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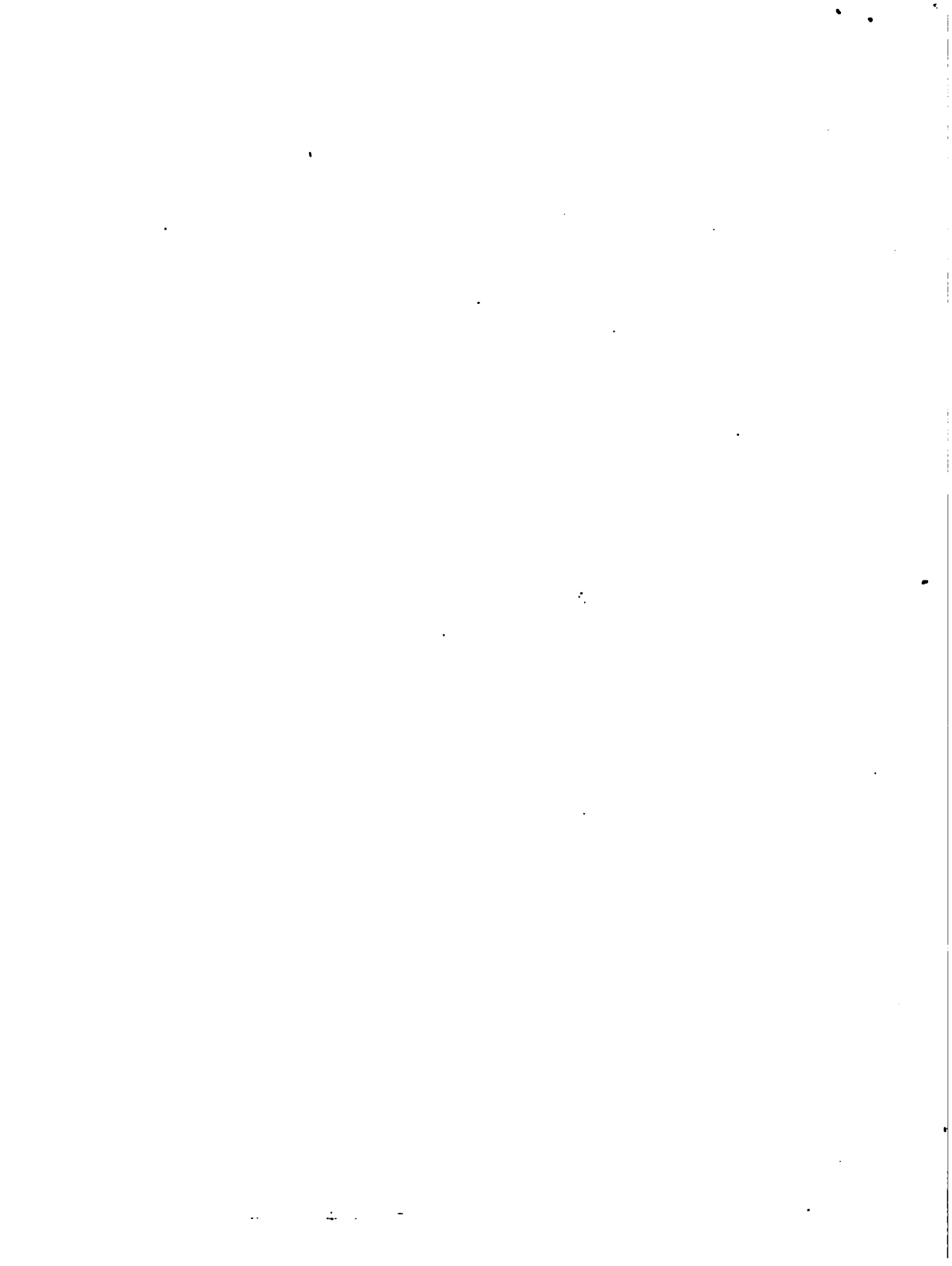


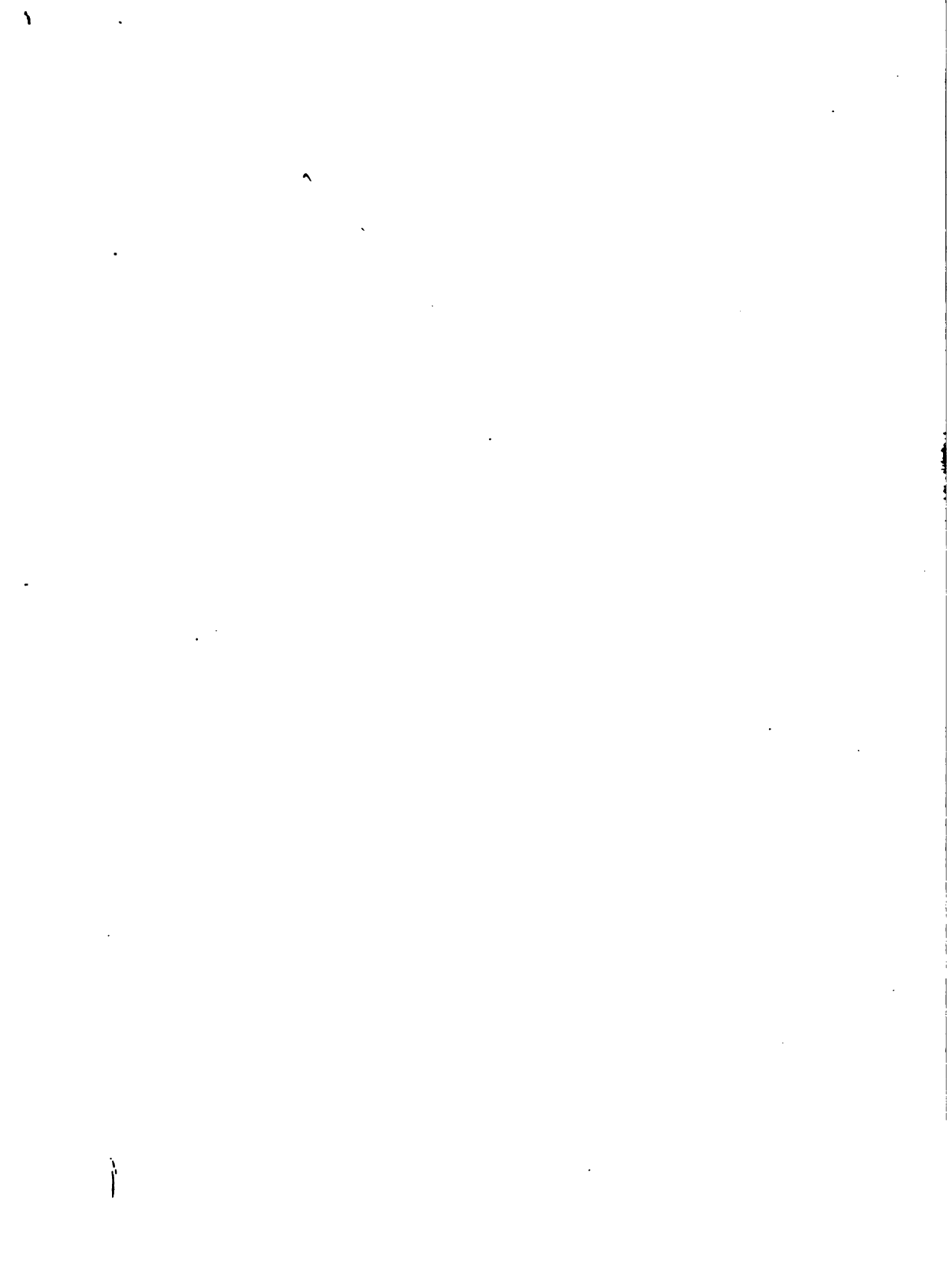


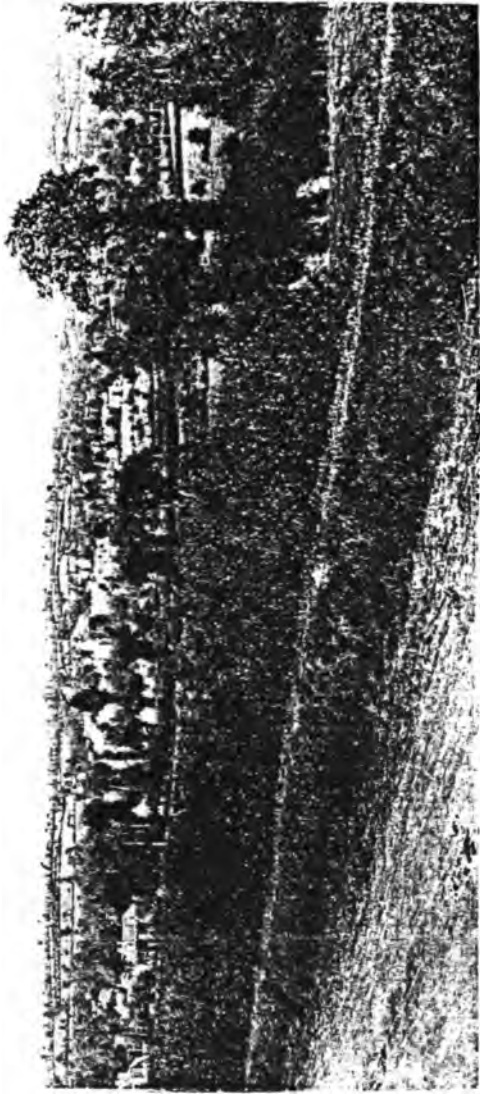




A HISTORY  
OF THE  
House of Percy







*Village of St. Lô,  
Normandy.*

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
*House of Percy*

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES DOWN TO  
THE PRESENT CENTURY

BY  
GERALD BRENAN,

EDITED BY  
W. A. LINDSAY, Esq., K.C., M.A.  
(WINDSOR HERALD)

IN TWO VOLUMES

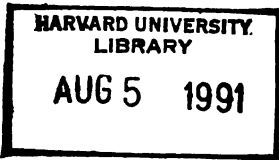
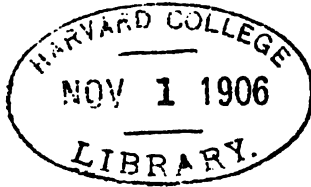
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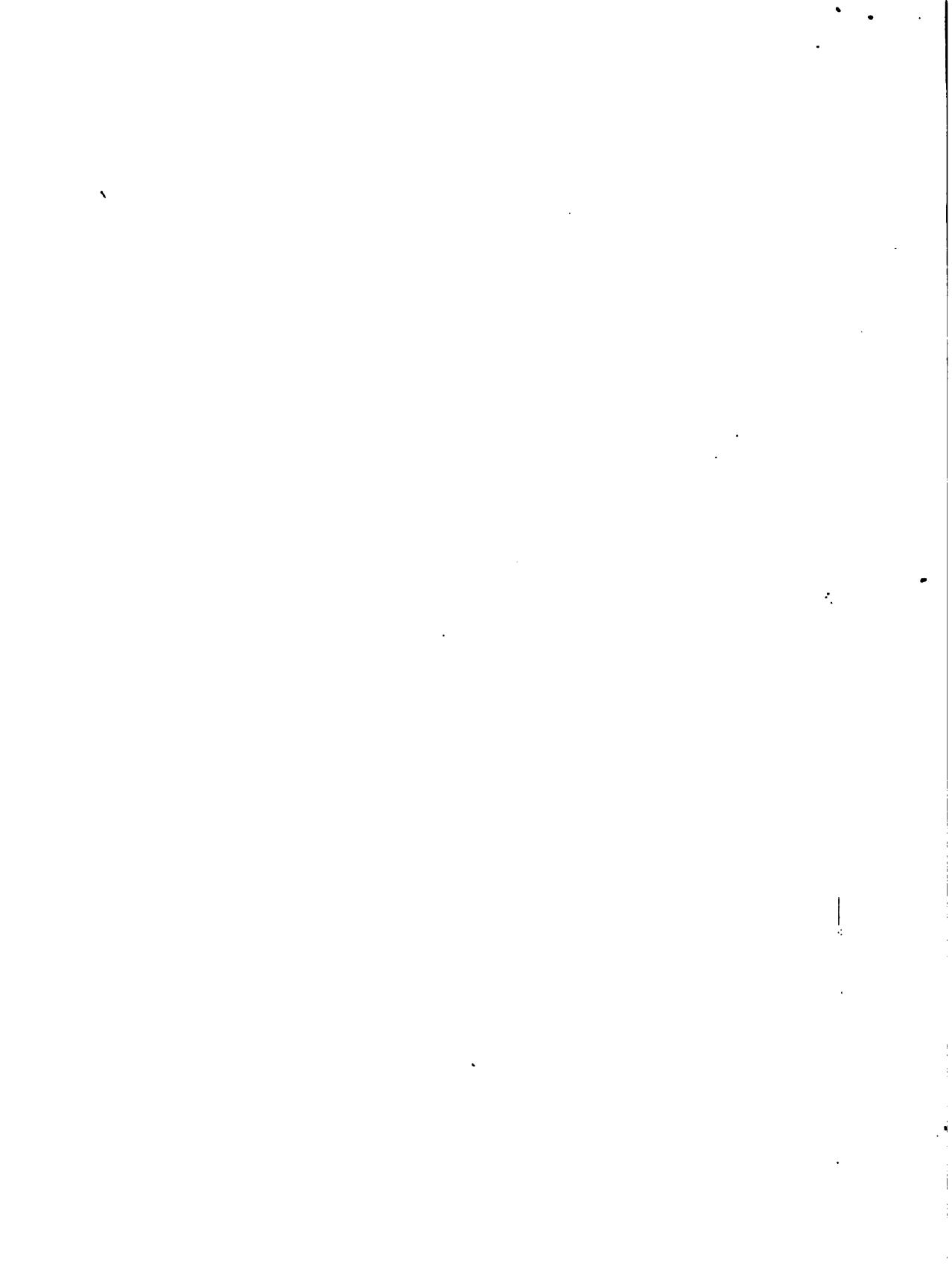
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*DEDICATED*  
TO  
HIS GRACE  
**The Duke of Northumberland**  
K.G. P.C.



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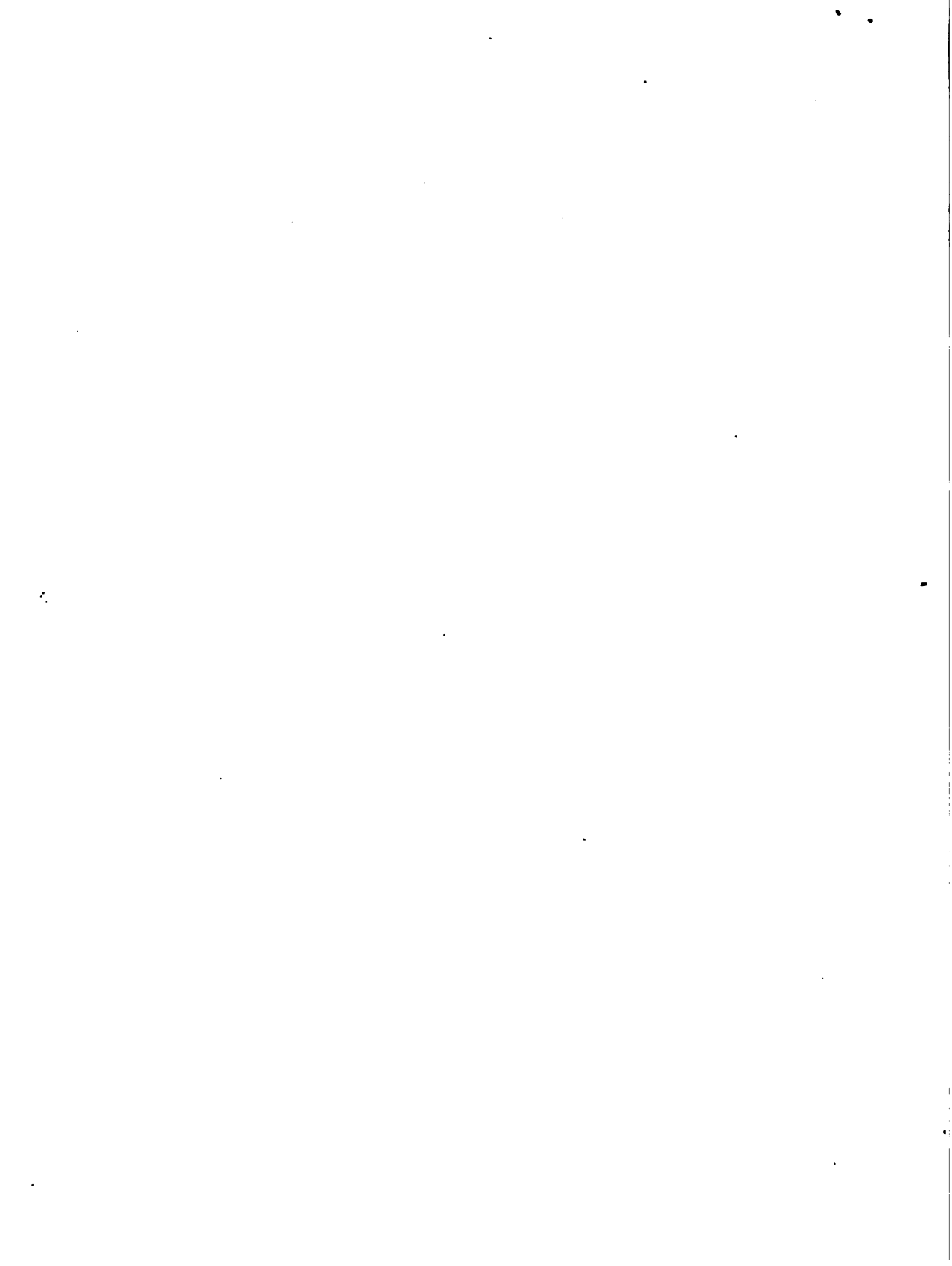
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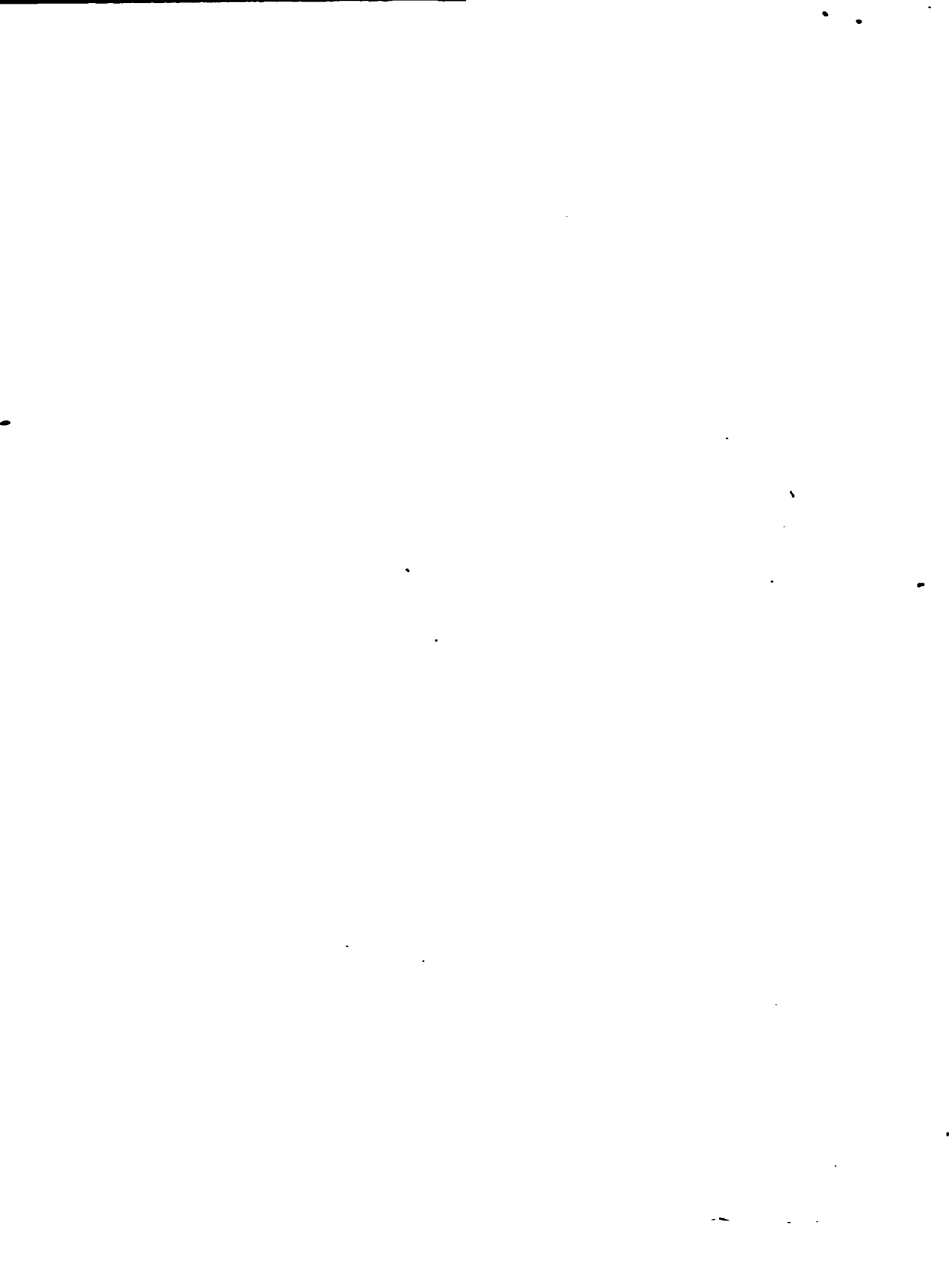


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## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR

THE "History of the House of Percy," by Mr. Gerald Brenan, was originally undertaken as a separate work, and not as one of a series. Messrs. Freemantle & Co., having afterwards determined to issue a series of histories of great houses, and having proposed to me that I should be general editor, the History of the Percies was included in a series, which recently opened with a "History of the House of Douglas." It is necessary, therefore, I should explain that I have not had the opportunity of conferring with the author of the present work, with many of whose opinions and remarks I cannot altogether agree. Mr. Brenan's ideas respecting the feudal law and chivalry are not mine; and I disclaim responsibility for certain references to the supposed plebeian origin of great statesmen who come within the scope of the narrative. I have, nevertheless, formed the opinion that the volumes now offered to the public are well arranged, well written, and of great interest.

There was, perhaps, no more illustrious House in the English nobility than that of Percy. Both in the age of chivalry, and in the so-called "Renaissance" or Reformation period, the house of Northumberland occupied a position of great, if not paramount, importance. Consequently the reader is here brought into closer contact with such historical magnates as King Henry VIII., Cardinal Wolsey, Archbishop Cranmer, Queen Elizabeth and her mother, Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the two Cecils, and King James I., than—unless he is an advanced student—he has ever been before. Many original documents, little known to the general public

are here revealed, and the result is very unfavourable to the reputations of the mighty dead. Her relations as a girl with Northumberland add a pathos to the life of Anne Boleyn, and to her cruel death, which the author has well delineated; and no one of his readers can fail to be impressed with the degradation to which her royal seducer and judicial murderer descended from a splendid pedestal. In respect, too, of the religious schism and resultant changes in the English Church, the Percy history indicates how far worse and inexcusable was the Catholic persecution by Protestants under Elizabeth and James than was that of Protestants by Queen Mary. The author is not personally known to me. I assume that his sympathies are Catholic. But after every effort to resist his influence the reader of these volumes cannot fail to be convinced, and, if he is candid, to conclude, that our popular school histories, written in the Protestant interest and to flatter the national vanity, are far—very far—from veracious.

And yet Protestantism as understood on the Continent seems never to have prevailed in England except in the reign of Charles. The nobles of England, and more particularly the ancient nobles, had an influence which at last overcame unscrupulous demagogues and arbitrary kings. And among these nobles the Percies stand pre-eminent. Catholic, but not Ultramontane; monarchical, but steadfast opponents of tyrants; they contributed more than their share to the development of the National Church and Constitution. Heroes in war, pioneers of learning, martyrs for religion, are all represented by Percies; while from the earliest period of authentic records there has been no grander title than that of King or Earl of Northumbria.

W. A. L.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN its original scope and character, as planned by the author and his publishers, this history of "The House of Percy" differed materially from the two volumes now issued. It was intended to produce a brief, popular account of the great race of Louvain-Percy, somewhat in the nature of a series of sketches dealing with the race's more remarkable scions and their adventures, warlike or romantic. Indeed, it was not until the book had been practically completed, and even partly printed in this form, that other counsels prevailed, and it was decided by the publishers that there was room for a more extended work. This fact must serve to excuse sundry discrepancies which the observant reader will no doubt discover, especially in the first volume. For instance, space being of the utmost value under the earlier scheme, the author was driven to curtail his references as much as possible, and to content himself in many cases with a general mention of the work drawn upon. Of course where really important points appeared to demand confirmation, he endeavoured to give volume and page of all authorities quoted. When his simple narrative was suddenly transformed into an elaborate historical production, the task of printing the first part had proceeded so far that the publishers deemed it expedient to interfere very slightly with the footnotes, references, &c., appended thereto, and a desire for uniformity in the second volume has rendered that portion of the "House of Percy" less precise in these matters than the severe historian might wish. Still all facts of vital importance, and all leading matters in dispute, to which reference is made by the author, will,

it is anticipated, be found to have been annotated sufficiently, if not quite exhaustively.

The present Duke of Northumberland objected to further search among the documentary collections of Alnwick Castle and Syon House as unnecessary. The author had therefore to fall back upon the manuscripts preserved in the Record Office, and upon the published researches of Bishop Thomas Percy and the late Edward Barrington de Fonblanque (both authorised chroniclers of the third dynasty of Percy) for his main facts. In most cases where the "Alnwick" and "Syon MSS." are alluded to, he may be understood as referring to MSS. quoted either by Bishop Percy or De Fonblanque, if not by both. "The Household Book" of the fifth Earl of Northumberland, for instance, was first transcribed and published by the indefatigable Bishop of Dromore. The "Chronicle" of Friar Peiris, to which frequent reference is made, has also been published, as have the ninth, or "Wizard" Earl's curious "Instructions" and "Advice" to his son. To De Fonblanque's "Annals of the House of Percy,"<sup>1</sup> a work prepared practically under the eye of the late Duke of Northumberland, and largely from original sources, the author is under manifold obligations.

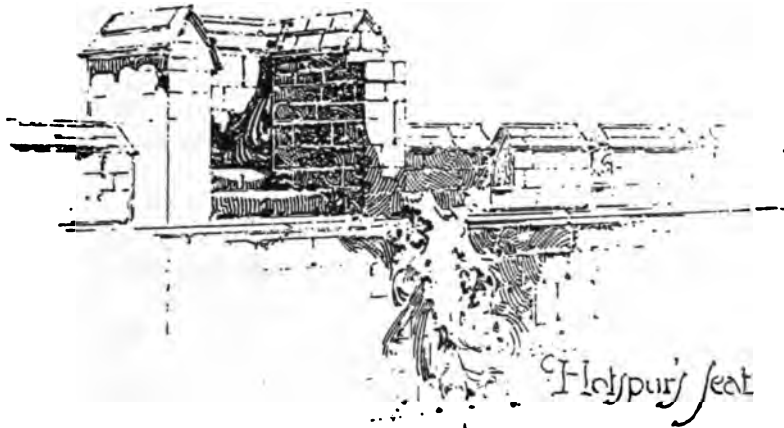
The author may, perhaps, be blamed for dwelling too extensively upon the claim of James Percy, the "Trunkmaker," to the Earldom of Northumberland; but he felt that the mystery which still surrounds that case, as well as the undoubted efforts made by those in authority to suppress both Percy and his evidence, justified him in setting forth the known facts in full. Researches in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire have, so far, failed to throw any further light on the question of James Percy's ancestry. It may be that the undeniable fear of the "Trunkmaker" evinced by Earl Josceline's female representatives and the stubborn manner in which they blocked his efforts, arose, not from any knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> These *Annals* were privately printed and limited to a few copies.

the justice of his claims, but rather from a desire to keep the actual male heir of the house of Percy in ignorance of his rights. For an actual male heir there almost certainly was—if not James Percy of Dublin, then probably Alan Percy of Beverley or one of that branch.

To the author's mind, one of the most interesting features of the Percy family history is the curious change, or series of changes, which came over the character of the race after growing luxury and love of court life had led its chiefs away from their native Borders. From being a line of rugged warriors, the Earls of Northumberland became, firstly, a line of courtiers, and subsequently (after they had experienced the perfidy of princes) one of broad-minded statesmen. Strength of arm gave place to subtlety of mind: but with the growth of their intellectual powers, the Percies began to fail in bodily *stamina*, and to become as physically weak as they were mentally vigorous. The bloody Wars of the Roses could not destroy this fruitful stock while still rooted in its congenial North; but once transplanted to city soil, and trained in the new fashions of Elizabethan and early Stuart times, it withered lamentably, and well nigh perished altogether. What a difference exists between the picture of young Hotspur, that "infant Mars in swaddling clothes," leading the assault upon Berwick while not yet in his teens, and the sickly Earl Josceline, learned in many sciences, yet doomed to die in early manhood, the last male of his line. But even had they desired to do so, the Percies could not have remained Border chieftains after the Reformation. The policy of the Cecils, and of the monarch whom they served, altogether forbade that; and the seventh and eighth Earls lost their lives because, while owning the old, noble blood, and following the ancient faith, they had dreamed of reviving the Percy viceroyalty north of the Humber.

LONDON, *April* 1902.



Hotspur's seat



Village of Deauville, Normandy





# THE HOUSE OF PERCY

## I

### THE FIRST LINE OF PERCY

WHEN William the Conqueror came with his warriors to crush the Saxon power, there dwelt in Lower Normandy, hard by the burgh of St. Lô, a certain noble family, known, from its chief domain, by the surname of De Perci.

How the Percies won foothold in England.

Tradition bestows upon these lords of Perci a remote Scandinavian origin; and monkish historians afterwards traced the house from those old Danish sea-rovers who harried every European shore from Shannon mouth to Tiber. In the words of Dugdale:—"This ancient and right noble family do derive their descent from Mainfred de Percy, which Mainfred came out of Denmark into Normandy, before the adventure of the famous Rollo thither."<sup>1</sup> And a rhyming chronicler of the fifteenth century<sup>2</sup> tells us that a son of this Mainfred the Viking was one of those who fought side by side with Rollo, first Duke of Normandy:—

*"Rollo's associate that was called Jeffrey Percie,  
A right valliant knight, gracious and fortunate,  
Whose father, named Mainfred, was fallen unto fate."*

There exists, moreover, a specious pedigree professing to deduce the line of Perci from this Geoffrey Fitz-Mainfred,

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale, *Baronage of England*, art. "Percy."

<sup>2</sup> *The Metrical Chronicle of the Percie Family*: by William Peeris, clk. He was chaplain to the fifth Earl of Northumberland.

through four generations of Counts of Caux, down to the sturdy William de Perci styled "*Als-germons*," who brought the blood to England.

But no trustworthy evidence can be set forth of Danish Mainfred's existence, or even of the source from which the race of Perci sprang. Sir Francis Palgrave points out that none of the Norman invaders thought of claiming descent from Scandinavian Jarls and Vikings until long after the Conquest. The very name of Duke Rollo's father was apparently unknown ;<sup>1</sup> for this progenitor of many kings is described in the chronicles as "*senex quidam in partibus Daciae*." Normandy, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, had probably a population as heterogeneous as that of ancient Italy, or as that of modern England.<sup>2</sup> The race of Perci may well have been Celts or Franks, rather than Danes ; indeed the tradition that their forebears held the fief of Perci before the coming of Duke Rollo would seem to bear out such a supposition.

Nevertheless, for the benefit of those that choose to believe in tales, long later told, of Norman pedigrees—for those, in fact, that gloss over, or forget the animal carelessness of the Neustrian vikings in regard to ancestry (as so well exemplified in the case of that great chief of the race, William the Conqueror), the often-quoted stem of the ancient Perci may here be set down. It is as follows :—

“MAINFRED ; ‘who came out of Denmark into Normandy, before the advent of Duke Rollo ;’ he begat :—

GEOFFREY ; associate of Rollo ; baptized at Artois, A.D. 912 ; he begat :—

WILLIAM, Sieur de Perci, governor of South Normandy, and Comte de Caux ; slain by Hugh Capet ; he begat :—

GEOFFREY II., Comte de Caux, Sieur de Perci, &c. ; he begat :—

WILLIAM II., Comte de Caux and de Poitiers, Sieur de Percy ; he begat :—

GEOFFREY III., Comte de Caux and de Poitiers, Sieur de Perci, &c. ; reputed father of William de Perci, who settled in the North of England, and of Serlo de Perci, Abbot of Whitby.”

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave, *History of England and Normandy*, vol. i. p. 704.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 480.

From whatsoever people they drew their being, it is at least certain that, at the coming to England of Duke William in A.D. 1066, the Percies were firmly and broadly settled upon Norman soil. William de Perci, Count of Caux and Poitiers, then chief of his name, held the *château* of Perci near Villedieu, in what is now the arrondissement of St. Lô, department of La Manche; together with other great estates in both Lower and Upper Normandy. According to the rhyming chronicler already quoted,<sup>1</sup> and to the genealogists who have accepted his traditions, it was this Count William who first settled in England, and planted the name of Percy north of Humber. The weight of evidence seems wholly opposed to this theory. Had the puissant Count of Caux and Poitiers landed upon these shores, his name and titles would surely have appeared in the list of "*les grands*"—in the roll of the greater nobles who accompanied the Conqueror. But no such dignities may be found therein; and, as the most accurate and painstaking historian of the Percies<sup>2</sup> justly observes, it is far more likely that the William de Percy who came hither from Normandy was some cadet, some scantily portioned scion of the elder stock. There is another place named Perci in Normandy—Perci-en-Auge, situated in Calvados—from which he may have taken his territorial name. We know that a powerful family of Perci remained behind in Normandy, and sustained the dignity of Count down to the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. In 1757 this line was represented by Antoine-Guillaume de Perci, Comte de Monchamps, Baron de Monchauer &c., Chevalier of several orders, who had married on March 3, 1710, Françoise du Pui d'Igni.<sup>3</sup> The Comte de Monchamps was son of Guillaume, Sieur de Perci by Marie de Crennes, Dame de Monchamps, and grandson of Robert, Sieur de Perci by Huguette de Chiffrevast.

<sup>1</sup> Friar Peeris.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque, *Annals of the House of Percy*, vol. i. p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionnaire Généalogique, Heraldique, &c.*, tome iii. p. 21 (Paris: Duchesne 1757), "*Avec Approbation du Roi.*"

This family, however, although it asserts kinship with the English Percies, bears for arms—"sable a chief indented or." Male descendants of the line survive in Lower Canada and in Martinique—the name having been corrupted in the latter place to "Percin."

To revert to William de Percy "Als-germons," in no contemporary record is he described by the title of Count; and it is difficult to understand what became of those large estates in Normandy, which he must have owned had he been the lord of Caux and Poitiers. There is good cause to doubt whether Percy crossed the channel with Duke William at all, or took any part in the battle of Hastings. In some of the various lists which purport to be copies of the lost Roll of Battle Abbey, his name is to be found. In others, names resembling "Percy"—(such as "Percehay" and "Pacy," given by Leland)—occur. But in Holinshed's list, and in several of the versions published by Duchesne,<sup>1</sup> the Sire de Percy is not mentioned among the companions of the Conqueror. And, to quote from a document of his own time, the Register of Whitby Abbey positively asserts that "Hugo d'Avranches and William de Percy came into England in A.D. 1067,"—*i.e.* the year *after* the Conquest.<sup>2</sup>

De Fonblanque<sup>3</sup> advances the theory that Percy already possessed lands in England, being one of the Normans brought in by Edward the Confessor, and afterwards expelled by Harold. The supposed new-comer was nicknamed by his own countrymen "*Als-germons*" (or, as we would say, "*With-the-Whiskers*"), which showed that he had adopted the Saxon fashion of permitting hair to grow upon the cheeks, "a habit wholly at variance with Norman customs." On more than one occasion he showed a strong sympathy with the defeated race, as when he interceded earnestly for Earl Gospatrick after the revolt of 1069, and he married a Saxon lady, called by the chronicles "Emma de Porte," probably because she inherited Semer, near

<sup>1</sup> *Historiæ Normannorum Scriptores Antiqui.*

<sup>2</sup> *Monast. Angl.* (Harleian MSS.).

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of the House of Percy.*

Scarborough, then a notable seaport. "Emma of the Porte . . . . was Ladye of the Semer beside Skarburgh afore the Conquest. . . . William Conqueror gave (her) to Syr William Percye."<sup>1</sup> All of which facts show that Percy was unusually well disposed towards the Saxons and their ways, if indeed he had not been domiciled in England before the Norman invasion. From Domesday Book we learn that he held *in capite* eighty-six lordships in the North Riding of York, exclusive of Whitby (which he obtained in a manner to be told presently); thirty-two lordships in Lincoln; and many broad acres in Essex and Hampshire. The recital of his landed estates in Domesday Book occupies nearly eleven closely printed columns.

A man of obstinate domineering character, not untinged by superstition, yet enlightened and charitable beyond his time,—such was William de Percy, nicknamed William de Percy, called "Als-ger-nons" first baron of that name. "*Als-ger-nons*." He made for himself a home in what was then the Wilderness of Yorkshire, that tract laid waste by the infamous Hugh Lupus, nephew of the Conqueror, and there strove with might and main to repair the desolation wrought by the wolfish Earl of Chester. Hugh Lupus, to quote from Palgrave, had turned the entire region between York and Durham "into a desolate desert, bounded by a wide circuit of ruins."<sup>2</sup> The wretched inhabitants were slaughtered ruthlessly, or driven to hide with the beast in forest or moor. Their homes were levelled with the earth; their crops wantonly destroyed; their flocks and herds driven southward, across the Humber. The torch seared what the sword could not smite; hunger and pestilence gleaned in the wake of that red harvest; until there fell upon the land a solitude so profound that, we are told, "the very birds hushed their voices and were still."

Into the midst of this desolation rode William de Percy, to claim the blackened, blood-soaked lordships granted to him by grace of his liege the king. Little by little he drew

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Whitby*, Harl. MSS., 692, 26.    <sup>2</sup> *Hist. of England and Normandy*.

the starving, wild-eyed English out of their lurking-places, filled their mouths with food, and found work suited to their weakness. A soldier before everything, he first built and fortified the castles of Spofforth and Topcliffe, which long remained the chief strongholds of his line.<sup>1</sup> But this precaution taken, he turned his broad blade into a plough-share; and set his vassals, Norman as well as Saxon, to make the waste places fruitful, to bring back the stolen herds, and to rear new homes upon the ruins of the old. For full twenty-five years he laboured among his people, before the desert began to smile; but, in the end, success was his. In the North Riding of York to-day there is not a field of grain or a field of grass that does not owe some of its sap to the generous obstinacy of William de Percy.

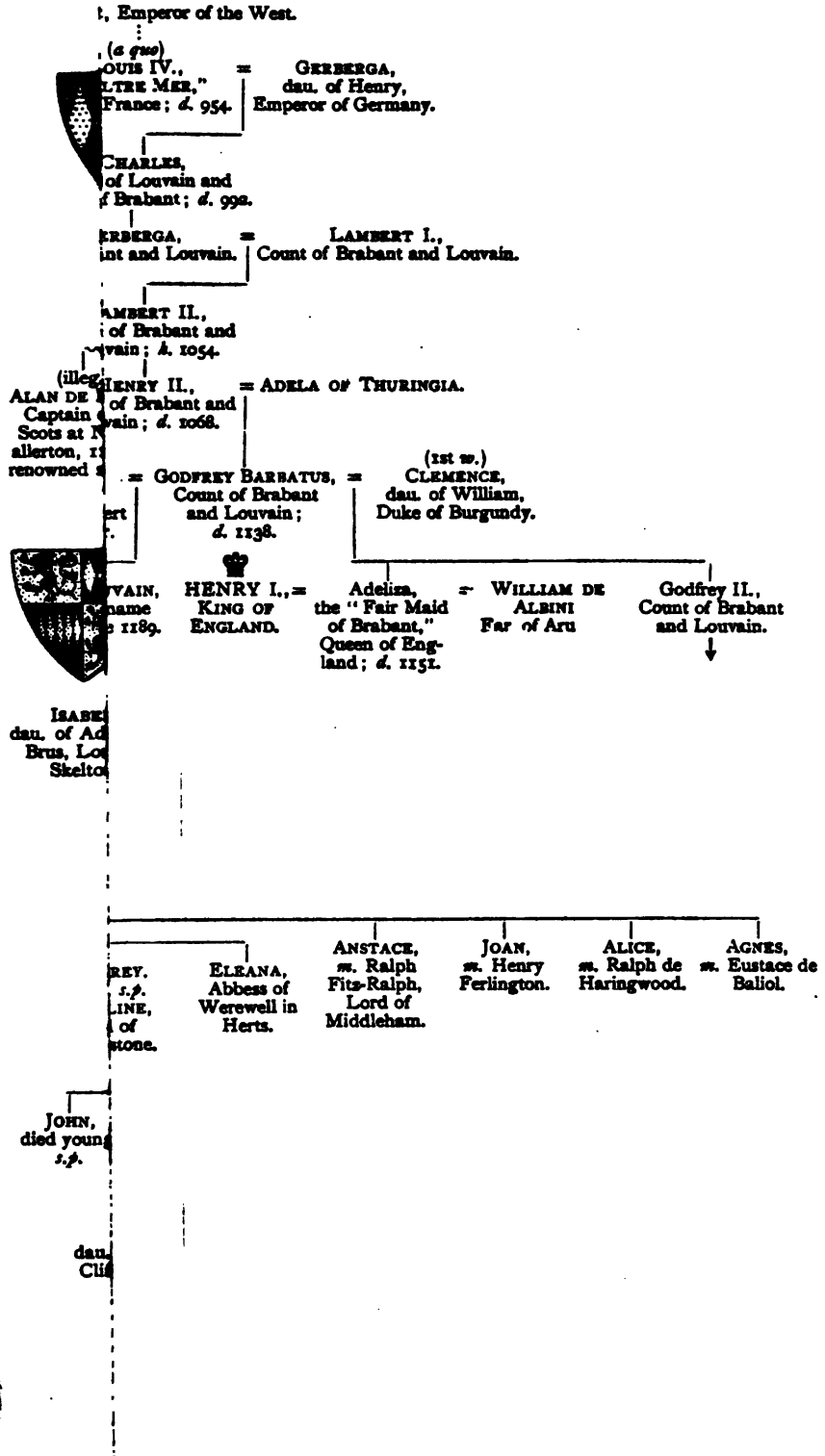
It is this very sturdy obstinacy which gives us the key to the second part of Percy's history. In all broad Eng-  
land there was no more obstinate man than  
William "Als-germons." It was an age when  
both Throne and Church claimed absolute  
sway,—each in its own dominion; yet it may  
fairly be said that neither to priest nor to king  
did this first English Percy yield one inch of way. The  
man's headstrong nature may well be shown by a  
dispute which raged for years over the control of Whitby  
Abbey. William I. had given the site and lands of Saint  
Hilda's ancient convent to Hugh Lupus; but Lupus had  
little use for a Whitby which he himself had laid waste, so  
that in due time the estate found its way into the possession  
of William de Percy.<sup>2</sup> Straightway Percy reared a new  
Abbey upon the ruins of that founded by Saint Hilda; and  
brought over from Normandy his old friend Reinfred to  
rule as abbot. With Reinfred came some two-score of  
friars and lay-brethren, gathered with unfortunate haste  
from the riff-raff of "frocked companions" who had  
followed the Normans to England. Among these was one

The obsti-  
nacy of Wil-  
liam "Als-  
germons," and  
his death as  
a Crusader.

<sup>1</sup> Camden.—Surtees' *Durham*.

<sup>2</sup> *Register of Whitby*.

# OF PERCY







sleek monk, who, working upon Abbot Reinfred's simple nature, shouldered himself into the position of prior. This man was soon at odds with William de Percy, upon the subject of the charter under which the abbey held its lands.<sup>1</sup> Percy refused to make the charter absolute, reserving for himself a certain jurisdiction over the territory of Whitby. Violent quarrels ensued, during which the Baron of Topcliffe was threatened with the wrath of Mother Church. A certain number of the brethren sided with their feudal lord, so that dissensions reigned even within the abbey walls. At length Percy, refusing to brook the prior's menaces longer, boldly

“ . . . broke into the spence,  
And turned the cowls adrift.”

The malcontent party, without exception, was driven forth from Whitby, only old Abbot Reinfred and those favourable to the founder being permitted to remain.<sup>2</sup> The banished friars laid their woes before the king ; and a stern reprimand, accompanied by orders to reinstate all the complainants, came speeding North. But Percy roundly refused to obey the king's commands. “ Only those monks personally agreeable to him,” he declared, should occupy his Abbey of Whitby.<sup>3</sup> He summoned his own brother, Serlo de Percy, from overseas, and had him chosen abbot in lieu of old Reinfred. But this Serlo possessed many of the family characteristics, and it was not long before the brothers, baron and cleric, were at war over the old question of the abbey charter. Serlo de Percy fled to the court of the new king, William Rufus ; and presently returned with that monarch's mandate to the effect that the monks were not to be interfered with by the feudal lord. The baron's sole reply was to march a troop to Whitby ; and, despite royal displeasure and threats of excommunication, to drive Abbot Serlo and those who upheld him away from the monastery.<sup>4</sup> In the end the monks were glad enough to come to terms. The goodly

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>3</sup> *Register of Whitby.*

<sup>4</sup> *Register of Whitby.*

slice of land which Percy had shorn from Whitby, and given to his faithful squire Ralf de Eversley, was permitted to remain in that honest soldier's hands.<sup>1</sup> Well pleased with the bestowal of this—apparently the chief bone of contention—and satisfied with having outlasted the anger of two kings and as many abbots, Percy then permitted the banished brethren, headed by Serlo, to return to Whitby. Peace was finally concluded after a warfare of nearly twenty years, and a new charter granted to the community.<sup>2</sup>

In 1096 William de Percy donned the Red Cross, and joined Robert of Normandy's forces in the first attempt to conquer Palestine. But he was not fated to share in the crowning exploits of the Crusade; for he died, "within sight of Jerusalem," in the autumn of the same year.<sup>3</sup> His body was buried at Antioch; but Ralf de Eversley carried his heart back to England, where it was laid by the reconciled Abbot Serlo, in the chapel of Whitby Abbey.

So lived and so died William de Percy, called "*Als-germons*," first baron of his name in England. By his English wife, Emma de Porte, he left four sons,<sup>4</sup> of whom the eldest, Alan, was his successor. There is little doubt but that William "*Als-germons*" had been summoned in right of tenure to the councils of the Conqueror and of Rufus. His brother Serlo, reinstated as Abbot of Whitby, lived on until A.D. 1102; and, on his deathbed, secured the abbot's chair to his nephew, William "Fitz-Alsgermons."

History tells us little of the second baron by tenure of the House of Percy, save that he was called "*Magnus Alanus*," or "Great Alan"; that he kept intact the wide possessions of his father; and that his wife was Emma de Ghent, daughter of Gilbert de Ghent, Baron of Folkingham, and granddaughter of Count Baldwin of Flanders. This was a powerful and illustrious alliance, for Emma was also

Of the three  
Barons who  
followed Wil-  
liam "Als-  
germons."

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Whitby*.—De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> *Register of Whitby*.

<sup>3</sup> *Memorials of Fountains Abbey*, Surtees Society.

<sup>4</sup> See *Percy Genealogy*, Plate I.

grand-niece of Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I. It is probable that "Great Alan" fought under the latter sovereign in Normandy and France; at any rate the ancient arms of Percy,—"*azure five fusils in fesse, or*"—lost none of their prestige while he bore them upon his shield. He died in A.D. 1120, and was buried beside the heart of his father, in Whitby Abbey.<sup>1</sup> Besides several children by his wife, Emma de Ghent,<sup>2</sup> he left a natural son, Alan de Percy, of whom we shall hear later as a shrewd captain fighting against his native country in behalf of the Scots.

The eldest son, William, became third Baron de Percy; but his one noteworthy deed was the founding of Handel Abbey.<sup>3</sup> He died in A.D. 1133, and was succeeded by his only son, William de Percy, fourth baron. At the age of twenty-five, this William led a goodly band of Yorkshiremen to fight with King Stephen against the Scottish invaders; and at the Battle of the Standard (A.D. 1138) he showed a prowess, which was all the more noteworthy from the fact that his uncle Alan de Percy, natural son of "Great Alan," was among the leaders of the enemy. Of this bastard Percy, we are told that he was one of the most skilful captains of his time. It was considered no shame that he should serve under King David of Scotland, and against his own kith and kin; for the majority of the Anglo-Norman nobility had learned to hate Stephen, and, but for the massacres perpetrated by the Scots in their southward march, it is likely that Northumbria would have sided with the hosts from over Tweed. Alan de Percy strongly urged King David not to abandon the good position which he had taken up; and, had his advice been taken, the fortunes of the day at Northallerton might have been far different. As it was, Malise, Earl of Strathearn, broke in upon Percy's good counselling, and angrily demanded why David hearkened to "that Frenchman."<sup>4</sup> Ajax prevailed over Ulysses. Percy was overruled, and the Scottish host suffered a signal defeat. Some authorities hold that Alan "*le Meschin*"

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Whitby.*

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>3</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate I.

<sup>4</sup> *Peeris' Rhyming Chron.*, Surtees, &c.

(as he was called) perished at this Battle of the Standard; others that he escaped, and founded a family in North Britain. But to his nephew, William, the chief of the house, were increased honours and estates; especially when, on the death of Stephen, there came to the throne Henry Plantagenet, grandson of good Queen Matilda, and thus a blood relative of the Baron de Percy. Among other additions to his territorial power, this fourth baron acquired 10,000 acres in the neighbourhood of Petworth, in Sussex, to be held directly from the Crown.<sup>1</sup> He founded the Abbey of Sawley or Salley in Craven, where many of his descendants were afterwards buried. By his first wife (Adeliza de Tunbrigg, daughter of Richard, third Earl of Clare) he had four sons, none of whom left issue,<sup>2</sup> and two daughters, in whom all his baronies, manors, and other rights and titles became vested. Legend gives to him a fifth son, unrecognised by the genealogists, but who may possibly have been illegitimate. Allusion is made to Ralph de Percy Lord of Smeaton, hero of the penance referred to by Scott in the second canto of *Marmion*. The old Northumbrian story tells how Ralph de Percy, hunting through Whitby Forest, in company with a Herbert and a Bruce, started a fine boar, which sought sanctuary in the adjacent chapel of Saint Hilda. The priest of the chapel made haste to close its doors; but Percy and his companions, enraged at being thus balked of their quarry, broke sanctuary and slew both protecting friar and hunted beast upon the steps of the altar. For this crime they must have suffered death had it not been proved that, as he lay on the threshold of heaven, the poor priest had blessed them, prayed for them, and given them absolution. But, by way of penance, they were compelled each year on the anniversary of their fell deed to repair to the forest where it was committed, and to gather up and carry to Whitby Abbey a bundle of faggots for the brethren's use. Other pains and penalties were said to have been laid upon Percy; and one of these is still commemorated by the local authorities of Whitby. Every

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate I.

year, on a certain day,<sup>1</sup> the representatives of the lord of the manor proceed solemnly to a fixed spot upon the shore, and exclaim three times "Out on ye! Out on ye!" by way of showing the detestation and horror with which they regard the sacrilege committed by Percy. This curious ceremony was last performed in May 1901 in the presence of a large concourse of people.

From this and other evidences, it seems highly probable that Sir Ralph de Percy of Smeaton really existed, and was concerned in the brutal murder of the forest priest. But it is far more likely that, in place of being a son of William, fourth baron of the name, he lived a generation later. A Sir Ralph de Perci, grandson of Baron William, is mentioned in all the pedigrees of the house; and this Ralph, for some reason not stated, is described as having "*returned to France, and settled in Provence, where he married a lady of the house of De Jennes, and founded a family long existent in those parts.*" If he had been one of the rude invaders of the forest sanctuary, Sir Ralph's departure from English soil might easily be explained. It is interesting to note that his last male representative, the Chevalier de Perci, fled to London during the bloody period of the French Revolution, and was hospitably entertained at Sion House by the second Duke of Northumberland.

When William, fourth baron, died A.D. 1168, he was succeeded by his daughters, Maud and Agnes de Percy. The former had married William de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, who fell in the Crusades A.D. 1184, without issue; when his widow paid to the Crown 700 marks for assignment of dower, and the right to marry again "according to her liking."<sup>2</sup> At this time she must have been fifty-two years of age;<sup>3</sup> and it does not appear that any suitors "to her liking" were tempted to come forward. At her various castles she maintained a rude state, verging on royalty. In a grant to the monks of Tadcaster, she speaks of acting "by the advice of the Lord Vavasour

<sup>1</sup> Ascension Thursday.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>3</sup> Born *circa* 1132.

and others of our faithful lieges, and of our whole Court.”<sup>1</sup> She died in 1203, at the age of seventy-one, bequeathing the half of her father’s estate which she had inherited to her youngest nephew, Richard de Percy. Now such a bequest she had absolutely no right to make. Dying childless, her estates should have passed to her sister Agnes, who thus became the sole heir. But the Countess Maud was apparently a person of strong will, and had moreover taken a fancy for the aforesaid nephew, Richard, in whom she perceived something of the old doughty spirit of William “*Als-germons*.” The eldest nephew, Henry,<sup>2</sup> was already dead, and his son a child, so that Maud found less difficulty in persuading her sister Agnes to enter into a “family covenant” by which the great Percy estates should continue divided. This led later to serious complications, and gave Richard de Percy an excuse for usurping a title to which he had no right,—that of Baron de Percy. Having accomplished thus much in favour of her nephew Richard, Maud de Percy died A.D. 1203, and her sister and co-heir, Agnes, became sole inheritor of the line which, for five generations, had lorded it over the North Riding. But the Lady Agnes only survived her sister two years.<sup>3</sup> Last of the original family planted in Yorkshire by William “*Als-germons*,” she passed on the great name and heritage to the sons whom she had borne to her husband, Josceline de Louvain. With her burial in Whitby Abbey began the story of the second and more splendid dynasty of Percy.

<sup>1</sup> *Monast. Angl.*, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> Wrongly styled “Sixth Baron de Percy.” He died in his mother’s lifetime. See *Genealogy*, Table I.

<sup>3</sup> She died A.D. 1205.

## II

### THE SECOND LINE OF PERCY ; ITS BEGINNINGS

WHILE the Lady Agnes de Percy, eventual heiress of the race, was in her sixteenth year, and as yet unwedded, it occurred to the shrewd Queen Adeliza of Brabant, second wife of Henry I., that no fitter match than this could be found for her own half-brother, Josceline de Louvain. Accordingly she hastily summoned young Josceline from Brabant,<sup>1</sup> and established him at Court, where Agnes de Percy was a Maid of Honour.

Now the birth and ancestry of this Josceline de Louvain were as splendid as his estate was slender. The younger son by a second marriage of Godfrey "*Barbatus*," Count of Brabant and Louvain, he possessed little of land or gold ; but he descended in the direct line from Charlemagne, through Louis "*Oultramer*," King of France and Count of Brabant.<sup>2</sup> His mother had been Ida, daughter of Albert, Count of Namur ; and his half-sister Adeliza had, as we have seen, married King Henry I. of England. Thus, if his eldest brother Godfrey II., Count of Brabant and Louvain, inherited all, or nearly all, of the paternal estate, Josceline had, at least, many royal and noble relatives to whom he might fairly look for advancement. Moreover, he appears to have been of handsome presence, and great skill in tourney ; with that equability of temper which is very desirable in the young man who aims to achieve a rich and happy alliance. Not long had

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Whitby.*

<sup>2</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table I.

Josceline sojourned in England before the Dowager Queen Adeliza began to make overtures in his behalf to the father of Agnes de Percy. Old Baron William, albeit somewhat dazzled by the splendours of the house of Louvain, and its indubitable descent from Charlemagne, had no intention that the name of Percy should be forgotten in Northumbria. So, before he would consent to a marriage between the Lady Agnes and Josceline de Louvain, he put forward certain alternative conditions. "*This Jocelyn,*" says the Whitby MSS., ". . . wedded this dame Agnes Percye upon condition that he shold be called Jocelyn Percy, or els that he shold bare the arms of the Lord Percy; and he toke the counsell of his syster, and he chose rather to be called Jocelyn Percy than to forsake his own armes (which be feld ore, a lion rampant azure); for so shold he have no right title to his father's inheritance, and so of right the Lord Percy shold be Duke of Brabant, tho they be not so indede."<sup>1</sup> And in his *Rhyming Chronicle* the good Friar Peeris tells us that:—

*"Therefore in cōclusion, he chose to holde hs owne armys styll,  
And to take the name of Percy at the saide Lady Agnes' wil."*

The date of this marriage is not certain; but it probably occurred about A.D. 1150, when Agnes de Percy was in her seventeenth year. Queen Adeliza conferred upon her brother, by way of a wedding gift, five and a half knight's fees in Yorkshire, and the honour of Petworth in Sussex. He lived for the remainder of his career in great splendour; and is chiefly remembered for the many rich gifts which he made to abbeys and religious houses. His death occurred previous to the accession of Richard I.—A.D. 1189. The Lady Agnes survived her husband until 1205; in which year she was buried on the day of her patron saint, in Whitby Abbey. The inscription on her tomb commemorates this event:—

*"Agnes, Agnetis festo tumulatur, et istis  
Idem sexus, idem nomen et una dies."*

It was doubtless considered a happy omen for the eternal

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Whitby.*



life of Agnes de Percy, that she should have been laid to rest on St. Agnes' Day.

The eldest son of Josceline de Louvain and Agnes de Percy having died in his mother's lifetime,<sup>1</sup> his only child, William, now became by right Baron de Percy. But this William was only fifteen years of age; so that his uncle, Sir Richard de Percy, found no difficulty in usurping not only the administration of the entire estates of the family, but even the baronial title as well. Indeed Richard is generally accepted by genealogists as the sixth (or as some wrongly have it, "seventh") Baron de Percy. It has been told how his aunt, Maud de Percy, discerning in him some of the domineering spirit of William *Als-germons*, had contrived, by an illegal arrangement, to settle upon this youngest of her nephews the half of her father's possessions to which she had succeeded. The character of Richard did not disappoint his aunt's expectations. He proved a veritable reincarnation of the obstinate, acquisitive founder of the family. Not even when his nephew, William, came of age, would he resign either the estates or the title of baron; and this too in the face of the royal command, and the fact that William de Briwere had been appointed the young baron's guardian.<sup>2</sup> Such usurpations were common enough at that period when the strong hand was a law unto itself. A few years later Richard *Cœur-de-Lion's* kingdom was appropriated in his absence by John; and the same John treated his nephew, Arthur of Bretagne, much as Richard de Percy attempted to treat the lad whose rights he had so coolly seized. But, in the case of the Percies, it must be owned that the uncle was by far the more admirable character. Young William, seventh Baron de Percy, was of a sluggard disposition, as may be judged from his tame submission to the usurpation of his relative. Not until he had reached middle-age did he make any effort to regain his ravished lordships, and, even then, his struggles against the Baron Richard were but faint-hearted. On the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table I.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

Richard de Percy, sixth baron by dint of occupation, was a man of iron will and unfailing energy. When (as is asserted by some historians, and by others—including Mr. Andrew Lang,—seriously questioned) Richard I., with a view to raising money for the Crusade, wished to sell the county of Northumberland to the King of Scots for 15,000 marks, Baron Richard led the fierce opposition aroused by this project among the northern nobility.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this, however, he managed to retain the favour and friendship of Cœur-de-Lion, who summoned him to his councils, and gave him many other signs of good-will. One of these latter is so curious, and withal so characteristic of the time, that it will bear repetition. The king, desirous of replenishing Percy's coffers without emptying his own, formally bestowed upon the baron a certain wealthy Jew, to be farmed out for profit. The Jew was given in lieu of lands or money; and Percy, while entitled to take abundant toll upon all the financial transactions of this son of Jacob, was bound on the other hand to protect and defend him against the rapacity of others.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the arrangement was not such a bad one for the Jew as it may seem at first sight. After several years of successful "farming," we find Percy making over his Jew to Queen Alianore for a goodly sum in gold.<sup>3</sup>

If Percy cherished a friendship for "*Cœur-de-Lion*," for King John he had nought but hatred. Against this monarch he had many private grudges, one of which was the cruel starving to death of his kinsfolk, the Lady de Braose and her son, in the dungeons of Windsor Castle. Seventh on the list of barons who, at Runnymede, forced John to sign Magna Charta we find the name of Richard de Percy, and the same name occurs among the twenty-five elected guardians of the Charter. The sturdy patriotism of Percy had refused to sanction King Richard's sale of Northumberland; yet, such was his hate of John, that he willingly surrendered to the Scots king, Alexander, the

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Madox, *Antiquities of the Exchequer*.

<sup>3</sup> Madox.

same territory, as the price of the latter's help against the English sovereign. Into the cause of the French prince, Louis, Percy threw himself vigorously, so that all his lands were declared forfeit. But no sooner was John dead than the northern baron returned to his loyalty, swore allegiance to Henry III., and had his possessions back again—if indeed his loss of them was anything more than nominal. It was not possible, however, to bribe him into forgetfulness of the provisions of *Magna Charta*. On the assembly of Parliament in 1237, Henry III. asked for a subsidy of one-thirteenth upon all movables. The demand having been duly recorded, the barons prepared to go "into a private place for deliberation," as their custom was. Gilbert de Bassett, a close friend of the king, said aloud to his master: "My lord the king, send some of your friends to go along with the barons to their deliberation."<sup>1</sup> Whereupon, we are told, "Richard de Percy, not without reason angered at this speech, arose and answered him: 'What is it, Friend Gilbert, that you say? Do you take us for foreigners, and not the king's friends?' And Gilbert stood reproved for his rude and rash words."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile Richard de Percy's nephew, William, had been gradually induced to assert himself, probably through the influence of his wife's relatives, the family of Baliol. He had recourse, however, to the courts of law rather than to the only code recognised by his uncle—that of the strong hand. As a result, Baron Richard defied every effort to dislodge him until 1234; when the king himself was appealed to, and a compromise was effected by which Richard was left in undisputed possession of the barony and estates until his death, after which William was to inherit both, to the exclusion of the usurper's sons.<sup>3</sup> Thus until the very hour which ended his life, Richard maintained himself in the position of head of the house. In 1244 he died, and was buried in Whitby Abbey.

When William, seventh Baron de Percy, at length came to his own, he was in his fifty-second year; nor did he live

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris, *Hist. Maior*, p. 435.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. Paris.

<sup>3</sup> De Fonblanque.

long to enjoy the undisputed barony. In 1245, less than a year after his uncle's death, he too passed away. By his first wife,<sup>1</sup> Eleanor de Baliol, he left seven sons, of whom the eldest, Henry, became eighth Baron de Percy. In 1249 this Henry had livery of his lands, and was accorded permission to marry as he pleased, on payment of £900—a very large fine even for a baron. He inherited little of his father's *faineant* nature, fighting valiantly in Wales and Scotland, and in 1263 suffering confiscation and attainder because, with the other barons, he had protested in arms against the king's extravagance and the ever-increasing swarm of foreign favourites at Court. But the arrogance of Simon de Montfort seems to have disgusted him, for he eventually returned to the king's side and was taken prisoner while fighting under the royal standard at the battle of Lewes. In the following year he helped to negotiate the treaty between Henry and the royal barons. By his marriage with the Lady Eleanor Plantagenet, niece of the king,<sup>2</sup> he knitted still closer the ties of relationship between the family of Percy and the reigning house. Dying in A.D. 1272, he made way for his son, another Henry; who, inheriting as ninth Baron de Percy by right of tenure, was summoned to Parliament as Lord Percy in 1298–99. This nobleman became the first of the border Percies. An infant at the time of his father's death, Queen Eleanor of Castile was appointed his guardian; and his early years were spent as a page at Court. After a bitter quarrel with the monks of Fountains Abbey over a question of game rights—it is interesting to note that the Percy was ever ready for a conflict with the ecclesiastical power—he was sent at the head of an army against the invading Scots, and succeeded in arresting their march. When barely twenty-two, the king picked him out of many other aspirants to head the English archers in Gascony; and from this time onward young Percy's life was crowded with wars and forays. Wherever blows were sounding, there might be heard the cry of "*Esperance ! Esperance !*" for the

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate I.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



MON PERCY

4A

2

Louvain Percies, while they retained their own arms, had gladly taken the fine motto of the former line,—“*Esperance en Dieu!*” The ninth baron fought in France, in Normandy, and in Wales; but it was along the Scottish borders that his deeds of greatest prowess were wrought. In 1296, his cousin Edward I. knighted him before the gates of Berwick; and, for his share in the victory of Dunbar, he was made Governor of Ayr and Galloway, and a Custodian of the Borders. In 1300 he was at the siege of Caerlaverock; his pennon being described in the curious heraldic poem written upon that occasion:—

*“Jaune o un bleu lyon rampant  
Fu sa baner bien vuable.”*<sup>1</sup>

And in the next year, we find him once more at odds with Mother Church; signing, with 103 other barons, the famous letter of remonstrance addressed to Boniface XII. against papal encroachments.

