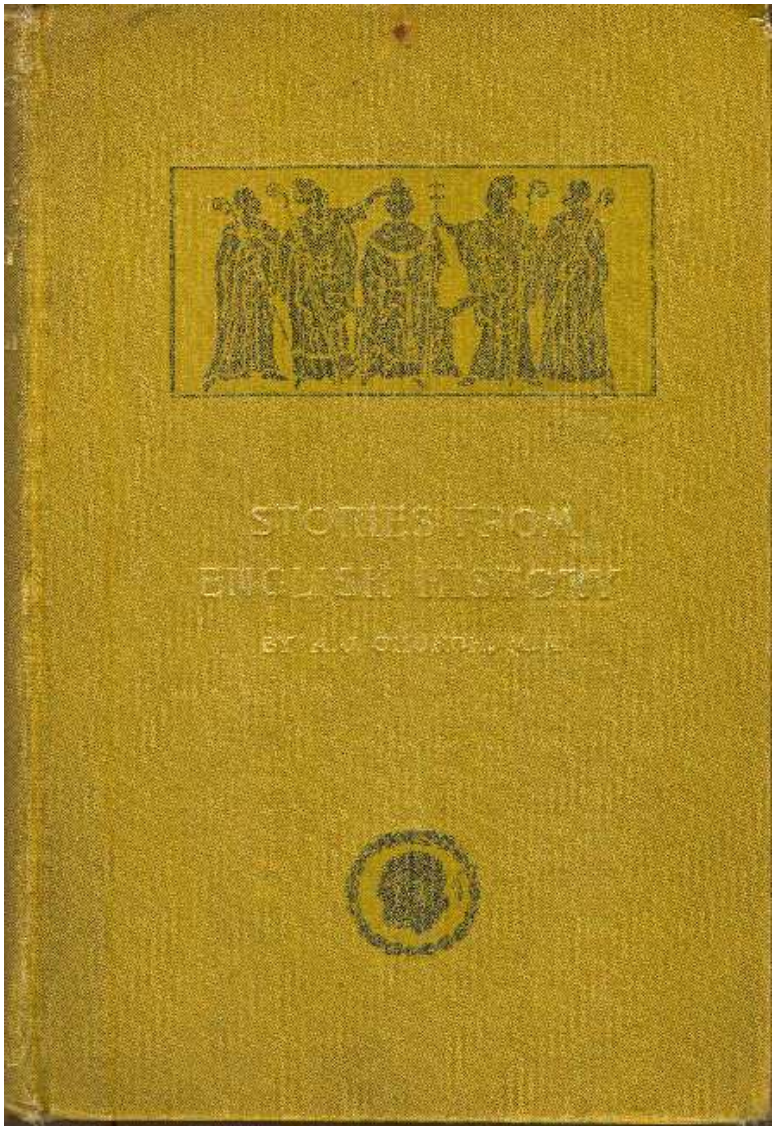

STORIES

FROM

ENGLISH HISTORY

FROM RICHARD II. TO CHARLES I.

BY THE

REV. A. J. CHURCH, M.A.

Sometime Professor of Latin in University College, London

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CHAPTER I

THE STORY OF WAT TYLER

In the year 1381 there broke out the most terrible rebellion of the people against their rulers that has ever happened in England. There were many things to make them discontented. A great number of men had perished, and great sums of money had been spent, in the French wars, and all to very little or no good. Then the Parliament had passed laws by which they tried to keep the labourers, both in the country and the towns, from earning their proper wages. The fact was that a dreadful plague, which men called the *Black Death*, had passed through the country and swept off as much as half the population. Naturally, when there were fewer men to do the work, these fewer would be better paid for doing it. But this did not please their employers; and the employers persuaded the Parliament, where the poor had no one to speak for them, to pass a law by which wages should be kept low. By these it was forbidden for any labourer to ask and for any master to pay higher wages than had been paid before the year of the Black Death. Then a very hateful tax, called the poll-tax, was laid upon the people. The word "poll" means head, and every one above a certain age was bound to pay it. True, it was provided that the rich should pay more than the poor; the Duke of Lancaster, who was the King's uncle, and the archbishops had to pay to marks (£6 13*s*. 4*d*.) each, while a labouring man had to pay a groat (4*d*.). But, as a matter of fact, rich and powerful people often paid less than their due, while the poor could not escape.

It was in the month of June, 1381, that the trouble began, and began in several places almost at the same time. An officer was sent down from London into Essex to inquire why the tax had not been properly collected in that county. At the first place he came to the people refused to answer his questions. Soon after one of the principal judges came to try them for their disobedience: they attacked him and his people; the judge escaped, but some of his clerks were killed. In a few days all Essex had rebelled, their leader being a priest who called himself Jack Straw.

At the very same time that these things happened there was a rising in Kent. It began at Dartford, where a tax-collector was killed by a tile-maker, because he had behaved badly to one of the man's children. It spread to Gravesend, where one of the townspeople had been claimed as a bondsman by a neighbouring squire, and thrown into prison till he should pay £300 for his freedom. At Maidstone the rebels found a leader, Walter the tile-maker, commonly called Wat Tyler. There were as many as seven men who followed this occupation of making tiles that were among the leaders of the rebellion. Wat Tyler was joined by a well-known priest, John Ball by name, who had already been punished more than once for speaking against the Pope, the bishops, and the clergy. At Canterbury the mayor and aldermen were compelled to swear that they would support the cause of the people. The whole multitude—according to some accounts there were as many as 100,000 of them—marched towards London. When they came to Blackheath, John Ball is said to have preached a sermon to them, taking for his text the two verses—

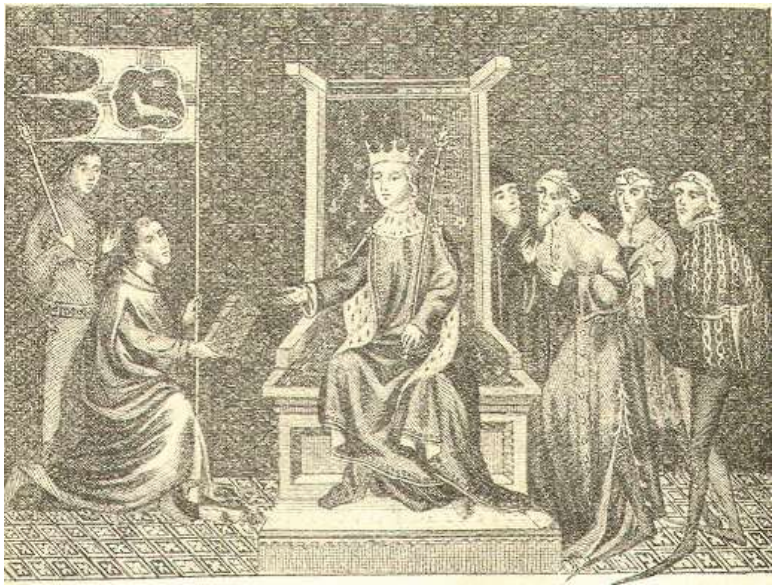
"When Adam delved and Evé span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

Meanwhile the country-folk from Essex had posted themselves at Mile End, which is on the east side of London, and those from Hertfordshire at Highbury, which is on the north. But it was not these, as we shall see, but the men from Kent that did the most mischief.

What they first did was to send a message to the King by a certain knight whom they had compelled to come with them. The knight was to tell the King that England had been very badly governed for many years by the nobles and bishops, and that the people desired, for his sake and their own, to have these things set right. They wished, therefore, that he should see them

and hear what they had got to say. The knight took this message, not very willingly, and the King sent him back with this answer, that if they would send their leaders the next day down to the river, he would talk with them.

The next day the King was rowed in his barge down the river as far as Rotherhithe (about three miles from Blackheath). The rebels had not been satisfied to send their leaders only; as many as 10,000 men had crowded down to the river-side, and these raised such an uproar when they saw the King's barge, that the nobles who were with him were frightened, and advised him not to land. The barge was rowed up and down, and the King tried to speak from it; the people, however, would not listen unless he landed, and this the nobles would not allow him to do.



KING RICHARD THE SECOND.

When the multitude at Blackheath heard that nothing had been done, they at once marched to London, doing much damage as they went. They were especially enraged against lawyers and foreigners, especially the Flemings, merchants and workmen from Flanders, many of whom had lately come over to this country. They thought that the lawyers made a profit out of their troubles, and that the Flemings took trade and work that properly belonged to Englishmen. The gates of London were not shut against them; in fact, there were thousands of people in the city who wished them well, and the authorities did not dare to refuse them admittance.

Perhaps the most unpopular man in the kingdom at this time was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, uncle to the King. A large body of the rebels, as soon as they got into the city, plundered and set on fire the Duke's palace, which was near the river, in a place then and still called the Savoy. The house and church belonging to the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes were also burnt; the people probably disliked them as being foreigners. Some houses belonging to Lombard money-lenders were broken open. We are also told that Wat Tyler murdered a citizen whose servant he had once been in France, and by whom he had been beaten. The story does not look like truth, for how should a tile-maker have been a citizen's servant in France?

That night the main body of the rebels remained in St. Catherine's Square opposite the Tower. It was in the Tower that the King, his mother, the Black Prince's widow, and many of his chief counsellors were living.

The next day the King went to talk with the people who had come up from the eastern counties, and who had assembled, as has been said, at a place called Mile End. He made them promises to set right the things of which they complained, and so satisfied them. He even put these promises into writing. As many as thirty scribes were busy all night, it is said, with this work. In the morning the deeds were handed over to the people, and they went away to their homes, thinking that they had obtained all that they wanted.

Meanwhile, much mischief had been done at the Tower. We do not know whether the rebels were permitted to enter this place, or broke into it by force. We can see that the King and his

advisers did everything they could to please Wat Tyler and his followers, of whom they were greatly afraid, and they may have thought it a good plan to seem to trust them. According to one account, the rebel leaders made their way through the gate as the King's party was coming out to go to Mile End. However this may be, they got in somehow, and murdered four persons, the chief of whom was Simon of Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury. After this they left St. Catherine's Square, and encamped in another large open space, where markets were held, known as Smithfield, and still called by that name.

The next morning the King rode into London from Westminster, for he had been at service in the Abbey. It is not clear whether he intended to speak to the rebels, or, seeing a great gathering of them as he rode by Smithfield, suddenly made up his mind to do so. He had done so well with the people at Mile End that he may well have hoped to pacify Wat Tyler and his followers. The story of what followed is thus told by a chronicler who lived at the time.

"When Wat Tyler saw the King, he said to his men, 'Here is the King; I will go and speak with him; do not move from your place till I give you this sign,' and he moved his hand to show what he meant. 'Then step forward and kill every one that is with the King, but save him alive, for he is young, and we can do what we please with him. We will carry him about England, and be masters of the whole land.' Then he spurred his horse to where the King was, coming so near that his horse's head touched the crupper of the King's saddle. 'King,' said he, 'dost thou see all these people?'

" 'Yes,' answered the King, 'I see them. Why dost thou ask?'

" 'Because they are all under my command, and have sworn to do whatsoever I shall bid them.'

" 'Well,' said the King, 'I do not blame them.'

" 'But dost thou think that all these men, and as many more as there are in this city under my command, ought to go away without having your promise in writing to take with them? Not so; but we will take the writings with us.'

" 'Nay, it has not been so ordered. Tell your companions to go to their homes, and the writings shall be given out village by village and town by town.'

"When the King had thus spoken, Wat Tyler saw one of the King's squires against whom he had a grudge. The man was carrying the King's sword. He said to him, 'Give me thy dagger.'

" 'Why should I give it thee?' said the squire. But the King said, 'Give it to him,' and this the squire did, much against his will.

"Wat Tyler said, 'Give me thy sword.'

" 'I will not,' the squire answered, 'for it is the King's sword, and thou art not worthy to carry it. And had thou and I been alone thou hadst not dared say such words, not for a heap of gold as high as this church. For they were near to the church of St. Bartholomew, which still stands in Smithfield. When the Mayor of London, William Walworth by name, heard this, he rode forward, having twelve others with him, all wearing armour under their clothes. 'How darest thou,' he said, 'so behave and say such words in the presence of the King?' By this time, too, the King had grown angry, and said to the Mayor, 'Lay hands on him.'

"Meanwhile Wat Tyler said to the Mayor, 'What concern hast thou with my words? What dost thou mean?'

" 'I mean this,' said the Mayor, 'that it does not become such a rascal as thou art to say such words in the presence of my lord the King. Verily, if I die for it, thou shalt suffer for thy insolence.' With this he drew a sword that he had, and struck Tyler such a blow as brought him down from his horse. When he was on the ground the King's people closed round him, so that

his followers could not see what was done, and one of the squires killed him.

"When the rebels saw that their leader was dead, they cried out, 'They have killed our captain; let us slay them all.' And they came on, each man having his bow bent before him.

"The King, seeing this, bade his attendants stay where they were, and rode forward alone. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'what are you about? You shall have none other captain but me. I am your king.' When they heard these words, such as were inclined to peace slunk away, but the others kept their ground, and seemed ready for mischief.

"By this time the alarm had spread in the city that the King was in danger, and a great number of the citizens came out to his help. Some of the King's counsellors were for falling upon the rebels, but the King would not suffer it. 'Nay,' said he, 'but go and ask them for their banners.' For each company had one of the King's banners. These they gave up. Then it was commanded that any man that had a written promise from the King should give it up under pain of death. This they did also, and after this they were suffered to depart."

The other leaders were seized and executed, and many of those who had joined in the rebellion were put to death. None of the King's promises were kept, and the wrongs complained of were not set right. Still in the end these poor men did not suffer in vain. Wat Tyler's rebellion was a step towards English freedom.

CHAPTER II

HOTSPUR AND GLENDOWER

It would have been well for King Richard if he had always behaved as well as he did on the day when he met Wat Tyler and his men in Smithfield. He was then but sixteen years of age, but unhappily he did not grow wiser as he grew older. At one time he allowed himself to be led by bad advisers; at another he seemed determined to have his own way, and was very tyrannical and unjust. One of his unrighteous acts was a chief cause of his fate. He had banished his cousin, Henry, Earl of Hereford, but had promised him that when Henry's father, John of Gaunt, should die, he should have his estates. This promise he did not keep. John of Gaunt died in 1399, and the King at once seized all his property. Henry came to England to claim his inheritance; many of the great nobles joined him; and Richard when he came back from Ireland, whither he had gone a few months before, found that he was no longer King. His cousin Henry had been declared King in his stead by Parliament.

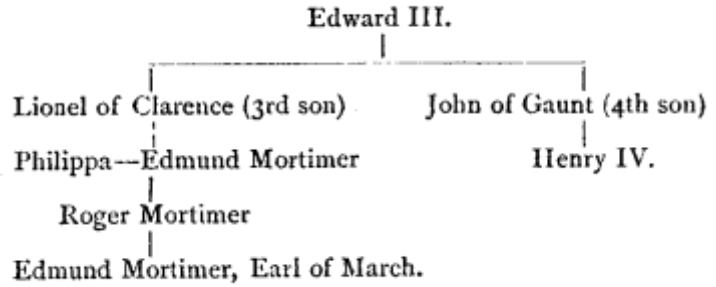
This was the first time that Parliament had done such a thing as to declare who was to be King. *Parliament was the people;* so it was the people saying who should reign over them. To us this seems all right, but it was not so clear then. Henry had to fight all his life against the rebellions and conspiracies of those who thought he had no right to be King. What great troubles came from this cause in after years we shall soon see.

The first rebellion that King Henry had to do with broke out in Wales. Rather more than a hundred years before this time an English King, Edward I., had conquered this country. The people had never been quite content, and now they saw a chance of getting their freedom again. Their leader was a certain Owen Glendower, who claimed to be descended from the last Prince of Wales, Llewellyn by name, the one who had tried in vain to

resist the English conquest. Glendower had been one of King Richard's squires, and had been ill-treated when his master lost his throne. A neighbour, Lord Grey of Ruthyn, had been allowed to take possession of some of his estates. When he tried to get justice done to him, it was refused. Then he rebelled, and soon gathered a number of followers. Wales is a land of mountains, which Glendower and his men knew very well, and in which it was not easy for the English to find them. To the very end of his reign King Henry found this Welsh chief a very troublesome enemy. Twice did he invade Wales with a large army, and twice he was obliged to retreat. He made a third attempt, he and his son Prince Henry (afterwards Henry V.) and the Earl of Arundel attacking the country at different points. This time the Welsh rivers were so flooded by heavy rains that the English armies could not advance. Owen had the reputation of being a magician, and his followers believed that he had caused the floods by his arts. This made him more powerful than ever.

THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY.

In one of his battles he had taken prisoner one Edmund Mortimer, uncle to the young Earl of March, who, according to the strict law of inheritance, had a better claim to the throne of England than Henry himself. As this is an important thing toward understanding the history of England for the next sixty years, I give a table which shows the descent of the two from King Edward III.



King Henry did not look with any favour on his family, and he would not allow Edmund Mortimer's relatives to ransom him. But by doing this he made enemies of another very powerful family, the Percies, Earls of Northumberland, for Henry Percy, eldest son of the Earl, known as Hotspur on account of his impetuous courage, had married Edmund Mortimer's sister. The Percies had for some time disliked the King. They had had much to do with putting him on the throne, and though he had rewarded them with grants of land and various honours, they thought that he had not done enough. So a great conspiracy was formed against King Henry. Owen Glendower released his prisoner Mortimer, and gave him his sister to wife, while Henry Percy made friends with a powerful Scotch noble, the Earl of Douglas. This Earl of Douglas had been taken prisoner by Henry Percy the year before at the Battle of Homildon Hill. He was now released without ransom, and joined the Percies with a large number of Scottish soldiers. Owen Glendower, on his part, promised to bring 12,000 Welshmen to help his friends. It was agreed that the Northumbrians and the Scotchmen should march southwards, and join Owen and his Welsh.

If this plan had been carried out it is quite possible that the rebellion might have succeeded. And indeed Henry was in great danger. He did not know what the Percies were thinking of doing. He heard indeed that Glendower and his Welshmen were about to invade Gloucestershire, and he sent letters to the lieutenant of that and of other counties on the Welsh border, telling them to muster their men and send them to join the Prince of Wales. He also knew that the Scotch were intending to attack England, and he sent instructions to the Percies themselves to resist them. This he did on June 16. A few days later he marched northwards himself, still knowing nothing about the Percies having rebelled. About July 12 he learnt the truth, and hurried back. And he was just in time. On July 18 he came up with Hotspur and his Scottish allies, before Glendower had been able to join them. They were three miles from Shewsbury, and so not far from the Welsh border. A fierce battle was fought, in which the rebels were defeated; Hotspur was killed, not, as Shakespeare describes, by the young Prince Henry, who was but a lad of fifteen, but by a chance arrow, as he was leading his men. The Earl of Douglas was taken prisoner. Prince Henry was in the battle, and was wounded by an arrow in the forehead.

We do not know what became of Glendower. He was certainly never conquered. In 1404, two years, that is, after the battle of Shrewsbury, we hear of his sending the Bishop of Asaph to make a treaty for him with the King of France, and nine years later still, Henry V., who was then about to start on the expedition which I shall describe in my next chapter, offered to pardon him if he would submit. He never did submit; very likely, as we hear no more about him, he died about this time.

CHAPTER III

AGINCOURT

I have already told how Edward III. claimed to be King of France, and how he won great victories by sea and land in seeking to make good this claim. But the whole country he could never conquer. Afterwards all that the English had won was lost again. For King Edward grew weak and foolish in his old age, and the Black Prince died before his father after long sickness. When Richard, the Black Prince's son, became king, he was but a boy, and the great English nobles were too much taken up with quarrels to care much for other things; nor did Richard do any better when he took the power into his own hands. The end of it was, that when Richard died only the town of Calais was left to the English. King Henry IV. was too busy keeping himself upon his throne, and putting down the nobles who rebelled against him, to have any time for conquest abroad. But Henry V. felt himself able to do what his father could not. First he claimed that certain provinces of France should be given up to him, and that he should have for his wife the daughter of the French king, the Princess Katharine, with a dowry of two million crowns. Something the French were willing to give, two or three provinces, but not all that Henry asked, and the Princess, but not with so much money. For a while ambassadors went to and fro, but they could come to no agreement, and on August 11, 1415, King Henry set sail from Southampton. He had about 30,000 men, who were carried in more than 1500 vessels.

He landed at Harfleur, and spent more than a month in besieging that place. When at last he took the town, he found that his army was much weakened. Some soldiers had been killed; many had died of disease, for the season was very wet and unhealthy. The safest and easiest thing for him to do was to sail back at once. This he did not like to do. It would disgrace him, he thought, to have taken so much trouble for the sake of a

single town, even though Harfleur was an important place, from which French ships used to come out to plunder the English coast. So he made up his mind to march across Normandy to Calais. This was a sort of defiance to the French King. Having done this he could go back to England with more credit. So he sent back the sick and wounded to England, and leaving a garrison in Harfleur, began his march. He had perhaps 2000 men-at-arms and 10,000 archers with him, and he had 150 miles to go through an enemy's country. About half the march he made without any one trying to hinder him; it was when he had to cross the river Somme that his real difficulties began. Sixty-nine years before his great-grandfather Edward III. had been in just the same position. He had to cross the same river, with the fords and bridges guarded, and an enemy's army much stronger than his own on the other side. King Edward had found a ford by bribing a Norman peasant; King Henry was able to cross the river at a place which the people of St. Quentin, whose business it was to keep it, had left unguarded. Half his army had crossed before the enemy came in sight; even then they were not strong enough to attack him, and he made the passage without any loss. But he had had to go very much out of his way, and in fact was not much nearer Calais than when he started. But though the French had a much stronger army, they fell back before him, and it was not till he was within forty miles of his journey's end that they made a stand. On October 24 he reached a little village called Blangy. Crossing a stream at a place where a mill now stands, he marched up to a high table-land which lies above the valley, and there found the French army, so placed as to block the road to Calais. Their leaders had not taken the trouble to make their position as strong as they might have made it. There were two villages a little in front of their two wings; they let the English occupy them. There were woods near, in which they ought to have posted troops. They did not do so. All they did was to put their huge mass of soldiers—a hundred thousand men at the least—between the English and the place which King Henry was trying to reach. They seemed to think that it would be quite sufficient to stand still and let these few thousands of men, who were scarcely a tenth part of their number, dash themselves against them. There were three lines of the French, one behind another. In the first were 20,000 men, armed with coats of mail and helmets. Bodies of cavalry stood on either side ready to charge when they were wanted. The second line was made up in much the same way; the third consisted chiefly of cavalry.

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

The English were drawn up in one line, with the archers on either side, the men-at-arms in the middle, but with some archers among them. Each of these had a stake shod with iron which he had carried with him on his march. These were to be

fixed into the ground to make a hedge when the cavalry should charge. There were archers also in the two villages which the French had not taken the trouble to occupy. The baggage was left some way behind with a few men to guard it.

King Henry rode along the line on a small grey horse putting his men in order, and bidding them be of good courage. He wore over his armour a coat embroidered with the leopards of England and the lilies of France, worked in their proper colours. Round his helmet was a crown of gold. Every one was to know that he was the King, and the King, as he said, both of France and England. When he had passed from one end of the line to the other, he sent his horse away, and took his stand on foot in front of his army, with the royal standard waving over his head. His post was in the middle of the line. On the right the Duke of York was in command; on the left Lord Camoys.

