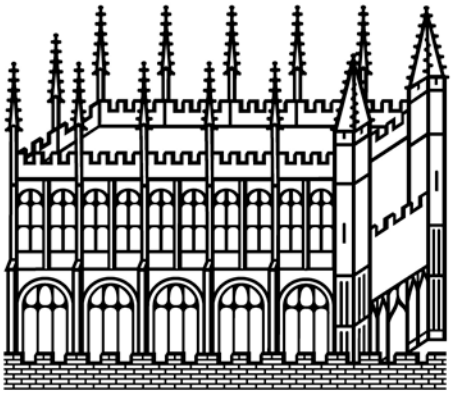

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Emma Dunston

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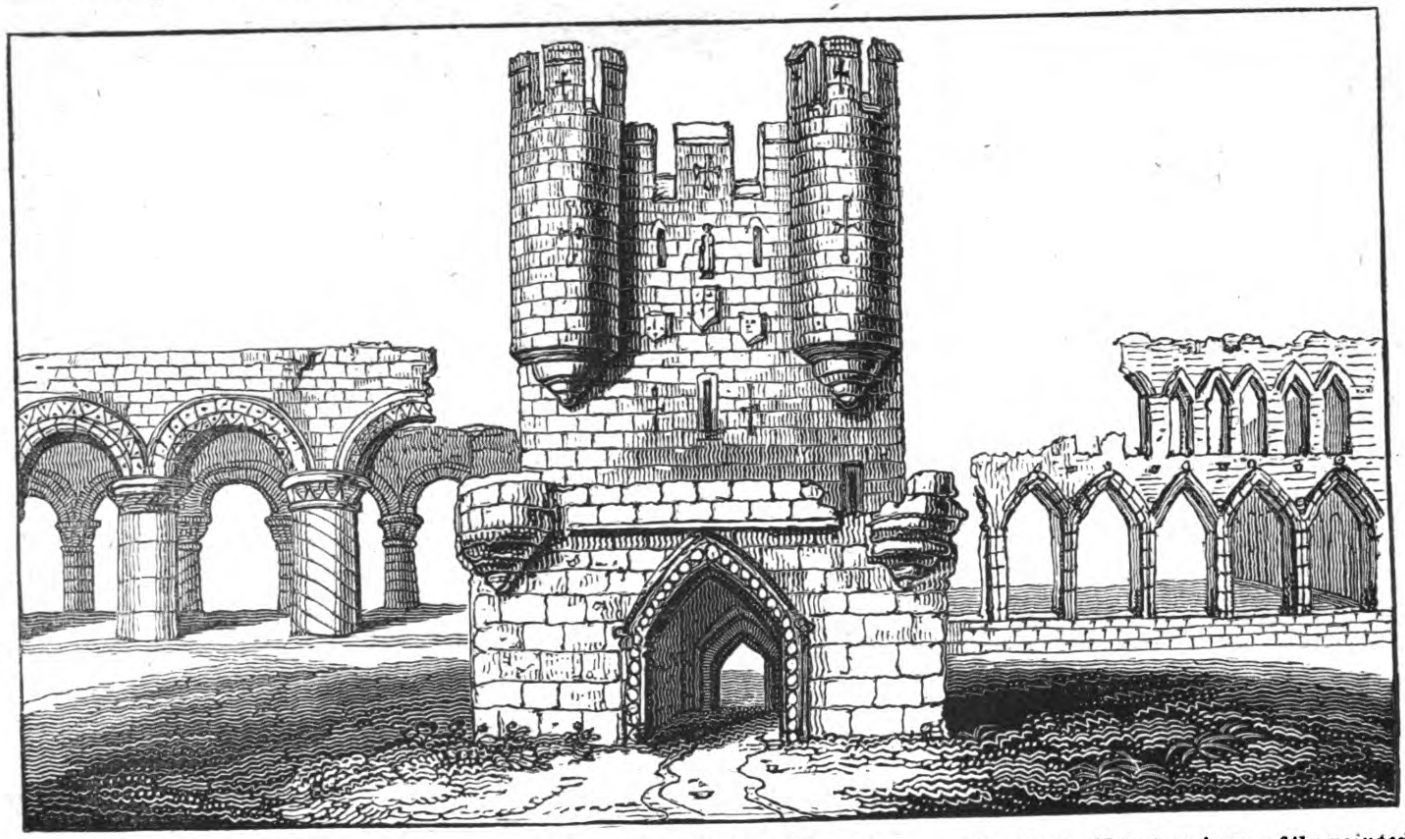

St. Sepulchre's, Cambridge (specimen of the Saxon style).

Micklegate Bar, York (a Norman gateway).

Croyland Abbey (specimen of the pointed style).

Beatrice Shield 1832.

A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE

FIRST INVASION BY THE ROMANS

TO THE

END OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE THE THIRD:

WITH

CONVERSATIONS

AT THE END OF EACH CHAPTER.

BY MRS. MARKHAM.

FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

THIRD EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXIX.

LONDON:
DPRINTE BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS little work, which was originally begun for the use of my own children, is now offered to the public in the hope that it may prove not unacceptable to those parents, who, in putting a history of England into the hands of their children, are desirous to give them something more than a mere chronicle of events. I have been desirous to relate, with as much detail as might be allowable, the most interesting and important parts of our history; and in the Conversations annexed to each Chapter, I have endeavoured to trace, in some degree, the successive changes which have taken place in manners, arts, and civilization.

I have dwelt little on scenes of cruelty and fraud, as being objects which it is hurtful to a young mind to contemplate: and I have made but few observations on the good or bad motives of actions. A child, whose mind is imbued with right feelings, will naturally see what is wrong, and what is right, without having either expressly pointed out. I trust, however, that it will be

easily seen to be the sincerest wish of my heart that my young readers may be taught to think and feel in the true spirit of religion and virtue.

I have in general avoided saying the worst of a character, because few people are in reality so bad as they are often made to appear.—In the reigns subsequent to the Revolution, I have been altogether silent on party politics, which, after that period, become exceedingly complicated, and afford to children no interest whatever, and which they cannot in the least comprehend.

Many of the observations which I have put into the mouths of the children, and especially into that of the little girl, may, I fear, be thought frivolous: but I have thought it best to incline to the extreme of explaining too much, rather than to that of leaving too much unexplained.

The little engravings with which these volumes are accompanied will easily be recognised as taken from Mr. Strutt's work, and from other books of acknowledged authority.

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INTRODUCTION.

MR. and Mrs. Markham had three children, whom they took great pleasure in instructing. Richard, the eldest, was a sensible, clear-headed boy, who was always eager to obtain information on every subject that came in his way. When he was about ten years old, he became very inquisitive about the history of his own country, and begged hard to be allowed to read Hume's History of England. His father consented, and he began it accordingly; but he soon found in it so many words and things he could not understand, that he was quite discouraged; and bringing the book back, said, with tears in his eyes, that he believed he had better give it up till he was older.

On this, his mother, who was present, laid by her work, and said:—"My dear boy, rather than that you should be disappointed in your ardent desire to learn something of English history, I will try what I can do for you myself; and, perhaps, I may be able to compile from other histories one that you may find easier to comprehend."—"Thank you, thank you, dear mamma," cried Richard, in a transport of joy: "will you begin to-day?"—"You must not be too impatient," said Mrs. Markham; "you must remember that I shall have a

great deal to do. I must read over several books very carefully, and I must then select, as well as I can, what I think will entertain and instruct you. However, I promise to begin as soon as possible, and whenever I shall have finished a chapter, I will read it to you in the evening, instead of telling you one of those stories which you have heard so often. After every chapter I will answer any questions you may ask concerning the subject of it, and the period to which it relates:—but you must not interrupt me while I am reading."

Richard ran to inform his brother of this kind promise; and as soon as the first chapter was completed, and the welcome hour was arrived of their mother's coming into the drawing-room after dinner, the two boys eagerly placed themselves by her side. Even little Mary, too, though she was very young, seated herself on a footstool at Mrs. Markham's feet, and listened with great attention while she thus began:—

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

INVASION OF BRITAIN BY JULIUS CÆSAR.

[Years before Christ, 55—54.]

You see what a beautiful and pleasant country England now is; what good roads we have, what useful bridges over rivers; what comfortable houses we live in; and what convenient shops there are, where we can buy all we want: but there was once a time when there were neither roads, nor bridges, nor houses, nor churches. The country was nothing but one overgrown forest. The people lived in holes in the ground, or in any miserable huts they could contrive. They had no clothes, except

the skins of the animals they killed in the chase; for hunting was their chief employment. They could neither write, nor read, nor sew, nor weave. They, however, still liked to make themselves fine: so they used to paint their skins in patterns with woad, a plant that produces a blue dye. It appears, indeed, that the inhabitants of the south coast were, at the time of the first invasion by the Romans, beginning to improve, owing to the coming of some people from Gaul (which was the name France was then called by), who settled among them, and carried on some sort of trade; but, as they had no books, they have left us no history of themselves. The first account we have of them is from the Romans, who were a very brave and restless people, and who conquered almost all those parts of the world which were in their time known to Europeans.

Fifty-five years before the birth of our Saviour, Julius Cæsar, the greatest general the Romans ever had, was in Gaul. He there heard a great deal about Britain, which was the name of England at that time, from the traders who used to go backwards and forwards for tin, and some other commodities. From them he heard that it was a fine country, and when he saw its white cliffs from the opposite shores of Gaul, he felt a great desire to conquer it. He set sail from Calais with several ships full of soldiers, and arrived before Dover; but it seems that the Britons had heard of his coming, and were assembled to prevent his landing.

They stood in such great numbers on the tops of the cliffs, which are very high at Dover, and looked so fierce, that the Romans were frightened, and sailed away to Deal, where the shore is flat, and they could land more easily: but the Britons kept sight of the ships, and, marching across the land, got to Deal as soon as they did. The Romans did not know what to do, whether to attempt landing, or to resolve to sail back again: however, they got their ships as close to the shore as they could, and, for a time, waited to see what the Britons would do. At last a Roman standard-bearer jumped into the water; and then the rest of the soldiers followed, and waded to land, in spite of all the Britons could do. At length the poor Britons, who had no armour that was at all suited to withstand the swords and spears of their enemies, were driven off.

Cæsar staid about three weeks in the island, during which time he fought several battles; and, though he always came off conqueror, still he lost so many men, and the stormy weather destroyed so many of his ships, that he returned to Gaul much more a loser than a gainer by his expedition.

The next year, which was fifty-four years before Christ, he came again with many more ships and soldiers, and landed as before at Deal, and marched to the place where Canterbury now stands, but which was then a mere wilderness. The Britons were there assembled in great numbers to resist him; but the Romans soon drove them away, and

were about to pursue, and would probably have slaughtered most of them, when a messenger came to tell Cæsar that almost all his ships had been destroyed by a violent storm. He directly marched back to Deal, and found most of his vessels driven on shore, and many of them very much damaged. Instead, therefore, of pursuing the poor Britons, as he had intended, he was obliged to employ his men in repairing the ships, and in making a kind of dock in which to place them in safety. When this was done, he again set out in pursuit of the Britons; and at one time got as far as the place where St. Albans was afterwards built; but he found the people so brave, and so difficult to subdue, and the country so wild and impassable, that at last he determined to abandon the enterprise, and return to Gaul. Thus ended the first invasion of Britain by the Romans. Cæsar himself wrote a history of his expedition, which you will one day be much entertained and delighted with.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER I.

George. How I should like to be a great general like Julius Cæsar, and march about at the head of my soldiers!

Mrs. Markham. There are many other things a general has to think of, besides marching about at

the head of his soldiers. He has to provide for their safety and comfort, as well as for their success in battle. I have to-day been reading about a king of Spain, who nearly died of grief because he had unwisely led his army into a disadvantageous position, where it was totally defeated.—You see, the general of an army has a very serious responsibility.

Mary. How happy those little Briton children must have been, mamma! because, as there was no reading and working, there could be no lessons nor tasks.

Mrs. M. They might have had tasks of a different kind from yours, and not so agreeable. The children, as soon as they had strength, were inured to hunting and other hardy and laborious exercises, that they might learn how to provide the means of subsistence in a wild and uncultivated country: and, if they had not so many employments as we have, they had not so many amusements.—Rude as the people were in other respects, there is one circumstance related of their art of war, that has always surprised me very much; but it is so well attested by the Roman writers that one cannot but believe it: which is, that, though the Britons were ignorant of almost all mechanical arts, and even of the means of preparing metals for use, they had, at the time of Cæsar's invasion, war-chariots of a very extraordinary kind, made with sharp scythes fixed in the axle-trees of the wheels, which they drove in amongst their enemies to their great destruction.

Richard. I think they must have cut their own legs with the scythes sometimes, if they did not take great care. But did they make nothing else that was curious, except these chariots?

Mrs. M. The only other thing we are told of is their basket-work. In this they excelled so greatly, that their baskets were carried to Rome, and considered great curiosities. They used to make boats of basket-work.

George. Basket boats! Why, mamma, I never heard of such a thing.

Mrs. M. They were covered with skins, and made perfectly water-tight; and they even crossed the Irish Channel in them. I am told that such boats are still in use on the river Severn.

Mary. O! mamma! how I wish we had one on our pond!

Richard. I think, mamma, I shall like history very much; I hope you will tell us a great deal more of it.

Mrs. M. History is a very delightful study; but to read it with pleasure and profit, it is not enough to attend merely to names and dates.

Mary. Dates, mamma! What are dates?

Mrs. M. The date of any event is the exact point of time at which the event happens. To-day is the 6th of December, 1820, and this is the date of our first beginning the History of England.

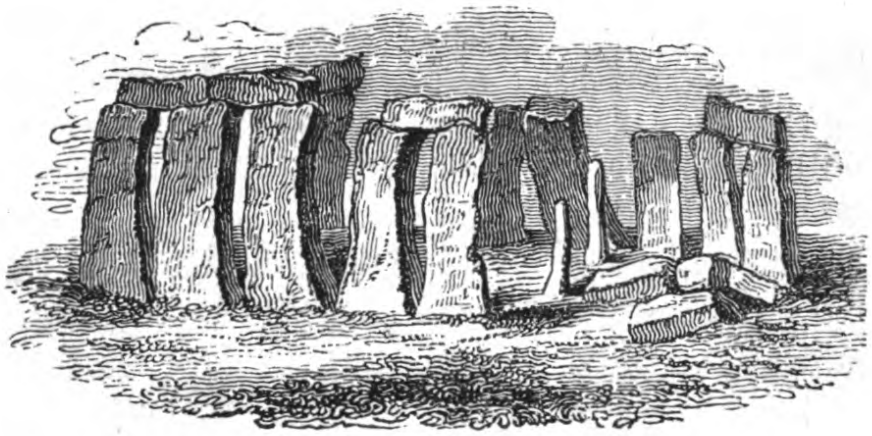
George. But is history of any use, besides being very entertaining?

Mrs. M. The older you grow, and the more you read of it, the better you will be able to understand its use. I shall only say now, that the greatest and best use of it is to show us, by observing events as they follow, the greatness and wisdom of God, and "how wonderfully He ordereth the affairs of men,"

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.

[Years after Christ, 43—420.]



THE Britons had a long respite of nearly a hundred years before the Romans again thought of invading them. There is a story told of Caligula who was afterwards an emperor of Rome, and who thought it a noble project to invade Britain as Cæsar had done. He assembled an immense army on the opposite coast; but, instead of crossing the sea, he only gathered some shells from the shore, and sent them to Rome, calling them "the spoils of the conquered ocean."

At last, in the year 43 after the birth of Christ, and 97 years after Cæsar's invasion, the Romans

determined on making another attempt to conquer Britain; but there was much difficulty in getting any soldiers to go there, they had such a frightful idea of the country and its inhabitants. It was so far off, they said, that it was like making war beyond the limits of the world. At length an army of fifty thousand men was collected, which was sent to Britain under the command of Aulus Plautius. The Britons defended themselves and their country with great bravery; but their imperfect skill in the art of war could not withstand the Roman power and discipline. After fighting many battles, the Romans at length took prisoners a British king, named Caractacus, and his family. They were all sent to Rome; and the king with his wife and two daughters were made to walk through the streets, loaded with chains, while the emperor and empress, and all the people, were assembled to look at them, as if they had been so many wild animals. Poor Caractacus, as you may suppose, was very indignant at this treatment, and made such a moving speech to the emperor, which you will hereafter read in other histories of England, that he immediately ordered his chains to be taken off, and treated him with great kindness ever after.

The Romans, notwithstanding their victories, advanced but slowly in gaining possession of Britain; they had only been able to build a few castles, and establish one colony, when Suetonius Paulinus, one of their greatest generals, resolved

to possess himself of the little island of Anglesea, which was the chief seat of the Druids. These Druids were the priests and lawgivers of the Britons, and were held by them in the greatest respect; and Suetonius thought that if he could destroy the Druids, he should more easily conquer the rest of the people. In this enterprise against Anglesea he succeeded without much difficulty: but the Britons, during the time of his being engaged in it, took advantage of the opportunity which was so afforded them, to attack and destroy the colony. Suetonius, on this, returned immediately, and found all the Britons under arms, commanded by a brave queen, Boadicea. A great battle ensued; and though the Romans were only 10,000, yet having been better taught the art of war, they defeated the Britons, and killed 80,000. Boadicea, for grief at this defeat, poisoned herself.

The Romans now easily established themselves all over Britain, and built towns and castles, and were entire masters of the country. Agricola, one of their generals, was a very good, as well as a very brave man, and prevailed with the natives to learn a great many useful arts, and encouraged them to live in towns, and to build comfortable houses, and did all he could to civilize them. He also marched into Scotland, then called Caledonia. The inhabitants fled into the mountains, thinking that when winter came he would go away. Instead, however, of going away, he built a line of

forts quite across Scotland, from the Frith of Forth to the mouth of the Clyde. The Caledonians, when they found themselves thus shut in, came down from the mountains, and ventured a battle, but were defeated; and then, overwhelmed with despair, they set fire to their dwellings, and killed their wives and children, for fear of their being made slaves to the victors. During this expedition, the Roman ships sailed quite round Great Britain, and so ascertained it to be an island.

For many years afterwards the country was in peace. During this period the Romans occupied themselves in making roads, of which many are still remaining, and in building castles, of which many vestiges are still left, and of which the ruins are so strong and massy, that they promise to outlast most of our modern buildings.

In the year 207, the emperor Severus, though a very old and infirm man, came to Britain with the determination to conquer Caledonia. He could not, however, succeed, owing to the nature of the country, and the bravery of the people; so he contented himself with employing his army to build an immense stone wall quite across from the Tyne to the Solway Frith, many parts of which are still to be seen. He soon after died at York.

For seventy years after the death of Severus we are quite ignorant of the affairs of Britain: we may hope, therefore, that every thing went on quietly. At last the emperor Constantius came from Rome

to take up his residence in this island. He did not live long, but died at York, in the year 309. His son, Constantine the Great, succeeded him; and being in Britain at the time of his father's death, here assumed the rank of emperor. While he lived, this country was at peace. He died in 337. I shall not attempt to tell you the names of all those who came in succession from Rome to govern Britain, and who were called legates, and sometimes vicars of Britain: but I shall pass on to the year 414, when the Romans found themselves attacked by so many and such dangerous enemies nearer home, that it became necessary to recal the legions that were in Britain.

The Britons had been so long used to have all their battles fought for them, that, when the Romans were gone, they felt themselves quite defenceless. They were soon invaded by the Scots and the Picts, who inhabited different parts of Caledonia. On this, they sent to entreat the Romans to come back again. One legion accordingly came back for a short time, and quickly drove away the Caledonians: but no sooner was it gone, than the Caledonians returned in greater numbers than before, broke down the Roman wall, and would have overrun all the country, if the Britons had not again sent to beg assistance from the Romans. Another legion was sent under the command of Gallio, who drove back the Scots, and helped the Britons to repair the wall. Gallio then departed,

telling them that, as they would never again have any assistance from the Romans, they had better learn to take care of themselves. Thus the Romans entirely quitted the island, after having had possession of it 475 years, reckoning from the first landing of Julius Cæsar.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER II.

Richard. How extraordinary it is that all the things you have been telling us of really happened, and in this very country where we live! But, mamma, I should like to know the meaning of the word colony.

Mrs. Markham. The word colony is used to express a settlement made by a number of people, who leave their native country to live anywhere else. The Roman colonies differed from colonies in later times; because, though the Roman soldiers had lands given them to live on, yet, when they died, they could not leave them to their children; for the lands were then given to be held by other soldiers. The Roman settlers, therefore, could never feel as if what they had really belonged to them; which was the reason that, when they finally quitted Britain, the whole body of them went away

together, and left none of their people settled in the island.

Richard. I think I remember, when I saw Stonehenge last year with papa, he told me something about the Druids having lived there.

Mrs. M. Stonehenge is supposed to be the remains of a Druids' temple. The Druids were a very extraordinary set of people, who lived in woods, and used to pray to the sun and moon, and to fire and water, believing them to be gods.

George. Pray, mamma, are any of those Druids to be seen now?

Mrs. M. No. They have all been dead and gone long ago: but some of their buildings, if one may call them so, like that your papa and Richard saw at Stonehenge, remain. Many strange things are told of the Druids, and you shall read the account of them when you are older.

Richard. You said there are many remains of Roman castles and roads still left. Did I ever see any of them?

Mrs. M. Do you recollect, when we went to see your uncle in Yorkshire, that in our way to Hull we passed through Lincoln?

George. Yes, mamma, I remember it very well: for you know we walked about Lincoln, and saw the great church there.

Mrs. M. And do you remember our passing under an arch of very large stones, called Newport

Gate; which your papa told us was built without any mortar; so that if one stone was to come out, the whole would fall down: and yet it has remained firm and strong ever since it was put together by the Romans?

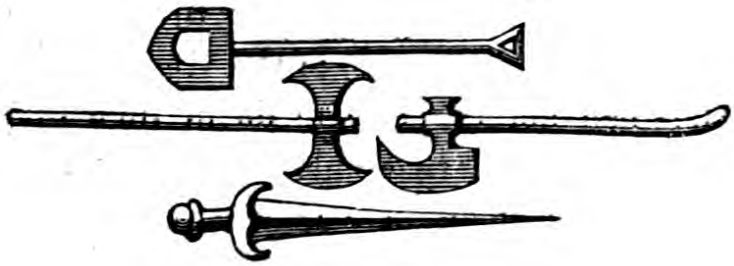
George. Yes, mamma: and I have not forgot that long, straight, tiresome road that we went for so many miles afterwards.

Mrs. M. That long, straight, tiresome road was one of the principal roads of the Romans. As their soldiers had nothing else to do in time of peace, their leaders used to employ them in these great works. The Roman roads may generally be known by being, as George would say, "long, straight, and tiresome."

CHAPTER III.

THE COMING OF THE SAXONS.

[Years after Christ, 420—871.]



When the Romans quitted Britain, the poor helpless inhabitants were left without leaders, governors, or magistrates, like so many wild animals, without reason and without laws. They committed all kinds of wickedness, and were so improvident, that at last they left off cultivating the land and sowing corn. Of course a famine very soon succeeded; and multitudes died of hunger and of an infectious disorder that broke out in the southern part of the island.

The land being now barren, and there being nothing to be got, the Scots and Picts left off coming for some years. Those Britons who had survived the calamities of the country once more began ploughing and sowing, and the next year there was an abundant harvest: but no sooner did

the rapacious Scots hear of it, than they all came rushing into Britain. The Britons once more sent to beg the Romans would come and help them; and I will repeat to you the letter they wrote to Ætius, the governor of Gaul. "*To Ætius, thrice Consul. The groans of the Britons.* The Barbarians drive us to the sea. The sea throws us back on the swords of the Barbarians: so we have nothing left but the wretched choice of being either drowned or butchered." But this melancholy letter did no good. No Romans came.

In the year after Christ 448, a prince of the Britons, named Vortigern, when he found that the Romans would no longer grant any assistance, most unwisely advised his countrymen to entreat aid from the Saxons. The Saxons were a nation of pirates, who inhabited the northern part of Germany. They, on their part, were very glad of the invitation; and there presently arrived three large ships, under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa, two brothers, who landed their troops, and being joined by the Britons, marched against the Scots, who had reached Stamford, where they were met by the Saxons, and were defeated, and driven back.

The Saxons soon saw the value and agreeableness of the country they had been invited to defend, and began to covet the possession of it for themselves. They were, in fact, as I have told you, a nation of pirates; and, without regarding the wickedness and cruelty of such conduct, they sent

for some more of their countrymen, and fell upon the unfortunate Britons, and defeated them in many battles. In one of these Horsa was killed, and Hengist then took possession of Kent, and made himself king of it. This happened somewhere about the year 460; but it is very difficult to ascertain the exact dates of events that happened so long ago, when there were but few who wrote any account of them. Gildas, however, the oldest British historian we know of, was a writer of this period. From him we learn that, after this success of the Saxons under Hengist, new swarms of them kept pouring in from time to time, and by degrees got possession of almost all South Britain; and as each of their chiefs took possession of what he conquered, there thus at last arose seven different kingdoms, which are commonly called the Saxon Heptarchy. Though I do not often try your memories with strings of names, I wish you to learn by heart the names of the seven Saxon kingdoms:—

Kent—contained Kent and part of Sussex.

Sussex—Surrey and part of Sussex.

Wessex—included the coast from Sussex to the Land's End.

East Saxony—or Essex.

East Anglia—Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire.

Mercia—the midland part of the island.

Northumberland—from Mercia to the borders of Scotland.

It was now that Britain began to be called, from one of the Saxon tribes, Angle-land, and from thence England. Of the native Britons but few were left. Numbers had been slaughtered by the perfidious Saxons. Some fled to Gaul, where they settled in the north-western corner of that country, which has since, from them, been called Bretagne, or Brittany. The rest took refuge in the western side of our own island, from the Land's End to the Frith of Clyde, which is, for the most part, hilly and mountainous. The present inhabitants of Wales, and of a part of Cornwall, are descended from these ancient Britons. Scotland was then inhabited by two separate nations, the Scots and Picts. So that you see our island must, at that time, have contained at least ten different states.

After the battle of Stamford, which I have mentioned to you, there is no account to be met with of the Scots or Picts, till the year 503, when there is some record of a king Fergus, who united the whole of the northern part of the island into one kingdom, and is the first king of Scotland we hear of. From the year 600 after Christ, to the year 800, there was nothing but fighting and disputing amongst the seven Saxon kings, who could not live together like good neighbours. During this time one of the kings of Wessex conquered Cornwall; and then the Britons had nothing remaining to them but Cambria, now called Wales, which they kept possession of till the year 1300, when it was

conquered by Edward I. king of England, as I shall hope to tell you in its proper place.

During this dark and stormy period, we have one bright object to look at with pleasure and thankfulness, and that is, the revival of Christianity. The Britons, as I before told you, had been instructed in the true faith by the Romans: but the Saxons, being pagans, persecuted the Christians, and seem at length to have nearly extirpated their religion. The people then became worshippers of the false gods of the Saxons, till the year 600, when St. Augustin arrived in England. There was, at that time, a king of Kent, called Ethelbert, who had married a daughter of a king of the Franks, who was a Christian. And when St. Augustin came into England, Ethelbert received him with great respect, became a Christian, and settled both him and the priests who came with him at Canterbury, where the magnificent ruins are still to be seen of an abbey, which is called after his name, and is believed to have been originally founded by him. From this beginning, the whole island was soon converted to Christianity; and the hearts and minds of the people began to be enlightened and improved; and civilization and morality, as is always the case, advanced hand in hand with religion.

The heptarchy was at last put an end to by Egbert, who is commonly considered the first king of all England: but, in fact, some of the kingdoms still remained, though he made them tributary.

Towards the end of his reign, the Danes began to make irruptions into England; and during the reigns of Ethelwolf, the son, and Ethelred, the grandson of Egbert, they came so frequently, and in such formidable numbers, that they nearly overran the whole kingdom. Ethelred was killed in a battle with them, and left his kingdom, in 871, to his brother Alfred, one of the best and greatest kings we have ever had.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER III.

Richard. How could the Britons be so foolish as to send for the Saxons to come and fight their battles for them? But why do you call the Saxons pirates?

Mrs. Markham. Because pirates are people who rob and pillage by sea. And these Saxons, having a very barren, unproductive country of their own,

were commonly brought up to a sea-faring life, and used to commit all sorts of depredations on whatever ships they met with; and often used to land on the coasts of other countries, and plunder the inhabitants, and carry off their provisions and cattle.

Richard. Why, then, mamma, the Danes only served them as they served other people.

Mrs. M. Indeed, there was no great difference between them. It was doubtless on some such pillaging excursion that the Danes made the settlement at Flamborough.

George. Dear mamma, was that the same Flamborough we went to see near Burlington, where there was that beautiful cave among the rocks, and that curious light-house?

Mrs. M. Yes, my dear, it was.

George. O! how glad I am! I remember very well our crossing a deep hollow with a short but steep hill on each side, and the coachman told me, (for I was on the barouche seat), that it was called Danes' Dyke, but he did not know why. Now, if we should ever go there again, I can tell him.

Mrs. M. You already perceive the advantages of knowledge, and how much pleasure we lose in travelling, by being ignorant of the history of the places we pass through.

Richard. You said that, after the Romans went, the Britons had no magistrates: What are magistrates?

Mrs. M. They are the persons who are appointed to enforce the laws.

Mary. Are there any magistrates now in England?

Mrs. M. Yes, my dear, our neighbour, Mr. Smith, is one. Don't you remember, when we were last week at his house, we saw a wretched-looking man brought there, who was suspected of having stolen some sheep?

Mary. O! yes, mamma, and I saw the man afterwards taken away to prison. And will he always be kept there?

Mrs. M. No, not always: he will be kept there till the assizes, which is the time when the judge who is to try the prisoners comes to the town. He will then be brought out into a large room, called the court, where he will stand up, that the judge and the lawyers, and all the people that come to hear the trials, may see him.

Richard. I think, if he really *has* stolen the sheep, he will be very much ashamed to stand there to be looked at: but you know, mamma, if he has not taken them, then he need not so much mind it.

George. Do you think, mamma, that he really did steal them?

Mrs. M. That we shall not know till the trial, when one of the lawyers, who will be called the counsel for the prosecution, will stand up, and state the reasons he has for thinking the man guilty, and will summon those persons who know any thing about the matter, to come and tell what they know of it. The persons thus summoned are called witnesses, and the lawyers and the judge will ask them

a great many questions. The prisoner may then, in his turn, ask any questions he pleases, and assign all the reasons he can why he should not be convicted of the theft. He also will call witnesses, if he knows of any body who can say any thing in his favour. The judge will then sum up the evidence, that is, will repeat over again the substance of all that has been said, and he will desire twelve men, who are called the jury, to declare whether they think the man guilty of having stolen the sheep, or not. If they say he is "not guilty," then there will be an end of the trial, and the man will be at liberty to go where he likes: but if the jury should say that they think him "guilty," he will, for a time, be taken back to the prison. But he will be brought again into the court for the judge to pass sentence upon him. This sentence may be, to be kept longer in prison, or perhaps to be sent to Botany Bay; or if he should prove to be a hardened offender, he may, perhaps, be condemned to be hanged.

Richard. O dear! how terrible to be brought to trial, and then to be hanged!

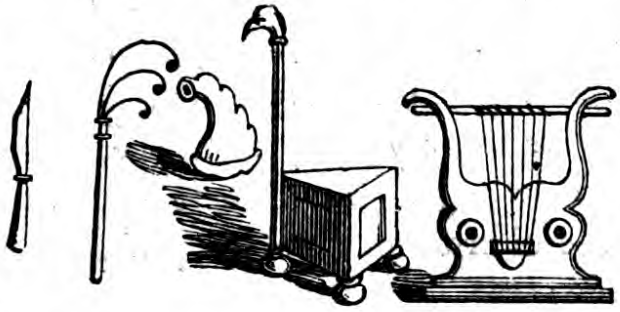
Mrs. M. It is, indeed, very shocking, to think of that poor wretch going through so much, with the sense of guilt upon his mind. And then to recollect, that he was once an innocent child like any of you, and probably never supposed it possible that he could be brought to commit any such wickedness, makes it still more sad.

Mary. Then how could he become so wicked?

Mrs. M. Mr. Smith told me he had always been too fond of play and idleness, and used to neglect his work and his duty; and so from little faults he got on to great ones, till at last he committed this crime. No one can ever tell, when once he allows himself to do wrong, how bad he may come to be.

George. But it is a comfort to think *we* need not be afraid of being hanged, for you know gentlemen never steal sheep.

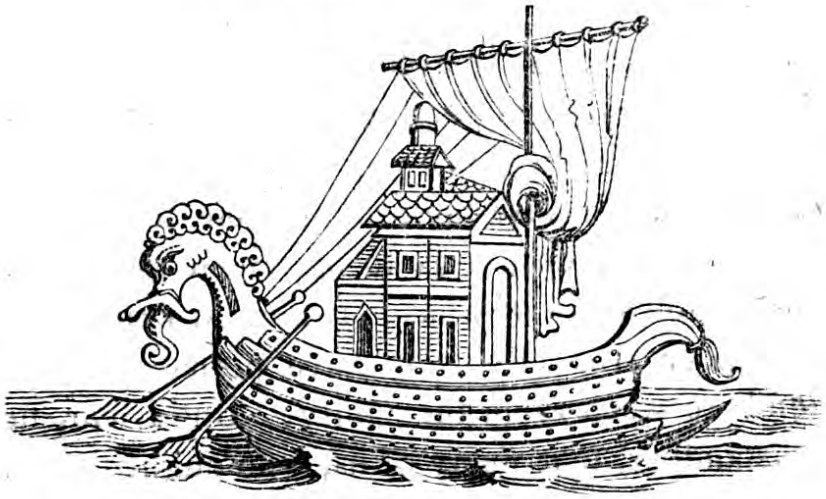
Mrs. M. Because their temptations to it are not so great. Besides, it is to be hoped they have a better knowledge of what is right and wrong, than these poor creatures, who have perhaps no kind friends to teach them their duty. But I fear, notwithstanding, that many of us, who ought to know better, do many very wrong things: but though we may escape being brought to trial for them here, there is a more awful trial we shall be brought to when we die: and if we shrink at the thought of standing up before an earthly judge, how much more shall we shrink when we come to stand, at the last day, before our heavenly Judge, if our conduct has not been according to his laws!



CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORY OF ALFRED.

[Years after Christ, 871—901.]



A Saxon ship of the ninth century.

I HAVE now related to you the chief occurrences in England from fifty-five years before Christ, to the year 871 after Christ, a period of above nine hundred years: and you may suppose that during that period great changes must have taken place in the face of the country, and in the manners and habits of the people. At the time to which I have now brought down our history, there were roads and houses, and towns; the houses not, perhaps, exactly like those we at present see, but still comfortable dwellings. The people had learned most of the useful arts; and, though probably their tools

and machines were clumsy and ill-contrived, still they tilled the ground, and wove clothing; and most of the arts of life began to be cultivated. They universally wore woollen clothes; some few of the rich had also linen; and the skins of animals were chiefly used for bedding. The oldest kind of cloth was a sort of plaid, such as we see in the Scotch tartan at this day: clothing at first seems to have consisted of one large piece of cloth, thrown loosely round the body: but in Alfred's time our ancestors had found out the convenience of having clothes made to fit their bodies, and cover their limbs. The arts of reading and writing were now practised, though chiefly confined to the monks. So that the country was in a very different state from that in which we first began our history. Christianity also had recovered from its early blight, and flourished, ever since the time of St. Augustin; and when Alfred began to reign it was the professed religion of the country.

I must now tell you something about this great king, who was brought up, like the young Saxons in general, in so much ignorance, that he was not even taught to read: but, when he was about twelve years old, his mother, who must have been, for those days, a very learned woman, one day showed him and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry, which was beautifully written and ornamented; and told them she would give it to the one who should soonest learn to read it. On this

Alfred applied himself with so much ardour, that in a very short time he was able to read the poem to the queen, who gave it to him as his reward. From this time he had the greatest delight in study: but he had two great difficulties to struggle with; one was, that there were so few books to be had; and the other, that there were so few people amongst the Saxons who could teach him any thing. However, notwithstanding all these obstacles, he soon became one of the most learned men of his time. Even when he was king he always carried a book in his bosom, that, whenever he had a spare moment, he might be able to profit by it: and thus, without neglecting any of his duties, he acquired a very extensive knowledge.

Alfred was about twenty-two years old when he succeeded his brother Ethelred: and we are told by some authors, that, on his first coming to the throne, he did not conduct himself towards his subjects like that good and benevolent prince he afterwards was: but, if this were so, his good understanding enabled him to amend his faults, and profit by adversity. During the first eight years of his reign he suffered continual persecution from the Danes, who at one time had got almost entire possession of the kingdom: and Alfred, to conceal himself from them, was obliged to disguise himself like a servant, and hire himself to a cowherd. One day, when he was in the cottage trimming his bow and arrows, the old man's wife, who did not

know he was the king, told him to watch some cakes that were toasting by the fire. Alfred, who had many other things to think of, forgot to turn them at the proper time, and they were all spoiled. The old woman was very angry with him, and told him he was a lazy fellow, who would eat the cakes, though he would not take the trouble to turn them. After a time the king went to a place in Somersetshire called Athelney, where he built a fort, and where many of his bravest nobles came to him. He soon had an army under his command, and determined to venture out and fight the Danes. It was necessary for him first to know something of the state of the Danish army; but having no trustworthy person whom he could send to gain intelligence, he disguised himself like a harper, and went to the Danish camp. When Guthrum, the general of the Danes, heard him play and sing, he was so much pleased with him, that he made him stay for some days in the camp, supposing him to be some poor minstrel. You may believe that Alfred was not very comfortable all this time, for fear of being discovered. However, he did not the less look about him, and see what was going on: and he observed that the Danes, not supposing that the English could muster an army strong enough to attack them, were quite off their guard, and were dancing and singing, and thought of nothing but amusing themselves.—The king, having thus gained the knowledge he wanted, took an oppor-

tunity of slipping out of the camp, and then summoned all his faithful subjects to meet him near Selwood Forest. He soon collected a large army; and, falling unexpectedly upon the Danes, obtained a complete victory over them, and made many prisoners. But, instead of killing or making slaves of them, as was often done in the barbarous and bloody battles of that age, he told them that if they would become Christians, and promise to live honestly and peaceably, they should be permitted to remain in England. This Guthrum and the rest of his people promising to do, retired into East Anglia and Northumberland. But they and their descendants were very unquiet subjects, both to Alfred and to the Anglo-Saxon kings who succeeded him; and were perpetually joining with those Danes from abroad, who, from time to time, renewed their invasions.

After the victory he had obtained over Guthrum, Alfred enjoyed several years of peace and tranquillity; and he employed the time in rebuilding his ruined castles, and repairing the mischiefs which had been done by the Danes, who had destroyed almost all the monasteries and schools. He also applied himself to the regulation of the laws, and many of the best and most useful laws we have, we owe principally to his wisdom. Alfred also took great pains to improve his subjects in useful and ingenious arts, and invited several skilful workmen into his kingdom to instruct his people. The En-

glish goldsmiths, in particular, soon became very expert. Little ornamented gold cases, which they made for relics, were known to foreigners by the name of *opera Anglica*, or English works. There was found at Athelney, in the seventeenth century, a very curious ornament, which is supposed to have been worn by Alfred. It is a thin plate of gold, beautifully engraved with various figures; and round it is an inscription in Saxon characters, "Alfred commanded me to be made."

This wise monarch was above all things desirous to improve the condition of his navy, considering it as his best security against his Danish enemies: but he had great difficulties to contend with, before he could procure an effective fleet. His subjects knew nothing of ship-building, so that he was obliged to get foreign shipwrights. These foreigners built some ships, and in time taught the English how to build them; but, even when this was done, Alfred found his people so inexpert, that he was obliged to get sailors from other countries. At last, by constant exertion and perseverance, he overcame all his difficulties, and got together a considerable fleet.

After the country had enjoyed near twelve years of peace and happiness, its tranquillity was again disturbed by the Danes, who came with a fleet of 330 ships, under a famous leader named Hastings. They landed in Kent, and made Apledore their head-quarters; and a long contest ensued before

Alfred could drive them out of the country. At last the wife and children of Hastings being taken prisoners, Alfred gave them back to him on condition that he and all his Danes should leave the country. This they agreed to, but some remained in the island till the year 897: from which time till 901, Alfred reigned in great prosperity, feared by his enemies, beloved by his subjects, and admired by all mankind. He died at the age of forty-nine of a complaint in the stomach, to which he had all his life been subject, leaving behind him a name which will ever be remembered by Englishmen with gratitude and veneration.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER IV.

Richard. Instead of wishing, as George did, to be a general, like Julius Cæsar, I should wish to be a king, like Alfred.

Mrs. Markham. If you could be exactly such a king as Alfred, yours would be a very wise choice.

George. But I think, Richard, I should not choose, if I were you, to be the king of such a stupid set of people as the Saxons. Why, they could not do any thing for themselves; and Alfred was obliged to send for people out of other countries to make his ships and every thing he wanted.

Mrs. M. The English certainly appear to have

been at that time behind-hand with most of the other nations of Europe. But I suppose this may be attributed to the constant state of warfare they were in among themselves. When people are quarrelling and disputing, they seldom find time for improving themselves.

Richard. You said something about monasteries, what were they?

Mrs. M. They were houses where the clergy, or rather the monks, lived all together: and at first they lived very humbly, in imitation of the apostles, who, you know, scorned riches, and had no pleasure but in doing good. They were the only people who in those days ever thought of cultivating their minds; but even among them there were not many who could do more than read and write.

Richard. Were there then no learned men in England till Alfred's time?

Mrs. M. There were very few. I have already told you of Gildas, who wrote the earliest History of England we have. There was also a very learned man in the seventh century named Aldhelm; but all I know about him is, that he was a poet. Bede also, or, as he is usually called, the *venerable* Bede, was of that age. He was an historian as well as a divine, and from his history it is that we learn many of the things I have been telling you. After Bede lived John Scotus, who, besides being a philosopher, was also a wit. It is

said, that the then king of France was very fond of him, and that one day, when they were sitting at dinner, one on each side the table, the king said, meaning to laugh at John Scotus, "What is there between a Scot and a sot?"—"Only the table," he replied, meaning that though he was the *Scot*, the king of France was the *sot*.—I must not, however, forget to mention Asser, a learned Saxon priest, who was the friend and companion of Alfred, and who wrote some account of his life.

Richard. How much I should like to read it!

Mrs. M. You would find in it some curious and interesting particulars of Alfred's conversations and private life.

Richard. I wish I knew what Alfred's ships were like.

Mrs. M. I can show you a copy of a Saxon drawing of a ship; but I can scarcely think that such a strange ill-shaped thing can be by any means an exact representation.

Richard. Pray, what is that sharp point that projects from it?

Mrs. M. It is an iron prow which the ships of war were armed with, for the purpose of striking one another. It is worth mentioning to you that the ship in this drawing bears a great resemblance to the figures which have come down to us of some of the galleys of the Greeks and Romans.

Mary. How could Alfred manage to carry a book in his bosom?

Mrs. M. In those days pockets were not thought of: but as the upper dress, or tunic, as I believe it was called, was made very wide and loose, and was bound in round the waist by a belt, it was easy to carry things in the folds of the dress.

Mary. Their purses, I suppose, they carried in that manner?

Mrs. M. I don't imagine they had much occasion for purses. At that time there was very little money in use. Things were bought and sold in the way of barter or exchange; and rents, till long afterwards, were paid in corn and cattle, instead of in money.

Richard. Then what was that very old piece of money the gardener found to-day when he was digging?

Mrs. M. That was a Roman coin—a coin of that good emperor I told you of, Constantine the Great. The Romans made use of money as we do; and though it is so long since they left the island, we are to this day continually finding their coins, and the more frequently because they had a custom of burying money with the dead.

Richard. When I was in London, you know, mamma, you showed me the king's palace. Was that the palace king Alfred lived in?

Mrs. M. No, my dear. I don't suppose Alfred's palace was a very splendid one. Most houses were in his time made of wood. There is an account of the chief palace of the kings of Wales

called the *White Palace*, which was made of peeled rods woven together.

Mary. What a droll house! It must have been like a great basket.

Mrs. M. Houses were then never built of stone, which was only used in constructing castles and strong places for defence. Even the churches were commonly of wood. William of Malmesbury, an historian of the twelfth century, says, that the first Christian church in Britain was made with wattles, which are stakes interlaced, or interwoven, with osiers. We are told that the first stone church was built at Lincoln, I forget in what year, and that it was thought a great curiosity. The first glass that was ever seen in England was at Hexham Abbey, in Northumberland, and was made by some workmen who came from France, and taught the English how to make it: but it was a long time before it became general. At first it was only used for the windows of churches.

George. Then had they no windows to their houses?

Mrs. M. The windows of their houses were covered with cloth to keep out the wind, or else with lattice-work.

Richard. How many things Alfred did! I cannot think how he found time for them all.

Mrs. M. He found time, by never wasting it. One-third of his time he devoted to religious exercises, and to study; another third to sleep and

necessary refreshment, and the other to the affairs of his kingdom. Thus every thing was attended to, and nothing neglected: and he was so much afraid of losing a moment, that as there were no clocks or watches, he contrived a sort of candle, by the burning of which he could measure time.

Richard. I cannot think how that could be done by a candle.

Mrs. M. I will try to explain it to you. These candles were painted in rings or belts of different breadths and colours, so many colours as he had things to attend to; and thus he knew by the burning of these candles when he had been employed long enough about any one thing.

Mary. Why, mamma, that is something like you, when you turn your hour-glass, and tell me I may go and play in the garden for an hour, When I see the sand all run out, I know that I have been out long enough.

Mrs. M. But in one respect Alfred's candles were not so good as an hour-glass, for when the wind blew upon them they burnt quicker; and so, to remedy that inconvenience, he invented lanterns to put them in.

George. Invented lanterns! I don't think I shall ever see a lantern again, without thinking of king Alfred.

Mrs. M. The benefits he bestowed on his country were so great and so various, that, even to this day, we are surrounded by them.

Richard. When papa comes in to tea, I will ask him when he thinks I shall be old enough to read all the books that have ever been written about king Alfred. I want to know every thing about him.

CHAPTER V.

THE SAXON KINGS AFTER ALFRED

[Years after Christ, 901—959.]

ST. DUNSTAN,
From a drawing said to be by himself.

ALFRED was succeeded by his son Edward, who had a turbulent reign of twenty-four years, the early part of which was disturbed by the attempts of his cousin Ethelwald to wrest the kingdom from him. This cousin Ethelwald was the son of Alfred's elder brother; but, being an infant at the time of his father's death, the nobles passed him by, and made Alfred king. The nephew, now that his uncle was dead, naturally put in his claim to the crown. After much fighting, and the loss of many of his adherents, he was killed, and then Edward's right remained undisputed.

Edward was a man of great abilities, but was fonder of war than of peace and quietness. He had also a sister named Ethelfleda, who was as fond of war as himself, and who assisted him in many of his enterprises. She inherited a great share of her father's talents, and would have made a better prince than princess. Edward, besides defending his kingdom against the Danes, who were perpetually attacking it, made, towards the close of his reign, a successful incursion into Wales. He died in the year 925, leaving behind him five sons and nine daughters. He is commonly called Edward the Elder.

Athelstan, his eldest son, succeeded him. His reign, like that of his father, was a continual conflict with the Danes. One of their generals, a prince called Anlaff, tried the same stratagem that had been practised with so much success by Alfred. He disguised himself like a minstrel, and went into Athelstan's camp. The king was much pleased with his music, and, thinking he was a poor boy, gave him a piece of money. Anlaff was too proud to keep it, and when he got out of the king's tent, and thought nobody was in sight, he buried it in the ground. It happened that a soldier saw him, and, thinking this very strange, examined the pretended minstrel's face, and knew him to be prince Anlaff, but did not attempt to obstruct his departure.

When the Danish prince had got some distance from the camp, the soldier informed Athelstan of the discovery he had made. The king reproved him for letting such a dangerous enemy escape. "I once served Anlaff," replied the man, "and gave him the same faith that I have now given to you; and if I had betrayed him, what trust could you have reposed in my truth? Let him die, if such be his fate; but not through my treachery. Yet now he has escaped, secure yourself from danger, and remove your tent, lest he should assail you unawares."—Athelstan was pleased with the honest soldier's answer, and took his advice, and it was well he did; for a bishop, who came the next day, and pitched his tent in the same spot where the king's had stood, was in the night attacked by the Danes; and both he and all his servants were killed.

The noise of this attack waked the Saxons, and the battle became general between them and the Danes. It lasted all that night and all the following day, and is distinguished in Saxon history by the name of the *long battle*. It ended in Athelstan's gaining a complete victory, which secured to him the entire possession of the kingdom. But he did not enjoy it long; for he died three years afterwards, in 941.

Athelstan was succeeded by his brother Edmund, who was at first molested by the perse-

vering Danes, collected together under the command of Anlaff, who had escaped from the late battle. They, however, were soon subdued, and Edmund displayed so much bravery and wisdom, that there was every hope his reign would be a happy one; when a sudden end was put to it. He was sitting at a feast with all his nobles about him, when a daring robber, named Leolf, came into the hall. The attendants tried in vain to turn him out; and the king getting very angry, rose from his seat, and, seizing him by the hair, threw him down. The robber upon this drew his dagger, and stabbed the king to the heart; and thus this hopeful young prince died, when he was only twenty-four years old, in the year 948.

He left two little sons, named Edwy and Edgar; but they were so young, that Edred, his brother, was chosen king. The Northumberland Danes, as they usually did, revolted in the beginning of the new reign; but Edred soon subdued them; and, no longer allowing them to have a prince of their own, he appointed one of his own nobles to be their governor; by which means he prevented them from any more disturbing the peace of the kingdom.

This king would have led on the whole a quiet life, if he had not suffered himself to be governed by an ambitious priest called St. Dunstan. Before I tell you who this St. Dunstan was, it will be ne-

cessary to give you some account of the state of the church at the period I am here speaking of. There were then two archbishops, as there are now, of Canterbury and York, at the head of the bishops. Of the body of the clergy a large portion were monks, who took on themselves some particular vow of living by a certain system or rule. Their ordinary practice was to live in *monasteries*, under the government of some superior: and they are often called the *regular* clergy. Another portion of the clergy were *seculars*, who did not take on themselves any monkish vows. The way of life of the secular clergy has, in later periods of our history, been altogether different from that of the monks or regulars. At first, however, both these classes lived chiefly in religious houses or monasteries, in which they preached regularly, and established schools. There were also nunneries. The nuns were religious women, who lived retired from the world, and spent their time in prayer and fasting.

The monasteries, being quite defenceless, were in general the first objects attacked by the Danes, who, after killing or driving out the inhabitants, carried off all the plunder they could find, and commonly destroyed the monastery. Of those who escaped, many took refuge in the neighbouring villages: and this occasioned a great increase of parish churches, almost all the churches till now having been either cathedrals, or annexed to re-

ligious houses. After a time many of the new parish priests became attached to the homes which they thus acquired, and married, and, in short, lived among their parishioners as clergymen do now. When Alfred rebuilt the monasteries, and wanted their former inhabitants to go back to them, many refused to return, and he was, therefore, obliged to invite monks from other countries to come and live in his monasteries. Perpetual quarrels and jealousies ensued, and the two parties did all they could to injure one another.

St. Dunstan was an English monk, of good interest and connexions. He had been at first abbot of Glastonbury; and at last came to be archbishop of Canterbury. A great many ridiculous stories are told of him; but they are so absurd that I shall not repeat them. He was a very proud meddling man, and was more violent than any body else against the secular clergy, and persuaded king Edred, over whom he had great influence, to treat them in a very harsh manner. Edred, in the latter part of his life, which ended in 955, became indolent and helpless from bad health, and let St. Dunstan do whatever he pleased.

Edwy, the eldest son of king Edmund, and nephew to Edred, then succeeded to the throne. He was only eighteen years old, and was naturally well disposed; but the cruelty and hard-heartedness of this St. Dunstan destroyed not only the happiness of his life, but also his life itself, as you

shall hear. Edwy had a beautiful cousin, Elgiva, whom he loved very dearly, and married. St. Dunstan, and Odo, at that time archbishop of Canterbury, declared it to be sinful for a man to marry his cousin, and did all they could to disturb their mutual happiness. On this the king sent St. Dunstan out of the kingdom; but Odo contrived to seize on the poor queen, cruelly burned her face with hot irons, in order to destroy her beauty, and then had her carried away into Ireland, where she was kept a prisoner. He then instigated Edgar, who was still a boy, to raise a rebellion against his brother. St. Dunstan also returned from his banishment, and joined in Edgar's rebellion. To complete Edwy's afflictions, his beloved Elgiva, having made her escape from Ireland, got as far as Gloucester in her way back to him; but she was there discovered by her savage persecutors, who put her to death. Edwy, not able to support such an accumulation of misfortunes, died of a broken heart in 959.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER V.

Mary. You said there were many ridiculous stories about St. Dunstan. I wish you would tell them to us. I love droll stories.

Mrs. Markham. These stories are ridiculous

from their absurdity, more than because they are really droll. However, I will tell you some of them. When he was a boy, he was so ill as to be considered at the point of death. An angel then appeared to him, and gave him a medicine that quite cured him. He directly jumped out of his bed, and ran, as fast as he could, to a neighbouring church, to return thanks for his cure. The devil, with a number of great black dogs, met him by the way, and tried to frighten him back. But St. Dunstan, caring neither for him nor his dogs, drove them all away with his stick. He then got safe to the church, but the doors were shut. An angel, however, taking him up, popped him down through a hole in the roof, and so enabled him to perform his devotions.—Another time, after he became a monk, he built himself a little cell on the outside of the church wall at Glastonbury, and here he amused himself with making many useful and ingenious things in iron and brass. One day, while he was busily at work, the devil, assuming the appearance of a human figure, put his head in at the window of the cell, and asked him to make something for him. St. Dunstan soon finding out who it was, seized the devil by the nose with a pair of red-hot tongs, and made him roar horribly.

Richard. Did the monks invent these stories by way of fun?

Mrs. M. I am afraid, my dear, it was more from knavery; and the people were so ignorant

and foolish that they would readily believe any thing.

Mary. In one of the pictures you showed us yesterday, there was the figure of a Saxon cook. What is he supposed to be doing?