Those were the days of William Wallace in Scotland; and, while Aymer de Valence was the nominal commander of the English forces against the knight of Ellerslie, Henry Percy unquestionably bore the brunt of the war. John Blair, the faithful chaplain of Wallace, while extolling his hero fervidly, is fair enough to admit that the latter's adversary, Percy, was

*“True, and ay of great avail,  
Sober in peace, and cruel in battail.”*

In 1306, Percy took prisoners Alexander and Thomas Bruce; and withstood a siege from the Scottish army, until relieved by the Lord Umfreville. When Edward I. lay dying at Burgh-on-Sands in 1307, he summoned three of his most trusted barons to his bedside, and administered to each in turn a solemn oath to secure the succession to the Prince of Wales. The names of the chosen three were Henry de Percy, Aymer de Valence, and Robert de Clifford. This trust was faithfully carried out; and Percy's reward was

<sup>1</sup> Siege of Caerlaverock, *Cotton MSS.*

the new king's permission to purchase a fortress upon the borders, with an important lordship which should make of his race a permanent bulwark against Scottish inroads. In this way the House of Percy was transplanted from the soil of Yorkshire to the district beyond Tyne ; for the castle and lordship which the ninth baron coveted most were those of Alnwick.

Alnwick, in Northumberland, had first been held by Gilbert de Tesson, the Conqueror's standard-bearer at Hastings. From the family of De Tesson, it passed to that of De Vesci<sup>1</sup> ; and in 1092 the Scots king, Malcolm Canmore, met his death at its gates. In 1210 it was a most important border stronghold, still belonging to the De Vescies. But in 1297 William de Vesci, dying without lawful heirs, was permitted by the king to enfeoff Anthony Beke, Bishop of Durham, in the castle, to hold it in trust for Vesci's natural son, William, then a minor. Beke, however, treacherously sold lordship and castle to Henry de Percy in 1309. The latter can scarcely be blamed for his part in the transaction ; for, upon learning that Beke had acted illegally, he offered to the heirs of Vesci the sum of 700 marks by way of compensation ; and in this manner secured a final release, and full possession of Alnwick. His first endeavour was to repair the castle ; which, since the death of the elder Vesci, had been allowed to fall into a dilapidated condition. He built the barbican, the gate-house of approach, the western garret, the Abbot's Tower, the Falconer's Tower, the Armourers' Tower, the sally-port, the Constable's Tower, the Ravine Tower, and many other portions of the castle as it stands to-day.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime, the first mutterings of the storm had arisen about Edward II. and his favourite, Gaveston. During the second Parliament of this reign, Percy was elected one of the Twelve Ordainers, whose duty it was to "regulate" the royal household ; but whose scarcely concealed object

How the Percies linked their name with Northumberland.

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> Surtees ; De Fonblanque.



was the overthrow of Gaveston. The favourite being shut up in Scarborough Castle, Pembroke and Percy followed him thither, and induced him to surrender. There is nothing to show that Percy was guilty of bad faith in this transaction. It is known that he merely desired the banishment of Gaveston; and with the latter's execution by order of Warwick he had nought to do. Yet Edward II. strove to visit his vengeance upon the new lord of Alnwick, and ordered his immediate imprisonment and the confiscation of all his lands. In this emergency the strong Baronial League stood stoutly by Percy, however; and he was included, the king's wishes notwithstanding, in the General Pardon which followed. Repairing to Court, he soon made his peace with the vacillating Edward, and even obtained the Governorship of Scarborough and Bamborough Castles, with the Wardenship of "all forests on this side Trent," and free warren of his great estates in Yorkshire.<sup>1</sup> In 1314 he marched with the king to Stirling; and shared in the utter overthrow of the great English army at Bannockburn, on June 23 of that year. In attempting to cover Edward's headlong retreat, Percy fell a captive into the hands of his old enemy Bruce.<sup>2</sup> He was speedily "ransomed for anayle"; and returned to Alnwick to die, as some declare, of a broken heart by reason of England's defeat, in November 1314.<sup>3</sup>

He who now succeeded as second Lord Percy of Alnwick and tenth baron by tenure was but sixteen years of age at his father's death, yet already renowned for his skill in tourney, and the promise which he gave of becoming a stout and fearless captain. This promise was, in the end, fully justified. Of the fourth Henry Percy of the line it is written in the records of Alnwick,<sup>4</sup> that he became "beyond all his forebears, the most famous and powerful." Long before his twenty-first year he had

Henry,  
second Lord  
Percy of  
Alnwick;  
victor of  
Neville's  
Cross.

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquisitiones Post Mortem*.

<sup>3</sup> Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

<sup>4</sup> *Chronicle of Alnwick Abbey*.

carried the Blue Lion many times successfully against the Scots, and had earned praise and popularity by the vigour with which he stamped out baronial brigandage and lawlessness north of Humber. In 1322 he was knighted, and accompanied the king on an expedition to the walls of Edinburgh. Against Edward's new favourites, the Spensers, Percy made a firm stand; and he was of the party of that "she-wolf of France," Queen Isabel, until—after the murder of the king—her behaviour and that of her paramour, Mortimer, set all that was honest in England against them. Then the Lord of Alnwick drew sword for the young king, Edward III.; and his name is among the list of peers who passed sentence of death upon Mortimer. Edward rewarded him with a grant of Warkworth castle and lordship; and he fought by the king's side at the siege of Berwick in July 1333, and at the battle of Halidon Hill. In January 1335, when the Scots came raiding into Redesdale, Percy met them with a picked force and drove them back across the borders. Between 1335 and 1342 he missed none of the battles and skirmishes between Scots and English, save for the brief period while he was in France, serving at the Battle of Sluys.

In 1345 we find the great rival houses of Douglas and Percy pitted against each other. Sir William Douglas had recovered the whole of Teviotdale and the castle of Hermitage from the English; and he now strove to push his conquests beyond the border. Percy, however, held him manfully in check; and, after a series of desultory conflicts, Douglas retired into Scotland, for the time being. When, in July 1346, Edward III. sailed for France, he left Percy to keep the North against marauding Scots. In this wise was the baron deprived of a part in the crowning victory of Créçy; but it has been truly said that the service which he rendered to his country during the king's absence was fully as useful as both Créçy and Poitiers together. For it was Percy who commanded the English in the battle of Neville's Cross—



SEAL OF HENRY, SECOND BARON PERCY

4A

3

that splendid fight which saved the North, crippled the Scottish power, and all but avenged Bannockburn. Taking advantage of Edward's absence, David Bruce in October 1346 invaded England with 50,000 men, marching unopposed to the gates of Durham. The Constable of the North strove with might and main to muster a goodly army; but even the name of Percy could not gather together more than 16,000. Nay, the great majority of his troops were "clergymen, priests, chaplains, fryers and the like . . ., yet good, tall trenchermen, such as were not afraid of a crack'd crown, though they had no hair to hide the wound."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, without the Northern clerics Percy could have offered but little resistance to Bruce and his 50,000. Each of the four divisions of his battle was commanded by a dignitary of the Church, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishops of Durham and Carlisle, wielding sword and spear at the head of their men. With Percy too fought scions of all the brave old Northern stocks—Umfreville, Scrope, Musgrave, Nevill of Raby, Rokeby, Mowbray, and the rest. Border ballads a-many ring with the story of that desperate fray; in which the English, woefully outnumbered, fought with a valour well-nigh fanatical, yet could not have hoped for victory but for the far-sighted generalship of Lord Percy. In the end the great Scottish host wavered and fled, leaving many thousands dead upon the field, or prisoners in the hands of the enemy. The rout was complete; Percy following the flying army of invasion as far as Berwick. King David himself, and the flower of the Scots nobility, were among the captives; and tradition has it that with the gold which he received in ransoms Percy was enabled to rebuild Bamborough Castle, and to add a new tower to Alnwick.

Once more, in 1349, Percy harried Scotland, in company with his kinsman Edward Baliol, little resistance being offered to their progress. This was his last exploit. He died suddenly at Alnwick, on February 17,

<sup>1</sup> Barnes, p. 378.

1352;<sup>1</sup> and was the first Percy buried within the walls of the old De Vesci fortress.

The stature of Henry Percy, who succeeded his father as third Lord of Alnwick and eleventh baron by tenure, must have been brief beyond the ordinary; since the old English chroniclers, who seldom indulged in any personal descriptions of their heroes, again and again refer to his small size. The Alnwick Chronicle speaks of him as "*hic parvus miles*," and again as "*vir parvæ stature*";<sup>2</sup> but is careful to add that this "man of few inches," this "little knight," was "loyal, brave, and kindly-hearted," and withal "of so generous a mind that he coveted not the lands of others, but remained satisfied with those he had inherited."<sup>3</sup> The Lanercost Chronicle<sup>4</sup> calls him a "small but skilful captain." When only fourteen he was contracted to the Lady Margaret Plantagenet, daughter of Henry, Earl of Lancaster, and great-granddaughter of Henry III.,—the second marriage of a Percy with a member of the royal house in a period of little over half a century. From boyhood upward he was his father's constant companion on field and foray, acting successively as page, squire, and lieutenant to that scourge of the Scots. More lucky than his father, however, he followed Edward III. to France, and led a Northumbrian levy at the battle of Créçy.<sup>5</sup> But no sooner had Créçy been won than, sniffing border warfare from afar, the "little knight" hastened back from Picardy; and rode blithely down into the North to draw a sword in that stalwart army of "priests, chaplains, fryers and the like," which his sire had brought together for the defence of Durham. Thus it was his enviable lot to take part in the victory of Neville's Cross, with the hard dints of Créçy still fresh upon his armour. At one critical moment, when the English showed signs of retreat before the Scottish onslaught, he is credited with a brave deed, which

Henry, third  
Lord Percy  
of Alnwick:  
a small war-  
rior with a  
great heart.

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke.*

<sup>4</sup> *Lanercost Chronicle*, p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> *Alnwick Chronicle.*

<sup>5</sup> *Rot. Franc.*, 20 Edw. III.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

helped materially to turn the tide of fight. Resolving to shame these tall borderers into holding their own, he rushed ahead of his men, hacking furiously to right and left with his great sword ; so that at sight of so much courage in so small a soldier, the Northumbrians took heart of grace, and followed shouting upon his heels.<sup>1</sup> The Scots too, embarrassed by the little man's attack, gave way before his blows ; and a great press of Northern knights closing about Harry Percy, the first vantage of the day was won.

After his father's death, Percy was on many occasions Warden of the Scottish Marches ; and it is not improbable that it was during his career that the hunting fray of Chevy Chace (since wrongly confounded with the battle of Otterbourne) took place.<sup>2</sup> It is certain that many such bloody encounters happened between the forces of the English Warden and the musters of Douglas. It will be remembered that in the older Ballad of Chevy Chace, the leader of the English is styled not "Earl Percy" (as in the version of the *Reliques*), but

"The Percie out of Northumberlonde."

However, the period of Chevy Chace, and the identity of the Percy who took part therein, have long been questions upon which antiquaries cannot pronounce decisively. The character of the stout baron who vowed to take his pleasure in the Scottish woods "*in spite of doughté Douglas,*" bears no little resemblance to that of the third Lord of Alnwick. Brave to the point of rashness, yet supremely generous to a fallen foe, the Percy of the ballad is our "*parvus miles*" to the life. The manner of the eleventh baron's death is not stated, but we know that it occurred on June 17, 1368.<sup>3</sup> He was buried beside his father in Alnwick. No mention has hitherto been made of his brothers,<sup>4</sup> one of whom, Thomas Percy, was Bishop of Norwich, while another, Richard, Lord of Semar, was summoned to Parliament as

<sup>1</sup> Alnwick Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> See later under the account of Otterbourne, page 46.

<sup>3</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>4</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate I.

a baron during the reign of Edward III. Of Percy's sisters, one married Robert de Umfreville, and another Ralph, second Lord Nevill of Raby, both of whom fought beside Percy at Neville's Cross.

The elder son of the eleventh baron was yet another Henry Percy. From his youth up the near relationship which he bore to the royal family brought him into close association with the Court; and his cousin, John of Gaunt (who was his senior by barely two years), became the constant companion of Henry and the latter's brother, Sir Thomas Percy, in their early experiences of war and venerie. At the age of fourteen, Henry Percy served at Poitiers; and three years later he was married to his cousin, the daughter of Lord Nevill of Raby. In 1360 he proved his skill as a leader of troops in France, earning knighthood at the hands of the Black Prince. With his brother, Thomas, he took part in the costly expedition to Castile in 1364; and 1366 witnessed his investiture with the Order of the Garter. In 1367 he was made Warden of the Eastern Scottish Marches, to which, a twelvemonth later, was added the care of the Western Marches as well, so that the peace of the entire border was in his keeping.

Meanwhile his brother, Sir Thomas Percy, had also been winning fame as a stout and adventurous knight; and in the pages of Froissart many stories of his prowess may be met with. He succeeded stalwart John Chandos as Seneschal of Poitou, and in that capacity took Moncontour and St. Severe. At the latter battle his cousin, Sir William Percy—there were several of the name then warring at home and abroad,—fell in the escalade, bearing the English standard. When Thomas Percy was at length wounded and taken prisoner by that strange mercenary, the Welsh soldier-monk Owen, outside Soubise, the Black Prince gladly yielded up the fortress of Levroux as the price of his kinsman's freedom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

Henry Percy,  
first Earl of  
Northumber-  
land.



While Thomas shouted "Esperance" so lustily in France, be sure that upon the Scottish Marches Harry was not idle. A brawl at Roxburgh Fair in 1370 between Northumbrian yeomen and Scots brought swords flashing and arrows flying; so that many vassals of Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, met their death, and the English bowmen had much the best of the fairing. But vengeful Earl Patrick had no thought to suffer such an affront in his own bailiwick; so, mustering his moss-troopers, he broke across the western border, and swept Cumberland like a whirlwind, carrying off a great booty of prisoners, horses, and kine. Naturally this foray brought about immediate reprisals on the part of the English. Skirmish followed hot upon skirmish, raid upon raid; until at length Percy raised a large army, and invaded Scottish territory. If the successes of the House of Percy be herein faithfully set down, its failures and defeats must not be forgotten; and this luckless expedition proved a defeat and a failure verging on the laughable. Scots rhymers, as quick to seize upon the satirical side of the English repulse as their descendants were long afterwards to hold the rout of "Johnny Cope" up to deathless ridicule, have left us a metrical account of the invasion and its results. It may be that they have somewhat exaggerated the humorous features of this inglorious campaign, but their verse is well worth perusal. Speaking of Percy, we are informed that

*"With seven thousand of nobill men and wycht,  
He came till Duns; and thair he baid all nycht."*<sup>1</sup>

During the night, however, some Scotch shepherds had occasion to blow upon the rude horns which they used for the purpose of frightening away deer and wild cattle from their flocks. Startled by the hideous uproar, the horses of the Northumbrian army stampeded; and a wild panic followed among the troops themselves. Cries were heard on all sides that the Scots were coming; and, heedless of

<sup>1</sup> *Buik of Chroniclis of Scotland.*

their leader's threats or entreaties, the frightened English fled helter-skelter back to Northumberland—

*"Sone by the flouries in the dew did fleit :  
And leit the Percie pas hame on his feit."*<sup>1</sup>

Soon after this untoward retreat, serious disputes arose between Percy and the first Earl of Douglas, in consequence of hunting expeditions which the Lord of Alnwick had been accustomed to make along the southern fringe of Jedburgh Forest. Several bloody skirmishes resulted, any of which might have supplied the germ of "Chevy Chase." At length Douglas, finding that he could not put an end to Percy's Scottish hunting by force of arms, laid complaint before the English Court; and the king appointed Commissioners to settle the matter. It does not appear that these peacemakers were very successful in their efforts; for, after a while, the feud broke out with more vigour than ever, matters being complicated by the fact that Douglas took to hunting in Northumberland in his turn. But a brief lull there was, while the Commissioners nosed over musty charters, and questioned woodmen; so that in 1373 Lord Percy found time to cross channel, and draw his good sword in France. He took with him a picked company consisting of twelve knights, forty-seven squires, and 160 mounted men.<sup>2</sup> With him too went his son Harry, a boy of eight,—afterwards to hew his way to fame as "Harry Hotspur." The French campaign however proved unsuccessful. The great captain, Du Guesclin, roundly defeated the English on land; while the fleet was almost annihilated by a French armament off Rochelle. As commander of one of the vessels in this engagement, we find Percy's brother, Thomas, whose restless energy had led him to exchange land-fighting for the perils of the sea. Just in time to save England from utter disgrace, a truce was patched up; and Lord Percy—who appears, at this portion of his life, to have been a particularly unlucky commander—returned dejectedly to Alnwick.

<sup>1</sup> *Buik of Chronicles.*

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.



*Henricus earl of Northumberland  
do and per opaco a labunp  
a quop a cap. Caspuno. B.*

SEAL AND AUTOGRAPH OF HENRY, FIRST EARL  
OF NORTHUMBERLAND

4A

4

But the news which met him as he crossed the Humber was of a kind calculated to shake off dejection, and awaken the lust of vengeance. The good advice of the king's Commissioners notwithstanding, hunting quarrels had again kindled the torch of war upon the borders. It was Sir John Gordon who, on this occasion, had a grievance against the Northumbrians; but when blows were to be struck against Percy and Percy's men, there was no holding back the Earls of Douglas and of March. Gordon, Douglas, and March raided the countryside from Berwick to Newcastle, retiring into Scotland with bloody spears and a great prey of cattle. Swift on their heels came Percy, his soul still hot with recent French defeat; and Teviotdale paid dearly for the harrying of Northumberland. Fight succeeded fight, raid followed raid, all through the years 1375-76. A savage fury seemed to possess both Scots and English. In the words of the old rhymer—

*“ They spairit neither man nor wyfe,  
Young or old of mankind that bare lyfe;  
Like wilde wolfis in furiositie  
Baith brint and slewe with greate crueltie.”*<sup>1</sup>

The feud seems to have spent itself, for the time being, at the close of 1376.

When John of Gaunt embraced the cause of Wickliff in 1377, Lord Percy was not slow to join his old friend. In his usual sturdy manner, he took up the cudgels for the Yorkshire priest; and, during Wickliff's march through London to appear before the bishops at St. Paul's, Percy acted as his protector, walking armed in front to shield the supposed heretic from the fury of the crowd. Even in the cathedral he persisted in keeping guard over Wickliff in defiance of the protests of Courtenay, Bishop of London. The mob (set on, it is said, by Lord Fitz-Walter) broke into

**How Percy  
stood for  
John Wick-  
liff.**

<sup>1</sup> *Metrical Chronicles.*

his house,<sup>1</sup> and into the Duke of Lancaster's palace (the Savoy) with the intention of killing them; but wily John of Gaunt had spirited Percy away before these forerunners of the Gordon Rioters arrived. The fanatical 'prentices (such they were in 1377, as in 1780) satisfied themselves by working havoc in the Savoy and Percy house; while the two chief sympathisers with Wickliff escaped by water to Kensington, where they were sheltered by the Princess of Wales.<sup>2</sup>

Immediately after the accession of Richard II., and before the coronation of that ill-starred monarch—*i.e.* on July 16, 1377—Percy was elevated to the dignity of Earl of Northumberland, chiefly through the powerful influence of John of Gaunt and the new queen. Since the Conquest, this proud title had been held by twelve earls—six of Saxon, three of Scots, and three of Norman blood. Henceforward, save for certain brief intervals, it was destined to be identified with the name and race of Percy.

At the same time the newly created earl became Earl Marshal of England despite the vigorous opposition offered by the Lady Margaret, daughter of Thomas of Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, and rightful inheritor of that office. This dame, from whom the present Earl Marshal (the Duke of Norfolk, K.G.) descends, failed in her efforts to supplant Northumberland. It would appear that the earl's hereditary obstinacy prevented him from yielding before he had fulfilled the duties of his newly acquired office at the king's coronation. Having done this, he was satisfied. The ceremony over, he at once resigned the Earl Marshalship, with all its privileges and dignities, in favour of the Lady Margaret. History does not tell us if the fair Plantagenet showed any gratitude for this tardy gallantry.

Perhaps Northumberland might have clung to his Marshal's staff a little longer, had not rumours of border

<sup>1</sup> Percy House then stood on the west side of Aldersgate Street, on the site of the Bull and Mouth Inn, say the old topographers. His son Hotspur owned a house in Wood Street, near Goldsmiths' Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Fonblanque.—*Life of Wickliff, &c.*

warfare and Scottish inroads summoned him to the North. Roxburgh was pillaged and partially dismantled by the Earl of Dunbar ; and several minor raids took place along the Eastern and Western Marches. But Northumberland, shaking off the soft trammels of Court, was hard upon the heels of the retiring Scots. Gathering his lieges and supporters as he hastened towards the border, he made a great hosting into Dunbar's territory—sweeping away cattle and gear, burning castles, and bearing down all that barred his way. The Scots were ready with a counter-movement ; and, as he rode homeward, Northumberland learned that they had surprised and captured Berwick. The earl fell upon that place, and, after a fierce struggle, succeeded in once more planting King Richard's banner on the walls. In this exploit he was ably seconded by one whose name is destined to live for ever in the annals of English chivalry—Harry Percy the younger, better known as "Hotspur."

Harry "Hotspur," eldest son of the first Earl of Northumberland, was born in Alnwick Castle on May 20, 1366.<sup>1</sup> Even in those rough days it was not customary for lads of gentle birth to leave the rule of their tutors and ride forth to war until they had passed the fourteenth year. At the age of eight, while his fellows were yet learning

Of Harry  
Percy, called  
"Hotspur."

*"To daunce and singe and speake of gentlenesse,"*

Hotspur had already tasted the stern delights of war. In 1378 he accompanied his father on the campaign against Du Guesclin, serving as a page,<sup>2</sup> and wearing in his cap the badge of Percy—the Crescent and Manacles. Next year, when only nine, he witnessed (if indeed he did not share in) the bloody fights between Scots and English ; and, at the coronation of Richard II., this child of eleven became Sir Harry Percy, knighted by the king's hand.

<sup>1</sup> His own evidence in the Scrope-Grosvenor trial, 1386.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

How he came by his famous war-name of Hotspur, we have yet to tell.

Scarcely had Berwick been retaken, than the Scots again made themselves masters of this most debatable of fortresses. During the autumn of 1378 a band of border raiders, to the number of forty-four, led by John Hogg and Alexander Ramsay, assailed the town on a dark night, and overcame a garrison said to have been superior in numbers. The greater part of the defenders, together with the acting governor, Sir Robert Boynton, fell before the unexpected onslaught of Hogg and Ramsay, who assumed control of Berwick on behalf of the Scottish king. Northumberland heard the news while riding the Western Marches; and, furious at the death of Boynton, as well as at the slight which had been cast upon his reputation for watchfulness, took the shortest road for the fallen stronghold. A stubborn resistance was offered by the raiders, who entertained hopes of succour from beyond Tweed. The siege lasted nine days in all; the final victorious assault being led in person by young Harry Percy, to whom his father granted this dangerous honour.<sup>1</sup> In spite of sober history's assurances, one must marvel at the story of this urchin of twelve leaping foremost through the breach, and falling, sword in hand, upon the desperate Scots. But doubtless there were stalwart Northumbrians at his side to see that Sir Harry came to no serious harm, and to shout "*Esperance!*" as they hacked out a pathway for the hope of Alnwick. The slaughter was relentless. Quarter was neither asked nor offered. Hogg and Ramsay fell fighting; nor of all the stark moss-troopers did one survive.<sup>2</sup> So were avenged Sir Robert Boynton and his garrison. But in those days vengeance called for vengeance. A body of Scots broke across Tweed, between Coldstream and Carham, and ravaged the country for leagues. Northumberland summoned a great levy, with the intention of carrying the war into the enemy's country; and the northern host was actually on

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham.



its way towards Scotland, when couriers came spurring from the king, commanding a truce until next "March-Day."<sup>1</sup> In vain the Percy and his followers stormed and expostulated. Their sovereign's order could not be overridden; and so the army broke up, and Scropes, Musgraves, Redmaynes, Rokebies, Swinburnes, and the rest, returned to their homes without striking a blow. In a little while it came to light that this interference with the Lord Warden's border rights had been brought about by none other than his old friend John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The wily Lancaster gave out that it was his intention to lead a large southern force to co-operate with Northumberland in an invasion of Scotland, the like of which had not been seen since the brave days of Edward Longshanks. But Northumberland was suspicious of his ancient associate, chiefly because of the efforts made by the duke to have his own son recognised as next heir to the English crown; and—as it proved—his suspicions were not ill-founded. John of Gaunt led an army northward indeed; but he held his men inactive in the neighbourhood of York, while, by way of Hull and other ports, he kept up negotiations with the King of Scots,—Robert II., first of the royal house of Stuart. All doubts of a secret alliance, between Lancaster and King Robert, were removed when the former's troops, instead of marching across the border, began to ravage Northumbria itself; and when John of Gaunt signed a treaty with his pretended enemy, in which terms the most humiliating to England were willingly accepted.<sup>2</sup> Rage and consternation spread from Berwick to Carlisle; and had not Lancaster withdrawn the bulk of his army beyond the Humber, a civil war would almost certainly have followed. As it was, when the duke returned from affixing his seals to the treaty of peace, and demanded admission to the town of Berwick, Sir Matthew Redmayne (who had

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. "March-Day" was the great annual border meeting, at which complaints were heard, and grievances adjusted.

<sup>2</sup> Ridpath; *Border History*.

succeeded Boynton as acting governor of that place) refused to open the gates. Lancaster vainly protested that he came on the king's service; the sturdy Redmayne roundly answered that no armed body should enter Berwick unopposed without the direct orders of the Warden of the Marches, the representative of the king.<sup>1</sup> And with this reply John of Gaunt had to be content for the time being. As he rode southward no Percy came out to meet him. The man who had stood by his side through war and persecution was now his enemy; the friendship of thirty years had been broken.

Northumberland was summoned to the royal banquet held at Berkhamstead on the Assumption Day following.

The quarrel with John of Gaunt. After the feasting, Lancaster suddenly broke forth into a storm of reproaches levelled against Northumbrians in general, and against their leader in particular. In plain words he accused Percy of high treason, in that he had caused the gates of Berwick to be closed against the royal envoy. The attack had probably been planned beforehand, for the king sat idly by while his uncle hurled denunciations at Northumberland. At length Lancaster plucked off his glove and flung it on the floor of the banquet hall. "*In the presence of the kyng, here present, I cast down my gage; rayse it an ye dare;*"—these were his words, as reported by Walsingham. Perhaps John of Gaunt believed that his royal blood gave him the right to challenge with impunity. If so, he knew nought of the Percy spirit. Northumberland sprang from his seat, and picked up the glove. Then he answered his challenger, as Walsingham tells us, "*after the manner of his race, with furious words.*" Instantly the hall was in a tumult. The king bade both disputants hold their peace. Lancaster had cunning enough to obey. Percy continued to storm, and was ordered under arrest. Knights and men-at-arms closed in around the earl, and he was borne struggling

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham.

out of the hall to a secure prison in one of the castle towers. When the passions aroused by this episode had time to cool, the Earls of Warwick and Suffolk interceded for their peer with King Richard, and succeeded in obtaining his release from durance vile. The two disputants were then confronted, and Richard made a praiseworthy attempt to patch up a peace between them. Peace, however, was impossible between John of Gaunt and Henry Percy. Nominally the quarrel ended when they saluted each other and exchanged fair words in the royal presence ; but each man rode away from Berkhamstead yearning for revenge. Lancaster's chance came first. Early in 1383 the conciliatory Richard made Northumberland Admiral of the Northern Coast ; and the earl came to London in order to hold consultation with the Lord Mayor respecting the tax to be levied on commerce for the uses of the Northern navy. The Earl of Devon, then Admiral of the West, also took part in this early meeting of an English admiralty board. Parliament assembling about this time, Northumberland betook himself to Westminster, attended by a large armed retinue ; and there encountered the Duke of Lancaster guarded in like manner. Both lords were in full armour ; and the daily encounters between themselves and their followers greatly terrified the peaceful Londoners.<sup>1</sup> At last the king interfered, sternly rebuking Percy ; and the Admiral of the North was compelled to retire to his domains, leaving the field in possession of his enemy.

Meanwhile Lancaster's peace with the Scots had proved sadly abortive. Howsoever King Richard and King Robert might desire harmony between their subjects, it lay not in their powers to effect a lasting truce upon the border under the conditions which then prevailed. The great lords on either side of the frontier had long maintained armed retinues ; and these men, bound to their chiefs by ties of heredity and feudal service, might not be disbanded and set adrift by the mere signing of a parchment.

<sup>1</sup> Stow's *Annals*.

Northumberland alone could boast of four bannerets, sixty-seven knights, and over a thousand esquires and archers, besides foot-soldiers in large numbers, upon his personal establishment. Among the names of his knights we find those of D'Arcy, De Roos, Le Dispenser, Boynton, Fauconer, Fitz-Hugh, Umfraville, Swinburne, Monbochier, Colville, Constable, Delavall, Washington, Conyers, Fenwick, Redmayne, Luttrell, Mauleverer, and Mitford.<sup>1</sup> On the thither side of Tweed, Douglas and Dunbar kept similar armed forces at their beck and call. Scarcely a warrior of them all but had some old wound to avenge, some feud to fight out with his ancestral foes. The seals of all the English and Scottish baronage could not have held these bandogs in leash. So it soon fell out that John of Gaunt's peace was rudely broken.

The temptation of finding Percy absent in the West proved too much for some of the Scots barons. Swooping down unexpectedly upon Berwick, they took that luckless town, it is said, through the treachery of Sir Matthew Redmayne's deputy. "Ill news travels fast," and Lancaster heard of the disaster as soon as did Northumberland. The duke was quick to seize this opportunity of compassing his revenge. Parliament was still sitting; and, through Lancaster's influence, the Warden of the Marches was impeached for having twice permitted an important fortress to fall into the enemy's hands. The retaliation was all the sweeter to John of Gaunt, for the reason that this same Berwick had once closed its gates against him. Short shrift was allowed to Percy's cause. His friends were absent or outnumbered at Westminster, and sentences of attainder and death were passed against the earl.<sup>2</sup> Already Lancaster saw himself dividing the estates and dignities of Northumberland. He had yet to learn that it was one thing to condemn a Percy to the scaffold, and another to carry out the condemnation. Utterly regardless of the proceedings against him, Northumberland marched against Berwick, and besieged the place so rigorously that "a bird could

<sup>1</sup> *Cottonian Charters*, xiii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque.

**THE NORTH-WEST VIEW OF COCKERMOUTH-CASTLE, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND.**



To the Right Honourable  
**Richard Earl of Ratford,**  
as he appears in his Grace Duke of Devonshire's Regiment  
& Colonel's Regiment of the County of Sussex Captain of the second Troop of Horse  
of the Honourable Regiment of Foot, and of the Island of Menorca.

This Engraving is humbly inscribed by his Lordship's most Obedt<sup>s</sup> Servants, the Right Honourable

*This Castle was built upon the Company, by Thomas de Mercha, who lived 1194,  
the 25th year of Richard the 1st. In the 15th year of King Richard the 1st, 1194,  
the Earl of Warwick, for a great sum of money, sold the Castle to King Richard the 1st,  
the 15th year of his reign, for a great sum of money, which money he had raised on the King of France. The Earl of  
1194, in the 15th year of the Prince's reign, built a house on the King of France. The Earl of  
1194, in the 15th year of his reign, built a house on the King of France. The Earl of  
1194, in the 15th year of his reign, built a house on the King of France. The Earl of  
1194, in the 15th year of his reign, built a house on the King of France. The Earl of*

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not have escaped." Learning, however, of the approach of a large Scots army, and knowing full well that he need look for no aid from the South, he made overtures to the garrison, and eventually bought them off with a thousand marks,<sup>1</sup> raised from his private resources. Parliament then revoked the sentence passed upon the earl; and he was pardoned by the king, in spite of Lancaster's strenuous objections.

In 1386 Northumberland, long time a widower, married again. His first consort had been a Nevill of Raby; his second was the Lady Maud de Lucy, sister and heiress of Anthony, fourth baron of that name, and widow of Gilbert de Umfraville, Earl of Angus.<sup>2</sup> This dame brought with her a great inheritance, including Cockermonth Castle, in Cumberland, with nine manors, estates in Northumberland, Cumberland, and Lincoln, eight thousand acres of meadow and forest land in Annandale.<sup>3</sup> Unkindly antiquaries have hinted that, at the period of her espousals, the Lady Maud was of something more than mature age. However this may be, it is certain that she entertained a deep love for her warrior husband; since, having no children by him, she settled all her estates upon his heirs male by his former wife.<sup>4</sup> The only condition imposed was to the effect that the house of Percy should for ever bear, quartered with their own, the arms of the family of De Lucy—*gules* three *lucres argent*. The wish of the childless countess was honourably carried out by the Percies; and a glance at the complete achievement of the present Duke of Northumberland will show that the arms of De Lucy still figure in their proper place upon the shield.

About this time all England began to ring with the fame of young Harry Percy. His youth, good looks, and absolute fearlessness had caught the popular fancy; and gentle and simple swore that never since the days of the Black Prince and Du Guesclin, had the world seen such a knight. But as yet,

How "Hot-spur" earned his war name.

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> Surtees; De Fonblanque.

<sup>3</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table II.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Fin.*, 8 Rich. II.

he was not known as "Hotspur"; and the bestowal of that famous name came about in this wise. Threats of French invasion were in the air; and Harry Percy, with his third brother, Sir Ralph,<sup>1</sup> were sent by their father to Yarmouth, there to await an attack from overseas. The brothers brought with them from the North a force of three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred lances, all proper fellows and tall, from the banks of Coquet, Till, and Tyne. At first the time passed pleasantly enough at Yarmouth, the Percies and their little force being buoyed up by the hope of a battle with the French. But weeks went by, and no invaders made their appearance. Watching for a foe that came not grew irksome to these gallant borderers—to none of them more so than to Harry Percy. In the North Country bows might be twanging, and swords reddening; while here by the dreary Suffolk coast, nine hundred stout soldiers, the flower of the Eastern Marches, lay pent up and inactive. Percy's impatience grew with every hour. At last he swore by Saint Hilda that if the French came not to seek him, he would go forth to seek the French. Seizing upon every available craft in Yarmouth harbour (for the most part fishing-boats and the like) he hurried his men aboard; and, dropping down the Channel with a fair wind, landed on the French coast, to the utter amazement of the enemy. Thereafter, and for many weeks, he "made such ridings into the quarters about Calles, that they never wish a worse neighbour."<sup>2</sup> Having thus revenged himself and his merry men against unkind fortune, he sailed back to Yarmouth with a booty worthy of the exploit. His quickness of action on this occasion made him more of a hero than ever; and "Hotspur" was his name thenceforward, first among his own soldiery, and afterwards throughout the length and breadth of England. When he came to London the populace acclaimed him louder than it did the king. To such a pitch did public admiration run, that his very personal defects were copied by the young knights of the Court. A certain hesitation of speech from

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Chart II.

<sup>2</sup> Speed.



which he suffered was eagerly imitated<sup>1</sup>; and lads of birth and spirit sought eagerly for the high honour of sporting the Percy badge, and serving him as page or squire.

Such a man could not but have enemies. The older courtiers seeing Hotspur already famous at twenty, were consumed with fear and envy. Slandrous tongues whispered of this dare-devil springald in the king's ear, and prophesied evil to the realm if his unprecedented rise were not checked in time. An attempt was even made to kill him<sup>2</sup> by sending him across the Channel in a leaky boat; but he returned successfully, to the confusion of the plotters. In 1386 he was called on as a witness in the suit brought by Lord Scrope, to restrain the Cheshire family of Grosvenor from using the Scrope arms,—*azure a bend or*. Geoffrey Chaucer was another witness in the same celebrated trial; which should have possessed a special significance to a Percy, since the Grosvenor family claimed descent from that very Hugh "*Lupus*," Earl of Chester, whose ruffianly excesses in Yorkshire old William "*Alsgermons*" had toiled so zealously to repair.<sup>3</sup> Northumberland presided over the trial, which lasted from 1386 to 1389; and the adherents of Sir Robert Grosvenor were not slow to accuse the earl of undue partiality towards Scrope,<sup>4</sup> who, besides being of the North Country, was also a kinsman of the Percies. The weight of evidence, however, seems to have been upon the side of Scrope. Careful archæologists have come to look askance upon the tale that the family of Grosvenor sprang from a certain Norman "*Gros-Veneur*"—a name which, it is pretended, meant "Great Hunter" in the sense of *power*, rather than in that of *corpulence*. The suggestion that they merely represented a respectable yeoman stock, long settled at the hamlet of Gravenor, on the Welsh Marches,<sup>5</sup> carries with it a far greater sense of likelihood. In any case little credit can be attached to the insinuation (repeated in our own times by

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>4</sup> Sir H. Nicholas, *History of the Scrope-Grosvenor Trial*.

<sup>5</sup> *The Herald and Genealogist*, vols. iv. and v., art. "Grosvenor."

Sir J. Bernard Burke and other apologists for the House of Grosvenor<sup>1</sup>), that Northumberland showed partiality as presiding judge, or that the chivalrous Hotspur's evidence might have been influenced by the power and kinship of Scrope.

While his brother and nephews were thus prominently in the public eye, Sir Thomas Percy advanced rapidly in fame and influence. During the feud between John of Gaunt and Northumberland, Thomas had taken no active part. Neither had he been openly identified with the Lollardist movement.

Sir Thomas  
Percy, states-  
man and  
soldier.

Of a politic temper,—the only Percy who had as yet shown any aptitude for the nice affairs of court,—his disposition suited well with that of Lancaster; and he retained that prince's favour long after the rupture with his brother, the earl. But he was no mere courtier, or sleek diplomatist, as his prowess both on land and sea abundantly testifies. In 1377, while convoying a fleet of merchant vessels down the Channel, he fell in with fifty Spanish and Flemish ships of war. As Spain was then at peace with England, Percy requested the Flemish to leave their allies and fight with him on equal terms. This was refused, whereupon the English admiral fell upon the united fleets and utterly routed them. In 1379 he was made Admiral of the North, and attempted to carry an army to the aid of the Duke of Brittany. Prevented from landing his men by an overwhelming fleet of galleys, he "*turned ageyn to Calais, and riden by lande thorow France . . . brent and killed without any resistance.*"<sup>2</sup> A few months later he joined his ships to those of Sir Henry Calverley, and defeated the enemy in several engagements,<sup>3</sup> taking many prizes. During the great gale of 1379, the British fleet was suddenly dispersed by stress of storm; and Percy found himself in a single battered and leaking ship, the rudder of which had been carried away, drifting

<sup>1</sup> Represented by the Duke of Westminster.

<sup>2</sup> Capgrave, *Chronicle*.

<sup>3</sup> Le Neve.

helplessly towards the French coast. Through an entire night the admiral and his men toiled unceasingly to keep afloat. Daybreak came at last, only to reveal a new terror. A Spanish man-of-war, unharmed by the elements, made its appearance, and bore down upon the crippled vessel. But Percy and his sea-dogs, sleepless and weary as they were, had no thoughts of surrender. Awaiting the Spaniard's near approach, Sir Thomas gave the order to grapple and board. At the head of his crew he leaped upon the enemy's deck, and engaged her commander with the sword. The battle which followed lasted for three hours; but all the foreigners' efforts failed to repel the attack. In the end, the Spanish colours were struck; and Percy took the captured craft into port, where he pledged her for the sum of £100. This money was distributed among the survivors of his crew, by way of reward for their bravery.

Not satisfied with this success, the admiral speedily rallied his scattered fleet, and swooped down upon the French armament anchored at St. Malo. Bertrand du Guesclin commanded the enemy; and, in the crushing defeat which he inflicted upon this great captain, Percy wiped out his own reverse of 1378.

John of Gaunt's pretensions to the throne of Castile resulted in a Spanish expedition, Sir Thomas Percy being chosen to command the fleet of two hundred ships. In the campaign which followed, Percy showed that he could battle as well on land as he had done on sea. Outside the gates of Noya he fought and won a hand-to-hand fight with the Spanish champion, Barrois de Barres. Galicia he swept with fire and sword, after the manner of border harryings; and a valorous assault upon Ribadivia with less than eight hundred men, made that strong fortress his. When Lancaster, according to his custom, concluded matters by a profitable if none too honourable peace, he sent Percy as his chief agent to conduct negotiations with the court of Castile.

### III

WHILE these things were being done in Spain, the Earl of Northumberland had set his name to a treaty of his own.

The document still survives, whereby, in the year 1386, the head of the house of Percy entered into a solemn covenant with the Scots Earl of Douglas,<sup>1</sup> for the peace and protection of the border. The language used by the monkish scribes who drew up the treaty is high-sounding in the extreme, and frequently difficult of comprehension. Douglas and Percy set their seals thereto "*at the Water of Eske beside Solowe the xv day of March.*"<sup>2</sup> But, as we have already observed, parchment compacts were of little avail in curbing the feuds of the East and West Marches. Within a month after the meeting at Eske water, some restless Musgrave or Armstrong led a private foray across the frontier; and, in spite of themselves, the Wardens were forced to take part in the quarrels and skirmishes that were the natural outcome of this hasty action. For over a year these "cross-road fights" were of almost weekly occurrence; so that men went armed to mass and merry-making, and coats of mail were donned instead of Lincoln green, when

*"To hunt the deer, with horn and hound,  
Earl Percy took his way."*

Be it well-defended peel, or rush-thatched shepherd's hut, no borderer's home was secure from attack and plunder. The steers that had been safe in byre overnight, might be driven leagues beyond Carter's Fell ere morning.

<sup>1</sup> James, 2nd Earl of Douglas, son of William, 1st Earl by Margaret, Countess of Mar; and grandson of Sir Archibald Douglas, Regent of Scotland, who fell at Halidon Hill.

<sup>2</sup> *Fadera*, vii. 468.

The snooded maiden, who yesterday danced the morris with her village friends, might be to-day the pale and trembling prisoner, whom my lord was to honour with a "broomstick wedding." The goodly knight or sturdy yeoman, riding out so fearlessly to the chase, was fated, all too often, to find a bloody deathbed among the mosses of the Waterbreak,<sup>1</sup> or in the shaws of the Debateable Ground.<sup>2</sup> It was soon realised by the great barons of the Marches that actual war—and war upon a large scale—could alone put an end to the reign of rapine and slaughter which prevailed in their dominions. The Scots were the first to strike the desperate blow by which they hoped to bring peace, however short-lived, to the border. In the month of July 1388 they invaded England with 50,000 men, in two columns. The right and larger wing, under the Earl of Fife, advanced, through Eskdale, upon Carlisle. The left, commanded by Douglas, under whom were the Earls of Dunbar and Moray, and Lord Montgomerie, broke impetuously across Tweed and Tyne, laid waste the country as far as Durham, and closely invested Newcastle.

The Earl of Douglas, we are told, was at this time "*a noble young knight, a parallel in the honor of arms of Hotspur.*"<sup>3</sup> But, whatever may be said of his personal prowess, he showed on this occasion a decided lack of generalship. In pushing so recklessly southward his object may have been to measure arms with young Harry Percy, who defended Newcastle. But he had omitted to take cognisance of the elder Percy's movements. This experienced leader, finding himself at the time unable to stem the tide of invasion, quietly withdrew to Alnwick, and permitted Douglas to pass on his way. But no sooner had the Scottish host sat down before Newcastle, than the Lord Warden emerged

<sup>1</sup> "The Waterbreak" was the name applied to the wild and mountainous country stretching from Wark Common towards the Solway Firth, and in which most of the English or Scottish border streams took their rise. For a considerable distance the Waterbreak formed the natural frontier.

<sup>2</sup> "The Debateable Ground" was the district south of the Scots' Dyke, bounded on the east by the Esk, and on the west by the Sark. It was claimed by both kingdoms.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

from his stronghold, and set about raising an army to cut off the enemy's retreat. Douglas had allowed himself to be drawn into a trap.<sup>1</sup>

The belief that the Scots leader's rapid advance upon Newcastle was largely prompted by chivalrous rivalry of Hotspur, is borne out by the fact that he lost no time in sending a cartel of defiance to the latter. Needless to say, the challenge to single combat was no sooner received than accepted. A course was arranged before the gates of Newcastle, and the two champions advanced unattended to the encounter. Douglas had the advantage alike in strength and age<sup>2</sup> (Hotspur had barely attained his majority); but in other respects the combatants were fairly matched. They met "*mounted on two greete coursers, with sharpe grounde speares at the utterance.*"<sup>3</sup> Fortune favoured not the Percy. Hotspur was struck in the side, and borne bodily out of his saddle. Fearing lest he might fall into the hands of the Scots, "*the Englishmen that stode without the gate made for the rescue, recovered him on foot, and brought him forthwith back into the town.*"<sup>4</sup> It is probable that Percy had been stunned by his fall, else he would have made some effort to continue the fight dismounted.

This untoward event was galling to the Northumbrians in proportion as it filled the hearts of the Scots with fresh vigour. The victorious Douglas at once ordered a general assault upon Newcastle. Huge heaps of faggots were thrown into the ditches; and, across these, the invaders attempted to make their way. Again and again they were beaten back; Harry Percy and his brother Ralph fighting in the forefront of the garrison. So resolute was the defence that Douglas determined to raise the siege, and retire towards the border. Perhaps rumours had reached him of the preparations which Northumberland was making to bar his homeward way; Hotspur was certainly in

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque.

<sup>2</sup> He was born, according to most accounts, in 1358; and was thus eight years Hotspur's senior.

<sup>3</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>4</sup> Froissart.

possession of cheering news from Alnwick. Before retiring Douglas could not resist flinging a farewell taunt at the unhorsed champion. This was perhaps somewhat ungenerous; but it must be remembered that the action of the garrison in sallying forth to rescue their fallen leader had been contrary to the accepted rules of single combat. Riding within earshot of the walls, followed by a squire carrying Percy's captured lance and pennon, the Scots earl demanded a parley. "Syr," he said, "*I shall bear this token of your prowess into Scotland, and shall set it high in my castle of Dalkeith, that it may be seen far off.*" "Syr," quoth Hotspur in reply, "*ye may be sure ye shall not passe the bounds of the countrye tyll ye be mett withal in such wyse that ye shall make none avaunt thereof.*" "Well, syr," answered the earl, "*come you this night to my lodgyngs, and seek for your pennon. I shall set it before my lodgyng, and see if you will come and take it away.*"<sup>1</sup> So ended, for the time being, the dispute between these valiant knights. The left wing of the Scots army struck camp; and the siege of Newcastle was raised.

Several accounts are given regarding the fate of Hotspur's lost pennon; but that quoted by Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore (who cannot in this instance be accused of partiality) may well be accepted. Quoting from a manuscript (still preserved) at Syon House, Bishop Percy states that the pennon was given by Douglas to his squire, Douglas of Cavers; and that it continued in the family of that gentleman, who were hereditary Sheriffs of Teviotdale. During a visit to Roxburghshire in September 1774, the bishop was shown the ancient relic.<sup>2</sup> He does not describe its appearance after a captivity of well-nigh five hundred years. Tradition tells us that Douglas of Cavers, while bearing the pennon from the field of Otterbourne, was pursued by Harry Percy; and that this pursuit was the cause of Hotspur's being cut off from his followers."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Natural son of James, 2nd Earl of Douglas. The family of Cavers is now represented by Archibald Palmer-Douglas, Esq., of Cavers, Hawick, N.B.

<sup>3</sup> Correspondence of Bishop Percy.

Leaving Newcastle, Douglas retired by slow marches, plundering as he went. Ponteland Castle surrendered to the Scots; but at the peel of Otterbourne they met with an unexpected rebuff, the small garrison refusing to open their gates. Otterbourne lies beside the River Rede, in the hilly parish of Elsdon. Half a day's march would have sufficed to carry the Scots safely across the border with their booty; but Douglas, rejecting the advice of Moray and Dunbar, stopped short before Otterbourne peel, and awaited the approach of Percy.<sup>1</sup>

The exact date of the battle of Otterbourne is doubtful, but most modern authorities state that the engagement began during the evening of August 19, 1388—a Wednesday, according to the Julian Calendar. Hotspur had availed himself of the time spent by the enemy before Newcastle to assemble a force of horse and foot; and he looked with confidence for aid from his father, as well as from the Bishop of Durham. It was not in the Percy nature, however, to delay an attack because of temporary disparity in numbers. Without waiting for reinforcements from Alnwick, Hotspur, pursuing, "broke the battle upon the Scottish host." The sun had already set, when he made his onslaught. "*Then,*" says Froissart, "*they cried 'Percy!' the other party cried 'Douglas!' . . . their two banners mett, and their menne; there was a sore fight.*" But the Scots had been clearly surprised, and their hastily-formed line of battle was shattered by the Northumbrians' onset. Darkness closed in, however, before the panic became a rout. The mighty voice of Douglas was heard through the gloaming, calling upon his men to rally, or never to think upon Scotland again. Moray, Dunbar, and the other lieutenants ranged through the press of flight, bidding their followers stand fast, and face the enemy. The Scottish archers halted and wheeled about; the scattered

<sup>1</sup> The spot chosen for the fight was at the junction of two main roads, the one leading north-east towards Alnwick and Berwick, the other along Redesdale, past Hungry Law, to Jedburgh.



pikemen formed again; and when the moon rose Percy found that the grimmest of his work was yet to do. Now it was the turn of Douglas to attack, and he swept down upon the English at the head of his knights. To make matters worse, the Bishop of Durham, coming late, mistook the position of the forces, and attacked the English in the rear; so that Hotspur's defeat seemed imminent, when the arrival of Northumberland — thirsting for battle — at the head of his Newcastle garrison, turned for the time the tide of war. The Scots were driven back, only to attack again and again. Hour after hour, and far into the night, the bloody struggle raged around the peel of Otterbourne. In the words of old Froissart: "*Of all the bataylles and encountrynges that I have made mencion of heretofore in all this my story, great or small, this bataylle that I treet of now was one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowardes or faynte hartes; for there was nother knyghte nor squyer but that did his devoyre, and foughte hande to hande.*"

Twice or thrice Douglas and Hotspur met face to face; and Hardyng expressly states that the latter wiped out the disgrace of his overthrow at Newcastle, by slaying the Scottish chieftain.<sup>1</sup> This too is the traditional version of the earl's death; but Froissart's account is quite different. Douglas, he declares, "*took his axe in both his handes, and entered into the presse . . . but at last he was encountered with three speares all at once . . . so that he was borne perforce to the earth.*" Mortally wounded, however, he continued to cheer his men to the attack; and his last words to his cousin St. Clair were words of cheer.<sup>2</sup> The assertion of Hardyng, however, that Harry Percy was the actual slayer of Douglas, carries weight, when it is remembered that Hardyng entered Hotspur's service as a page, fought in this battle by his side, and remained his intimate friend until the fatal day of Shrewsbury.<sup>3</sup>

Doubt and contradiction surround even the issue of Otterbourne fight. Scot and Northumbrian alike claim the

<sup>1</sup> Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser, *The Douglas Book*.

<sup>3</sup> Froissart's description, on the contrary, was derived wholly from Scots whom he met overseas.

victory to this day. It is certain that both Hotspur and Ralph Percy were taken prisoners; but the English account runs that they fell into the hands of the enemy, owing to their rashness in pursuing too far.<sup>1</sup> Certain also it is that the remnant of the Scots host immediately re-crossed the Cheviots; a fact which scarcely tallies with the claim that Douglas, though dead, was still a conqueror. The losses on either side must have been great indeed, judging by the impression which this terrible moonlight fray—fought out in the watches of the night—produced throughout the two kingdoms. Flodden itself could not efface the memories of Otterbourne along the borderland.

Ralph Percy yielded his sword to Sir John Maxwell, a knight of the Earl of Moray; while the honour of taking Hotspur prisoner "when deserted by most of his followers" is generally ascribed to Sir Hew Montgomerie. This lucky knight benefited notably by the capture; for the heir of Northumberland was ransomed, after a brief sojourn across the border, for the sum of £3000, towards which (so great was the esteem in which Hotspur was held) Parliament willingly voted £1000.<sup>2</sup> It is said that Sir Hew Montgomerie built the castle of Polnoon, in Renfrewshire, with this money.<sup>3</sup>

Thus runs the old ballad of *The Battle of Otterbourne*, as quoted by Bishop Percy from a MS. in the Cotton Library:<sup>4</sup>—

*" Yt felle abowght the Lamasse tyde,<sup>5</sup>  
Whan husbonds wynn ther haye,  
The dowghtye Dowglasse bowynd him to ryde,  
In Yngland to take a praye :*

*The Yerlle of Fyffe, withowghten stryffe,  
He bowynd him over Sulway :  
The grete wolde ever together ryde ;  
That race they may rue for aye.*

<sup>1</sup> Hardyng.

<sup>2</sup> Issue Rolls, 12 Richard II.

<sup>3</sup> De Fonblanque. The ballad of Otterbourne, however, has it that Montgomerie, himself a prisoner, was exchanged for Hotspur.

<sup>4</sup> *Cotton MSS., Cleopatra*, c. iv.

<sup>5</sup> Lammas Day, August 1.

*Over Ottercap<sup>1</sup> hyll they came in,  
And so dowyn by Rodelyffe cragge,  
Vpon Grene Leyton they lyghted down  
Styrande many a stagge ;*

*And boldely brent Northomberlonde,  
And haryed many a towyn :  
They dyd our Ynglyssh men grete wrange,  
To battell that were not bowyn.*

*Than spake a berne upon the bent,  
Of comforte that was not colde,  
And sayd, ' We have brent Northomberlond,  
We have all welth in holde.*

*' Now we have haryed all Bamboroweshyre,  
All the welth in the worlde have wee ;  
I rede we ryde to Newe Castell,  
So stylle and stalwurthlye.'*

*Uppon the morowe, when it was daye,  
The standards schone fulle bryght ;  
To the Newe Castelle they toke the waye,  
And thether they cam fulle ryght.*

*Sir Henry Percy laye at the Newe Castelle,  
I telle yow withowtten drede ;  
He had byn a march-man all hys dayes,  
And kepte Barwyke upon Twede.*

*To the Newe Castell when they cam,  
The Skottes they cryde on hyght,  
' Syr Harye Percy, and thow byste within,  
Com to the fylde and fyght :*

*For we have brente Northomberlonde,  
Thy eritage good and ryght ;  
And syne my logeyng I have take,<sup>2</sup>  
With my brande dubbed many a Knyght.'*

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<sup>1</sup> Ottercap hill is in Kirk-Whelpington parish in Tynedale Ward ; Rodecliffe or Rodeley Crag is in Hartburn parish, Morpeth Ward ; and Green Leyton is a village also in Hartburn.—(Percy, *Reliques*.)

<sup>2</sup> Douglas here takes up the tale.

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

*Sir Harry Percy cam to the walles,  
The Skottyssh oste for to se ;  
' And thow hast brent Northomberlond,  
Full sore it rewyth me.*

*' Yf thou hast haryed all Bambaroweshyre,  
Thow hast done me grete envye ;  
For the trespasse thow hast me done,  
The tone of us schall dye.'*

*' Where schall I byde the ?' sayd the Dowglas,  
' Or where wylte thow come to me ?'  
' At Otterborne in the hygh way,  
Ther maist thow well logeed be.*

*' The roo full rekeles there sche rinnes,  
To make the game and glee :  
The fawkon and the fesaunt both,  
Among the holtes on hee.*

*' Ther maist thow have thy welth at wyll,  
Well looged ther maist be.  
Yt schall not be long, or I com the tyll,'  
Sayd Syr Harry Percy.*

*' Ther schall I byde the,' sayd the Dowglas,  
' By the fayth of my bodye.'  
' Thether schall I com,' sayd Syr Harry Percy ;  
' My trowth I plyght to the.'*

*A pype of wyne he gave them over the walles,  
For soth, as I yow saye :  
Ther he mayd the Douglas drynke,  
And all hys oste that daye.*

*The Dowglas turnyd him homewarde agayne,  
For soth withoughten naye,  
He tooke his logeyng at Otterborne  
Vppon a Wedyns-day :*

*And ther he pyght hys standerd downn,  
Hys gettynge more and lesse,  
And syne he warned hys men to goo  
To chose ther geldyngs gresse.*

*A Skottysse knyght hoved upon the Bent,  
A wache I dare well saye ;  
So was he ware on the noble Percy  
In the dawninge of the daye.*

*He prycked to his pavyleon dore,  
As faste as he myght ronne,  
'Awaken, Dowglas,' cryed the knyght,  
'For hys love that syttes yn throne.'*

*'Awaken, Dowglas,' cryed the knyght,  
'For thow maiste waken wyth wynne :  
Yender have I spyed the proude Percy,  
And seven standardes wyth hym.'*

*'Nay, by my trowth,' the Douglas sayed,  
'It is but a fayned taylle ;  
He durst not loke on my bred banner,  
For all Ynglande so haylle.*

*'Was I not yesterdaye at the Neue Castell  
That stonds so fayre on Tyne ?  
For all the men the Percy hade,  
He cowde not garre me ones to dyne.'*

*He stepped owt at hys pavelyon dore  
To loke and it were lesse :  
'Araye yow, lordyngs, one and all,  
For here begynnes no peysse.*

*'The Yerle of Mentaye,<sup>1</sup> thow arte my eme  
The forwarde I gyve to the :  
The Yerlle of Huntlay, cawte and kene,  
He schall wyth the be.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Menteith, who was "eme" or kinsman of the Scots leader.

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

*'The lorde of Bowghan,<sup>1</sup> in armure bryght  
On the other hand he schall be ;  
Lorde Jhonstone and lorde Maxwell  
They schall be with me.*

*'Swynton fyre fylde upon your pryde,  
To batell make yow bowen :  
Syr Davy Scotte,<sup>2</sup> Syr Walter Stewarde,  
Syr Jhon of Agurstone.'*

## A FYTTE

*The Perssy came byfore hys oste,  
Wych was ever a gentyll knyght,  
Vpon the Dowglas lowde can he crye,  
'I wyll holde that I have hyght :*

*'For thou haste brente Northumberlonde,  
And done me grete enuye ;  
For thys trespasse thou hast me done,  
The tone of us schall dye.'*

*The Dowglas answerde hym agayne  
With grete wurds up on hee,  
And sayd, 'I have twenty agaynst thy one,  
Byholde and thou maiste see.'*

*Wyth that the Percye was grevyd sore,  
For soothe as I yow saye :  
He lyghted down upon his fote,  
And schoote his horsse clene away.<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Buchan.

<sup>2</sup> Ancestor of the Dukes of Buccleugh, and of Sir Walter Scott. "Agurstone" was the lord of Haggerston. It were idle to speak at length upon the names in this brief catalogue. They stood for the flower of the Eastern Scottish Border.

<sup>3</sup> A like act of defiant daring is ascribed to the "King-Maker" Earl of Warwick, who slew his war-horse and fought afoot in order to hearten his men. In this case Percy merely "schoote" or drove away his steed.

*Every man sawe that he dyd soo,  
That ryall was ever in rowght ;  
Every man schoote hys horse him froo,  
And lyght hym rowynde abowght.*

*Thus Syr Hary Percy toke the fylde,  
For soth as I yow saye :  
Jesu Cryste in hevyn on hyght  
Dyd helpe him well that daye.*

*But nyne thousand ther was no moo ;  
The cronykle will not layne ;  
Forty thousande Skottes and fowre  
That day fought them agayne.*

*But when the batell beganne to joyne,  
In hast ther came a knyght,  
Then letters fayre furth hath he tayne,  
And thus he sayd full ryght :*

*' My lorde, your father he gretes yow well,  
Wyth many a noble knyght ;  
And he desyres yow to byde  
That he may see thys fyght.*

*' The Baron of Grastoke ys com owt of the west,  
Wyth hym a noble companye ;  
All they loge at your fathers thys nyght,  
And the Battel fayne wold they see.'*

*' For Jesu's love,' sayd Syr Harye Percy,  
' That dyed for yow and me,  
Wende to my lorde my Father agayne,  
And saye thow saw me not with yee :*

*' My trowth is plyght to yonne Skottysk knyght,  
It needes me not to layne,  
That I schulde byde hym upon thys bent,  
And I have hys trowth agayne :*

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

' *And if that I wende off thys grownde,  
For soth unfoughten awaye,  
He wolde call me but a howarde knyght,  
In hys londe another daye.*

' *Yet had I lever to be rynde and rente,  
By Mary that mykel maye ;  
Then ever my manhod schulde be reprovyd  
Wyth a Skotte another daye.*

' *Wherefore schote, archars, for my sake,  
And let scharpe arowes flee :  
Mynstrells, playe up for your waryson,  
And well quyt it schall be.*

' *Every man thynke on hys trewe love,  
And marke hym to the Trenité :  
For to God I make myne avowe  
Thys day wyll I not fle.'*

*The blodye Harte in the Dowglas armes,  
Hys standerde stode on hye ;  
That every man myght full well knowe :  
By syde stode Starres three :<sup>1</sup>*

*The whyte Lyon on the Ynglish parte,  
Forsoth as I yow sayne ;  
The Lucetts and the Cressawnts both :  
The Skotts faught them agayne.*

*Vppon Sent Andrewe lowde cane they crye,  
And thrysse they schowte on hyght,  
And syne marked them one our Ynglysshe men,  
As I have tolde yow ryght.*

*Sent George the bryght our ladyes knyght,  
To name they were full fayne,  
Owr Ynglysshe men they cryde on hyght,  
And thrysse the schowtte agayne.*

---

<sup>1</sup> The ancient arms of Douglas were : "Argent, a man's heart gules ; on a chief azure three stars of the first."



*Wyth that scharpe arowes bygan to flee,  
I tell yow in sertayne ;  
Men of armes byganne to joyne ;  
Many a dowghty man was ther slayne.*

*The Percy and the Dowglas mette,  
That ether of other was fayne ;  
They schapped together, whyll that the swette,  
With swordes of fyne Collayne ;<sup>1</sup>*

*Tyll the bloode from ther bassonetts ranne,  
As the roke doth in the rayne.  
' Yelde the to me,' sayd the Dowglas,  
' Or ells thow schalt be slayne :*

*' For I see by thy bryght bassonet,  
Thow arte sum man of myght ;  
And so I do by thy burnysshed brande,  
Thow art an yerle or ells a knyght.'*

*' By my good faythe,' sayd the noble Percy,  
' Now haste thou rede full ryght,  
Yet wyll I never yelde me to the,  
Whyll I maye stonde and fyght.'*

*They swapped together, whyll that they swette,  
Wyth swordes scharpe and long ;  
Ych on other so faste they beette,  
Tyll ther helmes cam in peyses dowyn.*

*The Percy was a man of strength,  
I tell yow in thys stounde,  
He smote the Dowglas at the swordes length,  
That he fell to the growynde.*

*The sworde was scharpe and sore can byte,  
I tell yow in sertayne ;  
To the harte, he cowde him smyte,  
Thus was the Dowglas slayne.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Steel of Cologne.

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

*The standerds stode styll on eke syde,  
With many a grevous grone ;  
Ther they fought the day and all the nyght,  
And many a dowghty man was slone.*

*Ther was no freke, that ther wolde flye,  
But styffly in stowre can stond,  
Ych one heuyng on other whyll they myght drye  
Wyth many a baleful bronde.*

*Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
For soth and sertenly,  
Syr James a Dowglas ther was slayne,  
That daye that he coude dye.*

*The Yerlle Mentaye of he was slayne,  
Grysely groned upon the growynd ;  
Syr Davy Scotte, Syr Walter Steward,<sup>1</sup>  
Syr John of Augurstone.*

*Syr Charles Morrey in that place,  
That never a fote wold flye ;  
Sir Hughe Maxwell, a lorde he was,  
With the Douglas didd he dye.*

*Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
For soth as I yow saye,  
Of foure and forty thowsande Scotts  
Went but eyghtene awaye.*

*Ther was slayne upon the Ynglysshe syde  
For soth and sertenlye,  
A gentell knyght, Sir John Fitz-Hughe,  
It was the mor petye.*

*Syr James Harebotell ther was slayne,  
For hym ther hartes were sore ;  
The gentyll Lovelle ther was slayne,  
That the Percy's standerd bore.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Stewart of Dalswinton.

*Ther was slayne uppon the Ynglyssh perts,  
For soth as I yow saye ;  
Of nyne thousand Ynglyssh men,  
Fyve hondert cam awaye :*

*The other were slayne in the fylde,  
Cryste kepe their sowles from wo,  
Scyng ther was so fewe fryndes  
Agaynst so many a foo.*

*Then one the morne they mayde them beeres  
Of byrch, and haysell graye ;  
Many a wydowe with wepyng teyres,  
Ther makes they fette awaye.*

*Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne  
Bytwene the nyghte and the day :  
Ther the Dowglas lost his lyfe,  
And the Percy was lede awaye.*

*Then was ther a Scottyshe prisoner layne,  
Syr Hughe Montgomery was hys name,  
For soth as I yow saye,  
He borrowed the Percy home agayne.*

*Now let us all for the Percy praye,  
To Jesu most of myght,  
To bryng hys soule to the blysse of heven,  
For he was a gentyll knyght."*

Such is the English metrical version of the fight of Otterbourne. Many of the events narrated, and not a few of the gallant names mentioned above, are used again by the unknown maker of that "fine old heroic song of *Chevy Chase*." But as has already been pointed out, the real or imaginary encounter of Chevy Chase cannot be identified with any particular epoch ; and the ballad so beloved of Sidney and Addison, so familiar to every admirer of British battle-lyrics, is probably but the strung-together memories of many such border frays.