Which side was to move first? Had the French kept to their plan of standing still and letting the little English army dash itself in vain upon them, the battle might have had another end. Happily for us they did not, and it seems to have been King Henry's boldness and skill that made them move. By his command, Sir Thomas Erpyngham, one of the oldest knights in the army, gave the signal to charge by throwing his truncheon into the air. All the line advanced; and then the French, in their turn, began to move. It roused them to anger to see this little company of men, ragged and worn with marching, daring to attack them. Their huge, unwieldy host began to advance. Then the English halted. The archers set up their hedge of stakes, and so sheltered sent a shower of arrows into the midst of the enemy. For a time the English line was borne backward. But the archers went on shooting, and the men-at-arms fought with desperate valour. When the French horsemen tried to charge, they found themselves stopped by the hedge of stakes. Besides, it was only a few that could charge. The army was so crowded together that it could hardly move; only those in front could raise their hands to strike. And then the heavy ground was against them. It was now late in the autumn, and there had been much rain during the last two months. The English had suffered from it while they lay outside the walls of Harfleur, or marched backwards and forwards along the banks of the Somme; now it served them. The horsemen and heavy-armed foot-soldiers could not move for the mire. And all the while the terrible shower of arrows went on falling among them and striking them down. The French have always been better at charging than at standing still, and they began to lose courage, to waver, to fall back.

Yet there was at least one brave effort to change the fortune of the day. The Duke d'Alençon gathered round him a number of knights and men-at-arms, and made for the place where King Henry was fighting in front of his army. If he could be killed, thought the Duke, the battle might yet be won. The Duke struck the King's brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, to the ground with a dangerous wound, and dealt the King himself a great blow which dinted his helmet, and brought him to his knees. But he could do no more. He was over-powered and slain. In vain did the King try to save his life.

The first line of the French was now broken; the second seems to have fled almost without resistance. Some brave nobles and knights did, indeed, charge the English, but they could do nothing; every man among them was either killed or made prisoner.

And now there happened a dreadful thing, for which the King has often been blamed. He was told that the French had attacked the rear of his army, that they were setting the prisoners free (for many prisoners had been taken by this time), had plundered the baggage, and were now about to charge him from behind. He gave orders to kill all the prisoners that had not been sent to the rear. When the nobles and knights refused to obey, for they hoped to get ransom for those whom they had taken, and so pay themselves back for the money which they had spent, the King sent a squire with a number of archers to execute his orders. Many had been killed, when it was found out that the news was a false alarm. A knight who lived in the neighbourhood had indeed gone with a number of men to the

rear of the English army and plundered the baggage. But there was no such danger as Henry had feared. And yet there might have been. Even then the French were in numbers far stronger than he was. If they had taken courage, and had found a brave and skilful man to lead them, they might still have destroyed him and his little army. And the prisoners, if set free, would of course have been very dangerous.

The battle over, the King rode over the field of battle. "To whom does the victory belong?" he said to the chief of the French heralds. "To you, sire," the man answered. Turning round, Henry saw the turrets of a castle, and asked its name. "The Castle of Agincourt," was the answer. "Since it is fitting," he said, "that all battles should bear the name of the fortress near to which they have been fought, let this field bear for ever the name of Agincourt."

The French lost 10,000 men in this great battle, and of these more than 8000 were nobles and knights. Some of the very first men in France were among them. On the English side the Duke of York was killed, and Michael de la Pole, the young Earl of Suffolk. How many more fell we do not know. A French chronicler says 1500, an English 3300. The English took 1500 prisoners, two royal princes among them.

The King went back to England. Afterwards he returned to France with another and yet stronger army. After much fighting peace was made. It was agreed that Henry should marry the Princess Katharine, and should be King of France after the death of Charles.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENGLISH IN FRANCE

On October 22, King Charles VI. of France died. At his funeral the French herald cried aloud, first, "May God have mercy on the soul of the late most powerful and excellent Charles VI. King of France!" and then, "May God grant long life to Henry, by the Grace of God King of France and England!" for indeed the little child, Henry of Windsor as he was called, then not a year old, was by the treaty of Troyes King of France and England. His uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, had been made regent by Henry on his death-bed, and for a time all seemed to go well. Charles, son of the late King, claimed, it is true, the crown of France, and was supported by many of the nobles, but the greater part of the country was content, it seemed, to submit to the English. The Duke of Bedford was an excellent soldier and a good governor. He was on good terms too with the two powerful princes, the Dukes of Brittany and Burgundy. A sister of the latter became his wife. But it was a state of things in which trouble was sure to arise before very long. After all, the English had no real right to be in France, and though some powerful persons in that country, for reasons of their own, supported them, their power had no strong foundation. Then there were perpetual quarrels at home among the nobles who ruled in the young King's name. The Duke of Gloucester, another uncle of the young King, and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, who was also related to him, were the leaders of two hostile parties in the Council, and their quarrels did much harm both at home and abroad. But the chief cause of the overthrow of the English kingdom in France was of a very different kind. This cause I shall now describe.

At the little village of Domremi, in the province of Champagne, there was a peasant family of the name of Darc. One of the daughters, Jeanne by name (commonly spelt Joan),

was a very pious and earnest girl, who had been greatly moved by the sad stories which she had heard of the troubles of her country, divided as it was by parties among its own people, and oppressed by a foreign ruler. She thought much about these things, as she spent day after day alone in the fields near her native village, keeping her father's sheep. Before long she seemed to herself to see the figures of angels in the sky, and to hear voices which told her that she had a great work to do for France. As time went on these visions seemed to become clearer and clearer. She saw Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine, and heard the voice of the Archangel Michael. She was to deliver the young King from his enemies, and bring him to be crowned where his fathers before him had been crowned, in the Cathedral of Rheims. Obeying, as she thought, these commands, she went to the officer in command of a neighbouring garrison, and told him her errand. Of course he was disposed to treat her as a mad-woman or a cheat. But by this time she had become famous in the country round. No one doubted her goodness and piety. Many were disposed to believe that she was really chosen by Heaven to do a great work for France. A priest who was sent to question her was much moved by her earnestness, and declared that she was not a witch—people in those days were terribly afraid of witches. At last she got her way, so far at least as to be taken to King Charles. Mounted on a white horse, and dressed like a man, for this, she said, was one of the things which the voices from heaven commanded, with four squires attending her, she rode to Chinon, where the King then was. The King and his Councillors were not disposed to believe in her. But at last her zeal and faith prevailed, not a little, we may suppose, because the King's affairs were in a very bad way.

It was now the early spring of 1429, and Orleans, the most important place which yet remained to King Charles, had been besieged since October 12 in the year before by the English and Burgundians. In February 1429 Sir John Falstaff, who was bringing provisions to the besieging army, had won a victory over an army of French and Scots at a battle called the Battle of the Herrings. If Orleans should fall, it was plain that for some time to come at least King Charles would have little hope of success. This was just what the Maid declared she could prevent, and the King resolved to try her. A force of 7000 men was raised and sent to relieve the town. Joan, splendidly armed, carrying a sacred banner, and surrounded by a troop of picked horsemen, went with the army. They took a supply of provisions for the town, which was carried down the Loire in boats, the army marching along the bank to protect them. The English tried to capture the boats but failed; both troops and provisions got safely into Orleans, and Joan was received with the greatest joy by the townspeople. Thenceforward she was commonly called The Maid of Orleans.

The very next day, Joan, sure that the besiegers were as much disheartened by what had happened as the townspeople were encouraged, prevailed upon the officers in command to attack the English works. The first place assaulted was a tower called St. Loup, garrisoned by three hundred English. It was taken. The next day another fort fell. A few days afterwards the strongest position of the besiegers, the Castle of Tournelles, was attacked. On this occasion the Maid was wounded in the neck by an arrow, and fell to the ground. But she revived when the arrow had been drawn out, and again joined the men of Orleans in the assault. The castle was captured, and most of the garrison either slain or taken prisoners. The spirit of the English was now quite broken down. On May 8, after burning what was left of their works, they gave up the siege, and Orleans was safe. In the course of little more than a week this wonderful girl had turned the tide of war.

And now, for some time, victory seemed to follow her wherever she went. Fort after fort, town after town, fell into the hands of the French. At Patay they ventured on a fight in the open field, a thing which they had hardly ventured to do since the fatal day of Agincourt, and gained a great victory. This was on June 18. About three weeks afterwards, on Sunday, July 8, Charles was crowned at Rheims The maid stood by his side, holding her sacred banner in her hands.

ENGLISH SOLDIERS FIGHTING IN FRANCE.

And now, feeling that her work was done, she would gladly have returned to her home. The voices, she said, had bidden her rouse the King from his despair, and see him crowned. This she had accomplished, and she asked leave to depart. "What will you do?" the King is said to have asked. "Feed my father's sheep as I was wont to do," was her answer. But King Charles thought too much of the help which she gave him to let her go, and she stayed, though much against her will.

And now her good fortune seemed in a way to leave her. King Charles made an attack on Paris, which the English still held. The Maid was among the foremost in an assault that was made on September 12 on one of the suburbs of the city. She scaled the wall, and when thrown back into the ditch, rose again and waved her banner to encourage the assailants. But nothing could be done, and when it was found that her special sword was broken, men began to whisper that the favour of Heaven had been withdrawn. Again she entreated the King to allow her to depart, and again he refused.

It was near the end of May in the following year (1430) that she fought her last battle. The Duke of Burgundy was besieging Compiègne, and the Maid marched with a considerable force to relieve the town. She made her way through the lines of the besiegers into the town. The next day she headed a sally against the enemy, and took one of their posts. Then her men were out-numbered and compelled to retreat. Joan, staying behind while she tried to rally them, was overtaken by a Burgundian archer, and pulled from her horse. "The English were rejoiced," says the chronicler Monstrelet, "and more pleased than if they had taken five hundred other combatants, for they feared no other leader or captain so much as they had hitherto feared the Maid." When shortly after the Duke of Burgundy himself came to inspect his army at Compiègne, he went to see his prisoner at the lodgings where she was kept. "He spoke some words to her," says Monstrelet, "but what they were I do not now recollect, although I was present." One cannot help being sorry that Monstrelet does not tell us more about this wonderful young woman. But he does not seem to have been very much interested in her.

What remains to say about her is very sad indeed. The Duke of Burgundy gave her up to the Bishop of Beauvais, who tried her as a heretic and a witch. As she declared that she was bound to obey the heavenly voices which she had heard, her judges found her guilty of heresy, and condemned her to death. She was persuaded to acknowledge that she had been wrong, and that she was bound to obey the Church rather than the voices. Having signed this confession—she could not write, but "made her mark"—her punishment was changed from death to imprisonment for life. But her enemies were not satisfied. The dress of a soldier was left in her cell; she put it on, and her gaolers, who had been watching her, found her in it. This was taken as a fresh offence; she was again condemned to death, and burnt on May 30, 1431, in the market-place of Rouen; One is

glad to think that this cruel and wicked act was not done by the English. King Charles, who owed his throne to her, did not take the least trouble to save her life.

Six months afterwards Henry VI. was crowned King of France in Paris. But his cause never prospered, and when the Duke of Bedford died, as he did about four years afterwards, it became quite hopeless. The war went on indeed, and sometimes one side got the better and sometimes the other. At last, in 1451, nothing was left of all the English possessions in France but the town of Calais. Things in fact were exactly as they had been thirty-six years before, when Henry V. began his French war. All the blood and treasure that had been spent had been spent in vain.

CHAPTER V

JACK CADE

The rebellion of Wat Tyler about which I wrote in the first chapter of this book happened just thirty-five years after the great battle of Poictiers, and the rebellion of Jack Cade, about which I am going to write in this, exactly the same time after Agincourt. And this was not a mere chance. Both Poictiers and Agincourt were glorious victories, but it might have been better for England if they had never been won, for they made the nation hope to do what never could be done, that is, conquer France. The English went on spending lives and money without end, and all for nothing. Men went away from every English village to the French wars, and never came back again; the taxes grew heavier and heavier; and the nobles and knights asked more and more from their tenants. Sometimes money was wanted when they had to fit themselves out for a campaign with their squires and their men-at-arms, sometimes to raise a ransom if they happened to be taken prisoners. All these things and others like them caused a great deal of trouble, as indeed was sure to be the case when the rulers of the country were more anxious to get hold of what belonged to other people than to do their best with what was their own. The result was great discontent, which broke out now and then into open rebellion when there was some special cause, such as a bad harvest or a new tax.

In the summer of 1450 the three counties that lie in the south-eastern corner of England, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, rebelled, under the leadership of a certain Jack Cade, who called himself Captain of Kent. They complained that the King had bad advisers about him, that the English possessions in France had been lost by treachery, and that the taxes were unbearably heavy. Who Jack Cade himself was is not known for certain. He gave out that he belonged to the noble family of Mortimer. It should be observed that the leaders of Wat Tyler's rebellion did not pretend to be anything but workmen, whereas the chief of this pretended that he was a man of high birth. According to some accounts he was an Irishman, who had fought in France against the English, but had afterwards come over to this country. He led his men to Blackheath, where they encamped. It is said that there was a great multitude of them, and that they were well disciplined and well armed. The King or rather his ministers, for Henry himself had very little spirit, and was for the best part led by others, raised an army of 15,000 men and marched against the rebels. Cade did not feel himself able to meet so strong a force, and retreated southward. The King was preparing to pursue him, but his wife, Margaret of Anjou, is said to have been afraid that he might meet with some injury, and to have prevailed upon him to stay behind himself, and send two of his generals, Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother William, to attack them. Cade had been afraid to resist the King. Perhaps he knew that his followers would not back him up in doing so. But it was a different thing when he had to do with a couple of knights. At Sevenoaks he turned upon his pursuers and defeated them, killing both their leaders. After winning this victory he marched northward again, and encamped once more on Blackheath. And now the city of London came over to him. The Common Council voted that the gates of the town should be opened to him, and he

marched his troops across London Bridge, and took possession. This he did by striking his sword on "London Stone" and crying out at the same time, "Now is Mortimer Lord of London."

LABOURERS.

The King, still under the influence of his wife, who did not behave with anything like the courage that she afterwards showed, had fled to Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, and it seemed as if the rebellion were likely to succeed. For a time Cade was able to keep his men in good order. They remained in the city during the day, but without plundering the property of the citizens or doing any injury to man, woman, or child. Every night their leader took them across the bridge to Southwark, which is on the other side of the river. But this happy state of things did not last very long. Cade seized the Treasurer, Lord Saye and Sele, who had made himself very unpopular, and brought him before the Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor condemned him, and he was executed in Cheapside. Another victim was Lord Saye and Sele's son-in-law, Crowmer, who was Sheriff of Kent. The citizens of London did not approve of these proceedings, and putting themselves under the command of one Matthew Gough, who had the reputation of being a skilful soldier, tried to prevent Cade and his followers from coming over the bridge from Southwark into London. A fierce fight took place. The Londoners, who had posted themselves at the southern end of the bridge, were driven back to the middle, where there was a drawbridge. Matthew Gough was killed in the battle. But though the rebels had the best of the fighting, Cade did not feel strong enough to enter London again, and remained on the south side of the river.

And now the King's counsellors thought that they might be disposed to listen to offers of peace. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Winchester were sent to treat with them. They found Cade dressed in a splendid suit of gilded armour which had belonged to Sir Humphrey Stafford. The Archbishop afterwards spoke of him as having been "sober in talk and wise in reasoning, though arrogant in heart and stiff in opinion." The Archbishop promised that the things complained of should be set right, and that no man should be punished for having taken part in the rebellion. On hearing this Cade's followers dispersed to their homes. They had got, they thought, what they wanted, and now the sooner they went back to their own business the better. But Cade was not satisfied. Perhaps he was afraid that, having been the leader of the whole affair, he would be excepted from the pardon. Perhaps, having had a taste of power, he was not willing to give it up. As his own people had left him, he is said to have provided himself with a new force by breaking open the gaols and setting free the prisoners. But this was a kind of army which did not hold together very long. With some of his followers Cade made his way to Rochester, whither he sent the plunder which he had collected. About this plunder they quarrelled, and Cade, leaving his companions, tried to make his escape alone. By this time a price of £1000 had been set upon his head. At Heathfield, a village in the Weald of Sussex, he was overtaken by Alexander Iden, who had been made Sheriff of Kent, and mortally wounded. Iden would have taken him to London, but he died on the way.

CHAPTER VI

THE TWO ROSES

The rebellion of Jack Cade lasted but a few weeks only; the Civil War, which is commonly called the "War of the Roses," went on, with times of peace in between, for thirty years and more. The first battle was fought at St. Alban's on May 22, 1455, the last at Bosworth Field on August 22, 1485.

The first and most easily described cause of this war was the claim of an elder branch of the royal family of England as against a younger. If you will look back to p. 15 of this volume, you will see how Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, was descended from Lionel of Clarence, *third* son of Edward III. It will be enough to say that the Duke of York, son of this Edmund Mortimer's sister Anne, claimed the throne as having a better right to it than Henry VI., who, as the same table shows, was descended from Edward II.'s *fourth* son, John of Gaunt.

But this family claim after all did not go for very much. Possibly it might never have been heard of, or would, at least, have come to nothing, if Henry V. had lived, or had left behind him a wiser and more capable son than Henry VI. But things were so badly managed by Henry and his advisers that the nation, or at least a great part of it, looked for a change. Then the Lollards or followers of Wiclif, who had been favoured by John of Gaunt, were persecuted by his descendants, and naturally turned to another branch of the family, which might, they hoped, treat them better. Another cause of the war was that the nobles, not having any longer the French to fight with, began to fight against each other. Lastly, the towns, which were growing richer and stronger, took up the side of the Duke of York, as being one who would try to make certain reforms which were much wanted, and generally to take their part against the nobles and bishops.

HENRY VI. AND MARGARET.

The first battle took place, as has been said, at St. Alban's, in 1455. The Duke of York had not then got as far as claiming the crown. He only demanded that the King should dismiss a very weak and worthless adviser that he had, Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset. In order to see that this was done, he, in company with some other nobles, of whom the Earl of Warwick was one, marched towards London. The King's troops came out to meet him, and the two armies met in the town of St. Alban's. The King's soldiers got into the town first, and made barricades across the streets. These they held for a time, and so kept the Duke of York's men in check, but the Earl of Warwick got in by another way, and took them in the rear. After a short struggle they fled. The battle lasted little more than an hour, and

not many were killed on either side, but among these was the Duke of Somerset.

The Duke of York now became the most powerful man in the kingdom, being made "Protector of the Realm." But Queen Margaret, who had far more to do with the government of the country than her husband, never liked him, and did not rest till she had deprived him of his office. For the time the Duke of York made no resistance, but retired to his castle in the north. The next thing was that the Archbishop of Canterbury, with others who were anxious to keep the peace, endeavoured to reconcile the two parties. For a time they succeeded; the chiefs went to St. Paul's Cathedral in London, walking arm-in-arm, while the Duke of York himself gave his hand to the Queen. But the peace did not last very long. The Earl of Warwick was very nearly killed by a mob in a London street, and fled to Calais, of which he was governor. From that time he began to do his best to take the crown from Henry and give it to the Duke of York.

In 1459 the war began again. First the White Rose was victorious, then the Red, then the White again. Lord Salisbury, who was father of the Earl of Warwick, was marching with 5000 men to join the Duke of York, when Lord Audley fell upon him with an army of double the strength. Salisbury was the better general of the two—indeed the leaders of the White Rose or Yorkist party were, on the whole, more skilful than those on the other side—and pretending to fly, drew the enemy into a dangerous position. He then turned upon him and defeated him with heavy loss. Lord Audley and as many as 2000 men were killed, and a great number of prisoners was taken. But in a few weeks all the advantage thus gained was lost. The Queen raised an army and marched to Ludlow, where the Duke of York with the two Nevilles were encamped. For some reason the Duke's army lost heart; one of Warwick's chief officers went over to the Queen with his men; the army dispersed without fighting—its sudden breaking up is called "The Rout of Ludlow,"—and their leaders had to fly for their lives, the Duke of York escaping to Ireland, the Earl of Warwick and his father to Calais.

But Queen Margaret used her victory very badly. Towns which were suspected of favouring the Duke of York were given up to plunder. Many of his friends were deprived of their property; some were put to death. These things made the King unpopular, and Warwick, who had a safe refuge in Calais, came back to England, landing at Sandwich. The men of Kent joined him at once, and he marched to London, which was then, and remained to the end, on the Yorkist side. Queen Margaret had not had time to gather all her forces; what she had were encamped outside the walls of Northampton. Warwick marched north with all the speed that he could use to attack this army before it could be joined by the Queen's friends from other parts of England. He reached Northampton on July 10, and at once stormed the camp. The Duke of Buckingham, who was a great-grandson of Edward III., the Earl of Shrewsbury, and more than three hundred knights were slain. The Queen, with her young son, fled to Wales. The Duke of York now thought that the time was come for him to claim the crown. He went to London, and calling a Parliament, demanded that he should be recognized as the true King of England. But he did not find even his own friends ready to yield. The King was not a little beloved, notwithstanding all his weakness. And then he and his father and his grandfather had been Kings of England for more than forty years. Parliament had solemnly acknowledged their right to rule again and again; there was no one in the kingdom but had taken the oath of allegiance to him. Warwick himself told the Duke that he must not claim to be King; he must be content to be Regent. At last the matter was compromised. Henry was to be King as long as he lived; the Duke of York was to succeed him. As for the claims of the young Prince, they were set aside.

King Henry was content to accept these terms; perhaps we may say that he could not refuse them. But Queen Margaret was not satisfied at all. She hurried to the north, where she had many friends, the great house of Percy being chief among them, and with their help raised another army. The Duke of York marched northward to meet them, and finding them at Sandal Castle, a home of his own, near Wakefield, resolved to attack

them. His friends advised him to wait, for his army was not equal to the Queen's, and great forces were on their way to join him under his son, the Earl of March. He would not listen to this prudent advice, but engaged at once. The result was a complete defeat. His army was broken by an attack in front; and in the midst of their confusion some troops who had been lying in ambush attacked them from behind. The Duke himself was killed. All the men of rank who were taken prisoners were executed the next day, the Earl of Salisbury among them. Their heads were stuck on the walls of Wakefield, that of York having a crown of paper put round it. The most shocking thing in the story is the murder of the Duke's second son, the Earl of Rutland, a youth of seventeen. A priest had the lad in his charge, and was taking him to a place of safety, when he was overtaken by some followers of Lord Clifford. The young Earl threw himself on his knees before Lord Clifford and begged for mercy. "No," cried the savage noble, "your father slew my father, and I will slay thee and all thy kin!" and he plunged a dagger into his heart.

CHAPTER VII

THE TWO ROSES *(CONTINUED)*

The death of the Duke of York did not do as much harm to his cause as one might have thought it would have done. He was a clever man, and of a much finer and more generous temper than any, we may say, of the nobles of his time, but he was not a skilful general. His son Edward, who succeeded him, was in this respect much superior, though he was a much worse man. And in something of the same way the death of the Earl of Salisbury was an advantage. The whole power of the family now came into the hands of his son, the Earl of Warwick, and Warwick, like Edward, was a cleverer man than his father.

Just seven weeks after the battle of Wakefield, the Yorkists suffered another defeat. Warwick was anxious above all things to keep London, which was, indeed, the chief strength of his cause. He got together in haste all the troops that he could, and marched thither. Queen Margaret, who was as anxious to gain the great city as he was not to lose it, had come from the north, though she had not used all the speed that she might. Her soldiers were bent on plundering, and she did not, perhaps could not, keep them in order. The two armies met at St. Alban's, and Warwick was defeated.