Mrs. M. He is going to take a piece of meat out of the caldron, with a hook of a peculiar construction. The Saxons seldom dressed their meat in any other way than by boiling. It should seem that they had no grates or fire-places; but they made a fire on the ground, and placed a trivet over it with a boiler. Though their cookery was very simple, they were very nice in the setting out of their dinner tables, which were covered with clean table linen; and every person had a separate drinking horn (there were no such things as glasses), and his own mess of pottage to himself. They had knives and wooden spoons, but the luxury of forks was unknown.

Mary. That was a very diverting story about the man who buried the money.

Richard. So it was, Mary; but, mamma, I don't think I quite know what a minstrel is.

Mrs. M. I have already told you that the Saxon nobles were very ignorant, and could neither write nor read. So you may suppose a great deal of their time hung heavy upon their hands, namely, the time when they were neither hunting nor fighting; and they were not fighting every day in the year, nor

hunting every hour of the day. And in rainy weather and winter evenings, when they had played with their dogs, and sharpened their arrows, and brightened their spears (for to have bright arms was an essential part of a Saxon gentleman's appearance), you may suppose they often did not know what to do with themselves. Any body who could sing a song, or play on the harp, or tell an entertaining story, was consequently much courted and valued: and this occasioned some persons to make it their business to learn all these accomplishments. These persons, whom the Saxons called glee-men, but who now go usually under the name of minstrels, used to rove about the country from house to house, and from castle to castle, singing their songs, and telling their stories, which were commonly in verse: and every body made them welcome, and was glad to see them. And even when the country was in a state of warfare, and other people could not travel without danger, they went every where without molestation, for nobody would hurt or molest the poor minstrel, who was always so acceptable and amusing a guest. I should not forget to tell you that the Danes were acquainted with the game of chess. Backgammon was also played in England, having been invented, it is said, by the Welsh, and called by them, from two words in their language, *bach cammon*, or little battle.

George. I am sure, mamma, if you had lived in those times, you should have been a minstrel, for you can tell a great many entertaining stories.

Mrs. M. I am glad you think them so; and before we have done our history, I hope to tell you a great many more.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE SAXON KINGS, IN CONTINUATION.

[Years after Christ, 959—1017.]

EDGAR, the next king, was only sixteen years old when he succeeded his unfortunate brother Edwy. He was completely governed by St. Dunstan, and other meddling monks, who, in return, wrote the history of his life, and praised him as the best king that had ever lived. We are not able, at this distance of time, to know how much of this praise he deserved. We are told that justice was so well and wisely administered in his time, that travellers had no longer any fear of robbers; and that he was so much courted and honoured, that eight kings

rowed him in his royal barge on the river Dee. It appears certain that he attended diligently to the maritime affairs of his kingdom; and he had so large a fleet, that the Danes never ventured to molest him.

Before Edgar's time, the petty monarchs of Wales had been obliged to pay tribute to the kings of England in money and cattle; but he commanded it to be paid in wolves' heads, of which they were to bring him three hundred yearly. After having reigned seventeen years, Edgar died in 975. His reign was so free from wars and tumults, that he obtained the title of Edgar the Peaceable. He left two sons, Edward, the son of his first wife; and Ethelred, whose mother, Elfrida, was still living. Elfrida was ambitious that her son should be king instead of his half-brother: but the influence of that bustling prelate, St. Dunstan, placed the crown on the head of Edward.

This poor young man behaved kindly and gently to every body, and respectfully to his ambitious stepmother; but this did not prevent her from contriving his death. One day, when he was hunting near Corfe Castle in Dorsetshire, where Elfrida lived, he rode to the Castle, unattended by any of his retinue, and unsuspicious of any ill, to make the queen a passing visit. Elfrida received him with much pretended kindness, and as he declined dismounting from his horse, she presented him

with a cup of wine. While he was drinking it, she caused him to be stabbed in the back. Nay, some writers say, she stabbed him herself. Edward, finding himself wounded, put spurs to his horse, and galloped off, but becoming weak from loss of blood, he fell from his horse, and was dragged in the stirrup till he died.

Ethelred then succeeded to the throne; but though his wicked mother had now obtained her utmost wish, she found it impossible to be happy. She founded monasteries, and performed penances, according to the superstitious notions of those times: but, as you may well believe, could never regain her peace of mind. Edward, whom she had murdered, was, on account of his tragical death, called Edward the Martyr. Ethelred had the name of *Ethelred the Unready;* for when the Danes made an attack upon his kingdom, instead of being prepared to drive them off, he bribed them with a large sum of money to go away. This, to be sure, at that time they did; but it was only to return again the next year, in hopes of being again bribed. Ethelred, however, was now ready for them, and would have blocked up and destroyed their fleet, had not Ealfric, one of his own commanders, deserted to them, after having first given them notice of the intended attack. By this means they escaped with only the loss of one ship.

In the following year, 993, the country was again invaded. Sweyn, king of Denmark, and Olave,

king of Norway, commanded this expedition. They sailed up the Humber, and landed in that part of Lincolnshire called Lindsey, and remained nearly two years, overrunning and pillaging different parts of the country. At last Ethelred, by giving them a very large sum of money, prevailed on them to depart. But the kingdom had only one year's rest from these insatiable marauders. They again returned, and were again bribed to leave the country.

Some years before, a body of Danes, under the command of a leader named Rollo, had made an incursion into France, and obtained possession of a fertile district, which has since been called Normandy. Richard II., duke of Normandy, a descendant of Rollo, was a very powerful prince at the time I am now speaking of: and the improvident Ethelred, who had entirely exhausted the resources of his own kingdom by those repeated bribes to the Danes, thought that the making a friend of this duke, who was, as I have told you, himself of Danish origin, would be his best protection against them in case they should return again. To cement this friendship, he prevailed on the duke to give him in marriage his daughter Emma, who was accounted the most beautiful princess in Europe.

This marriage might, through the duke of Normandy's influence with the Danes, have been some security to the English, but for an act of barbarity, not less unwise than wicked, of which they were guilty. In revenge for the repeated sufferings

which the foreign Danes had brought upon them, they made in the year 1002 a general massacre of the Danes settled in England. Amongst others was killed a sister of the king of Norway, with her husband and children. When the news of his sister's murder reached Sweyn, he vowed to make a bloody retaliation; and, accordingly, in the year 1003, he brought a large army to England, where he established himself successfully. In the course of ten years, he got entire possession of the kingdom; and Ethelred and his queen Emma, with their two young sons, fled into Normandy. But Sweyn, before he could be crowned, died at Gainsborough. As soon as Ethelred heard of his death, he came back into England, and conducted himself with such unexpected activity and courage, that he compelled the Danes, with their young king Canute, to return home.

If Ethelred had been wise and prudent, he might now have reinstated himself in his kingdom: but he suffered himself to be governed and misguided by one of his traitorous nobles, and caused some of his more faithful adherents to be put to death unjustly. Canute now returned; and Edmund, the eldest son of Ethelred, a brave and active young prince, struggled hard to preserve his father's kingdom, amidst the many and great difficulties occasioned by the cruelties of the Danes, the weakness of his father, and the wickedness of the nobles.

This prince, on the death of his father in 1016,

became king; and from his hardihood and invincible valour, was called Edmund Ironsides. He fought no less than five pitched battles with the Danes. Canute and he then came to an agreement to divide the kingdom between them, and to live in peace if they could. It was settled that Canute should have Mercia and Northumberland, and that Edmund should keep all the rest of the kingdom. But, a few days after this agreement had been made between them, Edmund was murdered at Oxford by one of his own nobles, and thus Canute became sole king of England in the year 1017.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER VI.

Richard. I cannot help thinking that though Alfred was so wise a king, it was not a very wise thing to let Guthrum and his Danes settle in Northumberland; for how much trouble they were always giving!

Mrs. Markham. Had all Alfred's successors been as wise as himself, it would probably not have occasioned so much mischief; but Alfred could not foresee that any of his descendants would be as weak and foolish as Ethelred the Unready. At the time Alfred granted the conquered Danes that privilege, he was doing a good and merciful action:

for in those times prisoners, who were taken in battle, were commonly either slain or made slaves of.

Mary. Slaves, mamma! I thought only negroes were ever slaves.

Mrs. M. All the slaves we now hear of, as belonging in any way to English people, are the negroes in our West-Indian colonies; and I trust that you, my children, if not I, may live to see the time when they too shall be free. But you will be shocked to hear that, in the early period of which we are now speaking, slavery was very frequent in England, and that even parents were known to sell their own children: but as God, for his own wise purposes, often allows evil, that good may come of it, so the coming of St. Augustin into this island arose from the circumstance of there being some English slaves, who were sent from hence to Rome.

George. Dear mamma, how could that be?

Mrs. M. It happened one day, when pope Gregory I. was walking in the streets of Rome, that he saw some very beautiful children exposed for sale. Asking where they came from, he was told, from England: on which he said, they would not be *Angli*, but *Angeli*, if they were but Christians. *Angli*, you know, Richard, is the word for *English*, and *Angeli* that for *Angels*, in Latin. And it was this circumstance which occasioned him first to think of sending St. Augustin to England, who, as you may remember, I have already told you converted the English to Christianity. The

monks used, from the beginning, every exertion to put an end to slavery in this country.

Richard. What a pity it was those monks were so meddling, for they seem often to have done very good things.

Mrs. M. They were, I am afraid, no better than other men; and as little able as the rest of mankind to resist pride. They were at that time the only people who had any learning, and were consulted and looked up to on all occasions, as being wiser and better than the rest of the world. It seems, therefore, to be very natural that human infirmity should have yielded to such great temptation, and that so many of them should have been proud and overbearing; and this ought to be a warning to us not to give way to pride, to spiritual pride especially.

George. Pray, mamma, what became of St. Dunstan? You have told us nothing about him for a long time.

Mrs. M. There is very little more to tell you about him. After the death of Edgar, some of the nobles took the part of the secular clergy against the monks, and St. Dunstan went on to the end of his life, disputing and squabbling for the interests of his order. He lived till the early part of Ethelred's reign.

Richard. I have been puzzling myself with thinking where the Welsh people could get those three hundred wolves' heads, to pay to king Edgar.

Mrs. M. You will be surprised to hear that they got them from their own mountains. Wales, and great part of England, were at that time much infested by these fierce animals; and Edgar imposed this tribute for the sake of clearing the country of them. The plan succeeded so well, that the whole race was at that time almost extirpated. Some, however, must, I suppose, have escaped this general slaughter, for we are told that, three hundred years afterwards, their number was again become so great that Edward I. issued mandates for their destruction. Some estates were held in Derbyshire on the condition of hunting and destroying them. The last which was known to remain in this island was killed in Scotland, in the end of the seventeenth century, by sir Ewan Cameron, of Lochiel: and they were to be found in Ireland little more than a hundred years ago.

Richard. What is the meaning of that wicked queen Elfrida's doing penance?

Mrs. M. In proportion as people are ignorant, they are also commonly superstitious; and, the more ignorant they are, the more strange and out of reason are their superstitions. No one, however, can be out of the reach of conscience, whether he be learned or ignorant: but in those superstitious times, when any one had committed a crime, instead of making amends for it in a proper way, by sincere repentance, and by repairing to the utmost the harm he had done, the monks used to persuade

him to do penance. To do penance was often to go barefoot, or to sleep on a hard board instead of a bed, or to do something else which should vex the body; but which would not make the heart or temper, from which the fault arose, at all the better. To the rich, especially, these penances could avail nothing, since they might always buy off their punishments. For instance, if a rich man was ordered, as a penance for any crime, to fast for a week, it was supposed that if he could hire seven men to fast a day each, their fasting would do his soul as much good as if he had fasted himself. It was common to exhort rich sinners to leave their money at their deaths to build churches and monasteries. This, you know, was no punishment at all. There were also such things as indulgences, which were privileges that were to be bought, allowing people to do things which were forbidden; but which still they had a mind to do. For instance, it was against the rules of the church to eat butter during Lent; and in some travels in France that I was looking at to-day, I found an account of one of the towers of the cathedral at Rouen which is called the *Butter Tower*, because it was built with the money that was paid for indulgences to eat butter during Lent.

George. Then I suppose those people who were rich could always afford to be as wicked as they pleased. I do not mean that there was any thing wicked in eating butter in Lent; but if they could

buy leave to do that, they might, I suppose, buy leave to do what was really wrong. Well, I am very glad we do not now live in such times as those.

Mrs. M. We have, indeed, a great deal to be thankful for in that, and in many other respects; and the more we read of history, the more thankful we shall feel ourselves disposed to be for the many comforts and advantages, and particularly for the moral and religious privileges, which we enjoy.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM CANUTE TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

[Years after Christ, 1017—1066.]

THE English showed, at first, some repugnance to accept for their king a foreigner and an enemy, in exclusion of the sons of Edmund Ironsides. But Canute, who was a wise and powerful prince, reconciled all their differences, and peaceably ascended the throne. His first care was to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between his English

and Danish subjects; in which difficult undertaking, it is said, he succeeded: and although he had profited by the wicked arts of those Saxons who had betrayed their country to him, he nevertheless inflicted on them the just punishment of their treachery, putting some of them to death, and banishing others.

Canute's conduct towards the family of his predecessor is the great stain on his character. He not only caused the brother of Edmund to be murdered, but also sent away Edmund's two little sons to the king of Sweden, meaning, it is supposed, that he should put them to death. But the king of Sweden took compassion on them, and sent them to Solomon, king of Hungary, desiring him to take good care of them. Edwin, the elder, died young; but the younger, who was called Edward, lived to grow up, and married Agatha, sister of the queen of Hungary: and you will hear of him again. Canute, when he was thoroughly settled in England, being desirous to show his new subjects what confidence he had in them, sent almost all his Danish fleet and army back again to Denmark, keeping only forty ships.

He next offered himself in marriage to Emma, the widowed queen of Ethelred; and you will be surprised to hear that she actually married him, although he had been her children's greatest enemy. It was, however, a very fortunate marriage for Canute, as it prevented the duke of Normandy from

attempting to place on the throne of England his nephews, Alfred and Edward, the two sons of Emma and Ethelred.

The conduct of Canute was so wise and prudent, that he has been called by historians Canute the Great. In a voyage to Denmark, to repel the Swedes, who were making an attack upon that country, he took with him some English under the command of earl Godwin; and they attacked the Swedish army with so much bravery, that Canute was greatly pleased with their conduct; and Godwin became one of his greatest favourites. He staid in Denmark about a year; and when he returned to England he found the country in great tranquillity, in which it continued for some years. During this time, Canute employed himself in making new laws and regulations, and in building churches and monasteries: neither did he disdain the character of a poet; and the first stanza of a poem written by him on the occasion of his hearing the monks of Ely chanting mass, as he was passing by on the water, is still on record.

> Cheerful sang the monks of Ely,
> When Cnut the king was passing by;
> Row to the shore, knights, said the king,
> And let us hear these churchmen sing.

This poem was afterwards sung in the churches, which gives us a very odd notion of the sacred poetry of those times.

Excepting a dispute with the king of Scotland about the tribute called Danegelt, which he demanded for a part of Cumberland that had at some former time been given up to the Scots, Canute preserved England in peace during the whole of his reign, a term of eighteen years. He died at Shaftsbury in 1035, and left three sons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute.

The succession had been settled on Hardicanute, who was queen Emma's son; but, he being in Denmark when his father died, Harold seized on the crown, and took possession of the late king's treasures. Earl Godwin, and the greater part of the English, declared for Hardicanute; and the country seemed on the verge of a civil war, when it was prevented by an arrangement entered into for dividing the kingdom between the two brothers. Harold was to keep London, and the counties north of the Thames. All to the south of that river was to be Hardicanute's; and his mother, queen Emma, was to live at Winchester, and govern the country for him, till his return from Denmark. Emma then sent for her two sons, whom she had had by Ethelred, to come to England from Normandy, where they were living under their uncle's care. Alfred, on his arrival, fell into the hands of earl Godwin, who had been secretly gained to Harold's interest, and was carried to Ely, where he was either actually murdered, or died in con-

sequence of the cruel treatment he suffered. As soon as Emma heard of his fate, she fled into Flanders, and Harold took possession of the whole kingdom. He did not, however, long enjoy the fruits of his cruelty and ambition, for he died in 1039. He was remarkable for his swiftness in walking and running, which obtained for him the name of Harold Harefoot.

As soon as Hardicanute, who had joined his mother in Flanders, heard of the death of Harold, he came to England, and was received by the people with the greatest joy. But their joy was of short duration, for the young king soon showed himself to be of a very ferocious and vindictive temper. He had the dead body of Harold, who, you know, was his half brother, taken out of its grave, and thrown into the Thames. Soon afterwards he levied a heavy tax on his English subjects, to pay his Danish fleet and army. His reign, however, did not last long; for he died in 1041, having shortened his life by his excessive intemperance in eating and drinking.

The violences of Harold and Hardicanute had so much disgusted the English with their Danish sovereigns, that they now resolved to restore the line of their own Saxon princes, and they looked about amongst the descendants of Ethelred for a successor to the vacant throne. Edward, commonly called Edward the Exile, that son of Edmund Iron-

sides, who, I have already told you, was taken care of by the king of Hungary, was undoubtedly the next heir to the crown: but he was so far off, and so little known, that they passed him by, and invited Edward, afterwards called the Confessor, the son of Ethelred and Emma, to ascend the throne. Edward, being of a timorous and unambitious temper, did not desire to be king, and would have declined the offer, had not earl Godwin, who was now become the most powerful person in the kingdom, prevailed on him to suffer himself to be crowned. This restoration of the Saxon line caused great joy throughout the kingdom, and was long celebrated by an annual festival called Hokeday.

Edward married Edgitha, daughter of earl Godwin, and began his reign by seizing on the treasures of queen Emma, who, he pretended, had treated him very unkindly during his adversity. He also revoked many grants the late king had made to the Danes; and took off the tax called Danegelt, a tax which was particularly odious to the English, and which had been first levied by Ethelred, to obtain money to bribe the Danes to leave the country.

Edward having been brought up amongst the Normans, had many friends and favourites of that nation, who came flocking over to him, and were loaded by him with favours and benefits. This gave great offence to the English nobles, parti-

cularly to earl Godwin, who considered himself as having a right to govern and direct the king, and who was indignant at the influence the Normans had over him. These jealousies became at length so violent, that the king banished earl Godwin, and gave his possessions to Norman favourites. Even the queen, because she was the earl's daughter, was very harshly treated, and was obliged to go into a nunnery. However, after a time, Godwin and his sons returned with a great fleet, and boldly sailed up the Thames, towards London. The king was then persuaded by the rest of the English nobles to restore Godwin to his possessions, and to banish the Normans, who all left the country as secretly as they could, for fear of being torn to pieces by the populace.

Soon after this, earl Godwin died suddenly, as he was sitting at table with the king. Godwin had married a daughter of Canute the Great; and Harold, his eldest son, who was quite as ambitious as his father, had set his heart on succeeding Edward, who had no children, in the throne of England. But the king, who was aware of his ambitious designs, and desirous of defeating them, sent Aldred, bishop of Worcester, into Hungary, to bring the long-forgotten prince, Edward the Exile, to England. The prince obeyed the summons; but died a few months after his arrival, leaving a little boy, named Edgar Atheling, and two daughters, Mar-

garet and Christina, friendless orphans in a country from which he had himself been banished for forty years.

The death of Edward the Exile strengthened Harold yet more in his hopes; and on the death of Edward the Confessor, which took place in 1066, he was crowned king. He did not, however, find the throne a peaceable possession; for William duke of Normandy immediately asserted his own claim to it, under pretence that Edward the Confessor had left him the kingdom in his will. William, in aid of his own preparations, excited Halfager, king of Norway, and Tosti, the brother of Harold, to make a descent in the north of England. Harold gained near York a great victory over these invaders; but was then obliged to make a speedy march to the south coast, to oppose the duke of Normandy, who had landed, with a great army, in Pevensey Bay, in Sussex, on the 28th of September, 1066. On the 14th of October was fought the great battle of Hastings, a battle that completely changed the fate of England. Harold was killed by a wound in the eye from an arrow, and William gained a signal victory.

An entirely new race of princes now ascended the throne: and as we are come to such an important period in our history, I will give you a little table of the Saxon kings, which you will find it useful to study at your leisure.

Began to reign.	Reigned.		
		THE SAXON LINE.	
827	9	Egbert.	
836	21	Ethelwolf, son of Egbert.	
857	14	Ethelred,	sons of Ethelwolf.
871	30	Alfred,	
901	24	Edward the Elder, son of Alfred.	
925	16	Athelstan,	sons of Edward.
941	7	Edmund,	
948	7	Edred,	
955	4	Edwy,	sons of Edmund.
959	16	Edgar,	
975	4	Edward the Martyr,	sons of Edgar.
979	37	Ethelred the Unready,	
1016	1	Edmund Ironsides.	
		THE DANISH LINE.	
1017	18	Canute the Great.	
1035	4	Harold Harefoot,	sons of Canute.
1039	2	Hardicanute,	
		SAXON LINE RESTORED.	
1041	27	Edward the Confessor, son of Ethelred the Unready.	
1066		Harold, son of earl Godwin, usurped the crown, though Edgar Atheling, grandson of Edmund Ironside, was the natural heir.	

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER VII.

George. I cannot help being sorry that we shall have no more of the Saxon kings. I do not feel as if I should like the Normans at all.

Mary. Do you know, mamma, I have been

thinking all the time of that song you once tried to teach me.

> The Romans in England long did sway,
> The Saxons after them led the way:
> They tugged with the Danes, till an overthrow
> They both of them got from the Norman bow.

Richard. As we have quite done with the Saxons, I wish, mamma, you would be so good as to tell us all you recollect about them.

Mrs. Markham. Indeed, my dear, you have set me no very easy task. I will, however, try to execute it as well as I can; but I must first tell you, you are a little mistaken in supposing you have quite done with the Saxons. Your papa and I are Saxons.

Mary. You a Saxon, mamma! Why, I thought you were an Englishwoman!

Mrs. M. So I am; but, as the Saxons continued in the country after the conquest, and were much more numerous than the Norman settlers, we are still almost all of us chiefly of Saxon descent: and our language, and many of our habits and customs, sufficiently declare our origin.—But I think you wished to know what the Saxons were like, in the interval between the time of Alfred and the Norman conquest, which was a period of about 165 years. During the greater part of that time they were in such a continual state of warfare with the Danes, that they did not make much progress in

any peaceful arts. Books were so very scarce and dear, that they were only to be found in royal libraries. Paper was not then invented, and it was not possible to procure parchment enough for a great supply of books. Besides this, there were only manuscripts (printing not being invented till a long time afterwards), and but few people could write. Some, however, of the few manuscripts remaining to us in the Saxon character are very beautifully and carefully written.—The Saxons had also another difficulty in the way of their acquiring knowledge. They had not any signs, or *characters*, to express numbers, except the Roman letters M. D. C. V. I., which are still, you know, occasionally in use: and till the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. were brought into Europe by the Saracens, by whom, it is said, they were invented, there was great difficulty in learning and practising arithmetic; insomuch that Aldhelm, a learned Saxon, pronounced the study to be almost too difficult for the mind of man.

George. I wish that learned Saxon had seen me do my sum to-day.

Mrs. M. He would have said you were a stupid boy if you had not done it, and a very conceited one, if he had heard you boasting of it.

Richard. Were the Danish kings friends to learning?

Mrs. M. I believe they were still less so than the Saxons, who, many of them, and particularly

Edward the Confessor, were fond of having learned men about them. Canute was a Pagan, before he became king of England; but he was afterwards converted to Christianity, and, as I have already said, built many monasteries and churches. The Danes and Saxons resembled each other very much in dress and language: but the Saxons, though equally brave and warlike, appear to have been a less savage and more social people than the Danes. They were not, however, very polished in their manners. They sat at their feasts on long benches, at large square tables, and every person took his place according to his rank. But if any one took a higher place than he was entitled to, he was degraded to the bottom of the table, and all the company were permitted, without its being considered any breach of civility, to pelt him with bones.

Richard. If the Saxons were brave and warlike, I cannot think how they could let themselves be conquered by the Normans.

Mrs. M. At the time of the Norman invasion, nearly a third part of the land is said to have belonged to monasteries, nunneries, and the clergy; and this is supposed to have been one great cause of the duke of Normandy's easy victory.

Richard. You said we were still like the Saxons in many things.—Do we dress like them?

Mrs. M. In some respects we do. At least, I believe that the loose dress called a carter's frock very much resembles the tunic which was worn by

the Saxons. These tunics were bound in round the waist with a belt, and usually came no lower than the knee; only kings and nobles wore them down to the feet. People of rank wore, over the other, a short tunic or *surcoat*, made of silk, and richly embroidered and ornamented: a linen shirt, also, shaped much like a modern shirt, was now an indispensable part of dress amongst the higher orders of people.

George. But how did the poor people dress?

Mrs. M. They wore no shirt, and had only a tunic made of coarse materials. The slaves wore an iron collar round the neck, and were clad in tunics open at the sides. To judge by the pictures we have of the Saxons, they appear generally to have gone bare-headed; though they occasionally wore fur caps, shaped like a Phrygian bonnet. The hair was worn long, and parted on the forehead, and hung in straight locks on each side of the face. The beard was shaven on the upper lip, and top of the chin: the rest grew long, and was kept very smooth and neat, and was usually divided in the middle, and hung down in two points. Their shoes came up high, and were more properly a sort of buskin.

Richard. But you have said nothing of the ladies' dress.

Mrs. M. They wore a linen under-dress with long tight sleeves; and over that a wide robe or gown fastened round the waist by a belt, and long

enough to conceal the feet. Their head-dress was a square piece of linen, or silk, so put on as to conceal the hair and neck, showing only the face. Historians talk of their curls and crisping-pins; but their pictures show us nothing but the face peeping through the folds of their *cover-chief*:—and it ought to be remembered, to the honour of the Saxon ladies, that, while the men were continually adopting new fashions in their dress, there was in 300 years little or no change in that of the women.—Both sexes wore mantles, more or less splendid, according to their rank, and a profusion of gold ornaments, fringes, and bracelets.

George. Then did they wear all these fine things, and go bare-legged?

Mrs. M. I forgot their stockings, which were of gay colours, often red and blue: and at one time the Saxon beaux cross-gartered their legs, in the same manner in which the Scotch Highlanders still do. Loose trowsers were also worn latterly: but this, perhaps, was more a Norman fashion, being introduced with many other changes by Edward the Confessor, whose early education had made him much attached to the Norman dress and customs. Amongst other changes he caused his nobles to be called *barons*, instead of by the old Saxon name of *theyn*.

Richard. You never told us why he was called *the Confessor*.

Mrs. M. The title of Confessor has nearly the

same meaning with that of Saint, and was conferred on him by pope Alexander III. about a century after his death.

George. I remember papa once showed me two pictures; one was of king Canute sitting by the sea-side; and the other was a picture of earl Godwin at dinner. Pray, what was the meaning of them?

Mrs. M. The picture of Canute represented him rebuking his courtiers for their flattery. They had been extolling him as the greatest and most powerful king in the world, and added that it was impossible for any thing to resist his commands. Canute ordered a chair to be placed on the sea-shore, at the time when the tide was rising, and, sitting down, commanded the waves not to rise beyond such a mark. Still the water kept rising higher and higher, till at last it touched the king's feet; when, turning to his courtiers, who were standing near him, wondering what he could mean, he made them observe, that the waves would not obey him, and called on them to acknowledge that God only is omnipotent.—The other picture is of the death of earl Godwin, which took place as he was sitting at table with the king, who had been reproaching him with an intention to betray him. The earl, though conscious that what the king said was true, declared, with a solemn oath, that he wished the next morsel he should eat might be his last, if he had ever designed any treachery. He

then took a piece of bread, which immediately choked him, and he fell back dead in his chair.—At least, this is the story, though the truth of it is very doubtful. At all events, he was immoderately ambitious: and ambitious men might take a lesson from observing how little of the fruits of greatness he or his family gathered, after all the sacrifices he had made to arrive at it. The very throne which his son obtained proved almost immediately fatal to him.

Richard. Have I not heard, mamma, about Goodwin Sands, and that earl Godwin had something to do with them?

Mrs. M. Godwin's estate was on that part of the coast of Kent where the sea has since made great encroachments; and those dangerous sands, which are called the Goodwin Sands, and which are now entirely under water, are supposed to mark the place where the possessions of that haughty and ambitious noble were formerly situated.

Richard. I have been looking over the table of kings you have written out for us, and I do not see the name of king Arthur amongst them. I thought he had been a very famous king.

Mrs. M. He has been made famous by the ballads and songs that have been written about him: but some people suppose his whole history to have been a fable. I believe, however, there is good evidence of his existence, and that he was one of the British kings, at the time of Hengist and Horsa.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILLIAM THE FIRST.

[Years after Christ, 1066—1087.]

It is the custom of most writers not to describe people's persons and characters till after they have given a relation of their deaths: but I shall begin my account of William of Normandy by telling you that he was of middle height, and stoutly made, with great strength of body. He had strongly marked features, and a stern countenance: he was a shrewd, clear-headed man; and I should imagine him to have been of a grave and thoughtful temper: for I cannot find out that he ever indulged in any gaieties or amusements (except indeed in hunting, of which he was particularly fond): and, it is said, he never admitted any one to intimacy or familiarity; not even those in whom he placed con-

fidence, and for whom he professed friendship. He had few favourites; and those he had were well chosen; which was a strong proof of his wisdom. He was considered religious, being very exact in the performance of all religious observances; but what influence these had on his conduct is more than we can pretend, or ought, to say. He certainly showed some great instances of generosity: but he suffered ambition to be his ruling passion.

By the fatal termination of the battle of Hastings, in which, as I have already said, Harold was killed, and William of Normandy completely victorious, the English were thrown into the utmost consternation. Some of the nobles assembled in London to deliberate on placing Edgar Atheling on the throne; but before they could come to any settled determination, the Conqueror was already at their gates. Some of the nobles fled into the north; but the rest, and amongst them Edgar Atheling, came out to meet the duke of Normandy, and offered him the vacant throne; which he, with a little pretended hesitation, accepted. He was crowned at Westminster, on Christmas-day, 1066. During the ceremony, the English, to show their satisfaction in their new king, set up loud shouts of applause. The Norman guards, who were stationed on the outside of the abbey, hearing a great noise, and not understanding what it meant, thought the English were insulting their prince. In the sudden passion into which this notion betrayed

them, they set fire to some neighbouring houses, which, being of wood, burnt furiously. A violent tumult ensued, which, though it arose only from a mistake, caused much ill will between the two nations; and there was some difficulty in pacifying it.

William, however, began his reign with so much prudence and moderation, that his new subjects thought they had great reason to be satisfied: but afterwards, when he built castles at Norwich, Winchester, Hereford, and London, and garrisoned them with Normans, they began to feel themselves oppressed. On an occasion offered by his going into Normandy, they broke out into open rebellion, but without success: and William, on his return, drew the reins of government very tight. Many years passed in unavailing struggles on the part of the English to throw off the Norman yoke, and in reiterated acts of oppression on the part of the Conqueror, who deprived the Saxon nobles of their estates to bestow them on his Norman followers. He also deposed the English bishops, and filled their places with Normans, or other foreigners: and here I ought not to omit mentioning that one of these, Lanfranc, an Italian, who was made archbishop of Canterbury, proved himself, by his wisdom and prudence, and by the influence he had with the king, which he used in trying to moderate the violences of his temper, one of the best friends the poor dejected English had. During this time,

Edgar Atheling had taken refuge with Malcolm, king of Scotland, who had given a kind reception to him, and to several nobles who had fled out of England with him. Malcolm married one of Edgar's sisters; and, assisted by the king of Denmark, made an attempt to drive out the Normans, and place Edgar on the throne of his ancestors. But William soon obliged the Scots and Danes to retreat; and with a view, as is said, to place an impenetrable barrier between England and Scotland, he depopulated a tract of sixty miles north of the Humber, and made it quite a desert. The inhabitants, those who could, fled into Scotland, where they were humanely received. The rest perished miserably from cold and hunger: and the land, after this dreadful devastation, remained uncultivated for nine years. In 1071, Malcolm being about to make a fresh attempt in favour of Edgar Atheling, William marched against him with a large army. The two armies met on the borders of Scotland, and a battle was about to ensue; but the two kings made peace with each other; one of the conditions of which was, that Edgar Atheling should be given up to William, who promised, if he would renounce his pretensions to the throne of England, to give him a mark a day*, which was considered a very handsome allowance in those days. Edgar assented to these terms, and both he

* 13*s.* 4*d.*

and William ever after continued true to their agreement.

It seemed, however, as if William had been destined never to enjoy repose; for now that he had no more disturbances to fear from either the English or Scots, his throne and life were endangered by a conspiracy amongst his own Norman nobles, those very persons, to enrich whom he had been so often guilty of injustice and cruelty. This conspiracy was, however, discovered to him by the conscientiousness of Waltheof, the only Saxon whom he had retained in his favour, and the only one of the conspirators who was punished, though his voluntary confession had preserved the king.

Fresh vexations next awaited William in his own family, from the turbulent and ungoverned tempers of his sons; particularly of the two eldest, Robert and William. These princes had been in a state of enmity with each other; and it is said that a boyish frolic, in which one of them threw some water on his brother's head, was the beginning of the quarrel between them. At last, Robert, who was less malignant than William, but more passionate and headstrong, proceeded, from this quarrel with his brother, to an open rebellion against his father, whom, in an encounter, not knowing who it was, he wounded and struck off his horse. When he saw that it was the king with whom he had been engaged, his remorse and horror, at the thought of having been so nearly guilty of

killing his own father, subdued in a moment all his rebellious and proud feelings: and he sprung from his horse in an agony of grief, and threw himself on his knees at the king's feet. William was then too much offended to forgive him, and, saying many bitter words to him, remounted, and returned to his own army: and it was some time before he would listen to Robert's contrite entreaties. At last queen Matilda, who was a very good and pious woman, and who was made very unhappy by the dissensions in her family, prevailed with the king to pardon his son.

One would have thought that, after all these turmoils, William would have been glad of some repose; but, on the contrary, on some trifling quarrel with Philip the First, king of France, he marched an army into that country, destroying and laying waste every thing: and as it was in the month of July, when the harvest was ripe, the devastation he made was very dreadful, particularly as he burnt every town and village he passed through. But his cruelty brought on him its own punishment; for after burning the town of Mantes, his horse, flinching from the smoking ashes, made a violent plunge; and the king, being very corpulent, got a bruise, which in a few days caused his death. He died in 1087, at the abbey of St. Gervaise, near Rouen, and was buried at Caen. He was in the sixty-third year of his age, and had reigned twenty-one years in England.

He married Matilda, daughter of the earl of Flanders, and had four sons and five daughters:

Robert, to whom he left the dukedom of Normandy.

William, king of England.

Henry, to whom he left his mother Matilda's fortune.

Richard, who died young.

Cecilia, a nun.

Constance, who married the duke of Britanny.

Agatha, Alice, } died young.

Adela, married Stephen count de Blois.

It is above 700 years since the death of William the Conqueror, and there are yet remaining two remarkable memorials of his reign and character. The one is the *New Forest* in Hampshire, to make which, for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of the chase, he depopulated a large district, destroyed thirty villages, and drove out the inhabitants. The other memorial is a less painful one. It is a book which he caused to be made, called *Doomsday Book*, being a survey of the whole kingdom, giving an account of the extent of every parish, with all particulars respecting it. This book is still preserved in the Tower; and all possessors of estates, who are curious to know to whom their lands belonged at the Conquest, whether it was arable or pasture, what was then its value, and, in some cases, what cattle it was stocked with, may there

make themselves acquainted with these circumstances.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER VIII.

Richard. I wish William had not been so cruel to the poor English. It was very natural for them to wish to get rid of those wicked Normans.

Mrs. Markham. And I fear it was quite as natural for William to wish to oppress the poor Saxons. If people give themselves up to ambition, they naturally become cruel and unjust. William had undoubtedly some great qualities; but they were shockingly sullied by his conduct to the English, at least to the upper class of them, which it seemed to be his policy to depress, or even extirpate.

Richard. How did he behave to the poorer sort of people?

Mrs. M. Except in Hampshire, and the district north of the Humber, which for reasons of his own he depopulated, I believe he suffered the labouring classes to remain very much in the condition in which he found them.

Mary. Sometimes, mamma, you call the people of the country English, and sometimes Saxons; and I am quite puzzled to know which was their real name.

Mrs. M. I am sorry, my dear, that I have puzzled you so needlessly. In strictness, I should have called them *Anglo-Saxons;* and the rather, in order to distinguish them from those Normans, who settled in, and became inhabitants of, this country, and who were called *Anglo-Normans.*

George. Were these Anglo-Normans any of them poor people, or were they all noblemen?

Mrs. M. There were many different degrees among them. The highest in rank, after the king, were the barons, who were made rich and powerful by the spoils of the Anglo-Saxon nobles. Another class was composed of Norman and foreign soldiers, who had helped to achieve the conquest of the island, and who settled on the lands that had been given to their leaders, and became their vassals and tenants. With this class became blended gradually the Anglo-Saxon thanes, or nobles, who were all degraded from their former rank, and stripped of the greater part of their possessions; and also the Anglo-Saxon ceorls, or farmers, who, if they had never taken up arms against the Conqueror, were allowed, on putting themselves under the protection of some Norman baron, to live without molestation. We may suppose, in general, that from this extensive class are chiefly derived the English gentry and yeomanry. Saxon and Norman are now melted together; and the question, whether we are in the greater degree of the one or of the other origin, is no longer of any moment. But it

was not till long after William and his followers were all dead and gone, that the descendants of the two nations could endure each other; the Normans holding in contempt the stupid ignorant Saxons; and the Saxons detesting their tyrannical oppressors. —Besides the classes I have been telling you of, the clergy also formed a distinct numerous body.—The lowest rank of the people had few, if any, rights of their own. These were usually, like the Russian peasants of our own times, considered as annexed to the estate on which they lived, and were bought and sold together with it. *Domestic slaves* also were very numerous; and these were the most miserable and degraded of any. The children of these poor people were slaves equally with their parents: and thus the number of persons in the condition of slavery was very great; though there were many ways by which emancipation might be obtained, in later reigns especially; and many free labourers, who worked for hire, as the labourers of our own times do now. In towns there was another class of people called *Burghers*. These were tradesmen, or merchants, who joined together in little societies: but in this reign they had not become a numerous, or at least not a powerful body.

George. Pray, mamma, could William and his Normans speak English?

Mrs. M. I believe they never tried to learn. William used every means in his power to intro-

duce the Norman or French into England, and to eradicate the Anglo-Saxon language. He altered many of the old Saxon laws, and established Norman instead; which were all written in Norman-French; and he ordered that law-business should be carried on in that language. He also required that French, instead of Saxon, should be taught to the children in the schools: but it is easier to conquer a kingdom than to change a language; and after an ineffectual struggle, which lasted three centuries, the Saxon got the better at last; and, with some intermixture of the Norman, forms the basis of the language we now speak. And even the Norman words we retain are often so altered by our way of pronouncing them, that a Frenchman would not easily recognise them. Did you not hear, while we were changing horses at Doncaster, the town crier call out, "*O yes*, this is to give notice," &c.? which you and George laughed at as nonsense, for you did not know that the crier's "O yes" is a corruption of the old Norman word "Oyez,"—"hear ye."

Richard. Why should William want to make the people talk French? I thought you had said the Normans were originally Danes.

Mrs. M. They originally came from Denmark under Rollo, the ancestor of William the Conqueror; but they soon left off all their Danish habits, and adopted those of the French.

George. What was papa saying to-day about

some fine place, that was built after the great battle in which Harold was killed?

Mrs. M. You must mean Battle Abbey. It was built by the Conqueror, in commemoration of his victory, near the place where the battle had been fought, and still remains a monument of it.

Richard. If ever I live to be a man, one of the first things I shall do will be to travel all over England, and see the places where great events have happened.

CHAPTER IX.

WILLIAM II.

[Years after Christ, 1087—1100.]

St. Michel.

WILLIAM, second son of William the Conqueror, was twenty-seven years old when he became king. Like his father, he had great bodily strength and activity, and he resembled him also in the sternness of his countenance. His complexion was ruddy, and his hair red, on which account he obtained the surname of Rufus. He had a stammering in his speech, especially when he was angry, which, if historians are to be believed, was very often. He was brave and active in war, like his father, and like him was ambitious and rapacious;

but had not any of his great or good qualities: for he was irreligious, a lover of low company, and of excessive drinking. He was very passionate, and had no principles of either honour or honesty.

His father was scarcely dead, when he set off for England to secure the inheritance which was left him, and to seize upon the royal treasures. It is but justice to say, that with part of them he paid his father's legacy to his brother Henry. His fierce and imperious temper being well known to the Anglo-Norman barons, they were very sorry to have him for their king, and made a rebellion to place his elder brother Robert, who was a much greater favourite with them, on the throne.

William Rufus now found it convenient to make friends with the Anglo-Saxons, who composed the great mass of the people; and he promised to restore many of their rights and privileges. By their help he speedily subdued the rebellion of the barons. The fair promises which he had made to the Anglo-Saxons he very soon forgot; but he never forgot his resentment against Robert, on whom he retaliated by attacking his possessions in Normandy; and this kept the two brothers in a continual state of enmity. The only occasion on which they ever agreed (for I fear Robert was very little better than William) was when they joined to oppress their brother Henry. Henry's inheritance had been left him in money. Robert, who was always extravagant and thriftless, had been glad to sell to

him a part of Normandy, called Cotentin, and now, in concert with William, sought to deprive him of it. Henry, being both brave and determined, would not tamely give it up, and with a small number of men fortified himself in Mont St. Michel; but, after enduring a very rigorous siege, he was at last obliged to surrender for want of provisions. Having thus lost every thing, he, with a few faithful followers, who would not forsake him in his distress, wandered about, often in want of necessaries, and always in want of a home.

Some time after this, Robert went on the crusade to the Holy Land; and to procure money for this expedition, he lent or mortgaged his duchy for five years to his brother William, for ten thousand marks. William extorted the money from his English subjects; and then, very much delighted with his bargain, took possession of Normandy. He did not find it a very peaceable possession, for it involved him in continual quarrels and wars with the king of France, in which sometimes the French, and sometimes the Normans, had the advantage. In one of these encounters, Heli de la Fleche, a very brave baron, was taken prisoner by William. After some time he regained his liberty, and then, coming to William, made him an offer of his services. The king rejected them; on which Heli went out, saying he would be revenged for the indignity. William called after him, in a very rude and haughty manner, "to be gone, and do his

worst." As soon as Heli arrived in France, he attacked William's territories there, and obtained possession of the town of Mans.

The news of this event was brought to William while he was hunting in the New Forest. He instantly left the chase, and galloped off to the sea-coast, and embarked for Normandy. It blew so furious a storm, that the sailors at first refused to put to sea. The king's impatience, however, was so great, that he would not listen to them. He insisted on their setting sail, and, contrary to all expectation, landed safely at Barfleur the next morning. Heli de la Fleche was soon driven out of Mans, and William returned to England to complete the preparations in which he had been engaged for taking possession of Guienne, which the duke of Guienne had mortgaged to him, in like manner as Robert had mortgaged Normandy. But a sudden end was put to all his ambitious projects: for going to hunt in the New Forest, during the time in which he was awaiting a fair wind to take his army over to France, he was shot by an arrow from the bow of sir Walter Tyrrel, who was hunting with him. Some say it was a mere accident, and that the arrow, hitting against a tree, glanced and struck the king: others suppose him to have been shot by design: but how that was, it is impossible for any one now to say. A story is related in an old chronicle, that while William was at dinner, before he went out hunting, he ordered

some arrows to be brought him, and that, picking out six very long and sharp ones, he gave two of them to Tyrrel, saying, "You are a good marksman, and will know how to use them." He little thought that one of these arrows was to be the instrument of his own death. William was killed in the year 1100, in the fortieth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign. He was never married.

Odious as his name must ever be, one memorial is left of him, which is still an object of admiration: I mean Westminster Hall, which he built; a noble building, and one of the largest rooms in Europe. He also built the Tower of London. I ought to mention, as one of the remarkable circumstances of this reign, that Magnus, king of Norway, made a descent on Anglesea in 1098. This was the last attempt on England by any of the northern nations. Those restless people learned about this time the art of tillage, which provided them with food, and gave them occupation at home, and thus freed the rest of Europe from their predatory invasions.—It was also in the reign of William Rufus that the sea overflowed the estates of the earl Godwin, and formed the Goodwin Sands, of which I have already given you some account.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER IX.

Richard. I shall be very glad, mamma, when you come to a good king. It is very disagreeable to hear about bad people.

Mrs. Markham. It is one of the great drawbacks to the pleasure of reading history, that it is such a painful record of human crimes. One cause of this is to be found in the nature of the human heart, which is so formed, that rank, and power, and fortune, all tend to incline it to what is wrong. Kings, and statesmen, and others, who, from the greatness of their station, are most prominent in history, are therefore more liable to err than people in a lower and happier condition of life. And, perhaps, there is another cause why history is so much fuller of wicked deeds than of virtuous ones. The virtuous ones are passed over, as not affording so much to be said about them.

George. How do you know what William Rufus, or William the Conqueror, were like?

Mrs. M. I can only know from the descriptions I have read of them in books. The Conqueror, and his sons Robert and William, have been described to us from some very curious paintings on the walls of a chapel at Caen in Normandy, which are supposed to have been original portraits. Queen Matilda was also in the same picture, and was

drawn with a book in her hand. There is also a very curious piece of tapestry, called the Bayeux tapestry, which is said to be the work of Matilda herself, though others suppose it to have been worked by her granddaughter, the empress Maude. This is still in existence at Caen, and represents, in a series of pictures, worked in worsted, the history of the conquest of England. The faces are supposed to be portraits; but it is not possible they can be very exact likenesses.

Richard. I thought St. Michael's Mount had been in Cornwall.

Mrs. M. There is a place of that name in the Mount's Bay, a steep rock joined to the main land by a narrow isthmus, which, at high water, is quite covered over, and makes the mount an island. On the top is a castle, which is still inhabited. A rock similarly placed in the sea, and also called Mont St. Michel, is situate on the opposite coast of France. On this rock is likewise a castle, and there it was that Henry was besieged by his brothers.

George. I was very sorry that Robert joined William in using his brother Henry so ill; for I feel a sort of liking for Robert.

Mrs. M. So do most people, I believe, when they read his history; but it is more because his misfortunes, and the ill usage he afterwards met with, excite our compassion, than for any real

merits which he possessed. He was an undutiful son, and an unkind brother.

Richard. What did his going on a crusade mean?

Mrs. M. It had long been considered an act of great piety to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to visit our Saviour's sepulchre. Jerusalem, after the declension of the Roman power, had fallen into the hands of the Saracens, who were not only the bravest, but also the most civilized people of the East. While they remained masters of the Holy City, the Christian pilgrims were permitted to pay their devotions unmolested. About the year 1065, the Turks, who were, as they still are, a very ignorant and cruel people, became masters of Jerusalem, and treated the pilgrims with great cruelty, and endeavoured to prevent them from visiting the sepulchre. One of these pilgrims, named Peter the Hermit, though only a poor priest, has made himself more distinguished in history than the most potent monarch of his time. On his return from the Holy Land, inflamed by zeal for religion, and by resentment against the Turks, he went about from country to country, exhorting the princes and nobles of Europe to go and fight against the pagans, and drive them from Jerusalem. The pope entered warmly into the cause, and published a crusade. The word crusade arose from the figure of a cross, which those who took up arms on this occasion

wore on their left shoulder. In a short time, men of all ranks flew to arms with an ardour almost inconceivable, some selling their lands to obtain money for the expedition, and all leaving their countries and their families to pursue the wild scheme of making war on the Turks, and redeeming Jerusalem from the hands of infidels.

Mary. And did they succeed?

Mrs. M. Most extraordinary to say, they did. After enduring hardships of every kind, and contending with numerous hosts of enemies, the crusaders, under the command of Godfrey of Bouillon, possessed themselves of Jerusalem after a bloody siege. They elected Godfrey king; and the city remained for about a hundred years in the possession of the Christians, when it was re-conquered by Saladin, the sultan of Egypt.

George. And then, I suppose, they left off crusading?

Mrs. M. Not quite then, as you will find, when we advance further in our history. The rage for crusades lasted from the time of Peter the Hermit in 1096 till 1291, a period of nearly two hundred years; during which time the princes of Europe were continually undertaking expeditions to the Holy Land, often to the destruction of themselves and their fortunes, and of the poor fellows who followed in their train.

Mary. Then, dear mamma, why did they go?

Mrs. M. Indeed, your question is a very dif-

ficult one. I will, however, answer it as well as I can. In the first place, it was considered a religious duty, and it was thought that those who died in the Holy Land were sure to be received into heaven, let their lives have been ever so bad.

Mary. But would it not have been a much easier way of going to heaven, to have led good lives and staid at home?

Mrs. M. Indeed one would have thought so. But, perhaps, other motives were mixed with those of religion. Those who returned gained the advantage of being much honoured in their lives; and at their deaths had the privilege of having their figures represented on their tombs with their legs crossed, to show to all succeeding generations that they had served in the holy wars.

George. Well, I do not think that was a privilege I should have cared much about.

Mrs. M. Besides these reasons, whether good or bad, there was the irresistible impulse of example. There seemed to be an universal madness, from which nobody could be exempt.

Richard. I think it was a very bad example.

Mrs. M. I think so too: but, still, out of so much that was bad, God in his mercy has permitted some good to arise. The Saracens (though those who wrote the accounts of the crusades were accustomed to style them barbarians and savages) were very superior to the Europeans in their knowledge of the sciences, and in many of the

arts and elegancies of life. Much of this knowledge was brought home by the crusaders. The private misery which those wars occasioned is now over, and we are only affected for the moment while we are reading of it; but the knowledge, my dear children, remains.

George. Then are the people of those countries so much cleverer now than we are?

Mrs. M. Whilst we have been improving and gaining knowledge ever since, the Turks and all the people of the East have been standing absolutely still. There are some travels in the East, written about the year 1440, by De Brocquiere, who was grand carver to the good duke of Burgundy, and you might suppose they were written only last year; the manners of the people, as he describes them, being in every particular precisely the same as they are now said to be by travellers of our own time.

BIBLIOTHECA RODLEIANA

CHAPTER X.

HENRY I.

[Years after Christ, 1100—1135.]

HENRY, the Conqueror's youngest son, who was hunting with William in the New Forest, at the time when he was slain by Tyrrel, instead of showing any concern at his brother's death, or even waiting to see his body borne away from the spot where it fell, put spurs to his horse, and rode directly to Winchester, where he seized on the royal treasure. He then hastened to London; and by great gifts, and many promises, disposed the people so much in his favour, that they crowned

him king, by the name of Henry I., in violation of the right of his brother, Robert, who was still in Palestine.

Henry's character was made up of such an extraordinary mixture of many good and engaging qualities, with many bad ones, that I find a difficulty in giving you a just description of him. When we consider his courage, his intrepidity, his political wisdom, his impartial administration of justice to his people, his love and affection for his children, his fine understanding, and his agreeable and facetious humour, as they are described to us by the historians of his time, it is impossible not to be inclined to admire him. On the other hand, his ambition, his avarice, his unjust usurpation, and his wicked conduct to his brother Robert, and to his nephew William (Robert's son), oblige us to acknowledge that, notwithstanding his dazzling qualities, he must have been a very bad man. In regard to his person, he was of a middle height, and well made; his countenance was agreeable and serene, and his hair brown, thick, and bushy. He had received, what was considered in those days, a learned education; and from having performed the great work of translating Esop's fables, he acquired the surname of Beauclerc.

He began his reign by promising to redress all the evils his father and brother had inflicted on the Anglo-Saxons, and granted them a charter of privileges; or, more properly speaking, restored

Edward the Confessor's code of laws, to which the people were much attached. He banished from his court all William's profligate associates, and recalled from exile Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, who had been banished by Rufus for refusing to receive investiture from his hands. And also, the more to endear himself to his English subjects, he married Matilda, daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and of Margaret, daughter of Edmund the Exile, and sister of Edgar Atheling. He also remitted many debts that were owing to the crown, and omitted nothing that could endear him to the people. This might proceed more from policy than from real love to his subjects. He may have thought that as his crown was usurped, he could preserve it only through the affection of the people. At any rate, the effect of this conduct was highly beneficial to the country.

In the meantime, duke Robert had returned from the Holy Land, and resumed the possession of Normandy. He lost no time in making preparations for invading England, and asserting his right to the crown. He was joined by some discontented barons, and landed with his army at Portsmouth, on the 19th of July, 1101. Henry now found the benefit of the conciliatory conduct which he had pursued towards the English, who remained firm to him, while the Normans chiefly sided with Robert; and he marched to Portsmouth, with a numerous army, to oppose his brother. The

two armies stood facing each other several days, as if awe-struck, without coming to an engagement; which gave Anselm, and some of the barons, who were desirous of peace, an opportunity of concluding a treaty between the two princes, in which it was stipulated that Robert should give up his pretensions to the crown of England, in consideration of Henry's granting him a pension of 3000 marks, and promising to restore those Anglo-Normans, who had joined with him, to their honours and estates in England. It was further agreed, that, if either of the brothers should die without children, the other should succeed to his dominions. The two armies were then disbanded, and Robert spent two months with his brother in feasts and amusements, and then returned to Normandy. But as soon as Robert was gone, Henry took the first opportunity of ruining and degrading those barons who had taken his side. When Robert heard this, he returned to England, and remonstrated with Henry on this breach of the treaty: but he soon found that, instead of benefiting his friends, he was endangering himself by staying in his brother's dominions; and he only escaped in safety by consenting to give up his pension.

The Norman barons were now made discontented by Robert's imprudence, prodigality, and indolence, and the mismanagement of his affairs, which followed in consequence. In 1104 they invited Henry to come over and settle their dis-

agreements with their duke; an invitation which Henry gladly accepted: and he acted so skilfully, or, to speak more properly, so craftily, that he weakened and humbled his brother's party, and prepared the way for obtaining Normandy for himself. During the two following years, Robert entangled himself more and more in difficulties, and Henry gained every possible advantage over his inconsiderate brother. At last, in 1106, he made a direct invasion of Normandy, and in a battle fought on the 28th of September, he took Robert prisoner, and many of his nobles; amongst whom was Edgar Atheling. Edgar, however, was considered no formidable enemy, and was soon set at liberty, and spent the rest of his life in harmless and enviable obscurity. His Saxon blood, and his mild and amiable disposition, made him the idol of the English; while his imbecility, and want of enterprise, rendered him too insignificant to be feared by the Normans. The only spirited thing we hear of him is, that he had accompanied Robert to the Holy Land. From the time we are now speaking of, to his death, which was not till he was very old, though the exact time is not recorded, he lived quietly in England, and probably far more happily than any of those who were wearing that crown to which he himself had the best title.

