in the Gunpowder Plot, several persons were punished very severely, in the capacity of supplementary victims, who might, or might not, have been implicated in the conspiracy. Lords Mordaunt and Stourton, two Catholic nobles, were fined, respectively, £10,000 and £4000 because they did not happen to be in their places in Parliament, to be blown up, had Fawkes succeeded in accomplishing his object. The Earl of Northumberland was sent to the Tower for a few years, and mulcted of £30,000, because he had made Percy a gentleman pensioner, some years before; but no trouble was taken to show how this could have rendered him afterwards a rebel, nor how Northumberland could be responsible, even if such a result had really arrived. But it was urged by the apologists for this severity, that the Gunpowder Treason would have been fatal alike to the good and the bad, and that as the punishment should correspond with the offence, an indiscriminate dealing out of penalties among the guilty and the innocent was quite allowable.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. JAMES THE FIRST (CONTINUED).



Original Size

HE Parliament that was to have been dissolved in thin air on the 5th of November, leaving nothing behind but a report in several volumes of smoke, met for the despatch of business on the 21st of January, 1606. Laws were passed against the Papists in a most vexatious spirit, and by one enactment they were positively prohibited from removing more than five miles from home without an order signed by four magistrates. If a Catholic had got into a cab, and the horse had run away, without the driver being able to pull up within the fifth mile, the fare would have been most unfairly sacrificed.

James, who saw the advantage Scotland would derive from an alliance with England, began to urge the Union, but the English naturally objected to such a very unprofitable match; for Scotland had nothing to lose, nothing to give, nothing to lend, and nothing

to teach, except the art of making bread without flour, joke-books without wit, reputation without ability, and a living without anything. James felt that the sarcasms on the Scotch were personal to himself, and he told the Parliament they ought not to talk on matters they did not understand; but it was thought that to restrict them to subjects which they did understand would be equivalent to depriving them of liberty of speech on nearly every occasion.

James had become somewhat popular on account of the attempt to blow him up sky-high with all his ministers, and a rumour of his having been assassinated, sent him up a shade or two higher in the affections of his people. It is a feature in the character of the English that they always take into their favour any one who seems to be an object of persecution; and there is no doubt that if in a crowd there is any one desirous of rising in public esteem, he has only to ask a friend to give him a severe and apparently unmerited blow on the head, in order to render him the idol of the surrounding multitude. If there had been no Gunpowder Plot, it would have been worth the while of James to have got one up, for the express purpose of increasing his popularity. His qualities, as shown in his way of life at this time, do not warrant the esteem in which he was held; for he divided his time between the pleasures of the table, the excitements of the chase, and the blackguardism of the cock-pit. When remonstrated with on the lowness of his pursuits, he declared that his health required relaxation; and he would declare that he would rather see one of his Dorking chickens win his spurs, than witness the grandest tournament. These pursuits, which were expensive, caused him to do many acts of meanness to obtain the necessary supplies: and among other things he went to dine

with the Clothworkers as well as with the Merchant Tailors, among both of whom the royal hat was sent round at the close of the banquet.

At the second of these entertainments his own beaver had just made the circuit of the table with considerable effect, when, encouraged by the liberality of the company, he shoved on to the social board a cap, in the name of his son, Prince Henry. The collection for the child was not very ample, for many of the guests objected to being called upon for a trifle towards lining the pockets of the young gentleman's new frock, more especially when it was obvious that James fully intended to clutch the whole of the additional assets.



King James disposing of Baronetcies.

Original Size

Among other disreputable methods he took of procuring money, was the institution of the order of Baronets, whose titles he sold at a thousand pounds each, without regard to the merit of the purchasers. The antiquity of a baronetcy is therefore not much in its favour, and those who can trace the possession of

such a distinction in their family down to the first establishment of the rank, do nothing more than prove the possession, either honestly or dishonestly, of a thousand pounds by one of his ancestors. Seventy-five families took advantage of this traffic in dignities to obtain a sort of spurious nobility, founded on the necessities of the sovereign. The only qualifications required of candidates wishing to be elected to the order were "cash down," to pay the fees, and an ability to trace a descent from at least a grandfather on the father's side; so that *semble*, as the lawyers say, the maternal ancestors might have been utterly hypothetical and purely anonymous. The arms of the baronets have always included those of Ulster, because the money they contributed was designed for the relief of that province—a proof that Ireland has been a drain upon England for a long series of centuries. The emblem of Ulster is a bloody hand, which was only too appropriate to the place; and the symbol being called in the language of heraldry a hand gules—or gold—in a field argent—or silver—was also characteristic of the metallic source from which the baronets derived their titles.

Prince Henry, the heir to the throne, had long been looked upon as a pleasing contrast to his odious father, and the people were anticipating the former's reign with an assurance that the amiable and accomplished son would compensate for the infliction they had endured in the ignorance, pride, and selfishness of the parent. Death, however, that sometimes seizes first on the best, and leaves the worst till the last—on the principle of the boy who began by picking all the plums out of the pudding—took the youthful prince before appropriating his papa, and caused the latter sinfully to exult in being the survivor of his own offspring. He forgot the

maxim that "Whom the gods love, die young," and the remarks he made upon his own comparative longevity proved that he at least was one of those whom the gods had not been anxious to adopt at the earliest opportunity. The young prince died of a malignant fever, on the 5th of November, 1612, and his father, whose harsh conduct—especially to Sir Walter Raleigh and other great men—had been criticised by his heir, allowed no mourning to take place, but made the unnatural and blasphemous boast that "he should outlive all who opposed him."

Though having little or no affection for his own children, James delighted in having about him some low and sneaking favourite who would flatter his ridiculous vanity, and help to cheat him into the belief that he was a good and amiable character. As no one of spirit and honesty would consent to become the despicable parasite that James required, some mean and unprincipled vagabond was of necessity selected as the depositary of that confidence which a son, with the feelings of a gentleman, could not of course participate. Henry had therefore been excluded from that free communication which should exist between child and parent in every station, and an uneducated humbug named Robert Carr had wormed his way into the heart, or rather into the favour of James, who was drawn toward the other by a sympathy with congenial littleness. Carr was such a wretched ignoramus as to be unable to speak ten consecutive words of grammar, and it flattered the egregious vanity of James to be able to impart some of that education of which he had just about enough to enable him to show his superiority over his most unlettered pupil. Carr played his cards so successfully that he was soon not only knighted but created

Viscount Rochester; and though his future career proved him worthier of the rope, he actually obtained the Garter.

It was to be presumed that this disreputable scapegrace would soon do something or other to prove how far James had been right or wrong in the selection of a friend, adviser, companion, and favourite. The necessities of Carr were so well supplied by sponging on his royal patron that it was not necessary for the former to commit any pecuniary swindle; but he very rapidly got into a most disgraceful connection with the Countess of Essex, a vile person who obtained a divorce from her own husband, to enable her to marry Rochester. The latter had a friend named Sir Thomas Overbury, who advised him to have nothing to do with the profligate woman in question. This so irritated the countess that she persuaded her paramour to join her in poisoning the party who had given the advice, and after trying the homoeopathic principle for some weeks without effect, they at length gave him one tremendous dose which did the atrocious business. Carr had received the title of Earl of Somerset on his infamous marriage, but the favourite was getting already a little out of favour when the affair of the murder happened. James being one of those who promptly turned his back on those who were "down in the world," and had smiles for those only who were prosperous, began to estrange himself from Somerset, and to transfer his worthless friendship to George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham.

The king first saw this young scamp at the Theatre Royal, Cambridge, where a five-act farce called *Ignoramus* was being represented by a party of distinguished amateurs, with the applause that usually attends these interesting performances.

Villiers was appointed cupbearer—a grade immediately under that of bottle-holder—to the king, and the influence of the new favourite was soon felt by the old, who found himself arrested one fine morning on the charge of having been concerned in Sir Thomas Overbury's murder. The steps taken for the punishment of this atrocity were perfectly characteristic of the period. By way of a preliminary offering to Justice, some half dozen of the minor and subordinate parties to the crime were executed off-hand, while the two principal delinquents, Somerset and his countess, having been tardily condemned, were immediately afterwards pardoned. The infamous couple subsequently received a pension of £4000 a year from the king, who no doubt felt that Somerset could show him up, and was just the sort of scoundrel to do so unless he could be well paid for his silence. The annuity allowed to the ex-favourite must be looked upon as hush-money, rendered necessary by the mutual rascalities of the donor and the recipient, who, being in each other's power, were under the necessity of effecting a compromise. The fall of Somerset was followed by the rise of Villiers, who rushed through the entire peerage with railroad rapidity, passing the intermediate stations of Viscount, Earl, and Marquis, till he reached the terminus as Duke of Buckingham.

Poor Raleigh, who had been thirteen years in the Tower, where he was writing the History of the World, began to feel a very natural anxiety to get out of his prison, and describe, from ocular demonstration, the subject of his gigantic labours. He accordingly spread a report that he knew of a gold mine in Guiana where the stuff for making guineas could be had only for the trouble of picking it up, and the king was persuaded to let him go and try his

luck in America. Raleigh had no sooner got free than he published a prospectus and got up a company with a preliminary deposit sufficient to start him off well on his new enterprise. He proved with all the clearness of figures—which the reader must not think of confounding with facts—that a hundred per cent, must be realised; and the shares in Raleigh's gold mine rose to such a height that he was enabled to rig a ship after having rigged the market. Plans were published, with great streaks of gamboge painted all over, to represent the supposed veins of gold that were waiting only to be worked; and through the medium of these veins the British public bled very rapidly.

The extent of the mining mania got up by Sir Walter may be imagined when we state that he arrived with twelve vessels at Guiana, a portion of which had already been taken possession of by Spain; and the English speculators declared with disgust, that they had come for the gold, and had not expected to meet the Spanish. The town of St. Thomas being already in the possession of the latter, was boldly attacked and ultimately taken, but instead of finding a mine there were only two ingots of gold in the whole place, which Raleigh clutched, exclaiming "These are mine," immediately on landing. It was evident to the whole party that Raleigh's story of the gold mine was a mere "dodge" to get himself released from the Tower; and when they came to look for the boasted vein, they found it was literally in vain that they searched for the precious metal. A mutiny at once broke out, and as Raleigh deceived them in his promise of introducing them to abundance of gold, they made him form a very close connection with a large quantity of iron. They in fact threw him into fetters, a species of

treatment that, had it been applied to every projector of a bubble company during the railway mania of 1846, would have hung half the aldermen of London in chains, and linked society together by a general concatenation of nearly every rank as well as every profession. Poor Raleigh arrived safe in Plymouth Sound, but he found a proclamation out against him, accusing him of a long catalogue of crimes, and inviting all the world to take him into custody.

The Spanish ambassador was at the bottom of this affair, for the Spaniards had a score of old scores against Sir Walter, who had no sooner landed at Plymouth than he was made a prisoner. With considerable ingenuity he pretended to be very ill, and even feigned insanity; but the latter was a plea that could not so easily be established in the time of Raleigh as it has been in our own days, when it has been found a convenient and effective excuse for those who, having committed murder, escape on the ground of their being given to eccentricity. Raleigh tried it on very hard, by talking incoherently, playing the fool, dancing fandangos in his prison, sending a potato to his tailor to be measured for a new jacket, and feigning other acts of madness, but to the writ *de lunatico inquirendo*, there was no other return than *nullum iter*, or no go, when the investigation into his state of mind was concluded. In order to save the trouble and expense of a fresh conviction, the old outstanding judgment was again brought up, and it was determined to kill him by a bill of reviver—if such an anomaly could be permitted. He grew ponderously facetious as his end drew nigh, and made one or two jokes that might have saved him had they been heard in time, for they gave evidence of an amount of mental imbecility that should have released him from all responsibility on account of his

actions. Among other lugubrious levities of Raleigh before his death, was the well-known but generally-execrated remark in reference to a cup of sack which was brought to him: "Ha!" said he, "I shall soon have the sack without the cup;" an observation that elicited, as soon as it was known, an immediate order for his execution. "That head of Raleigh's must come off," cried the king, "for it is evident the poor fellow has lost the use of it." On the 29th of October, 1618, poor Raleigh joked his last, upon the scaffold, where he stood shivering with cold, when the sheriff asked him to step aside for a few minutes and warm himself. "No," said Sir Walter, "my wish is to take it cool;" and then looking at the axe, he balanced it on the top of his little finger—some say his chin—and observed, "This is a great medicine, rather sharp, but it cures all diseases." At this the headsman, no doubt irritated by the maddening mediocrity of the intended witticism, let fall the fatal blade, and Raleigh, with his head cut off, never came to—or rather never came one—again.

We ought, perhaps to shed a tear over the fate of this great, though unprincipled man; but it is not so easy to turn on the main of sentiment to the fountains of pity, after the water has been cut off during more than two centuries by Time, in the capacity of turncock. Besides, in going through the history of our native land there are so many victims, all more or less worthy of a gush of sympathy, that we should literally dissolve ourselves in tears before we had got half through our labours, if we began giving way to what old King Lear has ungallantly termed a woman's weakness.

On the 16th of June, 1621, James, being "hard up," and finding that the circulation of the begging-box produced no effect, was compelled to summon a

Parliament. Some cash to go on with was voted to the king, but the Commons then proceeded to investigate some cases of gross corruption that had been discovered among the Ministers. The Testes, the Cubieres, and other official swindlers of modern France, who, in the midst of meanness, deception, and theft, were still blatant about their "honour," might have found, in the England of 1621, a precedent for their venal rascality. Sir John Bennet, Judge of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and Field, Bishop of Llandaff, were convicted of bribery. Yelverton, the Attorney-General, was found guilty of having aided in an extensive swindle in the Patent Office, and Bacon, the great "moral philosopher," was found to have been fleecing the public in the Court of Chancery, to such a degree, that he might have stuffed the woolsack over and over again from the produce of the shearing to which he submitted the flocks of suitors who appealed to him. He would take bribes in open court, and he would pretend to consider, that as all men should be equal in the eye of the law, the equality could only be achieved by emptying the pockets of every party that came into court, as a preliminary to giving him a hearing. It has been said by his apologists, that though he took bribes, his decisions were just, for he would often give judgment against those who had paid him for a decree in their favour. The excuse merely proves that he was sufficiently unscrupulous to follow up one fraud by another, and to cheat his suitors out of the consideration upon which they had parted with their money. Bacon endeavoured to effect a compromise with his accusers by a confession of about one per cent, of his crimes, but the Peers insisted on making him answerable in full for all his delinquencies. He then acknowledged twenty-eight articles, which

seemed to satisfy the most ravenous of his enemies, who were hungering to see his reputation torn to pieces by the million mouths of rumour. The great seal was taken away from a man of such a degraded stamp, he was flned £40,000—a mere bagatelle out of what he had bagged—was declared incapable of holding office or sitting in Parliament, and was sent off to the Tower.



Bacon, ye great Moral Philosopher. From a remarkably scarce Print.

Original Size

There were thoughts of beheading him, but happily for England, her Bacon was saved to devote the remainder of his life to literary compositions, which have greatly redeemed his name from obloquy. We must regard the character of our Bacon as streaky, for the dark is intermingled with the fair in the most wonderful manner. "Bacon was undoubtedly rash, but he might have been rasher," says the incorrigible Strype, whose name is

continually suggestive of the lashing he merited.

The Commons having been instrumental in bringing to light a considerable quantity of corruption, seemed determined to continue on the same scent, and every one who had a grievance was invited to lay it at once before Parliament. The waste-paper baskets of the House were of course soon overflowing with popular complaints, for there is scarcely a man, woman or child that cannot rake up a grievance of some kind, upon the invitation of persons professing to be able and willing to supply a remedy. James, fearful that his prerogative would be entrenched upon, wrote a letter to the Speaker, advising the Commons not to form themselves into an assembly of gossips, to listen to all the tittle-tattle that an entire nation of scandal-mongers would be ready to collect; but the House would not be diverted from its honest purpose by the sneers or threats of the sovereign. A good deal of polite and other letter-writing ensued between the king and the Parliament, until the latter entered on its journals a protestation, claiming the freedom of speech and the right of giving advice as the undoubted "inheritance of the subjects of England."

James was furious at what had occurred, and ordering the Journals of the Commons to be brought to him, he contemptuously tore out the page; and then, sending back the book, advised the House to turn over a new leaf as soon as possible. "Tell your master," said Coke, in a whisper that nobody heard, "tell him he will do well to take a leaf out of our book, but not in the style in which this leaf has been taken." Parliament was first prorogued, and then dissolved by the king, who declared it would do no good as long as it lasted, and Coke, who was charged with adding fuel to the Parliamentary fire, was sent

to the Tower with several others. On the day of the dissolution James nearly met with his own dissolution, for while taking a ride on a spirited horse, who had perhaps a certain instinctive sympathy with the popular cause, he was thrown into the New River.



King James rescued from the New River.

Original Size

This was on the 6th of January, 1622, when the water was frozen; and James had just been saying to himself, "I'm glad I have made the plunge, and broken the ice with these turbulent Commons," when he found himself plunging and breaking the ice after another fashion. Fortunately his boots were buoyant —perhaps they had cork soles—and Sir Richard Young, seizing a boat-hook, which he converted for the moment into a boot-hook, drew the sovereign by the heels from what he afterwards declared was decidedly not his proper element.

Buckingham, as we have already seen, was the sole successor to Somerset in the office of royal favourite; but Charles, the Prince of Wales, had taken rather an

aversion than otherwise to the person whom his father patronised. The friends of the latter were generally so disreputable, that his son could not go wrong in avoiding them; but Buckingham beginning to look upon Charles as the better speculation of the two, resolved on making himself as agreeable as possible to the more faithful and therefore more promising branch of royalty. The duke being fond of scampish adventure, proposed a plan better suited to be made the incident of a farce, than to be ranked as an event in history. He suggested that Charles and himself should travel to Spain under the assumed names of Jack Smith and Tom Smith, in order that the prince might introduce himself to the Infanta of Spain, whom it had been proposed he should marry. For such a wild-goose scheme to succeed, an Infanta of Spain must have been much more accessible in those days than in ours; for though Jack Smith and Tom Smith might find their way into a public-house parlour, and make love to the landlord's daughter, they would assuredly never be allowed to carry their gallantries into any European palace, or even to obtain admittance into any respectable private family. James, when the scheme was proposed to him, discouraged it at first, but being taken by the scapegrace couple in "a jovial humour," which means when the trio happened to be disgracefully drunk, the consent of the king was given to the farcical enterprise.

Having arrived at Madrid, the two hopeful youths rode up on mules to the door of Sir Thomas Digby, the British ambassador, and sent in the names of John and Thomas Smith; but Digby, knowing no less than half a hundred Smiths, declined seeing the "party" unless a more special description was sent up to him. Without waiting for further formality,

Buckingham—*alias* Tom Smith—walked with his portmanteau straight into the ambassador's presence, after a series of scuffles on the staircase and in the passages, accompanied by shouts of "Keep back, fellow!"

"You can't come up!" and other exclamations that had prepared Digby to give Tom Smith a reception by no means encouraging. When tne ambassador recognised his visitor, his manner completely changed, and his politeness knew no bounds, when in Jack Smith, who entered next, Digby saw no less a person than the heir to the throne of England. The *incognito* was of course at an end in an instant, and the next day Buckingham and the prince were presented to the royal family of Spain, though the farce of the disguise was still kept up to a certain extent; and the Infanta was sent out in her father's carriage, "sitting in the boot," says Howell, "that Charles might get a sight of her." The position of a young lady looking from the boot of a carriage could not have been very becoming, and she does not seem to have made a particularly favourable impression on her intended suitor. He nevertheless expressed his readiness to have another look at her, and he played the part of lover at Buckingham's instigation, for the purpose of getting a variety of presents from the young lady's family.

Her brother Philip was anxious for the match, and did everything to encourage it, by giving some valuable article to Charles whenever he evinced anything like affection for the young Infanta. One day he pretended to be in a particularly tender mood, and at every piece of gallantry he displayed Philip gave him something costly to take away with him. By a series of smirks, leers, and pretty speeches, he secured some original pictures by Titian and

Correggio, but when he rushed up to the Infanta with amorous playfulness, pinking her in the side with his cane, and giving the Spanish version of "Whew, you little baggage!" the queen of Spain was so delighted that she emptied her reticule, which was full of amber, into the pocket of the Prince, while the word "Halves" was whispered in a sepulchral tone into his ear by the crafty and avaricious Buckingham.

When they had got all they could out of the Spanish royal family, the English prince and his companion made up their minds that the Infanta was a failure, and that they had better get home with all possible celerity. Buckingham began treating Philip with the most disrespectful familiarity, slapping him boisterously on the back, alluding to him curtly, but not courteously, as Phil., ana otherwise offending the royal dignity. At length Prince Charles and his companion called to take leave, when the former played his old part of a devoted lover, beating in the crown of his hat, stamping on the floor, and giving the numerous signs of devotion that a practice of several weeks under a popular actor had made him completely master of. He had no sooner turned his back upon Madrid, and commenced moving towards home, than he made up his mind to cut the matrimonial connection; and he announced his determination by a messenger, who was instructed to say to Philip, that, for the good of both parties, and decidedly for the happiness of one, the abandonment of the marriage was much to be desired. Philip, upon whom the Infanta was a drag he would have been glad to get off his hands, became angry at the tampering that had taken place with the young lady's affections; but as these were no doubt pretty tough, the damage was not material.

A proxy had been left in the hands of Digby, Earl

of Bristol, the British Ambassador at Madrid, and the royal family sent nearly every day, with their compliments, begging to know when the proxy was to be acted upon; but finding at last, that, notwithstanding the proxy, there was no approximation to a satisfactory result, a most unpleasant feeling was created. Bristol, who was a man of honour, felt very uncomfortable at the evasive replies he was compelled to give, and was not sorry to return to England; though he had, as he naturally observed, "not bargained for the warrant which, in the most unwarrantable manner, awaited his arrival, and sent him straight to the Tower." He was soon afterwards released, but was not allowed by Buckingham, the favourite, to approach the king, and a recommendation to Bristol to go to Bath, or to retire to his country seat, was the only reply the ex-ambassador could obtain to his solicitations to be allowed to offer explanations to his sovereign.

Charles had given the Infanta scarcely time to recover from the jilting she had just undergone, when, with a cruel disregard of that young person's feelings, he made up to Mademoiselle Henrietta of France, and a marriage with the latter was speedily concluded. The dowry, amounting to about £100,000, was paid partly down, but the nuptial ceremony was performed by proxy; and the English Government wrote over to say that there was no hurry about the bride, provided some of the cash was transmitted to England as speedily as possible.

With some of the cash thus obtained, and with money squeezed out of the people, an expensive engagement was formed with Count Mans-feldt, an adventurer from the Low Countries, who undertook to recover the Palatinate, if an English army of twelve thousand men were placed under him. The

troops were put at his disposal, and embarked at Dover; but on reaching Calais the governor had no orders to let them pass, and in consequence of the loss of the city in Mary's time, the free list, of which the English had been in the habit of taking advantage, was of course suspended. In vain did Mansfeldt inform the door-keeper that it was all right, and insist that the name of Mansfeldt and party should have been left with the authorities; for the man resolutely declared he had a duty to perform, which prevented him from admitting the earl and his followers. While they were waiting outside the bar of Calais, several of the troops suffered severely from sea-sickness, and being obliged to go round by the back way, they had become so attenuated, that instead of being fit for marching into the Palatinate, they were much better adapted for marching into Guy's Hospital.

The failure of this expedition was the last event of importance in the reign of James, who was fast sinking under gout and tertian ague, produced by a long indulgence in rums, gins, brandies, and other compounds. He died, at the age of fifty-nine, on the 27th of March, 1625, having reigned upwards of two-and-twenty years, during which he showed himself fully deserving of the title bestowed on him by Sully, who said of James the First that he was the "wisest fool in Europe." He was learned, it is true, but his acquirements, such as they were, became a bore, from his disagreeable habit of thrusting them at most inappropriate times upon all who approached him. He was weak, mean, and pusillanimous, while his excessive vanity caused him to select for his companions those pitiful sycophants who would affect admiration for those miserable qualities, which, had he cultivated the friendship of honest and

intelligent men, he might have been eventually broken of. He lost, and indeed he did not desire the society of his children, because they could not sympathise with those littlenesses of character which, the older they grew, their judgment caused them more and more to despise and deplore in their unfortunate parent.

Happily only two out of seven survived to endure that alienation which must have been painful while it would have been unavoidable; and they were thus spared the humiliation of seeing a father vain, selfish, and unrepentant to the last, while their deaths in rapid succession gave him happily no uneasiness. For his eldest son he had, as we have already seen, prohibited the wearing of mourning, thus giving a proof of combined malice and stupidity, since his insults to the dead were of course as impotent as they were wicked and infamous. He was suspicious in the extreme, and always fancied he was going to be done or done for. To guard against the latter contingency he wore a quilted doublet that was proof against a stiletto, and under the apprehension of being taken advantage of, he obstinately excluded every one from his confidence. The result was that he never had a friend, through his constant dread of an imaginary enemy. It has been said of him by one of his historians, that he was fond of laughing at his own conceits; but the wretch who can even smile at a joke of his own must be such a libel upon human nature that not even Hume-an(d) Smollett (ha! ha! mark the pun) shall make us believe that an individual so abject could ever have existed.

Though the sovereign himself was not calculated to inspire respect, there were many events in his reign which rendered it useful if not glorious. Sir

Hugh Middleton commenced at Amwell that now venerable New River, by dabbling in which he swamped himself and secured a stream of health and prosperity to those who came after him. The immortal Hicks finished his memorable Hall; Lord Napier invented logarithms, to the extreme disgust of the school-boys of every generation; and Dr. Harvey made the magnificent discovery that the blood is a periodical enjoying the most unlimited circulation. Two Dutch navigators contrived to double Cape Horn; which the reader must not imagine was twice its present size before that operation was performed, for Cape Horn, like any other cape, is not larger when doubled. Bill Baffin, an Englishman (you all know Bill Baffin) discovered Baffin's Bay in the year 1616, and a patent for the fire engine, granted two years afterwards, has been stated as a proof that steam power was first known in England in 1618, though upon inquiry we are inclined to think there was more of smoke than steam in the invention spoken of.

The wealth and extravagance of the nobles, among whom corruption and bribery were practised "wholesale, retail, and for exportation," may be imagined from the statement, that on the marriage of the French king, the horse of the English ambassador wore silver shoes so loosely fastened on, that they fell off, and were instantly replaced, for distribution among the populace. We can scarcely believe that any English horse could have walked in these silver shoes or slippers in the time of James, however skilfully they could have substituted sliding for walking, since the Wood Demon, coming to London, caused the introduction of wooden pavements.

The luxury and display that stand prominently forward among the characteristics of the period,

were discountenanced by James when seen in others, though he would have spared nothing tor the selfish gratification of his own extravagance. Bacon, whose tendency to flattery justifies the popular analogy between butter and bacon, remarked of the king that he would recommend the country gentlemen to remain at their seats, by saying to them, "In London you are like ships in a sea, which show like nothing; but in your country villages you are like ships in a river, which look like great things." * This, after all, was a funny idea, but a bad argument; for a ship in a river, like a storm in a puddle, is somewhat out of its element. Many would prefer being wrecked in the ocean of a busy but tempestuous life, to remaining aground in the dismal swamp of rural obscurity. The thing to be desired, is the art of keeping a steady course, and steering in the right direction; but it is mere pusillanimity to accept a recommendation to shirk the voyage. Among the inventions of the reign of James, we must not omit to mention the sedan, a contrivance of the lazy and luxurious Buckingham. On its first appearance in public, the mob hooted the machine as it passed, declaring that their fellow-creatures should not do the service of beasts; but the "fellow-creatures," being paid for and liking the job, were the first to beat off their friends, the people. The friends of humanity were, however, not content till they had broken in the top and knocked out the bottom of the machine, leaving Buckingham to walk home in a most uncomfortable case, with his head peering out at the top, and his feet appearing at the bottom of his novel equipage.

The literary characters who flourished in the reign of James were very numerous; and we must, of course, place at the head of them our old acquaintance the "Swan of Avon," as some goose has

most irreverently christened him. Shakespeare adorned the time of James by dying in it, as, by living in it, he shed a lustre on that of Elizabeth. One of our predecessors * in the gigantic task we have undertaken—and, by the way, it is said that Mr. Macaulay, fired by our shining example, is preparing himself to follow it by a retirement from public life—one of our predecessors, we repeat, has thrown cold water upon the warm admiration which is felt for Shakespeare to this day, and which at this very moment is urging the whole nation to buy his house at Stratford, though the town was burnt, great at first for the possession of this relic, has, we confess, a little abated since our research put us in possession of the unpleasant fact, that the bard must have been burnt out, notwithstanding the assurance of the auctioneer, who acts, of course, on what he considers the best policy. Whatever we may think of the house the poet left or did not leave behind him, the houses he still draws by the magic of his genius are sufficient to refute the argument of the hypercritical Hume, that Shakespeare appeared greater than he really was, because he happened to be irregular. We are not aware that irregularity and grandeur must necessarily seem to be combined, and indeed, irregularity in payment, which considerably aggrandises an account, is the only instance we can call to mind in which we see some ground for our fellow-historian's strange hypothesis, ** down at about the time when the poet lived in it. Our own enthusiasm, which was Fletcher, the dramatist, and his partner Beaumont, belonged to the reign of James; but when the latter died, in 1616, the firm was broken up; and as each had been nothing by himself, Fletcher fell into wretched insignificance. His name had only been known in connection with

that of Beaumont, and if he attempted to play the lion afterwards at an evening party, a cool inquiry of "Fletcher! Fletcher! who's Fletcher?" was the only sensation the announcement of his name elicited. Some say he died of the plague in 1625, but it is more probable that the plaguy indifference shown towards him everywhere, after he lost poor Beaumont, was in reality the death of him.

** Home.*

*** Stratford-upon-Avon was all destroyed by fire i*
September, 1614, two years before Shakespeare's de

Honest Jack Stowe, the antiquarian, ought not to be overlooked, though time has long since stowed away his works among the lumber of our libraries. His Survey of London was his greatest literary labour, and he was preparing a new edition in 1605, when he was obliged to "Stow it" by an attack of illness that unhappily proved fatal.

Donne, the poet, can hardly be mentioned among the literary dons of the age; but Bacon is a luminary that must not be snuffed out in a single sentence. It has been said that his wit was far-fetched, but a thing is certainly not the less valuable for having been brought from a long way off; for if it were so, the diamond would lose much of its value in the London market. If Bacon's wit was far fetched, it was not only worth the carriage, but it has been found sufficiently valuable to warrant its being forwarded on from generation to generation: and it will, we suspect, find its way to a still remote posterity, before it arrives at the terminus of its journey.

James himself was but a contemptible writer, and would have been scarcely worth his five pounds a

week in these days, as the London correspondent of a country newspaper. His imagination would not have been vigorous enough to supply him with the "latest intelligence," which must always be in type at least two days before the date on which the facts it professes to impart are stated to have happened. As an industrious chronicler of early gooseberries, new carrots, gigantic cabbages, irruptions of lady-birds, and showers of frogs, he would have been useful in his way, or he might have undertaken that branch of periodical literature which embraces the interesting recollections—or non-recollections rather—of the oldest inhabitant.

CHAPTER THE THIRD. CHARLES THE FIRST.

ON the afternoon of Monday, the 28th of March, 1625, Charles the First was proclaimed at Charing Cross, amid a tremendous shower of rain and hail, so that the commencement of his reign was hailed in a somewhat disagreeable manner. His first care was to turn out the fools and buffoons that his father had kept at Court, or rather, as Buckingham

called it, to get rid of the comic and pantomimic company which had been established in the palace. He next determined to send over for his new bride, who appeared to have been forgotten in the hurry of business, and who was waiting at Paris, "to be left till called for." Buckingham was despatched to take charge of the precious cargo; but his behaviour at the French Court was so disreputable that he received some very broad hints as to the propriety of his speedy return to England. He made love to the young Queen Anne of Austria, and flirted with every female member of the royal family, to the extreme disgust of Cardinal Richelieu, who told him, plainly, that such conduct could not be permitted, at any price.

Buckingham took his departure, with the young Henrietta, on the 23rd of May; but there must have been pretty goings on, or dreadful standing stills, during the journey, for it was the 27th of June before they arrived at Dover. Charles, who had naturally begun to wonder what had become of his minister and his bride, set off to meet them, and having slept at Canterbury on the 27th of June, he reached Dover on the 28th, and found his intended, who had "put up" at the Castle.

The first interview was very dramatic, for Charles extended both his arms, and Henrietta, taking a hop, a skip, and a jump, tumbled gracefully into them. Finding her a little taller than he expected, he looked at her feet, when the young Princess coquettishly pulled off her shoe, to prove that there was no imposition practised, and that it was impossible there could be any deception through the medium of high heels, for she and, in reality, a sole above it. The newly married couple started for Canterbury at once, and making another day of it to Rochester, they came *via* Gravesend to London, where they arrived in

the midst of one of those pelting showers which have been graphically compared to a *mêlée* of cats, dogs, and pitchforks.

Charles being in want of money had assembled a Parliament, which opened for business on the 18th of June, and he at once asked for some supplies; but as he stammered in his speech, there was a sort of hesitation in his demand, which some took for modesty. With real, or affected delicacy, he declined mentioning any specific sum, but requested his faithful Commons to give what they pleased, and they were thus placed in the embarrassing position of a gentleman, who, on asking "what's to pay?" finds it left to that dreadfully sliding scale, his "own generosity." This dishonest manouvre, for such it usually is, succeeds frequently in extracting twice the proper amount from the pockets of him whose liberality is thus artfully invoked; but the Commons, being apparently "up to the dodge," voted Charles £112,000, to meet liabilities to the tune of some £700,000 per annum, for the war, to say nothing of his father's debts and other contingencies. Pocketing this miserably inadequate contribution, he adjourned the Parliament, on account of the Plague, and having met it again at Oxford, in August of the same year, he told the Commons, plainly, that he "must have cash," for he was being dunned by the King of Denmark, who held his promissory note, and that his private creditors would allow him no peace in his own palace. He protested solemnly that he had not the means of paying his way for the subsistence of himself and his family, and, throwing a quantity of tradesmen's accounts, unsettled, before the Speaker's chair, asked, imploringly, if those were the sort of bills that could be got rid of by ordering them to be read that day six months, or by their being suffered

to lie on the table? The Commons shook their heads, expressed their regret, buttoned up their pockets, and declared they could do nothing. The matter now became serious, for Charles had changed his butcher already three or four times, and was having his bread of nearly the last of a confiding batch of bakers. "Something must be done," he said, with much solemnity, to himself, and he wrote off a polite note to the Corporations of Salisbury and Southampton, requesting the loan of £3000, which was loyally granted him. Angry at being baffled and left insolvent by his Parliament, he declared that he would, at least, prove himself solvent in one respect, by dissolving the Parliament who had so rudely resisted his demands.

Finding that he had got nothing by begging, and very little by borrowing, he was thrown upon the expedient of stealing, as a last resort. With the money lent him by some of his subjects he resolved on fitting out a fleet, under Cecil, to attack some Spanish ships, which he understood were lying at Cadiz, with some valuable cargoes on board. He reached the bay, and being kept at bay by the enemy for a short time, he at last landed very silently, the leaders exclaiming, "*Piano, Piano,*" and took a fort. The troops, finding a quantity of wine in the garrison, partook so freely of it that they lost all their ammunition, and spoiled several pounds of best canister, by making too free with the juice of the grape. Cecil, finding that the longer they remained the more intoxicated they got, resolved on re-shipping as many as could be got to stand upon their legs, and to return to England. The British sailors were, however, in those days, such delicate creatures that half of them died of sea-sickness, and a very few of them returned home alive.

Charles, having been foiled in his last hope of recruiting his exhausted resources by plunder, resolved to try another Parliament, and a new one was manufactured with a view to give every chance to the experiment. He endeavoured to weaken the opposition by putting several of its members into offices which would prevent them from sitting in the House of Commons; but, this artful manouvre having been seen through, only served to put the people more on their guard.

The new Parliament was in its principles the *fac simile* of its predecessor, and on the 6th of February, 1626, voted to Charles just about one-tenth of what he really wanted, and one-twentieth of what he asked. Notwithstanding the smallness of the subsidy, he took it, and resolved to pay his creditors something on account, as far as the money would go, and trust to the future to enable him to make up the deficiency. Having shown a pretty resolute disposition in dealing with the king, it is not surprising that the Commons should at length have determined to take a turn at the minister. Buckingham had long been very obnoxious, and one Dr. Turner—remarkable for his straightforward conduct, and his determination not to turn—moved a question, "Whether Common Report was a good ground of proceeding?" Though Common Report has generally been accounted a common story-teller, she had been tolerably right about the Duke of Buckingham, and the resolution to proceed against him on the faith of Common Report was at once approved.

On the 8th of May a still more resolute step was taken with reference to the "favourite," as this generally detested person was absurdly called, by articles of impeachment being preferred against him.

The duke and his master seemed to treat the matter rather as a joke, and Charles even went down to the House of Lords to speak in favour of Buckingham. These proceedings were so clearly unconstitutional and irregular, that if the British Lion had taken to roaring, and only roared out in time, he might have saved many of the disagreeable consequences that unhappily followed. Considering how very intrusive this animal has sometimes been on occasions when he really was not wanted, it is lamentable to think that "the squeak in time," which might have saved nine times nine hundred and ninety-nine, was not forthcoming at the exact moment when its value would have been extreme.

Notwithstanding the impeachment of Buckingham, he was still loaded with fresh honours, and he became Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, at which the Commons vainly expressed their disgust. They nevertheless continued boldly enough remonstrating against this, and that, and the other, until the king regularly shut them up by a dissolution, without their having passed a single act.

Charles, sympathising with nature in an utter abhorrence of a vacuum, which he found in the royal treasury, devoted all his energies to filling it. "Must have cash," was the motto adopted by his majesty; who was not particular whether he begged, borrowed, or stole, so that he succeeded in replenishing his pockets. He looked up every outstanding liability, and routed out a lot of recusants who had fallen into arrear with their penalties.



His Gracious Majesty Charles the First borrowing money.

Original Size

He borrowed money from the nobility—if it can be called borrowing to go up to a person, exclaiming, "Lend me your money," and at the same time take it forcibly away from him. But the most tremendous swindle of all was the demand of ship-money; a tax he laid upon all seaports, under the pretence of their contributing a certain number of ships to the defence of the country. He, of course, pocketed the proceeds without supplying the ships, so that, if the country had been attacked, there would not have been a sail to resist the assailants. Charles and his favourite, Buckingham, declared, with disreputable frivolity, that the ship-money was appropriately applied; for it was, in fact, floating capital, and helped to keep them above water just as much as if it had been devoted to the purchase of a navy.

Something having been said during the sitting of Parliament about a subsidy, which had never been granted, Charles thought he might as well collect it at any rate, though the Commons had declined voting it. Promises were held out that it should all be paid back out of the next supplies, or, in fact, that

though the king helped himself from the right-hand pockets of his subjects, he would return the money out of their left-hand pockets—some day or another. A great many of the people, who objected to this remote reversionary interest, were thrown into prison, or sent to serve in the navy, where they became British Tars in spite of themselves, and some of them having received a classical education, introduced, no doubt, the College Hornpipe into the fleet, as an elegant and scholarly pastime.

Even the church was made the medium of extortion, for the popular preachers recommended from their pulpits the propriety of cashing up to any extent that the sovereign might require. By way of economising at home, Charles went one afternoon to the queen's apartments and dismissed every one of her tribe of French servants, who were dancing and curvetting in the presence of their mistress. This ballet of private life was summarily brought to a close by a general *chassez* of the whole crew, who had been dancing attendance on her majesty since her marriage, and she was so enraged at their dismissal that she broke the windows with her fist, which shows the panes she was at to mark her displeasure. The French women howled very piteously, so that, between their lamentations in broken English, and the queen's expostulations in broken glass, the hubbub was truly terrible. These disturbances fomented the ill-feeling between France and England, which Buckingham desired to increase, and he actually had the excessive vanity to put himself at the head of a fleet, which sailed to Rochelle, where he "carried himself nobly," to use the words of the king, but where, in fact, he carried himself off as speedily as his legs would allow, for he ran away after having made a desperate failure.

Charles was now, once more, as completely cleaned out as a young scamp in a farce, who arrives "without sixpence in his pocket," just like "love among the roses;" and Buckingham was the roguish valet who is usually in attendance on the eccentric light comedian under the circumstances alluded to. The worthy couple discussed the best method of raising the wind, and it was agreed that there was nothing left but to try it on again with a Parliament. "We shall have writs out against ourselves," said Charles, "if we do not get the writs out for summoning the Commons." They met on the 17th of March, 1628, and several of the most determined opponents to ship-money were found in the new house, which included Bradshaw, the brewer, who was ready to brew the storm of revolution, as well as Maurice, a grocer, who suited the times to a T with his liberal sentiments. The king made a haughty speech, but the Parliament determined to proceed with address, and, upon the grand piscatorial principle of throwing a sprat to catch a herring, five subsidies were hinted at for the purpose of securing concessions of the utmost value to English liberty. The Petition of Right was accordingly drawn up, which declared the illegality of collecting money except by the authority of Parliament. It next referred to our old friend, your old friend, and everybody else's old friend, Magna Charta, or Carter, as some people call it—perhaps because a broad-wheeled waggon has been frequently driven through it—and this document was recited to prove that people could not be imprisoned without cause; though, unfortunately for them, they had been imprisoned very frequently, in spite of the arrangement that made such a circumstance quite impossible. The Petition of Right next alluded to the

billeting of soldiers on private houses, which had grown into such an abuse, that scarcely a family could sit down to tea without half a dozen troopers dropping in during the meal, and pocketing the spoons, cribbing the cups, or saucily appropriating the saucers, when the entertainment was concluded.

The Bill of Rights, having been drawn by the Commons, and endorsed by the Lords, was offered to Charles for his acceptance. Without either rejecting it or adopting it, he wrote under the petition a few vague generalities, which meant nothing at all, and the Commons, retiring to their Chamber, vented their indignation in a very spirited manner. Sir Robert Phillips uttered several severe Philippics against the sovereign; Sir D. Digges followed, with some tremendous digs at the throne, declaring it was quite *infra dig*. for the Commons to sit still and do nothing; while Mr. Kurton, or, as that miscreant Strype calls him, Curtain, * threw off the veil; and even old Coke gave symptoms of having caught the revolutionary flame. Selden, whose table-talk is much more amusing than his talk at the table of the House of Commons, proposed a strong declaration under four heads, and was in the midst of a powerful harangue, when Finch, the Speaker, who had got the name of Chaff-Finch, from the badinage in which he indulged, ran breathless into the House with a message from the king, recommending, as well as his puffing and blowing would permit, an adjournment until the next morning. Notwithstanding the valour that had been displayed in words, the Commons had not yet learned how to act with courage, and they quietly adjourned at the suggestion of the sovereign. The next day, however, they met again, and having plucked up all their pluck, they continued to demand an explicit answer to the Petition of Right, to which

the assent of Charles was, one fine afternoon in June, 1628, somewhat unexpectedly given. Buckingham, who could never keep quiet, resolved to make another warlike venture at Rochelle, and had got as far as Portsmouth, where, on the 23rd of August, says Howell, "he got out of bed in good-humour, and cut a caper or two" in his nightcap and dressing-gown. These capers were soon destined to be cut very short, for as the duke was passing to his carriage in the course of the day, he received a stab from somebody in a crowd of gesticulating Frenchmen, who were all suspected of being the assassins, and instead of being taken into custody were, oddly enough, kicked down stairs. Buckingham was as dead as the British and Foreign Institute, when a number of captains and gentlemen rushed into the kitchen of the house, exclaiming—"Where is the villain?"

** We regret to say, that the motive of Strype in c*
this person Curtain, instead of Kurton, is too ob
jeu de mot is at the bottom of this baseness. We r
from saying more, and, according to the accounts c
period, his majesty rolled himself about on his be
agony of tears, until nothing but a wet blanket se
hang over all his prospects. He nevertheless conti
attention to business, but he never had another fa
like Buckingham, whom his majesty used to apostrop
familiarly as "my Buck," and hence that term of an
no doubt has its origin. He admitted Laud to be in
respects laudable; and of Wentworth he acknowledge
worth, while Noy, whose maxims contain the maximum
wisdom, was so far appreciated as to get the place
Attorney-General.

"*Ou est le boucher!*" Upon this a gentleman of the name of Felton, who had been screening himself in

the meat-screen, stood forth, and struck an attitude, vociferating "Here I am."



Felton admits that he killed the Duke.

Original Size

He then handed over his hat, in the crown of which he had stitched the full and true particulars of his own crime, which he requested might be read out, while he did the appropriate pantomime to the confession in the centre of a group of listeners. Felton gloried in the act he had committed, and when put upon his trial there was a good deal of badinage between himself and Judge Jones, whom the prisoner politely thanked for the announcement that he was to be hanged until he was dead, at Tyburn.