And now, if the Queen had pressed on at once, the Lancastrians might have been successful. This time, it would seem, her husband stopped her. He could not bear to think that the savage soldiers, who had done so much harm in England already, should plunder and burn the capital city of his kingdom. He persuaded the Queen to wait till the Londoners, who were greatly in favour of the other party, should make a regular surrender of their city. And while she waited the opportunity was lost.

The Duke of York's son, the young Earl of March, was in the west of England when the news of his father's defeat and death reached him. On February 2, 1461, he met the Lancastrians, under the command of Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, at Mortimer's Cross in Herefordshire, and defeated them. Jasper fled from the field. His father Owen, who, thirty-three years before, had married Katharine of France, the fifth Henry's widow, was with him. The stout old man refused to fly, was taken prisoner, carried to Hereford, and beheaded there.

Edward went on towards London, and was joined on the way by Warwick. The Queen, who had not been able to keep her troops together, did not wait for their coming, but retreated northwards. The young Duke entered London, and without waiting for the assent of Parliament, caused himself to be proclaimed King by the title of Edward IV.

It was no time for him to sit still and enjoy his new dignity. In the course of a few days he and Warwick marched northwards, and met the Lancastrians, who were under the

command of the Duke of Somerset, at Towton, a village about ten miles south-west of York. The battle that followed, fought on March 29 (Palm Sunday), 1461, was the greatest, if we regard the numbers engaged, and one of the most important, ever fought in this country.

SOLDIERS.

The Duke of Somerset posted his army on some high land in front of the village of Towton. On his right was a steep slope, going down to the beck or brook called the Cock. This is commonly a small stream, but it was then in flood, and could not be crossed. On his left there was another slope, not so steep, but still steep enough to make an attack difficult. In front also the ground fell, but more gently. His great fault was, according to a recent writer, that he crowded his men too much together, and so lost the advantage of his larger numbers. Something of the same kind had been done by the French at Agincourt. King Edward and Warwick came on from the south, unseen because of a snow-storm which was blowing from that direction, and was therefore driving into the faces of the Lancastrians. But they could see better than they were seen, and sent volleys of arrows among the enemy. These tried to return them, but to little purpose. The Yorkists drew back when they had discharged their arrows; when the volleys of the enemy began to fail they came on again. At last the Lancastrians were provoked to leave their post, to descend the slope in front, and to climb that which rose on the opposite side of the valley to where the Yorkist army stood. And still the snow beat fiercely in their faces. The fight went on fiercely for many hours. About noon the Duke of Norfolk, who had been some miles behind, came up with fresh troops from Ferrybridge, at which place he had crossed the Aire, and fell on the left flank of the Lancastrians. Still they held out; it was late in the afternoon before they broke and fled. Many were slain on the field of battle; it is said that as many as 30,000 bodies were buried at Towton, and many were drowned in the flooded brook. By the end of the day the Lancastrian army had ceased to be. No prisoners were taken. Never have Englishmen fought so savagely as they did in the War of the Roses.

Even after this Queen Margaret did not give up hope. She had still some friends in England, and she now began to look for help to the enemies of her country. She gave up Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Scotch, and she pledged Calais to the French, and got some soldiers in return. The great house of the Percies was still on her side, and so were others among the nobles of the north. They fought for her at Hedgeley Moor and were beaten; they fought again at Hexham, and met with the same fate. King Henry was at Hexham, but soon fled from the field. He escaped, though three of the servants who waited on him were taken. For a year he was in hiding, and was then discovered, and taken to London. Queen Margaret, who had her son, then eleven years old, with her, fled towards the Scottish border. She went through not a few hardships and dangers before she could make good her escape. She fell among a party of plunderers, but contrived to get away while they were quarrelling over their booty. A few hours afterwards she met—so the story runs—one of the outlaws who haunted the great forest of Hexham. She told him that she was the Queen of England, and that the boy with her was the heir to

the English crown; and she begged him to protect, if not herself, at least the child. The man was moved by her prayers, and found a hiding-place for mother and son till their friends could arrange for their escape to France.

The battle of Hexham was fought on May 15, 1464. About a month afterwards Warwick took Bamborough Castle, the last place in England that held out for the Lancastrians, and for six years the land had peace.

CHAPTER VIII

"THE END OF THE KING-MAKER"

Edward had not long been King before a quarrel began between him and his powerful subject, the Earl of Warwick. Warwick was a prudent statesman, and thought that the King could not do better than marry a French princess. This would strengthen him on his throne, because it would prevent the French King, who was the nearest and most powerful of his neighbours, from helping the House of Lancaster. But Edward wanted, as indeed was quite natural, to please himself in the matter of marrying. He had fallen in love with Lady Elizabeth Grey of Groby, daughter of a certain Lord Rivers who had fought on Henry's side in the War of the Roses. This lady he married in 1464. Warwick was greatly displeased at this, and became still more angry when he found that the King was disposed to raise his wife's kinsfolk to power. Then another cause of difference came up. Warwick still desired an alliance with France, but the King was more disposed to make friends with the Duke of Burgundy, Charles surnamed the Bold, and promised to give him his sister Margaret for wife. Edward and his brother the Duke of Clarence were not on good terms, and the Duke made friends with Warwick, whose daughter he married in the year 1469. In this year the quarrel between the King and Warwick broke out into open war. There was a rebellion in the north, which the Earl and his friends secretly encouraged. The King was not strong enough to put it down, and was actually made prisoner, his keeper being Warwick's brother, the Archbishop of York. About the same time the Queen's father and brother, who had been taken prisoners at a battle in Northamptonshire, were put to death. Warwick was now the real ruler of England; but in the next year King Edward contrived to escape, and Warwick had to fly from the country. He now made up his mind to break with King Edward altogether, and to put Henry again upon the throne. By the help of King Louis of France, he made friends with Queen Margaret. Shortly afterwards he returned to England, where his brother, Lord Montague, had been busy raising an army. And now Edward, in his turn, was compelled to fly from the country, and to take refuge with his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy. The Duke, while pretending to favour neither of the two parties, secretly helped him, and Edward returned to England. In Yorkshire, where he landed, having been driven out of his proper course by a storm, he was not well received, but as he went southward, great numbers flocked to join him. The Duke of Clarence, "false, fleeting, perjured," joined him, and when he reached London he was at once admitted within the gates, and found the citizens ready to help him with both money and men. Warwick had followed him from the north, and King Edward lost no time in turning back to meet him. He marched to Barnet, taking King Henry from his prison in the Tower with him.

Warwick, who had with him the Earl of Oxford, and his brother, Lord Montague, had encamped on the table-land which lies to the north of Barnet. Edward marched up Barnet Hill without being hindered, passed through Barnet town, and drew up his army on the southern part of what is now known as Hadley Green. The country was covered with a thick mist, and it seems that neither of the two commanders knew exactly where they were, or where the enemy was to be found. King Edward, in particular, meaning to draw up his army in line over against that of the Earl of Warwick, drew it up really far too much to the right. The mistake really turned out to his advantage, for the cannonade which the enemy directed during the night on his left

wing, or rather where they supposed the left wing to be, did no harm, the balls falling in an empty space. About five o'clock in the morning—it was Easter Day, April 14, 1471—the trumpet sounded for battle, and King Edward's men began to move forwards. No regular plan of attack could be carried out, so thick was the mist. Whenever it grew lighter for a time, and this company or that could see a portion of the enemy, there was some fierce fighting. Then it became thicker again, and the combatants were almost obliged to hold their hands. At first the battle seemed likely to go against King Edward. Lord Montague and the Earl of Oxford found his left wing very weak, and drove it before them in confusion. Some of the flying soldiers took refuge in the houses of Barnet town, some tried to hide themselves in the great forest called Enfield Chase, which in those days came close up to the town. A few even fled as far as London, carrying with them false tidings of how King Edward's army had been altogether defeated. But, thanks to the mist, the rest of the army knew very little of what had happened, and fought on as bravely and cheerfully as if nothing had gone wrong. On the other hand, the pursuers took to plundering the houses of the townsmen, and their leaders had much trouble in gathering them together again and putting them in good order. When they had done this to the best of their power, and were making their way back to the field of battle, another misfortune happened to them, and of this also the mist may have been, in part at least, the cause.

They came upon the centre of their own line of battle, and being taken by them for enemies were received with a shower of arrows. One reason for this mistake is said to have been that the Earl of Oxford's men wore a badge that was very like that of King Edward's soldiers. These latter had on their coats a sun with rays streaming from it, while the Earl of Oxford's badge was a star with five points. The one may well have been taken for the other, especially on a misty day. Certain it is that the right wing, when coming back to the battle, received a volley from their own friends. Some of them set up a cry of "Treachery! treachery!" and fled from the field, the Earl himself being among them. The archers too, when they found out what they had done, were not a little disturbed. King Edward saw at once the confusion among his enemies, and felt that the time was come for striking a great blow. He had kept in reserve behind his first line some companies of horse and foot. These were of course quite fresh, while the rest of the two armies had been fighting ever since dawn, that is for nearly five hours. King Edward himself led them on, and fought at their head. There was not a stronger or more skilful man-at-arms than he in either army, and that day he fought more fiercely than ever. The Earl of Warwick's line was soon broken through, and though here and there small parties of his men continued to resist, the victory was beyond all doubt with King Edward. By an hour before noon all was over, though the pursuit may have lasted some time longer. The King-maker and his brother, Lord Montague, were found dead on the field. An obelisk, set up about a hundred and fifty years ago, marks the spot where, according to tradition, the two were slain. Another memory of the battle is preserved in the name of "Dead Man's Bottom," given to a hollow in Hadley Wood. The two brothers were buried in Bisham Abbey.

THE BATTLE OF BARNET.

But King Edward had one more battle to fight before he could enjoy his kingdom in peace. On the very day of the battle of Barnet, Queen Margaret landed at Weymouth, and was joined by some of the old friends of her cause. Her first intention had been to march on London, but when she heard of Warwick's defeat and death, she turned westwards. Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, was raising troops in Wales, and if she could join him her chances of victory would be much improved. She got as far as Gloucester, but the Governor of the city would not admit her men within the walls. Thus they were not able to cross the Severn, as they had hoped to do, by Gloucester bridge. They now marched northwards, hoping to get across the Avon at Tewkesbury, and so make their way to Worcester, and from Worcester into Wales. King Edward was following them, and at Tewkesbury was so close behind that they could not hope to make the passage of the Avon without fighting. Queen Margaret was for moving on, but the soldiers were utterly wearied, for they had marched more than forty miles within the last twenty-four hours, and their leaders resolved to fight where they were. The two armies were about equal in numbers; but King Edward was a far better leader than Somerset, and his soldiers were in better condition. Anyhow the battle was soon over. Somerset, who would probably have done better if he had remained in the strong position which he had taken up, and been content to defend himself, saw, as he thought, an opportunity of attacking the enemy, and fell upon the left wing of Edward's army. He was beaten off, and falling back upon his own lines, put them into confusion. King Edward now charged the centre of the Lancastrians. It broke and fled, and the day was lost. As there is a "Dead Man's Bottom" near the field of Barnet, so there is a "Bloody Meadow" by the side of the Avon below Tewkesbury. Probably the name marks the place where the fugitives, unable to cross the river or get into the town, were slaughtered by the conquerors. Here, it may be, Prince Edward, the last heir of the Lancastrian line, was slain. It seems tolerably certain that he fell either in the battle or in the pursuit. Shakespeare's story—if indeed the play of *Henry VI.* be Shakespeare's—is that he was taken prisoner, and brought before King Edward, and that, haughtily maintaining his right to the throne, he was stabbed by the King and his two brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester.

The battle of Tewkesbury was fought on May 4, 1471. On the twenty-second of the same month the body of Henry VI. was exposed to public view in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. It was said that he had died a natural death, but no one doubted that he had been murdered, and most people believed that the murderer was Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

Queen Margaret, who had been taken prisoner at Tewkesbury, was kept in prison till the year 1476 when Louis XI., King of France, ransomed her by paying fifty thousand gold crowns. But as she was allowed to leave England, she was obliged solemnly to give up all her claims to the crown, and King Louis got in return for his money a surrender of all her rights to the provinces which she should have inherited from her father and mother. She died in 1481.

CHAPTER IX

WILLIAM CAXTON, PRINTER

There never was anything that made a greater difference to the world than when books began to be printed, instead of being written by the hand. This wonderful invention was not made all at once. First there was printing from blocks, which is done by drawing or writing something on a piece of wood or metal, and taking an impression from it. But real printing began when a letter, or sometimes two or three letters, were made in wood or metal, put together in words, and then, having been covered with ink, were stamped on paper. These letters made in metal, for wood was soon given up, are called *type*. Type that was movable, *i.e.* could be put together and then taken to pieces, was the great secret of printing. When this was done, a real

beginning was made. It is not certain who first did this. But it is commonly believed to have been one Gutenberg, who set up in business at Mentz in 1441, and in the following year printed two small books. In 1455 he printed a Bible which is called the Mazarin. The first English printer was William Caxton, who was born about 1422. For many years he was engaged in trade—he had been apprenticed to a mercer—and lived in Bruges, as governor of the English traders in that city. But he was always fond of books, and when he was about forty-seven years of age he began to translate from the French a book about the Trojan War. Not long after he entered the service of the Duchess of Burgundy (sister to our King Edward IV.), and on September 19, 1471, he presented to her his translation, which he had by that time finished. She was much pleased with the book. What a great lady liked was sure to be popular; so many people wanted to have copies that Caxton's hand, as he tells us himself, grew tired with writing, and his eyes dimmed with overmuch looking at the white paper. Then he began to think of printing.

CAXTON BEFORE EDWARD IV.

There was a printer in Bruges at this time of the name of Collard Mansion, who had his printing press in a room over a church porch. Caxton learnt the art from him, and the book was printed, as was also another, about chess, which was published in the following year. In 1476 Caxton left Bruges and returned to England (from which he had been absent five-and-thirty years), bringing with him a "fount" of Collard Mansion's type.

The place which he chose for carrying on his new business was the "Abbey" of Westminster. When we now speak of "Westminster Abbey," we mean the beautiful church founded by Edward the Confessor, as has been told in the first volume of these Stories. But at the time of which I am now writing the word meant much more. There was then a great house for monks, who were ruled by an Abbot, and all the buildings belonging to this were called the "Abbey." Among these were a gaol for the safe keeping of prisoners, and an almonry, where alms were given to the poor. Some houses near the Almonry were called by the same name, and in one of these, known as "Redhall House," Caxton set up his printing press. The first book printed in this place was published in 1477.

For fourteen years he lived and worked in Westminster. He was an important person in the parish (St. Margaret's, Westminster), for we find his name signed to the parish accounts, to show that he had looked through them, and found that they were all right. And he worked hard, not only at printing books, but also at writing them, or rather translating them either from the Latin or the French. The number that he printed and published during these fourteen years was about eighty, and a quarter of these he translated himself. It has been reckoned that these translations of his contain in all about four thousand five hundred pages, folio pages that is, and so four times as big as the pages we commonly see. We must remember that he did with his own hands a great deal of the actual work of printing. A master-printer now only sees that others do their work properly, but Caxton actually "composed," *i.e.* put the letters together into

words, and "struck off" copies from the type when it had been composed.

He had many great and powerful friends. King Edward IV. gave him money, came, it is said, to see his printing-office, and had two books printed under his patronage. The Duchess of Burgundy, whose servant he had been at Bruges, also continued to be his friend. Perhaps, when he came to England in 1480 on a visit to her brother the King, she may have gone to Westminster to see Caxton. He dedicated a book to King Richard III., and another to Henry VII., and he presented the story of Æneas to Prince Arthur, King Henry's eldest son. This was in 1490, when the Prince was four years old.

In 1490 Caxton seems to have lost his wife, for we find that a certain "Mawde Caxton" was buried in the churchyard of St. Margaret's. If this lady was his wife, they had been married nine-and-twenty years. In this year Caxton began to print a book called *Feats of Arms*, but he stopped the work in order to print another which has the title *The Art to Die Well*. This is just what he would have been likely to do if some one very dear to him died about this time. He went on working up to the time of his death. This seems to have taken place about the end of the year 1491.

One Wynken de Worde, who was his chief assistant, and succeeded him in his business, says of a book published in 1492 with the title of *Lives of the Fathers that lived in the Desert*, that it had been "translated out of French into English by William Caxton of Westminster, lately deceased, and finished on the last day of his life." He was buried in the church-yard of St. Margaret. Six shillings and eightpence was paid for torches and sixpence for ringing the bells. These are much higher fees than were commonly paid. He does not seem to have left much besides his stock of books. Fifteen copies of one of them he left to the parish church. These were sold at different prices, varying from 6*s*. 8*d*. to 5*s*. 8*d*. during the next ten years. These prices would be equal to about £3 to £2 10*s*. of our money.

CHAPTER X

THE TWO PRINCES

The last chapter was a pleasant change from the tale of wars and, too often, of wicked deeds of which history is for the most part made up. In this I must go back to the old subject, for I have to tell a very shocking story indeed.

King Edward was dead, a young man, as we should now think him, for he was but forty-two; but he had wasted his strength in riotous living. He left two sons, Edward, Prince of Wales, who was thirteen years old, and Richard, Duke of York, who was nine, and five daughters. Of the eldest of these five, Elizabeth by name, we shall hear again. Kings as young as Edward, even younger, had come to the throne, and kept it, for a time at least, in peace. The third Henry was but nine; the second Richard eleven; the third Edward only fifteen. But there was trouble in store for the two boys, because their nearest kinsman, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the late King's brother, had begun to think that he might win the kingdom for himself. His way had been cleared by the death of the brother who stood next in age to King Edward—George, Duke of Clarence. Whether Richard had had anything to do with Clarence's death I cannot say. Clarence was a foolish, hot-headed man; he had quarrelled fiercely with the King, had been found guilty of treason, and had been condemned to death. How he died no one knows. A story has been told of how he was allowed to choose his manner of death, and that he chose to be drowned in a butt of malmsey wine. But this seems to have been made up long afterwards. That he was found dead in the Tower is certain. It is probable that the King knew how he came by his end, for no one was punished for it. There is nothing to prove that Richard was concerned in it. More we cannot say. That he had something to do with the death of his nephews cannot be doubted.

RICHARD III.

When his father died young Edward was at Ludlow Castle, which was at that time the appointed dwelling of the Princes of Wales. In the course of a few days he set out for London, in charge of his uncle, Lord Rivers. Meanwhile the Duke of Gloucester, who was in the north at the time of his brother's death, hurried back. He overtook the young Prince at Stony Stratford on April 30, arrested Lord Rivers, Lord Richard Grey, a son of the Queen by her first marriage, and others, and carried his nephew up to London. For a time all seemed to go well. The Council acknowledged young Edward as King, and such of the chief men of the kingdom as happened to be in London took the oath of allegiance to him. Richard was named Protector to carry on affairs of State as long as the King was under age. The young King, who had been at first entertained in the Bishop of London's palace, was now lodged in the Tower, as being more convenient.

And now it would seem Richard, not content with the royal power, which he had as Protector, began to plot for getting the crown itself. He felt certain that the power would not long be his if the young King lived. In two or three years the boy would be old enough to act for himself, and then he would be certain to prefer to have his mother's kinsfolk about him as his advisers. Richard could count on a good deal of support. He was very popular in the city of London. Many of the old nobility, who hated the Queen's relatives as upstarts, were ready to help him. But one man, with whom he was on very friendly terms, and on whose aid he reckoned, refused to listen to his offers. This was William, Lord Hastings. Richard at once resolved to destroy him. The way he did it was very strange.

There was a meeting of the Council held in the Tower. Richard came late to it, asked pardon for being after his time, and talked about some trifling matters, asking the Bishop of Ely, who was there, to send for some strawberries out of the garden of his London palace, which was in a street out of Holborn, still called Ely Place. He then left the room, but returned before very long in great trouble as it seemed. "What, my lords," he cried, "think ye should be done to them who compass my death, seeing that I am near in blood to the King and in charge of this realm?" The other members of the Council were too much astonished to speak, but Lord Hastings said—"They deserve to die as traitors, whosoever they be." Richard then pulled up his sleeve and showed a withered arm, caused doubtless by an illness in his childhood. Very possibly it was not known to any but those who

had waited upon him. Evidently it was hidden by his sleeve, and he seems to have had the use of both arms, for he was a skilful knight. "This," he cried, "has been done by my brother's wife and others who have worked with her. See how they have destroyed my body by their witchcraft." "If they have done any such thing," said Hastings, "they deserve to be sorely punished." "Answerest thou me with 'ifs' ?" cried Richard, furious with rage; "I tell thee they have done it, and thou hast joined with them, as I will prove upon thy body, thou traitor." As he spoke, he smote with his fist upon the Council table, and a body of armed men rushed in. He bade them seize Hastings, the Bishop of Ely, and others whom he knew to be opposed to his plans. Hastings was hurried out into one of the courts of the Tower and beheaded. The others were put in prison. About the same time Lord Rivers and some of his kinsfolk and friends were executed. But worse things than these remained to be done.

The Queen was in sanctuary at Westminster with her younger son, the Duke of York, and her five daughters. "Sanctuary" was a place, commonly in the neighbourhood of a church, to which persons guilty of offences against the law might fly. As long as they remained in it they could not be touched. She had fled thither as soon as she heard of Richard's coming to London, and of how he had seized her brother. Richard maintained that a child who had committed no crime was not a fit person to take sanctuary, and the Council agreed with him. Still he did not like to take away the boy by force, and thought it better, if he could, to persuade the Queen to give him up. He sent, therefore, the Archbishop of Canterbury to do this, and the Archbishop, who seems to have believed that Richard meant no harm to his nephew, argued the matter with the Queen. At first she refused. She said that the child was sick, and needed his mother's care. Then she hinted that the Duke had not much love for his nephew. When the Archbishop declared that the boy had no right in the Sanctuary, she replied that her lawyers had advised her otherwise, and said plainly that she did not think the Princes were safe in the hands of their uncle, seeing that he would be King if they were to die. The Archbishop declared that he would answer, with soul and body, for their safety. On this the Queen consented to give the young Duke up. She bade him good-bye in much grief and fear, saying as she kissed him, "God knoweth when we shall kiss together again." The boy, who cried much on leaving his mother and sisters, was taken by the Archbishop to Richard, who pretended that he was very glad to see him. Glad he was to have both him and his brother in his power, for to have one without the other would have been useless. The young Duke was then sent to be with his brother in the Tower.

This was on June 16. Six days afterwards a certain Dr. Shaw, who was Richard's chaplain, preached a sermon at Paul's Cross, which it was hoped would help his plans. The preacher declared that the late King had been married to a certain Eleanor Butler before he took Elizabeth Woodville to wife, and that the two Princes were not his lawful children. As for the son of the Duke of Clarence, he had lost his rights, because his father had been condemned for treason. It was hoped that the people on hearing this would cry out for King Richard; but they were too much surprised to say anything. Richard had to try another plan. He sent the Duke of Buckingham, who was himself a descendant of Edward III., to tell the Mayor and citizens of London the same story that Dr. Shaw had told in his sermon. At the end of his speech a few persons, who, it is likely, had been hired to do it, threw up their caps and shouted, "Long live King Richard III.!" The next day Parliament met. It had been called to witness the coronation of Edward, but it was terrified into acknowledging his usurping uncle. The Duke of Buckingham led a deputation of the two Houses to Richard. They begged him to take the crown. At first he refused. He would sooner, he said, act as Protector for his nephew till the boy should be of age to reign himself. "Nay," said Buckingham, "England will not obey a base-born boy." Then Richard pretended to yield. He said that he consented to be King of England and France. England he would rule, France he would conquer. He and his wife Anne, daughter of the King-maker, were crowned on July 5, nearly three months after the death of King Edward.