Robert's fate was not so happy. He was brought prisoner to England; and his cruel and unrelenting brother kept him in perpetual confinement till his

death, twenty-eight years afterwards. The whole of Normandy now submitted to Henry. Robert's son, William, a child of six years old, was found in the castle of Falaise, and was committed by Henry to the care of Helie de St. Saen, who had married a natural daughter of Robert.

Every thing had prospered with Henry, according to his ambitious wishes; but you would be much mistaken were you to suppose that his happiness was now complete. From this time he never knew what happiness was. Remorse for his conduct towards his brother preyed unceasingly on his mind. He in vain endeavoured to stifle it by founding abbeys and building churches, and he had not virtue or strength of mind enough to repent sincerely, and make true amends. On the contrary, though groaning under the burden of one crime, he still (no uncommon case) was meditating the commission of another, that of destroying his brother's son; whose rightful claims kept him in a continual dread, and prevented all enjoyment of what he had so unjustly got. He therefore sent Robert Beauchamp to surprise the castle of St. Saen, during the absence of its lord, and to seize on the young prince: but, by the vigilance and fidelity of the people who were left in charge of him, the child was carried to a place of safety. Henry, enraged at this disappointment, confiscated all the property of Helie de St. Saen, who, having

no longer a home of his own, wandered about from court to court, claiming protection for his royal charge, who was every where pitied for his misfortunes, and admired for the beauty of his person. The earl of Anjou engaged to assist him, and promised him his daughter, Sibylla, in marriage: but Henry no sooner heard that his nephew had acquired so powerful a friend, that he determined to prevent the intended match, and offered his own, and only son, William, in marriage to Matilda, another of the earl's daughters. The earl found this temptation so strong, that he broke off the contract with William, the son of Robert, and concluded one with William, the son of Henry. The faithful Helie, and the unfortunate prince, then retired from the court of Anjou to that of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, where they were received with great kindness.

For the next five years, whatever conflicts the king might suffer in his own mind, the country, at least, enjoyed tranquillity. Henry was, however, still so suspicious of his son's right to the crown being disputed, that he required all his earls and barons to swear fealty to him; and he endeavoured, by great promises, to entice his nephew to his court. But William could not forget his unhappy father, still languishing in prison, and would not put himself in his uncle's power. In 1118, Louis le Gros, king of France, with the earls of Flanders

and Anjou, formed an alliance against Henry, in favour of William, and were joined by several disaffected Norman barons.

Henry was now surrounded by enemies, both secret and declared, and knew not whom to trust, nor whom to fear. He slept in armour, and with a guard watching in his apartment. Nevertheless, his vigilance and prudence did not forsake him. He contrived to win over the Norman barons; and detached the earl of Anjou from the alliance with France, by solemnizing the marriage that had before been contracted for between his son and the earl's daughter. The king of France and the barons confederated with him, met Henry in the plain of Brenneville, not very far from Rouen, and a fierce battle ensued, in which prince William showed great valour, and, breaking through the first ranks, penetrated to his uncle, who narrowly escaped being killed by Crispin, a French knight. But in the end the English army was victorious, and the king of France and prince William escaped with some difficulty. This battle might have been called the battle of the nobles, so many nobles having been engaged in it. It is also remarkable for having cost the lives of only three knights. This is to be accounted for from their being clad in complete armour, and from the desire which was felt by each party to take prisoners rather than to shed blood. Henry spent the greater part of the year 1120 in Normandy, en-

deavouring to strengthen the certainty of his son's succession, who was now eighteen years old.

But how useless was all this anxiety! This beloved son, for whose aggrandizement he had done and sacrificed so much, was suddenly snatched from him. He was returning to England with a numerous train, and many ships; one of which, called the *White Ship*, was allotted to the prince and his retinue. The prince had ordered some wine to be given to the ship's crew, of which they drank so freely that many of them were intoxicated. The rest of the fleet had meanwhile sailed, and Fitzstephen, the commander of the White Ship, crowding all his sails, and plying all his oars, to overtake them, the vessel suddenly struck upon a rock called the *catte raze*. A boat was immediately let down, into which the prince and some of the young nobles were hurried; and they might have reached the shore in safety, had not the prince insisted on going back to rescue his illegitimate sister, the countess of Perche, whose shrieks he heard from the ship, where all was terror and confusion. As soon as the boat approached the vessel, so many persons jumped into it, that it instantly sank, and every creature perished. Thus died the prince, with many of the young nobles, and several ladies of rank. Of three hundred persons who were on board, a butcher of Rouen, of the name of Bertould, who by clinging to the mast contrived to keep his head above water till the

next morning, when he was picked up by some fishermen, was the only one who escaped. The captain had also clung to the same mast, but when told by the butcher that the prince had perished, he would not survive so great a disaster, and threw himself headlong into the sea.

The news of this misfortune reached England the next day; but it was three days before any one had courage to tell the king of it. At last a boy was instructed to fall at his feet, and tell him that the prince and all on board the White Ship were lost. Henry immediately fainted away, and it was a long time before the violence of his grief abated. He had now only one legitimate child left, his daughter Matilda, who was married to Henry V. emperor of Germany, but who had no children.

The death of the prince of England encouraged the friends of his cousin William to make fresh attempts in his favour; but they were unattended with any permanent success; and William returned to the court of Louis, and married a sister of the queen of France, with whom he received a small domain as her dower, and thus at last became possessed of a spot of ground that he might call his own. A few years afterwards, the king of France put him in possession of a part of Flanders, to which he had a claim in right of his grandmother Matilda, wife of the Conqueror, who

was, as I have told you, the daughter of an earl of Flanders. But no sooner did fortune seem to smile on this young prince than he died of wounds received in a skirmish with the landgrave of Alsace. Before his death he wrote a letter to king Henry, entreating his favour for Helie de St. Saen, and the other barons who had followed his fortunes. It is pleasing to be able to add that this last request of the gallant and ill-fated son of Robert was amply gratified.

In the year 1126, Henry's daughter Matilda had become a widow. She then returned to live with her father, who made all his nobles swear fealty to her, as they had formerly done to her brother. The following year she was married to Geoffry, eldest son of the earl of Anjou; and Henry, who was devotedly fond of his daughter, spent the latter part of his life in Normandy, that he might be near her. After living to see her the mother of three sons, he died on the first of December, 1135. He had heated himself a few days before with hunting, and had supped on lampreys: and this is supposed to have been the occasion of a fever, with which he was seized. He died at St. Denis, a little village in Normandy, in the 67th year of his age, and the 36th year of his reign. His body was brought to England, and was buried in the abbey he had founded at Reading.

His first wife was daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, by Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling.

Their children were—

William, who married a daughter of the earl of Flanders, and was drowned.

Matilda, married first to Henry V., emperor of Germany, and, secondly, to Geoffry, son of the earl of Anjou.

By his second wife, who was a daughter of the earl of Lovaine, he had no children.

Henry, by his will, left all his dominions to his daughter, to the exclusion of her husband Geoffry. He had several natural children.

Robert of Normandy died in prison the year before the death of his brother Henry, and was buried at Gloucester. The circumstances of his death are thus related. "King Henry, on a festival day, putting on a new scarlet cloak, the hood, being too tight, was torn in putting it over his head. On which the king said, 'My brother Robert has a smaller head than I have; let him have this garment.' The cloak was accordingly taken to the duke; but the torn place not having been sewn up, he discovered it, and asked, 'if any man had worn it before?' And being told the circumstance, he considered it as a deep affront, and exclaimed, 'Now I perceive that I have lived too long, since my brother clothes me like an

almsman, in his cast rent garments.' He then refused to take any nourishment, and died in consequence*."

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER X.

Richard. Indeed, mamma, it is exactly as you said about this king Henry: though one must admire his cleverness, one cannot help disliking his hard-heartedness.

Mrs. Markham. He certainly had worldly wisdom, but nothing could justify his conduct to his brother and nephew.

George. I could not understand what that old archbishop had been banished for by William Rufus.

Mrs. M. He had refused to admit the king's authority to invest him in some of the rights of the archbishopric, considering that authority to be the pope's. Indeed, at first, knowing the violent temper of Rufus, he had refused the dignity, saying, "The plough of the Church of England ought to be drawn by two oxen of equal strength, the king and the archbishop; but if you yoke me, who am but a weak old sheep, with the king, who is a mad young bull, the plough will not go straight." Afterwards, when Henry recalled him, he made the

* Holinshed.

same difficulties about his investiture, which involved the king in a long and tedious dispute with the pope, Pascal II.; in which dispute Henry stood up for his own right of investing his prelates, without the pope's interference. But, tired out by the trouble and vexation which this contest occasioned, he at length agreed to a compromise, by which bishops were to receive their investiture from the pope, but were to swear fealty and do homage to the king.

George. That Anselm must have been a very troublesome bothering sort of a man.

Mrs. M. He certainly seems to have had more zeal than discretion; and, in regard to the married clergy, he wanted common humanity; for by his influence a law was passed, obliging them to put away their wives, and forbidding them ever to see them again, or to suffer them to live on any lands belonging to the church, on pain of seeing them reduced to servitude, or otherwise punished.

Mary. Oh, my dear mamma, what hard hearts the bishops of those times must have had!

Mrs. M. Some of them, I have no doubt, were good and humane; but those who made themselves conspicuous by interfering in public affairs were, generally speaking, men of vindictive characters, who, having no domestic ties to excite and exercise their kindly affections, were hard and unfeeling bigots. Anselm not only conducted himself arbitrarily in the affairs of the church, but he also

troubled himself about the dress of the laity. He preached so furiously, and so successfully, against long hair and curls, which he disapproved of, that the ladies absolutely cut off their locks in the church. He was not so successful in the attacks he made on the fashionable shoes of the gentlemen; for, notwithstanding his threatenings and exhortations, they continued to wear them so enormously long, that they were obliged to have a chain from the end of the toe fastened to the knee.

George. I think the best cure, or at least the best punishment, for inconvenient fashions, would be to condemn people always to wear them.

Richard. What did you mean by saying that the knights, in that battle in which only three were killed, were in complete armour? I thought those old knights always wore armour.

Mrs. M. At the time when the Romans landed in England, the Britons had no kind of armour, except a rude sort of shield: nor does it appear that the Saxons or Danes had any other defence except the shield and helmet, till a little before the time of the Conquest, when the nobles and leaders of their armies adopted armour, something like that of the Normans. I have seen the complete armour of a Norman knight, which was exhibited in London in a collection of ancient armour. The whole dress was made of little rings of iron, much smaller and slighter than the chain of a horse's

bridle; and these were all linked together so ingeniously, like net-work, that it fitted close to the limbs and body, and was, at the same time, as flexible as a stocking. Under this they wore a dress called a *gambeson*, which I imagine to have been like a shirt without sleeves or collar, and quilted or stuffed with wool: sometimes this was worn over the *hawberk*, which was the name of the coat of *mail*, or chain armour. But I suppose this kind of armour was not found a sufficient defence against the point of a spear or arrow: for in the fourteenth century plate armour was introduced, so called from being made of plates of iron, which were often so heavy, that when a knight in this armour was overthrown, he lay on the ground immovable till he was helped up: and there were many instances, in hot weather, and in the press of an engagement, of persons being suffocated with the heat and weight of their armour. In a battle between the French and Italians, in 1495, some Italian knights, who were overthrown, lay like huge lobsters, and could not be killed till their armour was broken by the French soldiers with wood-cutters' axes. There was also an intermediate kind of armour, called scale armour, formed of little pieces of iron laid one over another, in the manner of the scales of a fish; but this kind does not appear to have been long in use. But I am here anticipating a little too much, and must go

back to the reign of Henry I. At that time the upper part of the hawberk, though it covered the head like a hood, left the face quite exposed, except that it was sometimes guarded by a *nasal*, a part of the cap which projected over the nose. But by degrees they covered the face more and more, till at length close visors were adopted.

Richard. Pray, mamma, what sort of weapons did they fight with?

Mrs. M. The knights fought with lances, spears, and swords; and the common soldiers with slings and bows, in the use of which the English excelled almost all other nations. The French were more active, but the English possessed more bodily strength. Besides these arms, which they carried about them, they used various kinds of machines for throwing darts and stones to a great distance. Gunpowder was not invented till long after the time we are speaking of.

Richard. To judge from the number of ruins we see, there must have been a great many castles in England.

Mrs. M. The country, to use the actual words of an old historian, "was overrun with them." The Conqueror and his two sons built a great many. The barons lived like so many little kings, each in his own castle, with his train of followers: and they even affected the ceremonial of kings; for their servants and attendants, instead of being

called stewards, grooms, and footmen, were called treasurers, privy counsellors, heralds, pages, and so on.

George. I wonder how the Saxon English liked having all those Normans, whom they hated, shut up in those strong castles.

Mrs. M. They did not like it at all, and it was one amongst their many grievances. Such haughty seclusion was entirely contrary to their own habits, which were remarkably convivial and social. They did not care for the shabbiness of their own dwellings, which were only built of wood, and thatched, if they could but eat and drink, and have merry-makings; while the Normans, on the contrary, were frugal in their manner of living, but very costly in their buildings.

Richard. Are there any Norman buildings left, and have I ever seen any of them?

Mrs. M. Many of their buildings are still standing; but, except the cathedral at Rochester, which, if I mistake not, is the oldest Norman building we have, I do not at this moment recollect that you ever saw any of the date I am now speaking of.

Richard. Norman, mamma! I thought, when we were there, you told me the arches were all Saxon!

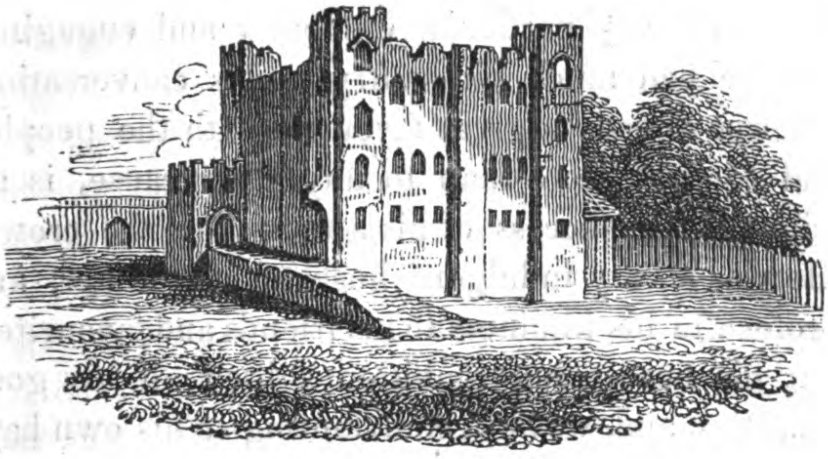
Mrs. M. So I did, my dear. The style of architecture, which we improperly call Saxon, is,

in fact, early Norman, and is distinguished by its massy and short pillars, and its circular arch, from the pointed arch, and tall slender pillars, of that style which we call the Gothic.

CHAPTER XI.

STEPHEN.

[Years after Christ, 1136—1154]



ALL the precautions which Henry had taken to secure the crown to his daughter were but vain. An usurper sprang up where he would least have expected one, in his favourite nephew Stephen, who was the second son of his sister Adela and the count de Blois, and to whom he had invariably shown the utmost kindness, and a preference above all his other relations. He had given him a large estate in Normandy; and had married him to the heiress of Boulogne, whose mother was Mary of

Scotland, sister to his own queen, Matilda. But all these kindnesses could not inspire Stephen with gratitude. As soon as he heard of the king's death, he hastened to England; and though he met with a little opposition at first, yet he soon procured himself to be crowned at Westminster.

Stephen, we are told, had a very graceful person: he was strong and active, and had a degree of courage that amounted to rashness. His deportment was particularly popular and engaging, and he had much pleasantry in his conversation. He was already a great favourite with the people; and to this, more than to any other cause, is attributed the success of his attempt on the crown. He was a very indulgent husband and father, and profuse in his kindness to his friends and favourites; but his headstrong ambition sullied all his good qualities, and, without contributing to his own happiness, brought great misery on the people.

This usurpation had been so totally unexpected, that no preparations had been made to guard against it; and the empress Maude, as I think she is commonly called, and her friends, seemed absolutely stunned. This gave Stephen time to strengthen himself, before any attempts were made to shake his power.

The first person who took up arms against him was David king of Scotland, who marched an army into England to vindicate the rights of his niece.

But Stephen contrived to win him over by ceding to him the greater part of the four northern counties of England, and giving to his son the earldom of Huntingdon. The wisest and most powerful baron then in England was the earl of Gloucester, a natural son of the late king. He was warmly attached to his sister; but as the other nobles acknowledged Stephen, he also was obliged to submit. For the next three years Maude appears to have made no direct attempt; but to have been lying in wait for an opportunity to assert her rights.

Stephen, in the year 1139, raised great discontents by his severity to some of his barons. This encouraged Maude and the earl of Gloucester, who had joined his sister in Normandy, to come to England. They were received in an evil hour into Arundel Castle by the dowager queen Adelais: and from this time, for several years, England was desolated by one of the most calamitous wars it has ever known. The barons sided with the two contending parties, as their feelings, or rather as their interests, prompted them. But, instead of an open war, it was a miserable vexatious kind of hostility, and displayed all the worst evils of the feudal system. Each baron, shut up in his own castle with his own retainers, kept up a sort of petty war with his nearest neighbour of the opposite party, to the destruction of all domestic comfort and civil order. To give you some idea of the state of the country during this unhappy

period, I will transcribe a passage translated from a history that was written at the very time. "All England wore a face of desolation and misery; multitudes abandoned their beloved country, and went into voluntary exile: others, forsaking their own houses, built wretched huts in churchyards, hoping for protection from the sacredness of the place. Whole families, after sustaining life as long as they could by eating herbs, roots, and the flesh of dogs and horses, at last died of hunger; and you might see many pleasant villages without a single inhabitant*."

After this contest had gone on for some time, without any decided advantage to either party, the earl of Gloucester, who commanded the empress's army, appeared before Lincoln, where a fierce battle took place on the 2d of February, 1141, of which an old writer† gives us a very animated account. He says that "when Stephen was left alone in the field after the dispersion of his army, grinding his teeth with anger, and foaming like a wild boar, he roared out like a lion; and though alone, none durst approach him, and with his double-edged axe he rushed on the enemy; but his axe being broken, and after that his sword," he was taken, and carried prisoner to Bristol Castle. Upon this great victory, Maude was acknowledged as queen, and on the 1st of June entered London

* Gesta Regis Stephani. † Matthew Paris.

in triumph. But instead of acting with prudence, or even with gratitude, she became inflated by her success; and despising the counsels of her uncle, the king of Scotland, who had come to visit her, and of her brother, the earl of Gloucester, to whom she owed so much, she treated her friends ungraciously, and her enemies insolently. She insulted the citizens of London, instead of granting any of their requests; and disgusted all orders of people so entirely, that, even while she was making preparations for her coronation, she found herself compelled to leave London, and fly to Winchester. Here she was soon besieged by Stephen's youngest brother, Henry, bishop of Winchester. With the utmost difficulty she escaped on a swift horse to Devizes; but the earl of Gloucester, in endeavouring to follow her, was taken prisoner, and carried to Rochester Castle. He, however, was soon after exchanged for Stephen. Thus, by both being taken prisoners, they both regained their liberty.

Stephen, about this time, was seized with a fit of illness, and was disabled, for a time, from taking advantage of this turn of fortune in his favour. As soon, however, as he regained his health, he pursued the empress. She escaped, borne in a litter, like a corpse, to Oxford; and took refuge there in the castle, during the absence of the earl of Gloucester, who had gone into Normandy to bring prince Henry, Maude's eldest son, to England. Stephen continued before Oxford for three months,

having sworn not to raise the siege till he had taken the empress prisoner. At last the garrison was reduced to extremity by famine; but still Maude's spirit was too proud and untameable to surrender. The ground, it being now the middle of winter, was covered with snow. The empress, and three of her trusty knights, attiring themselves wholly in white, that they might be the less easily distinguished, opened by night a postern door, and got out of the castle; and after crossing the frozen river, and walking six miles, they reached Abingdon in safety, where they procured horses to convey them to Wallingford. At Wallingford, Maude was met by the earl of Gloucester, on his return from Normandy with prince Henry, a fine promising boy of eleven years of age; and she soon forgot all her late fatigues and alarms in the joy of that happy meeting.

The fatal and ruinous warfare between Maude and Stephen continued for some years longer. Indeed, it seemed as if the people were become so much accustomed to war, that they did not know how to leave it off; but in the year 1147 the empress had a severe loss, in the death of her faithful friend, the earl of Gloucester. On his death, feeling herself, at length, wearied out with the struggle, she resigned her claims to her son Henry, who went into Normandy to collect an army which might enable him to renew the war. To that country she also retired, and spent there the remainder

of her life; never interfering in public affairs, except when she could be useful to her son, to whom she was always a devoted mother. She left, however, a memorial of herself in England which ought not to be forgotten, the first stone bridge * that had been seen in the island, all former ones having been of wood.

The flames of civil war had latterly been subsiding, but they blazed up again in the year 1153, on the arrival of prince Henry from Normandy. Stephen and he met at Wallingford. The two armies faced each other for several days without coming to an engagement. Some of the barons, who deplored the miseries of the country, had thus an opportunity of proposing an accommodation, to which Stephen the more willingly consented from having a short time before lost his eldest son, Eustace. It was agreed that Stephen should keep the crown during his life, and that Henry should succeed to it at his death.—The news of this treaty was received with the greatest joy all over the country, and the king and his people at last obtained some repose. But the following year, some disagreements ensuing between Stephen and Henry, the war seemed ready to burst forth again. Happily for the country, the death of Stephen put an end to the contest.

* That at Stratford-le-Bow, called *Le Bow* from the arch of the bridge.

Stephen died at Dover, on the 25th of October, 1154. He married Matilda, heiress of the earl of Boulogne; and had two sons,

Eustace, who died young;

William, who inherited his mother's patrimony of Boulogne.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XI.

George. Indeed, mamma, I am quite glad you are come to the end of that tiresome Stephen. I like to read about battles and brave men; but this was such disagreeable backwards and forwards fighting, I am quite tired of it.

Mrs. Markham. Of all kinds of warfare, a civil war is the most to be dreaded. It dissolves all the natural ties of kindred and friendship, and hardens and exasperates people's minds far more than fighting with a foreign enemy.

Richard. I remember your telling us something about king Stephen, when we were at Rochester: and you showed me that part of the castle which he rebuilt; but as I did not then know the story, I do not remember much about it.

Mary. Those old castles must have been uncomfortable rubbishy places to have lived in.

Mrs. M. You must not entirely judge of them as habitations by the ruinous remains we now see.

Of course all the interior decoration is gone; but I agree with you, that they must have been very comfortless, gloomy dwellings. The castle of Rochester is a very good specimen of an ancient castle, being more perfect than most of them. You remember that there is a high tower, which stands in what is now a garden, surrounded on all sides by high walls, or at least the remains of high walls. In one corner is a little ruinous tower, through which there is an entrance. Without this garden is another enclosure, taking a larger circuit, which may still be traced by the remains of thick solid walls, with towers at different distances. These outer walls seem to have surrounded the castle on three sides, the cliff overhanging the river being a sufficient defence on the fourth, where there is only the wall of the inner enclosure. In all castles there was such an inner enclosure, which was called the *inner bailey;* and contained the square tower, or *keep*, in which the baron, or governor, and his family dwelt, and in which all the stores and arms and valuable things are kept. Under the keep was the dungeon for prisoners. The chapel also stood in the *inner bailey*.

George. Then pray, mamma, where did all the soldiers and servants live?

Mrs. M. Between the walls of the outer and inner enclosures, which space was called the *outer bailey*, there was always room enough for the sol-

diers' lodgings, the stables, and the workshops for the blacksmiths, carpenters, and other artificers.

Richard. The blacksmith must have been a very important person to all those knights in armour. But pray, mamma, in what part of the castle was the postern gate?

Mrs. M. It was a small private entrance, which was generally concealed from view, and afforded means to the governor of going secretly in and out of the castle. Rochester Castle is now so mere a shell of a building, that we can only conjecture that the two rooms in the centre part, which have ornamented fire-places, and pillars on the walls, were the state apartments; and that the sleeping rooms were those little dark recesses, which we observed in going up the winding stairs that lead to the battlements. The best apartments were always in the upper stories of the castle, because the windows at the bottom part were only little slits in the walls, while those above were made the larger, the further they were from the ground.

Richard. And what was that for?

Mrs. M. Because the upper parts of the castle were, of course, in less danger from the enemy. In those rooms, therefore, the inhabitants indulged themselves with air and daylight.

Mary. What terrible times those were in which one was always to be so much afraid of one's enemies!

Mrs. M. It must, indeed, have been a very shocking state of society, when every baron lived in his castle like a robber in his den, and only sallied out to plunder and fight.

Richard. Pray, mamma, what was the difference between knights and barons?

Mrs. M. No nobleman, let his rank have been ever so great, could be considered a complete soldier till he was knighted. There were many different orders of knighthood, in each of which different ceremonies and vows were used: but the chief formality was the kneeling down before some elder knight, who, giving a slight blow with his sword on the left shoulder, said: "In the name of God and St. George, rise up, Sir John!" or "Sir Thomas!" or whatever else the name might be. Amongst the different sorts of knights, you have, I dare say, heard of knight-errants. This order was first introduced in England in the time of king Stephen, by some young and ardent men, who, abhorring the tyranny of those lawless barons, bound themselves by solemn vows to devote themselves to the protection of the injured and helpless. The knight-errants were not formed into a regular body, but were quite independent of one another, and travelled about from place to place for the purpose of redressing grievances. Whether they really did the actual good they proposed, I am not able to say: but this order of knight-errantry was of infinite service in softening the ferocious man-

ners of the times, and instilled into the minds of those who professed it the most exalted principles of honour, though these might probably be often carried to excess. The spirit of chivalry seemed to belong wholly to the Norman character, no traces of it having been found amongst the plain and rustic Saxons.

George. I should like to know what ladies did in those troublesome knock-about times?

Mrs. M. According to our notions of comfort, they must have fared very ill. The daughters of noblemen were commonly educated in nunneries till they married: they then lived in their husbands' castles, and were very often besieged, and taken prisoners, according to the chances of war. One of their occupations was that of surgery; and it was their office to make salves, and attend on the wounded; but their chief employment, I apprehend, was embroidery and needle-work; and they used to sit in the great hall, surrounded by their damsels, working with them, and setting them their tasks, like the dress-maker and her apprentices we saw yesterday.

Mary. Dear mamma, how very odd for a great baron's wife! And did they never go visiting, or have company?

Mrs. M. I should think not during the civil wars. I do not think even you, Mary, would like to go visiting with a guard of soldiers to protect you from being slain or taken prisoner by the way.

But they had no want of society at home; for, besides the menials belonging to the castle, every lady had a number of damsels attendant on herself, who were the daughters of inferior knights and barons, or perhaps her own relations. And every castle was a sort of school for young nobles, where, first in quality of pages, and as they grew older, in that of squires, they learned the arts of war and hunting, which were the chief requisites for a gentleman. So, you see, though the life of a baron's lady in an old castle might be dull and monotonous, it was far from being solitary.

Richard. Pray, mamma, where did all the common soldiers come from? When you told us about the different ranks of people, you never said any thing about the soldiers.

Mrs. M. The soldiers then were hardly a separate class. The king gave his barons lands and estates, on condition that they should always be ready to attend him in battle. The barons let out many or most of their estates to persons of inferior rank, on the same condition; and these again had others under them, who held by a similar tenure. Thus, whenever the baron marched to war, those tenants, who thus held their estates by the condition of military service, marched with him; and though, after a time, it was allowable to compound, or for people to pay money to excuse themselves from actual service, yet the obligation still remained; and this sort of bond between the

king and his barons, and the barons and their retainers, was called the feudal system. Some traces of it are to be found among the Saxons, but it was completely established by the Conqueror.

George. I hope that feudal law is over now. I do not think papa's tenants would like to be marched off to battle in that manner.

Mrs. M. I do not think they would. Nor is there any hazard that they will. Happily for them and for us, things are much altered for the better since those days.

Richard. Will you tell us, mamma, how the change came?

Mrs. M. You must have patience, my dear; and, as I proceed in my history, I will endeavour to direct your attention to those parts of it, in which the unerring hand of Providence has at length brought us, by gradual steps, from a state of anarchy and slavery, to the happy condition which we are now in. But I cannot hope to explain every thing to you. I only attempt to give you as much knowledge as may enable you to read other and fuller histories with greater pleasure and advantage than you would be able to derive from them, if you had no previous acquaintance with the subject.

Mary. The empress Maude did one good thing in building that stone bridge.

Mrs. M. In Stow's Chronicle is the following account of her building it:—"This Matilda, when

she saw the forde to be dangerous for them that travelled by the Old Forde over the river Lue (for she herself had been well washed in the water), caused two stone bridges to be builded, of the which one was situated over the Lue at the head of the towne of Stratford, now called Bow, because the bridge was arched like a bow: a rare piece of worke; for before that time the like had never been seen in England."

Began to reign.	Reigned Years.	THE NORMAN LINE.
1066	21	William the Conqueror.
1087	13	Robert, } children of William the Conqueror.
1100	35	William Rufus, } children of William the Conqueror.
		Henry the First, } children of William the Conqueror.
		Adela, countess of Blois, } children of William the Conqueror.
		William, son of Robert.
		William, } children of Henry the First.
		Empress Matilda, } children of Henry the First.
1135	19	Stephen, son of Adela and the count de Blois, grandson of William I.
		THE SAXON LINE RESTORED.
1154	34	Henry the Second—son of the empress Matilda, and Geoffry Plantagenet; —grandson of Henry the First and Matilda of Scotland, who was niece to Edgar Atheling, and descended from the Saxon kings.

CHAPTER XII.

HENRY II.

[Years after Christ, 1154—1189.]

HENRY II. AND BECKET.
From a MS. in the Cotton Library.

HENRY PLANTAGENET was the eldest son, as I have before said, of Geoffry earl of Anjou and the empress Matilda. It was the custom, before family surnames were adopted, to call each person by a surname of his own; as Harold *Harefoot*, William *Rufus*, and so on. Thus Geoffry got the surname of *Plantagenet*, from wearing in his helmet a sprig of the plant *genista*, or broom; and

Henry, either because he liked the name, or from affection to his father's memory, retained it, and by this means it became established as the surname of his family.

Henry had had the great advantage of receiving a part of his education at Bristol Castle, under the superintendence of the earl of Gloucester, who, I have already told you, was the most learned and virtuous nobleman of his age. And though he was still very young when his excellent preceptor died, he seems to have benefited extraordinarily from his instructions; or, perhaps necessity had made him early capable of judging and acting for himself. He had the possession of Normandy given to him when he was only sixteen years old. By his father's death, in 1151, he became possessed of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine. The year following he married Eleanor, heiress of Guienne and Poitou, who was many years older than himself, and had before been married to, and divorced by, the king of France. Thus he already possessed a very large domain in France, when the death of Stephen put him in possession of England also.

He was at this time twenty-one years of age; of the middle size, and remarkably strong and active. His countenance is described to us as being comely, and his eyes particularly fine, with usually a mild expression, but very sparkling and brilliant when animated or angry. In after-life

he was inclined to grow fat, but he guarded against it by abstemiousness and exercise. He was a very graceful rider, even to the last years of his life. Whilst under the earl of Gloucester's care, he not only acquired all the common military accomplishments of the times, but also that uncommon one of a taste for study. He delighted in the conversation of learned men, and had so good a memory, that he remembered every book he had read, and every face he had seen. He had an affectionate and good heart, an excellent understanding, and inherited all that was good and admirable in his grandfather Henry, without the alloy of his bad qualities. He was the first king, since Edward the Confessor, who came fairly by the crown; so that the people of England were prepared to receive him with the utmost joyfulness; and not the less because of the Saxon blood he inherited from his grandmother.

The first thing he did, on coming to the crown, was to send away all the foreign soldiers that Stephen had brought into England; and to order all the castles that had been built during the civil wars to be demolished. He also confirmed a charter of privileges to the people; and, to use the words of one of our best historians*, "no king, in so short a time, had done so much good, and gained so much love, since Alfred." In 1155, he recovered from the king of Scotland that part of the

* Henry.

north of England which Stephen had ceded. He also carried his arms against the Welsh, who had been very troublesome neighbours: and though his army was once in some danger of being defeated, he, in the end, made an advantageous peace with them, and compelled them to give up some places which they had taken on the English border. From this time till the year 1163, he was chiefly engaged in a war with the king of France, in pursuance of a claim he considered himself to have, in right of his wife, on Toulouse, and some other territories. This war ended in the marriage of Marguerite, daughter of the king of France, to king Henry's eldest son, Henry, though they were both children. In 1166, Constantia, the only child of the duke of Bretagne, was betrothed to Henry's third son, Geoffry: and the duke, finding himself unable to cope with his turbulent barons, resigned his duchy into the hands of the king of England, in guardianship for Constantia and Geoffry.

You will have thought it extraordinary, that I should not yet have said any thing to you about Ireland. That fertile island was divided into five separate kingdoms. Very little mention is made of it by any of our historians, till the year 1171, when Dermot, one of the five kings, being driven from the kingdom of Leinster, came over to England to implore the assistance of Henry, who gave him some money from the royal treasury, and permitted him to enlist in his cause any of the En-

glish whom he could prevail on to join him. Accordingly the earl of Pembroke, surnamed *Strongbow*, and a few other noblemen, returned with Dermot to Ireland, and with their assistance he soon recovered his kingdom. Not contented with this success, he now thought that, by the help of his English friends, he might also possess himself of the other four kingdoms. But Strongbow did not dare to engage in a plan for the conquest of the whole island without first soliciting Henry's consent.

The king's answer was for some time delayed; and the earl, meanwhile, hastening his preparations, collected in England an army of 1200 men: but when he was on the point of conveying them to Ireland, he received Henry's positive commands not to proceed. He was, however, now too much bent on the enterprise to give it up; so, putting life and honour to the hazard, he set sail. At Waterford he was joined by Dermot, and there married his daughter Eva, and then proceeded to the attack of Meath, which was soon conquered. The year following Dermot died, and earl Strongbow, in right of his wife, succeeded to his possessions, and thus became king of great part of Ireland.

Henry had been exceedingly displeased with the earl for having disobeyed him; nor was he appeased till Strongbow came over to England, and resigned to him all these great acquisitions.

Henry allowed him to retain part of Leinster, and went over himself in 1172, with a fleet of 400 vessels, to take possession of his new dominions. The petty princes, overawed by such a powerful force, immediately submitted; and Roderick, the supreme king of the island, consented to become tributary; and thus was this important conquest effected without bloodshed.

I must now tell you about Thomas à Becket, who was at this time a very distinguished person, and whose quarrels with king Henry were a subject of concern and interest even to many foreign potentates. Thomas à Becket was the son of a citizen of London, and was the first Anglo-Saxon who had arrived at any kind of eminence since the Conquest. He had early been remarked for his great abilities, and for his attachment to the cause of the empress Maude. When Henry came to the throne, he selected Becket as his favourite and companion; and at length made him his chancellor, thus placing him in the highest dignity in the kingdom next to that of the archbishopric of Canterbury. He also confided to him the education of prince Henry, his eldest son.

Becket now indulged himself in every kind of luxury and magnificence. He never moved without a numerous train of servants; his dress was splendid in the extreme; he was profuse in his gifts; the luxury of his table and of his furniture was greater than had ever been seen before; and

Fitzstephen, who was his secretary, and wrote the history of his life, states, as an instance of his extreme delicacy, "that in winter his apartments were every day covered with clean hay and straw, and in summer with green rushes, or boughs, that the gentlemen who paid court to him, and who could not, by reason of their numbers, find a place at table, might not soil their fine clothes by sitting on a dirty floor."

Though Becket had been ordained a deacon, he considered himself more a layman than an ecclesiastic, and employed his leisure in hunting and hawking, and similar diversions. He also engaged in military affairs, and conducted 700 knights, at his own charge, to attend the king in his war in France. His house was a place of education for the sons of the chief nobility, and the king was often present at the entertainments he gave. As an instance of the familiarity with which the king treated Becket, Fitzstephen tells us the following story:—One day, while they were riding together in the streets of London, they met a poor beggar shivering with cold. The king made the observation, that it would be a good deed to give that poor man a warm coat. The chancellor agreed, and added, "You do well, sir, in thinking of such a good action." "Then he shall have one presently," said the king, and seizing on the chancellor's cloak, which was of scarlet lined with ermine, he tried to pull it off. The chancellor,

not liking to part with it, held it fast, and the king and he were near pulling each other off their horses in the scuffle. At last, Becket letting the cloak go, the king gave it to the beggar, who, you may be sure, was much astonished at such a scene, and such a gift.

The bishops had, at this time, encroached so much upon the privileges of both the king and the people, that the king was hardly master of his kingdom, or the people masters of their own consciences. One great cause of this evil was, that the clergy were not amenable to the common laws of the country. Henry, feeling the inconvenience of this church tyranny, had long meditated the putting a check to it. And, on the death of the archbishop of Canterbury, he promoted Becket to that dignity, believing that he would be ready to forward the design of lowering the pride and power of the clergy. But no sooner was Becket established in his new dignity than he seemed changed in character, as well as in condition. He renounced all his gay and active amusements, and was always seen with a book in his hand, or else absorbed in deep meditation. He affected the greatest austerities; he wore sackcloth next his skin, and never changed it till it was full of dirt and vermin; he ate nothing but bread, and drank water in which fennel had been steeped to make it nauseous; he lacerated himself with continual scourging; and he every day washed the feet of thirteen poor beggars.

In short, the ostentation of affected sanctity made him take a satisfaction in inflicting on himself the severest penances.

His conduct towards the king was not less changed than his personal deportment and way of living. He withdrew from the intimacy with which Henry had treated him, and resigned the office of chancellor, saying he must now devote himself wholly to his spiritual functions. And so far was he from giving any aid to the king's plans of reform, that he set himself up as a strenuous supporter of the usurpations of the clergy. In all this conduct he was encouraged by the pope; and Henry was thus kept in a continual ferment for eight years.

I will not enter into the intricate particulars of these dissensions, because you will read of them in other histories when you are older, and you will then understand them better than you can now. I will only say, that Henry was so much disappointed and exasperated by the conduct of Becket, that, forgetful of all his former regard for him, he certainly treated him both unjustly and, on some occasions, severely. At last, in a moment of great irritation, he unhappily exclaimed, "Is there nobody that will rid me of this turbulent priest?" Henry probably had no sooner said these words, than he forgot them. But they were not forgot by some of those who heard them, and who thought they should do the king an acceptable service by

executing what they imagined to be his wishes. Four gentlemen of his household set out immediately with the utmost speed from Bayeux in Normandy, where the king then was, to England. When they arrived at Canterbury, they demanded admittance into the archbishop's palace. The servants, apprehensive of some evil design, obliged their master to fly into the cathedral, thinking the sanctity of the place would protect him. But the assassins followed him; and, because he would not submit to be their prisoner, they slew him on the steps of the altar, as he knelt before it.

When Henry heard of this murder, he was so much shocked and concerned, that he shut himself up for three days, and refused to let any body come near him. At last his attendants forced open the door of his room, and persuaded him to take some refreshment. The king afterwards caused a magnificent tomb to be erected for Becket in Canterbury cathedral. He walked barefoot to the shrine, and permitted himself to be lashed by scourges as he knelt before it; and thus considered himself as fully absolved from all guilt he might have incurred by being accessary to his death.

In the year 1173, Henry appeared to have arrived at the utmost height of glory and dominion. He was sovereign of England, Ireland, and of a third part of France. All his dominions were in a state of tranquillity. But it seems as if princes

were destined to pay for their royalty the high price of that domestic happiness which their subjects often enjoy, and which is, after all, the greatest of all worldly enjoyments. The queen, whom he had married for the sake of her rich dower, was of an unamiable and jealous temper, and not only gave him much vexation by her own conduct, but also encouraged her children to behave undutifully to him. Henry, the eldest of them, had been crowned by his father, when he was about fifteen years old; it being not uncommon at that time for the heir to be crowned in his father's lifetime. He soon became impatient to reign in reality, and entered into a conspiracy with the kings of France and Scotland, and other princes who were jealous of king Henry's power, to dethrone him. The king perceived that his son was less dutiful and respectful than formerly, and therefore removed from about him some persons who gave him bad advice. On this the prince, and his brothers Richard and Geoffry, whom he had persuaded to join him, fled to the court of the king of France; and even queen Eleanor, in the disguise of a man, tried to escape there also, to the very same king from whom she had formerly been divorced, on account of her ill conduct. She was, however, discovered, and brought back to Henry, who shut her up in strict confinement.

The rebellion which had been preparing now broke out. On the side of Normandy Henry was

beset by the king of France and the earl of Flanders, while William king of Scotland marched into Cumberland, where he was joined by all the discontented barons of England. But in no part of his reign did Henry act with more wisdom and vigour than in this great emergency. The united efforts of so many enemies were unable to do him any serious injury; and in the following year, 1175, all their schemes were frustrated by the capture of William king of Scotland, who was taken prisoner at Alnwick Castle, by a body of 400 knights, commanded by Ranulph de Glanville, who, under the cover of a thick fog, approached the castle without being perceived. They found the Scottish king, and about seventy of his knights, amusing themselves with tilting near the castle. William made an attempt to defend himself, and called out, "Now let us see who are the best knights!" but his horse being killed at the first onset, he was taken prisoner.

When the news of this event was brought to Henry, he was in bed; but he instantly rose, and called his attendants about him, that he might tell them the happy tidings. The king of France was now glad to make peace, and thus every thing turned out prosperously for England. Henry's generosity to his defeated enemies was much to be admired. He gave liberty without ransom to above nine hundred noblemen who were made prisoners; and he gave the king of Scotland his liberty, on

condition that he and his successors should thenceforward swear fealty to the king of England. He pardoned his sons, on the score of their youth; and, to keep his son Henry for the future out of the way of bad advisers, he made him accompany him in a tour round the kingdom.

But, though Henry behaved to his son in the kindest and most paternal manner, the young prince, who seemed to be quite devoid both of affection and gratitude, grew weary of the constraint he was kept in, and importuned his father, under different pretences, to let him quit England. This at last the king very unwillingly agreed to, and the prince returned immediately to his former companions, and spent his time in all kinds of idle amusements, and gave the king continual vexation by his headstrong and obstinate conduct. At last, the prince having a quarrel with his brother Richard, and the king seeming to take Richard's part, the prince, in the violence of his passion, broke through all restraints, and was actually leading an army against his father, when the tumult of his mind threw him into a fever. Finding himself dying, he sent a repentant message to his father, entreating forgiveness for all his undutiful behaviour, and beseeching that he would come and see him.

This the king would not do, apprehending his illness to be only pretended; but he sent him his ring in token of forgiveness. The prince received it with thankfulness, and a little before his death

desired to be laid on a heap of ashes, with a halter about his neck, to testify his deep humiliation and contrition. This was done, and in this state he died. Henry's grief, when he heard that his son was dead, was very great indeed. He bitterly reproached himself for having refused to go to him, and forgot, in sorrow for his death, all his faults and misconduct.

Prince Henry died in the twenty-ninth year of his age; and as he left no children, his next brother, Richard, became heir to the throne. Richard also was of a turbulent disposition, and on many occasions behaved very ill to his father. In the year 1186 Henry's third son, Geoffry, was killed in a tournament at Paris. He left one daughter, called the Damsel of Bretagne; but, soon after his death, a posthumous son was born, who was named Arthur.

In the year 1188 the melancholy news arrived in Europe of the taking of Jerusalem and the defeat of the Christian army, by Saladin, sultan of Egypt. The consternation this news occasioned flew from country to country, and fired all the warriors of Europe with the desire of driving the infidels from the holy city. Philip, king of France, and Richard Plantagenet, were amongst the first to take up the cross. Richard, jealous of the favour which John, his youngest and now only surviving brother, had with his father, wanted to take him with him to the Holy Land; but this his father would not consent to; and Richard, whose fiery temper could not

brook the least contradiction, then joined Philip, who indeed had probably drawn him on, in making war upon Henry, instead of carrying his troops to Palestine.

Henry, being totally unprepared for such an attack, was obliged to subscribe to a humiliating treaty; but what afflicted him most of all was the conduct of John, his favourite son, who, forgetting every tie of duty and gratitude, had joined in the rebellion. This seemed to weigh down the poor king's heart more than any other affliction of his life; and he fell ill of a fever, occasioned by anxiety of mind. Feeling himself dying, he desired to be carried to a church (I believe it was the abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou). He was laid at the foot of the altar, and there expired, on the 9th of July, 1189, in the 57th year of his age, and 35th of his reign.

He married Eleanor, the heiress of Guienne.

Their children were—

William, who died when a child;

Henry, who married Marguerite of France, and died in 1182;

Richard, surnamed Cœur de Lion;

Geoffry, married Constance of Bretagne, died in 1186, leaving a son, named Arthur, and a daughter;

John, surnamed Lackland;

Maud, married Alphonso of Castile;

Joan, married William, king of Sicily.

He had many natural children, but little is known about any of them, except Richard Longespée, and Geoffry, archbishop of York, who were his sons by Rosamond Clifford, commonly called Fair Rosamond. This Geoffry is distinguished above all Henry's other sons, as being the only one who behaved to him with gratitude and duty.

One of Henry's institutions, which still remains, is the division of the kingdom into circuits, in which justices appointed by the king travel round to decide causes and administer justice. This at that time was a most necessary protection against the tyranny of the barons, who often took the administration of the laws into their own hands. It was during this reign that the distinction between Saxons and Normans began to wear away, and that they learned to consider themselves as one people.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XII.

Richard. How shocking it was, mamma, that such a great and excellent king should have such wicked children!

Mrs. Markham. I fear there must have been some latent fault, which we have now no means of finding out, in his conduct towards his sons. My

own opinion is, that they acquired habits of disobedience to their father, by seeing how little harmony subsisted between him and their mother. When children see their parents disagree, they seldom learn to treat them with duty or respect.

Mary. I wonder Henry could marry that old queen Eleanor, particularly as she had made a bad wife to king Louis.

Mrs. M. If we could know Henry's secret thoughts, I dare say he often, in the bitterness of his heart, thought he had paid a heavy price for the rich provinces she brought him.

Richard. As Henry was so fond of reading, I suppose learning was less uncommon at this time.

Mrs. M. His grandfather, Henry the First, was a great encourager of it; and in the reigns of Stephen and Henry II. there were many learned men, both poets and historians, to whom we are much indebted for the knowledge of the events of their times, and of the times before them. Of these the most eminent are, William of Malmsbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Giraldus Cambrensis; the last of whom wrote an account of a journey through Wales, and also a description of Ireland, with the history of the conquest of that island. All the writers of this time were monks and priests. As for the laity, few of them could write; it was a great thing if they could read. I must not forget to tell you of Nicolas Breakspear, the only Englishman who ever arrived at the popedom. In his

youth he was a menial in the abbey of St. Alban's, and being reproached for indolence, he left the abbey and went to Paris, where, our own universities not being at that time in great repute, it was the custom for English students to resort. At Paris he applied himself so earnestly to study, that he obtained the notice of pope Eugenius the Third, who after a time made him a cardinal; and in 1154 he was chosen pope, and took the name of Adrian IV.

George. I suppose that, as there were so many writers, books were become more plentiful.

Mrs. M. The invention of paper, the art of making which was discovered in the twelfth century, was of infinite advantage to the progress of learning. Books could now be multiplied at less expense, and a library was become essential in every monastery. Every monastery had also a room called the writing room, where the younger monks were employed in transcribing books: for printing was yet unknown.

Richard. Pray, mamma, were there any boys' schools?

Mrs. M. There were several in different parts of the kingdom; but, we are told, the best were those of the Jews.

Mary. Jews! mamma, how came the Jews into England?

Mrs. M. You know that ever since the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman emperor, 72

years after Christ, the Jews have been an outcast, though still a separate, people. About the time of Henry II. many of them came over and settled in England: but they were treated with many indignities, and were obliged to wear a square yellow cap, to distinguish them from Christians.

Mary. How very odd it was of Thomas à Becket to be riding about the streets in a scarlet cloak!

Mrs. M. It would seem so now to us, but then it was the general custom. The dress of the nobility was at that time very splendid. Some persons wore their cloaks so long that they swept upon the ground; and the sleeves of the gowns came down over the fingers, to the great inconvenience of the wearers, who could scarcely walk or use their hands; but Henry II. introduced the Anjou mode of wearing short cloaks, which gained him the surname of *Court Mantle.*

George. Then he had two surnames, Court Mantle and Plantagenet?

Mrs. M. The first, I suppose, was only a familiar appellation, or a sort of nickname. Family surnames were unknown before the Conquest, and appear to have been then introduced from the circumstance of many of the Normans who came over to England being called by the names of the places they came from in Normandy. Their children, willing to preserve the remembrance of their Norman origin, also called themselves by the same

names. The present noble families of Seymour (anciently St. Maur), and Sackville, and many others, derive their names in this manner from places in Normandy. It was soon found that family names were not only honourable, but also convenient. Accordingly they have become universal; but at the time we are speaking of they were only assumed by distinguished families; and it was a long time before they were adopted by the lower orders of people.

George. How I should like to have seen Thomas à Becket in all his state and magnificence!

Mrs. M. I would rather have seen it than have been myself troubled with such magnificence. Fitzstephen says, that, when Becket travelled, he was accompanied by two hundred knights, each having his own attendants; and that he had in his train eight waggons, containing provisions, furniture, and clothes, besides twelve pack-horses, loaded with plate, books, and money. To each waggon was chained a fierce mastiff; and on each packhorse sat an ape or a monkey.

Mary. And then, mamma, how shocking it was that the poor man should be so barbarously murdered!

Mrs. M. Murder was not then considered so great a crime as in reality it is. The lawlessness of the times, and the continual wars, made men savage and hard-hearted.

George. But you know we have wars still, and yet people are not so cruel now.

Mrs. M. There are many reasons which unite to account for this; but I will only observe to you, that the use of fire-arms now enables armies to fight at a greater distance from each other. In many cases the men can scarcely, if at all, distinguish each other's faces. Thus, dreadful as a battle still is, it is not so morally injurious as formerly; when, before the invention of gunpowder, almost every decisive battle was fought hand to hand, and each combatant considered his antagonist as his own personal enemy. Hence arose a private sentiment of exultation at the sight of a dying foe, independent of the general feeling for the public cause. Froissart, in the history of the wars of France of the 14th century, very much censures the ferocity of some baron, who "was even so wicked, that he minded no more the killing a knight or a baron than he would a mere peasant." *Now* the peasant's life is as much protected as the baron's.

Richard. It seems very odd that so little should be known about Ireland during those many hundred years before earl Strongbow.

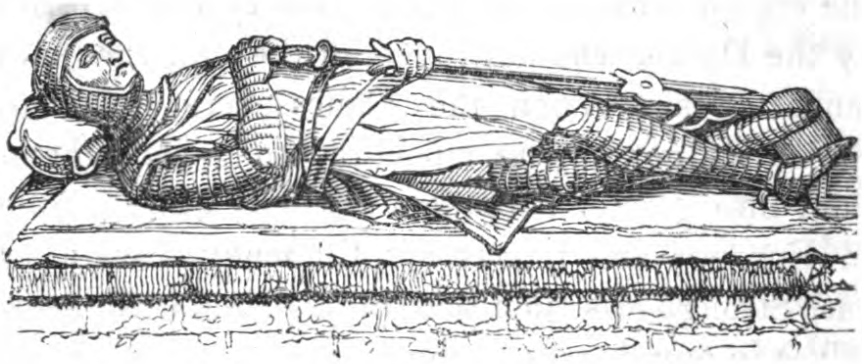
Mrs. M. It certainly is extraordinary that we should know so little about such near neighbours. Thus much, however, is known, that, in the fifth century, St. Patrick, who was a native of Corn-

wall, or as some say of Wales, was carried by pirates to Ireland, and that he converted the inhabitants, who till then professed the religion of the Druids, to Christianity. From that time Ireland was a place of refuge for learned men of all countries; and religion and science flourished there till the eighth century, when the country was overrun by the Danes, who destroyed all the churches and monasteries. When the Danes were expelled, the Irish, not having an Alfred to govern them, sank into greater barbarism than any other people in Europe; and it was not till many years after earl Strongbow's time that they assimilated themselves in any degree to the manners and habits of other nations.

CHAPTER XIII.

RICHARD I.

[Years after Christ, 1189—1199.]



Monument.

RICHARD, surnamed Cœur de Lion from his undaunted courage, had received from nature a very generous disposition. His faults were those of a lofty, headstrong spirit, and were, perhaps, too suitable to the unruly temper of the time he lived in, to be then considered reprehensible or dangerous. For his father's death he felt extreme sorrow, and on seeing his dead body expressed an agony of remorse for his own undutiful conduct towards him. He is said by the historians of his time to have been a good politician, orator, and poet: but, though he may have possessed a great deal of talent, he was hot-headed, and had no judgment. His appearance was highly prepossessing. His

eyes were blue, and his hair, what was then much admired, yellow; and his countenance animated and engaging. He was tall, and his figure extremely fine: he had a majestic and stately mien; and this, joined to his undaunted courage, and an alacrity of mind that never forsook him, gave him on all occasions a wonderful ascendancy over men's minds.

One of the first acts of his reign was to release his mother from her long confinement. He bestowed many kind but ill-judged gifts on his brother John, which, instead of inspiring him with any affectionate feeling, only put it the more in his power, as you will soon hear, to show his ingratitude. Richard soon turned his whole mind to the crusade. He sold the royal castles and demesnes in order to raise money, and had recourse to many unjust and unworthy methods of extorting it from his subjects. He also, for the sum of ten thousand marks, absolved the king of Scotland from his oath of doing homage to the kings of England.