The king was greatly affected on hearing of Buckingham's death.

On the 30th of January, 1629, the Parliament met once more, and Charles turning out both his pockets, urged the necessity of supplies. He declared that as to his balance at his bankers, it had become like

"linked sweetness," for it had been "long drawn out," and the public treasury had been swept up several times, in the hope of finding an odd coin or two; but there was not a shilling to be found, and Charles was running up bills in all directions with his tradespeople. The Commons, instead of giving him the money to pay his debts, brought against him all their own old scores, and there were several stormy discussions, the storminess of which may be accounted for by the long-windedness of many of the orators.

Among those who took part in these debates, was a clownish-looking person of about thirty years of age, with a slovenly coat, and a hat so bad that Strype hints it was perhaps without a crown, to mark the republican objection to crowns which was entertained by the owner. This individual was Mr. Oliver Cromwell, the new member for Huntingdon, who brewed beer and political storms until the country itself became Cromwell's entire, the Crown his butt, and the Constitution his mash-tub.



The Member for Huntingdon.

Original Size

Charles finding the Parliament in a very unaccommodating humour, desired Sir John Finch,

the Speaker, to adjourn the House, but the House refused to be adjourned, and when he was about to leave the chair, he found himself suddenly knocked back into it, with his arms pinioned, which rendered him incapable of putting any motion whatever, for he was quite motionless. A few privy councillors rushing in, endeavoured to release him, but the opposite party bound him again to the chair, and the trial of strength between the two factions ended in a tie—as far as poor Finch was concerned—for he remained fastened in the seat of dignity. At length the Speaker, who could not dissolve the House, began dissolving himself in tears, and the king who had been waiting for him to come and tell the news, was so impatient, that messengers were dispatched to know what had become of him. Hearing that Finch was caged, or in other words locked in, the king could only leave the poor bird to his fate; but he despatched a messenger to tell the sergeant to slip out of the House quietly with his mace, which would dissolve the sitting. The sergeant may perhaps have forgotten the right cue, but he had got the right mace, and had walked nearly to the door, when he was stopped and pushed back, the key of the House taken from him and placed in the hands of one of the members, who promised to keep tight hold of it.

Charles, hearing that the door was bolted, went down, determined to force it open; but happily, he found the Commons had bolted instead of the door, or at least, they were on the point of doing so. The king, nevertheless, ordered several of the ringleaders to be arrested, and he intimated pretty plainly to the Commons that he would not trouble them again for a very considerable period. He had, in fact, resolved to take all matters of Government entirely into his own hands; and though Magna Charta, with a few other

trifles of the kind, stood in his way, he did not scrapie to trample on rights and liberties, which he knew were being continually renewed, as occasion required.

On the 10th of March, 1629, the day to which the Commons had adjourned themselves, Charles came down to the House of Lords with the proclamation of dissolution in his pocket. His majesty began by saying, that this was "really a very unpleasant business," that "he had no fault to find with the Lords," but "there were some vipers among the Commons"; whom, according to the unhappy Strype, he expressed his determination of "viping out"—observe the paltry evasion of the W for the sake of the pun—"with the utmost energy." Thus, by flattering the Lords and threatening the Commons, or, to continue the language of Strype, "soaping the Upper House, and lathering the Lower," did Charles dissolve his Parliament. Several members had already been placed in custody, among whom were Eliot, Holies, and Selden, the last of whom was such an inveterate table-talker, that his tongue was always getting him into scrapes of the most serious character. An information was exhibited against them in the Star-Chamber, but they were subsequently offered their release, on promising to be of good behaviour, which they refused to do, for they felt they would have been good for nothing had they entered into such a disgraceful compact. Eliot died in prison, and the rest were adjudged to be detained during the pleasure of the king, and as he took great pleasure in persecuting his refractory Commons, there was every chance that their "durance vile" would be unpleasantly durable.

The 29th of May, 1630, was signalised by the birth of Prince Charles, and it is said that a bright star

shone in the east at midday, which some have considered ominous. To us, the appearance of the star by daylight, on the birth of this dissolute scapegrace, denotes nothing more than a propensity for not going home till morning, or till daylight did appear. About the same time that severities were being practised on the Commons, one Richard Chambers refused to pay more than legal duty on a bale of silk, and the Custom-house officers going at him rather fiercely, he declared that "merchants were more screwed in England than they were in Turkey." His audience hearing him use the word "screwed," at once nailed him to the expression, and he was fined £2000 for the *lapsus lingua* he had fallen into. Unhappily, political martyrdom was not, in those days, so good a trade as it has subsequently become, and poor Chambers had neither a subscription opened to pay his fine, nor a testimonial to reimburse him for the expense of resistance. A struggle for principle was then a struggle indeed, and not an eligible medium for advertisements. A Chambers of the present day would have made his principles pay him an enormous percentage, and would have made a handsome fortune for himself by what he would have termed his exertions for the happiness and liberty of the people. Poor Chambers, however—the real martyr of 1630—died in a prison at last, after waiting for redress from the Long Parliament, which was a little too long in making reparation to the victim of oppression, Charles had apparently made up his mind to get on as well as he could without any Parliament at all, and having bribed some of the cleverest fellows in the kingdom, he thought that as one fool proverbially makes many, one or two knaves would also be found to fructify. Among the shameless apostates of that day were of

course many who had been mouthing most energetically on the popular side; and Wentworth, who had been originally one of the very noisiest of the people's friends, became the meanest and most inveterate of the people's enemies. Having brawled for some years against aristocracy, his purpose at length peeped out in his acceptance of a peerage for himself, and the man who had been continually bullying the Court, became its fawning favourite. Digges, who had been, as we have already intimated, digging away most energetically at the constituted authorities, accepted the post of Master of the Bolls, for he had, as he said, made the discovery on which side his bread was buttered.

It would be tedious to the reader, and difficult to ourselves, to give a catalogue of the exactions and impositions which were practised by Charles between the years 1629, when the Parliament was dissolved, and 1640, the year marked by the assembly of a new one. He revived, among other cruelties, the old practice of making knights of all persons possessing forty pounds a year, and either charging ruinous fees for imposing the so-called honour, or imposing a heavy fine for declining it. Knighthood became such a fearful drug in the market of dignities, that it is not surprising it should even up to this day have failed to recover its position. The cry of "Dilly, dilly," was never more ferociously addressed to the ducks who were invited to "come and be killed," than was the command to "come and be knighted," enforced against the unwilling victims, who were selected either to pay the penalty for declining, or the fees on receiving this unenviable distinction.

While guilty of wholesale persecution, Charles did not, however, neglect the retail branch, and a

Puritan preacher named Leighton—a blind fanatic, but, notwithstanding his blindness, no relation we believe to Leighton Buzzard—was exposed to the utmost cruelty for writing some *ad captandum* trash against the queen and the bishops; a bombastic little work, which neither repaid perusal, nor repaid the printer who brought it forward. Poor Leighton was fined for his coarseness, and flogged for his flagellation of the authorities, besides being compelled to undergo a variety of other barbarisms, the narration of which we would have attempted, but we found our very ink turning pale at the bare prospect of our doing so. The Puritans now began to emigrate in great numbers to America, and they no doubt laid the foundation of that drawl which has ever since distinguished the tone of the model republicans.

We now arrive at the tragical story of poor Mr. William Prynne, a barrister of Lincoln's Inn, who, in the utter absence of briefs, finding himself at a dead stand-still for want of a motion, had started a trumpery little work with one Sparkes, a publisher. The volume had the unattractive title of "*Histrio Mastric*, the Players' Scourge, or Actors' Tragedie," in which he made an attempt to write down the stage in particular, and all amusements in general. He denounced all who went to the play as irredeemably lost, and he neither exempted the free list, the half-price, or those who went in with the orders of the Press, from the anathema, which he hurled indiscriminately against the "brilliant and crowded audiences" nightly honouring such-and-such an establishment with a succession of overflows. The queen not only patronised the drama, but sometimes appeared herself as a distinguished amateur, and the whole of Prynne's book was taken to apply to her,

though she was not even mentioned in any part of it. Poor Prynne was declared to be a wolf in sheep's clothing, and, considering that he was a barrister who had turned author, the alleged mixture of wolfishness and sheepishness may be fairly attributed to his character. He was found guilty, of course, and upon sentence being passed, the Chief Justice expressed his regret that a gentleman, who had handed in on two or three occasions a compute, and was a promising junior of twenty years' standing —without ever being on his legs—should have brought himself into such an unpleasant predicament.

He was condemned to be degraded from the profession, or in fact to be dishonoured; to pay a fine of £5000, which was by no means feasible, when we consider his fees, and to be kept from the use of pen, ink, and paper, which was perhaps the most humane part of the sentence, for he was thus prevented from proceeding with his wretched trade of authorship. The poor fellow, however, contrived to write humorous articles on the soles of his boots; and "Prynne on the Understanding," though it was rubbed out as mere rubbish by the man who cleaned his boots, might have taken its place by the side of many more lofty productions of the period. His sentence was exceedingly cruel, and comprised "branding on the forehead," as if his enemies would have it believed "there was nothing inside to hurt," while his nose was savagely maltreated, to prevent its being again poked into that which did not concern its owner. His ears were cropped under the pretext of their being a great deal too long, and indeed Prynne was so altered, as a punishment for rushing into print, that his own clerk would not have known him again in the abridged edition which the Government

reduced him to.

We have now to treat of the great civil war; but the magnitude of the subject requires us to take breath, which we cannot do unless we break off and begin a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH. CHARLES THE FIRST (CONTINUED).



Original Size

HE great civil war was brought on by a series of incidents we will now briefly explain; but we must premise that the turncoat Noy had been long hunting for precedents to justify Charles in any course of despotism that he might resolve upon. It never was

very difficult to find precedents in the legal records for anything, however cruel, tyrannical, or absurd, and Noy was not the man to be over nice in putting upon the case in "the books" whatever construction would be most favourable to the views of his master. The ingenious Noy took care to discover that the supplying of ship-money by sea ports was a custom as old as the hills, and giving a large interpretation to the word hills, he assumed that land as well as water should supply ships, and that inland places as well as those on the coast were consequently liable to the impost. He argued that almost every town, however far from the shore, had marine interests, for there was always a dealer in marine stores, and in fact he urged that a town being unable to float a ship, might nevertheless be made to build or at least to pay for one.

In the midst of these ingenious theories and perplexing points of law, Noy died, which is no matter of astonishment to us, for the idea of looking up such a subject as ship-money, and having "case for opinion" continually on his desk, is sufficiently formidable to reconcile with it the decease of the barrister to whom the business had been confided. London was selected as the first place on which the demand for ship-money was made, and an attempt to excite the fears of the citizens, by getting up a cry very like that of "Old Bogie" was resorted to. A proclamation was issued declaring that a set of "thieves, pirates, robbers of the sea, and Turks," were expected by an early boat, though a sharp look-out along the offing at Gravesend and Richmond, through one of which the pirates must pass, would have convinced the greenest of the green that a corsair was not likely to be eating his white-bait at Blackwall, nor was England in danger of an invasion

by a horde of ruffians coming up from the other side of the world at the Chelsea end of the metropolis. Several ships were ordered, but the citizens would have been quite at sea had they attempted to supply a ship, and a composition in money was demanded as an easier method of satisfying the wants of the Government. Considerable resistance was made to this gigantic swindle, and the celebrated John Hampden immortalised himself by the part he took in the struggle. This true patriot had consulted his legal advisers on the subject of ship-money, and hearing from them that it could not be justly claimed, he determined that he would resist the impost at any sacrifice. The matter came on for argument upon demurrer, in the Court of Exchequer, on the 6th of November, 1637, and lasted till the 18th of December, when their lordships were unable to agree in their judgment. The majority, however, ultimately decided against Hampden, but two of the judges continuing to differ from the rest, it was felt that the imposition was seen through, and that the public would have the sanction of at least some of the legal dignitaries for resisting it. Wentworth would have whipped Hampden like poor Prynne, but not all the black rods, white rods, and rods in pickle the Court could muster, would have been sufficient for the flagellation of so great a character.

The dissatisfaction of the people, and the unconstitutional practices of the king, were not confined to England, for Scotland, after having been taken—or rather having been merged in the English monarchy—was destined to be well shaken by political convulsions. The proximate cause of the dissatisfaction of the Scotch, who are not a remarkably excitable race unless their pockets are threatened, was the introduction of the English

service into their churches; and when the Dean of Edinburgh began to read it on Sunday, the 23rd of July, 1637, he was assailed with shouts of the most indecorous character. The populace clapped with their hands, kicked with their heels, and bellowed with their lungs till the Bishop of Edinburgh, who had ascended the pulpit to entreat that order might be preserved, was compelled to bob down his head to avoid a three-legged stool that was thrown with savage force by one of the assembled multitude.



Something like argument.

Original Size

The Scotch congregation continued to evince their zeal for their religion by throwing sticks, stones, and dirt (of which they had a good deal always on their hands) at the unprotected prelate, and cries of "stone him!" "at him again!" "give it him!" "throw him over!" "turn him out!" resounded through the sacred edifice. The religious ruffians kept up their ferocity without

intermission wherever the new service was commenced, and thus, though they might easily have satisfied their consciences by abstaining from attendance at the churches where innovation had been introduced, they preferred to intimidate and brutally attack the inoffensive ministers. This was another of the innumerable instances history has to record of the name of religion being desecrated by its being applied to acts utterly at variance with every religious principle.

Charles, who in this instance evinced a keen perception of Scotch character, resolved to punish the people of Edinburgh in a manner they would be sure to feel; and by threatening to remove the council of government from that city to Linlithgow, he touched them in what is the Scotchman's tenderest point—his pocket. Whether it was from fear of a general stoppage to business, and the consequent loss of its profits, or from some more exalted cause, the Scotch desisted from physical violence, and took a great moral resolution, which is in every way respectable. A document, called the Covenant, was drawn up, and its sentiments were put forth with the eloquence of enthusiasm from the home of John O'Groat—by-the-by, who was this Jack Fourpence, Esq., of whom we have heard so much?—to the hills of Cheviot. The Covenanters had exchanged the brickbat and bludgeon style of argument for the lighter but more pointed and effective weapon—the pen—though they still acted in the most unchristian spirit of intolerance and persecution towards those who would not adopt their sentiments.

The Marquis of Hamilton was sent to Scotland with instructions to do all he could, and a great deal that he couldn't. He was to apprehend all the rebels,

if possible; but not being of a very lively apprehension, it was not likely he would succeed greatly in this portion of his enterprise. He was to overturn the Covenant in six weeks, if he found it convenient to do so, or in less if he found it otherwise. In fact, his instructions might be summed up into an order to go and make the best of a bad job —an attempt which frequently ends in leaving the matter much worse than one originally found it.

On his arrival at Holyrood his first effort to persuade the people to give up the Covenant was met by an attempt to cram it down his own throat, but he refused the proffered dose, and finding himself in a very awkward fix, he could only hope to temporise. Charles wrote to him to say, "he would rather die than give in," but Hamilton, knowing his master would have to die by deputy, and that the deputy would be no other than himself, entreated his majesty not to be too open in his demonstrations of force against his Scotch subjects. The Covenanters on the other hand declared they meant nothing disrespectful to the throne, and that their pelting, shouting, bullying, stoning, and protesting, were all to be considered as acts performed in the most loyal spirit, and without the smallest idea of disobedience to the royal mandate.

Some negotiations ensued between the two parties, and it was resolved that a General Assembly should be held in Glasgow forthwith, while a proclamation was issued for a Parliament to meet at Edinburgh a few months afterwards. Hamilton knew the Assembly would do no good, and wrote to the king to say so; but Charles answered, that it would at all events gain time, and the Scotch might perhaps, if they met together in large numbers, come to the scratch among themselves—a result that was exceedingly

probable.

The Marquis of Hamilton reached Glasgow on the 17th of November, 1638; and the General Assembly commenced on the 21st with a sermon of such tremendous length, that the audience were pretty well exhausted by the time it was concluded. The Assembly would have then chosen a moderator; but Hamilton starting up with a polite "I beg your pardon," told them there was a little Commission to read in order to explain by what authority he was sitting there. The Commission was exceedingly long, and all in Latin, which enabled the officer entrusted with the commission of reading the Commission, to extemporise rather extensively, by adding to the original Latin a considerable quantity of Dog, which spun out the time amazingly. The Assembly then again prepared to choose a moderator, when Hamilton starting up, exclaimed—"I'm very sorry to be so troublesome, but I must interrupt you again, for I wish you to hear this letter from his majesty."

Charles had purposely despatched a most unintelligible scrawl, and the functionary employed to read it prolonged the painful operation of deciphering it as long as he could, until at length the reading of the letter was concluded. The Assembly being again about to proceed to elect a moderator, Hamilton once more was upon his legs, with a "Dear me, you'll think me very tiresome, but I have really something very particular to say;" and off he went into a speech which seemed almost interminable, from its excessive wordiness.

As all things must come to a conclusion, if not to an end—Hamilton's speech, for example, came to no end at all—the oration of the marquis was terminated at last, and for the fourth time the Assembly had begun to choose a moderator, when

Hamilton interfered with a "Stop! stop! stop! Before you go any further, remember that I protest against anything you may do that will be prejudicial to the king's prerogative."

At length he was formally asked if he had quite done with his interruptions, and having exhausted all his resources, he was constrained to admit that he had no further remark to make, when the election of a moderator was proceeded with. Alexander Henderson, a minister of Fife,—which might well have been called, in the strong language of Shakespeare, the "ear-piercing Fife," for it was determined to make itself heard,—was chosen to the office, and Hamilton was again on his legs to read a protest, but a general cry of "Down! down! Come! come! we've had enough of that," prevented the marquis from proceeding further in his obstructive policy. The Assembly then chose one Archibald Johnston as clerk, and Hamilton, determined to give the Covenanters one more lesson on the Hamiltonian system, commenced protesting against the last appointment they had made. The marquis was, however, most unceremoniously pooh-poohed, and the Assembly adjourned.

On the next day Hamilton began the old game of entering more protests against the return of lay elders to the Assembly, but he was treated with no more respect than if he had been a lay figure, and was compelled to hold his tongue. Being checked in every attempt to enter a protest on his own account, he insisted on patronising ana adopting a protest of the bishops who denied the jurisdiction of the Assembly, but one of the clerks of session thundering out a declaration that they would go on with the proceedings, Hamilton started up once more, "begging pardon for being so very troublesome, but

adding that he really must protest to that." Finding his protestations utterly useless, he thought it better to protest to the whole thing *en masse*, and he accordingly dissolved the General Assembly on the ensuing day. Henderson, the moderator—so called, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, from his being no moderator at all—declared he was sorry they were going to lose the pleasure of Hamilton's company, but the Assembly, being assembled, had no intention to disperse. The marquis, who had gone about muttering to himself "Oh, you know, this is quite absurd! I'm no use here," made the best of his way to England. He urged Charles to take military measures against the Scotch, but they were very active in making warlike preparations, and had already got up a magazine at Edinburgh—no relation to Blackwood or Tait—which was full of pikes, muskets, halberts, and other striking but very offensive articles. In the meantime the coffers of Charles were standing perfectly empty, nobody in the city would take his paper upon any terms, and indeed he could accept no bills, for there was no Parliament in existence to draw the documents. He called upon the judges, the clergy, and even the humbler servants of the crown, to contribute part of their salaries to his necessities—a process very like borrowing a portion of the wages of one's cook to pay one's butcher.



Charles the First does not know which way to turn.

Original Size

The Covenanters had got together a tolerably large number of troops, under General Leslie, and Hamilton was sent with five thousand men to take Leith, but by the time he got into the waters of Leith(e) his soldiers seemed to be oblivious of their duties, for they all deserted him.

Charles now thought it high time to go and see about the Scotch business himself, and he started, per coach, for York, with the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Holland as inside passengers. He was met at that city by the recorder, as the coach drew up to the inn door, and that functionary, in a fulsome speech, told him he had built his throne on two columns of diamond—the parasite forgetting that the old notion of "diamond cut diamond" might unpleasantly suggest itself. At York Charles enacted an oath of fidelity from the nobles, which was taken by all but Lord Saye and Brook, the former declaring he should be a mere do if he consented to say what he did not mean, and the latter intimating that he was far too deep a Brook to commit himself in the manner that the king required.

On the 29th of April Charles left York and repaired to Durham, where the bishop feasted him famously, giving him Durham mustard every day, as a condiment to the delicious dishes that were prepared for him. He next advanced to Newcastle, where the mayor entertained him sumptuously; but while the king went to dinner he heard that many of his troops were going to desert, and by the time he got to Berwick he was glad to listen to a proposition for a truce, which, after a good deal of trumpeting on both sides, was arranged without a blow—except those conveyed through the trumpet—on either.

A conference was next agreed upon, between the deputies of the Covenanters and the Commissioners of the king; but, just as they were commencing business, Charles walked in, saying, "I am told you complain that you can't be heard! Now then, fire away, for I am here to hear you." Lord Loudon, who was loud without being effective, began to make a speech, but the king cut him short, and Loudon, with all his loudness, remained inaudible during the rest of the sitting. The parties to the negotiation were pretty well matched, for royal roguery had to contend with Scotch cunning. "We must give and take," said Charles. "Yes, that's all very well, but you want us to do nothing but give, that you may do nothing but take," was the keen reply of the Caledonians. The assemblies of the Kirk were to be legalised, and an act of oblivion was to be passed, which was very unnecessary on the king's side, at least, for he was very apt to forget himself. Castles, forts, ammunition, and even money, were to be delivered up to the king, but part of the money having been spent, the cunning Scotchmen accounted for the deficiency by saying to his majesty, "You can't eat your cake and have it—that is

very well known; and as we have eaten your cake, that you can't have it is a natural consequence."

Charles was puzzled, though not quite convinced, by this reasoning; but he thought it best to acquiesce for the sake of peace and quietness in all the proposed arrangements. The two armies were disbanded on the 24th of June, and Charles having stopped at Berwick to buy a Tweedish wrapper, returned to England. The king was now seized very seriously with a fit of his old complaint—the want of money—and he called in Laud and Hamilton to consult with Wentworth about a cure for the distressing malady. It was agreed, after some hesitation, to try another Parliament, and Wentworth suggested that an Irish Parliament might be tried first, upon which he was named Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with the title of Earl of Strafford, to give him more weight in making the experiment. The Irish Parliament promised four subsidies off-hand, and two more if required; but an Irish promise to pay, is little better than a bill without a stamp, a promissory note without a date, or an I O U without a signature.

At length on the 13th of April, 1640, the English Parliament met, and it contained many eminent men, among whom Hampden, who sat for the town of Buckingham, was one of the most conspicuous. Finch, who had been formerly Speaker, was now Lord Keeper, a position he was most anxious to keep, and Mr. Serjeant Glanvil was chosen to fill the Speaker's chair, upon which he made a long tedious speech that annoyed everyone by its premises, as much as it gratified every one by its conclusion. The debates very soon assumed a most important air; and Pym—who, from his effeminate voice, had got the name of Niminy Pyminy from some parasites of the king—held forth with wondrous power, on the

subject of national grievances. Charles, who hated the word grievance—it is a pity he did not abhor and avoid the act—ordered Parliament to attend him next day in the Banqueting Hall, not to give them an opportunity of filling their mouths, but for the purpose of stopping them. Charles said nothing himself, but set Finch at them, who told them that they must first vote the supplies, and that then they might luxuriate in their grievances to their hearts' content, and having given the king his cash, they would be at liberty to look out for their own consolation. The Commons were not to be so cajoled, and on the 30th of April resolved themselves into a committee of the whole House on the question of ship-money.

The Lords, who were servile to the king, no sooner heard of this than they sent down to request a conference, but the Commons, who could get no satisfactory answer to the questions "why?" and "what about?" of course, on seeing the trap, declined tumbling into it. In vain did Charles send down to say he had a large amount to make up, and would be glad to know when it would be convenient to let him have "*that* subsidy," and even Sir Henry Vane, his treasurer, came—it can't be helped, the wretched pun must out—Yes! even Vane presented himself in vain to know when the supplies would be ready. The usual mode of getting rid of a pertinacious dun was resorted to by saying that an answer should be sent; and on the 5th of May, 1640, Charles, having asked the Speaker to breakfast, and as some say, made him exceedingly drunk, ran down to the House of Lords and dissolved the Parliament.

The state of the money-market was now truly frightful, and the emissaries of Charles ran about in all directions crying out "Cash! Cash! We must have

Cash!"

Bullion was got from the Tower by bullying the people who had charge of it, and when no more good money was to be got, a proposition for coining four hundred thousand pounds' worth of bad was coolly suggested. "By Jove!" said the king, "when we can't snow white, we must snow brown, and if we can't snow silver, we must snow copper." Such snow would, however, have been equivalent tobits Latin appellation of *nix*, and the merchants foreseeing the danger of depreciating the coinage, prevented the uttering of base money, which would have been a source of unutterable confusion. The swindling resorted to for supplying the necessities of the king was something quite unsurpassed even in the annals of the most modern of fraudulent bankruptcies. Charles got goods on credit at a high price, and sold them for ready from the Tower by bullying money at a low one; horses were lugged out of carriages or carts, leaving the owners to draw their own vehicles and their own conclusions; and indeed the king's emissaries went about like a clown in a pantomime, appropriating and pocketing everything they could lay their hands upon. "See what I have found!" was a common cry at the snatching of a purse or anything else for the use of the king, and the example of robbery being set in high quarters, was sure to be followed in low with the utmost activity. The London apprentices were invited by a posting-bill stuck upon the Royal Exchange to a *soirée* at Lambeth, for the purpose of sacking the palace of the archbishop, but Laud was ready with cannon, loaded with grape, and the apprentices muttering that the grapes were sour, abandoned their formidable intention.

Hostilities with Scotland having again broken out, Charles had his hands quite full, and his pockets

quite empty. The disputants on both sides were ultimately glad to come to another truce, for they found themselves after a great deal of fighting exactly where they were before they began, except some of the killed and wounded, who, unfortunately for them, were anything but just as they were at the commencement of the contest. The Scots were to receive, according to treaty, the sum of £850 per day for two months, and Charles, wondering where the money was to come from, recollected that the Commons had the glorious privilege of voting the supplies, together with the glorious privilege of raising the money.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH CHARLES THE FIRST (CONCLUDED).

SUCH an unfortunate sovereign as Charles is a melancholy subject to dwell upon, but we must not cut him short though his contemporaries cruelly served him so. With a melancholy forboding of what was to come, the king, on the 3rd of November, 1640, opened the Long Parliament. One of its earliest acts was to release from prison our learned friend

Mr. Prynne, and to give him £5000 damages for his detention. On hearing the decision he declared he would live no longer like a Prynne, but like a prince; and by way of a beginning he came down one flight of stairs, and had "2 pair, Mr. Prynne," instead of "3 pair, Mr. Prynne," marked on the door-post of his chambers.

Strafford, who felt that his turn would very soon come, remained out of town as long as he could, under the idea that, in conformity with the proverb, "Out of sight out of mind," the Commons, if they did not see him, would never think of him. Charles, however, wrote to him, telling him that "to keep so long out of sight he must, indeed, be out of his mind," and insisted on his coming up to town to take his place in Parliament. He had scarcely entered the House of Lords before Mr. Pym appeared at the bar to impeach Thomas Earl Strafford in the name of all the Commons of England. The earl was taken to the Tower; and the chief secretary, Windebank, had he not discovered something in the wind, which caused him to take to flight, would assuredly have been obliged to follow the favourite, or even to come in with him neck and neck, which means, in this instance, neck or nothing. Finch, the Lord Keeper, was next proceeded against, but, having made one speech in his own defence, he availed himself of the natural qualities of the Finch family, by taking to flight, or to speak more characteristically, he "hopped the twig," and fled to Holland. Several others were threatened with Parliamentary vengeance, and Berkeley was actually arrested while sitting as a peer in his ermine, which he said had been done because the mob had resolved to undermine the Constitution.

On the 19th of January, 1641, Mr. Prideaux

brought in a bill to regulate the holding of Parliaments. Its object was to provide for their being summoned by the Lords in case of the refusal of the king, or by the Sheriffs in default of the Lords, or on the failure of King, Lords, and Sheriffs, the thing was to be done by the people. There was, by this measure, to be a new Parliament once in three years, which was allowing rather amply for wear and tear; and though Charles was very reluctant, he ultimately gave his consent to the arrangement. Those very ill-used gentlemen, the bishops, who are always selected as a mark when the spirit of revolution is abroad taking random shots at everything venerable, were of course not allowed on this occasion to escape, and the Commons voted them most unceremoniously out of Parliament.

The great event of the session, however, was the trial of Lord Strafford, who on the morning of Monday, the 22nd of March, boated it, or rather barged it, up from the Tower to Westminster. Everything, even the tide was against him, and the Earl of Arundel, who was notoriously his enemy, acted as High Steward at the trial. The impeachment contained twenty-eight articles, every one of them being capital, so that if Strafford had possessed twenty heads, it is quite clear that the deep revenge of his accusers "had stomach for them all." Strafford's reply was written out on two hundred sheets of paper, but a good bold text hand must have been employed, for the two hundred sheets, as well as the articles of impeachment, were all got through on the first day of the trial.

It is rather a strange way of proceeding to take the reply before hearing evidence in support of the charge; but such was the practice on this momentous occasion. Arundel next called upon the managers of

the Commons to bring forward their proofs, and Pym began a very roundabout address in the fashion of the period. The speech of Pym was a reiteration of the charges in the impeachment, served up with a *garniture* of his own eloquence. Strafford declared it was a conspiracy, of course, for it is a curious fact that the most flagrant criminals have always been—if they are to be believed, which we need scarcely say they are not—the victims of a cruel combination against injured innocence. Strafford asked for time to plead, but he had not taken out a summons in the regular way, and accordingly only half an hour was awarded him. He nevertheless made such good use of this short time, that he made a capital speech, and concluded with a puzzle almost as good as the old original inquiry, with reference to the red herring and the sack of coals. * "For if," said he, "the one thousand misdemeanors will not make a felony, how will twenty-eight misdemeanors make a treason?"

** Every one knows, or ought to know, the question arithmetical enthusiast: "If a red herring costs t halfpence, what will a sack of coals come to?" Ans Ashes..*

The trial was continued from day to day, and on the 10th of April Pym walked knowingly up to the bar with a variety of nods and winks, to intimate that he had a matter of vast importance to communicate. The assembly having ordered the door to be locked to prevent intrusion—as if the housemaid might have wandered in with her broom —there was a general cry of "Now then, what is it? Let's have it out without all this mystery." Pym hereupon produced a copy of notes taken at a meeting of the privy council, in which Strafford was

reported to have told the king that he was "'absolved and loosed from all rule and government.'" The point was considered a strong one; but if Strafford had told Charles he was the Emperor of Morocco, and might turn all his subjects into morocco slippers by trampling them under his feet, the ministers having merely said so would not have made the fact, and he could not have been liable for it unless it had really happened. *Verba non acta* seemed, however, to be the motto of his judges, who took the word for the deed in numerous instances. Strafford having made the best answer he could to this part of the charge, was told by Arundel, that if he had anything more to say, the sooner he said it the better, for his judges were very anxious to have the pleasure of condemning him. The fact was, that the customary sympathy of Englishmen for a poor fellow in a mess, was beginning to show itself, and the Commons feared that the trial would not "keep" a great deal longer if they did not speedily make an end of it. The matter was accordingly hurried on, and on the 21st of April, the bill of attainder passed the Commons by a very large majority. The numbers were 204 against 59, which of course did not include the "tellers," for if it had done so, Hume, Hallam, and the rest of us, must have been comprised, for we are all of us the "tellers" of this sad story.

When the bill went up to the peers, their lordships were not at all in a hurry to despatch it, and the Commons kept sending up messages to know "How about that little Bill?" and begging that the Upper House would immediately settle it. It was rumoured that Strafford intended to escape, but it was rather idle to speculate upon the intentions of a man who was utterly unable to accomplish them. He offered a bribe of £22,000 to Balfour, the Lieutenant of the

Tower; but that virtuous individual scorned the filthy dross, though some brute, who has no appreciation of the great and good, has hinted that Balfour either expected more, or was afraid that what was offered would not be forthcoming.

Charles, who was very anxious to make the favourite safe, though the odds were terribly against him, sent for the Lords and Commons, whom he begged, when drawing up their sentence, to draw it as mild as possible. He said he had listened to the evidence, and he really did not see how they could commit the earl. But Pym replied, *sotto voce*, that "none are so blind as those who won't see;" and Charles could elicit nothing satisfactory. At the next sitting of the Parliament a furious mob was collected outside, and the Lords naturally expressed their disinclination to being bullied into haste on the subject of the bill of attainder. Upon this, one Dr. Burgess, who had some weight with the people, went out to disperse them, and though he said some sharp things which caused that intolerable nuisance—a wag—to cry out, "Come, Burgess, none of your sauce!" he succeeded in his object.

The state of nervous agitation in which the whole country was plunged at about this period may be conceived by a little anecdote which is told on the best authority—that is to say, the best that happens to be available. Sir Walter Earl was in the midst of a cock-and-bull story about some plot that had been hatching to make a sort of girandola of the Parliament, by blowing it up with a splendid display of fireworks, in the midst of which the Speaker was to have gone off like a Jack-in-the-box, when the members, who were shivering and shaking like a grove of aspens, were startled by the following incident:—Two very corpulent members happening

to stand upon one plank, which was rather the worse for wear, caused the floor to crack, and the Commons thought it was all up, or rather all down, with them. The utmost confusion prevailed, and somebody at once started off to fetch the train-bands, who acted as the police of the period. It turned out to be a false alarm, or to speak more correctly, a real alarm resting on false premises, for the flaw in the floor had been the cause of this not altogether groundless terror.

On the 7th of May the Lords passed the bill of attainder against Strafford, as well as another bill, abrogating the power of the king to dissolve the Parliament. The House was thin, and it may have happened that the recent accident with the two fat members in the Commons operated as a warning to corpulent peers not to attend till their locus *standi* had been looked to by the carpenter.

It now remained to be seen whether Charles would give his consent to the execution of the favourite, and poor Strafford feeling that his life hung upon a thread, sent a long yarn, in the shape of a letter, to his royal master. The king summoned his privy council to advise him what step to take, when honest Jack Juxon, the plain-sailing Bishop of London, exclaimed, bluntly, "I'll tell you what it is, your majesty; if you've any doubts about his guilt don't you go and sign his bill of attainder for all the Bills—no, nor the Bobs, nor the Dicks—in Christendom." Others, however, gave him opposite advice, and the scene ended by his resolving to give his assent, though he did so with his pocket-handkerchief before his eyes, but whether from emotion or a cold in his head is still an "open question" with all historians. On the 12th of May, 1641, poor Strafford met his doom with such heroic fortitude that, though he became

shorter by a head in a physical sense, his moral stature was considerably heightened in the eyes of posterity.

The death of Strafford was the signal for the abandonment of office by several of his friends, who thought it better to live with resignation than die with resignation at this very trying juncture. Bills were passed for abolishing the Star-Chamber, and the Court of High Commission, as well as for preventing the Parliament from being dissolved, except by its own consent; so that Charles became like a king in a game of skittles, whose downfall was only a question of time and circumstance.

Being dreadfully in want of a little loyalty to comfort him, and finding very little in England—and that of the weakest kind—the sovereign paid a visit to Scotland, where he knew he could have as much as he wanted, if he chose to pay for it. His visit to that country was fast coming to a close when news reached him of a rebellion in Ireland, where the descendants of the early settlers, who were for settling everybody, and had taken the name of the "Loras of the Pale," were causing numbers to "kick the bucket."

The republican spirit had now broken out in full force; and the more the king went on doing what he was asked, the more the Commons went on being dissatisfied. At length he determined to try a bit of firmness, and walked into the House of Commons one morning to demand the impeachment of five members, two of whom were Pym and Hampden. Charles entered the assembly quite alone, and walking up to the chair of the Speaker, who had risen on the king's arrival, his majesty glided into it. He stated that he had come to take the five members into custody; but there was something so derogatory

in the idea of "every monarch his own policeman," that the Commons Were rather disgusted, and greeted him with shouts of "Privilege! Privilege!"

Having made up his mind that "this sort of thing would not do," he determined to go out of town, and repaired to York, where he was soon joined by a party of volunteers more select than numerous. Charles was in that state of cashlessness so often ascribed by history to kings, who, nominally possessed of a crown, are positively not worth a shilling.

He had sold his wife's jewels, and laid out the produce in arms and ammunition, which he gave out as far as they would go to his few friends; but the distribution was a mournful business. There were scarcely swords enough to go round, and the gunpowder was served out in little packets like so many doses of salts to the small band of royalists. They mustered the money for a manifesto, in which Essex, one of his apostate generals, was denounced in very large type; and the king having corrected the proof of the poster, ordered one hundred to be worked off and stuck up at the earliest opportunity. His majesty and suite—which Strype tells us was short and suite—repaired to Nottingham, where the cause of the sovereign got a sort of lift by the hoisting of the royal standard.

When Charles found it necessary to draw the sword, he felt that he had nothing else to draw, for his funds were quite exhausted. Everything seemed to go against him, and even the elements themselves were unfavourable, for the standard which his friends had found it so difficult to hoist, was blown down, and came rattling through a skylight on to the heads of the royalists. The civil war had now regularly commenced, and the first battle was fought

at Edge Hill, in Warwickshire, where Prince Rupert—the inventor of mezzotinto engraving—left the print of his sword, and several proofs of his valour, on the ranks of the king's enemies. After fighting all day the two armies put up for the night, and facing each other the next morning, they evidently did not like each other's looks, for both parties retired. Had the king's troops gone to London, they might have done some good; but they loitered about Reading, and by the time they got to Turn-ham Green, it was occupied by twenty-four thousand men, though where they managed to turn 'em in at Turnham Green is somewhat mysterious.*

** It seems more probable that the twenty-four thou Parliamentary troops were stationed in London thar many were crammed into the little suburb specifiec*

On the 15th of April, the Parliamentarians invested Reading, but the king having nothing to invest, could not compete for this eligible investment. Essex, who had managed the transaction, did not continue long a holder, but fell back to Thame, where a skirmish took place that would have been literally a tame affair if the illustrious Hampden had not perished in the *mêlée*.

Essex was one of the worst men possible to be chosen as a leader, for he had an unconquerable propensity to gib—which was the only invincibility he possessed—and he was consequently falling back whenever he should have been going forward. He had gibbed from Reading to Thame, and he now gibbed again from Thame to London, where it became a saying among the common people, "Oh, that's Essex: I know him by the cut of his jib."



Trained Band. Soldier of the Period.

Original Size

The civil war continued to rage with varying success until the battle of Marston Moor, where the royalists, under Prince Rupert, sustained a defeat they never recovered from, and the only use they could make of their right and left wing was to fly for safety. After this reverse, Charles attempted to get up a treaty called the Treaty of Uxbridge, which, after twenty days of wrangling between the Commissioners of the Parliament and those sent by the king—the former wanting everything and the latter conceding nothing—fell completely to the ground. Cromwell had contrived that Sir Thomas, now Lord Fairfax, should be appointed General of the Parliamentary Army, so that the responsibility of failure should rest upon that individual; while the wily brewer, who knew how to take his measures, would have artfully secured the merit of any success for himself. The battle of Naseby was the last decisive blow, which, in the graphic words of one of our early writers, "put the nasal organ of royalty completely out of joint." Charles behaved very gallantly, and so did Rupert; but when the former cried out to his cavalry, "One charge more and we win the day!" he might just as well have exclaimed,

"Twopence more, and up goes the donkey!" for his words produced no effect. "Thank you, we've had enough of it," seemed to be imprinted on every countenance; and after a few more reverses, Charles formed the rash deliberation of throwing himself upon the generosity of the Scotch.

He might just as well have thrown himself on the pavement beneath the Monument, as the sequel proved; for the Scotch at once set to work to see what profit was to be made by the sale of the royal fugitive. After a good deal of haggling, they sold the sovereign, who had thrown himself upon their generosity, for £400,000; and they no doubt silenced their consciences—if they ever had any—by saying, "It's just a matter of beesness, ye ken," to any one who remonstrated with them upon their mercenary baseness.

The royal prisoner was shut up for some weeks at Holmby Castle, in Northamptonshire, but after a few weeks, Cromwell sent one Joyce, formerly his tailor, and afterwards a cornet in Fairfax's troop of horse, to "smug" the unhappy king and carry him to the army.

The House of Commons became exceedingly jealous of the military influence that prevailed, but the people rather sided with the soldiers; for the Parliament had, of course, in its great love of liberty, taken the liberty to lay on taxes to an extent unprecedented in the annals of royal rapacity. It is a fact worth remembering, that the people frequently find their friends more costly than their enemies.

In the autumn of 1647, the king was sent to Hampton Court, where he was allowed some indulgences, such as going out to spend the day at Sion House, where two of his children were remaining as parlour boarders with the Duke of

Northumberland. Some Puritans having given indications of their imagining that they had a spiritual call to do some mischief to the king, his majesty resolved not to be at home to such a call if he could possibly help it, and leaving Hampton Court with three attendants he reached the coast of Hampshire. It was noticed at the time that Charles had probably heard of the celebrated Hampshire hogs, and fancied therefore that Hampshire must be the best place for him to go to in the hope of saving his bacon. He resigned himself to Colonel Hammond, the Governor of the Isle of Wight, who placed the royal fugitive in Carisbrook Castle; where a bowling-green was arranged and a summerhouse built, so that Charles could fancy himself, if he liked, in a suburban tea-garden. The king was a capital bowler, and when sorrow came across his mind he would try and "drown it in the bowls" which Colonel Hammond was so good as to provide him with.

In the September of 1648, another conference was attempted, and Charles took a furnished lodging at a private house in Newport, where the commissioners came to consult with him. They found him much altered, and with his hair so grey as to bespeak the fact that care had been busy in peppering his head, which he declared had got into that state during his anxious sojourn at Oxford; and this peculiar combination of tints retains to this day the title of the Oxford Mixture.

The Parliament would have been glad to diminish the influence of the army by a successful negotiation with the king; but while terms were being discussed, Cromwell, who never brewed half-and-half, struck a blow at both parties. He sent one of his draymen named Pride, who had risen from a seat on the shafts of his dray to a colonelcy in the army, to blockade

the Parliament-house with a body of troops, and let in only those members who were favourable to the views of his late employer. We, who cannot imagine Barclay or Perkins going the entire in the style of their predecessor in trade, nor conceive Meux and Co. meddling with the Crown, except to supply it with beer, are of course astonished at the insolence of Cromwell. He nevertheless gained his point, for he set the Parliament at defiance, and had the king removed to Hurst Castle, in Hampshire, which was so dull that Charles could not help remarking that coming to Hurst was like going to be buried. He was again removed to Windsor, and subsequently to St. James's Palace, where the guards were ordered to call him Charles Stuart, in order to show the magnanimity of the revenge of such a man as Cromwell. The king was exposed to every petty insult that littlemindedness could suggest or coarse brutality execute. In this respect the "liberals" of England in 1649 set an example which the "liberals" of France followed in the treatment of their own fallen and powerless sovereign upwards of a century afterwards. The only comfort he enjoyed was the society of poor old Jack Juxon, the bishop who had been faithful to him in all his adversity.

It was now determined to bring the king to trial, and on the 20th of January the proceedings commenced in Westminster Hall, when upon its being declared that Charles was accused in the name of the people, a shrill voice exclaimed "Pooh, pooh! not a tenth part of them." The ushers looked in vain to see who was disturbing the audience, and the soldiers were ordered to fire into the corner whence the voice proceeded, until it turned out that Lady Fairfax was the individual by whom the proceedings had been interrupted. She was a warm politician,

and with her husband had espoused the parliamentary cause, but was disgusted like him with the brutal use that the "liberals" were making of their triumph. Charles demurred to the jurisdiction of his judges for three days, but, on the 27th, they found him guilty, and sentenced him to be beheaded three days afterwards. The "people," imitating the conduct of some of their "friends," insulted the fallen monarch in his misfortune, and many a malicious, low-bred ass, tried to get a kick at the chained lion. Happily the people in our own days are very superior to the people of the time ol Charles, and there is no sympathy among the masses with ungenerous persecution, whatever may be the rank of the victim.

As Charles quitted the hall after his conviction, a wretched miscreant displayed a toad-like venom by spitting in the king's face, which drew from the sovereign the true remark, "Poor souls! they would treat their generals in the same manner for sixpence." While chronicling an act disgraceful to human nature, we must not forget to put down what is on the credit side—namely, a blessing instead of an insult from one of the guard, who was struck to the ground for giving way to this creditable impulse.

We draw a veil over the closing scene, for our history is not a register of murders; but whoever reads attentively the details of the sacrifice of Charles the First will see the original of one of the darkest scenes in the French Revolution.