The death of Douglas, and the cruel slaughter of Otterbourne, awed the border into a peace more lasting than it had known for many a long year. This cessation of hostilities gave Northumberland leisure to turn his eyes towards the affairs of the Court, which had for some time worn a grave and threatening aspect. Little by little Richard II. had allowed himself to fall into the ways of his unhappy ancestor, Edward of Carnarvon. Favourites, chief among whom was Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, created "Duke of Ireland," dominated the feeble mind of the king, and tempted him (as Gaveston the Despensers had tempted Edward II.) into luxury and wastefulness. Opposed to the party of the Court was a strong, and growing, body of malcontents; whose opinions were voiced in Parliament by the Duke of Gloucester (the king's uncle) and by the Earl of Arundel. For a time Northumberland held aloof from both sides, and even sought to act as peacemaker between Richard and Gloucester. But the royal folly was too flagrant to escape frank censure from one who never numbered sycophancy among his faults. During a council held at Clarendon, Northumberland addressed his sovereign in the following words, which Richard would have done well to ponder:

*"Sir, there is no doubt but these lordes who now be in the field<sup>1</sup> alwaies have been your sure and faythful subjects, and yet are not intending to attempt anything agaynst your state, wealth and honor; nevertheless they feel themselves sore molested and disquieted by the warlike devices of certain persons about your maiestye, that seeke to oppose them; and verily, without fayle, all your realme is sore grieved therewith, both great and small, as well lordes as commons, and I see not the contrarye, but they mind to adventure their lives with the lordes that are in armes, especiallie in this case which they reckon to be yours, and your realme's. And, sir, now ye be in the cheefe place of your realme, and in the place of your coronation, order yourself therefore wiselye, and like a king! Send*

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Arundel were in a state of armed protest against the Court, and had come to Clarendon escorted by a great multitude.

*to them to come before your presence in some public place, where they can declare unto you the extent and purpose of their coming accompanied by so grette a nombre of people unto these partes, and I beleve it verilye they will show such reasons that you will hold them excused."*<sup>1</sup>

This honest and manly speech was warmly supported in council by the Archbishop of Canterbury and others; so that the king's better feelings were touched, and he consented to receive Gloucester, Arundel, and others of the protesting party. He met them at Westminster, where a reconciliation was effected. De Vere and the pack of favourites fled; and a new council, in which Northumberland was prominent, took advantage of the royal repentance to introduce numerous reforms chiefly dealing with the raising of revenues. Richard's fickle favour shone also upon Hotspur; who, having recovered from the wounds of Otterbourne, was made Governor of Carlisle, Warden of the West Marches, and a Knight of the Garter. The latter proud distinction was already enjoyed by both Northumberland and Sir Thomas Percy;<sup>2</sup> perhaps the only instance in history of three closely related members of a family not royal holding the Garter at one and the same time.

From Calais, whither he had been sent as Governor, Northumberland was, in 1391, hurriedly recalled to aid in repelling fresh invasions from beyond the Scottish border.<sup>3</sup> As Warden of the Eastern Marches he received over 7000 marks a year by way of expenses; but, whether the Scots were too elusive, or the earl too careless, it is certain that, in 1393, the former succeeded in laying waste Northumbria, so that the latter incurred the severe reproaches of King and Parliament.<sup>4</sup> In October 1396 he was one of the four great lords who assisted at the meeting between Richard and the French king at Guisnes; and during the same year Sir Thomas Percy, with Hotspur among his knights, went in full state to conduct the child-queen, Isabel of France, to English territory.

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>3</sup> Anstis, *Hist. of the Garter*.

<sup>4</sup> *Annales Ricardi II.*

Thomas Percy had on several previous occasions acted as the envoy of his sovereign to foreign courts. Indeed the renown which this brother of the earl had long since won as England's foremost sea-captain, was now eclipsed by his success as man of affairs. He "*had been long soveraygn squyer of the kynge's house, for all the state of the kynge passed through his handes*";<sup>1</sup> and in the capacity of Lord Steward he introduced Froissart to Richard in 1395. This chronicler gives the following interesting account of Percy's doings, when sent during the same year on a mission to France:—*These knyghtes of Englande, Syr Thomas Percy and other, alighted in Paris in the streete called the Crosse at the sign of the Castle . . . and the nexte day about nyne of the clocke they lefte on their horses ryght honorably, and rode to the Castle of the Louvre, to the kynge, where he with his brother and his uncles were redye to receyve the Englyssche Embassadours. . . Then they approached and were commended to declare their credence. . . The kynge answered and sayde; 'Syr Thomas Percy, you and all your company are ryght heartilye welcōme. . . Ye shall tarry here in Paris a Season, and we will speake with our counsayle, and make you such convenable answer ere you depart that it shall suffice you.' With this answer the Englysshmen were well content. Then it was neer dyner tyme, and the Englysshmen were desyred to tarry and dyne; and so the Lord of Coucy brought them into a chambre, and the Lord de la Riviere; there they dyned at their leyser, and after dyner they returned into the kynge's chambre, and there they had wyne and spyes, and then took their leave of the kynge, and went to their lodgyng. . . The daye before that they shulde depart out of Paris, the kynge . . . made a dyner to the Englysshe knyghtes, and caused Syr Thomas Percy to sit at his borde, and called hym cousyn by reason of the Northumberland blode."*<sup>2</sup>

The adherence of Thomas Percy to Richard II. probably served to keep that unwise monarch upon the throne

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Besides the descent of the house of Louvain-Percy from Charlemagne, it must be remembered that Sir Thomas (through his mother, Mary Plantagenet) was a direct descendant of Louis VIII. of France.

for a period considerably longer than would have been possible without such powerful support. The king, who had grown weary of well-doing, and permitted his banished favourites to creep back to their old places at Court, was once more at war with the party of reform. Most of the great barons, and the commons generally, regarded the return of Richard's evil counsellors with anger and disgust. Only the aid of the ecclesiastical power was needed to precipitate a revolution. But, through years of cautious championship of the Church, Sir Thomas Percy had made himself the political adviser and spokesman of the clergy; and now his influence in this direction saved the day for the king. Civil war was stayed; and at the Parliament held in Nottingham, Richard asserted himself to such purpose that all the statutes limiting royal authority which had been enacted since 1388, were formally revoked. The Earl of Arundel was seized, and beheaded on Tower Hill; while Gloucester, the other great leader of popular opinion, was secretly done to death at Calais. Sir Thomas Percy took no part in these excesses; and Northumberland risked his own head by speaking against them, and interceding warmly for his kinsman, the doomed Arundel.<sup>1</sup> But the younger brother's influence among the bishops had shown the Court Party that he was a man to conciliate; and, on September 29, 1398, Sir Thomas Percy was raised to the dignity of *Earl of Worcester*. Richard II. and his short-sighted advisers were, however, almost at the end of their tether. The time drew near when even the faithful Thomas Percy could no longer uphold such a master.

All his life long, "old John of Gaunt" had been a menace to the peace and prosperity of England; but the evils which he had wrought when living were as nothing to those which he bequeathed to the nation upon his deathbed; for the passing away of the unscrupulous duke on February 4, 1399, was but the beginning of that terrible four-score years of

The House of  
Lancaster,  
and the Per-  
cies.

<sup>1</sup> Grafton's *Chronicle*.

rapine and bloodshed which we call the "Wars of the Roses."

Lancaster's intrigues to place his own son, Henry of Bolingbroke, in the position of next heir to the throne, had (as will be remembered) largely caused the fierce quarrel between Northumberland and his old ally. The same ambitious schemes had not unnaturally drawn upon Bolingbroke the dislike and suspicion of the king, and eventually resulted in the former's banishment. News of John of Gaunt's death reached Richard as he was making preparations for an invasion of Ireland, to avenge his heir-apparent, the Earl of March.<sup>1</sup> Without consulting his council, the king (moved no doubt by Bolingbroke's growing popularity) revoked the letters-patent granted to the heir of Lancaster, and confiscated all his estates. Great was the outcry against this arbitrary proceeding. Northumberland, Hotspur, and other great lords protested so vehemently against Bolingbroke's despoilments that the king ordered their arrest. The Earl of Worcester warned his brother and nephew in time, and they escaped the Tower by a swift journey northward. Richard sent several emissaries commanding them to return to Court; but this they wisely refused to do, pleading in excuse the unsettled condition of the border. Sentences of banishment and confiscation were therefore pronounced against them;<sup>2</sup> but although offered an asylum at the Scottish Court, they remained under arms in their own territory.

Postponing the execution of his sentences until after the Irish expedition, Richard sailed from Milford Haven in a fleet commanded by Worcester. Hardly had he reached Waterford when the Percies opened communications with their cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, and invited him to attempt the recovery of his inheritance by force of arms. The inheritance in question was simply that left by John of

<sup>1</sup> Roger Mortimer, 5th Earl of March, grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence the third son of Edward III.); was, according to the English law of succession, next heir to the throne.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart.



Gaunt. As yet, at least, the Percies had no desire to put forward the banished Plantagenet as a candidate for the Crown.<sup>1</sup> Their position is perfectly intelligible. Bolingbroke, their near relative and close friend, had been unjustly treated by the king. Their own heads were in jeopardy should Richard return from Ireland and find them unprepared. For these reasons they invited Henry to England; and he landed at Ravenspur on July 4th of the same year. There "*mette with hym the Erle of Northumberland, with a grete power to helpe and succor the said duke.*"<sup>2</sup> From Ravenspur the united forces proceeded to Doncaster; where, it was claimed by the Percies and their friends, young Lancaster was compelled to take a solemn oath not to lay claim to the throne, but to rest content with the goodly estates whereof Richard had despoiled him. To quote the metrical version of Chaplain William Peeris:

*"The said Henry of darby after he was entered to this lond,  
At Dancaster in the Whiet-frears was sworn on the sacrament,  
To the said seventh Henry, 1st Earl of Northumberland,  
And to the lord Percy his eldest son, being there present,  
With his uncle the Earl of Worcester, that he wold be content  
His owne inheritance onely to clame,  
Which was the dukedom of lancaster which of right he shuld obtaine;  
And not to usurpe the crowne upon his prince King Richard;  
And after he was perjured, and of his oathe had no regarde."*

Even the adherents of Henry admit that, for some time after his landing, he merely claimed the estates of Lancaster. But, finding the kingdom favourably disposed towards a regency, it was not long before he put forward that idea. It was enthusiastically received, by none so more than by Northumberland, who saw in such an arrangement the extinction of the power of those who had so long swayed the feeble mind of Richard. When the king returned in haste from Ireland, he found the might of the nation arrayed against him. Seeing that his power had vanished, he commanded the Earl of Worcester to break his staff of

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *Englische Chronicle*, Camden Society

office and dismiss the royal household.<sup>1</sup> His next step was to despatch the Duke of Exeter to Chester (where Lancaster lay with a great army), asking that Northumberland might be allowed to visit him.<sup>2</sup> From this point onward the accounts of Northumberland's behaviour towards the unfortunate king vary widely. The earl himself and his son, Hotspur, maintained that they had no part in extorting Richard's abdication of the throne, or in selecting Henry as his successor. Their objects were, they declared, a regency during the remainder of Richard's life, and (should he die without issue) the eventual succession of the young Earl of March. These statements are repeated by the contemporary historian Hardyng (who was, however, a strong partisan), by Friar Peiris in his *Metrical History*, and by most subsequent chroniclers of the House of Percy. De Fonblanque<sup>3</sup> boldly asserts that, so far from there being any proof of Northumberland's tricking Richard into abdication, the evidence is strongly to the contrary effect. Peiris accuses Henry of double-dealing not only towards Richard, but towards the Percies as well; and, having stated that Northumberland and Hotspur withdrew from Court after the Lancastrian assumption of the crown, goes on to tell how the new king was punished by Providence

*"For his wrongfull dealing, and perjury,  
As Polychronicon in his life dothe plainly expres,  
God punished him right sore and greuously;  
For, after he had taken upon him the Crowne wrongfully,  
Immediately strickene he was with contagious seknes  
Of Lepre, which is a disease remediles."*

On the other hand, we are told by the *Annales Ricardi II.*, an authority accepted by many later historians, that Northumberland induced Richard to leave Conway for Flint Castle; there handed him over to the Duke of Lancaster; and, on September 29, recited before the Council a promise of abdication which he had received from the king, then

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Ricardi II.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> De Fonblanque.



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imprisoned in the Tower. It is also claimed that the earl officiated at Henry's coronation.

Whether it be true that the Percies wittingly helped Henry to climb the throne; or whether they were duped by John of Gaunt's right worthy offspring, and kept in ignorance until too late; it is certain that, for a short time after his accession, Henry IV. saw fit to seek the goodwill of these north-country kinsmen by loading them with new honours. His first signature as a king was attached to a charter making Northumberland Lord High Constable, and he shortly afterwards granted him the Isle of Man and its dependencies.<sup>1</sup> Worcester was associated with the youthful Prince John, Henry's second son, as Lord High Steward; and received in addition the posts of Governor to the Prince of Wales, Admiral of the Fleet, Treasurer of England, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Lieutenant of South Wales, and Governor of Aquitaine.<sup>2</sup> To Hotspur fell the Wardenship of the Eastern Marches, and the Justiciaryship of North Wales; while he was also named Governor or Constable of Berwick, Roxburgh, Bamborough, Chester, Carnarvon and Flint.

The arrival at Alnwick of a Scots refugee and outlaw in the person of George Dunbar, Earl of March, drew the Percies' attention towards the North. Dunbar was their hereditary enemy; yet now that he came to their gates a fugitive they made him welcome, treated him with every honour, and positively refused to hearken to the Scots king's demands for his surrender. Indeed their attitude led to war with Scotland; and in August 1400 the king led an army across the border, but was obliged to retire by news of Owen Glendower's insurrection in Wales. Northumberland and Hotspur, however, took up the cause of George Dunbar with such good will that in 1401 the Earl of Douglas<sup>3</sup> laid formal complaint before Henry of Northumberland's aggressions, stating that the English Warden had repeatedly broken truce, and urging that joint commissioners should be appointed to investigate the troubles

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale's *Baronage*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Archibald, 4th Earl of Douglas.

of the border. The king, in his reply, exonerated Northumberland from all blame, but agreed to appoint commissioners on behalf of England.<sup>1</sup> So continuous and so fierce had been the recent fighting along the frontier, that the Duke of Rothesay proposed to hold the investigation at Melrose Abbey, giving as his reason the deplorable condition of the Marches themselves. Raid after raid had devastated the country to such a pitch that there was no food to be had for either man or beast—“*nul vivre pour gentz ou chevalx d'assembler en maner accustumez.*”<sup>2</sup> The joint commission sat from March until May,<sup>3</sup> but arrived at no definite decision. In October Northumberland and Douglas tried their hands at peace-making, and met in conference at Yetholm;<sup>4</sup> but, owing to the obstinate temper of the knights and barons on both sides of the border, and the impossibility of settling the countless feuds and cross-feuds between them, this praiseworthy effort also came to nought. Before another spring had gone by, Northumbrian and Scot were at each other's throats again.

While these bootless negotiations were pending, there had appeared the first open signs of ill-will between the new-made king and the house of Percy. Northumberland urged the strengthening of Carlisle and

Some Letters  
of Hotspur.

Berwick as protection against probable invasion, but the king took no notice of the appeal. On Good Friday 1401 Conway Castle was betrayed to the Welsh; but Hotspur succeeded in recovering the stronghold after one month's siege. When he wrote for funds wherewith to pay the expenses of this enterprise, all that he could induce the king to send fell short by over one-half of the sum actually necessary. To add to this the troops on the Western Marches had been left unpaid for months.<sup>5</sup> Whether such niggardliness was natural to Henry IV. (as in later times to Henry VII.), or whether the king's admitted duplicity led him to take this means of quarrelling

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS.

<sup>2</sup> State Papers, Hen. IV.

<sup>3</sup> Wylie.

<sup>4</sup> Letters of Hen. IV.

<sup>5</sup> Adam of Usk. Ord. Privy Council, Hen. IV.

with and discrediting the Percies, whom he feared, it is difficult to say. Again and again Hotspur wrote, pleading for the money fairly due to his troops; but king and council turned a deaf ear. Addressing the letter from Carnarvon on May 2, 1401,<sup>1</sup> he prays them to "*remember how I have repeatedly applied for payment of the king's soldiers, . . . who are in such distress as they can no longer endure, owing to the lack of money. . . . I therefore implore you to order that they may be paid. . . . If better means cannot be found, . . . I shall have to go to you in person to claim payment, to the neglect of other duties.*"

This, of course, is a translation of Hotspur's letter from the language in which it was written. For the benefit of the curious, a copy is subjoined of one of his original epistles to the council, written at this time, and preserved with others from his hand in the Cotton MSS., British Museum:—

"SWYNESHEDE, 3 July 1401;

SIR HENRY PERCY TO THE COUNCIL:

*'Tresreverentz piers en Dieux et mes treshonurez Srs.; Jeo me recomanc a vous. Et vous please remembrer coment Jay pursuez vers le Roi moun souverain Sr. et vous diverse foitz pur la payment q<sup>e</sup> mest duez pur la Marche Descoce, dont Je suy gardein, Sibien pur ceo quastoit aderere a le darrien Parlement, come davoit payement en avaunt sur Hull et Bostone, solonc le patent eut grauntez par le Roi moun souverayn Sr. susdit a moun tresredoute Sr. et pier et moy, par avis de vous, mes Srs. de soun graunt Conseille, dont Jespoire q<sup>e</sup> vous avez bone conisance. Et touchant le debt a moy duez a moun darrien partier de Londrez le Roi nostre souverayn Sr. susdit chargea soun Tresorer q<sup>e</sup> lors estoit pur la dite matere, et le dit Tresorer moy disoit q<sup>e</sup> sil fuist greable a vous autres, mez Srs., du graunt Conseille, qil ordener [oit] q<sup>e</sup> Jeo serroie paieiz de ij ml. marcz en monoy entour cest Pentecost darrien, et q<sup>e</sup> Jeo serroie servis par assignement de le remenaunt q<sup>e</sup> moy fuist duez a plus tost q<sup>e</sup> faire purroit; pur quelle argent*

<sup>1</sup> Issue Rolls, 3 Hen. IV.

*et assignement avoir Jay fait mez servauntz pursuer, sibien a Londrez come a Hull et Bostone susdit, destre paieez selonc leffect de la dite graunt et patent sanz ascun denier resceyver unques depuis moun partier dillesques, mez a moy graunt costage, et travaille a mez servauntz, sanz nulle exploit. Et come Jey entenduz a le darrien Parlement, quant la necessitee de roialme fuist moustrez par vous, mez Srs. de graunt conseil, as Barons et Comons de roialme, il estoit demandes, par toutz les marches—Caleys, Guyenne et Escoce, la meer, et Irlande, come pur guerre et la Marche Descoce estoit limitez a xxxvij Ml. livres, ou plus: et la ou le payment de temp de trievez a moun dit Sr. et pier et moy duez namonte q<sup>e</sup> a V ml. livres par au, ne poet estre paieez, en bone foy Jeo moy graunt merveille, et moy semble q<sup>e</sup> vous mettez les ditz marches trop a nunchaloir, queux serront trovez les plus fortz enemys q<sup>e</sup> vous avez, on autrement q<sup>e</sup> vous nagrees point de nostre service en lez ditz marches; et si vous cherchez bien, Jespoir q<sup>e</sup> le greindre defaute q<sup>e</sup> vous troverez en lez ditz marches est defaute de payment, sanz quelle vous ne troverez nulle qi vous poet faire tiel service. Sur qoy, tresreverentz, piers en Dieux, et mez treshonurez Srs., Jay escript a Roi mon souverain Sr. susdit, en suppliant q<sup>e</sup> (si) ascun male aveigne a sez ville, chastelles, on marche, q<sup>e</sup> Jay en governance, pur defaute de payment, q<sup>e</sup> Dieux defende, q<sup>e</sup> Je nay poynt de blame, mez ceux q<sup>e</sup> ne moy voillent paier, solonc soun honorable mandement et voluntee. Tresreverentz piers en Dieux et mes treshonurez Srs., ne vous displease q<sup>e</sup> Jescrive nounsachantment en ma royde et feble manere de ceste matere, qar necessitee le moy fait faire, noun pas seulement de moy, mez auxi de mez souldours, qi sont en tresgraunt mischief sanz remedy du quelle Je ne puisse ne ose aler vers les ditz marches, pur quelle vous supplie et requerre dordenir solonc q<sup>e</sup> vous semble busoignable. Jy prie a Dieux q<sup>e</sup> vous est en sa seintisme garde. Escrit a Swyneshede le iiij Jour de Juylet.'"<sup>1</sup>*

The language and style of this letter may indeed be "royde," but the writer was wrong to call them "feble." It is a plain, honest statement of the ill-treatment accorded by King and Parliament to the defenders of the borders.

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., Cleopatra, F. III., fol. 7x and 32.



Hotspur, it appears, had written to the king as well, warning him that serious trouble might result upon the Marches if the soldiers were left unpaid. But once more Henry declined to afford any relief, although his exchequer was well filled. At last Hotspur resigned his ungrateful post as Justiciary of North Wales; and, on September 1, 1401, went northward to assist his father in the endeavour to preserve peace with the Scots. That endeavour, as we have seen, was destined to be fruitless.

On May 7, 1402, a considerable body of Scots raiders, led by Hepburn, crossed the border; and, careless of well-meant commissions of peace, proceeded to plunder and slay, until encountered at Nesbitt Moor by a force of equal strength under the Earl of Northumberland and Hotspur. The marauders were taken somewhat by surprise; and the advantage thus gained by the Percies resulted, after a long and unflinching struggle, in complete victory for the English. Thousands of Scots were slain; and their chief, Hepburn, fell into Hotspur's hands, together with many other prisoners of distinction.

To avenge the defeat at Nesbitt Moor, a second expedition invaded England during the following August, commanded by the Earl of Douglas and by Murdoch Stewart, Earl of Fife.<sup>1</sup> Thirty French knights of great distinction accompanied the army, which numbered over 12,000 picked men. They ravaged Northumberland and Durham, penetrating as far as the Wear.<sup>2</sup> Returning homeward with a rich prey, they found themselves intercepted, on the morning of September 14, at a point about six miles north of Wooler, by Northumberland and his son. With the two Wardens fought the Scotsman George Dunbar, Earl of March, whom we have seen driven from his own country. The English occupied at Millfield-on-Till a strong position, commanding the main line of the enemy's retreat. The Scots halted at Homildown, or Humbledown,

<sup>1</sup> Son of the Regent Albany.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun, *Scotichronicon*, xv. 14.

Hill, a bowshot off. Hotspur was all for charging at the head of his horse; but the cautious George Dunbar succeeded in restraining his eagerness.<sup>1</sup> At the advice of Dunbar the battle was left to the English archers, who had been drawn up in the van, and who sent such showers of arrows into the exposed ranks of the invaders, that the fight was over within an hour.<sup>2</sup> The Northumbrian men-at-arms were never even called into action; and the victory, which was complete, belonged entirely to the archers. Sir David Swinton attempted to cut his way through, only to fall back in utter rout. Five hundred fugitives were drowned in the Tweed, miles away;<sup>3</sup> while five earls—Douglas, Fife, Angus, Moray, and Orkney—were taken prisoners on the field of battle.<sup>4</sup> Henry IV. gave an annuity of £40 to the courier—one Nicholas Sherbury, an esquire of Hotspur—who brought him the first tidings of success.<sup>5</sup>

Sir Walter Scott, in his dramatic poem of *Halidon Hill*, boldly uses some of the leading incidents of Homildoun to describe the former battle. The deadly rain of arrows upon the chivalry of Scotland is introduced; and the Lord Percy is represented as saying to Edward III.—

*"Horses and riders going down together!  
'Tis almost pity to see nobles fall,  
And by a peasant's arrow!"*

Rejoiced as was the king by the victory, one of his first acts after the arrival of Percy's welcome courier was to issue an edict strictly forbidding that any of the prisoners taken should be ransomed or exchanged.<sup>6</sup> His excuse for such a course—wholly at variance with established custom, and certain to breed lively discontent—was that, by keeping the Scottish border-lords in durance, peace might be insured between the two kingdoms. Captives and captors were alike enraged;—the latter by the loss

<sup>1</sup> *Scotichronicon.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham. Hardyng.

<sup>4</sup> *Ann. Henr. IV.* Wyntoun.

<sup>5</sup> *Records of the Tower.* This annuity was subsequently renewed by Henry V.

<sup>6</sup> *Fadera.*

of their liberty, the former by what they held to be a breach of chivalry, and a deliberate insult from the throne. Henry followed up his first order by a second, desiring that all the prisoners should be conveyed to London without delay. Hotspur, who had himself taken the Earl of Douglas, positively refused to comply; and when the Scots and French lords arrived in the capital, Douglas was not among them. This disobedience brought about a stormy interview between the King and Northumberland, during which the earl reiterated his son's protests against the lack of pay for the border troops. "*The erle having urged payment for the custody of the Marches, said;—'My son and I have spent our all in your service.' The king replied;—'I have no money, and money you shall not have.' The erle said;—'When you entered the kingdom you promised to rule according to our counsel. You have since, year by year, received great sums from the country; and yet you have nought, and pay nought. . . God grant you better counsel.'*"<sup>1</sup>

The king then sent couriers to Alnwick demanding Hotspur's instant attendance at Court, together with that of his prisoner Douglas. The second portion of the message was ignored; but Harry Percy himself set out for London. On his way to the capital news reached him that the young Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, and the latter's uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, had been captured on the Welsh frontier by Owen Glendower. Only a few months before Hotspur had married Elizabeth Mortimer, sister of Sir Edmund, and aunt of the earl; so that he had now family reasons for being interested in the fate of this unfortunate house. But, apart from the ties of kindred, he must have been moved by the fact that the legitimate heirs to the English throne lay at the mercy of the wild Glendower. For, it will be remembered, young Roger of March stood next after Richard II. in the strict line of succession to the throne. Hastening on to London, Hotspur lost no time in seeking audience with the king. "*Then came in like manner . . . Henry Percy, who was married*

<sup>1</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum*, vol. iii. 396.

to the sister of the captive Edmund Mortimer in Wales, and he prayed that the king would allow the said Edmund to be ransomed at his cost. The king replied that the public money should not be expended in strengthening his enemies against himself. Henry answered;—'How is this? You would have us expose ourselves when you or your crown is in danger, and yet you will not help us?' 'Thou art a traitor!' said the king wrathfully. 'And wouldst thou have us help our enemies, and those of the State?' 'Traitor am I none,' Henry replied, 'but a true man; and as a true man I speak.' The king drew his dagger upon him.<sup>1</sup> 'Not here,' cried Henry, 'but in the field;' and so departed."<sup>2</sup> Hall adds that Hotspur made further application for leave to ransom the young Earl of March, only to be again refused. Whereupon, in leaving the king's presence, he exclaimed so that all might hear;—"Behold the heyre of the realme is robbed of his right; and the robber, with his owne will not redeem him."

The king made no effort to have Henry Percy impeached. His partisans maintained that this forbearance was due to generosity and the recollection of past friendship. But the impartial chronicler is more likely to ascribe the sovereign's conduct to crafty motives. Realising the instability of his throne, and the widespread popularity of Hotspur, he desired, under cover of fair words and a pretence of magnanimity, to provoke the Percies into war, and so rid himself of their opposition, while, at the same time, retaining popular sympathy. Had he openly attacked Northumberland and his son, it is probable that throughout the country (and especially in London, where the name of Percy was intensely popular) feeling of a hostile and dangerous nature would have been created. But by placing Hotspur in the light of a rebel, and by driving him into alliance with the dreaded Glendower, Henry foresaw that he should have Parliament and the majority of the people at his back. One of the first steps which he took had the effect of removing the Percies from London

<sup>1</sup> In the original text, "*Rex traxit contra eum pugionem.*"

<sup>2</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum*, vol. iii. 396.

and sending them to the North. On March 2, 1403, he granted to Northumberland "all the lands of the Earl of Douglas;"—that is to say, almost all the country between the Tweed and the border, and the greater part of Galloway.<sup>1</sup> Of course, although this great estate had been nominally annexed to England, English sway did not extend over one-tenth of the area which Henry pretended to bestow. Consequently, before the Percies could enjoy their new possessions, they had first to conquer them. As we have seen, the king refused to pay the supplies necessary for the proper carrying on of such a border war. Cheaply indeed, therefore, did Henry earn popular praise for his "generous" treatment of the truculent lords of Alnwick.

Northumberland made a determined effort to take the regions in question. At first he made some progress against the Scots, but two fortresses held out strongly against the invaders. To these places—Cocklaw peel, near Yetholm, and Ormiston, by Hawick—Hotspur laid siege. So prolonged was the defence, that the earl's resources became exhausted. He had no money to pay his soldiers, and provisions became scarce. In this grave emergency he resolved to write once more to the king,—to make one more effort to loosen the royal purse-strings. His letter, a straightforward and dignified appeal, points out that over 20,000 marks were fairly owing to himself and his son by the royal exchequer; and that without this sum disaster must certainly fall upon the defenders of the border.<sup>2</sup> The earl signed himself, "*your Matthias*," such being the old name given to him by the king in happier days, when Henry Bolingbroke chose to compare Northumberland to the heroes of the Maccabean house. Instead of sending the sorely-needed money, or even deigning to answer the letter, the king mustered an army, and marched northward. This sudden movement, regarded as hostile by the Percies, precipitated the civil war which had been threatening ever since Henry's refusal to ransom the Mortimers.

<sup>1</sup> *Pat. & Close Rolls.*

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the Privy Council*, i. 203-4.

A son had been born to Harry Hotspur while he was laying siege to Ormiston and Cocklaw. This son, the sole

Hotspur's  
rebellion and  
death.

offspring of the union with Elizabeth Mortimer, strengthened the alliance already existing between his father and the legitimate heirs to the throne.

At the same time his birth greatly increased the king's fear and hatred of the house of Percy. "*The king began to think that now Hotspur's son had a nearer right to the crown than his own offspring; it was not to be borne with.*"<sup>1</sup>

Hotspur on hearing of the king's armed march from London sent his wife and her babe to a secure retreat,<sup>2</sup> most likely to some peel across the border. Then leaving his father to gather an army in Northumbria, he took a force of one hundred and sixty picked horsemen across the Yorkshire moors, through Lancashire and into Cheshire. With him rode his ancient foe, but present ally, the Earl of Douglas, together with some others of the Scots prisoners taken at Homildown. Arrived in Chester (a town always inimical to Henry IV.) on Monday July 9th, Hotspur and Douglas took up their quarters at the house of one Petronilla Clark,<sup>3</sup> and thence sent couriers across the Welsh border to Owen Glendower. This last-named chieftain had released Edmund Mortimer and the Earl of March from captivity during the previous November, and had since established a blood alliance with Sir Edmund by giving him his daughter's hand in marriage. No positive evidence to that effect exists, but it is more than likely that secret communications were opened between the Earl of Northumberland on the one hand, and Glendower and Mortimer on the other, almost immediately after the news of King Henry's northern march reached the Welsh and Scottish borders. It is certain that, by the time Hotspur, Douglas, and their hard-riding knights reached Dame Clark's house in Chester, the Welsh were already preparing for war.

The combination against Henry IV. was beyond all question formidable; and it is when we see that monarch

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> Hardyng.

<sup>3</sup> Wylie.

rising promptly and vigorously to the occasion that we forget for the time his unscrupulous craft, his niggardliness, and his other ill qualities; for none but a born leader, a man of iron nerve and extraordinary decision of character, could have faced as he did the odds arrayed against him.

In Wales was Glendower, with the legitimate heirs to the throne by his side, calling his fiery Celts together in the name of liberty, and even urging them to war by means of that other potent influence upon their racial character, the supernatural. For one of the old prophecies of Merlin—long secretly whispered among the mountains—was now chanted triumphantly by the bards, and (translated into the English tongue) repeated through the shires across the border. "*And now,*" ran the words of the Arthurian seer, "*after these there shall come out of the North a Dragon and a Wolf, the which shall be the help of the Lyon, and bring the realme great rest, with peace and glory. . . . These three shall rise agaynst the Moldewarpe,<sup>1</sup> which is accurst of God. Also they shall thrust him forth from the realme; and the Moldewarpe shall flee, and take a ship to save himself.*"

There can be no doubt of the importance attached to this prophecy in a superstitious age. The application seemed clear. The Lyon was Glendower; Percy and Douglas were respectively the Dragon and the Wolf "out of the North." King Henry was the Moldewarpe, loathly beast; and, as to his being under the ban of Heaven, we have quoted the words of Peiris to show that many held him to have been stricken with leprosy for his crimes of perjury and usurpation. Many of the great lords of the Welsh Marches joined Hotspur or Glendower; the rest remained, like Nevill of Furnival, outwardly neutral, while secretly sympathising with the insurgents. The impression created by the prophecy among the border shires did much to earn for Glendower that reputation

<sup>1</sup> "*In this, as Glendour persuaded them, they thought they should accomplish a prophecy, as though King Henry were the Mouldwarp cursed of God's own Mouth.*" (Baker's *Chronicles*, p. 161.) The "Moldwarp" or "Mouldwarp" was the mole.

as a worker of magic which survived until the time of Shakspeare.<sup>1</sup>

In the North the Earl of Northumberland was not relying upon prophecies. Making his headquarters at Berwick, he drew to his standard a great host, both of Scots and English. Letters were sent broadcast over all the countries north of Humber, and by sea to Kent, Sussex, and the South. Hardyng asserts that, when he was Constable of Warkworth Castle under the Umfrevilles, after the attainder of the Percies, he found there letters from nearly all the great barons of England, written under their seals, and promising aid to Northumberland and allegiance to the Earl of March. The Earl of Worcester, casting aside the king's favour, and jeopardising all his high Court offices, threw in his lot with his brother and nephew. Northumberland and he drew up a manifesto, declaring that the king had obtained his crown by fraud and perjury, and demanding that the money raised by means of taxation should be used, not for Henry's privy purse, but for the use and defence of the nation.<sup>2</sup> With this document Worcester proceeded to Chester, where he joined Hotspur; while the head of the house made his final preparations for a march southward. Had that march ever been carried out the rising would probably have succeeded. But, worn out and weakened by his exertions, the earl was attacked by fever near Berwick;<sup>3</sup> and when he was able to leave his bed and move to the relief of Hotspur it was, as we shall see, too late.

Meantime in Chester were brave doings, and the little force which came out of the North with Hotspur and Douglas had swelled to goodly proportions. Armourers were busy, and grindstones a-whirr from morning till night. To the house of Dame Petronilla Clark (where the blue lion hung side by side with the arms of Douglas) knights and gentlemen came and

How Hot-  
spur marched  
to Shrews-  
bury.

<sup>1</sup> See *Henry IV.*, Part I.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. Hen. IV.*

<sup>3</sup> Surtees, *Descendants of Josceline de Lovain.*



went unceasingly. The galleried courtyard was thronged with envoys and couriers from every corner of the land. Broad Scots, Norman-French, homespun English, eager Cymbric, and the burr of Tyne and Tees,—you might well have heard them all had you dwelt in Chester town when the “Dragon” and the “Wolf” were making ready to fight against the “Moldewarpe.”

Cheshire, loyal to the memory of Richard II., sent its knights and squires to battle with Hotspur for Richard's heir. All the old Cheshire names may be found upon the insurgent muster-roll,—Vernon, Venables, Leigh, and the rest; while reinforcements poured in from Lancashire, Derbyshire, and the Marches. About July 17th, Worcester arrived at Chester with the manifesto; and uncle and nephew issued a proclamation to the effect that the Earl of Bolingbroke was deposed, and that they themselves had assumed the “style and title of Joint Protectors of the Commonwealth.”<sup>1</sup> Also they sent out letters of defiance, accusing Henry of breaking the oath made to them at Doncaster in 1399 relative to his intention not to claim the crown; and further stating that he had caused Richard II. to be starved to death.<sup>2</sup>

Learning that Glendower was on the march, Hotspur set his force in motion, and, on the morning of Saturday July 21st, he appeared by the Oswestry road before the Castle Foregate of Shrewsbury, near which town he expected to make a juncture with the Welsh. But dire disappointment awaited him. On the walls of Shrewsbury floated the banner of Henry IV.!

By one splendid stroke the king had resolved to win or lose all. Hearing of the rebellion on July 16th, he saw that, with enemies on every side, but a single hope remained, that of pushing into the very heart of the war and cutting off the central body of insurgents before they could unite with Glendower or with Northumberland. Some historians<sup>3</sup> state that this plan of action was suggested to

<sup>1</sup> Hardyng.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Ramsay, *Lancaster and York, &c.*

him by that skilful strategist, the banished Dunbar, Earl of March. This theory is by no means unlikely; for Dunbar was with Henry's army at the time, and he had already given signal evidence of his generalship at Homildown when fighting with, instead of against, Hotspur. Whoever may have been the author of the movement, it is certain that Henry effected it with a rapidity and success which utterly surprised Hotspur, himself no sluggard on the march.

At sight of the royal standard over Shrewsbury, Hotspur drew back along the Whitchurch road for about three and a half miles, and chose a position of considerable strength on the slope of the Hayteley field, to the left of the road, in the parish of Albright Hussey.<sup>1</sup> His front was protected by a tangled crop of peas, and—according to Ramsay<sup>2</sup>—by three small ponds. The king, advancing from Shrewsbury, took up perforce a situation at the foot of the slope. Hence he despatched messengers, among them the Abbot of Shrewsbury, to Hotspur, asking him to come into the royal lines, together with Worcester, for the purpose of averting bloodshed. The real object of this course is disputed. Perhaps Henry was sincere in his desire of a peaceful settlement; but his proved duplicity rather leads us to believe that he had some ulterior motive in desiring the presence of the two insurgent leaders. The theory that he wished to gain time can scarcely be maintained, for delay might have proved fatal to his cause. The scouts of Glendower were already in sight; while Northumberland, recovered from his illness, was again on his way with a strong force.

Hotspur refused to go in person to the king, probably fearing some such treatment as had been meted out to Richard II.; but he allowed his uncle to attempt negotiations. Capgrave and other historians assert that Worcester proved an untrustworthy envoy, false both to the king and to Hotspur. This view of the old soldier-statesman's character has been perpetuated by Shakspeare in *Henry IV.*,

<sup>1</sup> Wylie, *Hist. of Henry IV.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lancaster and York.*

Part I., where Worcester is represented as concealing the king's fair offers of peace from Hotspur, lest the latter should decide to accept them. It is difficult to believe the earl guilty of such wanton treachery. Froissart declares that continental sovereigns and statesmen were ever ready to accept the bare word of Thomas Percy as sufficient ratification of all treaties or conventions. It is, however, quite probable that (like his nephew) he distrusted the king's fine promises, and so advised Hotspur not to hearken to them. After some hours of parleying, it became apparent that a battle could not be avoided. Hotspur's final answer to the king was, "I put no trust in thy mercy." To which Henry replied, by the mouth of Worcester, "I pray the Lord that thou and not I may be held responsible for the blood spilt this day."<sup>1</sup>

Before the ranks had begun to move, an omen happened which blanched for a little space the cheeks of Hotspur and his friends. Turning to an esquire, Percy called for his favourite sword, the staunch weapon with which he had won so many fights. "Alack, my lord," replied the esquire, "it was left behind at the place where you encamped overnight, *the village of Berwick.*" Hotspur groaned. "Then," cried he, "has my plough reached its last furrow!" A soothsayer had long beside prophesied that Harry Percy should die before Berwick; but naturally the north-country hero had thought his own border Berwick the place referred to. At this southern Berwick he had passed the night, without even knowing its name; and to have left there his good sword seemed to him a warning of death.<sup>2</sup> For, although Shakspeare makes Percy mock at the tales which credited Glendower with magic power, the real Hotspur, like so many brave captains, seems to have been of a superstitious nature. His fears soon vanished, however, and he made ready for attack, taking a leaf out of crafty George Dunbar's book by placing the archers of Cheshire in the foremost line of fight.

<sup>1</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Not long after noon King Henry gave the word to charge—"En Avant Baner!"<sup>1</sup> "*Esperance! Esperance,*

Shrewsbury: *Percy!*" cried the insurgents; to which the  
Hotspur's royal troops replied with a lusty "*St. George!*"  
last battle.

The Cheshire archers shot not so well as their northern brothers at Homildoun, for although their arrows broke a portion of the royal line, they were themselves driven back by a second and more determined attack, said to have been headed by the boy Prince of Wales.<sup>2</sup> Thenceforward the combat raged hand to hand. Hotspur and Douglas with thirty chosen knights cut their way through the advancing host straight to the royal standard. The standard-bearer fell beneath the sword of Percy. The banner, beaten to earth, would have been captured had not the Earl of Stafford seized it and borne it out of the press. Swift followed Hotspur, and Stafford in his turn bit the dust. Striding over the fallen standard, Percy saw approaching a knight arrayed in the royal armour. "The king!" he cried, and thrust him furiously through the throat, so that he fell a corpse beneath the feet of the royalists. "The king!" echoed those who followed Hotspur—"the king is slain!" Henry's host wavered and would have broken, had not a second knight rushed to the front, bearing likewise the royal arms and crest. This man went down, his skull cloven by the battle-axe of Douglas. Again was the cry raised that the king had fallen. Not so! Henry the cautious, knowing full well that a direct attack would be made upon his person, had but sent two gentlemen forth disguised in his royal harness, whilst he himself directed the battle from the rear in company with George Dunbar.<sup>3</sup> Such cunning tricks of

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii. 396.

<sup>2</sup> Shakspeare has it (in *Henry IV.*, Part I.) that Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales were of the same age, and makes the king speak of the former as—

"*This Hotspur Mars in swaddling clothes,  
This infant warrior!*"

Yet the king himself was born in the same year as the man he styles an infant, while the Prince of Wales was barely seventeen.

<sup>3</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum*, &c.

warfare commended themselves not to that soul of chivalry, Harry Percy. He neither sheltered himself among the men-at-arms, nor sent his devoted esquires to die behind a lying 'scutcheon. Hotspur had he been all his life; and here on Shrewsbury field he was Hotspur yet. Even where his knights fought back to back above the trampled standard of skulking Bolingbroke, even where the bloody axe of Douglas cut its terrible path, Harry Percy could not tarry long. Lifting his visor so that all might know him, he burst through the enemy's van, shouting "*Esperance!*" and calling on those that loved the right to follow. Perhaps he had seen the hosts of Glendower drawn up across the neighbouring river,<sup>1</sup> and hoped to cut his way thither through the royal army. Perhaps he expected the Welsh to fall upon the royal rear, as, to their disgrace, they did not fall! Whatever were his thoughts, he was not long to think. As Harold died at Senlac, so died Hotspur at Shrewsbury. A chance arrow, falling from aloft, pierced him through the brain. His followers, in doubt, still shouted "Percy! *Esperance!*" and pressed onward. But the king, emerging from safe shelter, lifted up his voice and cried, "Harry Percy is slain!"<sup>2</sup> The royal troops took heart of grace, and bore the insurgents back. Glendower and his legions, on the opposite bank of the river, made no attempt to turn the tide. The knights of Northumbria and Scotland, scorning to fly, fell before the onrush. The gallant Cheshire bowmen fired their last shafts, drew their skians, and perished on the battle side of the slope. Few indeed of the insurgent army left the field alive. The sunset of that day was the sunset of the cause of Mortimer.

In the twilight, Henry Bolingbroke searched the field for Hotspur's body. The road thither was plainly marked by a broad line of royalist dead. There, too, lay the thirty knights who had followed their lord into the fight, resting side by side, with the fallen ensign of the king for their right worthy couch. There lay the Douglas, his great axe

<sup>1</sup> Wylie. Ramsay.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. Hen. IV.*

clutched in the grip of death. And there, beyond them all, with his face to the early stars and his forehead pierced by the arrow of doom, lay the bravest, rashest, staunchest knight in England, Harry Percy of Northumberland, whom men called Hotspur.

*"The earth that bore him dead,  
Bore not alive so stout a gentleman."*<sup>1</sup>

It is said that the king wept over Hotspur's body. Perhaps in the first shock of thus beholding this near kinsman, this friend of his boyhood, Henry may have been moved to tears. It is known, at least, that he permitted one of the neutral barons, Thomas Nevill, Lord Furnival, to remove the body from Shrewsbury, and to inter it during the night in a family chapel at Whitchurch, sixteen miles from the field. But the royal generosity was short-lived. A day or two later he had the remains torn from their grave and carried back to the scene of battle. There they were rubbed in salt, and placed upright between two mill-stones, by the side of the pillory, in Shrewsbury market-place.<sup>2</sup> So they stood, while gaping crowds came to view, for the greater part of a week. Then the head was hewn off, and sent to be fixed upon that gate of York which looked towards Northumberland. The four quarters were distributed between London, Bristol, Chester, and Newcastle. Long afterwards Hotspur's sorrowing widow obtained leave to gather together these ghastly remnants of him she had loved. Doubt exists as to the ultimate resting-place of the dismembered body; but Friar Peiris expressly states in his *Rhyming Chronicle* that Harry Hotspur was buried by his faithful widow in the Northumberland tomb at York Minster. The Earl of Worcester, sorely wounded, had been beheaded on the field of battle, and it was probably his body which was subsequently brought to light in St. Mary's Church of Shrewsbury.

During the night succeeding the struggle Owen Glen-

<sup>1</sup> *Hen. IV.*, Act v. sc. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Wylie, i. 364. *Chronique de la Traison de Richard Deux.*

dower, who had remained inactive across the river, retreated with Mortimer into South Wales. Henry Bolingbroke's bold stroke had amply succeeded. One of his foes utterly crushed, the other a fugitive, he had now only to reckon with old Northumberland.<sup>1</sup>

Tardily marching (tardily through no fault of his) to relieve his son and brother, Northumberland was arrested by the dire news of this catastrophe. Moreover, The results of defeat. he found his southward pathway blocked by Nevill, Earl of Westmoreland, who had been detached from the main body of the royalist force for this purpose. Stricken with grief by the death of Hotspur, the old earl made no attempt to attack Westmoreland, but retreated to Newcastle. Misfortune is ever a sore severer of old ties, and the Percy found the gates of Newcastle closed against his army. In vain he pleaded the memory of the past: the burgesses whom Hotspur had commanded, whom the house of Percy had so often defended, hardened their hearts against the baffled earl, and refused his troops a refuge. All that could be obtained from them, after long negotiation, was permission for Northumberland and his personal train to enter the city.<sup>2</sup> The soldiers were compelled to pass the night outside the walls. Next day the earl retired still farther north, marching to his own castle of Warkworth. Here, of course, he was made welcome; and here he received a summons from the king to present himself forthwith at York. The royal message intimated that no harm should come to its recipient, provided that he made his defence in due form before Parliament. Northumberland set out at once, scantily attended, and appeared before the king at York on 11th August. He was received with extreme coldness; and treated, to all intents and purposes, as a State

<sup>1</sup> Authorities on the battle of Shrewsbury and the death of Hotspur: *Ann. Hen. IV.*, *Chron. de la Traison de Richard Deux*, Hardyng, Holinshed, Wylie's *Hist. of Hen. IV.*, Ramsay's *Lancaster and York*, Surtees' *Descts. of Jos. de Lovain*, De Fonblanque, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. Hen. IV.*

prisoner.<sup>1</sup> A few days later the Court moved to Pontefract, where the earl, despite the king's assurances, was coerced into formally yielding up all his northern castles to be governed by royal nominees.

No sooner had he signed a treaty to this effect than all disguise was thrown off, and he was conveyed to Baginton, near Coventry, and there kept in close captivity until February 1404. In that month Parliament met, and the earl was carried to Westminster to offer what defence he could against the charge of high-treason. After grave deliberation the Lords decided that his acts had not amounted to treason, but merely to a trespass against the sovereign authority. A fine they held sufficient to atone for the delinquency. Thereupon Northumberland, at his own request we are told, took an oath of fealty on the cross of St. Thomas; and the king pardoned him at the request of both Lords and Commons. The Commons, with whom he was especially popular, sent to Henry on 9th February a memorial of thanks for this clemency. For some time a feud had existed between the earl and his cousin of Westmoreland. The growing power of the latter in the north had been a thorn in the side of the Percies; and bitter ill-will prevailed between the adherents of Nevill and of Percy upon the border. But now "*at the request of the Commons [the king] commanded the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Westmoreland, in token of perfect amity, to kiss each other in open Parliament.*"<sup>2</sup> This ceremony was duly carried out; and the two noblemen became ostensibly reconciled,<sup>3</sup>—although, as will be seen, the feud still secretly continued.

Northumberland was then restored to all his honours and dignities, save the High Constablership; and to all his possessions except the Isle of Man. However, he agreed to make over his castles to be governed by nominees of the Crown.

It was one thing for the king to receive Northumber-

<sup>1</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum*, iii. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Brydges' *Collins' Peerage*.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 524.





St. John's  
Newfoundland

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land's submission, and another to enforce that submission upon some of the turbulent borderers who governed Berwick, Bamborough, Warkworth, and other northern strongholds for their feudal lord. Several of these captains positively refused to believe that the Percy had agreed to surrender his fortresses, and the officers of the king were in more than one instance denied admittance by Northumberland's loyal lieutenants. The earl was naturally suspected of secretly sanctioning this opposition, and repeated summonses were sent him to attend Court and set himself right with the Council. At last, about midsummer, he repaired to Pontefract, where Henry then lay, bringing with him as hostages his grandsons—the only son of Hotspur, and the two sons of Sir Thomas Percy of Athol.<sup>1</sup> After some vacillation on the king's part the surrender of Berwick and Jedburgh Castles was cancelled, and Northumberland was allowed to retain the governorship of those places.<sup>2</sup> He returned to the border apparently well satisfied, but in reality irritated by the manner in which he had been treated, and ripe for further mischief. Called to attend the Council in January 1405, he excused himself from this irksome duty in a letter to Henry, pleading old age and infirmity, and signed "*your humble Matathyas.*" Probably he feared to share the fate of the Earl Marshal, the Archbishop of York, and others who had trusted themselves in the hands of Westmoreland and the king.

While in this frame of mind he was approached by the agents of Mortimer and Glendower, and there seems little reason to doubt that he entered into a treaty with them, by which a new insurrection was planned. England and Wales were to be portioned out between the three conspirators, it is said, the earl receiving twelve northern and eastern counties for his share.<sup>3</sup> Before the scheme could come to maturity, proof of its existence was brought to Henry by Westmoreland. The king lost no time in marching an army to the north; but before he could reach Alnwick, Northumberland had fled across the border

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table II.

<sup>2</sup> *Ann. Hen. IV.*

<sup>3</sup> *Chron.*, ed. Giles.

in company with his close friend and ally, the Lord Bardolf—a nobleman renowned for his great size and strength, rather than for any qualities of his mind. Together they sought an asylum at the Scottish Court; while the king ravaged Northumbria, capturing one castle after another until all were reduced. In June 1406 the earl and Bardolf were cited to appear before Parliament within fourteen days, to answer an accusation of high-treason preferred against them. In default of their presence they were duly adjudged outlaws and traitors—a sentence involving the forfeiture of all their estates and titles, and the penalty of death at the king's pleasure.<sup>1</sup> Hardly had the decree of confiscation been signed, than Henry set about the congenial task of distributing the Percy possessions. The southern manors were given to the Duke of Bedford, the king's brother; while all the remainder, including Northumberland House in Aldersgate Street, London, fell to the queen's share.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Commissioners were despatched to Scotland for the purpose of obtaining, by threats or persuasion, the surrender of the outlawed lords. It is likely that the Scots Court would have delivered up the fugitives had not Sir David Fleming of Cumbernauld (who cherished a friendship for the gigantic Bardolf) given them timely warning of danger. Not a day too soon Percy and his companion fled by sea, probably from Glasgow, and succeeded in reaching the coast of South Wales, where they joined Glendower and Mortimer.

For two years thereafter the life of the attainted earl was one succession of hasty flights and narrow escapes from capture. Lord Bardolf shared with him every trial and misfortune. Now we find them in Brittany, now in Wales. They ventured even to return to the Scottish border; and in 1408 the strange spectacle was presented of Northumberland raiding his own estates at the head of a body of Scots, and carrying off a prey of sheep and cattle. A proclamation was issued, in consequence of this

<sup>1</sup> *Rolls of Parlt.*, 7 Hen. IV.

<sup>2</sup> This mansion afterwards became known as the "Queen's Wardrobe."

exploit, setting a price upon the earl's head;<sup>1</sup> and all loyal subjects were urged to capture or slay "*Henry Percy, late Earl of Northumberland.*"

This state of affairs could not last long. King Henry had sworn never again to make peace with Percy; nor was the Scottish Court inclined to offer him protection. Upon the border and in Wales, Bardolf and he found hazardous shelter for short spaces of time; but the English agents were too watchful and energetic to give them any lasting rest. The perils and privations which he had suffered since his outlawry had added greatly to the earl's infirmities; but harassed as he was, he seems to have retained his indomitable spirit to the last.

The end of  
the first Earl  
of Northum-  
berland.

While lurking in one of the border peels in the Douglas country, messages were brought to him promising the aid of "a strong party" in case he invaded England.<sup>2</sup> It is generally admitted that these cozening communications had been prompted, if not actually sent, by Thomas Rokeby, Sheriff of York. Rokeby was a friend of Northumberland, and had served under him in France and England; so that the earl would naturally have been well disposed to trust to his promises.

Whether the sheriff really had a hand in the treachery or not, Northumberland took the bait all too eagerly. Arousing his friends upon the Scots border by promises of a raid even more successful than that upon which he had previously led them, the valiant old soldier succeeded in mustering an army of no mean proportions. Likely it is that knights not a few from the English side of the frontier came to join their quondam lord, or swelled his forces as he marched across the Tweed and Tyne. The *Scotichronicon* asserts that Thomas Rokeby had promised to join him near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire, and that Northumberland pushed on without opposition to that place. With him rode the faithful Bardolf. At Bramham Moor Rokeby appeared with

<sup>1</sup> *Scotichronicon.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1167.

a superior army; but alliance with Percy and the Scots was far from being his intention. By means of ambuscades he succeeded in surrounding the invading troops on every side. Then, "*with a standard of St. George's spread,*" he "*set fiercely upon the earl; who, under a standard of his own, encountered his adversary with great manhood.*"<sup>1</sup> Rokeby was a man in the prime of life; Northumberland had reached his sixty-third year. After a sturdy fight the latter was unhorsed, but continued, although wounded, to do battle on foot. The huge Bardolf, battle-axe in hand, rushed to his friend's assistance, and for some time kept back the grim press of Rokeby's knights. Tradition avers that, seeing further resistance hopeless, the kindly giant would have carried off Northumberland in his arms. But a lance-thrust pierced Bardolf's throat, and he was slain. Northumberland, bleeding from many wounds, fought valorously on, until life forsook him, and he fell beside the corpse of his fellow-outlaw. Then "*his head, crowned and bearded with hoary hair, was set high upon a pike, and borne in all men's sight to London, to be fixed upon the bridge of that city.*"<sup>2</sup>

In such wise died Henry Percy, first Earl of Northumberland. While neither a great captain, nor possessed of any extraordinary intellectual gifts, he had all the dauntless courage and rugged honesty of his race. The racial obstinacy and quickness of temper also distinguished him; and the upright independence of his nature can be judged from his vigorous support of Wickliff, as well as for the stout efforts which he made in favour of court and parliamentary reform throughout the reign of Richard II. When his character and attainments are compared with those of his contemporaries among the English or Scots nobility, the first Earl of Northumberland must be accorded a very high place. Seldom surely in the history of the Island have three such near relatives occupied, at one and the same time, a position so prominent, or encountered harsher fates, than did Northumberland, Harry Hotspur, and Thomas, Earl of Worcester.

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham.



SEAL OF HENRY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND

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## IV

WHEN the old earl fell at Bramham Moor, the heir of his name and race—Henry Percy, only son of Hotspur—was a sojourner across the border. Young Percy was in his fifteenth year, having been born on 3rd February 1394. His grandfather had sent him into Scotland in 1405, when the clouds were once more beginning to lower upon the house of Percy; and mainly to protect the lad from Henry IV.'s treachery and hatred, the Scots held him as a prisoner of war, refusing to yield him up to the English sovereign, on the plea that the latter had similarly detained Douglas and other Scottish prisoners after Homildoun.<sup>1</sup> At the northern court, however, the attainted heir of Northumberland was treated with great kindness, and allowed every privilege consistent with his own safety. It is interesting to note that his signature appears to a charter dated January 18, 1404, by which Robert, Duke of Albany, conferred lands in Clackmannan on his son-in-law Duncan Campbell of Lochaw.<sup>2</sup> It is "*a far cry to Lochaw*" indeed; but one may remember that a direct descendant of this Duncan of Lochaw (afterwards first Lord Campbell) is Edith, present Duchess of Northumberland.<sup>3</sup> King Robert selected Lord Percy as a fit companion and fellow-student for his son and heir, the future James I.; and together they trod the road of letters at the now venerable, but then newly-established, University of St. Andrews. Bishop Wardlaw (who was

<sup>1</sup> *Scotichronicon*, p. 1166.

<sup>2</sup> This document—connecting for the first time the names of Percy and Campbell—is preserved in the MSS. of the Duke of Argyll.

<sup>3</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table IV.

governor to the young prince), becoming fearful of the evil intentions of the Regent Albany towards his charge, eventually prevailed upon the king to send James, in company with young Percy, into France. This voyage, however, ended in ill-luck. Off Flamborough Head the prince caused his captain to cast anchor, and himself went ashore "to refresh himself after his sea vomit and nausea-tion."<sup>1</sup> In this way he fell into the hands of the English; and, in defiance of all treaties, was carried a prisoner to London, where, as we know, Henry IV. detained him in captivity for eighteen years. Another account<sup>2</sup> has it that the ship ran ashore off Flamborough Head; but this would appear to be untrue, for the reason that the heir of the Percies was not imprisoned at the same time as his friend, but actually returned to Scotland and re-entered the halls of St. Andrews. It is by no means likely that Henry IV. would have permitted so valuable a hostage as Percy to slip through his grasping fingers; and a natural supposition is that the account of Buchanan is correct, and that our subject, being a better sailor than the prince, remained on board, while the latter went on shore to recover from the pangs of sea-sickness. No mention is made of the fate of the vessel and its officers; hence it is probable that, hearing of their master's capture, and being attacked by a superior force, they put off to sea again, and made their way back to Scotland.

Henry Percy, during the intervals of study at St. Andrews, did not neglect to attain for himself that knowledge of arms which had become an attribute of his line. Not only in tourneys, but in the more serious civil frays of the day, he took an honourable part; and Northumbria treasures ballads and legends not a few, telling of his secret journeys across the border to visit his own country and his lost lands. No absolute evidence exists of these dangerous voyages; but some of the old traditions respecting them

Romantic legends concerning Percy.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan.

<sup>2</sup> David Scot, *Hist. of Scotland*, p. 222.

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Hamildege, Warwick  
April 20 1875

were in the year 1818 made into a drama, entitled "Percy's Masque," and even acted upon the stage. According to this romantic, though very doubtful, authority, Percy served for a time as a page, and under an assumed name, in the household of his father's enemy the Earl of Westmoreland. Here he fell in love with the earl's daughter, the Lady Alianore Nevill, who afterwards became his wife. The rest of the masque is wholly impossible. Bishop Percy, in his charming ballad, the "Hermit of Warkworth," tells how Percy, coming clandestinely into England, won the heart of Lady Alianore, and was married to her at the Warkworth Hermitage. He then returned to Scotland; but the Countess of Westmoreland, learning her daughter's secret, began at once to intrigue for the restoration of Percy to his paternal estates. The legend is preserved by the Register of Whitby;<sup>1</sup> but cannot be substantiated by any contemporary evidence. Still there seems little reason to doubt that Hotspur's son did on more than one occasion elude the vigilance of King Henry's wardens, and pay flying visits across the frontier which separated him from his home and the home of his fathers. The quaint hermitage of Warkworth, where the wandering heir and the lovely Alianore Nevill were said to have met and married, still stands ruggedly by the waterside, hard by Warkworth Castle; and a pleasanter or more inviting spot for young love to mate in spite of family feud and royal displeasure, one must wander far to find.

Whether her daughter's legendary marriage to Percy had aught to do with the Countess of Westmoreland's sudden favour, or whether other influences overcame the enmity which this noble dame (like her husband) had long borne towards the Percies, it is certain that, no sooner did Henry V. reach the throne, than the mother of Lady Alianore Nevill interceded vigorously with that monarch for the banished and landless youth. The intercession had all the more effect, since Joan of Westmoreland was the king's

<sup>1</sup> *Ex Regist. Monast. de Whitby*, Harl. MSS. 692, 26, fol. 235.

aunt,<sup>1</sup> and exercised great influence at Court. Henry was prevailed upon at length to restore Percy in blood ; and on November 11, 1414, the nominal prisoner of Scotland was permitted to present a petition to Parliament praying for the restoration of his estates and titles.<sup>2</sup> Upon this petition Parliament reported favourably, adding that "*le dit suppliant est deinz age et detenu en Escose encontre son bon gré et volenté*"<sup>3</sup>—showing that the Scottish Court, partly doubting English good faith towards Percy, and partly desirous of obtaining in exchange some of the prisoners taken at Homildoun, still kept up the fiction of the young man's forcible detention. The latter theory is supported by the fact that the Regent Albany offered to exchange Percy for his son Murdoch, Earl of Fife ; and negotiations to this effect were pending when the discovery of the Earl of Cambridge's conspiracy caused them to be temporarily abandoned. Cambridge attempted to implicate Percy in his schemes ;<sup>4</sup> but this charge was quickly disproved, and the exile's exchange was duly arranged for on July 1, 1415, the English Commissioners being the Lords Grey and Nevill. Fife was delivered up to Scotland ; while Henry Percy, upon entering into a recognisance with the king for the sum of £10,000, became once more free of English soil.<sup>5</sup> So poor at the time were both of these long-exiled nobles, that grants of £200 and 100 marks were needed before they could appear becomingly at their respective courts.<sup>6</sup> The hereditary possessions of Percy were duly restored ; and on March 16, 1416, he did homage in Parliament for his earldom and other titles, receiving a new patent of creation.<sup>7</sup> Some little while later he was made Governor of Berwick and General Warden of the East Marches, "*with same powers as Lord Grey formerly had.*"<sup>8</sup> Thus the Percies were once more restored to the lofty position which they had forfeited when the first earl was outlawed and attainted.

<sup>1</sup> She was the daughter of John of Gaunt, and consequently sister of Henry IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Rolls of Parlt.*, iv. 36-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 3 Hen. V., m. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Federa*, ix. 300.

<sup>5</sup> *Proceedings of Privy Council.*

<sup>6</sup> *Issue Rolls*, 8th February 1416.

<sup>7</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, iv. 21-2.

<sup>8</sup> *Rot. Scot.*, 4 Hen. V., Feb. 23, 1417.

It is satisfactory to note that one of the new earl's first acts was to obtain the royal leave to remove from London the head of his unhappy grandsire, and to bear that grisly relic dutifully to York Minster, where it was interred with the mortal remains of Harry Hotspur.<sup>1</sup>

Whether or not the second Earl of Northumberland had been secretly married to Lady Alianore Nevill at Warkworth Hermitage (as Bishop Percy sings, and as the old stories tell), he was publicly united to that fair damsel shortly after his restoration. A double wedding seems indeed to have taken place, for the earl's sister<sup>2</sup>—the only daughter of Hotspur—was united to John, Lord Clifford.

It is regrettable that no account exists of these nuptials. Even the gossiping monkish chroniclers of Whitby do not enter into any details concerning them. Romance indeed has woven legends around Alianore Nevill before her marriage; yet, after that event, it tells us nought of her life. All that we can gather concerning the countess is told in a very few words. She celebrated her new dignity by a grand banquet to the king at Leckonfield—the parish and church of which place were ever afterwards under her patronage, probably by gift from her husband. She bore her husband in all twelve children; and in or about 1425 we are afforded a fleeting glimpse of the earl and countess proceeding from Leckonfield, attended by some of their offspring, to witness the great plays or mysteries of Beverley, held annually on the feast of Corpus Christi.<sup>3</sup> These performances were of ancient origin in Beverley, and must have afforded keen delight to the children of Northumberland. "*There were,*" says Poulson, "*theatres for the several scenes, large and high, placed upon wheels, and drawn to all the eminent parts, for the better advantage of the spectators. Strutt says that the antient stage*

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Percy married, first, Lord Clifford, and, secondly, the second Earl of Westmoreland.

<sup>3</sup> Poulson's *Beverlac*.