At length the mighty armament was ready; and Richard, accompanied by a number of the English barons, all as eager in the cause as himself, arrived at Messina on the 14th of September, 1190. Here he was joined by Philip king of France, and, the season being too far advanced for them to proceed immediately to Palestine, it was agreed that they should pass the winter in Sicily. There could

not be a greater difference of character than that which existed between these two kings. Richard, though proud and domineering, was brave and generous. Philip was equally proud, but was sly and deceitful. The French historians extol him as one of their best and wisest kings, and have given him the surname of Augustus; but what they have called wisdom and policy, I should be inclined to call craft and dishonesty.

It will not appear surprising that two such opposite characters should quarrel before their six months' residence in Sicily was over; and it must be acknowledged that the first aggression came from Richard. He had long been contracted to Adelais, sister of the French king; but Henry, his father, had repented of the engagement, and would not permit it to be fulfilled while he lived: and now Richard, having become enamoured of Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre, broke off his engagement to Adelais. Early in 1191 he prevailed with his mother, queen Eleanor, to bring the princess Berengaria to Messina. They arrived the day before he was obliged to sail; but, it being Lent, the marriage could not then take place. Eleanor returned to England, and the princess, accompanied by the queen of Sicily, Richard's sister, embarked for the Holy Land. During the voyage the ship the two princesses were in was in great danger from a violent storm; and the king of Cyprus refusing to admit the ship into his har-

bours, Richard laid siege to that island, and in a short time obtained entire possession of it. Here he and Berengaria were married; and after leaving a governor in the island, he sailed for Acre, where the king of France, who had some time before left Sicily in great displeasure with Richard, was already arrived.

Acre was a large town on the coast of Palestine, in the possession of the Saracens, and had been besieged for the last two years by an army of Christians collected from all parts of Europe. The Christians were now in their turn surrounded and besieged by a large army of infidels, under the famous Saladin. The arrival of Richard, whose valour was well known, revived the courage of the Christians; and the town, being attacked night and day, was obliged to surrender on the 12th of July. Soon after the capture of Acre, the king of France returned home, pretending that the climate disagreed with him; but in reality because he was jealous of the superior glory of Richard, and had not forgot his quarrel with him at Messina. Before he went he solemnly engaged not to make any attempt on the territories of Richard, though at this very time he entertained the full intention of attacking them as soon as he got back. He also gave secret orders to the duke of Burgundy, the commander of the troops he left behind, to omit no opportunity of thwarting and mortifying the English king.

In the meantime Richard, unsuspicious of these designs, thought only of his open and declared enemies. He displayed extraordinary bravery and skill, and in a battle near Joppa, which lasted from morning till night, gained a great victory over Saladin. The victorious Christians then entered Joppa, or rather the ruins, which were all that was left of the town, which had been wholly dismantled by the Turks. Richard's intention was immediately to have pursued Saladin, who had reassembled his scattered forces at Ascalon; and had he done so, his success would in all probability have been complete: but the duke of Burgundy, agreeably to the instructions he had received, insisted on staying to rebuild the walls of Joppa. Richard was unwillingly obliged to submit, and a delay of seven weeks was caused by that useless work. When they at last set forth again, the rains and natural impediments, to which were added those that the duke of Burgundy still threw in the way, prevented their getting to Jerusalem till the end of the year 1191: and, when at last they had arrived in sight of it, the French troops, and some others, refused to advance to the siege; and Richard, to his bitter mortification, was obliged to retreat to Ascalon. This march is described as the most painful of all that the army made; and when at last, worn out by fatigue and famine, it arrived at Ascalon, the place was found such an entire ruin, that it became necessary to set to work immediately

to repair it. Richard set the example by working with more ardour than any common labourer. Soon after, the duke of Burgundy, and all whom he could entice to follow him, separated from the army, and went to Tyre.

In the meantime the affairs of England had gone on very ill. Prince John, and the bishop of Ely, to whom the chief authority had been given, soon disagreed, and the whole kingdom was in a state of disturbance. At last the bishop was obliged to abandon the country, and delegates were appointed, who acted more prudently. When the king of France got home, he lost no time in inviting John to unite with him in seizing on Richard's territories. John was only prevented from doing so by queen Eleanor, who appears to have acted like a wise and good woman at this juncture. Philip then would have invaded Normandy with his own forces; but he was obliged to give up this design, all his barons refusing to accompany him in so unjust and ungenerous an attempt. The news of these transactions reached Ascalon about the middle of April, 1192, and Richard resolved to return to Europe.

But while Richard was preparing for his return, he heard that Saladin was besieging Joppa, and that the Christians there were reduced to the last extremity. Giving up, therefore, his design of immediately embarking, he went directly to Joppa, and defeated the Pagans in a furious battle, in

which he performed prodigies of valour. Soon after this he fell ill, and, being unable to pursue his advantages, concluded a truce with Saladin for three years, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours.

Amongst the many causes that had from the first impeded the progress of the Christian army in the East, was the division that arose in it from the rival interests of Conrad marquis of Montferrat, and Guy of Lusignan, who each contended for the empty title of king of Jerusalem; while the substantial part, the kingdom itself, was in the possession of the Turks. The kings of France and England had taken opposite sides in this contest, Philip taking the part of Conrad, and Richard that of Lusignan. Richard, before he quitted Palestine, was called on by the whole army to decide this question. He decided in favour of Conrad; but, to compensate the disappointment to Lusignan, bestowed on him the kingdom of Cyprus, a far more substantial gift than that which his rival obtained; for Cyprus remained in the family of Lusignan during a period of three hundred years. In the year 1471 it became annexed to the Venetian dominions, and long remained the only territory that was gained to Christendom by all the devastation and bloodshed of the crusades. It is now again subject to the Turks. As for the king of Jerusalem, he enjoyed his imaginary dignity only a few days. He was murdered by some of

the mountaineers of Lebanon, men who were in the service of a Pagan chief who was called "*The old man of the mountain;*" and this event Philip tried to turn to the injury of Richard by accusing him of the murder.

On the 9th of October, the two queens having sailed for England previously, Richard commenced his disastrous voyage. After many storms at sea, he was shipwrecked near Aquileia. He then attempted to pass through Germany in the disguise of a pilgrim. Unfortunately he had made the duke of Austria his bitter enemy by some personal affront at the siege of Acre; and having betrayed himself by a generosity and profuseness more suitable to the king he was, than to the pilgrim he wished to appear, he was discovered and made prisoner by his unforgiving enemy, who, afterwards, on condition of receiving a share of the ransom, gave him up to the emperor of Germany. The news of his imprisonment caused the greatest sorrow to all his subjects, who had been anxiously watching for the return of their brave king. John alone rejoiced at his misfortune; and by spreading a report of his death endeavoured to obtain the crown for himself. The king of France also made an attack on Normandy; but the barons remained faithful to their sovereign, and successfully defended their country.

Richard, meanwhile, was treated by the emperor with every possible indignity, was confined in a

dungeon, and loaded with chains: but his cheerfulness and gay humour did not, even under these circumstances, forsake him, and he found amusement in talking facetiously and merrily to his guards. How long he remained in this dungeon I do not exactly know: but after a time he was taken to the town of Worms, where a meeting of the princes of Germany, called a diet of the empire, was to be held. While he was on his road to this place, he was met by some persons from England, whom his mother had sent to attend on him. He received them very cordially, and inquired with the greatest kindness for all his friends. When they told him of his brother's base behaviour, he was extremely shocked; but, presently recovering his cheerfulness, said with a smile, "My brother John is not made for conquering kingdoms."

When Richard arrived at Worms, the emperor, by way of justifying his own ungenerous behaviour, accused him before the diet of having driven away the king of France from Palestine, of having affronted the duke of Austria, and of having made peace on too easy terms with Saladin, and added many other equally unfounded charges. But Richard defended himself so eloquently and pathetically, that many persons shed tears on hearing him, and all were convinced of the malice of his accusers. After this, the emperor behaved somewhat better to him, and agreed to set him at liberty

on the payment of 100,000 marks of silver, and on his giving hostages for the future payment of 50,000 marks more.

When this treaty was made known in France, it threw Philip into the greatest consternation, and he sent a secret message to prince John, bidding him "take care of himself, for the devil was unchained." Philip and John then tried to bribe the emperor to keep Richard a year longer in prison. The emperor, who was exceedingly avaricious, longed to accept their offer; but he dared not do so, for the pope, Celestine the Third, considering Richard as the champion of Christendom, threatened the emperor with excommunication, if he refused to fulfil his engagement. Queen Eleanor, as you may well believe, and every body in England who loved king Richard, and there were many who did, used every means to raise the sum required for his ransom. A general tax was levied to procure it; but, this not being found sufficient, the nobles voluntarily contributed a quarter of their yearly incomes, and the silver that was in the churches and monasteries was melted down. When the money was collected, queen Eleanor took it herself to Germany, and had the happiness of receiving her son, and bringing him to England. He landed at Sandwich on the 20th of March, 1194, after an absence of four years, fifteen months of which he had been a prisoner. He was received with overflowings of

joy; and in London with such a display of wealth, that the Germans who had accompanied him exclaimed, "If our emperor had known the riches of England, your ransom, O king, would have been much greater."

After Richard had settled some affairs in England, and been a second time crowned, that he might wipe off the stain of his captivity, he embarked for France to defend Normandy against an attack which Philip was preparing to make. The morning after his landing at Barfleur, prince John suddenly rushed into his apartment, and, throwing himself at his feet, implored his forgiveness, which the king immediately granted, though he could not feel any cordial affection for such a brother. Indeed, he soon after said to some of his attendants: "I wish I may forget my brother John's injuries, as soon as he will forget my pardon of them."

The four following years were passed in a succession of wars and truces with the king of France. At last, by the mediation of the pope, a truce for five years was agreed upon, to enable them to undertake another crusade.—But the death of Richard prevented its taking place. It had been rumoured that a considerable treasure had been found on the lands of the viscount of Limoges. Richard claimed this, as of his right as sovereign; and, on the viscount's refusing to give up more than a part, declared positively that he would have the whole, and immediately laid siege to the castle of Chalus,

where the treasure was supposed to be lodged. The garrison offered to surrender the castle, and all that was in it, provided they might march out with their arms. Richard vindictively refused their offer, protesting he would take the castle by force, and put them all to death. On the 28th of March, 1199, as he was taking a survey of the castle, and giving directions for the assault, he was wounded by an arrow from the crossbow of Bertrame de Gourdon. The wound appeared trifling at first, but it soon turned to a gangrene, and in a few days his life was despaired of. Before he died, the castle was taken, and all the garrison were instantly hanged, excepting Bertrame, whom the king ordered to be brought into his presence. "What harm have I done to you," said he to him, "that you should thus have attempted my death?" —"You killed my father and brother with your own hands," replied the man; "and intended to have killed me, and I am ready to suffer any torments you can invent with joy, since I have been so lucky as to kill one who has brought so many miseries on mankind." Richard, conscious of the truth of this bold reply, bore it with patience, and ordered the man to be set at liberty: but this command was not obeyed, and Bertrame was put to death as soon as the king had expired.

Richard died on the 6th of April, 1199, in the forty-second year of his age, and tenth of his reign. He left all his dominions to his brother John. He

had at one time appointed Arthur of Britanny his heir, but on his death-bed he altered his will, for what reason is not certainly known; though he is conjectured to have been influenced by queen Eleanor, who had a great hatred to Constance, Arthur's mother. When he was dying, he remembered with bitter anguish his undutiful conduct to his father, and desired to be buried near him. He married Berengaria of Navarre, and had no children.

During this reign (only four months of which the king passed in England) the disorders of the country arrived at a pitch that had been before unknown. No man's life or property was secure; and there was at one time a regular band of robbers, which, till their leader, William Fitzosbert, was taken and hanged, threatened London itself with destruction.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XIII.

George. Notwithstanding what you said, mamma, about Cœur de Lion's passionateness, and other faults, I really cannot help liking him very much; he was such a fine brave fellow.

Mrs. Markham. You are not singular in your way of thinking: people are often so much dazzled by brilliant qualities as to overlook great faults.

Richard. I should have liked him very much,

if it had not been for his cruelty to the people at that castle—Chalus, I think it was; however, I am glad he got punished for it.

George. I wish, however, that Richard had lived to go back to Palestine, and drive out all those wicked Turks.

Mrs. M. I cannot say that I join in your wish. The crusaders had no right to attack the infidels. It was, to say the least of it, a mad and unjust war. It appears, throughout the whole history of the crusades, that, though God for his own inscrutable purposes had determined to punish the infidels, he did not choose to extirpate them. He seems to have pronounced on the Christian arms, as on the waves of the sea, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther:" for the Christians never could gain any advantage beyond a certain point; and all their victories only brought greater sufferings and disasters on themselves.

Richard. The more I hear about the crusades, the more I wonder how people were ever brought to undertake them.

Mrs. M. Enthusiasm can make people undertake any thing. The taking up the cross was, as I have said before, considered highly honourable; and the vow was often made in public, in a very solemn and imposing manner, and with a great many ceremonies, the meaning of which we are now at a loss to comprehend. I remember to have

read of a very odd one, in the account of a great banquet given by Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, preparatory to his taking the cross. A roasted pheasant was brought in, and was carried round to each person of the company. The duke first, with the most solemn oaths, vowed by the pheasant to combat with the infidels until death; and after him all the other persons present made vows to the same effect, though with different conditions, according to their different feelings and circumstances. In some instances, a live peacock was introduced, and answered the same purpose as the pheasant.

Mary. I wonder how people could know one another when they were all fighting together, covered up in armour.

Mrs. M. It was easy to distinguish the Turks from the Christians, their dress and appearance being totally different; but amongst the Europeans it must have been difficult, notwithstanding the custom they had of ornamenting their helmets and shields with different devices.

George. I think, mamma, they had better have had their names written on their shields at once.

Mrs. M. That would have been a good plan, had they all been scholars; but though every man in the army could distinguish an eagle from a lion, there might not have been one in a thousand who could have distinguished the name of George

from Richard. Before the crusades, every knight adopted what crest on his helmet, and device on his shield, he liked best: but the sons of those who had fought in the Holy Land had a pride in adopting the devices their fathers had worn there; and thus coats of arms, as they were called, became hereditary in the families of the crusaders.

Mary. Then, mamma, what numbers of people there are whose ancestors were at the Holy Land, for almost every body's carriage has a coat of arms upon it!

Mrs. M. Coats of arms, or armorial bearings, as they are called, have long ceased to be confined to the descendants of crusaders; and what was, at that time, an honourable distinction, is, at present, little more than an unmeaning ornament.

George. I wonder how that wicked duke of Austria could find out Richard when he was travelling in disguise.

Mrs. M. There are many different stories about the exact manner in which the discovery was made. One of the stories is that he travelled under the name of Hugh the Merchant, and betrayed himself by presenting a splendid ring to the governor of a town he had to pass through. The governor let him pass, but spread the intelligence through Germany, that Hugh the Merchant was no other than Richard Plantagenet. Richard arrived, however, without molestation at Frisak, near Saltzburgh; and the governor there sent one of his

knights to examine who he was. This knight was by birth a Norman, and instantly knew the king; but, instead of betraying him, he presented him with a horse, and entreated him to fly and save himself. Accompanied by a boy and one other attendant, he reached a town near Vienna. Here he entered a house of public entertainment, and, that no suspicion might be excited concerning his rank, busied himself in turning the spit; but he forgot to conceal a splendid ring which he wore on his finger; and a man who had seen him at Acre knew him, and gave information to the duke.

Richard. Is that pretty story true about Richard's page finding out where he was by singing a song under his prison windows?

Mary. O! I remember! and when he left off singing, Richard went on with the song.

Mrs. M. I believe there is no other authority for the story but an old French romance. It is very certain that Richard was fond of poetry, and amused himself in composing verses when in prison. I remember some very touching lines said to be made by him; but as they are in the Provençal language, a mixture of old French and Italian, which you would not understand, I will attempt a translation of them:—

In prison pent, the weary mind
Will grieve, though grieving is most vain,
And oft, in numbers sad, complain
Of friends forgetful and unkind.

A captive still, a second year,
My life, my hopes, all wear away:
My ransom still my friends delay,
And leave me lingering here.

Richard. I suppose money was not so scarce as it had been, or Richard's ransom could not have been sent at all.

Mrs. M. It seems extraordinary that so large a sum could have been raised, for money must still have been scarce, although the foreign traders and the Jews had made it more plentiful than it was before. The price of a horse or cow was four shillings, and a sheep could be bought for tenpence.

Richard. How was it that the Jews were richer than other people?

Mrs. M. They were the only people who lent money on interest, usury being forbidden amongst the Christians.

Richard. When papa comes in, I must get him to tell me all about usury and interest; but now, dear mamma, tell us some more about the Jews.

Mrs. M. They had the reputation of being very rich, and were exposed to many cruelties and extortions on that account. There is a sad story about the Jews at Lincoln, and, if you like, I will tell it you. It is said that, in derision of our Saviour's death, they crucified a little boy called Hugh; and they were in consequence made to pay an enormous sum of money, by way of atonement for the crime.

Mary. But do you know if it was true?

Mrs. M. The crime is said to have been committed in king John's reign; but all I know about it is that, when we were at Lincoln, we were shown a house, where it is pretended the man lived who killed the child. It certainly is a very curious old house, with the chimney over the door, a mode of building to which the Jews were compelled, in order to distinguish their houses from those of the Christians:—but as to the story of the murder, I suspect it was a mere pretext for fining the Jews. There are many other stories of the same sort. It was considered no sin to plunder or even murder a Jew; and more especially if the end proposed was to get money for a crusade, it being deemed that, in such a case, the cause justified the crime.

Mary. Pray, mamma, tell us who was the Old Man of the Mountain?

Mrs. M. He was the sheik, or prince, of a tribe of Arabs called Assassins, who dwelt on Mount Lebanon; and his people, who paid him a religious veneration, abandoned themselves wholly to his will, so that he could make them do what he pleased. He frequently employed them to go, in various disguises, into the Christian camp, and secretly murder the most distinguished persons; so that no one could consider himself as secure. And hence came the name *assassin* for a secret murderer. The word sheik in Arabic means *old man*, or, as we should call it, *elder*.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN.

[Years after Christ, 1199—1216.]

ELEANOR OF GUIENNE,
From her tomb at Fontevrault.

JOHN came to the crown of England without having one heart in his favour. His perfidiousness, cruelty, and rapacity, were already well known; and he had neither personal bravery, nor mental ability, to make up for his faults. He had early shown his incapacity for government. For his father, Henry the Second, intending that Ireland should be his inheritance, sent him there to accustom the people to him. But he insulted the Irish chiefs, ridiculed their customs and habits, and behaved with so much folly and levity, that his father thought fit to alter his purpose.

At the time of king Richard's death, Arthur of Bretagne was of an age and temper to feel the disappointment of being excluded from his inheritance. His mother was a woman of violent temper, and by her advice he placed his cause in the hands of the king of France, who was glad enough to have an opportunity of interfering with the affairs of England. John, however, found means to persuade Philip that it would be more to his advantage to abandon Arthur; and the two kings entered into a treaty, in which it was settled that Philip's son Louis should marry Blanche of Castile, John's niece; and that Arthur should be given up to John, who would have immediately put him to death, had he not found means to escape.

Three years afterwards, in 1202, Arthur married a daughter of Philip, who then, in good earnest, undertook his cause, and assisted him to besiege the castle of Mirabel, in Poitou, where his grandmother, queen Eleanor, who had always been his enemy, lived. He had nearly got possession of the castle, when John, acting with a vigour quite unusual to him, came suddenly to his mother's rescue, and took the unfortunate Arthur prisoner, with his sister the damsel of Bretagne, who was carried to England, and kept in perpetual imprisonment in Bristol castle. Arthur was taken to the castle of Falaise, where the king gave orders to Hubert de Burgh, the governor, to put him to death. But Hubert, desirous to save the unhappy

young prince, placed him in concealment; and, pretending that he was dead, had the funeral service publicly performed for him. But the Bretons were so much exasperated at the supposed murder of their prince, that Hubert found it necessary to inform them of his being alive. But no sooner did John hear of it, than he had Arthur removed to Rouen, where he himself resided; and it is generally believed that he murdered his unfortunate nephew with his own hands.

This barbarity filled every mind with horror, and John became an object of universal detestation. And, partly because his barons refused him assistance, and partly from his own sloth and cowardice, he made but little opposition to the wily Philip, who drove him step by step out of Normandy, and severed that province from the crown of England, after it had been for three hundred years in the possession of the descendants of the Danish Rollo. His mother's inheritance also, and nearly all the rest of John's territories in France, yielded themselves up to Philip.

About the year 1208, John had a quarrel with the pope, Innocent III., about the choice of an archbishop of Canterbury. Innocent insisted on the election of Stephen Langton, an Englishman, whose superior abilities had raised him to the dignity of cardinal; and John refusing to confirm his choice, the pope laid the kingdom under an interdict. This, however, John did not much regard;

and he occupied himself during the next two years in expeditions against the Irish and Welsh, and in extorting money from his own subjects, and from the Jews especially, by many unjust and cruel methods. One of his contrivances was to assemble all the abbots and abbesses of the religious houses in London; and when he had collected them together, he kept them prisoners till they had paid him a very large sum of money.

The pope, finding that his interdict made no impression, now resolved on a more effectual way of bringing John to obedience. He excommunicated him, absolved his subjects from their oath of allegiance, and published a sort of crusade against him, exhorting all Christian princes and barons to unite in making war upon and dethroning him. To the king of France the pope applied particularly; and Philip, who, you may believe, was not slow in availing himself of the opportunity thus offered, assembled a numerous fleet and army at Boulogne for the invasion of England.

The dread of being conquered by the French overpowered the dislike the English had to John. They flocked to him in great numbers on this emergency, and a large army was soon collected at Dover. While affairs were in this state, the pope, who only wished to humble John, and not to increase the power of Philip, sent his legate Pandulf to England, and promised John that if he would receive Langton as archbishop of Canter-

bury, he would recal the sentence of excommunication. When John had agreed to this, the legate required him to resign his crown to the pope, and promised that the pope would restore it to him again, on condition of receiving a yearly tribute of 1000 marks, and would forbid Philip to invade the realm of England. John, regardless of every thing but the present danger, agreed to these ignominious terms; and it is said, that when he took off his crown (for kings in those days often wore them), and laid it at the feet of the legate, the pope's representative, that haughty cardinal spurned it with his foot, and that it was some time before he consented to replace it on the king's head.

Philip, when he heard of these arrangements, and was ordered by Pandulf to withdraw his forces from the coast, was enraged beyond measure. But, as he did not dare to make the pope his enemy, he found himself obliged to submit. Unwilling, however, that his great preparations should be thrown away, he determined to attack the territories of Ferrand, earl of Flanders. In this extremity Ferrand applied to John, who sent to his assistance the fleet that had been collected for the defence of England. A battle ensued between the English and French fleets, and the English were completely victorious. Philip, on the loss of his fleet, returned home with his army in great disorder.

John was so much elated by this victory, that he wanted to follow it up by the invasion of France;

but his barons refused to accompany him. He therefore entered into an alliance with Otho, emperor of Germany, and some other princes, who engaged to enter France on one side, while John, with some foreign troops that he had collected, attacked it on another. Otho accordingly entered the Netherlands; and John landed an army in Poitou, and penetrated into Anjou and Bretagne. But the army of the emperor being completely defeated at Bouvines, John made a five years' truce with Philip, and hastily returned to England. Here a most unwelcome reception awaited him. His barons, tired out by his weakness and wickedness, had been long conspiring together against him. They were now joined by Stephen Langton, the new archbishop, who, having discovered a concealed copy of the charter granted by Henry I., drew up from it a bill of rights and privileges, which the barons, in full assembly, approved of.

This the king, on his return from France, was called on to sign: but he refused to do so. At last, finding himself abandoned by every body, and in a most desolate condition, he sent the earl of Pembroke, a nobleman distinguished for virtue and ability, to propose a conference with the barons. A meeting accordingly took place on Friday, the 15th of June, 1215, in a large meadow between Windsor and Staines, called Runimede, which means the *meadow of council*, and which was so called because it had been used by the Saxons as

a place for public meetings. At this meeting was signed the famous *Magna Charta*. You are yet too young to understand its value and meaning; but when you are older you will read fuller details. In the meantime, it is enough for you to know, that it rescued our ancestors from much of the oppressive tyranny of the feudal system; and that the superior happiness we ourselves enjoy as a nation over the rest of Europe we owe principally to the sense and virtue of those who raised that invaluable bulwark of English liberty.

King John, as soon as he quitted Runimede, retired sullen and out of humour to the Isle of Wight, where he spent three months in planning schemes for revenging himself on the barons. He made himself familiar and companionable to the common sailors, trying to gain popularity with them; and sent agents to raise an army of Brabanters, promising them the plunder of the barons' estates. Meanwhile the barons, too much despising the king to believe him capable of any vigorous measures, had made no preparations against him, and were amusing themselves with feastings, tournaments, and bear-baitings, the usual diversions of the times; when John, starting from his concealment, appeared before Rochester castle at the head of an army of foreign soldiers. The barons were now reduced to great extremities, and in their distress resorted to the worst and weakest measure that could have been thought of. They invited

Louis, eldest son of the king of France, to come to their aid, promising him the crown of England in right of his wife, who, if you remember, was the king's niece. Louis landed with his army at Sandwich, on the 23d of May, 1216, retook Rochester castle, and entered London in a sort of triumph, the citizens doing homage to him as their proper sovereign.

It was now king John's turn to fly, and the barons' turn to pursue. Every place submitted to them till they came to Dover. Hubert de Burgh, of whom you have heard before, was governor there, and defended the castle so well, that Louis swore a solemn oath that he would not quit its walls till he had taken it, and hanged all the garrison. This oath was the preservation of England; for the delay of the French prince before Dover castle gave the barons time to reflect on their error in having called in his aid, and many of them abandoned his party, and joined the king. John by this means mustered once again a considerable army; but as he was marching from Lynn in Norfolk into Lincolnshire, over what is called the Wash, the rear of his army was overtaken by the tide, and his carriages, money, provisions, and baggage of every sort, were lost. The king himself got safe to Swinesheadabbey, in the fens of Lincolnshire, where, it is said, one of the monks gave him poison; but it is more probable that fatigue and anxiety threw him into a fever. With great difficulty he reached Newark,

where he died on the 19th of October, 1216, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign. He was twice married; having divorced his first wife, the heiress of the earl of Gloucester, for no other reason but because he had become attached to Isabella, daughter of the earl of Angouleme, whom he married, although she was betrothed to the earl of Marche.

By his first wife he had no children; but he had two sons and three daughters by his second;

Henry, who succeeded him;

Richard;

Jane, married Alexander, king of Scotland;

Eleanor, married first the earl of Pembroke, secondly the earl of Leicester;

Isabella, married Frederick II., emperor of Germany.

It is extraordinary that the reign of the worst king and the worst man that ever wore the crown of England should be the one that has brought the most lasting good to the nation. The Magna Charta has consecrated the reign of king John to all succeeding ages. Besides this great charter, he had, in the early part of his reign, granted one to the citizens of London, conferring on them many of the privileges they at this day enjoy.

The present stone bridge over the Thames, called London bridge, was completed in this reign. The former one had been built of wood.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XIV.

Richard. I remember very well, when we were once coming from Windsor to Staines, papa stopped the carriage, and we all got out, and walked in a flat green meadow, which you told us was Runimede; and I could not think why you and papa thought it so curious. But I now know why; and if ever I walk in it again, instead of gathering daisies, and running after butterflies, I shall be thinking of all the noble barons, and Saxons before them, who met in that place.

Mrs. Markham. The meadow we were in was where the great mass of the people were assembled: but it is believed that the actual spot, where the king and the barons signed the Magna Charta, was a little island separated from the meadow by the river, and now planted with willows.

Richard. I should like very much to know every thing that was in the Magna Charta.

Mrs. M. That you may easily do by looking into Henry's History of England, where you will find a translation of it. The charter itself is in Latin; and as I think you would be tired with reading the whole, I will tell you some brief particulars of it. I must first remind you that, under the feudal system, the power of the kings was very oppressive, and had become more and more so, till

no subject could act in the commonest affairs of life without the king's consent, which could be obtained only for money. You may suppose the sort of interference the king had in every person's concerns, when I tell you that nobody could marry without his consent; and that he could oblige heiresses to marry whom he liked; and even widows, who often paid fines to save themselves from being compelled to marry again. We read of a countess of Chester, who paid king Stephen five hundred marks that she might not be obliged to marry again for five years; and of a countess of Warwick, who paid king John five hundred marks that she might not be obliged to marry till she pleased. Justice of every kind was bought.

George. And, I dare say, *in*-justice too, mamma! Why, if a man had but money, he might have bought leave to do any thing he liked.

Mrs. M. He undoubtedly could: and the object of the Magna Charta was to put a stop to these fines and oppressions. It contained sixty-three different clauses; and when I have told you what a few of them were, you will better comprehend the sort of vexatious tyranny the kings had been accustomed to exercise over the people, which alone could make such clauses necessary. These, for instance: that the goods of every free man shall be disposed of, after his death, according to his will: that, if he die without making a will, his children shall succeed to his property: that no officer of the

crown shall take horses, carts, or wood, without the consent of the owner: that no free man shall be imprisoned, outlawed, or banished, unless by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land: that *even* a rustic shall not by any fine be bereaved of his carts, ploughs, and implements of husbandry. This last was the only article in that great charter for the protection of the labouring people. The invidious word "even" shows plainly how little they were considered or thought of.

Richard. And I think, mamma, that was very ungrateful and wicked; for what would the king and his great barons have done without them? But surely there must have been laws before this time?

Mrs. M. Laws there were; but they were very ill kept. Till men are civilized, the will of the strongest is the law, to which the weakest must submit. While the Romans were in Britain, the island was governed by the Roman law; but when they departed, every vestige of their government and of their language departed with them. The Saxons brought in their own laws, or rather customs; for there were no written laws till the time of Ethelred, who, if you remember, was the first Christian king of Kent. The code of Ethelred still exists, and strongly shows the simplicity of manners in those ancient times. Alfred, and after him Edward the Confessor, also made codes of laws, many of which are still in force. From the number

of laws for the preservation of the peace, which are to be found in those ancient codes, it would appear that our Saxon ancestors were a most quarrelsome race. Indeed scarcely any meetings were held either for business or pleasure, without ending in rioting and bloodshed.

Mary. Pray, mamma, what was an interdict?

Mrs. M. Forbidding, or interdicting, divine service to be publicly performed. When a nation was under an interdict, the churches were shut; the bells were not rung; the dead were buried in ditches and holes, without the performance of the funeral service; diversions of all kinds were forbidden; and every thing wore an appearance of mourning and gloom.

Mary. Was that the same as excommunication?

Mrs. M. No; excommunication was a worse sentence still, and was levelled at persons, as an interdict generally was at nations. A person who was excommunicated was considered as unholy and polluted; every one was forbidden to come near him, or to render him any friendly offices*. Thus, if the sentence could have been fully enforced, it was possible for the most potent monarch to become, by a single mandate of the pope, a miserable outcast.

* The wife, children, and domestics of an excommunicated person, and also medical people, and of course priests, were still allowed to have access to him.

George. Pray, mamma, can you tell us what sort of a place the Wash is?

Mrs. M. I have never crossed it, and therefore can only describe it to you from the accounts of those who have. The Washes, for in fact there are two, are the mouths of two small rivers on the coast of Lincolnshire. At low water they are nearly dry, and may then be crossed with safety: but the difficulty is, after you have crossed one, to be in time to cross the other before the tide rises: and, on account of there being some dangerous quicksands, it is all times necessary to have guides.

George. I wonder, as John was such a coward, that he should have taken his army into such a dangerous place.

Mrs. M. When God wills the death or ruin of a bad man, he frequently causes him to be the agent of his own destruction by his own accountable folly.

George. I suppose he went creeping on, expecting that time and tide would wait for him.

Mrs. M. He could not travel very expeditiously if he followed the troublesome custom of those times, which was for people, wherever they went, to carry all their goods along with them. Peter of Blois, who was chaplain to Henry II., describes very divertingly the manner of that king's travelling. He says: "When the king sets out in the morning, you see multitudes of people running up and down, as if they were distracted, horses rush-

ing against horses, carriages overturning carriages, players, cooks, confectioners, mimics, dancers, barbers, all making a great noise, and an intolerable jumble of horse and foot."

Mary. You never told us, mamma, what became of that busy, meddling queen, Eleanor.

Mrs. M. She died a very old woman, soon after her grandson Arthur.

George. And this reminds me, mamma, that you did not tell us about Hubert's going to put out prince Arthur's eyes in the prison.

Mrs. M. Because the story does not rest on good authority: and, as I have often said, I never tell you any thing in my history of England, that is not, as I believe, *strictly true.* In Shakspeare's play of King John, parts of which I shall soon let you read, you will see that there, as well as in your favourite little book of "Stories from the English History," Arthur is represented as being quite a child at the time of his death; but this *must* have been a mistake, since he was old enough to bear arms against his uncle. And he was fifteen, some authors say eighteen, when he was taken prisoner at Mirabel.

George. I am quite impatient to know what was the end of the French prince's invasion of England, after John's death. I hope it won't be like the coming of the Saxons over again.

Richard. I wonder the recollection of that did

not make the barons afraid of sending for the French.

Mrs. M. It certainly was the greatest oversight wise and brave men could have been guilty of, to throw away the freedom they had with so much difficulty obtained, by putting themselves willingly in bondage to a foreign prince, and that prince the son of their country's most inveterate enemy.

Mary. You forgot, mamma, to tell us what sort of looking person king John was.

Mrs. M. He was so unamiable and disagreeable, that I have no pleasure in describing him; so you shall have what is said of him in the words of an old chronicle; "King John was of stature indifferent tall, and something fat, of a sour and angry countenance."

CHAPTER XV.

HENRY III.

[Years after Christ, 1216—1272.]

Soldiers of the fourteenth century.

When king John died, his eldest son Henry, called Henry of Winchester, from the place of his birth, was only eight years old. The earl of Pembroke, who was a wise and good man, was made protector of the kingdom, and governor of the young king; and while he lived, the youth and incapacity of Henry were of no material disadvantage to the country. Pembroke, by renewing the great charter, and seeing that the articles of it were duly executed, brought back most of the re-

bellious barons to the royal cause. Louis continued in England some months after the death of John, but without being able to increase the number of his partisans; and on the 19th of May, 1217, he encountered the royal army at Lincoln, and was so completely beaten in a battle which was fought in the streets of that town, that he was glad to make peace with the protector, and to withdraw with the remnant of his army into France.

The earl of Pembroke governed the kingdom with honour, wisdom, and success, till 1219, when, to the misfortune of England and its king, he died. Hubert de Burgh, and Peter de Roches, a native of Poitou, were appointed to succeed him.

In 1223, when the king was sixteen years old, he was declared of age to govern by himself. In 1224 Philip king of France, the old enemy of England, died, and his son Louis succeeded him; but *he* also died soon after, and left an infant son, Louis the Ninth, under the guardianship of his mother, Blanche of Castile. Henry thought this would be a good opportunity to attempt the recovery of Normandy, and led an army there in 1230; but he misconducted the expedition to such a degree, that, instead of obtaining any advantages, he returned in a few months to England, covered with disgrace.

In 1236 he married Eleanor, daughter of the earl of Provence, and he immediately raised her friends and relations to some of the highest offices

of the state, which gave great umbrage to the English nobles. This king's most hurtful folly was the weakness with which he attached himself to strangers, particularly to foreigners, and the fickleness and caprice with which he cast off old favourites to set up new ones. And he was also so profuse in his generosity to his favourites, that his treasures were soon exhausted, and he was often obliged to apply to parliament (as the great council of the nation began about this time to be called) for a supply of money. By these proceedings he made himself every year more and more hated and despised, and many plans were formed for deposing him; but for some time none of them were brought to bear, though a general discontent pervaded the kingdom.

The pope, profiting by Henry's imbecility, made many and great encroachments on the rights of the church of England. The benefices were by his means filled with Italians, and he contrived to intermeddle on all occasions. In 1255 he led the king into great and useless expense, by conferring on his second son Edmund the title of king of Sicily, which he did in the hope of revenging a quarrel of his own with Mainfroy king of Sicily, by drawing on Henry to invade that island. But all the English barons refused to give the least assistance to this wild project. The king, finding every method fail of extorting money from his subjects for this expedition, resorted to one that

was till then unknown. He gave to Italian merchants bills of exchange to a great amount, for money pretended to be advanced by them for the Sicilian war. These bills were drawn on all the prelates of England, who at first refused to pay the demands thus made on them; but through the remonstrances of the pope they at length submitted.

About this time prince Richard, the king's brother, who, though not otherwise of an unamiable character, was as parsimonious as the king was profuse, was tempted by the hope of being elected emperor of Germany to depart from England with a train of English nobles, and all his treasure, which he lavished fruitlessly in this expedition. He soon found himself deceived in his hopes, and was only repaid by the empty title of king of the Romans for this expense and disappointment.

The absence of the king's brother, and of so many nobles who were attached to the royal cause, gave an opportunity to the disaffected barons of bringing about the rebellion they had planned. Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, who had once been one of the king's favourites, took the lead in this rebellion. The barons assembled at Oxford on the 11th of June, 1258, and obliged the king, and his eldest son, then eighteen years of age, to agree to a treaty, by which twenty-four of their own body, at the head of whom was De Montfort, had authority given them to reform all

abuses. The barons, under this pretext, lorded it over the king, and assumed a right to govern the kingdom: but the people, scarcely acknowledging such rulers, or not knowing whom they were to obey, paid no respect to the laws, and it almost seemed as if all government was dissolved. This state of things lasted for six years. The king and the barons were continually making treaties, the conditions of which were broken as soon as made.

The king of France, Louis the Ninth, with a very different policy from that which had actuated his grandfather Philip, tried to make peace between Henry and his barons, and to place the affairs of this distracted country on a peaceable footing. Henry was too weak, and De Montfort too ambitious, to listen to reason, and all Louis's endeavours were unavailing.

At last prince Edward, who inherited more of the capacity and courage of the Plantagenets than either his father or grandfather had possessed, became old enough to stand forward and assert his own and his father's rights; and many barons, disgusted with the conduct of the twenty-four self-appointed rulers, joined the royal standard. The armies of the king and of the earl of Leicester met at Lewes in Sussex, on the 14th of May, 1264. The royal army was formed into three divisions: one commanded by the prince; another by the king of the Romans, and his son Henry; and the third by the king of England in person. The

rebel army was divided into four bodies, one of which, consisting almost entirely of Londoners, was so furiously attacked at the onset by prince Edward, that it gave way. Edward, inflamed by youthful ardour, unwarily pursued the fugitives to a distance of four miles from the field of battle. De Montfort, perceiving the prince's error, took such advantage of it that he defeated the remainder of the royal army, and made the two kings prisoners. And Edward, on returning from his pursuit of the flying Londoners, found, instead of the complete victory he had expected, that his father and uncle were prisoners in the hands of the rebels, and the royal army beaten and dispersed. He endeavoured to prevail with his own followers to renew the battle, but they were too much confounded and dispirited to attempt to do so. Indeed earl Warrenne, one of the chief supporters of the royal cause, and many others, struck with dismay, immediately fled and escaped out of the kingdom.

Edward, finding himself surrounded by Leicester's troops, without the possibility of escaping, was obliged to submit to any terms that might be imposed: and he and his cousin prince Henry were detained, and sent strongly guarded to Dover castle, under the colour of being hostages for their two fathers; who, nevertheless, still were in effect kept prisoners. Leicester now could do whatever he liked. He used the king's name for his own ambitious purposes, seized on the property of many

of the loyal barons, and took possession of some of the royal castles in the king's name. He also formed plans of raising himself to the throne. But his ambition caused his ruin. The earl of Gloucester, his former associate, and now his rival, seeing himself eclipsed by his greatness, secretly planned his ruin. Leicester, perceiving himself an object of suspicion, tried to regain the good opinion of the people, by pretending to set Edward at liberty, and restore him to his father; but as Henry was in reality a prisoner also, the prince only changed his place of confinement, and Leicester became the more hated for this deceit. In the meantime Gloucester had retired to his estates on the borders of Wales, and put his castles in a state of defence. He was proclaimed a traitor in the king's name by Leicester, who came to Hereford, bringing the king and the prince with him.

The earl of Gloucester, being anxious for an opportunity of getting the prince out of Leicester's hands, was very much pleased at this. He formed a plan which he contrived to communicate to him for his escape, and sent him a horse of extraordinary fleetness. The prince, according to Gloucester's plan, pretended to be very ill, and in a few days, appearing a little better, he obtained Leicester's permission to ride out for the benefit of his health. Riding slowly, as if he was weak and ill, he, after some little time, persuaded the gentlemen who were his guards to ride races with one another.

When he thought that their horses were sufficiently tired with this exercise, he raised himself erect in his saddle, and telling his guards "he had long enough enjoyed the pleasure of their company, and that he now bade them adieu," he put spurs to his horse, and was soon beyond the reach of pursuit. He was joined immediately by the earl of Gloucester; and, as soon as his escape was known, all the loyal barons flocked to him, and he was thus at the head of a considerable army.

Leicester, having the old king still in his power, obliged him to issue a proclamation, declaring the prince a traitor. He also sent for his own eldest son Simon from London, who accordingly set out to join him with a great reinforcement. But the prince intercepted and defeated Simon at Kenilworth; and, before Leicester could hear of his son's defeat, Edward's army appeared in sight, bearing in front the banners taken from young De Montfort at Kenilworth. This made the earl at first suppose that the reinforcement he was expecting had arrived; but, when the prince advanced near enough for him to find out his mistake, he exclaimed, "Now God have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are prince Edward's!" The battle soon began, and poor king Henry was dragged into the midst of it by Leicester, and was near being killed by one of prince Edward's soldiers; but he called out, as the soldier, not knowing him, was going to strike him down, "I

am Henry of Winchester, thy king; don't kill me." The soldier then led him out of the battle; and the prince, being informed where to find him, flew to put him in a place of safety, and then returned to the fight, which ended in his gaining a complete victory. Leicester and his son Henry were killed. This important battle was fought at Evesham, on the 4th of May, 1265, and put an end to the confederacy of the barons. Simon, De Montfort's eldest son, and a few others, still made, indeed, some ineffectual struggles; but these were only like the subsiding of a storm.

On the 4th of May, 1270, prince Edward embarked at Portsmouth for the Holy Land, meaning to join the king of France (who had set out on a crusade, the sixth and the last), at Tunis; but, on his arrival there, he found that Louis, who has deservedly acquired the surname of Saint, had died of the plague. On his death the French troops returned to Europe; but Edward resolved still to pursue the enterprise with his own little army. He conducted it with great skill and valour; and the Saracens, who found him a very powerful enemy, employed an assassin to murder him. Edward wrenched the dagger from the man's hand, and killed him in his attempt, not however before he had himself been wounded in the arm with the poisoned weapon. The wound, we are told, might have proved fatal, had not his affectionate wife Eleanora, who had accompanied him to Palestine,

prevented the effect of the poison by sucking the wound. He set out on his return to Europe soon afterwards.

Whilst the prince was thus exposing himself to unnecessary perils abroad, the royal family was suffering great affliction at home. Prince Henry, son of the king of the Romans, was basely murdered in Italy by the exiled sons of the earl of Leicester, and his poor father died of grief at Berkhamstead. King Henry was become old and feeble; and his government, never much respected, was now totally despised; and riots, robberies, and excesses of all kinds, were perpetually committed. At last the king, worn out by infirmities, died at Westminster on the 16th of November, 1272, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the fifty-seventh of his reign, the longest reign in our annals, with the exception of that of George III.

Though Henry was gentle and merciful to a fault, there was not one person found to lament his loss; so contemptible had he made himself by his weak and deceitful conduct. His appearance was exceedingly disadvantageous; for, though he was of a tolerable height, he had no dignity of mien or of manner, his countenance was unpleasing, and his left eye-lid drooped so very much as almost to cover the eye. Weak as he was, he had yet wit enough often to say very shrewd and cutting things to his courtiers. In his domestic character he was not unamiable. His

conduct to his queen and his children was kind and affectionate, and he was a liberal friend, though, at the same time, an unsteady one. He was a great encourager of the fine arts.

He married Eleanor of Provence.

His children were—

Edward;

Edmund, titular king of Sicily;

Margaret, married Alexander III., king of Scotland;

Beatrix, married the duke of Bretagne.

It is remarked of this reign, that trials by ordeal were abolished in it; and that a licence was granted to the people of Newcastle allowing them to dig for coals, the first mention we find of that useful mineral.—In this reign the class of gentry began to arise; but the condition of the lower orders still remained unchanged, and slaves were bought and sold like brute animals at the fairs. There were no regular shops, and the merchants and traders travelled from place to place to dispose of their goods.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XV.

George. Though Henry the Third was not nearly so wicked as Henry the First, I cannot help disliking him a great deal more, he was so provokingly stupid and silly.

Mrs. Markham. You will find, I am afraid, many of your way of thinking; folly is often more disliked than vice.

Mary. And yet, mamma, that is very hard, for people cannot help being silly.

Mrs. M. Neither do I quite agree with you, Mary. All people who are not absolute idiots may improve their understandings.

Richard. However, poor Henry was not stupid in every thing; for you said he was an encourager of the fine arts.

Mrs. M. He was a great admirer of paintings; and during his reign the art of painting greatly improved. It became the fashion to adorn the walls of rooms and churches with historical pictures. This we learn from some of our ancient records, for these pictures have either all faded long since, or have been touched up too often to leave any traces of the work of the original artist. Antiquaries are very much puzzled to imagine what sorts of colours were used in these large paintings. There is reason to think they were not merely water colours, and yet it is commonly supposed that the art of painting in oils is of much later discovery. The only paintings which we can rely upon as of this time are those which we find in Missals, as the Prayer Books of the Roman Catholics are called, which are often ornamented, or, as it is commonly called, *illuminated*, with paintings, beautiful from the brightness of the gold and colours, and curious

from the excessive delicacy of the execution. Many of these books are still in excellent preservation: I believe you saw one of them at your uncle's.

Richard. That was not a Prayer Book, mamma; that was only a Latin book.

Mrs. M. All prayers in churches were in Latin at that time.

Mary. Did every body then understand Latin?

Mrs. M. Scarcely any body understood it; but the saying a great many prayers, though without understanding a single word of them, was a great part of the devotion of those times.

Mary. Then when did people begin to pray in English?

Mrs. M. I shall have a great deal to tell you about that hereafter: at present we have other things to speak of. Some of the finest Gothic buildings we have were built in the reign of Henry III. The heavy Saxon, and early Gothic style, was now succeeded by one of much greater elegance and richness of ornament. Instead of heavy thick shafts to the pillars, like those you saw in Rochester cathedral, the pillars had one small shaft in the centre, surrounded by many slender ones, so as to form altogether one bulky pillar composed of many parts. The carved work of all kinds was more elaborate, and the outsides of the churches were adorned with pinnacles, and with loftier steeples than formerly. Such very curious and complicated buildings could not be

executed by common workmen. A number of the best artificers incorporated themselves into companies, and went about from place to place as they were wanted. They lived in temporary huts, near the great buildings they were employed upon, and called themselves *free masons:* and this is the origin of the society of free masons, of which you may, perhaps, have heard.

Mary. I hope they sang and had music in their churches, to make up for the prayers being in Latin.

Mrs. M. Much attention had long been paid to church music. There were also organs: indeed we hear of an archbishop, so long before as in William the First's time, who himself both played on the organ, and could make organs.

George. Did they play on any thing else besides organs?

Mrs. M. They had many kinds of musical instruments: harps, you know, were in use in Alfred's time; but from the want of musical notes people could only play by ear, till an Italian monk* invented the musical scale we now use, an invention which, he thought, "atoned for all his sins."

Richard. He must have thought music a very fine thing, to have made such a merit of it: but is all that which Mary is learning from her music-master the invention of that old monk?

* Guido Aretine.

Mrs. M. Not entirely; the division of the notes into long and short was invented a long time after, by some person whose name is unknown.

Richard. That is very hard: I had rather be remembered for a clever invention than for having gained a battle.

Mrs. M. Then you would be pleased to be such another man as Roger Bacon, who lived in Henry the Third's reign; and who is remembered for more clever inventions than almost any body I could name. This extraordinary person was a monk at Oxford, and was the most learned man of his age. He applied his learning to the discovery of useful knowledge. He invented telescopes, reading glasses, microscopes, and many other astronomical and mathematical instruments. He discovered gunpowder, though he considered it as an object of mere curiosity, rather than as an invention that could be applied to war. He invented many curious machines, and made many valuable discoveries in medicine. He also wrote several books; and made a map, a thing which excited great admiration.

Richard. Was it a map of England?

Mrs. M. No; it was a map of Tartary; and was made from the descriptions he obtained from some travellers, who had been there. In short, his genius soared so far above all his contemporaries, that he was looked upon as a magician, and thrown into prison, where he was kept for many years.

He at length returned to Oxford, and died there, a very old man, in 1292. Some years ago, a place called friar Bacon's study was shown among the curiosities of the place.

George. I suppose Oxford was very famous in Roger Bacon's time.

Mrs. M. It was just beginning to emerge from obscurity. The four oldest of the colleges now existing there were founded and built in this reign; but learning was still at a very low ebb. The chief study was a sort of quibbling logic, which it was mere waste of time to learn. The sciences were little understood; and you may judge of the ignorance which prevailed as to medicine, from a prescription for the small-pox given by a learned physician, which was to wrap the patient in red cloth, and to have the hangings and quilt of the bed red also.

Richard. Were parliaments first owing to the Magna Charta?

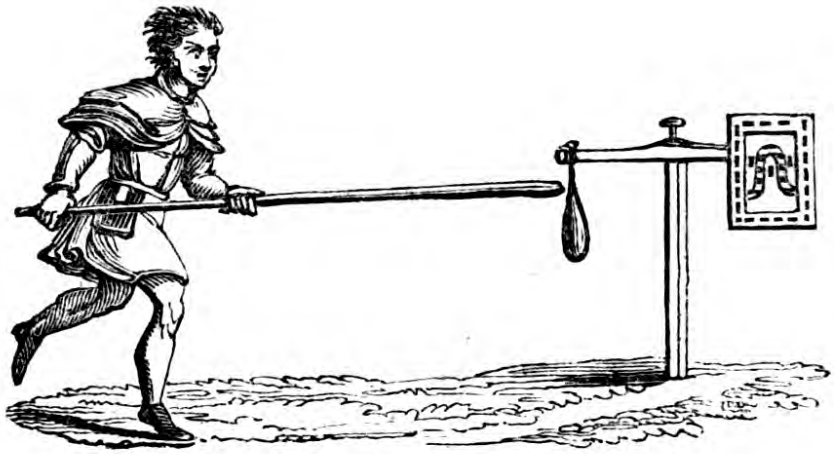
Mrs. M. The first certain information we have of a parliament, like the parliaments of our own time, is in 1265, when the earl of Leicester, in the king's name, sent writs, or written orders, to the sheriffs, to send "two discreet knights from each county" to serve in parliament. Every city and borough was also ordered to send "two of its wisest citizens and burgesses." The nobles attended these parliaments in their own right, as the immediate servants of the crown. At first, the nobles and the

representatives of the counties and towns assembled in one house; but afterwards they divided themselves into two: and hence arose the House of Lords, and the House of Commons; the one composed of noblemen who attend there in right of birth or creation, and the other of gentlemen who are elected by the people.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD I.

[Years after Christ, 1272—1307.]



The Quintain.

You have already heard so much of Edward in the last reign, that you will be prepared to find him a very different king from his father. In his person he was unusually tall, and his legs being somewhat out of proportion, he had the surname of *Long Shanks* given to him. He had a fine open forehead, and regular features: his hair and complexion were fair in his youth, but became darker in his middle age. His air and carriage were very commanding: he delighted in all martial and manly

exercises, and was an excellent rider. He had great courage and military skill, and his understanding was of a very superior order. In the relations of son, husband, and father, he was exemplary: and yet this man, with all these fine and noble qualities, was the occasion of infinite misery to many thousands of people. The desire of possessing himself of the whole island had so beset his mind, that every other consideration gave way to it. To attain this end, he turned courage into mad ferocity, and prudence into deceit and craft.—But, to relate every thing in regular order, I must return to the time when Edward, on arriving in Sicily, on his return from the Holy Land, heard of his father's death.

On receiving this news he set out for England, but he delayed so long on the road, that he did not arrive there till the 2d of May, 1274. His first business was to restore the police of the kingdom, and he made many excellent laws and regulations. His expedient to fill his coffers was not so commendable. He employed commissioners to examine into the titles by which all persons held their estates; and if any one had not a good title, he was compelled either to pay a great fine, or to forfeit his land to the king. When the commissioners came to earl Warrenne, and desired him to produce the instrument or title by which he held his estate, he drew an old rusty sword out of the scabbard, and said, "This is the instrument by which

my ancestors gained their estate, and by which I will keep it as long as I live." When this answer was reported to Edward, he became sensible of the hazard he was incurring, and put an end to the commission.

The Welsh, under their prince Llewellyn, had long been very troublesome neighbours to the English. They had joined in Leicester's rebellions, and did not keep the terms of peace which Edward made with them on coming to the throne. Perhaps Edward was not sorry to have this pretext for making war on them; and they, presuming too much on their own strength, attacked his army on the 11th of December, 1282, and were totally defeated. Their king Llewellyn was killed in the battle, and his brother David was taken prisoner, and beheaded like a common traitor. His head was put on the walls of the Tower of London, and his limbs were quartered, according to the barbarous custom of those times, and were hung up in four different places, at York, Winchester, Bristol, and Northampton.—David being the last branch of that family of ancient kings, Edward took undisputed possession of Wales, and promising the people a prince of their own country, who could speak no English, presented to them his own eldest son, born a few days before in Carnarvon castle, who was thence called prince of Wales, as all the eldest sons of our English kings have been called since.

Thus much of Edward's desire to unite the whole island under his own dominion being accomplished, we shall next see how nearly Scotland also was thrown into his grasp.

The kings of England and Scotland, considering how apt near neighbours are to quarrel, had lived in singular harmony, particularly during the last two reigns, in which the intermarriages between the royal families of Scotland and England had made a family as well as national union. Alexander the Third had married king Edward's sister, who died leaving only one child, Margaret, who afterwards married the king of Norway, and died, leaving a little daughter about three years old. Alexander himself died in 1286, and his infant grand-child became heiress of his dominions. Edward proposed to the king of Norway that the prince of Wales should marry his daughter, the little queen of Scotland. Such early marriages were then not uncommon. Indeed Alexander and his queen had been betrothed, when neither of them was a year old. The king of Norway and the parliament of Scotland having consented to this match, the young queen was on her way to Scotland, when, being taken ill, she was obliged to be landed at the Orkneys, and there she died.