And what about the two young Princes, for whose safety the Archbishop had pledged his body and soul? No man knew for certain, but few doubted that Richard had ordered them to be put out of the way. They were never heard of again, though, as we shall soon see, some people believed, or at least pretended, that one of them escaped. Some years afterwards a confession was made by two of the persons concerned in the murder, and published by King Henry VII. There were some strange things in this story, and it was of course to Henry's interest to have it made quite certain that the Princes were dead. But on the whole we may be satisfied that the story was true. Richard, it seems, sent a certain Green to Sir Robert Brackenbury, who was Constable of the Tower, with a command that he was to put the Princes to death. Brackenbury refused to commit the crime. Then Richard gave a warrant to Brackenbury that he was to give up the keys of the Tower for one night to a Sir James Tyrrell. Tyrrell engaged the help of Miles Forest, one of the men that waited on the Princes, and of a groom of his own, Dighton by name. These two ruffians murdered the lads by smothering them with pillows, and when they had done the deed called Tyrrell to see the dead bodies. Nearly two hundred years afterwards some workmen found under a staircase a great chest in which was a quantity of bones. These were said by persons skilled in such matters to be the bones of boys who were of the same age as the Princes.

CHAPTER XI

BOSWORTH FIELD

Richard was not happy on the throne which he had bought at so dreadful a price. He made a progress through England to show himself to his new subjects, whom he tried to attract by the splendid show which he made. At York he was crowned for a second time by the Archbishop of York, which is the Northern Province, as he had been crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop of Canterbury. But the people murmured against him. They could not forgive the crime which by this time few doubted that he had committed. When the crown was again put upon his head, they said that this was done because the poor lads had been murdered since his first crowning, and he now felt himself to be really King.

And then he knew that there were those who were ready to do more than murmur. Chief of these was the Duke of Buckingham. This man had been ready enough to help in pulling down the kindred of the Woodvilles, whom the late King had so much favoured, but he was not prepared for all that Richard seemed ready to do. He had carried the King's train at the coronation at Westminster, but he had done this only under compulsion. He had been unwilling to come to the ceremony, and had sent word to Richard that he was sick. When the King replied that if he was not well enough to walk he should be carried, he saw that there was no help for it, and came. After the coronation he left London with the King, and rode with him as far as Gloucester. There they parted, Richard going on to the north, the Duke journeying towards Wales. He was already thinking of turning against his master.

On his way he met Margaret, Countess of Richmond, widow of the eldest son of Owen Tudor and Queen Katharine, and heiress of the Beauforts. The Countess Margaret had a son

Henry, who seemed the most likely person to set up against Richard. He had, it is true, no real claim to the crown, but then he might marry Elizabeth, King Edward's eldest daughter, and would have his wife's right to depend upon. This, we shall see afterwards, he actually did.

PROCLAMATION OF THE KING.

Another enemy of Richard's with whom the Duke of Buckingham took counsel was that Bishop of Ely of whom I wrote something in the last chapter. The Duke had him in his charge, having been told to find a prison for him in Wales. Richard would willingly have put him to death, but to kill a bishop without any very grave cause, and no such cause could be found against the Bishop of Ely, would have been a very dangerous thing. The Duke had had some thoughts of claiming the throne for himself, for he too, as has been said, was of the blood royal. But then he would not be able to win over to himself those who still held by the House of Lancaster. And as he had already had a wife (a sister of Edward IV.'s Queen) he could not strengthen his claim, as Henry could, by marrying Elizabeth of York. On the whole, therefore, he was inclined to favour Henry. Still he hesitated, till at last the Bishop of Ely, who was afraid that his plans might be betrayed to King Richard, found an opportunity of escaping, and made his way to France.

Richard by this time had heard that some plot was being hatched against him. He sent a message to Buckingham, commanding him to come to London. The Duke had now no choice. To obey was to throw away his life, for Richard, he was sure, knew enough to condemn him. He had therefore openly to take up arms, though he was very far from being ready. He sent messengers to the two Tudors, Henry and his uncle Jasper, urging them to come over at once to England with all the men that they could collect and join him. He himself marched towards England. But everything went against him. The people with whom he wanted to make friends would not trust him. He found the roads guarded and the bridges broken down. When he would have crossed the Severn to join a force that had been raised in Devonshire, that river rose in such a flood—long afterwards remembered as "Buckingham's Flood"—that he had to give up the idea. He had got as far as Gloucester, but he had to fall back into Herefordshire. Henry Tudor had come with a small fleet to the coast of Devonshire, but finding no one to welcome him, had sailed back to France. Buckingham's insurrection had altogether failed. He sought shelter with an old friend at Shrewsbury. But the friend, alarmed for his own life, or tempted, it may be, by the reward of £4000 which the King had offered for Buckingham's capture, betrayed him. He was taken in a wood, disguised in poor clothing, and carried to Salisbury, where the King then was. He asked leave to plead his cause, but Richard would not hear or see him, and he was beheaded.

He had sent away his little son to another friend, who kept his faith better. The boy was taken, dressed up as a little girl, from one place to another, and at last lodged with a widow lady at Hereford, who kept him safely till the tyrant was dead.

Buckingham's rebellion happened in the late autumn of 1483. In the April of the next year, on the very day on which Edward IV. had died, Richard lost his only son, Edward, Prince of Wales, after a very short illness. Less than a year afterwards his wife, Anne, daughter of the King-maker, died, after as unhappy a life as woman ever had. There was some talk after her

death of the King marrying his own niece Elizabeth. The Pope of Rome had granted leave—or dispensation, as it was called—for such marriages to take place. But the King denied that he had any such intention. He named the Earl of Warwick, son of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, heir to the throne, and when it became clear that the poor lad was of weak mind, another nephew, the son of his sister Elizabeth and her husband, John de la Pole, who had the title of Earl of Lincoln.

But I must make haste and finish my story. On August 11, 1485, Henry of Richmond landed at Milford Haven. He did not bring with him, as he had once hoped to do, some French soldiers. He came in a single ship with a few nobles of the Lancastrian party, chief of whom was John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and some of those of the other party who did not like the doings of King Richard. The Welsh received him with great joy, not because he had any right to the crown, for this he had not, but because he was a countryman of their own, and they hoped for his favour if he should come to be King. Richard had not at first thought that the danger was serious, but when he saw that Henry had many friends in England, and especially when he found that Sir William Stanley, who was very powerful in North Wales, made an excuse for not joining him, he began to bestir himself. He marched northward to Leicester, which he reached on August 20. The next day he went on towards Bosworth. The battle was fought on a great plain near that town, called Bosworth Field, otherwise Redmoor. Henry, who had been joined by the Talbots and other great families in the Midlands, had taken up his position on the east of this plain. He had not half as many men as Richard, but he trusted that Stanley, who was close at hand with a large force, and held himself ready to join either party, would be on his side. He had hopes, too, that other friends of the King would leave him when the battle once began.

Shakespeare has described how Richard spent the night before the battle, seeming to see in his dreams the ghosts of those whom he had slain, King Henry, the two young Princes, and Buckingham, his last victim, among them. But he did not forget his duty as a general. It is said that, making the round of the camp at midnight, he found a sentinel asleep at his post and killed him. The next morning he set his line of battle in order, with his archers in the middle, and near them a number of cannon. He was much stronger than his adversary, and if only his followers had been faithful to him, could hardly have failed to win the battle. Bad man as he was, he was a good general and a brave warrior. He put on the armour which he had worn at Tewkesbury, the last great battle which had settled his family on the throne. Round his helmet he wore, as Henry V. had done at Agincourt, a crown of gold.

Henry made the first movement. The Earl of Oxford charged that part of the line where the Duke of Norfolk was in command. And now the Duke found out how true was the warning which, as the story goes, he had received the night before—

"Jockey of Norfolk, be not so bold, For Dickon thy master is bought and sold."

It was so; the Duke of Northumberland—the Percies, it will be remembered, were old friends of the House of Lancaster—who was in command of the second line, would not move forward to help the first. Richard himself now charged, bent especially on slaying the Earl of Richmond himself. If his great rival could be put out of the way, all might be well. But now the Stanleys, who had up to this time stood apart, saw that it was time to act. They advanced with their force of three thousand men, and Richard's followers saw that they had changed sides and were going to attack them. One of them pointed out to the King what was about to happen, and bade him mount his horse and fly. If he saved himself that day, he might live to fight again. Richard refused to escape. "Not a foot will I fly so long as I live. I will die King of England," he said. Furiously did he fight till he was overborne by numbers, and fell dead to the ground. Among his followers that perished with him was the Brackenbury that had been Constable of the Tower

when the young Princes came by their end. For a time the pursuit was hot, and as many as a thousand men are said to have been slain in it. But Henry did not forget that he was now King of England, and called back his soldiers as soon as he could from the slaughter of their countrymen. The crown that Richard had worn was found hanging on a hawthorn bush. A knight brought it to Henry where he stood with Lord Oxford and others of his party. Lord Stanley set it on his head, and the army all over the field of battle shouted, "God save King Harry!"

The body of Richard was found covered with wounds, thrown across a horse, and carried into Leicester, where it was buried by the sisters of a nunnery there. So ended the long War of the Roses.

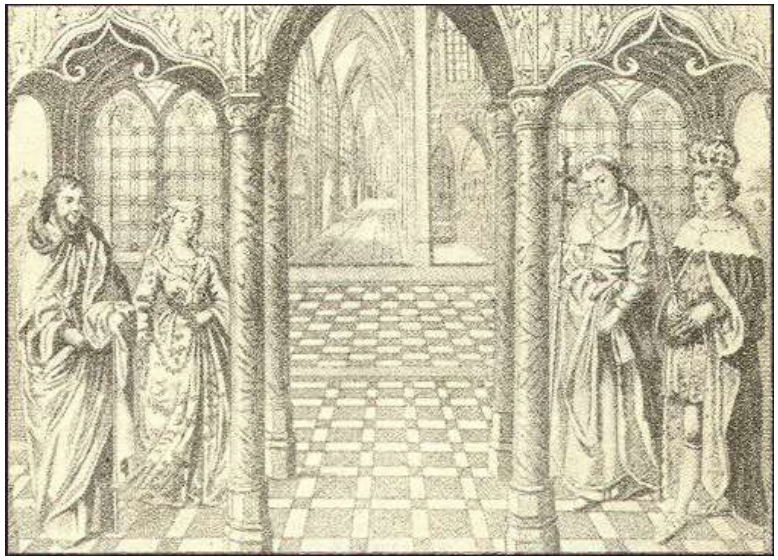
A curious story is told, which may be taken to show how the ill-gotten gold of the usurping King brought a curse with it long afterwards. He had slept at an inn in Leicester, and had brought his bedstead with him. More than a hundred years afterwards it was found that this bedstead had a double bottom, and that this was filled with gold coins. The landlady of the inn was murdered by her servants, who thus got possession of the treasure.

CHAPTER XII

TRUE OR FALSE?

I have to tell in this chapter two strange stories, so strange that we cannot be sure that we know the truth about them even now.

King Henry was crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury on November 7 in the same year in which he had conquered Richard; about two months afterwards he married Elizabeth of York, and in the September of 1486 he had a son born to him. The son was christened by a name dear to the Welshmen who had fought so bravely for him at Bosworth—Arthur.



MARRIAGE OF HENRY VII. WITH ELIZABETH.

But now a new kind of trouble began. News was brought to London that a lad who claimed to be Earl of Warwick had landed in Ireland in charge of a certain priest of Oxford. Soon it was reported that he had been proclaimed King at Dublin, under the title of Edward VI. The real Earl of Warwick was in the Tower. Henry brought him out, and had him taken through London, where any one that chose might speak to him. As he had been at Court in King Richard's time, there must have been many who knew him. It seems clear that the boy in Ireland was not what he pretended to be. Indeed, it was afterwards found out that he was one Lambert Simnel, son of a Thomas Simnel, who was a carpenter. He was tall and handsome, and had been taught to tell the story of how he had escaped from the Tower, and to behave as a Prince should. Indeed, he was more like a Prince than the poor boy whom Henry kept in the Tower. But it was easy to prove that he was not the Earl of Warwick; and even if

he had been, he had not the least right to be King of England. Yet a powerful nobleman, the Earl of Lincoln, took up his cause. He went over to Burgundy, where his aunt, Edward IV.'s sister, was Duchess, enlisted by her help two thousand soldiers under a certain soldier of fortune (a "soldier of fortune" was a man who would fight for any prince or city that was willing to pay him), Martin Swartz by name, and then landed in Ireland. He caused "Edward VI" to be crowned, and then crossed over to England, taking with him as many Irish as he could collect and Martin Swartz's soldiers. Some English friends of the House of York joined him. Henry meanwhile had marched from London. The two armies met at Stoke-on-Trent; Lord Lincoln, with Martin Swartz and his chief Irish allies, fell on the field of battle. One of the few leaders that escaped was Lord Lovel. He was not killed nor taken prisoner, but he was not heard of again. Two hundred years afterwards a secret chamber was found in the house of Minster Lovel (where the Lords of Lovel lived), and in it the skeleton of a man seated at a table. The pretended king, who was with the army, was taken prisoner. He confessed that he had told a false story. The King pardoned him, and gave him a place in the royal kitchen. Afterwards he was promoted. "Lambert is still alive," says a chronicler who wrote in the latter part of Henry's reign, "and has been made Keeper of the Hawks, after turning the spit for a while in the royal kitchen."

Five years afterwards Henry had to meet a more serious danger of the same kind. A handsome young man, with very good manners, landed from a Portuguese ship at Cork. He gave out that he was Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the two Princes said to have been murdered by Richard III., and that he had escaped from the Tower. We do not know any more of his story, how he had escaped, and where he had been living meanwhile. However, many of the citizens of Cork were satisfied that he was what he claimed to be, and some of the Irish nobles also acknowledged him. Before long the King of France invited him to visit him. The young man went, and was well received. A bodyguard was given him, and a number of English exiles offered him their services. He did not, however, stop long in France. When Henry consented to sign a treaty about which he had been making some difficulties, the King commanded the young man at once to leave the country. He had been only making use of him to hasten the business which he wanted to get finished.

The Pretender, as we may call him, now went to Burgundy, to the same Duchess who had shown herself so ready to the friends of the false Earl of Warwick. She received him in an affectionate way, declaring that she was sure of his being really her nephew. For some time he was content to stay safely where he was. But the people of the country had very good reason to be dissatisfied. The Flemish merchants—Flanders, *i.e.* the country now known as Holland and Belgium, was part of the possessions of the Duke of Burgundy—lost a great part of their trade, for Henry, angry that a man who claimed his kingdom was so well received in Burgundy, would not allow them to have dealings with England. Accordingly the Pretender felt that he must do something. He landed at Deal, but was beaten back, after losing most of his companions. He then went to Ireland, and with the help of some friends of the House of York, besieged Waterford. But the Lord Deputy who ruled Ireland in the name of the King's second son, Henry, Duke of York, got together some soldiers, and put him and his followers to flight. He was glad to get back to his friend the Duchess of Burgundy.

But he was not to be allowed to stop long with her. A treaty was made between Henry and the Duke of Burgundy, and one of the points in it was that neither Prince should allow an enemy of the other to remain within his dominions. The Pretender had now to leave, but he found a friend in Scotland, where King James acknowledged him to be the son of Edward IV., and gave him in marriage a noble Scotch lady, a cousin of his own, Lady Catherine Gordon. Twice the Scottish King helped to invade England. There were always plenty of people on the Borders and elsewhere who were ready to take part in an invasion of England. But these expeditions did him no kind of

good, and when the English army invaded Scotland in turn, the King and his people grew tired of the whole matter. At last a regular peace was concluded between the two countries by the mediation of the Spanish ambassador. After that the Pretender had to go. He first went to Ireland, but the nobles who had helped him before would have nothing more to do with him. Then he sailed to Cornwall. The Cornishmen, who had already rebelled against some new taxes which the King had demanded from them, joined him in considerable numbers, and he marched to Exeter, which city he in vain tried to take. Then he moved on to Taunton. But when the King's army approached he lost heart, and taking horse, rode with sixty companions to Beaulieu Abbey in Hampshire. There he took sanctuary. Growing weary of being shut up in this place, and being promised his life, he came out and threw himself on the King's mercy. Henry took him up to London, and made him ride in his train through the city. After this he was allowed to live within the precincts of the Palace of Westminster, not kept in custody, but closely watched. From time to time he was questioned about his past history. After six months he managed to escape, but finding that he could not get away from England, gave himself up to the Prior of the monastery of Shene (near Richmond). The King again spared his life, but put him for a day in the stocks at Cheapside. He was also obliged to make a confession of his real name and birth in front of Westminster Hall, and again at Cheapside. This done, he was sent to the Tower.

In the Tower he made friends with the young Earl of Warwick, and contrived—so at least it was said—another plot. Four of the warders of the Tower were to murder the Governor, and then carry the Pretender and the Earl to some safe place outside England, where the one was to be proclaimed as Richard IV., while the other was to call to arms the friends of his father, the Duke of Clarence, and his grandfather the King-maker. This exhausted King Henry's patience.

The Pretender was tried, not for his share in this last plot, but for having made war upon the King. Of course he was found guilty. A few days afterwards, having declared on the word of a dying man that his confession was true, he was executed. Even the poor young Earl of Warwick was put to death; he pleaded guilty to a charge of treason, and was beheaded on Tower Hill.

And now who was this man whom I have called the "Pretender"? According to his own confession he was the son of a Jew of the town of Tournay, who settled for a time in London, and then returned to Tournay; his real name was Warbeck, Perkin being shortened from Peterkin, or "Little Peter." The Duchess of Burgundy had seen how like he was to Edward IV., and being always on the lookout for ways of doing harm to Henry VII., had contrived the plot. But there are some very strange things about the story. The young man was not in the least like what you would expect him to be if it were true. He was very handsome, had noble manners, and a way of winning the hearts of all with whom he had to do. And then, though we can understand why the Duchess of Burgundy should have taken up his cause, it is hard to see why James of Scotland did so. Altogether the matter must be left in doubt, though it is not at all likely that he was really Richard, Duke of York. Perhaps he was a son of Edward IV., born before his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville.

CHAPTER XIII

FLODDEN FIELD

I have said that peace was made between England and Scotland by the help of the Spanish ambassador: To give it a better chance of lasting, King James asked the English King to give him his daughter Margaret in marriage. For some time he had been unwilling to do so, for he loved a lady in his own country. When she died—poisoned, it is said, along with her three sisters by an enemy of her family—he delayed no longer. The two were betrothed, but as Margaret was very young—she was born in 1489—the marriage did not take place till August

1503, and she was barely fourteen. During the rest of Henry VII.'s reign the peace lasted, though there was always more or less trouble on the Border, and other causes of complaint were arising from time to time. The most serious of these may be told, for it is an interesting story.

A KNIGHT.

There was a certain Andrew Barton, the most famous of the British seamen of the time. Barton had had the honour of commanding the fleet which had carried the Pretender when he was sent away from Scotland, but he was in fact little more than a pirate. Many years before certain Portuguese had plundered a ship belonging to John Barton, Andrew's father, and in 1506, though it had happened so long ago, King James made this an excuse for giving Andrew and his two brothers leave to seize and plunder such Portuguese ships as they could lay hold of. But Portuguese ships were not always to be found; now and then the brothers Barton would seize an English merchantman, if they suspected it had Portuguese goods on board, and sometimes even without this reason. The English Government complained, but without effect. At last the King—Henry VII. had by this time been succeeded by his son, Henry VIII—proclaimed the Bartons to be pirates, and gave his Admiral, Sir Edward Howard, a son of the Earl of Surrey, leave to attack them. In 1510 Sir Edward, with the help of his brother Sir Thomas, took two of their ships in the Downs, and Andrew Barton was killed in the fight. King James demanded satisfaction for his death, and, as may be supposed, was but ill pleased when Henry replied that the death of a pirate was not a matter with which kings should concern themselves.

Two years afterwards the Scottish King determined to make war upon England, all the more readily because Henry had invaded France, and had, of course, taken the greater part of his English soldiers with him. He went against the advice of his wisest counsellors, and his wife, Queen Margaret, prayed him with many tears to give up his purpose. It was said too that he had other warnings: that St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, appeared to him in the shape of an old man, and told him that the war would end in disaster; and that a voice was heard calling the King, and the nobles who were urging him on to make war, to answer for their deed before God. Still he persisted in going, and took with him—a war with England was always popular in Scotland—the very largest army that had ever been gathered in the country.

On August 22, King James with his army crossed the Border. If he had marched on at once, he might have done the enemy a vast amount of damage, for the Earl of Surrey, who was in command of the English troops, was not strong enough to meet him. But he wasted the time in the most foolish way, and so lost his chance. The weather grew wet and stormy; the stock of food failed, and a great part of the army left him to go home, for armies could not be kept together in those days as well as they can now. Lord Surrey sent a herald challenging King James to fight on a certain day which he named, Friday, September 9. Of course there was no reason why James should wait so long; indeed there was excellent reason why he should not, namely,

that his army was growing weaker, and Lord Surrey's growing stronger, every day. The Earl of Angus, who was the most famous soldier in the army, begged him not to accept the challenge, but only got the insulting answer that if he was afraid he might go home.

The Scottish army was posted in a strong place, where Lord Surrey did not like to attack it. What he did therefore was to try to draw it away. By the advice, it is said, of his son, Sir Thomas Howard,—now Lord High Admiral of England in the place of his brother Edward, who had been killed at Brest in an attempt to destroy the French fleet,—he marched northward, and so got between the Scottish King and his country. James might either have stayed where he was, in which case Lord Surrey would have been bound to attack him, or he might have fallen upon the English army while it was crossing a river which was in its line of march. He did neither, but moved from the high ground where he had been encamped—Flodden Edge it was called—to a place called Brankston, which was somewhat lower down.

At four in the afternoon the battle began. Both sides had cannon, but those of the English were the better served of the two, and did so much execution among the enemy that these lost no time in coming to close quarters. At first it seemed as if they were going to win the day. The men of the Border, sturdy soldiers who had been used to war ever since they could ride a horse, fell on the right of the English line, where yet another Howard, Sir Edmund, younger brother of the Admiral, was in command. Sir Edmund's troops came from Cheshire; they were used to be led by a Stanley rather than by a Howard, and they were not accustomed to Border ways of fighting. Their line was driven back and broken, and though Lord Dacre came up to their help with the English cavalry, and the Admiral, who was in command of the right centre, also sent them some support, they never quite recovered their ground. On the left of the English line things went very differently. Here Sir Edward Stanley's archers threw the Highlanders into confusion with their showers of arrows. The mountaineers charged in vain, they could not break the line, and bearing as they did no armour but a shield, they were easily cut down by the English men-at-arms. Meanwhile the Admiral had advanced with his main force, and had beaten back, though not without a fierce struggle, the divisions opposed to him. This done, he turned to attack the Scottish King himself where he stood in the centre, throwing himself on one flank, while Stanley attacked the other, and Lord Surrey came on in front. The Borderers, who might have come to James's help, are said to have refused to move. They had done their part, they said, and would do no more. The King, with a splendid courage, stood firm in his place, and would neither fly nor yield. What followed may best be told in Sir Walter Scott's noble words—

"But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly bow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing,
O'er their thin host and wounded King."