The death-warrant for the execution of Charles the First was signed by fifty-nine of his judges, the list beginning with the name of James Bradshaw, and ending with that of Miles Corbet. Few of them rose to much distinction, and still fewer have left descendants capable of acquiring fame, for there is scarcely a renowned patronymic in the entire

catalogue. A man in a visor performed the murderous ceremony of striking off the king's head; and we cannot be surprised that the executioner was ashamed to show his face on such an occasion.

Though the nation had stood by, in the most apathetic manner, while the mischief was doing, it was no sooner done than everybody became very indignant and very sorrowful. Women went into fits, men took to drinking, and some went so far as to commit suicide rather than survive their murdered sovereign. This sympathy was all peculiarly English, and, in fact, a little too much so; for it is the fault of our countrymen to make a great deal too much of the dead and too little of the living.

Frequently the fate of one who, after his decease, has his merits recognised by subscription and a monument. Genius not unfrequently asks in vain for bread when living, but when dead gets a stone awarded him.

Charles was in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign, when he was brought to the scaffold. We regret that we cannot give a favourable character of this unfortunate person out of place—for he certainly was completely out of place on the throne of England. His disposition was mixed, like human nature in general; and indeed, what is mankind, as the philosopher would ask, but the "mixture as before" incessantly repeated? He was dignified, it is true, but so is the representative of the "fifth noble" Neglect, or even starvation, is freor "tenth senator," in an opera or play, and he was temperate also to an extent that might have fitted him for the chair of a teetotal lodge, but not for the throne of a vast empire. He was not avaricious, but if he spent money freely it was because he freely helped himself to the money of other people. He was

humane to such an extent, that "he would not have hurt a fly;" but it may be said that a fly never did him any harm, and hostility therefore, to that imbecile insect, would have been at once brutal and undignified. The man who would hurt a fly must indeed be very hard up for a victim to his malevolence, and Charles cannot, therefore, have much credit given him for his amiability towards that humble member of the class of *diptera*. The manners of Charles were not much in his favour; "but it would not have mattered much," says the incorrigible Strype, "that he was a bit of a bear, had he been otherwise bearable."

In a commercial country, like ours, his swindling propensities will always tell against him, and his insatiable desire to obtain money, under false pretences, was quite unworthy of his exalted station, or, indeed, of any station but that where the police are paramount. It is true that his subjects would have kept him rather hard up for cash; and he often declared that the Long Parliament reduced him repeatedly to very short commons. Hume has endeavoured to give Charles the reputation of being a man of "probity and honour;" but it must have been the sort of honour said to prevail among thieves, for when he could not get money by honest means—which he seldom could—he never scrupled to rob for it.

In person, Charles had a sweet but melancholy expression, a sort of *agro dolce*, which made his portrait not quite a *Carlo Dolce* to look upon. His features were regular, but he was not vain; and he would often say or think "that he should not care about a regular nose or chin, so that he could make both ends meet by having a regular salary." He was an excellent horseman; but it is one thing to be

skilful in the management of the bridle, and another to be adroit in holding the reins of power. His equestrian accomplishments would have been useful to him had fate thrown him into another circle, where his favourite, Buckingham as clown to the ring, would also have been in his proper position.

The men of letters of Charles' reign were numerous and illustrious. Ford, the dramatist, whose depth it is difficult to fathom; Ben Jonson, surnamed the Rare, and as it has been prettily said by somebody, "the rarer the better;" with Philip Massinger, belonged to the period. Speed, the topographer, commonly called the "slow coach;" Burton, the famous anatomist of melancholy, and familiarly known as the sad dog; Spelman, whose writings possess no particular spell; Cotton, who has furnished a lot of printed stuffs; and a few others, constituted the literary illuminators of the age, by their moral and intellectual moulds, dips, or rushlights.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. THE COMMONWEALTH.

THE king being now dead, the republican

beggars were on horseback, and began at a rapid pace the ride whose terminus we need not mention. On the 5th of February, 1649, a week after the execution of Charles, the Commons had the impudence to vote the House of Peers "both useless and dangerous." One of the next steps of the lower House was to vent a sort of brutal malignity upon unfeeling objects, and having no longer a king to butcher, it was resolved to break up all his statues. The Commons thought, no doubt, to pave the way to a republic by macadamising the road with the emblems of royalty.

Considerable discussion has been raised upon the question of the right of a nation to decapitate its king; and, of course, if the people may do as they please with their own, they may do anything. The judgment of posterity has very properly pronounced a verdict of "Wilful Murder" against the regicides, and we have no wish to disturb this very fair decision. It is very unlikely that a similar state of things will ever arise again in England; but, if such were to be unhappily the case, there are, in these enlightened times, numerous pacific and humane modes of meeting the emergency. "Between dethroning a prince and punishing him, there is," as Hume well observes, "a wide difference;" and unless the professed humanity-mongers should get fearfully ahead—unless the universal philanthropists should gain an ascendency over public opinion—there is no fear that kings or aristocrats will ever be butchered again, for the promotion of "universal love" and "brotherhood."

When Charles was no more, the republicans continued to show their paltry malevolence by making insulting propositions as to the disposal of his family. It was suggested that the Princess

Elizabeth should be bound apprentice to a button-maker; but the honest artificer to whom the proposal was made generously hoped that his buttons might be dashed before he became a party to so petty an arrangement. Happily for the princess, death, by making a loophole for her escape, saved her from being reduced to the necessity of making buttons.

A Committee of Government had been hitherto sitting at Derby House, which was now changed into the Executive Council, with Bradshaw as president, and Milton, the poet, as his secretary: the latter having being employed no doubt on account of his powerful imagination to conceive some possible justification for the conduct of the regicides. Duke Hamilton, the Earl of Holland and Capel, the last of whom had bounded away like a stag, but was seized at the corner of Capel Court, were all tried and beheaded.

The usual consequences of the triumph of the "great cause of liberty," as advocated by noisy demagogues, and of the ascendency of the *soi-disant* friends of the people, very soon became evident. It was declared treason to deny the supremacy of Parliament, which might indeed lay claim to supremacy in oppression, pride, and intolerance. The "freedom of the press" was completely stopped; and, in fact, there was the customary direct antagonism between principle and practice which too frequently marks the conduct of the hater of all tyranny except his own, and the ardent friend of his kind, which is a kind that we do not greatly admire.

The king's eldest son was proclaimed as Charles the Second, in Scotland and Ireland, which caused Cromwell to say, "I must go and see about that," and to start at once for Dublin. Having done considerable damage, notwithstanding the resistance of some of

the Irish youth, who went by the name of the Dublin Stout, he left his son-in-law, Ireton, to look after Ireland, thinking, perhaps, he would be acceptable from the semi-nationality of his name, while he himself returned to England. He took up his abode in London, at a place called the Cockpit, where he was visited by several persons of consequence; and the new lord of the Cockpit enjoyed the Gallic privilege of having a good crow upon his own dunghill.

Montrose now made an attempt in Scotland in favour of Charles the Second, but being defeated, he fled and sought refuge with a Scotch friend, who, of course, sold him for what he would fetch, and made £2000 by the business transaction. Poor Montrose was hanged at Edinburgh, on a gallows thirty feet high, which justifies us in saying that cruelty was carried to an immense height, on this deplorable occasion. Charles himself now took the field, having landed at the Frith of Cromarty, and had collected a tolerably large army under Lesley. Cromwell instantly started for Scotland, with a considerable force, and attacked the royalists at Dunbar, where he encouraged his own troops by a quantity of religious cant, which contrasted strangely with the sanguinary nature of his object. After cutting to pieces all that fell in their way, the Puritan humbugs set to at psalm-singing with tremendous vehemence. This mixture of butchery and bigotry was one of the most disgusting characteristics of Cromwell and his ferocious followers. Charles, having fled towards the Highlands, intended leaving Scotland: but some people there asked him to stop and take a bit of dinner, with the promise of a coronation in the evening.

The *réunion* took place, but it was rather dull, and Charles determined to make his way towards

England. Cromwell resolved to pursue him, and this active friend of religion and humanity, having met a few royalists on the road, deliberately "cut them to pieces." On the 3rd of September, 1651, the Battle of Worcester was fought, with success to the republican force; and poor Charles was obliged to escape as well as he could by assuming a variety of disguises, though how he got the extensive wardrobe his dramatic assumptions entailed a necessity for, is not quite obvious. He arrived at Shoreham, near Brighton, in a footman's livery, and "the lad with the white cockade," as the old song called him, obtained a situation in a coal barge, in which he was carried to France. The captain of the collier must have been an odd sort of person, to take a footman with him on the voyage, but perhaps the coal-heavers of that day were more refined than they are at present.

Cromwell was triumphantly received in London, and the cloven foot soon began to peep out from the high-low of the crafty republican. He accepted Hampton Court Palace as his residence, and an estate of £4000 a year was voted to him, without the purity of his intentions offering any obstacle to his receiving it.

The Parliament was now getting into disrepute, and Cromwell thought he would take advantage of its loss of popularity, to increase his own stock, whereupon the game of "diamond cut diamond" was commenced between them. The Parliament had now been sitting for some years, and people began to think there might be too much of a good thing, even in an assembly of red-hot patriots, that had hanged a king, and sent the country into a fit of melancholy, by prohibiting, by law, everything in the shape of cheerfulness.

In those days, a joke would lead the perpetrator to

the gibbet, and a pun was so highly penal—as, perhaps, it ought to be—that a dull dog who had dropped one by mistake, was called upon to find heavy securities for his good behaviour. The nation was thrown into the dismals by Act of Parliament, and England became—to use a simile that would, at the time, have sent our heads smack to the block—the very centre of gravity. Cromwell, seeing that the Parliament was going down in favour every day, resolved to raise himself by giving the finishing blow to it. He sounded Whitelock, to whom he put the question, "What if a man should take upon himself to be king?" and thus Whitelock got a key to Cromwell's intentions. The old man—Silverplate, as some call him,—did not take to the notion, and Cromwell was exceedingly cool to him ever afterwards. There was a meeting at Oliver's lodgings, on the 20th of April, to discuss the best method of getting rid of the Parliament; and Cromwell, hearing the Commons were in the act of passing a very obnoxious bill, got up from his chair, in a very excited state, and told some soldiers to follow him. He swelled his little band with the sentinels on duty, whom he called out of their sentry boxes, as he passed, and entered the House, attended by Lambert, a file of musketeers, and a few officers. He took his seat, and listened to the debate, but when the Speaker was going to put the motion, he started up, saying to Harrison —"Now's the time; I must—indeed I must!" when Harrison pulled him back by the skirts of his coat, saying to him, "Can't you be quiet? Just think what you're doing." He then proceeded to address the assembly, but soon got dreadfully unparliamentary in his language, and rushing from his seat to the floor of the House, got very personal. He next stamped on the floor, when his musketeers entered, and, pointing

to the Speaker, who was, of course, raised above the rest, he cried, "Fetch him down!" when the Speaker was seized by the robe and pulled into the midst of the assembly. Pointing to Algernon Sydney, Cromwell next cried, "Put him out!" and out he went like a farthing rushlight.

Algernon was very young, and exhibited at first a degree of boyish obstinacy, mixed with infantine insolence, which caused him to be refractory, or—to use a simile in conformity with the image of the rushlight—to flare up in the socket. He, for a moment, refused to go; which caused Harrison to tap him gently on the shoulder, and say to him, in a mild, but resolute tone, "Come, come, young gentleman; if you don't go out quietly, we must put you out." The child seemed doubtful whether to turn refractory or not, when it suddenly appeared to occur to him that it would be useless to resist; and, just as Harrison had his hands on the lad's shoulders, to impart to him sufficient momentum to have sent him flying through the door, young Algernon made up his mind that he would go quietly. Cromwell stood, in fact, like a dog in the midst of so many rats; a position he had perhaps learned to assume, from his residence at the Cockpit; and he next flew at the mace, exclaiming, "Take away that bauble!" The mace was most unceremoniously hurried off, when, after a little more abuse against several of his old friends, the House was completely cleared, and there was an end to the Long Parliament.



Original Size

Nothing could exceed the well-bred dogism or utter curishness of the Commons on this occasion, for not one of them offered the smallest resistance to the violence of Cromwell. When they had all sneaked out, he locked and double locked the door, put the keys in his pocket, and carried them to his lodgings. He admitted that he had not intended to have gone so far when he first entered the House, but the mean-spiritedness of the members had urged him on to the course he had adopted.

Thinking that he might as well make a day of it, he proposed to Harrison and Lambert to walk with him to Derby House, and the three stalked into the room where the Council of State was sitting. Cromwell at first pretended to listen with attention to what was going on, and gave an occasional loud ejaculation of "Hear!" but Bradshaw, who was presiding, soon felt that the cheer was ironical. Business was permitted to proceed in this way for a few minutes, when the Council felt it was being "quizzed," and Bradshaw, giving an incredulous look at Cromwell, the latter made no longer a secret of his intention. "Come, come," he cried, "there's been enough of this; go home, and get to bed, and don't come here again until you've a message from me that you're wanted."

The hint was immediately taken by Bradshaw, who started up and ran for it—for he was afraid of rough treatment—and he presently had close at his heels the whole of his colleagues. Thus, within the space of a few hours, Cromwell had broken up the Council of State, and dissolved the Long Parliament.

Cromwell, having made short work of the Long Parliament, proceeded to supply its place by a legislature of his own composition, and the enemy of absolute monarchy proved himself an absolute humbug by acts of the most arbitrary and designing character. His pretended patriotism had in fact been a struggle on his part to decide whether the business of despotism should remain in the hands that were "native and to the manner born" to it, or whether he should start on his own account as a monopolist of tyranny to be practised for his own aggrandisement. The new Parliament was a miscellaneous collection of impostors and scamps, with a slight mixture of honest men, but these were too few to make the thing respectable. Cromwell now began to put on the external semblance of religion, with an extravagance of display that gives us every reason to doubt his sincerity. As the man of straw frequently covers himself with jewellery, a good deal of which may be sham; so Cromwell enveloped himself in all the externals of sanctity, which we firmly believe penetrated no further than the surface.



The Barebones Parliament.

Original Size

One of the principal members of the new Parliament was a fellow named Barbone or Barebone, a leather-seller and currier, who attempted to curry favour by an affectation of extreme holiness. The legislative assembly subsequently got the name of the Barebones Parliament from the person we have named, and the whole pack of humbugs usurped the powers of the State by pretending they "had a call" to take upon them the duties of government.

It may generally be observed that they who make piety a profession look very sharply out for professional profits, and if they are desirous of taking what is not justly their own, they soon get up an imaginary "call" to urge them to the robbery. Cromwell formally handed over to them the supreme authority—which, by-the-by, was not his to give—and the first day of their meeting was devoted to praying and preaching, with a view to giving the public an idea of their excessive sanctity. They soon set to work in their career of mischief, and began by

abolishing the Court of Chancery, on account of its delays, which was like killing a horse because it did not happen to go at full gallop. They certainly expedited the suits, and brought them to a conclusion about as effectually as one would accelerate a steam-engine by shutting up the safety valve, and allowing it to go to smash with the utmost possible rapidity. They nominated as judges a new set of lawyers, whose qualification was that they were not in the law; and there is no doubt the Parliament would have dissolved every institution in the kingdom if the members had not dissolved themselves on the 12th of December, 1654, at the suggestion of Cromwell.

The old constitutional principle, that "too many cooks spoil the broth," having been rapidly exemplified, it was declared expedient to have "a commonwealth in a single person," or, in other words, to have a king with a democratic name, which is the invariable result of the policy of red-hot republicans. Cromwell was, of course, the unit who had put himself down as A1 for the new office, and he succeeded in choosing himself or getting himself chosen by the title of *Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland*. Thus, though the people had cut off the head of a real king, another head grew in in its place, for Government is like the hydra, which must have a head, however often the process of decapitation may be carried into execution. The brewer had, in fact, mashed up the constitution as completely as if he had used one of his own mash-tubs for the purpose, and his upstart insolence reached such a point, that the now well-known expression, "He doesn't think small beer of himself," was first applied in reference to this dealer in ale and stout, who, it was clumsily observed, had "gone the

entire" in his great audacity.

While these things were going on at home, the English fleet had been engaged with Von Tromp, or Trump, abroad, and the Dutch sailor behaved like the article which his name delicately indicates. The Dutch for some time, though they only had this Von Trump, carried off all the honours, and sometimes succeeded even by tricks; but at length the distinguished Trump was obliged to "shuffle off the mortal coil," and though he would gladly have revoked his determination to "cut in" to such a desperate game as an engagement with the English, he played it out to the last with all his wonted courage. The only remaining Trump, looking whistfully round him, fell by a blow from a knave who was in the suit and service of the English. When the last breath was blown out of the highly respectable Trump, the war between the Dutch and the English was at an end, and the Protector had time to follow out his principles by protecting himself with the utmost vigilance. One of his chief difficulties arose from the eagerness of the various liberal sects in religion to oppress each other in the name of brotherly love and universal harmony. This difficulty in quieting the demands of each to exterminate the others taught him lessons of diplomacy, and Cromwell soon became the most accomplished "do" that ever had a place in the pages of history. Though he recommended great tolerance in their quarrels with each other, they no sooner began to abuse him than he threw some of them into prison, reminding us of the celebrated apostle of temperance who, in a fit of intoxication, broke the windows of a public-house for the purpose of assisting the triumph of the "grand principle."

Cromwell, who was a clever man, and, though a

brewer, was averse to doing things by half-and-half, made some legal appointments that gave general satisfaction. He promoted Hale—with whom he was hale fellow well met—to the Bench of the Common Pleas, and he was fortunate enough to obtain a recognition of his protectorate from the Governments of France, Spain and Portugal.

On the 3rd of September, 1654, which was Sunday, Cromwell, as Protector, first met his new Parliament, and played the part of a king in all its most essential points, even down to the delivery of a speech from the throne, remarkable for the badness of its grammar, the antiquity of its language, and the utter emptiness of most of its sentences. He abused the levellers, for, with the skill of political engineering, he desired to level down no lower than the "dumpy level" at which he had arrived; and while eulogising liberty of conscience, he admitted it to be a capital thing so long as it did not extend to the formation of opinions unfavourable to the Protector's own position. He spoke glowingly of the beauty of free thoughts, but hinted that, lest these thoughts should be more free than welcome, the people had better keep their thoughts to themselves as much as possible.

At the close of Cromwell's speech, the Commons sneaked back to their House, where they elected Lenthall their Speaker, and appointed the 13th of September a day of humiliation, as if there had not been humiliation enough for the country in the conduct it had been recently pursuing. The Protector soon began to put his despotic principles in force, for his position having been debated rather freely, he sent for the members of Parliament to the Painted Chamber, and told them very plainly that he had made up his mind to stand no impertinence. "You

wanted a republic," said he, "and you have got it; so you had better be satisfied." In vain did they venture to urge that liberty, equality, and all the rest of it had been the purpose they had in view, for he replied that "they were all equally bound to show subservience to him, and that as to liberty, they were at perfect liberty to do, say, or think anything that would not be offensive to him, their master." He followed up this announcement by placing a guard at the door of the Parliament, whose duty it was to exclaim to each member "You can't go in, sir, until you have signed this paper," and on its being produced, it turned out to be an agreement not to question in any manner Cromwell's authority. Though this was a piece of tyranny and impertinence more disgusting than anything that had been attempted by Charles, one hundred and thirty of the members yielded to it at once; for it is a curious fact that, though the people will often show the susceptibility of the blood-horse at the slightest check of the rein when it is held by a royal hand, they will manifest the stolid patience of the ass under the most violent treatment from one of themselves, who has risen to the position of their master.

On the 14th of September Cromwell's door-keepers played their part so well, and barred the entrance so effectually against all but those who would sign the paper, that a great many more agreed to do so, and when the number of consenting parties was sufficiently respectable to make up a fair average House, Cromwell's creatures proceeded to vote that subscribing the recognition of the Protector should be a necessary preliminary to taking a seat in Parliament.

The Protector having done everything he could for himself, proceeded to show his protecting influence

—of course—over several of his relatives. Fleetwood, who had married his daughter—the widow of Ireton —was sent as governor to Ireland, and the Protector's own son afterwards succeeded to this high and lucrative office. Not only did he provide snugly for his living kindred, but he gave them most inappropriate honours when dead, and his mother happening to go off about this time, he actually insisted on the "old woman's" being entombed in the Abbey of Westminster. What the dowager Mrs. Cromwell had done to deserve this distinction, we have yet to learn, and as we have learnt everything connected with the subject on which we write, our instruction on this point will, we fear, be postponed to a very distant period.

Among the incidents of the Protector's domestic life, there is one which we will insert on account of its amusing and perhaps instructive character. Cromwell's vanity had so increased with his success, that he one day said to himself, "I can drive a whole people; I can drive a bargain as well as any man; and, odds, bobs, and buttercups! why should I not be able to drive my own carriage?" The cattle having been put to, he mounted the box with a jaunty air to enjoy a jaunt, and was tooling the cattle down Tooley Street, when, in consequence of the friskiness of one of the nags, Cromwell began nagging at his mouth with much violence. The horses not being so easily guided and controlled as the Parliament, soon turned restive, and ran away; which threw the Protector from his seat, and his own poll came into collision with the pole of his carriage. To add to the unpleasantness of the situation, a loaded pistol, which Cromwell always carried about him, went off, in sympathy, no doubt, with the steeds; or, perhaps, the charge could no longer contain itself, and

exploded with a burst of indignation at the pride of its owner, who, however, was not wounded by the accident.

The Protector continued to feather his nest with unabated zeal, and he got the Parliament to vote him half a dozen different abodes, including three or four in London itself; so that, unless he took breakfast at one, at a second, and took "his tea" at a third, he could not have occupied the metropolitan residences set apart for him. Multiplicity of lodgings appears to have been a *faiblesse* of the Protector: for, notwithstanding these six places of sojourn, there is scarcely a suburb that has not a house or apartments to let that, according to a landlord's myth, once served for the palace or residence of Cromwell. If we may trust to tradition, he once lived at a surgeon's in the Broadway, Hammersmith; once in a lane at Brompton; once in Little Upper James Street, North; and once in or near Piebald Row on the confines of Pimlico. Having got an allotment of plenty of houses, to an extent reminding us of the extravagant order of "some more gigs" which an anonymous spendthrift once commanded of his coachmaker, Cromwell began to think about getting a grant to pay the expenses of his numerous establishments.

An allowance of £200,000 a year was settled on himself and his successors, which, we find from a document of the period, * was exactly one entire sixth of the whole aggregate revenue of the three kingdoms put together.

** Statement of a sub-committee of the Commons.*

Thus, though poor Charles had experienced the utmost difficulty in getting money granted for the payment of his debts, or even for the costs of his

living like a king and a gentleman, the usurper Cromwell obtained at once the concession of a most liberal salary.

Notwithstanding the subservience the Parliament had in the first instance shown, symptoms of refractoriness in that quarter soon became visible. The Protector had made up his mind to go on changing it, as he would have done a set of domestic servants, until he could thoroughly suit himself; and accordingly, on the 22nd of January, 1656, he rang the bell, desired the legislature to appear before him, and announced that he had no further use for it. The members were desired to find themselves situations elsewhere; and though some of them had courage enough to hint that they "would be sure to better themselves, for they were tired of the quantity of dirty work they had had to do," the Parliament evinced, on the whole, a spirit, or rather a want of spirit, that was quite contemptible. Some of the malcontents ventured on a little revolutionary rising; but the levellers were speedily reduced to their old level. Major Wildman, a man rendered wild at the success of Cromwell's ambition, and hating the protectorate, had been heard to declare that he would "take the linch-pin out of the common-weal," and notwithstanding the flaw in the orthography, he was imprisoned on this evidence of hostility to the ruling power. At the moment when Wildman was arrested, he was sitting alone in his own back-parlour, evincing the same sort of enthusiasm that has immortalised the three tailors of Tooley Street, and drawing up "a declaration of the free and well-affected people of England now in arms against the tyrant Oliver Cromwell, Esquire." The major thought he had accomplished something very stinging, in adding "Esquire" to Cromwell's name; and he was in

the act of roaring out, "Hear, hear! Bravo, bravo!" after he had written out the title of his tremendous manifesto, when a sudden bursting open of the door, and a cry of "You must come along with us," threw the major into a state of surprise from which he had not recovered when he found himself put for safe keeping in the keep of Chepstowe Castle.



Arrest of Wildman.

Original Size

A few other insurrectionary movements were made, but all of them were of a very trifling character. Penruddock, Grove, and Lucas got up a little royalist trio, but their movement was soon turned into a dis-concerted piece, by a regiment of Cromwell's horse, who rode rough-shod over the three conspirators, and they were executed instead of their project.

The Protector was no less imperious towards foreign nations than towards his own, and having made some demands upon Spain, to which that country refused to accede, he sent Admiral Penn,

familiarly termed his Nibs, to write his name upon some of the Spanish possessions. Assisted by General Venables, Penn, who may be distinguished as a steel-pen, for he carried a pointed sword, and never showed a white feather, took the island of Jamaica after a contest, in which he found among the inhabitants of Jamaica some rum customers. Blake worried the Spaniards in another quarter, and the Protector spread so much consternation among some of the European governments, that the celebrated Cardinal Mazarin, who greatly feared him, began to look so very blue, that a Mazarine blue retains to this very day a character for intensity.

Emboldened by his good fortune, Cromwell thought he might venture on another Parliament, which met on the 17th of September, 1656, the members having undergone at the door an examination as to their servility to the Protector's purposes. The first sitting was like the first night of any novelty at the pit of Her Majesty's Theatre, and two of Cromwell's creatures officiated as check-takers. Every member who presented himself at the doors was obliged to produce his credentials, and upon this being satisfactorily done, a cry of "Pass one," was raised to the officer in charge of the inner barrier. Nearly one hundred new members were sent back, after more or less altercation; and the words "I can't help it, sir; those are my orders; you must go back, sir," were being continually heard above the din of "Pass one," or "It's all right," which confirmed the privilege of admission claimed by many of the applicants.

A legislature with only one House soon began to be considered as a sort of sow with one ear, and even the ear that remained was closed by Cromwell's art against what he used to call in private "the swinish

multitude." A suggestion was made by several that the House of Lords should be restored, and many began to sigh for a return to the old constitution, which had been broken up before there had been time to try the effect of a new one.

At length an alderman of London, one Sir Christopher Pack, started up, without any preliminary notice, and moved that the title of king should be offered to the Protector. Pack's proposition set off the entire pack of republicans in full cry against him, and they all continued to give tongue from the 23rd of February to the 26th of March, 1657, when Pack's motion was carried by a large majority. A deputation was appointed to request that "his Highness would be pleased to magnify himself with the title of king,"—a proposition almost as absurd as an offer to place Barclay and Perkins on the throne, or entreat Meux and Co. to write Henry IX. over the door of their brewery.

Cromwell gave an evasive reply to the requisition, approving most fully of the proposition to restore the House of Lords, but was hanging back about the "other little matter," when a declaration from some of his former friends and tools, that they had fought against monarchy and would do so again if required, completely settled him in his wavering refusal of the royal title. He was therefore inaugurated with much pomp as Lord Protector—and, indeed, he might well have been satisfied, for he had secured everything except the name of royalty. His manner of life and his Court were marked by no extravagant show, but he had everything very comfortable: and he was accustomed to say to his intimate friends, "What do I want with the gilt, for haven't I got the gingerbread?" He did not give very large parties at Hampton Court, but used to have a "few friends" to tea, and "a little

music" in the evening.



One of the Protector's Tea Parties.

Original Size

He occasionally attempted a joke, "But this," says Whitelock, "was always a very ponderous business." One of his frolics—we start instinctively at the idea of Cromwell being frolicsome—was to order a drum to beat in the middle of dinner, falling unpleasantly on the drums of his guests' ears, and at the signal the Protector's guards were allowed to rush into the room, clear the table, pocket the poultry, and, on a certain signal from the drum, make off with the drumsticks.

Cromwell had the good taste to delight in the society of clever men, and there was always a knife and fork at Hampton Court for Milton, or for that marvel of his age, the celebrated Andrew Marvel. Waller, the poet, was welcome always; Dryden now and then; John Biddle sometimes; and Archbishop Usher, whom Cromwell use to call the only real

gentleman usher of his day, was constantly kicking his heels under the Protector's mahogany.

We have now to record the death of poor Blake, who, having fluttered the Canaries in the isles of that name, was returning safe into Plymouth Sound, when he died of the scurvy, which, according to a wag of that day—happily the wretch is not a wag of this—showed that fortune had in store for him but scurvy treatment. Poor Blake had been in early life a candidate for an Oxford fellowship, but lost it from the lowness of his stature, * for in Blake's time very little fellows were not academically recognised. There is no doubt that with his general ability he would have taken a very high degree if he had been only big enough. He was buried at the Protector's expense, in Henry the Seventh's chapel, for Cromwell was a great undertaker, and was very fond of providing his friends with splendid funerals.

** Brodic, Brit. Emp., iv. 317.*

While these things were happening at home, the Protector was fortifying his position abroad, and had persuaded the French to abandon Charles the Second, known to the world in general, and to playgoers in particular, as the "merry monarch." This fugitive scamp—of whom more hereafter—was mean enough to offer to marry one of the Misses Cromwell, a daughter of the usurper, who had the good sense and spirit to turn up his puritanical nose at the idea of such a son-in-law. Orrery, whom Charles consulted with the vague idea that consulting an orrery was in fact consulting the stars, took the message to Cromwell, who replied, haughtily, "I am more than a match for Charles, but Charles is less than a match for my daughter." The Protector had

what he called something better in view for his "gal," who, on the 17th of November, was wedded to Lord Falconbridge. The ceremony was described in the *Morning Post* of the period, which was then called the *Court Gazette*, and a column was devoted to an account of the festivities. We see from facts like these how ready are the declaimers against aristocracy to adopt the ways and even the weaknesses of a class that is ridiculed and abused chiefly by those who would, if they could, belong to it.

The ascendency of the puritan Protector was marked by the grossest corruption that ever prevailed under the most licentious of regal governments. Unlimited bribery of one portion of the people was effected by the unlimited robbery of the other, and thus the dupes were made to pay the knaves who sold themselves and betrayed their fellow-subjects for the sake of Cromwell's aggrandisement.

On the 20th of January, 1658, the Parliament met again, and fraternised with a little batch of peers, amounting to sixty in all, whom Cromwell had created, and who might, indeed—upon our honour, we don't say so for the sake of the pun—be justly called his creatures. Two of the Protector's sons, namely, Richard and Henry, were among the batch of anything but thoroughbreds, that formed the roll of Oliver's peerage. The number, however, included some highly respectable names, among whom we may particularly notice Lord Mulgrave, who took the family name of Phipps, because in the civil wars he would not at one time have given Phippence for his life; Lord John Claypole, whose head was as thick and whose brains were as muddy as his title implies; and a few old military friends of Cromwell. Colonel Pride, who had been a drayman, was also among the

new peers; and the drayman of course offered a fair butt to the royalists, who threw his dray in his face and assailed him with the shafts of ridicule.

Scarcely any of the genuine nobles who had been called to Parliament condescended to come, and the Protector made his appearance before a house almost as poor as some of those in which the farce of legislation is enacted in these days at nearly the close of a very long session. Cromwell was really indisposed, or shammed indisposition on account of the scantiness of the audience, for, after having said a few words, he turned to his Lord Speaker Fiennes, exclaiming, "Fiennes! you know my mind pretty well; so just give it them as strongly as you like, for I'm too tired to talk to them." Fiennes, taking the hint, proceeded to rattle on at very rapid rate, mixing up a quantity of religious quotations and a vast deal of vulgar abuse, in the prevailing style of the period.

The Commons retired to their chamber in a huff; and four days afterwards, receiving a message mentioning the Upper House, refused to recognise the peers except as the "other house,"—for the little Shakspearean fable of the rose, the odour, and the name, was not at that time popular. The Protector, who always sent for the Parliament as he would have sent for his tailor, desired that the legislature should be shown into the banqueting or dining-room, where he advised them not to quarrel, and, producing the public accounts, he impressed upon them that things were very bad in the city. He exhorted them not to increase the panic by any dissensions among themselves, but he could not persuade them to change their note; and he accordingly got out of bed —some say, wrong leg first—very early on the 4th of February, when, calling for his hot water and his Parliament, he dissolved the latter without a

moment's warning. The legislative body had enjoyed a short but not very merry life of fourteen days, when an end was thus put to its too weak existence.

The Protector was now in need of all his protective powers in consequence of the dangers that on all sides threatened him. The republicans were ready, as they generally are, to draw anything, from a sword to a bill; and the army, with its pay in arrear, did nothing but grumble. The royalists were being inspirited by the Marquis of Ormond, who was "up in town," quite *incog.*; and the levellers were, of course, ready to sink to any level, however degraded, in the cause of the first leader who was willing and able to purchase them.

Notwithstanding the gathering storm, Cromwell boldly stuck up the sword of vengeance by his side, as a sort of lightning conductor to turn aside the destruction that threatened him. A pamphlet, called "Killing no Murder," put him to the expense of a steel shirt, the collar of which, by the way, could have required no starch; and he kept himself continually "armed in proof," but we do not know whether he selected an author's proof, which might have been truly impregnable armour, for getting through an author's proof is frequently quite impossible. He carried pistols in his pockets, to be let off when occasion required—a provision of which he never gave his enemies the benefit. Poor Dr. Hunt was cruelly cut off—or, at least, his head was—which amounted to much the same thing; and others were treated with similar severity.

On the Continent the Protector was very successful, and the English serving under Turenne, or, as some have called him, Tureen, poured down upon Dunkirk, which was overwhelmed and taken. Cromwell, however, lived a miserable life at home,

being suspicious of every one about him, and he never dared sleep more than two consecutive nights in the same place—a circumstance that may account for the multiplicity of lodgings we have already alluded to. This continual changing of apartments must have rendered him very liable to get put into damp sheets, and, as hydropathy had not yet been reduced to a system, he caught the ague, instead of profiting by the moisture of the bed-clothes. On the 2nd of September he grew very bad indeed, and, in the presence of four or five of the Council, he named his son Richard to succeed him; but this youth was so complete a failure, that to talk of his succeeding was utterly ridiculous. Oliver Cromwell died between three and four o'clock in the afternoon of the 3rd of September, the day on which he always expected good luck, for it was the anniversary of some of his greatest victories. Death, however, is an enemy not to be overcome, and, in spite of the prestige of success which belonged to the day, the Protector was compelled to yield to the universal conqueror. He died in the fifty-ninth year of his age; and it is a singular coincidence that Nature brewed a tremendous storm—as if in compliment to the brewer—at the very moment of his dissolution.



One, Two, Three, and Under.

Original Size

The character of Cromwell was, as we have already intimated, a species of half-and-half, in which the smaller description One, Two, Three, and finder of beer appeared to preponderate. He had, like a pot of porter, a good head; but to draw a simile from the same refreshing fount, he was rather frothy than substantial in his political qualities. His speeches had the wonderful peculiarity of meaning nothing, and instead of saying a great deal in a few words, he managed to say very little in a great many. * Cromwell wrote almost as obscurely as he spoke, and could do little more than sign his name, for which he used to make the old excuse of the illiterate, that his education had been somewhat neglected; and indeed it seemed to have gone very little beyond those primitive pothooks intended for the hanging up of future more important acquisitions. The Protector's wit was exceedingly coarse, or rather particularly fine, for it was scarcely perceptible. It savoured much of the Scotch humourist, whose fun might be exceedingly good sometimes, if it were not always invisible. His practical jokes wore not particularly happy, and his

smearing the chairs with sweetmeats at Whitehall, to dirty the dresses of the ladies, was a piece of facetiousness worthy of an eccentric scavenger, but highly unbecoming to the chief magistrate, for the time being, of such a country as England.

** The following is an extract from one of the Prot*
speeches, which even Captain Bunsby, the naval ora
"Dombey and Son," might be proud of: "I confess. I
say, I hope, I may be understood in this, for inde
be tender in what I say to such an audience as thi
I would be understood that in this argument I do r
parallel between men of a different mind."
—Original Speech of Oliver Cromwell.

Though Cromwell could scarcely read the characters of caligraphy, he could peruse the characters of men with great acuteness. He was well acquainted with all the variations of human types, and could easily distinguish the capitals from the lower-case. In private life he was playful, though in his public capacity he was severe even to cruelty; and it has hence been prettily remarked, that, though he was a kitten in the bosom of his family, the puss became a tiger in the arena of politics. He never turned his back upon any of his children, except at leap-frog, in which he would often indulge with his sons, who had little of that vaulting ambition for which their parent was conspicuous.



Cromwell playing at Leap-frog with his children.

Original Size

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.
RICHARD CROMWELL.



Original Size

ONSIDERING all things, we have some hesitation in devoting a chapter to this contemptible imbecile; but in taking up the thread of the history, we promise to wind him off in a very few pages.

The ceremony of proclamation was performed in London and Westminster, as well as in every city of the kingdom, and congratulatory addresses poured in upon the new Protector, as they would upon Brown, Jones, Robin-son, or any other piece of scum that the tide of chance might have thrown up to the same position. There was the usual junction of condolence on the death of the parent, and joy at the accession of the son; but both expressions were equally affected and hypocritical. Richard Cromwell was, however, such a mere nonentity, that he could not turn to account the advantages of his position: and when the army promised to stand by him to a man he had nothing to say beyond "Dear me! how very kind of the army!" He had, it is true, been born, as the saying is, with a "silver spoon in his mouth," and the qualities of the spoon had become incorporated with his being.

The soldiers soon began to discover that the brewer's son knew more about barrels of beer than barrels of gunpowder, and that his acquaintance with the musket was limited to the butt end of it. A petition was got up among the troops requesting him to resign; but he replied, that though he was very willing to do anything to oblige, he was sure his people did not wish him to relinquish the command of the army.

Richard had sent, as usual, for the coffers of the State, which have been generally the first object of solicitude to one attaining the post of chief magistrate. Some small change was all that the coffers contained, and he resolved to call a

Parliament in order to replenish them. The legislative assembly met on the 27th of January, 1659, but was very soon torn by factions of every sort, except satisfaction, which there were no symptoms of in any quarter whatever. Fleetwood, the brother-in-law of Richard Cromwell, and Desborough, his uncle-in-law, who had married his aunt, got up a movement against him among the soldiers who resented their want of pay, and avowed their determination not to draw their swords until they had drawn their salaries. Finding there was nothing to be got out of the Parliament, Richard dissolved it, and the old one that Oliver had forcibly ejected had the impudence to resume its sittings. The new Protector beginning to think, like his father, that self-protection was the first duty he had to perform, withdrew to Hampton Court, and sent in his resignation, which was accepted immediately.

The Parliament, though very long of date, was very short of cash, and coolly proposed selling the three royal palaces to ease the pecuniary pressure which the tightness in the city was occasioning. Royalists' plots, however, disturbed the plans of the assembly, whose members quarrelled fiercely with each other, and were terribly bamboozled by Monk, who had a large amount of monkish deception in his character. He wrote letters to cajole Parliament, while he was in treaty with the king; but the former being very short of cash soon decided, whatever doubts he might have entertained as to which was the best investment for his allegiance.

It having become tolerably sure that Charles the Second would be sent for, there was a sudden rush of competitors for the honour or dishonour, as the case may be, of bringing him back to England. Even Fleetwood, the brother-in-law of Richard Cromwell

and the son-in-law of Oliver, was on the point of undertaking the job; but having entered into a sort of tacit agreement with Lambert, to give him a share in any job that he (Fleetwood) might undertake, the latter could not make up his mind to sell himself in the former's absence.

Monk continued to deceive the Parliament with so much success that he was invited by that body to come to London, and accept the situation of keeper of St. James's Park, a post of honour rather than of active duty; for, in those days, "the boys" had not gained such ascendency as to call for activity in the metropolitan beadlery. Monk used his new position for the purpose of promoting the object for the furtherance of which he had in fact sold himself to the king; and his majesty having sent a letter to the Parliament, in which the lords had again mustered very strong, a favourable answer was returned to it.

Charles was voted a sum of £50,000 to pay his expenses home, and the evening was spent in bell-ringing, beer, and bonfires. Royalty rushed up to a premium as exorbitant and unhealthy as the discount to which it had fallen in the days of the Commonwealth; and on the 8th of May, 1660, Charles was proclaimed at the gate of Westminster Hall, amidst loud cries of "Hats off!" "Down in front! Long live the king!" and "Where are you shoving to?"

Richard Cromwell made himself not the least obstacle to any arrangements that might be made for deposing him, and indeed begged the parties concerned would not "consider him" in any alterations that circumstances might require. His chief anxiety was to get a guarantee against the expenses of his father's funeral, for which "poor Richard" feared he was legally responsible. He sneaked eventually out of the kingdom, and making

a call abroad on a foreign prince, who did not know him, was told to his face, in the course of a casual conversation, that "Oliver Cromwell, though a villain and a traitor, was fit to command, but that Richard was a mere poltroon and an idiot." * "What has become of the fellow?" added the prince; upon which Richard suddenly withdrew, and the conversation ended. He eventually returned to England, and taking the name of Clark, died unknown at a little place in Cheshunt.

** Universal Biography, vol. i., "Life of Richard C*
The Prince of Conte is the individual with whom th
conversation was held in which Richard received, u
this true but not flattering character.

We may as well finish off the Cromwells at once, while we are about them, by mentioning that the last known descendant of the family, who died in 1821, was on the roll of attorneys. From the throne of England to the stool in a solicitor's office, is undoubtedly a dreadful drop; and if Oliver Cromwell could have seen the last of his race making out a bill of costs, the Protector would have received a lesson by which he might have profited.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH. ON THE

NATIONAL INDUSTRY AND THE LITERATURE, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CONDITION OP THE PEOPLE.

THAT improvement was not stationary during the period we have just been describing, will be inferred from the fact that, in 1625, Science called a hackney-coach into existence. Though in these days invention would seem to be at a stand if it went no further than the point we have indicated, still the hackney-carriage was a decided advance on the slow coaches of previous centuries. From a print of the period we perceive that the newly-invented vehicles resembled in shape something between a steam locomotive and a covered railway luggage-van, or in other words, exhibited a sort of combination of the 'bus and the boiler. The hackney-coachman did not long enjoy a monopoly, for in 1634 Sir Sanders Duncomb thrust a pair of poles through an old sentry-box, and calling it a sedan, started it as a "turn out" for his own convenience. The arrangement seeming to give satisfaction, he obtained a patent for fourteen in all, and S. D. advertised the careful removal of ladies and gentlemen by means of his new invention.

In the year 1630, London began to exhibit symptoms of outgrowing its strength, and fresh buildings within three miles of the gates were prohibited. So long as the metropolis extended on all sides alike, there could have been nothing to fear, for it would have been as broad as it was long, at any

rate. It is a curious fact that those persons who had money in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not know what to do with it. They had been in the habit of keeping it in the Royal Mint, till Charles the First got into the ugly habit of going down to that establishment, clearing off the whole of the cash it contained, calling it a loan, and never paying it back again. The capitalists next tried the experiment of lodging their cash with their clerks and apprentices, and unfortunately it soon became current coin of the realm, for the clerks and apprentices all ran away with it. "The moneyed men, listening at last," says Anderson, "to these admoney-tory lessons, began to place their cash in the hands of goldsmiths," but these gentlemen used to pick out the heaviest coins and make a profit by the sweating process, so that instead of living by the sweat of their own brows, they lived by the sweating of other people's money. This was the origin of the banking business, which began in, or near, Sweeting's Alley, then called Sweating's Alley, from the practices we have mentioned.

Gardening industry made wonderfully rapid strides during this era, for the peas were well drilled, the cabbages made to stand at ease in the open air, and the turnips to take close order at the commencement of the seventeenth century. Cherries soon after came amongst the English people, with a degree of cherry bounce that the beauty and delicacy of the fruit perhaps warranted. The apple was welcomed with enthusiasm, and Samuel Hartlib, a gardener of the day—week, month or year—was so affected by the flourishing growth of an apple-tree he had planted, that the well-known expression, "Go it, my pippin!" burst from his lips, and has taken its place in popularity with the Eureka of the old philosopher.

The hops also presented themselves as candidates for British favour, and were soon at the top of the poll in all directions.

The woollen manufacturers of England acquired importance at a very early date; but the secret of dyeing the cloth could never be discovered, and every failure only threw a wretched stain upon national ingenuity. At length a Dutchman settled himself, in 1643, at Bow, and announced, by a notice in his bow-window, his intention to get a living by dyeing upon an entirely new principle. Hitherto the English had miserably failed in this branch of art, for when they attempted to master the dye and keep it under their control, it was always sure to come off with flying colours. The Dutchman of Bow had determined to conquer, even in dyeing, and he not only succeeded in producing a single shade, but he made such hits with his shots, that customers might safely stand the hazard of the dye, if they brought their orders to his establishment. He taught the art to the English, the fastness of whose colours had been previously shown in the extreme rapidity of their running.