*consisted of three several platforms raised one above another. In the uppermost sat God, surrounded by his angels; in the second appeared the holy saints; and in the last mere mortals. On one side of this lowest platform was the resemblance of a dark, pitchy cavern, from whence issued appearances of flames of fire; and when it was necessary the audience was treated with hideous yellings and noises, as imitative of the howls and cries of the wretched souls tormented by restless demons. From this yawning cave the devils themselves constantly ascended to delight and instruct the spectators."* One would imagine that the more youthful members of the family of Leckonfield must have been frightened rather than delighted at this spectacle. The entry from the rolls of Beverley describing the visit of Northumberland and his family runs as follows:—*"A.D. 1423; 2nd of Henry VI.—And in expenses of an entertainment made by agreement of the twelve governors in Corpus Christi day, to the Earl and Countess of Northumberland and their children in the house of Wm. Thyxhill barber dining and supping at the charge of the said town of Beverley, and in several presents given to the different officers and ministers as appears by bill produced examined and approved upon this account;—£4. 0s. 4d. Also paid the archers of the town of Beverley riding in the morning through the whole town;—20d. Also paid for the charges of the twelve governors of the town in the day of the play of Corpus Christi expended upon the aldermen of the different crafts and burgesses of the town and other gentlemen assembled as appears by a bill thereof made and written in the paper book;—30s. 9½d."*

While the distinguished guests of the town were so hospitably treated at the house of barber William Thyxhill, the mysteries themselves took place at the North Bar. After the feasting and playing the earl and countess, with their family and train, returned to Leckonfield; which appears to have been their favourite place of residence.<sup>1</sup> Alianore, Countess of Northumberland, survived her husband eight

<sup>1</sup> Leckonfield or Leconfield, where the second Earl of Northumberland and his wife spent most of their time, lies about three miles from Beverley to the N.N.W. The ancient manor-house was replaced by a stately castle, probably



years. As a widow in 1459 and in 1461 she made grants of the advowson of the parish church of Leckonfield.<sup>1</sup>

Although the earl preserved feelings of the kindest nature towards Scotland, where he had dwelt so long, and which had treated him so hospitably in the days of his adversity, yet duty soon called him to serve actively against his friends across the frontier. In the spring of 1417 he was made Warden of the East Marches and Governor of Berwick. Under Archibald, fourth Earl of Douglas and the Duke of Albany, the Scots attacked Roxburgh and Berwick during the following October. Northumberland lost no time in mustering an army—the first raised by a Percy in the north of England since the tragedy of Bramham Moor. Gentle and simple flocked to his standard; one of the first to join the array being that sturdy churchman Bowet, Archbishop of York. The Northumbrians encamped on Barmoor by Wooler; and subsequently marched to the relief of the threatened towns, driving the invaders before them. An English raid into the southern counties of Scotland followed; and more than one castle which of old had sheltered the banished Percy, now fell before his attack.<sup>2</sup> Again in 1419 Sir William Haliburton having crossed the Tweed (it is said without provocation) and captured Wark Castle, Northumberland advanced with a promptness worthy of Hotspur and laid siege to that fortress. The defence was most determined; but in the end the English succeeded in effecting an entrance through the main sewer, and “*slew every Scot within the walls.*”<sup>3</sup>

To Henry V., the monarch who had restored him to his titles and estates, the earl ever showed an unfailing loyalty. He was still exiled in Scotland at the time of

built between 1400 and 1410; and this structure was itself demolished in 1600 to furnish materials for the repair of Wressell Castle. The moat may still be traced, in the middle of a rich pasture. The estate has passed into the family of Wyndham.

<sup>1</sup> *Calend. Inquis. ad quod damnum*, 37 & 39 Hen. VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotichronicon*, p. 1186; *Gesta Hen. V.*

<sup>3</sup> *Holinshed*, v. p. 411.

the battle of Agincourt, so that (in spite of the erroneous statements of Banks<sup>1</sup> and Wainwright<sup>2</sup>) he could have taken no part in that great victory. But in 1419 he was one of the ten earls who rode with Henry on his entry into Rouen; and at the marriage of the king to his "fair Kate" on February 24, 1421, Northumberland officiated as Lord High Steward. When the king's untimely death occurred, the earl became a member of the Council of Regency; and a year later saw him filling the former post of his great-uncle, Thomas Percy, as Ambassador to the Court of France. For this important service he received the sum of 66s. 8d. a day,<sup>3</sup> as well as £100 to be used as expenses "*in going and coming upon the embassy aforesaid.*"<sup>4</sup> Embassies to Pavia in 1423, and to Scotland from 1423 to 1424 and from 1429 to 1430, followed; during the latter of which missions he succeeded in effecting a prolonged truce with the Scots.

Northumberland was notable at this period of his life for his great skill in tourney. That such a chivalrous knight should evince a distaste for what he considered the chicanery of the law is by no means strange; and we find him in or about 1422 figuring as one of the suitors in a case which had been referred to a court of honour—that characteristic institution of the period by means of which disputes were decided between armed champions in single combat, rather than by the arguments of cunning pleaders. The case in which Northumberland became involved arose out of the rival claims advanced by himself and one Sir Peter Cokain [? Cockaigne] to the manor of Cappenhow, in Cumberland. The full account of this curious trial is preserved in the original Norman-French among the manuscripts at Syon House. The following is a translation of a portion of the record:—" *Sir Peter Cokain Knight presents Brief of Right against Henry Percy Earl of Northumberland for the manor*

Trial by  
combat.

<sup>1</sup> *Extinct Baronage of England.*

<sup>2</sup> *Fadera*, x. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of Yorkshire.*

<sup>4</sup> *Issue Rolls*, 1 Hen. VI.

*of Cappenhou in the County of Cumberland; Strange for the Tenant joins battle upon the 'meer Right' by the Body of Coltson, if God give him success, and Paston for the Demandant rejoins Battle by the body of his Free Tenant or Freeholder J.P. if God give him success.*

*"And it was commanded to the Champion of the Tenant or Holder of the said manor (scilicet the Earl of Northumberland) that he should put into his glove five pence, into each fingerstall one penny, and that he should hold it in his right hand naked to the Elbow, and that he should throw down his glove into the Court, and it was commanded to the Champion of the Demandant to do in like manner.*

*"Brown and Clerk received the Gloves, and it was commanded by the Court that they should come the next morning in their array. And then the Champions came . . . and Babington commands to the Champion of the tenant that he should mount behind the Bar, and that he should come into his place bare-headed and ungirt without hose or shoes, and it was commanded of him to be upon the east side of the place, and that the Champion of the defendant should come in like guise, and be on the left of the place. And then the Champions being on their knees before the Justices, and the Chief Justice demanded of Strange and Paston, who were with the parties, if they had anything to say why the two champions should not be allowed by them, or why the two champions should not join in (dirreigner) this Battle; who answered they had Not. Cokain then said, 'See that they are without men,' and then Brown gave the gloves and searched if there were in each glove five pence, or not; and he found in each glove five pence, that is to say in each finger one penny. And then he gave one glove to the Champion for the tenant and one glove to the Champion for the defendant, but he took no notice which of the gloves he gave to the one or the other, for this is unimportant (car il nest plus forse)."*

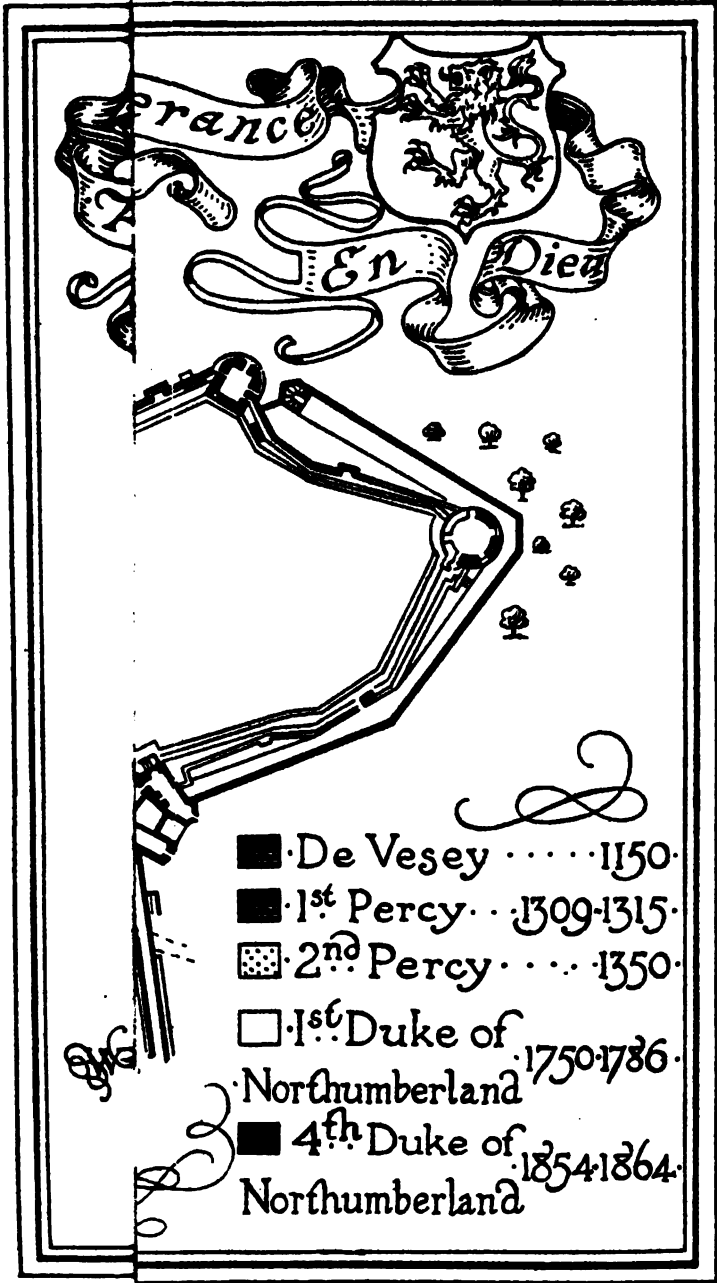
The champions were then asked whether they stood ready to engage in battle for their claims; and having answered in the affirmative, they were commanded to be in that same place "in their array" to engage in combat

on the following Saturday. To one of them one of the gloves cast into the arena was then given with orders that he was to carry it to the north door of St. Paul's, and there implore Heaven to give the victory to him that best deserved it. In a similar manner the other claimant received a glove; but he was instructed to bear it to St. Edward's shrine at Westminster, in order to offer up a prayer for the defence of the right. Sureties were demanded that the champions should be prevented from meeting until the appointed day. Sir Peter Cokain and the Earl of Northumberland were then called before the bar; and the latter was "*solemnly demanded that he should come with his champion to arraign this Battle in his defence against the said knight, Sir P. C. and his champion for the Manor of Cappenhow in the county of Cumberland, or otherwise the said earl should lose the land for himself and his heirs for ever.*"

When the day set apart for the combat arrived the earl failed to appear before the court. He had in the meantime satisfied himself of the justice of Cokain's claim, and for this reason let the decision go by default. He was accordingly ordered to be "*amerced according to his rank and estate by his brother peers;*" and Cokain was declared to have established his case. On several occasions Northumberland himself presided as judge over tribunals of a similar strange character. During the dispute for precedence between the Earl Marshal and the Earl of Warwick, both sides chose him umpire.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the efforts of the recently-released King of Scots, James I., on the one side, and of those of his old comrade, Northumberland, on the other, war Fresh border wars. soon broke out afresh upon the border. The truce with Scotland expired in May 1436; but long before that event Northumberland foresaw bloodshed, and made his preparations accordingly. Alnwick, which had been partially destroyed in former conflicts, was re-walled; and the earl bestowed knighthood upon many of

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 3 Hen. VI.



- De Vesey . . . . . 1150.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Percy . . . 1309-1315.
- ▣ 2<sup>nd</sup> Percy . . . . . 1350.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Northumberland . 1750-1786.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Northumberland . 1854-1864.



the northern chivalry. An army of about five thousand men was also held in readiness to overcome any invasion which might take place. At length, either in consequence of a Scottish raid, or, as some say, because of a private feud between himself and William Douglas, Earl of Angus,<sup>1</sup> Northumberland advanced towards the Eastern Marches. At a place called Piperden or Pepperden on Brammish, among the foothills of the Cheviots (and consequently well within his own territories), he unexpectedly encountered a Scots force of equal strength commanded by Angus, Hepburn of Hales, Elphinstone of Elphinstone, and Ramsay of Dalhousie.<sup>2</sup> It seems probable that the Scots had prepared an ambush for Northumberland; whose reckless generalship led him into the trap. The English were crushingly defeated. Forty knights and nearly fifteen hundred gentlemen and commons were left by them upon the field, while the losses of the conquerors were trifling. Sir Richard Percy, cousin of the earl, Sir John Ogle, and Sir Henry Clidsale were among the Northumbrian captains who fell; and Angus lost his lieutenant, the brave Elphinstone.<sup>3</sup> Many of the incidents of this bloody encounter are supposed to have been woven into the ballad of Chevy Chase.

Northumberland fell back upon Alnwick; while the invaders, led by their king in person and reinforced by some 20,000, pushed on to the walls of Roxburgh. This fortress, however, Sir Ralph Grey gallantly defended against them for twenty days. During this time Northumberland had been able to rally his army; and coming to Grey's relief, he fell upon the besiegers and routed them with great slaughter. King James is accused by Holinshed<sup>4</sup> and Hardyng<sup>5</sup> of flying from the field even before Nor-

<sup>1</sup> The second earl. Boece, p. 353, states that it is doubtful whether Northumberland had the royal authority for making war against the Scots.

<sup>2</sup> Ridpath, *Border History*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Holinshed, iii. 189.

<sup>5</sup> Hardyng, *Chronicle*, p. 397:—

*" Therle then of Northumberland throughout  
Raysed up the lande, and when he came it nere  
The Kyng trumped up and went away full clere."*

thumberland arrived. Ridpath, on the contrary, seeks to explain the monarch's retreat by the arrival of news, brought by the queen, of a plot against the throne. No doubt exists, however, as to the defeat and dispersal of the Scottish army, among the survivors of which the luckless expedition was long expressively known as "*the Dirlin Raid*." A truce was concluded almost immediately after this event.<sup>1</sup>

Although the earl had been so badly defeated at Piperden, his services in raising the siege of Roxburgh were rewarded with an annuity of £100 for life; and he was despatched on a special mission to deliver the Order of the Garter to the King of Portugal.<sup>2</sup> This sovereign was his own cousin, being the grandson of John of Gaunt; so that it may be presumed that Northumberland met with a good reception at the Portuguese Court. After his return he purchased the lordship of Doncaster from Sir John Salvayne; and began the erection of Warkworth keep, which, though to-day a ruin, remains an impressive monument to his memory. In 1441 we find him as a lord of Council inquiring into the accusations brought against the Duchess of Gloucester and others of sorcery and treason aimed at the king's life;<sup>3</sup> and in 1442-43, during a feud with Kemp, Archbishop of York, Northumberland's men wrought havoc upon the archiepiscopal property at Ripon and Bishopthorpe, for which over-zeal in his behalf their lord was afterwards forced to make good.<sup>4</sup>

The truce which had subsisted for an unusually prolonged period between England and Scotland was broken in 1448. Each side accused the other of having been the first to commence hostilities. Buchan<sup>5</sup> asserts that the Earls of Northumberland and Salisbury, respectively Wardens of the East and West Marches, raided and burned the towns of Dumfries and Dunbar, thereby compelling the Scots to make reprisals. English writers, on the other hand, would have it that the first blow was

<sup>1</sup> *Pat.*, 16 Hen. VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Scot.*, 16 Hen. VI.

<sup>3</sup> *Devon. Issues*, p. 444.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings*, v. 269-70, 309.

<sup>5</sup> Buchan, i. 11.



struck by Douglas of Balveny,<sup>1</sup> who burst furiously across the border, ravaged Cumberland, and laid the town of Alnwick in ashes. Northumberland pursued Balmeny across the Solway; until he found himself confronted, on the banks of the Sark, by a large army under the Earl of Ormond.<sup>2</sup>

The fight was keenly contested. For a time fortune favoured the English; "*Ormond and the rest of the (Scottish) leaders being sore discomfit*;"<sup>3</sup> but the sudden arrival of the Lord Maxwell with belated reserves wrought a complete change in the condition of affairs, and Northumberland's army was put to flight, 3000 being either slain on the field or drowned in the Solway Firth. The earl himself escaped capture or death only through the courageous devotion of his eldest son, Henry, Lord Percy, who was himself taken prisoner while defending his father against the enemy.<sup>4</sup> Next year, however, the earl succeeded in repelling a Scottish raid, and received (in company with another of his sons, Sir Ralph Percy) the thanks of the king for "*diligence in protecting the Marches*" and for "*rebuking and resisting the malice of our enemyes the Scottes that studiene by all thir wayes the noysance of our saide countreye and subyettes.*" Other marks of royal favour followed. Wressill Castle, part of the confiscated property of Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, was bestowed upon the latter's grand-nephew; who was also elevated to the dignity of Lord High Constable.<sup>5</sup> Northumberland's second son was about the same time created Baron of Egremont;<sup>6</sup> and the earl himself sat as one of the judges upon De la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, for complicity in the murder of the Duke of Gloucester, and the surrender of some of the French provinces.

<sup>1</sup> James Douglas of Balveny, brother of the Earl of Douglas.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh, Earl of Ormond, brother of Balmeny and of the Earl of Douglas.

<sup>3</sup> *Book of Caerlaverock*, vol. i. p. 137.

<sup>4</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>5</sup> Wressill again passed out of Percy hands in 1469, but was restored to the fourth Earl of Northumberland by Henry VII. It was transferred to the Wyndham family in 1750.

<sup>6</sup> *Pat.*, 28 Hen. VI.

In spite of intermarriages,<sup>1</sup> and public professions of friendship on the part of both houses, the old feud between the families of Nevill and Percy had never wholly died out. Political troubles—the discontent arising out of intolerably heavy taxation, and the loss of so much French territory—now fanned the smouldering embers into a blaze. Early in 1452 a serious conflict occurred between Northumberland and his brother-in-law, the Earl of Salisbury,<sup>2</sup> probably in the neighbourhood of Beverley, over the control of which town the Nevills and Percies had of late been at odds.<sup>3</sup> This affray, wherein many were slain or wounded, brought in July 1453 a letter from the king,<sup>4</sup> praying the two earls to keep the peace. It was as though the unfortunate Henry had instinctively recognised in these northern frays a prophetic warning of the coming civil war which was to hurl him from his throne. But even the royal wishes had no effect upon the rival houses. Northumberland and Salisbury themselves, it is true, sheathed their swords for a space; but the younger generation was not to be held back. Scarcely a month had elapsed before a furious battle was fought at Stamford Bridge,<sup>5</sup> near York, between Thomas, Lord Egremont and Sir Richard Percy (the sons of Northumberland) on the one part, and the two sons of Salisbury on the other. Through the treason of one of their knights, it is said, the Percies were defeated and taken prisoner. Egremont was sentenced by the Justices of York to pay the heavy fine of 14,800 marks; and "*for lakke of payment thereof, or of putting suretie for the same, the sayd Lorde Egremonde was*

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the marriage of the Lady Alianore Nevill to the second Earl of Northumberland, the latter's sister (after the death of her first husband, Lord Grey) had been married to the second Earl of Westmoreland, nephew of the Lady Alianore.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury, second son of the first Earl of Westmoreland.

<sup>3</sup> Poulson's *Beverlac*.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings*, vi. 147.

<sup>5</sup> Stamford or Stanford Bridge had been the scene of a previous struggle, that between Harold and the Danes, September 23, 1066.

*committed to Newgate.*"<sup>1</sup> His brother, Richard, was also lodged in prison; but not for long did these grandsons of Hotspur remain in durance. In the words of Stow,<sup>2</sup> "*Lord Egremont and Sir Richard Percy, his brother, brake out of prison by night, and went to the king; the other prisoners took the leads off the gate, and defended it a long while against the sheriffs and all their officers, insomuch that they were forced to call more aid of the citizens, whereby at last they subdued them and laid them in irons.*" The two Percies, however, succeeded in getting clean away, "*to the grete charge of the sheriffs,*" which latter officials became responsible for Egremont's fine. Once more the king wrote to Northumberland, imploring him to do his duty, and keep his unruly sons and their adherents in order.<sup>3</sup>

In May 1455 the war-storm broke upon England. The Duke of York, whose commission as Lieutenant of the Kingdom had been withdrawn, resolved upon the overthrow of the king. With the Earl of Warwick and a formidable force he marched upon St. Albans, where Henry and his loyal followers lay encamped. The veriest pretence at negotiation was followed on May 22 by a sudden attack upon the Lancastrian lines. The battle was brief and bloody; York and Warwick were everywhere victorious. Northumberland, the real leader of the royalists, showed himself once more as brave as he was unlucky. The king stole away from the fight and fled to London, presently to fall into the hands of his enemies. But running away was not to the liking of Hotspur's son:—

The battle of  
St. Albans.

*"The great Lord of Northumberland,  
Whose warlike ears could never brook retreat,  
Cheered up the drooping army; and himself  
Charged our main battle's front, and, breaking in,  
Was by the swords of common soldiers slain."*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Englishe Chronicle.*

<sup>2</sup> *Survey*, vol. i. p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings*, pp. 159-64.

<sup>4</sup> Third Part of *King Henry VI.*, Act i. sc. 2.

So, indeed, died the second Earl of Northumberland, the first of his race to fall for the house of Lancaster. Henry V. had restored to him his forfeited possessions; he gave to the cause of Henry VI. his life in requital. The slaughter was terrible on the royalist side. "*There died under the sign of the Castle (underneath an ale-house paltry sign) Edward, Duke of Somerset, Henry, second Earl of Northumberland, Humphrey, Earl of Stafford, John, Lord Clifford, with VII M. men or more.*"<sup>1</sup> Hume places the number of the slain at 5000.

The body of Northumberland was temporarily laid in the Lady-Chapel of St. Albans Abbey; but was afterwards removed to York Minster, where a painted window, removed in 1590, represented him kneeling in prayer, together with his Countess Alianore and their twelve children.<sup>2</sup>

To the second earl succeeded his eldest son, Henry, third Earl of Northumberland, the same loyal knight that we have seen sacrifice his liberty to save his father from capture on the Sark Water in 1448.

The third earl was bound to his ill-fated sovereign, Henry VI., by many ties of sympathy and friendship.

King and subject had been born within the same year, 1421;<sup>3</sup> and within the same year, almost within the same month, they had been married. When, on May 4, 1426, at the age of five years, the young King Henry was knighted by the Duke of Bedford, his first act, after receiving the accolade, was to knight young Henry Percy.<sup>4</sup> Before that they had been playmates; thereafter they became fellow-students and companions in camp and court. But always from the first they were friends; and we shall see how loyal was Percy's friendship.

<sup>1</sup> Hall's *Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> Drake's *Eboracum*. The window was taken down for repairs, and never replaced.

<sup>3</sup> *Fœdera*, x. 356.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

The third earl was born at Leckonfield, the beloved home of his parents, on July 25, 1421—his two elder brothers died in infancy, leaving him heir of his name. Without doubt he was one of the children who accompanied the Earl and Countess of Northumberland to the mystery-plays at Beverley, heretofore described; but just so soon as he had

“ . . . bene sette  
To scole and learnt the doctrine of lettrure,  
And afterward to have him in language  
And sit at meat semely in all nurture,”<sup>1</sup>

he was removed from the quiet halls of Leckonfield and placed at Court. In 1439, at the age of eighteen, he had already so well established his fame as a soldier, that the Wardenship of the East Marches towards Scotland was committed to him;<sup>2</sup> and the following year saw him one of the Commissioners of the Border. In March 1443 occurred his marriage to a great heiress—Eleanor Baroness Poynings, Fitz-Payn and Bryan. This lady (the daughter of Sir Richard Poynings who fell at the siege of Orleans in 1429) inherited not only the titles and estates of her grandfather, Robert, Lord Poynings and Fitz-Payn, but also those of the latter's wife Elizabeth, Baroness Bryan. Her mother (daughter of Sir John Berkeley and widow of the Earl of Arundel) made a curious will, dated 1455, by which she bequeathed to “*my dear daughter the lady Eleanor Percy, a golden collar for her neck, . . . also a basin of silver with the arms of the said Poynings and of Sir John Berkeley my father therein, likewise a ewer of silver, and C*l* sterling.*”<sup>3</sup> Through the Lady Eleanor the baronies of Poynings, Fitz-Payn and Bryan were brought into the Percy family,<sup>4</sup> together with large estates in Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Somerset, and Kent. In 1446 the Lord Percy was summoned to Parliament as Lord Poynings. Scottish authorities state that he precipitated a new border war by

<sup>1</sup> Hardyng's Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> Testamenta Vetusta.

<sup>3</sup> Federa.

<sup>4</sup> Dugdale, Baronage.

burning Dunbar in May 1448; and we know that he was taken prisoner on Sark Water in that year. Having regained his liberty on payment of a heavy ransom, he was recompensed by his friend the king with a grant of one-half the lands of the outlawed Sir Robert Ogle. The royal favour was further shown when, on the death of the second Earl of Northumberland at the battle of St. Albans, King Henry (although virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of York) succeeded in procuring for Lord Percy the peaceful inheritance of his father's domains and dignities; nor could the Yorkists, much as they hated the name of Percy, hope to retain popular approval while barring the way to the third earl's succession, seeing that on July 3 he had raised an army "*at his own great expenses,*" beaten back the Scots from Berwick, and saved the distracted kingdom from invasion.<sup>1</sup> The dominant party even permitted Northumberland to be given the important post of Justiciary of the Royal Forests beyond Trent<sup>2</sup> as a further reward for his vigorous defence of the border.

The Scots repulsed from Berwick, Northumberland's first thought was to revenge the death of his father, and incidentally to free the king, his friend, from Yorkist clutches. With these ends in view he set himself to gather together a band of young nobles, whose sires (like his own) had fallen on the stricken field of St. Albans. Many responded to his call; among the number the Duke of Somerset, the Lord Clifford, and Northumberland's own three brothers—Thomas, Lord Egremont, Sir Ralph Percy, and Sir Richard Percy.<sup>3</sup> All the members of the band were young; all were staunchly Lancastrian in their sympathies; and all had a debt of blood to repay.<sup>4</sup>

Queen Margaret—that heroic, almost masculine, woman

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Fin.*, 33 Hen. VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Pat.*, 38 Hen. VI.

<sup>3</sup> Of the earl's two remaining brothers, one, George Percy, was a priest; the other, William, likewise a cleric, became Chancellor of Cambridge, and eventually Bishop of Carlisle.

<sup>4</sup> Lingard.

—lent open countenance to this "League of the Young Lords," as it came to be called. But the craven king sought only peace, preferring even to continue a prisoner than to undergo again the risks and terrors of war. Hearing of the movement in the north, he hurriedly sent out summonses to Yorkists and Lancastrians alike, bidding them come to London and discuss their grievances in open council. The great meeting was convened for March 15, 1457; but more than a month before that date the chivalry of the kingdom began to pour into London and its suburbs. From the north came the young nobles, each member of the league attended by a great company of knights, esquires, and men-at-arms. So threatening indeed was the behaviour of the Percies, Somerset, and Clifford, that, according to one historian,<sup>1</sup> "*The cytie (of London) wolde not receyve theym, because they came agaynst the pease. The Duke of Yorke and the Erle of Salisbury came out onely with ther householde men in pesyble manner, thinking none harme, and were lodgyd withyne the cytie; but the abovesaide came for to destroy utterly the saide Duke of Yorke, armed for to withstande the malice of the young Lordes yf nede had be.*" This writer, however, shows signs of strong prejudice in favour of the White Rose. Grafton states that the young lords abode in the suburbs of London, because "*as the Jews disdained the company of the Samaritans, soe they abhorred the familiaritie of the Yorkshire lineage.*" If York, Warwick, and Salisbury brought only their private households "*in pesyble manner,*" to London, they must have possessed unusually large and well-armed trains. "*The Earle of Salisburie,*" declares Stow,<sup>2</sup> "*came with 500 men on horseback, and was lodged in the Herber; Richard, Duke of York, with 400 men lodged at Baynard Castle. The Dukes of Excester and Somerset with 800 men; and the Earle of Northumberland, the Lord Egremont and the Lord Clifford with 1500 men. Richard, Earle of Warwick, with 600 men, all in red jackets embroidered with ragged staves before and behind, was lodged in Warwick Lane.*"

<sup>1</sup> *An Englische Chronicle*, Camden Society.

<sup>2</sup> *Survey*, p. 72.

Naturally the worthy citizens of London dreaded an outbreak with such formidable forces within and without the walls, and took every precaution against violence. The civic trained bands "*kept greate watche as well by daie as by night, riding about the citie by Houlbourne and Fleet Street, with four thousand men well armed and arrayed, to see good order and peace at all times kept.*"<sup>1</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury and others of the hierarchy, too, acted as mediators between the young lords and their enemies; making daily journeys from the city to the northern heights whereon Northumberland lay with his troops. On March 15 the leaders of both parties appeared before the king and Council in Westminster. Negotiations were prolonged until March 25; when an award, acceptable to the Lancastrians, was finally made. The adherents of York were ordered by the Council to found a chauntry for the repose of the three great lords (Somerset, Northumberland, and Clifford) slain at St. Albans; and to pay substantial fines to their sons and heirs. The young Duke of Somerset received 5000, and the Lord Clifford 1000 marks. Northumberland, however, proudly refused to accept one penny. His father's death, he averred, could not be atoned for by the payment of any sum of money howsoever great; nor could all the persuasions of king and friends induce him to change his mind. It is even said that he opposed the order of Council remitting that heavy fine which, six years before, his brother Egremont had been condemned to pay to the Nevills for his share in the affray at Stamford Bridge. A grand thanksgiving was held at St. Paul's by way of termination to these proceedings. The king was present, wearing his crown; the Duke of York escorted the queen with every appearance of friendship; and the nobles, ostensibly reconciled, walked hand in hand in solemn procession.<sup>2</sup> History does not state whose hand Northumberland clasped on this memorable occasion; nor indeed do we know with certainty that he participated in the ceremony at all. A few weeks later he was again in

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed, iii. p. 640.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. p. 648.



his beloved north. The League of the Young Lords remained unbroken, despite all the efforts at reconciliation made by the Yorkists; and it soon became apparent that Northumberland and his friends looked upon the decisions of Parliament as anything but final. In London, Queen Margaret was busy for the cause of the Red Rose. Her emissaries crossed and recrossed the Channel, or made their way to and fro between Alnwick and the Court. Even the purblind king saw that the truce was destined to be short; and, one by one, the Yorkist leaders began to steal away from the capital and to look to the strengthening of their fortresses.

Within a year after that futile thanksgiving in St. Paul's the queen sent secret word to Northumberland summoning the young lords once more to London. The warning beacon blazed from hill to hill; the north rose in arms; and the sons of those who had died at St. Albans rode forth resolved that, this time at least, vengeance was to be theirs. In spite of civic opposition they made their way into London, and demanded the punishment of the Yorkists. The king, no longer intimidated by his enemies, was easily induced to hearken to the loyalist nobles; and Northumberland brought formal charges against York, the Nevills, and others of having rebelled against the royal authority and "*feloniously slayne divers Lordes of the Bloode, that is to saye the Duke of Somerset, the Earle of Northumberland, and the Lorde Clifford.*"<sup>1</sup> At the Parliament held in Coventry, November 28, 1459, an act of attainder was passed against all those accused; and the young lords, headed by Northumberland, took oath to maintain the succession to the throne in the king's family. At the queen's instigation the government of the country north of Humber was then bestowed upon the Earl and Lord Clifford, as the "*trusty and most faithful friends*" of the House of Lancaster.<sup>2</sup> This was a shrewd stroke; since "*the whole north of*

The queen  
and the  
young lords.

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 27 Hen. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 242.

*England*" (as Hume observes) "*was by means of these two noblemen warmly engaged in the interests of Lancaster.*" Without their influence, indeed, the cause of the Red Rose would have found but slight favour in those regions, where the pitiable character of Henry VI. was well known, and the superior claims of York to the throne fully recognised.<sup>1</sup> But, although they might hold the men of the north country together, the Percies and Cliffords could do little to stem the flowing tide of Yorkist influence in the south and west. Along the Welsh Marches especially the name of Mortimer's heir was one to conjure with.

Although Northumberland and his brothers were at feud with each and all of their cousins, the Nevills, it was against Richard Nevill, the great Earl of Warwick, that their hate was chiefly directed. Many traditional reasons are given for this, the most plausible being that it was by Warwick's sword that the second Earl of Northumberland had been slain at St. Albans. When the royalist and Yorkist forces met at Northampton, the four Percies "*determined to take Warwick dead or alive*";<sup>2</sup> and the impetuosity of the Lancastrian attack upon the future "King-maker's" forces is traceable to this unfortunate resolve. The battle lasted several hours, and ended in a complete victory for the veterans of York,—the royal army losing, according to Hall, "*few lesse than xm talle Englishmen.*" Northumberland, seeing that affairs were past mending for the time, sent his brother, Lord Egremont, to guard the king's person; while he himself retreated with the queen and the young Prince Edward. Egremont hastened to the royal tent only to meet a furious charge of the enemy led by Warwick in person. No thought of surrender, however, crossed the brave soldier's mind: to ask quarter of a

<sup>1</sup> Richard, Duke of York, was son of the Earl of Cambridge by the sister of Edmund Mortimer, last Earl of March, who had died *s.p.* 1425. Consequently, like Northumberland, he descended from Lionel, Duke of Clarence. It will be remembered that, at the outset, the Percies had sided with their kinsmen of York; but that the gratitude of the second earl towards Henry V., and the third earl's friendship for Henry VI., had made the family Lancastrian.

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

Nevill—and, above all, of Warwick—were to him unspeakable shame. Drawing his sword he placed himself directly between the trembling Henry and the whole host of York. Two knights, bearing Warwick's badge of the bear and staff, precipitated themselves upon him; but he defended himself obstinately, slaying both of his assailants. Then Warwick (who had recognised Egremont) ordered several knights and esquires to attack him at once;<sup>1</sup> and so this second of the soldier brethren of Northumberland,—a man "*full stoute in feate of warre*"—paid for his loyalty with his life, and fell pierced by many wounds at the very feet of the king.<sup>2</sup>

Although the battle of Northampton was straightway followed by the proclamation of the Duke of York as heir to the throne and Regent of England; and although the craven king was actually induced to forego his own son's rights in consenting to this humiliating arrangement; the Lancastrian party had but suffered a temporary stay, and the revenge of the young lords, so long looked for, was really near at hand.

The queen and Northumberland rallied their forces at York, where they were joined by the Lords Clifford and Dacre with fresh levies. It was in vain that the king at the bidding of York and Warwick sent urgent messages calling upon Margaret to join his gilded captivity in London. The regent would have hailed with joy any chance which delivered Henry's strong-willed consort into his hands; but Margaret had no intention of being snared. She utterly repudiated the base surrender of Prince Edward's birth-right, and refused either to visit London or recognise the new regency. In November there was a great muster of the Lancastrians at York. The Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Wiltshire hurried to join their fellow-leaguers; and

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs's *Constit. Hist. of England*.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, Lord Egremont, left an only son, John Percy, who is supposed to have died without issue.

the tenants and supporters of the regent were ruthlessly plundered.

Furious at these evidences of renewed activity on the part of the young lords, York rashly advanced against the queen's army with only 10,000 men. Reaching Wakefield in December he found his way barred by 20,000 royalists, commanded by the queen, Northumberland, and Clifford. The regent took temporary refuge in Sandal Castle, with the intention of awaiting reinforcements ; but on December 31 his proud spirit could no longer brook inactivity, and he sallied forth to do battle against these heavy odds. Had he but remained in Sandal until after Christmas, he must have been relieved by Warwick ; as it was he rushed blindly to defeat and death. "*Invironed on every side, like fish in a net, he fought manfullie ; yet was he within half an hour slain, and dead, and his army discomfited.*"<sup>1</sup> Nearly 2800 Yorkists died around their chief, "*whereof manie were young gentlemen and heires of great parentage in the South Parties.*"<sup>2</sup> The lust for vengeance overmastered all other feelings on the part of many of the victors. The queen herself acted more like a fury than a woman in the cruelty with which she treated the dying Duke of York. Lord Clifford, calling upon the name of his own slaughtered father, stabbed to the heart the Earl of Rutland, a boy of twelve, whose only offence was the name he bore. With such examples before them, it is not surprising that most of the young Lancastrian lords refused quarter to the enemy, and that the bloodshed was so great. Indeed, but for the noble magnanimity of the Earl of Northumberland, Wakefield might have become a very shambles. No royalist of them all had more wrongs to avenge than the head of the House of Percy ; yet, when he saw the battle surely won, he sheathed his sword and sternly called his soldiers from their bloody work. He was not one that warred with boys and sorely wounded men ; and the chronicles record his earnest condemnation of the murder of young Rutland. To the queen's face he remonstrated against the fiendish taunts and revilings with which

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

she embittered York's last moments. In the Third Part of *King Henry VI.*, Shakespeare has made immortal the colloquy between Margaret and her chief supporter:—

“NORTHUMBERLAND—

*Beshrew me, but his passions move me so,  
That hardly can I check my eyes from tears . . .  
Had he been slaughter-man to all my kin,  
I should not, for my life, but weep with him,  
To see how inly sorrow gripes his soul.*

Q. MARGARET—

*What, weeping-ripe, my Lord Northumberland?  
Think but upon the wrong he did us all,  
And that will quickly dry thy melting tears.”*

From Wakefield, the queen and Northumberland advanced rapidly south to attack the Earl of Warwick, who was vigorously recruiting in the neighbourhood of London. By a strange trick of fortune the two armies met at St. Albans, the scene of Lancastrian defeat and the death of Northumberland's father, six years before. A battle was fought on February 17, in which Warwick was utterly routed. Very many prisoners were taken, among them the poor shuttlecock king, who was found in Warwick's tent, as fearful no doubt of falling into the power of his wife and the party which he had betrayed as he was of remaining the captive of the Yorkists.

But even two victories in rapid succession were not sufficient to restore the fallen fortunes of Lancaster.

Hardly was the second fight of St. Albans won, when news reached Northumberland that the young Earl of March, son of the Duke of York, had defeated the Earl of Pembroke with great loss at—name of good omen to the Yorkists!—Mortimer's Cross. The royalist army, although hitherto successful, had lost heavily both at Wakefield and St. Albans; so that, in view of March's advance, Northumberland deemed it the best policy to fall back upon York for reinforcements. This was

Towton  
Field: a  
black day for  
the Percies.

done ; and March, hastening southward, entered London, and was there proclaimed by soldiers and citizens King of England under the name of Edward IV. The remarkable beauty of the new monarch's person, his legitimate right to the throne, and the contrast between his strength of character and the weakness of the wretched Henry, caused men of every rank to flock to his banners. A great army marched behind him, when, with the rapidity of a born leader, he turned again towards the north, prepared for a death-struggle with the Lancastrians.

Meanwhile, at York, Northumberland had increased his army to some 60,000, but many of the new levies were raw and undisciplined. On March 28, 1461, the advanced guards of the two hosts found themselves close together in the neighbourhood of the river Ayre. With Northumberland were his two brothers, Sir Ralph and Sir Richard Percy. The Yorkist van was commanded by Warwick, still smarting from his defeat at St. Albans.

Seeing the advantage which must accrue from the possession of Ferriby Brig over the Ayre, Warwick despatched Lord Fitz-Walter<sup>1</sup> to take it. The attempt was however forestalled by Northumberland, who sent Lord Clifford with a superior force to drive Fitz-Walter back. The Lancastrians were successful ; and only a few of Fitz-Walter's men escaped with their lives from the encounter. It was then that Warwick resorted to one of those impressive, though theatrical devices by which mediæval captains so often stirred the sluggish blood of their soldiers. Springing from the saddle he plunged a sword into the heart of his war-horse, crying aloud that upon that day there was to be no retreat, and that he would fight a-foot among his men-at-arms until Ferriby Brig was won. The example fired all hearts ; and, headed by Warwick in person, the advanced guard rushed upon the defenders of the causeway. Clifford, courageous if cruel, beat back his assailants

<sup>1</sup> This nobleman had a hereditary feud with the Earls of Northumberland, arising out of the first earl's defence of John Wickliffe, and the attempts which the Lord Fitz-Walter made to arouse the London populace against him.

again and again ; but numbers in the end prevailed ; and, towards nightfall the brig was taken, and Clifford slain.

At an early hour on the following day both hosts were in motion. Most of the combatants carried sprigs of blest palm or yew, for it was Palm Sunday ;<sup>1</sup> and mass was sung in each camp before the trumpets sounded to the fight. A harsh, boisterous morning it proved to be ; and as the sacred host was uplifted in the centre of the Lancastrian army, there came a heavy snowstorm, blown by the wind into the faces of Northumberland's soldiers—so that it was whispered hither and thither that Heaven was wroth at the desecration of such a festival.

The snow, in truth, proved the undoing of the Lancastrians. Under cover of its blinding gusts the Yorkist archers under Lord Falconbridge crept unperceived within bowshot of the opposing ranks, and discharged a murderous volley ; after which they fell back out of the enemy's range. Utterly ignorant of this skilful manœuvre, the king's bowmen replied to the best of their ability ; but, naturally, all their shafts fell short. Then the Yorkists, advancing again, picked up the fallen arrows and sent them winging back into the thick of the foe. The trick was repeated until every Lancastrian quiver was empty. "*The Northern men, feling the shoot, but by reason of the snow not wel viewing the distance betwene them and their enemyes, like hardy men shot their shiefe arrows as fast as they might, but al their shot was lost and their labor vayn, for they came not neer the Southerners by xi taylor's yardes.*"<sup>2</sup>

With all their shafts spent, there was nought for the Lancastrian archers but to fall back upon the main body. Then the Earl of Northumberland resolved upon a charge ; and, placing himself at the head of his entire force, led the way directly into the enemy's centre. The schemes of Warwick and Falconbridge were now of no avail : it was a battle hand to hand—almost a blindfold battle, for the snow continued to fall heavily, shower following shower, and the two forces were so confused and broken up that

<sup>1</sup> March 29, 1461.

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

no man could tell a foe at further than a sword's thrust. For ten hours the terrific struggle lasted, "*in doubtful victorie, the one part sometime flowing, and sometime ebbing*;"<sup>1</sup> and the one guiding rule was carnage without quarter. About four o'clock in the afternoon the snow ceased altogether; and the Earl of March, who had wisely withdrawn some picked troops and held them in reserve, ordered a charge. The Lancastrians broke and fled before this unexpected onslaught, nor did Edward and Warwick allow them time to rally. The battle of Towton Fields ended in a victory for the Yorkist cause, as complete and decisive as it was bloody. Holinshed places the total loss on both sides at 38,000; and, in a private letter from the Earl of March—now truly King Edward—to his mother, it is stated that 28,000 Lancastrian corpses were counted next day upon the field and in the neighbouring villages.<sup>1</sup> Queen Margaret and her son escaped to Scotland, guided by Somerset and Sir Ralph Percy; but the Earl of Northumberland and his other brother, Sir Richard, fell swords in hand, even as their grandsire Hotspur had fallen at Shrewsbury. Some say that Northumberland's life was not yet extinct when he was discovered; and that he was carried into York where he died before nightfall.<sup>2</sup> It is certain that this chivalrous nobleman—"The Loyal Earl" as he well deserved to be called—was laid to rest in the church of St. Dionys at York, close by "Percy's Inn," the mansion maintained by his family in the Northern capital.

But Yorkist spite marked itself even upon the earl's tomb. When Parliament met to confirm Edward's title to the throne, and to outlaw the late king, it took the opportunity to issue writs of attainder against the dead Percies—Northumberland, his brother Richard, and even Lord Egremont, who had fallen so long before.<sup>3</sup> Sir Ralph

<sup>1</sup> Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Sheahan and Willan, *Hist. of Yorkshire*. A gold ring bearing the earl's crest was, say the same authors, found on Towton Fields in 1786.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, v. 480, 1 Edw. IV., November 9, 1461.



Percy, the sole survivor of the brothers, was likewise placed under sentence; but he—having seen Queen Margaret and her son safely into Scotland, and sent his own youthful nephew (Northumberland's heir) in the same direction—shut himself up with a determined band in the castle of Dunstanburgh, and prepared to defend that fortress to the bitter end.

The Lancastrian armies had been practically annihilated; the North was in Yorkist hands; but still Ralph Percy held out against King Edward. Attempts were made to dislodge him, but without success; and by dint of moonlight ridings into the surrounding country, he succeeded in keeping his little garrison sufficiently well supplied with food. To such a pitch did he harass his neighbours of the opposite party—attacking their hinds when they sought to garner the first peaceful harvest of years; carrying off their cattle and fat wethers (and, if tradition tells truth, their daughters as well); and ever choosing a time for his attacks when they deemed themselves most secure—that the Yorkists resolved in the end to make terms with this “Gledd of Dunstanburgh,”<sup>1</sup> this kite of the tower, as they had learned to style him. Accordingly, “by the king's grace,” Sir Ralph was granted leave to hold Dunstanburgh as governor;<sup>2</sup> and a pardon was drawn up in his name, although it does not appear that he made formal submission to Edward. Indeed, he became more active than ever in the cause of the Red Rose; and, whereas his former efforts had been directed towards keeping Dunstanburgh inviolate, and annoying Sir John Astley<sup>3</sup> and others of the Yorkist lieutenants in those parts, he now began to increase the force at his command by bringing bands of Scots from across the border. They came in small parties, so as to arouse the suspicion of the Yorkists

Sir Ralph  
Percy, last  
of the soldier  
brethren.

<sup>1</sup> “The Gledd,” or Kite, of Dunstanburgh was a name given in the North to Sir Ralph Percy.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 2 Edw. IV.

<sup>3</sup> Astley held Alnwick Castle for Edward IV.

as little as possible ; and it was not long, as Grafton tells us, until Dunstanburgh was "*stuffed with Scots.*" Communication was opened with the exiled Queen Margaret, and with the Duke of Somerset, who had also been secretly at work for the house of Lancaster. Margaret had at length succeeded in gathering an army of sorts, it is said by means of a promise to surrender Calais to France and Berwick to Scotland ; but this latter assertion rests upon the authority of Yorkist chroniclers. She was joined by the Duke of Somerset ; and, with ill-judged haste, burst into England. "The Gledd of Dunstanburgh" flew to join his royal mistress ; and it was long afterwards her regret that she did not assign to this tried and faithful captain, rather than to the weak Somerset, the chief command of the Lancastrian troops. But the superior rank of Somerset prevailed, and he associated with him in the leadership the Lords Hungerford and Roos. Percy accepted his exclusion from the councils of war without complaint ; and made ready to do his duty loyally.

The first step taken by Somerset was an attack upon Alnwick Castle, still defended by stout Sir John Astley.

This attempt failed miserably. Thanks to the two last Earls of Northumberland, the defences of Alnwick had been greatly strengthened ; and Somerset had neither the skill to take the stronghold by assault, nor the persistence to compel its surrender by blockade. After a series of half-hearted efforts he abandoned the siege, and marched in the direction of Chillingham. At Hedgeley Moor, near that place, he found himself opposed by a strong body of Yorkists, raised by John Nevill, Lord Montagu.

Now, at last, the advice of Sir Ralph Percy was asked by the captain of the invaders. He gave it simply, and to the best of his knowledge as a soldier. The Lancastrians were face to face with a desperate situation. The time wasted at Alnwick had permitted the enemy to get between them and the border, thus cutting off their retreat into

The end of  
the "Gledd of  
Dunstan-  
burgh."

Scotland. Fight they must sooner or later ; and it was as well to fight then, even though outnumbered, as to delay until the foe had been still further reinforced. Under the circumstances Percy counselled an attack. At first Somerset and his lords seemed to hearken to this advice, and the queen's army advanced to within bow-shot of the Yorkists. But before the trumpets sounded to the onset a disgraceful thing came to pass. Somerset, Hungerford, and Roos, stricken with a sudden panic, turned their horses' heads, and without drawing sword, galloped from the field. Utterly demoralised by the cowardly conduct of their leaders, most of the archers and men-at-arms followed in headlong rout. Only Sir Ralph Percy, and the brave hearts that had defended Dunstanburgh with him, remained to face the enemy. In compact files they calmly awaited the Yorkist onfall, protecting by this heroic stand the wild flight of Somerset and his army. There is a grim reticence among the contemporary historians respecting the fate of the devoted band ; but enough can be gathered from the various accounts to show that Percy himself, and nearly all who fought by his side, fell in the affray. In the simple words of Grafton, Hedgeley Moor is thus summed up :—“*Sodaynely the sayde Lordes (Somerset, Hungerford, and Roos) without stroke stryking fled, and onely Syr Rauf Percie abode and was there manfullie Slayne.*”

So stooped the “Gledd of Dunstanburgh” for the last time. Those who left him cravenly to his fate were not long destined to keep the lives which they had saved at such a cost. After the battle of Hexham, on the following 15th of May, when the power of Lancaster was once more crushed, the very lords who had deserted Ralph Percy at Hedgeley Moor perished, one and all, beneath the headman's axe.<sup>1</sup>

Upon the spot where Sir Ralph fell, a column, roughly carved with badges of the house of Northumberland, was subsequently erected—probably by his nephew, the fourth earl. It stands to this day, and is known as “Percy's

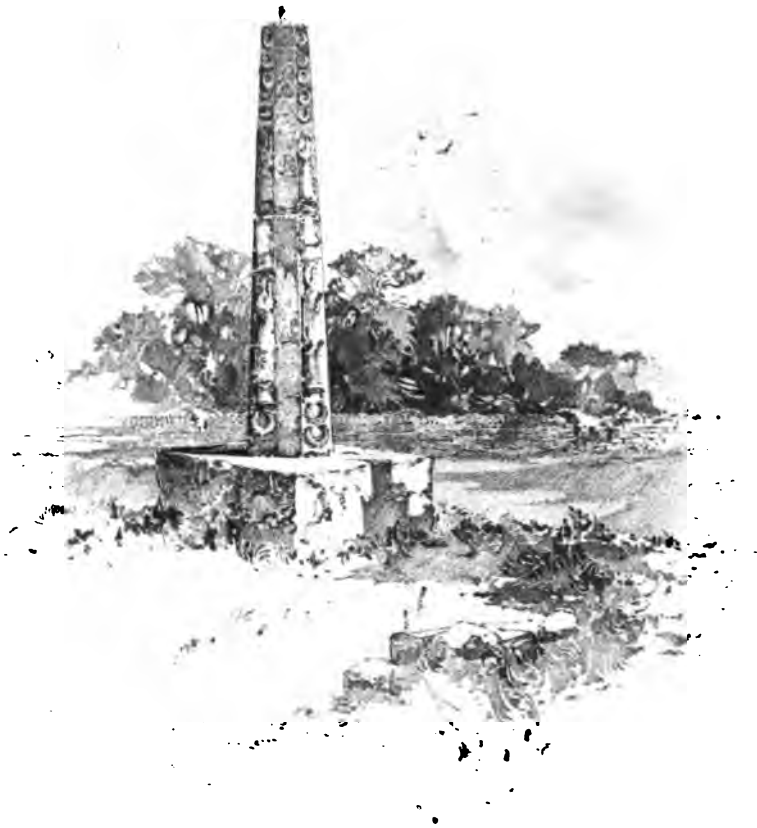
<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

Cross." Not far away upon the moor is a spring called "Percy's Well," whence, say the country-folk, the loyal knight took his last draught. Even his dying words are preserved by tradition; for we are told that, glorying in his allegiance to the Lancastrian kings, "*he cried with his last breath* ;—'I HAVE SAVED THE BIRD IN MY BOSOM.'"<sup>1</sup>

With Sir Ralph's death the fortunes of the house of Percy were indeed at a low ebb. Outlawed and exiled, the young heir of the house, Henry, Lord Percy, hid his sorrows at the Scottish Court. Not one square foot of English ground could he call his own; his scanty means of subsistence he owed to the charity of King James; nor had he (as was the case with his grandfather, the second earl) a single powerful friend to plead his cause in his native land. Within four short years his father and his three uncles had been slain in battle; he himself was an only son; and his nearest male relatives, the Nevills, were bitterly hostile. So great had been the slaughter during the Civil War that it is extremely doubtful whether, failing the exiled Henry, a single Percy existed who could prove descent from the ancient line.<sup>2</sup> Upon the single life of this boy of seventeen—surrounded as that life was by a thousand dangers—depended the very existence of the race of Louvain-Percy.

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed. Sir Ralph Percy had married Eleanor, daughter and heir of Laurence Acton of Acton, Co. Northumberland, and left issue three sons, Henry, Ralph, and George. His eldest son Sir Henry Percy, Knt. of Acton, was governor of Bamborough, and died in 1486, leaving a son, John Percy of Acton, who sold his estates and left Northumberland *circa* 1520. (See *Genealogy*, Table II.)

<sup>2</sup> This is all the more remarkable as, a few generations before, Northumberland and Yorkshire had swarmed with Percies "of the blood." But such "wipings out" of fine old families during the Wars of the Roses were common enough, and explain the fact that so few of the English titled persons of to-day can satisfactorily prove their descent from baronial houses of Plantagenet times.



Percy's Cross.  
Robert G. Bellows.

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V

THE exact manner in which the heir of Northumberland eventually returned to his native land is unknown; but it is believed that, driven to despair by poverty and neglect, he determined to risk his life across the border. Accordingly he left the Scottish court, entered England, and was taken prisoner in or about the year 1468. A few years before the forfeited earldom of Northumberland had been conferred by Edward upon John Nevill, Lord Montacute, brother of Warwick.<sup>1</sup> Consequently it was as "Sir Henry Percy" that the homesick captive was committed to the Fleet Prison. An entry in the Fleet records runs as follows:—"To Sir Henry Percy, knight, to provide for his table and four persons to attend upon him . . . during two months and four days, for each week £I, 6s. 8d. = £II, 3s. 8d."<sup>2</sup> From this it would appear that, although in confinement, he enjoyed more comfort than he had done while at liberty beyond the frontier. Possibly the shrewd Edward had already begun to suspect the Nevill faction of disloyalty, and was therefore determined to hold Percy in reserve, and to use him as kindly as possible by way of winning him over to the Yorkist side. After the revolt of Warwick, Percy was transferred to the Tower, where he was treated in all respects as a prisoner of the highest rank. Edward was as yet unable to prove the charge of treason against John Nevill, so that he could not strip him of the recently conferred Northumberland earldom without offering some sort of substitute honour. But the king's agents set to work in the North, and caused a petition to be drawn up praying for Henry Percy's restora-

Henry, fourth  
Earl of Northumberland.

<sup>1</sup> Hall's *Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> *Issue Rolls*, 5 Edw. VI.

tion to his ancestral dignities.<sup>1</sup> Even before this document could reach him, however, Edward had Percy brought from the Tower to Westminster ; and there, in the presence of most of the council, caused him to take the oath of allegiance :—" *I, Sovereigne Lorde, Henry Percy become your subjette and liegeman,*"—(such were the terms of the oath)—"*and promyt to God and youe that herafter I Feyth and Trouth shall bere to you, as to my Sovereigne Liege Lorde, and to youre Heyres, Kynges of Englande, of Lyfe and Lymme and of erthely worshippe for to lyve and dye agenst all erthely people. And to youe and to youre commandementes I shall be obeisaunt, as God me helpe and his Hole Evangelistes.*"<sup>2</sup> Percy was then pardoned and set at liberty. During the Parliament which followed, the petition of the Northerners for his restoration was favourably received, and recommended for the royal approval. Montacute sulkily relinquished his earldom, and received by way of exchange the title of Marquis of Montacute, with (as he himself expressed it) "*a pye's nest to maintain it withal.*"<sup>3</sup> Three years later, by Act of Parliament, Henry Percy was "*restored in bloud to the said Erydome (of Northumberland) and to all such hereditaments of the same Earl as came into the King's hands, the second day of March, in Ann. 9 Edw. IV., and the attainder made against the said Earl, Ann. 1 Edw. IV., is made void.*"<sup>4</sup> In the meantime he had acted as one of the judges who tried the Duchess of Bedford for sorcery.<sup>5</sup> One of the evidences of witchcraft brought against the duchess was that she had, by dint of the black art, brought about a marriage between Edward IV. and the Lady Elizabeth Grey. His appointment as Warden of the East Marches towards Scotland ensued ; and he was engaged upon the duties of this office when Warwick "the king maker" returned from

<sup>1</sup> "*Kyng Edward fered then the Lord Montacute, the Earl Warwikes brother, whom he had made Erle of Northumberland, and so privilee causid men of the cuntry to desyre the ryghtful heyre, Percy, sunne to Henry that was slayne at York Felde.*"—Leland's *Collectanea*, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> *Fadera*, xi. 649.

<sup>3</sup> Leland's *Collectanea*, vol. i. p. 503.

<sup>4</sup> Cotton's *Abridged Acts of Parliament*.

<sup>5</sup> *Rot. Scot.*, 10 Edw. IV.



France at the head of an expedition and forced Edward to fly to Holland. It is hard to believe that Percy's blood was not stirred when he learned that Henry VI.—a king of straw indeed, but the king for whom his father and grandfather had fought and died—was once more upon the throne of England. That a Nevill (and, of all Nevill's, the virulent Warwick) should have restored the house of Lancaster, must have been galling to the heir of Northumberland; but one prefers to believe that it was his oath, so lately taken, rather than any jealousy of the rival faction, which kept him neutral during the brief struggle which followed. Absolutely neutral he remained, even after Edward landed at Ravenspur; nor did the king blame him for thus "*syttynge still*," seeing that the Northumbrians had "*in theyr freshe remembraunce how that the Kynge at the first entrie-winning of his ryght to the Royne and Crowne of Englande had and won a great battaill in those same partes, where theyre maystar the Erll'es father was slayn*," and so "*it was thought that they cowth nat have borne very good wyll, and done theyr best service to the Kynge at this time, and in this gwarell*."<sup>1</sup> The death of Warwick at Barnet, the defeat and capture of brave Queen Margaret at Tewkesbury, and the extinction of the Lancastrian cause—throughout all these events Percy stood aloof. On October 6, 1473, "*the King sitting in the Chair of State in the Painted Chamber, he (Henry Percy) was present, and by the King's commandment was restored in blood to the Earldom of Northumberland and to all the hereditaments of Henry Percy, late Earl of Northumberland, as came into the King's hands, and the attainder against the said Earl, of 1st Edw. IV. tit. 17, was made void*."<sup>2</sup>

A year later, in 1474, he entered into a curious compact with Richard, Duke of Gloucester, by which he bound himself to serve that crouch-backed prince "*at all tymes lawfull and convenient when thereunto . . . lawfully requyred. The dutie of the alegaunce of the said erle to the kynge's highnes,*

<sup>1</sup> *Historie of the arrivall of Edward IV. &c.*;—Camden Society, vol. i. p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Collins.

*the quene, his service and promise to Prince Edward, their first begoten son, and all the king's issue begoten, and to be begoten, first at all tymes receyved and hadd."*<sup>1</sup> In 1475 Northumberland accompanied Edward to France; and was present at the meeting between the sovereigns at Pecquigni, when peace was proclaimed, and the release of Queen Margaret agreed upon. His elevation to a Companionship of the Garter occurred in the following winter; and his name occurs among the list of peers who concurred in the sentence of death passed upon the Duke of Clarence.

An attempt made in 148<sup>7</sup> to recapture Berwick having proved abortive, Gloucester and Northumberland (accompanied by the banished Duke of Albany) again assailed the border fortress two years later. The earl commanded the vanguard. His force numbered 6700 men in all; and with him fought his brother-in-law, Lord Scrope of Bolton, and other gentlemen of prowess. Berwick Castle, defended by Lord Bothwell, held out courageously; whereupon, foreseeing a protracted siege, Northumberland left troops enough to guard the place, and marched into Scotland. Meanwhile King James, marching to the relief of Berwick, had been confronted with the rebellion of many of his nobles, and carried a prisoner to Edinburgh. The invaders were permitted to march unopposed to the very gates of Edinburgh. A hurriedly executed peace, secured through the offices of Albany, restored Berwick permanently to England. This treaty was signed on behalf of the Scots by the Duke of Albany, the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the Earl of Argyll; and on behalf of England by Gloucester, Northumberland, and Lord Stanley.

As a reward for this important service Northumberland received the thanks of Parliament;<sup>2</sup> and was granted the privilege of conferring knighthood upon five of his officers

<sup>1</sup> The original counterpart of this document is preserved in the Muniment Room at Syon House.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 22 Edw. IV.

Border war-  
fare, and  
Richard III.'s  
reign.

—to wit, Sir Thomas Grey, Sir Marmaduke Constable, Sir Christopher Ward, Sir Ralph Widdrington, and Sir Thomas Tempest—all of whom he made knights bannerets. On the attainder of the Earl of Oxford, a year later, he was still further honoured by being elevated to the post of Lord High Chamberlain.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the compact already quoted, Northumberland stood faithfully by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, when, on the death of Edward VI. in 1483, that prince became regent of England. Richard and he had been allies and companions in the field; and, while it cannot be shown that Northumberland had the slightest cognisance of any of the crimes by which Richard is supposed to have reached the throne, it is certain that, at the latter's coronation, the earl bore the chamberlain's sword, and thus lent his sanction to the ceremony. His kinsman, Sir Robert Percy,<sup>2</sup> acting on the same occasion as Comptroller, came in and served the "kyng solemnly with one dishe of golde and another of silver."<sup>3</sup> Not long afterwards the earl presented to his new lord a petition, in which he pleaded for the full restoration of all the estates which had belonged to his great-grandfather prior to the latter's attainder; and beginning—"Please it youre Highness, of youre moost habundaunt grace, to have in youre tender consideracion how that youre humble subject and true liegeman Henry Percy, now Erle of Northumberland, is, and all tymes hath ben, sith the tyme of your moost noble reigne, of humble; true and due obeissaunce to you, liege lorde, and to youre lawes, and ever shall be during his life, with the grace of God."<sup>4</sup> The document goes on to mention the attainder of the first earl by Henry IV., "late in dede but not of right, Kyng of England;" and to pray that it be set aside. Next year, by Letters-Patent dated May 5, Richard III. granted all the requests contained in the petition.

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 14 Edw. IV., vi. p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> The precise relationship of this knight is a moot point among genealogists. He was of Scotton, Co. York, grandson of Robert Percy of Scotton, who flourished 37 Hen. VI., and descendant of John Percy of Scotton, fl. 1394. (See *Genealogy of PERCY OF SCOTTON.*)

<sup>3</sup> Hall.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 1 Rich. III.

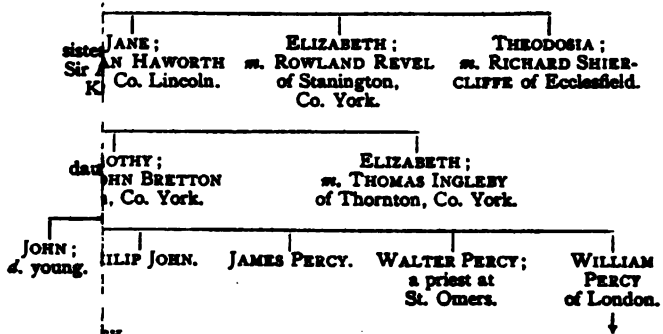
Meanwhile Henry, Earl of Richmond, had been gradually advanced by the enemies of Richard as a claimant to the crown and the representative of the Lancastrian cause. Although the Percies themselves, the Nevills and other English families could show hereditary rights to the succession far nearer and clearer than this descendant of the adulterous intercourse between John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford, yet to such a degree had the people been impressed by the tales spread broadcast of Richard Crouchback's evil deeds, that this first pretender to the heirship of Lancaster was eagerly accepted as the true champion of the Red Rose. The conduct of the Earl of Northumberland up to the time of Richmond's landing in Wales had been such that even a monarch as suspicious as Richard could find no fault with his loyalty. He had even supported his sovereign in the condemnation and execution of Earl Rivers and the Duke of Buckingham, thereby justly incurring for himself widespread unpopularity, and the just blame of posterity. But when the forces of Richard and the Earl of Richmond confronted each other at Bosworth, Northumberland once more played the part which he had chosen during Edward IV.'s second invasion of England—that of complete inactivity. The efforts to explain this behaviour are many and various. Lingard asserts that Northumberland, discovered that his followers were "wavering and on the point of flying, or going over" to the enemy. Others allege a sudden quarrel between Richard and the earl, which led the king to post Northumberland in the rear of the army with strict orders not to advance. Insinuations against the earl of positive treachery, or at least of a disposition to await the result of battle before taking sides, are not wanting; but it is undeniable that, after Richard had been slain and the bloody crown placed upon the invader's head, Northumberland was seized as a prisoner of war. Grafton says: "*Amongst these (the prisoners) was Henrie IV. Earl of Northumberlande, which, whether it was by the commandement of Kynge Richarde puttyng diffidence in hym, or he did it for the love and favour which he bare unto*

# Co. YORK

p. 873.]

GRANTED TO SIR ROBERT PERCY OF SCOTTON  
BY RICHARD III.

HENRY PERCY  
Pavenham; ancestor of  
mes Percy, claimant  
of the Earldom.





*the earle, stooode still with a great companie and intermitted not in the bataille."* A point, held to be in favour of the earl's loyalty, is the letter written to him two days after the fight, by the council of York, who asked his advice on the subject of recognising Richmond as Henry VII. The citizens beseeched him to advertise them as to what might best "*proufitt and sauffegarde*" the city of York, since "*King Richard, late lawfully reigning over us, was through grete treason . . . piteously slaine and murdered to the grete heavynesse of this citee.*"<sup>1</sup>

After weighing all evidence, however, it seems clear that Northumberland accepted the death of Richard and the downfall of the house of York without sorrow, and perhaps even with a certain sense of relief. His compact with Richard was now at an end, and he felt himself absolved from the oath of allegiance taken before Edward IV. Henry VII., as we know, showed after Bosworth a clemency surprising in those harsh days, and inspired probably by his extremely questionable title to the crown. The only person of consequence executed was Catesby; and great consideration was shown to the prisoners, most of whom (including Northumberland) were liberated "*sub cautione.*" This generosity of the victor was not lost upon the earl, who advised his adherents, the citizens of York, to acknowledge the new king. They promptly obeyed; and Northumberland—a prisoner no longer—was rewarded by Henry's favour, confirmed in all his titles and offices, made Warden of the East and Middle Marches, Bailiff of Tynedale for life, Justiciary of the King's Forests beyond Trent, Constable of Newcastle, Bamborough, and Dunstanburgh, Maister Forester of Knaresborough, and Commissioner of the Royal Mines in the North of England.<sup>2</sup> At the same time several other Percies received concessions and appointments, the earl's eldest son, a boy of eleven, being made keeper of Bamborough Castle.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Drake's *Eboracum*.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, 1 & 2 Hen. VII.

<sup>3</sup> Richard's Comptroller, the Sir Robert Percy of Scotton, above mentioned, had fallen in Bosworth fight.