The battle still went on till the night fell. Then Surrey drew off his men, hardly yet knowing what had happened. The King was lying dead, his head cloven by a bill-hook, and round him were hundreds of the best born in all Scotland. There was not a noble family in all the land but lost one or more of its sons. The survivors silently left the place where they had made so gallant a stand. The Scottish army had ceased to be.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GREAT CARDINAL

In the first years of the sixteenth century, every one that knew about such things would have said that there was no man more likely to rise to high place in the Church than Thomas Wolsey. He was, it is true, but a butcher's son; but this, though it would have hindered him if he had wished to be a soldier, did not matter to a Churchman. He was sent to Magdalen College, and did very well, taking his degree so soon—he was but fifteen—that he was known as the "Boy Bachelor." He remained at Oxford for some fourteen years in all—he was born in 1471. When he left it he soon became a very important person. Bishop Fox of Winchester, who was one of the King's chief advisers, employed him, both at home and abroad. If Henry VII. was pleased with his shrewdness and habits of business, so Henry VIII. found him always a lively companion, ready to join in his amusements, and not without learning, for which Henry had a certain taste. The old King made him Dean of Lincoln; the young one seemed never to be satisfied with heaping gifts and honours upon him. In 1514 he was made Bishop of Lincoln, and in the course of the same year Archbishop of York; fourteen years later, when Bishop Fox died, he was allowed to become Bishop of Winchester also. At the same time he was allowed to hold numbers of livings. These he never visited, and he had so much employment at Court and abroad that he seldom went near the dioceses which he was supposed to govern. Even this was not all. Certain bishoprics were in the hands of foreigners. As they resided abroad, their revenues had to be collected for them. This was managed by Wolsey, or rather by people whom he employed. For a time he had also a great share in the revenues of St. Alban's Abbey. Altogether he was the richest person in England, the King only excepted. We may even doubt whether the King himself had as great a command of money.

In 1515 the Pope made him a Cardinal, and very soon afterwards his Legate in England, that is, the person who ruled the Church there for him. This last appointment made him superior to the Archbishop of Canterbury himself. Finally the King made him Lord High Chancellor. There never was a man who held so many high offices at the same time.

RETINUE OF A GREAT MAN.

There was both good and bad in the use which Wolsey made of all these riches and honours. He wanted to do something great for learning, and accordingly he set about founding a college at Oxford. He was allowed to take for its use the property that had been given to certain other institutions, and he also gave large sums of money out of his own purse. If he had been able to carry out his plans, the college, which was to have been called "Cardinal" or "York College," would have been the most splendid in Europe. As it is, Christ Church, for that is the name which it actually received, is a very noble place, and though Henry VIII. is called its founder, the honour of it really belongs to Wolsey. He also founded a grammar-school in his native town, and had other great schemes which he would certainly have carried out if he had remained in power.

And then he was really anxious to improve the state of things in the Church of England. Many of the parish clergymen were quite unfit for their offices, and many of those who lived

under a religious rule in the monasteries were even worse. Wolsey was really anxious to make them better, though unfortunately he did not go the best way of setting about it. He did not show a good example in his own life; and there was certainly no man who more neglected his duties, seeing that he had more to do than ten men could possibly have performed.

But the show and display which Wolsey kept up were beyond all bounds of reason. He had such a train of followers and servants as was not to be seen in any house in the land, scarcely in the King's palace itself. Even the persons who waited on him at table were of noble birth. All this splendour would in any case have caused much envy and dislike. But these were greatly increased when people remembered that this great man was of humble birth. Had he been of royal descent much might have been excused which could not be pardoned in the "butcher's dog," as his enemies loved to call him.

Much might be written about the cause of his fall, but to tell the story at length would not be suited to this book, and I shall put it very shortly. The King had married the widow of his elder brother Arthur. This was of course against law, but the Pope had given leave. It was the doing of the old King, who was very fond of money, and was unwilling to give back the dowry of 50,000 gold crowns which the Princess Katharine had brought with her. And now Henry was troubled in conscience, and doubted whether the marriage, even with the Pope's leave, had been lawful. And then he had seen some one else whom he would have been glad to make his Queen. This was a certain Anne Boleyn, daughter of a Norfolk knight, whose wife was a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk. Wolsey had at first been anxious that the marriage should be pronounced null, for he wished the King to marry a French Princess. But he found that it could not be managed. The Pope was unwilling or unable to undo what another Pope had done, and also did not wish to offend the Emperor Charles, who, it should be said, was Queen Katharine's nephew, and was of course very angry at the way in which Henry was treating her. So Wolsey began to hang back. The King was furious at being disappointed; Anne Boleyn hated the man who seemed to hinder her chance of being Queen.

It was in 1529 that the end came. At the beginning of November Wolsey, as Lord Chancellor, opened the Courts of Law in the usual way. The next day two great nobles came to him with the King's orders that he was to give up the Great Seal, and was to go to a house at Esher, which belonged to the Bishops of Winchester. This was a kind of banishment. He went, and waited. Parliament, which had not met for seven years, had been called together, and it ordered him to be tried for having taken office from the Pope without the King's leave. The charge was not true; the King had not only given him leave, but had been very desirous that he should have it. This leave Wolsey had under Henry's own hand and seal. Yet he would not bring this forward, but pleaded guilty. The fact was that Henry again and again sent kind messages to him, assuring him that it was not intended to do him any harm, and that all would come right in the end. And he believed him, though he must have known the text, "Put not your trust in princes." The truth was that Henry had kind thoughts about his old companion, but let himself be turned by those about him who hated Wolsey, chief of all, by Anne Boleyn. If Wolsey could have seen the King, the end might have been different; but this was never permitted. As the Cardinal had pleaded guilty, sentence was passed upon him. All that he had was to be forfeited to the King. He wrote to Henry, and begged that at least the Oxford College might be spared. To this he got no answer. And yet the King now and then gave him some little comfort. He fell ill, and Henry sent his own physicians to him; and when they reported that his old favourite was suffering more from trouble of mind than from sickness of body, and that he would die unless he had some comforting words, he sent a ring with a kind message and bade Anne Boleyn do the same.

About two months afterwards Wolsey received the King's command to go down to York, and take up his duties there as Archbishop. He went, staying for a week on his way at

Peterborough, where on the Thursday in Holy Week he washed the feet of fifty-nine pilgrims. He remained at York for some seven months, busying himself with his duties as Archbishop. Then at the beginning of November the last blow was given. Lord Northumberland brought a warrant to apprehend him for high treason. Some time was wanted for preparations. He started to go to London, and though he was ill, would not delay his journey. On the third day he reached Leicester Abbey. The monks with their chief were standing ready to receive him. "Father Abbot," he said, as he was helped to get down from his mule, "I am come to lay my bones among you." He was taken at once to bed, and lay there for two days; on the third he prepared for death. He sent a message to the King, in which among other things he said: "If I had served my God as diligently as I have served my King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs." At eight o'clock in the evening he died. It was the 29th of November, the eve of St. Andrew, in the year 1530.

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT CHANCELLOR

When Wolsey gave up the Great Seal, it was to Thomas More that the King handed it. Thomas More, who was then nearly fifty years of age, was one of the most famous, as he was one of the very best men in England. He was the son of a judge, and had himself followed the profession of the Law. But he was a good deal more than a lawyer. He had studied at Oxford, and had been very well thought of as a scholar, and he was a member of Parliament at the early age of twenty-one. In Parliament he was noted for his independence, even persuading the House of Commons to refuse, on one occasion, the money which the King demanded. This was in the days of Henry VII. When the younger Henry came to the throne, he soon took More into his service. As time went on he continued to rise in favour. In 1521 the King published a book on theology, in which More is said to have helped him; and More himself wrote a book in defence of the King. Henry professed, and we may believe really felt for the time, a great affection for him. More was not only very learned but also very witty, and the King, as long as he was not thwarted in what he desired, could be very friendly and even affectionate. But More always knew how very easily all this might be changed. Once when the King had come unexpectedly to More's house at Chelsea, and had dined with him, he walked after dinner about the garden with his arm round his host's neck. When he was gone More's son-in-law, Thomas Roper, said to him that he must be very well pleased to have the King on such friendly terms with him. He had never been seen before to be so familiar with a subject, except that once he had walked arm-in-arm with Wolsey. "I find his Grace my very good lord indeed," was More's answer, "and I believe he does as singularly favour me as any subject within this realm. However, son Roper, I may tell thee, I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go."

Nor did it fail to go, as we shall see, but not for a castle in France. The way this came about was as follows: the Pope would not pronounce that the King's marriage to Queen Katharine was null. So the King, having got opinions in his favour from sundry learned persons, had sentence pronounced to that effect by Thomas Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury. This was in May 1533, but the King had been already for some months married to Anne Boleyn. Early in the next year an Act of Parliament was passed which declared that the realm of England was not under the spiritual rule of the Pope, and that the King was entitled to have the supreme power which had hitherto been exercised by the Pope. We must not suppose that all this was done on Anne Boleyn's account. The English people had always been jealous of the Pope's power, and the best English kings had been careful to see that it never grew too great. Thus a decree or Bull of the Pope, so called from the large round seal—bulla—which was fastened to it, could not be brought into the country without the King's leave. There was then a good deal to make Henry think that he was doing right

when he acted as he did. On the other hand, we may be sure that if the Pope had given way in the matter of the divorce, the course of things would have been very different.

THE GREAT BIBLE.

For some time More had seen something of what was going to happen. We may wonder that he ever took the office of Chancellor. Perhaps he hoped that the King would give up his plans if he found that the Pope was firmly set against them. He certainly did not fear, at least then, that there would be an absolute breaking away from Rome. And it must be remembered that it was not easy to refuse anything to King Henry, especially when he asked it in a good-humoured way. However, in May 1532 he gave up the Great Seal. He told the news of his giving it up to his wife in this way. He was at Chelsea Church on the day after his resignation, and had been singing as usual in the choir. It had been the custom for one of his gentlemen to go to Lady More's seat, and to let her know that the Chancellor had left the church by saying, "My Lord is gone before." This time he went himself and said, "My Lord is gone" (*i.e.* he was no longer my lord). Lady More was very angry when she found out what had happened. Among other things she said, "Would to God I were a man, you should quickly see what I would do. What! why, I would go forward with the best; for, as my mother was wont to say, it is ever better to rule than to be ruled, and therefore I would not be so foolish as to be ruled where I might rule." All that Sir Thomas said to this was, "By my faith, wife, I dare say you speak truth, for I never found you willing to be ruled yet." So far the King was very friendly. But the end was to come soon. The new Queen was to be crowned on May 31, 1533, and Sir Thomas More was invited to be present at the ceremony. He would not go; he was not satisfied, he said, of the lawfulness of the marriage. This year More's enemies, of course at the desire of the King, endeavoured to destroy him by what was called an Act of Attainder. This was a Bill brought into Parliament declaring that such and such a person was guilty of a certain crime named. If the two Houses passed this Bill; and the King gave his assent, the person was taken to be guilty just as if he had been tried in the regular way by a judge and jury. However, the attempt failed. There really was nothing to bring up against More, and his name was struck out of the Bill. Then these same enemies tried to make out that he had taken bribes while holding his office of Chancellor. They failed again. There never had been a more honest judge upon the Bench, and More was easily able to show that the stories brought up against him were nothing at all. One may serve as a specimen. It was said that he had received from a certain widow-lady, who had a suit in his court, a New Year's present of a pair of gloves with forty gold pieces. The lady had sent the gloves and the money, hoping, we may suppose, to bespeak the Chancellor's favour. He returned the money with this message—

"It would be against good manners to refuse a lady's gift; therefore I take the gloves, but as for the *lining*, I utterly refuse it."

The next attack was one which could not fail. In April 1534 Parliament passed an Act, declaring that the King's marriage with Katharine was null, that his marriage with Anne Boleyn was lawful, and that any child of his by Anne had the

right of succession to the throne. (A child, afterwards Queen Elizabeth, had been born in September 1533.) It was also provided that any person might be called upon to take an oath that he assented to all these things, and that if he refused to do so he was guilty of treason. This oath More was at once called upon to take. He refused. He would swear, he said, to the succession, but the oath as it stood was against his conscience. Nothing could move him. When the Duke of Norfolk warned him that it was dangerous to resist the King, quoting the text, "The wrath of a King is death," "Is that all?" he replied. "Then there is no more difference between your Grace and me, than that I shall die to-day and you to-morrow; and 'tis surely better to offend an earthly king than the King of heaven." For four days he was put in the charge of the Abbot of Westminster, the King hoping that he might be persuaded. As he still refused, he was sent to the Tower. The Lieutenant of the Tower apologized to him for not making him as comfortable as he could wish. The King, he said, would be displeased. "Good Master Lieutenant," said More, "whenever I find fault with the entertainment which you provide do you turn me out of doors."

For many months he was kept in prison, many persons trying to frighten or persuade him. But they came in vain. He could not act against his conscience. On July 1 he was brought to trial. He defended himself well, but in those days, a man accused of treason was never acquitted, and the jury, after but a few minutes' consideration, found him guilty. The Lord Chancellor was about to pronounce sentence, when the prisoner stopped him. "My lord," he said, "when I was towards the law, the manner was to ask the prisoner whether he could give any reason why sentence should not be pronounced against him." The Lord Chancellor had to own that he was wrong, though of course nothing that More could say could make any difference. He was taken back to the Tower with the edge of the axe turned towards him. When he reached the wharf where he was to land, his daughter Margaret Roper rushed through the guard and threw her arms round his neck, crying out, "My father, my father!" He blessed her, and sought to comfort her. Still she clung to him, till the rough soldiers themselves were in tears.

After this he had not long to wait for his release. In the early morning of July 6, the King's messenger came to him with the tidings that he must die that day at nine o'clock. He heard the message with calmness. He would have dressed himself in his best clothes—the clothes belonged by custom to the executioner,—for, as he said, "if they were of cloth of gold I should think them well bestowed on him who should do me so singular a service." He was persuaded, however, to change them for a frieze gown; but he sent the executioner a gold coin. When he came to the scaffold, he thought that it looked weakly built. "Lend me thy hand, Master Lieutenant," he said, "and see me safe up; as for my coming down, let me shift for myself." He said the fifty-first Psalm ("Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness"), and then said to the executioner, who had asked his pardon, as was the custom, that it was the greatest of services. "Pluck up thy spirits," he added, "and be not afraid to do thy office. My neck is very short; see that thou strike not awry for thy credit's sake." And yet again, bidding him hold his hand a moment, till he should put his beard out of the way, "for that is no traitor: it hath not offended his Highness."

His Highness was playing backgammon with Anne Boleyn when the news of his old friend's death reached him. "Thou art the cause of this man's death," he said to her in an angry tone, and left the room. Whatever he felt did not prevent him from seizing the dead man's house and goods. But it added to the aversion that was growing up in his mind against the Queen herself. In less than a year she had followed More.

Margaret Roper got possession of the severed head. She had it embalmed and placed in a casket. When she was dying it was put in her arms, and it was placed in her coffin.

"Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last trance
Her murder'd father's head."

Tennyson, *Dream of Fair Women.*

CHAPTER XVI

THE BOY-KING AND THE THREE-WEEKS QUEEN

When Henry VIII., died (January 28, 1547) there was no doubt about who was to succeed him. It was his son Edward, born of his third Queen, Jane Seymour, whom he had married after the death of Anne Boleyn. Edward was but eight years old when he came to the throne, and nearly four months short of fifteen when he died. What his character really was it is not easy to say. That he was very much bent on having his own way is clear; it is just what we should expect from the son of such a father. We are told that he was "inclined to generosity." It has been said that he was unfeeling, because he records in his diary without a word of pity or sorrow that his uncle had been executed. I am not sure that this is fair. A young boy, if he wrote such a thing down at all, probably would write it in the very shortest way. And he had been in the midst of such things ever since he was old enough to take notice of what was happening round him. Beyond all doubt he was clever. "He begins to wish to understand what is going on," says the person who describes him as inclined to be generous; while a physician who was called in to attend him during his last illness says that his knowledge of Greek and Latin and of other matters was quite extraordinary for his years. He showed his fondness for learning, not only by diligently following his own studies, but by taking great interest in the education of others. He had something to do with the foundation of grammar schools, many of which are called by his name. The most important of all, and one in which he took a particular interest, was Christ's Hospital in London. This still flourishes, and is often called the *Blue Coat School*, on account of the dress which the boys wear.

EDWARD VI.

Another thing that he cared for even more than he cared for his books was his religion. A great change had been taking place in England, and elsewhere also, in what men believed since the early years of the sixteenth century. It had indeed begun long before, but I have said nothing before about it, because it is not a matter which it is fitting to write in such a book as this. Even now I will say no more than that there was one party which held by the old or Roman belief about Christian doctrines, and another which held by the new or Reformed belief. The young King was very strongly attached to the party of the Reformers, and was anxious that, whatever happened to himself, this should continue to rule the country. As time went on, it became very plain that he could not live very long. In the spring of the year 1552 he had an attack of both smallpox and measles, was often ill during the summer, and caught so bad a cold in the autumn that he never recovered from it. What was there to be done? Naturally his successor would be the Princess

Mary, daughter of Katharine of Aragon. But Mary held most firmly by the old faith, and would not so much as listen to the preaching of the new. As she was seven-and-thirty years old, and was as determined to have her way as her father had been, she would certainly undo all that had been done in setting forward the Reformed faith. Then there was the Princess Elizabeth. She was of the party of the Reformers, but it would be very difficult to get England to accept her instead of her elder sister. And she too was of age—she was two-and-twenty—and with a much stronger will than the great nobles of her brother's Council liked, anxious as they were to keep power in their own hands. There was a Scotch cousin indeed, Mary, daughter of James V. of Scotland, and so grand-daughter of Margaret Tudor, Henry VIII.'s sister. We shall hear of her again. At this time she was in France, and was to be married, when old enough, to the Dauphin, or eldest son of the King of France. It was quite out of the question that she should be Queen of England. The most powerful of King Edward's advisers, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, chose for the future Queen Lady Jane Grey, eldest daughter of the Marquis of Dorset and his wife Frances Brandon, Frances Brandon being the daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Mary Tudor, younger sister of Henry VIII. First he brought about her marriage to his own son, Guildford Dudley. She was fifteen, and the bride-groom two years older. This was in May 1553. Edward did not particularly like Lady Jane; perhaps he was jealous of her, for she was even more learned than himself. But he was persuaded to name her as his successor, because she would hold by the new faith. Accordingly he allowed a deed to be drawn up by which the crown was to go first to any son there might be of Frances Brandon, then to Lady Jane Grey, then to Lady Jane's sons, then to her sisters, and so on. As Frances Brandon had no sons, this was to leave the crown to Lady Jane. The judges were called in to put this in proper shape. They said that it could not be done. The matter was settled by Act of Parliament and could not be altered except by Act. At last they consented, if they had an order to do it and a pardon, for it was high treason, under the Great Seal. The Council all signed it, Archbishop Cranmer last of all; he was most unwilling to do it, knowing that the King's sisters had the better right, but the dying boy begged him so earnestly to do so for the sake of religion that at last he gave way.

Edward died on July 6. Poor Lady Jane knew nothing of what had been going on. Even the King's death was kept from her for a time. Then her father and mother, with the Duke and her husband, came and explained what was done, and falling on their knees, did homage to her as their Queen. Astonished and troubled, she fainted away. For a time, after coming to her senses, she refused to consent. But she could not hold out against the persuasions and even threats of all her family, and gave way. That evening—it was the 8th of July—she was proclaimed, but no one cried, God save the Queen!

Her reign, if it can be called a reign, lasted twenty days only. Nobody cared for her, or indeed knew anything of her. What they did know of her father-in-law, who, they were sure, had set the whole affair going, they did not like. Even he saw that the thing was hopeless, and proclaimed Queen Mary at Cambridge. Lady Jane and her husband were sent to the Tower. They were both beheaded on February 12, 1555—Dudley on Tower Hill, Lady Jane, on account of her royal descent, within the walls of the Tower.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RIVAL QUEENS

I have said nothing about the reign of Queen Mary. It was a dismal time for England. The Queen, who had suffered herself on account of her religion, to which she was indeed sincerely attached, was bent upon bringing her subjects back to the old faith. Many who refused were cruelly put to death. About these things, however, you will have to read elsewhere. I must

mention two things only: that Mary, very much against the will of her subjects, married Philip II., King of Spain, and was not at all happy in her marriage; and that the town of Calais was taken by the French in the month of January, 1558. The Queen was much distressed at this loss, and is said to have declared that after her death they would find "Calais" written on her heart. She died in the month of November that same year; and to the great joy of the nation was succeeded by her sister Elizabeth.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

There was much to make people hopeful, but there were also many difficulties in the way. The new Queen's title to the Crown was doubtful, and there was a great party in England, not half or nearly half the people, but still numerous, which did not wish well to her. Both at home and abroad things had been much mismanaged. There was no money in the Treasury, and England was at war with France, not for any object of her own, but to suit the plans of King Philip of Spain. And the new Queen herself was, in some respects, a strange person. She knew how to choose good counsellors, and, on the whole, she trusted them, and listened to their advice. William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, was one of her ministers during nearly the whole of her reign—in fact, from her coming to the throne, till he died, on August 4, 1598.

But she had very bad favourites, and sometimes she would let them lead her into very dangerous positions. She was bent on doing great things for England, but sometimes she was so mean that she would not furnish her soldiers and sailors with proper pay and food. And she was foolishly vain—vain of her learning, of which she really had a good deal, and vain of her beauty, which was nothing very remarkable, though all her courtiers, good and bad, spoke to her and of her, and that to the very end of her life, as if she was the most lovely creature under the sun.

But the person who really was her greatest danger, and of whom, at the same time, this vanity of hers made her most jealous, was Mary Stuart of Scotland.

When I last mentioned Mary, it was just before the death of Edward VI. She was then betrothed to Francis, eldest son of King Henry II. of France. The marriage took place in 1558. In the following year King Henry died, and her husband succeeded him. He too died after a reign of little more than a year. Eight months afterwards Mary came to Scotland. She was only nineteen, very beautiful and charming, very accomplished, and in a degree learned —she had quite a large library of books, considering the age. But she had led a very troubled life, partly on account of the circumstances of the times, and partly from her own fault. There was the same division in Scotland as there was in England, between the favourers of the old faith and the

favourers of the new; and Mary, unlike her cousin Elizabeth, belonged to the old. This made her the hope of those who hated Elizabeth. She was, in any case, the next heir to the English Crown, and many believed that it rightfully belonged to her now, partly because they held that Elizabeth's mother had not been properly married, and partly because she, as a heretic, was not qualified to reign. In 1565 Mary married a certain Lord Darnley, a foolish and ill-behaved young man, with whom she soon began to quarrel. In the following year she had a son, of whom we shall hear again. Elizabeth was troubled at the news. "The Queen of Scots," she cried, "hath a fair son, while I am but a barren stock." She had refused to marry, though her subjects had time after time urged her to do so, and though she amused herself by encouraging various suitors, some of them foreign princes, among them a brother of the French King, Henry III., and some of them English nobles, as William Courtenay, Earl of Devon, and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Dudley is said to have procured the murder of his wife, Amy Robsart, in order to clear the way for his marriage to Elizabeth. But she could never resolve to give up her liberty, and at the same time she was really afraid that her marriage would injure the country. All the other parties, their own hopes being gone, would have joined together against her and her husband.