The death of a little girl of three years old was never before so much lamented, nor has ever since produced such disastrous consequences. What might have happened, had she lived, we know not:

but her death prevented the union between the two nations, and plunged Scotland into long and bloody private feuds and public wars. No fewer than thirteen competitors for the throne sprung up. Robert Bruce and John Balliol were the two whose claims were the strongest; and they agreed to refer the decision to Edward, who was so much looked up to by the princes of Europe, that he had before been applied to, to determine a competition for the crown of Sicily. In that case, where his interest was not concerned, he had given a wise and equitable decision. Happy had it been for both England and Scotland, would he have done so now: but the temptation offered was too great for him to resist. He came to Norham, on the borders of Scotland, with a numerous army; and first insisted that his supremacy over Scotland should be admitted; which the Scots agreed to after much hesitation. He then required that the royal castles, and places of strength, should be put into his hands; and, when this was done, he gave judgment in favour of Balliol, who was proclaimed king of Scotland. But the mere name of king was all that he obtained, for being of a weak capacity, he could make no resistance to the encroachments and exactions of Edward, who treated him like a child, and was disposed to treat the Scots like slaves. On their refusing to submit tamely, he marched into Scotland, and defeated at Dunbar the army of Balliol. Balliol then threw himself into the hands

of the king of England, who obliged him to make a solemn renunciation of his crown, and detained him a prisoner for three years. He was then allowed to retire to France, where he died at an advanced age, having been nominally a king for four years.

While Edward was thus endeavouring to increase his dominions in one quarter by injustice and violence, he lost part of them in another by an artifice more contemptible, but not more unjust, than those he had himself practised. Guienne, the inheritance of the old queen Eleanor, had still remained to her posterity, when almost every thing else they had possessed in France was gone. Some disputes arising with Philip the Fair, king of France, about the ceremony of doing homage for that duchy, Edward, by way of a form of acknowledgment of the feudal superiority of the king of France, was persuaded to surrender the duchy to Philip, who promised, on the word of a king, to restore it immediately: but when that wily monarch had got possession, he would not resign it, and Edward was too deeply engaged in the affairs of Scotland to be able at that time to avenge himself.

In 1291 Edward had the affliction of losing his queen. She died at Harby, in Nottinghamshire, and Edward accompanied her body from thence to its burial place at Westminster; and, to commemorate her worth, and his own grief, he caused a stone cross to be erected at every place where the body stopped on this melancholy journey.

After the imprisonment of Balliol, Edward treated Scotland like a conquered country, and carried off the regalia, and a stone chair from Scone, near Perth, in which the kings of Scotland were crowned, and on which the Scots set an extraordinary and superstitious value. Earl Warrenne was appointed governor of the kingdom, and all the offices of state were given to Englishmen. The Scots groaned bitterly under this degradation; and, in 1297, William Wallace, whose name will never be forgotten, stood forth, though only a private gentleman, of small estate, to rescue his fallen country. He was soon joined by several of the nobility; and, notwithstanding the many impediments he met with from the jealousies of some of the nobles, he maintained the glorious struggle for eight years, but with various success. At one time he pushed his victorious arms into England; but at another his cause was nearly ruined at Falkirk, where Edward obtained a complete victory. At last, in 1305, he was betrayed into the hands of the English, who put him to death.

John Balliol had died in France the year before, and Robert Bruce, son of the former competitor, now stood alone as claimant of the throne of Scotland. He collected a small army; and the countess of Buchan, in whose family the right of crowning the king had been hereditary, placed the crown upon his head; her brother, who ought to have done it, being in the English interest. When

Edward heard of this, he was enraged beyond measure, and vowed the destruction of *The Bruce*, whose escapes and adventures were very extraordinary; but, as I am relating to you the history of England, and not of Scotland, I must pass them over.

Edward's next and last expedition began with a very singular ceremony. He assembled all his nobility in Westminster Abbey, and, with many solemnities, caused two live swans, adorned with bells of gold, to be brought in. By these swans he took a solemn oath, that he would march into Scotland, and never return till he had brought it into entire subjection. And he kept his vow; but not in the way he had intended, for he did not subjugate Scotland, and he never returned. He spent many months in a vain pursuit of Bruce and his adherents, who contrived to conceal themselves in the fastnesses amongst the mountains, watching for favourable opportunities of coming forth from their hiding places, and annoying the English. At last Edward, exasperated by disappointment, sent for all the forces in his dominions to meet him at Carlisle. Before they could arrive, he became so ill as to be confined to his chamber. It was reported that he was dead, and to show the falsehood of the report he set out from Carlisle; but, when he had advanced a few miles, to a place called Burgh on the Sands, he was obliged to stop. He there expired in a tent by the road-side, on the 7th of July, 1307. He was seventy years old, and

had reigned thirty-five years. He was twice married; first, to Eleanor of Castile, by whom he had fifteen children; and, secondly, to Marguerite, sister of the king of France, by whom he had two sons.

The children of Eleanor were,

John,
Henry,
Alphonso,
And six daughters, } died young;

Edward, succeeded to the crown;
Eleanor, married the earl of Bar;
Joan of Acre, married the earl of Gloucester;
Margaret, married the duke of Brabant;
Elizabeth, married the earl of Holland;
Mary, a nun.

The sons of Marguerite were,
Thomas of Brotherton, earl of Norfolk;
Edmund of Woodstock, earl of Kent.

Edward, before he died, charged his eldest son to send his heart to the Holy Land: to carry his body with the army into Scotland, and not to bury it, till he had made a complete conquest of that country: and never to recall Piers Gaveston, a wicked favourite of the son, whom the father had banished.

Amongst the many violent acts of Edward was the banishment of the Jews. He drove them out of the country, and, leaving them only money enough to enable them to reach some foreign land, seized on all the rest of their property.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XVI.

George. To be sure it was very wrong, but still it was very natural, that Edward should like to have the whole island to himself.

Mrs. Markham. It was as natural, and quite as wrong, as if lord Fitzwilliam should like to have all Yorkshire, because he has large estates there.

Mary. It seems to me very odd that people should put themselves to so much trouble to get kingdoms, when, after all, they can keep them but such a little time.

Mrs. M. If all people were true Christians, I believe there would be no conquerors: but it is our business at this moment not to think about what people *ought* to have done, but what they *did.* Edward, by establishing English laws and customs in Wales, united that principality with England: but his attempts to subjugate Scotland only inflamed the Scots with a more implacable hatred to him and the English; so that his fatal thirst of conquest turned two peaceable and friendly neighbours into inveterate enemies; and this enmity did not abate for upwards of a century. After that time, it began to subside.

Richard. What sort of trade had people in those days?

Mrs. M. A great deal of trade of various kinds,

and particularly foreign trade, was then carried on in England. The first commercial treaty we know of, to which this country was a party, was made between Henry the Third and the king of Norway. The trade of England was chiefly carried on by Germans. The principal commodities were wool, lead, and tin. These were brought to certain towns in different parts called the staple towns, where the collectors of the king's customs were appointed to receive the duty. The goods were then sold to the German traders, who were called the merchants of the staple; and these people exported them abroad, and imported gold, silver, and various goods in return. The Lombards also were another set of foreigners who settled in England. Their business was chiefly to lend money on interest. Lombard Street, in London, was so named from them.

George. But what did the natives do all this time? Did they sit with their hands before them, and let these Germans and Lombards buy and sell for them?

Mrs. M. They made a serious remonstrance to Edward, begging that the "*merchant strangers*" might be sent out of the kingdom: but the answer they got from the king was, "I am of opinion that merchant strangers are useful and beneficial to the great men of the kingdom, and, therefore, I will not expel them." In fact, they not only imported silks, wines, spices, and other luxuries that were

used only by the nobles, but also were in the practice of lending them money.

Richard. But I should have thought that, as Edward was such a warlike king, his subjects would have liked to be soldiers much better than to be shopkeepers.

Mrs. M. In all ages and times people have been covetous of money, and have liked to get what they could of it. However, you are right in supposing that the people imbibed something of the spirit of their monarch. Their very amusements were all of a martial sort; and instead of going to balls and assemblies, their diversions were tournaments and tiltings.

Mary. O, pray, mamma, tell us what sorts of games those were.

George. The games of broken bones, and bloody noses, Mary;—but, mamma, I dare say, will tell us all about them.

Mrs. M. I will, as well as I can. In times when, as I have said before, every battle was little more than an assemblage of so many single combats of men fighting hand to hand, it behoved every knight to fight well; and the learning the use of arms was a necessary, perhaps I might add, a principal part of the education of a gentleman. To every castle belonged a paled court called the tilt-yard, where the young men used to practise all the exercises and manœuvres requisite to make them good warriors. These exercises, and the mock

combats in which they engaged, were always practised with blunt spears, and it was thought very dishonourable for them to wound each other. They had also many games in these tilt-yards which were excellently calculated to improve their strength and agility. Riding at the ring was one of these; the object of which was, while riding at full speed, to run the point of the spear through a small ring that hung suspended from a high post*.

Mary. I should like that very well; because there could be none of George's bloody noses at that game.

Mrs. M. But there might be broken bones; for if the rider did not sit well, he had a great chance of being knocked off his horse. Even the little boys in their plays delighted in mimic exercises of the same sort. One of their favourite games was that of the quintain. The quintain itself, as I have heard it described, appears to me to have been something like a turnstile, with two arms instead of four†. On one arm was a painted board or shield, and to the other hung a bag of sand, or a piece of wood. The play was for a boy to run at the shield, and to push it with a long stick. When the shield was struck, of course the arms of the quintain to which it was fastened turned round instantly; and, if the boy was not very quick in his movements, the bag of sand would give him a

* See page 283. † See page 208.

great knock on the back, before he could get out of the way. I was lately told by a gentleman that there is still a quintain existing at Malling, in Kent. At the first sight of it, he thought it was a guide-post; but on inquiry he found it was the relic, and probably the only one left, of the quintain, the favourite diversion of our ancestors.

George. It shall not be the only one long; for, if you and papa will allow of it, Richard and I will soon have a quintain of our own.

Mary. But, now, mamma, will you tell us all about tournaments?

Mrs. M. It would take a great deal of time to tell you *all* about them; but I will endeavour to tell you a little. A tournament was a public meeting of knights, to display their skill and courage in mock combats. These meetings were commonly proclaimed for a long time beforehand, that knights from a distance might be able to attend. They were in general held by kings and princes; and queens, and the wives and daughters of the nobles, were among the spectators; and the most beautiful lady, or the one of highest rank, commonly bestowed a scarf, or some such prize, on the knight who acquitted himself best. But were I to describe to you the splendour of the dresses, the trappings of the horses, the noise of the trumpets, the number of the pages, squires, banner-bearers, and all the ceremonials of those knights who fought, and of those who were the judges of the combat, I

should not finish to-night. But if you wish to know more about them, you may look into Henry's History of England, where you will find the full description of a grand tournament, that was held at Smithfield in the reign of Richard II.

Richard. One would think Smithfield but a very bad place for the exhibition of any thing splendid.

Mrs. M. You forget we are talking of things that happened above four hundred years ago. Smithfield is in the centre of what was then the gayest part of London; and Charing, where Charing Cross now is, was then a little village in the fields, midway between the two cities of London and Westminster.

Mary. It seems very odd to think of things having ever been different from what they are now.

Mrs. M. And yet you are aware that great changes must necessarily have taken place in every thing. In the year 1288, there were only two clocks in the whole kingdom. One was over the gateway at Westminster, and the other at Canterbury.

CHAPTER XVII.

EDWARD II.

[Years after Christ, 1307—1327.]

Queen Isabella going to Paris, 1325.

THE reign of Edward the Second has always appeared to me the most distressing period of English history, being nothing but a detail of follies on the part of the king, and of violences on that of the nobles. The king began his reign with disobeying all the dying commands of his father. He recalled Gaveston from banishment; and, abandoning the invasion of Scotland, gave himself up to frivolous and idle amusements. He resembled his

father in the beauty of his person, but not in the qualities of his mind. He was weak, passionate, and irresolute, fond of trifling diversions, and, if we may believe historians, was addicted to the ignoble vice of drinking to excess. He was devotedly attached to his favourites, who were, with I believe no exception, ill chosen and unworthy persons. The only kingly quality he possessed was that of personal courage; but this, as it was not guided by discretion, was of no service to himself or his country.

In 1307 Edward married Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fair, king of France; a most unfortunate marriage for him, as you will hear in the sequel; though at first the queen had the greater cause for complaint, as the king neglected her society, and spent all his time with his favourite Gaveston. Piers Gaveston was a native of Gascony; and his elevation to riches and honours above the old nobility of England made him an object of general dislike; a dislike which was greatly increased by his own conduct; for he treated the nobles with the utmost insolence, and used to divert himself and his royal master by turning them into ridicule, and giving them contemptuous nicknames. This treatment they so highly resented, that they entered into a confederacy against him, at the head of which was the king's cousin, the earl of Lancaster, a very rich and powerful baron, the son of that prince Ed-

mund, who had been titular king of Sicily. The demand of the confederate nobles was, that Gaveston should be sent out of the country. Edward affected to comply with their demand; but instead of sending him back to Gascony, as they had meant, he made him lord deputy of Ireland; and the year after recalled him.

In 1312, the nobles, and indeed the whole nation, were so completely exasperated against the king and Gaveston, that a civil war broke out. The earl of Lancaster, who was the leader of the barons' army, hearing that Gaveston was in Scarborough castle, despatched the earl of Pembroke against that place, who took Gaveston prisoner, and brought him to his own castle of Deddington, in Oxfordshire. One day, when the earl of Pembroke was absent from his castle, it was beset by a party of troops, headed by Guy earl of Warwick, who took Gaveston to Warwick, where Lancaster, and the other confederate nobles, were assembled. The next day they carried him to a neighbouring hill, called Blacklow Hill, and there they put him to death, satiating their savage hatred by looking on while his head was severed from his body. When the king heard of the death of his favourite, he was thrown into agonies of grief, and made unwonted exertions to revenge his death; but he had so completely lost the affections of his people, that he had not the power to make his resentment felt,

and was obliged to smother it, and accept of peace on the terms the barons chose to offer.

While England was thus distracted by its own internal broils, Robert Bruce, by his courage and intrepidity, had established himself on the throne of Scotland. He drove the English out of that country step by step; till, in 1314, nothing remained to them but the castles of Stirling, Dunbar, and Berwick. At last Edward resolved to rouse himself and his people, and to reduce Scotland to the English yoke by a single blow. He entered Scotland at the head of the largest army that had ever marched out of England, and, arriving on the 24th of June within three miles of Stirling, he there saw the Scottish army drawn up on the banks of the little river Bannock.

Bruce had only been able to muster about 30,000 men to oppose the immense host of the king of England; but he chose his position with great judgment, and neglected nothing that could facilitate his success. He placed his army on a rising ground, with the river in front, and a bog on one side; and, to make the approach still more difficult, he caused pits to be dug, and filled with sharp stakes, and the tops covered over and concealed by turf and leaves.

The English halted for the night; and, confident in their numbers, and despising the little army opposed to them, spent the night in feasting and mer-

riment; while the Scots, whose very existence as a nation depended on the result of the coming day, passed their time in devotion, and in mutual exhortations to conquer nobly, or to die. The young earl of Gloucester, the king's nephew, who commanded the cavalry, was the first to advance from the English army, and falling into one of the covered pits, was the first to die on that disastrous field. The cavalry having lost its leader, was thrown into confusion, and being attacked by sir James Douglas, was put to the rout. The infantry, astonished by the defeat of the cavalry, and mistaking some boys and waggoners of the Scottish army, who were furnished with banners, for another army, fled without striking a single blow.—So great was the panic of the flying multitude, that Edward found it impossible to rally his forces, and was himself obliged to fly to avoid being taken prisoner. The number of the slain was very great, and would have been still greater, had not the Scots been more intent on plundering the English camp than on pursuing the fugitives, who had eighty miles to go before they could reach a place of security. And thus ended the battle of Bannockburn, a battle which established Bruce on the throne of Scotland, and which is remembered by the English as the most signal overthrow they have sustained since the Conquest. The wife and daughter of Bruce, who had been prisoners in

England ever since the time of Edward the First, were restored to him on an exchange of prisoners; and many Scottish lords and gentlemen now also obtained their liberty.

When Edward returned to England after this discomfiture, he found his power more curtailed than ever. The country was torn in pieces between two parties, the royalists, and the partisans of the earl of Lancaster. The king, whose infirm mind was unable to support itself without the prop of an exclusive favourite, weakened his own cause, and drove from him many loyal hearts, by the injudicious choice he made of a new favourite, a Welsh gentleman called Hugh Spenser, a man of an insolent temper, and a rapacious disposition. The king loaded him and his father with honours and riches, which soon made them as much objects of jealousy and hatred as Gaveston had been. At last, in March, 1322, the earl of Lancaster was taken prisoner at Boroughbridge, and carried to Pontefract. After a short trial, he was condemned to death; and on the 22d of March, this once powerful nobleman, placed on a miserable horse, and clothed in a shabby dress, was led out of Pontefract, which had been his own chief place of residence, and taken to a hill near the town, and there beheaded with the same circumstances of savage cruelty which had taken place when he himself put Gaveston to death. Eighteen other noblemen

were also beheaded, and many estates were forfeited to the king, most of which he bestowed on his avaricious favourite.

In this year a quarrel arose between the two kings of France and of England, about the old story of doing homage for Guienne, which had been restored to the English king. And, in 1325, the queen Isabella was sent to accommodate matters between her husband and her brother. The queen, when she had been some time in France, refused to return to England. She collected about her all the nobles who had been exiled on account of Lancaster's rebellion; and placing one of them, Roger Mortimer, a man of infamous character, at the head of her counsels, set herself up in rebellion against her husband. The king of France disapproving her conduct, and refusing to give any aid in this enterprise, she left Paris, and applied to the earl of Hainault, who assisted her with a small fleet, and some troops, with which she landed at Orwell Haven, in Suffolk, on the 24th of September, 1326.

The Spensers were so much detested, that, out of hatred to them, many nobles joined the queen, who set out with a numerous army in pursuit of the king. The king, abandoned by every body, fled into Wales, in hopes of raising an army there. In this hope he was disappointed; and he next embarked for Ireland, in the belief that he should there find a place of refuge: but being driven about

by adverse winds, he was obliged to reland near Swansea. He then sought to conceal himself and a few followers in the monastery of Neath: but his retreat was soon discovered; and Henry, earl of Lancaster (son to the earl who was executed at Pontefract), made him a prisoner, and carried him to Kenilworth. Both the Spensers were taken at Neath with the king, and fell sacrifices to the hatred of the people.

In the meantime, the king's eldest son, Edward prince of Wales, a boy of fourteen years old, had been placed by his mother and Mortimer at the head of the rebel army, and had been declared regent. But, as the authority he possessed was a mere name, the kingdom was in a deplorable state. There was no government, the courts of justice were shut, and the people committed all kinds of violence without control. The mobs of London and other cities committed robberies and murders with impunity, and were called by the name of the *Riflers*.

The queen and Mortimer having got the king into their power, declared him incapable of governing, deposed him, and proclaimed the prince king in his stead. But the prince refused to be king in his father's lifetime without his consent. To remove this scruple, the parliament sent a deputation to Kenilworth, to intimate to the king the sentence of his deposition, and to procure his consent to the coronation of his son. As soon as the poor miser-

able king saw the deputies, he fainted away; and when he recovered, and was told their errand, he said to them that he was in their power, and must submit to their will. Judge Trussel, one of the party, then, in the name of the people of England, renounced all fealty to Edward of Carnarvon; and sir Thomas Blount, high steward, broke his staff, and declared all the king's officers discharged from their service.

Thus ended the reign of Edward the Second, a period of nearly twenty years of public disgrace and private calamity. But his own miseries did not end with it. After his deposition he was put under the care of the earl of Lancaster: but the queen and Mortimer, thinking that Lancaster treated the king too humanely, removed him to the custody of lord Berkeley, John de Maltravers, and sir Thomas Gournay, who were to keep him each a month by turns. Lord Berkeley behaved very well to him; but it seems as if the other two were desirous to kill him by ill usage. They hurried him about from castle to castle, in the middle of the night, and but half clothed. One day Maltravers ordered him to be shaved with water out of a dirty ditch, and refused to let him have any other. The miserable king shed tears at this usage, and while the tears were trickling down his cheeks, said, with a smile of grief, "Here is clean warm water, whether you will or no." But these varied insults and cruelties did not satisfy the savage

hearts of the queen and Mortimer, who, therefore, ordered Gournay and Maltravers to despatch him without delay. And they, taking the opportunity of lord Berkeley's absence, murdered the king at Berkeley castle, with circumstances of great cruelty. He was murdered on the 21st of September, 1327, in the forty-third year of his age. He was called Edward of Carnarvon, from having been born there. He married Isabella, daughter of Philip IV. king of France, and had two sons and two daughters:

Edward;

John, died young;

Jane, married David king of Scotland;

Eleanor, married the duke of Gueldres.

Amongst the other calamities of this reign was a most grievous famine. Provisions became so scarce and dear, that the nobles, whose state and magnificence were chiefly shown in the number of their retainers, were obliged to discard many of them. These people, having been accustomed to lead idle lives in the castles of their lords, commonly turned robbers to obtain a livelihood, and this they did in such great numbers, that the country was overrun by them.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XVII.

Jester of the fourteenth century.

George. Pray, mamma, was the famous Robin Hood one of these robbers? I think he must have lived about the time you are speaking of.

Mrs. Markham. His time was over before the reign of Edward the Second. He died in the year 1247. He is said to have been a man of birth and fortune, and to have squandered his patrimony. He then, as the story goes, betook himself to the woods and forests, and became, if I may use such a phrase, a sort of gentleman robber, and pacified his conscience by robbing only the rich, and by being beneficent to the poor. But his fame is more owing to the ballads that have been made on him than to any of his own good or bad deeds.

Richard. I think, mamma, one remembers a song or a poem better than any thing in prose;

for while you were telling us about Bannockburn, I directly thought of some lines papa once repeated to us:

> " O, for one hour of Wallace wight,
> Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
> And cry—' Saint Andrew and our right!'
> Another sight had seen that morn,
> From fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
> And Flodden had been Bannock-bourne!"

Mary. Why should any body wish to see another Bannockburn, if it was the most unfortunate battle that was ever fought?

Mrs. M. It was unfortunate to the English, but glorious to the Scots. There is a homely saying, yet not an untrue one, in regard to worldly gains and losses, that " One man's loss is another man's gain." And so it was natural that the author of the poem, from which your papa repeated those lines, should, being a Scotsman, speak exultingly of the battle of Bannockburn. Historians tell us, that after the loss of that battle the English were so much dispirited and cast down, that for a time they lost their wonted courage; and that it was some years before they regained it.

George. I cannot bear to think of the English having ever been cowards. I hope they were not long so.

Mrs. M. A little humiliation for a time, I dare say, did them individually no harm. Froissart tells us, in his Chronicles, that " the English were so

proud and haughty, that they could not behave to the people of other nations with civility." Nor does he give a more favourable account of the Scots; for he says of them, that "they are naturally fierce and unpolished, and in Scotland there is little or no politeness, the people being a herd of savages, envying the riches of others, and tenacious of their own possessions." However, I trust that both the English and Scots are improved since those days.

Richard. Pray, mamma, did the Scots speak English then, as they do now?

Mrs. M. Erse or Gaelic was their original language: but great part of the Lowlands of Scotland being conquered by the Saxons, about the time when they made themselves masters of England, the Saxon became the language of that part of the country. The Saxon, so introduced into Scotland, continuing afterwards unmixed with the Norman, remained much purer there than in England. In England there arose, in different districts, so great a difference of dialect and pronunciation, that one half of the kingdom did not understand the other. A writer of the thirteenth century, in words which I cannot pretend to interpret, reproaches the people of Northumberland and Yorkshire for having a language "so sharpe, slytting, froting, and unshape, that we southern men may not understand them *."

Richard. What a shocking thing such a famine

* He adds, "They use strange whaffling, chytryng, harring, garryng, and grysbyting."

must be as that which happened in this last reign you have been telling us of!

Mrs. M. A famine such as that is one of the severest chastisements God can inflict on his rebellious creatures.

George. Were the people good farmers at that time?

Mrs. M. I do not suppose they were. Agriculture was left entirely to rustics, and was held beneath the attention of a gentleman. It was one of the charges against Edward II., that he was fonder of agriculture than of military exercises. Farming was not, however, entirely below the consideration of the state; for, in a book of laws made in the time of Edward the First, there are very particular directions when and how to till the ground. It was then a rule to let the land lie fallow, or barren, every third year; and, as they had no means of fatting cattle in the winter, every family, at the end of the summer, when the sheep and oxen were made fat by grass, killed beef and mutton enough to last them till the spring.

Mary. But how could they make it keep so long?

Mrs. M. They salted and pickled it, as we do bacon and pork.

George. I think they must have been tired of living on salt meat all the winter.

Richard. You forget, George, that they could hunt venison and catch birds and fish in the winter.

Mrs. M. One way or other, the nobles and rich people contrived to live very sumptuously. Edward the Second issued a proclamation, forbidding the people of his realm to have at dinner more than two courses. "Whereas, by the outrageous and excessive multitude of meats and dishes which the great men of our kingdom have used, and still use in their castles, many great evils have come upon our kingdom, the health of our subjects has been injured, their goods consumed," &c. &c. —The rest of the proclamation is very amusing; but it is too long to repeat to you. The royal feasts were beyond any thing we ever hear of in our time. At the marriage feast of Henry the Third's brother there were thirty thousand dishes. It was the custom for kings to be attended at table by their physicians to tell them what to eat; a necessary precaution, it should seem, since their banquets were so profuse.

George. These dinners of thirty thousand dishes must have taken a long time to eat. What o'clock did they begin at?

Mrs. M. Those feasts were extraordinary things, and could not come often. The usual hour of dinner amongst the higher classes was eleven o'clock in the morning. They had no meal equivalent to our tea; but early in the evening had a good solid supper. And, in great houses, before the company retired to bed, cakes and spiced wines were handed round.

Richard. I suppose wine was formerly made in England, because you know, mamma, one of my grandpapa's fields is called the vineyard.

Mrs. M. There are a great many places of that name in different parts of the kingdom; and this naturally leads one to suppose that, at some time or other, wine was made here. Indeed there is a place at Rochester called the Vines, and some charter was held there on condition of furnishing the bishop yearly with a certain quantity of wine.

Mary. Then why do not we make wine now?

Mrs. M. It is a general notion that our climate has undergone a change which will not allow grapes to ripen sufficiently to make good wine: but my own opinion is, that the change is in ourselves, and that we should not be contented with such wine as satisfied our ancestors. My reason for thinking so is, that all other trees and plants, as far as we can know, flourish as well now as they did formerly.

Mary. Had they pretty gardens then?

Mrs. M. The houses of the nobility had commonly some sort of garden or "pleasance" attached to them; and all the monasteries had orchards and gardens, including a "herberie," or physic garden, the chief medicinal nostrums of the times being preparations from herbs. We do not hear of ornamental gardening till many years afterwards; and the list of culinary vegetables at this time cultivated was very scanty, there being few besides carrots, parsnips, and cabbages, in general use.

Mary. You forget potatoes, mamma?

Mrs. M. There was not such a thing as a potato in Europe at the time I am speaking of. This root was first brought from America by sir Walter Raleigh, in the latter part of the sixteenth century.

Mary. Pray, mamma, whom did you mean when you spoke of God's rebellious creatures?

Mrs. M. I meant ourselves, and all people. We are all God's rebellious creatures, daily neglecting to do his will, and receiving his benefits with unthankful hearts.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EDWARD III.

[Years after Christ, 1327—1377.]

EDWARD III.
From an old MS.

EDWARD III. at the commencement of his reign, not being more than fifteen years old, was only a tool in the hands of the queen and Mortimer, who confiscated the property of the Spensers, and appropriated it to their own purposes. They caused the late king's brother, the earl of Kent, to be executed under a false charge of treason; and by their revengeful and rapacious conduct made themselves

so much hated by the people, that the nation would soon have been thrown into internal confusion, had not a foreign foe appeared, and drawn the public attention to a more pressing danger.

Robert Bruce thought this a favourable time to retaliate on the English for all the sufferings they had brought on Scotland, and began hostilities on the border. Edward immediately took the field against him; and though no brilliant action was performed on either side, showed Bruce that he had roused a far more formidable antagonist than the late king had been. Bruce was glad to put a stop to the war by entering into a negotiation with the queen for the marriage of his infant son with her daughter Jane.

In 1328 Edward married Philippa of Hainault, a queen of the highest and most irreproachable character, and no less distinguished for her sense and intrepidity, when the occasion called these qualities forth, than for her benevolence and gentleness to all whom she could benefit by her kindness. Edward also is esteemed one of the greatest of our kings, though he has been more commonly admired for his bravery and military skill than for his many other better qualities. He was tall and majestic in his figure, and his countenance bore a very noble expression. His address was pleasing, and he excelled in all manly and warlike exercises. He was also well versed in the learning of his time, and had an excellent understanding: but, unfor-

tunately for his country, all the powers of his mind were early engrossed by one ruinous desire, the desire of making conquests.

His mother had had three brothers, who were all kings of France one after the other, and who all died leaving only daughters. There is a law in France, called the Salique law, which excludes daughters from inheriting the crown. Consequently, when Charles, the last of the three brothers, died, Philip of Valois, his uncle's son, became king, as being the next male heir. But Edward affirmed himself to be the next male heir, being nephew to the late king, and contended that though his mother, according to the French law, could not be queen, still he might be king, as inheriting through her.

But before Edward could be master of France, it was necessary for him to be master of himself, and to shake off the bondage in which his mother and Mortimer still kept him. He had soon an opportunity of doing this. Isabella and Mortimer (now earl of March) resided at Nottingham castle. Edward, by the assistance of the governor, contrived to get through some subterranean passages into an apartment where Mortimer and the queen were; and in spite of the entreaties of the queen, who called upon her son "to have pity on the gentle Mortimer," seized and had him carried away prisoner to Westminster. Mortimer was soon after hanged on a gibbet at Tyburn. The

queen-mother was deprived of all her ill-gotten riches, and was confined during the remainder of her life a sort of state prisoner at Rising.

The king now took the administration of affairs into his own hands, and by his wise regulations gave early proof (for he was only eighteen) of his great capacity: but unhappily his love of war soon called him off from the arts of peace. In the year 1331 he renewed hostilities with Scotland, where David, son of the brave Robert Bruce, was now king, a child of only seven years old. David was driven in less than a year from the throne his father had so hardly won, and was conveyed into France; and the son of John Balliol was recalled from his retirement and made king of Scotland, if king he could be called, who was only a tool in the hands of Edward, and who was placed on the throne and displaced from it, as the party of the English or of *The* Bruce prevailed.

At last Edward, tired of this unprofitable war, determined to abandon it, and to apply all his strength to the project he had so long harboured against France. He was occupied during two years in raising money and making preparations. In 1338 he landed with an army at Antwerp, but found himself unable then to proceed. In 1340 he sailed again, and encountering the French fleet off Sluys, completely defeated it, after a most bloody and obstinate fight. This defeat was so entirely unexpected on the part of the French, that no one

dared to tell Philip of it, till at last it was hinted to him by his jester, who said in his hearing, "O! what dastardly cowards those English are!"—"How so?" said the king. "Because," rejoined the jester, "they did not jump into the sea, as our brave men have done." The king then demanded an explanation, and heard from his courtiers the whole disastrous story.

After the victory of Sluys, Edward disembarked his men, and advanced as far as Tournay; but here he found himself obliged to make a truce with Philip. He returned in 1340 to England, where his absence had produced many inconveniencies. He was at this time involved in great difficulties. All his allies deserted him: he had drained the country of money, and was obliged to pawn the crown, and even the queen's jewels. Still nothing could divert him from his inordinate ambition to possess himself of the crown of France; and he continued to make many unavailing attempts on that country. At last, in 1346, success seemed likely to crown his efforts. He landed at La Hogue in Normandy on the 12th of July, with an army of thirty-two thousand men, in which was his eldest son, who has been called the Black Prince; so called, it is supposed, from the colour of his armour.

Philip, hearing of this invasion of the English, assembled a large army to oppose them, and, breaking down all the bridges as he passed, came in

sight of them on the banks of the Seine near Rouen. The two armies marched for some time on opposite sides of the river; the English on the left or western, the French on the right or eastern side. Edward wished very much to cross over, but could not, on account of the bridges being broken. At last he contrived to cross by means of a stratagem. He made preparations for repairing the bridge at Poissy, and then suddenly decamped as if to march further up the river. The French also set off in the same direction, which Edward no sooner perceived, than he hastily turned back to Poissy, and, repairing the bridge with the utmost expedition, crossed over it, and turned off towards Flanders, while the French were keeping along the side of the river. But when he reached the banks of the Somme he found himself in a still worse dilemma. Here also the bridges had been destroyed, and Gondemar de Faye was on the opposite side to prevent his crossing, and the king of France was behind him with 100,000 men. Edward offered a hundred marks to any one who would show him a ford, and a peasant was tempted by the promised reward to point out a place at Blanchetaque, between Abbeville and the sea, where it was possible to cross at low water. Edward first plunged into the water, calling out, "Let him who loves me follow." The whole army instantly followed, and before Philip could arrive at the same place, the rising of the tide made it im-

possible for him to cross over, and obliged him to go round by Abbeville.

Edward, after he had crossed the ford, surprised Gondemar and defeated him; and the next day, the 5th of August, had time to post himself in an advantageous position on the plain of Cressy, before Philip and his army came up with him. The king of France, thinking the English were now in a complete trap, and that he had only to overtake them to gain an easy victory, had marched with all haste from Abbeville; but when he saw how advantageously they were posted, he ordered his men to halt for the night, that they might rest and refresh themselves before the engagement began. But military discipline was then so imperfect that the order was not attended to, and the foremost troops kept advancing in a disorderly manner, till they arrived in front of the English. Edward had disposed his forces in the most judicious manner, and after he had ridden along the lines and encouraged the men with words and looks, he ordered them to sit down in their ranks on the grass, and take refreshment. But as soon as they saw the French approaching, they sprang from the ground; every horseman mounted his horse, every archer made ready his bow, each foot-soldier stood ready in his place, and waited with firmness for the moment of attack.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon when Philip's advanced troops came up with the English,

and the battle soon became general. At the first onset, the part where the prince of Wales was posted was furiously beset: and the king, who had taken his station on the top of a windmill, from whence he could overlook the whole field, was importuned to go to his succour; but he refused, saying, "He would not deprive his son, and those who were with him, of the honour of the victory." These words, being repeated to the prince and his companions, inspired them with extraordinary courage. After fighting till the close of the evening, the French army was completely discomfited. The king fled, accompanied by only five knights and about sixty soldiers, leaving on that bloody field eighty bannerets, and forty thousand dead and dying men. Amongst the slain was the old king of Bohemia, who, being blind, had been led into the battle by two knights, one on each side of his horse. The motto on his shield was *Ich dien*, which means *I serve*. These words were adopted by the Black Prince, in commemoration of this great day, and have been the motto of the princes of Wales ever since.

When the battle was over, Edward rushed to his son, and embraced him with great affection, while the prince fell on his knees before his father, and craved his blessing. Edward stayed three days at Cressy to bury the dead, and then marched to Calais, with the intention of laying siege to it; but, finding it too strong to take by storm, he de-

termined to subdue it by famine. He stationed his fleet directly opposite the harbour, and built huts for his soldiers all round the town, so as completely to invest it, and prevent it from getting assistance either by land or sea. He then sat down patiently waiting the result. John de Vienne, the governor, seeing himself shut out from all succour, determined to hold out to the utmost, in hopes that Edward's patience would be tired, and that he would raise the siege. And, to make the provisions that were in the town last the longer, he turned seventeen hundred old people, women and children, out of it. When Edward saw all these forlorn wretches thrust out from Calais, and the gates locked upon them, he had compassion on them, and gave them food and money, and let them pass through his army in safety.

After the siege had lasted eleven months, the garrison were in so much distress for want of food, that they were reduced to eat horses, dogs, and cats, till even these failed, and John de Vienne found himself obliged to capitulate. Edward agreed, after some hesitation, that on condition that six of their principal citizens should come to him barefooted, with ropes about their necks, and bring him the keys of the town, he would spare the lives of the rest. The people of Calais were greatly distressed, when they heard the terms the king of England insisted on. While they were deliberating on what was to be done, Eustace de

Pierre, one of the richest merchants of the town, offered himself as the first of the six victims. His example inspired five others with equal courage, and after a sorrowful parting with their friends (for they all expected to be hung) they appeared before Edward. He affected, for it is supposed he was not really in earnest, to be so much enraged against the people of Calais for holding out so long against him, that he ordered these six men to be executed. Queen Philippa then fell on her knees before him, and besought him to pardon them. The king granted her request, and she had them conducted to her apartment, where she entertained them honourably, and sent them back to the town, bestowing on them many rich presents. Edward took possession of Calais on the 4th of August, 1347, and, turning out all the old inhabitants, peopled it entirely with his own subjects.

While these things had been going on in France, David Bruce had been recalled to Scotland, and took the opportunity of Edward's absence to invade England. But queen Philippa acted with such vigour, that an army was speedily raised, and he was taken prisoner near Durham, and afterwards brought to the Tower of London. The queen hastened over to France to carry this good news to Edward, and had arrived just before the surrender of Calais.

Edward's successes in France were suspended for the next six years by a most terrible pesti-

lence; so terrible as to be called the black death, which raged throughout Europe, and proved a greater scourge to the people than even the calamities of war.

In 1350 Philip de Valois died, and was succeeded by his son John. And in 1352 the animosity between the French and English revived with such fury, that neither the pestilence, nor the truces which had been made (but ill kept), could restrain them from renewing hostilities. The English had generally the advantage, and during the next four years greatly extended their territories in France. Of the heroes who distinguished themselves in these wars, none surpassed the Black Prince in valour and prowess. On the 6th of July, 1356, he marched from Bordeaux with an army of 12,000 men, and after taking and burning many towns and villages, he encamped on the 17th of September within two leagues of Poitiers. The same evening the king of France, with an army of 60,000 men, encamped within a mile of the prince, who, when he saw the French army advance thus unexpectedly upon him, exclaimed, "God help us! it only remains for us to fight bravely." The cardinal of Perigord, who was with the French army, was very desirous to prevent an engagement, and rode backwards and forwards several times between John and the prince, in hopes of being able to make peace. The prince said to him, "Save my honour, and the honour of my

army, and I will readily listen to any reasonable conditions." But John would consent to nothing, unless the prince and a hundred of his knights would surrender themselves prisoners of war. The reply of the prince to this was, that "he would never be made a prisoner but sword in hand." The cardinal, finding his endeavours unavailing, retired to Poitiers, and the two armies made themselves ready for battle.

The next day, Monday, the 19th of September, the prince drew up his army in excellent order, and riding along the lines with a countenance in which modesty, goodness, and fortitude, were expressed, exhorted his men to fight valiantly; saying that he himself was resolved to conquer or die, and that England should never have to pay a ransom for him.

The king of France formed his army in three divisions, and because the English had posted themselves in such a manner that they could be approached only by a narrow lane covered on each side by high hedges, he ordered a separate detachment to go first, and clear a passage for the rest. When this detachment entered the lane, it found that a line of English archers was placed behind each hedge. These archers, who were themselves out of all danger, killed and wounded a great number of the French soldiers. Of those who escaped, some got to the end of the lane, and were either killed or taken prisoners by the Black Prince, who

was there in waiting for them: but the greater number, turning back, rushed down the lane to their own army, and threw it into some confusion. Before order could be restored, the Captal de Buche, whom the prince had sent during the night to lie in ambush near the French camp, fell upon their army in flank, attacking that part where the dauphin was stationed. In their anxiety to remove their young prince from danger, the officers who were with him hurried him out of the field, thus setting the example of flight, which was soon followed by the whole division. The duke of Orleans, who commanded another division, perceiving this movement, imagined all was lost, and fled precipitately. Thus were two-thirds of the French army conquered more by their own fears than by the arms of the enemy.

The king's division, meanwhile, which was alone much superior in numbers to the whole English army, resolutely maintained its ground. The English, encouraged by seeing victory more within their grasp, and the French, perceiving that it was now necessary for them to exert their utmost valour, fought desperately; but at length, three of the French generals being killed, the cavalry gave way, and the king, who had shown great personal bravery, was left towards the end of the day with a few followers on the field of battle; and, being surrounded by English and Gascons, he and his youngest son were taken prisoners. The Black

Prince, being overpowered by excessive fatigue, had at this time been persuaded to take some rest in a little tent. On being informed that John had been taken prisoner, he sent the earl of Warwick to conduct the royal prisoner to his tent. The king was surrounded by soldiers who were clamorously disputing for the possession of him, when the earl arrived, and, rescuing him from their turbulence, led him to the prince, who received him with every mark of respect and sympathy; and, having ordered a magnificent supper to be served up, would not sit in his presence, but stood behind his chair, trying to soothe and comfort him. The king, much affected by this generous treatment, burst into tears, and declared that though it was his fate to be a captive, he rejoiced that he had fallen into the hands of the most generous and valiant prince alive.

The loss of the French in this battle was very great. Besides those who were taken prisoners, there were above 6,000 men at arms left dead on the field. The prince, after returning thanks to God for the victory, praised his troops for their conduct, and gave rewards and dignities to those who had more particularly distinguished themselves. He remained at Bordeaux till the 24th of the following April, when he sailed with his royal prisoners to England. On their approach to London, they were met by a train of a thousand citizens in their best array, who conducted them with great

state to Westminster. The Black Prince, in a plain dress, and on a little palfrey, rode by the side of the king of France, who was clad in royal robes, and mounted on a beautiful horse. When they arrived at Westminster, king Edward met them, and embraced the captive king with every mark of respect and affection. He and his son were lodged first in the palace of the Savoy, and afterwards at Windsor, and were treated, during the three years they remained in England, more like visitors than prisoners. Edward had now two captive monarchs in his kingdom: but on the 3d of October David Bruce regained his liberty, and returned to Scotland, after a captivity of eleven years.

France was thrown into the greatest confusion by the misfortune of her king. The dauphin was appointed regent; and the necessities of the country were so great that he was obliged to enter into a treaty with Edward, by which he gave up to him in full sovereignty a large tract, containing several provinces, to which Edward's town of Bordeaux formed a sort of capital. John's ransom was fixed at three millions of gold crowns, and forty noblemen were to be sent over to England as hostages till the money should be paid. This treaty, after many tedious negotiations, was at last completed. Edward accompanied John to Calais, and the two kings, with many expressions of affection and regard, parted on the 24th of October, 1360. Edward then returned to England, after bestowing

all his newly acquired French provinces on the Black Prince, who went to hold his court at Bordeaux with the princess Joan his wife, the beautiful daughter and heiress of the earl of Kent. She had before been married to sir John Holland, by whom she had two sons.

The duke of Anjou, one of the hostages who had been given for the payment of John's ransom, having escaped, and the dauphin making some difficulty in fulfilling the articles of the late treaty, John, who felt that by this breach of faith his own honour was impeached, returned to England to put himself again in Edward's hands; and, falling ill of a fever, he died at the palace of the Savoy early in the year 1364.

I have hitherto endeavoured to confine myself as much as possible to the concerns of our own country; but the affairs of all the nations of Europe become, as I advance, so much intermingled, that I must enter somewhat into the history of foreign countries. France, amongst the many miseries by which it was at this time desolated, suffered intolerably from the insolence and licentiousness of numerous bands of foreign soldiers, who called themselves the "free companies," and would submit to no authority but that of their own particular commanders. They consisted chiefly of soldiers disbanded from the great armies of France and England, and they held themselves in readiness to enlist again with any party that would hire their

services. In the interim, they possessed themselves of some strong castles in different parts of the country, and lived entirely by plunder.

These men, by their violence and rapacity, were the scourge of France. The pope, with many promises of present gain and future pardon for their sins, which were many and grievous, tried in vain to tempt them to undertake a crusade to the Holy Land; but neither glory nor religion could detach them from their free-booting life. At last the dauphin, now Charles the Sixth, contrived means of getting them out of his kingdom. There was, at that time, a very wicked king of Castile, called Pedro the Cruel; he had a half-brother, Henry of Trastamare, a good man, and much beloved by the people, who much wished him to be king instead of his brother. And Charles, thinking this a good opportunity of getting rid of the free companies, sent them, under the command of Du Guesclin, one of the bravest generals France ever possessed, to assist Henry in driving Pedro from the throne. The companies, after having stripped France, were very ready to rush like a swarm of locusts into Spain. Pedro was soon driven from his throne, and fled with his two daughters to Bordeaux, to implore the protection and assistance of the Black Prince, who engaged heartily in the cause of the dethroned monarch, and, accompanied by his brother John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, marched an army of 30,000 men

into Spain. Henry of Trastamare met them with a force of more than 100,000 men; and the battle of Najara was fought between these two unequal armies on the 3d of April, 1367. In this battle the skill and valour of our brave prince and his well disciplined troops overthrew the immense host of Spain; and, against the wishes and endeavours of the whole nation, replaced a hated tyrant on the throne.

Pedro no sooner found himself thus re-established, than he forgot his obligations to the Black Prince, and treated him with great ingratitude. Many of the English soldiers fell victims to the unhealthiness of the climate: the health of the prince also suffered exceedingly, and, in great disgust at the conduct of Pedro, he returned with the shattered remains of his army to Bordeaux. Henry of Trastamare, as soon as he knew that the English had withdrawn from Spain, returned there, and, by the assistance of the king of France, attacked and defeated Pedro in a pitched battle, and slew him with his own hand. Henry then peaceably ascended the throne, and the two daughters of Pedro fled to Bordeaux, and again claimed the protection of the prince of Wales. These two princesses soon after married two of the English princes, the third and fourth sons of king Edward. Constantia, the eldest, married John of Gaunt, whose first wife had been daughter and heiress of the earl of Lancaster. Isabella, the other sister,

married Edward, duke of York. The duke of Lancaster immediately on his marriage assumed, in right of his wife, the title of king of Castile.

The Black Prince, from the time of his return from Spain, became subject to such continual ill health, that it was generally believed he had been poisoned. His illness had a most unhappy effect upon his temper, which was so much altered by it, that, from being the most benevolent and generous of men, he became cruel and morose; and thus, during the last year of his life, lost the affections of his French subjects, though his English ones, to whom he showed more tenderness, loved and honoured him to the last. After some months of constant suffering, he became unable, from weakness, to mount his horse, and was obliged to give up the command of his army. From this time the glory of England declined; every expedition was unsuccessful, and the fleet suffered a signal defeat off Rochfort. These mortifications, and his continued illness, increased the irritability of the prince's mind. He returned to England, as a last hope, for the recovery of his health; but after lingering some time, he died on the 8th of June, 1376, in the forty-seventh year of his age.

His death was felt throughout England, both as a private and as a public loss. And though the parliament was at that time much displeased with the king on the subject of raising subsidies, it expressed the utmost sympathy in his grief on his

son's death, and showed its respect for the memory of the prince by attending his remains to Canterbury, where his monument is still to be seen. The Captal de Buche, one of the brave commanders in the prince's army, was so much afflicted by his death, that he refused all nourishment, and thus soon followed his lamented master.

The loss of his son broke down the heart of the poor old king, who did not long survive him, and died at his palace at Shene, June 1, 1377, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-first of his reign.

Queen Philippa is mentioned by all historians in the highest terms of praise. She and Edward lived together in uninterrupted harmony forty-two years.

Their sons were—

1. Edward the Black Prince.

2. Lionel, duke of Clarence, who died in 1368, leaving an only daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, earl of March.

3. John of Gaunt, married first Blanch, heiress of the earl of Lancaster, by whom he had one son, Henry, afterwards king, and two daughters. His second wife was Constantia of Castile, by whom he had Catherine, married to the king of Castile. His third and last wife was Catherine Swynford, by whom he had two sons, John Beaufort, who was great grandfather to Henry VII., and Henry Beaufort, cardinal of Winchester.

4. Edmund, duke of York, married Isabella of Castile, by whom he had Richard, who married his cousin Anne Mortimer, and was the father of Richard, duke of York.

5. Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester;

And three other sons, who died young.

Their daughters were—

Isabel, duchess of Bedford;

Joan, contracted to Pedro the Cruel, but died;

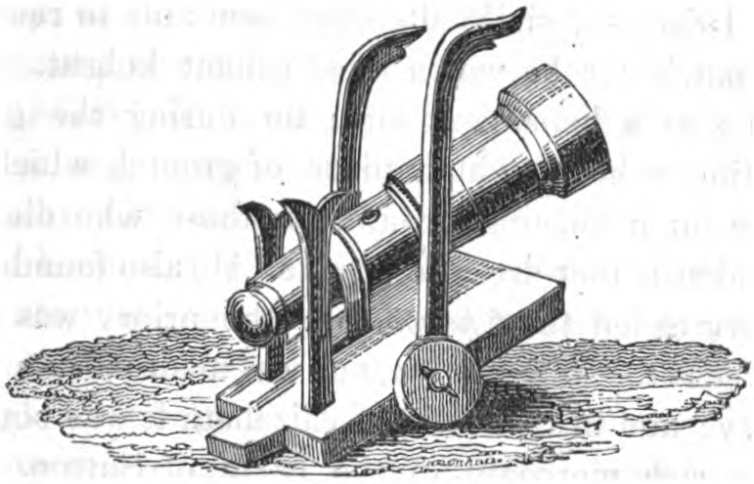
Mary, duchess of Bretagne;

Margaret, countess of Pembroke.

Edward III. founded the order of the Knights of the Garter. He rebuilt and enlarged the castle of Windsor; and every county was assessed to provide a certain number of masons and artificers to complete the work. He also rebuilt St. Stephen's chapel at Westminster, where the house of commons now holds its assemblies. Its first assemblies were held in the chapter-house at Westminster. The division of the house of parliament into lords and commons, the exact commencement of which is not known, was thoroughly established in this reign: in the first part of which the knights of the shire sat with the lords; though before the middle of it they had taken their places, as now, in the house of commons. The laws and statutes were in this reign commanded to be written in English, having been written in Norman French ever since the Conquest.—There is a passage in sir Matthew Hale's History of the Common Law, which reflects

so much credit on this reign, that I must copy it. "Under the long reign of Edward the Third, the law was improved to its greatest height. The judges and pleaders were very learned, and their pleadings polished; yet they have neither uncertainty, prolixity, nor obscurity. They were plain and skilful, and in the rules of law, especially in relation to real actions and titles of inheritance, very learned and excellently polished; so that at the latter end of this king's reign, the law seemed to be near its meridian."

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XVIII.



A cannon in 1377.

Richard. I only wish Edward had had more right on his side in his wars in France. There would then be still more pleasure in reading of his

victories, which, to be sure, whether his cause was right or wrong, were very glorious.

George. As Edward was such a fighting king, he had, I should suppose, a great many brave knights about him.

Mrs. Markham. He had so many that it would take up too much time to enumerate them all. Sir Robert Knolles, sir John Chandois, and sir Walter Manny, are perhaps those whose exploits are most frequently mentioned. Sir Walter Manny was a native of Hainault, and came to England as page to queen Philippa. When he first began his career of arms, he, and some young companions of his own age, each put a black patch over one eye, and vowed not to take it off till they had performed some brave action in the wars in France; and I dare say sir Walter was soon able to remove his patch, for he was a most valiant knight. He was also a beneficent one: for during the great pestilence he bought a piece of ground, which he gave for a burying ground for those who died in London of that dreadful disease. He also founded a priory called the *Chartreuse:* the priory was dissolved at the Reformation, and was made private property; and in the reign of Elizabeth it was bought by a rich merchant of the name of Sutton, who endowed it as a public school, and also founded an hospital there: and this is the history of the Charter-house school, the name being a corruption of the above French appellation.

George. Well, then, if papa sends me to the Charter-house, and I am obliged to fight and give a boy a black eye, I 'll tell him I gave it him in honour of old sir Walter and his black patch.

Mrs. M. Then at the same time I hope that, in honour of the same valiant knight, you will be generous in victory, and honourable in all your actions. The reign of Edward the Third was the reign of heroes. The martial spirit of the king and of the Black Prince inspired the young nobility with an enthusiastic valour, and it was to encourage this chivalrous spirit that the king instituted the order of the Garter.

Mary. Was it not called so because a lady lost her garter at a ball?

Mrs. M. There is a vulgar story that this happened to the countess of Salisbury at a ball at court, and that the king, seeing the courtiers smile at the lady's confusion, good-naturedly took up the garter and bound it round his own leg, saying, "Honi soit qui mal y pense;" which words have been adopted as the motto of the order. But this story is generally believed to be a mere fabrication, the annexing of the garter to an order of knighthood having, it is supposed, the much more honourable origin of being derived from Richard the First, who gave a leathern strap to gird round the knee, as a distinction to some of the brave knights who fought with him in Palestine. Edward also made the foundation which still subsists

of the Poor Knights of Windsor, as a retirement for those who were too old for service. The present houses of the Poor Knights were built by him, and I have been in one of them, the walls of which are eight feet thick: so massy were buildings formerly made.

Richard. The more I think of the battles of Cressy and Poitiers, the more surprising it seems that such handsful of men should beat the immense armies of the French.

Mrs. M. It has been supposed that Edward owed the first of these victories to the use of gunpowder, which was first used, it is said, in war, in that battle. Some writers indeed tell us it had been used before in other countries; but, be that as it may, it was a novelty to the French, and it is no wonder that they should have been dismayed by the smoke and noise. When multitudes once begin to fly, they are more hurt by one another than by the enemy; and this was particularly the case in those times when people were cased in such heavy armour, that when once thrown down, they could not rise without help.

George. Did not you once tell us who invented gunpowder?

Mrs. M. Gunpowder was, I believe, first invented by Friar Bacon, though Schwartz, a German, also claims the merit of the discovery. It was used at first to shoot off darts and arrows and stones from an imperfect sort of cannon, which was

composed only of bars of iron joined together by hoops, and which commonly burst after the third or fourth discharge. Experience, however, taught people to improve upon them. Stone balls were used for some time, before the practice of casting iron ones was adopted.