In 1622. hemp and flax having been introduced ready dressed into this country, the rope manufacture twined itself with the industrial institutions of England. There had been always a prejudice against the use of coal for domestic purposes; but on its value in manufactures being discovered, it acquired a higher character, though its best friends were never able to say that coal after all is not so black as it had been painted. It was extensively employed in iron manufactories, which had greatly advanced; and we have seen an old woodcut of a saw which is one of those very "wise saws" that maybe considered equal to the best of our

"modern instances."

Knowing the danger of playing with edge tools, we forbear to speak of them any longer in a sportive strain, and turn to the state of music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Henry the Eighth himself was a composer, if we are to believe Sir John Hawkins, but we suspect that the monarch's well-known overtures to the Pope may have misled the musical historian. There were several writers of madrigals, a class of production whose name has been ingeniously but ignorantly supposed to have reference to the mad wriggles into which the music throws itself.

Charles the First was an adept in the pleasing science, and pretended to play on the viol, though not without a sad viol-ation of some of the rules of harmony. He was, however, fond of melody, which, like everything else of a cheerful and agreeable nature, received a sad blow from the dull puritanical humbugs who rose into importance at the time of the Commonwealth. These psalm-singing sycophants were so fond of hearing their own melancholy and monotonous voices, that no accompaniments were allowed: and thus, to use the impassioned pun of Smith, * "one of the most disgusting specimens of an organised hypocrisy that the world ever saw was carried on entirely without the use of organs."

The Fine Arts flourished in England under Charles the First, who was a scholar, a man of taste, a gentleman, and, in fact, everything but what he ought to have been—namely, a good sovereign. He employed Vandyke to take off his head, or rather multiply it frequently, as if he felt a foreboding of his eventually losing it. He was also the patron of Inigo Jones, the architect of several public buildings, and of his own fortune.

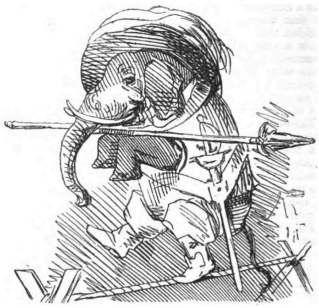
The drama is a subject so exciting to antiquarian speculation, that we are afraid of losing ourselves in the mists of ages by plunging into it. We cannot hope to surpass in sagacity some of those ingenious annotators of the present day, who have had such a keen eye to Gammer Gurton's needle, that they actually trace its existence to so remote a date as some few years before the birth of its author. ** We need not particularise the various dramatic authors who gave lustre to the Elizabethan period, nor shall we fall into the affectation of talking about Master Beaumont, Master Fletcher, Master Jonson, Master Shakspeare, Master Deekes, and Master Hey wood, as if they had been so many precocious young gentlemen or juvenile prodigies of which the present age is somewhat prodigal.

** For further particulars of Smith, see the "Londo Directory."*

*** See Wright—who, by the way, was generally wrong "Historia Histrionica."*

The Long Parliament put down all stage plays, for the miserable mummers of whom that assembly was composed were desirous of having all the acting to themselves, though they made a very poor burlesque of the parts of statesmen and patriots. It has been ingeniously suggested by Mr. Collier, in his History of Dramatic Poetry, that the Puritanical Parliament suppressed the drama and dramatists less on conscientious grounds than from the fear of being made the subject of well-merited satire. The same feeling which would urge a legislature of pickpockets to abolish the police might have actuated the Republicans in their zeal to get rid of that moral

watch which a well regulated state will always keep over cant and villainy.



The Balance of Power.

Original Size

If, however, dramatic performances were scarce during the ascendency of Cromwell and the Puritans, the public—had they known how to appreciate it—would not have been without food for mirth in the very ludicrous exhibitions which the events of the day were perpetually furnishing. The career of Cromwell himself might have suggested an amusing spectacle to those who are in the habit of turning to the ridiculous side of everything. A brewer on the throne, endeavouring to unite republican simplicity with royal state, presents to the imagination a figure almost as grotesque as that of an elephant on the tight-rope—an idea in which there is that rare combination of ponderosity and levity, which Cromwell's conduct on the protectorat elbow, or supreme arm-chair, will be found to have realised. His unwieldy gambols and great preponderance over all below him, were most fatal to that balance of

power which can never be sustained without an equality of pressure and an equality of resistance on all sides.

Our survey of the literature of the seventeenth century would be incomplete if we were to omit to notice the 3rd of November, 1640, as being the date of the earliest English newspaper. It bore the name of the "Diurnal Occurrences; or, Daily Proceedings of Both Houses," but though it professed to give daily news, it was only a weekly periodical. There arose rapidly a provincial press, but its pretensions were slight, and *News from Hull, Truths from York, Warranted Tidings from Ireland*, were the names of some of the chief of these country newspapers. Their leading articles were not much in the style we are accustomed to at the present day; but the ancient order of penny-a-liners seemed to be ever agog for these precocious gooseberries, showers of frogs, and fading reminiscences of oldest inhabitants, that are still the staple of the productions of this humble class of contributors. It is a remarkable coincidence that the circulation of the blood and the circulation of newspapers should both have belonged to this period of our country's history.

Furniture and costume improved wonderfully in this age, and the wealthy became less chary of expense in their chairs, while they began to sleep on down, or, in other words, to feather their nests with great luxuriance. The clothes of the times of the two Charles's were made much too large for the wearers, and may be considered characteristic of the loose habits of the period. The hair was cut short by the Republican party, or Roundheads, in memory of whom the culprits at Clerkenwell and other prisons are cropped exceedingly close, though this is not the only point of resemblance between the modern

rogues and the old regicides.

The condition of the people was not very enviable in the era we have described, and it is a remarkable as well as a most instructive fact, that commonwealth is usually synonymous with common poverty. Wages were invariably low, for a man-servant who could thrash a cornfield and kill a hog, received only fifty shillings per annum. Poverty and knavery, begging and filching, were at their height under the reign of the Puritans; for "Like master, like man" was at all times a proverb that could be thoroughly relied upon.

BOOK VII. THE PERIOD FROM THE RESTORATION OF CHARLES THE SECOND TO THE REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. CHARLES THE SECOND.



Original Size

THOUGH we find Charles the Second at the commencement of this chapter seated comfortably enough upon the English throne, the question "How came he there?"—when we remember the straits and the crookeds through which he passed—very naturally suggests itself. There is an anecdote connected with his escape from Worcester, which we have not given before, because, as it rests chiefly on the authority of the "Merry Monarch" himself, the story is very likely to be dubious. Whether fact or fiction, we may give it a place in the history of his reign, for if the tale is made up, the manufacture is entirely his own, and so far may be considered to

belong to his annals. We shall therefore follow the thread of the king's own narrative, and if the yarn he has spun was of a fabricated fabric, it is to Charles and not to us that the imposture must be attributed.

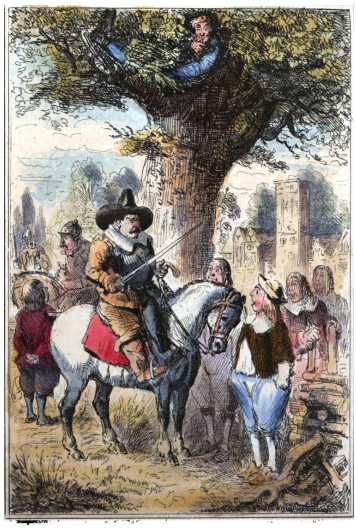
On the battle of Worcester being utterly lost, Charles began to think of saving himself; but his adherents, who had been thoroughly beaten, insisted on sticking to him with rather inconvenient loyalty. Feeling that a small party could run away much faster than a large one, he resolved to give his too faithful friends the slip; and when night came on he succeeded in doing so, leaving his supporters, who would have stuck to him till death, to shift for themselves. Charles, with that scamp Wilmot, afterwards Rochester, and three or four others, got clean off in a very dirty manner. Some advised the king to take shelter among the Scotch; but his majesty, having no desire to be regularly sold, declined putting himself in the power of a people who at that time valued the virtues for exactly what they might bring, and would no doubt have received the king with open arms as an eligible investment to be speedily realised. He determined, therefore, to proceed towards London, and, by the aid of a leathern doublet, grey breeches, and green jerkin, he "made up" very effectually as a stage countryman.

Taking with him a real countryman, one Richard Penderell, as a companion, Charles went into a wood, from the edge of which he saw a troop of horse: but the rain poured down in such torrents that the troop retired, instead of taking shelter in the wood, which was certainly the wisest course they could have adopted. The anecdote is, however, so essentially dramatic, that the soldiers were perfectly in character when they went quite in the opposite direction to that they should have taken, like those

pursuers on the stage who usually overlook the person they are in search of, and who, to every one else, is most conspicuously visible. Charles's position on this occasion resembled, in a minor degree, the situation of the fugitive at the fair, who, pointing to a painted blind representing a tree with a hole cut down the centre of it, expressed his determination to conceal himself in "yonder thicket." Finding accommodation only for his body in the tree's imaginary trunk, his legs of course protruded from the "shady grove," when two assassins in hot pursuit tumbling over the out-hanging heels of the wretched runaway, exclaimed confidentially in the ears of the audience, "By 'ivins, he 'as eluded us!" Such must have been the good fortune of Charles, and the stupid blindness of the troop, when the former sat on the forest's edge, and the latter never noted him.

This incident being over, another soon afterwards ensued of an equally melodramatic character. Charles and Penderell, after travelling two nights on foot, had put up at the house of one of Penderell's brothers; but it was not thought safe to remain in it, and his majesty was recommended to an oak, whose parent stem would afford friendly shelter, while all the junior branches might be thoroughly relied upon. The king having supplied himself with bread, cheese, and beer, which could not have been table beer, for there was no table to put it on—though there were plenty of leaves—made the best of the imperfect accommodation that the tree afforded him. He had no sooner settled on his perch, and made himself a kind of nest in the boughs, than some soldiers entered on the o. p. side, and looked everywhere—except in the right place—for the fugitive monarch. His legs, as usual, were visible enough, but the troopers possibly mistook them for a pair of

stockings hanging up to dry, and they were not even struck by the shoes at the end, that should have awakened them to the value of the booty. The most infantine participators in the game of hide-and-seek, would not have been at fault under circumstances of a similar kind; and there can scarcely be a doubt, that if any urchin had only raised a suggestive cry of "Hot beans and butter!" Charles would have been laid by the heels without a scruple on the part of those who were in search of him.



THE ROYAL OAK.

Original Size

Leaving his majesty's legs to dangle in the air, and allowing credulity to score one for his heels on the cribbage-board of fancy, we proceed to contemplate Charles in a more dignified position on the throne of

England. He arrived at Dover on the 25th of May, with his two little brothers, who had grown to men, but were still called "the boys" by those who remembered them before their exile from the land of their forefathers. Monk received the royal trio, who rode to the hotel in the same hackney-coach with the general, forgetting that there had been a good deal of truly monkish cunning in the conduct of that individual, who being the latest with his service, obtained the favour due to much earlier and older royalists.

The principle of "first come, first served!" was in this instance laid aside, and the rule of "last come served best" was ungratefully adopted. A most unreasonable reaction towards royalty now ensued, and the anxiety to deal mercilessly with the regicides ran into a most sanguinary extreme, surpassing in fury the most bloodthirsty predilections of the fiercest republicans.

Both Houses of Parliament met, and an Act of Indemnity was passed for the benefit of the king's enemies; but, like the old story of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark, most of the persons interested in the Act were excepted from its provisions. Nineteen of the regicides surrendered; and ten more being in custody, formed a batch of twenty-nine to be brought to trial. A commission was issued for the purpose, and on the 9th of October, 1660, the proceedings began before a tribunal of thirty-four, many of whom had been Long Parliament men, masked Presbyterians, or miscellaneous scamps, of quite as revolutionary a turn as some of the prisoners submitted to their judgment. Sir Hardress Waller, who was number one on the list, had prepared a very fine speech in his defence; but looking over the document he made up

his mind that it was rather strong, and could certainly do no good, upon which he pleaded guilty. Harrison and Carew, who came next, made each a very eloquent and enthusiastic harangue, glorying in their respective acts, by which they laid down their lives as an investment for a reversionary interest in the good books of posterity.

Henry Marten, "the wit of the House of Commons," made a most dismal attempt to laugh the matter off, and to joke the prosecution out of court; but his humour, notwithstanding its extreme heaviness, had no weight with his judges. He began by demanding the benefit of the Act of Oblivion, and in a lame *bon mot* claimed to be allowed to forget himself. He was sharply told he must plead guilty or not guilty, but he insisted on the benefit of the Act of Indemnity, saying his name did not appear among the exceptions, and that in fact he had never been an exceptionable character. Irritated by these dismal jokes—so insulting to the understanding of the court—the Solicitor-General ordered the Act to be produced, with the name Henry Marten inserted legibly enough, when "the droll," with a miserable quibble not even amounting to a pun, exclaimed, "My name *is not so*—it is *Harry* Marten." This unmeaning objection being very properly overruled, the "mad wag" endeavoured to stand upon his reputation for mad waggery, and urged that being known as a wit, he had done nothing with a serious intention. He was, however, told that regicide in sport was high treason in earnest, when, after some few further attempts at facetiousness, the "witty Harry Marten" was found guilty, and retired cutting wretched jokes upon the disgusted turnkey.

The court, which, in order to get beforehand with its work, had prepared most of its verdicts before the

trials commenced, had already determined on fixing the act of cutting off the king's head on the shoulders of William Hewlett. Everything went to prove that the common hangman had performed the sanguinary job for £30, but the commissioners had made up their minds, and were unwilling to open the very small parcels for the purpose of looking at the charge by the light of the evidence. Hewlett was condemned, but people beginning to talk of the glaring injustice of the verdict, he was eventually saved from capital punishment. Poor Garland was another of the intended victims, and it may well be said that Garland by his heroism has made himself a wreath of immortality. He would have pleaded guilty to the accusation of having signed the death warrant of Charles, but indignantly repudiated the charge of having insulted the fallen sovereign. "I was a regicide, it is true," exclaimed Garland, "but as for the assertion of my having been base enough to spit in the face of the king, I throw it back in the face of my enemies."

Upon this the Solicitor-General called as a witness a low, needy fellow, named Clench, who swore not only to the spitting by Garland, but to the king having wiped his face immediately afterwards, and from the supplementary lie told by Clench to support the first falsehood, the term Clencher obviously took its origin. Poor Garland was found guilty, of course, but his life was not eventually forfeited. The executions of the regicides were very numerous, and conducted in a spirit of barbarous brutality, that excited a great deal of disgust at the time among all but those who were animated by the desire to retaliate the atrocities that the other side had committed. It is in fact, a very common fault among philanthropists, and others who rush about with a

strong sense of great social wrongs, to commit some other wrongs equally great, or even greater, upon the persons by whom their virtuous indignation may have been excited.

We feel naturally interested in the fate of poor Harry Marten, the "funny man" of the Long Parliament. While in prison under sentence of death, he was visited by some aristocratic friends, who recommended the wit to petition in a jocose strain, but his humour had become exceedingly dreary in his dingy dungeon. He contrived, nevertheless, to serve up one small pun in a lengthy document begging for mercy; and though the Commons did not see the fun of the thing, the Lords good-naturedly took it for granted that, coming from a professed wag, there must be "something in it," and with a patronising "Ha, hal—very clever—amazingly droll!"—the Peers remitted his sentence.

Though Royalty had risen wonderfully in public respect, there was nothing in the conduct of the royal family to render it respectable. The queen-mother, Henrietta Maria, returned to England with an extensive French suite, and ran into debt even over her head and ears, which being very long, may enable us to measure the depths of her extravagance. The utmost dissoluteness prevailed at Court, and the king's brother, the Duke of York, had married—several months later than he should have done—Miss Anne Hyde, the daughter of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon. This consummate old humbug affected to be much pained at the degradation of his prince, through his marriage with Clarendon's own daughter, and the chancellor, affecting to doubt the fact, declared, if it were true, "The woman should go to the Tower and have her head chopped off!" in accordance with an Act of Parliament he would

himself draw up for that purpose. All this unnatural abuse of his own child, instead of earning him the smallest respect, simply rendered him infamous in the minds of all but those who believed he was acting a part, and who regarded him, therefore, as simply contemptible. He is believed to have been secretly engaged in promoting the marriage against which he publicly protested; and the recognition of his daughter as Duchess of York, which soon afterwards took place, was purchased, it is said, by Clarendon's paying the debts of the queen-mother, by, of course, robbing the people.

It is impossible to say much for the magnanimity of the royalist party, whose triumph was signalised by continued acts of mingled ferocity and littleness. A law was passed attainting Oliver Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, who were dragged from their graves in Westminster Abbey, and hanged at Tyburn, on the 30th of January, the day of the death of Charles the First—in celebration of his martyrdom. This was certainly one way of crying quits with the regicides in the game of butchery, and both sides were thus brought to the same degraded level. The royalist resurrectionists having commenced the desecration of the dead did not relinquish their loathsome pursuit until they had ex-humed, as we learn nom Hume, the remains of Cromwell's highly-respectable mother and inoffensive daughter, as well as numerous others who had done nothing in life to render them in death the objects of enmity.

All parties now began to claim the merit of the Restoration in the hope of obtaining a reward, and bills for old arrears of alleged loyalty were sent in to the Government. The Scotch were of course not backward in looking after the profits due, or supposed to be due, on account of any assistance

rendered to Charles in his misfortunes; but the king and his friends having been sold two or three times over by the crafty Caledonians, his majesty thought they had really made their full money out of him. When, therefore, the Marquis of Argyle asked permission to pay his respects, a friendly reply was despatched to bring him up to town; but on his arrival at Whitehall, he had scarcely knocked at the door when he found he was regularly let in, for a guard, tapping him on the shoulder, walked him off as a traitor. He was sent to be tried by his own countrymen; for as some of them would profit by his death, it was considered that making them his judges would be a sure method of getting rid of him. The result realised the estimate formed of the character of the Scotch, who condemned him and hanged him as a matter of *beesness*, because there was a small profit to be got out of the transaction. Poor Argyle had been the very party who had put the crown on the king's head a few years before at Scone; but, "Life," said he, on the scaffold, "is a toss up, and it's heads I lose on this melancholy occasion."

On the 8th of May, 1661, a new Parliament met, which lasted even longer than the long one *par excellence*, and, indeed, the lengths to which it went might alone have entitled it to the epithet bestowed on its Republican predecessor. The Cavaliers had a very large majority in this assembly, and the off-hand manner in which it dealt with the country rendered the words cavalier treatment and bad treatment synonymous. The royal prerogative was the object of nearly all the acts of this assembly; and the rights of monarchy were being continually declared, in the same spirit as the artist who wrote "This is a lion," under his picture, because there would have been room for doubt in the absence of

the epigraph. Thus the frequent assertions of the Parliament that the king was paramount, and indeed absolute, were tolerably good evidence of the fact that the position is not altogether incontrovertible.

After a brief session, in which the Cavaliers helped themselves to £60,000, by way of compensation-money, and voted a supply to the king, the Parliament adjourned from the 30th of July till the 28th of November, by which time Charles and his minister, Clarendon, had got up a little mare's nest of a pretended conspiracy, to give a new impetus to the prevailing spirit of inconsiderate loyalty. The servile Commons called at once for a few supplementary executions, and with this view it was resolved to look through the back numbers, or stock remaining on hand, of the regicides. Lord Monson, Sir Henry Mild-may, and Sir Robert Wallop, were "unearthed" from the obscurity into which they had crept, and were dragged on sledges, with ropes round their necks, to Tyburn and back again. Poor Wallop's name was cruelly made suggestive of ruffianly attacks, which, by turning the first person present—Wallop—into the participle in ing, the reader will at once mentally realise.

The subserviency of the Parliament to Charles was absolutely sickening, and it is a fact worthy of remark, that the epithet "most religious," applied to the sovereign in portions of the Church service, was bestowed originally upon this profane and immoral reprobate. His necessities, or rather his extravagances, were supplied lavishly by Parliament, who voted him a hearth-tax for every fire-place, or in other words, gave him a draft upon every chimney. Notwithstanding the odious domestic character of Charles, every match-making old mother of royalty abroad endeavoured to get off some daughter by

offering her as a wife to the heartless libertine. "He put himself up to auction," says a brother historian, * and we may add that it is much to be regretted he was not knocked down according to his merits. Portugal having bid the Princess Catherine, with half a million sterling, and other contingent advantages, the bargain was struck, and a ship sent over for herself and her dowry.

** Mr. McFarlane's Pictorial History of England, vo*

The royal marriage had recently taken place, when that unhappy weathercock, Sir Harry Vane, was brought to trial for having compassed the death of Charles the Second, merely by accepting employment under the Republican Government. Relying on the indemnity, Vane had gone to live at Hampstead, when he found there was something in the wind which gave him an unfavourable turn; but it was too late for him to escape, and he was accordingly sent to the Tower.

After the fashion of the period, poor Vane was condemned in the opinion of his judges before he was tried, and he was not even allowed to make a last dying speech; for the sheriff snatched the document from which he was reading, drove away the reporters who were taking notes, and ordered the drums to strike up a *rataplan*, which overwhelmed the voice of the gallant soldier.

The exuberant loyalty of the people towards Charles received a severe check, when, looking round for something to sell, in order to support his extravagant habits, he determined to throw Dunkirk into the market. Spain, Holland, and France were all in the field as customers for the lot, which was eventually made over to the last-named power for a

few thousands, payable within three years by bills, which were discounted at an alarming sacrifice.

Numerous Acts of oppression were passed by Charles, assisted by his most servile Parliament; and among them, the Conventicle Act, which forbade the Nonconformists from assembling anywhere but in the established churches, under the penalty of transportation or long imprisonment. Every loft, attic, or barn, where the Dissenters had got together for psalm-singing purposes, was searched, and the occupants were dragged away to the nearest prison.

The year 1665 was dreadfully signalised by the plague of London, from which the king and Court fled to Oxford, as if they were aware that, by themselves at all events, the awful visitation was thoroughly merited. While, however, the profligate king and his dissolute companions escaped the physical consequences of a plague, the abandoned crew carried with them wherever they went the malaria of a moral pestilence. During the early part of 1666, the fever in the metropolis subsided, and Charles with his courtiers came sneaking back to town, where they resumed their old habits as the "fast men" of the period.

On the 2nd of September, in the same year, about the middle of the night, some smoke issued from a baker's house near London Bridge; but the watchman on duty, being asleep, as a matter of course, took no notice of the incident. The fire continued its progress unchecked, for the people instead of trying to put it out, which they might have done at first, pumps as they were, began to speculate on the subject of its origin. For some time it was reported that Harry Marten, "the wit of the House of Commons," as he was, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, called, had set the Thames on fire by some brilliant flashes, and

the ignition of the river had, it was alleged, communicated itself to London Bridge, and thence to the shop of the baker. Others declared the French had done the mischief, and instead of arresting the flames, the mob began arresting all the foreigners.

The usual casualties contributed to heighten the destructive effect of the fire, for the parish engine had, in the hurry of the moment, come out in the middle of the night without its hose, and the New River had been smoking its pipe or soldering it for the purposes of repair on the previous day, and neither of these aids to anti-combus-tion was available. Poor Clarendon, the Chancellor, who had got the reputation of being a great moral engine, was disturbed in his sleep by some mischievous boys, who, with a cry of "Fire! fire!" called upon the great moral engine to come and spout away upon the burning city.

The devouring element continued its tremendous supper without interruption, and there was, unfortunately, considerable difficulty in administering anything to drink to allay the burning heat which was rapidly consuming the whole metropolis. The most furious conflagration will wear itself out in time, and the fire of London, after giving the inhabitants several "Nichts wi' Burns," brought its own progress to a conclusion. It is gratifying to be enabled to state that, even in the seventeenth century, the English were remarkable for their charity, and the calamities that fell upon the metropolis—particularly the fire—stirred up the public benevolence to the fullest extent, and inspired all classes with a warmth of feeling that was quite appropriate.

Charles having got all he could out of the people, for the purposes of war, thought he might as well be

paid on both sides, and began to think of selling peace to his enemies. He entered into negotiations with the Dutch, but before they had come to terms, he commenced cutting down the expenses by selling the furniture of his fleets to the dealers in marine stores, and dismissing his soldiers, in order to put their pay into his own pocket. He was properly served for his selfish parsimony by De Buyter, the Dutch admiral, who, hearing that Charles was doing everything upon a low and paltry scale, dashed at the Medway, surprised Sheerness, and sacked not only the place, but several cargoes of coal that were lying there. Upon the old English principle of guarding the stable door after the furtive removal of the horse, Charles prepared to collect a force to guard his country against the injury it had already experienced. Twelve thousand men were enrolled; but during the process of enrolment, the enemy had got safely off, and when the soldiers were assembled, it occurred suddenly to the king that he had no means of paying them. As the Parliament seemed quite unwilling to take this little responsibility off his hands, the twelve thousand men were disbanded, all of them grumbling furiously at having been made fools of by the bankrupt monarch. Peace was concluded with De Ruyter just as if nothing had happened; and though the English did not obtain all they asked, they got the colony of New York, which was destined to give them so much trouble at a far distant period.

The people were by no means satisfied with the terms of the treaty, and as national ill-humour must always have a victim of some kind, poor old Clarendon, the Chancellor, was pounced upon. The Nonconformists hated him because he was a high churchman; the high church party hated him because

he wasn't; while the papists hated him, they didn't exactly know why; and the courtiers hated him because they had got a large balance of general animosity on hand, which they were determined to expend upon somebody. Clarendon, in fact, was the grand centre in which all the detestation of the country appeared to meet, or he might be more appropriately called the bull's-eye of the target towards which the shafts of public malignity were directed. Clarendon had been a faithful servant to Charles, but the monarch's stock of gratitude had always been very small, and what little he once possessed he had paid away long ago, to less worthy objects. He accordingly sent to the Chancellor for the Great Seal, but Clarendon, pleading gout for not immediately leaving home, promised that when he could get out he would call and leave the official emblem at the palace. Charles replied, that as to Clarendon's postponing his resignation till he could get out, he must get out at once, if he wished to avoid an ejection of a not very agreeable character. Urged by this formidable message, he took Whitehall in his way during a morning's walk, and having seen the king, made a desperate but useless struggle to retain the seal, which he was forced to surrender. His misfortunes did not end here, for the Commons impeached him; and Clarendon, as if owning the not very soft impeachment, absconded to France, where he ended his days in exile.

A change of ministry ensued on the downfall of Clarendon, and a Government was formed which gave rise to almost the only constitutional pun which we find recorded in history. The cabinet received the name of the Cabal, from the five initial letters of the names of the quintette to whom public affairs were intrusted. This great national acrostic deserves better

treatment than it has hitherto received at the hands of the historians; and taking down our rhyming dictionary from the cupboard in which it had been shelved, we proceed to invest the political *jeu d'esprit* with the dignity of poetry.

C was a Clifford, the Treasury's chief;

A was an Arlington, brilliant and brief;

B was a Buckingham—horrible scamp;

A was an Ashley, of similar stamp;

L was a Lauderdale, Buckingham's pal.

Now take their initials to form a Cabal.

These five individuals looked upon politics as a trade, and principles as the necessary capital, which must be tinned over and over again in order to realise extraordinary profits. They were all of them out-pensioners on the bounty of France, and they soon persuaded Charles that it was better to receive a fixed salary from abroad, than trust for his supplies to the caprice of a Parliament. The king, therefore, intrigued with several States at the same moment, and was taking money from two or three different Governments, on the strength of treaties with each, some of which he all the while intended to violate. He nevertheless did not disdain the money of his own people, and extracted a sum of £310,000 from the public pocket, in the shape of a supply from Parliament.

The domestic proceedings of the king were always of the most disreputable kind, and he had lately taken up with one Mary or Molly Davies, a jig

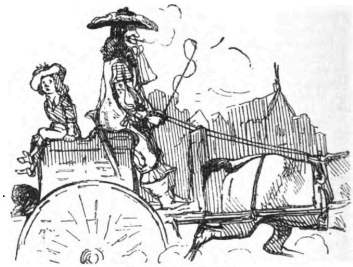
dancer, who pretended to come of a very ancient family in Moldavia. This wretched little ballet-girl was introduced at Court by the king, who was positively ambitious of being thought rather "fast," an epithet which is generally bestowed on loose characters. He had also formed an intimacy with Eleanor, or Nell Gwynne, originally a vendor of "oranges, apples, nuts, and pears," but subsequently an actress; and it was said at the time—which is some excuse perhaps for our saying it again—that Eleanor sounded the knell of older favourites. Lady Castlemaine, who went by the name of "the lady," was cut by the king in favour of the fruit girl and the figurante.

Notwithstanding the rivalry to which "the lady" was exposed, her influence over the mind of Charles —if we may be allowed the allegory—was still very considerable; and in the year 1670, which was very soon after Miss M. Davies had danced herself into the good graces of the king, he conferred the title of Duchess of Cleveland on Lady Castlemaine. As many of our aristocratic families are fond of tracing their origin to its very remotest source, we shall perhaps be thanked for assisting some of them in the search to find the root of their nobility. We, however, decline the, to us, wholly uninteresting task, for we are quite content to take our peerage as it comes, and estimate its members for their personal worth, without reference to their ancestors. We certainly should not value the vinegar in our cruet any the more if we knew it comprised within it a dissolved pearl, nor should we treasure a lump of charcoal on account of its supposed relationship to some late lamented diamond.

With our accustomed fairness, we on the other hand have no wish to throw a degraded and

abandoned ancestry into the faces of those who do not presume upon birth, but are decently thankful for its worldly advantages. It is only when we find rank turning up its nose at all inferior stations that we feel delight in seizing the offending snout, and driving home the iron ring, to show a connection between the proboscis of pride and the humbler materials of humanity.

CHAPTER THE SECOND. CHARLES THE SECOND (CONTINUED).



Charles driving the Mail.

Original Size

CHARLES opened Parliament in person, on the 14th of February, 1670; and, in imitation of Louis the Fourteenth, introduced some soldiers into the procession, which had hitherto, in England, been limited to the boys, the beef-eaters, and the blackguards. The speech from the throne had one advantage over those of our own day, for it was perfectly intelligible, inasmuch as it told the Commons in very plain terms that Charles "must have cash"—a necessity he shared with the bankrupt linendrapers and the cheap crockery dealers of a much later era. Taxation was therefore the order of the day, and after putting a tax on everything in the shape of property or income, it was proposed to attempt the forcing of a sanguineous extract from stone, by putting a tax on actors' salaries. This, however, was so preposterous an idea that it was not followed up; for unless the poor players had been allowed to pay the impost in gallery checks leaden damps, and the other rubbish that forms the currency of the stage, the taxes received from the dramatic fraternity would have given the collectors a sinecure. Though enough money to pay off the National Debt is frequently distributed in a single scene by a stage philanthropist, or left by an old uncle in the course of "a tag" to a farce, there would be little prospect of the business of the country being carried on if the supplies were contingent on such resources as those which the actors dispose of with the most lavish generosity.

The early part of the session was signalised by a frightful example that was made of Sir John Coventry, who had ventured upon a joke—an undertaking at all times perilous, and frequently

entailing upon the manufacturer the most alarming consequences. Sir John endeavoured to be witty on the subject of a tax, but the joke, which is happily lost in the mist of ages, was of so wretched a description that a conspiracy was actually formed for the purpose of bringing the perpetrator to punishment. The joke had reference to a private matter into which it was thought Coventry had no right to poke his nose, and this being the offending feature, was severely handled by his assailants, who took hold of it as a prominent point, and savagely maltreated it. This was a specimen of the practical joking adopted by the "fast men" of the time of Charles the Second, but the king was obliged to affect disapprobation of such an act, and a law against cutting and maiming was immediately passed, to protect all future noses from the fate that had placed Coventry's nose in the hands of those with whom he had fallen into bad odour.

In the same year the notorious Colonel Blood provided matter for the penny-a-liner of his own day, and the historian of ours, by two or three crimes of a very audacious character. One of these was to waylay the Duke of Ormond as he was returning from a dinner-party in the city, and was, from that very circumstance, most unlikely to be in a fit state to defend himself. His grace was placed upon a horse, and carried towards Tyburn, but his coachman having undertaken to overtake Blood, soon came up, to the consternation of the latter, who could not understand what the former was driving at. Blood, finding the coachman had the whip hand of him, oozed quietly away, but being incapable of keeping out of mischief, he was soon detected in an attempt to steal the Crown jewels from the Tower. This act of crowning audacity, as the merry monarch

lugubriously termed it, induced Charles to wish to "regale himself," as he said, "with the sight of a fellow who could be bold enough to attempt to steal the *regalia*." The monarch, who had a sort of sympathy with blackguardism of every description, was mightily taken with Blood, whose bluntness made him pass for a very sharp blade, and the ruffian was not only allowed to go at large, but received grants of land without the smallest ground for such a mark of royal favour.

Charles and his people did not go on together in a spirit of mutual confidence, for from a sort of instinctive appreciation of his own demerits, he was afraid to trust his subjects, while they reciprocated that distrust, from a due sense of the king's worthlessness. He had therefore entered into some foreign alliances, of which he was fearful they would disapprove, and he had accordingly prorogued the Parliament, in the cowardly spirit of a man who, having some bills he cannot meet, declines meeting his creditors. Supplies were, however, necessary, and these he secured by going down to the Exchequer, which he robbed of every farthing deposited there by the merchants, who had been in the habit of leaving their loose cash in the hands of the Government, at a handsome rate of interest. When remonstrated with on the subject of this disgraceful robbery, he defended himself on the *aide-toi* principle, declaring we were always told to help ourselves, and that he had accordingly helped himself to all he could lay his hands upon.

Being now in league with France, England waged war upon Holland, but the Dutch metal of that country soon displayed itself. The nation found in William, Prince of Orange, a leader who did not give exactly the quarter implied in his name, but was

merciful as far as circumstances would permit to all his enemies. He expected sympathy from the English Parliament, which Charles was afraid to call until he found himself without a penny in his pocket, just like the acknowledged scamp of domestic life, as represented in the British Drama. The impossibility of proceeding without supplies urged the king to take the dreaded step, and the writs for summoning the Commons should have been couched in the old popular form, commencing, "Dilly, dilly, come and be killed," for the Commons were only called together to be victimised. It is a beautiful fact in natural history, that even the donkey will kick when his patience is too sorely tried; and the Commons, who had been wretchedly subservient during Charles the Second's reign, began at last to show symptoms of opposition under the insults they experienced. They were angry at the war with Holland, and threatened to impeach Buckingham; but Charles, comforting his favourite with the exclamation, "Don't be alarmed, my Buck!" took the utmost pains to screen him. A negotiation was commenced for a peace with Holland, but this was after all nothing better than a Holland blind, for Charles's predilection for a French alliance was still perceptible. This occasioned much dissatisfaction, and the people, being in the habit of frequenting coffee-houses, talked about the matter over their cups, and were very saucy over their saucers, which induced Charles to order the closing of all those places where temperate refreshment was obtainable. Thousands to whom coffee and bread and butter formed a daily, and in many cases an only meal, were horrified at this arrangement; while many who, not having a steak in the country, got a chop in town, were disgusted beyond measure at the order, which

extended to taverns as well as to tea and coffee shops. A mandate which would have dashed the muffin from the mouth of moderation, and turned all the tea into another channel, was certain not to be obeyed, and the doors of the marts for Mocha in your own mugs—a term synonymous with mouths—continued open as usual.

Urged by the remonstrances and clamour of the people, Charles entered into an alliance with William, Prince of Orange, who married the Princess Mary, the eldest daughter of James, the young lady being used, like so much of the cement distinguished as "Poo-Loo's," for the purpose of mending the breakages that had occurred on both sides. William was as deep as Charles, and soon began to pooh! pooh! the idea of having cemented, *à la* Poo-Loo, a rupture of such long standing, and he positively refused to fall into Charles's projects.

The state of Scotland was not more satisfactory than that of England at this time, for the Covenanters were striving vigorously against the constituted authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical. Lauderdale, who represented the king, enrolled twenty thousand militiamen; but had he enrolled, or rolled up in old coats, as many scarecrows, they would have been quite as serviceable as the new soldiery.

Charles is informed of a plot against his precious life.

The recent regicide having caused a reaction in favour of royalty, it became a common trick with the king's party to get up a report of the intended assassination of Charles the Second, whenever the stock of popularity was running rather short, and the people seemed to be getting dissatisfied with the Government.



Charles is informed of a plot against his precious life.

Original Size

In the absence of real objects of suspicion, there is never any difficulty among Englishmen in drawing upon their inventive resources for materials to make a panic, whether monetary, political, or otherwise; and about the year 1670 rumour was very busy in manufacturing all sorts of plots against the life of the sovereign. On the morning of the 13th of August, which happened to be one of the dog days, Charles was walking with his dogs in the park, when Kirby, the chemist—a highly respectable man, but an egregious blockhead—drew to the monarch's side, and whispered in the royal ear, "Keep within the company; your enemies have a design upon your life, and you may be shot in this very walk." Charles, who was a little flurried, desired to know the meaning of this warning, when Kirby the chemist offered to produce one Doctor Tongue, a weak-minded and credulous old parson, who said he had heard that two fellows, named Grove and Pickering, were making arrangements for smashing Charles on the

very first opportunity. This tongue was so exceedingly slippery that he could not be believed; but to keep himself out of a pickle, he brought a pile of papers, containing a copious account of the alleged conspiracy. He alleged that he had found them pushed under his door; but we cannot very easily believe that any conspirators would have been so foolish as to go about, dropping promiscuously into letter-boxes, or thrusting under street doors, the proofs of their designs on the sovereign.



T. Oates, Esq.

Original Size

Upon further inquiry being prosecuted, it turned out that a low fellow, named Titus Oates, was at the bottom of this plot, to raise the apprehensions of the public. Oates was a man of straw, the son of an anabaptist preacher; and our antiquarian recollections have reminded us, that from the extraordinary propensity of Oates to deceive by false representations, the application of the term "chaff" to stories at variance with fact, most likely owes its origin. Happy had it been for many in those days, if

Oates had been so dealt with, that the chaff had been all thrashed out of him. The fellow is described by a writer of the period, as "a low man of an ill cut and very short neck," with a mouth in the middle of his face; "whereas," says the old biographer, "the nose should always form the scenter."

"If you had put a compass between his lips," continues the quaint chronicler we quote, "you might have swept his nose, forehead, and chin within the same diameter." This places the nasal organ in a high, but certainly not a very proud position, bringing it nearly flush with the eyes, and making it a sort of inverted comma on the summit of that index which the face is said to afford to the human character.

The stories got up by Oates were of the most elaborately absurd description, betraying an equal ignorance of grammar, geography, and every other branch of information, polite or otherwise. He contradicted himself over and over again, but this only rendered his story the more marvellous, and as the lower orders of English were always fond of the most extravagant fictions, the terrific tales of Oates were not too absurd to be swallowed. He became the most successful political novelist ever known, and received a pension of £1,200 a year, besides lodgings in Whitehall, by way of recognition for his services in contributing to the amusement of the people, by frightening them out of their propriety.

The success of Oates induced a number of imitators, each of whom contrived to discover a plot to murder the king, with a complete set of written documents, to prove the existence of the foul conspiracy. One of these speculators on royal and public credulity was a man named William Bedloe, a fellow who, having failed as a thief, and been

detected as a cheat, attempted to repair his fortunes by turning patriot. With the usual injudicious energy of mere imitation, he went much further than even Oates himself in the audacity of his statements. These two miscreants between them sent many innocent people to the scaffold, for if Oates only hinted his suspicion of a plot, Bealoe was at hand to swear to the persons involved in it. As surely as Oates declared his knowledge of some intended assassination, Bedloe would come forward to indicate not only the assassins themselves, but to point to the very weapons they would have used, when, if it was replied they did not belong to the parties against whom the charge was made, he would not scruple to swear that the instruments would have been purchased on the next day for the deadly purpose. All the rules of evidence were outraged without the slightest remorse, and poor Starkie * would have gone stark, staring mad, could he have witnessed the flagrant violations of those principles which he has expounded with so much ability.

** Starkie and Phillips are, at this day, the two acknowledged authorities on the Law of Evidence.*

The Parliament which sat during these proceedings, was in existence for seventeen years, and has gained, or rather has deserved, an undying reputation by the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act. This glorious statute prohibited the sending of anyone to prison beyond the sea, and allowed anyone in jail to insist on being carried before a judge to inquire the cause of his detention. A troublesome captive might therefore, by pretending never to be satisfied with the explanation of the

court, keep running perpetually backwards and forwards to ascertain the reason of his captivity. The Oates conspiracy had not yet undergone the winnowing which the breath of public opinion—universally right, in the long run—was sure at one time or another to bestow, when a new affair, called the Meal-Tub Plot, burst on the attention of the community. A fellow of the name of Dangerfield affected to have discovered a new field of danger in an alleged design to set up a new form of government. This reprobate had been in the pillory, where it is believed the quantity of eggs that met his eye gave him the notion of hatching a plot, and he obtained the assistance of one Cellier, a midwife, to bring the project into existence. There was something very melodramatic in the mode of getting up accusations of treason in the days of Dangerfield, for it was only necessary to drop some seditious papers in a man's house, or stuff the prospectus of a revolution into his pocket, in order to make him responsible for all the consequences of a crime he had perhaps never dreamed about. Colonel Mansel was the intended victim in the Dangerfield affair; and some excise officers who had been sent to his lodgings under the pretence of being ordered to search for contraband goods, found the heads of a conspiracy cut and dried, crammed in among his bed-clothes. The colonel succeeded in showing that he had nothing to do with the transaction, and declared that, "as he had made his bed, so was he content to lie upon it." His words carried conviction home to the minds of all, and Dangerfield was obliged to admit the imposture he had practised; but he confessed another conspiracy, the particulars of which were found regularly written out and deposited in a meal-tub in the house of Cellier, the

midwife.



Noble Lord.—"I believe I'm engaged to your Ladyship for the next dance."

Original Size

It is evident from numerous instances, that conspirators in those days were very apt to carry their designs no further than committing them to paper, and carefully depositing in some place or other the records of their crime, so that in case of detection the evidence against themselves would be complete and irresistible. Thus had the plotters with whom Dangerfield had been acting in concert, put away in a meal-tub the evidence of their intended proceedings, for no other purpose which we can perceive than the ultimate finding of the documents, and the furtherance of the ends of justice in the true poetical fashion. Lady Powis was implicated in this affair, and was sent to the Tower; but the Grand Jury ignored the bill against her, while Cellier, the midwife, who had aided in the miserable abortion, was tried and acquitted at the Old Bailey.

The rumour, or the reality of conspiracies against the royal family, did not prevent Charles from throwing himself into the pleasures, or rather the dissipations for which his Court was remarkable. Though political liberty was exceedingly scarce during this reign, he did not discourage the taking of liberties in private life, among those who formed the society by which he was surrounded. The palace was one continued scene of that degrading excitement which passes sometimes by the name of gaiety, and nearly every evening was devoted to that sort of entertainment which is sought by the snobs and shop-boys of our own day in the casinos and masked balls. The "fast" mania, which thrusts at this moment the penny cheroot between the lips of infancy, drags the clerk from the desk to the dancing rooms, and perhaps urges his felonious hand to his master's till, had in the time of Charles the Second corrupted the whole nation, from the highest to the lowest, so that even the best society—and bad indeed was the best—bore the impress of the example that was furnished by the king himself. The palace balls were accordingly conducted in a manner that would disgrace the humblest of modern hops, and in these days deprive of its licence any place of public entertainment where such behaviour would be permitted by the conductors of the establishment.



Evening Party_Time of Charles II

Original Size

CHAPTER THE THIRD. CHARLES THE SECOND (CONTINUED).

THE Duke of York, the king's brother, being an acknowledged Papist, the people began to look out for a Protestant successor, and turned their eyes upon young Monmouth, a natural son of Charles, who was almost a natural in more respects than one, for his mental capacity was more—or less—than dubious. He was, indeed, a good-looking idiot, and nothing more; but, coming after such a king as Charles, the nation might have been satisfied with him; and, to oblige York, the fellow was formally

declared illegitimate. The prosecution of the Catholics was carried on with unabated animosity; and several, among whom was the aged Lord Stafford, were put to death, under the pretence of advancing the cause of "peace and goodness."

The particulars of the sacrifice of Stafford afford such a faithful sample of the mode in which justice was administered in the reign of Charles the Second, that, converting ourselves into "our own reporter," we give a brief sketch of the trial. The defendant in the action, which was in the nature of an impeachment, was accused of high treason, and the three witnesses against him were Oates, Dug-dale, and Turberville, three scamps who made a regular business—and a very profitable one—of giving false evidence. Oates swore he had seen somebody deliver a document signed by somebody else, appointing Stafford paymaster to some army, which at some time or other was going to be got together somehow, somewhere, for the purpose of doing something against the Government, and in favour of the Catholics. Dugdale swore that the accused had engaged him, Dugdale, to murder the king at so much a week, with the offer of a saintdom in the next year's almanack. Turberville swore ditto to Dugdale, and though Stafford was able to disprove their evidence in many very important points, the trio of perjurers had gone so boldly to work that there was a large balance of accusation remaining over that could not be upset, in consequence of the unfortunate impossibility of proving a negative.