Mary, with her son to come after her, was now a really dangerous rival, and if she had been a wise woman, could hardly have failed to make good her claim to the Crown. But a wise woman, happily, it may be, for this country, she was not. She had done, as we have seen, a very foolish thing in choosing Darnley for a husband, but worse was to follow. He refused to attend the christening of the young Prince. Afterwards he fell ill of smallpox, and Mary went to see him, and behaved very affectionately to him. When he could be moved, he was brought to a house outside the walls of Edinburgh, called the Kirk of Field, because it had once been a house of monks. It was a small, ruinous place. Mary slept on the first floor; her husband was below. To all appearance she was very loving to him. But a few days after he came into the house, he was warned that, unless he got away at once, he would never leave it alive. On February 9—*i.e.* twelve days after Darnley came to Kirk of Field—there was a wedding of two of the royal servants at Holyrood Palace, and a ball afterwards. The Queen was at the wedding and at the ball; she went in the evening to bid her husband good-night, but she slept at the palace. That night Kirk of Field was blown up with gunpowder. Some of the servants were found dead among the ruins. But Darnley's body was discovered eighty yards from the house, together with that of his page. Both of them were dressed in their shirts only; neither showed any marks of scorching. Indeed there were no signs to show how they had come by their death.

One thing comes out quite clearly, when, very unwillingly and after a long delay, the Queen ordered an inquiry to be made into the affair, that the man who had plotted the murder was a certain James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Whether Mary herself was also guilty was doubted then, as it is doubted now. It is needless to say any more, than that, little more than three months afterwards, May 15, 1567, she married the murderer. Whether she was guilty or not, the suspicion was so strong that, in Scotland at least, it ruined her hopes. For a time it looked as if there might be civil war. Two armies, one led by Mary and Bothwell, the other by the nobles who were her enemies, actually met. But there was no fighting. Mary's soldiers left her, and she had to yield herself prisoner, and a few weeks later was shut up in Lochleven Castle and compelled to give up the crown. In the year following she escaped, but her friends were defeated at Langside (just a year after her marriage), and she had to take refuge in England.

In England she remained for nineteen years, taken from castle to castle, and, wherever she was, a cause of anxiety and danger to Elizabeth. In 1570 the Pope solemnly declared that Elizabeth did not belong to the Church, and that she was not rightfully Queen of England. This turned against her many Roman Catholics who up to that time had been loyal. Abroad the great Roman Catholic rulers were her enemies, and, if they could

have given up their jealousies and united against her, she could hardly have held her own. Then plot after plot was made in England against her life. With all these things Mary Stuart was more or less mixed up. She knew about many of them, and it was to put her upon the English throne that all were made. Again and again Elizabeth was urged to get rid of her. If Lord Burleigh had had his way she would have been executed long before the end of the nineteen years.

At last a plot was discovered in which she was proved, by the testimony of her own handwriting, to have had a part. One Anthony Babington, who had been one of Mary's pages, and had been charmed by her, as were all who came near her, John Ballard, a Jesuit priest, who had obtained the Pope's leave for the assassination of Elizabeth, and others conspired to murder the Queen, and to raise the country for Mary Stuart. Babington wrote to Mary, telling her of what had been planned, and she sent him an answer, in which she approved of his plans, and urged him to carry them out with all speed. But the English ministers knew what was being done, they had spies everywhere,—and at the proper time arrested the conspirators. Mary's letter was found among their papers, and Babington's letter to her in her room, which was searched during her absence. Of course all these things are doubted or denied by those who take Mary's side. More need not be said. She may not have been guilty, but Elizabeth had only too much reason for believing that she was. The Queen had many doubts as to what she should do. She hated the idea of having to put her cousin to death; but then, as she said to herself, it was "Strike, or be stricken." If it could have been done without her knowledge it would have pleased her best. At last she gave a half consent, and on February 8, 1587, Mary Stuart was beheaded.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN THE WESTERN SEAS

No man was more hated in England during the second half of the sixteenth century than Philip II., King of Spain. Men remembered how busy he had been in the cruel persecution which had been carried on during the reign of his wife, Queen Mary. They knew that he was always on the watch to recover the power which he had lost at Mary's death, that he hoped to conquer and enslave their country, and that he had plotted more than once the death of their Queen Elizabeth. And in the minds of many there was a feeling at work which was not less strong than hatred. This was the hope of gain. Spain had become, since the discovery of America, marvellously rich. The Gulf of Mexico and the neighbouring seas were called the "Spanish Main." Ships came in numbers from thence, bringing treasure, chiefly silver, to fill King Philip's treasury. It is no wonder that bold English seamen began to think that it would be a fine thing if they could at the same time do damage to the great enemy of their country and enrich themselves. One of the plans they had was to seize the treasure-ships as they sailed across the sea; another, bolder and more dangerous, but, if it succeeded, certain to be even more profitable, to plunder the settlements on the Main from which the ships were wont to sail.

The most famous of these adventurers was Francis Drake. He was a Devonshire lad, born in 1545, the son of a yeoman, who was a Protestant preacher, and afterwards became Rector of Upchurch in Kent. The elder Drake had, it is said, been a sailor himself, and the son went to sea when quite a young boy. He was apprenticed to a master-mariner, who traded with France and Holland. His master, dying, left him his vessel, and young Francis began business on his own account. This, however, he soon gave up, to serve, under one leader or another, in voyages across the ocean. A fine story might be told about every one of

these voyages, and about others which Drake made on his own account; but I have to be brief, and must be content with telling the tale of one expedition.

In November, 1577, Francis Drake sailed out of Plymouth harbour with five ships, not one of them of more than 100 tons burden. It was pretended that he was going on a trading voyage to Egypt, but it was scarcely a secret that he was really bound for the Spanish Main. The Queen had helped him with money in fitting out his ships, and many of the chief nobles about the Court had taken shares in the venture.

SHIPS IN A STORM.

On his way out a terrible thing happened. The Queen had tried to keep the help which she gave to the expedition a secret from her chief minister, Lord Burleigh. She knew that the thing was not to his liking, and that he would try to stop it. The fact was that he wanted England to remain at peace with Spain, and that this could not be if Drake was not only permitted to sail, but even helped by the Queen. Lord Burleigh found out what was going on, but he could not stop the expedition. All that he could do was to try to make it fail. He employed a man, Thomas Doughty by name, whose business it would be to do all the harm he could to Drake and his venture. Doughty soon went to work; a deadly quarrel grew up between him and his chief; things went on from bad to worse, till Drake, feeling sure that unless he got rid of the cause of the trouble the whole business would be ruined, resolved to act. When he reached the Straits of Magellan, he brought Doughty to trial on a charge of treason. The court, which consisted of officers of the ships, with the second-in-command as their chief, found the accused guilty. Drake and Doughty had been close friends. They now took the Holy Communion together; Doughty kissed the Admiral in token of his forgiveness, and then knelt down at the block. The executioner dealt him a blow with the sword, and holding up the severed head, cried out, "Lo! this is the end of traitors."

This terrible duty done, Drake set sail again. He passed through the Straits of Magellan without loss, but when he had reached the Pacific a dreadful storm burst upon his little squadron—three out of the five ships which had sailed from Plymouth had been broken up. One of the three, the *Marygold*, after three weeks' struggle with the weather, went down with all hands, another, the *Elizabeth*, was taken back to England by the second-in-command. Drake was left alone with the *Pelican*, now named the *Golden Hind*.

Slowly he made his way up the western coast of South America. He sailed into the harbour of Valparaiso, seized a ship laden with gold and provisions, and took all that was worth taking in the town itself. At other points on the coast he laid his

hands on sundry prizes, and just missed getting hold of others. The country was becoming alarmed, and Drake, who had been hoping to be joined by the *Elizabeth*, taken home, as we know, by its captain, resolved to act by himself. He boldly entered the harbour of Lima, and searched all the vessels that were in it for treasure. He found nothing, but he heard of a prize which, if he could only secure it, would repay him for all his labours. A treasure-ship had been sent off some fortnight before to Panama. For three days a dead calm kept him where he was, and almost betrayed him into the hands of the Spaniards. Then a breeze sprang up, and he started in pursuit. The treasure-ship had a great start, but the *Golden Hind* was a fast sailer. At Payta, near the northern boundary of Peru, he was only two days behind; on March 1 his lookout man, his own nephew, John Drake, spied the prize. All day he followed her unseen; when it was dark he ranged alongside, and took her without having to strike a blow. It took three days to count and transfer the booty. When they came to reckon their gains, they found that they had secured thirteen chests of piasters, eighty pounds weight of gold, a great store of precious stones, and uncoined silver in such quantities that it served to ballast the ship.

After such a piece of good fortune the best thing to do was to go home. Another capture he made, and this was of two pilots who had with them the charts by which the Spanish ships were accustomed to navigate the Pacific. Then he turned homewards, but the thought came into his mind that he might go by the North-West Passage, and so gain the glory of a great discovery. Accordingly he sailed northward, and reached about 45° north latitude, when the increasing cold, and the look of the land, which showed no prospect of a passage eastward, made him turn back. He coasted along to where the town of San Francisco now stands. Thence he boldly made for the Moluccas, three thousand miles away across the unknown Pacific. For more than two months the voyagers were out of sight of land. When they reached it they were by no means out of danger. Their narrowest escape was early in 1580, when the *Golden Hind* struck on a reef near one of the islands of the Celebes group. For nearly a day and a night it seemed that the great voyage was to end in shipwreck after all. Drake began to lighten the ship, a painful business when the cargo was so precious. Suddenly the wind changed, and the *Golden Hind* slipped back into deep water. After refitting in Java, Drake set his face homeward. We, who are used to go round the world in less than seventy days, read with surprise that the journey took him the best part of a year. It was not till September 28, 1580, that the *Golden Hind* reached Plymouth. Drake had been away from home nearly three years.

For a time it seemed as if the great sailor was to receive a very poor welcome at home. King Philip was of course furiously angry at what had happened, and had instructed his ambassador to demand justice. No news of Drake had reached England. There had been one report, that he had been taken by the Spaniards and hanged, another that his ship had gone to the bottom. Lord Burleigh hoped that either one or the other of these might be true. As for the Queen, she solemnly declared to the Spanish ambassador that she had had nothing to do with the expedition, and that when the pirate—for so the Spaniards called him—came home he would be severely punished. And now the "pirate" had come.

Drake had friends at Court, and they warned him to be on his guard. He refused to take his ship into Plymouth harbour, keeping her where, if need should be, she could escape. A week afterwards the Queen sent for him. He went, but did not go empty. He carried with him some of the best of his spoils. When he reached London he found that alarming news had come from Spain. King Philip had seized Portugal, and had landed some soldiers in Ireland. Burleigh and his friends were terribly frightened, but the Queen heard enough from Drake to give her fresh courage. He told her what he had done, and showed her how easily it might be done again.

The Spanish ambassador still called for justice, and the Queen spoke him fair. An account, she said, should be taken of the treasure brought home. His master should have what

belonged to him. An account *was* taken, but Drake was allowed to take £10,000 out of it for himself. Then the *Golden Hind* was brought round from Plymouth to the Thames, and everybody in London flocked to see it. The Queen still answered the ambassador with excuses and promises, but she had made up her mind to stand by her bold servant. In April, 1581, she let everybody know it by going down to Deptford, where the *Golden Hind* had been hauled ashore, and making Drake a knight. His ship was to be preserved as a trophy.

Great schemes for carrying on the work which Drake had begun were made. But now the Queen hung back. The schemes would cost money, and she did not like spending it. They meant open war, and from open war she still shrank.

At last, in September, 1585, Drake was afloat again. He did damage at various places on the coast of Spain, and then sailing to the West Indies, burnt three of the chief Spanish settlements. When he came home again England was in great danger, for King Philip had been steadily preparing fresh forces to subdue her. Drake was put in command of a squadron, with which he boldly sailed into the harbour of Cadiz. He burnt there, it was said, 10,000 tons of shipping,—this he called "singeing the King of Spain's beard,"—afterwards sailing to the Azores to capture Philip's own merchantman, the *San Filippe*, with a cargo worth a million of money. In my next chapter I shall have something more to say about Drake. For the present, all that remains to be told is, that he sailed in 1595 with another expedition, which was to act against Spain in the West Indies, and that he died on board his ship, off Portobello, on January 28, 1596.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PERFECT KNIGHT

England in the days of Queen Elizabeth was, we may say, full of great men. It was an age when great things had to be done, and men were found ready to do them. If Philip Sidney, of whom I am going to say something in this chapter, does not stand in the front rank of Elizabeth's heroes, as they may be called, it was because his life was cut short. In all the company there was no one more noble.

Philip Sidney was born in the year in which Lady Jane Grey was beheaded; he had his name "Philip" given him by way of compliment to the Queen's husband, Philip of Spain. His father, Henry Sidney might very well, but for his prudence, have been brought to destruction in the Duke of Northumberland's attempt to set the Princess Mary aside and to put Lady Jane in her place. He had married the Duke's eldest daughter; he had been the young Edward's closest companion, and he must have been present when the young King was persuaded to leave the crown away from his sisters. Indeed we are told that Edward died in his arms. He wisely took no part in the events that followed, but retired with his wife to his house at Penshurst in Kent. There on November 29, 1554, Philip was born. He was sent to Oxford before he was fifteen; from Oxford he went to Cambridge; when he was eighteen, having learnt, if we are to believe his biographers, everything that could be taught him in England, he began his travels in Europe. The first place at which he stopped was Paris, where the French King, Charles IX., professed to be so much pleased with him, that he made him one of his gentlemen-in-waiting. Very soon afterwards took place the dreadful slaughter of the Protestants in Paris, known as the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Philip had a narrow escape, but saved his life by taking refuge in the house of the English ambassador, Sir Francis Walsingham. Walsingham's daughter

Frances afterwards became his wife. After three years of travel he returned to England, and soon became one of the first favourites at Court. He was exceedingly handsome, and had most gracious manners; he was learned, he could speak the three chief languages of Europe, French, Spanish, and Italian; he was a good dancer and a fine musician, and he wrote verses which, then at least, every one admired. It was the fashion, as I have said, to flatter the Queen, and to speak of her as the wisest, the best, and the most beautiful of women. Philip Sidney did this, which seems to us rather absurd, very well; and the Queen, who at fifty was as vain as she could have been at fifteen, spoke of him as "her Philip." But the young man was a great deal more than a clever courtier. He was sent more than once as an ambassador to transact important business, and he did it with the utmost discretion. A man of twice his age could not have been more prudent. It was truly said of him that "from a child he started into a man, without ever being a youth."

GENTLEMAN AND HIS ATTENDANTS.

How wide was his reputation may be seen from the fact, that in 1585 he was named among the competitors for the crown of Poland. The Poles used to elect their own King, a plan which sounds reasonable enough, but actually worked very badly; for as the choice had to be unanimous, there was nothing for it but for the majority to put the minority to death. Elizabeth did not like to lose the very finest gentleman about the Court; perhaps she did not think the place was good enough for him; possibly she was jealous of him. Anyhow she refused to let him compete for the honour.

In 1586 he joined the English army which Elizabeth sent in that year to help the Protestants of Holland against Philip II. The Low Countries, once the possession of the Dukes of Burgundy, now belonged to Spain, and the people had been fighting for many years for their liberty, especially the liberty to hold the Reformed faith. They were at this time in great straits. Philip had conquered the western part of the State (now known as Belgium), and had procured that the great leader of the Dutch, William of Orange, should be assassinated. Queen Elizabeth, who had before allowed her subjects to help the Dutch, now openly took their part; she saw that she and they had a common enemy in Philip of Spain, and that if she allowed them to be destroyed the turn of England would come next. So she sent 7000 men under the command of the Earl of Leicester, who was son of Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and so Philip Sidney's uncle. Sidney was already in the country, for in 1585 he had been sent as Governor to Flushing. In July of the next year he joined Maurice of Nassau in attacking the Spaniards, and some weeks later the united forces of English and Dutch besieged the town of Zutphen in the province of Quelderland. The Spanish commander sent a convoy of provisions for the town, and a force of English cavalry was sent to intercept it. Philip Sidney with various young noblemen and gentlemen, went with it as volunteers. It was a foggy morning, and for a time nothing could be seen, only the wheels of the waggons in which the provisions were carried could be heard. Then the sun came out, and the Englishmen saw that the convoy was well guarded. There were

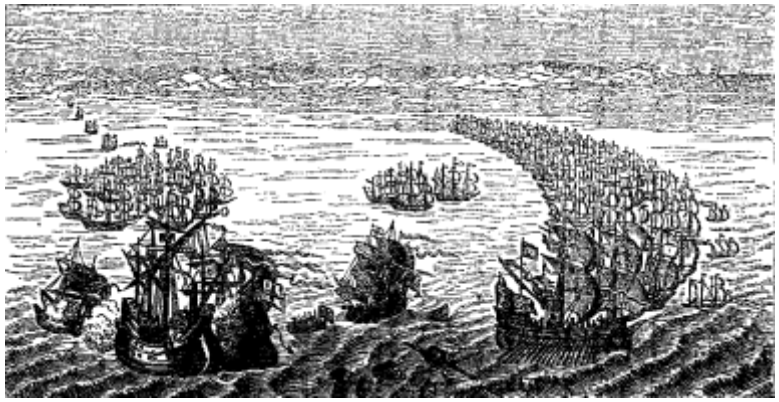
3000 Spaniards in all, among them some of the best of the Spanish cavalry and spearmen. The Englishmen, overmatched as they were, did not hesitate for a moment. They charged the enemy, the young Earl of Essex leading them, broke through the lines of the Spaniards, and then, turning round, charged them again. Philip Sidney's horse was shot under him in this second charge. He mounted another and rode on. Meanwhile the convoy which they were trying to capture went on getting nearer and nearer to the town, for the English, with their scanty numbers, could not stop it. Then Sidney and his companions charged a third time, and this time he got as far as the town itself. Then he was hit by a musket-ball on the leg above the knee. Commonly this part would have been protected by armour, but Sidney had put off his *cuisses*, or thigh-pieces, because a companion, an older man than himself, had none to wear. The ball made a bad wound, breaking the bone of the thigh. Sidney rode back to camp, for he could no longer manage his horse in battle. As he went along, he asked for a drink of water. When it was given him, he saw, while raising it to his lips, a dying soldier who looked at the cup with eyes of longing. He handed the water to him with the words, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

It was not thought at first that the wound was mortal. Very likely, had the surgeons of that day been as skilful in treating wounds as are the surgeons of ours, he might have lived. But this was not to be. He lingered for rather more than a fortnight, dying on October 17, 1586.

CHAPTER XX

THE GREAT ARMADA

King Philip of Spain had long been waiting to make his great attempt on England. He had an old dislike for the country, which he knew did not love him. And he had received many provocations, the plundering, for instance, of his towns and fleets described in ch. xviii., and now the help given to his rebellious subjects in the Low Countries. I have already related how Drake pounced down upon his stores of ships and other things and destroyed them. Even then Elizabeth had hopes that the peace might be kept. She was still very sparing of her money, starving both her armies and her fleet. She did not want to believe that the Spaniards would come, and she persuaded herself, as people often can, to believe what she wished to be true. Even her ministers were deceived, and her ambassadors told that there was nothing to fear.



THE GREAT ARMADA.

As a matter of fact there was very much to fear, and it is impossible to say what might have happened if Philip, on his part, had not been as disposed to delay as she was to disbelieve.

He was waiting, he thought, till everything was quite ready, so that success would be quite certain; but he really was waiting, though he did not know it, till the moment of success had gone by for good. The Armada—so the great fleet that Philip had been slowly gathering together was called—was ready to sail at the beginning of May; it did not sail till the end of that month, and it was two months more before it came in sight of the English coast. There were 130 vessels, many of them very large, carrying more than 20,000 soldiers and a number of priests. Philip's plan was that the Armada should sail up the Channel till it reached the coast of Flanders, where the Duke of Parma had collected an army of 60,000. This army, joined by the soldiers carried by the Armada itself, was to be taken across the Channel. If this could be done, there was nothing in England that could even pretend to meet it. Happily for us the plan broke down.

The English preparations were begun very late, but once begun they were made with plenty of zeal. The English navy did not number more than some thirty vessels, but the great cities furnished many more. The city of London was to have fitted out fifteen, and it sent thirty-three. There was the same zeal shown in other places. Seamen flocked in from all the coast, till at last there were nearly 200 vessels. They were much smaller than the Spanish ships, but they were well armed, well manned, and well commanded. It was no unequal match after all, though the Queen had put off making her preparations dangerously long. She had actually ordered the fleet to be dismantled at the very moment when the Armada was about to sail. Lord Howard, the chief admiral, happily refused to obey.

Drake was playing bowls with some of his fellow-captains on the Hoe at Plymouth when a small merchant vessel came into the harbour with news that the Spanish fleet had been sighted off the Lizard. The great seaman would not show any disturbance.

"There is time," he cried, "to finish the game, and to beat the Spaniards too!" Yet he knew that things were in bad plight. The English fleet was in harbour, and if the Spaniards found them still there, might easily be destroyed by fire-ships. All night the officers and seamen were hard at work getting the ships out of harbour. This done they sailed westward along the coast, and in the afternoon of the next day sighted the Armada. It was coming up the Channel in the shape of a crescent, its huge ships bright with gilding and paint. It was not wholly made up of ships intended to fight. "Truly, I think, not half of them men-of-war," Drake wrote to the ministers in London. This being so the Spanish admiral did not mean to have a great sea-battle. He would sail on straight to where the army of Flanders lay, and then fight if necessary in carrying it across the Channel. On the other hand, the English were very anxious to have the battle, and the greater the better. If the Spaniards contrived to do what they wanted, and join their allies and countrymen in Flanders, things would be looking very badly for England. So they kept as close as they could to the rear of the Spanish fleet, and tried to provoke the enemy into fighting. At last one of the great ships turned upon its pursuers. Drake, who was in front of the English, attacked it; others of the Spaniards came to its help. They suffered not a little from the English cannon, but none of them were sunk or taken. At night the Armada went on its way eastwards. Drake was for attacking; Lord Howard was for waiting till he could join the other English squadrons. Drake did his best to get his way by going against the chief commander's will, but did not succeed. Two of the great Spanish ships, however, fell into the hands of the English. This was on Monday, the first fighting having been on Sunday, July 31. On the Wednesday there was fighting again, the two fleets being now near Portland. The Spaniards were no match for their nimble enemies, and though they did not lose more than three ships, they began to feel very much out of heart. What was nearly being a great battle took place on the Thursday near the Isle of Wight, and if the weather had remained calm the English, who had much the best of the situation—in those days, before steam was used, it was everything to have the wind in one's favour—might have won a signal victory; but a strong breeze sprang up, and the Spaniards got out of their difficulties. On the

Friday there was no fighting; on Saturday the Armada had reached Calais, and was within a few miles of its journey's end. The Spanish army were at Dunkirk, some thirty miles away, and the Dutch ships, which had been blockading the harbour of that town, had been obliged to go away to get fresh stores.