When Henry first rode beyond Humber, Northumberland met him at Barnesdale with a goodly array of knights and horsemen ;<sup>1</sup> and subsequently the royal party was sumptuously entertained at Leckonfield. During the rising of Lord Lovell and the Staffords, it is ascribed to the caution and resourcefulness of the Earl that the king escaped capture or assassination. "*King Henry would most certainly have been taken by them whilst he was devoutly solemnizing of St. George's day in that city (York), had not the Earl of Northumberland been more prudent in coming to the rescue.*"<sup>2</sup> Again during the attempt of Lambert Simnel to secure the throne, under the pretence that he was the imprisoned Earl of Warwick, Northumberland took a firm stand against the absurd claimant of Plantagenet blood. Here he found himself opposed to a strong party in the North, the very party which he himself had at one time fostered and led. Indeed symptoms of that unpopularity which afterwards proved fatal to the earl now began to show themselves in the very regions where the name of Percy should have been most potent. Hall states that the men of the North "*bare agaynst the Earle continual grudge by the deth of Kyнге Richard, whom they entirely loved and highly favoured.*" That much of this love and favour was due to the former exertions of Northumberland in Richard's behalf we may feel assured. Apart from the fact that his sometime followers neither understood nor appreciated his sudden acquiescence in King Henry's rule, Northumberland's lack of personal magnetism also turned many of his countrymen against him. Consequently, when Simnel's army landed in Furness, its ranks of Irish and German swordsmen were quickly swelled by large reinforcements from Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Durham, nor was Northumberland able to prevent some of his own vassals and near relatives from joining the pretender's motley host. However, he succeeded in bringing a considerable body to the king's aid, and at the battle of Stoke (where the hopes of Simnel and his chief sponsor, the Earl of Lincoln, were crushed) he

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., Julius, B. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Drake's *Eboracum*.



rendered excellent service. Henry rewarded him with the Wardenship of Berwick and the custody of Sir Bryan Stapleton's<sup>1</sup> estates; but, although he strove to regain the affections of the citizens and religious of York by presents of fat bucks and the like liberality, and went so far as to protest boldly against the heavy taxation enforced by the king, he remained widely unpopular. Even while virtually standing between the people and their grasping monarch, and endeavouring to secure for the former some remission of the burden they were forced to bear, his own life was compassed by those who should have felt for him only gratitude.

The earl, taking upon himself the just grievances of the people, sent word to Henry that serious complaints were rife concerning the extortionate tax upon land and personal property. "*They had been charged,*" he said, "*of late yeres with innumerable commodities and oppressions without any default or desert, and now there was a huge somme requyred of theym which neyther they were hable to satisfy, so grete a demaunde, nor yet woulde once consent to paye one penny of the saide somme requyred.*"<sup>2</sup> To cross or attempt to cross the will of Henry VII. in the matter of money, was to touch him on his most sensitive point. Indignant at Northumberland's words, he despatched a stinging rebuke to the earl, ordering him to compel the payment of the taxes, by force of arms if necessary.<sup>3</sup>

With a heavy heart, and perhaps with some forebodings of his fate, the lieutenant-royal set about obeying his master's behests. Those who protested most bitterly (or, as the king himself phrased it, who "*whyned most*") had made common cause against the tax-gatherers, and chosen John a' Chambre and Sir John Egremont as their leaders and spokesmen. Northumberland sent word to John a' Chambre to meet him at a certain hunting-lodge called

<sup>1</sup> Sir Bryan Stapleton of Carleton, in Yorkshire, one of the supporters of Lambert Simnel.

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Cockledge or Cocklodge<sup>1</sup> situated in his deer-park at Topcliffe, there to discuss what might be done towards a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Chambre brought to the appointed spot a very large body of his discontented neighbours; so that the earl found himself unexpectedly outnumbered. However, he read the king's harsh answer unflinchingly—so much so indeed that many of the listeners credited him with approving of it, and angry murmurs began to rise. Chambre, a man of glib tongue, seized the opportunity to deliver a fierce personal attack upon the earl. Northumberland it was, he declared, who had caused all their misery by deserting Richard III. at Bosworth, and thus placing Henry on the throne. Richard was belauded as a magnanimous sovereign who would never have stooped to grind down his people by cruel imposts; while Northumberland was abused in terms as coarse as they were undeserved.

At first the earl heard Chambre's angry words in silence; but some unusually insulting epithet brought him to his feet. "*Thou art a scurvy knave,*" he exclaimed, "*and they that hearken to thee hearken to a false and dangerous adviser.*" Then he urged the people who thronged the hall to stop their ears against such treasonable talk, and to betake themselves to their homes without delay. So far from his words producing a soothing effect upon the mob, they only served to precipitate a riot. Led by Chambre, who cried out that Northumberland was the real author of the taxes,<sup>2</sup> the malcontents fell upon the earl and his few servants. No clear account exists of the affray; but every one of the royalists was ruthlessly put to the sword. Most historians agree that Northumberland fell fighting against the rebels in the hall at Cockledge; but a tradition exists that his body was dragged to Thirsk, 4½ miles away, and there beheaded under an elm tree.<sup>3</sup> This tree, which was of great antiquity,

<sup>1</sup> In this lodge Charles I. was afterwards imprisoned while negotiations were being conducted between the Scots and the Parliamentary forces for his surrender. It was also known as "Maiden's Bower."

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, *Old Yorkshire*.

stood until comparatively recent times on the "elm-green" of Thirsk. It was a pitiable end—all the more so for the reasons that it occurred upon the very ground which Northumberland's great ancestor, William *Als-germons*, had made fertile, and that it was brought about by the very people who owed so much to the same *Als-germons* and his descendants.

Skelton, the court poet of the day, wrote at the king's desire an elegy upon the murdered earl; of which the following is portion—

*"The ground of the quarel was for his souerain lord,  
The well concerning of all the hole lande,  
Demandyng suche duties as needs most accorde,  
To the ryght of his prince, which shold not be withstand:  
For whose cause ye slew him with your owne hand:  
But had his noble men done wel that day  
Ye had not bene able to haue sayd hym nay.*

*He was enuironed aboute on every syde  
With his enemyes that were stark mad and wode;  
Yet while he stode he gaued them woundes wyde,  
Alas for ruth! What thoughe his mynde wer goode,  
His corage manly, yet ther he shed his blode.  
Al left alone, alas! he foughte in wayne,  
For cruelly among them ther he was slayne.*

*Alas for pitt! that Percy thus was spyll,  
The famous Erle of Northumberlande;  
Of knightly prowes the sword, pomel and hylt,  
The myghty lyon douted by se and lande!  
O dolorus chaunce of fortune's forward hande!  
What man remembryng howe shamefully he was slayne,  
From bitter weping himself can restrain?"*<sup>1</sup>

Skelton apparently intended to suggest that Northumberland's death was due to the desertion of his own household and the treason of the Yorkshire nobility; but in no

<sup>1</sup> This elegy may be found in *Percy's Reliques*.

other contemporary writer can any corroboration of this charge be found.

The king sent the Earl of Surrey in hot haste northward to avenge the assassination, and to punish the rebels with the utmost rigour. Bacon asserts, however, that his wrath at the earl's murder was merely simulated; and that he secretly welcomed the event as giving him an excuse for employing greater force against the northern insurgents, and thus insuring the payment of his taxes. One of his first acts after the news of the tragedy reached Court was to increase the amount of the tribute imposed upon Yorkshire; and, while he issued orders that the burial of his "*moste faythful servaunte*" should be carried out with a pomp worthy almost of royalty, he took good care that not one groat of the expenses came out of his own purse. The earl's family was burdened with the whole of this costly funeral.<sup>1</sup>

The interment took place in Beverley Minster, whither the body was borne by easy stages from Wressill Castle. Every poor person who visited the grave on the day of the burial received a dole of 2d.—charity being distributed to about 13,340 souls. Every priest present at the burial received 12d. and every clerk 4d. The cost of "*Meate and Drinke and Horse Meate*" amounted to £266, 13s. 4d. A magnificent monument was erected in the Minster to Northumberland's memory.

The fourth earl left, by Maud Herbert,<sup>2</sup> his wife, four sons and three daughters. The third son, Alan, was a cleric, and became in turn Vicar of Giggleswick in Yorkshire, Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Warden of Holy Trinity College at Arundel in Surrey. Jocelyn (or "Gosslyne," as he is styled in the curious will of his father<sup>3</sup>), the youngest son, acted as

The earl's  
children.

<sup>1</sup> Papers in the *Alnwick MSS.* show that the mere expenses of the burial ceremony exceeded £1040.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of William, first Earl of Pembroke.

<sup>3</sup> This will may be found in the *Testamenta Eboracensia*.

cup-bearer to Henry VIII. during his expedition to France in 1513. He is thus mentioned in the fourth earl's testament:—"Also I will it my feoffes make astat of lande and tenements to the yearly value CCC merk to Gosslyne my son for term of his leve within the county of Sussex, whereof the manor and lordship of Poynings shall be parcell, to the entent that the said Gosslyne shall be of loving and lowly dispocion toward the said Henry his broder and give him next his allegiance, and that I charge him to do and to be, upon my blessing as he will answer before God." A genealogical tree of the descendants of this Josceline will be found in the *Genealogy of the House of Percy*.<sup>1</sup> Assuming the accuracy of the descent, it will be seen that, but for the attainder of 1572 (and, as some maintain, even in spite of that attainder), Alan Percy of Beverley (who died in 1692) should have succeeded as Earl of Northumberland and heir male of the family after the failure of the direct male line.<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Charles Percy of Cambridge (who died 1743), and Josceline, son of Charles, might have inherited the chief honours of the house. The genealogical tree is extracted from an article in the *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. ii., compiled from materials collected by Robert Surtees (the historian of Durham), the Rev. Joseph Hunter (the historian of South Yorkshire), and Charles George Young, F.S.A., York Herald, afterwards Garter King of Arms. Portions of the earlier links in the chain of descent were gathered by Sir William Dugdale, Garter King of Arms, who, on November 9, 1691, gave it as his formal opinion that "*Mr. Francis Percy, now living and residing in Cambridge,*<sup>3</sup> *is lineally descended from Thomas Percy, who was one of the conspirators in ye Gunpowder Treason in ye 3rd year of King James.*"<sup>4</sup> So far as is known, this branch of the

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate III. Josceline made his own will, Sept. 7, 1532.

As in the case of the Earldom of Ormonde, to which a junior branch of the house of Butler, not affected in blood by the attainder, succeeded.

<sup>3</sup> See *Genealogy*, Plate III.

<sup>4</sup> MS. Coll., vol. iv. p. 82.

house became extinct in the male line with the death of the Rev. Josceline Percy in 1756. In the female line it is represented by the Anglo-German family of Baumgartner, settled at Island Hall, near Godmanchester, Co. Huntingdon.<sup>1</sup>

Of the two daughters of the fourth Earl of Northumberland, the younger, Ann, married William Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel; while the elder, Alianore, was united to Edward, Duke of Buckingham. On December 14, 1490, the king granted "*that Edward Duke of Buckingham shall by the grace of God wed and take to wife, Alianore eldest daughter of the Erle of Northumerland by Xmas of next year. In the event of the Duke of Buckingham dying before this marriage, then his next brother shall marry the said Alianore, the Pope's sanction being if necessary obtained: but if the said Alianore should die before the marriage with either, then the Duke or his brother shall marry the next daughter, Anne, within twelve months of the said Alianore's death. In consideration of which the executors shall allow the king the sum of £4000 out of the said Erle's revenues.*" Evidently Northumberland was particularly desirous of an alliance with the house of Buckingham. The marriage between the duke and the Lady Alianore took place before the appointed time. It will be observed that the royal Harpagon did not allow the occasion to pass without squeezing a considerable sum out of Northumberland's coffers. Although the Lady Alianore Percy had scarcely seen her husband before the day of the nuptials, and although her wishes were not considered in the matter at all, she subsequently conceived for the splendid Buckingham<sup>2</sup> so great an affection, that when he was condemned by Wolsey's instrumentality to the scaffold, she fell ill from

<sup>1</sup> General Robert Julian Baumgartner, C.B., heir general of these Percies, died in 1895, leaving a son and heir, Henry Percy Julian, now of Godmanchester.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Buckingham claimed the office of Constable of England and had judgment in favour of his right.

shock and in a little while followed her loved husband to the grave.<sup>1</sup> Her sister, the Countess of Arundel, was one of the dames who in 1494 distributed the prizes at the tournament held to celebrate the elevation of Prince Henry to knightly dignity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collins.

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

## VI

THE fifth Earl of Northumberland was in his twelfth year at the time of his father's assassination. Born at Leckonfield on January 13, 1478, this "*Yonge Henry Alger-  
non Percy,  
fifth earl,  
styled "The  
Magnificent."* *Lyon of the North*" (so Skelton calls him), had been for some time in the royal household as a companion of the king's sons. When the heir to the throne<sup>1</sup> became Prince of Wales on November 29, 1489, the youthful earl was made a Knight of the Bath.<sup>2</sup> On that occasion his esquires were James Hide and John Parker; of whom the latter was severely reprimanded for that he had "*employed the money otherwise that he had received from the Sectours (executors) for that cause, and not to his worship.*"<sup>3</sup> In 1494 Northumberland, although only sixteen, took an important part in the ceremonies attendant upon the investiture of Prince Henry with the Order of the Bath. On this occasion (when, as has been already stated, the earl's sister, Ann, distributed knightly guerdons to the victors in tourney) the prince was attended by "*the three gret Astates in their robes; that is to saye, the Earl of Suffolk, which bore a rustic sword, the pommele upward; the Erle of Northumberland bore a rod of golde, and the Erle of Darby the cape for astate furred with armyne.*"<sup>4</sup>

With the appearance of the new pretender to the throne, Perkin Warbeck, Earl Henry Algernon was enabled to prove both his loyalty and his courage in fight. The

<sup>1</sup> Prince Arthur, elder brother of the future Henry VIII.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolas, *Hist. of the Orders of Knighthood.*

<sup>3</sup> Nicolas.

<sup>4</sup> Letters of Henry VII.



Cornish supporters of the pseudo Richard Duke of York, having rashly marched towards London, and united with the forces of Lord Audley, a royalist army was sent to meet them upon Blackheath. Northumberland, although the entire influence of the Yorkist party was brought to bear upon him, had repudiated Warbeck; and he was now placed in command of the "Northern Horse," most of whom he had himself raised. The encounter took place on May 22, 1497. Although the rebels fought stubbornly and the Cornish archers defended the causeway at Deptford Strand with true Celtic valour, the king's troops prevailed—Northumberland and his Horse showing especial activity in the capture of the causeway. Over 2000 of the pretender's men were left dead upon the field.

Northumberland had now attained his majority, and was in full possession of the great estates bequeathed to him by his father. He at once began to display those tastes for splendour and lavish hospitality, as well as that intelligent patronage of art and letters, which eventually gained for him the name of "*The Magnificent*." When in 1500 King Henry went to Calais to meet the Archduke Peter, the earl accompanied his sovereign, and astonished all by the richness of his raiment. The author of "*The Chronicles of Calais*" states that Northumberland was attired from head to foot in cloth of gold, with "*the goodliest plumashes of whit austriche feders that ever I saw*." This same chronicler furnishes us with some details concerning the abundance of good things set forth at the royal banquet given to the Archduke. "*There were ordeyned vij horse-loades of cherry's; ther lakkit noo creme, strawberys, nor sugar, bake venison, spice-kakes nor wafers. Ther were couched gret plentie of wyne and byer in houseyng thereby for them that will drinke*." Moreover there was "*the grettest nombre of yonge kiddes that ever I saw*;" besides "*an Englishe fat ox powdered and lesed*."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warbeck pretended that he was Richard, Duke of York, second son of Edward IV.; and claimed that he had escaped from the Tower at the time Edward V. was murdered.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronicles of Calais*.

A year later Northumberland was present at the marriage of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Arragon;<sup>1</sup> and his name figures as one of the subscribing witnesses to the marriage of the Princess Mary. Meanwhile he had been made General Warden of the Scottish Marches; and the splendid pageants and banquets with which he astonished and delighted the honest gentlemen of the northern counties soon won back for the name of Percy all its old prestige and popularity. To the governor and burgesses of Beverley in particular he gave a feast of such magnificence that its memory survives to this day. It is curious to find in the old records of the town that Northumberland's clerk of the kitchen was, like the giver of the entertainment, a Percy;<sup>2</sup> and that the Beverley burgesses, mindful of the good dinner with which he had provided them, presented this nobly-named servitor with the sum of one shilling and tenpence. During this period of hospitality the earl was married to Katherine Spenser, daughter of Sir Robert Spenser by Eleanor Beaufort, sister and co-heir of Edmund, sixth Duke of Somerset, and thus a near relative of Henry VII.

In 1503 it fell to the lot of Northumberland to conduct the Princess Margaret, bride of King James of Scotland, towards the Border, where her husband awaited her. The earl performed this agreeable duty in a manner so regal that one wonders how Henry VII. (ever jealous of his nobles' influence and covetous of their wealth<sup>3</sup>) permitted a subject thus to display his power and grandeur. The king accompanied his daughter on her journey northward as far as Colly-Weston, the residence of his mother in Northamptonshire. Thence she was escorted by the Earl of Surrey

A queen's  
progress.

<sup>1</sup> Harleian MSS., 6725.

<sup>2</sup> He was Thomas Percy, probably some humble offshoot of the family—perhaps, indeed, the missing ancestor for whom Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore, afterwards sought.

<sup>3</sup> Henry had, on more than one occasion, fined great nobles for what he pretended to consider undue display. The Earl of Oxford was a notable sufferer.

across the Humber to York, from which point onward she was to be under the care and guidance of the Warden of the Scottish Marches. Northumberland met the young queen's cavalcade a few miles south of York; and so splendid was his retinue, that it quite outshone that of Margaret. "*Above all other,*" says Hall, "*was the Erle of Northumberland: what for the ryches of hys cote, being gold-smyths worke garnyshed with perle and stone, and what for the costly apparel of his henxmen and galaunt trappers of their horses, bcsydes four hundred tall men, well horsed and apparelled in his colours, that he was esteemed both of the Scottes and the Englishmen more lyke a prynce than a subject.*" Yonge, the Somerset Herald, who accompanied the queen, has left a circumstantial account of the voyage.<sup>1</sup> "*Att two Mylle fro the sayd Cité (York)*" he writes, "*cam toward the sayd Quene my Lord the Earle of Northumberland, well horst upon a fayre Corser, with a Foot Cloth to the Grounde of Cramsyn Velvett, all bordered of Orfavery; his Arms vary rich in many Places uppon his Saddle and Harnays; his Sterrops gylt; hymselfe arayd of a Gowne of the said Cramsyn. At the Opnyngs of the Slyves and the Coller a grett Bordeur of Stones. His Boutts of Velvett blak; and in many places he made Gambads plaisant for to see.*" Behind the earl rode a number of knights of ancient race, among them Sir John Hastings, Sir Lancelot Thirlekeld, Sir Thomas Curwen, Sir John Penyngton, Sir Robert of Aske, and Sir John Normanville, all handsomely arrayed. Then came the earl's private Officer of Arms, "*named Northumberland Harault;*"<sup>2</sup> followed by a great concourse of gentlemen wearing the Percy livery, "*some in Velvet, others in Damask and Chamblett, and others in Cloth, well monted to the Nombre of Three Hundred Horsys.*"<sup>3</sup>

During the next day, which was Sunday, Margaret

<sup>1</sup> *The Fyancells of Margaret, eldest daughter of King Henry VII., to James, King of Scotland*, by John Yonge, Somerset Herald.—(Leland's *Collectanea*.)

<sup>2</sup> In addition to this private herald, Northumberland had boasted of another called "Percy Herald."—(Anthony Wood's MSS., Ashmole Museum.)

<sup>3</sup> Yonge.

remained in York, lodging at Percy House. Attended by Northumberland, she heard High Mass sung in the earl's private chapel; the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of Durham, Moray, and Norwich taking part in the sacred ceremony. After mass the Countess of Northumberland and several other great ladies of the north country had audience with the bride. She had known her kinswoman the countess at Court, and so gave her very cordial greeting, "*kyssing her in the welcoming.*" At Newcastle, whither the party next proceeded, Northumberland gave to all the knights and ladies a "*goodly baunket which lasted till mydnyght, for cause of the games, daunces, sportes and songs: with force of ypocras, sueres and other metts of many delycous maners.*"<sup>1</sup>

On reaching the deer forest about two miles from Alnwick, Northumberland turned aside from the main road, so that the queen might enjoy a day's hunting "under the greenwood tree." Margaret killed a buck from her own bow, whereupon the gallant earl and his gentlemen loudly hailed her as "*the Diana of England.*" The fatigues of the chase necessitated repose; and perhaps the queen, with the natural timidity of maidenhood, was not sorry to linger a little longer in her native land before meeting the husband whom, as yet, she had never seen. At any rate, "*she was all the holl next day in the said castell (of Alnwick), and by the Lord well cheryste and her company.*"<sup>2</sup> In after years, when Flodden had been fought and sorrows came thick upon her, Queen Margaret may well have looked back with regret upon that week of careless happiness during which she was the guest of "The Magnificent" Northumberland.

When Northumberland had safely handed over his fair charge to King James at Kirk Lamberton beyond Berwick Bounds, he accompanied the royal pair to Dalkeith, and thence to Edinburgh. The marriage took place in the latter city on August 8th, the bride being scarcely fourteen years of age; and it is probable that Northumberland's

<sup>1</sup> Yonge.

<sup>2</sup> Yonge.

investiture with the Garter took place immediately after his return from this brilliant and successful pilgrimage.

But although Henry affected to be pleased with the honours paid by Northumberland to his daughter, he must have frowned in secret over the liberality with which the journey of the princess was conducted. The Earl of Oxford had already been mulcted in a great sum of money for the simple reason that he had welcomed Henry himself to one of his castles with a retinue larger than the king wished his nobles to possess, and thus gave evidence that his coffers were worth pillaging.<sup>1</sup> It was not likely that the avaricious monarch, or his worthy agents of the iniquitous Star Chamber, would permit Northumberland to flaunt his wealth so proudly without making him pay for the privilege. Accordingly, one is not surprised to find in the Records of the Star Chamber,<sup>2</sup> under date "25 Nov. 1508" (little more than two months after the earl's return from Scotland), the following significant entry: "*For the pardon of the Earl of Northumberland £10,000.*" What, it may be asked, had the Percy done to deserve a punishment so great as this?—for, if we remember the relative value of money in those days,<sup>3</sup> the fine seems enormous, and probably represented at least four years of the earl's income. The mystery is not solved until the records of the following reign are opened. There we discover that Henry, through his agents, ordered Northumberland to deliver up this vast amount, simply because the latter had interfered in the love affairs of a young lady to whose wardship and custody the king had pretensions. Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of that same Sir John Hastings whom we have seen riding in Northumberland's train, had been committed by her

<sup>1</sup> Henry, visiting Oxford at Henningham, commented on the earl's great hospitality and the number of his servants. Reviving an old statute against luxury, he compelled Oxford to pay a fine of £10,000.

<sup>2</sup> *Lansdowne MSS.*, No. 160, fol. 311. Published in *Archæologia*, vol. xxv.

<sup>3</sup> Money was then about eight times its present value, making the fine in our valuation £80,000 or more.

father to the earl's care, and was probably domiciled in the household at Leckonfield. It is to be presumed that the young lady had certain matrimonial wishes of her own, or else that she was willing to accept some suitor chosen for her by the earl. But the king, hearing that she had been either affianced or actually married without his knowledge, saw in the event a chance to lay hands upon a goodly portion of Northumberland's store. Aided by some of his Empsons or Dudleys, he trumped up a claim to the wardship of the heiress of Hastings. The result was the fine mentioned above; nor had the earl any appeal from the royal decision. It was too large a sum to pay all at once, however; so that Henry was perforce obliged to accept the money in instalments. By grasping at so much, the rapacious king lost all or nearly all of the fine; for he died some few months later,<sup>1</sup> having only collected a few of the earl's gold pieces, and a written acknowledgment of the remainder. The new king, Henry VIII., speedily cancelled this recognisance, and remitted the rest of the fine—as he might well do, seeing that he found his treasury already full to overflowing with his father's ill-gotten gains. By Patent in his first year, dated March 21, 1510, he granted "*the pardon and release of £10,000, recovered against the said Earl of Northumberland in the Common Pleas, for abduction of Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir John Hastynges, Knight, and for the loss of her custody and marriage.*"<sup>2</sup> Shortly before this, in July 1509, Northumberland had been one of the judges who presided over the trial of the notorious Dudley,<sup>3</sup>—the adviser of Henry VIII.—who, together with Empson, had been so largely instrumental in bringing about his own fine, as well as in plundering the country to gratify the late king's lust for wealth. And so ended the episode of Elizabeth Hastings' abduction.

Under Henry VIII. the Earl of Northumberland could

<sup>1</sup> On April 22, 1509.

<sup>2</sup> Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.

<sup>3</sup> The son of this Dudley afterwards became Duke of Northumberland during the attainder and temporary disgrace of the Percies, and was himself executed.

indulge without stint or fear of evil consequences those tastes which had earned for him his sobriquet of "Magnificent."

It was indeed an era of magnificence; and Henry  
The earl's domestic life. Algernon Percy stands forth as an enlightened type of the great, but wasteful, nobleman of his day.

At Court the Arts were reviving, and Luxury and Learning walked hand in hand; nor were the households of Northumberland far behind those of his sovereign in the completeness of their arrangements, the adornments of their halls and chambers, and the armies of servitors maintained within them. Thanks to the loving labours of the Bishop of Dromore, we have an exact record of the mode of life, the amounts of expenditure, and the thousand-and-one details of the Magnificent Earl's many establishments.<sup>1</sup>

Northumberland's domestic arrangements were as precise, and, at the same time, as costly as those of a great prince. To assist him in the proper governance of his affairs he employed a chamberlain of the household, a comptroller, a treasurer, a secretary, a master of the horse, and clerks of the kitchen and signet. These dignitaries were entitled to places at "the Knights' Table," and had each from three to six servants of his own. Attached to his lordship's chapel were a dean (holding the rank of Doctor or Bachelor of Divinity), ten priests (one of whom was almoner),<sup>2</sup> a master of grammar, a Gospeller, a "Pistoller" (*i.e.* reader of the Epistle), and a "riding chaplain," whose duty it was to accompany the earl on long journeys and in times of war. The gentry of the chapel also numbered seventeen choristers—"to wit three Bases, four Tenors, four Countertenors and six child Tribles;" and on feast days the religious music was increased by the addition of "a Tabarett, a Luyte and a rabece." Then follow a host of receivers, constables,

<sup>1</sup> *The Northumberland Household Book*, compiled in 1770 by permission of the first Duke of Northumberland. An authorised transcript is contained in the *Antiquarian Repertory*.

<sup>2</sup> The reverend almoner was also a "maker of Interludes." From 1490 to 1513 the Earl of Northumberland maintained his own Company of Players, twenty persons in all. [*Household Books*: also the *Household Book of Hen. VII.* 1490-1500.]

auditors, and the like ; mostly concerned with the management of the estates. Of domestic servants there were one hundred and sixty-six, each of whom was allowed annually £3, 11s. 6d. for meat and drink, or, in our present money, about £30. Bread, let it be remembered, then cost less than a farthing a pound ; while fat beeves were sold for 13s. 6d., calves and sheep for 1s. 8d., capons for 2d., and beer for 1½d. a gallon.

The *Household Booke* of the earl (the full title of which is "*The Booke of all the Directions and Orders for keepynge of my Lordes Hous Yerely*") is divided into fifty parts, and deals with everything needed for the proper regulation of the various mansions of Wressill, Topcliffe, Leckonfield, as well as of Alnwick Castle, and of the town houses in London<sup>1</sup> and York. Wressill appears to have supplanted Leckonfield as the favourite abode of the family. A sum of £1100 was set apart annually for household expenses ; but, from the accounts shown in the *Booke*, this must have fallen considerably short of the amount actually needed. Indeed it did not even include what are labelled "*forren expences,*" *i.e.* New Year's gifts, offerings to the Church, charity, payments to players and musicians,<sup>2</sup> and so forth. Every Maundy Thursday Northumberland distributed among his poor neighbours "*as many russet cloth gowns, linen shirts, cups of wine and penny pieces, as he counted years ;*" and when this ceremony was over he stripped off his own violet gown of good cloth, lined with sheepskin, and gave it to the poorest man present.

Although Wressill Castle was the earl's mansion of state, he would seem to have preserved a greater fondness towards his birthplace of Leckonfield ; for he caused several rooms of the latter house to be handsomely decorated, and adorned with stanzas and distiches, some written by himself, but for the most part composed by the various poets and learned men who visited him. Lydgate and Skelton, both

<sup>1</sup> The London residence was situated in Aldgate.

<sup>2</sup> Among the strollers who annually visited the earl's northern home and received gifts from him were the "King's Juggler" and the "Queen's Bear-ward."



of whom were patronised by Northumberland, contributed not a few of these rhymes. One of them, which is a quaint play upon the family motto,<sup>1</sup> runs as follows :—

“ ESPERAUNCE EN DYEU !  
*Truste in hym that is most trewe.*

EN DIEU ESPERAUNCE !  
*In hym put thine affiaunce.*

ESPERAUNCE *in the Worlde?* . . . *Nay ;*  
*The Worlde varieth every day.*

ESPERAUNCE *in riches?* . . . *Nay not so ;*  
*Riches slidethe, and sone will go.*

ESPERAUNCE *in exaltacion of Honoure?*  
*Nay, it widderrithe . . . lyke a floure.*

ESPERAUNCE *in bloode and highe Lynage?*  
*At most nede, bot esy avauntage.*

ESPERAUNCE EN DIEU, *in hym is All ;*  
*Be thou contente, and thou art above Fortune's fall.”*<sup>2</sup>

This was inscribed “*in the Rooffe of the Hyst Chaumbre in the Gardinge*”—probably the apartment wherein the Percy genealogy was preserved, according to Leland. Another “Proverb,” written “*in the Rooffe of my Lordis Library at Lekyngfelde*” has the following stanza :—

“ *To every tale geve thou no credens,*  
*Prove the cause or thou gyve sentens.*  
*Agayn the right make no dyffens,*  
*So thou hast a clene Consciens.”*

It is remarkable how little the sixteenth century nobles had departed from the simple rules of life—the habits of early rising and early dinner—of their robust ancestors in

<sup>1</sup> The third Earl of Northumberland had used “*Esperance ma Comforte*” for his motto.

<sup>2</sup> This description of the inscriptions of Leckonfield is taken from Leland's *Itinerary*, vol. I.

the time of the Norman kings. The household rose every morning in time to hear six o'clock mass. At seven came breakfast ; and, except on very great occasions (such as the banquet given in honour of Queen Margaret at Newcastle), bedtime must have been soon after nine o'clock, when the gates of the castle were made fast for the night. The fare, too, was simple. The breakfast of the earl and his wife consisted of "a loaf of bread in trencher, two manchets, one quart of beer, one quart of wine, and half a chine of mutton, or else a chine of beef boiled." On fast days and in Lent the Earl's table was served with bread, manchets, wine, beer, and (in place of the flesh meat) with "two pieces of salt fish, six 'bacon'd' herrings, and a dish of sprats, or else three white herrings."

The other tables enjoyed much the same kind of food. Young Lord Percy and his brother Thomas had on "flesh days" the "half of a loaf of household bread, a manchet, a 'pottell' of beer, and a chicken, or else three mutton bones boiled"; while the little Lady Margaret and Inglegram Percy, both still in the "*Nurcy*," were given "a manchet, a quart of beer, and three mutton bones boiled." What would the mothers of our own times think of allowing two children of four or five to drink a quart of beer between them at a sitting? But, no doubt, the Countess Katherine of Northumberland would have been equally disgusted at the idea of tea for her nurselings. The gentlemen of the household breakfasted for the most part upon boiled beef and beer ; while in the stables and porters' lodges they had bread and a quart of beer to each man. Salt fish formed the staple Lenten diet of the humble members of the establishment on fast days.

The quarrel between the Pope and the King of France having afforded Henry VIII. the opportunity which he had so long desired—that of showing to all the world that he was as skilful and as brave in actual war as he had shown himself in joust and tourney—  
 Campaign in France.  
 on June 3, 1512, he declared war against France, taking as

his immediate excuse the natural refusal of Louis to restore to England her lost territories across the Channel.<sup>1</sup> The early stages of the war (directed on land by the Marquis of Dorset, and on sea by Sir Edward Howard) having brought but little success to the English arms, King Henry resolved to enter France in person at the head of a large army. Among those whom he summoned to accompany him on this expedition was the Earl of Northumberland. The text of the royal message to the earl runs thus: "*Whereas we according to our dutie to God and to his Chyrche, and at the instant requests and desyres of the Pooopes holiness and other Christian Princes, have for the defence of the said Chyrche, being by our enemy the King of France oppressed, and the extinction of detestable schism, raised by certain powers cardinals and mayntayned by the same, entered into actual warre agaynst him:*

"*We signifie unto you that for our better assistance in that behalfe we have appoynted you amongs others to passe over with us in our journey and voyage with the number of five hundred able men for the warres to be by you provided, whereof a hundred to be demy lances, well and sufficiently horsed and harneysed, and CCC archers and a hundred bills on fote.*"<sup>2</sup>

Little time did Northumberland lose in making ready to join his liege lord in what all England hoped was to prove the defeat of France and the reconquest of the British patrimony there. A manuscript quoted in the *Antiquarian Repository*, vol. iv., and transcribed in 1620 from the original manuscript in the College of Arms, gives full particulars regarding Northumberland's muster-roll, as well as the arms and equipment of himself and his troops. The force included 380 of his own tenants from Wressill, Leckonfield, Semer, Hundemanby, Craven, Pocklington, Nafferton, and Catton. To serve under his banner came Sir John Hotham from Scarborough, Sir Ralph Salvyn from Newbiggin, William Thwaytes of Londe-of-the-Wolde, and Stephen Hamilton of Gigleswicke, whose united retinues amounted to 143 fighting men. In the Exchequer Rolls there is an

<sup>1</sup> Lingard.

<sup>2</sup> *Add. MSS.*, Brit. Museum, 5758, F., 165.

order granting Northumberland £439, 9s. 8d., being his "wages for one month" as Grand Captain in the royal army. He had for his "cheef Capteyns,"—Sir John Normanvill, Roger Lascells, John Tampliew, Cuthbert Musgrave, and William Middleton; and, for his "petty Capteyns,"—George Swynborne, Thomas Eryngton, Thomas Horslay, John Hearon, and John Huthom: most of them gentlemen of fine old North-Country names, and bringing in their trains stout fellows from Cumberland, Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland. The Grand Captain had with him a treasurer, a herald, a pursuivant, and a chamberlain, together with kitcheners, yeomen of the tent, and yeomen of the wardrobe. For his own use and the use of his squires, he took twenty-three horses of mettle; besides several others to give to the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and twenty sumpter-horses to carry his baggage, and the baggage of his captains and soldiers. Following the king's example, Northumberland chose that his wardrobe should be gorgeous in the extreme. Doublets of crimson, green, and white satin; riding-coats and cloaks garnished with cloth of gold and silver; twenty pairs of hose; fourteen "hattys" of black, scarlet, crimson, and white; twenty-five pairs of boots, shoes, and slippers; silk laces, silk points, garters of silk, and many-coloured hat-bands—these form but a few of the many "items" set forth in the long list of "*my lordes parcells of stufte.*" His suits of armour had been selected with great care, and included "*a payre of Myllan brygaudys*" (Milanese coats of mail) "*couered with blake fusten and sett with roundhedyt gilt naile.*" The harness of his horses was equally fine, with "*a change for every day, and another for meating of princes which be the Kynges friends.*" All his personal train are remembered in the list; his chaplains being allowed "*xj yards and j q'rter of rede cloth for iij gownys,*" and "*ij bendys of white sarssenett and gren, wth vj cross, vj ross, and vj cressaunt.*" Many escutcheons and devices, for purposes of camp and tourney, are mentioned, among them "*xxx scochons in mettall,*

*wrought in oyle cullors upon bokeh'am with my Lord's hole armes, for to be sett upon my Lord's tents ;*" "CCC scochons in metall within the garter, wrought upon pauper, fer to sett upon my Lord's owne lodgyngs"; devices in colours upon paper, within the Garter, for the captains' lodgings; and white crescents (the Percy badge) upon red and black paper for the lodgings of the lackeys. Among the other items are: "a folding table for the cooks to dress my Lord's meete upon," "iij scythes for mawing of gresse and corne for my Lord's horsse," and "a cupboard for my Lorde's owne tent, and to serve an auter for the prests to say mess on"—the last-mentioned showing that either the earl or his chamberlain had an inventive mind, and knew the value of making camp furniture pay "a double debt."

Northumberland embarked from Dover on June 16, 1513, in the second division of the army; which division was under the chief command of the Lord Chamberlain Herbert.<sup>1</sup> On reaching Calais, where his troops were reinforced by 1500 Germans of the Emperor Maximilian's army, Herbert marched at once upon Terouenne, before which town the Earl of Shrewsbury already lay. Here, a few weeks later, they were joined by the third division, commanded by the king in person,<sup>2</sup> and by the Emperor Maximilian with 4000 horse. King Louis advanced to the relief of the besieged town, and despatched his entire cavalry, divided into two bodies, along the opposite bank of the Lis, under the Dukes of Longueville and Alençon. Henry, acting on the emperor's advice, sent the German horse and English mounted archers to repel the attack. At the very first shock a sudden and inexplicable panic seized upon the French soldiers—10,000 of the best veterans in Europe—and they fled like deer. In vain the Chevalier Bayard, that mirror of knighthood, strove to rally his men.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Earl of Worcester.

<sup>2</sup> Henry had spent a useless fortnight in Calais, merry-making and holding jousts and carnivals.

The Battle of  
the Spurs,  
and Flodden  
Field.

In vain Longueville and Bussy d'Amboise attempted to stem the torrent of flight. The pursuing Germans and the Earl of Northumberland's light horse followed so hard at the heels of the fugitives that they broke into the thick of the relieving army and, taking Louis by surprise, succeeded in putting his entire forces to rout. Many prisoners were taken, among them the fearless and blameless Bayard, Bussy d'Amboise, Clermont, and La Fayette. The headlong retreat earned for this inglorious action the derisive name of the "Battle of the Spurs." Terouenne, seeing its hopes of relief vanish, surrendered almost immediately.

While Northumberland was still with the royal army, outside Tournay,<sup>1</sup> news came from the Border which must have filled him with pleasure, not only for patriotic, but also for family reasons. The victory of Flodden had been fought and won; and among those who had battled most bravely through that bloody day had been the earl's second brother, Sir William Percy. Percy fought as second in command of the left wing of the English army,<sup>2</sup> under the aged Sir Marmaduke Constable. The ancient ballad of "Flodden Feld" places him among the right wing:—

*"The right wing, as I ween, was my lord Lumley,  
A capteyne full keen, with St. Cuthbert baner,  
My lord Clifford with him came all in clere armour,  
So did Sir William Percy that proved was of deeds."*

But this is an error, according to the English Chronicle, Holinshed, and other authorities. Percy was one of those who signed the letter sent from Surrey to the King of Scots, by which the shrewd captain of the English hoped, by dint of playing on his adversary's chivalry, to induce him to abandon his strong position on Wooller-haugh.<sup>3</sup> After the stern fight was done, and the "Flowers o' the Forest," with their king among them, lay dead on Flodden

<sup>1</sup> After the capture and demolition of Terouenne, Henry had laid siege to Tournay.

<sup>2</sup> Ridpath.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

side, Percy, for his deeds of valour, was made Knight Banneret. "*When the field was doone, and that the skouts brought word that there was no more appearance of the Scots, but that they were all auoyded and gone, the earl (of Surrey) gave thanks to God, and called to him certain lords and gentlemen, and them made knights; as Sir Edward Howard his sonne, the Lord Scroope, Sir William Persie, Sir Edward Gorge and divers others.*"<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, slowly but ever so surely, there had been growing up at Court a new power fraught with danger towards the Staffords, the Percies, the Howards, and others of the old nobility. Thomas Wolsey, son of Suffolk trading-folk, had pushed himself forward in the king's graces; until, as every reader of English history knows, he became first minister of the realm and Archbishop of York. Northumberland, like his brother-in-law, Buckingham, and the other great lords, cordially detested Wolsey, whom he looked upon as an upstart, and whose plebeian birth<sup>2</sup> he exaggerated and ridiculed. It was a sore matter with the survivors of the Plantagenet aristocracy that the king should repose so much trust in a priest, who, according to Skelton, had been—

*" Begat by butchers, and by beggars bred."*

Moreover, the new-made archbishop was shaping his policy upon the very lines afterwards followed in France by Richelieu. He aimed at crushing the power of *les grands seigneurs*, and placing the government in the hands of the king and his chief adviser. No doubt Buckingham, Northumberland, and the rest were quick to realise these intentions; although at first they failed to discern the

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> The contemporary assertion that Wolsey was the son of a butcher has never been substantiated. On the other hand, it is known that he belonged to a wealthy burgher family of Ipswich, connected by marriage with the Greshams and other Suffolk houses.

true strength of their enemy. Buckingham openly flouted Wolsey in the royal presence, even after the latter had obtained the cardinal's hat; and replied with superb insolence to the minister's threats. Little they heeded his warnings then, those *grands seigneurs* of the Court who laughed so heartily at the duke's jibes; but they had good reason to remember them later—none more so than hapless Buckingham himself. We may be sure that Northumberland was one of those who looked scornfully upon the cardinal before he had tried his strength against that man of iron will. Wolsey had foisted himself into the See of York, left vacant by the death of the earl's old friend, Cardinal Bambridge; and, although the new archbishop spent most of his time in London, yet he exercised great influence north of the Humber, and must have proved a most distasteful neighbour to the Percies. Friction soon arose, and Wolsey resolved to strike a blow which would, at one and the same time, punish Northumberland and put a powerful friend of Buckingham out of the way. In his quiet, steadfast way he had for some time been undermining the duke's influence, and preparing for his final overthrow. The young Earl of Surrey,<sup>1</sup> Buckingham's son-in-law, had been practically banished to Ireland. Now it was Northumberland's turn to feel the lash. "*There rested yet the Earl of Northumberland, whom the Cardinal doubted also, lest he might hinder his purpose, when he should go about to wreak his malice against the Duke of Buckingham: and therefore he picked a quarrel to him, for that he had seized upon certain wardes, which the Cardinal said belonged of right to the King. And because the Erle would not give over his title,<sup>2</sup> he was also committed to prison; and after took it as a great benefit at the Cardinal's hands that he might be delivered out of his danger.*"<sup>3</sup> We hear more of the earl's confinement through the correspondence of the astute

<sup>1</sup> Son of the former Surrey (now Duke of Norfolk), the victor of Flodden.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* his title to the wards. The names of these wards are not mentioned; but they were doubtless of northern families.

<sup>3</sup> Holinshed, iii. 645.



Shrewsbury<sup>1</sup>, who at this particular time was striving to keep in Wolsey's good graces; although when the tide had turned against the cardinal he became his bitterest foe. Writing to his chaplain, Thomas Allen, on April 30, 1516, Shrewsbury says: "*I am sorry to hear that my Lord of Northumberland is committed to the Fleet, but hope the King will shortly be good lorde to him, and that the earl will take no displeasure, as it might hurt himself.*"<sup>2</sup> A week later Chaplain Allen, who acted as a sort of spy for his master in London, writes to Shrewsbury: "*The King's grace sat in the Star Chamber, and there was examined the Earl of Northumberland, and so commanded to the Fleet; and there remains as yet.*"<sup>3</sup>

Unless he humbled himself before Wolsey, Northumberland need look for no mercy from the Star Chamber. In his "ragged rime," the laureate Skelton speaks eloquently of the cardinal's influence in that so-called Court of Justice:—

*"In the Exchequer he them checks;  
In the Star Chamber he nods and becks,  
And beareth him there so stout,  
That no man dare rout  
—Duke, Earl, Baron or Lord—  
But to his sentence must accord."*

The rude lines indeed "*have in them some pith,*" as their author declared, and give us a lifelike picture of the truculent cardinal. Little wonder that, still refusing to bow himself down before the enemy of his order, Northumberland was once more bundled back to the Fleet. He did not remain there long. The block might not have terrified him, or cowed his spirit; but the prospect of an indefinite sojourn between prison walls soon brought the splendour-loving Percy to his senses. He saw at length that it was useless for even an Earl of Northumberland to struggle against the cardinal's power, backed and sustained

<sup>1</sup> George Talbot, fourth Earl of Shrewsbury.

<sup>2</sup> *Talbot Papers*, I. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

as it was by the royal prerogative. His wife, too, pleaded with him to yield; and it is probable that Shrewsbury and others of the politic nobles brought their influence to bear upon him. On May 16, 1516, Sir Richard Sacheverell writes to Shrewsbury: "*No news, but that my Lord of Northumberland came out of the Fleet on Saturday, and was with the King on Wednesday in his Privy Chamber.*"<sup>1</sup> His imprisonment had lasted nearly a month; and, if he did not love the cardinal any better after leaving the Fleet, he had at least learned the lesson that it were better not to range himself too openly against so influential a minister.

The underlying cause of Lord Shrewsbury's keen interest in Northumberland became apparent soon after the latter had regained his freedom and returned to Court. Shrewsbury had five daughters, the successful marrying and portioning of whom he had made one of the serious problems of his life. Nearly everything that this cunning noble did was done cautiously and well; so that it is no surprise to learn that all of the five Ladies Talbot were advantageously disposed of, and at the smallest possible expense to their somewhat close-fisted sire. Now one of the daughters, the Lady Mary, had been intended by her father for the widowed Duke of Buckingham; but the match was broken off ostensibly on account of difficulties in the matter of settlements, but really in consequence of the grave dangers which Shrewsbury's foresight perceived to be hanging over the duke's head. He had no intention of plighting the Lady Mary to a peer, however great, upon whom the evil eye of the cardinal had rested; and whose lands and life might alike be forfeited to-morrow. Accordingly Shrewsbury began to cast about for another mate for his daughter; and the name of the young Lord Percy,<sup>2</sup> Northumberland's heir, at once occurred to him. Lord Percy's father safely out of the Fleet and once more in the king's favour, Shrewsbury

Match-  
making  
Shrewsbury.

<sup>1</sup> *Talbot Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> At this time in his fifteenth year.

broached the subject of an alliance to him; and arrangements were come to by which the young people were practically affianced. Shrewsbury, however, in the character of anxious parent, kept careful watch through his agents and correspondents lest Northumberland might be tempted to break through the agreement. Chaplain Thomas Allen writes to his lord from London: "*The question hath been asked of the Earl of Northumberland for the marriage of his son by Sir William Compton and divers others, who hath made answer:—'I have concluded with my Lord of Shrewsbury.' He hath also been desired to bring him to Court. He answered: 'When he is better learned and well acquainted with his wife, shortly after that he shall come to Court.' This conversation pricks him more hartely forward than ever he was.*"<sup>1</sup>

It is to be regretted that no particulars survive as to how Lord Percy was made "well acquainted" with his future bride. Such information would afford to the curious an invaluable glimpse of the domestic manners of the day, besides supplying the key to much that can now only be guessed at in the subsequent unhappy story of these young people. Did Percy, as was frequently the custom, don the Talbot livery, and serve for a time in Lord Shrewsbury's household? Or was little Lady Mary sent to Wressill to win her betrothed's regard, with his mother for a kindly governess, and his sisters for playmates? The contemporary records do not say what was done to bring the twain together; but they must have met, and become "acquainted," for in all too brief a time, the engagement between them was set aside by mutual consent of their parents, owing to the strong aversion which the affianced children had conceived for each other. Strong, indeed, must the aversion have been before the obstinate fathers of the Tudor epoch allowed it to interfere with their matrimonial arrangements. But in this case the wishes of the plighted pair were for once allowed to prevail. Lord Shrewsbury looked elsewhere for a husband for his fifth,

<sup>1</sup> *Talbot Papers.*

and least comely, daughter ; while young Percy was packed off to London, there to serve as a page to my lord the cardinal, and perchance to find some damsel more suited to his taste. Such a one he was fated to find soon enough, to his own life-long sorrow ! But for the present he was happy. The fear of a marriage with Mary Talbot had been removed ; and the joys of the great world, from which he had hitherto been debarred, were at last to be opened before him. So he set out from Wressill with a light heart and a purse of weight, as befitted the heir of a great and apparently wealthy nobleman. When he next turned his face homeward it was under woefully different circumstances.

Whether it was that his pride had been broken by the defeat and humiliation inflicted upon him at the hands of Wolsey, or whether (as is likely) resources crippled by youthful extravagance brought about the change in his nature, the erstwhile "Magnificent Earl" began at this period of his life to give evidence of a character widely different from that which had formerly earned for him the admiration and envy of the world. The splendours of the past were to a large extent abandoned. Northumberland became morose, and neglectful of the public duties regarded as inseparable from one of his name and station. In the affairs of the Border especially, he showed a lack of interest which provoked at first surprise, and then unpopularity. Lord Dacre of Gillesland,<sup>1</sup> newly appointed Warden of the East, West, and Middle Marches, was driven to complain to the king that Northumberland lent him little or none of that assistance which was expected from the head of the house of Percy. He was forced, he said, to contend single-handed, or at least "*without grete help*" against "*the hole power of the realme of Scotland.*"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William, third Lord Dacre of Gillesland, a son-in-law of the Earl of Shrewsbury, bore the reputation of being a fierce and relentless ravager of the Scottish Marches.

<sup>2</sup> *Cotton MSS.*

If Northumberland was rebuked for not aiding the Warden more loyally, he seems to have treated the royal reprimand but lightly; and to have continued to stand aloof from Border warfare. Dacre was forced to bring further charges against him; and to beg Wolsey that the earl should be forced to make his tenants and dependants "*gif attendaunce as in tymes past.*" For, it appears that not only was Northumberland himself disinclined to share the perils of the marches, but that he had gone so far as to issue orders among those who followed his banner not to help the Warden without his permission—"not to rise without special commaundment."<sup>1</sup> Northumberland entered but half-heartedly into the guarding of the frontier; so that murmurs began to be heard even among the most devoted vassals of his house. To the sturdy Northumbrians it seemed shameful that the descendant of Hotspur should sit idly in his castle, a book in his hand in place of a sword, while the Scots were riding and reiving from Berwick to Carlisle, and the king's captain was crying out for help.

The reader will remember that when Margaret of England went to meet her husband the King of Scots in 1503, Northumberland met her outside York, and acted as her guide and protector across the Border. Rarely had he shown more magnificence than upon that occasion. Now, after the lapse of fourteen years, it once more fell to his lot to act as escort to Queen Margaret. But the circumstances were greatly and unhappily different. She who had so thoroughly enjoyed the earl's hospitality while yet a light-hearted bride, was now returning to England a trembling fugitive, bearing her little son<sup>2</sup> into safety from the machinations of the Duke of Albany. Her royal husband slain at Flodden, the queen was remarried to the Earl of

Northumberland again escorts Queen Margaret.

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, *Original Letters*.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards James V., "*the King of the Commons*," the James Fitz-James of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*.

Angus ; and, in spite of the fact that she was scarce thirty years of age, sorrow and persecution had lined her brow and streaked her hair with white. But deeply occupied as Margaret was with her own distress, she can hardly have failed to notice that Northumberland, the splendid princely figure of fourteen years before, was now a morose and prematurely aged man, whose slender resources no longer admitted of luxuriant banquets and glittering pageants. The earl, learning of Margaret's flight, met her at Berwick Bounds early in the spring of 1517, and journeyed with her as far as York. No merry-making signalised this voyage, nor did the Countess of Northumberland come to York, as on the former occasion, to greet the king's sister. The earl acquitted himself of his trust faithfully, but without any effort at display.

When Margaret reached sanctuary in her brother's Court a few weeks later, and when favourable negotiations had been concluded with Albany in regard to her return to Scotland, Henry wrote to Northumberland as follows :  
*"Right trustie and ryght well-beloved cousine, we grete you well. And foreasmuch as we understand that at the tyme of the late repayre hither of our derest sister, the Queen of Scots, ye, according to our letters then addressed, ryght thankfully acquitted yourself in geving your attendaunce for her conductinge and honorable conveyence, we therefore geve unto you our speciall thanks.*

*"And wheir it is appoynted that our sayd derest sister shall now return into the realm of Scotlande, we wot and desyne you to put yourselfe, and our cousyne the lady your wiffe, in a redines likewas to accompany and conduct her at this her sayd returne from our citie of Yorke, where she entendith to be the xxix daie of this monneth instaunte so to attend upon hyr to Newburrow, wherby you shall deserve our further thanks to be remembered accordingly.*

*"Geven under our signe at our Manor of Richmonde this vii daie of Maie."*<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the gracious nature of this letter, Northum-

<sup>1</sup> *Talbot Papers*, i. 49.

berland by no means welcomed the new commission, for he realised full well that, economise as rigidly as he might, to escort the Queen of Scots and her son once more to their dominions would prove a serious drain upon his depleted purse. He wrote to the king broadly hinting that some other northern noble—Clifford or Dacre, perhaps—should now be given the honour of guarding Margaret. But Henry either did not see, or else affected not to see, the hint thus broadly conveyed. The earl then wrote to his friend Shrewsbury praying him to use his influence at Court to the end that Lady Northumberland at least might be excused from attending upon the queen. His wife, he pleaded, was not "*in caise to ride*"; but he omits to mention the nature of her indisposition. His own wish to be excused from duty he repeats to Shrewsbury, in such terms that the true cause of his disinclination for such costly service is easily seen to be lack of money. Shrewsbury, interested on behalf of his daughter, Lady Mary (the engagement still existed), in preserving as much as possible the Percy fortune, acted as Northumberland's advocate with the king; but his negotiations were only partially successful. The Countess of Northumberland was permitted to remain at Wressill on account of her ailment (real or contrived); but Henry refused to accept any substitute for the earl. The latter's request to be allowed to meet Margaret on the further side of York, thereby avoiding the cost of lodging her in the city, was also refused. We learn from a letter written by Magnus to Wolsey, that "*my lord steward<sup>1</sup> attended the Queen to Doncaster; she was honourably received on entering Yorkshire by Lord Darcey, and at York by the Lord of Northumberland and the Mayor.*" Perhaps the earl succeeded in inducing the mayor and citizens of York to bear some of the heavy charges thus forced upon him.

Northumberland was now greatly pressed for money; yet the relentless king (or perhaps Wolsey still more relentless) compelled him in the following year to undergo

<sup>1</sup> Shrewsbury, Lord Steward of the Household.

expenses to which those attendant upon Queen Margaret's coming and going were as nothing. He was commanded to raise and equip a goodly retinue; to accompany Henry on his second and more famous visit to France; and there to make one of the ten earls who were to wait upon Francis I. at that scene of gorgeous mummery, the Field of the Cloth of Gold. With his characteristic bluntness, the king bade his "*dere cosyne*" see to it that the numbers and general appearance of his following were well worthy of the occasion. To the best of his ability Northumberland obeyed the royal mandate. He brought with him to Guisnes, near which place the meeting of Henry and Francis was to take place, six gentlemen of birth, three chaplains, and twenty-three men-at-arms and domestics, together with "*twenty horses all caparisoned in trappings of velvet, embroidered with gold and silver.*" But the descriptions of the earl and his train read but poorly when compared with the account of Northumberland's previous voyage across the Channel. In order to accomplish the feat of fitting out his contingent at all he was driven to borrow considerable sums from the substantial citizens of York and Beverley, giving in exchange orders on his various estates payable at the next rent gathering. Others of the noblemen who accompanied Henry to Guisnes were similarly situated; even Buckingham, the richest of England's peers, having felt the strain occasioned by years of wasteful expenditure and the consequent scarcity of money. Hence it was not difficult for Wolsey to outshine them all, and thus gratify the vanity so commonly found in men thus quickly raised from obscurity to power and great riches. The cardinal's retinue, it is said, almost equalled in magnificence that of the king himself, and far surpassed the troops of Buckingham or Northumberland. Hated by the nobles, as his Eminence had been before, this insolent splendour (for such it was deemed) filled the cup of his unpopularity. They ridiculed his pomp as openly as they dared; and Northumberland

Field of the  
Cloth of Gold  
and its  
results.



and his nine brother earls, waiting on King Francis, mocked the "flesher's son of Ipswich" for the amusement of that gay prince. But the "flesher's son" as yet held King Henry wholly on his side. Buckingham, acting as spokesman of his peers, protested bitterly against the great pageant at Guisnes, declaring that England had been drained dry in order that the upstart cardinal might strut upon cloth-of-gold. Northumberland and all the great lords, except Shrewsbury and one or two of the more cautious, joined in the chorus of angry discontent. The king listened to them but impatiently, and then inclined his ear to the whispers of the favourite minister. Wolsey never forgot, and rarely forgave a slight. Within two years after the protest of the nobles, Buckingham, their leader, laid his proud head upon the block. In the words of Charles V. :—  
*"a butcher's mongrel had slain the finest buck in England."*

Taking warning from the fate of his brother-in-law, Northumberland abandoned the Court and hastened northward. Rendered gloomier and less desirous of public life than ever, he retired to his Yorkshire estates, hoping to be allowed to spend the remainder of his life in peace.

The grim cardinal, however, had no intention of thus permitting one of his enemies to dwell in safe seclusion.

Northumberland was again and again summoned to council, the journeys to London and back incurring expenses only a little less heavy than the alternative fines for non-attendance. In 1523 the Regent Albany threatened war upon a large scale, and massed troops along the Border. The king, at Wolsey's advice, selected Northumberland for the exceedingly difficult and responsible post of General Warden of the Marches; and this in spite of the fact that the earl had never before been tried in any high command, except perhaps that of the light horse in France. Northumberland accepted the Wardenship with misgiving; a misgiving that was more than justified when after a few months he realised that, while personally courageous enough, he lacked the military skill necessary to cope with Albany, and that, in

Northumberland's unpopularity and embarrassments.

consequence of the reserved habits of his later years, he scarcely possessed the confidence of his lieutenants. Under the circumstances he took the best course, and resigned his high command to the Earl of Surrey, with whom were associated the Marquis of Dorset and that experienced Border-captain Lord Dacre.

However honourable the earl's motives may have been, they were everywhere misconstrued throughout the North Country. For over five hundred years the Percies had been hereditary soldiers. The fighting strain had been transmitted from father to son; and, save for a few priests, tonsured perhaps against their inclinations, the line had never before brought forth man-child that did not love battle better than books. Even the fifth earl, in his brave youth, had shown a spirit worthy of his sires. Yet now he refused to take the Percy's natural place at the head of a Northern army. He cast aside the glorious chance of once more standing in the gap of danger, and of hurling back the Scots as they had been hurled back by the old Percies at Northallerton, at Nevill's Cross, and at Homildoun. Had the blood of the house of Alnwick turned to water?—so asked the perplexed and disgusted Northumbrians. Radcliffes, Musgraves, Redmaynes, Swinburnes, and Scropes, who had been proud to follow the Percy to war, or to ride in his train at joust and tourney, now passed him by with scarce a word. Rough ballads were made upon him, and sung, in all their uncouth satire, around the hall fires of many a Border castle. His name became a by-word: his own kin (even his brother, Sir William of Flodden fame) looked askance when he was spoken of; his vassals and tenants were stricken with shame. "*For refusing this commission*" (the Wardenship of the Marches), "*the Earl of Northumberland was not regarded of his owne tenants, which disdained him and his blode, and much lamented his foly.*"<sup>1</sup>

The real reasons for the earl's resignation of the Wardenship were his own knowledge of his inability to

<sup>1</sup> Hall.

perform the duties properly (as has already been stated), and probably also that poverty which had haunted him for so many years. One month after he incurred the undeserved contempt of the North by declining to act as General Warden against Albany, we find him writing to one of his successors, Lord Dacre of Gillesland, asking for a loan of £100. He explains that he had just returned from attending Parliament, which expedition had entirely exhausted his supplies; and that no sooner was he home at Wressill again than a second summons had arrived from the king, bidding him present himself at Court without delay. To obey the royal command he must have ready money; and it is for this purpose that he asks Dacre to oblige him with a loan. By way of security, he encloses an order on the steward or receiver of his estates in Cumberland, payable on the following Lady Day.<sup>1</sup> Had he retained the Wardenship, he must have run the risk of expenses far beyond his means—expenses which, since the Royal Treasury itself was not over well stocked, he might never have been able to recover.

Although the Northumbrians regarded Earl Henry with doubt, and even with aversion, they had nought but good words for Sir William Percy. While the elder brother was busy squandering his substance at Court, the younger had lived the life of a Border knight—sharing in fray and foray, and leading as many men as his brother could spare to the help of each successive Warden of the Marches. We have seen his prowess on Flodden Field, where Surrey invested him with the well-earned dignity of Knight Banneret. Long before Flodden, however, he had won his spurs; and long afterwards he was to uphold the Percy name upon the frontier. Little fear of the Cheviot passes forgetting to echo "*Esperance*" while Sir William was in the saddle! There were not wanting those who said that he should have been the earl, in place of his brother; but who can tell whether honest William would have been able to withstand the

Sir William  
Percy well  
upholds the  
name.

<sup>1</sup> *Add. MSS.* (Brit. Museum), 24, 965; p. 18.

temptations of the Court any better than he who now sorrowed in sackcloth for what he had spent upon cloth-of-gold. Fortunately or unfortunately for himself, William's life was passed almost wholly among "the Marches towards Scotland"; and it is extremely doubtful if he ever went so far afield as London in all his days.

Lord Warden Dacre showed little affection towards the Earl of Northumberland, whose tastes and habits he despised; but Sir William Percy he at once admired and understood. Indeed, the Warden's letters to the king are replete with praise of the cadet of Northumberland. In 1522 the Bishop of Carlisle reported to the Council that "*Sir William Percy, the Lord Ogle, and others to the number of 200, attacked the Border, and slew Lance Carr, and brought his son and heir and a great prey in safety to England, losing only one man.*" The bishop suggests that the king should be asked "*for a letter of thanks to them*"; adding shrewdly that "*otherwise he would have to give them money.*"<sup>1</sup> His lordship's advice was duly acted upon; and Henry sent the raiders a letter of thanks on June 14. To this Wolsey added a more substantial recognition of their services, in the shape of money to the amount of £122, 13s. 4d. The list showing how this sum was divided is interesting, containing as it does so many brave old Border names. The fact that Sir William Percy's name is placed fifth upon the roll means nothing; as it will be observed that he received the same honorarium as Ogle, the other leader of the raid.

*"Reward given unto divers men of the North by the handes of My Lorde Lieutenant, for the casting down of Blackatur<sup>2</sup> and other fortresses in Scotland:—*

	£	s.	d.
<i>For the Souldiers of</i>			
<i>Berwick . . . }</i>	6	13	4
<i>Lord Ogill . . .</i>	13	6	8
<i>Sr William Heron . . .</i>	10	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Bishop of Carlisle to the Council, May 22, 1522; Record Office.

<sup>2</sup> Blackadder, Co. Berwick; now the property of Sir G. L. Houston-Boswall, Bart.

	£	s.	d.
<i>Sr Edward Graye</i> . . . . .	10	0	0
<i>Sr William Percy</i> . . . . .	13	6	8
<i>Sr Philip Dacre</i> . . . . .	5	0	0
<i>Sr Ralph à Fenwick</i> . . . . .	10	0	0
<i>Sr William Lysle</i> . . . . .	5	0	0
<i>Sr Roger Guast</i> . . . . .	4	0	0
<i>Robert à Collingwood</i> . . . . .	4	0	0
<i>To the Gunners</i> . . . . .	5	0	0
<i>To Claverynge</i> . . . . .	53	¼	
<i>Sir John Delavale</i> . . . . .	53	¼	
<i>John Swinburne</i> . . . . .	40	0	
<i>John Heron of Chipease</i> . . . . .	4	0	0
<i>Sr. William Hilton</i> . . . . .	10	0	0
<i>Sr. William Ellerbee</i> . . . . .	5	0	0
<i>Cuthbert Racliffe</i> . . . . .	4	0	0
<i>Sr. Nicholas Ridley</i> . . . . .	40	0	
<i>Certain guards</i> . . . . .	40	0	
<i>Total</i> . . . . .	<u>£122, 13s. 4d."</u> <sup>1</sup>		

It will be noticed that "gunnes" were used during this sweeping foray, and that archers are not mentioned. Sir Thomas and Sir Ingelgram Percy, younger sons of the Earl of Northumberland, fought under their uncle's eye, and took part in the capture of young Carr.<sup>2</sup> Both lads were already knighted, although neither had as yet attained his majority. They were being trained in the same hardy, open-air school as that in which Sir William had won his spurs; just as their elder brother, Henry "*the Unlucky*," was already learning, as his father had learned, the thriftless lessons of the Court.<sup>3</sup>

In 1523 Percy wrote to Lord Dacre asking for a fresh supply of arrows; and desiring that twenty of his horsemen might have eight days' leave of absence in which to procure remounts, the steeds they were then riding "*being so sore creysed*." The Warden, however, was a stern commander, even to his favourites. Further arrows he refused, for the

<sup>1</sup> *Cotton MSS.*, "*Caligula*," Book I. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Book VI. p. 426.

<sup>3</sup> He was then in Wolsey's household.

time being, on the ground that to comply with such a request would be to bring half the Borderside clamouring to his gates for ammunition. He also denied Percy's men their hoped-for furlough, because they had "*only made five raids that quarter.*" The king, he informed Sir William, expected his marchmen to "*make a raid at least once a week while the grass is on the ground.*"<sup>1</sup> With the Scots replying to each English assault by another, the condition of the Borders during these years must have been one of continuous strife. To such an extent was the "game of give and take" carried, that the yeomen on either side of the line had no spare time in which to cut firewood for their dames at home, and were driven to hew down and carry away the enemy's timber while riding back from a foray.<sup>2</sup> A few days after Percy's application for arrows, the Warden, by way of practically illustrating his statement, planned a raid upon an unusually large scale, the objects of which were—"to burn Ednam and Stichell, the towns under Stichel Crag, Hasington, Manes, Newton, Aynthorne and others on the road, also Akles and Mersington." Sir William Percy brought 200 men to the tryst appointed by Dacre; but only part of the intended plan was carried out in consequence of the stubborn resistance offered by the Scots.