Stafford succeeded in damaging the credit of the witnesses, but as they came forward professedly in the character of hard swearers, who, so as they got the prisoners executed, were indifferent about being believed, the attack on their reputations affected

them very little. The unhappy prisoner was so taken aback by the effrontery of his accusers, that he hardly gave himself a fair chance in his defence, which consisted chiefly of ejaculations expressive of wonder at the excessive impudence and audacity of the witnesses. Such exclamations as "Well, I'm sure! what next?" though natural enough under the circumstances, did not make up, when all put together, a very eloquent speech for the defence, and after a trial of six days' duration, the Peers, by a majority of twenty-four, found poor Stafford guilty.

Sentence of death was passed upon him, but the more ignominious portion of the punishment having been remitted by the king's order, the two sheriffs were seized with a most sanguinary fit of system, and objected to the omission of hanging and quartering, because, as they said, the leaving out of these barbarities would be altogether irregular. In order to satisfy the scruples of these very punctilious gentlemen, the Peers pronounced them "over nice," and the Commons passed a resolution of indemnity, by which the sheriffs were made aware that they would not be considered to have "scamped" their work, if they merely cut off Stafford's head without proceeding to the more artistical details of butchery.

Stafford died nobly, and the fickle populace, who had howled for his condemnation, began sighing and grieving at his fate; but as all this sympathy was almost in the nature of a *post obit*, it was of little or no value to the nobleman on whose behalf it was contributed. The executioner himself turned tender-hearted at the last moment, and twice raised the fatal axe, but a coarse brute near him on the scaffold—perhaps one of the thwarted sheriffs—desired the headsman not to make two bites at a cherry, and the blow was forthwith administered.

These excesses of the Parliament caused even the dissolute Charles to *try*, the effect of dissolution; but there was no going on for any length of time without a House of Commons to vote the supplies; and the king, thinking to withdraw the legislature from the influence of London mobs, appointed the next to be held at Oxford. This a arrangement gave great dissatisfaction to the opposition, and both parties came as if prepared for a battle, the speakers on each side being, no doubt, abundantly supplied with the leaden ammunition that is customarily used for debating purposes. It was during the party bickerings prevailing about this time, that the definitions, since so famous—and sometimes so infamous—of Whig and Tory, were first hit upon. The former was given to the popular party, merely because it had been given to some other popular party, in some other place, at some previous time, and the latter was given to the courtiers, because some Popish banditti in Ireland had been once called Tories; * but why they had been, or why, if they had been, the courtiers of Charles the Second's time need have been, are points that the reader's ingenuity must serve him to elucidate.

** Somebody, who was of course a nobody, says the w*
is derived from Torrco, to roost, because the Tori
always clever at roasting their antagonists.

The king had usually been civil enough to his Parliaments, but on the occasion of the assembly at Oxford he determined to speak his mind, and his speech, being a reflection of his mind, was of course very rambling and irregular. He complained of the last Parliament having been refractory, and expressed a hope that the "present company" would

know how to behave themselves. He disavowed all idea of acting in an arbitrary manner himself, but he was thoroughly determined not to be "put upon" by any one else; and so now they knew what he meant, and he trusted that no misunderstanding would arise to mar their efforts for the public benefit. The Commons listened to all this with a few mental "Oh, indeed's!" "Dear me's!" "No! 'Pon your honour's!" and "You don't say so's!" but they were not in the least over-awed, and they set to work exactly in the old way to choose the same Speaker and adopt the same measures as the last Parliament, of which many of them had been members.

The new Parliament was of course found by Charles to be no better than any of its predecessors, and when it was a week old he jumped into a sedan chair, had the crown put under the seat, and the sceptre slung across the back, when, in reply to the chairman's inquiry, "Where to, your honour?" the sovereign with a dignified voice, directed that he might be run down to the place where Parliament was sitting. This was the morning of the 28th of March, and Charles, bursting into the hall where the Lords had met, dissolved the fifth and the last of his Parliaments.

This proceeding, which, in the days of a monarchy's decline, would have been exclaimed against as highly unconstitutional, was hailed as a piece of vigour at a time when royalty, having been recently maltreated, united in its favour the general sympathies. Charles, finding that courage was likely to tell, became very liberal of its exercise, and began to abuse the opponents of his policy with more than common energy. "There is nothing like taking the bull by the horns," Charles would say to his intimate friends, "and John Bull especially should be taken by

the horns, to prevent his making unpleasant use of them."

Shortly after the dissolution, Charles brought out for general perusal a justification of the course he had thought proper to pursue; for, like many other people in the world, he first took a step, and then began to look for the reasons of his having taken it. The opposition brought out a reply, written by Messrs. Somers, Sydney, and Jones, but it did not sell, and as these gentlemen could not afford to give it away, it had very little influence. Charles managed to get a number of addresses presented to him, congratulating him on his deliverance from the republicans, but the Lord Mayor and Common Council having come down to Windsor with an address of a different kind, were told that the king was not at home, but they had better go to Hampton Court. On their arriving at the latter address there was a great deal of whispering among the royal servants, who would give no other information than the words "Yes, yes; it's all right!" At length, upon a signal from above, a domestic exclaimed, "Now, then, gentlemen, you may walk up;" and on going into a room on the first floor, they found the Lord Chancellor sitting there, looking as black as thunder. His lordship, putting on a voice to match his countenance, began asking them how they dared to come with anything like a remonstrance to their sovereign; and the Lord Mayor, with the Common Council, slinking timidly out of the room, made the best of their way back to the point they had started from.

A few more plots of an insignificant character were got up against the Government, but met with no success; and the Bye-House conspiracy, so called perhaps from the wry faces the parties put on when

they were found out, stands out from among the rest, which have been long ago buried under their own insignificance. Some have suggested that the Bye-House plot was a name invented as a kind of sequel to the notion of Oates, and the conspiracy of the Meal-Tub; but the hypothesis is far too trifling for us to dwell upon. As it has taken a position of some importance in history, we must furnish a few particulars of this Bye-House plot, which in the old nursery song, * taking for its theme the domestic arrangements of royalty, seems to have had a slight foreshadowing.

** "Sing a song of sixpence,*
A pocket full of rye."

On the 12th of June, 1683, one Josiah Keyling, who had formerly been a red-hot Whig, and was by trade a salter, was seized with the infamous idea of applying his skill in business to the affairs of his country, which he resolved to put, if he could, into a precious pickle. He went to Lord Dartmouth, for the purpose of revealing a conspiracy that had been formed to take away the king's life; and he declared one Burton, a decayed cheesemonger, Thompson, a carver, who had been trying to carve his own fortunes in vain, and Barber, an instrument-maker, as his accomplices in the intended act of regicide. They were all to have gone down to the house of one Bumbold, a maltster, at a place called the Bye, where they were to have taken a chop, and cut off the king and his brother on their return from Newmarket. They were to have purchased blunderbusses, but, perhaps by some blunder, missing the 'bus, the London conspirators never left town, and did not arrive at the "little place" of Bumbold the maltster.

The disclosures made by Keyling included, at first, a few names only; but, as a brother historian * has well and playfully suggested, "he subsequently went into a regular *crescendo* movement," and indulged in an *ad libitum*, introducing several new accompaniments to the strain he had originally adopted, besides adding new circumstances and dragging in new persons into his accusation, without the slightest regard to harmony of detail. He at length went off into a *largo* of such wide and unmeasured scope, that he included William Lord Russell in the charges made, and his lordship was committed to the Tower.

** Macfarlane's Cabinet History of England, vol. xi 142.*

Lord Grey, who was also accused, was rather more fortunate; for, having been taken in the first instance to the home of the jailor, he had the satisfaction of finding that official reeling about in a state of helpless drunkenness. Lord Grey, perceiving that the functionary who had charge of him was not in a situation to appreciate any consideration that might be shown to him, quietly walked out at the door-way of the serjeant's house, and jumping into a boat on the Thames, hailed a ship for Holland. Lord Howard of Escrick, another of the alleged conspirators, was pulled neck and heels down a chimney, into which he had climbed for concealment, in his house at Knights-bridge. His character has been blackened almost as much as his dress, by this ignoble act, for it is recorded of him that when pulled out from the grate, he looked fearfully little. He trembled, sobbed, and wept, or in other words, had a regular good cry, and the tears forming channels through the soot,

rendered his aspect exceedingly ludicrous. He at once confessed that he did not come out of the affair with clean hands, but he was guilty of the very dirty trick of implicating many of his own friends and kindred by his pusillanimous confession.



Arrest of Lord Howard of Escrick.

Original Size

Besides other less illustrious victims, Lord Russell was sacrificed; and his kinsman Howard, whom we have just had the pleasure of dragging before the world from the chimney into which he had slunk, was one of the witnesses against the nobleman we have mentioned. Russell behaved with great dignity throughout his trial and during its fatal result; but the execution was scarcely over, when the town rang with his last speech, of whioh some enterprising Catnach of the period had obtained the manuscript. It was actually in print before the fated event took place; but there is every reason to believe that it was genuine, for speculation had not in those days learned to anticipate reports, notwithstanding the

occurrence of the events described in them having been by some accident prevented.

Individuals of lesser note than Russell were condemned to share his fate, and among them was one Rouse, who was executed at Tyburn for having endeavoured to house the populace. A declaration, containing a narrative of the Rye-House plot, was published by the king, who was exceedingly fond of performing the office of his own historian. It enabled him to "touch up" the events in which he himself was concerned, and give them a colouring favourable to himself; but happily for the cause of truth, notes were being taken on its behalf, and materials were thus collected for such truthful chronicles as those the reader's eye now rests upon.

The trial and death of Algernon Sidney, the last of the Commonwealth men, took place soon after Russell's execution. Though it is to be hoped that few people in these days can be ignorant of the character of this remarkable man, yet there may be a section of the British public from whom will have burst the cry of "Sidney! Who is Sidney?" directly we mentioned him. Sidney then—we state the fact for the benefit of the benighted classes—was son of the Earl of Leicester, and had always been a republican, and had been named one of the judges on the trial of the king; but he was either too lazy or too loyal to take his seat amongst-them. He opposed Cromwell's elevation, from which it might have been inferred that he would have had no objection to the Restoration; but he opposed that, and having nothing else to excite his resistance, he opposed himself by refusing to take advantage of a general bill of indemnity. He had been obliged to remain out of England, but finding that he was seriously opposing his own interest by his absence from home, he

applied for the king's pardon, which was sent him by an early post, and he arrived in England with his protection in his pocket. Party spirit was running very high when Sidney returned, and he was not the man to do anything with a view to moderation, so that he was soon at his old trick of opposing the Government. He began talking largely about liberty, and he was really going on in a very improper way, for he fell into the common error of patriots, namely, that of spouting commonplace claptraps instead of attempting every legal means to bring about a reform of the evils that may be in need of remedy.

Sidney now became a marked man, whom the royalists were determined to crush, and a pretext was speedily found for bringing him to trial. Several witnesses were brought forward to prove the existence of a plot; but what plot and what Sidney had to do with it, or whether he was concerned in it at all, did not form any part of the subject of the evidence. Having established a plot, the next thing to be done was to show that Sidney was at the head of it, and the abject Howard—no relation to the philanthropist—made his sixth or seventh appearance as a royalist witness for the purpose specified. According to law, it was necessary to have the testimony of a second person; but there were not two Howards in the world, and a supplementary scoundrel to swear away Sidney's life was nowhere to be met with.

Some papers found in the house of the accused were examined in lieu of a second witness; and though this was a flagrant evasion of the law, the proceeding was pronounced by the infamous Jeffreys to be perfectly regular. He asserted that written documents were better than living witnesses, for the former could not give an evasive reply; but the

judicial villain forgot that the papers, unless the writing happened to be crossed, would not admit of the test of cross-examination like other witnesses. Sidney pleaded that his hand-writing had not been proved; and that even supposing him to be the author of the documents, he might have been "only in fun;" but this was a frivolous excuse, for it is dear that if "only in fun" were a good plea, there would be great difficulty in getting over it. A verdict of "Guilty" was returned by a jury so discreditably packed, that the box in which they sat should have been called a packing-case.

Judge Jeffreys "came out" exceedingly on the occasion of Sidney's sentence being passed, and insisted on proceeding to the last extremity, notwithstanding a mass of irregularities having been pointed out to him. Jeffreys would listen to nothing in the prisoner's favour; and upon one Mr. Bampfield, a barrister, venturing an opinion as *amicus curia*, that unhappy junior was smashed, snubbed, and silenced by the judge, who recommended the learned gentleman to confine himself to those points of practice upon which his opinion was required. The scene between Sidney and Judge Jeffreys degenerated into a mere personal squabble before the unhappy affair was concluded, and it ended in Jeffreys telling Sidney to keep cool, while the judge himself was boiling over with rage, and the prisoner tauntingly requested his "lordship" to feel his—the prisoner's—pulse, which the latter declared was more than usually temperate. Sidney followed the practice, prevalent at the time, of placing a paper in the hands of the sheriff by way of legacy on the scaffold; but we have been unable to account for the strange partiality felt by persons at the point of death for the individual principally

concerned in their execution.

Hampden was selected as the next victim to the political persecution so much in vogue during Charles's reign, but it was thought more profitable to fine this gentleman than to execute him, and he was adjudged to pay a penalty of £40,000, which added a large sum to the royal treasury, besides saving the executioner's fee and the cost of a scaffold. Judge Jeffreyss though balked in this instance of an opportunity for gratifying his sanguinary propensities, took his revenge upon some inferior prisoners, for it was his practice when one eluded the gallows by any chance, to hang two, as a poor compensation for the disappointment he had suffered. Professor Holloway, who had been concerned in the Rye-House plot, was accordingly condemned to death, with Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had had a small and very unprofitable share in the plot.

Judge Jeffreys, who figured in these sanguinary transactions, was one of the most extraordinary specimens of ruffianism that the world ever produced; and if history—like Madame Tussaud—were to get up a Chamber of Horrors, Judge Jeffreys would certainly take his place in it by the side of Danton, Sawney Bean, Marat, Mrs. Brownrigg, and Robespierre. Before he went on circuit he used to say he was going to give the provinces "a lick with the rough side of his tongue"—a vulgar threat which he carried out to its fullest extent, for he not only used his tongue, but his teeth, in the lickings he administered to the unfortunate prisoners brought before him for trial. He was not much interested in dry points of law, and indeed he endeavoured to moisten them as much as he could by drinking copiously before he went into court, and he

sometimes reeled about so unsteadily as he took his place on the bench, that a facetious usher of the period declared Jeffreys should be called the Master of the Rolls, for he was always rolling about from side to side when he approached the seat of judgment.

The king endeavoured, by courting personal popularity, to avert from himself some of the odium that attached to nis creatures and his Government. Knowing that the suspicion of his entertaining Popish predilections was very much about, he married his niece, the Lady Anne, to Prince George of Denmark, a Protestant. No consideration would induce him, however, to call another Parliament, and though he was bothered for money on all sides, without the power of raising a supply, he preferred, as he said, "rubbing on," to the chance of getting some much harder rubs from the legislative body, in the event of one having been summoned. He greatly preferred doing just as he pleased with other people's money, to the annoyance of getting any of his own upon the conditions that a Parliament would certainly have attached to the grant of it. His credit being almost unlimited, he never wanted for anything that cash could procure; and he led a much more independent life by setting Parliament at defiance, and having nothing to thank it for, than he could have done had he called it together, and taken an annual supply, the amount of which would have been in some measure contingent on his good behaviour.

Charles had become as absolute as the last case of a Latin noun, but he was not happy, and his gaiety beginning to forsake him, the picture of the sad dog was gloomily realised. He fell into a succession of fits of the blues, and on Monday, the 2nd of February, 1685, he put his hand to his head, turned very pale,

and seemed to be in a very shaky condition. Dr. King, an eminent physician, with a taste for experimental philosophy, was sent for; but his experiments either failed, or were put off too long, for Charles fell on the floor as if dead when the doctor arrived to prescribe for him. Dr. King resolved on bleeding the royal patient, who came to as fast as he had gone off, and in a fit of generosity the Council ordered the surgeon £1000, which, in a fit of oblivion, was forgotten, and he was never paid anything. Perhaps payment may have been disputed, on the ground that the doctor's treatment had not been permanently effective, for a bulletin had scarcely been issued declaring the king out of danger, when it was found necessary to issue another bulletin declaring him in again. The physicians handed him over to the ministers of the church, but Charles would not have about him any Protestant divine, and the Duchess of Portsmouth then told it as a great secret to the French ambassador, that the king, at the bottom of his heart, was a Catholic. This information revealed two facts about which there might have been considerable doubt, namely, that the king possessed some religion, though it was the one which he had been during the whole of his reign persecuting and executing others for following; and secondly, that he had a heart sufficiently capacious for any moral or virtuous principle to lie at the bottom of.

The moment the true character of Charles's faith was known to the French ambassador, he used his utmost ingenuity to smuggle a confessor to the death-bed of the sovereign. The English bishops, however, stuck to the expiring monarch so pertinaciously that no Romish priest could approach, until one Huddleston was hunted up, who had

formerly been a Popish clergyman, but had so terribly neglected his business, that the office of confessor was quite strange to him. A wig and gown were put upon him to disguise him, and he was taken to a Portuguese monk to be "crammed" for the task he had to perform; and having been brought up the back staircase to the royal chamber, he got through the duty very respectably. Such was the disreputable imposture that was resorted to for supplying Charles the Second with the only religious assistance or consolation that he received before his dissolution. The Protestant bishops, who had been all hurried into the next room, did not know exactly what to make of it; but there were various whispers and shrewd suspicions current among the churchmen and the courtiers.

Soon after his interview with Huddleston, who was huddled up in a cloak to get him out of the palace without being discovered, Charles got a little better, and sent for his illegitimate children to give them his blessing. A catalogue of these young ladies and gentlemen would occupy more space perhaps than they are worth, but it is sufficient perhaps to say, that Master Peg and Miss Peg, the king's son and daughter by Mrs. Catherine Peg, were absent from the family circle in consequence of their having died in their infancy. Master James Walters, the eldest of the group of naturals, who had been created Duke of Monmouth, was not mentioned by his father in his last illness; but little Charlie Lennox, the young Duke of Richmond, and his mother, the Duchess of Portsmouth—Mademoiselle Querouaille—were especially recommended to the Duke of York's attention. The dying reprobate had the good feeling to put in a word for Mrs. Eleanor Gwynne, the actress, ancestress of the noble house of St. Alban's;

but as he only said, "Do not let poor Nelly starve," it does not seem that his views with regard to her were very munificent. The bishops, however, were scandalised *selon les règles* at even this brief allusion to the "poor player," who had invariably refused all titles of honour; but it is said that their holinesses were not nearly so much shocked at the mention of the Duchesses of Portland and Cleveland, who were morally not a bit better than Nell Gwynne, though they had electrotyped their infamy with rank, which formed in those days, as we are happy to say it does not in these, the only real substitute for virtue.

At six in the morning of the 6th of February, 1685, Charles asked what o'clock it was, and requested those about him to open the curtains, that he might once more see daylight. Where he was to see it at that time of the morning in the darkest period of the year is, like the daylight itself, under such circumstances, not very visible. His senses, which must have been already wandering, were by ten o'clock quite gone, and at half-past eleven he expired without a struggle. He was in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his actual reign, though, according to legal documents, he was king for thirty-six years, inasmuch as while he was flying about from place to place, and perching upon trees to elude discovery, he was supposed, by a loyal fiction, to be still sitting on the throne of England.

A report got abroad that Charles had been poisoned, but although this deadly operation had been performed on his mind by the evil and corrupt councillors into whose hands he fell after the death of Clarendon, there is no reason for believing that physical poisoning was the fate of this disreputable sovereign.

The characters of the kings and queens it is our

duty to pass in review give many a pang to our loyal bosom, and we regret to say that our heart has been perforated, nay, riddled to an alarming extent, by the melancholy riddle which the character of Charles presents to us. We will begin with him as a companion—not that we should be very anxious for his company; but because it was in the capacity of a companion that he presented the most amiable aspect. His manners were engaging; but as his engagements were scarcely ever kept, the quality in question was only calculated to lead to disappointment among those who had anything to do with him. His wit, raillery, and satire are said to have been first-rate, but we find none of his *bon-mots* recorded which would have been worth more than two pence a dozen to any regular dealer in jokes, though for private distribution they might have been a little more-valuable, on account of their royal authorship. For his private life he has found apologists in preceding historians * one of whom appears to imagine that the disgusting selfishness familiarly termed "jolly-dogism" is the highest social virtue of which human nature is capable. Charles was, we are told, a good father, but it was to those of whom he ought never to have been the father at all; a generous lover to those whom he could not make the objects of generosity without the grossest injustice to others; and a pleasing companion to those with whom he ought to have avoided all companionship. We do not concur in that sort of laxity which looks at the domestic ties as so many slip-knots that may hang about the wearer as loosely as he may find convenient.

** Hume calls him "an obliging husband."*

For his public character, even those who admire him in his private relations have not ventured to offer any apology; and his utter disregard of the honour, the religion, the liberty, and the material interests of the nation over which he ruled cannot be made the subject of laudation. It is suggested that a certain reckless gaiety formed some excuse for his defects as a sovereign; but monarchy in sport becomes tyranny in earnest, when its affairs are conducted by a negligent and heartless libertine. His reign was one long hoax as far as religion was concerned, for he was a Catholic at heart while pursuing the Papists with the most cruel persecution; and though his behaviour towards that class would, under any circumstances, have been hateful, it seems doubly detestable when we remember that he was himself guilty of holding the opinions for which he sent so many to the scaffold.

There can be no doubt that the fate of his father, and the disgust occasioned by the tyranny arising out of the ascendency of the rabid friends of freedom during the Commonwealth, were mainly instrumental in obtaining toleration for the vices and oppressive cruelties of Charles the Second. The dissatisfaction caused by the abuse of the royal power in the preceding reign must have burst out with more earnestness had it been kept bottled up until the accession of the libertine monarch, whose supposed sufferings during exile had attracted towards him a large share of sympathy. Had he comc to the throne in due course, without the intervention of a republic, he would have been swept off by a storm of general indignation; but the rebound of public feeling in favour of monarchy carried him in triumph to the same position that his father had occupied.

It was remarked of Charles the Second, that he never said a foolish thing or ever did a wise one; an observation which either he—or some one for him—happily turned to account, by observing that his words were his own, while his acts where those of his ministry. He has left nothing very valuable to posterity, notwithstanding the alleged wit or wisdom of his words, for the only persons who have been able to turn him to profitable account are the dramatists, who have founded a few farces on the career of that sad scamp—the Merry Monarch.



The Merry Monarch.

Original Size

CHAPTER THE FOURTH. JAMES THE SECOND.

Original

Size

HOUGH James had not been popular as heir-presumptive to the crown, he had no sooner got it on his head than loyal addresses poured in upon him from all sides, for the attachment manifested towards the throne on these occasions refers rather to the upholstery than to the individual. In his capacity of Duke of York, few would have exclaimed, "York, you're wanted!" to fill the regal office, but when he had once succeeded to it, every one was ready to declare that the diadem became him as if it had been expressly made for him.

James and his wife were greatly puzzled about their coronation, for they had an objection to the ceremony being performed by a Protestant prelate, and unfortunately for them "No other was genuine, own conscience—a party, by the way, that is sometimes not very obstinate in coming to terms—James and his queen not only-accepted the crown from Protestant hands, but got over an awkward oath or two by means of some mental quibbles. As the crown was being put upon his head, it tottered and almost fell, which caused a bystander to paraphrase the old saying about the slip 'twixt cup and lip, exclaiming:

"There's many a mull
'Twixt the crown and the skull,"

an observation that, happily for him who made it, was uttered in a tone that was scarcely audible.

A few days after the coronation, Titus Oates was brought to the bar of the Queen's Bench to be tried over again, though he was already under sentence of perpetual imprisonment. James, however, was

desirous of feeding his revenge on Oates, who had done his worst against the Catholics; and Jeffreys, that judicial flail, was set to work to administer to Oates a sound thrashing.

The prisoner assumed a very bold front, and there was a sort of desperate restlessness in his manner, which got him the name of Wild Oates at the time he was undergoing his trial. He was convicted on two indictments, and ordered to pay a thousand marks in respect of each. "But," said the inhuman Jeffreys, "we will supply him with marks in return, for he shall be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and from Newgate to Tyburn." He was also granted a life interest, by way of annuity, in the pillory, where he was adjudged to stand five days every year, as long as he lived, and where voluntary contributions of eggs were shelled out in most unwelcome profusion by the populace.

Parliament met on the 22nd of May, 1685, and James delivered a speech from the throne, with notes introduced *ad libitum*, and a running accompaniment of threats, remarkable for their extreme impudence. This effrontery had its effect, for the Commons, having retired to their chamber, voted him an income of a million and a quarter for his life, with other contingencies which only required asking for. The Court party supported him with zeal, and chiefly recommended him as a king that had never broken his word, which appears to have placed him in the light of a royal phenomenon. In the midst of all this comfortable and complimentary confidence between the Parliament and James, news arrived that Monmouth had landed in the west, with a tremendous standard, round which the mob, who will rush anywhere to see a flag fly, were rapidly rallying. Monmouth had only got a force of one

hundred men by way of nucleus to a larger assemblage, or, in other words, as the tag to which the string of rag and bobtail would be most likely to attach itself. The rebellion raised by Monmouth was very soon put down, and Monmouth himself was found cowering at the bottom of a ditch, in the mud of which he must have expired, had it not been for an opponent of his dy-nasty, who would not leave him to die in such a very disagreeable manner. Poor Monmouth was taken, tried, and condemned; and, not to be out of fashion, he gave money to the headsman—thus paying the costs of his own execution even upon the scaffold.

James proceeded to punish all whom he believed to be the enemies of his Government, with a sanguinary fury worthy of the revolutionary tribunals of France during the ascendency of Robespierre. Colonel Kirk, a soldier who had become savage by service at Tangier, and who, having once tasted blood, never knew when he had had enough of it, was sent to use the sword of war upon real or suspected rebels, while Jeffreys hacked about him right and left with the sword of justice. The king himself, with brutal appreciation of the judge's ferocious career, gave it the name of "Jeffreys' campaign," and this disgrace to the ermine inflamed by drink the natural fierceness of his character. He hiccuped out sentences of death with an idiotic stare of counterfeit solemnity, and he rolled about the Bench in such a disgraceful manner, that a junior, who had nothing to do in court but make bad jokes, observed that Jeffreys could never have acted as a standing counsel, and it was, therefore, lucky for him that he had been raised to a post of dignity which he could conveniently lean against. This monster in judicial form was elevated to the office of Lord

Chancellor, with the title of Baron Wem, on the death of Lord Keeper North; when, by way of earning his promotion, Jeffreys went hanging away at a much more rapid rate than before, and the only misfortune was, that there was not sufficient rope for him to hang himself, notwithstanding the abundance of that material which was supplied to him. Jeffreys added to the trade of a butcher the less sanguinary pursuits of bribery and corruption, which enabled him to make a certain sum per head of the prisoners, while their heads remained upon their shoulders. He and Father Petre, the king's confessor, divided £6000 paid by Hampden, who was in gaol, to put aside a capital charge of high treason with which he had been threatened; and poor Prideaux, a barrister who had talked himself into the Tower by an unfortunate "gift of the gab," purchased his impunity for £1500, the probable amount of his entire life's professional earnings.

The Marquess of Halifax had sat at the council board for some time with Rochester, who, though swearing from morning till night, and drunk from night till morning, was the recognised head of the high church party, and the great hope of the religious section of the community. Halifax, not exactly liking the projects of his royal master, and the character of his colleague, turned a little refractory; and being dismissed from office, became in the natural order of things the leader of the opposition. His hostility told even upon the haughty Jeffreys, who was made to perform the unpleasant operation of biting the dust—a fate to which those who are always opening their mouths and showing their teeth are necessarily reduced when they are brought to a prostrate condition. James was so much disgusted and disappointed that he dissolved the

Parliament, to avoid further discussion, thus as it were turning off the gas by which a light was being thrown upon his own real views and character.

The undisguised object of James was to Catholicise the whole country by dismissing from office all who had the slightest shade of Protestantism in their principles; and even Rochester, the head of the high church party, having got argumentative and disputatious over his drink, was turned out of the council. This ejectment was judicious in the main, though the immediate cause for it scarcely warranted the act; but the council room had been little better than a public-house parlour during the whole time that Rochester had been suffered to sit in it. James next drew up a declaration of liberty of conscience, to be read in all the churches, but the bishops, with very great spirit, resisted the introduction of the obnoxious document. They were consequently summoned on a charge of high misdemeanor before the King's Bench, when Jeffreys tried to cajole them with such amiable observations as "Now then, what's this little affair? There's some mistake, is there not? but we shall soon put it all to rights, I dare say;"—a style of conciliation to which the bishops did not take as kindly as the king and his creatures desired. The people were greatly in favour of the prelates, who were cheered on their way to their trial by an enthusiastic mob of juveniles; for it is worthy of remark, that the boys are ever in advance of their age, as the pioneers of popular opinion.

The jury, having in their own hearts an echo to the general voice, acquitted the defendants, after an adjournment and a locking up for a night, which had been rendered necessary by the obstinacy of a Mr. Arnold, the king's brewer, who supplied the palace with beer, and insisted upon putting what he called

"nice pints," for the purpose of raising difficulties in the minds of his colleagues. A verdict of "Not guilty" was however eventually returned, and a round of applause having started in the court itself, passed from group to group till it got to Temple Bar, where the porters taking it up with terrific force, gave it a lift down Fleet Street, and it was thence forwarded by easy stages as far as the Tower. London was illuminated in honour of the occasion, and the Pope having been hanged in effigy, some wag put "a light in his laughing eye," which caused it to twinkle for a few moments, until, like the fire of genius, it consumed the frame in which it was deposited.

On the 10th of June, 1688, the queen, Mary d'Este, the second wife of James, was declared to have been delivered of a "fine bouncing boy," but the people, who would have no Papist heir to the throne, declared the alleged "bouncing boy" to be a bounce altogether. There was not over nicety in the mode chosen to account for the presence of the child, by those who would not believe that it was the son of the king and queen; but the most popular story was, that the little fellow had been brought in a warming-pan into the royal bedchamber. This was hauling the young Pretender rather prematurely over the coals, but as the contents of the warming-pan were never regularly sifted, we cannot vouch for the truth or falsehood of the account that has been handed down to us. The event, whether real or fictitious, was celebrated by a brilliant display of fireworks, which proved a sad failure; for the lightning, which was exceedingly vivid, completely took the shine out of the *feu d'artifice*, and thoroughly "paled," as if with a pail of cold water, "their ineffectual fires."

All eyes were now turned upon William, Prince of Orange, who, naturally enough, became as proud as

a peacock at having so many eyes upon him. Having received a very pressing invitation from England, he determined to come over and question the legitimacy of the alleged Prince of Wales—our young friend of the warming-pan. On Friday, the 16th of October, 1688, William of Orange set sail, and stood over for the English coast; but old Boreas, who stands as sentinel over the British Isles, began railing and blustering in such a boisterous manner, that the invading fleet was driven out of its course, and the order on board every ship was to "Ease her," "Back her," or "Turn her astarn," to prevent a collision that might have proved disagreeable. The fleet, however, sailed definitively on the 1st of November, and arriving at Torbay on the 4th, he landed there amid the usual kissing of hands, grasping of legs, hanging on at the coat tails, and tugging affectionately at the cloak skirts, which form the ordinary demonstrations of affectionate loyalty towards any new object, who can bid tolerably high for it. Nevertheless, the people did not come out half so strongly as he could have desired; and, indeed, he complained that the warmth of his first reception had soon cooled down to mere politeness with the chill off. It is said that he even threatened to return, but recollecting that such quick returns would be productive of no profit, he abandoned the notion of going home, and said to himself, very sensibly, "Well, well! now I am here, I suppose I must make the best of it."

James was completely taken aback at the news of what had occurred, and tried to get up a little bit of popularity by turning quack doctor and running about in all directions to touch people for tne king's evil. It was, however, a mere piece of claptrap, or, as some term it, touch and go; for directly the people had been touched they were found to go without

evincing the smallest symptoms of attachment to their doctor and master. James had certainly got a considerable number of soldiers; but he could not rely upon them for three reasons—first, because they were not to be trusted; secondly, because they were not to be depended upon; and thirdly, because there was no reliance to be placed upon them. Any one of these causes would of itself have been sufficient; but James was almost as difficult of conviction as the celebrated angler, who only abandoned his fishing expedition upon finding that there were, in the first place, no fish; secondly, that he had no fishing-rod; and thirdly, that if there were any fish, he did not think they would allow him to catch them.

The soldiers soon began to justify James's doubt of their fidelity, by rapidly deserting him. Lord Colchester went first, and the example was so catching that it ran through all the forces, and when James made up his mind to join the army, he made the mortifying discovery that there was nothing to join, for all the officers were unattached to the cause of the sovereign. The bishops advised him to call a Parliament, and the little Prince of Wales was packed off in a parcel, with "This side upwards" legibly inscribed on the crown of his hat, to Portsmouth. In the midst of his other distresses, the king's nose began to bleed, in consequence, it was said, of the repeated blows he had endured from the soldiery, who had flown in his face with the utmost disloyalty. He consequently made up his mind and his portmanteau to retreat, when, in stopping at Andover, he asked his son-in-law, Prince George of Denmark, and the young Duke of Ormond, to sup with him. They accepted the invitation; but in the morning they were both missing, having run off—without paying their bills—to join the Prince of

Orange, whom they found in quarters. On arriving at Whitehall, James found that even his daughter Anne had followed her husband's example and joined the enemy.

As every one else was flying, James began to think that it was high time for himself to run for it. The little Prince of Wales, who had been forwarded to Portsmouth, was actually declined as a parcel on which the carriage had not been paid, and was sent back like a returned letter to London. The queen, putting the little fellow under her arm, walked over Westminster Bridge, popped into the Gravesend coach, and hailed a yacht, which took her and her infant to Calais. James, only waiting to pocket the great seal, ran after his wife; but finding the bauble heavy, and that the great seal, by making him look conspicuous, would perhaps seal his doom, he pitched it into the river. On reaching Lambeth they exclaimed, "Hoy, a hoy!" and a hoy was provided in which he took his passage; but the vessel putting in at the Isle of Sheppy for ballast, the people attacked him with great rudeness, and called him, without knowing who he was, a "hatchet-faced Jesuit." This proves he must have had a very sharp expression, for with a face like a hatchet, he would no doubt have had teeth like a saw, and presented altogether a rather formidable aspect. To save himself from outrage he announced himself as the king, but this disclosure had only the effect of making them rob as well as insult him, for knowing he had money of his own, they were determined to get it out of him. He was seized by a mob of fish-women, sailors, and smugglers, who turned his pockets inside out, and bullied him so severely that he howled out piteously for mercy, and adopted a favourite oath of his brother Charles's, when a salmon lighting rather

heavily on his eye, he exclaimed, "Odds fish!" with considerable earnestness. He at length "put up" at the nearest public-house, where he wrote a note to Lord Winchilsea. Upon the arrival of this nobleman, the king sat down and had a good cry, but Winchilsea sagaciously observed to him, "Come, come; it's no use taking on so; you had much better take yourself off as speedily as possible."

The moment the flight of James from his palace was known, the city was thrown into the utmost excitement, and by way of making each other more nervous than need be, the inhabitants set all the bells ringing with incessant vehemence. The people might have knocked each other down with feathers, so agitated had they become; and in their frenzy they not only began burning all the Popish chapels, but looked everywhere for Father Petre to make the same use of him that his namesake saltpetre might have been turned to on such a very explosive occasion. Father Petre had taken himself off to France, but the pope's nuncio, who was in general denounced by the mob, disguised himself as a footman, and kept jumping up behind a carriage, to look as if he was in service, whenever he observed any one apparently watching him with suspicion. Judge Jeffreys having been stupidly intoxicated over some sittings in *banco* at a public-house, followed by a trial at bar of some cream gin that had been strongly recommended to his lordship for mixing, was unable of course to fly—or even to stand—but, disguised as a sailor, he was perambulating the streets of Wapping. Having been discovered, he was seized by the mob, who, instead of exercising a summary jurisdiction, and hanging him at once, as they might have done had they determined to pay him in his own coin, turned him over to the Lord

Mayor as a preliminary to a regular trial.

A provisional Government of the bishops and peers was formed in London, and a note despatched to the Prince of Orange, saying, "that the first time he came that way, if he would drop in they should be very happy to see him." James showed considerable obstinacy before he could be got rid of; and he continued exercising, as long as he could, some of the smaller functions of royalty. He came back to London, and to the surprise of everybody, sat down to dinner as usual at Whitehall, forgetting, perhaps, that his father had taken a chop there on a previous occasion for having given offence to his people. Four battalions of the Dutch Guards were marched into Westminster by way of hint, which James for some time refused to take, and he had actually gone to bed, when Halifax roused him up by the information that he must start off to Ham, as the Prince of Orange was expected at Whitehall the first thing in the morning. James observed that the place suggested to him was very chilly, and as he could not bear cold Ham, he had much rather go to Rochester if it was all the same to Halifax. This was agreed to on behalf of the Prince of Orange; and James, taking the Gravesend boat, quitted London with a very few followers. There was an explosion of cockney sentimentality on this occasion; for the citizens, who had been the first to demand his expulsion, began shedding tears in teacupfuls when they witnessed the departure of the sovereign. Having remained for the night at Gravesend, he started the next morning for Rochester, and after a very brief stay, he went in a fishing-smack smack across the channel to Ambleteuse, a small town in Picardy. From thence he hastened to the Court of Louis the Fourteenth, where James still enjoyed the empty title of king, which

was not the only empty thing he possessed, for his pockets were in the same condition until Louis replenished them. He sometimes compared them to a couple of exhausted non-receivers, for these were utterly exhausted, and were not in the receipt of anything but what he obtained from his brother sovereign's munificence. Some historians tell us that James had made a purse, but if he had, it is doubtful whether he had any money remaining to stock it with after the fishermen, who made all fish that came to their net, had encountered him at Torbay, and deprived him of all the loose cash he had about him.

William of Orange could not exactly make up his mind what to do upon the flight of James; but he very wisely declined to follow the advice of some injudicious friends, who recommended him to appear in the character of William the Conqueror. He sagaciously observed that imitations were always bad, evincing an utter absence of any original merit in the imitator, and certain in the end to have their hollowness detected. He admitted that the idea of entering England as William the Conqueror might have been a very good one at first; but that he should very justly be denounced as an impudent humbug if he endeavoured to obtain popularity by trading on the reputation of another. Scorning, therefore, to be a servile copyist, he determined on striking out a path for himself, and tried the "moderately constitutional dodge," which succeeded so well, that he is to this day recognised as the hero of what is termed the "glorious Revolution." He called together some members of Charles the Second's Parliaments, and recommended them, with the assistance of the Lord Mayor and forty Common Councilmen, to consider what had better be done under the peculiar

circumstances of the nation. There is something richly ludicrous, according to modern notions, in the idea of consulting a Lord Mayor and forty Common Councilmen on a great political question; for though we would cheerfully be guided by such authorities in the choice of a sirloin of beef or the framing of a bill of fare, their views on the cooking up of a constitution would not in these days be gravely listened to. The peers and bishops had already recommended the summoning of a convention, and the Lord Mayor having proposed that the Commons should say "ditto to that," the suggestion was forthwith adopted.

The Convention having met, the first question it proceeded to discuss was whether James had not, in leaving the kingdom, run away, in fact, from his creditors, for every king owes a debt to his people; and whether the throne, crown and sceptre might not be seized for the benefit of those to whom he was under liabilities. The Commons soon came to the resolution that the throne was vacant, a conclusion which we must not examine too strictly; for if the principle involved in it were to be generally admitted, we should find that a freeholder running away from his freehold house to avoid meeting his Christmas bills, would, by that act, not only oust himself from his property, but cut off all his successors from their right of inheritance. Upon the broad and vulgar principle that the Stuarts were a bad lot, the Convention was justified perhaps in changing the succession to the throne; but, for our own parts, we must confess our disinclination to let in such a plea for the wholesale setting aside of a reigning family. As the last of the Pretenders is happily defunct, we may venture upon taking the line of argument we have adopted, without running

the risk of a public meeting being called on the appearance of this number, to consider the immediate restoration of the Stuarts, a measure which our loyalty to the reigning sovereign, who fortunately unites in her own person all claims to the crown, would never tolerate. Had it been otherwise, we should not have been surprised by the announcement of a league, with the usual staff of a chairman, a boy, a brass plate, and a bell, to restore to the house of Stuart the crown of England.

To return, however, to William of Orange, whom we left waiting to be asked to walk up the steps of the throne; and we have great pleasure in taking him by the hand, for the purpose of giving him a lift to that exalted station he was now called to occupy. Some were for engaging him as regent during the minority of the Prince of Wales; but William flatly refused to become a warming-pan for one whose alleged introduction into the royal bed-chamber through the medium of a warming-pan, rendered the simile at once striking and appropriate. "All or none" was the motto adopted by William in his negotiations with the Convention, and it was at length resolved to settle the crown on the joint heads of himself and the Princess of Orange, with a stipulation that the prince should hold the reins of government. A declaration of rights was drawn up, so that everything was reduced to writing, and put down in black and white, for the purpose of avoiding disputes between the king and the people.

James's reign was now hopelessly at an end, and entirely by his own act; for, after he had absconded, it would have been idle for the nation to have been satisfied with writing, "Gone away; not known where," over the throne of England. A sketch of the character of this king is scarcely required from the

English historian, who may fairly say, "My former man, James, quitted my service, and you had better make inquiries in his last place, for I have ceased to have anything to do with him. I can venture to say he was sober; but I am not quite sure about his honesty; for though in looking over the plate basket where I kept the regalia, I found the crown, sceptre, and other articles of that description perfectly right, I had missed from time to time a great deal of money, which I verily believe that man James had pocketed. I should say that the fellow was very weak, and not being strong enough for his place, he left his work a great deal to inferior servants, who behaved very shamefully. I think the fellow was willing, and it might be said of him, that he would if he could, but he couldn't—a state in which the servant of a nation is not likely to give much satisfaction to those who require his services." Such is the character that may be fairly written of James the Second, who, we may as well add, was promoted to a saintdom in France, by way of compensation for his forfeiture of the "right divine to govern wrong" in England.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. LITERATURE, SCIENCE, FINE ARTS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS,

AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

IT is now necessary to sink the historian for a time in the reviewer, and to take a retrospect of the literature of the period through which our narrative has passed. The republic of politics was not favourable to the republic of letters, and the Elizabethan dramatists were followed by a few playwrights of a very inferior class. The mantle of Shakespeare, or even of Beaumont and Fletcher, who had flourished under the monarchy, was caught by no worthy object, and it fell upon Shirley, for whom it was evidently a great deal too large. Denham and Waller, those two commonplace songsters, set up a faint warbling, and Hobbes had sufficient fire to burn with philosophic ardour, though his thoughts were fettered by his royalist principles. Hobbes, however, was a fireside companion to many, though they dared scarcely hang over Hobbes in the broad light of day.

Milton had written little till he gave to the world—which is true enough, for the world can hardly be said to have bought it—his "Paradise Lost," which he brought out in 1667, and though the sale was limited, it was sufficiently encouraging to induce him to baffle the crowd of imitators by advertising a new poem, to be called "Paradise Regained." He feared the sort of impertinent opposition which echoes every new work, and which, when an original writer takes it into his head to bid anyone "Go where the aspens quiver," "Meet him in the willow-glen," or commit some other foolery, will reply by expressing

a desire to come where the aspens are actually quivering, and to be punctual at the willow-glen, for which the invitation is forwarded. "Paradise Regained" had the fate of all merely imitative literature, for it never acquired, and will never attain, the reputation its prototype or predecessor has enjoyed.

The Restoration seemed to act as a restorative to Milton's powers, for he published many of his finest things after Charles the Second returned to the throne. Cowley was one of the earliest writers who took to diluting the works of other people in some stuff of his own; and, taking the materials of Donne, he set an example of the modern practice of seizing upon another man's original ideas, for the purpose of beating or spinning them out into a shape that may, if possible, prevent the real authorship from being recognised. There was, however, a great deal of true genius among the literary men of the age, through which our narrative has just carried us. Spenser, whose tales were only too short, would have been sufficient to redeem the period from the imputation of mediocrity.