Mary. I could not understand that story about the king of France and his jester.

Mrs. M. It was formerly customary for kings and nobles to have amongst the number of their attendants one whose business it was to play the fool, and who was privileged to say or do any thing that was ridiculous for the sake of diverting his master.

Mary. That would just have suited me. I could have done very well for some little princess's fool.

Mrs. M. It required some cleverness to be a good fool. In the plays of Shakspeare, which you will one day read, you will see that in many of them the fool is a very prominent character, and has a great deal of wit.

Richard. O, mamma! I have read one of those plays. It was called '*As you Like it*,' and there is a very entertaining fool in it, "a motley fool," as he is called.

Mrs. M. That was because the fool's dress was motley; that is, made of different colours. He also wore a cap made with two great ears, to re-

semble asses' ears, and he had little sheep-bells fastened to different parts of his dress.

Richard. Well, I should neither have liked to have been a fool myself, nor to have lived in a house with one, with all his tiresome jingling bells.

Mrs. M. Then you are more fastidious than our ancestors were, who liked the noise of the fool's bells, as well as his witty jests. An old German writer, who lived not long after this time, says of the English, "that they are very fond of noises, such as the ringing of bells and beating of drums." And, indeed, all the diversions of the English, whatever they may be now, were formerly of a noisy and tumultuous kind. When a nobleman opened his castle to his guests, on occasions of public festivity, the courts and halls were crowded with minstrels, mimics, jugglers, and tumblers; and there was a confusion and mixture of feasting, drinking, dancing, singing, tumbling, and buffoonery, which would appear very strange to us now in any nobleman's mansion.

Mary. Why did not these jugglers and tumblers show their tricks at their own houses, or at the playhouses?

Mrs. M. There was not at that time a playhouse in the whole kingdom. These people used to travel about the country, and, when they were not received into private houses, they exhibited their tricks in carts in the open streets. Indeed it

appears as if the streets used to be scenes of great gaiety; for we are told that the servants of the citizens of London were accustomed on summer evenings to dance in the streets before their masters' doors.

Richard. That might do very well when there were no carriages passing.

Mrs. M. There were no carriages then.

Mary. Then how did people go about?

Mrs. M. Queens and persons of high rank were occasionally conveyed in horse-litters. I have seen pictures of these litters: they were like a bedstead, fastened by shafts before and behind to two horses (something in the manner in which sedan chairs are carried by men). Over the litter there was a canopy held, supported on four long poles, each pole carried by a man on foot; so that this mode of travelling was not a very expeditious one. The lord mayor and aldermen of London, on occasion of an annual merry-making in the country, used to ride, while their wives went in waggons: but the usual way for ladies "to go about," as well as gentlemen, was on horseback.

Richard. And, besides, you know, mamma, London was not so large as it is now. The new streets were not built, I dare say, then.

Mrs. M. No, nor many that we now call old streets. I have before told you that London and Westminster were then separate cities. The road from Temple-bar to St. Giles's was so very bad in

the reign of Edward the Third, that the first turnpike toll in England was levied to repair it: and all beyond St. Giles's was a wild thicket. What is now the Strand was occupied by noblemen's houses, which had gardens running down to the banks of the Thames.

CHAPTER XIX.

RICHARD II.

[Years after Christ, 1377—1399.]

JOHN BALL,
The crazy priest of Kent.

RICHARD of Bordeaux was the only surviving child of Edward the Black Prince, and was proclaimed king on the death of his grandfather. There was no regent appointed; but the young king's three uncles took the direction of affairs upon themselves. John of Gaunt, the eldest of the three, had a high spirit, and great ambition. He was not of an engaging popular temper; but being a man of activity and exertion, he had had, even

in his father's lifetime, great authority in the state. The duke of York was well-meaning, but indolent, and of slender capacity. The duke of Gloucester was turbulent, bold, and meddling; but John being the oldest, and perhaps the most ambitious, had the chief sway in their councils. Yet he soon showed himself ill qualified to be the leader of affairs, and plunged the country into great distresses by several unprofitable expeditions both into France and Scotland.

In 1381, a poll-tax of a shilling a head, levied on all persons throughout the kingdom above the age of fifteen, raised the discontents of the lower orders of the people to the greatest pitch. One of the persons employed to collect this tax having been killed in a quarrel with a tyler at Deptford, called Walter, a crowd collected; and from this small beginning a serious disturbance broke forth. Wat Tyler, as he is called, took upon himself the command of the insurgents, and sent messages into the neighbouring counties, inviting the common people to join together, to shake off the yoke of servitude, and to take vengeance on their oppressive masters. The people willingly obeyed the summons, and leaving their employments, hastened to Blackheath, the place of rendezvous, burning the houses and plundering the estates of the nobility and gentry as they passed. The frenzy of the people was encouraged by the declamations of one John Ball, a crazy priest, who went about exhorting

the lower people to destroy all their superiors. The mob, when assembled at Blackheath, amounted to 300,000 men. Wat Tyler, and another man, called from his business as a thresher, Jack Straw, were appointed leaders, and they all set off, like hounds in full cry, towards London. The king's uncles were absent from the kingdom; and this insurrection was so sudden, that no preparations had been made for checking it. The king, with his mother, and a small number of the nobility, took refuge in the Tower of London.

The insurgents sent to the king a knight whom they had made prisoner, to say that they wanted to speak with him about the government of the kingdom, which his uncles managed very ill. The king returned for answer, "that if they would approach the Thames, he would speak with them the next morning." In the morning the king went on board his barge, and, attended by a few noblemen, rowed towards Rotherhithe, where about ten thousand of this rabble were waiting by the river-side. These people, when they saw the royal barge approaching, set up such frightful outcries, that the king was persuaded by those who were with him to row back to the Tower. The return of the king exasperated the rioters, and they rushed forwards to London, destroying every thing they met in their way; and they beheaded every gentleman who was so unfortunate as to fall into their hands. The gate on the bridge had been shut; but it was opened

by the friends of the rioters in the city. Wat Tyler and his mob then rushed in, and spread all over London, filling every place with terror. They were particularly furious against the Lombards and Flemings; and those who could not pronounce the words *bread and cheese* with a proper English accent were judged to be foreigners, and had their heads chopped off on the spot.

The mob then pillaged and burned John of Gaunt's palace at the Savoy, and destroyed the Temple, and all the records that were kept in it; and there is no saying to what excesses they would have proceeded, had not the greatest part of them happily become stupified by the quantity of wine they had gorged themselves with. In this state they lay sleeping and intoxicated about the streets. The respite thus gained gave the terrified inhabitants time to take some measures for the general security. A council was held, in which the lord mayor of London, sir William Walworth, proposed to rush into the streets and slaughter the insurgents while overpowered by wine and sleep. But this advice was overruled; and it was determined that a message should be sent to them from the king, to say that if they would peaceably retire to Mile-End, he would meet them there on the morrow, and hear their grievances. The next day, June the 14th, the king, with a few unarmed attendants, left the Tower and proceeded to the appointed place, where he found about 60,000

persons assembled. The king, in a gentle manner, asked them what they wanted. They replied, "they wanted the freedom of themselves and children." The king promised that their desire should be granted, and that, if they would return to their homes, he would give them charters for their freedom. Immediately thirty clerks were set to work to write these charters, which were given to all who demanded them, and immediately the mob dispersed, and every one returned peaceably and contentedly to his home.

In the meantime Wat Tyler, with Jack Straw, and the most desperate of the party, instead of going with the others to meet the king at Mile-End, had broken into the Tower of London, and murdered the archbishop of Canterbury, the lord chancellor, and many other persons whom they found there. Their design was to seize on the young king, to murder all the nobility, and to plunder, and then burn, London. But on the following day, June 15, they were stopped in their mad career. The king was passing through Smithfield, attended by the lord mayor and about sixty horsemen. Wat Tyler met them with 20,000 of the insurgents, and, riding up to the king, behaved with so much audacity, that Walworth, unable to endure the sight of this clown's insolence to his sovereign, drew his sword, and felled him to the ground with a blow.

The rioters seemed for a moment stunned with surprise by the loss of their leader; and before

they had time to recover themselves, the young king, with astonishing presence of mind, rode up to them, and said: "My friends, be not concerned for the loss of your unworthy leader. I will be your leader." And turning his horse, he rode into the open fields, at the head of the multitude, who seemed to follow him unconsciously, and without knowing why. A cry, meanwhile, had arisen in the city, that the king had fallen into the hands of the rebels, and instantly some thousands of brave men flew to his rescue. When they appeared, the mob, seized with a panic, fell on their knees before the king, imploring his pardon, which he granted them, on condition that they dispersed and returned to their homes. This they all did: and thus the insurrection melted away, like snow in a sudden thaw.

Richard's conduct during this disturbance naturally led his people to imagine that he had inherited the courage and vigour of mind of the Plantagenets: but the fair promise which he had thus given was soon blighted. He betrayed, as he advanced in age, a weakness and frivolity which made him totally unfit for the government of a kingdom. His person was extraordinarily beautiful: he loved pomp and show, and hated business; and it has even been asserted by some writers, that his uncles purposely neglected his education, and led him into vain and idle amusements, that he might be the less inclined to interfere with their

ambitious designs. When the ferment of the insurrection was over, and the country was restored to tranquillity, Richard revoked all the charters of freedom which he had given, and compelled the bond-tenants to return to their state of villanage, and perform all their accustomed services to their lords.—At the age of sixteen he married Anne of Bohemia, who was long remembered in England by the name of the *good queen Anne.*

During the next five years nothing material occurred, and the chief business of the parliament was to keep a check on the duke of Lancaster, who wanted to drain England of men and money to prosecute the claim on the crown of Castile which he possessed in right of his wife, who, as I have already told you, was daughter of Pedro the Cruel. It was long before he could prevail on the parliament to grant the necessary supplies. At last, in 1386, he raised an army of 20,000 men, and, taking the duchess and his three daughters with him, sailed for Spain. He landed at Corunna, and his troops were suffered to overrun the province of Gallicia without much opposition; for the king of Castile, who was son of Henry of Trastamare, trusting that the same causes would destroy the forces of the duke of Lancaster which had formerly been so fatal to those of the Black Prince, avoided meeting him in the field.

At the end of this bloodless campaign, the king of Portugal, who had always favoured the duke's

claims, entered into close alliance with him, and married his eldest daughter by his first wife. In the following year, the king of Castile, being joined by some French troops, put himself at the head of an army. The English and Portuguese armies took the field together, and gained some places of little importance in Leon. But the unhealthiness of the climate, to those whose constitutions were not inured to it, had already, as had been foreseen, destroyed two-thirds of the English. Those who survived were reduced to a deplorable state of weakness; and the duke himself was so ill, as to be nearly at the point of death. In this extremity he retired into Guienne with his family, and the shattered remains of his army. He now sought, as he could not gain the crown of Castile by force of arms for himself, to procure it by policy for his daughter Catherine. Pretending to negotiate for her marriage with a brother of the king of France, and to transfer her mother's claims to her, he so much alarmed the king of Castile, that he immediately demanded the princess in marriage for his eldest son. The duke consented; and well pleased at having thus secured the crown to his posterity, returned to England in 1389.

During the three years of Lancaster's absence, Richard, by his abuse of the royal power in displacing the officers of the government, and putting in their places his own idle favourites, had made himself exceedingly unpopular. The parliament

had also made great stretches of power; had condemned and imprisoned one of the king's chief favourites, Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, and obliged the king to sign a commission of regency to fourteen noblemen, thus divesting himself of all authority.

The duke of Gloucester was at the head of the party against his nephew, and, not contented with reducing him to be a mere cipher, determined to destroy every friend that remained to him. Richard, though he had assembled around him so many vicious characters, had still preserved his respect for sir Simon Burleigh, a good and venerable old man, who had been appointed his tutor by the Black Prince, by whom he had been greatly esteemed. Neither that circumstance, nor his age and virtue, could preserve him from the malice of Gloucester, who procured his condemnation on a pretended charge of high treason. And though the *good queen Anne* remained on her knees three hours before the inexorable Gloucester entreating for his life, he was executed as a common traitor. De la Pole and a few others saved their lives by a timely flight. The rest of the king's favourites were put to death.—In this year, 1388, was fought the battle of Otterburn, between the English and Scots, in which lord Douglas was killed, and Henry Percy, better known as Harry Hotspur, was taken prisoner. It was an engagement of no material

consequence; but Shakspeare has made it so much celebrated that I must not altogether pass it by.

After a quiet submission of about a year and a half to his uncle's tyranny, Richard suddenly roused himself into exertion, and asserted his own right to hold the reins of government. He took the great seal from archbishop Arundel, a creature of the duke of Gloucester, and gave it to William of Wykeham, and acted with so much sense and vigour, that Gloucester and his party were thunderstruck, and relinquished their assumed authority. The duke, however, was not of a character to submit patiently; and though the king conferred on him grants of immense value, in hopes to purchase his friendship, was continually engaged in factious schemes. He, at length, retired to his castle of Pleshy, in Essex, where frequent meetings were held by the discontented nobles. The king, hearing that Gloucester had a design of seizing his person, determined to be before-hand with him, and caused him to be seized by surprise, and conveyed to Calais. His chief associates, the earls of Warwick and Arundel, were committed prisoners to the Tower. The duke of Gloucester was then accused of high treason, and a parliament was summoned at Westminster, Sept. 17th, 1397, to proceed on his trial.

So many nobles came to attend this trial, that every lodging in London, and for ten miles round,

was filled. When the day of trial arrived, the governor of Calais was summoned to produce his prisoner; but, instead of producing him, he sent word that Gloucester had died in prison. The exact particulars of his death were never known; but there is every reason to believe that he was murdered by the king's orders. The king is supposed to have acted on this occasion by the advice, advice he lived bitterly to rue, of the earl of St. Paul, a French gentleman.

The following year a quarrel arose between Henry Bolingbroke, John of Gaunt's only son, and the duke of Norfolk. It seems that the duke had spoken of the king as having instigated the murder of Gloucester; and that Bolingbroke, indignant at the charge, took it up as a personal offence. Richard, whose guilty conscience did not dare to have the matter openly discussed in a court of justice, adjudged it to be determined by a single combat, which was to be fought between Norfolk and Bolingbroke, on Sept. 16th, 1398, at Coventry. The nobles and the parliament were already assembled to see the fight, and the combatants had entered the lists, when the king forbade them to engage, and banished Henry Bolingbroke for ten years, and the duke of Norfolk for life; who both left the kingdom highly dissatisfied with the sentence.

In 1399, John of Gaunt, "time-honoured Lancaster," died, and Richard seized on all his great

estates. Bolingbroke was at the court of France when he was informed of this injustice done to him. He resolved immediately to reclaim his rights; and being assisted with ships and soldiers by the duke of Bretagne, he came over to England, and landed July 4, 1399, at Ravensburgh*. The king was at that time in Ireland, where he had taken a considerable force, for the purpose of quelling an insurrection, and his uncle the duke of York was left regent during his absence.

It is probable that when Bolingbroke first landed, he had no view beyond that of getting back his inheritance: but finding himself joined by the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, and by other powerful noblemen, he soon began to entertain designs upon the throne itself. The duke of York was preparing, on the king's part, to make resistance; but he too being persuaded by Bolingbroke, in an interview which he had with him at Bristol, that he was only come to claim his own inheritance, joined him with the forces under his command.

Richard himself soon after landed at Milford Haven, and finding that his uncle, instead of having an army ready for his service, had gone over to the party of Bolingbroke, retired with a few friends to Conway. After some short negotiations, he imprudently agreed to a personal conference with his

* A town in Yorkshire, near the mouth of the Humber, which has been long washed away by the encroachments of the sea.

cousin at Flint Castle; but as he was on his way there with a few attendants, he was met by Bolingbroke, who conveyed him to London, and sent him prisoner to the Tower. Bolingbroke at first told the king he only intended to assist him in the government of the kingdom; but as soon as he found him completely in his power, he openly declared his own design upon the crown, and obliged him to sign a paper containing his resignation of the kingdom. This paper was read before the parliament, and approved of by them. A list of crimes and errors of which the king had been guilty was read, and he was then declared solemnly deposed; and the archbishops of York and Canterbury led Bolingbroke to the empty throne, and placed him on it.

Richard was conveyed a prisoner to Pontefract Castle, and was there put to death in the beginning of the year 1400, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign. He married, first, Anne of Bohemia; and, secondly, Isabella of France, and left no children.

In this reign the first seeds were sown of the protestant or reformed religion. John Wickliffe, a priest who had the living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, became known, in the latter end of Edward the Third's reign, by a controversy with the begging friars. He afterwards attacked the corruptions of the whole body of the monastic clergy: and though he might not, perhaps, be the

first who discovered the fallacy of many of the doctrines of the church of Rome, he was the first who dared to inveigh against them publicly. During his life no positive step was taken to bring about the reformation of the church; yet he prepared the way for that which afterwards followed, by awakening people's minds to the conviction that the Romish church had gone far astray from the purity of the Christian religion. Till the time of Wickliffe, there were none but Latin Bibles, which were only to be found in the possession of the priests; so that the mass of the people was kept in total ignorance of the Scriptures. Wickliffe undertook and completed a translation of the Bible into English. This, though highly acceptable to the laity in general, was universally disapproved of by the bishops, and all who were attached to the Romish corruptions: and a bill was brought into the house of lords to suppress the English translation. But the bill was rejected, in consequence of the warm remonstrance of John of Gaunt, who concluded by saying, "We will not be the dregs of all, seeing that other nations have the law of God, which is the law of our faith, written in their own language."

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XIX.

Tilting at the Ring.

Richard. There is no pleasure in reading of any person being imprisoned and murdered: yet I think Richard deserved his fate, and did every thing he could to draw it on himself.

George. Yes: the revoking all the charters of freedom that he had given to those poor slaves was the beginning of all his bad deeds.

Mrs. Markham. No person, whether a king or a subject, ought ever to make any promise without the firm intention of performing it.

Mary. What became of John Ball?

Mrs. M. I do not recollect that his fate is mentioned; indeed, he might not perhaps be remembered at all, but for two lines he was continually repeating in his harangues to the common people:—

"When Adam delved, and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

Mary. You said, mamma, that Wat Tyler's mob destroyed the Temple. I did not know that we had any temples in England.

Mrs. M. It is the name of a building that was once a monastic house, belonging to the Knights Templars, an order of monkish knights, who, instead of living in monasteries, and wearing cowls, put on armour, and devoted themselves to the protection of those who went on pilgrimages to the Holy Land. They also took on themselves the vow of celibacy, and observed other monastic rules. This order was after a time dissolved; and Edward the Third granted their house, which from them was called the Temple, to the students of the common law, by whom it is still inhabited. The Temple church was built by the Templars, after the model of that of the Holy Sepulchre; and I am told that it is one of the most curious in London, as well on account of its antiquity and architecture, as for the monuments it contains of the old knights.

Richard. Who were those begging friars?

Mrs. M. They were people who, because our Saviour and the apostles avoided worldly riches and honours, pretended to imitate them by going about begging; and who seemed to think that poverty and beggary were the essence of religion.

Richard. Was the Bible we read translated by Wickliffe?

Mrs. M. No: the translation now in use was

made many years afterwards. You shall hear about that when we come to the reign of James I. Even Wickliffe was not the first who gave this country a translation of the Bible. The old Saxon bishop Adhelm translated the book of Psalms into Saxon in the year 706. The venerable Bede also made a translation of the whole Bible; but when the popes began to rule the affairs of the English church, none but Latin Bibles were allowed to be used.

Richard. What could be the reason of that?

Mrs. M. To keep the people in ignorance, that the priests and monks might make them believe what they pleased.

Mary. Then how very glad the Wickliffites must have been when they got a Bible in English!

Mrs. M. The followers of Wickliffe were called Lollards, a name given them by their adversaries out of derision, the word meaning "noisome weed." Wickliffe's opinions were not confined to our island. A young Bohemian gentleman, who came to England in the train of Richard's first queen, became a proselyte to them during his residence here, and on his return to Bohemia spread the knowledge of the new doctrine amongst his countrymen, which laid the foundation of the Reformation in Germany.

Mary. Did Richard and his queen become Lollards?

Mrs. M. The king was too much occupied with frivolous amusements to concern himself about

serious matters: but the queen was one of Wickliffe's best friends. John of Gaunt was also, at one time, a very warm advocate for the new doctrine; but after a time his zeal cooled. Indeed, during the latter part of his life he forbore to interfere in any public or party concern. His once turbulent ambition seemed quite satisfied with having two of his daughters queens; and ever after his return from Spain he led a private life. His second wife died in 1394, and he married almost immediately afterwards Catherine Swinford, who had been governess to his daughters, and who was sister to the wife of Chaucer, the father of English poetry.

Mary. Father of English poetry! What does that mean?

Mrs. M. It means that he was our first eminent poet. Indeed, few of our modern poets have equalled him in the excellence of his descriptions; but, from the great changes that have taken place in our language since his time, his poetry is often so obscure, that persons unaccustomed to the old style of writing cannot easily understand it.

Richard. Can you tell me what it was like?

Mrs. M. I believe I can recollect a pretty description of the morning, which you will find intelligible.

"The busy lark, the messenger of day,
Saluteth with her song the morning grey;
And fiery Phœbus riseth up so bright,
That all the orient laugheth at the sight;
And with his beam*es* drieth in the *greves*
The silver droppe*s* hanging on the leaves."

Richard. I know that Phœbus means the sun, and the orient means the east; but I do not understand what *greves* are.

Mrs. M. The same as *groves.*

George. Is Chaucer the only old poet we have?

Mrs. M. There are some others as old and older, whose works have been preserved to us, but none who can bear any comparison with him. There was a poet who lived about this time, Robert Langland, a priest of Oxford, who wrote a very severe satire against persons of all professions, called the "Vision of Pierce Ploughman," which, for the insight it gives us into the manners of the times, is a very valuable relic.

Richard. Is that as difficult to understand as Chaucer's poetry?

Mrs. M. You will find it more so. It is without rhyme, and is written in a very singular kind of verse, which is called alliterative, and which consists in having, in the same line, as many words as possible, beginning with the same letter. You will have a better idea of it, if I can find a passage not too difficult for you to make out. Here is one. The poet is satirizing the magnificence of a monkish dwelling, and says:—

"I found there
A hall for a high king, a household to holden,
With broad boards about*en*, y-benched well clean:
With windows of glass wrought as a church,
And chambers with chimneys, and chapels gay."

George. You said Richard was fonder of amusement than of any thing serious: what sort of things did he amuse himself with?

Mrs. M. He was fond of tournaments, and all kinds of shows: he was a great lover of dress, and encouraged it in his courtiers, as it should appear, for the fashions of his time were more costly and absurd than they had ever been before. A fine gentleman did not then think himself well dressed unless his clothes were literally made of patchwork. For instance, one sleeve was blue, the other green; one stocking red, and the other white; a boot on one foot, and a shoe on the other. And they not only wore many different colours, but had also a great variety of clothes. It is recorded of sir John Arundel, that he had fifty-two suits of gold tissue. There is an old Scotch song ridiculing this passion for dress amongst the fine gentlemen of Richard's court. I only remember one stanza.

"Long beards, thriftless,
Painted hoods, witless,
Gay coats, graceless,
Maketh England thriftless."

George. Well, I like the fighting days of Edward III. better than the dressing days of Richard II.

Mrs. M. And yet "the fighting days" of Edward III. produced in the young nobility a ferocious overbearing character, which made them per-

petually think themselves affronted, and entitled to revenge these supposed affronts by open violence. I recollect a very striking anecdote exemplifying this, in Froissart's Chronicles. King Richard marched into the north in 1385 to check an incursion of the Scots, and halted some days at Beverley by the way. His army was too numerous to be lodged in the town, and part was, therefore, dispersed in the neighbouring villages. A poor German knight, who was one of those who were so dispersed, was looking for a lodging, and trying in very bad English to make himself understood. A squire belonging to the king's half brother, sir John Holland, began to abuse the poor German, and laughed at him; but an archer of sir Ralph Stafford's took part with the German, and shot the squire. When sir John Holland heard of his squire's death, he made a vow that he would neither eat nor drink till he had killed the German knight, the innocent cause of the affray: and riding furiously about the lanes in search of him, till it was dark, he met sir Ralph Stafford in a narrow lane, and struck at him with his sword as he passed. The blow was fatal; but sir John Holland rode on, without perhaps knowing at the moment that he had killed him.

Mary. But was not he hanged for the murder?

Mrs. M. He would have been, had he not taken refuge in the sanctuary of St. John of Beverley.

The king was exceedingly angry with him, and refused to pardon him; and his mother, the princess of Wales, was so miserable that she died of grief. He afterwards obtained the king's pardon, and was made duke of Exeter, and married John of Gaunt's youngest daughter.

George. To be sure he was the king's brother, which, I suppose, accounts for his not being punished as he deserved.

Mrs. M. But I have not quite finished my story; in which, as the beginning has shown you an example of the lawless manners of the age, so the end exhibits an instance of the high-wrought feelings of honour which are characteristic of chivalry. Sir Ralph was a very accomplished young man, and the only son of an old lord Stafford, who was then with the royal army. Lord Stafford, as soon as he had recovered from the first burst of grief at his son's shocking murder, went to the king, and told him, that as he was on his road to fight the Scots, he would not let his grief prevent him from serving his country in the hour of need. "And," added he, "during this expedition, I shall not think of my affliction; for I like not that the Scots be rejoiced at the misery of the earl of Stafford." The afflicted old man accordingly accompanied the army into Scotland, and performed all the duties of a soldier and commander, as if he had had a heart free from sorrow: but as soon as the

expedition was ended, he went to the Holy Land, on account of his son's death, and did not live to return.

Richard. Those "Chronicles" of Froissart must be very entertaining.

Mrs. M. Froissart was a native of Hainault; and having been desired in his youth, by his "dear lord and patron," Robert de Namur, to write the history of the wars of his own time, he devoted his whole life to that purpose, and to travelling about to collect news. He was some time in England in the service of queen Philippa, and has given us more minute details of passing events than are to be found in any other writer.

Richard. I must, dear mamma, ask you one more question. Was not Richard II. the first king who made dukes? for I do not think you have mentioned any before.

Mrs. M. You forget the five sons of Edward III., who were all made dukes by their father. They were the first persons who bore that title in England. The Black Prince was the first duke of Cornwall.

CHAPTER XX.

HENRY IV.

[Years after Christ, 1399—1413.]

Rustics of the 15th century.

HENRY IV., only three months before he obtained the crown, was wandering about, a banished man, in a foreign land. His success was the more surprising, because he had no personal qualities, except the kingly quality of courage, to attach the people to him. Nor had he, even after Richard, the next right of inheritance; for the undoubted heir was Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, whose

grandmother was daughter of Lionel, duke of Clarence, elder brother of John of Gaunt. Mortimer was at this time a child of seven years old: and though the parliament passed him by, and settled the crown on Bolingbroke and his heirs, yet Henry thought him too dangerous a rival to be at large, and kept the poor boy a prisoner at Windsor.

The king himself was in no enviable condition. His life was made miserable by continual apprehensions of plots and conspiracies, apprehensions as much occasioned by his own jealous and suspicious temper, as by the circumstances in which he was placed. He had possessed the crown only a few months, when a very dangerous conspiracy against him was entered into by some nobles attached to Richard, which soon after broke out into an open war. A man called Maudlin, who greatly resembled Richard, was dressed up to personate him; but, a division ensuing between the leaders of the party, it was soon and easily crushed. All the nobles who were taken in arms were beheaded, and thus a bloody beginning was made to this distracted reign. Henry, believing that while Richard lived he never should possess the throne in peace, caused him to be murdered in prison, as you have already heard; and, to prevent any one from pretending in future to personate him, made known the certainty of his death, by causing his dead body to be brought to London, and exposed, with the face uncovered, for three days before it was buried.

In the year 1401, the king had a very narrow escape. One night he perceived concealed in his bed, just as he was stepping into it, a steel instrument with three sharp points, which would either have killed him, or wounded him severely, had he laid down on it. The author of this attempt was never discovered.

Besides his secret enemies, Henry had a very formidable open foe in Owen Glendower, a Welsh gentleman of high spirit and courage. Glendower had had a quarrel with lord Grey, of Ruthyn; and considering himself aggrieved by Henry, who took part with lord Grey, he proclaimed himself prince of Wales, and his countrymen crowded to his standard. Favoured by the mountainous nature of the country, he was able to maintain himself for seven years against all the endeavours of Henry to subdue him, and frequently made incursions into the English border, and plundered and killed the inhabitants. In one of these incursions he took prisoner sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to the poor boy whom Henry kept at Windsor; and the king was so well pleased that any of that family should be in safe custody, that he prevented the earl of Northumberland, who was Mortimer's near relation, from entering into any treaty for his ransom.

In 1402, the Scots, commanded by earl Douglas, entered England with 10,000 men. They were defeated at Homildon Hill by the earl of Northum-

berland and his son Henry Hotspur. Douglas, with many others, was taken. Immediately on the news of this victory, Henry sent to prohibit the earl from ransoming any of the prisoners; a command the Percies resented violently, and the more so, as it was chiefly by their means that Henry had been enabled to ascend the throne. They, therefore, considered themselves doubly injured. Northumberland, with his brother the earl of Westmorland, and his son Hotspur, in talking over this business together, more and more inflamed their mutual resentments; and Hotspur, who had that name from his fiery temper, urged on his father and uncle till they resolved to dethrone Henry, thinking that they could do this with as little difficulty as they had found in dethroning Richard. To strengthen their cause, they gave Douglas his liberty, and engaged him to assist their enterprise. They also admitted Glendower into their confederacy, who undertook to join them on the borders of Wales with 10,000 men.

Douglas and Hotspur, leaving Northumberland to follow with the main army, reached Shrewsbury early in July, 1403; but before they could be joined by Glendower, the king's army approached; and on the morning of July 21, the great battle of Shrewsbury was fought. The king commanded the main body of his army, and displayed the utmost prudence as a general, and courage as a soldier. His eldest son Henry began on this day his

career of military glory; and, though he was wounded by an arrow in the face, would not quit the field. On the other side, young Hotspur and the earl of Douglas performed prodigies of valour. The two armies were nearly equal in numbers, each consisting of about 14,000 men, and the victory remained some hours undecided. The king had caused several of his attendants to wear armour resembling his own, and Douglas, who ardently desired to engage with him personally, sought him over the field of battle, and often thought he had fought with him, and slain him; but he as often found himself deceived, and was at last himself taken prisoner. Hotspur was killed, and the royal army at length remained master of the field, on which six thousand men lay dead.

When Northumberland heard of his son's death, he disbanded his army, and retired, almost broken-hearted, to Warkworth. But when Henry proclaimed a pardon to all the rebels who would return to their allegiance, the earl, encouraged by these gentle measures, came to York, where the king then was, and threw himself at his feet, to implore his mercy and forgiveness. At first the king received him with a frown; but, remembering how much he owed to his former services, and pitying the poor old man's bereaved condition, he granted him his life, and soon after restored to him almost all his honours and estates.

Notwithstanding the attempts Henry had made

to conciliate the people, they became more and more discontented; and in 1405 another formidable insurrection broke out, of which Scroop, archbishop of York, and Thomas Mowbray, earl marshal, were the active movers. They soon assembled a body of 15,000 men, and encamped on Skipton Moor, expecting to be joined by the earl of Northumberland, who had again taken arms against the king. To suppress this sudden and formidable rising, the king sent Ralph Nevil, earl of Westmorland, into the north. Nevil, finding the insurgents more numerous than he had expected, had recourse to stratagem. He sent to inquire of them what were their grievances, that, if reasonable, they might be redressed. He then invited the archbishop and the other leaders of the party to a conference, in which they stated their demands. To all of these Nevil agreed, and solemnly pledged himself to procure the king's ratification. When he had thus completely lulled them into security, he persuaded them to send messengers to their troops, to tell them that peace was made, and that they might return to their own homes; promising, on his own part, to do the same. But while the archbishop, unsuspicious of any fraud, sent orders to his men to disband, the wily Nevil gave his own message to a person whom he had previously ordered not to deliver it: and, as soon as he had perceived that the insurgents' camp was broken up, and the men dispersing, he

caused a body of his own soldiers to come suddenly to the place of conference, and carry off the archbishop, and all those who had accompanied him, prisoners to Pontefract. They were every one beheaded, even Scroop himself, which was the first instance in this country of a capital punishment being inflicted on a bishop.

Northumberland, on hearing of the death of his friends, fled first into Scotland, and afterwards into Wales, where he wandered about for some time. In 1408 he returned into the north, and made a last attempt to overthrow the power of Henry: but his party was defeated, and himself slain, in a battle on Bramham Moor, in Yorkshire. The repeated ill success of these rebellions at length subdued all the king's enemies. Even the Welsh, despairing to establish their independence, abandoned Glendower, who wandered about in various disguises, till he died at his daughter's house at Mornington, in Herefordshire, in 1415.

In the year 1405, a most unexpected chance threw into the hands of Henry the only son of Robert III. king of Scotland. David Bruce, having no children, had been succeeded by his sister's son, Robert Stuart, who died in 1390, leaving two sons. The eldest, Robert III., succeeded his father, and was a prince of a very feeble character: the other son was duke of Albany, a restless and ambitious man, who got the affairs of the nation into his hands, and ruled them imperiously, and

even imprisoned and starved to death the elder of his brother's two sons. Robert, anxious to save his other son, James (afterwards king James I. of Scotland), from falling into the hands of his cruel uncle, was desirous to send him to France, and committed him to the care of the earl of Orkney, whom he directed to conduct him to that country. They embarked secretly, and set sail, but their vessel was taken off Flamborough head by an English privateer; and the prince and his attendants were conveyed to Henry, who, on being told by the earl of Orkney that the young prince was going to France to learn French, said, "I understand French, and therefore ought to be intrusted with his education." He then committed James and his attendants close prisoners to the Tower. When the poor old father heard the news, it threw him into such agonies of grief that he died in three days. James remained a prisoner till he was twenty-eight years old, the duke of Albany being in the meantime regent in Scotland; but Henry made some amends for his unjust and cruel conduct towards the young prince, by giving him the best education the times afforded, so that he proved, when restored to his kingdom, the most accomplished monarch that ever sat upon the Scottish throne.

Now at last Henry had some respite from his enemies; but he had none from the bitter reflections of his own mind, which was a perpetual

prey to remorse and fear. He also suffered greatly from bad health; and soon after the death of archbishop Scroop he became afflicted with a loathsome eruption in his face, which the common people considered as a punishment for the death of that prelate, who was much beloved by them. The king's happiness was also much embittered by the wildness and eccentricity of his eldest son, the "madcap Harry," who, when not engaged in military exploits, in which he displayed great courage and ability, passed his time in a very licentious way. One of his companions was committed for a robbery, and brought before the chief justice Gascoigne. Gascoigne refusing to release the offender, the prince drew his sword, and behaved in a very violent manner, on which the chief justice ordered him to be taken to the King's Bench prison. The prince, conscious of the impropriety of his own conduct, submitted to the punishment: and when this incident was related to the king, he exclaimed: "Happy the monarch who possesses a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty, and a son so willing to submit to the laws!"

In the last year of Henry's reign he sent a body of troops to France, under the command of his second son, the duke of Clarence, to join the duke of Burgundy, in a civil war which he was carrying on against the duke of Orleans. He, no doubt, hoped that, by fomenting the distractions of that

unhappy country, he might be able to regain some of those possessions in France which were now lost to the English. But both parties, dreading the admittance of a large body of English troops into the country, prevailed on Clarence, by the promise of a sum of money, to retire into Guienne.

The king's health now rapidly declined, and he became subject to epileptic fits. It is said that one day, when he was in one of these fits, the prince, who believed him to be actually dead, carried the crown, which was placed by the king's bedside, out of the room. When the king came to himself, he instantly missed it, and sternly asked, who had taken it away? The prince made a dutiful apology, which pacified the king, who said with a sigh, "Alas! fair son, what right have you to the crown, when you know your father had none?" —"My liege," answered the prince, "with your sword you won it, and with the sword I will keep it."—"Well," replied the king, "do as you please; I leave the issue to God, and hope he will have mercy on my soul." Not very long afterwards, while he was performing his devotions in Edward the Confessor's chapel at Westminster, Henry was again seized with one of his fits. He was conveyed to the abbot's lodging, and there expired, on the 20th of March, 1413, in the 46th year of his age, and the 14th of his reign. His first wife was Mary de Bohun, by whom he had four sons and two daughters:—

Henry, prince of Wales;
Thomas, duke of Clarence;
John, duke of Bedford;
Humphrey, duke of Gloucester;
Blanche, duchess of Bavaria;
Philippa, queen of Denmark.

His second wife was Isabella of Navarre, widow of the duke of Bretagne, by whom he had no children.

Several Lollards were in this reign condemned to death for their opinions.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XX.

Women servants of the fifteenth century.

George. Surely it was very hard to persecute the Lollards for what they thought.

Richard. But what were their opinions, mamma?

Mrs. Markham. In the first place, they put no faith in the pardons and indulgences granted by the pope, not thinking that the souls of men were in the keeping of any sinful and mortal man like themselves: and this opinion, you may suppose, was very displeasing to the Roman Catholic clergy, who made a great profit by the sale of those indulgences. The Lollards disbelieved also in transubstantiation.

Mary. Pray what was that?

Mrs. M. The belief that the bread and wine taken at the sacrament actually becomes, by the priest's blessing, the real body and blood of our Saviour, instead of considering them, as we Protestants do, to be solely a memorial of Christ's last supper, or to be taken in remembrance of him, in the hope that our prayers for the pardon of our past sins, and for the amendment of our future lives, may, by God's mercy, be sanctified and accepted. There were many other points in which the Lollards differed from the then established church, such as the praying to images and relics, doing penance, saying masses for the souls of the dead, and many more: but that of denying transubstantiation was considered the most material difference, or rather was made a sort of test of faith, by which heretics were to be distinguished. There was in after times an artful trap laid to convict queen Elizabeth (before she was queen) of

heresy. She was asked her opinion about transubstantiation, and with wonderful readiness replied,

> Christ was the word that spake it,
> He took the bread and brake it:
> And what that word doth make it,
> That I believe and take it:

an answer that did not contradict her own opinion, and yet gave her enemies nothing to find fault with.—But to return to the reign of Henry IV. Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, was the chief persecutor of the Lollards, and caused many of them to be condemned and executed. One of them, of the name of Badby, was sentenced to be burnt at Smithfield. He was tied to a stake, and faggots were piled around him, which were just going to be set on fire, when the prince of Wales rode up to him, and besought him to renounce his opinions, and save his life, promising to give him enough to live comfortably upon, if he would do so. The poor man thanked the prince with many expressions of gratitude; but said that, as he firmly believed his opinions to be true, he would not sacrifice his conscience to save his life. When the faggots were set on fire, the prince came again, and entreated him to recant; but he continued steadfast as before, and was accordingly burnt.

Richard. Of all the reigns you have yet given us, this is by far the most cruel; for, besides those poor Lollards, what numbers of other people were put to death for plots and conspiracies!

Mrs. M. Perhaps Henry might not have been naturally cruel, but he was drawn on to be so, by his continual apprehension of losing the crown he had so unjustly gained.

George. Mary wants to know if all kings sleep with their crowns by their bedsides.

Mrs. M. Henry is the only king I ever heard of who did so.

Richard. I suppose he was so much afraid of having it taken away from him, that he could not bear it out of his sight. But pray, mamma, tell us how those dukes of Burgundy and Orleans came to have a civil war in France. Was there no king there?

Mrs. M. There was a king, Charles the Sixth; but he, by a madness of a most deplorable nature, was incapable of performing any of the royal functions. His brother, the duke of Orleans, and his cousin, the duke of Burgundy, taking advantage of his calamity, contended, with the most culpable ambition that ever inflamed two selfish men, for the management of the kingdom. The queen, Isabella of Bavaria, a very bad proud woman, abandoned the king and her children, who were neglected, and often in want of necessaries, while she and the duke of Orleans tried to get every thing into their own power. At last the duke of Orleans was assassinated in the streets of Paris by the contrivance of the duke of Burgundy. The son and widow of the murdered prince called on all France to revenge

his death; and the friends of the Orleans family, under the name of Armagnacs, and the other party under that of Burgundians, carried on for many years a bloody and inveterate war. Sometimes one party, and sometimes the other, got the poor king into its hands, and used his name and authority for its own ambitious and vindictive purposes.

George. I am sure if England was ill off at that time, France was still worse off.

Richard. And so, I think, was Scotland, with that cruel duke of Albany for regent, and the poor little prince, that should have been king, a prisoner in England.

Mary. How long, mamma, was he kept in prison?

Mrs. M. He remained in England from the age of ten till he was twenty-eight; but I should hope that he was not kept in close confinement all that time. He had an excellent tutor appointed to superintend his education; he learnt tilting, wrestling, archery, and all the exercises then usually practised by young men of rank; and excelled in these exercises, as well as in the more refined studies of oratory, jurisprudence, and the philosophy of those times. He had also an extraordinary talent for music and poetry. Indeed some say that he was the inventor of that sweet and plaintive style of music which is peculiar to Scotland; but others assert, with more probability, that he merely reduced the wildness of Scottish melody

to the rules of composition. His poetry is quite extraordinary, considering the time and circumstances in which it was written. "Christ's Kirk on the Green," and "Peebles to the Play," are popular ballads even to this day: but what pleases me best of all his writings that have come down to us is "The King's Quair;" in which he describes very touchingly his manner of life when he was a prisoner at Windsor.

George. How did he gain his liberty at last?

Mrs. M. When the duke of Albany died, the people of Scotland paid their king's ransom, and he returned home. After reigning fifteen years, he was assassinated.

Mary. Poor man! How unfortunate his death was, as well as his life!

Mrs. M. His whole life was not unfortunate, for he lived to do much good to his native country. He made excellent laws, and reformed many abuses; and conducted himself with so much firmness, justice, and good policy, that the name of James the First of Scotland is still held in reverence. While at Windsor, he became attached to Jane Beaufort, grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, whom he married as soon as he was restored to his own country.

Mary. You told us yesterday, mamma, what odd figures the gentlemen made of themselves in Richard the Second's time; but you did not tell us what the ladies wore.

Mrs. M. They wore the most extraordinary

head-dresses you can imagine, and so immoderately large and high as to be quite preposterous. Some were like steeples, with long streamers hanging down from the top. Others were so immensely broad, as well as high, that the head looked like a loaded waggon. Isabella of Bavaria adopted such an extreme of this fashion, that the doorways of some of the royal palaces were obliged to be made higher and wider, that she might be able to go through them. Some ladies fastened two great projecting towers of rolled lawn and riband on their heads, which looked like great horns. The rest of the dress was not ungraceful. The waist was worn short, and the petticoat very full and flowing, and adorned with broad borders of fur, or with other ornaments. At one time there was a fashion of wearing immoderately large sleeves, ending in a pouch, which answered the purpose of a pocket; but this awkward contrivance did not last long; for in most of the pictures of the fifteenth century both ladies and gentlemen are drawn with bags hanging from the girdle, instead of those sleeve pouches.

Richard. What were their clothes made of?

Mrs. M. Those of the higher ranks were chiefly of silk or stuff, with richly embroidered girdles. The labourers, and poor people, were forbidden to wear any thing except coarse flannel, and fustian clothes with linen girdles.

George. But did gentlemen wear silk and stuff coats?

Mrs. M. Tight coats, such as are now worn, were not then in use. A tight waistcoat or jacket, with a loose robe over it, was the general dress of the men, when not in armour. On one occasion, prince Henry is described as having been dressed in a blue satin robe, full of oylet holes; and from each hole hung the needle it was worked with.

George. If that fashion ever comes in again, I'll wear flannel and fustian, and give up being a fine gentleman.

Richard. I have seen people in old pictures painted in dresses all over coats of arms.

Mrs. M. Those were called tabards, and were worn by noblemen and heralds at tournaments, and on occasions of ceremony. I believe they are still sometimes worn by the officers of the heralds' college. A tabard is a sort of mantle, open at the sides, and covering only the back and front, and richly ornamented with coats of arms and other devices.

CHAPTER XXI.

HENRY V.

[Years after Christ, 1413—1422.]

A gentleman and ladies of rank of the fifteenth century.

HENRY, as soon as his father had breathed his last, retired to his own room, and spent the remainder of the day in prayer and privacy. On the following morning he is said to have sent for the low companions of his youthful follies, and to have told them that he was now going to lead an altered life, and to enter on new and important duties; at the same time forbidding them to appear in his presence, till they, like himself, should have reformed their conduct.

The young king possessed in an eminent degree the qualities most calculated to make him a favourite with the people. Even in the midst of his wildest excesses, he had always given proofs of a good and feeling heart. He had already distinguished himself for military courage, and his deportment was at once commanding and ingratiating. His person was tall and slender, his hair dark, and his features exceedingly beautiful; and, in the general joy with which he was received as king, the defect in his father's title to the crown seemed to be forgotten.

Henry, confiding in this his general popularity, set at liberty the earl of March (who had been kept in close confinement during the whole of the last reign), and treated him with an unsuspicious frankness, which more effectually secured his fidelity than bars and bolts could have done. This young nobleman, in the following year, was made a party to a plot against Henry, which had for its object to place himself on the throne; but he discovered the whole plot to the king, who put to death all the ringleaders of the conspiracy. To show his respect for the memory of the unfortunate Richard, who had knighted him, and from whom he had when a boy received many kindnesses, Henry caused his remains to be removed from Langley, where they had been buried, and re-interred at Westminster with great pomp. Amongst many other generous acts, he recalled the son of Hotspur from exile, and restored to him the estates

and honours of his family. In short, his conduct fully justified in all respects, except in that of his persecution of the Lollards, the high opinion the nation had formed of him. But in that instance we may suppose he was actuated by a mistaken zeal for what he considered the true religion.

One of the most distinguished followers of the new doctrine was lord Cobham. He had been in the early part of his life very wild and ill-conducted; but from the time he adopted the reformed opinions, he had led a moral and religious life. Henry, thinking highly of him as a wise and virtuous man, attempted to reason with him on what he himself thought the fallacy of the new opinions. The king, however, after a long conversation, became so much shocked and provoked by Cobham's obstinacy in the defence of his tenets, that he turned him over to an assembly of bishops, by whom he was committed prisoner to the Tower. From thence he made his escape, and secreted himself in Wales till the year 1417; when a particular search was made for him, on suspicion of his having excited a popular tumult, and being taken, he was condemned and burnt as a heretic.

Meanwhile the miseries of France had increased rather than abated. The civil war raged with greater fury than ever: the nobles seemed to have caught the frantic madness of their monarch, and to be actuated by the desire of exterminating each other. Towns were taken and destroyed, the open

country was desolated by fire and sword, and all to gratify the hatred and revenge of the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy. This sad condition of that unhappy country added fuel to the ambition of the English king. Few of our kings have been able to resist the temptation of a war with France. We ought not, therefore, to wonder that the military ardour of Henry induced him to revive the claim to the crown of that country which had been made by Edward III. He accordingly made preparations for asserting it; and the leading parties in France were so intent on their own internal quarrels, that they saw not the gathering tempest, till it was ready to burst on their heads, and Henry, with thirty thousand men, had already crossed the Channel. He had time to besiege and capture the town of Harfleur, while the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy were at Paris, contending who should command the army which was to be sent against him. This contest being at length decided in favour of the duke of Orleans, he marched from Paris with 100,000 men, meaning at one blow to annihilate the English army, which, by the heat of the weather, and by disorders brought on by eating too much fruit, was now reduced to 10,000 men.

Henry, after repairing Harfleur, and placing an English garrison in it, designed to return to England; but, not to discourage his men by the appearance of a flight, he resolved to march round by Calais. To do this, he had to travel through an

enemy's country, in which there were strong towns to pass, and deep rivers to cross. Nothing daunted, however, he departed from Harfleur in October 1415, proceeding by easy journeys, and enforcing the strictest discipline. He paid the country people liberally for every thing he had of them, and they consequently brought him supplies of provisions, notwithstanding the orders they had received to the contrary. During the march, the king fared no better than the meanest soldier, and encouraged his men by the cheerful and friendly manner in which he conversed with them. His way led him to the ford at Blanchtaque, the same that had been crossed by Edward the Third the day before the battle of Cressy: but the French, profiting by past experience, had driven sharp stakes into the river, and made the ford impassable, and had also placed a strong body of men on the opposite side. This obliged Henry to march farther up the river, till at Berthencourt he fortunately found a ford, where the whole army crossed.

On October 24th they arrived near the village of Azincourt, where they beheld the whole French army drawn up at some distance before them. Henry took an attentive survey of the country from a rising ground, and saw that it was equally impossible to retreat or to advance without a battle. He therefore resolved to hazard one the next morning, and sent his faithful Welsh squire, David Gam, to reconnoitre the number of the French

army. Gam's blunt account was, that "there were enough to fight, enough to be killed, and enough to run away."

The evening was dark and rainy; but, as soon as the moon was risen, the king took advantage of its light to examine the ground with great care. He chose his position on a small rising ground, surrounded on every side by brushwood and trees. He then placed guards and lighted fires, and the army, with the exception of some who passed in prayer what they supposed would be the last night of their lives, retired to rest. As some of the nobles were conversing together, one of them said, he wished all the brave men who were then living idly in England were there to help them. The king happened to overhear them, and cried out, "No! I would not have one more. If we are defeated, we are too many; but if it please God to give us the victory, as I trust he will, the smaller our number, the greater our glory."

While these things were passing in the English camp, the French passed the night in noisy festivity; and, confident of victory on the morrow, it was agreed among them that all the English should be put to the sword, excepting the king and the chief nobility, who were to be saved for the sake of their ransoms.

When morning dawned, Henry summoned his men to attend mass, and then prepared for the battle. He disposed his little force in such a

manner as to make it appear to be more numerous than it really was. In front he placed sharp stakes pointed with iron, a contrivance which was of great service in keeping off the enemy's cavalry. He then rode along the line, clad in shining armour, with a crown of gold, adorned with precious stones, on his head, and addressed an animating speech to each corps as he passed.

The two armies were now drawn up nearly opposite to each other; but, for want of space, the French were not in such good order as the English, who were waiting, every man in his place, with his bow ready bent, for the moment when the charge should be sounded. That instant, the archers who were in front discharged such a flight of arrows as threw the French line into some confusion. As soon as they had expended all their arrows, they rushed on the enemy with their swords and battle-axes, and defeated the first line. The second French line, commanded by the duke d'Alençon, then advanced, and encountered the second line of the English, led on by Henry. The conflict was close and furious, and the duke of Gloucester was wounded and unhorsed, and would have been slain, had not Henry defended him till he could be borne off the field. On this the duke d'Alençon, who had made an oath to kill or take the English king, forced his way to Henry, and, aiming a furious blow, cleft the crown on his helmet; but was immediately overborne and slain without doing him

any farther injury. Eighteen other French knights had also taken the same vow, and like the duke lost their lives in attempting to fulfil it, being all killed by the king's faithful squire, David Gam, and two other Welshmen, who defended their master at the cost of their own lives. Henry knighted these his brave defenders as they lay bleeding to death at his feet.

When the second line of the French army knew that their leader, the duke d'Alençon, was killed, they made no more resistance, and the remaining division of the army fled without having struck a blow. Thus did Henry, after a conflict which lasted only three hours, obtain a complete victory in circumstances that scarcely seemed to allow him any hope of escape from his enemies. The loss of the French, both in killed and prisoners, was immense. Amongst the latter were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon; and it is remarkable that the principal loss fell upon the nobles of the two factions; and that comparatively few of the common men were slain. Henry returned to England in great triumph with his royal prisoners; and the people were in such ecstacies of joy, that when he approached Dover, many of them plunged into the sea to meet his barge.

The cabals amongst the nobles of France, instead of being checked by the late national calamity, only became the more violent. The count d'Armagnac was now, in the absence of the duke

of Orleans, the head of the Orleans faction, and was promoted to be constable of France. The duke of Burgundy, who had himself been ambitious of this dignity, being exceedingly provoked at this preference of the count d'Armagnac, entered into a treaty of alliance with Henry, acknowledging his claim to the crown of France, and engaging to assist him in obtaining it. The new constable, instead of considering of the means to defend his country in this crisis, thought only of his own private animosities. Such was the state of things, when Henry landed with a considerable army in Normandy, on the 1st of August, 1417. No preparations had been made for opposing him, and he marched forwards, taking possession of all the towns in his way; little resistance being attempted, except at Rouen, which sustained a siege of nearly six months, and was at last only reduced by famine.

In the meantime the factions of France, as on Henry's former invasion, were too much occupied in their mutual contests to observe the progress of the English king. The queen, who had been kept in prison by the constable, made her escape, and put herself under the protection of the duke of Burgundy. The dauphin took the side of the Armagnacs, and each party formed bloody plots against the other. But those of the Burgundians were the most successfully executed. The son of the governor of Paris, being in the interests of that party, stole the keys of one of the gates from under his

father's pillow, while he slept, and admitted a small number of the duke's friends into the town at night. They seized the constable, and some of his most powerful partisans, and threw them into prison, and they would also have seized on the person of the dauphin, had he not made his escape. The queen and duke of Burgundy had sent secret orders to their friends in Paris to put every one who was known to be an Armagnac to death. It is said that in consequence of this bloody mandate 14,000 persons were massacred: and while the streets were actually streaming with blood, the queen and duke made their triumphant entry into Paris!

At last, when Henry had conquered the whole of Normandy, the contending parties began to look about them, and to consider, when too late, what was to be done. The queen and the duke of Burgundy invited Henry to a personal interview, where many points were discussed, but nothing finally concluded. The dauphin, alarmed by the duke of Burgundy's alliance with Henry, contrived to detach him from it, and to induce him to make peace with himself: and this apparent reconciliation was hailed as the beginning of a happy change, and was celebrated throughout France with every demonstration of joy; joy, however, which was but of short continuance, for the reconciliation was only pretended on the side of the dauphin, who, inviting the duke to a personal conference on the

bridge of Montereau sur Yonne, caused him to be assassinated, and even stood by, and witnessed the murder.