In October 1524 the Earl of Northumberland surprised friends and foes alike by shaking off for the nonce the lethargy into which he appeared to have fallen. Mustering a great force of his kinsmen and tenants, he marched across the Border. With him went his brothers, Sir William and Josceline, and his sons Sir Thomas and Sir Ingelgram. Beyond raiding a section of the Merse, fighting one unimportant skirmish, and carrying off some prey, little was done upon this expedition. But the wholly unexpected action of the earl irritated, as much as it astonished Lord Dacre, who, brave captain as he ever showed himself,

Last deeds  
and death of  
the "Magni-  
ficent" Earl.

<sup>1</sup> Dacre to Percy, June 23, 1523; *Add. MSS.*, 24, 965.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of Henry VIII., June 27, 1523.

was not proof against jealousy. The Warden wrote post haste to the Council, complaining that Northumberland had "*gone agaynst the Scots as if he had been the King of England in person, bearing the Cross Keys.*"<sup>1</sup> If Dacre hoped to excite the king's wrath against the earl by these means, he was doomed to disappointment. Cardinal Wolsey, who, since Northumberland's eldest son was placed in his household, had become an ally of the house of Percy, now interposed in the earl's behalf. "*Your highness was informed,*" he said to the king, "*that my lord of Northumberland, in this his proceeding against the Scotts, wore the Crosse Keys, which is the bage of your Church of York. . . . I have commoned with your servante, my treasurer Sir William Gascoyne, who shewith me assuridly and undoubtidly, as he wil abide by and is redy to justifie upon his oath . . . that neither the said Erle of Northumberland, ne any of his retynue, ware the Crosse Keyes; but that they ware your highnes' cognizance onely, and under that his own bage.*"<sup>2</sup> *Wherefor, Sir, your grace hath cause to give the less credence unto those which wolde make unto the same such fayned and untrue reaportes.*"<sup>3</sup> Wolsey was a powerful friend; and the earl received praise from Henry instead of blame. But the circumstance originated a feud between Dacre and the Percies, which was afterwards to bear evil fruit.

In 1526 Northumberland was hastily summoned from the North by the cardinal, to interpose his parental authority between his son, Lord Percy, and a certain fair lady of Queen Katherine's household—one Mistress Anne Boleyn. How, with the cardinal's aid, he succeeded in separating these young lovers; and how that separation brought only sorrow and tragedy in its train—these things remain to be told in the history of the earl's successor, to whose sad life they more properly belong.

Satisfied that he had done his duty as a father and a loyal subject, yet grievously troubled by what he considered the waywardness and lack of thrift of his heir, Northumberland returned for the last time to Wressill

<sup>1</sup> The "*Cross Keys*" was the badge of the Archiepiscopal See of York.

<sup>2</sup> The "*Crescent and Munsicles.*" <sup>3</sup> Letters of Henry VIII., Nov. 26, 1524.

Castle. It was but cold comfort that he found there. His bailiffs and receivers brought him little or no money, and every day the demands upon his shrunken purse grew more and more importunate. Satisfied that Lord Percy's extravagance would complete the ruin which he himself had begun in his own careless youth, he cast about for a means of disinheriting Anne Boleyn's late lover, and of settling the estates, if not the titles, of the house upon one of his younger sons. He had openly threatened Lord Percy with disinheritance;<sup>1</sup> and it is quite possible that he would have succeeded in carrying out his threats, owing to the king's jealousy of that luckless youth and love of Mistress Boleyn, had not another alternative presented itself. Young Percy's early betrothal to the Lady Mary Talbot will be remembered. The engagement had been broken off by mutual consent; but now, at Wolsey's suggestion, Northumberland sought to have it renewed. Perhaps the Lady Mary did not relish this method of playing fast and loose with her future; perhaps Northumberland's altered position in regard to worldly wealth caused Shrewsbury, the lady's father, to look less favourably upon a Percy alliance. Difficulties certainly blocked the way; and, while endeavouring to remove them, the fifth Earl of Northumberland was suddenly overtaken by death, on May 19, 1527.

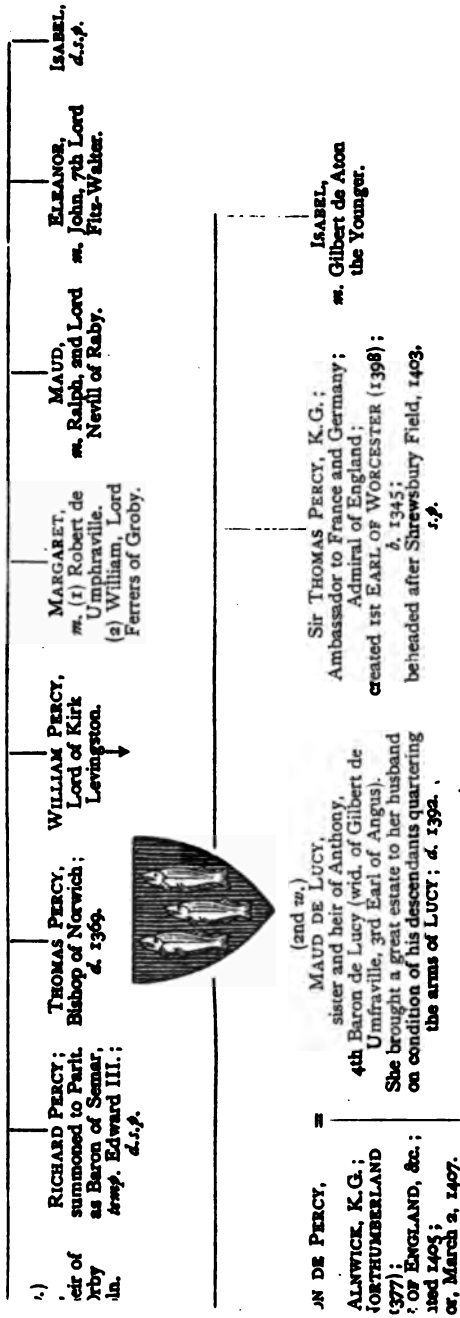
His life cannot be described as either useful or happy. Beginning his career with great riches, high rank, and intelligence far above most of the nobles of his day, he wasted all these endowments in striving to sustain at Court that prodigal magnificence which eventually shattered his resources, and forced him to spend his latter years in poverty and retirement. The courtiers whom he had dazzled soon forgot his evanescent splendours; and the soldier barons of the North Country found in their hearts but little kindness for the morose and broken man that had flouted them in the days of his pride. On his deathbed all the ready money at his disposal amounted to less

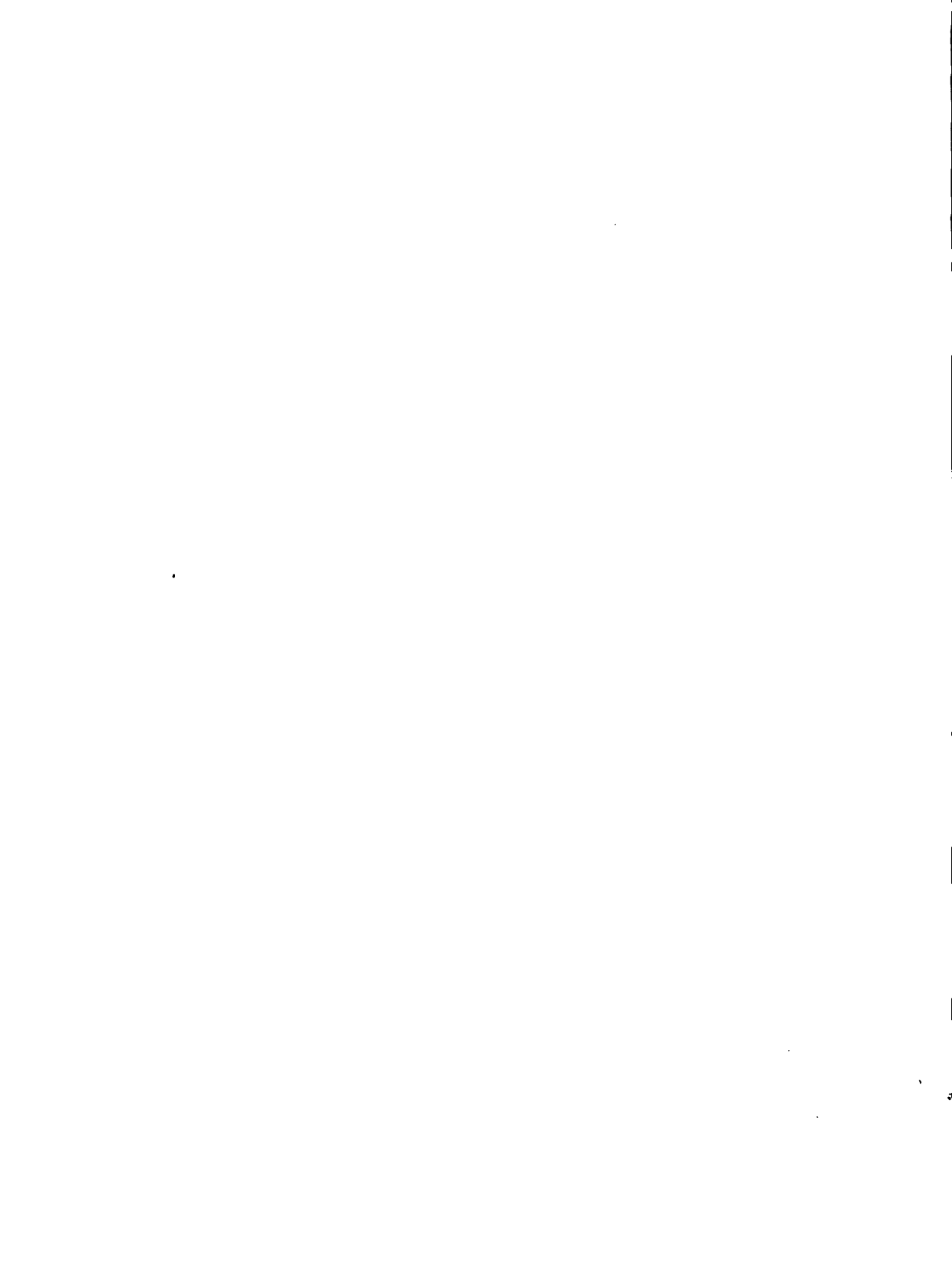
<sup>1</sup> See later, under the account of the sixth earl.



# ALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF PERCY

TABLE II.





Alfred Sneyd  
1833  
1846

AUTOGRAPHS OF THOMAS, SEVENTH, AND HENRY, EIGHTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND



than £14; and the wherewithal to bury the body of the "Magnificent Earl" had to be borrowed upon the security of what little plate remained at Wressill.<sup>1</sup>

No sooner was Northumberland dead than Wolsey interfered in the affairs of the Percy family so imperiously, and with so little apparent right, that he must have had the king's direct sanction for his actions. The heir of the deceased earl was of full age, and entitled to direct his father's obsequies; but Wolsey sent down from London strict injunctions to the effect that the Earl of Cumberland,<sup>2</sup> young Percy's brother-in-law, should make all the necessary arrangements and act as executor of the estate. Nay, Cumberland was even forbidden to allow the new earl to attend his father's funeral!<sup>3</sup> Whether the design was simply to punish Percy for his love-affair with Mistress Boleyn (hereinafter to be dwelt upon); or whether king and cardinal feared that, were he allowed control of his patrimony, the young man would use it to carry off his lady-love by force; it is difficult to determine. But motives connected with the royal designs upon Anne Boleyn almost certainly inspired the cardinal's high-handed conduct; and only the abject poverty in which he found himself can explain Percy's tame submission.

With Cumberland was associated one Brian Higden, a creature of Wolsey. Six days after Northumberland's death they wrote as follows to Thomas Hennege, the cardinal's gentleman-usher:—"*Have made a new proportion of expences for the funeral of my lord of Northumberland, which have appointed to take place on Thursday come se'nnight; and trust not to exceed the sum assigned in his highnes' letter. Will send up Will Worme<sup>4</sup> as desired, though he would be of great use to them.*"

<sup>1</sup> See later.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Clifford, first Earl of Cumberland, had married as his second wife the Lady Margaret Percy.—(See *Genealogy*, Table II.)

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*, 1527.

<sup>4</sup> The chief steward at Wressill Castle. The family of Worme is still to be met with in this part of Yorkshire.

*Neither beeves nor salt-fish left at my lord's death; and only twenty marks in money<sup>1</sup> which is spent long ago, with much more for which pledges have been given. More money must be borrowed before the funeral; else the house will break and 'sparple,' which would be a dishonour while the body lies unburied. If it be broken up afterwards, the servants should have their wages at least for the past time and for this quarter."*<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after the funeral Cumberland and Brian Higden wrote again:—"Have according to his grace's command, delivered to my Lord (Abbot) of St. Mary's, York, certain parcels of plate of my lord of Northumberland late deceased, amounting to £666, 6s. 4d, which money have received from the Abbot, and therewith buried the said Lord. There were neither priests, scholars, poor folk, noblemen nor gentlemen at the burial to the number they had prepared for . . . so that a good sum was reserved both of the money for the doole and for the housekeeping at the time of the burial. Had proportioned the liveries of divers prices, some 10s., some 6s. 8d. and less; but the purveyors could not find cloth of so much value in the country, and, as the time was too short to send to London, they had to take coarser cloth, which saved still more money.

"Have discharged the household according to his grace's letter of the XI June, received on Friday. Paid them according to a book made by Will Worme, and delivered to the writers by Ambrose Yrton; though, where it did not quite agree with my Lord's Chequiroull here, have followed the latter. Have advised the Countess with her children to remain with my lord of Cumberland, who has offered her his house, and to be as chief lady and mistress of the same. She evidently does not wish to live in Craven for the coldness of the air, and would be glad to remain here, or be with my lady Pykering in this country, being of kin to my lord her son, until otherwise provided for. She is willing to live poorly, and will be at pains to please his grace. My lord her son,

<sup>1</sup> Or about £13, 6s. 8d.

<sup>2</sup> Earl of Cumberland and Brian Higden to Hennege, XXV. May; State Papers.

*and her children go with my lord of Cumberland until his grace's pleasure is known."*<sup>1</sup>

The fifth earl was buried at Beverley. By his wife, Katherine Spenser<sup>2</sup> (who, dying in 1542, not only outlived her husband but all three of her sons as well), he left five children: Henry, sixth Earl of Northumberland, Sir Thomas Percy (of whom later), Sir Ingelgram or Ingram Percy (who is supposed to have died unmarried in or about 1540, and from whom the "*Trunkmaker*," Thomas Percy, claimant of the earldom, afterwards claimed descent), Margaret (second wife of Henry, first Earl of Cumberland), and Mary (wife of William, Lord Conyers).

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> The countess was one of the daughters and co-heirs of Sir Robert Spenser, Knt., by his wife Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of Edmund Beaufort, sixth Duke of Somerset (one of the legitimatised descendants of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford).

## VII

HE who now inherited the titles and impoverished estates of Northumberland was one of those whom fate seems to have marked out for a life of sadness and disappointments. Throughout his short career, scarcely anything prospered to which he turned his hand. His father disliked him; for the very reason, probably, that the older man saw in the younger many of those same traits of wastefulness which had left his own coffers void. From his mother and brothers, Henry "the Unlucky" had been separated at an early age; so that of family ties or family affection he knew but little. The cup of his misfortune was filled by an unhappy love affair, and a marriage equally unhappy.

Very soon after his boyish engagement to Mary Talbot had been broken off, the then Lord Percy was placed by his father in the household of Cardinal Wolsey. Since his imprisonment, and the execution of his brother-in-law Buckingham, the fifth Earl of Northumberland, realising that further opposition was both useless and dangerous, had become one of Wolsey's adherents; and did not disdain to pay a considerable sum for the establishment of his heir in the palace of his Eminence of York—which was then held to be "*the best introduction to Court.*"<sup>1</sup> Wolsey's household consisted of over eight hundred persons; including nine or ten young noble, who occupied a separate table,

<sup>1</sup> Benger, *Memoirs of Anne Boleyn.*



fifteen knights, and forty squires.<sup>1</sup> Young Percy's life among these surroundings was at once idle and beset with temptations to extravagance. His principal duty consisted in waiting upon the cardinal when the latter visited Court ; and it was during one of these visits to the royal palaces that Henry the Unlucky first saw the damsel who was fated to win his heart and make him the unconscious rival of a king. Mistress Anne Boleyn, youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, was then in her seventeenth year, and had but recently returned from a sojourn at the French Court. While the cardinal deliberated with the king, Percy passed his time more agreeably, though more perilously, with the ladies of Queen Katherine. So it came to pass that he made the acquaintance of Anne Boleyn ; and, quickly outstripping Sir Thomas Wyatt—(self-constituted laureate to the new beauty)—and other competitors for her smiles, offered to Mistress Anne his hand and heart. He was little more than twenty years of age, of comely presence, and heir to one of the few ancient houses spared by the civil wars. Perhaps because she really loved him, perhaps because no more promising suitor appeared at the time, Sir Thomas Boleyn's beautiful and coquettish daughter accepted Percy's offer of marriage ; and they plighted their troth without consulting the wishes of the Earl of Northumberland, or dreaming for a moment that any serious obstacle would mar their courtship. No attempt was made to conceal their happiness from the Court ; and presently gossip carried news of the engagement to the king's ears. Henry, himself secretly in love with Mistress Anne, resolved that the stripling Percy should not stand in the way of his desires. The royal libertine had, at the time, no intention of entering into anything more than a left-handed union with this prettiest of Katherine's maids. No thought of putting Katherine aside and raising the

<sup>1</sup> Fiddes, *Life of Wolsey*.

daughter of a simple knight to the vacant throne had entered his head. Consequently only disgust can be felt at the conduct of Cardinal Wolsey, who, learning from Henry's own lips what his wishes were in regard to Anne Boleyn, deliberately set himself to pander to them by checking the loves of that pretty coquette and the heir of Northumberland. There exist numerous accounts, more or less faithful, of how Wolsey carried out the foul work by which he hoped to strengthen himself in Henry's favour, but which—justly enough—eventually brought about his disgrace and ruin. Perhaps the most reliable of these narratives (since it emanates from an eye-witness to the scenes described) is that published in Nott's *Life of Wyatt*, and entitled "*An Account of Queen Ann Bullen, from a MS. in the handwriting of Sir Roger Twisden Bart., 1623.*" This manuscript was endorsed by the writer, as follows:—"I received this from my Vnclie Wyatt anno 1623." The Wyatt alluded to was brother of Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, and one of the cardinal's gentlemen. Applying to the story the test of contemporary evidence, it will be found that Cavendish in his *Life of Wolsey* corroborates Wyatt in almost every detail.

Wyatt relates how the king, hearing of Lord Percy's engagement to Anne Boleyn, sent for Wolsey and revealed the state of his own affections towards the young maid of honour. The cardinal promised to do his utmost towards preventing a match between Anne and Percy. "*So that,*" continues the manuscript, "*when the Cardinall returned from the Court to his house at Westminster, being in the Gallerye, and not forgetting the king's commaundment, called the sayd Lo: Percye unto him, and, before us his servants then attendinge, sayde to him:—'I marueile not a little (quoth he) of thy folly, that thou wouldest thus attempt to assure thyselfe with a foolishe gyrl yonder in the Court, Ann Bullen. Doest thou not consider the estate that God hath called thee unto this world; for after thy father's death thou art most like to inherite*



SEAL OF THE EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, SIXTH EARL

4A

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*and enjoye one of the noblest Earledomes in this Kingdome, and therefore it had been most meete and conuenient for thee to haue had thy father's consent in this case; and to haue acquainted the King's Ma<sup>ty</sup> therewith, requiring his princely fauore, and in all such matters submitting thy proceedings unto his Highnesse, who would not onely thankfully haue excepted (accepted) thy submission, but I am assured would haue so provided for the purpose, that hee would haue aduanced thee much more nobly, and haue matched thee according to thy degree and honor; and so by thy wyse behauiour (thou) mightest haue growne into his high fauore to thy greate aduancement. But now see what you haue done! Through your wilfulness you haue not onely offended your father, but also your louinge Soueraign Lorde, and matched yourself with such a one as neyther the King nor your father will consent unto. And hereof I put thee out of doubt, that I will send for thy father, who at his coming shall eyther breake this unadvised bargayne, or else disinherit thee for euer. The King's Ma<sup>ty</sup> will also complayne on thee to thy father, and require no less than I haue saide, because he intended to prefer Ann Bullen to another, wherein the King had already trauilled, and being allmost at a poynt with one for her: though shee knewe it not, yet hath the King, like a Politique Prince, conveyed the matter in such sort, that shee will bee, I doubt not, upon his Grace's mention gladd and agreeable to the same.'*

*“‘ Sir’ (quoth the Lo: Percy), ‘I knewe not the King's pleasure, and am sorry for it: I considered I am of good yeares, and thought meselfe able to provide me a conuenient wife, as my fancie shoold please me, not doubting but that my Lorde and father would haue bene right well content. Though shee (be) but a simple maide, and a knight to her father, yet is she descended of right noble bloude and parentage; for her mother is nighe of the Norfolk's bloud,<sup>1</sup> and*

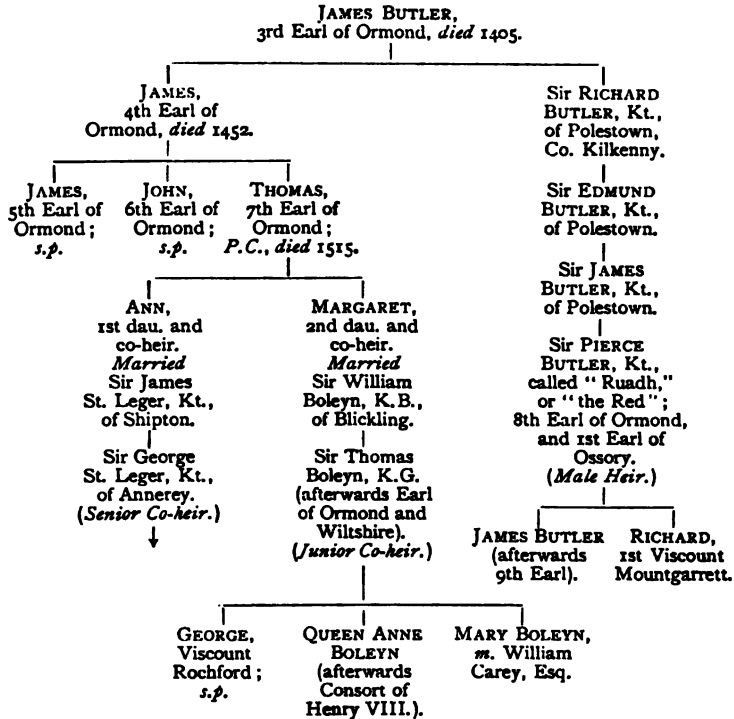
<sup>1</sup> Ann Boleyn's mother was a daughter of Thomas Howard, second Duke of Norfolk. The Boleyn family had been founded by Anne's great-grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, Lord Mayor of London in 1458.

The king's  
rival makes  
reply.

her father descended of the Earle of Ormoun, being one of the Earle's heires generall.<sup>1</sup>

“ ‘ Why then, sir, should I be anything scrupulous to match with her in regard to her estate and descent, equall with myne, even when I shall bee in most dignitie? Therefore I most humbly beseech your Grace's fauore herein, and also to entreate the King's Ma<sup>ty</sup> on my behalfe, for his Princely fauore in this matter, which I cannot forsake !’ ”

<sup>1</sup> Ann Boleyn's father was one of the co-heirs of the *senior* line of Ormond, as may be seen by the aid of the following table :—



Sir Thomas Boleyn claimed the Earldom of Ormond, although it was inheritable only in the male line, and although, even were the case otherwise, Sir George St. Leger was equally a co-heir with Boleyn. Meanwhile Sir Pierce Butler, the heir male, had assumed the title. The dispute was referred to the king, and the Boleyn influence prevailed. Butler was forced to relinquish his rights, being

"*'So! sirs' (quothe the Cardinall to us) 'yee may see what wisdome is in this willfull boye's heade! I thought that when thou heardest the King's pleasure and intendement herein, thou wouldest have relented, and put thyself and thy voluptuous act wholly to the King's will and pleasure, and by him to have beene orderered, as His Grace should have thought good.'*

"*'Syr' (quoth the Lo: Percy) so I would; but in this matter I haue gone so farre before so many worthy witnesses that I knowe not how to discharge meselfe and my conscience.'*

"*'Whye' (quothe the Cardinall) 'thinkest thou that the King, and I knowe not what we haue to doe in as weightie a matter as this? Yes, I warrant thee. But I see no submission in thee to that purpose.' . . . . . 'Forsooth, my Lord' (quoth my Lo: Percy) 'if it please your Grace, I will submitte meselfe wholly to the King and your Grace in this matter, my conscience being discharged of the weightie burden thereof.' . . . . . 'Well, then' (quoth my Lo: Cardinall) 'I will send for your father out of the north, and he and we shall take such order; and in the meane season I chardge thee that thou resort no more unto her company, as thou wilt abyde the King's indignation.' . . . . . And soe he rose up, and went into his chamber."*

Cavendish, speaking of Anne Boleyn and Percy, says:—  
*"There grewe such love betweene them, that at length they were ensured together, intending to marry."* Later, however, *"it was advised that the Lord Percy's assurance should be infringed and dissolved."*

Historians inimical to Anne Boleyn have endeavoured to attach a deeper significance to certain of Percy's confessions before the cardinal, such as his statement that his conscience troubled him in the affair, and that he had

created first Earl of Ossory (1527) instead; while, St. Leger being altogether passed over, Boleyn became Earl of Ormond (1527). On the death of the usurping earl in 1537, however, the king restored Pierce "the Red" to the ancient dignity of his family, and to the enjoyment of all the Butler estates, half of which had also been given to the Boleyns. It is interesting to note that, while the earldom was still in dispute, it was proposed by both sides to compromise the matter by a marriage between Anne Boleyn (then in France) and James Butler, son of Pierce, who afterwards became ninth earl. Anne's love affair with Lord Percy put an end to this scheme.

gone too far to withdraw honourably. Ten years later, during the trial of Henry's second consort, these slender evidences were made much of; and sundry of the king's advocates even asserted that a secret marriage had been entered into between Anne and Percy. But an unprejudiced consideration of the facts leads us to believe that nothing existed between the young people more serious than an informal engagement. Had the case been otherwise, some hint of the truth must have leaked out among Queen Katherine's ladies, of whom Anne Boleyn was one.

The Twisden MS. continues:—*“Then was the Earle of Northumberland sent north for, in the King's name; who, upon receipt of the King's letters, made all the speede he could out of the north, unto the King; who, at this first cominge made his resort to my Lord Cardinall,—as commonolie all others that were sent for in such sort did,—who certified them of the course of their sendinge: and when the Earle was come to my Lord, he was brought unto my Lord into his gallery, and were there a long space in secrette communication; which done, and after the drinking of a cup of wine, the Earle departed, and going his way sate down at the galleries' end, in the halfe-place upon a forme that was standing there for the wayters' ease; and calling his sonne thither, said unto him to this effect: ‘Sonne’ (quoth he) ‘even as thou hast bene, and allwayes wert, a proud licentious and unthriftie waster, so hast thou now declared thyselfe; and therefore what joy, comfort, pleasure or solace shall I conceive of thee, that thus, without discretion hast misused thyselfe? hauinge neyther regarde unto me, thy naturall father, nor yet to the King thy naturall Soueraigne Lord, . . . . nor to the wealthe of thine owne estate; but hast unadvisably assured thyselfe unto her, for whom the King is with thee highly displeased. . . . . But his Grace, considering the lightnesse of thy head and willfull qualities of thy person, his indignation were able to ruine me and my posteritie utterly. Yet, he being my singular good Lord and favorable Prince, and also my Lord Cardinal, my good Lord, hath and doth clearely excuse me in thy lewd fact, and doe lament thy lightnes, rather than maligne me for the same, and hath*



*devised an order to be taken for thee, to whom both thou and I be more bound than wee may be able well to consider. I pray God, that this may be to thee a sufficient admonition to use thyselfe more wisely hereafter, for I assure thee that, if thou doest not amend thy prodigalitie thou wilt be the last Earle of our house; for of thy naturall inclination thou art wastfull and prodigall, and wilt continue to waste all that thy progenitors haue with greate care and trauel gathered and kept together with honor. But the King's Ma<sup>tie</sup>, beinge my singular and good and gracious Lord, I assure thee that I trust soe to order my succession, that you shall consume but a litile thereof; for to tell thee true, I intend not to make thee my heire; for I thanke God I haue more boyes,<sup>1</sup> that I trust will proue much better than you, and use themselves more like unto wise and honest men, of whom I will choose the most likeliest to succeed me. Nowe, good my masters and gentlemen' (quoth he, unto us) 'it may be you chaunce hereafter, when I am dead, to see these things that I haue spoken to my sonne, proue as true as I speake them. Yet in the meane season I desire you to be his freendes, and to tell him his faulte, when he does amisse, wherein you schall shew yourselfe freendly unto him, and' (quoth he) 'I take my leaue of you: and, Sonne, goe your wates unto my Lord your Master and attend uppon him according to your duetie.' . . . And soe he went doune through the Hall, and into his Barge."*

It is hardly probable that the earl knew anything of the king's real intentions in regard to Anne Boleyn, or that he had in any way lent himself to the conspiracy for the gratification of the royal Minotaur's desires. Wolsey, in his capacity of Sir Pandarus, surely knew better than to confide such shameful secrets to the proud and austere Northumberland. The cardinal's natural course in discussing the matter with Percy's father was to exaggerate the coquetry of Mistress Anne, to dwell upon her small dower and comparatively insignificant birth, and to point

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table II. The earl had two other sons surviving, viz., Sir Thomas Percy (ancestor of the present Duke of Northumberland), and Sir Ingelgram.

out the danger to the already impoverished Northumberland estates of permitting a union between two persons so evidently disposed towards extravagance and pleasure. For years the earl had been haunted, day and night, by the spectre of poverty; a fact of which Wolsey was well aware. Northumberland's long and choleric speech to his son reads, allowing for different forms of expression, much like what a modern father might say to his son who meditated an undesirable match. The threat of altering the succession probably had some foundation. Henry VIII., who by a pen-stroke robbed Ormond of lands and title, would not have hesitated for a moment to transfer the earldom and inheritance of Northumberland from Lord Percy to one of his younger brothers, had the former continued to stand in his way. But with Percy removed, and all expectations of an honourable marriage to one of the first noblemen of the realm thus dispelled, Henry hoped that Anne Boleyn might easily be induced to become his mistress.

*"Then, after longe conculcation about the Lord Percy's late assurance,"* goes on the Twisden MS., *"it was devised that the same should be infringed and dissolved, and that the Lord Percy should marry one of the Earle of Shrewsbury's daughters."* This was the same Mary Talbot, whose previous engagement to Percy had been broken off "by mutual agreement." The suggestion that it should now be renewed was cruel and inconsiderate in the extreme. Lady Mary disliked Percy, and Percy reciprocated to the full that feeling of dislike. But the king wished his young rival married as quickly as possible; who the bride might be mattered little, so that her name was not Anne Boleyn. Then, on the one hand, there was sleek Shrewsbury, eager to get his dowerless daughter<sup>1</sup> well provided for; and on the other, Northumberland, cowed and fearful of the royal wrath, seeking only to keep his son out of further mischief by an alliance with the influential Comptroller. So the strings were pulled without any thought of the poor puppets; and presently

<sup>1</sup> Lady Mary Talbot brought no fortune of any kind to her husband.

the master-showman, my lord cardinal, announced that he had "*made a match of it*" between Percy and Mary Talbot. "*Wherewith,*" according to our authority, "*Mistress Ann Bullen was greatly offended, promising that if ever it lay in her power she would worke much displeasure to the Cardinall, as afterwards she did indeed: and yet he was not to blame altogether, for he did nothing but by the King's deuisc'd will and commandment. And as my Lo: Percy was commanded to auoid her company, soe she was dischargdged of the Court, and sent home to her father for a season, wherreat she smoked: for all this time she knew nothing of the King's intended purpose. Now began the grudge that afterwards wrought the Cardinall's overthrowe.*"

But, although Anne may have treasured feelings of revenge against Wolsey for thus putting an end to her love-affair with Percy, it is plain that her affection for the latter was only of a French depth; and one may well doubt whether, had she actually become Countess of Northumberland, her wifely constancy would have withstood any serious temptation. Already she began to "smoke" the king's intentions with regard to her, nor does it appear that she experienced any virtuous indignation thereat. With Percy it was far different. Separation from Anne brought upon him a serious illness, from the effects of which he never fully recovered.

The place to which Mistress Boleyn had been temporarily exiled was Hever Castle, a residence owned by her father on the banks of the Eden in Kent. A French duenna, Simonette by name, was chosen to watch over her in this retreat, and, if possible, to turn her mind from thoughts of Percy (who was kept in complete ignorance of her whereabouts, believing that "*shee had gone back to France*"). Presently, "*after my Lord Percy's troublesome matters were brought to a good stay, and all things done that were deuiscd, Mistress Anne was removed to the Court, where she after florished in greate estimacion and fauore.*"<sup>1</sup> The traditions of King Henry's love-pilgrimages to Hever Castle

<sup>1</sup> Nott's *Life of Wyatt*, p. 438, &c.

do not belong to this period of Anne's life. For all her natural fickleness and French training, she did not quite forsake Percy until after her return to Court.

Although Anne was caged at Hever under Dame Simonette's experienced eye, and her swain lay upon a sick bed, equally well-guarded, the cardinal felt The end of the romance. that the work of separating them was not yet fully accomplished. There were rumours of mysterious horsemen galloping through Kentish lanes under cover of darkness, and of love-billets cast across the moat into Sir Thomas Boleyn's lonely castle. Wolsey knew that Lord Percy had a few staunch friends, like Thomas Arundel,<sup>1</sup> who might act as his go-betweens with the pretty prisoner, and seek to upset the royal plans by carrying her off to France or the North. Or Percy's malady might itself be a mere pretence, under cover of which the ardent lover held midnight converse with Mistress Anne. Prompt and vigorous action was necessary if the king's desires were to be gratified, and this troublesome love-story ended beyond all doubt.

Wolsey at once communicated with the Earl of Surrey, then General Warden of the Marches towards Scotland, asking him to find forthwith some post of responsibility for Lord Percy which would keep that infatuated youth safely north of Humber until the arrangements for his marriage had been completed. Surrey, tired no doubt of his own long exile from Court, offered to resign the Wardenship itself in favour of Northumberland's heir; and although the latter was in matters of warfare (and, in particular, of Border warfare) nothing more than an inexperienced boy, a royal order was immediately signed, despatching him to the North, there to take up the reins of authority, and to command men who, like Dacre and Sir William Percy, had grown grizzled battling against the

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Arundel (so-called) was younger brother of William Fitz-Alan, thirteenth Earl of Arundel, and had been a fellow page with Percy in the cardinal's household. He remained Percy's life-long friend and correspondent.

Scots. It was useless to resist such a command, even had Percy been in a position to attempt resistance. As it was, the lad was taken from his bed, where he lay recovering from an attack of fever, and carried *nolens volens* into the North. He rode on horseback until he reached Godmanchester near Huntingdon, at which place he was obliged to take to a litter. Probably never before had a new-made Warden of the Marches gone to his stern duties in such unsoldierlike wise. The rigours of his northern journey sowed in Percy's system the seeds of that disease which was destined to make the rest of his life one weary round of sickness and suffering.

He had not visited the North since his boyhood, and the somewhat harsh climate of those regions was ill suited to his shattered constitution.<sup>1</sup> With most of his kinsmen and dependents he was unpopular. The ways of those hard-riding borderers were not his ways. They could not help contrasting this languid, sickly heir of the Percies with his two stalwart brothers, Thomas and Ingelgram. Both of these had been bred wholly in the North, had shared in foray and chase since early childhood, and had suffered no hapless love-affairs with fine Frenchified Court ladies to make them moody and ungenial. Small wonder that the old Earl of Northumberland was not alone in wishing that either Thomas or Ingelgram, rather than unlucky Henry, had been the heir.

From the period of his return to the paternal domains a kind of lethargy seems to have fallen upon Lord Percy. He obeyed the king's order, it is true, but without any evidence of alacrity or martial ardour. Surrey must have seen that to place the Wardenship in such hands would have been dangerous, at a time when the Scots were particularly active, for he continued to carry out the duties of the office, and Ridpath states that he was still in chief command upon the frontier at the close of 1523. In October of the same year Percy led a large force to the Border, but he is not styled Warden by contemporary

<sup>1</sup> See his own statements to Arundel and Wolsey.

authorities. The Cotton MSS.<sup>1</sup> informs us that there rode in his train on this occasion "*eight chief and eight petty captaynes,*" together with "*Esperaunce Herald, two chaplaynes and two chirurgeons.*" He received the king's thanks, but no exploit of any note on the part of the expedition is recorded.

Meantime Wolsey continued active. He urged the Earls of Northumberland and Shrewsbury to hasten the marriage of Lady Mary Talbot and Percy; and he sent emissaries into Kent to convey to Anne Boleyn the truth concerning the king's passion, together with a casquet of valuable gems as a gift from his Majesty. Shortly afterwards Anne was permitted to revisit Court, where she listened to Henry's coarse addresses as though no such person as Percy had ever existed. It is difficult to reconcile this ready acquiescence on the part of the future queen with the bitter hatred which she undoubtedly entertained towards Wolsey, not only at the time, but to the prelate's last hours. She professed a keen desire to be revenged upon the man who had torn her lover from her arms; yet Cavendish assures us that, when released from her moated solitude at Hever, she bore herself with every outward appearance of gaiety—"very hault and stout, having all manner of jewels or rich apparel that might be got with money."<sup>2</sup> The theory that religious convictions had aught to do with shaping the course of her life from this time onward, is surely extravagant. A new admirer, or a new gown, ever outweighed a new doctrine in the mind of Mistress Anne. She was no more a wanton than she was a saint; but she loved flattery and courtly dalliance perilously well. Reared in the same light school as Mary Stuart, Anne's character and conduct present many resemblances to those of the Scottish queen. It is not difficult to imagine Mary acting, under similar circumstances, much as Anne Boleyn did now, when all hopes of a union with Percy were at an end, and when a great king and practised gallant exhausted every artifice

<sup>1</sup> *Caligula*, Book V. 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Wolsey*.

to win her regard. Sir Thomas Boleyn's daughter was besieged with gifts from Henry and compliments from his Court. Her own father ridiculed her fidelity to the absent; and all her relatives received substantial marks of royal favour. Henry made a show of putting away his mistresses (Anne's own sister had been one of these); and even hinted that Queen Katherine herself need not stand in the road, should the new favourite prove scrupulous. In the end Anne yielded to temptation, accepted the king's presents, and listened without shame to his importunities and the ambitious promptings of her kinsfolk.

One wonders in what spirit Percy heard these tidings, sent to him from London by his friends in the cardinal's household, or perhaps by the triumphant cardinal himself. In his letters he makes only veiled allusion to the "*greate sorrow*" of his life; but an early result of Anne's change of heart was that her former lover at last resigned himself, with the apathy of despair, to his father's wishes, and consented to marry Mary Talbot. So ended this romance; to be bitterly recalled years later in the shadow of the scaffold.

It has been shown how Henry the Unlucky succeeded as Earl of Northumberland at the age of twenty-five; and Earl only in name. how Wolsey, with an arrogance which even Richelieu, in the plenitude of his power, would not have ventured to display, took the entire management of his affairs out of the new lord's hands, and actually interdicted him from attending his own father's funeral. That the sixth earl, sick both in mind and body as he was at the time, should have tamely submitted to such high-handed treatment seems at first sight inexplicable. But there was another reason for his submission besides fear of royal displeasure and personal infirmities. In spite of sounding titles and broad acres to which he had succeeded, Northumberland was little more than a poor debtor, at the mercy of the Crown and its chief minister. Some writers have given to him the nickname of "Unthrifty,"

and on one occasion his father so styled him. But the truth of the matter is that it was this very father who had been the "Unthrifty Earl"; whereas the son was compelled all his life long to suffer for the parental extravagance, and to endure on that account the insults of Wolsey and the extortions of the latter's successor, Cromwell. At the period of his death the fifth earl had owed over £7000 to private individuals, and arrearages of £10,049 to the State. In the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*, volume v., will be found a statement of the claim put forward by Wolsey against the Percy estates. The claim, which explains the hold that the cardinal had gained over the new earl, is thus summarised:—

" Arrears for the 5th Earl of Northumberland's wardship and marriage of Sir John Thawayts' daughter . . . . .	£	s.	d.
	66	13	4
For his debt to Anthony Bonvyse . . . . .	8062	9	6
For the redemption of the Manor of Poynings and other manors in Sussex from Sir Edward Seymour . . . . .	1604	0	0
For livery payable by the 6th Earl . . . . .	316	13	4
	<hr/>		
Total of Exchequer Claim against the Estate } . . . . .	£10,049 6 <sup>s</sup> 2 <sup>d</sup> ."		

The plate at Topcliffe and Leckonfield had to be pledged to the monks at York in order to raise sufficient money for the deceased earl's decent interment; and to all intents and purposes the Percy family was dependent upon the bounty of the Crown—which, at the time, meant the bounty of Cardinal Wolsey. For the good of his mother and brothers, quite as much as of himself, Northumberland was compelled to put up with the minister's tyranny. Two days after the "Magnificent Earl"—he who was the real cause of this ruin—had been laid to rest, his son wrote to his close friend, and some time companion, Thomas Arundel:—"Before Ambrose<sup>1</sup> came unto me, I was comyn unto

<sup>1</sup> One of Wolsey's couriers.



*my house at Topclyf, towards the funeralls of my late lorde and fader . . . but seeing I know my Lo: Grace's pleasor contrary, I woll not come to ye funeralls at Beverly, ye whiche to have bene at I wolde have bene very glade. . . . Sense the weke after Estre I have bene in jeoptie of my lyve, not only by reason of an agoor" (ague) "but also of myn olde disease and the unhappy ayer of this North Country; having more amendement unto the tyme I cam to Topclyf, where somethyng I nowe doo amende."*<sup>1</sup>

After the Earl of Cumberland (whom Wolsey placed as executor of the estate) had arranged for the maintenance of the dowager countess and her younger children, the cardinal drew up a scheme of living for his former page, which can only be described as niggardly in the extreme. The long-postponed marriage of Northumberland and Lady Mary Talbot was celebrated in a manner at which many well-to-do yeomen of the period would have sneered. Contrary to the custom followed through ages by the house of Percy, no largesse was distributed after the ceremony, and the poor were sent hungry from the gates. The earl pleaded for more generous treatment of his vassals, but Wolsey sternly forbade any further expenditure. The unhappy character of the union was believed in the North Country to have been due to this apparent churlishness on Northumberland's part; but the truth was, of course, that earl and countess were wholly unsuited to each other, and should never have been married at all. The rigid economy in which the cardinal and his agents compelled the young couple to live may be judged from a few instances. For their own subsistence they were allowed, by the steward set over the property, a weekly sum of six shillings and tenpence apiece.<sup>2</sup> Out of this all that they ate and drank had to be paid for. Two male and two female attendants were permitted to them, the board and wages of each of these domestics being one shilling and sixpence a week. "My lady's wardrobe" was valued at

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland to Arundel, in Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Papers*, Henry VIII., vol. iv. 337B.

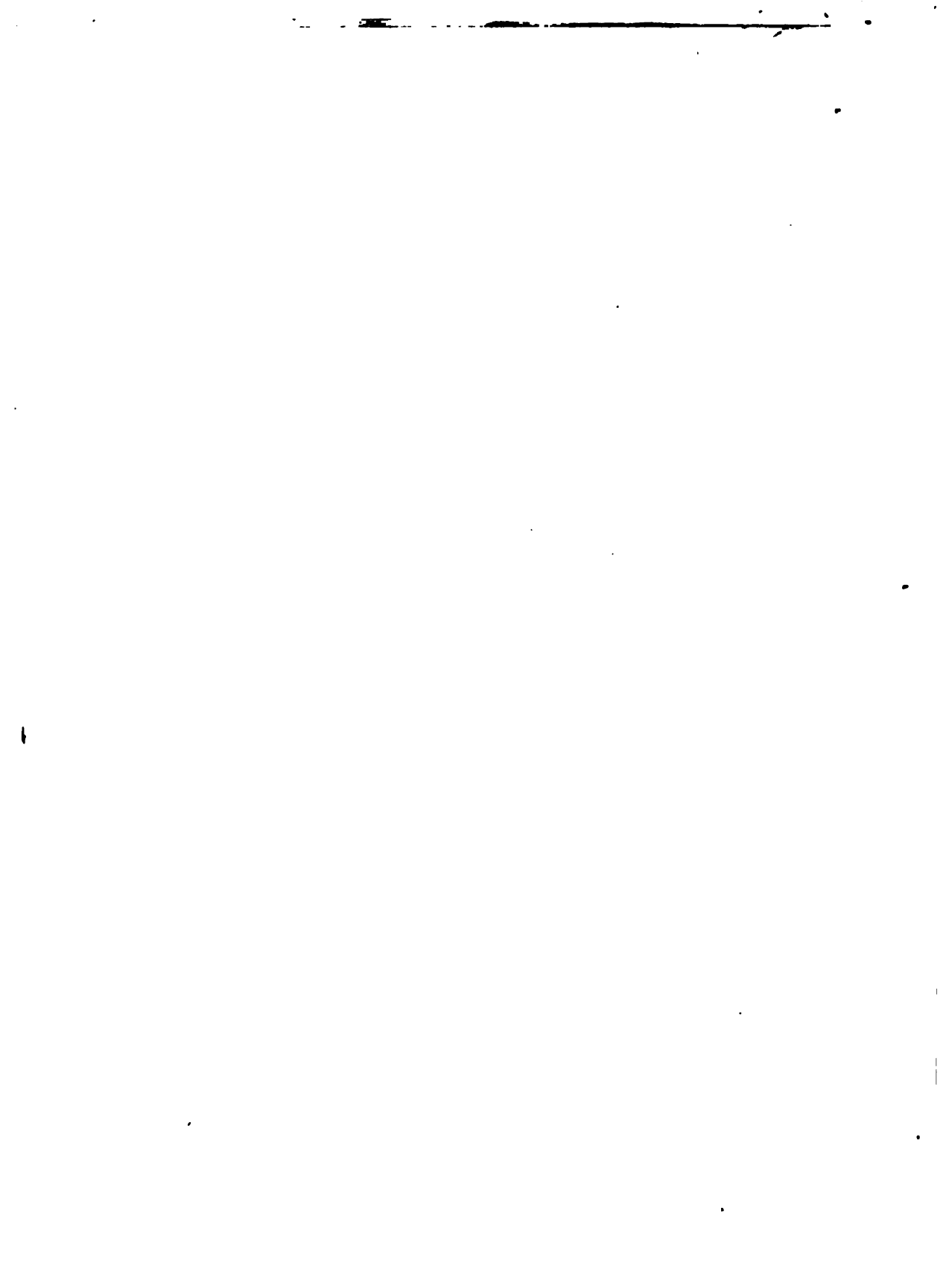
£40, including jewelry, &c. One is led to wonder how Anne Boleyn, who by this time was glittering in gems and gorgeous raiment at Court, would have relished such slender fare and so scantily furnished a wardrobe had she carried out her original purpose and become Countess of Northumberland.

Everything that could be spared from the rents of the Percy estates was supposed to be turned over to the Exchequer by Wolsey's agent. But there is good reason to believe that some of the gentry employed as bailiffs for the Crown allowed not a little of the gold thus obtained to stick to their fingers. Certain it is that the claims were not finally discharged until 1531. In that year Cromwell (who was then chancellor), seeing the slowness with which the earl's obligations were being paid off, took formal action in the Court of Exchequer. Northumberland managed to raise the balance of the sums due by sacrificing all his estates in Kent, and by mortgages upon other parts of his patrimony.

Wolsey lost no opportunity of further aggravating the unhappy lot of the earl, behaving to him generally as though he had been some barefoot novice of a begging fraternity, rather than the chief of the greatest family in the North and a blood-relative of the king. Again and again we find Northumberland accused of "*wastefulness*" or "*lacke of thrift*" by the minister or his insolent (and probably dishonest) agents. Yet there seems little or no justification for these charges. The fifth earl had left debts amounting to over £17,000. So far as can be discovered, the sixth earl owed only £800, and this in spite of the fact that his younger brothers (to whom he was as generous as his means allowed) were wholly dependent upon him. But these unfair attacks did not hurt or humiliate our subject half so much as the swarm of spies which were kept constantly about his house by Wolsey. His servants were encouraged to watch all his doings, and inform the cardinal concerning them. Since they received pay for any news

you wd in the beginning wd have left on my back  
of course the first day of journey

To the  
12<sup>th</sup> day of August  
1806  
To the Earl of Northumberland



of this kind sent to London, they not infrequently carried slanderous and lying stories thither; and the complaints and protests of Northumberland were disregarded in favour of anything which this venal crew chose to say against their master. It was a most intolerable form of persecution; and one is not surprised to find the earl writing in the following strain to his friend Arundel—his one friend apparently, for even his wife was understood to be in the cardinal's pay:—*“ Myne owne good bedfellow,<sup>1</sup> thys Saterday at XII off the clock at mydnyght, I reseerved yr loveyng and kind advertisements, thereby not onely well perseuyng the truc hart in old tyme which ye have borne to me, but also ye perseverant good mind off ye sayme by whiche daily you do renue myne old bond of anyte, which in hart cannot be more than yt ys, as yt ys bounden.*

*“ Also I perseyff y<sup>t</sup> som Judas about me, notwithstanding my goodness to all my servaunts, hayth sertiffyed my Lord's Grace off my dettes. I assure you, bedfellow, y<sup>t</sup> which I do how”* (owe) *“ both ffor my lord my ffayther and mysele ys but that som of VIM marks, ffor whiche I trust I have takin such dereckcion as ys to myn honour, notwithstanding the practices off my servant thus to defame his master: praying you, good bedfellow, I may know who he is, as my trust ys in you abouff all. . . . My hous sens my coming ether”* (hither) *“ hayth bene very costly (nothwithstanding ther ys not a penny howing ffor the sayme) and specyally by reson of derness off corne, for every quarter woll well cost iiii schilt<sup>res</sup>. And whereas y<sup>t</sup> Judas wrote I could not serve the Kyng yff my Lord Cardenall dyd nott tak some order with me, I trust my lord, upon the information of such a lyght person, wyll not take nor follow no such ways as may pluk my poure hart ffrom him, pouddering watt servis I may do him. . . . Sertyne secret comunycacion was betwene my lord Cardinall and my tresorere, y<sup>t</sup> whiche as yet I can not serteffy you the trueth off; but I do extem thys was a part ther off. . . . More wold I wryt, but my sykness and my troubled mynd will not suffer me.”*

<sup>1</sup> They had shared the same bed in Wolsey's household. The term was a common one between old schoolfellows and the like in Tudor times. Edward VI. applies it to Sir Barnaby Fitz-Patrick, afterwards Lord Upper-Ossory.

Probably through Arundel's good offices, the spy's identity was soon discovered. He proved to be one William Worme, auditor of the earl's accounts. Worme—appropriate name!—belonged to a family which had served the Percies faithfully for generations; but shortly after the death of the fifth earl he had been taken into Wolsey's pay. There is more than a suspicion that he took advantage of his position, director of the Northumberland finances, to rob his master extensively, while at the same time reporting to the cardinal that these unexplained overdrafts upon the estate were due to the earl's extravagance.<sup>1</sup> The discovery that such an old retainer had played him false roused Northumberland out of the lethargy which had become habitual to him since his separation from Anne Boleyn. So great was his wrath, that he offered a considerable bribe to Wolsey in order to obtain license for the punishment of Worme. "*Yff my Lords Grace wyll be so good Lord unto me,*" he wrote, "*as to give me lychens to put Wyllm. Worme within a castell of myne off Alnwyk in assurty, unto the tyme he have accomptyd ffor more money recd. than ever I recd., I shall gyff his Grace ii C.*" (£200) "*and a Benyfiss of a C. worth unto his colleyg,<sup>2</sup> with such other thynges resservd as his Grace shall desyre.*"

There is no direct proof that Wolsey accepted this offer; but a tradition preserved by Bishop Thomas Percy inclines one to believe that, whether the £300 was handed over or not, the traitorous Worme met with a well-deserved punishment. In the *Alnwick MSS.* Bishop Percy states that one of the castle legends relates how "an Auditor was formerly confined in the Dungeon under one of the Towers, until he could make up his Accounts to his Lord's satisfaction." There is certainly a tower at Alnwick known as the "Auditor's Tower," beneath which Worme may have been immured.

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from the accounts kept by Worme may be found in the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*, vol. iv. Part II.

<sup>2</sup> The college newly founded by the cardinal at Oxford, and now known as Christchurch.

If William Worme wronged his master in many ways, he did him at least one indirect service. The anger stirred up in Northumberland's breast by his auditor's treachery and dishonesty did not expire after the latter had been removed from office and disgraced. Successful in battling with meaner foes, the earl even dared to face the cardinal.

Wolsey had appointed one of his creatures, a person named Manning, to succeed Worme as agent and receiver of the Percy estates. But Northumberland had had enough of such mayors of the palace, and was determined to be master in his own house. Accordingly he wrote to Thomas Arundel:—"Ye news off Mr Manyng ys blone abroad over all Yorksher; y' neyther by y' Kyng nor by my Lord Cardenall am I regardyd; and y' he wyll tell me" (so) "at my metyng with hym, when I come unto Yorksher; which shall be within thys month, God willing; but I ffer" (fear) "my words to Mr Manyng shall displeas my Lord, ffor I wyll be no Ward." . . . (If) "ye payns I tayk and have taykin sens my comyng heyther are not better regardyd. . . . I wyll never occupy thys Rom off the Kyng, to dy for it, longer than my comyng up,<sup>1</sup> but trust me to serve God as well as I have done ye Worlde trustyng to ffynde a better Reward there, and be more able to do ffor my ffrends."

The obnoxious Mr. Manning was apparently recalled by Wolsey, who must have seen that he should not try Northumberland's temper too severely. The earl, left to his own devices, appointed two stewards of tried fidelity—Roger Eyssells and Thomas Johnson. His bodily ailments having increased, he became anxious about the succession to his estates, and determined to execute a will. Writing to Arundel in June 1528, he says:—"Daily moore and moore it pleaseth God to visit me with myn old disease; by reason whereof I am very casuaill and uncertayne of my Lyf. And,

<sup>1</sup> This obscure passage may be explained as meaning that Northumberland would not continue to serve as Lord Warden, and risk his life in the harsh northern climate any longer than it would take him to "come up" to London and resign, unless he were better treated.

*as yet I have not maide nor furnyshed no Will, for myne owne soule, and for the well of thoes that will come after me, I desire and hartily pray you to move my Lord's Grace to procure Maister Broke, Chiefe Baron of the Exchequer, after hys terme and his Circuit fynished, to take the payne to come down unto me for the perseyting of my Will; for I have wryton unto Maister Broke desyryng hym for the same; and nowe have lyen this sennet" (se'nnight) "at my castell of Prowdehowe,<sup>1</sup> within V mile of Tyndale, to see good orders to be kept, the which nowe, thanks be to Godde, is well kept in this country."*

The closing sentence of the earl's letter reminds us that his delayed appointment to the difficult and dangerous post of Warden General of the Marches towards Scotland had actually taken place on December 2, 1527, after an apprenticeship in arms served under the experienced eye of Surrey.

In spite of all his trials and sufferings—shattered health, the persecutions of Wolsey, and another grievous trouble hereafter to be dwelt upon (his unhappy married life)—Northumberland proved himself to be the best and most reliable Lord Warden that the Border had known for many a day. It must have taken no little strength of will, and no little of the finest kind of bravery, for a man racked by disease, poor in pocket, and betrayed by those who should have been his most loyal friends, to defend the frontier so stoutly and with such success. It was not alone against the Scots, now fully recovered from the crushing blow of Flodden and more vigorous in their inroads than ever, that he had to fight. Turbulence and open rebellion within his own territories rendered the task doubly hard. And, as if all this were not enough for one of scant experience to cope with, there was ever Wolsey at his elbow, fault-finding, contemning, spying—doing everything, in fact, but offering encouragement or aid.

Rarely had the Borders, especially upon the Scottish side, been in a more disturbed condition than when North-

<sup>1</sup> Prudhoe.



THE SOUTH VIEW OF PRUDICE CASTLE IN NORTHUMBERLAND.



To the Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> ALGERNON Earl of Northumberland, Viscount of Down, Viscount of Lisburne, Viscount of Drogheda, Viscount of Dungannon, Viscount of North Down, Viscount of North Antrim, Viscount of North Londonderry, Viscount of North Tyrone, Viscount of North Antrim, Viscount of North Londonderry, Viscount of North Tyrone, Viscount of North Antrim, Viscount of North Londonderry, Viscount of North Tyrone.

By Appointment Surveyor of the Ordnance, Surveyor of the King's Works, Surveyor of the King's Works, Surveyor of the King's Works.

This Castle was built for the Earl of Northumberland by Sir John Prudice in the reign of King Henry II. It is a fine specimen of the architecture of that period, and is one of the best preserved in Northumberland. It is situated on a high rock, and is surrounded by a deep moat. The castle is now a ruin, but it is still a fine object to the eye. It is now a ruin, but it is still a fine object to the eye.

It is situated on a high rock, and is surrounded by a deep moat. The castle is now a ruin, but it is still a fine object to the eye. It is now a ruin, but it is still a fine object to the eye.

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umberland assumed the staff of wardenship. Sir Roger Lassells, his principal lieutenant, writing to him about this time, declared that,—“*As tochyng the order of the Bordures, the thefes of boothe sydes<sup>1</sup> never did steale so faste. If there be not a stay in it shortlye, I fere me it shall be past making of redress; for the Kynges company doth robbe and spoyle all of theym that belongith to the Earl of Anguish,<sup>2</sup> and the Earl lykewyse and his frendes doth robbe and spoyle all theyme that takes the Kynges part . . . by reason whereof the Bordures of both sydes takith all that they may gett.*”<sup>3</sup> On the English side of the frontier there were several bands of freebooters, recognising no law, and murdering and pillaging Scot or Northumbrian with impartiality. Many of these Ishmaelites of the Border belonged to ancient and honourable houses which had fought side by side with the Percies in bygone days for the defence of their native land. Yet now we find them outlaws, living by deeds of violence, and even openly sympathising with the Scottish enemy. In Redesdale and Tynedale especially, a state of active revolt prevailed; and the new Warden realised that only by the most stringent methods could he hope to put an end to the reign of anarchy which left the North a prey to Scottish invasion.

The chief leaders of the outlaws were Sir William Lysle of Felton and William Charleton of Shottlington. In Redesdale, according to the confession of Humphrey Lysle (son of Sir William), made later in the Tower of London, the rebel families, with the numbers of each in arms against the king, were as follows:—“*Halles, 70 under John Halle of Otterbourne; Jaffrasons, 2; Ellesdens, 7; Dons, 7; Nicholsons, 9; Spores, 15; Cooksons, 18; Flechers, 13; Potts, 29; Hedleys, 64; Louisdens, 8; Beuykes (Bewicks), 9; Waullesses (Wallaces), 9; Dawgs, 6; Nexsons, 3; Chators, 3; Edgors, 2; Brownes, 20; Wilkinsons, 5; Grenes, 9; Hangenshawes, 3; Stefensons, 3; Fosters and Forsters, 28; Wans, 7; Mylburnes, 4; Hogs, 6; Merwoods, 2; Robsons, 5; Colwells, 2;*

<sup>1</sup> Lassells speaks of both sides in the struggle between James V. of Scotland and the rebel lords.

<sup>2</sup> Angus.

<sup>3</sup> Cotton MSS.

*Clerkes, 2; Robinsons, 3; Rawes, 5; Hoppes, 4; Smythes, 2; Hoghtons, 3; Wadhawes, 6; Andersons, 1; and Redes, 39.*" Tynedale had its share of Pringles, Redes, Halls, and Robsons—all, or nearly all, disaffected; while Lysles, Shaftoes, Erringtons, and Swinburnes thought no shame in putting themselves at the head of these ever-ready *banditti* and harrying the castles and homesteads of their own countrymen.

Northumberland was hardly a month installed when he struck a stern blow against the insurgents. Hearing that Felton,<sup>1</sup> the seat of Sir William Lysle, was their chief meeting-place, he sent thither at midnight a strong force under Sir Roger Lassells. The Lysles and others managed to escape after a sharp fight; but Lassells succeeded in capturing fourteen, including "*Alexander Crawshawe, the chief-counsellor of the rebels; John Pringill, to whose house the Lysles and their spies resorted; Rowly Eryngton; Gerard Shaftoe; Edde Hedle (Hedley) of Bowreshelys in Riddesdale; Edward Bewike; Matthew Stokehall; and Johnnie Armestrange, who brought the Armestranges to Newcastle when they broke the gaol there.*"<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were carried to Alnwick, where, on January 18, Northumberland held a Warden Court, and sentenced them to death. Nine were beheaded for March treason, and five hanged for felony. "*The countrey,*" he wrote to Wolsey, "*is nowe in greate fear and drede.*" But fear and dread were of brief lasting upon the Border. Before a fortnight had passed, the outlaws were "up" once more. Sir William Lysle and many of his followers had taken refuge in Scotland, where they were secretly protected by Angus, in spite of the fact that the latter nobleman was at the time professing the deepest friendship towards King Henry and the Lord Warden. From their refuge in Teviotdale, the Lysles made frequent forays into English territory, Sir William boasting that he would, ere long, "pluck the proud cardinal by the nose."

<sup>1</sup> Felton, on the Coquet, nine miles south of Alnwick, now a seat of the Riddells.

<sup>2</sup> The Armstrongs had been the means of helping Sir William Lysle to break out of Newcastle gaol.

On or about January 24, a raid of a more serious character than usual took place, this time under the leadership of "*wyght Will Charleton of Shotyngton, the heyed rebell of all the howthlawes.*" The night-riders "*descended upon Wolsyngham,*" slew every one that offered resistance, spoiled the neighbourhood "*as cleanly as dogg strips bone,*" and carried off the local parish priest for ransom. But either they delayed too long, or else Northumberland was quicker and more resourceful than they gave him credit for. The Tyne chanced to be too full for fording in consequence of recent heavy rains. Hearing this, the Warden called a "screy" or pursuit, and gave orders that Haydon Brig,<sup>1</sup> by which alone the raiders could return to their homes, should be locked fast. Thomas Errington, a tenant of the Percies, possessed several sleuth-hounds, and with their aid the rebels were tracked and run down. After a bloody struggle "*wyght Will Charleton*" and four of his troop fell into Northumberland's hands, the captured clerk and most of the prey being released.<sup>2</sup>

This second success, following so soon after the first, did indeed go far to make the young Warden feared and respected upon the Border. Angus became pressing in his wish for a conference, but Northumberland would have nought to do with the slippery Scottish earl so long as the Lysles and other English malefactors were sheltered by him. Angus promptly ordered the Lysles to leave Teviotdale, and nothing remained for the luckless marauders but to return to Northumbria. Here they found it impossible to resume their old outlaw life, and so determined to throw themselves upon the mercy of that Wolsey whose nose they had promised to pluck. Thus it befell that on the last Sunday in January, while Northumberland was coming from mass at Norham Castle, he was met by Sir William Lysle, his son Humphrey Lysle, and fifteen of their band, clad only in their shirts and with halters around their necks in token of abject submission. "*They asked for no condi-*

<sup>1</sup> Over the South Tyne, between Hexham and Haltwhistle.

<sup>2</sup> *Northumberland to Wolsey: Cotton MSS., Calig. Book VII.*

*cions,"* writes the Warden, "*but declared them redy to byde the execution of your Grace's most dredful laws.*"<sup>1</sup> Haltered and barefooted, they were conveyed to Alnwick, and there left to await judgment. The king, moved by this surrender, asked Northumberland for the names of those who had signalised themselves most in subduing the rebels and keeping law upon the Marches. The Warden recommended Sir Thomas Tempest, his cousins Lord Clifford and Widdrington, Lord Delaval, Sir Roger Lassells, and others. Among these the not very large sum of £100 was distributed.

Whatever may have been the earl's feelings towards killing men in open fight, he had no liking for sending them to the scaffold, a disagreeable duty which was forced upon him by March Law. Accordingly, he urgently petitioned the king to allow one or more of the Assize Judges, then sitting at York, to try the Lysles and their fellow-rebels, pleading that he was himself "little conversant with the law of attainder." But that humanity, rather than ignorance of legal forms, was at the bottom of his desire to escape sentencing these doomed men, may be judged from his efforts to save the life of Humphrey Lysle, a boy of thirteen, who had followed his father, Sir William, simply for the love that was between them, and who could not, by reason of his years, have shared in the murders, robberies, and other crimes of the band. Not satisfied with imploring both the king and Wolsey to spare this lad, Northumberland wrote secretly to his old friends William Arundel and Bryan Tuke, asking their assistance to the same end. Honest Tuke proved a valuable ally; and a letter of his to the king is preserved in which he asks mercy for Humphrey Lysle, vowing that he could not water his flowers for thinking of the undeserved and awful peril in which the boy was placed.<sup>2</sup>

The saving  
of young  
Humphrey  
Lysle.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to King and Council*, Chapter House, vol. iii. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

The efforts in favour of Lysle's son succeeded ; although Cardinal Wolsey had little sympathy for Northumberland's scruples, and doubtless considered them utterly unworthy of the king's viceroy upon the Border. "*You should not use so cantellous and colourable dealing,*"<sup>1</sup> he wrote, "*with one that thus tenderly hath brought you up and set you forward. . . . For the sparing of putting to execution of Sir Willm. Lyle's elder son, if it should not embolden other men under your rule not to offend . . . it should be much more to my contentation that he should live than die, 'quia non cupio mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur et vivat.'* Wherefore the King's pleasure is that you shall in safe custody send hither to the Tower of London the said Sir Willm. Lysle's eldest son, . . . and as touching the execution of the father and the other offenders, the King's pleasure is that with diligence you shall perform the contents of his Grace's and my letters directed unto you. And thus fare ye well. At Hampton Court, this 17th March, 1528."