The stage was, during the reign of Charles the Second, in a very degraded state; but the cry for the restoration of the drama has been kept up so long, that we really do not know what there is to restore, if everything has been always bad, except the works of two or three writers, whose productions are being so constantly performed that the public cannot reasonably complain of not getting enough of them. The "palmy days of dramatic literature" are, according to the ordinary acceptation of those who use the term, any days but the present, and it is not improbable that our own will be looked back upon and lamented as the genuine "palmy days" by the

generation of grumblers who may come after us. If everything is objected to in its turn—and such has been the fate of every successive crop of writings for the stage—we of course cannot tell with accuracy what it would be considered worth while to restore in the judgment of those who are clamorous for the restoration of the drama. There is also considerable difference of opinion as to how the restoration is to be effected; and we may perhaps be excused, therefore, for suggesting that some good strong salts —attic salts, of course—are likely to prove the most effectual restoratives to a drama in a languishing condition.

There was an immense increase in the family of science at or about the period we have been speaking of, and indeed science had so many sons, that it would not have been very surprising if the fate of the domestic circle of the old lady who lived in a shoe—namely, an abundance of broth and a scarcity of bread—had been their inheritance.

The illustrious Boyle might frequently have been left without a roast by the number of competitors who were seeking a living round him through the exercise of their talents; and amidst his curious experiments on air, that of trying to live upon it might, if successful, have been of the greatest use to him. He was an enthusiast in the splendid career he had long and perseveringly pursued; nor is it going beyond the truth to say of him, that he combined ecstatics with hydrostatics, by the eagerness and animation with which he threw himself into water, whose properties were almost the only property he ever realised. There were several other scientific luminaries in this age, and we must not forget Hooke, who always had an eye to the capabilities of the microscope, and took an enlarged view of

everything that fell under his observation. For Sydenham, the restorer of true physio, we have not so much veneration; but Newton is a name that we cannot pass over so slightingly. This great man, to whom science was the apple of his eye, and to whose eye the apple had revealed one of the greatest truths ever discovered, lived for some time a most retired life, which he passed in tranquil obscurity. Such was his position when the fruits of his contemplation came home to him in the shape of a golden pippin, which he revolved in his mind as it revolved in the air, and the result was the great fact by the perception of which his name has been immortalised. Though Newton was a pattern of modesty in his intercourse with the external world, he was bold enough in his approaches to Dame Nature, and would not allow her to hide her face from him, if by any amount of perseverance he could get a peep at it. He even had the audacity to go the length of tearing off her veil, for the purpose of revealing her beauties; and Nature, instead of becoming indignant at this rough treatment, was evidently flattered by his attentions, to which she offered every encouragement.

It is a curious fact, that the institution of the Royal Society commenced under the auspices of a brother-in-law of Cromwell, one Wilkins, a clergyman, who, although so nearly allied to the republican leader, had no objection to accept facilities from a regal hand for promoting the objects of science, in which he felt a zealous interest. This brother-in-law of Cromwell was Bishop of Chester under the Restoration, which he liked just as well as the Commonwealth, and perhaps better, for his mitre was rather safer under a royal rule than it could have been during a republican government.

Charles the Second was without doubt a lover of the sciences to a certain extent; but his disgusting depravities left him neither money nor time for the advancement of genius and literary merit. His contemporary, Louis the Fourteenth, was more liberal of his bounty to those whose intellect formed their chief claim to consideration; but even this magnificent monarch scarcely devoted to literature, science, and art, as much as he often lavished on one worthless courtier. It is, however, a matter for humiliation and regret that we have not advanced upon the munificence of Charles the Second and Louis the Fourteenth; for, notwithstanding all the acknowledgment that talent in these days receives by way of personal consideration and respect, a few paltry thousands a year form the whole amount that the nation will afford to pension its instructors or entertainers, when their powers of instruction and entertainment have failed to afford them the means of comfortable livelihood.

Of the condition of the people during the period described in the few last chapters, we had rather say very little, as we can say nothing complimentary. Hypocrisy, during the Commonwealth, and unbridled licentiousness at the Restoration, were the characteristic features of the two divisions of a period which cast upon the respectability of the nation a blot that time has only turned to iron-mould. The fame of a nation, like a damask table-cloth, when once stained is never thoroughly restored; for, send them both to the wash—immersing the former in tears of regret, and the latter in the soapsuds—the stain is still indelibly there, beyond the power of pearl-ash or penitence.

BOOK VIII. THE PERIOD FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. WILLIAM AND MARY.



Great Seal of William and Mary.

Original Size

THE crown of England stood for almost two months in the same position as Mahomet's tomb, for the diadem no longer rested on the head of James, nor had it yet lighted on that of the Prince of Orange. On the 13th of February, 1689, both Houses waited on the Prince and Princess of Orange with a bill and a request that they would put their names to it. This document was a Declaration of Rights, in which it was asserted that "elections ought to be free," that "jurors ought to be duly empanelled and returned," besides a number of those "oughts" which are highly respected at the commencement of a reign, but frequently stand for nothing before the end of it. The Prince of Orange was by no means so squeezable as his name would seem to imply, for he refused to accept the crown unless he could have the power as well as the name of king, and he stipulated that his wife should have no share in the government. He probably knew the lady's temper pretty well, and felt that neither the country nor himself would have had

much peace had she been allowed to interfere, and indeed it was a saying of one of the ancients, whose name we have not been able to learn, that "when a woman rules the roast, a quantity of broils may be looked for." He threatened to return to Holland if Parliament gave his wife any share of his authority, and the once popular but now almost obsolete menace of "If you do I'm a Dutchman," * originated no doubt in the intimation of William that he would cut his English connections, and return to his Dutch duchy if his views were thwarted by his adopted countrymen.

** The insertion of this rare old saying is rather to display our own reading than with any idea of i absolutely essential to the narrative.*

A country in want of a king is naturally prone to accept one upon almost any terms; and though England might have been very particular in ordinary circumstances about its chief magistrate, there was so much unpleasantness in being without a person of the sort, that the nation was very anxious to suit itself. William's stipulations were therefore listened to, and it was even arranged that Mary, in whose right alone he had any claim to the British Crown, should have but a nominal share in it. The Commons voted that James had abdicated, or, in other words, bolted, and thereby shut himself out; while the Lords resolved that the throne was vacant; and thus by two different modes they came to the same conclusion, namely, that there was an opening for any one to "step up," if the terms were agreed upon. After some negociation it was arranged that William should take the vacant situation, which should be considered to some extent a single-handed place, though nominally

filled by "a man and his wife," it being understood that the former should do all the work, and that the latter should make herself generally useless.

It will naturally occur to the curious reader to inquire what has become of the fugitive James, and we shall therefore commission our research to set out as a policeman in pursuit of him. We first trace him to Versailles, where he met with a very friendly reception from Louis the Fourteenth, who made him as comfortable as circumstances would admit, and lent him a lot of French soldiers to play at an invasion with.

Ireland was then, as it has been always, our weakest point, and it was resolved that James should hit us on that unhappy raw, which all our attempts to heal have only tended to aggravate. James repaired to Brest, where he found himself in the bosom of a ragamuffin crowd of exiles; and forming the best of these into a sort of army, he landed with a force of about two thousand five hundred at Kinsale. Having taken the English by surprise, James's party obtained a bit of a victory at Bantry Bay, for the numbers of the former being comparatively few, their commander, Admiral Herbert, thought it would be sheer folly not to sheer off, and he made for Scilly, which he acknowledged to a friend was exceedingly ridiculous. James made the most of the opportunity, and summoned an Irish Parliament, which, with true Irish generosity, began voting away money at a tremendous rate before it came in, and had bestowed upon James £20,000 a month, out of nothing a year, within the few first days of their sitting.

The Treasury was of course not in a condition to meet the liberal orders that were made upon it, and James had no means of replenishing it, except with

what he brought over in his pocket from France, and this, though it had come some distance, would not go very far, when he began to try the experiment. Having a scarcity of gold and silver, he deter-, mined to try the effect of brass, which he knew to be in many cases a perfect substitute for both the precious metals, and he ordered that his brazen coinage should pass for a hundred times its value, which has furnished a *monumentum cere perennius* of his brazen impudence.

His household was poverty-stricken in the extreme, and Black Rod had nothing but an old Awkward Mistake, birch as the emblem of his office. The Court was, in fact, rendered as bad as the lowest alley by the turmoils and turbulence that prevailed in consequence of the shortness of cash, and after some little hesitation, James deter-mined to go to Londonderry for ammunition to carry on the war; but on his arrival the only powder and shot he received came to him in the shape of the firing of the garrison. Finding the place—or rather the inhabitants —unwilling to surrender, James drew off, and arrived in Dublin, where some of the famous Dublin stout in the shape of a few stalwart adherents still sustained him in his enterprise.



Awkward Mistake.

Original Size

William had no doubt a very troublesome part to play, for he was surrounded by a discontented set, which must always arise upon a change of dynasty, when the good things to be given away form a proportion of about one-eighth per cent,—or half a crown in the £100—to the expectations of the would-be recipients. When a plan is fixed upon for dividing £1000 into fifty thousand equal shares of £100,000 each, there will be some probability that the promoters of a revolution will, when the revolution is complete, be all equally and perfectly satisfied. William was speedily surrounded by a number of adherents to his cause, who had stuck to it with the leech-like intention of drawing upon it to the fullest possible extent; and his hangers-on were consequently more weakening to him than otherwise.

On the 19th of October he opened the second session of his first Parliament, and was soon pestered by the pecuniary importunities of the Princess Anne of Denmark, who declared that her income was scarcely enough to keep her in gloves and Denmark satin slippers; and that she must have £70,000 a year

settled upon her, quite independent of her brother-in-law and her sister. A family quarrel ensued upon this demand, and Queen Mary insisted that "Nancy must be mad" to prefer a request so shamefully exorbitant. The matter was eventually compromised, by a settlement of £50,000 a year on "Sister Anne," who was completely under the influence of Churchill, now Earl of Marlborough.

In the beginning of 1690, William dissolved the Parliament; and a new one met on the 20th of March; when the king announced his intention of going to Ireland, and intimated his necessity for cash to enable him to undertake the journey. He requested the assistance of the Commons in settling the amount of his revenue, upon which he proposed to borrow a considerable sum, thus acting on the dangerous and unprofitable system of drawing a salary in advance, and spending to-day what will not come to-morrow. He intended, in fact, to eat his pudding first, and to have it afterwards, or rather to eat his own, and then come down upon that of other people to supply the deficiency. The Commons, instead of checking this improvidence, granted him £2,200,000, which was presented to William in the shape of an elegant extract from the pockets of his people. Money was not all that the new king required, for he was anxious to cement his power, and like all those who feel the doubtful character of their claims, was continually insisting on their being formally recognised. Bills were passed, though not without some difficulty, abjuring James and his title to the crown; but some nobles objected to take the oaths, and Lord Wharton, who was a very old man, declared he was unwilling to go swearing on to the end of his days, that "he had taken so many affidavits, he scarcely knew one from the other, and

he must beg to be excused from any more oath-taking during the brief remainder of his existence."

The Parliament having served its purpose, in a pecuniary point of view, was prorogued rather early, and William started for Ireland. Previous to the king's departure, the queen very reasonably suggested that as he could not take the royal authority away with him, it would be a great deal like a dog in the manger, if he refused to let her have the enjoyment of the sovereign power during his brief absence. With some reluctance he consented to the arrangement, observing coarsely, that he knew she would make a mess of it, but as he should not be gone very long, it did not much signify. With this surly concession, having agreed to a temporary transfer of the sceptre into her grasp, he quitted her, with the discouraging and discourteous words, "There, take it! and let all the world see how right I was in preventing you from having a hand in the use of it."

On his arrival at Belfast he began to look about him for James, whose army was at length pounced upon on the banks of the Boyne, and a battle became unavoidable. William was looking about him, when the enemy loading two immense field-pieces, aimed them both at him; but, as between two stools, one often goes to the ground, so, between two cannon balls, one may occasionally come off without injury. William, when he saw the balls bouncing by him, may have thought that he was lucky in escaping a ball'd head, but he soon received a real wound on the shoulder, which positively tore his coat, and grazed the skin, to the utter horror of Lord Coningsby, who stuffed his pocket-handkerchief into the sleeve, to staunch the blood that might have been, but, fortunately, was not, flowing. William was more

frightened than hurt, and his officers were more frightened than William, while the enemy were more frightened than either, and allayed their trepidation by giving out that William was certainly dead, which we need not say was a mere penny-a-line report, without the smallest foundation. A poultice soon set his shoulder to rights, and at all events enabled him to put it to the wheel, which he did, by calling a meeting of the officers at nine in the evening. He told them he should cross the river the next day, and he gave orders about their dress, observing to them playfully, that as they would have to pass through the tide, they had better make themselves as tidy as possible. Hearing that the enemy wore cockades, made of white paper, he remarked that he would not have his men in such foolscaps, but that he desired to see them all with green boughs in their hats; and in this very guyish guise the soldiers of William met the adherents of James in combat.

The gallant Duke of Schomberg, who was extremely touchy, had been somehow or other offended at the Council of War, and had retired in a huff to his tent, exclaiming pettishly, "Settle it yourselves how you like, for it seems I'm nobody." In vain did some of his comrades call after him, "Schomberg, Schomberg! Come back, come back;" for the general withdrew within his quarters, and letting down his camp-curtains, sat smoking his pipe with interjectional mutterings to himself on that fruitful topic to a gentleman in the sulks—"The obstancy of *some* people." The order of battle being formed, a copy of it was sent to him, when, snatching it from the messenger with a loud "Umph!" he declared that he had scarcely made up his mind whether he should obey or light his pipe with the document. Having looked at it, however, the old soldier gave a whistle

of satisfaction as if in an ardent anticipation of the work before him; and putting on his armour as coolly as if he had been dressing for dinner, he made his way to the spot appointed for the coming contest. His reception by his sovereign and his fellow-soldiers was cheerful if not çordial; but it was evident by the twinkle of the veteran's eye, that Schomberg was "himself again" when he stood in the presence of an enemy.

The contending forces having a river between them, found their ardour a great deal damped, for it is not easy to be valorous with the water up to one's waist, and with every desire on both sides to make a splash, the soldiers could only dabble in hostilities without plunging deeply into them. William put his nag boldly across the stream, but the English had to deplore the loss of the gallant old Duke of Schomberg, who, there is too much reason to believe, was killed in mistake by one of his own men, though, we must confess, we always look with very great suspicion on these so-called accidents. James had taken his station at a most respectable distance from danger during the whole of the affray, and he no sooner saw that he had lost the day than he determined not to lose a minute in making his escape from England. He galloped on horseback to Dublin, hastened to Waterford, and embarked for France with a wretched retinue. William returned to England, and sent the Duke of Marlborough to Ireland, who reduced several places, and by putting the screw upon Cork, made it pull out very handsomely.

The bishops now began to feel very uncomfortable about their allegiance, and to doubt the validity of its transfer from James to William, though the truth seems to be that they had not found the transfer fee

so large as they had expected. Several were deprived of their temporalities—the surest way of bringing them to their senses; but there were numerous instances of disinterestedness, in which a blindness to the advantages of the see was honourably conspicuous. William troubled himself comparatively little about what was going on at home, but was far more anxious to carry on with success the league against France; and to further this object he repaired to the Continent, where a warfare of a rather paltry character was persisted in. The hostilities, though of a contemptible kind, were sufficiently costly to render it necessary for William to return in the course of a few months, and ask for more money from the English Parliament. Large grants were made, but not without a great deal of grumbling, for John Bull always pays, though he parts with his money very reluctantly, and sometimes takes out half its value in surly remonstrances against being compelled to put his hand into his pocket. The general discontent was considerably aggravated by a necessity for the revival of the odious poll-tax, which was a regular rap on the head to all except paupers, children, and servants; for with these exceptions everybody—or rather every head—was charged so much a quarter for the privilege of remaining on its owner's shoulders.

William continued riding backwards and forwards between England and Holland, but he paid the former the compliment of making it his purse on every occasion. His majesty was constantly taking abroad with him both money and men, the former being invariably spent and the latter severely wounded, before the king came home again. Occasionally some impression was made on a French fort, but the damage done to the enemy cost more

than it was worth to the English, whose patience and pockets continued to be taxed for the continental freaks of the foreign king they had permitted to rule over them. There were some able leaders on the side of the British, and among the most conspicuous may be cited Sir Cloudesley Shovel, who threw fresh coals on to the fire of enthusiasm that occasionally burned up among the English.

It would be wearisome to make a list of the various journeys of William to the Continent and back; nor, indeed, would the document amount to anything more interesting than a time-table, were we to take the trouble of preparing it. His people might with reason have complained that they never saw anything of him, unless he wanted something from them, and at length on the 12th of November, 1694, when William condescended to meet his Parliament and request the favour of £5,000,000 to "carry on the war," the opposition led by Mr. Harley, the statesman,—not the low comedian—forced upon nis majesty's acceptance a bill for the summoning of triennial Parliaments.

The assent he gave to this unpalatable measure has been attributed to the anxiety he felt on account of the dangerous illness of his wife, which may very naturally have incapacitated him for any serious resistance to a demand which Parliament urged with wonderful unanimity and energy. Poor Mary was seized with an attack of the small-pox, and it is a curious mark of the unfeeling character of the punsters of that happily remote age, that her malady was made the subject of a pun, which, as it was new at the period of which we are writing, we may be allowed for the three thousand and eighty-fourth time to chronicle.

When it was known that her majesty had caught

the small-pox, or rather that the small-pox had caught her majesty, it was remarked with a savageness that loses none of its ferocity from the fact of its being a bitter truth, that she was "very much to be pitted." Whether the queen ever heard this unfeeling and poverty-stricken joke, the chroniclers do not relate, and we cannot answer with certainty for its having been the death of her; but, as she actually died, the supposition we have suggested is exceedingly feasible. She expired on the 28th of December, 1694, in the thirty-third year of her age, to the great grief of her husband, and the regret of the nation in general; for though she was not particularly beloved either by one or the other during her life, there was a decent show of sorrow on the part of both at losing her. William no doubt felt the bereavement in more ways than one, for he had a servant the less to wait upon him, a dependant the less to bully, and a subject the less to domineer over. He lamented her less as a partner and friend than he missed her as a companion and housekeeper. She was certainly a devoted wife, but the devotion of a woman to her husband's interests is, after all, only a second selfishness, which, when viewed in a proper light, is far more prudent than respectable. Her inveterate dislike of her sister, with whom she refused to be reconciled even on her death-bed, convinces us that it was not altogether a warmth of heart that bound her to her husband; and we therefore set her down as a cold unfeeling person who could sacrifice all other ties for the sake of one which she believed to be of the most importance to her interests.

We should not, however, be doing justice to the character of Mary if we were to omit to state that she was exceedingly skilful in the use of the needle, and

by working curious devices on chairs or carpets, she in one way at least set a pattern to the female portion of the community.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.
WILLIAM THE THIRD.



Original Size

ILLIAM was now *en garçon* upon the throne of England; but, to use the words of a quaint commentator, "he missed his missus" very grievously. When spoken to on business, he for several weeks returned no other answer than an intimation that business might experience that fate which attends a dramatic production when an audience will not listen to a word of it. The Princess Anne, his sister-in-law, sought a reconciliation through Somers, the

lord-keeper, whose reception was not by any means as mild as a summer's day, and who congratulated himself on having the royal conscience rather than the royal temper in his keeping. The keeper, however, was determined to keep it up, and so importuned William to be reconciled to Anne, that his majesty ultimately roared out, "Do as you like, but don't bother me, for I'm not fit for business, nor indeed for anything." Somers arranged an interview between sister Anne and the king, who gave her St. James's Palace as a residence, and a quantity of the jewels, which the late queen, whom he called his "duck of diamonds," had left behind her. The Marlboroughs, who had gone quite out of favour with the king, but were the right and left hand of Anne, expected to have a share of the reconciliation, and an interest in its proceeds.

Early in 1695, a glut of unpaid washing-bills which were floating about the neighbourhood of all the barracks, threw a doubt on the honesty, or at all events on the prudence, of the soldiery; and it was determined by the Government that an inquiry should be made into the causes of this paltry irregularity. The disgraceful discovery was instantly arrived at, that the soldiers could not pay their scores because the gallant fellows had not received their salaries.

Corruption and bribery of the lowest kind in the highest quarters were soon brought to light, and it was proved that the secretary of the treasury had taken a large percentage on the money he had to pay, as a sort of bonus for giving himself the trouble to hand it over. Sir John Trevor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, turned out a shocking old rogue, and was found to have been in the habit of receiving bribes for putting questions from the chair, or for

smuggling measures through their various stages. He had, in fact, undertaken to get bills done for anyone who brought him a tempting *douceur*, and a sum of £1050 was distinctly traced to the pocket of the venerable knave from the promoters of the Orphans' Bill. He was punished by being compelled to put from the chair of the House the resolution that he, Sir John Trevor, was unworthy of sitting in the House, and deserved to be kicked out of it. The "Ayes" decidedly had it, and Sir John Trevor would have had it too, if he had not instantly withdrawn, to avoid the unpleasantness of forcible ejection. Mr. Hungerford, the chairman of the committee on the same bill, was also accused, when, yielding to a loud cry of "Turn him out!" mingled with occasional mutterings of "Throw him over!" the dis-honourable member sneaked away from the senate. A further series of corruptions would certainly have been detected had not William determined to avoid further scandal, or at all events further exposure, by dissolving the Parliament.

James was constantly urging his friend Louis to invade England, and he was at length persuaded to collect a fleet and army on the coast, while James himself sent over Sir George Barclay and the Duke of Berwick to attempt an insurrection. The idea of a couple of adventurers coming over to upset the Government was of itself absurd, and the affair was rendered more preposterous by Barclay having taken a lodging in Hatton Garden, where a garret formed his place of business for conducting the affairs of the conspiracy. A simple notification to "ring the top bell," was all that pointed out this nest of treason to those who took an interest in its progress. Even the modern accessories of a boy and a board-room, with a provisional committee, a dozen chairs, and a

dining-table, were wanting to this desperate scheme, and indeed, while Barclay was away in order to get his meals—for there was no cooking on the premises—a recommendation to put letters through the door, and leave messages with the porter at the lodge, formed the entire instructions upon which the subordinate conspirators had to act when they chanced, in the absence of their chief, to call at the chambers.

Such were the contemptible arrangements of this project for turning the thrown upside down, and burying, or at all events, bonnetting, William in the ruins of the outraged upholstery. We cannot be surprised that its progress was not by any means encouraging, but Barclay had heard of a plot to assassinate the king, in which one Sir William Perkins was concerned, and thus the since celebrated firm of Barclay and Perkins may be considered to have originated in a partnership project for brewing the storm of revolution. Barclay thought well of the scheme, and was introduced to one Porter; but in those days Barclay and Perkins turned up their noses at Porter, "who was a drunkard and a blab," and they therefore were unwilling to put any faith in him. Barclay, however, resolved to persevere in his regicide scheme, and applied to one Captain Fisher, who lived in King Street, Westminster, and was understood to be open to an offer as decidedly as if there were written over his door, "Murders carefully performed. Assassins' work in general."



Captain Fisher doesn't think he can do it at the price.

Original Size

The proposal of Barclay, whatever it may have been, was not sufficiently liberal; for Fisher would only undertake to kill one of the royal coach-horses between Hyde Park and St. James's, but he declined any higher responsibility at the price that was offered. Barclay called Fisher a fool, and they never came to terms; but the former resolved to make the attempt on William's life, and the romantic Green of Tumham, over which the king was about to pass, on a day appointed, was selected as the scene of the treasonable experiment. The party of assassins had swelled to thirty-five, who planted themselves in ambush behind some bushes, when news was brought that the king had changed his mind, and would not come to Turnham Green; "Which," says Burnet, "was enough to turn 'em pale with anger and disappointment." There being some fear that the plot would be discovered, Barclay sneaked off to France, abandoning his fellow-conspirators to their fate, and believing that his old companion Perkins would be nicely left in the lurch; but by a strange coincidence, that personage had entertained a similar notion with regard to his associate, and had got away first, so that the recreant couple had been equally deep in their cowardice and duplicity.

It appeared that Fisher, who had volunteered the horrible office of knacker upon the coach-horse of the king, disclosed to Lord Portland the particulars of the plot, and the result was that several more of the traitors, finding confession the order of the day, went forward to tell not only all they knew, but a great deal more that they had invented for the sake of having something to communicate. This glut of confidential intelligence was so embarrassing, that the Government did not know what to believe or what to doubt; but nevertheless a proclamation was issued, offering £1000 and a pardon to any gentleman involved in the scheme, who would be fool enough to criminate himself, and villain enough to betray his accomplices. There were, of course, several candidates for the cash, and disclosures at £1000 each poured in at such a rapid rate, that it was difficult to meet the demands made on the treasury, on account of the news for which the Government had advertised. To make a long story short, several were tried, found guilty, and executed, for having shared in the treasonable design against William, and among them was one Keys, a trumpeter, who was a mere instrument—like his own trumpet—in the hands of any one by whom he could be played upon.

William's popularity increased, on account of the plots that had been put into operation against him; for it is a beautiful trait in the English character, that the people will become suddenly attracted towards any one who seems to be an object of dislike to others. Unfortunately, however, this generosity is somewhat inconsistent in its nature, for it is usually accompanied by an excess of illiberality in an opposite direction, and if a man is a martyr to a spirit of hostility, the sympathy evinced for him by

the public is joined with a savage desire to make martyrs of his enemies. Upon this principle, poor Sir John Fenwick was pounced upon for having compassed or imagined the death of the king, and though there is every reason to believe that such an idea was quite out of the compass of his wildest imagination, he was brought to the scaffold.

It is doubtful, notwithstanding the fuss we now make—and, indeed, have been making ever since the event—about the glorious Revolution of 1688, whether we really had anything like full value for the trouble it occasioned us. However numerous the blessings we have since derived from it, we must contend that it did not pay in the first instance; for as long as England derived no other advantage than William for its king, the good achieved by the Revolution of 1688 must be considered rather more than dubious. He spent his own time and his new country's money in sustaining his own title against the attacks made upon it by foreign powers, whose interest in supporting the doctrine of the "right divine of kings to govern wrong," kept them constantly in a state of active sympathy with James, whose misconduct had caused his forfeiture of the crown, which would otherwise have been legitimately his beyond the power of any one on earth to take it away from him. William was consequently at perpetual warfare with some of the continental states; and it was only when he got into discredit with his subjects that he seemed to rise in favour with some of the absolute monarchs, who then, for the first time, appeared disposed to bear with him. Louis of France listened to the terms of an arrangement; but he never intended to keep faith with William, and was, in fact, intriguing with Spain to defeat the very project he pretended to be willing

to carry out with the duped majesty of England. It was evident that the British public did not look with favour upon the individual that had been chosen to enact the part of king; and though, like the frogs in the fable, the people had rejoiced in being relieved from the devouring stork of absolutism embodied in the Stuarts, the Dutch log of which William formed the type was quite as distasteful to the nation in general.

It would be most unprofitable to unravel the tangled thread of events that made up the complicated but most uninteresting annals of this worrying reign, which was distinguished by the multiplicity and the pettiness of the disputes between the prince and a portion of his people. The loggishness of the sovereign seemed to affect the whole nation with the loggerheads; and not only were parties arrayed against each other, but on some occasions the Lords and the Commons came into very serious collision. The disputes in which William was involved with foreign governments were exceedingly costly to his own country, but he finally, on the 7th of September, 1701, after having been a party to several treaties that had been either violated or "gone off," entered into a "second grand alliance" at the Hague, with various powers. By this arrangement all the parties were bound to provide men and money, which their people of course had to pay; and the emperor, who had made himself liable to furnish a contingency, was so excessively hard up, that he was compelled to borrow the money upon his quicksilver mines; but no silver, however quick, could keep pace with the rapidity with which the money was called for and got rid of.

We will now return for a few minutes to James the Second, who was in a very bad way at St. Germains,

and was understood to have been dying all the summer. At length, on Friday, the 2nd of September, he was taken very bad indeed with a fainting fit, but got better, until another and another still succeeded; and the last fit was stronger than the first. On Tuesday, the 13th, Louis came to his bedside to say "How d'ye do?" but poor James was unable to answer the polite and obliging inquiry, for he was almost without consciousness. Louis kindly endeavoured to comfort his last moments by promising to protect his family, and treat the nominal Prince of Wales as actual King of England, but this recognition was not likely to do much good either to the dead or the living, as the only parties who were capable of giving it effect, namely, the English people, would have nothing whatever to do with it. Poor James, who was dosed with a great deal of medicine, and swallowed no end of James's powders, was now beyond the aid of medical skill, and he died on the 16th of September, 1701, at the age of sixty-seven. An attempt was made to pitchfork this very indifferent sovereign into the Roman Calendar as a first-rate saint; but there has never been any disposition among the English to award him the honours of martyrdom.

William was by no means the thing in his own health, when the news of the death of James was brought to him. A report was indeed spread that, like a bill at thirty days, he had only a month to run; but this rumour was circulated by the friends of Louis the Fourteenth, who fancied that if William was once out of the way, the *grand monarque* might be as potent in Europe as the bull of fabled lore was at his ease in the china shop. William had been in Holland, where he was really dangerously ill; but he contrived to get back to England, where he dissolved

Parliament in November, 1701, and called a new one together, which met on the 31st of December, to see the old year out and the new year in, and for the despatch of business. The king made a long and rather an effective speech, which had been written expressly for the occasion by Lord Somers, and had a great effect in giving an impetus to the waning fidelity of the people towards the sovereign of their selection. They might, however, have exclaimed with the poet, that they "never loved a young—or old—gazelle," without the usual unhappy result; for just as they were getting to know William well, and love him—or at least to pretend to do so—he was attacked in such a manner as to make him "sure to die." He had been a great deal shaken by the severity of the winter; but it was hoped he would recover in the spring, which he probably might have done, but for an accident that befel him on the road between Kensington and Hammersmith. "A-hunting he would go, would go" in that savage suburb, whose wildness is remarkable to this day, and his horse coming to a block of stone, was unfortunate enough to find it a regular stumbling-block. William was thrown with some force, and experienced a fracture of the collar-bone, when, having been removed to Hampton Court, the medical men began to quarrel about the treatment of his majesty. They of course made no bones about setting the collar; but a dispute arose about the necessity for bleeding the king, and in the heat of the argument, the physicians all pulled at his pulse with such fury, that they unset the bone "while intending," says Burnet, "to make a dead set at one another." The doctors continuing fractious, the fracture got worse, and at length, on the 8th of March, 1702, the royal patient expired. He had reigned thirteen years and a half, and was in the

fifty-second year of his age, when the fatal catastrophe happened.

The character of William will not add much to the reputation of British royalty in former days, when sovereigns were so bad that they would never have been allowed to pass current in times like these, in which there is a disposition to examine closely the weight and quality of the metal. He was by no means popular when alive, and bad characters do not, like old port, improve by keeping. The state of parties during his reign made him the centre in which a great deal of odium met, for he happened to form in his own person the embodiment, or rather the representative, of certain principles which were regarded with the utmost aversion by many.

The most valuable attribute of William, which has handed him down as an object of respect and even of enthusiasm in the minds of some, is the fact of the question of constitutional monarchy having been settled in the affirmative by his elevation to the throne of England. His case is certainly valuable as a precedent, but its greatest value consists in the probability that its existence will spare the country hereafter from the disagreeable necessity of being obliged to follow it. English sovereigns have learned the possibility of their being set aside like James the Second, and replaced by one who, like William the Third, owed his power to the will of the people. Such Revolutions as that of 1688, notwithstanding the glorious character that belongs to it, are better as beacons for rulers than as precedents for the people, since a change of dynasty, however constitutionally effected, must be at all times an unpleasant, not to say a deplorable process.

William the Third is entitled to the very highest admiration for having succeeded in holding firmly a

position from which the slightest vacillation would have inevitably shaken him. His early stipulation for all the throne or none, and his repudiation of the right of his wife to interfere, though domestically harsh, was politically respectable. The constitution underwent during his reign some of the most substantial and valuable repairs that were ever bestowed upon it, either before or since, notwithstanding some very high-sounding nominal advantages that the country has in ancient and modern times experienced. It was in William's reign that the Commons took the purse-strings of the country tightly in hand, and the censorship of the Press was, during the same period, permitted to expire. The judges were secured in their places during good behaviour; and members of the Privy Council being compelled, by the Act of Settlement, to sign the measures they proposed, we obtained from William's reign the blessing of a responsible Cabinet. It is true that official heads fell more frequently before than since, but the great salubrity of the provision to which we allude is shown in the fact that it has secured the good conduct of ministers so effectually, as to have preserved their heads upon their shoulders. It is a curious truth that the National Debt increased marvellously during William's reign, and there would seem, therefore, to be some reason for the common assertion, that this tremendous liability is a mark of our national prosperity. It certainly proves our credit to be good, as a load of debt in the case of an individual would make it evident that his tradesmen had trusted him; but no one will contend that, on that account, he must be considered more prosperous.

It was the great increase of the Government expenses that had caused the augmentation of the

National Debt, and afforded another illustration of the infallible principle, that nothing good can be had without liberally paying for. We might get a republic done for us no doubt at a hundredth part—or less—of the cost of our present excellent constitutional monarchy; but we do not think any reasonable person would feel very anxious to try the cheap and nasty experiment.

Some historians who have preceded us, fall into what we consider the error of eulogising William as if he had been the author of all the good that occurred in his reign, when the fact is that a great deal was accomplished, not alone without his agency, but actually in spite of him. When he came, or rather when he was called to the throne, the nation had profited by experience, and had become equally sensible to the dangers of democratic excess and of absolute monarchy. The tyranny of the Republic, no less than that of the Stuarts, had pointed out the safety of a middle course between the two sorts of despotism; and William, as a very middling person in every respect, was well adapted for the situation that appeared to be made for him. It was owing to no particular merit on his part that his reign was not arbitrary, for he sometimes tried his hardest to make it so; but the good sense of the nation, sharpened by the troubles it had lately passed through, preserved it against further victimisation at the hands of either kings or demagogues.

As the first really constitutional sovereign, William is, we repeat, entitled to our respect and admiration; but we must not forget that the people themselves made the mould to which, we will admit, he was exceedingly well adapted, for he was pliable enough to take the right impress, and sufficiently firm to give body and substance to the nation's *beau ideal* of a

limited monarchy.

THE accession of Anne to the throne of her Annecestors, as Hume in a most humiliating attempt at humour hath it, was hailed with general satisfaction, for it usually happens that a new reign is welcomed on the old principle of "anything for a change," and most people expect that some good may come out of it. It will be remembered that Anne was originally a Miss Hyde, being the child of James by his first wife —the daughter of Old Hyde, afterwards Earl of Clarendon; and she had been married to the young man known among his familiar friends as "Georgey Porgey, Prince of Denmark."

It is a beautiful remark of Thomson, that "the women never can keep quiet;" and Anne soon realised this estimate of the female character by declaring war against France with the utmost promptitude. The Commons voted the supplies necessary.

CHAPTER THE THIRD. QUEEN ANNE.



Original Size

HE Dutch and the Germans perceiving that the King of France had "got no friends," felt that the time had arrived for hitting him, and echoed the English declaration of war, though their puny voices came upon the French monarch's ear like the penny whistle after the full-blown ophicleide. Marlborough was appointed *generalissimo* of the allied army, and he certainly proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him. He made the Low Countries lower than they had ever been before, and subsequently throwing himself upon Bavaria, he swept the independent elector before him, leaving that unhappy individual to make his election between flight and compromise.

On the 12th of August, 1704, Marlborough observed the enemy marking out a camp near Blenheim, and merely muttering to himself, "So so, my fine fellows; that's what you're after, is it?" he resolved on their instant discomforture. He determined to give battle, and on the 13th, notwithstanding a swampy country, which greatly tested his determination to stick at nothing, he commenced an attack in three columns, each of which behaved so gallantly as to have deserved a supplementary column to its memory. The contest was exceedingly fierce on both sides; but the superior skill of Marlborough rendered the English victorious. The general was rewarded by the grant of an estate, upon which was built a magnificent

mansion called Blenheim, after the place near which the battle was fought; and future Dukes of Marlborough have turned many an honest, though not a very honourable shilling, by sharing with the housekeeper and other servants the gratuities received from the visitors to this splendid monument of a country's generosity.

England could not rest satisfied without interfering in the disputes of other states, and had lent a helping hand to the Archduke Charles of Austria, who was playing a sort of game at bob-cherry with the Spanish crown, which hung suspended over his head in a very tempting manner. A fleet was sent under Admiral Sir George Booke to convey the archduke to Lisbon; and Booke, who was as cunning as an old crow, proceeded towards Barcelona, which would have been nuts for him had he succeeded in taking it. In this attempt, however, he failed; but putting his vessel astern, and altering her gib towards Gibraltar, he made an attack on the fortress, which he took with the utmost facility. For this service the conqueror was rewarded with an empty vote of thanks, and he had no sooner got the copy of the resolution than he put it in his pipe and smoked it—according to some; or, as others say, he merely lighted his pipe with the valueless document.

Domestic affairs did not progress very pleasantly, and the English began to quarrel with the Scotch, who evinced their national propensity to come to the scratch in a very annoying manner. The Parliaments of the two countries came into decided collision and the English legislature having prohibited the importation of Scotch heifers, "there arose," says Swindle, "a heffervescence of the most deplorable character." The queen proposed that there should be an immediate union of the two Parliaments; but the

little matter could not be arranged; and as the two negatives could hot be induced to make an affirmative, Anne put an end to both by a dissolution.

In the summer of 1705, Marlborough, who had been waiting on the banks of the Blue Moselle, forced the French lines, and very hard lines they proved both to the vanquished and the victors.

We must here be permitted to introduce the beautiful episode of Sir Isaac Newton, and turn from the turmoils of war to the peaceful pursuits of science. We are sure we shall not be accused of irrelevancy if we step aside from the rushing stream of history which, like a cataract, is hurrying us rapidly along, and enjoy a few moments of calm reflection on the life and merits of the great philosopher.

Isaac Newton was born in 1642, and came as unusually little into the world as he went greatly, and indeed gigantically, out of it. His mother declared he might have been put into a quart pot at his birth, and therefore, had he been always judged by the rule of "measures not men," he would never have attained the elevation he has arrived at. In early boyhood he displayed a great mechanical turn, and buying a box of carpenter's tools, he got perhaps the first insight into plane geometry, and deduced from a few wise saws, a variety of modern instances. He was very fond of measuring time, but not by its loss alone, for he constructed a wooden clock, and ascertained the position of the sun by driving nails into the wall—hitting, no doubt, the right one on the head very readily. Having a shrewd suspicion that there was something in the wind, he would occupy himself in leaping with it and against it, to ascertain its power. These pranks did not elevate him much in

his class, of which he was generally at the bottom; for the routine of his school education did not include trials of strength with old Boreas, and the other exciting pursuits in which Master Isaac Newton indulged himself. In course of time he was removed to Cambridge, where the works of Des-Cartes fell into his hands, and where those ponderous volumes, from their soporific effect upon youth, often fall out of the hands they have fallen into. Young Newton grasped them with energy, and he soon profited amazingly by their contents, which set his own mind at work to add to the stock of discovery already in existence. During the great plague in 1665, he was compelled to leave Cambridge for a rural retirement, though the rustication was not of the ordinary kind: and while sitting in an orchard, "his custom sometimes of an afternoon," an apple fell upon his head with considerable violence.



Discovering of the Laws of Gravitation by Isaac Newton.

Original Size

Beginning to reason from this "*argumentum ad*

hominem," he asked himself why every other object did not at once fall to the earth; and he even speculated on the possibility of the moon alighting heavily, and leaving him in a literally moon-struck condition. It was some time before he discovered the laws of gravitation by which the apple had been carried to his head; and it is not true, as is commonly believed, that he was struck all of a heap with the great truths that he has given to posterity. They were published in 1687, at the expense of the Royal Society, under the title of the "Principia;" and it is a curious fact, that the critics of the day were not altogether pleased with it. Some few pronounced it "a work that ought to be on every gentleman's sideboard," and our old friend, the evening paper, patronised it as a production that might "repay perusal;" * but some very learned, very cold, very dull, and very stupid, "gentlemen of the press" "regretted that Mr. Newton should have wasted so much time upon a work of such a description." They were angry with him for what they considered his levity in popularising serious matters, and advised him to keep his hands off the moon, which was far too lofty a subject for him to meddle with.

** A curious puzzle has been suggested by a celebra arithmetician, who has expressed a desire to know of the works that the reviewers say will "repay pe likely to "repay the printer."*

It has been noticed as a very unaccountable circumstance, that Newton never made any important addition to scientific discovery after he had completed his forty-fifth year; though he lived to be eighty-four, and had therefore got beyond the period at which the poet's apostrophe, "*O Vir be-*

eighty," might have been addressed to him. He was exceedingly fond of tobacco, and it is believed that he felt more at home in his astronomical reflections when he could envelop himself in a cloud of his own blowing. The old saying, that "There is no smoke without fire," received an apt confirmation from the fact that Newton was scarcely ever without a pipe in his mouth during the most brilliant and blazing period of his genius.

We now return to Anne, who, *anno* 1705, went to Cambridge, where she knighted Mr. Newton, who was the Mathematical Professor at Trinity College. We feel we ought not to pass over in silence a piece of wonderful self-denial on the part of a lawyer, which gives to this reign a peculiarity that ought to make it stand apart from all that have preceded or followed it. There had been formerly an old custom of making a present to the Lord Chancellor on New Year's Day, at the cost of the practitioners, who usually contributed about £1500, which previous keepers of the royal conscience had most unconscientiously pocketed. To the great honour of Lord Chancellor Cowper be it spoken, he declined the proffered bonus, which appeared to him to resemble somewhat too closely a bribe, and thus set an early example of disinterestedness, by which the tone of judicial morality was improved, and has at last reached the perfection we have at the present day the satisfaction of witnessing.

The subject of the Union between England and Scotland, which had from time to time been discussed, was at length taken into serious consideration at a place called the Cockpit, from which the reader must not infer that it was considered as a sporting event, and that the betting men were chiefly interested in promoting it. After a

great deal of disagreement, the preliminaries were ultimately settled, and on the 6th of March, 1707, the royal assent was given to the Act of Union. There were no less than twenty-five articles, by the majority of which the Scotch had been cunning enough to make the best bargain for themselves; and they had taken care that if the British Lion got the lion's share, they would at least secure the fox's perquisites. The Union took effect from the 1st of May, and the queen went in state to St. Paul's, to celebrate the event with due solemnity.

The 22nd of October, in the same year, derives a mournful interest from the loss of poor Shovel, whose ship got scuttled on the rocks of Scilly, and though Shovel himself went at it "poker and tongs" to save the vessel, his own and two others were involved in the same* calamity.

On the 28th of October, 1708, the queen lost her husband, Prince George of Denmark, who died of asthma at Kensington. His malady of course prevented him from having a voice in public affairs; but, if he had had one, he would certainly have been afraid of using it. He combined the mildness of the moonbeam with the stupidity of the jackass, and not only had he been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but he had become one entire spoon—fiddle-head and all—in his excessive pliability. He was, however, one of those spoons that made very little stir, and his removal from the busy scene of life left a gap that was scarcely perceptible. Within little better than three months, both Houses of Parliament addressed the queen, imploring her to marry again, which shows that they did not estimate very highly her grief at the loss of her first husband. Her majesty's reply contained no specific answer to the petition, but intimated her belief that a decided

response was not expected by the applicants.

On the 5th of November in the same year a political parson, named Dr. Sacheverel, began to raise the since famous cry of "Church in danger," which, like that of "Wolf," has been since so frequently and foolishly set up, that it stands a chance of being neglected when it really may require attention. The object of all the rant in which this noisy churchman indulged, was to obtain popularity, flavoured with a spice of martyrdom, and his opponents being silly enough to fall into the trap, they kept up the ball for him with a vivacity that must have equalled his most sanguine desire. Like a shuttlecock, that must drop to the ground if its elevation is not secured by frequent blows, Sacheverel would have tumbled irredeemably to the earth, if he had not been kept aloft by the knocks he experienced. He was ultimately exalted into the position of a delinquent standing to take his trial at the bar of the House of Lords; and when he was found guilty of having preached a sermon, warning the public of danger to the Church, he had reached the highest point of glory in the estimation of the large mass of people who are under the influence of bigotry and prejudice. He was condemned to forbear from preaching for three years; but his sentence not excluding him from accepting a good living, one was placed at his disposal immediately afterwards. The reverend sufferer for conscience' sake eventually got something still better, in the form of the living of St. Andrew's, Holbom, where, finding it no longer worth his while to quarrel with the Government, he sought a vent for his turbulent disposition in repeated rows with his parishioners. His first sermon after his new appointment sold forty thousand copies, and a little calculation will give some idea of what the reverend

gentleman's martyrdom brought him in from first to last in the shape of livings, copyrights, and other contingencies that arise out of a well-managed popularity.