Nothing could exceed the fury of the Burgundians at this dreadful tragedy: and Philip, the son and successor of the murdered duke, forgetting every other consideration in the desire of vengeance, entered into a treaty with Henry, which went to confer on him the regency of France during the life of the present king, and, at his death, the succession to the crown, in exclusion of the dauphin, against whom England and Burgundy agreed to unite their forces. The king of France was at this time in the power of the Burgundians, and was made a party to their treaty. One of the articles was that Henry was to marry the princess Catherine, the king's youngest daughter. This marriage was accordingly solemnized, and the two kings and their queens made a triumphant entry into Paris, in May, 1420. The title of the new regent was ratified by the states general (a kind of parliament), and the union of the two crowns was celebrated with great outward demonstrations of joy. The duke of Burgundy presented himself to the assembly of the three estates, clothed in the deepest mourning, to demand justice on the murderers of his father, and a sentence of excommunication was pronounced on the dauphin and his accomplices, who were declared incapable of succeeding to any honour or dignity. The dauphin

did not submit tamely to be thus disinherited; but, appealing to God and his sword for the maintenance of his title, he assumed the title of regent, and vigorously defended himself and the few places that still adhered to him.

Early in the following year, Henry, with his young queen, came to England, leaving his brother the duke of Clarence behind him as his lieutenant; but, after a few months' absence, he returned hastily to France, on hearing that the duke of Clarence had been killed in an engagement with some Scottish soldiers in the dauphin's service. Henry took with him the captive king of Scotland, in the hope that the presence of their king would detach the Scots from the dauphin. But his project did not succeed, for they remained steady to the side they had taken. In May, 1422, Henry, with the queen and his son, who had been born a few months before, made a triumphant entry into Paris, to show the people their future king. But, though the magnificence of the show might amuse the Parisians for the moment, it could not stifle the discontent they in secret felt at the humiliation of their country.

After this, Henry rejoined his army, and reduced several towns which had adhered to the dauphin: but while besieging Cosne he was taken ill, and was obliged to give up the command of his army to his brother the duke of Bedford. He

then retired to Bois de Vincennes, near Paris, where he grew rapidly worse. He soon felt himself at the point of death, and sent for the duke of Bedford and the earl of Warwick to come to him, and receive his last directions. He appointed the duke of Bedford regent of France, and the duke of Gloucester regent of England; and his infant son he committed to the care of the earl of Warwick. He also gave a particular charge that the prisoners taken at Azincourt should not be set at liberty till his son was of age. After he had given his final directions, he asked his physicians "how long they thought he might live?" And when they told him, "about two hours," he shut out from his thoughts every earthly care, and spent his remaining moments in devotion. He died Aug. 31, 1422, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the tenth of his reign. His death is said to have been hastened by the unskilfulness of his physicians. His funeral procession was conducted with prodigious pomp through France, and afterwards from Dover to Westminster, where he was buried. Tapers were kept burning day and night on his tomb for nearly 100 years, and might be burning still, perhaps, if all customs of that kind had not been abolished at the Reformation.

He married Catherine of France, and left one son,

Henry, born at Westminster, Dec. 6, 1421.

The queen, soon after his death, married Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, by whom she had three sons—

Edmund, earl of Richmond, married Margaret, daughter of John Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and was the father of Henry Tudor, afterwards king Henry VII.;

Jasper, earl of Pembroke;

Owen.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXI.

Richard. How could queen Catherine marry a Welsh gentleman? I thought queens and princesses only married kings and princes.

Mrs. Markham. It is best for all persons to marry in their own rank of life. Catherine's ill-assorted match brought her into general contempt. Nor does it appear that Owen Tudor had any thing to recommend him but his beauty and his fine dancing. His beauty seemed to be a family quality: for the queen said of some of his relations who were very handsome, but who could only speak Welsh, that "they were the goodliest dumb creatures that ever she saw." He himself had not much reason to rejoice in his great alliance; for after Catherine's death he was committed to the Tower for his presumption in marrying her: but

he contrived to make his escape by the connivance of his keepers, and was killed, many years after, in the civil wars of which you will hear in the next reign.

George. Was it not an odd thing for Henry to knight his Welsh squire who was killed at Azincourt, as if it should do a dying man any good to say to him, "Rise up, sir David Gam?"

Mrs. M. It could, indeed, do him little good; and yet it was, perhaps, the only means at that moment in the king's power to express his sense of gratitude and esteem for such a faithful servant.

Richard. Poor Henry! It was a sad thing that he should die in the midst of all his glory and triumphs.

Mrs. M. The French people had at that period of their history arrived at a very dreadful pitch of wickedness; and nothing, I think, appears more clear, than that Henry was an especial instrument in the hand of Providence to humiliate and chastise them. When he had performed his appointed task, his career was stopped.

Richard. Was it not very extraordinary, mamma, that so small a number of English should again beat an immense army of French?

Mrs. M. The circumstances of the battles of Cressy, Poitiers, and Azincourt, have a singular resemblance to each other. In each we see a wise and politic prince plunging, without any adequate object, into the midst of an enemy's country, and

surrounded and in danger of being destroyed. And in each we see, at the head of an innumerable host of French, a commander who commits the same error of despising, through vain-glory, a handful of desperate men: and that these handfuls of desperate men should each time obtain a complete victory is, doubtless, as you say, very extraordinary.

Mary. I am glad the duke of Orleans was punished by being carried prisoner to England. I hope the dauphin too got well punished.

Mrs. M. We may be willing to believe that his worst crimes are more to be attributed to the evil counsellors who governed him than to a wicked disposition of his own. He was only sixteen years old at the time of the duke of Burgundy's murder, and afterwards, when he became king, his conduct was not marked with cruelty. He had not, however, a very happy life; and the end of it was truly miserable, for he was in such continual dread of being poisoned by his unnatural son, afterwards Louis XI., that he at last refused all food, and starved himself to death.

Mary. I wish, mamma, there were not so many shocking stories in history.

Mrs. M. History is, indeed, a sad catalogue of human miseries, and one is glad to turn from the horrors of war and bloodshed to the tranquillity of private life. Shall I tell you something of the

domestic habits of the English in the fifteenth century?

Mary. Oh do, mamma; I shall like that very much.

Mrs. M. The nobility at that time no longer lived shut up in gloomy castles; but began to inhabit large rambling mansions, built of timber, and covered with plaster. The outside wood work was very much carved, and the windows were large and wide. The principal apartment was the hall, which was two or three stories high, and commonly had an entrance porch. The floor of the upper half of the hall was raised about a foot higher than the rest, and called the *dais*, and there the lord of the mansion sat with his guests. The lower part was common to the menials of the family, of whom there were in every house a great number. The furniture of these halls was not very sumptuous, and usually consisted of only a long table fastened to the floor, three or four wooden benches for the gentlemen, with some low stools for the ladies, and perhaps a corner cupboard.

Mary. But what were the walls covered with?

Mrs. M. Large pieces of tapestry, hung on tenter-hooks, and taken down in summer, were, I believe, their most frequent decoration. I am not quite sure whether wainscoting was used so long ago as the time we are speaking of. Some houses had chimneys; but in many the fire-place was in the

middle of the floor, and, unless when a hole in the roof was made for it, the smoke found its way out through the rafters.

Mary. A fire in the middle of the floor! How very dangerous that must have been!

Mrs. M. There is in the great hall at Penshurst, in Kent, a fire-place of this kind, which is raised on a stone or marble hearth (I have forgot which), with a little ledge round it to prevent the ashes or blazing sticks from falling about.

In these halls, while the nobles and their guests sat at table, they were entertained by singers, minstrels, and dancers. Over their heads were the perches for their hawks, and at their feet the pavement was crowded with dogs, gnawing the bones that were thrown to them: and besides all this, was the bustle and confusion of the numerous and noisy attendants, who, it should appear, were allowed to bawl and shout, and talk to each other.

Richard. Well, I am sure I had rather dine in our neat little dining-room, with only our quiet Thomas to wait upon us, than in one of those great halls with all that noise and dirt.

Mrs. M. In some houses, while the company sat at one end of the hall, the servants dressed the dinner at the other end.

Mary. Why, mamma, that was worse and worse.

Mrs. M. Field sports being our ancestors' chief delight, they had no idea of coming to London for

amusement; yet many of the nobility had houses there, which they occupied when they were summoned by the king, or attended parliament, or on any other public occasion. These houses were called Inns; as Derby Inn, Salisbury Inn, or Furnival's Inn, from the names of their owners. A few very old houses are still standing in the city, and there is one in Bishopsgate Street nearly as old as the time we are speaking of. In towns, the common method of building was to make every story project beyond the one below it, so that in narrow streets the top stories almost met; a style of building which may still be seen in some of our old towns. I remember to have seen several houses of this kind at Wakefield, and I am told that at Chester there are many more.

George. Can you tell us, mamma, what sort of things people had for dinner then?

Mrs. M. They had a great many things we should not think of eating now; a roasted crane, or a stewed porpoise, for instance. At their great entertainments they had much variety, and were very fond of ornamental dishes, such as castles made of pastry, with tigers of jelly. But the common way of living was plain enough; an enormous dish of salt fish, and huge joints of beef, with a little garnish of cabbage, formed the every day dinner of many a noble baron. When he and his guests had eaten what they chose, the serving men took their share, and what remained was given to

the poor, who at the hour of dinner stood in crowds about the gate to receive it.

Mary. Then, at least, they were very charitable.

Mrs. M. I fear it was not a beneficial kind of charity, for it made the poor both idle and clamorous. After what I have been telling you, you will not expect to findthat our ancestors' accommodations for sleeping were very comfortable. In fact there is not a servant in this house who is not better lodged than a nobleman was in the reign of Henry V., when a flock bed and a chaff bolster were considered extraordinary luxuries; while pillows were only made for sick people. Featherbeds, however, we may suppose, were used by kings and princes, as Richard the Second's uncle, the duke of Gloucester, found to his cost; for the common story is, that he was smothered to death with one. The beds of the middle classes of people were straw pallets covered with a sheet, and a log of wood for a bolster, with a blanket and coverlet, like what is now used for horse-cloths. As for servants, they had very seldom any sheets at all to keep the hard straws from hurting them; and the sleeping in night-clothes was an extravagance they did not indulge in. And in war even such accommodations as these were sometimes denied to princes themselves. A few nights before the duke of Clarence was killed, a monk found him in his armour fast asleep in an orchard, lying on the damp grass, with a stone for his pillow.

I must not forget to tell you, Mary, that your favourite "Whittington, lord mayor of London," lived in this reign.

Mary. Why, mamma, I thought the story of him and his cat was only invented to amuse children.

Mrs. M. As for his cat, I do not pretend to vouch; but Whittington was a real person, and a munificent one too; and many of his charitable foundations exist in London to this day.

CHAPTER XXII.

HENRY VI.

[Years after Christ, 1422—1461.]

BEAUCHAMP, EARL WARWICK,
Presenting the infant King Henry the Sixth to the Parliament.

THE duke of Bedford, who was appointed to the regency of France by the late king, was not his inferior either in valour or wisdom, and was much superior to him in the excellent virtues of clemency and command of temper. The earls of Warwick, Salisbury, Arundel, and lord Talbot, who held high offices in the state and army, were all men of

distinguished abilities; so that the death of Henry made no immediate change in the situation of affairs in France. Charles VI. ended his unhappy reign a few months after the death of Henry. The dauphin, Charles VII., immediately assumed the name of king, and lost no opportunity of trying to regain his kingdom: but Bedford did all that a wise and politic man could do to support the interests of his nephew. He agreed to the ransom of the king of Scotland, and made a seventeen years truce with that country, which prevented Charles from obtaining any farther assistance from it.

In 1428, the earl of Salisbury, with a powerful army, laid siege to Orleans, which still adhered to Charles. At the second assault a small tower which defended the bridge was taken. At the top of this tower was a grated window, which overlooked the town; and while the earl of Salisbury was taking a survey from it, he was perceived by the master gunner of the enemy, who aimed a gun at the window, which shivered the iron bars of the grate, and wounded the earl so desperately that he died a few days afterwards. By his death, as the old chronicles tell us, the duke of Bedford was "sore stricken with heaviness, as that he had lost his chief aid in time of necessity." The siege was continued under the direction of the earl of Suffolk and lord Talbot, who completely defeated the army which had been sent to the relief of the town, and Charles now thought it impossible to save it; when

one of the most extraordinary circumstances that has ever been recorded in history occurred, and not only preserved Orleans from the English, but also greatly contributed to their being deprived soon after of all their late conquests in France.

There was a young woman of the name of Joan d'Arc, who was servant at an inn at Neufchatel in Lorraine. The accounts she was continually hearing from the travellers who came to the inn, of the distress the people of Orleans were reduced to, and of the little probability there was that Charles would be able to preserve that town, or any other that remained to him, worked up her mind to such a pitch of sympathy for the sufferers, and of enthusiasm for the cause of her king, that she fancied herself delegated by God to raise the siege of Orleans, and restore to Charles the kingdom of his ancestors. She imparted what she considered her high commission to the governor of a neighbouring town, and desired him to send her to the king. At first the governor treated her as an insane enthusiast; but at last, being overcome by her importunities, he allowed some of his attendants to conduct her to the royal presence. It was two days before she could gain admittance; but when she appeared before the king, and announced her errand, he and his courtiers were so much astonished by her appearance and manner, that they declared themselves convinced of her being commissioned by Heaven to expel the English from France; and an escort

was ordered to conduct her to Orleans. The hardships to which Joan had been inured had qualified her to bear the fatigues of a soldier's life. It having been part of her business at the inn to tend the horses, she was already an expert rider: and when she got admitted into the town, she headed the troops, and made several sallies against the English, in which she was always victorious. The belief of her sacred mission, while it revived the sunk spirits of her countrymen, depressed those of the English soldiers, who, joining in the general superstition, imagined, when they were combating with her, that they were fighting against Heaven: and Suffolk was obliged to raise the siege of Orleans, May 8, 1429.

The French, improving this advantage, laid siege to several of the towns which were held by the English; and in all these sieges the Maid of Orleans, as Joan was now called, behaved with the intrepidity of an experienced soldier. On one occasion, when scaling a wall, she was wounded in the head, and fell from the top of the ladder into the ditch; but without regarding the hurt, she exclaimed with a loud voice, "Advance, advance, my countrymen! the Lord hath doomed the English to destruction!"—Another time she was wounded in the neck by an arrow, and, drawing out the arrow herself, she retired to have the wound dressed, and then returned to lead on the troops.

In the month of June the French and English

armies met. So much discord and confusion prevailed among the English, that the French obtained an easy victory.

These successes greatly increased the fame and influence of Joan: and now, having raised the siege of Orleans, she insisted on being allowed to attempt the object which she had next at heart, that of crowning Charles at Rheims; and in this attempt also she succeeded, although the country about Rheims was for the most part in possession of the enemy. When the ceremony of the coronation was over, Joan announced that she had fulfilled her mission: and falling at the king's feet, besought him to permit her to return to her former station. The king denied her request, and constrained her to remain with the troops; but as a reward for what she had done (being too poor to give her a more substantial one), he ennobled her and her family by the name of "Des Lys." It is supposed that there are still some descendants of the family left who retain that name.

During these events the duke of Bedford was not idle: but his military skill and policy could do little to stem the torrent that was now rapidly leading back the French from their foreign conquerors to their rightful king. He hoped, by having the young Henry also crowned, to counteract the effect of Charles's coronation: but, though the ceremony took place at Paris with great parade and pomp, it had no effect upon the hearts of the French

people, who were only drawn the more towards their own king by seeing another assume those honours that ought to have been his.

On the first unexpected turn of fortune, the French commanders had been willing to give all the honour of their successes to Joan; but after a time they became jealous of her fame: and one day, when some troops under her command were repulsed near Compeigne, and obliged to retreat into the town, the governor admitted all the party except poor Joan, who, it is said, was purposely shut out. Being thus left alone amidst a host of enemies, she was pulled from her horse and taken prisoner. It is with sorrow that I retrace the short remainder of this heroic woman's life. The treatment she received from the duke of Bedford and his council is a lasting stain upon the memories of men, who, as soldiers, Englishmen, and Christians, should have shown humanity and justice towards her. She was burnt alive in the market-place at Rouen; and Charles, who owed so much to her services, made no effort to save her.

In 1435, the duke of Burgundy withdrew from his alliance with the English, and a solemn peace was ratified between him and Charles at Arras; an event that was celebrated throughout France with transports of joy, but which caused such deep vexation to the duke of Bedford as to occasion his death.

His death was a serious loss to the English, and

not only in regard to their affairs in France, but also in regard to the government at home; as he had often quelled, by his influence and authority, the disagreements between the duke of Gloucester, who was the regent of England, and the cardinal Beaufort, a natural son of old John of Gaunt, who had now the principal care of the young king. The duke of Bedford's death opened a fresh subject of contention, in the choice to be made of a new regent of France; and while the English council was disputing who should be appointed to that office, Charles got possession of Paris, and of many other important places. The duke of York was at last appointed to the regency.

He, when he arrived in France, found affairs there in a very declining state, and only supported by the bravery and exertions of lord Talbot, who was now the sole survivor of Henry the Fifth's brave band of warriors. In 1438, a dreadful famine and pestilence raged in England and France, and almost occasioned a cessation of hostilities: and a negotiation for peace was entered into, which the duchess of Burgundy, from truly Christian motives, laboured heartily to promote. This good princess was daughter of the king of Portugal, and granddaughter of John of Gaunt: but some trifling difficulties on the subject of doing homage made her good offices of no effect, and prevented an end being yet put to a war, which had desolated France and exhausted England for twenty-five years.

After some little interval the war was renewed with vigour on both sides. Charles, who was naturally very indolent, roused himself into activity. Talbot, who had the command of the English army, conducted the war with his accustomed skill and bravery: but the disputes and factions at home made all his endeavours to preserve the possessions of the English in France of no avail. In 1440 the duke of Orleans, after a tedious and melancholy captivity, which had lasted ever since the battle of Azincourt, regained his liberty and returned home: and, in 1444, he and the duchess of Burgundy procured a truce for six years between the two countries.

Hitherto Henry VI. has been almost entirely out of sight. In fact he would have been very glad to have remained so: for, being of a timid and quiet disposition, he was unfit for the cares of royalty, and its parade and bustle brought him only weariness in his youth, disgust in his riper years, and sorrow in his age. He inherited neither the fine qualities nor the majestic figure of his father, nor any of his mother's delicate beauty. His personal appearance was inelegant, his countenance dull and unmeaning; he was of a gentle and humane disposition, but from the inferiority of his understanding was only fit to be a passive instrument in the hands of others.

Henry was in his twenty-fourth year, when cardinal Beaufort, chiefly for the sake of thwarting

the duke of Gloucester, who wished the king to make some more advantageous alliance, contrived his marriage with Margaret of Anjou. Gloucester, as if he had foreseen the miseries which this fatal union was to bring upon the country, did all in his power to prevent it. But his efforts only made Beaufort and his party the more eager to bring it about, and the marriage took place in 1445. Instead of the king's receiving any dower with his bride, he agreed to give up a large tract of Maine and Anjou to her father, who was a relation of the king of France, and titular king of Sicily, but without territories.

Margaret was a woman of a high spirit and a vindictive temper. She never forgave the duke of Gloucester for the opposition he had made to her marriage, and came to England vowing vengeance against him in her heart. She found willing associates in cardinal Beaufort and the duke of Suffolk, who had already, by their machinations, involved Gloucester's wife, Eleanor Cobham, in a charge of witchcraft, and caused her to be sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in the Isle of Man: and they now entered with the queen into a wicked confederacy to accuse the duke of high treason, but found it impossible to substantiate any actual charge against him. He was, notwithstanding, imprisoned, and soon afterwards was found dead in his bed. It has never, I believe, been clearly ascertained whether he died naturally, or

by violent means; but the belief that the queen and Beaufort had caused him to be murdered was so general that the whole nation regarded them with detestation. If Margaret was really accessary to this horrid deed, she was fully punished. Gloucester's death was, in fact, her greatest misfortune: for, had he lived, his ability, his integrity, and his great popularity, would probably have preserved the royal family from those calamities that afterwards befell them. Cardinal Beaufort did not live to see the evils he had helped to bring on the country, and died soon after Gloucester, in 1447.

The queen and Suffolk now managed every thing their own way, and by their violent and rapacious conduct made themselves more and more abhorred. While Gloucester lived, they had not ventured to acknowledge the agreement that had been made to give up Maine and Anjou to Margaret's father. And knowing that the duke of York, who acquitted himself with great wisdom and prudence in the regency of France, would never consent to the execution of a measure so ruinous to the English cause, they recalled him, and gave the regency to Beaufort, duke of Somerset, nephew to the cardinal. Suffolk and Margaret had soon reason to repent of this unwise measure. For York, who had hitherto been a man of strict loyalty, feeling himself greatly injured, now meditated on a high revenge, that of asserting his own right to the crown. By his father he was descended from Edward the Third's

youngest son. From his mother, who was the last of the Mortimers, he inherited the claim of that family from Lionel, *second* son of the same king. You must not forget that John of Gaunt, from whom Henry the Sixth was descended, was Edward's *third* son. Therefore York, in right of his mother, had certainly a superior claim to the throne. He kept his designs secret for some time, lying in wait for an opportunity of forwarding them.

In 1450 the queen and Suffolk, by their mismanagement, lost the whole of Normandy; and the popular indignation against them became so great, that the parliament committed Suffolk to the Tower, and tried him for high treason. The queen contrived that he should be only sentenced to a five years' banishment. But the resentment of his enemies was not to be so easily satisfied. He was pursued from Harwich, where he had embarked, and overtaken before he had reached the opposite shore. Being brought to Dover, his head was struck off on the side of a small boat, and his body was left on the beach, where it was found by his chaplain, who conveyed it to be buried at Wingfield in Suffolk.

The unsettled state of the country now showed itself in tumults and insurrections. The most formidable was one that broke out in Kent, headed by a man named Jack Cade, who defeated an army of 15,000 of the king's troops at Sevenoaks; and, elated by this victory, advanced to London. Enter-

ing the city, he put to death the sheriff and several nobles, and striking with his staff what is called London stone, said, "Now am I master of London." But his triumph did not last long, for lord Scales with a strong body of men soon drove out both him and his rabble; and, a pardon being offered to all who would return to their homes, Cade soon found himself without a single follower. For a short time he wandered about in disguise, but was at last found lurking in a garden at Rothfield in Sussex, where he was killed by Alexander Eden, a gentleman of Kent.

In 1451, Calais was all that remained to the English in France. The venerable Talbot, now in his 80th year, obtained permission to make a last effort for the recovery of Guienne. He landed at Bordeaux, Oct. 17, 1452, and for a time success attended him: but on July 23, 1453, this brave veteran was killed in an attack on the French camp at Chatillon; and his son, lord Lisle, refusing to comply with his father's entreaties that he would fly and save himself, was slain fighting by his side.

The duke of Somerset now returned to England, and became the queen's adviser and favourite. His misconduct in France had made him very unpopular, and all eyes naturally looked up to the duke of York, who had acquitted himself so well during his regency. In 1454 the king sunk into a state of total bodily and mental weakness. The duke of York was on this made protector of the kingdom;

and the first use he made of his power was to put Somerset in prison. The king soon after recovered his reason, and then Somerset was set at liberty, and York displaced from the protectorship.

The animosity between these two nobles soon afterwards threw the whole nation into a ferment. They both assembled their friends and vassals, and met at St. Alban's, where a desperate battle was fought, May 3, 1455, in which Somerset was killed, and the duke of York was completely victorious. The king, whom Somerset had dragged much against his will into the battle, was wounded, and took refuge in the house of a tanner. Here the duke of York found him, and falling upon his knees before him, declared himself his loyal subject, and ready to obey his commands. "If so," said the king, "then stop the pursuit and slaughter."

The use which was made by the duke of York of this signal victory was marked with the greatest gentleness and moderation. He conducted Henry to London, and treated him with every mark of submission and respect; and though some people regard the duke's conduct on this occasion as a deep-laid artifice to lull the royal party into security till his own plots were more fully ripe, we may rather hope that it may have really proceeded from the natural goodness of his disposition: for throughout the whole of this unhappy contest he seemed more inclined to mercy than to vengeance.

Notwithstanding, however, York's professions of loyalty, yet, under pretence of freeing the king from evil counsellors, he continued to carry on a civil war against him; and the battle of St. Alban's was followed by many others, which were fought with various success between the two parties. At last the duke declared his secret views on the crown itself, and on this many who had joined him, because they supposed him to be contending solely for the public good, deserted his standard. He, seeing himself thus suddenly abandoned, retired for a time into Ireland. Nevil, earl of Warwick, a very powerful nobleman, and brother to the duchess of York, assembled a body of 25,000 men, and obtained at Northampton so great a victory over the royalists that they fled in all directions. The queen and her son, the prince of Wales, were obliged to fly with a few attendants, and escaped with great difficulty into Scotland, where they were received with great kindness by the young king, James III., and were soon after joined by the duke of Exeter and others of the king's friends, who now began to be called *Lancastrians*. The earl of Warwick, after the battle of Northampton, had found the king sitting alone in his tent, and carried him in triumph to London.

The duke of York now returned to England, and laid before the parliament his claim to the crown. That he was the direct heir of Edward III. could not be denied, but the principle of keeping

the succession in the direct line was not invariable, or, at least, was not always strictly attended to; and the parliament was unwilling to dethrone the reigning king. It was therefore determined, after many warm debates, that Henry should continue on the throne during his life, but that, on his death, the duke of York and his heirs should succeed instead of the prince of Wales, the king's only child. But Margaret was not of a disposition calmly to see her son thus set aside. By great exertions she contrived to collect a body of 20,000 men, consisting chiefly of borderers, whom she enticed into her service by the promise of giving them the plunder of the fertile lands of England. With this army she proceeded towards London, and at Wakefield was met by the duke of York, who, not aware of the number of her forces, had with him only 5000 men. He wished to have remained on the defensive in Sandal Castle, near Wakefield, till his son Edward should arrive with a reinforcement; but by the advice of the earl of Salisbury he changed his plan, and on the 30th of December, 1460, marched in order of battle to meet the enemy;—a fatal determination, for his little army was totally defeated. He himself was among the first who fell, and the spot where he was slain is still fenced off in the corner of a field near Sandal.—Richard duke of York had many great and good qualities, and his death was sincerely lamented by all who had taken up his cause. He left three

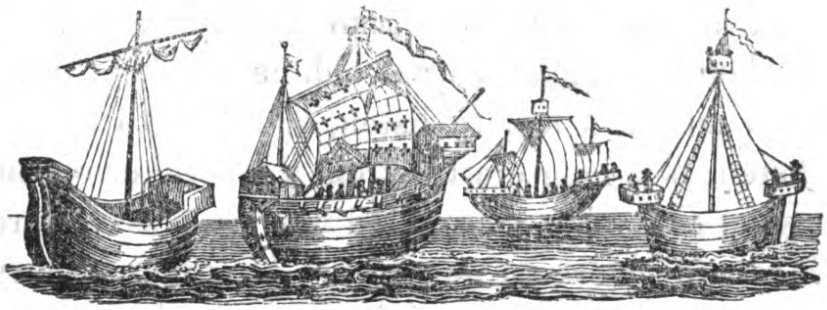
sons, Edward, George, and Richard, and three daughters. Another son, Edmund, who was earl of Rutland, a beautiful boy of twelve years of age, was killed on the same day with his father, being butchered by lord Clifford on Wakefield bridge, where a small chapel, which is still standing, was afterwards built, to perpetuate the memory of that bloody deed.

Margaret, equally merciless in victory as she had been undaunted in defeat, sent the earl of Salisbury, and many other knights and gentlemen, to Pontefract, where they were beheaded without a trial. She caused the head of the duke of York to be stuck on the gates of York, with a paper crown on it. The head of the innocent Rutland was also cut off and placed by the side of his father's. The queen then set forwards to London; and the borderers fully availed themselves of their licence to plunder, for they pillaged and burnt every church and dwelling, marking their way by fire and devastation.

The earl of Warwick hastened to meet the queen, taking with him the poor passive king. On February 17, 1461, the two armies met at St. Alban's, which was a second time the scene of a bloody battle. The Lancastrians obtained the victory, and Warwick fled from the field, leaving the king behind, who rejoiced to be restored to the queen and his son. Margaret, however, notwithstanding this victory, finding, as she advanced

nearer London, that the party of the Yorkists was stronger than she had expected, was obliged to retreat again into the North; and Edward, the young duke of York, after obtaining a victory over the Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross, near Hereford, entered London on the 3d of March, and was proclaimed king with the loudest acclamations of the populace. The next day he went in solemn procession to Westminster Hall, where he took his seat on the throne, and received the homage of the nobles who were present.—Henry the Sixth lived many years after this event, but as we are now come to the conclusion of his reign, this chapter had, perhaps, best end here.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXII.



A Ship of the time of Richard II. *A Ship of Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 1420.* *Ships of the time of Edward III.*

Mary. I am glad the duke of York is made king. I hope there will be some quiet now.

Mrs. Markham. I fear you will be disap-

pointed. Margaret, you will find, did not submit patiently to see her son deprived of his rights.

Richard. Of his rights, mamma! Why, you know he had none, for the duke of York had more right to the crown than he had.

Mrs. M. I see, my dear, you are like the rest of the good people of England, who, while they had a brave and victorious monarch like Henry the Fifth, never troubled themselves about the forgotten claims of the Mortimers; but you now find out that his poor helpless son is an usurper, and are become a furious Yorkist.

Richard. Why, to be sure, mamma, there is something in that; for, as to Henry VI., he was no better than a baby king from first to last.

Mrs. M. Some witty person has said, "Princes are flattered by all things but their horses, who will make no more ceremony about throwing a king than a groom:" and few kings can have been earlier inured to flattery than Henry the Sixth; for, when only eight months old, he was kept quiet on his mother's lap, to listen, or rather to appear to listen, to a long oration from the speaker of the house of commons, who called him "a most toward prince and sovereign governor." However, Henry was better off than most princes in having a wise and sincere friend in the good old Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who, when the king was eleven years old, not only himself reprimanded him, but also desired the council would in a body admonish him

of his faults: and we may hope their admonitions were not thrown away; for, though he was a very insignificant king, he was, as a man, amiable, well-meaning, and pious. Indeed, an old historian says of him, that "there never was a more holy, nor a better creature, a man of a meek spirit, and a simple wit, preferring peace to war, and rest to business, and honesty before profit. He was governed of those he should have ruled, and bridled of those he should have sharply spurred."

Mary. Pray, mamma, why was the duke of Gloucester's wife accused of witchcraft; and what are witches?

Mrs. M. There are no such people as witches in reality; but it was one of the vulgar superstitions of those ignorant times to believe that God permitted his all-wise decrees to be influenced by the malevolent feelings of particular persons, who were called witches and sorcerers, and were supposed to have the power of destroying life and health by their spells. It would be a most unprofitable waste of time to recount the wild and idle opinions that were entertained on this subject.

Mary. But why was Eleanor Cobham thought to be a witch?

Mrs. M. One of the proofs that were brought against her was a paper of mathematical figures written by her priest, which the ignorance of the people who found it imagined to be some magical incantation. But the real cause of poor Eleanor's

accusation was the cardinal Beaufort's hatred of her husband, which made him glad to vex and injure him in every possible way.

Mary. Then I am sure the duke of Gloucester could not have liked the cardinal.

Mrs. M. We cannot suppose he felt much good will towards him. But Gloucester, the good duke Humphry, as he is called, was a man of high principles and integrity, and sacrificed his private feelings of resentment to what he considered his duty to his king.

Richard. What three fine fellows Henry V. and his two brothers were!

Mrs. M. It is not often that history presents to us three brothers of such fine qualities, and such superior abilities. I think that of the three the duke of Bedford is my favourite: and, excepting that dreadful blot of his conduct towards Joan of Arc, he was "a man almost blameless." When Charles the Seventh got possession of Rouen, his courtiers proposed to him to destroy a monument of black marble that was raised on the grave of the English hero. "No," said Charles, "let him repose in peace, and be thankful that he *does* repose, for were he to awake, he would make the stoutest of us tremble."

Richard. I should like to know what the exact business of the parliament is.

Mrs. M. If you mean what the business of the parliament is *now*, that would lead me into too long

a discussion: but if you want to know what it was in the early part of our history, I can, I believe, satisfy you.

In the reign of Edward the First, the parliament had little else to do but to grant supplies for the purpose of carrying on the king's wars. As its necessity and importance increased, so did its power; and succeeding kings, whatever laws *they* might make, could not establish them till they were ratified by the parliament. In Richard the Second's reign these functions were reversed: the parliament made the laws, and the king sanctioned them.—The reigns of the Lancastrian kings proved favourable to the liberty of the people; for the two first monarchs of that family, conscious of the weakness of their own title, and how much they owed to the good will of the people, were naturally inclined to make concessions to them; and it was during this period that the power of the parliament became confirmed. And though the constitution, government, and laws of England had not then arrived at that degree of perfection which they have since attained, yet they were even then better than those of any other country in Europe; at least, if we may believe Philip de Comines, a French writer, who wrote the memoirs of his own times, (which are the times we are now speaking of), and who says: "In my opinion, of all the states in the world that I have seen, England is the country

where the commonwealth is best governed, and the people least oppressed."

Richard. But surely, mamma, during the civil wars, the people must have been oppressed.

Mrs. M. The sufferings of many thousands of individuals must doubtless have been very great: but the laws and constitution remained unchanged: and the cause of freedom having once taken root, strengthened by degrees, till the liberty of the people, the power of the nobles, and the dignity of the crown, became, at length, happily balanced.

George. As Richard says he means some time or other to be a member of parliament, it may be very right to tell him about laws, and government, and all that: but as I should like to be a sailor, I wish you would tell me something about ships, and the progress of the British navy.

Mrs. M. Henry IV., who was in many respects a politic ruler, strengthened his navy, and checked the depredations of the privateers, who had become so troublesome, since the time of Edward the Third, as greatly to impede the commerce of England. His son, Henry V., was as victorious by sea as by land; and, while he and the duke of Bedford lived, England maintained the dominion of the narrow seas. Then Beauchamp earl of Warwick, for a while, kept up the honour of the English navy. During the long wars of York and Lancaster its glory declined; but again revived under Edward

the Fourth, who not only was an encourager of commerce, but was also a sort of merchant himself; for he had many trading vessels of his own. In his reign the fisheries also began to be much attended to, so that, about this period, many different kinds of ships were employed. The importance of a navy to England was long ago discovered, and in a poem, written in the beginning of the fifteenth century, we are told that our prosperity can never be shaken so long as we keep possession of our "sea walle."

The construction of ships had undergone very great changes since the reign of Richard the Second. The ships of war were of a much larger size, and on the top of the mast was a little wooden tower, where three or four men could stand to hurl down stones and arrows into an enemy's ship. In Henry the Sixth's time, decks and bowsprits were added; and the large ships were exceedingly encumbered by a sort of wooden house or castle at each end.

George. Oh pray, dear mamma, don't forget to call it *fore* and *aft*, instead of talking of *each end.*

Mrs. M. I see I must take care what I am about, when I describe ships to such an experienced seaman.—The ships of war were much ornamented with gilding and painting; and armorial bearings and badges were embroidered on the sails and streamers. The vessel in which Henry the

Fifth sailed to France, just before the battle of Azincourt, had purple sails, embroidered with gold.

George. Well, give me good plain sail-cloth, and a fifty-gun frigate.

Mrs. M. The ships I have been describing were not without guns, though these guns were not very serviceable; for they were fixed in their places in the ship, and had no carriages.

Mary. Pray, mamma, what is London stone, that Jack Cade struck with his staff?

Mrs. M. It is a large stone, preserved to this day in Cannon-street in the city. It is supposed to have been placed there by the Romans, to mark the spot from which they measured the distances from London.

THE EARL OF SALISBURY,
who was killed at the siege of Orleans, 1428.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EDWARD IV.

[Years after Christ, 1461—1483.]

A specimen of early engraving from the Boke of Chess, the first book printed in England.

EDWARD was scarcely nineteen years old, when he found himself, almost beyond his own expectation, thus suddenly placed upon the throne. He was brave, active, and enterprising, with a capacity far beyond his years, and was exceedingly handsome. Comines says of him, that "he was tall of person, fair of face, of a most princely presence,

and altogether the goodliest man that ever mine eyes beheld:" but one almost regrets to find all these attractive and brilliant qualities in a sovereign whose character is blackened by the worst vices. In peace he revelled in every kind of self-indulgence, and in war was sanguinary beyond all who had gone before him. As a warrior he had great skill or, at least, great success. He told Comines that he had been in nine battles, in eight of which he fought on foot, and had never once been defeated.

The first battle which was fought after he became king was at Towton, a village between Ferrybridge and Tadcaster. Never did two mighty armies encounter each other with more inveterate hatred; and the orders of the commanders on each side were to take no prisoners, and give no quarter. The battle lasted from early in the morning till late in the evening, and was one of the most bloody ever fought in Britain. The snow fell thickly, but the Yorkists had their backs to the storm, while the Lancastrians, who faced it, were greatly incommoded by it. The latter, after a desperate struggle, at length gave way, and, flying from the field, were pursued with great slaughter. When the news of this defeat reached York, Henry and his family, who were there waiting the result, fled with the utmost precipitation to Scotland.

A parliament, which was now summoned to settle the government, confirmed Edward's title to the

throne. The new king satiated his revengeful temper by many bloody executions, and every Lancastrian who fell into his hands was condemned as a traitor. To strengthen his own party, he conferred honours and titles on all his friends. Indeed it was doubly expedient for him to make new peers, since the late exterminating wars, and the executions which had been made by his own order, had greatly reduced the numbers of the nobility. He created his brother George duke of Clarence, and his brother Richard duke of Gloucester.

In the meantime queen Margaret made two voyages to France in hopes of obtaining aid from thence. At last Louis the Eleventh, who had succeeded his father Charles VII. in 1460, supplied her with a small body of troops, on condition that she should give Calais up to him, if she ever regained the crown of England. With these troops she advanced from Scotland, and took the castles of Alnwick and Bamborough, in Northumberland. But her success was of short duration. Lord Montacute, brother of the earl of Warwick, gained a victory over her at Hedgely Moor, April 25th, 1464: and three weeks afterwards he gained another at Hexham, which was so decisive that Henry was only saved by the swiftness of his horse from being made prisoner. The queen and her son sought to conceal themselves in a wood; but there, losing their way, they fell amongst a gang of robbers, who took from them every thing they had

that was valuable. The robbers then luckily began to quarrel about the division of the plunder, which gave Margaret and the prince an opportunity of escaping from them. As they were wandering about bewildered in the wood, they encountered another robber. The queen, knowing that both flight and resistance were impossible, went boldly up to him, and presenting her son, said, "Behold, my friend, the son of your king! I commit him to your protection:" which appeal so wrought upon the man, that he led them to a place of concealment, where they remained till the pursuit was over. He then conducted them to the sea-coast, from whence they made their escape to France.

Henry, meanwhile, had fled into Lancashire, where he was with difficulty protected by his friends for more than a year, and where he suffered many hardships and privations in his wanderings from one place of concealment to another. In July, 1465, as he was at dinner at Waddington Hall, he was betrayed by a monk to sir James Harrington, who conveyed him to London, and resigned him into the hands of his great enemy, the earl of Warwick. Warwick treated him with the utmost indignity, and tying his feet in the stirrups, as if he had been a criminal, compelled him to ride in that manner three times round the pillory, while the populace were by proclamation forbidden to show him any marks of respect or compassion. He was then committed to the Tower.

The Lancastrians were now reduced to so much distress, that many of the most distinguished nobles of that party were absolutely begging their bread in foreign lands, while the Yorkists were revelling in their forfeited estates. Edward indulged himself in all the luxuries and pleasures to which his disposition strongly inclined him. Some time before he had become attached to Elizabeth Wydville, daughter of Jacqueline duchess of Bedford (who after the death of the duke of Bedford had married sir Richard Wydville), and widow of sir John Grey, of Grooby, by whom she had two sons. Edward soon after privately married her, though he did not at first venture to declare his marriage. The court was soon filled by the new queen's relations. Her father was created lord Rivers. Her three brothers and five sisters were all raised to the rank of nobility, and married into the greatest families, and her eldest son was married to the king's niece, daughter of the duke of Exeter. This sudden prosperity made the new queen's family objects of jealousy to all the other courtiers; and though the court was one continued scene of revelry, there was no real happiness to be found in it; for under an outside of gaiety and amusement, was hid a smothered fire of hatred and envy.

The earl of Warwick, who had been desirous to connect the king with some powerful foreign family, was exceedingly indignant at his impolitic marriage, and could with difficulty conceal his dislike

of the queen and all her relations. The king's two brothers also, seeing themselves supplanted by these new favourites, felt a growing antipathy to them all. The queen's father and one of her brothers were, however, soon removed out of the reach of enmity, being killed in an insurrection which broke out in 1469. In the same year, the duke of Clarence, who had married Isabella, Warwick's eldest daughter, conspired with his father-in-law against the king. They at first retired into France, where they were soon joined by all the scattered friends of the house of Lancaster. Queen Margaret, who with her son had been living in retirement in Lorraine, seized this opportunity of again coming forward, and cemented the union she now made with Warwick, who had before been her most inveterate enemy, by the marriage of the young prince, her son, with the earl's youngest daughter Anne. And it was concerted amongst them to dethrone Edward, and that Warwick should be regent of England during the life of Henry, or till his son prince Edward should be of age, and that in case the prince should die without children, Clarence should be king after him.

While these plans were forming, Edward was giving himself up to a succession of diversions; and though he was warned of the coming storm by the duke of Burgundy, who had married one of his sisters, still he seemed wilfully blind to his danger; and when Warwick landed at Dartmouth, Sept.

13, 1470, and was joined by numbers of disaffected persons, he was as much taken by surprise as if he had received no notice of the intended invasion. With great hazard he and the duke of Gloucester escaped in a trading vessel to Friesland. They had embarked with so much haste that they were unprovided with money enough to pay for their passage, and the king was obliged to recompense the captain of the ship by giving him his cloke. The queen remained in England, and with her daughters took refuge in the Sanctuary at Westminster, where her son, afterwards Edward V., was born.

Edward being gone, and the Yorkists stunned as it were by so sudden a blow, the earl of Warwick carried all before him. The poor forgotten Henry was now dragged from his prison, and once more made a king. But he enjoyed, or rather endured, his restoration only a few months; for the Yorkists recovering from their consternation, Edward returned to England, and early in 1471 regained possession of London, and again committed his helpless rival to the Tower. Warwick collected all his forces, and marched in haste against Edward, who, aware of his movements, advanced to meet him. The two armies approached each other near Barnet, April 12th, and in the night time the fickle Clarence deserted to his brother with 12,000 men. The next day the fight began, and the advantage was undecided, till the soldiers

of Warwick attacked by mistake a party of their own friends, who, thinking they were betrayed, immediately fled. This threw the Lancastrians into confusion, and Edward, improving the advantage, became entire master of the field. The great earl of Warwick died covered with wounds, and many other nobles fell with him.

Queen Margaret and her son had embarked for England on March the 4th, but had been tossed about by contrary winds, and did not land till the evening of the day on which the battle of Barnet was fought. When, instead of the triumphant return they had anticipated, they found that all their hopes were blasted by the catastrophe of that fatal day, the queen's undaunted spirit forsook her for the first time. She sank to the ground and fainted. When she revived, she fled with her son to the Sanctuary at Beaulieu; and intended to have returned immediately to France. But some of the dispersed Lancastrians gathering around her, she was persuaded to stay and make one more effort to regain the kingdom: a fatal resolution, which cost the lives of many brave men, who were defeated and slain in a battle that was fought at Tewkesbury, on the 3d of May. The queen and the young prince were soon after taken prisoners, and thus an end was put to the bloody contest between these two rival families, a contest which had lasted eighteen years, and had cost the lives of sixty princes of the royal family, above one half of the

nobles and principal gentry of the kingdom, and 100,000 of the common people.

After the battle of Tewkesbury, the young prince Edward was brought into the king's presence, who asked him how he dared to come into his kingdom in arms. He boldly replied, "I came to recover my father's kingdom:" upon which Edward struck him on the face with his gauntlet, and the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, with their attendants, instantly fell upon him with their swords, and killed him.—Margaret survived her son nine miserable years, five of which she was kept prisoner in the Tower. Louis XI. then ransomed her, and she returned to France, where she died in 1480.

Edward, after the murder of the prince, returned in triumph to London, and the next day Henry VI. was found dead in the Tower. The manner of his death will probably ever be a secret; but there is a suspicion of his having been murdered by the duke of Gloucester. By the death of prince Edward, Anne, daughter of the earl of Warwick, was now a widow. Gloucester, though his hands were stained with the blood of her husband, resolved to marry her: but Clarence, who had married her eldest sister, wished her to remain single, that he might secure to himself the whole of earl Warwick's vast estates, and contrived to secrete her. At last Gloucester discovered her, disguised as a cookmaid in London, and immediately married her.

In 1475 Edward made great preparations for a war with France, and landed at Calais with 30,000 men. But while the English at home were expecting great conquests from this powerful armament, Edward, who was now grown indolent, and fonder of pleasure than of war, suffered himself to be cajoled, by the cunning of Louis the Eleventh, into a disgraceful peace, and accepted of a large sum of money as the price of his peaceable return to England. Louis also corrupted the integrity of many of the English nobles, and bribed them by rich presents and pensions to be favourable to the interests of France.

The king now led a life of self-indulgence and luxury: but he had one secret care which corroded all his enjoyments. Although the family of Lancaster had been in a manner extirpated, one distant and illegitimate branch still remained. Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, a grandson of Owen Tudor, and descended, by his mother, from a natural son of John of Gaunt, was the only person now left alive, in whose veins ran any of the blood of the Lancasters. He was, therefore, considered as the representative of that family. He had been brought up in the court of the duke of Bretagne, who protected him from every attempt the king of England made to get him into his power. Edward promised to marry the young Richmond to his eldest daughter, and thus to unite the two houses of York and Lancaster; and by this promise the

duke was prevailed on to send him to England. But no sooner was he set out, than the duke began to doubt the sincerity of Edward's intentions, and sent after Richmond and brought him back, and thus probably saved him from destruction; for Edward's disposition to cruelty seemed to have increased with his years.

In 1478, Clarence having spoken with imprudent freedom of the king, Edward appeared glad to seize the opportunity of getting rid of a brother whose fickleness and petulance were continually giving him offence. Clarence was impeached and condemned to die by the parliament; but, as a royal and brotherly favour, the king allowed him to choose the manner of his death. It is difficult to believe historians when they gravely tell us that he desired to be drowned in a butt of malmsey. He left a son, who had the title of Warwick from his grandfather, and a daughter, afterwards countess of Salisbury, who both, as you will hear, died on the scaffold.

Edward was chiefly employed during his latter years in making negotiations with foreign princes, most of which came to nothing. In his private life he was sunk in sloth and vice. He died April 9, 1483, in the forty-first year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. His life is said to have been shortened by his excesses, and by vexation at having been outwitted by Louis XI. in a nego-

tiation for a marriage he had much at heart, between his eldest daughter and the dauphin.

He married Elizabeth Wydville, and left two sons and five daughters:

Edward, who succeeded him;

Richard, duke of York;

Elizabeth, married the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII.;

Cecilia, married lord Wells;

Anne, married the duke of Norfolk;

Bridget, a nun;

Catherine, married the earl of Devonshire.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXIII.

George. As for that Louis XI., I cannot bear to think of him, and his cunning, and his bribing king Edward and his courtiers.

Richard. But I think it was much worse in Edward and his nobles to accept bribes from a king of France. Well, I think that will not happen again: at least not in our time, I hope.

Mrs. Markham. Philip de Comines gives an entertaining account, though at the same time rather a mortifying one, of the artful way in which Louis cajoled the English. All the while he was

treating Edward and his courtiers with the most profound respect to their faces, he used behind their backs to divert himself and his confidants with ridiculing them for being so mercenary and greedy.

Richard. Pray, who was this Philip de Comines?

Mrs. M. He was a Flemish gentleman, who was first in the service of the duke of Burgundy, and afterwards in that of Louis XI., and of his son Charles the Eighth. He did not, like Froissart, travel about to collect news, but merely wrote a relation of what passed within his own knowledge. Having been much employed in affairs of importance by his sovereigns, and being also a man of a fine understanding, and clear judgment, his book is not only valuable for the insight it gives us into the times in which he lived, but also for the general remarks and reflections with which his anecdotes are interspersed. He gives in his memoirs a melancholy description of the condition of the Lancastrian exiles, who had taken refuge in the duke of Burgundy's territories. "Many of them," he says, "were in such extremity of want and poverty, that no common beggar could have been in greater. I have seen the duke of Exeter (but he concealed his name) barefoot and barelegged, begging from door to door: but, becoming known, the duke of Burgundy bestowed on him a pension."

Mary. Indeed, that was very terrible: but I hope there were not many who were so distressed.

Mrs. M. The state of the Lancastrians was everywhere deplorable. Edward, with savage ferocity, did all he could to exterminate them, and those who remained in England could only save themselves by concealment. The son of that lord Clifford who murdered young Rutland was concealed in a poor cottage in Yorkshire, and brought up as a shepherd. Sir Humphry Nevil, another Lancastrian, was hid for five years in a cave on the banks of the Derwent; and a lady of high rank, and related to the royal family, whose name I do not just now recollect, maintained herself and her family for some time by working with her needle, and, when that failed, she was obliged to beg about the streets of London.

Richard. What did Edward do with all the estates he took away from the Lancastrians?

Mrs. M. Edward enriched his two brothers with many of them. The earl of Warwick had also a very large grant. This nobleman inherited great estates from his ancestors, and had married the heiress of the old Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, so that he was the richest subject in the kingdom. On his different estates he maintained 30,000 people, a number which must be considered the more extraordinary, as the whole kingdom did not, probably, at this time, contain much more than 2,300,000 souls, not the fifth part of its present inhabitants.

Stow, a writer of this time, who has given us a Survey of London, describes Warwick coming there with a train of 600 men, all in red jackets, embroidered on the sleeves with the bear and ragged staff, the badge of his family. He lodged in his house in Warwick Lane, and six oxen were often consumed in it for breakfast; and not only his own people were fed at his cost, but all persons who had any acquaintance with those of his household might come and carry off as much boiled and roast meat as they could take away on their daggers. So you see it is no wonder he was so popular, and could raise armies and make and unmake kings as he pleased.

Mary. Pray, mamma, what was a badge?

Mrs. M. It was a device adopted by families, or individuals, and worn by their retainers. Sometimes political parties adopted these badges, or devices. For example, that of the Lancastrians was a red rose; and a white rose was that of the house of York.

George. All these parties appear to me so bad alike, that had I lived then, I should never have known whether to have followed the red rose or the white.

Mrs. M. The events of the reign of Edward IV. are exceedingly confused, and the accounts we have of them are so contradictory, that I have found no period of our history so difficult as this. Most historians complain of the same difficulty,

and of our having but few books of this period, which some have thought to account for by attributing it to the then recent discovery of the art of printing.

Richard. How could that be the cause?

Mrs. M. It has been supposed that the business of transcribing declined before printing was brought to sufficient perfection to supply its place.

Richard. Will you, if you please, mamma, tell us all about printing, and who it was who was so lucky as to invent it?

Mrs. M. Whoever it was, we owe him a great deal; but so many persons have claimed the merit of the invention, that we hardly know to whom to ascribe it. The common story is that Laurentius, of Haarlem, was the person to whom the idea first occurred. And I will give you the account of it in the words of his old servant:—"He, one day walking in a wood near the city, as the rich citizens were wont to do, diverted himself in cutting letters on the bough of a beech tree, and for fancy's sake the thought struck him, to take the impression off on paper with ink, to please his grandchildren." This experiment succeeding beyond his expectation, he and his son-in-law applied their minds to improve the discovery. They made wooden types; but for a time they could only print on one side of the page. An old parchment, with the alphabet and the Lord's prayer printed on it, is, I am told, preserved in some library in Ger-

many, and is supposed to have been one of these first attempts. As this surprising art excited great admiration, and promised to be very profitable, Laurentius set up a printing press in his house, and wished to keep the secret confined to his own family: but two of his servants, whom he was obliged to employ in the business, stole his types and fled to Mentz, where, under the encouragement of John Fust or Faustus, a rich citizen, they pretended to be the inventors of printing, and were probably the real inventors of some improvement in the art. The first book which was printed by Fust is an exceedingly splendid Bible, of the supposed date of 1450 or thereabouts.

George. And how did the art of printing get to England?

Mrs. M. The honour of introducing it into this country is generally ascribed to William Caxton, an honest citizen and mercer of London, who, while following the business of his trade in Holland, had heard and seen much of this new discovery. Being very solicitous of making so valuable an art known in England, he established himself for some time at Cologne, for the purpose of learning it. And though he was in his fifty-seventh year, he applied himself so diligently to his new undertaking, that in 1471 he printed, by the desire of the duchess of Burgundy, a book, entitled "The Recule of the History of Troy." He then came to England, and set up a printing press in the

Abbot's lodging at Westminster, and printed a book on the game of chess, interspersed with many wood-cuts, which, though they appear uncouth and strange to us, were at the time considered as very admirable specimens of engraving. Caxton lived till 1491, and printed nearly fifty different books, most of them translations by himself from the French. He says of himself that he was a "rude and simple man." I am sure he was a most industrious and useful one.

Richard. Well! it is a comfort to think that while all the princes and nobles of the land were murdering each other without remorse, there was this dear, good, quiet soul, who went on printing and translating, without troubling himself about any of them.

Mrs. M. I ought not to forget to tell you that playing cards were first introduced into England in this reign. They had been known in France some time before, having been invented to divert the melancholy of Charles VI. during the paroxysms of his madness.

Mary. You have often mentioned the dukes and duchesses of Burgundy; and there really are so many of them I cannot make them all out.

Mrs. M. I believe the fact is, there were so few, that I have not taken sufficient pains to make you distinctly know one from the other. There were only four dukes of Burgundy of the Valois family; but they were all men of great abilities,

courage, and activity, and each of them in his turn bore a distinguished part in the busy scenes of his time.—The first duke was brother to Charles the Fifth of France, and lived during the reign of our Edward III. He married the heiress of the earl of Flanders, and became an independent and very powerful prince.—His son, the second duke, was the one who murdered the duke of Orleans, and was himself assassinated by Charles the Seventh, when dauphin.—*His* son, Philip, was the third duke of Burgundy, and married Isabella of Portugal, grand-daughter to John of Gaunt. Philip affected more splendour and parade than any of the sovereign princes of his time, and was dignified by the name of *the Good:* but I suspect he owed this distinction more to his riches and generosity, than to any other virtue: for he was tyrannical to his subjects, and treacherous to his allies, as the regent duke of Bedford often found.—Philip's son, the fourth and last duke, was called Charles the Bold, from his rash and headstrong temper. He was killed in an engagement with the Swiss, and left an only daughter Mary, who married the emperor Maximilian. On the death of the last duke, the duke of Lorraine considered himself as showing extraordinary respect to his memory by attending his funeral with his beard covered with gold leaf.