There was nothing for the earl but to rest satisfied with having saved young Humphrey, and submit to the instructions so grimly sent him. On March 31 he wrote to Wolsey :—"I have now, according to the King's laws, justly proceeded against William Lisle and his other accomplices remaining with me in prison, in several wise, . . . that the lands and tenements of the said William Lysle should be the more surely and indefensibly entitled to the King's use, and for the more terrible and dreadful example of all the inhabitants in these parts, William Lisle, Humfrey Lisle his son, John Ogle, William Shaftowe and Thomas Fenwick, gentlemen of name, chief leaders and most heynous offenders of all the saide rebels, were according to their demerits attainted of high treason ; and by me had judgment given to be hanged drawn and quartered, the execution whereof was accomplished upon them accordingly—only reserving Humfrey Lisle, whom, according to the pleasure of the King and your Grace, I have sent by

<sup>1</sup> The spelling of this letter, being particularly eccentric, has here been modernised.

*this bearer, John Norton, my servant, to be further ordered as shall stand with your Grace's pleasure."*

Young Humphrey was conveyed to London in time to escape the gruesome sight of his father's head grinning from Newcastle gate. While in prison he was coerced into a confession giving the names of the Redesdale and Tynedale rebels, and implicating Sir William Lysle in no less than five deliberate murders. Another of the family, Nicholas Lysle, captured by Lassells, owned on the scaffold that the English outlaws were supported and encouraged by Angus, Bothwell, and Maxwell. On April 21 five of the chief Redesdale rebels were hanged at Alnwick "*in the presence of the gentlemen of Northumberland,*" and a great crowd of suspected persons from the Redesdale district made submission in their shirts, with halters about their necks.

It is probable that Northumberland, under plea of illness, did not witness these executions. Wolsey was informed that the earl was troubled not only with his old disease, but also with an "*extreme agoo,*" whereby he was like to have died. At the same time he wrote to his former "bed-fellow," Arundel (whom he had lately appointed commissioner of his woods and forests in Somerset and Dorset<sup>1</sup>):—"*Yt pleasyd God to vesytt me with syknes; not only myne old deses, but also a swelling of my stomack, with an extrem agoo; not estemyng in myne owne mynd to have seyn yow again, or els to have trowbelyd you with thes, my rud lettres.*" He adds that the last rites of the Church were administered to him in expectation of death.

Few knew better the treacherous character of the Earl of Angus than the Warden of the Marches; and, in common with most well-affected English borderers, he must have heartily disliked the proposed alliance between Henry VIII. and the arch-enemy of the Scottish king. But Wolsey's bosom scheme was the placing of King James' crown upon Henry's head; and Angus, by pretending to favour such a union

Angus flies to England, and Northumberland revisits Court.

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland also conferred upon Arundel a life annuity of £60, charged upon the Percy estates in Devon.



of the realms, had apparently won the cardinal's confidence and friendship. Thus when, after some years of intrigue, Angus openly demanded a conference, Northumberland strove to put him off by various excuses. But Scotland had grown too hot to hold Angus; and, from his lair in Tantallon Castle, he sent the Abbot of Holyrood to Sir Roger Lassells, asking leave to seek refuge in England. Lassells, on August 19, 1528, sent this letter to his chief, who in turn forwarded it to Wolsey. The reply showed beyond all question that the king's policy was to be one opposed to his nephew, James V. Wolsey directed that Angus and his friends were to be received with all honour, and any attempts on the part of James to prevent them from entering English territory resisted by force of arms. The Abbot of Holyrood went back to Tantallon; and on Thursday, August 29, Angus landed at Newcastle, where he was greeted by the Warden "*in as loving wise as could be, all the gentlemen of Northumberland being there assembled*"<sup>1</sup> A great banquet took place in the evening (at the cardinal's expense, fortunately for Northumberland, who could ill afford such hospitality). But in spite of the outward show of respect, and even of cordiality, which they were compelled to wear, the "gentlemen of Northumberland" must have felt in their hearts that they had this black-avised Douglas guest of theirs to thank for half the murders and plunderings which had been done on the Border for a round score of years.

James V. was naturally angry that his uncle and his uncle's minister should welcome Angus to England, and in the first heat of his wrath it is probable that he made preparations for an invasion of Northumbria with the view of capturing his foe. Word of these intentions reached the Warden, who at once wrote to Wolsey that James would probably attack Norham Castle, where Angus had been lodged. "*But I shall be nighe unto your said castell,*" he added, "*with all the power of Northumberland to withstande his purpose, as ferr as in me shoulde lye, yff he be aboutward*

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

to attempt anye such malice." James, however, changed his mind, and determined to try fair words rather than hard knocks. He knew that Northumberland did not love Angus, and he also knew that the Warden was possessed of an earnest desire to give lasting peace to the Marches under his charge. Hence the following curious letter written in the monarch's own handwriting, under the date October 5, 1528 :—

*"To our rycht traist and holly lovit cousing, ye Erle of Northumbrelande.*

*"Richt traist and weilbelovit cousing, we commend us to you in all hertlie manner. Your letters off ye dait at Topcliff, ye 14 day of Septembro last bigone, beyng ressavit by us, we know and onderstandis yarby ye gud and kynd mynd ye beir anentes us, our weilfair tranquillite and rest of our Realm. And quhar be certane writtingis sent to you be our derrest uncle, your soverane, ye are movit to be advertist of ye terme and diet we wald war kepit, and of ye plaice for ye takyne and prorogacion of new trewis" (truce) "betuix us and our said derrest uncle, and off ye namis of ye personagis quhame we will send to trait and conclude ye samyne. . . . Rycht traist cousing, we haiff send our Maister of Armes, Lyoun, to our derrest uncle, instrukit with writtingis contenant our mynd and desyris in yat behalff at lenche. . . . Quharfor we exhort you rycht tenderlie, that ye wil, estir your greit and usit wisdom, suppressse all opionione of commonis, bayth on Bordouris and oyer placis fra beleiff of ony new motioun to be had betuix baithe ye realms, for ony truble proceeding by ye mishaving of Archibald sometyme Erle of Angus, quhil ye day off meting forsaid; quhar na folt salbe fundin on our part for prorogacion of pease to be had; and yarefter all faltes to be emended wyth Goddis grace, quha haiff you in keping." <sup>1</sup>*

In many letters to Wolsey, Northumberland shows his distrust of Angus. It had been decided to house the Scottish exiles in Norham; but the Warden had no intention

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., Caligula, Book VII. 149.

of allowing them to pry too deeply into the plan of that stronghold. In a communication to the cardinal on October 28, he says:—" *There shall noo moo*" (no more) "*come within your Graces castell but the Erle, George Dowglas, and Archibald Dowglas, with three with theym, and noo moo ; and they shall lye in the otter*" (outer) "*warde ; and in noo wyse they shall be maid prevey to any of the ynner wardes.*"<sup>1</sup>

Wolsey was now in high good humour with his sometime pupil, so that when Northumberland asked leave to come to Court for the purpose of declaring more fully "the state of these Borders," the request was almost immediately granted. The king, it is true, demurred a little at first ; for he was not as yet married to Anne Boleyn, and he could not drive from his mind the memory that Henry Percy had been once Mistress Anne's favoured suitor. Wolsey, however, protested that Northumberland now stood to him in the light of a son, "*leaving off his prodigality, sullenness, mistrust, disdayne and making of partis ;*"<sup>2</sup> so that Henry finally consented to receive the Lord Warden, who all this while had been practically banished from the scenes and friends he loved best. Perhaps Anne Boleyn could not trust herself to face her old lover, perhaps she was bidden by the king to absent herself ; it is certainly a highly suggestive fact that on the eve of Northumberland's coming to London the queen to be was suddenly taken ill with the sweating-sickness,<sup>3</sup> so that she had to be removed in haste to the country house of her brother, Viscount Rochford, and was thus prevented from renewing her acquaintance with the earl. Nor did she return to London until the gates of Northumberland House had been once more closed, and Percy and his train had departed into the North.

While in London, the earl made good use of his time by bringing to Wolsey's attention a dispute which greatly embarrassed the English forces on the Border. This was

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

<sup>2</sup> *Colton MSS., Appendix.*

<sup>3</sup> *Love Letters of Henry VIII. ; Letters of Cardinal Du Bellay, &c.*

the feud between the Earl of Cumberland and Lord Dacre—both of them Northumberland's brothers-in-law<sup>1</sup>—which, having started in disputes over forest hunting-rights, had reached such a pitch that encounters between Cliffords and Dacres were of weekly occurrence, and half the great families of the Marches were involved. Northumberland's personal predilections were all in favour of Cumberland, for Dacre had long been his enemy, had carried tales about him to Wolsey, and (as we shall see later) had helped to incite his wife against him. But, holding as he did the post of March-Warden, the earl's sense of justice would not permit him to favour either side. The report which he laid before the cardinal was so fair as to win praise from both king and minister; and on his return the Warden was commissioned to visit both lords and, for the good of the Border, attempt to make peace between them. He did so, and succeeded in quelling the feud for the time being. It was destined to break out anew, and to blaze with a fury as great as that which had kept Nevill and Percy at sword-points in bygone days.

But feuds raged not alone between great nobles, the chiefs of rival houses. For years Northumberland had known the bitterness of strife within his own family circle, and—sadder still—his enemy was his wife.

The two had never loved each other, notwithstanding the efforts of their families to foster such a feeling. Their union was even worse than what is now called a "marriage of convenience," for they had been forced into each other's arms despite the fact that dislike, if not positive hatred, had existed between them from childhood. We know little of the Countess Mary's character, beyond the fact that she was cold and unsympathetic. Had she been otherwise, she might not improbably have succeeded in making her

<sup>1</sup> Cumberland had married the earl's sister, Margaret Percy (see *Genealogy*, Table II.), while Dacre's wife was a Talbot, sister of the Countess of Northumberland.

husband's burdens lighter, and in weaning his mind from thoughts of the lost Anne Boleyn. As it was, she offered him neither kindness nor comfort, quarrelled with him incessantly, plotted with her relatives against him, and is more than suspected of having joined the ranks of the cardinal's spies who surrounded him on every side. No promise of any offspring occurred until they had been married four years. Just before she became a mother, the countess, taking advantage of her husband's absence, left home and rode by rapid stages to one of her father's houses,<sup>1</sup> a considerable distance away. The result of this imprudent and untimely flight was that her child was born dead. Northumberland's first news of the event was from his father-in-law. "*So yt ys,*" the former writes to William Arundel in April 1529, "*my wyff is brod to bed of a chyld ded, and as I have word from my Lord Steward<sup>2</sup> and them aboutt her, she looks for non other but deth, and yff she escap ye ffechysions*" (physicians) "*wryt plain she cannot continew.*"

Lady Northumberland recovered, and, probably through the influence of Wolsey, consented to return to her husband, But any hope of reconciliation was soon spoiled by the persistent interference of the relatives of the countess. Of these the most malignant were her brother-in-law, Dacre (who bore the Percies an old grudge), and her sister, Lady Dacre. The latter, under pretence of sisterly affection, instilled into the young wife's ears poisonous tales about Northumberland. His early failings were magnified a thousandfold; his brief love-affair with Anne Boleyn was paraded anew; and the unfortunate countess was gradually led into the belief that one of the kindest and most upright gentlemen of his time was a monster eager to end her life. The result was deplorable. From listening to the wanton falsehoods of her sister and brother-in-law, Lady Northumberland became a hypochondriac,

<sup>1</sup> Probably Sheffield.

<sup>2</sup> The Earl of Shrewsbury, father of the countess, was Lord Steward of the Household.

dreaming of poison, daggers, and the like, and never happy save in her husband's absence. For her sake, as well as for his own, Northumberland was compelled to close his doors to the Dacres, and even to old Shrewsbury, whom they had succeeded in tricking into fears for his daughter's safety. By these means the earl hoped that peace might be restored under his roof-tree; but the relatives of Lady Northumberland, with the aid of secret messengers, managed to keep alive the fear and hatred with which she now regarded her husband.

The following letter from Northumberland to his godfather, the Duke of Norfolk (then President of the Council of the North), tells its own tale:—"Pleaseth it your Grace to be advertised that before my coming home, one Thirlkeld, servant to the Lord Dacre, was from him and his bedfellow<sup>1</sup> with my wife, talking with her secretly a greate space, after which her wordes anenst me might have been well amended, for which and other her former dealing, to your Grace not unknown,<sup>2</sup> I have put Edward Edgar my auditor, and Thomas Kelk with George Hodgson my servaunts, to see her entertained a great deal better than she hath deserved. Notwithstanding, I will not suffer her to speak with them, to contrive more malicious acts against me. Nevertheless Rauff Leche and one Sampson a priest was sent from my Lord of Shrewsbury to speak with her . . . with whom I spoke, my Lord of Cumberland and Sir Thomas Clyfford being present; and Rauff Leche using these words: that my Lord his master, hearing his daughter to be in some agony did send him and his fellow to bring her his blessing and to speak with her. . . . To whom I answered that her malicious purpose, so manifestly known unto them by her letters, which they were privy unto, and contrived as did appear by the counsel of my Lord her father, I could not be contented that he, or any from him, should speak to her to invent more malicious imaginations of untruth; being most sorry that my Lord her father, therein regarding neither his own

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* Lady Dacre.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to a former letter to the duke describing how Lady Northumberland, instigated by her sister, had vilified him to the cardinal.

*honour, nor the kindness of me, which took nothing with his daughter,<sup>1</sup> should set forward that which should touch both mine honour and life.*

*“ And if my Lord her father would make his excuse, that less he could not do, considering his duty to the King’s higness. . . . than to make the said certificate, and that he thought his daughter not so entertained as he would, and she being in fear of poisoning, would send for her, I would send her unto him with a reasonable finding<sup>2</sup> for eschewing of more inconvenienc: for peremptorily, her acts so openly manifest, I would never come in her company as long as I lived: with which answer they departed. . . . At my Castle of Warkeworth, the iij<sup>th</sup> of September, MDXXVIII.”<sup>3</sup>*

The time was now at hand when Wolsey’s arrogance and Wolsey’s spies should torment Northumberland no more. The fall of the great cardinal had begun. The cardinal’s fall. He had stepped blindly into the meshes which his enemies were spreading through so many years of patient hatred; and, once trapped, age and infirmities forbade all hope of his winning back to the paths of freedom and power. His voice, lately all-powerful at Court, was heard of royal ears no more; his fate and the fate of England depended now upon the wheedling words of the wench that he had flouted, Mistress Anne Boleyn. And while a man, in time of victory, often shows forbearance towards the conquered, the triumphant woman rarely forgives her enemies. Mistress Boleyn was resolved to glut her vengeance upon the disgraced minister, and in the ears of the libidinous king her lightest word was law. The doom of Wolsey was already pronounced. Judges whom he had placed upon the bench set to work, all too willingly, to prepare the articles of his impeachment. Valuers were busy in the sumptuous rooms of his Westminster palace;

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the fact, most unusual in those days, that Lady Mary Talbot had received no dowry from her father.

<sup>2</sup> Reasonable allowance. The earl’s views in this respect were liberal, as we know from his treatment of his brothers.

<sup>3</sup> *Northumberland to Arundel; Cotton MSS., Caligula, Book I. 127.*

most of his goods were already confiscate to the Crown ; and he himself had been ordered to leave London and betake himself within the confines of his archiepiscopal See. Norfolk, Shrewsbury, and Suffolk, a little while past his obedient servants, were now foremost of those who cried out for his attainder and death. They were a pack of bloodhounds, hot upon his heels—thirsting for his blood ; bloodhounds self-confessed indeed, for did not their leader, Norfolk, ferociously swear that he would “tear Wolsey with his teeth” ?

Now, of all the great lords, not one had more reason to hate the cardinal than Henry Percy. Yet the earl took no part in the hue and cry against his former tyrant ; and it was due to the Percies that, when this “old man broken by the storms of fate” sought refuge in the North, he was received with kindness and respect. Stout Sir William Percy of Flodden fame, the earl’s uncle,<sup>1</sup> who acted as his nephew’s chief steward in Yorkshire, met Wolsey upon the way, knelt to receive his blessing, and escorted him with honour to the manor house of Cawood. Such treatment of “this traitor priest,” as they called him, roused to fury many northern barons: Sir Robert Constable and others railed bitterly at the Percies, and threatened to complain to the king, “their Most Gracious Liege.” The same “Most Gracious Liege” was to hang Constable in chains at Hull gate a few years later ; but now Sir Robert was zealous in the king’s service, and especially eager to hunt down and harry all those who had incurred the royal displeasure. The bluff banneret,<sup>2</sup> William Percy, was not to be frightened by threats out of what he held to be the worthiest course ; nor could Northumberland be induced to treat the cardinal with discourtesy.

This attitude of her old lover towards the man that had parted them agreed but little with Anne Boleyn’s idea of the fitness of things. Womanlike, although she had long

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Percy was steward of Pocklington, and chief forester of Leckonfield and Catton under his nephew.

<sup>2</sup> He had been made knight banneret on Flodden Field.



since abandoned Northumberland, and accepted the king in his place, she thought that the discarded admirer should have continued faithful, and that his desire to humble Wolsey should have been as great as her own. To find him neglectful of so rare an opportunity for paying off old scores hurt her vanity—that jealous vanity which she was to bequeath to her daughter, Elizabeth; and there came into her mind a means whereby the earl might be brought to book for his lack of fidelity, while, at the same time, the cardinal's humiliation was increased fourfold. This plan, the mocking humour of which strongly recommended it to the king, was to place the intended arrest of Wolsey in Northumberland's hands. The proud minister who had so long lorded it over Henry Percy, and who had behaved towards him "as a harsh schoolmaster might towards a froward pupil," was now to make submission to this same Henry Percy, and become his prisoner.

To Northumberland; chivalrous and humane as he was, such a mission could not but be hateful. However, as the king's lieutenant in the North, he had no choice but to obey the royal mandate. On November 2, 1530, Walter Walsh, a gentleman of the king's Privy Chamber, arrived at Topcliffe with instructions to the Lord Warden respecting the immediate arrest of the cardinal. On November 4 Northumberland, attended by Walsh and a number of his own gentlemen, set out for Cawood; arriving there early in the afternoon, just as Wolsey had finished dinner. Having passed through the gates, the earl sent to demand the keys; but the porter roundly refused to give them up except at the express command of his master. Other nobles of the period—Norfolk, for instance—would have had the man flogged for his insolence; but Northumberland had been too often betrayed not to know the value of fidelity such as this. "*Thou art a good fellow,*" he said to the porter, "*who speaketh like a faithful servant to thy master, and like an honest man. Keep thou thy master's keys, but let no one pass out save with my permission.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cavendish; *Life of Wolsey*.

Wolsey was rising from table, when word was brought him that the Earl of Northumberland was in the hall, with a considerable company of retainers. "*Whereat,*" says Cavendish, "*he marvelled, . . . but commanded a gentleman to bring him the truth, who, going down the staires, sawe the Erle of Northumberland, and returned and sayde it was very hee.*" 'Then,' quoth the Cardinal, 'I am sorrie we have dyled, for I feare our officers be not provided with any more of good fish<sup>1</sup> to make him some honorable cheere; let the table stand' quoth he: and with that he rose up, and going downstairs . . . as soon as the Cardinall espied the Erle coming up with all his traine, he put off his cap, and saide, 'My Lorde, ye be most heartily welcome;' and so embraced each other.<sup>2</sup> . . . Then my Lorde led the Earl to the fire, saying, 'My Lorde, ye shall go unto my bedchamber, where is a good fire made for you, and then ye may shift your apparel until your chamber be made ready. Therefore let your male<sup>3</sup> be brought up and, or ever I go, I pray you give me leave to take these gentlemen, your servants, by the hands.' And when he had taken them by the hands, he returned to the Erle, and said, 'Ah, my Lord, I perceive well that ye have observed my old precepts and instructions, which I gave you when you were abiding with me in your youth, which was to cherish your father's old servants, whereof I see here present a great number. . . . For these be that will not only serve and love you, but they will also live and die with you, and glad to see you prosper in honor, the which I beseech God to send you with long life.' This said, he took the Earl by the hand and led him into his bedchamber, and they being all alone (save only I, that kept the door, being gentleman usher) these two Lords standing at a window by the chimney . . . the Earl, trembling, said with a very faint and soft voice, laying his hand upon his arm, 'My Lord, I arrest you of high treason;' with which the Cardinall, being marvelously astonished," (astonished) "standing still both a good space, without speaking."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was Friday, and a day of abstinence.

<sup>2</sup> "The Cardinal now shewed himselfe much more humbler than he was wont to be."—(Hall's Chronicle.)

<sup>3</sup> Mail, or trunk.

<sup>4</sup> *Life of Wolsey.*

It is difficult to understand why, after reading this passage, certain historians have seen fit to blame Northumberland for the part which he took in Wolsey's arrest. The duties of his office compelled him to carry out the royal warrant; but it must be admitted that the manner in which he executed this painful commission was in every respect courteous and considerate. To a man of less generous character, the opportunity thus presented of making Wolsey feel some of the mortification which he had loved to inflict upon those in his power, would have been so tempting as to be well-nigh irresistible. Had their positions been reversed, it is more than likely that the cardinal would not have hesitated to reproach and upbraid his prisoner; but Northumberland behaved with a chivalry and self-restraint which do him the highest honour. The bitterest taunts flung at him by the disgraced and despairing Chancellor were not sufficient to make him lose his temper, or to abate one jot of that respect which he felt to be due to his old master.

When Wolsey had recovered from the first shock of the ill news thus suddenly brought to him, he demanded to see the warrant for his arrest. Northumberland had strict orders not to show this document, which contained minute secret instructions as to the treatment of the cardinal. "*Well then, quoth my Lorde*" (to cite from Cavendish again), "*I will not obey your arrest, for there hath been between some of your predecessors and mine great contention and debate given upon an ancient grudge, which may succeed in you with like inconvenience as it hath done heretofore; therefore, unless I see your authority and commission, I will not obey you;*" and he proceeded to argue that, as a member of the See Apostolic, he was not subject to temporal authority.

"*The earl answered, 'When I was sworn Warden of the Marches, you yourself told me that I might with my staff arrest all men under the degree of the King; and now I am stronger, for I have a commission so to do.'*"

Wolsey then appealed to Walter Walsh (who had carried the warrant to Northumberland), absolutely refusing to

take the earl's word on the subject. Even when Walsh confirmed what the Warden had said, and explained that the latter acted through no personal animosity, but solely in obedience to the king, the cardinal refused to submit to his former pupil. Turning his back upon Northumberland, he surrendered himself prisoner to Walsh, saying in a loud voice that "*the worst in the King's Privie Chamber is sufficient to arrest the greatest peer in the realme by the King's commandment.*"<sup>1</sup> Lord Herbert of Cherbury expresses himself as doubtful whether this conduct arose "*out of stubbornness to the Earl who had been heretofore educated in his house, or out of despight to Mistress Anne Bolen, who (as he might conceive) had put this affront upon him in finding measures to employ her ancient suitor to take revenge on both their names.*"<sup>2</sup> The latter supposition is not improbable.

The earl continued to treat Wolsey with all possible leniency and respect. Grave fears were entertained of a rising among the cardinal's armed retainers, who outnumbered the Lord Warden's soldiers; yet in spite of the adverse counsel of Walsh and others, Northumberland permitted these honest fellows to wait upon and guard their lord. The cardinal was also allowed to take a public farewell of his tenants and friends, and to bestow his blessing upon them. On the following Sunday, after he had celebrated mass in the private chapel at Cawood, he was sent under the care of Sir Roger Lassells to be delivered over to the Earl of Shrewsbury at Sheffield. Illness overtook him under Shrewsbury's roof, and he remained there for three weeks, before being taken to Leicester. The pathetic story of his death in Leicester Abbey is familiar to all.

<sup>1</sup> Cavendish.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Henry VIII.*

## VIII

AFTER Wolsey's death, the services of Northumberland as Warden of the Marches began to earn their just recognition at Court. On St. George's Day, 1531, he was installed Knight of the Garter in the presence of the foreign envoys and a great concourse of spectators.<sup>1</sup> No doubt the bright eyes of Anne Boleyn were among those that looked upon the ceremony from the ranks of the maids of honour. But as in the case of Hotspur, and his father the first earl, such empty honours were almost the only compensation that the Warden obtained. His March-keeping expenses were heavy; and the annual sums which the Treasury paid towards the preservation of peace on the Border were sadly inadequate for the purpose. The debts left to him by his predecessor grew larger instead of decreasing, so that the new Chancellor, Cromwell, entered suit (as has been already stated) for repayment of the amount due to the Crown. By grant of April 1, 1531, license was given to the Earl and Countess of Northumberland and to Sir Ingelgram Percy, to alienate the manors of Westwood, Eastwell, Rokeslie, Horsmonden, Tyrlingham, North Cray, Newyngton, and Barham in Kent.<sup>2</sup> With the money obtained in this manner, and by means of mortgage, the greater part of the Treasury claim was paid off; but that the earl was still in debt may be judged from a letter of his to Cromwell, dated September 27, in which he thanks the minister for an extension of time given him in the case of one of his creditors, Sir Edward Seymour.<sup>3</sup> At the same time he offers to sell the estate of Petworth to the king.

<sup>1</sup> Austis, *History of the Garter*.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Duke of Somerset.

During the summer of 1531 the earl's agents intercepted near Alnwick certain letters of importance from the emperor to the Scots king.<sup>1</sup> The letters contained a treaty guaranteeing peace between Germany and Scotland for one hundred years, and urged an alliance between James and the Princess Dorothea of Denmark, the emperor's niece. Arms and ammunition for use against the English were also promised. The same report in which Northumberland conveyed news of his capture to London, tells of a peace conference which he had held at Ridingburn on the East Marches with the principal members of the Clan Carr or Ker. The meeting ended apparently in mutual recriminations, and the Kers at once recommenced their raids into English territory.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the young Earl of Bothwell, following the example of Angus, had been seeking an alliance with England. On December 21, 1531, Northumberland met Bothwell by the king's orders. The meeting took place in the dead of night, at Dilstone, two miles from Hexham. With Bothwell came David Hepburn, Robert Ellwold, and Nicholas Rutherford. Bothwell's grievances against his sovereign were many, though scarcely undeserved. James had given his estates to the Kers of Teviotdale, had held him prisoner in Edinburgh for six months, and had even (so he declared) planned his assassination. He was willing to take the oath of allegiance to Henry VIII., and claimed that he could raise a force of 1000 gentlemen and 6000 commons to fight against their native country. With the help of these troops, and those of Angus, he declared that Henry might supplant his nephew, and be crowned King of Scotland "*withyn breif tyme.*"

Northumberland was favourably impressed by the sanguine Bothwell. Writing to Henry, he describes his new acquaintance thus:—"Of parsonage, wit, lernynge and manneres, of his yeres as goodly a gentelman as ever I saw

<sup>1</sup> The letters were carried by a party of Scots, headed by one Davy Pander. On being taken prisoner, Pander made a confession, real or pretended.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

*in my liff, and to my simple understandyng he is verey meete to serve your Highnes in anything that shall be your most gracious pleasure to command him withal."*<sup>1</sup>

James V., hearing of this midnight conference at Dilstone, quickly abandoned his efforts to make a friend of Northumberland, and lodged formal complaints against the earl at the English Court. He who had formerly been a "right trusty cousin," was now, according to James, guilty of innumerable crimes against the peace of the two kingdoms. Among other things, the Warden was accused of "*burnyng of Churche lands and corne, and murderynge and burnyng in the silence of the night.*"<sup>2</sup> The districts in which these enormities were supposed to have been committed is not specified, and it is likely that Northumberland did no more than make reprisals upon the Kers and others of the Scots king's friends. Henry VIII., at least, acquitted his Warden of all the charges made against him, and in a letter dated March 2, 1532, and sent by the hands of Carlisle Herald, blamed James for sheltering outlaws and marauders upon his side of the dividing line.

On August 23, 1532, Northumberland was able to announce to the king that he had "established"—*i.e.* placed on an efficient military footing—the county of Northumberland and the North generally, causing "*every gentelman which lay within the towne of Newcastle to repayre and lye at their owne houses, there to kepe watch, warde, showte and crye, and every man to be ready to ryse with his neighbor and followe upon payne of deth.*" Sir Ralph Fenwick, he reported, had defeated and captured a body of Scots led by "*Hector Armistrange, and Andrew his sonne,*" who had descended upon Northumberland through Bewcastle Dale. Hector Armstrong is described as "*a tall personage, son to Mykell Sym.*" The prisoners were taken to Warkworth, where they volunteered to swear fealty to England and fight for King Henry.<sup>3</sup>

A little later in the year, 7000 of the enemy, com-

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., Caligula, Book VII. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish State Papers.

<sup>3</sup> State Papers.

manded by Dan Ker of Graydon, ran "an open day forey" into Norhamshire and routed the force hastily raised to oppose them. Encouraged by this success, a second raid was attempted on August 19, by the Kers, Rutherfords, and Davidsons. The invaders were met near Hawteshill by a body of English under the leadership of Thomas Errington, Alexander Fetherstonhaugh, and Robert Thyrlewall. After a fight lasting for several hours, the Northumbrians were completely victorious, putting the Scots to rout and taking twelve prisoners. These latter were brought to Norham Castle, and there hanged under March Law. In his letter to the king describing this event, Northumberland mentions that he had good reason to suspect certain Pringles and other persons resident in Tynedale of being in league with the enemy, and of having helped many to escape. Should his suspicions of treachery at home be confirmed, he vows that he "*will not fayle to put them (the men of Tynedale) to such terrible execution that it shall be a warnyng to all such offenders not to bring in the Scottes hereafter.*"<sup>1</sup>

The close of the year 1532 was one of exceptional restlessness on both sides of the Border. Armed bands **Fire and sword.** scoured the country; and such was the prevalence of treachery and disloyalty, that it was hard for either Scots or English to tell who were enemies and who friends. As a matter of fact, the heads of the great frontier families were firstly for themselves, and only secondly for the king or warden under whom they chanced at the time to be serving. Bothwell, as we have seen, was in negotiation with England. Angus had actually transferred his allegiance from James to Henry; and when Northumberland visited him at Berwick he found him "true to the king," and eager to invade Scotland. His allies in the Merse, declared this renegade Douglas, had promised to give him full information of any hostile movements on the part of James, and to

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*



stand aloof in case of hostilities. The Scots king lay at Coldingham, while his new Warden of the Marches, the Earl of Moray, protected the frontier with 3000 picked men. James was reported by Angus to be in dire financial straits, as the emperor, then engaged in wars of his own, had neglected to send him certain promised moneys. But although the king was too poor to attack, and Angus had gone over to the enemy, the English Warden had still to reckon with turbulence at home (chiefly instigated by his own brothers, Thomas and Ingelgram Percy), and with ceaseless raids from Teviotdale and Tweeddale. On October 10 a large company of moss-troopers under Launce Ker eluded the watchfulness of Sir Richard Tempest and fell suddenly upon the village of Alnham,<sup>1</sup> which they gave to the flames, slaying most of the male inhabitants. Pushing on next day to Newstead, they captured twenty-six prisoners, vassals of Northumberland, and two hundred head of cattle. On Sunday, October 31, Lorbottle was taken and destroyed; after which Launce Ker rode back to Tweeddale with his prey.<sup>2</sup>

Such forays as this induced Northumberland to increase his army of defence. Sir Arthur Darcy was sent to the Border with reinforcements, while Clifford and Angus each raised considerable levies. But in spite of these formidable preparations the Kers and other Scots freebooters were not to be terrorised. Mark Ker boldly sent word to Northumberland that, within the space of a week, he proposed burning one of the earl's towns in the heart of the county, and so near Warkworth Castle that the blaze would give the earl "*licht enow to put on his clothes by at midnight.*" Knowing the daring character of the Kers, the Lord Warden doubled his guards; but Mark Ker broke into England through one of the wild passes towards the north-west, and was within four miles of

<sup>1</sup> Alnham lies under Hazelton Rigg about thirteen miles west of Alnwick. Newstead is a hamlet some five miles south-west of Bamborough. Lorbottle or Lowrebotell is in Whittingham parish, hardly.

<sup>2</sup> *Cotton MSS., Caligula, Book VI. 24.*

Warkworth before the watchers had set light to a single beacon. "*Uppon Tuesday at nyght last,*" wrote the earl to Henry, "*came thyrty lyght horsemen into a litell village of myne called Whitell,<sup>1</sup> having not past sex howses in it, and there wold have fyred the said howses but there was no fyre to gyt there, and they forgate to brynge any withe theym; and so take a wyfe, being grete with child in the towne, and said to hyr; 'Where we cannot give the Lord lyght, yet we shall do this in spyte of hym;'* and gave her three mortell woundes upon the head, and another in the right syde with a dagger, whereupon the said wyf is dede, and the child in her belly is loste."<sup>2</sup> While the Kers were at this brutal business, word of their coming was brought to Warkworth, and the beacon at once kindled to arouse the countryside. Answering fires leaped up from the surrounding hills and castles, and the Warden's deputies made haste to block every known pathway to the Border. The Kers, abandoning their intention of burning Whittle, made off by the way they had come; and though the breadth of the county lay between them and safety, and all the roads were alive with armed men, these daredevil Celts reached the fastnesses of the Waterbreak without the loss of a single life.

The black deed of which they were accused—the killing of a woman with child—was unfortunately but too common a crime on both sides of the frontier; but it served so to inflame the passions of the English marchmen, that Northumberland was able to lead a serviceable force into the Merse and Teviotdale within three days after the escape of the reputed murderers. Joined by some Scots horsemen under George Douglas, the invaders attacked and burned Coldingham, whence King James had retreated in hot haste. The towns of Blackhill and "Branerdegast" were likewise destroyed after heavy slaughter; while eighty prisoners, sixty horses, two hundred head of cattle, and corn worth rooo marks sterling fell into the hands of the English.

<sup>1</sup> High and Low Whittle are now two farmsteads, four miles from Warkworth in the parish of Shilbottle.

<sup>2</sup> Northumberland to the king, *Cotton MSS., Caligula*, Book VI. 24.

*THE SOUTH VIEW OF WARKWORTH CASTLE, IN NORTHUMBERLAND.*



15th the Duke, son to ALGERNON, Earl of Stafford, son of George, afterwards  
 Duke of Clarence; Henry Percy, Esq. Lieutenant and Captain  
 of the County of York; Captain of the 1st and 2d Regiments  
 of Foot Guards; and Governor of Plymouth Castle.  
 This Prospect is handsomely illustrated by  
 J. G. Kay, Esq. Architectural Engraver.



THIS is a Prospect View, drawn on the bank of the River Ure, which passes  
 through the town of Warkworth, and is a fine view of the  
 ruins of the Castle, and the remains of the town, which were  
 destroyed by the Duke of Clarence, in the year 1470. Since which  
 time the Castle has been in ruins, and the town has been  
 almost entirely destroyed. The Castle is now in the possession  
 of the Duke of Northumberland, and is used as a residence. It  
 was built by the Duke of Northumberland, in the year 1470.  
 The Castle is a fine specimen of the architecture of the  
 15th century, and is one of the most interesting  
 remains of the Middle Ages in Northumberland.

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Thus was the poor wife of Whittle well avenged. Moray attempted reprisals; whereupon Northumberland raised 2500 men and despatched them across the Border at five different points. He himself commanded one troop; while Sir Arthur Darcy, Sir Thomas Clifford, Angus, and Tempest each led a separate foray. All were successful except Angus, who was taken prisoner, and only managed to escape by bribery and specious promises to his captors.<sup>1</sup> The Lord Warden burnt Raynton<sup>2</sup> and many other places of importance. In his report to the king, he says:—“*Thankes be to God, we did not leave one pele, gentleman’s house or grange unburnt or (un)destroyed; and so reculed to England.*”<sup>3</sup> Northumberland, after this triumphant raid, wrote to Henry asking that the ancient privilege granted to Lords Warden of conferring knighthood upon their most distinguished followers might be revived in his favour. Wolsey was held chiefly responsible for the loss of this long-recognised right; the last occasion upon which a Warden had knighted his lieutenants having been after Flodden. Henry, however, was not inclined to renew the lapsed privilege, and so returned no answer to the appeal.

There occurred about this time an event of considerable interest to the Percy family—the death, under suspicion of foul play, of Josceline, youngest son of the fourth Earl of Northumberland, and ancestor of the Percies of Beverley and Cambridge.<sup>4</sup> Josceline Percy, who had held Newlands and part of Great Sandal near Wakefield, died on September 8, 1532, a few days after making his will. His brother, Sir William Percy, announced the event to Cromwell on September 19, asking at the same time for the wardship of the deceased’s son and heir, Edward Percy, then “nine years old,” yet, in spite of his tender age, already “married to one Walterton, a sorry bargain, his

Josceline  
Percy and  
his line.

<sup>1</sup> Lesly.

<sup>2</sup> Raynton or Renton in Berwickshire, the seat of a branch of the Stirling family.

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*, December 15, 1532.

<sup>4</sup> See *Genealogy*, Tables II. and III.

blood considered.”<sup>1</sup> The “Walterton” in question was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Waterton, knight, of Walton.<sup>2</sup> On January 20, 1533, Sir William wrote again to Cromwell, accusing three of Josceline’s servants—Humphrey Snawdell, William West, and a maid, their confederate—of having killed their master by poison, after inducing him to sign a will in their favour. They then, he declares, took all the dead man’s money and movable goods and went to Walton Hall, where they were sheltered by Sir Thomas Waterton. Later on, with the sheriff’s consent, an inquest was held at York, the jury consisting wholly of the friends of Waterton and the poisoners. Custody of the heir was allowed to Sir William Percy, but he was only given £20 out of his brother’s estate upon which to bring up the boy. Nothing further is mentioned of the affair in the State Papers; but Edward Percy subsequently recovered such of his father’s property as lay in and around Beverley, consummated his juvenile marriage to Elizabeth Waterton, and was father of Alan Percy, M.P. for Beverley in 1603, and of Thomas Percy, of “Gunpowder Plot” notoriety. His great-grandson, Alan Percy of Beverley (who died 1686), was, after the extinction of the senior line in the person of Josceline, eleventh Earl of Northumberland, entitled to inherit the earldom, *his blood being unaffected by the attainder of Sir Thomas Percy in 1537.*<sup>3</sup> Whether through ignorance of his rights or lack of sufficient wealth, he never made any attempt to bring his just claims before Parliament. The last known male representative of this branch of the family was the Rev. Josceline Percy, M.A. of Corpus Christi

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

<sup>2</sup> Ancestor of the celebrated traveller “Wandering Waterton.” Walton Hall is within a little distance of Sandal.

<sup>3</sup> A similar case, in which the heir actually succeeded in establishing his claim, was that of John Butler of Kilkenny Castle, afterwards fifteenth Earl of Ormonde. The second Duke of Ormonde had been attainted, and thus forfeited his title; but John Butler, belonging to a younger branch of the family, was unaffected by the attainder, and so succeeded to the hereditary titles and estates.

College, Oxford, and Rector of Marham in Northamptonshire, who died in 1755.<sup>1</sup>

The discontent and lawlessness among English borderers, which had been stayed for a time by the execution of Sir William Lysle and his fellow-outlaws, now raged **Lawlessness at home.** more fiercely than ever. Lord Dacre sought by every means in his power to hamper his brother-in-law, the Warden, in the discharge of his duty; and in 1531 Northumberland complained to the king that Dacre refused to deliver up to him some prisoners whom he had illegally taken. When the royal warrant for the handing over of the prisoners was sent to Dacre, he coolly "*allowed them to slyp*,"<sup>2</sup>—preferring that they should be at large, than in Northumberland's care. The Mayor of Hull was another delinquent. Seizing upon an English ship which had towed a Scots prize into the Humber, he returned only insolent answers when ordered by Northumberland's deputy, Sir John Lamplough, to surrender both vessels in the king's name. "*He wold in no wies obey*," reported Lamplough, "*but with disdennous wourdes, and like handelyng of my said Warden Sargente, causied hym to departe*."<sup>3</sup> But it was the reckless behaviour of his own brothers, Sir Thomas and Sir Ingelgram Percy, which caused the Lord Warden most uneasiness. These young men, like their ancestor Hotspur, had been "marchmen all their lives"; and their sympathies were with the Northumbrians. While Henry was laying up for himself a store of grief and ill-health in the stifling atmosphere of the Court, Thomas and Ingelgram had ranged the borderside, and learned the arts of war and venerie under old Sir William, their uncle, and many other captains of renown. When he came to his own Henry had treated his brothers generously, although himself hard pressed for money; yet there never was much

<sup>1</sup> See *Genealogy*, Table III. See also under Josceline, eleventh Earl of Northumberland. It is by no means improbable that James Percy, the famous "Trunk-maker," who claimed the Earldom in the seventeenth century, sprang from this line.

<sup>2</sup> *Cotton MSS., Caligula*, Book I. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

sympathy and friendship between the new earl and these, his nearest kin. Thomas and Ingelgram began to consort with some of the wildest spirits in the North—the survivors and representatives of those who had defied the king's power under Lysle and Charleton. Throughout Redesdale and Tynedale they were regarded as leaders of every disturbance, and among their followers and associates were young Humphrey Lysle (the same boy whom Northumberland had saved from death in 1628, and who had but a few months before been released from the Tower),<sup>1</sup> John Heron, the Fenwicks, Swinburnes, Shaftoes, and many others of good name. Northumberland blamed Thomas Percy for having "*debauched Humfrey Lysle, and led hym astraye from the dutie whych he above all other oweth to the Kinge*"; so that when Sir Thomas asked for the post of Deputy Warden of either the East or Middle Marches, he met with a stern denial, and the coveted office was given to Lord Ogle, a nobleman of proved loyalty, but ill regarded by the Northumbrians. Furious at what they deemed an undeserved slight, Thomas and Ingelgram Percy openly defied their brother, and ordered their tenants and adherents not to rise at his summons. Such conduct as this could not be overlooked by the Warden. He never forgave Thomas Percy for his share in the troubles which followed; and, so far as can be ascertained, the earl and his heir presumptive were as strangers from that time forward.

A truce was entered into with the Scots in 1533, chiefly through the mediation of the French ambassador to Scotland, Vido Floreus or Fleury.<sup>2</sup> Friendly letters passed between James V. and his "dear uncle," and in May of the same year a formal treaty of peace was concluded at London, to last during the joint lives of the two kings, and for twelve months after the death of him that died first.<sup>3</sup> In the autumn Northumberland disbanded the army which

<sup>1</sup> Humphrey Lysle was about eighteen years of age at this time, and had received the honour of knighthood on his being set at liberty.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



he had raised with considerable pains, and kept in a constant state of efficiency. Money for the paying off of the troops was wanting; and the Lord Warden, with a generosity scarcely justified by his own resources, took upon himself the risk of advancing the necessary funds. "*For soo moche as there was not in the handys of the saide Syr George Lawson,*" he writes, "*any money from your Highnes for dissoloynge of the said garyson, I dyde by advice of your counsaile here shewe myselfe to the advauncement of the same to my possible power, and soo heith dissolved theym for the tyme.*"<sup>1</sup> In the same letter to the king he asserts that grave dissension still existed in Scotland. James had vainly attempted to make peace between the warring factions, and, despairing of success, had shut himself up in Holyrood under the pretence that he was "*ill of a sore fois.*"

At the spring Warden Court in 1535 young Sir Humphrey Lysle (who had disregarded Northumberland's warnings, and persisted in the lawless courses which brought his father to the scaffold) was among those charged with rebellion and treason. Together with Alexander Shafto, he was convicted and sentenced to death; but the two managed to break gaol with the assistance of their friends, and so escaped into Scotland. The outlaw instinct seems to have been very strong in Lysle, whose estates, so recently regained, were now again forfeited to the Crown. Northumberland was accused by his enemy, Dacre, and by Sir Thomas Percy (who, out of pure spite against his brother, had allied himself with Dacre) of showing partiality in this trial; but a commission sent to investigate the matter acquitted the earl of the charge.<sup>2</sup> Indeed it seems strange that, after Northumberland's humane and vigorous efforts to preserve the life of Humphrey Lysle as a boy, he should now desire to put him to death by unfair means. The accusation was

<sup>1</sup> *Cotton MSS.*, Book III. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Among the witnesses whose evidence exonerated Northumberland were Sir William Eure, Sir Robert Ellerker, Robert Collingwood, Lionel Gray, and Christopher Mitford.

probably only a piece of revenge on the part of Dacre ; as, a little while before, the earl had caused him to be tried for treasonable correspondence with William Scott of Buccleugh,<sup>1</sup> and he had only escaped conviction through the presence upon the jury of several friends of Thomas and Ingelgram Percy.

The breach between these young knights and their brother grew wider as time went on. A certain Sir Raynold Carnaby had been for several months employed by Northumberland, as confidential messenger, journeying to and fro with letters between the earl and the king. Carnaby, who was a young man of comely presence and agreeable manners, speedily acquired great influence with his employer, whose frequent hours of suffering he helped to cheer by the latest news of London and the Court. In the North, and especially by the younger Percies, Sir Raynold was held to be an agent of the king, sent for the express purpose of estranging the Lord Warden from his kindred and connections. This view was strengthened by the fact that Northumberland, on hearing of some fresh depredations committed by his brothers against Lord Ogle's tenants, publicly threatened to cut both Sir Thomas and Sir Ingelgram off from the succession to his estates, and leave all he possessed to the Crown.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that he did not, as yet, seriously entertain such an intention ; but Sir Thomas Percy, alarmed at the menace, wrote to Cromwell, bitterly complaining that Sir Raynold Carnaby had wrought discord between the earl and his brethren, and asserting that Carnaby's removal could alone restore harmony in the family.<sup>3</sup> Probably it was not to Cromwell's interest that harmony should be restored ; at any rate, Thomas Percy's letter was ignored, and Carnaby continued to act as Northumberland's agent and friend.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, Scotland ; Chapter House, Part I.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that on one occasion the earl had threatened to disinherit him, and to leave the estates to this same Sir Thomas or his brother.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

It was at this period of the earl's history that his name became once more linked with that of Anne Boleyn. **Anne Boleyn** The arrangements for the divorce of Henry VIII. **once again.** from Katherine of Arragon had of late proceeded swiftly; and it was on every side admitted that, unless something occurred to change the king's capricious heart, Mistress Anne would surely reach the goal of her ambition, and take Katherine's place upon the throne. Her enemies, led by the Earl of Shrewsbury, sought eagerly for some means by which her elevation might be prevented, and at length a plan which appeared feasible was decided upon. The Earl of Northumberland's wife (who had finally deserted her husband, and was now living under Shrewsbury's roof) supplied the first hint for this insidious cabal. Northumberland, in one of the many painful quarrels between the countess and himself, had rashly owned to his former love for Anne Boleyn, and the desire which he had once entertained of making that lady his wife. A recent writer<sup>1</sup> has it that the earl went so far as to allege an actual contract of betrothal with Anne; and this was certainly the form into which Lady Northumberland, prompted possibly by her sister, Lady Dacre, twisted her husband's heedless speech. Remembering the strange, hypochondriacal character of the countess, and the former false charges which she had made against her consort, we can attach but little credence to her statements. "The truth of the case," says De Fonblanque, "appears to be that Northumberland, having in a fit of anger ungenerously reminded his wife of his early love for Anne, and perhaps expressed his regret that she had not become his wife, the countess, glad of any opportunity of injuring her husband, chose to interpret and to represent these remarks as an admission on his part

<sup>1</sup> Paul Friedmann; *Ann Boleyn, a Chapter in English History*. Mr. Friedmann throughout his book is very unfair towards Northumberland, of whose real nature he appears to know but little. He speaks of Lady Northumberland sending an account of her husband's remark to her father by letter; whereas she had dwelt under Shrewsbury's roof for nearly two years, and was still dwelling there, when she told him the story of the pretended pre-contract.

of a previous marriage, and therefore, as far as he was concerned, of an act of bigamy."<sup>1</sup>

The Earl of Shrewsbury may have had no hand in altering Northumberland's words to suit his purpose, but he was quick to realise the importance of the words thus altered. Lady Northumberland and her sister urged that the matter should be laid directly before the king, thinking thus to end Anne's hope of a royal marriage, and endanger the life and liberty of Northumberland at one and the same time. "But Lord Shrewsbury," says Friedmann, "though an enemy of Anne, was a cautious man. Had he done as his daughter desired, he would not have gained much: the letter would have been at once communicated to Anne, who would have found means to defend herself. It was accordingly taken to the Duke of Norfolk, by whom it was handed to his niece. Anne at once chose the boldest course. She showed the letter to the King, and insisted that the affair should be investigated. At her request, Northumberland was sent for, and strictly examined."

Northumberland unhesitatingly contradicted his wife's allegations. "Before the Council he denied that any pre-contract existed between him and Anne, and this statement he solemnly repeated before the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup> Anne had once more defeated the plots of her enemies."<sup>3</sup> This writer speaks loosely of the earl's "intrigue" with Anne Boleyn. There is not a tittle of evidence to the effect that any criminal relations had existed between them. Had such evidence been forthcoming, it would have been used at the trial of Anne.

On or about January 25, 1533, Anne Boleyn,<sup>4</sup> being with child, was secretly married to Henry in the presence of a few attendants.<sup>5</sup> The name of the priest who

<sup>1</sup> De Fonblanque, *Annals of the House of Percy*, vol. i. p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> Before the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. After taking an oath in the presence of these prelates, the earl heard mass and partook of Holy Communion.

<sup>3</sup> Friedmann.

<sup>4</sup> She was now Marchioness of Pembroke. Her condition was very noticeable, and she had the effrontery to boast of it publicly.

<sup>5</sup> *Archæologia Britannica*, vol. xviii. p. 87.

performed the ceremony is unknown, but Chapuis, in a letter to the emperor, declares the complaisant cleric was an Augustinian friar. This description agrees very well with that of George Brown, who shortly afterwards was made Prior of Austin Friars in London, and eventually rose to be Protestant Archbishop of Dublin.<sup>1</sup> The marriage was kept secret for some time, chiefly in order to hoodwink the Pope, and to delay the issue of a Bull of Excommunication against Henry. Meanwhile strong pressure was brought to bear upon Queen Katherine to resign her rights, and accept the titles and revenues which had been hers as Princess of Wales. Katherine proudly refused to take any course which would impugn the legitimacy of her child, the Princess Mary; and was banished by the king's order to Ampthill. On April 12 Anne Boleyn appeared for the first time in royal state. A wave of dissatisfaction swept over England when the news was known. During Anne's journey to Westminster, on May 31, crowds lined the streets hooting her loudly and cheering for "the true queen" — Katherine. When Cranmer, who had been commanded to officiate at her coronation, made his appearance in public, he was received with jeers; and disturbances of a serious character occurred in various parts of the city and suburbs. After the coronation, Anne went by barge to Greenwich, where a week of feasting and merrymaking followed. But with the great mass of the people—even of those opposed to Roman interference—the king's divorce, and his hasty remarriage, were exceedingly unpopular. During Katherine's removal from Ampthill to Bugden, early in July, great throngs of country-folk followed her cavalcade, and every village through which she passed was strewn with flowers. The Princess Mary, who rode pillion behind her mother's chamberlain, met with a reception so enthusiastic that Anne Boleyn bitterly complained to the king. Mary, she declared, in spite of her "illegitimacy," had been "*treated in every village as if she were God Himself who had descended from*

<sup>1</sup> Friedmann.

*Heaven.*"<sup>1</sup> But the new queen's complaints were not listened to with as much attention as of old. Already the king's passion for Anne had begun to wane; and during the period of her confinement, the royal satyr amused himself with the maids-of-honour (among whom was Jane Seymour, wanton, roguish-eyed, and by no means averse to the coarse gallantries of his Grace). Anne was a woman of spirit, and angrily upbraided Henry for his fickleness; only to be told that she had no reason to murmur, since she herself had played the same part in Katherine's household which Mistress Seymour and others were now playing in hers. Quarrel after quarrel followed.

The birth of a female child,<sup>2</sup> instead of the eagerly expected Prince of Wales, still further embittered the relations of the couple; and when Anne suffered a miscarriage in the following year, the king made up his mind to have the marriage annulled. In vain the Boleyn faction resorted to the loathsome expedient of sacrificing Anne's pretty cousin, Margery Shelton, to Henry's carnal appetite, in order to retain their influence at Court.<sup>3</sup> The "Defender of the Faith" grew weary of poor Margery as he had grown weary of so many others, and she that had left Kent a maid went back dishonoured and forsaken. The advanced Reformist party no longer basked in the sunshine of kingly favour, and Anne's enemies were busily engaged in plotting her downfall. The selfishness and arrogance of her father, my Lord of Wiltshire "and Ormonde," together with the rapacity displayed by many of her relatives, had greatly increased the numbers of those who bore her ill-will. For some time, indeed, her one friend in the North had been Henry Percy, who, in spite of evil report, continued faithful to the memory of the Anne that he had loved. But even Northumberland could not brook the insolence of the queen's kindred. On December 15, 1534, Chapuis was informed by the earl's

<sup>1</sup> Chapuis to Charles V., July 11, 1533.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Queen Elizabeth.

<sup>3</sup> *Anna Boleyn* (Friedmann).

physician<sup>1</sup> that "the only peer north of Trent who had remained favourable to Anne," now stood sternly aloof, having been offended by the overbearing conduct of Lord Wiltshire, Lord Rochford, and the Boleyns and Careys, their relatives.<sup>2</sup> There is absolutely no proof that Northumberland's former love for the queen had been "turned into hate" (as Friedmann asserts with his usual unfairness towards the earl).<sup>3</sup> Even had he hated her, it was not in Percy's nature to take any part in the relentless persecution of Anne, instigated by Cromwell and Shrewsbury, and sanctioned by the unspeakably mean and ungrateful Cranmer.<sup>4</sup> Yet the loss of this, her last disinterested friend, was an event of ill omen for the unhappy woman.

The facts concerning the arrest of Anne Boleyn, of her brother Rochford, and of her so-called "partners in crime," Smeton, Weston, and Norreys, scarcely need to be repeated here. Suffice it to say that Cromwell's stealthy labours and Anne's own reckless vanity bore fruit at last. Guilty or not—adulteress or only indiscreet coquette, the young queen's doom was sealed when she had once passed the dark arch of Traitor's Gate. To the outside world, however, the certainty of her conviction and execution was as yet unknown. With the rest of those who were not in Cromwell's confidence, Northumberland probably believed that her worse fate would be a sentence of divorce from the king. The earl was in London, dwelling in one of his houses at Newington Green,<sup>5</sup> when her trial began. Norfolk, as High Steward *pro tempore*, was compelled to summon the jury of peers which met in the Tower

<sup>1</sup> This person was in the pay of Chapuis, and had on former occasions acted as a spy upon Northumberland.

<sup>2</sup> Chapuis to Charles V., February 25, 1535.

<sup>3</sup> *Anne Boleyn* (Friedmann).

<sup>4</sup> Cranmer had begun life as a servant of the Boleyns, and owed his all to Anne's favour.

<sup>5</sup> He had two mansions—one in the north, the other on the south side of Newington Green. After his death both came into the king's possession. A footpath, leading from a corner of the Green to the turnpike road at Ball's Pond, is known as "King Harry's Walk."—(Thornbury.)

on May 15 for the purpose of considering the charges against Anne. It may be that the duke had still some hope of saving his niece's life; at any rate, none of the jurymen whom he selected belonged to the ranks of the queen's avowed enemies. Besides Northumberland, the nobles who attended were: the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Exeter, the Earls of Arundel, Oxford, Westmoreland, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Sussex, and Huntingdon, and Lords Audley, Delawarr, Montague, Morley, Dacre of the South, Cobham, Maltravers, Powys, Monteagle, Clinton, Sandys, Windsor, Wentworth, Burgh, and Mordaunt. Anne's chief foes, Lords Dacre of Gillesland, Hussey, Braye, and Darcy, were not summoned. The jury was sworn in on May 15; on the following day the trial began in the great hall of the Tower. Before an hour had passed, the peers present realised that, instead of being free agents presiding over a state tribunal, they had merely been called together for the sake of formality; and that Anne was already condemned by the will of the king. The evidence laid before them was of the flimsiest nature, proving nothing more than that the queen had at times foolishly flirted with some of her courtiers. Smeton, it is true, confessed upon the rack to an adulterous intercourse with her; but he recanted all his craven admissions when he learned that they would not save him from the gallows. The jury was commanded to accept the statements made by him under torture, while wholly disregarding his subsequent retraction. Friedmann observes that, in his belief, Anne had probably committed "offences quite as grave as most of those of which she was accused, . . . crimes which it did not suit the convenience of the Government to divulge. At the subsequent trial, some hints to this effect were thrown out, and although proof was not adduced, they were likely enough to have been true."<sup>1</sup> No doubt mysterious "hints" and loose statements of this kind were freely produced at the trial, to take the place of actual proof, and to salve as much as possible the consciences of the jurymen, who well knew that, even

<sup>1</sup> *Anne Boleyn*, vol. ii. p. 265.



had they dared to acquit the prisoner, she could not escape a capital sentence.

What must have been the feelings of Henry Percy when his old love was led into the hall to go through the mockery of pleading her cause! Already he had seen the utter futility of this pretended "court of justice." Already he beheld in fancy that fair neck bared to the headsman's stroke. Anne and he had met when both were young; before sorrow had saddened the one, or courtly folly spoilt the other. The memory of a man's first sweetheart oftentimes continues fresh and fragrant through every vicissitude of life; and we have learned from Northumberland's own passionate admission that he still looked back with longing and regret to the happy days when he courted Mistress Boleyn, the queen's maid-of-honour.

It was a woeful fate that made Henry the Unlucky one of the judges of that day. Norfolk was Anne's uncle; but Norfolk had a callous soul that recked but little of another's pain. To Northumberland, on the contrary, each cruel accusation against the queen was as a poignard thrust in his own heart. It needs no great effort of imagination to depict him as he sat by the High Steward's side: his face wan and furrowed from sickness and many griefs; his frail figure trembling under the splendid robes of state;<sup>1</sup> his fevered eyes now bent upon the ground, now lifted for a pitiful, fleeting glance at the lonely woman in the dock. At length, when Anne rose to speak in her own defence, he could bear the horror of the situation no longer. To save her was impossible; but at least he would be no party to her condemnation. He rose from his seat. Their eyes met for one brief moment. Then Northumberland turned and went in silence from the hall.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A nervous disorder had been added to his other ailments, so that even on warm days he shivered as one in an ague.—(*Letters and Papers*.)

<sup>2</sup> Bengel, *Memoirs of Anna Boleyn*. The official records of the trial state that all the peers, except Northumberland, pronounced a verdict of guilty against the accused.

But of Anne Boleyn's other judges, not one dared to brave the king's wrath. When the queen had said her use-  
Last days of the queen. less say, the twenty-five peers that remained, after a pretence of deliberation, unanimously found her guilty of the crimes alieged against her. Then, with an amazing bravery—some say with a smile upon her face—Anne heard Norfolk deliver the sentence of death. She was to be burned at the stake or beheaded, according to the king's pleasure. The court was over; the ghastly comedy was played out; and the mother of England's greatest queen went back to her cell to prepare for death.

But even as she stood upon the threshold of the future, her enemies gave her no peace. They wished, by way of a last indignity to deprive her of the name of wife—to make her child a bastard, as the Princess Mary was already proclaimed to be. A strong party, headed by Cromwell, favoured the settlement of the crown upon the young Duke of Richmond, a natural son of the king. But Richmond's succession was impossible so long as Anne's daughter, Elizabeth, stood in the way; hence the desire to annul the marriage of Henry and Anne. The first step taken in this direction was the sending of Sir Raynold Carnaby to the Earl of Northumberland, with an earnest request to the effect that he should withdraw his denial of a pre-contract between Anne and himself. Only a few years before he had in the most solemn manner repudiated any such engagement or betrothal; and it is characteristic of a Court wherein honour and truth were alike disregarded, that he should now be asked to avow what he had previously sworn upon the Eucharist to be false. The message came directly from Cromwell, but it contained a strong hint that ready compliance on the earl's part would atone for his action in leaving the Tower before the conclusion of Anne's trial. With the insulting proposals of the minister Northumberland positively refused to comply. His letter to Cromwell, in which he repeats the former disavowal of a pre-contract, is as follows:—

*“Maister Secretary: This shall be to signifie to you that I perceave by Sir Reginald Carneby that ther is a supposed Pre-contract between the Queen and me. Wherfor I was not only examined upon my othe before the Archbishops of Canterburie and York, but also receaved the blessed Sacrament upon the sayne, before the Duke of Norfolk, and others of the Kynges hignes Council learned in spiritual law; assuring you, Mr. Secretary, by the said othe and besced bodye, which affore I receaved, and herafter intend to receave, that the same may be to my damnation if there were any contract or promise of marriage betweane her and me.*

*“At Newingtone Grene, the XIII daye of May, in the 28th year of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lord, King Henry the VIII.: your assured*

NORTHUMBERLAND.”<sup>1</sup>

Cranmer was then sent to the Tower for the purpose of gaining Anne's confidence, and of persuading her, if possible, to admit what Northumberland denied. He was instructed to hold out vague hopes of mercy as an inducement to the queen; but, whether Anne was resolved to preserve her own dignity and the legitimacy of her child at all hazards, or whether she had learned to take the promises of such men as Cromwell and Cranmer at their proper worth, this cowardly mission proved as great a failure as that of Carnaby to Northumberland. Unable to prove the existence of a pre-contract, the king's advisers sought anxiously for some other pretext upon which to claim a dissolution of the marriage. One was found in the statement by Henry himself that he had, previous to meeting with Anne Boleyn, committed adultery with her elder sister Mary.<sup>2</sup> Cranmer readily affirmed that, according to the Canon Law, such carnal relations, whether lawful or the reverse, placed Henry and Anne within the forbidden degrees of affinity. He then proceeded to “declare invalid

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

<sup>2</sup> Mary Boleyn married in 1520-21 William Carey of an old west country family, by whom she was the mother of Sir Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon, and ancestor of the Careys or Carys, Earls of Dover and of Monmouth. The family of Cary, Viscounts Falkland, descends from Sir John Cary, brother of Mary Boleyn's husband.

that which he had solemnly declared to be valid,"<sup>1</sup> and to stigmatise as a harlot the woman whose influence had raised him to high place. This decree had, of course, the immediate effect of rendering the Princess Elizabeth a bastard in the eyes of the law.

Anne Boleyn was beheaded on May 19, 1536, in the courtyard of the Tower. Frivolous and simple she may have been in life, but she went to her death with the courage of a Joan of Arc. Not twenty-four hours after her death, while her body still lay in its winding-sheet, Henry VIII. took to himself another wife in the person of Jane Seymour.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Raynold Carnaby, riding post-haste into the North with the likeliest budget of Court gossip which he had carried for many a day, was refused an audience by his patron, the Lord Warden. Northumberland had no wish to hear of the gay doings at Hampton Court—the jests and laughter, the music and merrymaking. To his ears came only the sound of a sexton's spade digging the narrow grave wherein Anne Boleyn was to lie. He, too, had received his sentence of death. His last illness was upon him; and in a little while he would follow Anne to the world beyond. Tossing restlessly upon his bed of pain, forsaken by all save a few old retainers, he may well have bewailed his lot in some such words as those placed in his mouth by the modern poet:—<sup>3</sup>

*"What joy can fayre earth offer nowe to me?  
Ah, none! I wepe that ever I was born.  
No more delight I in swete minstrelsy,  
Or trumpet's clang, or sound of hunting horn.*

<sup>1</sup> Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. iii. fol. 804.

<sup>2</sup> The marriage of Henry and Jane Seymour took place privately at Hampton Court about 6 A.M. on May 20. Mr. Froude characteristically observes that, in thus taking a third consort, while the blood of her predecessor was scarce dry upon the scaffold, Henry "*sacrificed himself to a sense of public duty.*"

<sup>3</sup> F. R. Surtees. This graceful effort to copy the sixteenth century style of versification is entitled "*The Lamente of Henry Percy.*"

*What boots gyf happiness he cannot bryng,  
 Phæbus his bryght rays sheds on Alnwick's towers,  
 Where birds in wodes bedeckt with leafis syng,  
 Chauntyng melodiouslé in yon green bowers.  
 One birde there was, a faulcon,<sup>1</sup> fine to view ;  
 Why hyndered fate that I might be her fere,  
 Whose harte to mine, and mine to hers, beat trew ?  
 But she is flowne—and I'm distraught wí care.  
 What's lyfe to me, Northumberland's proud pere ?  
 Lyfe without love, is erth without a sunn.  
 Why dyd the fates then ever place me here,  
 Why was I domed life's cheerless course to run ?  
 Pale is the crescent of my hope, and fled  
 Is all my thought of happiness e'er more,  
 Soon be my days as summer shaddows sped,  
 And soon my breaste as cold as Laplande shore.  
 But thee, fond mayd, to starry hyght upborne,  
 Whose name my lips to 'plaine of scarce may move ;  
 Thee lyke Philomel, whyll I ever mourn,  
 Anna ! my fyrste, my laste and only love."*

The doctrines of Luther had made but scant progress in the north of England, where the old religion was still revered and adhered by the great mass of the people and by nearly all the families of note. Hall observes that the honest folk of Yorkshire and the Border counties were "*altogether nose-led in superstition and popery.*" This conservatism in matters of faith and attachment to the proscribed Church was due in no small measure to the strong Celtic leaven in the Northern population. The suppression of monasteries and the confiscation of Church lands were not received in Strathclyde or upon the Eastern Marches with the same apathy as in the Saxon South. Discontent spread rapidly, fanned by the lay nobility rather than by the priests. Great gatherings of the commons were held at Percy's Cross and similar places of meeting ; and while loyalty to the king was everywhere proclaimed, bitter reproaches were levelled at

The Pil-  
 grimage of  
 Grace.