In the latter end of 1711, some very disreputable disclosures, in which the Duke of Marlborough and Mr. Walpole were chiefly involved, were brought before the House of Commons. Marlborough, not satisfied with his pay, pensions, and other emoluments, had been taking a percentage on every transaction in which he had been confidentially concerned; while Walpole, in his capacity of Secretary at War, had been playing the same game as the illustrious soldier. Marlborough and his wife were in the enjoyment of upwards of £60,000 a year, so that there was no excuse for them on the score of poverty; and even if they had been in want of cash, they might have done what, as we have already hinted, their successors have done since, namely, shown Blenheim to the public, and shared with their own domestics the daily proceeds. The duke and duchess were deprived of their offices, while Mr. Walpole was expelled from the House of Commons, amid a chorus of "Serve him right!" from nearly the whole of his fellow-countrymen.

Marlborough was further accused by Lord Paulet of having knocked his own officers on the head, in order to be enabled to sell their commissions; but this would seem to have been a most superfluous piece of atrocity, for he might have easily got their heads knocked off in a more regular and reputable manner, by exposing them to the blows of the enemy. The duke challenged Lord Paulet for having made this assertion; but after an interchange of hostile messages, the seconds contrived so to complicate the business as to lose sight of the real

matter of dispute, and the duel was prevented. The reputation of Marlborough was so damaged by what had taken place, that he obtained permission of the queen to go abroad, and he crossed over to Ostend, in the vague hope that a sea voyage might have the same effect it is said to produce on a bottle of Madeira, and cause an improvement of his quality.

The disgrace of the British general had been fortunately delayed till the period when his services were no longer required, for the treaty of Utrecht, which was signed on the 30th of March, 1713, secured the peace of Europe. By this celebrated arrangement the Protestant succession in England was formally recognised; the crowns of France and Spain were split into two, giving those countries one apiece; the harbour of Dunkirk was demolished, and other little matters of difference settled to the satisfaction of all parties, except the Emperor of Germany, who stood aside in a corner by himself, objecting to everything.

Just before the close of the year, while political matters of importance were on foot, the gout laid Queen Anne by the heels, at Windsor, and the funds suffered in sympathy with the toe of royalty. There was a rapid run upon the bank; but the gout abating so far as to enable her majesty to bear the weight of a shoe, the pressure was relieved immediately and the country stood much as before, which may also be said of the sovereign.



Queen Anne going to open Parliament.

Original Size

On the 2nd of March, 1714, the queen came down in a sedan to open Parliament. Her use of the chair arose from her being very chary of her foot, which retained some of the effects of the havoc that gout had performed upon it. In the course of her speech she took the opportunity of assuring the House that the Protestant succession was not in danger, and the House of Commons subsequently assured itself of the same fact—as far as words could go—in a resolution that was carried by a large majority. These repeated assurances proved more than anything else that the Protestant succession was not quite so safe as the queen and the Parliament could have desired, and a number of precautionary measures directed against the Pretender and the Jacobites furnished still stronger proofs that the Government really entertained the fears it seemed so very anxious to repudiate.

On the 29th of July, 1714, the queen, who was almost tired out by the disputes of her ministers, fell into a lethargy, and the Council, who had been quarrelling in the Cockpit, adjourned to Kensington.

At this critical juncture, an individual of the name

of Mr. Craggs suddenly started on to the canvas of history as a writer of a letter to the Elector of Brunswick, apprising him of the perilous condition of the queen, and telling him that his succession would be quietly provided for. On the 1st of August, poor Anne expired of dropsy, in the fiftieth year of her age, the thirteenth of her reign, the third of her gout, and the first of her lethargy.

In person, Anne was of the middle size, as far as height was concerned; but if we look at her as a piece of measurement goods, and take her by her bulk, we shall have to put upon her a very different estimate. It cannot be said that she was one of Nature's favourites, though Nature had certainly made much of her, and perhaps more than the queen herself would have desired. Her hair was dark brown, and her complexion a sort of clear mahogany, while her nose standing prominently out from a very round face, gave her something the appearance of a perpendicular sun-dial. Her voice was as clear as a bell, and her tongue as active as the clapper. Her capacity was good, but her acquirements miserably few, and her mind therefore presented a resemblance to a fine site for building, which had remained uncovered for want of the necessary capital. She was very fond of hunting, but she had a very odd way of showing her fondness, for she used to follow the hounds in a pony chaise, which of course became a vehicle for a good deal of merriment. All historians concur in saying that she lived very fast, but whether it was in eating or in drinking that her weakness, or rather her strength, was shown, the various authorities are not yet agreed upon. She was a mother to her people, a master to her husband, a pattern to her own sex, and a terror to ours. She was obstinately attached to her own way, and it was only

the fortunate feebleness of her intellect that prevented her from developing herself into that gigantic nuisance, a strong-minded woman. Though her own mental powers were not sufficient to throw lustre on her reign, it was rendered glorious by numerous men of learning and genius who were the contemporaries of her majesty. We have already enjoyed a paragraph or two with Newton, and we must not forget Locke, who furnished so many keys to the understanding and the difficult arts of government.

Considering the fuss that has lately been made about the merit of having originated penny and twopenny publications, we ought not to forget that the modern claimants to the honour of the idea did but steal it from Steele, whose "Tatler," started in 1709, was followed by the "Spectator" and the "Guardian." To the more recent projectors of cheap periodicals we are quite ready to allow the originality of their assertion, that their speculations are not intended for their own profit, but to fulfil exclusively the great purpose of benefiting the community. In compliance with these large hearted and benevolent intentions, we may, we suppose, look with confidence to the day when the produce will be paid over for the benefit of the people, whom the existing race of cheap periodical proprietors love so very much better than they do themselves, if we are to believe their protestations and their prospectuses.

We may at all events say for the reign of Anne, that it was much freer than the reign of Victoria from these wondrous professions of disinterestedness, which we have been waiting in vain, for the last ten years, to see carried into practice.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.
GEORGE THE FIRST.



Original Size

T is not without some feeling of humiliation and regret that the historian finds England so badly off for a sovereign as to be obliged to borrow one from abroad, and her throne in the seventeenth century, like her stage of the nineteenth, to be indebted for its support to foreign adaptations. The British Lion must have been a poor cub in those degenerate days, for there does not seem to have been a roar of remonstrance from that indifferent beast when the Elector of Hanover quietly took the crown from the royal bandbox, caused it to be altered to suit a gentleman's instead of a lady's head, and, using the sceptre for a walking stick, coolly stepped into the kingly office.

This somewhat more than middle-aged gentleman

was the eldest son of Ernest Augustus, first Elector—and anything but an independent elector—of Brunswick, and of the Princess Sophia, granddaughter to James the First, through whom he had pretensions to a good title, though, oddly enough, the Stuart family being repudiated, the only legitimate portion of his claim was that which the country refused to recognise. It seemed, however, that England, after its numerous wars of succession, which had formed a long succession of wars, was resolved upon putting up with anything for peace and quietness—a contented disposition of which we have long experienced the blessings, inasmuch as it has given us a family of sovereigns under whose constitutional sway the country has enjoyed an unexampled degree of prosperity and happiness.

George the First was a sober, decent, steady-going person of fifty-four when he arrived to undertake the superintendence of England, by the day, week, month, or year; and, in fact, to do monarch's work in general. He was proclaimed king in London, on the 1st of August, 1714, but was in no particular hurry to enter upon his new dignity, for he only arrived, *via* Greenwich, on the 18th of September, and his coronation took place on the 20th of October following. He was of course old enough to know pretty well what he was about; and though he had attained that respectable maturity which, among the feathered tribe, is believed to form a protection against capture by chaff, he seems to have acted on the impression that younger birds might certainly be caught by the same unsatisfactory material. His first plan, therefore, upon his arrival, was to go about uttering what he called his "maxim," which he said was "never to abandon his friends, to do justice to all the world, and to fear no man." This egotistical puff

for his own qualities may have been politic, but it was by no means dignified, and reminds us more of the old self-laudatory naval song, commencing "We tars have a maxim, d'ye see," than of any language or sentiment becoming to the mouth and mind of a monarch. If the English people had put upon the clap-trap sentiment of the Hanoverian its true interpretation, they would have seen that it pledged him more to his old subjects than engaged him to his new ones; and the result of his reign quite justified the view we are disposed to take of the meaning of his "maxim."

Immediately on the death of Anne, the Privy Council had met and deputed the Earl of Dorset to go over and apprise George of his accession to the Crown, when the earl mixed up the announcement with so many fulsome compliments, that flattery took the name of Dorset butter—a figure that has remained in force from those days to the present.

One of the best, and perhaps the boldest acts of the Council, was the appointment of Mr. Addison—the celebrated contributor to what was termed *par excellence* the P. P. or popular periodical of the day—to a post in the Government. The late ministry had been ignominiously displaced, and Bolingbroke used to dangle about at the door of the Council-room with a bag of papers in his hand, expecting, or at least hoping to be called in, while menials were instructed to deride, or, as the modern phrase has it, to "chaff" him in the passages. Bolingbroke was mean enough to brook even this for the chance of place; but he would occasionally turn round and shake his fist, including his bag, in a menacing manner at the crew who passed upon him these insults. Occasionally they would slap him on the back, exclaiming, "Well, Bolly, my boy, you are indeed a regular out-and-

outer." Nor can it be doubted that, had the air been popular at the period, the Ethiopian melody of "Who's dat knocking at de door?" would have been frequently sung or whistled in the face of Bolingbroke by the scamps in the waiting-room.



George the First putting on a clean Collar.

Original Size

The king had only just arrived, and had merely gone into his bedroom to put on a clean collar—that of the Order of the Garter, if we may hazard a shrewd guess—when a party of Whigs rushed in, and began to ear-whig him with the utmost industry. In fact, the touting that took place for the vacant offices can only be imagined by an individual who has once landed at Boulogne, and found him-self torn to pieces by the hirsute representatives of some fifty hotels, each anxious to accommodate the new arrival. The whole of the Whig party pounced upon George, and thrust their pretensions before him with the perseverance of the class of Frenchmen, commonly called commissioners, to whom we have alluded. As these persons snatch at a traveller's cloak, walking-stick, or carpet-bag, the Whig touters almost snatched at gold sticks, official portfolios, or anything else they could lay their hands upon. "Allow me to take charge of your conscience, sir,"

roared Lord Cowper; "you'll find it very heavy to carry, sir; pray give it to me, sir; I'll take it down for you, sir;" and thus the Chancellorship was in a measure seized by this determined place-hunter. "You'll lose that privy seal, sir, if you don't take care," bellowed the Earl of Wharton; "you had much better entrust it to me; there are some very bad characters about just now,"—and thus, by a mixture of warning and worry, the privy seal was secured for himself by the rapacious nobleman.

Bolingbroke, after hanging about the official passages for a short time longer, now listening at the door, now peeping through the keyhole, and alternately bullied or bantered by his more fortunate rivals as they passed to and fro, resolved on flying to the Continent. Several significant exclamations of "You'd better be off!" "Come, come, this won't do!" and "We can't have a parcel of idle fellows lurking about the Treasury!" convinced him that he had nothing to hope, and everything to fear from the new Parliament. He accordingly took from the corner of his sitting-room an old official wand, and sobbing out, "Farewell, my once cherished stick!" he cut it for ever. The monopoly of all the snug places by the Whigs rendered them extremely overbearing, and as "Britons never, never, never will be slaves" to the same party for any considerable length of time, they became impatient of Whig arrogance, and ready for an alterative in the shape of some regular old Tory tyranny. The king became unpopular, and his birthday passed over without the smallest notice, as if to hint to him that he was not to be borne at all, unless he changed his system.

George, instead of conciliating, attempted to crush the disaffected, and like a bad equestrian mounted on a restive horse, he began pulling at the rein ana

tightening the curb, instead of mildly but firmly exclaiming, "Wo, wo, boys! steady, boys; steady!" to his now somewhat frisky people. The Habeas Corpus Act—the great British Free List—was suspended, and the Pretender was used as a pretence to alarm the people, and reconcile them to the most arbitrary measures. The Riot Act was in this year, 1715, read a third time and passed, but it has this peculiarity, which distinguishes it from every other legislative Act, that it requires to be read again on every occasion of its being brought into requisition.

These measures only added fuel to the fire that was now setting the country in a blaze; and even the University of Oxford was threatened with assault by Major-General Pepper, who was the first to make the now venerable joke about mustard, which, with all our courage, we confess we dare not chronicle.*

** The curious reader is referred to "Joe Miller." the edition brought out under the title of "The Fa Miller," is the best for the student's purposes.*

In the north, the insurrection took a very bold form, and Mr. Forster, a gentleman of great ability—a barrister, we believe—joined with the Earl of Derwentwater, who was ready with all his retainers, the only kind of retainers, by the way, with which his learned colleague was at all familiar. Being joined by some gentlemen in blue bonnets, who had come from over the border, they proclaimed the Pretender, and would have seized upon Newcastle, with the intention of sparing the coals and sacking only the city; but the gate had been shut, and the whole party was not strong enough to force it open. They retired therefore to Hexham, and a literary gentleman among them bewailed their failure as he sat in the

coffee-room of the inn at Hexham, in doleful hexameters. They next retired by way of Lancaster to Preston, whose Pans they hoped would prove preserving pans to themselves; but General Wills being sent to attack them, proved the fact, that where there are the Wills there are always the ways of accomplishing an object.

Mr. Forster, hearing that there was no hope, despatched a trumpeter—a gentlemanly young man, who was quite equal to a solo of the kind—to negociate a treaty. He could get no other answer than an intimation that the rebels might expect to be slaughtered; and, being very much cut up by the news, they wisely resolved to surrender. The noblemen and officers of the party were sent to London, where they were led through the streets bound together and pinioned, which caused one of them to wish that his pinions were those of a bird, so that he might be enabled to fly away from his captivity. Though the Pretender must have known, or might have known, that his pretentions were about as hopeless as they could possibly be, he resolved on landing in Scotland, and he positively arrived with nothing more than a special train of six gentlemen. He came in disguise, and passed through Aberdeen without being known, till he came to Feterosse, where he was met by the Earl of Mar and thirty nobles of the first quality, though all their quality could not of course make up for their lamentable deficiency in quantity. When the Pretender saw his friend's beggarly show of adherents, he addressed Mar with great levity, telling him he had been "a sad Mar to his hopes," and indulged in other poor frivolities. "As I've come, however," he added, "I may as well be proclaimed." And the ceremony was gone through with mock gravity. He next proceeded to

Scone, "for," said he, "we must have a coronation, you know." And he behaved altogether in such a manner as to lead us to believe that he relished the ludicrous points of his own very ridiculous position. Having gone so far in the mockery, he crowned the absurdity instead of being crowned himself, by making a speech to his grand council, intimating that he had no arms to fight with, no ammunition to load the arms with if he possessed any, and no money to purchase the ammunition if he felt disposed to try its effects upon his enemies. Under these circumstances, he intimated that his presence among them should be regarded as a flying visit, just to say "How d'ye do?" and "Good-bye"; after which, with the latter salutation on his lips, he popped into a boat, and was "off again" for the Continent.

Instead of allowing this miserable rebellion to die a natural death—we cannot say that it ended in smoke, for the rebels had no money to purchase gunpowder—the Government of the day had the rashness to keep the thing alive by prosecuting those who had been concerned in it. Half a dozen nobles were seized and put upon their trial, when the poor creatures whimpering out an acknowledgment of their guilt, were sentenced to death, and two were taken to the scaffold. A third, the Lord Nithesdale, had also been condemned; but his mother having come to see him in prison, they got up between them a dramatic incident, by effecting an exchange of dress; and while the lady remained in gaol like a man, the gentleman walked away in female attire.

The prosecutions were not limited to the chiefs of this rebellious movement—if that can be called a movement which stuck fast in its very first steps—but some of the humblest adherents, or suspected adherents, of the Pretender's cause were included in

the proceedings taken by the Government. Several were hanged, and some hundreds experienced what was facetiously termed the "royal mercy," by undergoing transportation for life to North America. This unnecessary and injudicious rigour had the effect of making the Government so unpopular, that, although according to the Triennial Act the Parliament ought to have been dissolved, the ministers were afraid of appealing to the country, and formed the audacious determination to introduce a Septennial Act, which, by the force of perseverance and impudence combined, was positively carried. Though George resided personally in England, his heart had never quitted Hanover, and he was continually keeping his eye upon the aggrandisement of that paltry electorate. For this purpose, he made free use of English money; and having intelligence at all times of the small duchies that the poverty of their owners occasionally threw into the market, he picked up those of Bremen and Verden at a very low figure.

Among the inconveniences occasioned to this country by allowing the sceptre to get into foreign hands, was the involving of England in foreign quarrels about foreign interests. Spain being in an unpleasant predicament, called upon George the First to join a league in her favour, and threatened to repudiate his claims to his dismal little duchies of Bremen and Verden, if he did not take the step that was required of him. As he could not well commit himself thus far, a war was commenced against England, and a Spanish expedition under the Duke of Ormond was fitted out to make a descent upon Scotland. With that happy adroitness in ruling the waves for which Britannia has long been celebrated, she caused them to rise as one billow against the

hostile fleet, which was rapidly dispersed by the ocean's uppishness. Though the buoyancy of Britain, assisted by the boisterous energy of the sea, defeated the attempts of foreign powers, the internal condition of the country was far from satisfactory. King George neither comprehended the character nor the language of his new subjects, and a good understanding between the prince and the people was therefore impossible. His majesty spent as much time and as much money as he could upon the Continent, leaving his ministers to propose what measures they pleased, while he transmitted by post his consent to them, without knowing, or caring to inquire their object.

Perhaps, however, the heaviest blow that England's prosperity ever received was the result of one of the most marvellous instances on record of a co-operation between knavery and folly. To add to the extraordinary character of the infatuation we are about to record, the scheme that led to it was not original, and the victims had consequently received a warning by which they failed to profit. A Scotchman of the name of Law had swindled the whole of France by starting a company to pick up fortunes in the Mississippi, which proved one of the most gigantic misses ever known; but as one batch of fools will make many, it was calculated, shrewdly enough, that the Mississippi hoax, instead of putting people on their guard against fraud, would have just the effect of preparing them to be taken in by it.

A scrivener named Blunt—a fellow of uncommon sharpness, whose name is emblematical of a great partiality for cash—suggested a concern called the South Sea Company, which was to purchase all the debts due from the Government to all trading corporations, and thus become the sole creditor of

the State. The National Debt was in fact to be bought up, and as there is a pretty clear understanding that the National Debt never will, or never can be paid, the advantages of the project must, upon the slightest reflection, have appeared at best apocryphal. The scrip in this grand concern came out heavy, for the securities were flatter than the public, when a bright idea flashed across the mind of Blunt for raising the wind and puffing up the shares in the South Sea Scheme to the utmost height that could be desired. He spread a report through paid paragraphs in the newspapers, that Gibraltar and Minorca were about to be exchanged for Peru, and the whole world went mad at the peru-sal. The story of this monstrous piece of universal insanity would afford a fine subject for an article from the pen of Dr. Forbes Winslow; * and indeed had he lived in the eighteenth century, the whole population would have been worthy to become the patients of that able and experienced master of the science of mental pathology.

** See the "Journal of Psychological Medicine and M Pathology." Edited by Forbes Winslow, M.D.*

The mental aberration of the public proved itself in the most preposterous demand for shares from persons willing to stake not only every penny they had, but many pounds which they had not. The proverb that "one fool makes many," found a parallel in the fact that one knave makes many; for the South Sea schemer called into existence a number of imitators, all anxious to profit by the credulity which he had excited. One adventurer made his fortune one fine morning by issuing a prospectus intimating that he would secure to every one who paid two guineas

on the instant, an annuity of £100. The preliminary deposits poured in so plentifully that he obtained two thousand subscribers in a few hours, though the details of the plan were only to be forthcoming at some future day. We regret exceedingly our inability to form an opinion on the merits of this project, for its originator having been called away suddenly on the very night after the first day's subscriptions had been paid in, pursued his way to the Continent by the light of the moon, and has never yet returned. Charity bids us presume that he died in the effort to mature the gigantic idea he had conceived for enriching those who had honoured him with their cash and their confidence. A few little episodes of this description tended to shake the faith of the public in the great parent hoax, and the monster bubble, formed, as it were, by the whole of the South Sea concentrated into one tremendous drop, gave symptoms of dropping to the ground. Those who witnessed the Railway Mania of 1845 can form a conception—though a very inadequate one—of the madness that prevailed in the early part of the eighteenth century, under the cunning influence of Blunt, who, strange to say, was a living illustration of a marvellous misnomer, for this Blunt was the essence of sharpness, at a time when obtuseness was the characteristic of all the rest of the community.

The amiable weakness which, in 1845, induced the whole population to concur in planning railways for every hole and corner of the world, the philanthropy which would have whirled the Cherokees through the air at sixty miles an hour and twenty per cent, profit, or brought Kamschatka, Chelsea, the Catskill Mountains, Knightsbridge, and Niagara, all into a group by the aid of trunk-lines or branches connecting the whole of them together, the mixture

of benevolence and self-interest which suggested these noble achievements, cannot bear a comparison with the universality of the movement that the South Sea Bubble called forth. Its bursting, however, nearly swamped the entire nation, for the bubble had been so extensive that scarcely any one escaped its influence, or could keep his head above water, when the awful inundation occurred.

Royalty itself had not been exempt from the prevailing madness, and the Prince of Wales had been appointed Governor of the Welsh Copper Company, which was to have supplied saucepans to the whole civilised world, and kept the pot boiling for the inhabitants of every corner of the globe. The capital proposed to be raised for all the various bubbles in agitation, amounted to £300,000,000, though few of the concerns had even the capital of the *soi-disant* millionaire in the farce, who having made promises of boundless liberality, and undertaken to make the fortune of the waiting-maid of his *inamorata*, finished with a tender of a threepenny piece as an earnest of his future bounty.

It would form a curious chapter in this or any other history, to trace the fluctuations in South Sea Stock; but we cannot afford to convert our pages into a share list of the eighteenth century. Upon the first fall in the stock, attempts were made to preserve it from a further decline, first by shutting up the transfer books, and secondly by preposterous promises of impossible dividends. The directors kindly guaranteed fifty per cent, for twelve years, from and after the ensuing Christmas; and it is probable that the old saying, that "Such a thing is coming, and so is Christmas" first arose out of the South Sea Bubble, for the stock fell from eight hundred to one hundred and fifty, between the 26th

of August, when the prospect was held out, and the 30th of September, when people had got a shrewd suspicion that it would never be realised.

In proportion to the extreme credulity the nation had shown, was the savage disappointment it now exhibited. The directors of the South Sea Company who had been encouraged in their audacious swindling by the blind rapacity of their dupes—who in their haste to devour everything they could lay hold of, swallowed every knavish story they were told—the directors, who after all had merely speculated on the avarice and stupidity of the rest of the world, were assailed with the utmost vindictiveness. Their conduct was brought before Parliament; some of them were taken into custody, ana all were called upon to explain the grounds on which these calculations of profit were made, though the stockholders were not required to state what reasons they had for believing with their eyes shut, all the evidently fallacious promises that had been held out to them. A confiscation of the property of most of the directors took place, and an inquiry before Parliament proved that several members of the Legislature, and even ministers, had received considerable slices of South Sea Stock for their assistance in promulgating this monster swindle.

The ruin that had been brought upon all classes of society, was aggravated by a necessity for further taxation to carry on the increased expense of Home Government, and of the costly foreign relations which the country had entered into. It has unfortunately happened that the foreign relations of England have been generally very poor relations, and they have consequently taken a great deal out of her pockets by their necessities, while they have added little to her respectability by their position and

character. Like poor relations in general, they were a dreadful drag, and it was necessary to contribute to their support by putting fresh burdens on the British people. Among these was a tax on malt, which, being extended to Scotland, caused a general fermentation; for the Scotch were always remarkable for their love of whisky, which they easily promoted into a love of liberty, when it suited at once their pocket and their purpose to assume the attitude of patriots. The tax—not the whisky—was, however, crammed down their throats in spite of the cry they had succeeded in getting up for untaxed toddy, which they, of course, pronounced to be the safeguard of their constitution, as everything else becomes in its turn when it seems to be placed in jeopardy. The rioters, however, could get no persons of rank or influence to join in the great whisky movement, which the masses had taken into their heads, and order was restored after a few lives had been sacrificed.

On the 2nd of November, 1726, Sophia Dorothea, nominally, but never practically, Queen of England, died in the prison at Hanover, to which her husband had committed her. This lady had formed an attachment for a Count Koningsmark, whom the king, her husband, then Elector of Hanover, unceremoniously butchered in an anteroom. As the historians who have preceded us call his majesty a strong-minded man, we presume that there is something intellectually vigorous in the commission of a murder, though we confess we are at a loss to discover the extraordinary fact which other writers appear to have recognised. Not very long after the death of his wife George repaired—or rather, he went very much out of repair, for his health was greatly damaged—to Hanover. He was taken very ill on the road, and was seized with apoplexy to the

unhappy perplexity of his attendants, whom he nevertheless desired to "push along and keep moving." They accordingly did so, and the royal carriage was hastened, but his majesty was only being driven to extremities, for on the 11th of June, 1727, he expired at Osnaburgh, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.

The particulars of his death have been very circumstantially given, and as they are rather characteristic of George the First, we will give them with our accustomed brevity. He had been in perfect health on the previous evening, and ate a hearty supper of sheep's hearts, including a tremendous melon, to which the melancholy result has been attributed. Resuming his journey towards Hanover at 3 a.m. he was seized with griping pains, but believing that one mischief would correct another, he fancied the supper that had disagreed with him would be counteracted in its consequences by a dinner, which he began lustily calling for. When it was placed before him he could eat nothing—an incapacity so unusual with George, or as some called him, Gorge the First, that his attendants were seized with alarm and astonishment. Having again entered his carriage, he exclaimed in quaint French, "*C'est fait de moi*" which we need scarcely intimate means either "I'm done for," or "It's all up with me." In the course of the same night his existence coming to an end proved the too fatal accuracy of his own conclusion.

George the First had nothing in his character to justify us in keeping George the Second waiting to be shown up to the throne, where in the ensuing chapter we shall have the pleasure of seeing him. The first George was a person of somewhat feeble intellects, exceedingly shy in public, but he could

"come out" at a private tea-party at home very effectively. His tastes were none of the most refined, and he voted all letters exceedingly dry but O.D.V.—such was the wretched pun the king made on *eau de vie*—which he was very partial to. It might be regarded as a redeeming point in the character of his majesty that he was very fond of Punch, which he regularly "took in," but this feather in his cap must be plucked out, for we find the Punch he patronised was the liquor, and not the periodical. Avarice was another of the most prominent features of his character, and he actually risked the throne itself on several occasions, because he would not spare a few pounds for the purchase of that floating loyalty that, in consequence of the venality and poverty of the ancient aristocracy, was always to be had at a certain price in the market. He had also the shabby trick of never carrying any money in his own pocket, so that he was always obliged to dip into the pockets of his companions to pay the expenses incurred, either at home or abroad, and many of his Court used to get as far away as possible from the side of the king when there was anything to pay, for he was sure to ask them for a loan on such occasions.

It seems from pretty good authority that he fancied himself to be an usurper; but he flattered himself a great deal too much in believing that the English nation would have quietly allowed an act of usurpation from so unimportant a personage as he would have been, but for the position into which he was called by the voice of the people. He preferred Hanover to England; "but," says Smith, "there is no accounting for tastes," and we will therefore make no effort to unravel the mystery of this absurd preference.

The Court of George the First was remarkable for

its laxity, though there was more external propriety than used to prevail in the days of Charles the Second. The latter monarch openly offended against the rules of decency; but George the First was just as bad in a quiet way, and imported into the aristocracy of England two or three vulgar, low-born, German, female favourites, whose successors now boast of their illustrious ancestors.

It is a somewhat interesting fact that charity schools were first established in the year 1698, when the predecessor of George the First was on the throne; and the antiquarian will perhaps tell us whether the muffin-cap is of greater antiquity than the muffin. We believe such to be the case, for the muffin is of comparatively modern date, and is the contemporary of its rival or companion, the crumpet. How the muffin-cap came to put the muffin into anybody's head is a question too difficult for any but the archaeologist.



Original Size

CHAPTER THE FIFTH. GEORGE THE SECOND.

WHILE George the First was alive, he and the Prince of Wales were always having high words in low Dutch to the discredit of themselves and the disgust of the bewildered courtiers. To such a pitch had the animosity between father and son been carried, that young Master George, the heir apparent to the throne, had been forbidden the palace, and he had frequently held long conversations through the fan-light with the hall porter, who could only show his face above the door-way, and exclaim, "Very sorry, your royal highness, but it's the governor's orders, and I can't let you in." Which of these two unnatural relatives may have been most to blame we are not in a condition to determine, but the father who shuts his doors against a son, and drives him from home, is, *prime facie*, a brute, and George the First's conduct to his wife affords collateral evidence of his being devoid of feeling towards those who were nearly allied to him. It may be generally taken for granted that sons are only indifferent towards parents who are bad, and if young George failed in respect or affection towards old George, it was because old George had done nothing to inspire in young George the sentiments which should have

been entertained by a son for his father.

Sir Robert Walpole, the minister, had endeavoured to bring the precious couple together on friendly terms, but they would often quarrel in his presence, and appeal to Sir Robert, until the frequency with which they invoked the support of their referee, by loud exclamations of "So help me Bob!" turned the phrase into a proverb, which is to this day prevalent among the lower and more energetio classes of the community. When George the Second came to the throne, he expressed his desire to "keep on" Sir Robert Walpole as minister, if the situation continued to suit that individual, whose acknowledgment that he was "very comfortable." concluded the arrangement for the continuance of the existing Government.

Walpole was one of the most dishonest ministers that ever lived, and it was his policy to resort to corruption of the grossest kind to ensure success; "for," as he would sometimes say, "the manure must not be spared, if you wish for an abundant harvest." He accordingly laid it on so extravagantly thick, that the expenses of the cultivation of his political connections was prodigious, and the national resources were frequently dipped into, for the purpose of serving the personal objects of the minister. The sinking fund had a tremendous hole made in it, where—to steal a figure from the plumber's art—a waste-pipe was inserted, and laid on to the pocket of the premier, who, collecting the floating capital into a private reservoir of his own, turned it on among his creatures with great prodigality. To meet the drain that was going on, new taxes were imposed, or in other words, the people were treated as if they had been an Artesian well, and were bored to the most frightful extent for

the sort of currency by which a liquidation of the liabilities of the State was to be effected.

The nation, recognising a swindling spirit in its rulers, gave symptoms of the imitative mania which invariably causes the vices of the great to be copied by the little. Speculations of the wildest and most dishonest nature were set on foot among every class, from the highest to the lowest, and there is no question that the Rogue's March would have been the most appropriate National Anthem for the period. From quiet fraud, the country soon fell into downright robbery, and the people got into the habit of plundering each other in the thoroughfares, without going through the formality—common in our own days of issuing a prospectus, and advertising a project. The first advertisement generally came upon the victim in the shape of a blow upon the head in the public streets; the preliminary deposit was extorted from him in the shape of the first article of value that could be easily snatched away, and the calls were exacted in rapid succession by a demand upon every one of his pockets. There was no hope of protection from the police, for the members of the force were too busy in robbing on their own account to bother themselves about the robberies that were being committed by others. It was, in fact, a case of Every Man his Own Pickpocket; and protection, being everybody's business, was soon considered nobody's business, until the whole kingdom was exposed to a sort of daily scramble, in the course of which Shakespeare's description of Iago's purse, "'Twas mine, 'tis his," was every hour realised. Things were, of course, in a most unsettled state, for nobody thought of settling anything—not even a washing bill—during the existence of the universal plunder system, and a riot every other day was the ordinary

average of popular turbulence. Even the Scotch grew warm, and becoming conscientiously opposed to the legal infliction of death, they attended the execution of a smuggler to make a great moral demonstration against capital punishment. In the excess of their philanthropic sympathy with the convict, they began pelting the authorities, who were on the point of being murdered, when John Porteus, the captain of the guard, interfered to save the lives of his comrades. Some time afterwards, the philanthropists, to prove their consistent abhorrence of the punishment of death, seized upon Porteus, who had officiated in keeping the peace at the execution, and hanged him at the Salt Market.

In the year 1737 the queen died, and the king sent up a piteous howl, though he had ill-used her majesty on many occasions; but it was well remarked by a philosopher of the period, that by the sincerity with which George the Second wept her dead, he almost teaches us to forget the severity with which he wapt her living.

The year 1740 was rendered remarkable by a severe frost, which confined Father Thames to his bed with a dreadful cold, until the 17th of February, from the 26th of December previous. A fair was held on the ice, but amid these rejoicings the watermen were dissatisfied at being deprived of their ordinary fare, and the fishermen complained that they had been able to net nothing during the frost's continuance.

The disputes of the Continent furnished occupation, as usual, for English troops and English money, nor was it long before a difference between the Elector of Bavaria and Maria Theresa caused the Earl of Stair to be sent to keep his eyes open, with sixteen thousand men, in the lady's interest. Stair,

after staring at sixty thousand Frenchmen face to face for some time, began to think he had a very poor look out, though joined by the king himself, and his son, the Duke of Cumberland. The whole three of them got beaten like so many old sacks by Marshal Saxe at the battle of Fontenoy. Cumberland, who had put his best leg forward, got it badly wounded. George rode along the lines—at the back, we believe—urging on the soldiers to fight for their king, while Stair seems to have been lost sight of, or perhaps to have run away, though we must admit that this flight of Stairs must be considered apocryphal.

While these disasters were going on abroad, a correspondence was being kept up between the Pretender, James Stuart, and his British friends, who promised that if he or his son Charles Edward would effect a landing in Scotland, there should be a good supply of horses and carriages; but one would imagine his friends were a parcel of jobmasters, by the quality of the aid they tendered, and indeed a job was their object, for all but the most unprincipled of the party were for abandoning the hopeless project.

Though James himself was a bird far too venerable to be attracted by Caledonian chaff, his son was sanguine enough to hope that by coming over to be met by a few glass coaches and hackney chariots, his cause would be aided. He wrote to say when he might be expected, and without waiting for an answer, he put to sea in a small frigate. He was joined by the *Elizabeth*, a sixty-gun ship, when an English liner, called the *Lion*, appeared on the foaming main, and an engagement commenced, which rendered it necessary for the *Elizabeth* to go into Brest harbour for refuge. At the end of eighteen days he reached the Hebrides, but the prospect was

so wretched that the few adherents who met him recommended him very strongly to be off again as speedily as possible. Charles Edward was, however, obstinate, and on the 11th of August, 1745, he took out of his portmanteau and unfurled the banner of the Stuarts in the pass of Glenfinnan. Attempts were made to obtain recruits, but they poured, or rather dribbled in so slowly, that the whole insurrection might have been broken up had it been nipped in the bud; but while Sir John Cope, the commander of the king's forces, was capering about the hills, and dragging his army of flats across the mountains, the young Charles Edward gained time enough to add to the strength of his company. Cope not coming up to cope with the rebels, they pushed on to Perth and Stirling, but they soon made an acquisition of still more sterling value, by taking possession of Edinburgh. Here the young prince, who had landed only with seven adherents, found himself at the head of four thousand men, most of whom had neither arms nor discipline, but brimming over with the froth of enthusiasm, they presented to their chief a refreshing aspect.

Sir John Cope, having fumbled his way out of the hills, had got to Preston among the pans, where he was seized with a panic, and being set upon by the Scotch, was utterly routed. Returning to Edinburgh after his success Prince Charles Edward had King James proclaimed in the usual form; and the King of France, who had stood aloof while the result was doubtful, sent over a small parcel of arms and a few packets of powder, by way of encouragement. He promised also that a French army should soon follow the arms, for Charles Edward had no soldiers to match the matchless matchlocks that had arrived from the French sovereign. Trusting to the word of

his Gallic majesty, the young Pretender ventured to cross the border in a blue bonnet, attended by a large body of adherents in the same interesting coiffure, and on the 29th of November, 1745, he fixed his headquarters at Manchester.



The Blue Bonnets coming over the Border.

Original Size

The alarm excited in London was something utterly indescribable. People who lived in the town rushed into the country to be out of the way, and the inhabitants of the provinces poured into the metropolis as the best place for avoiding danger. The householders took up arms, and formed themselves into squares, crescents, lanes, streets, alleys, or anything. Some bolted their doors, others bolted themselves, and all gave unspeakable symptoms of terror and confusion. A camp was ordered to be formed in the suburbs, and after getting a large force together it was at first resolved to turn 'em out at Turaham Green, but Finchley was at length decided upon as the place of rendezvous.

George, who had been summoned from Germany, came blustering over to England, and began immediately to boast, in bad grammar and wretched pronunciation, that he would "vite vor his Binglish bossessions," and would "meet the Bretender how or where he bleased." His personal valour was not put to the test, for Charles Edward, who had expected instalments of friends to continue meeting him at

every large town, had the mortification to find that the more he kept looking for them the more they kept on not coming; and eventually, by the unanimous voice of his officers, he was compelled to retreat. When he first heard their decision, he observed that the messenger must be joking, and his features wore a faint smile, but when the porter who brought the intelligence shook his head, as much as to say, "It's no joke, your honour," the features of the young Pretender fell, and those who watched him narrowly for the rest of his life, declare that he was never afterwards seen to smile again.

It is impossible to recite the misfortunes of Charles Edward without a feeling of grave sympathy at the failure of the many noble qualities with which he was endowed. In April, 1746, he advanced to Culloden, intending to astonish the English, but he and his followers, like the individual named in the song who had resolved to "astonish the Browns," finished by astonishing no one but themselves.

The rebels advanced in two columns; but the soldiers fell asleep, and we are not surprised at the fact, for any newspaper reader will admit that in the very idea of two columns there is something soporific in the extreme. The exhausted troops fell from fatigue; others lost their way; and the second column found it impossible to keep up with the first. This threw a damp upon the energies of even consternation on the boldest; and with a mental ejaculation of "Oh! it's no use," the very best of Charles Edward's adherents retired. Notwithstanding the valour of a *corps* consisting of picked men, there arose among them a feeling of dissatisfaction at standing unsupported, to be picked out by the artillery of the enemy; and though one gallant body withdrew, playing on their pipes, the pipes were very

soon put out by a smart shower of bullets. Such was the upshot of one of the most spirited enterprises that ever was undertaken; and its chief, the unfortunate Charles Edward, became a pauper fugitive, with scarcely clothes to cover him, and there was quite as much necessity as nationality in the bareness of his legs, during the period of his wanderings.

One of these fogs which are so accommodating in romance, but very rarely present themselves opportunely in history, was obliging enough to make its appearance for that night only on an evening of September, 1746, and by its kind assistance in doing the heavy business on that occasion, Charles Edward was enabled to pass unobserved through an English squadron, and cross in a vessel to Morlaix in Brittany. The unfortunate Pretender seems to have taken his discomfiture so seriously to heart, that from a fine spirited young fellow, he lapsed into all sorts of excess, and having taken to drinking, he fell into a constant reel, which formed the sole remaining vestige of his once enthusiastic nationality. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, walking about Florence in the year 1799, tumbled over an intoxicated individual, and raising him from the ground, had no sooner carried him towards a light, than he recognised the features of the young Pretender.

Matters might possibly have gone on very peaceably with England, for there was nothing to fight about at home, but a dispute arose with the French about the respective influence of the two nations in some of their distant colonies. A contest for the Nabobship between some of the native tribes in the Carnatic, became the subject of a desperate quarrel between the two great European powers; one

of whom supported the claims of Anwar ad Dien, the other promoting the pretensions of Chunda Sahib, and both caring, in fact, not a button about either. A war was, nevertheless, entered upon with intense vehemence, and was carried on for some time, with alternating success; but, not having the bulletins of the day at hand, and the despatches being equally out of the way, we are unable to give the particulars of the various contests. The quarrelling, though at a great distance, made at the time sufficient noise to be disagreeably audible at home, and preparations were made in the two mother countries to send out large forces to thrash the children on both sided out of their turbulence.

Though all this bickering had been going on for some time in the colonies, war had not been formally declared; but whenever an English or a French vessel had a chance of worrying the other, each made the most of the opportunity. On one occasion, two French sail of the line got treated very unceremoniously, and eventually captured; when the Government of Paris began expressing a great deal of surprise and indignation, and professing utter ignorance of the fact that the two powers were quarrelling. It is absurd to suppose that France was sincere in this declaration, for it could not have been understood to be "only in fun," that the French and English were knocking each other about most unmercifully and energetically in America. The circumstance of the capture to which we have referred, caused an immediate understanding that both parties were henceforth in earnest; and there was a mutual calling-in of their outstanding ambassadors.

George, however, instead of thinking about the colonies, became solicitous only about his "little

place" at Hanover, and while he neglected therefore the American war, which became a series of mishaps, he threw his whole strength into the defence of the wretched spot, that would not have been "had at a gift" even by the ambitious enemy.

Higher game was, in fact, in view; and the possession of the rock of Gibraltar and the island of Minorca by the English having long been envied, the French made up their minds to have a dish at one of them. Gibraltar was speedily pronounced impracticable, but Minorca seemed to be in a state of helplessness that tempted a resolute foe, and Fort St. Philip was suddenly invested. No preparations having been made for defence, the authorities ran about asking each other anxiously what was to be done, for most of the officers of the garrison were absent on leave; and General Blakeney, who was on the spot, though a very gallant fellow, was old and shaky. His spirit was consequently more effective as a fine piece of acting than for the purposes of actual war; and though the old fellow, tottering about in his dressing-gown and slippers, might have exclaimed "Aye, aye—let 'em come; I'm ready for them," and have relapsed with affecting feebleness into the sufferings of a gouty twinge, the spectacle, which might have been beautiful on the boards of a theatre, was, in the midst of a town threatened with a siege, most painfully ridiculous.

Relief was ordered from Gibraltar; but the governor, who was either very stupid or did not like the job, pretended to, or really did misunderstand the purport of the instructions sent out to him. At home, the same want of energy prevailed, for the acting representative of the Government picked out a few ill-manned vessels, which he dignified with the name of a squadron; and calling to him an admiral,

since notorious but then unknown, observed to him, "Here, Byng; you had better take this force, and go and see what they want at Fort St. Philip." Admiral Byng did not at all like the job, and began to hesitate about undertaking it; but being told to call at Gibraltar for fresh troops, he plucked up sufficient pluck for the enterprise.

On his arrival at Gibraltar, the governor pretended not to know what Byng had come about; and when asked for troops, merely exclaimed, "Nonsense, nonsense; there's some mistake. I can't part with my troops, for I'm as nervous as an old aspen myself, with the very little protection that is left to me." Byng became more disheartened than ever by the refusal of the expected aid, and went grumbling away, muttering, "Well! they'll see; I know how it will end;" and giving vent to other ejaculations of a similarly un-seaman like character. He wrote to the Lords of the Admiralty, announcing the certainty of his making a mess of it; and in speaking of the refusal of troops at Gibraltar, he in vulgar but forcible language "gave it the governor." Having made up his mind to a failure, it was not very difficult to accomplish the object, and having gone to look at Fort St. Philip, he merely played, as it were, a game at stare-cap with the sentinel on the look-out, but did not perform a single operation with a view to its protection. In due course the French fleet hove in sight, and it was expected that a brilliant action would have taken place, for both squadrons immediately began manoeuvring most beautifully until each had got into the line of battle. A little harmless cannonading had commenced by way of overture to the anticipated work, when the French slowly retired, and the English slowly following, they disappeared together in the most harmless and

indeed almost friendly manner, to the astonishment of poor old Blakeney, who watched them as long as the strength of his glasses would allow of his doing so. Nothing could have been more orderly than the retreat on both sides; and indeed it has been suggested by an old offender, who very naturally refuses to give his name—"That if the affair we have described deserves to be called a battle at all, the Battle of Co-runner"—mark the deceptive spelling in the last syllable—"would be a good name for it."

The rage of the English, whose boast it had been to rule the waves, and never, never, never to be slaves, may be conceived at the arrival of the intelligence of Byng's bungle. The Government was the first object of the popular fury; but the ministers were adroit enough to turn the indignation of the people against the unfortunate admiral. Byng was, no doubt, bad enough, though he was not the only guilty party; but his fellow-culprits, taking a lesson from the pickpockets, who were the first to raise after their accomplice the cry of "Stop thief!" began to denounce the nautical delinquent with excessive vehemence. They recalled him from his command, ordered him to Greenwich, and instead of allowing him to partake in the amusements of the place, they imprisoned him with the intimation that "None but the brave deserved the fair." The next step was to bring him before a court-martial on a charge of cowardice ana disobedience to orders, when, being found guilty, he was condemned to be shot, and underwent at Portsmouth, on the 14th of March, 1757, this rather redundant punishment. We are anxious to do what we can in the way of sympathy for poor Byng, particularly after the little we find that can be of any use to him in the pages of preceding historians. They seem disposed to join in the cruel shout of "Sarve

him right!" which a vulgar and unthinking posterity has raised to hoot the memory of this unfortunate officer. We are induced to look at him as a gentleman who merely was unfit for the profession he had chosen, and as his was not an uncommon case, we think it hard to look upon it with uncommon severity. It is perhaps an odd coincidence, that an officer more eager for the fray than Byng had urged the latter to enter into the action with the French, when the dry observation "I'll be shot if I do," was the only reply of the admiral. It cannot fail to strike the philosophic observer at this distance of time, that Byng, when saying "I'll be shot if I do"—that is, if he ever said as much—might have been profitably given to understand that he would be shot if he didn't. It has been put forth as a consolatory reflection that the naval service in general profited by this melancholy execution of poor Byng; but though as a general rule, what is desirable for the goose is equally advantageous to the gander, we cannot in this instance agree that what was good for the men was at the same time good for the admiral.