Something had to be done, and done at once, and it was determined to try fire-ships. Eight vessels were picked out—there were no old and worthless ones to use, so good ships had to be sacrificed, and Drake offered his own—and sent down against the enemy. As fire-ships they failed, that is, they did not set any of the Spaniards on fire. Still they did what was wanted. The enemy, terribly frightened lest the fire-ships should come among them, cut their cables in haste and tried to escape. In a short time they were scattered, and then the English attacked. In vain did the admiral try to bring them back and form them into line. Drake and his fellow-captains, Hawkins and Frobisher, and others less famous, fell on them as they were, divided and unable to help each other. After a while Lord Howard, who had been engaged with one of the biggest Spaniards, came up, and the fight went on more fiercely than ever. Such fighting had never been seen before at sea. The English ships moved far more quickly than their foes, and they were far superior, as has been said, in their cannon, but the Spaniards, over-matched as they were, fought bravely on. At the end of the battle—it lasted for some nine hours, going on until the morning of Tuesday, August 9—the Spaniards had lost twenty-four out of the forty ships which had been attacked. It seemed likely that the rest would be driven ashore, for the wind was blowing strongly from the north-west. Then at the last moment it suddenly changed to the south-west, and what remained of the Spanish ships were saved, at least for the time. They bore up to the north, and though Lord Howard and Drake and the other captains followed them for a while they never came within shot again. They had other reasons, too, for giving up the chase. The Queen had been sadly mean about furnishing the fleet with provisions, and some of the sailors actually died of want. And then the weather had broken up, and it was necessary, especially with ships which had been more or less damaged with fighting, to get into shelter.

But for the Spaniards there was no shelter, while, as they had no pilots, they knew nothing of the seas over which they were sailing. Some of the ships were driven on to the coast of Norway, and there perished. The commander of the Armada himself was wrecked on one of the Orkney Islands. Of those that managed to get through the stormy and dangerous seas of the North of Scotland many perished on the Irish coast. The people had no mercy on the strangers, though they were of the same faith, the Reformed doctrines having made no progress in Ireland, but either killed them on the shore, or sent them as prisoners to England. They did not know or care what they were, but having first plundered them, either killed or made prisoners of them, just as they thought would be most profitable. Of the 134 ships that had left Spain only fifty-three returned; of the 30,000 soldiers and sailors, only a third part.

And what, we may ask, was Queen Elizabeth doing all this time? As soon as the Spanish fleet had been sighted, signals had been sent by fire throughout England, that all the soldiers should be mustered. The chief camp in the south of England was at Tilbury Fort, on the Essex shore of the Thames nearly opposite Gravesend. The Earl of Leicester was in command, and the Queen went down herself to review the army. We can hardly call it an army, for the men for the most part were not soldiers. Since the beginning of Elizabeth's reign there had been little fighting on land, and few of the men who assembled at Tilbury could have seen any service. They were full of zeal, however, and courage. Elizabeth rode through their ranks on a white horse, wearing a steel breast-plate, and holding in her hand the truncheon of a field-marshal. She made a speech to the army, of which the last words were these, "I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King of England."

Lord Leicester died on September 14.

CHAPTER XXI

A FAVOURITE

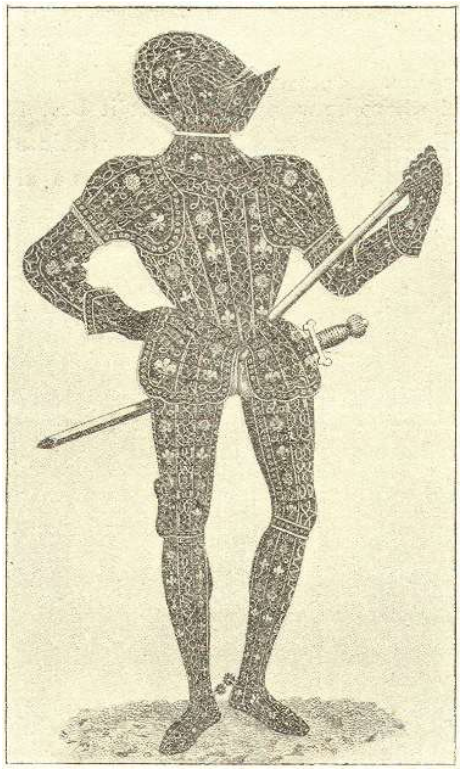
We have heard how at Zutphen, where Sir Philip Sidney was, the charge was led by the young Earl of Essex. He was a gallant young fellow, hot-headed and foolish indeed, and extravagant, but yet with much that was good in him. Unhappily he was spoilt by bad friends; the Queen herself, with her changeable ways, now petting him, now showing herself displeased with him, did not do him any good. What was worst of all, he could not control his own temper.

At Zutphen he was only nineteen, only twenty therefore when, in the year after, the Queen put him in command of the cavalry at Tilbury Fort. She liked to have him in attendance on her, for he was handsome and clever, and with fine manners, though he was sometimes violent in speech and action, as when, for instance, he fought a duel with a rival courtier, a certain Sir Charles Blunt. Sir Charles wounded him in the knee. The Queen, hearing of it, seemed rather pleased than offended. Essex, she said, needed some one to take him down, otherwise there would be no ruling him.

In the year after the Armada, when there was an expedition to help a certain Don Antonio, who hoped to take Portugal from King Philip, Essex ran away from Court to join the fleet. The Queen, who was much vexed, sent one Robert Carey after him with a letter, in which she said that "his sudden and undutiful departure from her presence and his place of attendance" was very offensive to her. Carey was not in time to catch him. He had already embarked. The expedition did nothing of any importance, for the Portuguese had no particular liking for Don Antonio, but Essex distinguished himself by his courage, being the first to leap ashore when there was a landing on the Spanish coast. This, however, was a fault which Elizabeth did not find it difficult to forgive. It was not so when she found that he had secretly married the widow of Sir Philip Sidney. She could not bear that any of her favourites should think of any one but herself. He was still in disgrace when some English soldiers were sent to help one of the French parties against the other. Again he secretly left the Court to have his share of the fighting. Of this, indeed, he seemed never to have enough. He was foremost in every attack; his young brother Walter was killed at his side. He challenged a French Admiral to a duel; and he took up a position so much in advance of his general's line that he was in great danger. The Queen did not like that he should risk his life in this way, and yet was proud of the courage which he showed. Still, as she refused to send the help which she had promised while he remained where he was, he thought it best to come home. Elizabeth gave him a hearty welcome, and seemed to forgive him for all his offences against her. In 1596 he commanded the army in an expedition against Spain, and took the town of Cadiz in a very gallant way. The Queen, however, was angry with him for allowing the soldiers to have the plunder of the place; she thought that it ought to have been kept for her, or, at least, for, her to divide as she thought best. Again Essex lost her favour, but he seems to have got it again the next year, when she made him Earl Marshal. In 1598 Lord Burleigh died; the Queen missed him much, and so did Essex. The two had been often at variance. Burleigh was for peace with Spain, if it were possible, and Essex for war. Once, it is said, when they had grown hot disputing this question, Burleigh drew a Prayer-book out of his pocket and showed the young man this text—"Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." But Burleigh had a great regard for him, and often served him with the Queen. Most of the courtiers looked at him with jealousy and even hatred.

In 1598 there was a worse quarrel than all, if indeed the story is true. There was a dispute as to the proper person to be put in some office in Ireland. The Queen set herself against the man whom Essex recommended, and at last he became so angry that he turned his back upon her. This piece of rudeness so

provoked her that she gave him a box on the ear. He put his hand to his sword, and when the Lord Admiral stepped between him and the Queen, he declared that he would not have put up with such an insult from Henry VIII. himself, and left the Court in a furious rage. Again, however, he was received with favour, or what seemed like it. In 1599 he was sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy. Of course it was an honour, but a very dangerous one. The country was most difficult to manage, and certainly wanted more prudence and good temper in its ruler than Essex had ever shown.



THE EARL OF ESSEX.

In Ireland everything went wrong. Essex was as brave as a man could be, but he was not a general. He could not defeat the Irish rebels; perhaps no one could have done so. Accordingly he tried to make peace, and sent over to England the terms which he thought ought to be given. The Queen and her counsellors were furious, thinking them far too good for the Irish. No one now can say who was in the right. Ireland, after all, did belong to the Irish, and they asked only for what had been their own. But then there were many English settlers in the country, and there would have been an end of them if the Irish had prevailed.

Essex's enemies, of course, were busy. They even said that Essex was thinking of becoming King of Ireland by help of the rebel Irish and of Spain. The Queen sent him an angry letter, and he, on receiving it, left Ireland at once, in order, as he said, to see the Queen, and defend himself before her from the slander of his enemies. When he got to London he found that she was not there, but at her palace at Cheam, called Nonsuch. He hurried down there, and almost forced his way into the Queen's chamber. She had not long risen from her bed, and was being dressed by her women. He fell on his knees before her, and covered her hand with kisses. She seems to have been kind to him, though no one knew what she said. Anyhow, when he left the room, he seemed to be content with the way in which she had received him, and was in good spirits. But afterwards she turned, or was turned by others, against him, and when a gentleman whom he had knighted came to pay her his respects, she showed a great deal of anger. "I am no Queen," she cried. "That man sets himself above me. Who gave him command to come hither so soon, when I sent him on other business?" Later in the day he saw her again, but then she showed him no kind of favour, told him that he must not leave his house, and that he would have to answer for his conduct before the Council.

All this happened in the winter of 1599. About six months afterwards he was tried in an irregular sort of way. He confessed that he had made great mistakes in the conduct of the war, but solemnly affirmed that he had never had any treason against the Queen in his thoughts. In the end she pardoned him, but gave him to understand that he was not yet restored to favour.

If he had been content to be patient all might have ended well. But patient he never was and never could be. He saw that his enemies were powerful with the Queen, and that they persuaded her to do what they pleased. He was honestly convinced that many things which they did were not for the good of the country, and that if he were in their place, he could give better advice. Then he was greatly in debt, and was very angry to find that he was not to have any longer a very profitable monopoly, as it was called. A *monopoly* was the privilege of selling something which other people were not allowed to sell. Of course any one who had the privilege could raise the price, not exactly as high as he chose, but so high as to make large profits. Essex's monopoly was of a kind of wine. He grew more and more angry and discontented, and began to talk in a very violent way, saying, for instance, "that the Queen grew old and cankered, and that her mind was become as crooked as her carcase."

At last he broke out into open violence. He had been called to attend the Council, and had answered that he was not well enough to come. The Lord Chief Justice and some other great persons came to warn him not to break the law. He brought them into his house and locked them up. This done, he went out into the street, followed by a number of friends, in the hope that the citizens would rise in his favour. The streets were empty, for the Lord Mayor had ordered that every one was to remain at home. One of the sheriffs, whom he knew to be his friend, he could not find. Sadly disappointed, he went back to his house, and found that his prisoners were gone.

Meanwhile the heralds had been sent into the city to proclaim Essex a traitor, to offer a reward of £1000 for his head, and pardon to such of his fellows as should at once make their peace with the Queen. Soon afterwards Essex's house was surrounded by soldiers; on the promise of a fair trial he surrendered, and was taken to the Tower.

The trial took place before a number of peers, some of whom were certainly Essex's enemies. He was not allowed to object to them, because they were not sworn, but gave their verdict on their honour. I need not describe the trial. He was of course found guilty, and indeed he had done much more than had been enough to bring about the condemnation of others. No one doubted that he would be sentenced to death; the question was whether the Queen would suffer him to die. For some time she could not make up her mind. Essex's enemies did their best to keep up her anger against him. They repeated, perhaps they made up, foolish things that he had said against her. But she could not forget that she had once loved him. There is a story, which has been denied, but which is probably true, that in former days she had given him a ring which he was to send to her when he was in great need. She expected to receive it, and he did send it. It went by mistake to the wrong person, and this person wilfully kept it back. The Queen was provoked that it never reached her, and the fierce temper which belonged to her family was roused to a worse rage than ever. Essex was found guilty on the 19th of February, the Queen signed his death warrant on the 23rd, and he was executed two days later.

It was a cruel act, because it was not in any way necessary. The Queen could not have believed that she was in any danger from him. It was not long before she began to reproach herself. After all she had loved the man, and when he was gone she began to find it out. She had many sad thoughts when she died, but none more sad than the memory of the foolish, brave Essex. She died on March 24, 1603, in her seventieth year.

CHAPTER XXII

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

If I had followed strictly the order of dates I should have written about Walter Raleigh before I wrote about the Earl of Essex or even about Philip Sidney; for he was two years older than Sidney, and fifteen years older than Essex. But it is more convenient to put his story here. Raleigh had to wait much longer than the other two before he began to rise in the world. He fought and fought bravely in France, in the Low Countries, and in Ireland, but he was still nothing more than a private gentleman at thirty, though Essex, as we have seen, commanded the English cavalry when he was but twenty. Then came Raleigh's chance. There is no reason to suppose that the story is not true, though we do not find it in print till more than thirty years after his death. It is very like what we might expect from him and from the Queen.

Elizabeth—it is thus the story goes—had to pass over some muddy spot, and stopped a moment in doubt. Raleigh, who was wearing that day a new plush cloak, at once stripped it off his shoulders and threw it down in front of the Queen. She passed on, not forgetting to notice the young man who had been so ready with his politeness. Not long afterwards he wrote on a window where he knew the Queen would see it this line—

"Fain would I climb, yet fear I to fall."

Elizabeth added underneath—

"If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all."

Raleigh took the hint, and climbed. He got up quickly enough. Of wealth he had plenty. The Queen gave him money and lands, not indeed of her own—of them she was very sparing—but belonging to other people. For instance, she made a college or a bishop grant him the lease of an estate at a very low rent; he could let it again, and take the difference. When Antony Babington was found guilty of plotting against the Queen, part of his property was handed over to Raleigh. Then he had monopolies of wine and cloth. Finally, though he did not get much profit out of them, he had lands in Ireland.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

If he got money quickly, he spent it freely. We read of a gentleman being tried for stealing a hat-band of pearls belonging to "Walter Rawley"—his name was spelt in twenty different

ways—worth £30. This indeed is nothing compared to other stories told about him. One writer of the time says that he wore £6000 worth of jewels in his shoes. There is a tradition that he had a court dress that cost £60,000. But he did not spend all his money in this foolish way. He would gladly have done as Drake did, and gone voyaging himself in those "Western Seas," where the Englishmen of that day were so fond of seeking for riches and fame. But the Queen would not let him go. So he fitted out ships, and sent others to seek adventure and profit in his stead. Two started in April, 1584, and five months afterwards came back with some fine pearls and furs and other things, together with two natives. The land they discovered was called "Virginia," after the Virgin Queen. It was Elizabeth herself who invented the name. Other expeditions were sent out and were not so successful. In fact they all failed, and it seemed as if all the lives and the money that were spent in them had been thrown away. But it was not so; he set an example, and at last, and that in Raleigh's lifetime (1606), the colony was really founded.

When there was fighting to be done Raleigh was, as we may suppose, ready enough to take his share, and he fought as gallantly as any man in the battles with the Armada. In 1592 he got into trouble. The cause was the same as that which again and again made Elizabeth angry with her favourites. He presumed to love some one else. She sent him to the Tower. He was not kept there very long. In September the privateers which he and others had fitted out to take Spanish shipping brought home a splendid prize, the "Great Crown of Portugal Carack," as it was called, named the *Madre di Dios*. She had a most valuable cargo of spices, ebony, tapestries, silks, and all manner of precious things. The pepper alone was reckoned to be worth £102,000. Raleigh was let out of prison, that he might help in dividing the spoil, about which there was, as usual, a great deal of quarrelling.

In 1595 he actually did what he had often been thinking of—sailed for the Western Seas. Just six weeks—not a long time in those days—took him across the Atlantic. He reached Trinidad, burnt down a newly-built Spanish city, and then with a couple of boats made his way up the Orinoco. He had various adventures and saw many curious things, which are good to read about, but of which I cannot write in this place. One of his experiences was to make a friendship with an old chief one hundred and ten years of age. He did not gather much treasure, but he made sure that the land which he had found was full of gold and silver, and he fully intended to visit it again. One thing that pleased him, and that we are glad to read, was that he was on quite friendly terms with the natives. In August he was back in England. He did not bring back a great store of treasure; without that, discovery was not much thought of in those days. People too laughed at his traveller's tales, but we know now that there was a great deal of truth in them, and that when he says a thing as of his own knowledge he is to be believed. He did not stop long at home. In the June of the following year (1596) he was with Lord Essex in the taking of Cadiz. He was wounded badly in the leg during the sea-fight, in which indeed he thrust his ship into the very foremost place. This wound prevented him from being at the plunder of the town. He complained that his part of the spoil was "a lame leg and deformed"; . . . that while others were enriched he had "nought but poverty and pain." He had, as a fact, nearly £2000, which would be equal to about seven times as much in our time. But then the heroes of that day were almost as greedy as they were brave.

I shall pass quickly over the rest of the time between this and the Queen's death. Raleigh was now again in favour with her; as he rose, Essex fell; who was right, who was wrong in the lamentable quarrel between them we need not ask. When Essex died, Raleigh was there. Some one says that he came unasked; but then he was Captain of the Guard, and it was probably his duty to be present.

With the Queen's life Raleigh's good fortune came to an end. King James did not like him, why it is not easy to say, except that the favourites of one sovereign seldom please his successor. All monopolies were recalled—a good thing, except

that they would soon be given again to other people. This greatly reduced Raleigh's income. Then his place of Captain of the Guard was taken from him. He still used to come to Court, but it was made quite clear that he was not welcome. In July he was arrested, kept at first in his own home, and then sent to the Tower. The charge against him was, of course, high treason, in that he had plotted to put Arabella Stuart on the throne. This lady was the granddaughter of Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII., and so of royal descent. Elizabeth, who did not like James, had sometimes talked of naming her as her successor. Nothing like real proof of this accusation was brought forward. It is likely that there had been some such plot, and Raleigh may have talked foolishly, but that was all.

At the last moment his life was spared; This was in December, 1603. For more than twelve years, that is, up to March, 1616, he was kept in prison. There was one person at least who wondered that such a thing could be done. This was Prince Henry, the King's eldest son. "Who but my father," he said, "would keep such a bird in a cage?" The Prince even made his father promise to release him. But he died, and for a time Raleigh's hopes were at an end.

At last he got his liberty. He was to go again to the country which he had visited twenty years before, and get possession for the King and his courtiers of some of the riches which he had seen there. But he was not pardoned. That was to depend upon whether he succeeded or not. He did not succeed. Everything seemed to go against him. He met with storms on his way. When he reached Guiana he himself fell sick of a fever, and was very near to death. Then he started for the great gold mine, where he hoped to find the wealth for which he was seeking. But the Spaniards were prepared for his coming. They thought that he had no business in the New World, believing that it all belonged to them. A battle followed, and Raleigh's son Walter was killed. As for the mine, they never reached it. If they had, they certainly would not have found what they expected. You do not find gold lying in a mine, as it lies in the drawer of a bank, and something of this was what they hoped to see. All that they did get was the plunder of a Spanish town, worth some £1000. Really it was worth far less than nothing to Raleigh, for King James desired above all things to be good friends with Spain, and here he had sent a prisoner out of the Tower to burn one of the King of Spain's towns!

There is no need to say much more. A few days after he got back to England he was thrown into the Tower. He had had no pardon for the crime of which he had been found guilty before, and new charges were brought against him. There was a sort of trial. But long before the King had made up his mind to kill him. And kill him he did. On the morning of Friday, October 29, 1516, Walter Raleigh was beheaded.

CHAPTER XXIII

A LITTLE ROMANCE

King James had not, indeed, an excuse, but a reason for putting Raleigh to death, in this, that he greatly desired to be on friendly terms with Spain. It makes one quite ashamed to see how an English King disgraced himself. As soon as the English ambassador at Madrid heard that Raleigh had been beheaded, he hurried to tell the King, who, he wrote back, "showed much contentment with the hearing." One of the English ministers wrote to the ambassador, telling him to make as much as he could out of the matter. He was to let King Philip understand that James had caused Sir Walter Raleigh to be put to death chiefly to give him satisfaction; he was to dwell on what a very clever man Raleigh was, and how much he might have done for his King and country, and so prove to the Spanish King that he ought to be very grateful. What could be more shameful than that a King of England should make a merit with a foreign ruler of having put to death one of his most useful subjects simply to please him? The King of Spain wrote him a letter of thanks with his own hand, and that was all the payment he got. But he hoped

to get much more, especially one thing on which he had set his heart. What this was I shall now show.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

After the death of Prince Henry, Charles, who was born in 1600, became the next heir to the throne. It was now time to think of finding a suitable wife for him, and King James hoped that such a wife might be found in the Spanish royal family. Philip III. never liked the idea, and no wonder, for the last Spanish princess that had come to England, Katharine of Aragon, had been very unhappy. But Philip III. died in 1621, and his son, Philip IV., seemed more favourably disposed. Indeed, an agreement was come to that Charles should marry the Infanta Maria, sister of the King. She was to be at liberty to worship God in the way to which she was accustomed. James also promised that the Roman Catholics in England should not be persecuted any more. If they gave assurance of their being loyal subjects, they were to be let alone. But then difficulties began to arise. There was a dispute about the dowry which the Infanta was to have when she was married, and another about the time of the marriage. The Spaniards too, backed up by the Pope, wanted to secure better terms for the Roman Catholics in England; King James, who had already given great offence to his subjects by what he had done, was unwilling to do any more. Another thing about which they differed was, what was to be done with a certain Frederick, a German Prince, who had married the King's daughter Elizabeth. He was the sovereign of certain provinces on the Rhine, and had been elected King of Bohemia, but had lost that kingdom and his own possessions. James hoped to get the Spaniards to restore them to him.

And now some one suggested the idea that Prince Charles should go himself to Madrid. He might see the Infanta, and perhaps settle the matters in dispute with her brother. It has been said that the idea first came from the Spanish ambassador. But the man that had most to do with it was a certain George Villiers, younger son of a country knight, who had become a great favourite with both the king and the Prince, and had by this time been made Marquis of Buckingham. It was not very easy to get the King's consent. He was afraid, he said, that he should lose "Baby Charles"—this was his pet name for his son. At last he gave way, and the two young men—Buckingham was just eight years older than the Prince—started on their journey, calling themselves Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown. They went by way of Paris, and saw the Royal family, among them the Queen, who was the sister of the Queen of Spain, and Henrietta Maria, whom he was afterwards to marry. In France the proposed marriage was not liked—nor, indeed, was it in England—and the travellers were warned that they had better hurry on, lest they should be arrested. They got safely across the frontier, and reached Madrid without any mishap. They went to the Ambassador, who was not a little surprised to see them. Charles was introduced to the King, and the two were very friendly. But

for the present, he was told it was not possible that he should be allowed to speak to or even come near the Infanta. But he could see her when she was taken out for a drive.

Then there came an entry in state. Charles rode at the King's right hand, with a canopy held over his head. At the palace he made what we may say was a "call" on the Royal family. The King and the Queen were there, the two brothers of the King, and the Infanta. But they had to talk through an interpreter, for the Spanish royalties never spoke any language but their own, at least in public. When Charles did manage to get a few words in French with the Queen, she told him that he would not be allowed to marry the Infanta, and that he had better give up the idea, and think of her sister Henrietta, whom he had seen in Paris.

Charles, however, was not going to own himself beaten. He determined to see the Infanta a little closer, and finding out that she used to go in the early morning to a certain orchard, scrambled over the wall and presented himself before her. Both she and her attendants were terribly frightened, and the Prince found that he had come to no purpose.