Mary. But you have not told us who that duchess was, that Caxton printed the book of Troy for.

Mrs. M. She was Margaret, widow of the last duke, and sister of Edward the Fourth of England. She appears to have been a very warm-hearted woman, though not perhaps always a judicious one. She was much attached to her friends and countrymen, and her court was always a place of refuge for them, when in distress.

Specimen of early engraving, from the "Mirror of the World," printed by W. Caxton, 1481.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EDWARD V.

[Year after Christ, 1483.]

Mummeries. From a MS. of Edward the Third's reign.

We are now come to the shortest reign and the most pathetic story in the annals of our country. When Edward IV. died, his eldest son was about thirteen years old, and was at Ludlow castle, under the care of his uncle, lord Rivers, and his half-brother, lord Grey. The title of the family of York to the crown was now completely established, and no objection was made to the young Edward's being proclaimed. But though the public willingly acknowledged him, there was, amongst his nearest relatives, one who had long marked the innocent boy for destruction. This person was

his uncle Richard, duke of Gloucester, a prince of great bravery and ability. It was to him that the victories of Towton and of Barnet were principally ascribed; and his sense and penetration had often preserved the king his brother from many political blunders into which his indolence and carelessness would have betrayed him.

Richard's ability and vigour of mind have never been disputed; but there has been a great difference of opinion in regard to his moral character, some writers having loaded his memory with more crimes than it seems possible for any one man to have committed, while others, apparently with more ingenuity than truth, have endeavoured to vindicate him from most of the crimes of which he has been accused. He had long formed the project of usurping the crown, and had cloked it with the most profound dissimulation. His first step, soon after his brother's death, was to impart to lord Hastings a wish to remove the lords Rivers and Grey from about the person of the young king. Hastings, a loyal and honest man, but who bore a bitter enmity to the queen and her relations, willingly agreed to second this design; and Richard, accompanied by Hastings and by the duke of Buckingham, who was still deeper in his secrets, set out with a numerous train to meet the king, who was on his way from Ludlow to be crowned at London.

They met the king and his little party at Stony

Stratford, where the lords Grey and Rivers waited on the duke of Gloucester, and passed the evening with him in convivial mirth and pleasantry, unsuspicious of the coming evil. The next morning, they and two other gentlemen of the king's retinue were seized and sent to Pontefract, and all the rest of Edward's attendants were dismissed, and forbidden on pain of death to come near the court. The poor young king, finding himself alone, and in the power of his uncle, whom he had been early taught by his mother to dread, was struck with grief and terror; but Gloucester, falling on his knees, assured him with strong professions of loyalty and affection, that what he had done was for his preservation. Edward then suffered himself to be soothed into composure, and set off with his uncle towards London, where the news of these violent measures arrived before them, and occasioned great alarm, for no one knew what to expect from such a strange beginning. The queen, fearing the worst, instantly fled into the Sanctuary at Westminster, taking with her the duke of York, then about seven years old, and her five daughters. Rotherham, archbishop of York, a faithful servant of the crown, hastened to her there, and found her sitting on the floor, weeping bitterly, and in the utmost agony of grief and despair. The good prelate endeavoured to give her some comfort; but her sorrow was beyond the reach of his consolation.

On the 4th of May, Gloucester conducted his

nephew into London, riding before him bare-headed, and saying to the people, "Behold your king!"

Two days after, a great council was held, in which the artful duke was appointed Protector of the king and kingdom. Preparations were begun for Edward's coronation on the 22d of June; but on the 13th of May, during the meeting of the council at Westminster, the door of the hall was suddenly opened, and a party of armed men rushed in, crying out "Treason! treason!" They seized on the archbishop of York, Morton, bishop of Ely, and the lords Stanley and Hastings, who were all hurried off to the Tower, and committed to close custody, except lord Hastings, whom Gloucester pronounced a traitor, and commanded to be immediately put to death. He was only permitted a few moments' delay to confess himself to a priest, and his head was cut off on a log of wood which happened to be on the spot.

On the same day, sir Thomas Ratcliffe, one of Richard's chief confidants, entered Pontefract with 5,000 men, and, without any trial, beheaded lord Rivers and lord Grey, and their two fellow-prisoners. The death of lord Rivers caused much lamentation, for he was the most accomplished nobleman of his time.

Gloucester, while committing these acts of violence, still kept on his mask of loyalty. He declared in council that it would be highly indecent

to suffer the duke of York, during the ceremony of his brother's coronation, to remain in the Sanctuary, a place where thieves and murderers found refuge. The archbishop of Canterbury was in consequence sent to require the queen to surrender her young son. She had not then heard of the bloody deed at Pontefract, by which she had lost a brother and a son. Yet her presaging fears were so great that nothing but the knowing that if she refused to part with him, her child would be torn from her by violence, could at all prevail with her to submit to the separation.

Having now got both the young princes into his power, Gloucester employed a preacher to assert from St. Paul's Cross, that the late king had been privately married to lady Eleanor Butler, and that therefore his children by Elizabeth Wydville were illegitimate. The duke of Buckingham made an harangue to the same purpose at Guildhall, before the mayor and citizens of London, who allowed themselves to be persuaded to accompany him to Baynard's Castle, a royal residence in the city, and to make the Protector the offer of the crown. Richard at first affected to decline it, and said "his love of his brother's children was greater than his love of a crown:" but when Buckingham urged the suit, Richard pretended to overcome his reluctance, and accepted the offered gift. He was the same day proclaimed king, and was soon after crowned. The same preparations that had been

made for the coronation of Edward V. served for that of Richard III. It was long before the fate of the two unfortunate young princes was known with certainty; but they never appeared more.

Some years afterwards two people owned themselves to have been concerned in their murder, and said that the two princes had been suffocated in their bed, and buried at the foot of a staircase in the Tower. This confession was not generally credited at the time, being supposed to have been fabricated for political purposes; but it had an extraordinary confirmation two hundred years afterwards, when in altering a staircase in the Tower a chest was found buried under it, in which were the bones of two children, answering in size to the ages of Edward and his brother. These bones were taken care of, and by order of Charles II., in whose reign they were discovered, were removed to Westminster Abbey, where a monument from a design by sir Christopher Wren was placed over them. Edward was in his thirteenth year when his father died, and reigned not quite three months.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Mary. Indeed, mamma, of all the many sad stories you have told us, this is the saddest.

Mrs. Markham. Few situations can be supposed more heart-rending than that in which the queen was here placed; for though she was weak and thoughtless in her prosperity, and without energy in her adversity, she must still have felt as a mother. Holingshed, an old chronicler, has described archbishop Rotherham's visit to her on her flying to sanctuary, in a way that always appears to me very touching, notwithstanding that the homeliness of his style makes it at the same time almost ludicrous. I believe I can find the passage:—"He (the archbishop) found about the queen much heaviness, rumble, haste, and business; carriage and conveyance of her stuffe into sanctuarie; chests, coffers, packs, fardels*, trussed all on men's backs; no man unoccupied; some lading, some going, some unloading, some going for more, some breaking down the wall to bring in the nearest way. The queen herself sate alone low on the rushes, all desolate and dismaid."

Richard. Why did Richard behead lord Hastings? I thought they were great friends.

Mrs. M. They agreed only in disliking the queen and her relations; and when Richard imparted to Hastings his secret plot on the crown, he expressed so much disapprobation, that the duke determined to get him out of his way.

Mary. You have not given us any description

* Bundles—from the French *fardeau*.

of poor little king Edward. I always want to know what people are like.

Mrs. M. He lived so short a time, and was so little seen, except by his attendants, that I do not recollect that his person has ever been described. There is a picture of lord Rivers presenting Caxton to Edward IV. and his queen, in which Edward V. is introduced, and in which he appears like a pretty little delicate boy. And this, I believe, is the only picture of him that is known.

Richard. Is that picture an oil painting?

Mrs. M. No; it is in an old manuscript. Oil painting was very little used in England at this time, having been only known here since the reign of Henry VI. Nor do I believe there were as yet any English artists, as all our earlier paintings are by foreigners. Mabuse and Holbein are those whose works are best known to us. Indeed Holbein's paintings are valuable, as well for their beauty as for their curiosity.

George. Did he live in this reign?

Mrs. M. Perhaps, in strictness, I ought to have put off speaking of him till I had got into another century. However, as I have begun, I may as well go on. He lived in the reign of Henry VIII. and has left us portraits of some of the most remarkable personages of his time. He, on some occasion, offended one of the lords of the court. Henry protected him from the rage of the irritated noble, and said, "I can, when I please, make seven

lords of seven ploughmen; but I cannot make one Holbein even of seven lords."

Mary. I have often wanted to ask you something about plays. I think, when you were telling us about Edward the Third's reign, you said there were no playhouses then.

Mrs. M. There were theatrical entertainments long before there were theatres. The first public representation that was any thing like a play was exhibited as early as 1378, and was called a *miracle*. It was the history of St. Catherine, and was performed by the priests of Dunstable. The actors were attired in the holy vestments belonging to the abbey of St. Alban's. In Richard the Second's reign, the clergy of St. Paul's enacted a miracle before the king and queen, which lasted eight days, and in which was represented the greater part of the history of the Bible.

George. Those acting priests were not sparing of their trouble: I will say that for them.

Mrs. M. These *miracles* were succeeded by *mysteries*, in which sacred subjects were strangely jumbled with mimicry and buffoonery. By degrees, some little moral allegory crept into these entertainments, and miracles and mysteries gave way to *moralities*, which consisted of long elaborate speeches from allegorical personages, as Theology, Adulation, Admonition, &c.

George. I do not think they would have been any great entertainments to me.

Mrs. M. These plays were all performed in churches and chapels, and the actors were almost always ecclesiastics. Besides these church plays, there were *secular* plays and interludes performed in private houses and in the streets, by jugglers, tumblers, and jesters, whose business it was to rove about and exhibit their talents. Sometimes these people were the servants of noblemen. I have met with a letter * from the famous lord Leicester to the earl of Shrewsbury, praying him to show "some conformity," meaning, I suppose, encouragement, "to certain of his servants who were players of interludes." There is no mention made of public theatres till the reign of Elizabeth. The first regular play we know of is one that gives us no very pleasing idea of our ancestors' taste or refinement. It was written about 1560, and is called "Gammer Gurton's Needle."

Mary. If the amusements of the grown-up people were so dull and stupid, I wonder what sort of amusements the children had!

Mrs. M. They seem to me to have been better off than their elders; for they had balls, paper windmills, and hoops, even so long ago as the time of the Conquest.

George. I think, Richard, you and I shall play with our hoops and our balls with more glee than ever, now we know that the Black Prince, John

* In Lodge's Illustrations of British History.

of Gaunt, ay, and may be Thomas à Becket, and old Caxton too, trundled hoops and tossed balls as well as ourselves.

Mrs. M. Shuttlecock and blindman's-buff are also very ancient games, and amused our ancestors many hundred years ago. But they had some amusements which were not so unexceptionable. There was a very strange ceremony observed in most, if not in all the cathedrals, on Innocents' Day, in which children were the principal performers. A boy was dressed up in the vestments of a bishop. He was attended by a parcel of other boys habited like priests, and in this guise preached a mock sermon in the church, and then went in procession about the town. This was called the festival of the *boy-bishop*. There was another strange piece of buffoonery, in which grown up people were the actors, and which was called the *festival of fools*, a sort of religious, or more properly *ir*religious, mummery acted at Christmas, and which, as well as the festival of the boy-bishop, was happily put an end to at the Reformation.

Mary. But you forget, mamma, the mummers still sometimes come about at Christmas.

Mrs. M. That is quite a different thing, and is a harmless merry-making among the common people, which is still kept up in some parts of England, particularly in the northern counties, and which I must own I should be sorry to see discon-

tinued. The mummeries of the festival of fools and of the boy-bishop were very different things, being a mockery of the ceremonies of religion. Nothing that relates *in any way* to the worship of God ought ever to be treated lightly, or made a jest of. The mumming and Morris-dancing of the present day is the remnant of an ancient and favourite pastime of our ancestors, who were very fond of going about in what they called *disguisements*. The Morris-dance was introduced by the crusaders, and the word means Morisco, or Moorish dance.

Richard. Had the poor people less to do then than they have now? for I do not think our village people could now find time for all these pastimes.

Mrs. M. You must remember that in the time of popery there were so many saints' days and holidays, that the lower orders of people had a great deal of time for their amusements.

Mary. Poor things! I wish they had as many holidays now!

Mrs. M. It is much better for them that they have not. When there was so much play, of course there was less work. The country was miserably cultivated: there were frequent famines; the dirt and wretchedness of the poor was extreme: hunger and idleness made them always ready to raise tumults and disturbances; and depend upon it, that though our poor labourers do not dance and sing

so much as their ancestors did, they enjoy more comforts, and fewer of them are killed in broils, or die of hunger.

The love of sports and merry-making was, however, not confined formerly to the lower orders. When the rich, who were almost devoid of all cultivation of mind, had so few sedentary amusements, they were glad to fly to active and boisterous ones. Even the fine ladies did not then disdain to seek diversion from things that in these times the very barrow-women in the streets of London would shrink from; such as bear-baitings and bull-baitings. These, however, were only on great occasions, and to entertain queens and princesses. Cudgel-playing and wrestling were the every-day amusements. But Christmas was the chief time of sports; and in the king's courts, and probably also in private families, a leader of the sports was elected, who had for the time the pleasant title of *lord of misrule.*

George. Oh! then, mamma, do let me be the lord of misrule on Mary's birth-day next week.

Mrs. M. If Mary will elect you, I have no objection.

CHAPTER XXV.

RICHARD III.

[Years after Christ, 1483—1485.]

RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, AFTERWARDS KING.
From a MS. in the Royal Library.

You must not suppose that the citizens of London solicited Richard to accept the crown entirely from the love they bore to him. He had caused the city to be surrounded by numerous bodies of troops, and would have proceeded to violent measures had not the citizens acted as they did.

The new king, soon after the coronation, set out

with his queen, and only son, then about eight years old, on a royal progress through the kingdom; and during his absence on this occasion from London, the murder of the two young princes in the Tower is conjectured to have been perpetrated. When the court arrived at York, the king, to gain popularity amongst the people, who flocked there in great numbers to see him, entertained them with the ceremony of a coronation, and was crowned in the cathedral at that city a second time. But while he was thus making a parade of his royalty, a plot was already brewing to deprive him of it. Morton, bishop of Ely, had been committed to the custody of the duke of Buckingham. That shrewd prelate soon saw that though the duke had received great rewards from the king, he yet wanted more, and that resentment and discontent were rankling in his mind. Morton accordingly found no difficulty in persuading him, notwithstanding he had so greatly contributed to the exalting of Richard, to join in a conspiracy formed for deposing him, and for placing Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, on the throne.

I believe I have already told you that war and the scaffold had destroyed so many princes of the house of Lancaster, that the only representative now to be found of that family was this young earl of Richmond, who in any other case would scarcely have been reckoned of the blood-royal, his only claim to it being by his mother, who was grand-

daughter of one of John of Gaunt's natural sons. I should not say, indeed, that he was absolutely the only person in that line of descent. There were also the royal families of Spain and Portugal, which were descended from the two daughters of John of Gaunt: but their claims stem never to have been thought of, even by themselves. The friends of Richmond were desirous of supplying the defects of his title by marrying him to Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV., who certainly, now that her brothers were gone, seemed to have the best right to the crown. Having formed their plan, they sent messengers to the young earl, entreating him to come to England immediately; and they made preparations at the same time for a general rising on the 18th of October. But Richard, whose vigilance had not let this tempest gather unperceived, assembled an army rapidly at Northampton, to be ready to march to that part of the country where the storm should burst.

The duke of Buckingham, who was at Brecknock, was to have joined his confederates on the other side of the Severn; but an extraordinary flood, such as had never been known before, and which was long remembered by the name of *Buckingham's flood*, prevented his crossing the river; and his Welsh soldiers, taking alarm, disbanded and returned home. The officers, thus finding themselves deserted by their men, either fled the country, or took refuge in sanctuaries. Bucking-

ham concealed himself for a time at Lacon Hall in Shropshire, with a person of the name of Bannister, a dependent on his family: but this man, tempted by the reward of a thousand pounds, which was offered for the discovery of the duke, betrayed the place of his concealment to the sheriff of Shropshire, who found him in the disguise of a peasant, hid in an orchard behind Bannister's house. He was taken to London, and begged earnestly to see the king and plead his cause before him; but Richard refused his request, and ordered him to be immediately executed. The other conspirators, discouraged by this disastrous beginning, dispersed, but were many of them taken, and the execution of some of the ringleaders terminated this formidable insurrection.

Richard made a triumphant entry into London in December, 1483; and all things now seemed to prosper to his wishes. But he, whose heart was too hard to feel for the affliction of others, was himself vulnerable in his paternal affection. Edward, his only child, died April 9, 1484, and we are told that the king's grief was so excessive that he almost "run mad." The grief of the queen was not less violent, and her death a few months afterwards is generally ascribed to it, though some authors have asserted that she was poisoned by her husband. Richard certainly showed little respect to her memory; and is said to have been desirous of marrying his own niece Elizabeth; though I

cannot help thinking that such an union as this could not have been his serious intention, and that he only pretended to desire it in order to prevent her marriage with Richmond, his most dreaded enemy, of whose designs on the crown, and preparations for a descent on England, he was not ignorant.

Richard, notwithstanding all his spies, and the secret intelligence he kept up in the country, does not seem to have been aware that, while Richmond was supposed to be in France, soliciting aid from foreign princes, he in fact passed great part of the time in Wales, making himself friends among his countrymen;—for the Tudors, you know, were a Welsh family. Once, when at Tremostyn in Flintshire, he was so near being discovered by one of Richard's spies, that he only escaped by jumping out of a back window, and getting through a hole, which is still called the *king's hole*. On his return to France he heard the report of Richard's intended marriage with the princess Elizabeth. On this, hastily collecting all the English exiles, and a few French soldiers, he mustered a body of 3000 men, and with this small army he landed at Milford Haven, August 7, 1485, trusting to the co-operation of his friends in England.

When Richard heard how small a number of persons accompanied the earl, and what a ragged beggarly crew they were, he despised so weak an enemy. But when he found that enemy to be

presently joined by some Welsh troops that had been sent against him, and that his numbers were fast increasing, he began to think the danger more urgent. He might still have quelled it, could he have known in whom to confide. His spies either could not or would not give him true information, and he began to suspect and distrust all about him. Nor indeed without reason; for lord Stanley, to whom he had given the chief command in his army, was in secret league with Richmond, whose mother he had married. Richard, though he knew not exactly what to apprehend, seized on Stanley's son, and kept him as a hostage for the fidelity of his father, who was thus prevented from openly appearing in Richmond's cause. The state of Richard's mind at this juncture is represented as so fearfully disturbed, that the description, as given by sir Thomas More, might alone deter any one from becoming a villain. "He never had quiet in his mind; never thought himself sure: when he went abroad, his eyes whirled about, his hand was on his dagger: his countenance and manner like one ever ready to strike again: he took ill rest at night; lay long waking and musing, sore wearied with care and watching; rather slumbering than slept; troubled with frightful dreams; sometimes started up, and run about the chamber: so was his restless heart continually tossed and tumbled."

He at length roused himself, like a desperate man, and collecting what troops he could, marched

from Nottingham, where he was keeping his court, to Leicester. August 22d, he left Leicester with great pomp, wearing a crown on his helmet, but with a countenance indicating a troubled mind, and encamped at the abbey of Merivalle, not far from Bosworth, where Richmond had arrived the night before. The two armies were placed so near together, that during the night many deserted from the royal army and joined Richmond.

The next morning the forces on both sides were drawn out in line of battle. Lord Stanley, and his brother sir William Stanley, with the troops under their command, detached themselves a little from the royal army. Richmond, who was no soldier, sent to request that lord Stanley would assist him in forming his men; but Stanley returned for answer, "that he must form them himself, and he would come to him at a convenient season." He did contrive, however, to get over unperceived for a short time. When he was returned to his men, he received a very angry summons from Richard, who did not like to see his troops drawn up so far aloof from the main army, threatening that if he did not come to him immediately, his son should be executed on the spot. I know not what was lord Stanley's answer.

The battle began, but no vigour or spirit was displayed in the royal army; and when lord Stanley suddenly turned and attacked it in flank, Richard saw that all was lost, and exclaiming

"Treason! treason! treason!" rushed in the madness of rage and desperation into the midst of the enemy, and made his way to the earl of Richmond, hewing down all before him. The earl rather shrunk back at the approach of such a desperate antagonist; but his attendants gathered round Richard, who fought like a wild beast at bay, till at last he fell covered with wounds. His helmet was so beaten in by the blows it had received, that its form was quite destroyed. Scarcely any persons of note fell on this memorable field. The duke of Norfolk was among the few exceptions. Some friend had tried to save him from his impending fate, and had that morning thrown an admonitory warning into his tent. It ran thus:

> "Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,
> For Dickon thy master is bought and sold."

Richard reigned little more than two years, and was slain in the thirty-fifth year of his age. He fell near a brook which runs through Bosworth field, the water of which long remained stained with blood; and even to this day I am told that the country people are scrupulous of using it. The dead body of the king was treated like that of a malefactor, and thrown neck and heels across a horse, and carried to Leicester, where it was buried in the church of the Grey Friars. But his bones were not permitted to rest in this humble bed; for at the destruction of the religious houses

by Henry VIII. they were torn from their burying place. His coffin was afterwards used as a drinking trough for horses at an inn in Leicester.

Richard married Anne Neville, and had one son, Edward, prince of Wales, who died at Middleham Castle, in the 10th year of his age.

Those historians who have tried to clear Richard's character from some of the worst charges that have been brought against it, have also tried to represent his person to the best advantage. By them we are told that, though his features were rather homely, the expression of his countenance was princely and sensible; that his figure, though short, was well built, with no other defect than that his right shoulder was somewhat higher than the left: while others, less disposed to consider him in a favourable light, tell us he was a monster of ugliness; and one old chronicler says, "He was crook-backed, hook-shouldered, splay-footed, goggle-eyed, and his face was little and swarthy." We may suppose, however, that his personal defects have been greatly exaggerated; for an old lady Desmond, who lived to be 130 years old, and had danced with king Richard in her youth, used always to say that he was a very handsome man.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXV.

George. I think, begging old lady Desmond's pardon, Richard could not have been a very handsome man, if he was like that gentleman in the picture with the long shoes.

Mary. What a length of time those pointed shoes were worn! You told us of them a great while ago.

Mrs. Markham. Few fashions were ever attacked with more violence. Laws were made, and the clergy preached, against them. Still they continued to be worn. However, after the reign of Richard the Third they declined; a contrary extreme became the mode, and in a few years all the fine gentlemen looked as if they had got the gout; for they wore cloth or velvet shoes, so very broad that their feet looked like great platters; and a law was made forbidding shoes to be made more than six inches across the toes. The dress of the men in the reign of Edward the Fourth and his brother is described as being so "skrimp" and tight, that fine gentlemen must have resembled stuffed figures more than living men. Their shoulders were stuffed out to make them look broad, and the waist was pinched in as tight as it could be borne.

George. They must have been droll figures.

Mrs. M. Quaintness and oddity of dress were

more aimed at than gracefulness or comfort. With a tight pinched-in jacket, which was not much longer than a waistcoat, such enormous long sleeves were worn, hanging from the elbows, that Edward the Fourth used to tie his behind his back to avoid tumbling over them when he walked.

George. I should think, mamma, that at the coronation of this usurping king Richard no champion could have ventured to come and throw down his glove, for he would have been afraid lest it should be taken up.

Mary. I do not understand what you mean.

George. Why, Mary, have you forgot all I told you about the coronation last week? that when the king was crowned, a man in armour, called the champion of England, rode into Westminster Hall, and threw his great iron glove bang down, and said he was ready to fight any man alive who dared to take up his glove and say George the Fourth should not be king of England?

Mrs. M. The challenge of the champion is a mere ceremony, and has been a very old custom at the coronation of our kings. Richard II. granted the office to a sir John Dymoke, in whose family it still remains.

Richard. I cannot think how so wicked a man as Richard the Third could have had so many friends as he seemed to have.

Mrs. M. It does not appear that he had any friends. There were a few persons whom he was

obliged to admit into his wicked schemes, but many of these betrayed him, His three chief agents were Ratcliff, Catesby, and Lovell, which gave rise to the following couplet:

> "The Cat, the Rat, and Lovell the dog,
> Rule all England under the Hog."

Mary. Pray, mamma, who was meant by the hog?

Mrs. M. Richard himself, who was called the hog, because his badge, or crest, as we should now call it, was a white boar.

Mary. I cannot think how Richard's coffin could be turned into a horse-trough.

Mrs. M. It was the custom in the fifteenth century to bury in stone coffins, and Richard's was of that description.

Richard. I recollect seeing a stone coffin: it had a place hollowed out for the head and neck.

Mrs. M. The history of Richard's bedstead is still more extraordinary than that of his coffin. He travelled about, as was then the custom, with his own bedstead. This bedstead, when he was killed at Bosworth, was left at the place he had last slept at in Leicester, and became the perquisite of the people of the house. It was entirely of wood, and much gilded and ornamented. About 100 years after the battle of Bosworth, the woman to whom it then belonged, one day while making the bed,

perceived a piece of money to drop out of a chink; and on examination she found that the bottom of the bedstead was hollow, and contained coin to the amount of about three hundred pounds. But the discovery proved fatal to the woman, for she was robbed and murdered by her servant for the sake of her new-found treasure. The servant was hanged for the murder; and thus Richard's gold seemed to have the property of bringing evil upon all who touched it.

George. I must ask you, mamma, before we talk of any thing else, if lord Stanley's son was beheaded?

Mrs. M. No: you will be glad to hear that, as soon as the fight began, he contrived to make his escape to his father, who no longer hesitated to take a decided part against Richard, when his fears for his son were thus at an end. The consequences of the battle of Bosworth were of great importance, not only to the individuals who were engaged in it, but to the whole nation. Indeed, no battle since that of Hastings had been productive of such material changes. The battle of Hastings brought in the feudal system in its most oppressive form; and the battle of Bosworth, as you will see in the history of the next reign, put an end to it, and also to the long line of Plantagenet kings, who had governed the kingdom for 330 years.

Mary. I wish, mamma, you would be so kind as to make us a table of the Plantagenet kings, as you did of the Saxon ones.

Mrs. M. Willingly, my dear. There were fourteen in all: Henry the Second, and thirteen of his descendants. Four of these, John, Henry III., Richard II., and Henry VI., were feeble monarchs. The rest inherited all the abilities and bravery of their great ancestor, and (with the exception of Henry IV. who was of a close and suspicious temper) had a frankness and openness of disposition, which endeared them to their subjects, and caused many of their faults to be overlooked. Of the character of poor little Edward V. we can of course say nothing. He did not live long enough to allow us to judge of him, and was king, as I have told you, only for three months.

Began to reign.	Reigned years.	THE PLANATGENET LINE.
1154	35	Henry II. Plantagenet.
1189	10	Richard I. Cœur de Lion, } sons of
1199	17	John, Lackland, } Henry II.
1216	56	Henry III. son of John.
1272	34	Edward I. son of Henry III.
1307	20	Edward II. of Carnarvon, son of Edward I.
1327	50	Edward III. son of Edward II.
1377	22	Richard II. of Bourdeaux, grandson of Edward III.
1399	14	Henry IV. of Lancaster, cousin to Richard II. grandson of Edward III.
1413	9	Henry V. of Monmouth, son of Henry IV.
1422	49	Henry VI. of Westminster, son of Henry V.
1461	22	Edward IV. of York, third cousin to Henry VI. great great grandson of Edward III.
1483	3m	Edward V. son of Edward IV.
1483	2	Richard III. Crookback, uncle of Edward V. and the last of the Plantagenets.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HENRY VII.

[Years after Christ, 1485—1509.]

HENRY VII. AND HIS QUEEN.
From an old picture by Mabuse.

KING RICHARD was the last man slain on the field of Bosworth, and his death was the signal of victory to Henry of Richmond. The soldiers who had engaged in pursuit of the fugitives were recalled by hearing the shouts of "Long live king Henry!" and, returning to the field of battle, they saw sir William Stanley placing on Henry's head the battered crown that had been struck off from the helmet of Richard.

Henry was at this time thirty years old, of a tall and slender form, a pale complexion, and a grave sedate deportment. If he had ever possessed any ardour or warmth of character, the circumstances in which he had been placed had completely chilled it. Cold, cautious, and designing, he did not possess one amiable quality. His natural abilities were far from brilliant, but he supplied the want of quickness by the most unwearied application, and was rewarded for his perseverance by gaining a reputation for more wisdom than he possessed. He was an unkind husband, a careful, but not an affectionate father, a rigorous master, and a bitter enemy. His guarded temperament could not preserve him from the tyranny of two ruling passions, which swayed his conduct from the first hour of his reign, and lasted to the end of his life. These were his avarice, and his hatred of the house of York. The first command he issued, even before he had left the bloody field where he had been proclaimed king, was, that persons should be sent into Yorkshire, to seize young Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwick, the son of the duke of Clarence, and to convey him to the Tower.

But, notwithstanding Henry's rooted dislike to the house of York, he soon found he could not maintain himself on the throne without allying himself to it. He therefore renewed an agreement he had formerly made to marry the princess Elizabeth; but his reluctance to the marriage was

so great, that he put it off till the following year. He had so much jealousy of its being supposed that he derived through her his right to the crown, that he would not permit the queen's name to be mentioned in the act of parliament that was passed for settling the succession. He even was offended because she was a greater favourite than he was with the people, and he is said to have treated her unkindly on that account.

Henry's conduct towards all those who had been connected with the late royal family naturally irritated them against him, and in 1487 a scheme was contrived, which, though it failed in the end, had many abettors, and gave him for a time much trouble and vexation. Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker of Oxford, was instructed to personate the young earl of Warwick, who, it was pretended, had made his escape from the Tower. Richard Simon, a priest, had the chief management of this plot. He took Simnel into Ireland, where the house of York had many friends; and there, the credulity of the people coinciding with their wishes, he was proclaimed at Dublin by the title of Edward VI. When Henry heard of this pretended earl of Warwick, he caused the real earl to be taken from his prison, and carried in procession through London, and permitted all who chose to converse with him. This measure, though it satisfied the people of England, did not convince those of Ireland, who asserted that Henry had exhibited an

impostor, while they were in possession of the true Plantagenet.

Whether the duchess of Burgundy was really of the same opinion, or whether she was glad of an opportunity to disturb Henry, does not appear; but she certainly assisted Simnel with a body of troops under the command of Martin Swartz, an experienced leader. The earl of Lincoln, son of the countess de la Pole, eldest sister to the duchess, also joined Simnel in Ireland. Leaving Ireland with a force of eight thousand men, they landed in Lancashire, expecting to be joined by the inhabitants. But they were mistaken in this expectation, and penetrated as far as Stoke, near Newark, without receiving any addition to their numbers. Here they were met, June 16, 1487, by Henry, with a considerable force, and defeated after a fierce engagement. Lord Lincoln and Swartz were slain. Simnel, and his preceptor Simon, were taken prisoners, and received better treatment than they could have expected; for Henry contented himself with imprisoning the priest for life, and with degrading the new-made king to be one of the scullions in his kitchen.

In 1493 another impostor started up, in a youth called Perkin Warbeck, who had been secretly instructed to personate Richard, duke of York, the young brother of Edward V., who, it was pretended, had escaped from the Tower, by the connivance of the ruffians who had murdered his bro-

ther. This youth had a strong resemblance to the Plantagenets, and acted his part so well that many persons were actually convinced that he was the prince. He presented himself at the duchess of Burgundy's court at Brussels, and claimed her protection, as being her brother's son. Some people say that she was in the plot, and had secretly instructed him how to act. Be that as it may, she appeared at first to doubt his story, and then, as if suddenly convinced by his answers to her questions, she embraced him with a transport of joy, exclaiming that he was indeed her long-lost nephew. She then appointed a guard of soldiers to attend him, and treated him as the head of the house of York.

The news of this extraordinary circumstance brought numbers of people to Brussels; and the answers of Warbeck were so extraordinary, his manners so bewitching, and his conduct so princely and dignified, that all who saw and conversed with him were fascinated, and were persuaded of the truth of his story. Henry now became anxious to publish to the world the certainty that the real duke of York had been murdered, and he obtained the confession of two persons who owned themselves to have been accessary to the death of the two young princes. But these confessions gained little credit at the time, though the discovery I mentioned to you of the skeletons that were found under the Tower stairs has since corroborated, in

an extraordinary manner, the evidence of the two murderers.

Amongst those who flocked to see Perkin Warbeck were two men sent by Henry, who were commissioned to insinuate themselves into his confidence. In this they succeeded so well that they became acquainted with all his secrets, and sent regular information of his plans to the king, who was thus enabled to know what persons in England were in correspondence with him. These persons were all seized in one day, and were immediately tried, condemned, and executed. Sir William Stanley was beheaded for having been heard to say, that "if he was sure Perkin Warbeck was the real duke of York, he would never bear arms against him."

These sanguinary measures deterred people from venturing to own themselves friends or favourers of Warbeck, who made two unsuccessful attempts to land in the realms which he claimed for his own. His first attempt was in Kent, and his second in Ireland. He then tried his fortune in Scotland, and having convinced the king, James IV., that he was a true Plantagenet, that young and ardent monarch received him with the utmost kindness, and entered into his cause with all the warmth of a generous mind; regardless of the danger of making an enemy of so powerful a monarch as the king of England, with whom it was greatly his interest to remain at peace. He gave Warbeck in

marriage the lady Katherine Douglas, one of the most noble and accomplished ladies in Scotland, and published a manifesto, inviting the English to repair to the standard of their rightful sovereign, Richard IV. James also raised an army, and in October, 1496, invaded England. The Scots immediately began to plunder, as was their custom; and Warbeck expostulated with James on this barbarous manner of carrying on the war, declaring that he had rather lose a crown than obtain it by the ruin of his subjects.

While Henry was preparing to repel the Scots, a still more pressing danger assailed him in an insurrection of the men of Cornwall, who came in a numerous body towards London. They got to Blackheath, but were there defeated by the king's troops. Their leaders were taken and executed. The rest, on paying two or three shillings each into the king's coffers, received a pardon, and returned home.

Warbeck was soon deprived of the assistance which the king of Scotland had for a time afforded him. Henry, who was at all times a better negotiator than soldier, preferred entering into a treaty with James to the meeting him in the field; and a truce was made between the two monarchs. Upon this Warbeck, after thanking James for the protection and kindness he had shown him, went to Ireland with about 120 followers, and his amiable

wife, who would not forsake him. He remained in Ireland some months, and on receiving an invitation from the Cornish men, who were still in an unsettled state, he landed at Whitsand Bay in that county. He was joined at Bodmin by 3,000 men, with whom he marched forwards and laid siege to Exeter. A large body of the king's forces marched against him, and Warbeck, seeing that all resistance would be in vain, left his companions to take care of themselves as they could, and fled in the night to the abbey of Beauley. The abbey was soon surrounded by the royal troops, and Henry would gladly have forced open the gates and seized on his victim, but was persuaded to try to entice him out of his sanctuary by the promise of his life.

Warbeck, on receiving this promise, yielded himself up, and was carried prisoner to the Tower. He contrived to elude the vigilance of his keeper, and made his escape; but being soon taken, and brought back again, he was compelled to mount a scaffold at Westminster, and to read a paper by which he confessed himself to be an impostor. He was made to repeat the same confession in Cheapside, and was then replaced in the Tower. He afterwards contrived to have some communication with the earl of Warwick, his fellow prisoner, who, though young in years, was old in sorrow, and a plan was concerted between them for their escape; but the plan being discovered, they were both

executed. Perkin Warbeck was hanged at Tyburn, Nov. 23, 1499, and the earl of Warwick was beheaded on Tower Hill three days afterwards.

Henry, from this time till his death, was undisturbed either by tumults at home or by wars abroad. He made many treaties of alliance and commerce with foreign countries, but he chiefly employed himself in amassing wealth, which he did in every possible way. He made many arbitrary and vexatious laws, and obliged those who infringed them in the slightest degree to pay heavy fines, or suffer imprisonment. These rapacious schemes he carried on chiefly by the assistance of two lawyers of the names of Empson and Dudley, whom he employed to entrap the rich and unwary. By these means, as well as by taxes and benevolences, he acquired immense wealth, not only in money, but also in plate and jewels. He kept it with the most anxious care, under his own lock and key, in secret apartments in the palace at Richmond.

In 1500 the king's eldest daughter, Margaret, married James IV. of Scotland; and, in 1501, prince Arthur, his eldest son, married Catherine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, the king and queen of Spain: but in the following spring the young prince died, and Henry, unwilling to lose the marriage portion of the Spanish princess, married her to his other son Henry, a boy of eleven years old. In 1503, the queen, Elizabeth of York, died, and the king projected a second marriage

with the dowager queen of Naples, whom he had supposed to be immensely rich: but finding that he had been deceived in that particular, he gave up the design.

In 1506, the archduke Philip of Austria, who had married the elder sister of Catherine of Arragon, being on his way to Spain with his duchess, was driven by contrary winds to land in England: and Henry, under pretext of showing him and the duchess extraordinary honour, detained them till he had extorted from Philip a promise to give him in marriage his sister, the duchess dowager of Savoy, with an enormous dower. He also obliged him to make a commercial treaty exceedingly advantageous to England, and prevailed with him to give up Edmund de la Pole (brother of the earl of Lincoln, who was slain at Stoke), a most distressed nobleman of the house of York, who, on the death of his aunt and kind protectress, the duchess of Burgundy, had taken refuge in the Austrian dominions. Philip complied most reluctantly with this last demand: and Henry, when he had got all he wanted, suffered him and his duchess to depart.

Henry had scarcely got De la Pole into his power, when he became sensible that all his schemes of revenge, avarice, and ambition, were drawing to a close. A violent attack of the gout gave him warning of his approaching end. He now devoted the remnant of his life to make preparations for

the awful change he had to expect; but even his dying acts were tinctured by that calculating, money-loving spirit, which had governed his life. Amongst other things he ordered that two thousand masses should be said for him at sixpence a-piece. One or two of his bequests, however, exhibited something like a conscience. He ordered that restitution should be made to those persons from whom his agents Dudley and Empson had extorted more than the law could warrant. He also ordered the debts to be paid of all persons in London and Westminster who were imprisoned for 40s. or under. Having thus done every thing that his fear and superstition suggested, he died at his palace at Richmond, April 21, 1509, in the 24th year of his reign, and the 54th of his age.

He married Elizabeth of York, and had two sons, and two daughters:

Arthur, married Catherine of Arragon, and died young;

Henry, his successor;

Margaret, married, first, James IV. of Scotland; and, secondly, Douglas, earl of Angus;

Mary, married, first, Louis XII. of France; and, secondly, Brandon, duke of Suffolk.

The reign of Henry VII. was the dawn of what may properly be called English liberty; for though the Magna Charta had fenced in the nobles from the tyranny of the king, yet the great mass of the

people were for a long time after as much exposed as before to the oppressions of the nobles: but now, the power of the nobility being much diminished by the long civil wars, the people began gradually to emerge from slavery.

Henry's policy also was to depress the nobles. He restricted the number of their retainers; and thus that idle race of people who had before passed their lives in following some great lord to the wars, or in hanging about his gates in time of peace, were driven to apply themselves to more industrious modes of life, and from helpless dependants became useful subjects.

Commerce too began to make a great alteration in the condition of persons in middle life; and Henry greatly facilitated their rise into consequence by lessening the strictness of entails, and so enabling the nobles to sell their estates, many of which thus came into the possession of rich commoners. With the change of property came a great change in the condition of all classes of people. The land-owners found it advantageous to commute the services of their villeins for money, and made them pay rent for their lands and cottages; and thus from *villeins* they became *tenants*. It is very difficult to trace every step of the lowest orders of the people from villeinage, which at some periods of our history was a state of mere slavery, to freedom. The progress was so various and so

gradual, that the state of villeinage seemed to decline insensibly, and after this time we find no more mention made of it.

In this reign the Star Chamber was first instituted; an arbitrary court of law, in which the king used to attend in person as judge, and which was called the Star Chamber from the decorations of the room in which the sittings were held.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER XXVI.

George. I did not expect that the reign of such a dull cross kind of a king would have had so many entertaining stories in it.

Mary. Poor Perkin Warbeck! I cannot help feeling sorry for him.

Richard. Do you know, mamma, what became of the beautiful Scotch lady he married?

Mrs. Markham. When Warbeck and the Cornish men advanced towards Exeter, the lady Katherine was left at St. Michael's Mount. After her husband was carried to the Tower, Henry sent for her, and, hard as his heart was, seems to have been touched by her youth, her beauty, and her grief,—for whether she knew Warbeck to be an impostor or not, she dearly loved him, and was a

most dutiful and affectionate wife to him. The king said some kind and soothing words to her, and presented her to the queen, with whom she remained as an attendant. She had an ample allowance made to her, and was much beloved at the court, where she was called "the white rose of England." She afterwards married a sir Matthew Cradock; and her tomb, with that of her second husband, may be seen in Swansea church.

Richard. How sad it seems that after so great a number of people had been killed in the battles of York and Lancaster, more blood should still be spilled for the sake of two impostors!

Mrs. M. Perkin Warbeck's attempt cost fewer lives than Simnel's did. Many brave men fell in the battle at Stoke. Lord Lovell, one of the few who escaped from the fight, was observed flying towards the Trent, and, as he was never seen afterwards, he was thought to have been drowned in crossing that river. But more than a hundred years afterwards, in pulling down Minster Lovell, a house that had belonged to him in Oxfordshire, a secret chamber was discovered, in which was found the skeleton of a man seated in a chair, with his head reclining on a table; and it was conjectured that this was the skeleton of that lord Lovell, and that he had contrived to escape to his own house, and from neglect or other causes had been starved to death in this secret chamber. An empty jar and a barrel were found near him.

Mary. But how could there be secret chambers in houses? I do not think any body could make a room in this house that I should not find out.

Mrs. M. When walls were thick and chimneys large, it was not difficult to make places of concealment, and I believe that in those unquiet times many houses had them. I know a large old house in Nottinghamshire, which was inhabited by a family for some generations, without its being known that there was a secret room in the kitchen chimney; and it was only discovered a few years since in making some repairs.

Mary. You have often talked about people going into sanctuaries. What does that mean?

Mrs. M. Every church, abbey, or consecrated place, was a sanctuary in the time of popery; and all persons who had committed crimes, or were otherwise in fear of their lives, might secure themselves from danger by getting into them. For they were deemed so sacred, that to force a sanctuary, that is, to take any person out by violence who had taken refuge there, was thought a greater crime than murder itself. I remember a story of a nobleman who had taken sanctuary in some abbey during the reign of Richard III. The king was on the point of rushing in, and seizing his victim, when the abbot presented himself in the gateway, bearing the Holy Sacrament in his hand, and Richard turned away, not daring to violate a sanctuary so guarded.

Richard. How long did these places remain sanctuaries?

Mrs. M. The abuse of them was put an end to at the Reformation; but all churches and churchyards are so far sanctuaries still, that no person can be arrested in them for debt.

Richard. Your talking of churches, mamma, reminds me of Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster Abbey. Did not he build it?

Mrs. M. He began it; but he died before it was finished, and it was completed by his son Henry VIII. Henry VII. had no taste in the fine arts; yet his ambition to have a splendid tomb was of infinite use in drawing forth the talents of others. The best architects of the age were called upon to furnish designs for this magnificent building, on which the king did not grudge to expend large sums of his hoarded wealth. There arose at this time a remarkable change in the style of architecture, through the introduction of what has been called the *florid* style, though I think it ought rather to be called the *Tudor* style, since it came in with Henry VII. and went out with his granddaughter Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors. All the buildings of this style are very beautiful, and are sufficiently distinguished from the Gothic piles of the Plantagenets, and the massy buildings of the Anglo-Normans, by the flat arch, called Henry the Seventh's arch, and the profusion of ornament with which every part is loaded.

Richard. Pray, mamma, was not America discovered by Columbus about this time?

Mrs. M. It was, and England was very near having the honour of sending out Columbus on his first voyage of discovery.

George. O! how I wish it had!

Mrs. M. You know the outline of the story of Columbus; in what manner he became convinced that there must be land hitherto unknown on the western side of the Atlantic ocean, and with what earnestness he solicited many different states of Europe to assist him with ships to make the discovery. On being refused elsewhere the assistance he wanted, and seeing his project treated as an idle chimera, he at last determined to apply to Henry VII., who was esteemed both the most sagacious and the wealthiest monarch of his time. Accordingly Columbus sent his brother Bartholomew to England for this purpose; but he unfortunately was taken by pirates by the way, and detained by them for four years as a galley-slave. At last, in 1489, he made his escape, and got to England, but in too destitute a condition to be able to present himself to the king or his ministers. In these circumstances, however, his industry and activity of mind furnished him with a resource. He set himself to work to make maps and sea charts, and finding a ready sale for them, he was able to purchase some decent clothes, which enabled him to appear at court. Presenting one of his maps to the king, he requested an audience, which

being granted, he explained to the king all his brother's views and wishes. Henry was so much struck with their feasibility, that he agreed to give Columbus the assistance he desired, and Bartholomew was sent to invite him to England. But before Bartholomew arrived in Spain, Columbus had already sailed on his first voyage, under the auspices of queen Isabella.

George. Why really, mamma, this same Henry was a sagacious old king after all, for he seemed to perceive at once what Columbus could never make any body else comprehend.

Mrs. M. I have already said that Henry was not naturally clever; but that he had unwearied application, and you need not be told how much industry alone can do in improving the faculties of the mind. Though Henry was a very unamiable man, yet in some respects his conduct as a king was beneficial to his country. His dislike to the nobles made him considerate of the lower orders, and his love of money made him encourage commerce; and it was he who laid the foundation of the British navy, and he built some four-masted ships, of a larger size than had ever been seen before.

George. Ah! then I dare say the Great Harry, which you know my uncle has a picture of, was one of those ships.

Mrs. M. The Great Harry was, if I mistake not, built by Henry VIII.

Richard. But pray go on, and tell us more

about Columbus. Was not Henry quite provoked to find he had just missed having him?

Mrs. M. Perhaps he was.—However, he did not abandon the idea of making discoveries: for in the year 1496, after Columbus had returned to Europe, with the account of what he had seen, Henry fitted out a small fleet of ships, and sent them on a voyage of discovery, under the command of John Cabot, a Venetian merchant. Cabot sailed in a north-west direction, and the first land he saw was what we now call Newfoundland, but which he called Prima Vista (first seen): he next saw the island of St. John's, and sailed to the south as far as Virginia, and then returned to England, where the king received him with great honour, and knighted him.

George. Knighted him! was that all? why, he should have made him a prince at least.

Mrs. M. I agree with you that he merited a great reward. He was in fact the first discoverer of the continent of America; for Columbus (who at the same time deserves all the honour of the discovery, since he pointed out the way to it) had not, at the time of Cabot's first voyage, seen more than some of the American islands. Cabot had a son named Sebastian, who was even a greater navigator than himself, and of whom I may have occasion to speak by and by.

Richard. I think, mamma, you may as well tell us now all you have to say about him. You may forget it another time.

Mrs. M. Well then.—This Sebastian accompanied his father during his voyage to America, and in the reign of Henry VIII. was employed on many important occasions, and became highly celebrated as a navigator. For some reason or other he entered in 1524 into the service of the king of Spain; but thinking himself ill used by that monarch, he returned to England, where his great merit and knowledge procured him all the consideration he deserved. He was appointed governor of the company of merchant adventurers, and he it was who first established our trade with Russia. After a long and useful life, he died in the reign of queen Mary.

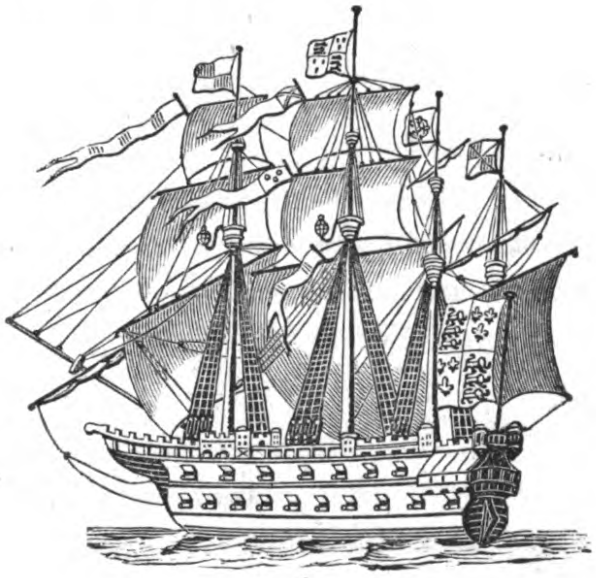
Mary. You said something about Henry's getting money by benevolences. Will you be so good as to tell us what that meant?

Mrs. M. A benevolence meant originally a voluntary contribution for the king's expenses, made amongst his own immediate vassals. Edward IV. extended it to the whole kingdom; and though the name implies its being a free gift, it became in fact a very arbitrary tax, for the king could quarter soldiers on those who refused to contribute, and could annoy them in many other ways, which often caused the people to call these benevolences *malevolences*. And you will think this name not unmerited, when I tell you what happened to an alderman of London in Henry VIII.'s time. The poor alderman, because he refused to contribute to a benevolence, was compelled to serve as a private

soldier in the war then carrying on with Scotland, and the king sent a letter to the general of the army, commanding that the alderman should be lodged amongst the common soldiers, and be made to ride forth in all difficult and dangerous enterprises.

George. O the poor dear fat alderman! What sort of a soldier did he make?

Mrs. M. He had little opportunity of showing his prowess, for he was taken prisoner in the very first rencounter, and had to pay a much larger sum for his ransom than he had been required to contribute to the benevolence.



THE GREAT HARRY,
Built in the reign of Henry VIII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES TO VOL. I.

Frontispiece. Specimens of Saxon and Norman architecture.

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16—A Saxon sword, spade, axe, and battle-axe.

21—A Saxon cook.

25—A Saxon penknife and riding whip, a servant's cap, a chair, and a harp.

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76—Helmets of William the Conqueror, of William son of Robert of Normandy, and a close visard helmet of the fourteenth century.

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100—A knight in chain armour.

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331—The earl of Warwick, with the infant king Henry VI.
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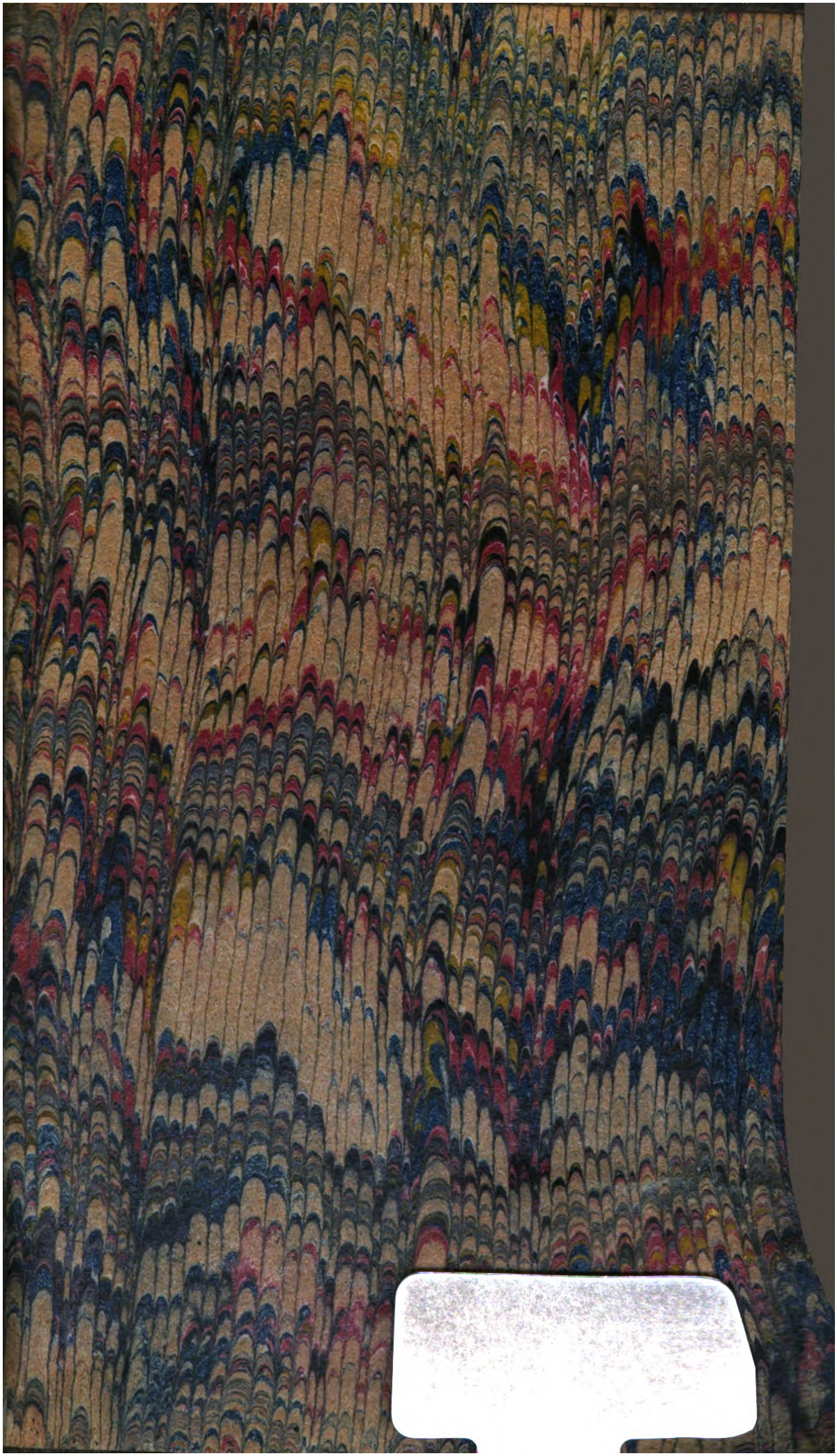
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