The treatment of poor Byng presents a very humiliating picture of the want of firmness shown by the court-martial that tried, the ministers that abandoned, and the king that would not pardon him. Everybody affected a strong desire to see him saved, but nobody had the resolution to take the responsibility of saving him. His sometimes merciless majesty, the mob, formed in reality the executioners of poor Byng, for the authorities were all afraid of risking their popularity by being instrumental to his pardon. The members of the court-martial, by their verdict, expressly implored the Lords of the Admiralty to recommend him to the mercy of the

crown, but there was a general feeling of "It's no business of mine," and to this heartless apathy poor Byng was eventually sacrificed. Never was there a better illustration of the hare with many friends, though not even a hair-breadth escape was permitted to the unfortunate admiral. Never was a gentleman killed under such an accumulation of kindness as Byng, and indeed he was, figuratively speaking, bowed out of existence with so many complimentary and sympathetic expressions, that but for the stubborn reality of the leaden bullets he might have fancied that the guns discharged at him were intended rather in the nature of a salute than as a capital punishment.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH. GEORGE THE SECOND (CONCLUDED).

DISCOMFITURE still attended the English in America, and though fresh troops with fresh leaders were sent off to wipe out the disgrace, they only got wiped out themselves in a most unceremonious manner. On the continent of Europe, too, poor Britannia was at a sad discount; for Austria, Saxony,

Sweden and Russia had all thrown themselves into the arms of France, for the purpose of counteracting the influence of the arms of England. It was only in Indian ink that the creditable part of our country's annals belonging to this period should be written, for in India alone were any of our achievements entitled to some of those epithets we are so fond of bestowing on our own actions. The British Lion had, in fact, retired from the Continent to the Himalaya mountains, where he remained on the majestic prowl as the protector of British interests.

There was a natural jealousy between England and France on the subject of their relative influence in that country, whose native princes were honoured by the protection of both, and who were always mulcted of a slice of their dominions by way of costs, for the expense incurred in the alleged support of their interests. If the aggressor of one of the Indian rulers happened to succeed, he took at once what he had been fighting for; while if a defender of some unhappy rajah or nabob was victorious, the native prince was made to pay all the same for the protection afforded him.

By this sort of assistance rendered to the Indians, the English and French had succeeded in helping themselves to a good share of territory, and while the former had already obtained possession of Calcutta and Madras, the latter had got at Pondicherry, a very respectable establishment under Monsieur Duplex, whose duplicity was, of course, remarkable. By espousing the causes of a set of quarrelsome nabobs, Soubahdars, and other small fry, who had taken advantage of the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk to raise a contest for the throne of the Deccan, the English and the French had found plenty of excuses for quarreling, and we are compelled to

confess that in this part of the world the Gallic cock had good reason for crowing over the British bull-dog.

Things might have continued in this unsatisfactory condition, had not Captain Clive, a civilian in the Company's service, exchanged a pen for a sword—a piece of barter that turned out extremely fortunate for English interests. With a small body of troops he took the Citadel of Arcot, nabbed the nabob, and prevented Duplex from setting up a creature of his own—a disagreeable Indian creature—in that capacity. After this achievement, Clive had gone home for his health, and was drinking every morning a quantity of Clive's tea, when in 1755 he accepted a colonelcy, and returned to the scene of his former glories. Here he was rendered very angry by a pirate of the name of Angria, whom however he quickly subdued; and he had heard from Madras that a mad-rascal named Suraja Dowlar was in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, and was threatening to settle the settlement. This news came like a thunder-clap on Clive, who determined on giving Dowlar such a dose as he would not easily forget; and he commenced by conveying secretly to one of his officers, Meer Jaffier—a mere nobody—an offer of the throne. The scheme completely succeeded, and Meer Jaffier became the tool, or rather the spade, for giving a dig at poor Dowlar, who fell to the ground very speedily.

Matters had now happily taken a favourable turn, and in America Wolfe distinguished himself, but unfortunately extinguished himself also at the siege of Quebec; for he died at the moment of victory.

Things were mending very perceptibly in all directions, and English honour, which had been for some time at an unusual discount, was once more

looking up, when the king, who had been speculating on the rise, was suddenly deprived of all chance of sharing in its advantages. He had made his usual hearty breakfast of chocolate, new-laid eggs, devilled kidneys, tea-cake, red herrings, and milk from the cow, when, as he was preparing to take a walk in Kensington Gardens, he suddenly expired, on the 25th of October, 1760. George the Second was in his seventy-seventh year, and the thirty-fourth of his reign, during the whole of which he had been a Hanoverian at heart, and he had nothing English about him, except the money. His manners were rather impatient and overbearing, for he had not a courteous style of speaking; and it was said at the time, that "no one could accuse him of being mealy-mouthed; for though he was not civil spoken, he was temperate in his living, and thus the term mealy-mouthed could in no sense be applied to him."

In forming an estimate of the characters of the sovereigns who have come before us for review, we have found ourselves fortunate in possessing an independent judgment of our own; for if we had been guided by precedent, we should have been puzzled to know what to think of the different kings and queens, all of whom have had witnesses on both sides, to censure and to praise with a want of unanimity that is really wonderful. George the Second has furnished a subject for this division of opinion, and his eulogist has complimented him rather oddly on his old age, a compliment that might as well be paid to an old hat, an ancient pun, a venerable bead, or any other article that has arrived at a condition of antiquity. The reasons given by his panegyrist for praising him are few and insignificant on the whole, though his severer critic founds his strictures on a tolerably substantial basis. We learn

from this authority that George the Second was ignorant, stingy, stupid, ill-tempered, and obstinate. His predilection for Hanover has, we think, been unjustly censured; for there is nothing very discreditable, after all, in a love for one's own birth-place, though it may be what is termed a beggarly hole in the strong language of detraction. The native of Lambeth has been known to pine with a sort of *mal du pays* after the cherished sheds and shambles of the New Cut, and we have heard the plaintive accents of "Home, sweet Home," issuing from the lips of the exiled sons and daughters of Houndsditch. If George the Second was still faithful in his love for Hanover, in spite of the superior attractions of England, we may question his taste, but we must admire his constancy; which presents an honourable contrast to young Love's notorious desertion of the coal and potato shed, when Poverty, in the shape of a man in possession, stepped over the doorway.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH. ON THE CONSTITUTION, GOVERNMENT AND LAWS, NATIONAL INDUSTRY, LITERATURE, SCIENCE, FINE

ARTS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

WE feel that the length of the above heading to this, the concluding chapter of the volume, will be sufficient to provoke the legal reader into making a charge for "perusing title and examining same," but we promise to make our clauses as pertinent as the magnet to the loadstone. Having already, in the course of preceding chapters, touched upon most of the subjects noticed in the abstract of title to which we allude, it will be unnecessary to hold the reader very long by the button; but perceiving him getting ready to run away, as the curtain falls upon George the Second, we cannot help exclaiming, "Stop a minute or two, we've got just half a dozen more words to say to you!"

The constitution is the first topic on which we have still to touch, and that is a theme which every true patriot loves to dwell upon. We have no hesitation in saying that our beloved country must have the constitution of a horse, to have gone through one-half the severe trials it has experienced. It is apparently peculiar to the soil; for, though the prescription for making it up has been given to other nations, and has been accurately prepared by some of the ablest political druggists, it has never been swallowed abroad, or, if rammed down the throats of rulers or people, it does not seem to have agreed very well with either one or the other. The British constitution is a thing *sui generis*, like the delicious

bun of Chelsea, the acknowledged brick of Bath, and the recognised toffy of Everton. It is vain for other nations to hope that they may have their own materials made up into the pattern they so much admire; for the attempt would be quite as abortive, and almost as unwise, as the effort to make a genuine Romford stove away from Romford, Epsom salts half a mile out of Epsom, Windsor Soap beyond the walls of Windsor, and the genuine Brighton rock anywhere in the world but in the very heart of Brighton. The British constitution must be like home-brewed beer, and even more than that, it must be enjoyed where it is brewed; or, in other words—to draw off one more figure from the cask—it must be "drunk on the premises." The most eloquent of foreign nations cannot come and fetch it, as it were, in their own jugs, however they may foam and froth about it in their own mugs when they carry it in their mouths by making it the subject of their speeches.

The durability of the British constitution, its fitness for wear and tear, has been exemplified in the wonderful manner in which it has survived the rubs that from the hands of party it has experienced. This reflection naturally brings into our mind the terms Whig and Tory, into which politicians were divided, until modern statesmanship introduced us to a new class of principles, that may be called, concisely and comprehensively, the Conservative-Whig-Radical.

The words Whig and Tory came into use, and into abuse also, about the year 1679, and their own origin has been traced with wonderful ingenuity, for the derivation has nothing to do with the derivative, according to these ingenious speculations; and if we may trust Roger North—a little too far north for us, by-the-bye—Tory is allied to Tantivy, without the

smallest apparent reason for the relationship. It would, perhaps, save a great deal of trouble to keep a register of philological next-of-kin; and we are sure that if something a little nearer than Tantivy could come forward to claim affinity with Tory, the noun, verb, or any other part of speech it might chance to be, would "hear of something to its advantage." The word Whig seems to be utterly without orthographical heirs-at-law, for no attempt has been made to get at its pedigree.

National Industry advanced materially during the period we have just described, and among other things, the glass, which had been hitherto imported chiefly from France, began to be seen through by the English manufacturer.

Literature and the Arts flourished in the reigns we have lately gone through; and Architecture took very high ground, or indeed any ground it could get, for the execution of its projects.

Periodical Literature rose in great brilliancy at about the time we have described, and the union of such writers as Steele, Addison, and Swift, in one little paper, must have formed a combination that should have been kept back until the days of advertising vans and gigantic posting-bills, enabling the parties interested to make the most of the "concentration of talent," which might have been the cry of every dead wall in the metropolis.

The manners and customs of the period were not particularly attractive, being, under the two Georges at least, far more German than Germane to our English notions of refinement. In dress, there was somewhat of an approach to the costume of our own days; and the scarcity of hair on the head began to be supplied by that friend of man, the horse, from

whom the Barrister had since prayed a *tales* to furnish the wig, which is considered essential to his forensic dignity.

The military costume of the time of George the Second is chiefly remarkable for the hats worn by the soldiers, which were something in appearance between the fool's cap and the bishop's mitre, as we find from one of Hogarth's drawings.

The condition of the people was not very enviable in the seventeenth or even the eighteenth centuries; and indeed all classes were very ill-conditioned; for morality was lax, education was limited, poverty was abundant, extravagance was very common, and wealth extremely insolent.

Such being the state of the people and the country at this period, we cannot be sorry to get out of their company, though it is not without some regret that we bid farewell for a time to our History. In the course of this work we have rowed in the same galley with Cæsar, stood up to our ankles in sea-water with Canute, run after the Mussulman's daughter with Gilbert à Beckett, wielded a battle-axe with Richard on the field of Bosworth, smoked a pipe and eaten a potato with Sir Walter Raleigh, danced with Sir Christopher Hatton on Clerkenwell Green, and sailed round the bay that bears his name with honest Bill Baffin: all these adventures have we enjoyed in imagination, that *beau ideal* of a railway, with nothing to pay and no fear of accidents.

We have at length arrived at a station, where we stop for the purpose of refreshment; but we hope to resume our journey, and proceed in the ordinary train, touching by the way at all stations, high and low, to the terminus we have set our eye upon.

THE END.

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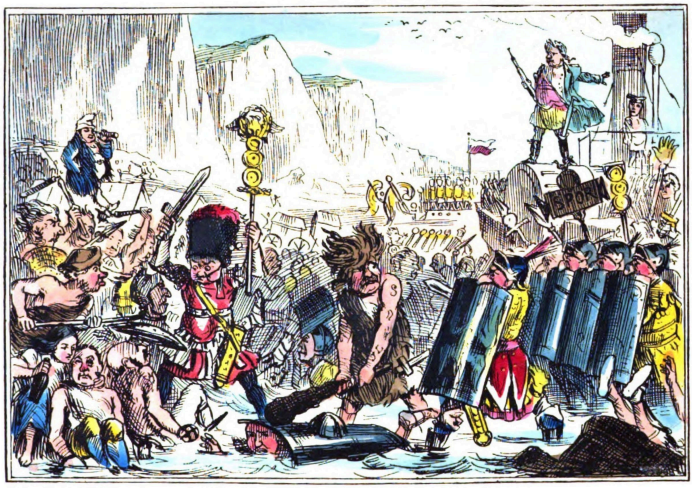
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Landing of Julius Cæsar.

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Henry VIII.th meeting Francis I.st

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Time Bowling out the Druids.

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Cæsar looking for the Pearls for which Britain was formerly celebrated.

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Cæsar receiving Intelligence of the Destruction of his Fleet.

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Ancient Armed Briton.

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Portrait of Julius Agricola.

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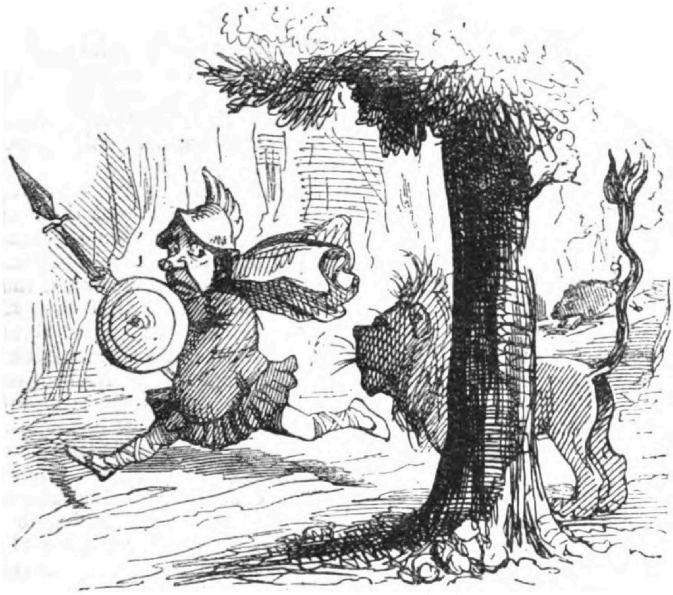
The Emperor Severus leads his Army against the Northern Barbarians.

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Rowena and Vortigern.

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Ida quitting his Kingdom.

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"Non Angli sed Angeli forent si fuissent Christiani."

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Battle between the Mercians and Egbert.—*Cotton MS.*

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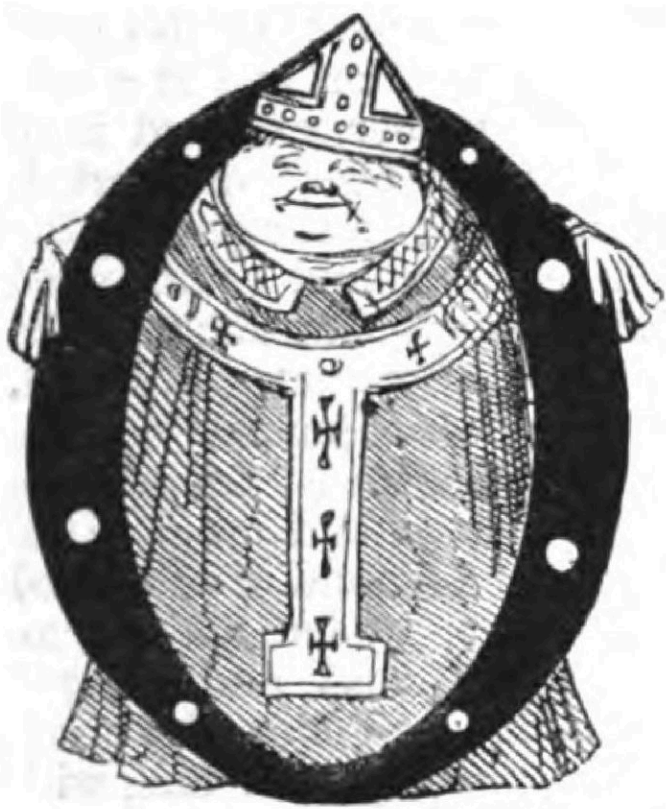
An Illuminated Letter.

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Guthrum pays an Evening Visit to Alfred.

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Edmund and Leof.

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Coronation of Ethelred the Unready.

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Settling the Bill.

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A Dane securing his Booty.

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Soldier of the Period.

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Thurkill's little Account.

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Ethelred despatching a Letter by his Son.

back



"Flee, English! dead is Edmund!"

back



Canute performing on his favourite Instrument.

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Canute reproving his Courtiers.

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A frightful Example. Death of Hardicanute.

back



Unpleasant Position of King Harold.

back



William inspecting the Volunteers previous to the Invasion of England.

back



The Landing of William the Conqueror.

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William refusing his Daughter to Edwin.

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The Bishop of Durham.

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William departing for France.

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Odo dismissed from Rochester Castle.

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Robert Curt-hose trying to get a Bill discounted.

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Reading the Dream.

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Flight of Sir Walter Tyrrel. Horse of the Period.

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The Effects of Extravagance.

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King Stephen in Prison.

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A Clerical Weathercock.

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Henry the Second dismissing the Foreign Barons.

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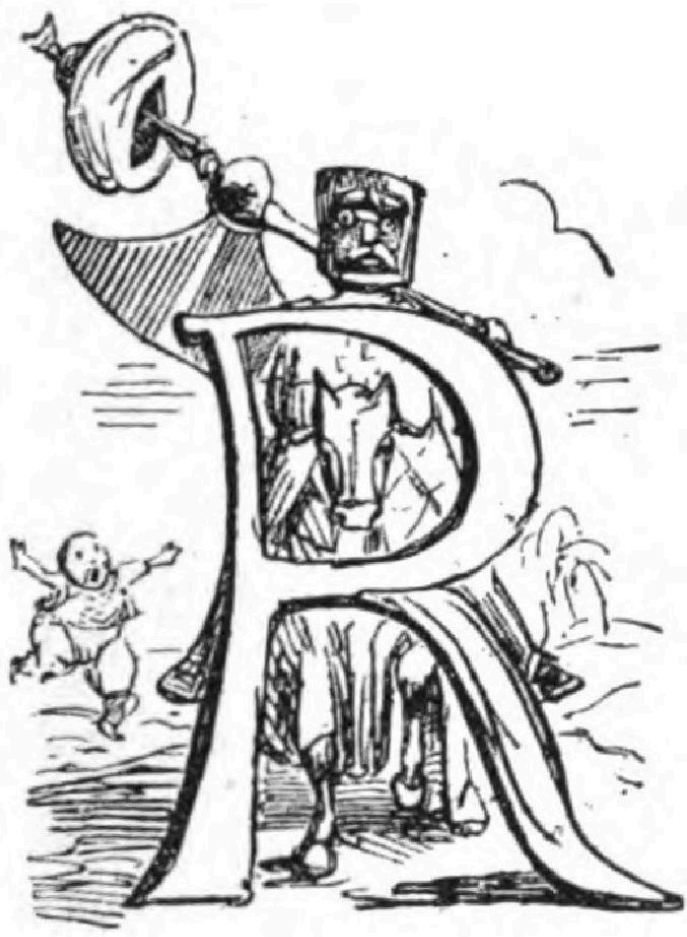
Gilbert à Becket. Thomas à Becket.

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Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamond.

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Terrific Combat between Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin.

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Blondel, the Minstrel, under the Walls of Richard's Prison.

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Bertrand de Gourdon before Richard.

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Arrival of Richard's Legacy at Rouen.

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Prince Arthur requires his Grandmother to surrender.

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King John threatens to cut off the Noses of the Bishops.

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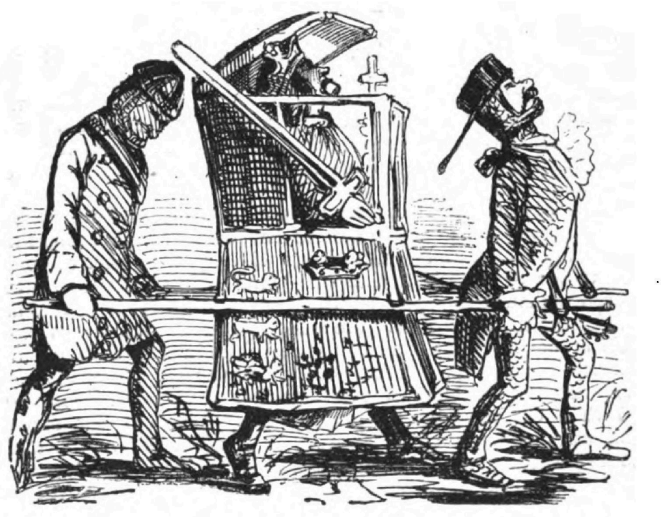
The Bishop of Beauvais capturing Salisbury.

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John in a Passion.

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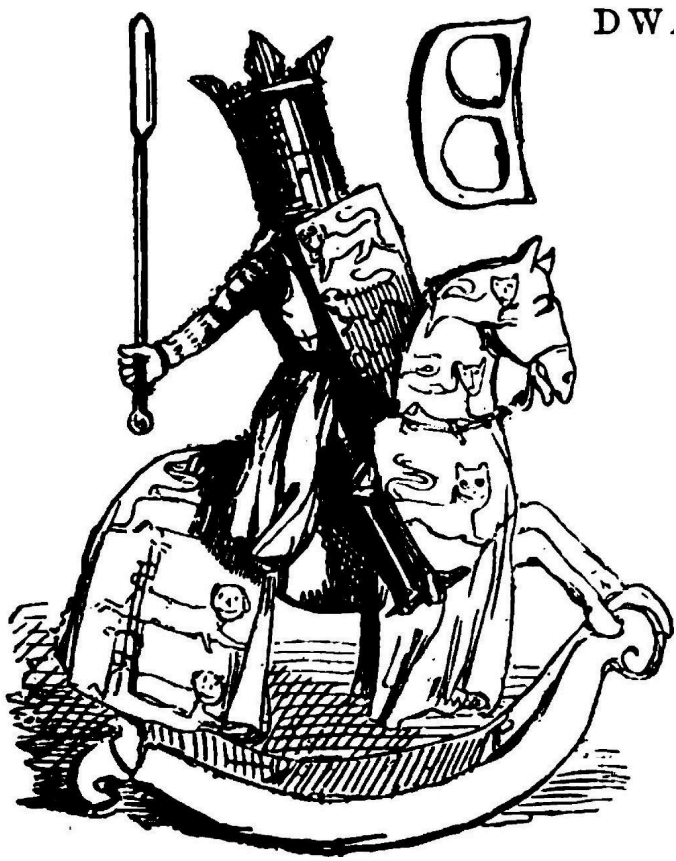
The Earl of Chester interposing between Henry the Third and Hubert de Burgh

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Marriage of his most Gracious Majesty Henry the Third and Eleanor of Provence.

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Edward's Arm in the hands of his Medical Advisers.

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Edward and the Count of Chalons.

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Earl de Warenne producing his title to the Commissioners

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King Edward introducing his Son as Prince of Wales, to his newly acquired Subjects.

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Portrait of William Wallace, from an old Wood Block.

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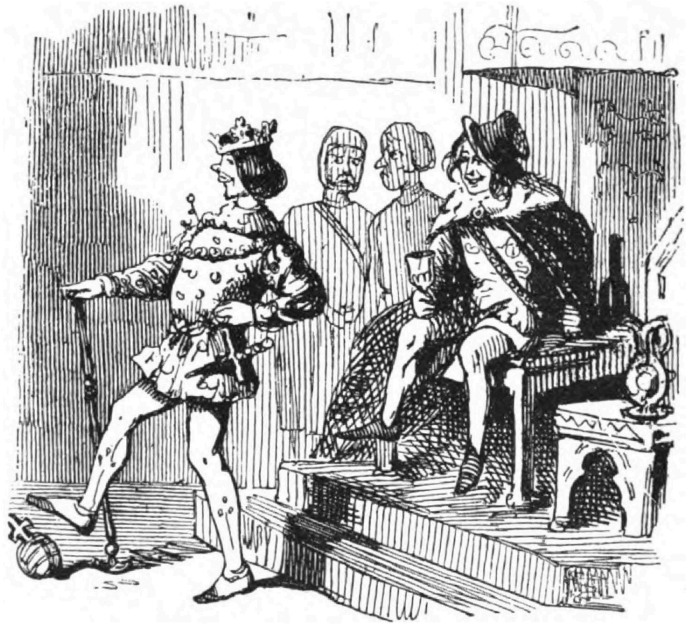


Tax Collecting in the Reign of Edward the First.

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Edward the Second and his Favourite, Piers Gaveston.

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Parley between Piers Gaveston and the Earl of Pembroke.

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Fancy Portrait of Inspector Balliol.

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Thomas of Rokeby receiving the honour of Knighthood.

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Edward pawning the Crown with the Archbishop of Treves.

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Edward's arrival at the Tower.

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Fancy Portrait of Inspector Baliol.

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Madame de Montfort astonishing the French Fleet.

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Assassination of Artaveldt the Brewer.

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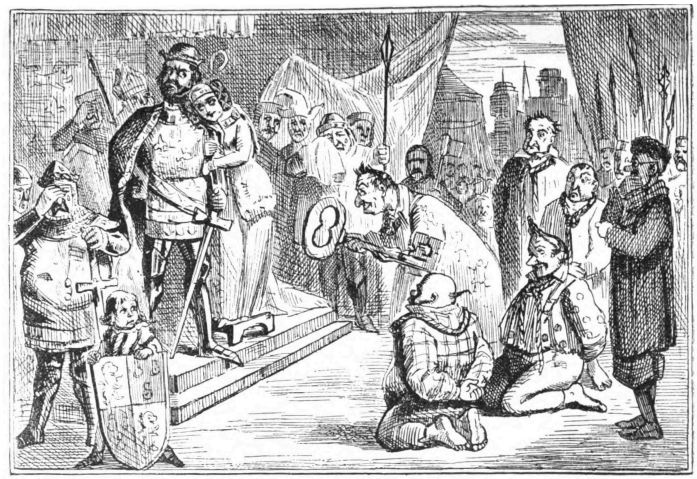
Edward the Third on the morning of the Battle of Cressy.

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Edward the Third at the Battle of Cressy.

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Queen Philippa interceding with Edward the Third for the six Burgesses of Calais.

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Origin of the Order of the Garter.

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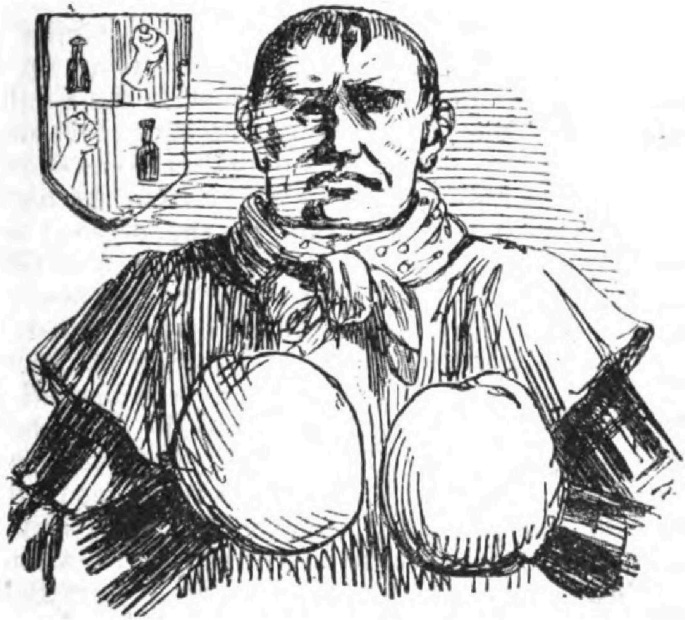


Edward, the Black Prince, conducting his Prisoner.

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Fancy Portrait of the Champion of England.

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Richard thinks it high time he managed his own affairs.

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Henry of Bolingbroke and the Duke of York transacting business.

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Richard the Second conducted a prisoner to Chester.

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A Practical Joke. Deposition of Richard the Second.

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Anglo Saxon Husbandman.

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Fox-hunting Bishop of the Period.

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Coronation of Henry the Fourth (from the best Authorities).

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Entrance of Dymock the Champion, at the Coronation Banquet.

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Mr. Owen Glendower armed by his trusty Clerk.

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Unseemly conduct of Henry, Prince of Wales.

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Lord Mayor of the Period arresting a suspicious Twelfth-night Character.

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Embarkation of King Henry the Fifth at Southampton, A.D. 1415.

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Henry the Fifth sends a Friend to the Dauphin.

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Henry inspecting his Troops before the Battle of Agincourt.

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English Soldier securing Prisoner at the Battle of Agincourt.

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The Duke of Burgundy introducing Queen Isabella and his Daughter to Henry the Fifth.

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Joan at the Walls of Paris.

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Joan trying it on.

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The King of Sicily and his Household.

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Banishment of Suffolk.

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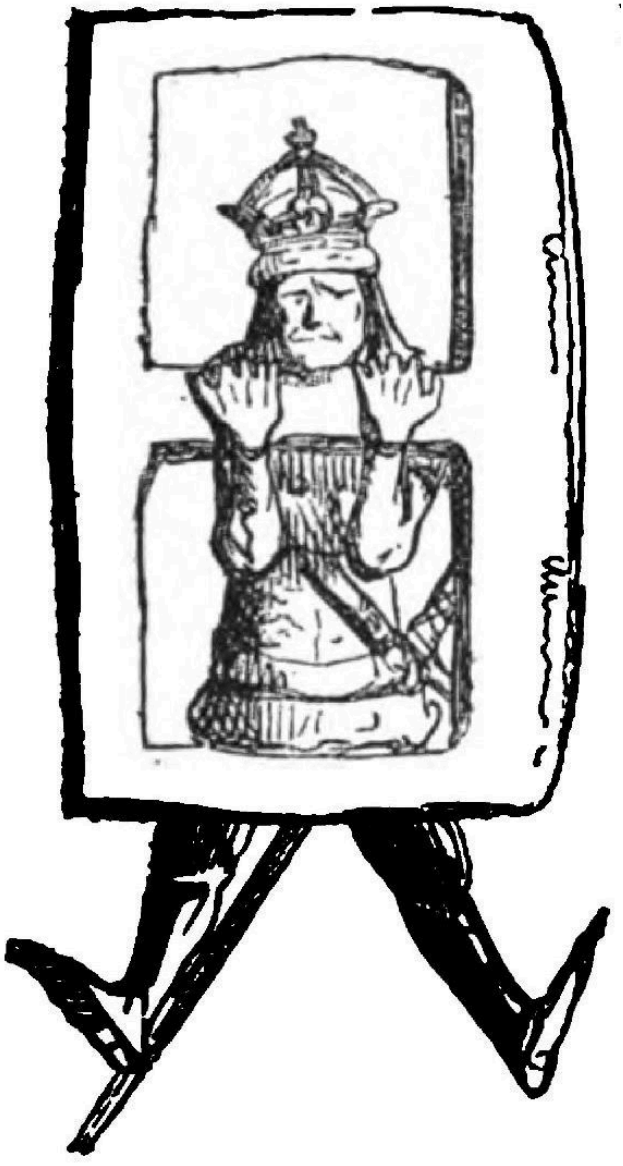
Quarrel between Somerset and York.

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Margaret of Anjou and her Child meeting the benevolent Robber.

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Edward the Fourth meeting Elizabeth Woodville.

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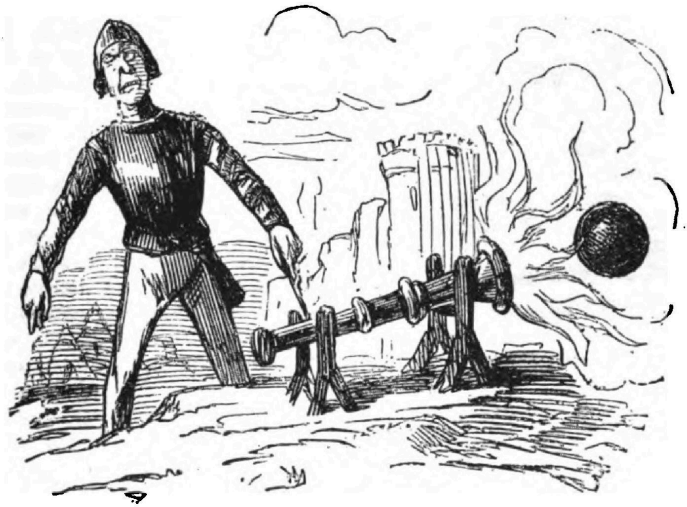
Field of Battle (in a Fog) near Barnet.

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Duke of Gloucester, disguised as a Policeman, discovering Lady Anne.

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Cannon and Cannon-ball of the Period.

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The Bishop of Ely presenting a Pottle of Strawberries to the Duke of Glo'ster.

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Arrest of Lord Hastings and Lord Stanley.

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The Citizens offering the Crown to Richard.

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The Duke of Gloucester goes into mourning for his little Nephews.

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Henry Tudor, Esq.

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Coronation of Henry the Seventh on the Field of Battle.

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"Would York like to go with his Uncle Dick?"

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"Ya-ah! Macker—el!" William of Trumpington, the Abbot of St. Alban's.

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Coronation of Henry the Seventh on the Field of Battle.

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Henry the Seventh taking a Chop with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

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A Young Pretender.

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Perkin Warbeck and his Army.

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Henry the Seventh and Perkin Warbeck's Wife.

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Perkin Warbeck Reading his Confession.

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Henry the Eighth and Catherine of Aragon.

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Henry's Tent.

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Henry pardoning the young Couple.

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Henry VIII.th meeting Francis I.st

back



The Duke of Buckingham suspects that he is watched.

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The citizens of Bruges supplying Wolsey's suite with provisions.

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Henry practising previous to challenging Francis.

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Election of Pope. Getting to the top of the pole.

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Cardinal Wolsey at Boulogne.

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Cardinal Campeggio and Mr. Sampson.—"I can hear nothing now, Mr. Sampson."

back



Wolsey surrendering the Great Seal.

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Birth of the Princess Elizabeth.

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Henry is determined not to be bullied.

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Henry making love to Jane Seymour.

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Henry VIII Monk Hunting

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Delight of Henry at having a Son and Heir.

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Henry wooing Catherine Parr.

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Shilling of Henry the Eighth.

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English Archer of the Period, from such a rare old print.

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The Duke of Northumberland offers to fight any one of them.

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Sir Thomas Wyatt surrendering to Sir Maurice Berkeley.

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Philip and Mary.

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Philip (of England and Spain) hears of his wife's death.

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Honest Jack Tars of the Period.

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Lord Darnley.

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Mary's Elopement.

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Lord Burleigh.

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Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh

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James the First on his way to England.

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Discovery of Guido Fawkes by Sheffield and Warrington.

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Flight of Rookwood.

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Guy Fawkes before and after the Torture.

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King James disposing of Baronetcies.

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Bacon, ye great Moral Philosopher. From a remarkably scarce Print.

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King James rescued from the New River.

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His Gracious Majesty Charles the First borrowing money.

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Felton admits that he killed the Duke.

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The Member for Huntingdon.

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Something like argument.

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Charles the First does not know which way to turn.

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Trained Band. Soldier of the Period.

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The Barebones Parliament.

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Arrest of Wildman.

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One of the Protector's Tea Parties.

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One, Two, Three, and Under.

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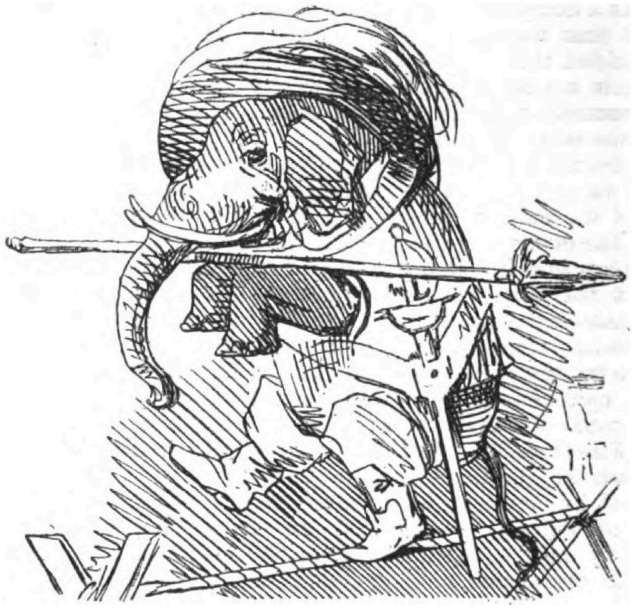


Cromwell playing at Leap-frog with his children.

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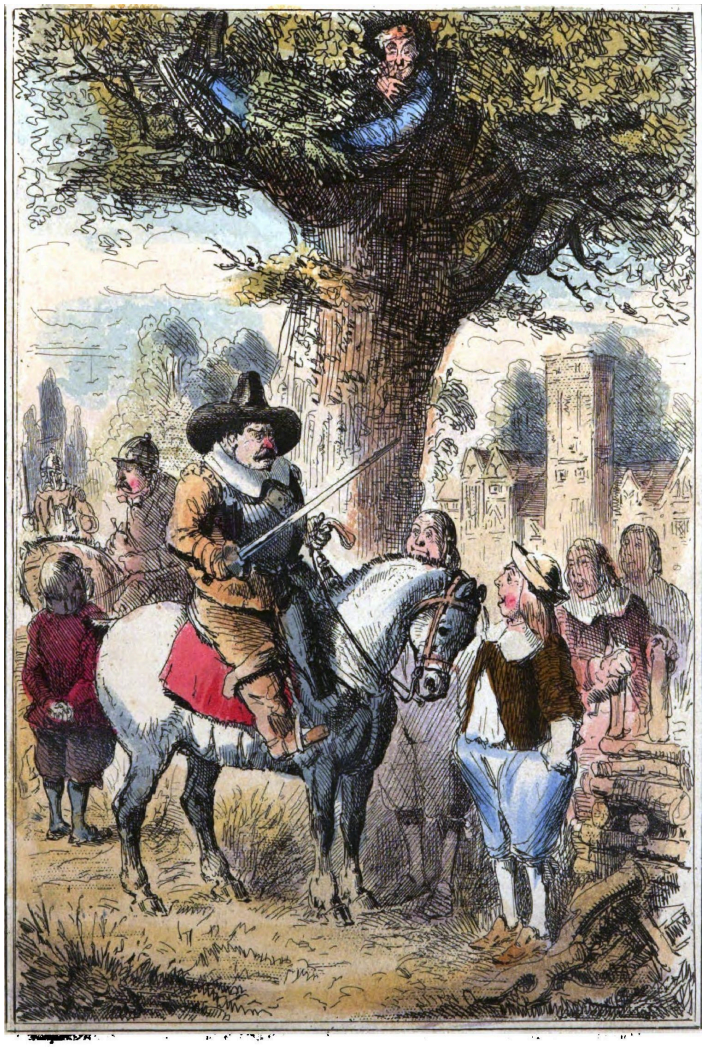


The Balance of Power.

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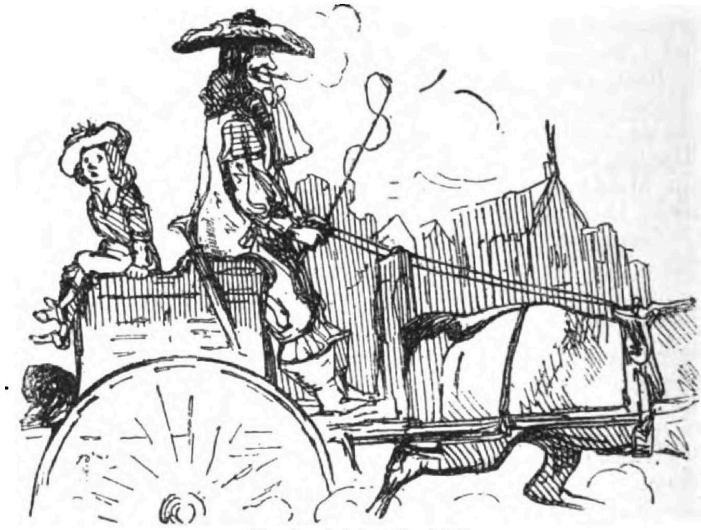


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THE ROYAL OAK.

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Charles driving the Mail.

back



Charles is informed of a plot against his precious life.

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T. Oates, Esq.

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Noble Lord.—"I believe I'm engaged to your La'ship for the next dance."

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Evening Party — Time of Charles II

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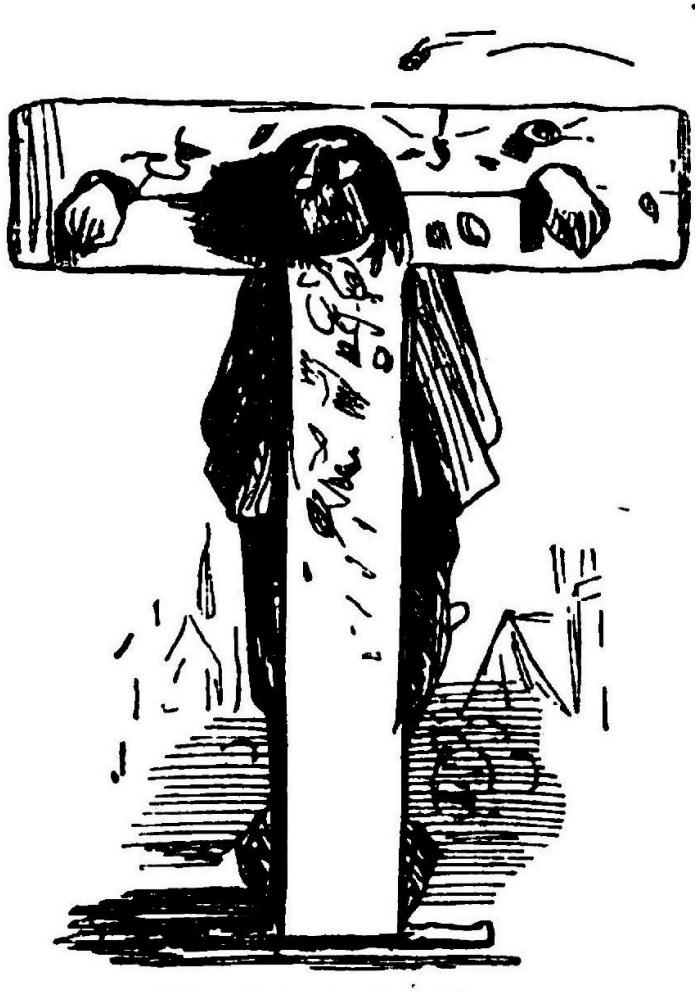
Arrest of Lord Howard of Escrick.

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The Merry Monarch.

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Titus Oates in the Pillory.

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Great Seal of William and Mary.

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Awkward Mistake.

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Captain Fisher doesn't think he can do it at the price.

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Discovering of the Laws of Gravitation by Isaac Newton.

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Queen Anne going to open Parliament.

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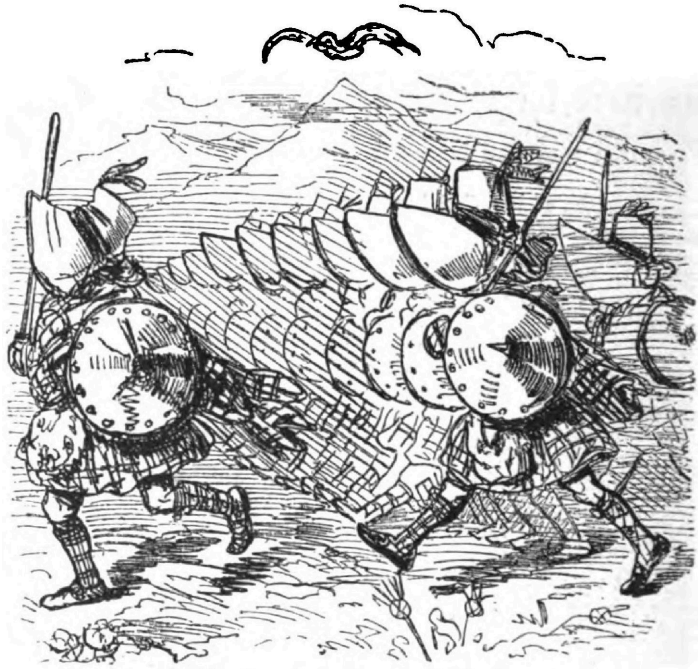


George the First putting on a clean Collar.

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The Blue Bonnets coming over the Border.

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