In the end nothing came of the treaties and the courtship. It was a bit of romance and nothing more. The Pope, whose leave was wanted before the marriage could take place, wanted more than King James was willing to grant. He even demanded that the Prince should become a Roman Catholic, a quite impossible thing, for, even if he had been willing, which he was not, the English people would not have permitted it. Then, when after a time the Pope gave way, King James began to draw back. He began to insist that the King of Spain should help his daughter's husband to get back his dominions. In fact it was he that broke off the affair in the end. Prince Charles parted from his Spanish friends on very good terms, giving them some handsome presents, among them a diamond ornament for the Infanta, and receiving as much or more from them; and he left authority to one of the Spanish princes to marry the Infanta by proxy. When it was not convenient for a bridegroom to be present at a marriage, he would give his proxy—from the Latin *proximus*, "nearest"—to some one who would go through the ceremony in his stead. Among ourselves godfathers and godmothers sometimes stand for children by proxy. Preparations were made for the marriage to take place in this way, when at the last moment King James sent a courier to stop it, unless the things which he asked were granted. And stopped it was. The King of Spain naturally felt very much offended, and all King James's scheming came to nothing. The next year there was war with Spain, and the year after James died.

CHAPTER XXIV

KING OR PARLIAMENT?

It would take very long, and would bring us into a number of very difficult subjects, to explain the causes of what is commonly called "The Great Rebellion," the war between the Parliament and the King. King James, and King Charles after him, tried to rule more absolutely than the English people were willing to endure. Elizabeth, it is true, was always fond of having her own way, but she knew when she had to yield. This was exactly what King Charles did not know. This was one cause of his troubles; another was the bad advisers whom he had about him.

The worst of these was his wife, Queen Henrietta Maria. I have already described how he courted a Spanish princess, and how the match was broken off. On his way to Spain he had passed through Paris. When the Princess Henrietta, youngest daughter of King Henry IV., heard the story of his adventures, she said, "The Prince of Wales need not have gone so far as Madrid to look for a wife." The Queen of Spain herself, another daughter of King Henry's, had told him that he had better think of her sister Henrietta. This time the Prince did not go courting in person. He sent his portrait, and King James his father sent ambassadors. The Princess was very much pleased with the

likeness, and the ambassadors made an agreement by which too much was yielded. So the Princess became Charles' wife, and, as I have said, proved to be a very bad adviser.

His other counsellors were not much wiser. There were more honest men than those whom King James had about him, but they were more unpopular. Foremost among these was Archbishop Laud, a learned and pious man indeed, but who offended many people both by his conduct and his opinions.

CHARLES I. AND ARMOUR BEARER.

The worst piece of advice that was given him—and it was all the more harmful because it fell in with his own ways of thinking—was that he should try to govern without a Parliament. Three Parliaments were called together during the years 1625—1629, and quickly dissolved, because they would not do what the King wished. Then for eleven years, 1629—1640, there was no Parliament, the King raising money by ways that were against law, or, if not actually against law, had been out of use for so long that they seemed to be so. In 1640 the Parliament called the Long Parliament met. Some things that it did were right and necessary, some were doubtful, some clearly beyond its powers. Very likely it would have been more moderate than it was if the King could have been trusted to keep his word. Unfortunately he could not. Anyhow, things went on from bad to worse. It was on August 22, 1642, that the war began. On that day the King set up his standard at Nottingham.

At first the Royalists, as the King's party are commonly called, were stronger than their adversaries. The larger part of England was with them. We may say that every town and every village was divided; even in families there were some that took one side while others took the other; but generally the west of England took the King's part and the east took the Parliament's. A recent writer says, "Roughly speaking, a line drawn from Hull to Weymouth would divide England into a large Royalist half, and a smaller Parliamentarian half, as things were just after the war had begun. The extreme north was for the King, but Lancashire favoured the Parliament." London was for the Parliament, and had a great deal to do with its final success. It must be remembered that there was no regular army, and that only few Englishmen had had any experience of soldiering. Some had taken service with foreign princes or countries. Most of these were on the Royalist side, and generally King Charles's men were better suited for soldiers than their adversaries. In one thing they were certainly superior, they knew better how to ride, for most of the latter came from the towns. On the other hand, the then London militia, or "train-bands" as they were called, had some discipline and practice in arms.

The most experienced general on either side was Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, son of the Earl of Essex who was put to death by Elizabeth. He had seen a good deal of service on the Continent. He fought for the Parliament, yet after all he did not distinguish himself very much. On the Royalist side the best was

the King himself, and the worst, that is the one who did most harm, Prince Rupert, the King's nephew, for he was the son of his sister Elizabeth. He was brave—no one could have been braver—but he was hot-headed, and had no power of seeing the whole of a battle. While he was pushing his own success he would let everything go wrong elsewhere. The man who really won the victory in the end for the Parliament was Oliver Cromwell. And now for a short description of the war.

From Nottingham the King moved westward to Shrewsbury, where his party was very strong. Having enlisted many soldiers he marched towards London. Lord Essex was waiting for him at Worcester, but the King avoided him, and he had to follow on as quickly as he could. At Edgehill, one of a range of hills that divide Warwickshire from Oxfordshire, the two armies met. What happened then was to happen again and again during the war. The King's cavalry was nearly as strong in numbers as his infantry, and far stronger in fighting power. Prince Rupert with his horsemen charged Lord Essex's cavalry and easily broke them. Carried away by excitement, he pursued the flying enemy for miles, and then came back to find that the King's infantry had been defeated, losing the Royal Standard and all the artillery. Some of Essex's cavalry under Oliver Cromwell, who now distinguished himself for the first time, had kept their order, and had made themselves useful in pursuing Charles's beaten infantry. On the whole, however, the Royalists had the best of the day, for the King was able to march towards London. Essex did the same, and though he was obliged to take a longer course, got there before him. At Turnham Green, some six miles to the west of London, the City train-bands were guarding some earthworks. The King did not venture to attack them, and drew back to Reading, and afterwards to Oxford.

The conflict at Edgehill was the only pitched battle of the year, but there was a good deal of fighting elsewhere. The Parliament showed itself strong in the east, the Royalists prevailed in the north and west.

In June, 1643, the Parliament lost one of its best and ablest leaders. John Hampden was mortally wounded in a skirmish with some Royalist horse that had come out of Oxford, where the King had fixed his head-quarters. He died six days afterwards. In July the Royalists won two victories in Wiltshire, and on the 26th of that month they got possession of Bristol, after London the largest town in the kingdom. A little later the King laid siege to Gloucester. At this time (August, 1543) he was probably stronger than he ever was again.

The Parliament felt that they must not lose Gloucester, which was a very important place, on account of the bridge over the Severn, and Lord Essex was ordered to march to its relief. When he approached the King raised the siege, but posted himself so as to intercept the Earl on his way back to London. A battle was fought at Newbury in Berkshire. In this the London train-bands distinguished themselves, standing firm against the fiercest charges of Rupert's cavalry. The King was not exactly defeated, but finding that his army was short of gunpowder, he left his position in the night, and made his way to Oxford. For the rest of the year there was no fighting of importance.

Both parties now began to look for help elsewhere. The Parliament applied to the Scotch. There were many skilful and experienced soldiers, men who had served in the wars on the continent, among the Scotch, and their help therefore was very valuable. The King, on the other hand, sent over to Ireland for the troops that had been fighting with the rebels there. It was even arranged that some of the rebels themselves should come. As it turned out, the Irish did more harm than good. Their coming made the English people very angry, and they were soon defeated. But when the Scotch joined the army of the Parliament things went very differently. The Royalists in the north could make no head against them, and the Earl of Newcastle, who was in command of them, sent to the King for help. Charles sent his nephew, Prince Rupert, with a large force of cavalry, and the two armies met on July 2nd, at Marston Moor, near York. There were about 27,000 men on the side of the Parliament, while the

King's army numbered about 3000 less. As was always the custom in those days, both sides had their infantry in the middle of the line, their cavalry on the two wings. And now there happened what had never happened before. Prince Rupert's cavalry charged, but charged in vain; for a few minutes indeed their adversaries wavered, but it was only for a few minutes. They had some Scottish infantry to support them, and in a very short time they recovered their ground, and drove Rupert and his men before them. Here again Cromwell distinguished himself; it was he who was in command of the Parliament horse. From this time there could be no doubt as to what the end of the war would be. The King's strength was in his cavalry, and when they were beaten his cause was really lost. In another part of the field things went differently. Lord Goring charged Sir Thomas Fairfax and broke his line. As usual the Royalists pursued the enemy too far, without thinking of helping their friends. When they came back to the field, they found that the battle was lost. The King's army was indeed quite broken up. Prince Rupert managed to get a few thousand men together, but all the north of England was now in the power of the Parliament.

Still the war was not over. The King marched out of Oxford, following Lord Essex, who had gone in hopes of bringing over the south-western counties to the cause of the Parliament. Essex was driven into Cornwall, and in the end lost the greater part of his army. Another battle, in which neither side gained much advantage, was fought at Newbury. This was on October 17. During the rest of the year 1644 nothing of importance happened.

On June 14 in the next year came the last battle of the war. It was fought at Naseby in Northamptonshire. Again Prince Rupert, who seems to have always lost his head as soon as he drew his sword, charged the opposite line, broke it, and pursued the fugitives. He even began to plunder the baggage. When he came back the battle was lost. Cromwell with his "Ironsides," as the horsemen whom he had himself trained were called, defeated the Royalist cavalry, and then fell upon the infantry. When these began to waver, the King, who was close by, made ready to charge at the head of his own bodyguard. Those who were with him would not allow it. Lord Carnwath, a Scotch nobleman, who was riding by his side, laid his hand upon his rein, saying, "Sire, would you go to your death?" And Charles unwillingly turned back. Perhaps it would have been better for him and for England if he had gone on, even though it was to his death.

Nothing was now left to the King but a few towns in various parts of England, where his garrisons still held out. He himself was at Oxford. But it soon became manifest that Oxford was not a safe place for him to live in. The Generals of the Parliament prepared to besiege it, and the King saw that if he did not wish to be made a prisoner he must go.

On April 27 he rode out of the city with two companions, one of them a clergyman, who, like many clergymen in those days, had turned himself into a soldier, the other a gentleman whose servant the King pretended to be. He wore indeed a servant's dress, and had his hair cut short in the fashion followed by those who followed the side of the Parliament. The party began by riding towards London, and got as far as Harrow-on-the-Hill. The King, it is said, had thoughts of entering the city and throwing himself on the mercy of his adversaries. But having got so far he changed his mind, and rode northward till he came to Newark, where the Scottish army was encamped. There he gave himself up. He knew that there were matters in dispute between the Scotch and the Parliament, and he hoped to turn these to his own advantage. But he was disappointed. The Scotch began by demanding terms which the King could not possibly yield. They wanted him to change the order of the Church; there were to be no more bishops. The King was quite firm. On this the Scotch determined to surrender him to the Parliament. They bargained that if they did this they were to have their arrears of pay, £400,000, paid them. Many people said that they had sold their King. And indeed what they did was something like it. He was actually given up on January 30, 1647; two years afterwards he was dead. The Queen, whose youngest

child, named Henrietta after her, was born in Exeter in June, 1644, fled from that city a fortnight after the birth of her baby, made her way to Falmouth, and thence crossed over to France. Her vessel was nearly taken by an English cruiser. The Queen commanded the captain to blow up his ship sooner than let it fall into the hands of the enemy. But just at the last moment—a shell had already struck the vessel—a French squadron came in sight, and the cruiser gave up the pursuit. Even then she was not safe. A gale sprang up, scattered the squadron, and drove the Queen's vessel on to the rocks. The passengers, however, escaped to land without injury.

The baby had been left behind. There is an interesting story of how, two years afterwards, she was brought to her mother in France by the lady into whose charge she had been given. The Parliament resolved to take her away from this lady—she was the wife of Lord Dalkeith,—and the faithful woman, sooner than suffer this, made up her mind to escape with the child. She dressed herself up in a shabby cloak and gown, made herself look deformed by fastening a hump of rags on one shoulder, and put a ragged suit of boy's clothes on the little Princess. She walked all the way from Oatlands, which is about twenty-five miles from London, to Dover, carrying the child on her back. The chief danger of being discovered came from the little Princess herself. She did not like the shabby dress which she wore, nor the name of Pierre by which she was called, and she told every one whom they met on the road that she was not Pierre, but a princess, and these dirty rags were not her own clothes. Fortunately no one understood her baby talk, and the party reached France safely.

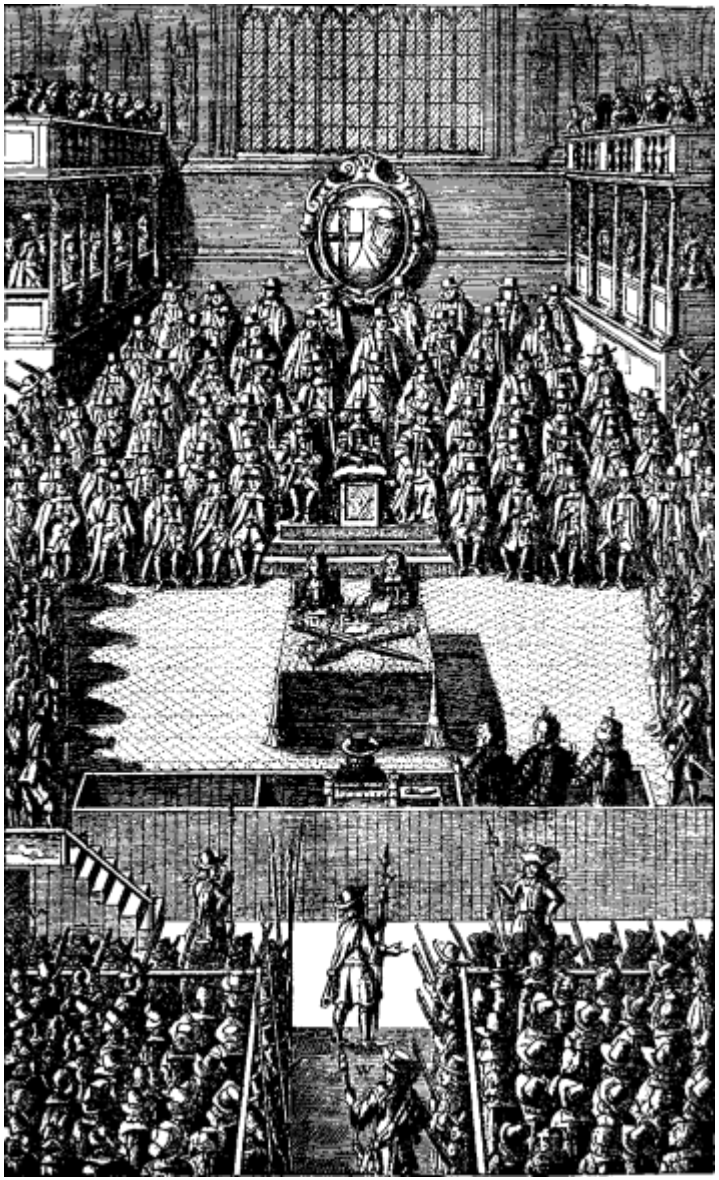
CHAPTER XXV

IN WESTMINSTER HALL

There were two parties among those who were on the side of the Parliament. Some hoped that the King might be compelled to rule better; others were resolved to get rid of kings altogether, and now came the time for the latter to prevail. We shall see this from what happened on December 5, 1648. There had been now for nearly two years, ever since the Scotch gave Charles up to the Parliament, many letters passing backwards and forwards, and many conferences, between the Parliament and the King. At last, on the day mentioned above, the House of Commons, after a debate which lasted all the night, resolved that "the King's concessions to the Parliament are a sufficient ground for settling the peace of the kingdom." But this did not suit the views of Cromwell and the other leaders of the army. They sent down soldiers the next day to take possession of the way into the House. These soldiers were under the command of a certain Colonel Pride. He had a list of members who were known to favour the King, and as any of these came up to the House, he was seized by the soldiers and led away. This business was called "Pride's Purge." The House of Commons was "purged," as Cromwell and his friends said, of those who were not really in earnest.

About three weeks afterwards the House, or what was left of it, resolved that as "Charles Stuart had acted contrary to his trust in setting up his standard, he should be tried." On January 1 it voted that Charles Stuart had been guilty of high treason, and on the 19th of the same month the judges that were to try him were called together. More than a hundred judges had been named, but many of them did not come. When the name of Lord Fairfax was called, a voice from the gallery called out, "He has more wit than to be here;" and when afterwards the clerk

said, "By the authority of Parliament, and of all the good people of England," it cried again, "No, nor the hundredth part of them."



TRIAL OF CHARLES I. IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

The next day the King was brought before the judges, who sat in hat and cloak. A chair of crimson velvet was put for him; he sat down without removing his hat. The accusation that he had brought great troubles upon the kingdom was then read. When one of the lawyers was about to speak, the King laid his staff gently on his shoulder, as if to bid him be silent. He did it again, and the gold head of the staff dropped off. The King was seen to grow pale.

"You are expected," said the President, "to make an answer to this charge."

KING. "By what authority am I brought here?"

PRESIDENT. "By authority of the people of England, whose elected King you are."

K. "The Monarchy of England has been for nigh two thousand years by inheritance, not by election."

P. " 'Tis well known that you have misused this trust. The court must proceed."

K. "I have been brought here by force. This is no Parliament, for I see no House of Lords; nor can there be a Parliament without a King."

This was repeated many times, the President requiring that the King should plead, the King refusing. As he walked out of the court some shouted "God save the King!" others "Justice! Justice!"

The same thing happened on the second and two following days. On the fifth the trial went on. Witnesses were called to testify that the King had set up his standard, and that various acts of war had been committed by him. The sixth day was occupied in the same way. On the seventh the King, on coming in, demanded to be heard. The President, answering that he should be allowed to speak before sentence was pronounced, went on to say that the Court was agreed that the charges brought against Charles Stuart had been proved. This done, he said to the King, "If you question our right to try you, we will

not hear you; but if you desire to defend yourself, then you may speak."

The King said that he had something to say to the Lords and Commons, and desired that he might be allowed to speak to them. His judges, of course, he refused, as before, to acknowledge. The President would not allow what he asked, and proceeded to give sentence. "The Court adjudge that Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public enemy, shall be put to death by the severing of the head from the body."

K. "Will you hear me a word?"

P. "Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence."

K. "No, sir?"

P. "No, sir; by your favour, sir. Guard, withdraw your prisoner."

K. "By your favour, sir, hold the sentence."

Then, finding it all useless, he cried, "I am not suffered to speak. Expect what justice others will have."

Some of the soldiers as he passed them treated him rudely, blowing the smoke from their pipes in his face. This was not, however, the temper of all. One soldier cried "God bless the King!" his officer struck him with a cane. The King said, "Methinks that the punishment is greater than the offence."

CHAPTER XXVI

THE WINDOW IN WHITEHALL

The King was condemned on January 27. On the 29th he took leave of the two of his children that were in England—the Princess Elizabeth, who was then thirteen years old, and the Duke of Gloucester, who was but eight. There had been some talk of making the boy King, so that the chiefs of the Parliament might rule in his name (his two elder brothers were not in England). Charles took the child on his knee, and said to him, "Sweetheart, now will they cut off thy father's head." The boy looked at him very earnestly. He went on, "Heed, my child, what I say; they will cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a king. But mark what I say: you must not be a king so long as your brothers Charles and James live; therefore I charge you, do not be made a king by them." "I will be torn in pieces first," said the boy. He made the boy promise that he would never consent to be king while his elder brothers were alive. Then giving them some jewels, the only riches, he said, he could bestow on them, he sent them away. Dr. Juxon, Bishop of London, was with him till late. When the Bishop had gone, he spent two hours more in meditation and prayers. The gentleman who was with him related that that though he himself could not sleep, the King slept quietly for four hours. About five in the morning—"two hours before dawn"— the King opened his curtain and called to him. "I will get up," he said, "for I have a great work to do this day"; and shortly after, "This is my second marriage day; I would be as trim to-day as may be, for before night I hope to be espoused to my Lord." He then chose the clothes that he would wear, taking care to have an extra shirt, for he said, "The season is so sharp as may probably make me quake. I would not have men think it fear; I fear not death. I bless God I am prepared."

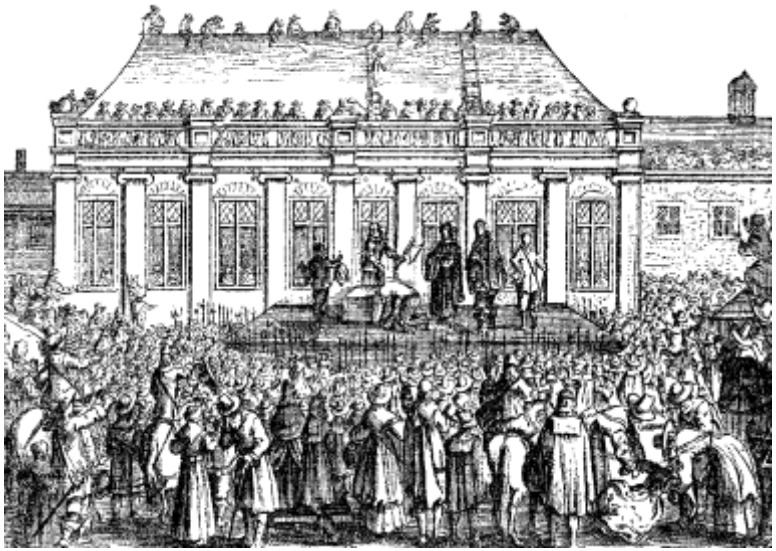
After this he gave directions for certain books which he wished to be distributed, a Bible among them, with notes written

by him in the margin, which he wished the Prince of Wales to have.

Bishop Juxon now came to read and pray with him. The Bishop read the 27th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, which contains the story of the Crucifixion of Our Lord. The King wanted to know whether he had chosen it. "May it please your Majesty," he answered, "it is the proper Lesson for the day."

The officer who had been sent to fetch him to the place of execution now knocked at the door. " 'Tis time," he said, "to go to Whitehall, where your Majesty may have some further time to rest." For a short time the King was left by himself; then, taking the Bishop by the hand, he said, "Let us go."

The way to Whitehall—it was at St. James's Palace that he had been since his coming to London—was lined on either side by soldiers. The drums were beaten without ceasing, so that it was scarcely possible to hear what was said.



EXECUTION OF CHARLES I.

The scaffold had been made outside one of the windows in Whitehall Palace, near the Banqueting Hall, looking westward on to what is now Parliament Street. The people were so far off that the King, perceiving that his voice could not reach them, said what he had to say to the gentlemen about him. He justified what he had done; at the same time he forgave his enemies. One of his gentlemen touched the edge of the axe. "Hurt not the axe," said the King, "that may hurt me." The Bishop then begged him to say something about religion. "I die a Christian," said the King, "according to the profession of the Church of England, as I found it left by my father."

He begged the officer to take care that he was not put to pain, and twice warned the gentlemen near that they should not hurt the axe. To the executioner he said, "I shall say but short prayers, and then stretch forth my hands."

"There is but one stage more," said the Bishop. "This stage is turbulent and troublesome, but you may consider it will convey you a very great way—it will carry you from earth to heaven."

The King answered, "I go from a corruptible crown to one incorruptible, where no disturbance can be."

The scaffold was hung with black, and in the middle stood a block, with an axe leaning against it. Two men with masks on their faces stood by. The King put his hair into the cap which he had on his head, the Bishop and the executioner helping him. Then he knelt down and laid his head upon the block. The executioner severed it with one blow. The other masked man took it up, and cried in a loud voice, "This is the head of a traitor!" A great groan was the answer.

Whether the king deserved to die or not, it is certain that it was a great error to kill him, an error which put back the cause of freedom in England by many years.

"He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye

The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed."

THE END.

WINDSOR CASTLE.