<sup>1</sup> The falcon was the device of the Boleyn family.

Cromwell, Cranmer, and others of his councillors. No adequate efforts were made to prevent the threatened outbreak. Northumberland, who, although himself a sincere Catholic, would have considered it his bounden duty to suppress any movement hostile to the Government, lay fettered by sickness at Wressill. Henry, occupied less by his new religion than by his new sultana, paid little heed to such rumours as reached him from beyond Trent. Cromwell deemed the violent demonstrations against his policy so much idle clamour of the populace. But king and minister were soon to be undeceived. All that the men of the North needed to spur them to vigorous action was a worthy leader; and this want was soon supplied in the person of Robert Aske of Aske Hall by Richmond, a gentleman of birth, whose religious enthusiasm, natural eloquence, and established courage all combined to fit him for the post. With Aske at the head of affairs the agitation rapidly assumed formidable proportions. The beacon fires were lit; the men of six counties rushed to arms. Early in October, what had appeared an undisciplined mob, began to present the appearance of a large and well-trained army. Private feuds and differences were forgotten; Yorkshire yeomen made common cause with moss-troopers from Cumberland; outlaws from Redesdale and Tynedale marched shoulder to shoulder with the burghers of York, of Beverley, and of Hull.

At first the great lords, although they sympathised with Aske, held back from open participation in the rising. The Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Durham made faint protests against violence. Lord Darcy closed the gates of Pomfret, and sent couriers to London asking for reinforcements. Sir Thomas Percy, the heir of Northumberland, took up his residence at Semer near Scarborough, the home of his mother, the dowager countess, and there awaited developments.

Aske's first step was to demand a personal interview with Darcy. He was admitted to the old soldier's

presence ; and, such were the man's persuasive powers, that before he left Pomfret Darcy had taken the oath, and enrolled himself in the "Pilgrimage of Grace"—the name now bestowed upon the insurgents. Darcy had only a few months before seized upon the goods of St. Mary's Abbey at York and other religious houses for the king. He now declared his intention of winning back these properties, and of preventing further confiscation. The Pilgrims took possession of Pomfret without opposition, and marched upon York. The sacred banner of St. Cuthbert was born before them ; Darcy and Aske rode at their head. Each day brought large accessions to the ranks ; at every cross-road upon the line of march parties of horse and foot awaited their coming. The Abbot of Salley gave them his blessing (Henry had left him little else to give), and the banished monks of St. Mary's composed a rude song for them to sing by the wayside. These rhymes are still preserved.<sup>1</sup> They consist of sixteen stanzas of seven lines each, and their character may be judged from the first and last verses :—

*" Christ crucifyid,  
For thy woundes wyde  
Us Commons guyde,  
Which pilgrimes be ;  
Throughe Godes grace  
For to purchase  
Old welth and peax  
Of the Spiritualitie.*

*Crom, Cram and Riche,<sup>2</sup>  
With LLL<sup>3</sup> and y<sup>r</sup> liche,  
As some men teach,  
God them amend ;*

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<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*, 1536, 787.

<sup>2</sup> "Crom," "Cram," and "Riche," were Cromwell, Cranmer, and Richard Rich.

<sup>3</sup> The three "L's" were Leigh, Leyton, and the Bishop of London.

*And that Aske may,  
Without delaye,  
Here make a stay,  
And well to end."*

Scarcely Tyrtæan strains these ; but the Pilgrims of Grace needed not the stimulant of martial music. Towards the king they still professed nothing but fidelity ; but for "*the base-borne heretics around hys grace*" they entertained a lively hate.

Darcy having boldly joined the rising, the other Catholic nobles and gentlemen of the North took heart of grace. Percies, Nevills, Scropes, Latimers, Fairfaxes, Swinburnes, Danbies, Nortons, Tempests, Musgraves, Lumleys, Markynfields, and many others of ancient name, rode out, with their retainers behind them, to support the rebellious commons. In most cases they came of their own free will ; but occasionally a little coercion—real or pretended—was used to persuade them into rebellion. Sir Ingelgram Percy was one of the first to follow Aske. His brother, Sir Thomas, refrained from taking the oath for several weeks ; but on or about October 6, he too became a sworn Pilgrim, and was given the command of the insurgent vanguard.

The following is the deposition of Sir Thomas Percy himself, when examined by the Council in February 1537 :—

How Thomas Percy rebelled. " *Syr Thomas Percye Knight examined, saith as hereafter doth ensue.*

" *To the first article he saieth that being at my Lady's house, his mother's, in Yorkshire, he heard a noise going abroad, and can remember no person by name that he should hear it of else, that they were up in Lincolnshire ; but at the first neither he nor any other did believe the same. And within three dayes after he heard . . . of one Stringer, that brought a tegg from Wresill to my said Lady, his mother, that Aske had been at Wresill and Holden, and there stirred up all the Commons, and cryed out at the gates of Wresill, ' Thousands for a Percy ! ' Then within a daye or twain after, this Examine prepared*



himself to avoid and steal away from his said mother's house, to his owne house ; and took with him but a man or two and his boy, and because he would not be known he took one of his servant's coats on him, and led his mail horse himself, and being two or three miles in his way, he met with two men, whereof the one was called Percy,<sup>1</sup> a man with a red face, who asked this Examine whether he knew where Sir Thomas was. And this Examine answered him that he heard say he was at my Lady his mother's. Then said the said Percy to this Examine that the Commons were then assembled at Malton, and that they had laid watch in every town to take Sir Thomas Percy. And they said they would have him by noon, or else they would leave my Lady his mother never a penny or pennyworth of goods. Which this Examine hearing, returned bye and by to his said mother's house to Semer again. And then he shewed my Lady his mother that he was stopped so that he could not pass home, whereupon she wept and sore lamented. And about two of the clock at after noon came a greate many of the Commons, with three or four gentlemen that were Captains, whereof one was named Preston, of the other he knew not the names. And the gentlemen entered into the house bye and by, without any resistance, and inquired for this Examine, who came forth to them to the great Chamber, where Preston aforesaid declared unto him how that the Commons, in greate number, were assembled about a thing that should be for the weal of us all (said he). ' And there be with them my Lord Latimer, my Lord Nevill, Mr. Danby, Mr. Bowes and divers other gentlemen. And we are come to fetch you unto them and to swear you to take such part as we do.' And this Examine asked what oathe should that be. And the said Preston read unto him the same oathe ; which this Examine said he was content to take, and so was sworn.

" Then they appointed this Examine to be on the morrow with them at the Wolde beyond Spyttell. And so he did, with

<sup>1</sup> This "man with a red face" was William Percy of Ryton, a prominent insurgent.

The Percies of Ryton belonged to a distant branch of the family, probably descended from Walter Percy of Kildale, fourth son of William, sixth Baron de Percy. William Percy, *alias* Hay of Ryton, was Sheriff of York in 1376.

*a dozen or sixteen persons in his company, where there were within a while a three or four thousand men assembled. And from thence they went to Mr. Chamley's,<sup>1</sup> and on the morrow spoiled his house and his goodes because he was required to come to them and would not. . . . And going from thence toward York by Aske's and other gentlemen's commandment to besiege the same, received a counter mandment from the said Aske, saying that York was won, and commanding this Examine and his company to go toward Hull to helpe them that were besieging the same, whereupon they went thitherward. And as they were at Semer, that night about midnight, came word unto them that Hull was also won, and on the morrow they received a commandment from Aske to set forward toward Pomfret. And thither they came, where they perceived that the same was also won, before they came thither by Aske and his company. And on the morrow came thither my Lord Nevill and Mr. Bowes, with a three or four thousand men out of the Bishoprick.<sup>2</sup> And as soon as the Bishoprick was come, (my Lord Darcy being then at dinner in the Castle) Aske came in with the gentlemen of the Bishoprick with him, and brought them to my said Lord Darcy. Which as soon as he saw them rose from his dinner and gat him to a window. And there he and Robert Aske together called unto them my Lord Nevill, Mr. Bowes, Roger Lassels, Sr Robert Constable, Sir Ralph Ellerker the younger, Rudston, this examine and other more. And there my Lord Darcy first declared them that, forasmuch as he had heard say that my Lord of Norfolk, and my Lord of Shrewsbury were marching forward towards them, it was expedient, because Fery bridge was a straight passage, that they should send thither certain to watch the same that night and to keep it from the other party. And thought best that the Bishoprick should go thither and watch it. Then Mr. Bowes answered, that they of the Bishoprick were come thither but lately, and both they and their horses were weary, wherefore he desired that they might be excused for that night from going thither. Whereupon all they concluded to send this Examine and his company, Sir Ralph Ellerker, Sir William Constable, and the said Rud-*

<sup>1</sup> Cholmely.

<sup>2</sup> The Bishopric of Durham.

ston, with their companies, being in the whole about the number of four thousand men to Fery bridge aforesaid. And there they kept watch for that night. And on the morrow came all the rest of the host to them, save only my Lord Darcy and my Lord Archbishop of York, with their own retinue which were left in Pomfret Castle. And the same day they went from Fery Bridge to a little nunnery beyond Doncaster, besides Robin Hood's Cross, and there kept the field all that night. And on the morrow came about a thirty horsmen from Doncaster (by likelihood) to view their company, and took up two fellows that were straying abroad. Whercupon the whole host of the north side pursued after them, and rescued the said two persons. And as he saith the Lord Darcy and my Lord of York were left at Pomfret for their ease, because they should not lie forth that night as the other did, but they were appointed to be with the host on the morrow, and came other on the morrow, or the next day after, unto them to the field against Doncaster. And here began the treaty between both parties.

"Being examined what causes were alleged of the same insurrection saith, it was for maintaining of the rights of the church, for holding up of Abbeyes that should be suppressed, and for maintaining of old usages and customs as were used before time, and for the statute of uses for ingressum takings. Also there were communication among them, that there should be money paid for christening and for every plough and divers other things.

"And the chief ringleader was Aske, and he coulde not perceive but that all the other gentlemen were willing enough in that matter. And my Lord Darcy was also very earnest in the matter before other.

"And saith that every town found certain men, and the gentlemen went of their own costs.

"Also this deponent had of the Abbot of St. Mary Abbey 20 nobles upon this Examinat's request, saying that he lacked money to find his men. And saith that Sir Nicholas Fairfox and Sir Oswald Wolsethorpe caused afterward the Abbot to come forward with his Cross, before the Commons through the City of York, which as he saith went with a very ill will, this

*Examine thought that Sir Oswald had not been well pleased by the Abbot. And afterward this Examine bade the Abbot steal away from them, and so he did as soon as they were at the Town's end, leaving his Cross behind him. Also he saith that the Abbot of Whitby sent to this Examine, and at his request, saying that their going forth was for their cause, four or five marks and an ambling nag. Also he sent for a gelding to Watton Abbey and had it.*

*"And examined what comfort they had out of the South partes, saith that there was a bruit among the Commons that my Lord of Derby would take their part, but he heard that of no notable person, as he saith, that he can tell the name of.*

*"And examined how far they intended to have gone, and what the end of their purpose was, saith that they thought to have come toward London and to take up the countrey by the way, and afterward to have spoken with the King, and to sue for his grace, to have certain statutes revoked, and to have them punished that were the causes of the making thereof; which he heard in no council but by a common bruit that went abroad among the Commons.*

*"Also he saith that the Commons, both at York and also at Pomfret, called this Examine Lord Percy, and he, examined whether he had procured any of them so to do, saith no, but withstood them as much as he could therein, and prayed them that they would not call him so. And so lighted off his horse, and took off his cap and desired them that they would not so say, for he said that the same would turn him but to displeasure."<sup>1</sup>*

Further light is shed upon the doings of Sir Thomas Percy and his brother, Sir Ingelgram, by a document preserved in the Record Office, and entitled: "A Brief Remembrance of the Demeanour of Sir Thomas Percy Knight, in the County of Northumberland, in the time of the late Rebellion in 1536." The manuscript, which follows the affairs of both Percies from October 1536 to the final defeat of the second rising under Bigod, is arranged in a series of itemised charges, stating:—

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers, Henry VIII., Northern Rebellion, 1st series, 408-774.*

"(1) *First how the said Sir Thomas Percy behaved himself in Yorkshire, in setting forward as much as in him was the East Riding there, and with such number as he could make; how gorgeously he rode through the Kings Highness city of York, in compleat harness, with feathers trimmed, as well as he might deck himself at that time; which did shew well he did nothing constrained, but of a willing malicious stomach against his moste naturall and drede sovereign Lord; and what writings he made in his name under pain of death, as divers placardes, preceptes and other, signed with his hande; and made entry upon landes belonging to other the Kinges Highness true subjects, and how many acts he there did against the dutie of allegiance, the whole country there can bear witness. But in the county of Northumberland, after that, Sir Raif Ellerker and Robert Bowes was sent from the Commons at Doncaster to the Kinges Majesty, partly of his doings hereafter followeth.*

"(2) *The said Thomas immediately after the meetyng at Doncaster . . . with all speed to his house at Pridhowe; to whom at his first comyng resorted the most notable offenders both of Tyndale and Hexhamshire, that had done most harm to all the true inhabitants of the country; and with him was as familiar as they had been his owne household servaunts, and especiallie John Heron of Chypches<sup>1</sup> and his friendes, Edward Charlton, Cuddy Charlton, Geoffrey Robson, Anthony Errington, with such other; which was a greate encouragement to all malefactors and evill doers.*

"(3) *Item, notwithstanding the said Sir Thomas had neither authority by the Kinges Majesty; nor yet by my Lorde of Northumberland, his Highness's Warden of the East and Middle Marches, he toke upon him as Lieutenant of the Middle Marches, and all to th' intent that under the colour of that office he might move and stirr the Kinges people, and to muster them at his pleasure.*

"(4) *Item, immediately after his said comyng, he and his brother, Sir Ingram Percy, appointed a meeting at Rothebery,<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Chipchase Castle.

<sup>2</sup> Rothbury on the Coquet, twelve miles S.W. of Alnwick, and famous for its forest. Thomas Mangus, the Rector of the day, was a Roman Catholic.

*commanding all the gentlemen of the country to be there for the establishment of Tyndale and Riddesdale . . . which, supposed to the whole country to be true, and of a faithfull meaning, a great part of the inhabitants of Northumberland, as well gentlemen as other, resorted thither."*

The narrative then goes on to describe how Percy promised to aid the commons with 500 Northumbrian spears; how he spent a night with Heron of Chipchase; how he endeavoured without success to induce some of the Scots lords to treat with him as Lieutenant of the Middle Marches; and how he interfered with force to prevent the real Lieutenant, Lord Ogle, from holding a Warden Court.

Sir Ingelgram Percy was accused of having also joined the rebels, and of supporting his brother in many acts contrary to loyalty and law. It was also alleged against Sir Ingelgram that he had spoken despitefully of Cromwell while at York, "*wishing him, being of the Kinges most honourable Council, to be hanged as high and he might look unto; and if he were there present, as he wished to God he were, he would put his sworde in his belly.*" The brothers did not forget their old hatred of Sir Raynold Carnaby, whom they blamed for setting Northumberland against them; and one of their first acts was to harry Carnaby's lands. Sir Ingelgram audaciously named himself as Sheriff of Northumberland, and put Sir Humphrey Lysle—but a little while before an outlaw and a fugitive—in the position of Under-Sheriff. Having forced John Ogle of Ogle and others to contribute to the funds of the Pilgrimage of Grace, Sir Ingelgram publicly swore that "*no man shoulde rule there but his brother and he.*"<sup>1</sup>

Aske was not satisfied with crying "A thousand for a Percy!" at the gate of Wressill. He determined if possible to win over the Earl of Northumberland to the side of the Pilgrims. It was true that the Northumberland lay "racked with pains and sick unto death," so that there was no hope for his active participa-

The dying  
earl remains  
loyal.

<sup>1</sup> *A Brief Remembrance of the Demeanor of Sir Ingelgram Percy, &c.*

tion in the rising. But the very name of the chief of the Percies was a talisman of wondrous power throughout the North, and when he that bore it was also Lord Warden of the East and Middle Marches, the value of alliance with him seemed to the insurgent leader beyond all price.

In the narrative of William Stapleton,<sup>1</sup> we have a full account of how Aske and Sir Thomas Percy came to Wressill, with the intention of forcing Northumberland to take the Pilgrims' oath; and of how the earl, placing the obligations of his high office far above the personal sympathy which he felt for the Northern Catholics, withstood threats and fair words alike, and remained loyal at the risk of his life.

Stapleton, a tenant of the Lord Warden, and himself already sworn as a rebel, was summoned to Wressill Castle, "*where Aske was above with my Lord, moving him to be goode to his brother, and to make him his Lieutenant of the one March, and Sir Ingram of the other; which in no wise my Lord would grant that Sir Thomas should have any meddling under him; and for that night departed to the chamber where Sir Thomas and the said Aske lay together. And the said William, after their departure, sent to my Lord to know his pleasure, in that he was comen to see his Lordshipp; who sent up for the said William, where he saw the said Lord lying in his bed. And when he saw the said William, he fell in weeping, ever wishing himselfe out of the world; which the said William was sore to see. And for that night the said William departed to his lodgyng in the town at one Humphreyes; after which, the morrow, after mass and breakfast, Aske went to my Lord with his labours again, but my Lord was in the same mind that he was before. Then Aske moved my Lord if he would be contented with that he and the Lords would do; and what by the general importunacy of Aske . . . he did thereunto agree, but he would in no wise see the said Sir Thomas, wherewith the said William was halfe angrie with my Lord, seeing what danger he was in; for it was openly spoken of the*

<sup>1</sup> Deposition of Wm. Stapleton, gent.; Exchequer Miscellaneous Papers, A. 78. p. 167, Record Office.

field,<sup>1</sup> 'Strike off the head of the Earl, and make Sir Thomas Earl;' whereof the said William was sore afraid. Also Sir Thomas Hilton axed the said William where my Lord was staying; 'He is now crept into a corner, and dare not shew himself, he hath made a mennye of knaves, gentlemen,<sup>2</sup> to whom he hath disposed much of his livyng, and able now to do nought himselfe;' all which wordes, the said William opened to my Lord, desiring him to speake with Sir Thomas for fear of the worst. And at that and all other times, he was very earnest against the Commons (in) the Kinges behalf and my Lord Privy Seal's, which then was very dangerous. . . . And so Aske and Master Percy departed; Aske that nyght to Beverley . . . and Master Percy to Seymer, to my Lady his mother, the morning after towards Northumberlande as he said."

Still firmly refusing to cast in his lot with the insurgents, or to place the affairs of the Marches in the hands of either Thomas or Ingelgram Percy, Northumberland was made a prisoner in his own house. The garrison of Wressill, all but two or three faithful servitors, went over to Sir Thomas Hilton, whom Aske had left as custodian of the place. After a few days orders came for the removal of the earl, and he was placed upon a horse-litter and carried to Percy's Inn, his town house in York.

But in spite of the thoroughly loyal manner in which he had acted, his enemies at Court endeavoured by every means in their power to make him out a participator in the rising. That the wretched Countess of Northumberland and her sister Lady Dacre were at the bottom of these calumnies is practically certain. Lord Shrewsbury, from whom the charges directly emanated, was but a tool in the hands of his daughters.

Under pretence of reminding the earl that his wife's allowance was due, Shrewsbury sent a spy to Wressill to find out if possible that Northumberland had countenanced the rising, or, as it is expressed in a letter to the king, "to discover in what case the Erle of Northumberland and the

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.* the commons encamped outside Wressill.

<sup>2</sup> An allusion to Raynold Carnaby and his brothers.



*countrye there standyth.*"<sup>1</sup> The emissary was one John Moreton, Shrewsbury's chaplain; and not long after he returned to his master Northumberland was accused at Court of being in league with the rebels, of having surrendered Wressill Castle of his own free will, and of several other acts of treason, including the giving to Aske of an order for certain articles of Percy plate which had been pledged with the monks of Wressill Abbey.<sup>2</sup>

It was not long, however, before this bubble was pricked. Prior Harry Guyall of Wressill deposed that Northumberland had not authorised the taking of the plate in any way; but that Aske had demanded it from the monks "under threats of worse harm." Abundant evidence was also forthcoming to the effect that the earl had in no way favoured the rising, and that certain of the fanatical members of Aske's council were clamouring for his immediate execution.

About the middle of November Aske's army numbered 35,000 men. Sir Thomas Percy, as has been stated, commanded the vanguard of 6000 men, mostly veteran horsemen; and had hostilities begun at that time the brunt of the battle must have fallen to his share. But the Duke of Norfolk, well knowing that the insurgent army vastly outnumbered the king's levies and was quite as effectively armed and drilled, came to the conclusion that the only sure plan of dealing with the rising was by negotiation. He had the king's authority to parley with Aske, and to "*speake him fayre*"; but this was to be done solely for the purpose of gaining time, and without the slightest intention of keeping any promises which should be made. Henry expressly told his lieutenant to "*esteeme no promyse*"<sup>3</sup> made to the rebels, but, having if possible induced them to lay down their arms, to punish the ringleaders with as much severity as though they had been actually defeated and taken prisoners in open fight. It is strange that a man of Aske's intelligence did not

<sup>1</sup> *Shrewsbury to the king, dated from Wynfell, Nov. 12, 1536: State Papers, Northern Rebellion, 1st series.*

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers, Northern Rebellion, 1st series.*

<sup>3</sup> King to Norfolk: *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*

suspect some such treacherous design. Old Darcy, who had learned from experience how absolutely destitute of honour the king was capable of showing himself, could not be prevailed upon to listen to any of the sovereign's "fair speaking." When Norfolk sent Lancaster Herald to the insurgent camp with a royal proclamation, it was through Darcy's efforts that the emissary was refused a hearing. Eager to wreak vengeance on somebody for this slight, Henry had the unfortunate herald executed with the butcher's jest that "*they shoulde quarter him according to the lawes of Armes.*" Aske, however, finally succeeded in bringing the insurgent chiefs to his way of thinking; and commissioners were appointed by both sides to discuss terms of peace. Sir Thomas Percy, Sir Cuthbert Radcliff, and Sir John Widdrington represented the county of Northumberland at the meeting which followed. Norfolk, on behalf of the king, announced that all reasonable reforms demanded by the Pilgrims should have full and favourable consideration. He also invited Lord Darcy and Aske to proceed to Court, there to lay whatever grievances they had before the king and Council. Darcy positively refused to trust himself in Henry's clutches; but Aske was induced to go. He was well received, and dismissed with "promises of indulgent consideration." These promises led to the disbandment of the greater part of the army. Aske himself, with Percy and many others, returned to their homes. No sooner were they out of the way than royal troops were poured into the North. Every important town in Yorkshire was garrisoned anew; and Suffolk, with the title of High Commissioner, was placed in control.

A royal commission met at York in January, and, with absolute disregard of all the promises made by the Crown, proclaimed that, before any insurgent could obtain pardon, he must swear to respect all statutes then in existence. Such an oath would, of course, entirely nullify the labours of Aske and his adherents. The people felt that they had been shamefully tricked. Some of those who had not yet returned home were hastily mustered under Sir Francis

Bigod. They numbered in all but 500 men; and, from the first, their cause was hopeless. Bigod issued a proclamation accusing the king and his lieutenants of having duped the Northern Catholics, and calling upon the disbanded forces to rise in arms. At the same time he wrote "*to ye olde Lady of Northumberland, that she would send her son, Sir Thomas Percy, to come forwarde to be Captayne of the Commons in Yorkshire, in their going forwarde against the Duke of Norfolk.*"<sup>1</sup>

Long before Percy could take his place as leader of this second rising, it had been crushed by Suffolk. Nor can any evidence of value be found connecting Aske or Lord Darcy with Bigod's ill-advised attempt. Both of these gentlemen were, like Percy, at their homes; and, even had they so desired, could not have reached Bigod in time. George Lumley, in his Confession,<sup>2</sup> says that "*the country was ready to rise again, if Sir Thomas Percy would have sett forward, for they trusted him before any other man;*" but he adds that Percy took no part in any hostile movements—a fact which is corroborated by the evidence of Sir Thomas himself, and of his servants. But Bigod's proclamation sealed the fate of all those who had been associated with Aske. The king's letters betray a savage glee that so good an excuse had been given him for the wholesale extermination of the Catholic leaders. He was resolved that, guilty or not guilty, all should perish. When a rash jury ventured to throw out one of the indictments "*for lack of evidence,*" Henry wrote to Norfolk in angry terms demanding the names of the jurymen, so that he might bring them to a sense of what was expected from them, and thus "*beate out the mystery.*"<sup>3</sup> Eventually Bigod and George Lumley were found guilty of having risen in arms against the Crown; and Aske, Darcy, Sir Thomas Constable, Sir John Bulmer, Margaret Cheyne (Lady Bulmer), Stephen Hamerton, Ralph Bulmer, James Corke-rill, William Thriske, John Pykeringe of Lythe, and others

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers; Northern Rising.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers; Northern Rebellion.*

of having "*aided and abetted the said Francis Bigod and George Lumley in these before mentioned treasons.*"<sup>1</sup>

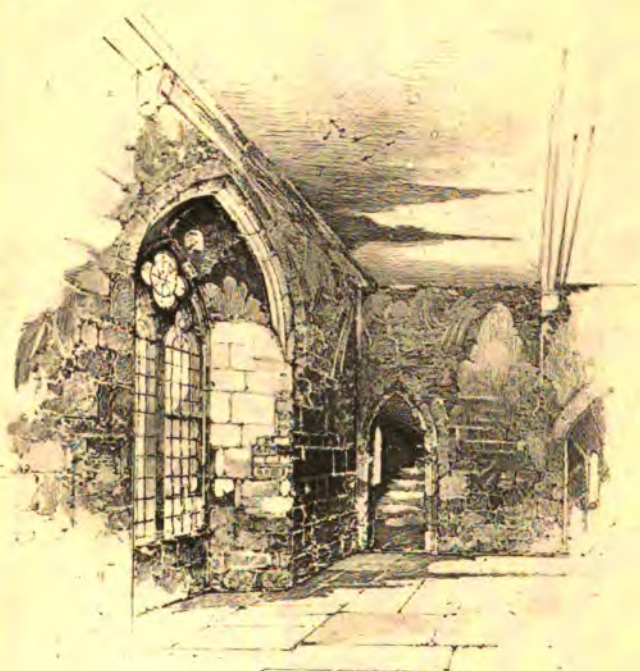
A special commission, sitting at Westminster, sentenced to death all the accused against whom true bills had been returned. The male prisoners were to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn, with the exceptions of Aske and Constable, who suffered at York and Hull respectively; while for the unfortunate Lady Bulmer—"a very fayre creature and a beautiful"<sup>2</sup>—was reserved the hideous doom of being carried in a cart to West Smithfield and there burnt alive.<sup>3</sup> But it was not only against the chiefs of the Pilgrimage that the king's vengeance was directed. The commons were punished with a fury worthy of the Orient. "*You shall cause such dredful execucion,*" wrote Henry to Norfolk, "*to be doone upon a good nombre of these habitants of every town, village and hamlett, that have offended in this rebellion, as well by the hanging of them uppon trees, as by the quartering of them, and the setting up of their heads and quarters in every town, great and small; which we requyre you to do without pity or respect.*" Norfolk obeyed his master to the letter. The miserable commons were put to death by hundreds, without any pretence of trial. Carcases of men and women dangled from every village tree or rotted in the public streets. The statutes against Romanism were carried out with greater harshness than ever; and for months the stake-fires of religious persecution crackled and blazed in all the northern cities.

The leaders of the rebellion went to their deaths with fortitude. Robert Aske was "*hanged in chains, at Yorke, till he died;*" and a like fate befell Sir Robert Constable before the principal gate of Hull. On "*the second daie of June, being Saturdaye after Trinitie Sundaie, Sir Thomas Percy Knight was drawn from the Tower of London to Tyburne, and there hangéd and beheaded; and Sir Francis Bigott Knight, George Lumley Esquire, sonne to the Lorde Lumley, the Abbot of Gervise, and the Frier of Bridlington were there hangéd and quartered . . . and their heades sett*

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> *Wriothesley's Chronicle.*

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers.*



SPERO FELI:  
INGORTI  
PERLU

Interior of the Beuchamp Tower and the  
Percy Inscription.

4.

17

on London Bridge, and other gates of London. Sir Thomas Percies bodie was buried at the Crossed Friers, beside the Tower of London."<sup>1</sup> Lady Bulmer died at the stake, "calling for Heaven's vengeance agaynst the Kinge, and all his seede;" and the rest of those sentenced to death suffered in due course. For some unknown reason, the life of Sir Ingelgram Percy, Northumberland's youngest brother, was spared. He was imprisoned in the Tower for some months, and then pardoned. On the wall of a cell in the Beauchamp Tower may still be seen a relic of his incarceration, in the following inscription:—

"SARO FIDELI.  
INGGRAM PERCY  
1537."

Sir Ingelgram retired to Yorkshire, where he made his will in 1538. From him James Percy of Dublin, called the "Trunkmaker," claimed descent on the extinction of the senior male line; but genealogists now agree that Sir Ingelgram left no legitimate offspring.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Thomas Percy and the other victims of the king's wrath were all attainted and their worldly goods confiscated to the Crown. The Earl of Northumberland had The sixth earl's death. wished to vest his lands in the Crown, with a view to their ultimate reversion to one of his nephews, the sons of Sir Thomas.

On January 22 he wrote both to the king and Cromwell, proposing that this course should be adopted. But the attainder of his brother took from the earl all power of regulating the succession. The children of the attainted man were now outlaws; and the Percy estates must pass, after the then holder's death, to the king's possession.

Northumberland took the best and most generous course under the circumstances. He had no quarrel with his

<sup>1</sup> Wriothesley's *Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> He had, however, a daughter Isabell, presumably illegitimate, who in 1544 married Henry Tempest of Broughton. An account of the claim of James Percy will be found on a later page.

brother's sons, and desired, if possible, to save some of the ancestral estates for their use. The one way by which this might be accomplished was to make over the property absolutely to the Crown, and to trust to the generosity of Henry or his successors, that, when the young Percies had atoned for their father's offences, they might receive back portion of the lost property. Northumberland journeyed by litter from York to his house at Hackney ;<sup>1</sup> and in a deed of gift, dated at the latter place very shortly before his death, formally presented all his estates to the king. This was probably done, as Bishop Percy observes in a note to Collins' Peerage, "by the wise forecast of some eminent lawyers, by whom he appears to have been directed, in order that the great family lands, being vested in the Crown, might be capable, at some future period, of being restored to his heirs, in which expectation he was not disappointed."

The only conditions which the earl attached to the gift were that his remaining debts might be paid, and that during the few weeks he had to live a small sum might be set apart for his maintenance. Not over much to ask for, surely ; yet the grasping king, although he accepted the gift of the estates, positively refused to pay even the interest on the giver's debts, "and left the poor earl to linger and die in penury."<sup>2</sup> On March 30, 1537, Northumberland wrote from Hackney to Cromwell, asking, if no allowance could be spared him from the estates which he had unselfishly given up for his nephews' sake, that at least some of the money still due from his salary as Warden of the Marches might be paid him by the Treasury.<sup>3</sup> Even this, his undoubted right, was denied to the dying man.

Richard Layton,<sup>4</sup> Rector of Harrow, visited Northum-

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland's residence at Hackney is described as "*a fayre house all of Brick, with a fayre Hall and Parlour, a large gallery, a proper Chapel and proper Library to lay books in.*" It subsequently passed to the Lords Brooke, and Earls of Warwick ; eventually becoming a lunatic asylum.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque, vol. i. p. 475.

<sup>3</sup> Cotton MSS., Vespasian, F. XIII. fol. 83.

<sup>4</sup> Layton afterwards acquired notoriety as a great suppressor of monasteries, and "monk-hunter."



berland on June 28, and found him almost penniless, and not long for this world. On the same day Layton wrote to Cromwell:—

*"Hit may please your Lordeshippe to be advertised that this Saint Peters day at iiii of the cloke at affternone, I went to se the Earle of Northumberlonde, beyng sent for five days paste, to have come unto hyme, and supposyng to have founde hyme syke, as I was wonte, I founde him languens in cxtremis, vara desirouse to have spoken to me, but hit wolde not be. His syght begon to faile, proffer he cowlde not one perfite worde, his stomake swollen so gret as I never see none, his face, brest, stomake, all his bodye as ycalowe as saffrone; his mumoric as yet goode and onderstendynge whatcver ys said unto hym, but speke he cannot. I told hym for his comfortte that ye sende me to see hym, and that ye wolde he shuldc take nothyng, and that your Lordeshipp wyllde hym to be of goode comfortte, and that ye wolde helpe to spede all his affayres with the King, nowe at your goyng to the Cowrte; and I comfortede hym before his servaunts in your Lordshippes name the beste I cowlde: but the trowthe is, I suppos, he cannot lyve xiij ourss. This iii wckes be hade no money but by borowyng, as his servauntes declarede to me. He hath made your Lordeshippe and the Bishope of Hereforthe his executors, and the King his supervisor. I rede his will whiche me seemeth is of small treasure.*

*"I thought hit to be my dewtye to advertyse your Lordeshippe of the premises, supposynge that he will be deade before this letter comes unto your handes.*

*"From London this Saint Peters day, at nyght, by your Lordshippes most bounden to commaunde.*

*"Richard Layton, Preste."*

Layton prophesied truly when he said that Northumberland could not live fourteen hours. Between two and three o'clock on the morning of June 29 the manifold sorrows of the Unhappy Earl were ended in death. An old tradition<sup>1</sup> tells that, some little time before he passed away, the bonds which had for days restrained his speech

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Bishop Percy.*

were broken, and he burst forth into a hymn in praise of the Creator. Only his confessor and two old servants were with him at the last; of his kindred and friends there were none to give him comfort.

Fearing a public scandal, Cromwell persuaded the king to advance out of the Northumberland estates sufficient money to defray the earl's funeral expenses. The body was laid in Hackney Parish Church, whither it was attended by friars of four orders, besides clerks and priests. Cromwell sent his nephew, Sir Richard Williams,<sup>1</sup> to represent him at the funeral; while the chief mourner was the Lord Butler.<sup>2</sup> No person of the name of Percy was present, nor did any of Lady Northumberland's relatives attend. The last rites were performed by the Bishop of St. Asaph and the Abbot of Stratford. A monument erected over the grave had already disappeared in 1767.<sup>3</sup>

Earl Henry had not long found rest beyond the tomb when his widow began to bestir herself in the matter of what she deemed her dower rights. As the king had now complete control of the Percy estates, he felt little inclination to let any of their revenues slip through his fingers. But the lady was persistent in her demands that the allowance made to her by her late husband might be continued. She was thirty-three years of age, and had some prospect of remarrying; but, as her father, one of the most parsimonious men of his time, showed no inclination to present her with a dowry, she desired to secure such provision for the future from the property of the attainted Percies. Shrewsbury, satisfied that he himself would not be expected to disburse any money, succeeded after great difficulty in obtaining for his

The king  
and the  
countess.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Williams subsequently took the name of Cromwell, acquired the estate of Hinchinbrooke, and was the direct ancestor of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell.

<sup>2</sup> Records of the Heralds' Office. This was Thomas, afterwards eleventh Earl of Ormonde.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Percy.

daughter an interview with the king. Henry heard her petition with unconcealed impatience, and finally answered : —“ *Madame, howe can your ladyshype desire any lyffing of your husbände's landes ; seying your father gaffe no money to your husbände in marriage with your ladyshype ?*” With this excuse she had to rest content for the time ; but powerful influences exercised in her behalf at Court secured for her in the end a not inconsiderable portion of confiscated abbey lands. It is characteristic of the woman, that, although professing the most devout Catholicity, she willingly accepted this gift, enjoyed it without scruple, and at her death bequeathed it to her heirs.

There was now no Earl of Northumberland. The young sons of Sir Thomas Percy, landless and nameless in the eyes of the law, were dependent upon the bounty of their father's friends. On October 11, 1551, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, was raised to the dignity of Duke of Northumberland ; but the title proved one of ill omen. Two years later Dudley was attainted and beheaded for his share in the attempted usurpation of Lady Jane Grey.

## IX

BY his wife Eleanor, daughter and heir of Sir Guiscard or Wygarde Harbotell<sup>1</sup> of Beamish, Sir Thomas Percy left two sons, Thomas and Henry. After their father's tragic death, and the confiscation of all his lands, these children were thrown on the charity of friends. To the honour of the Duke of Norfolk, it may be recorded that, although he had been foremost in suppressing the Pilgrimage of Grace and bringing its leaders to the scaffold, he honestly endeavoured to find an asylum for the lads, the elder of whom was barely in his eleventh year.<sup>2</sup> In the midst of the slaughter which followed the Catholic rising, Norfolk wrote to Cromwell :—  
*"As to Syr Thomas Percy's chyldren, I have entreated good Syr Thomas Tempest<sup>3</sup> to take them into his custodie, they being at this tyme in the Bushopricke<sup>4</sup> withyn twoo myles of his house, and have promised hym to have ther costes payed for."*<sup>5</sup>

Tempest consented to act as guardian of the landless heirs ; but when the funds for their maintenance began to fail, he made application to be relieved of the charge. No doubt he considered that their mother (who had succeeded in regaining some of the Harbotell lands), or

<sup>1</sup> Sir Guiscard Harbotell fell at Flodden Field, slain, it is said, by James IV. himself. His daughter, Lady Percy, remarried Sir Richard Holland of Denton, who died 1548.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Fr. Phillips, S. J., "*The Blessed Thomas Percy.*"

<sup>3</sup> Sir Thomas Tempest of Tong in Yorkshire, ancestor in the female line of Sir Robert (Ricketts) Tempest, Bart., of Tong Hall, by Bradford.

<sup>4</sup> They were protected by tenants of their mother's family.

<sup>5</sup> Norfolk to Cromwell, July 8, 1537; *State Papers*, Henry VIII., vol. v. p. 92.

her second husband, Sir Richard Holland, should assume the responsibility. Tunstall, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Durham, was Tempest's intercessor with the Secretary. "*Also Sir Thomas Tempest, at the commaundment of my Lorde of Norfolke, hath the sonnes of Sir Thomas Percy in his keepinge, at his house in the Byshoprick; which house is not stronge, but very weyke, and within 16 myle of Tyndal; no town betwyx nor nodyr obstacle than the ryver of Tyne when the water is rysen; for at low waters ther be 2 fordes that every man may passe, by whiche thevys mych do annoy our countrey. I know this to be trew by experience, for I have rydden the same way. He desyreth mych to be rydde of the custody of them, and demandyth of me licence to be absent for the keepinge off them; which resonably I cannot deny, and yet his presence wer veray necessary. Some odyr place more within the contre, were more mete than his hows, and the chyldren be yonge, and most be among women.*"<sup>1</sup>

As will be seen, the excuse advanced by Tempest for removing the lads from his Durham residence, was the possibility that they might be carried off by marauding Scots or by their father's friends in Tynedale or Redesdale. Permission was granted by Cromwell; and Thomas and Henry Percy passed the remainder of their boyhood at Denton in Yorkshire, or at their mother's manor of Beamish, near Chester-le-Street. In spite of the fact that they were legally nameless as well as landless, the Government permitted them to take part in the defence of the Border; and from very early years they rode side by side to muster and foray. Their characters were very dissimilar: Thomas, the elder, being genial and generous, but of no great capacity for affairs; while Henry, on the contrary, was reserved, harsh to his inferiors, and possessed of considerable talents and judgment. Both were gallant soldiers; but Thomas was by far the more popular of the two, with all classes of society.

So long as Henry VIII. lived, however, the courage and good service of the young Percies went unrewarded and

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, vol. v. p. 118.

unacknowledged. But immediately after the king's death Lord Protector Somerset and his Council "restored the sons of Sir Thomas Percy in blood"—that is to say, legitimatised them sufficiently to allow of their inheriting their mother's lands and the surname of their race. Another step towards the rehabilitation of the family fortunes was accomplished in 1549, when the elder brother received the honour of knighthood; and both Thomas and Henry were granted the right "to have and enjoy in survivorship all offices, fees and profits, and to inherit the annuity of 100 marks bequeathed to them by their uncle, the sixth earl." To this grant, however, was attached a proviso, specially excluding them from any right to their father's confiscated estates or to the Percy property vested in the Crown. Then came the accession of Warwick to power, and his strutting in borrowed plumage as "Duke of Northumberland"; during which time honours and preferment were withheld from the Percies. But the just reward of loyalty and patience came at last under Queen Mary. Henry Percy was knighted; and to Thomas was entrusted the important governorship of Prudhoe Castle. Stout old Thomas Carey, who had ruled the fortress under two sovereigns, refused to "*make waye for any Papist lordynge*"; whereupon, by order of Council, dated March 14, 1555, Mary commanded him to pay Percy £20 compensation and "*wholly to avoyde the said Castel at Whitsuntide*,"<sup>1</sup> It is pleasant to observe that Sir Thomas declined to take the £20; and that he and Carey became staunch friends in consequence.

Early in 1557 Sir Thomas Stafford, at the head of a mixed force of French and English Protestants, made a descent upon the Yorkshire coast and captured Scarborough Castle. The Percies lost no time in besieging the place, which they won back after two days. For this exploit, Mary, on April 30, 1557, created Sir Thomas Percy a peer, with the title of Baron Percy of Cockermouth;

**Earl Percy  
once more.**

<sup>1</sup> *Alnwick MSS.*, vol. i.

and, on the following day, still further ennobled him as Earl of Northumberland, "*in consideration of his descent, constancy, virtue, and valour in arms, and other strong qualifications.*"<sup>1</sup> Both earldom and barony were to revert, in case of failure of heirs male of Sir Thomas Percy's body, to his brother, Sir Henry. The earldom was *created anew*; so that, strictly speaking, Sir Thomas was the first earl of the second creation, and not the seventh earl of the creation of 1377.<sup>2</sup> The attainder of his father was, in fact, never removed; so that he cannot be said to have inherited any of the ancient baronies enjoyed by his ancestors. Yet, in subsequent reigns, eldest sons of his successors were summoned to Parliament in right of these baronies; a fact which, in the opinion of some authorities, had the effect of creating new baronies by writ.<sup>3</sup> The patent of the new earldom, richly illuminated, and bearing portraits of Philip and Mary, is still preserved at Syon House.

Simultaneously with his restoration to the rank of his ancestors, the seventh (or first) Earl of Northumberland was granted a large portion of the land which his uncle had given to the Crown. These estates were, like the titles, to descend in tail male, with remainder to Sir Henry Percy.<sup>4</sup> The utmost joy prevailed throughout the North when the news went forth that "the sons of Sir Thomas Percy were restored," and that the lion and lucas once more waved above the keep of Alnwick. Old Bishop Tunstall sang High Mass in Durham Cathedral; the bells were rung backward in church and minster; and the honest gentlemen, whose fathers had ridden in the Pilgrimage of Grace, flocked by hundreds to give greeting to the earl and his brother. As for the peasantry, their satisfaction knew no bounds. Oxen were roasted whole on every village green between Beverley and Berwick; and all the beacon hills blazed with bonfires. Northumberland's

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, xv. 461, 462.

<sup>2</sup> Nicol, *Synopsis of the Peerage*, and other authorities summarised in the new Peerage by G. E. C., vol. vi., p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> Nicol, *Synopsis of the Peerage*. . . . *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, ii. 59.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters Patent*, 4 & 5, Philip and Mary.

journeys from Beamish to Alnwick and the Border, and thence southward again to long-empty Topcliffe, were progresses more than royal in the enthusiasm which they provoked. And hardly had the excitement time to quiet down when it was aroused once more by the nomination of the earl to the post of "Marshal of the Field against the Scots,"<sup>1</sup> Lord Warden of the East and Middle Marches, and Governor of Redesdale, Tynedale, and Berwick,<sup>2</sup> on May 19, in the same year. A Percy Lord Warden once more! The very thought was enough to make the heart of every true north-countryman beat high.

Wherever the earl went he made friends of high and low, gentle and simple. This was an enviable faculty which remained his to the last. He was, says De Fonblanque, "affectionate and simple-minded, a warm friend, a jovial and hospitable neighbour, and a kind and generous master; devoted to field sports and martial exercises; and, although of an indolent and irresolute nature, and possessed of little intellectual power, yet by no means devoid of dignity, or of a due sense of the responsibility attaching to him as head of his house, and as a great Border chieftain; what faith would have been placed in the prophet who should have foretold that, within little more than twelve years, this kindly and genial nobleman would have lit the torch of civil war, and passed, through penury and exile, to an ignominious death on the scaffold?"<sup>3</sup>

Certainly none in the North dreamed that such a fate was in store for the Percy, when, at the outset of 1588, he brought home to Topcliffe his young and beautiful wife, Lady Anne Somerset, daughter of William, second Earl of Worcester. Honoured and trusted of his queen; loved by his people; untroubled, as was his predecessor, by ill-health or poverty; and married to perhaps the most charming Englishwoman of her day—such were the happy fortunes of the seventh Earl of Northumberland at the age of thirty-one.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, Queen to Northern Council, May 19, 1557.

<sup>2</sup> *Federa*, xv. 468, 472, and 475.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of the House of Percy*, vol. ii. p. 9.



The earl's first step was to set his Border defences upon a proper footing. This was all the easier, since men flocked to his standard who had sulked in the ingles, or lurked in moor and moss, through the twenty years which followed the Pilgrimage of Grace. His frontier garrisons soon numbered 1150 men, distributed in bands of 100 and 50, all well armed and excellent horsemen. Of these, 450 were "spoiled inhabitants," that is to say, Northumbrians who had been made homeless by Scots raiders, or the still more cruel foe, religious persecution. The rest were retainers of his own or of other great Border houses. There was hardly one of them whose father or some of his kin had not been implicated in the Catholic rising of 1536-37. "Some," he informs the queen, "*are brought to Glendale at moonlyght, but at other tymes lie where in the dark there is as much danger and more plenty of food.*"<sup>1</sup> The pay ranged from 6d. to 12d. a day—equivalent to from three shillings to six shillings of our money; but out of this the marchmen were obliged to keep and equip themselves and their horses. The earl urged the queen to increase the forces at his command; and, so persistent was he to this end, that in January 1558 he was permitted to raise another thousand men to keep the eastern coasts against combined attacks of the French and Scots. During the following April, he writes:—"Last Thursday I devised with my brother to burn a town in the Merse, called Langton, because it was a place of harbour for their chief officer, and there was much corn there. . . . We crossed over with 1000 foot and 100 horse at Norham, burnt the town and a large quantity of corn, and divers villages thereabout, and took a great booty of cattle. . . . Lord Hume and all the company so straightly followed, that my brother, after he had drawn the horse in order, was compelled to light on foot, and after a long encounter the victory was on your side; 100 Scots killed, 400 prisoners; English losses not above six, and as many taken."<sup>2</sup> Dunse was also burnt and plundered during this

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland to Queen and Privy Council, Dec. 21, 1557; *State Papers*, Philip and Mary.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*.

A wight  
Lord  
Warden.

expedition, in which Sir Henry Percy and Sir George Bowes, the Marshal of Berwick, took part. Hume's men fell upon the retreating English from the direction of Kelso, with 2000 horse and three bands of foot. The encounter took place at Swinton. It was a foggy morning; and when the Scots foot charged, the English were taken by surprise, and fell back. The English horse, however, turned the scale by routing Hume's mounted Borderers; whereupon Sir Henry Lee restored order to his retreating infantry, and the Scots were completely overpowered, after a stubborn contest lasting long into the afternoon. Many Scots and French prisoners of note were taken, among them Lord Keith, son of the Earl Marischal, and "*the foot-captains, Cullen and Kennedy.*"<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Percy, Sir William Brereton, and Captains Thomas Markham and Ralph Ellerker displayed signal bravery on the English side. A curious feature of this engagement was that, in consequence of the damp weather, the powder became useless, and the fighting was almost entirely hand to hand.<sup>2</sup>

A project of the Scots Queen Mother for the capture of Norham and Wark castles was defeated by the vigilance and prompt action of the Lord Warden in August 1558. With only a day's notice of the enemy's approach, he succeeded in mustering a formidable army at Lowick. The Queen Mother's troops, by dint of forced marches, reached the woods beyond Wark about sunset on August 2, deeming their presence wholly unknown to the English. What was their surprise and mortification when they perceived the banners of the Warden, the Earl of Westmoreland, and the Lord Talbot floating defiantly between them and the fortress! They retreated swiftly, without attempting an engagement. Northumberland, however, did not propose to let them escape so easily, and so sent his brother, Sir Henry, with Sir John Forster and the men of the Middle Marches in pursuit. Percy and Forster were met at a point near Cheviot, almost on the border-line, by a large force of Teviotdale troopers under Sir Andrew Ker,

<sup>1</sup> Of Culzean.

<sup>2</sup> Ridpath.

son of Sir Walter Ker of Cessford. The sides were fairly matched, and the fight was one long remembered on the frontier. Ker succeeded in driving the English back, until some rising ground gave Percy and Forster the advantage. Three times the Scots swept up the slope, and three times were they beaten back with slaughter. Then Sir Henry Percy, at the head of his men, charged in turn, and drove the enemy into a morass, where, raked by a heavy fire, they were forced to surrender. Ker and other gentlemen were captured; and the English made their way to Berwick, burning several villages upon the way.<sup>1</sup>

About this time there occurred a serious dispute between Sir Henry Percy on the one part and the Earl of Westmoreland and Lord Eure (Governor of Berwick) on the other. Northumberland sided with his brother; and it seemed likely that the old feud of Nevill and Percy was to be revived. The queen, however, exercised her influence, and ordered the Bishop of Ely and the Master of the Rolls "*to examine the causes of the division . . . and if possible appease the same, or we must seek other means of address.*"<sup>2</sup> So far as Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Eure were concerned, peace was quickly restored; indeed, the two earls became friends from that date, and in later times we shall see them linked together in misfortune. But Sir Henry Percy proved implacable. With Westmoreland or Eure he would have nought to do; and, rejecting his brother's solicitations and the queen's commands, took himself off in high dudgeon to his mother's house at Beamish. Indeed, he never forgave Westmoreland; and this quarrel afterwards greatly influenced his behaviour during the Northern Rising.

The early portion of Northumberland's Wardenship was brought to an agreeable conclusion on the last day of May 1559, when a treaty of peace between Scotland and England was signed "in the Church of St. Mary" at Upsetlington.<sup>3</sup> The Scots Commissioners on this occasion

<sup>1</sup> Ridpath.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*, Philip and Mary.

<sup>3</sup> Probably the so-called "Kirk of Ladykirk" built by James IV. in the parish of Upsetlington, across the Tweed from Norham.

were James Earl of Morton, Lord Dalkeith, Lord Home, Henry Sinclair, Dean of Glasgow, and James Macgill of Nether Rankeillour, clerk to the Privy Council; while for England acted the Earl of Northumberland, Cuthbert, Bishop of Durham, William Lord Dacre and Greystock (Warden of the Western Marches), and Sir James Crofts, Warden of Berwick Castle.<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Percy had been named one of the Commissioners, but had refused to serve, being still at odds with his brother on account of the latter's alliance with Westmoreland.

The death of Mary and accession of Elizabeth wrought a great change in the North Country. All Catholics were now under suspicion, as they had been in the days of Henry and Edward. It is true that the new queen was at first favourably disposed towards the name of Percy, which had been associated so tenderly, and yet so painfully, with that of her mother, Anne Boleyn. But Mr. Secretary Cecil had for the Lord Warden and all his kin only distrust and bigoted hatred. There is something in noble name and long descent peculiarly irritating to the politician of obscure birth, who has wormed his way into power. As it had been with Wolsey and Cromwell, so was it now with Cecil. To harass and humiliate the great northern earl gave a malevolent pleasure to this son of Saxon peasants. Like Wolsey, Cecil worked by means of spies. He had spies of every rank and class, from the well-born who filled their purses by serving him, down to such creatures as the woman, known as "Madame,"<sup>2</sup> who traded her wretched body to buy secrets for his ear. To the North he sent several agents, chief of whom was Sir Ralph Sadler,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ridpath.

<sup>2</sup> The life-story of this unfortunate woman was an extraordinary one. It was she who was sent to spy upon O'More, Prince of Leix, after his capture of "Black Thomas," tenth Earl of Ormonde.

<sup>3</sup> It may interest the reader to learn that the notorious John Sadleir, M.P., who terminated a career of fraud by committing suicide on Hampstead Heath some fifty years ago, was a direct descendant of Cecil's Puritan spy. See Burke's *Landed Gentry*.

an austere and bigoted Puritan. This individual was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and given a place on the Commission for the defence of the Border, of which the Lord Warden was President. Sadler had secret instructions from his master to watch Northumberland closely,<sup>1</sup> and to report the slightest fault of omission or commission of which the earl might be guilty. He knew little or nothing of Border ways or Border warfare, yet he was hardly settled in his new position than he began to criticise the Percies and their friends. We have seen how, owing to the dispute with Westmoreland and its results, Sir Henry Percy had retired for a time from active service. This fact was seized upon by Sadler as an excellent opportunity for disparaging a man who, whatever might be his shortcomings, had again and again proved himself a most skilful and energetic leader.

*"As for Sir Henry Percy,"*—thus Sadler, in a letter dated August 29, 1559,—*"I saw him not yet, for he hath not ben nere the frontiers synse I came hyther, nor a good whyle before; nor do I judge him a man of such integryte as in any wyse may be comparable to Sir James Croft."*<sup>2</sup> *And the Earl, his brother, is, I assure you a very unmete man, for the charge which is comytted unto him here."*<sup>3</sup>

Again, on September 19, he offers his opinion that Lord Dacre *"woulde be very loth that the protestants in Scotland, yea or in England, should prosper, if he might let it. And even of the same sorte is your Warden of the Est and Middell Marches."*<sup>4</sup>

Acting on his instructions, Sadler proceeded to thwart and irritate Northumberland in a thousand ways. No clearer proof can be found of the absolute unfairness with which the earl was treated than the agent's own letters to Cecil, as preserved in the Sadler State Papers and elsewhere. Two sets of reports

Northumberland resigns in disgust.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Sadler State Papers*, vol. i. p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> This gentleman had reverted to the Protestant faith.

<sup>3</sup> *Sadler State Papers*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

were regularly sent from the North. One contained statements signed by the Warden and his Council; the other consisted of Sadler's secret letters. The former rarely reached the queen in their entirety, being mutilated or suppressed to suit Cecil's views; but the latter, which, needless to say, were bitterly hostile to the Northern Catholics, were carried to Elizabeth immediately on their arrival. For months Northumberland remained ignorant of this nefarious course of statecraft. When, at last, it was made clear to him that he was being duped, and that his every action was misrepresented at Court, he wrote to the queen, pointing out that he could not govern the North under such conditions.<sup>1</sup> This protest silenced Sadler for a time; but before long Elizabeth's ears were again poisoned by every species of falsehood and insidious half-truth calculated to injure the earl in her estimation. The very right of appointing his lieutenants, which had belonged to the Lord Warden from earliest times, was now assailed and overridden for the purpose of lessening Northumberland's influence, and, if possible, of goading the hot Percy blood into rebellion. Sir Thomas Clavering,<sup>2</sup> a brave soldier, but, unfortunately for himself, a Catholic, had been appointed by the earl to the Deputy-Governorship of Norham Castle. Sadler now denounced him as "*a Scots spy*," and Elizabeth was informed that he had betrayed an important secret to Queen Mary. The "important secret" was to the effect that the Earl of Arran, while coquetting with the English Puritans, had been entertained at Berwick.<sup>3</sup> No proof whatever was produced of Clavering's alleged disloyalty, beyond the facts that he did not belong to the dominant religion and that he was a nominee of Northumberland. Cecil made a personal appeal to the queen for his removal, and he was accordingly ordered to deliver the keys of Norham, neither to the honorary governor of the fortress nor to the Warden,

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> Ancestor of the Claverings, Baronets, of Axwell Park, Co. Durham. The Governor of Norham was Sir Henry Percy.

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers.*

but—to Sir Ralph Sadler! Before Northumberland could protest against this unheard-of interference with his prerogative, another case of even more wanton persecution completely exhausted his patience.

Francis Slingsby of Scriven,<sup>1</sup> Keeper and Bailiff of Tynedale, had been granted by the queen the use of a house at Hexham in order that he might be able to carry out the duties of his office with greater convenience. The favour—a slight one, seeing that the house had long been unoccupied, and that Slingsby's presence in the district would conduce to the preservation of peace—was obtained through Northumberland's representations. This was enough for Cecil, who laboured night and day until he prevailed upon Elizabeth to withdraw her consent, and Slingsby was ordered to purchase a mansion in Tynedale for himself if he needed one.<sup>2</sup> The house at Hexham remained empty, as before; and Slingsby resigned his keepership.<sup>3</sup>

Insults like these could no longer be borne. In 1560 Northumberland demanded permission to resign the Lord Wardenship. Sadler was eager to succeed him; but Cecil did not dare to place such a person at the head of northern affairs, and—to the spy's keen disappointment—the coveted dignity was bestowed upon Lord Grey of Wilton. Then followed an episode in which Cecil's cynical insolence overreached itself. The secretary, knowing that Grey had no residence in Northumberland, instructed him to take up his abode at Alwick Castle; which, of course, was not a Crown possession, but the private property of Northumberland. Accordingly the new Lord Warden proceeded thither. But the rightful owner (by no means forgetful of how his brother-in-law, Slingsby, had been treated in the matter of the queen's house at Hexham) was determined that Alwick should not be turned into the official stronghold of her Majesty's lieutenants. Grey found on his arrival that the earl had "*carried away the most parte of the stuffe there, and*

<sup>1</sup> Slingsby had married Mary Percy, one of the earl's sisters. The family still survives at Scriven in the female line.

<sup>2</sup> *Sadler State Papers.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

*broken up the brewing vessels, and other necessary implements of the householde,"*<sup>1</sup> thus rendering the castle useless as a dwelling. He urged that he could not remain in the county "without a suitable house." Northumberland was requested to restore the furniture taken from Alwick, but this he declined to do. The place, he explained, had long stood in need of extensive repairs, and while these were being carried out he could not "*lende his castell to my Lorde Warden or anyone else.*"<sup>2</sup> The repairs took a suspiciously long time, for in 1562, when it was proposed that Mary Queen of Scots should visit Elizabeth at York, the earl wrote to Cecil that he could not receive either sovereign at Alwick, as the castle was "*utterlie unfurnished, and not so much as one bed, or any part of household stuff.*"<sup>3</sup> Lord Grey was forced to make shift as best he could with Sadler, Sir George Bowes, and other friends of the secretary.

Having resigned the Wardenship, Northumberland devoted himself for several years to hunting and kindred amusements, making his home for the most part at Petworth. But his heart was true to the North Country; and even among the Sussex downs he contrived to keep himself well informed of all that passed upon the Border-side. Indeed, although absent, he continued to wield an extraordinary influence in the country of his birth, and private disputes and grievances were frequently submitted to his arbitration by marchmen who would not trust his successor to do them justice. His brother, Sir Henry Percy, who had added largely to his estates and dignity by a judicious marriage with the only daughter and heir of Lord Latimer,<sup>4</sup> remained in the North, and served valiantly under Lord Grey.<sup>5</sup> During the early months of

Trouble  
brewing in  
the North.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, February 6, 1560.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*, February 8, 1560.

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>4</sup> Katherine, eldest daughter and heir of John Nevil, Lord Latimer, brought the barony of that name into the Percy family. This lady's mother was a sister of the Countess of Northumberland, so that the latter was both aunt and sister-in-law of Sir Henry Percy's wife.

<sup>5</sup> Ridpath.



1563 Northumberland entertained Elizabeth at Petworth; and in spite of his avowed Catholic sympathies, and the strenuous opposition of Cecil, the queen made him a Knight of the Garter on May 23 in the same year.<sup>1</sup>

The Puritan party freely asserted (and probably believed) that the earl's withdrawal from public life was but a pretence to hide deep designs against the peace of the kingdom. There were rumours that he corresponded with the discontented Northern Catholics, with Mary Queen of Scots, and even with the Pope and the King of Spain. Cecil's agents in Yorkshire and upon the Border were extremely anxious that the chief of the house of Percy should remain as much as possible on his southern estates. They feared the effects which his presence might produce among the northerners, irritated as the latter were by religious restraints and unsympathetic rulers. In 1565 Throgmorton wrote to Leicester:—"Let the Earl of Northumberland be stayed in London; from all I hear it is very necessary: the papists in these parts" (Northumberland) "do stirr themselves. Look to yourselves and to Her Majestie's safetie. . . . Sir Henry Percy also is dangerous."<sup>2</sup>

A month later the Archbishop of York, in sending to the queen a list of the principal lords and gentlemen of his diocese, mentions Northumberland as the chief personage of Richmondshire. While he admits that the earl was "too much given to pastime, and would be better fitted at Court," he adds that, "his Lordshipp is an open friend of Lady Lenox," and "gives the upper hand to Lord Darnley at table."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, according to the archbishop, Northumberland was "an obstinate Catholic."

In the spring of 1568 Mary Queen of Scots fled from Scotland, with the intention of trusting herself to the "generous hospitality" of her sister sovereign. She was met at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, by Richard Lowther,

<sup>1</sup> Alistis, *History of the Garter*.

<sup>2</sup> Throgmorton to the Earl of Leicester, May 1565; *State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop of York to the Queen and Council; *State Papers*.

Deputy-Warden of the Western Marches, who conveyed her to Carlisle. The news of the queen's arrival was carried to Northumberland by some of his Cockermouth tenants; but it is very probable that he had been for some time forewarned of her intentions. In company with the great body of English Catholics, he regarded Mary as heir-presumptive to the throne; and no sooner had he heard of her landing than he became anxious that the privilege should fall to his share of entertaining her at one or other of his seats. The vague tales of a love-affair between the lovely and unfortunate queen and the earl must be dismissed by all who examine into the facts without prejudice. Lady Northumberland was as eager as her husband to welcome Mary to England; which could hardly have been were there any foundation for the morbid stories of the earl's supposed passion for the Scots monarch. The first (and last) time that the two saw each other, indeed, was at Carlisle, in the presence of the Deputy-Warden and a page, and this interview lasted but a little while. John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, deposed (when at the Tower in 1571) that, shortly after her landing in England, Mary had told him that "*she had mony good friendis in the countrey, that did favour her and stick to her, such as th'erle of Northumberland and his Lady, be whom she had mony intelligences and messages.*"<sup>1</sup>

From Topcliffe the earl despatched a letter to Elizabeth, describing what had occurred. He goes on to say, that "*for her enterteignment and saftye I have sent to myne officers and frendes there diligently to attend upon the same untyl your highness good pleasure be understood in that behalf.*"<sup>2</sup> Under the same date he writes to Cecil urging that "*seeing she hath happened unto my handes, I trust you, and other my dear frendes there will be meyne that my credit be not so much impaired in the face of the country as she should be taken from me and delyvered to any other person in these partes.*"<sup>3</sup>

Without waiting to hear from London, he then obtained

<sup>1</sup> *Burghley State Papers* (Murdin), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

a so-called "order in the queen's name" signed by several members of the Northern Council, sitting at York; and, armed with this document, hastened at the head of a large escort to Carlisle, fully expecting that Lowther would deliver up Mary to his care. But the Deputy-Warden of the Western Marches was a cautious man, and, being of the Protestant persuasion, probably doubted Northumberland's intentions. He refused to accept the earl's warrant "*in nomine reginae*" as authentic, and positively refused to give up the Scots queen without a direct command from Elizabeth or her secretary.

Such a rebuff enraged Northumberland to the utmost degree. He stormed at Lowther as Hotspur might have done, and expressed his amazement that a mere country gentleman should presume to play gaoler to a queen.<sup>1</sup> But notwithstanding his furious words and undisguised contempt, he failed to move Lowther, who would only allow him to visit Mary accompanied by one page, as though he meditated carrying her off.

Lowther thus describes the attack made upon him; — "*The Earl used some rough wordes towards me, adding too that I was too mean a man to have such a charge, and that he marvelled how I dared take it in hand. Afterwards he sent for me to his lodgging, and growing into some heate and anger, gave me great threatening, with many evil wordes, and a like language, calling me a varlet, and such others, as I had neither deserved at his handes, neither at any mans, for the servyce of the Prynce.*"<sup>2</sup>

Sir Francis Knollys, sent in haste by Elizabeth with instructions in regard to the Queen of Scots, was met near Boroughbridge by Northumberland, Sir Nicholas Fairfax, Sir William Fairfax, Mr. Hungate, and Mr. Vavasor, "*being all unsound in religion.*"<sup>3</sup> The earl, according to Knollys, complained of Lowther's refusal to hand Mary over to his

<sup>1</sup> Although the earl spoke slightly of Lowther's blood, the latter sprang from a family of considerable distinction. His ancestor, Sir Hugh de Lowther had been Governor of Carlisle under Edward III.

<sup>2</sup> Lowther to Scroope; *State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> Knollys to Cecil, May 27, 1568; *State Papers*.

care in obedience to the order of Council. Knollys replied that "*although the Council of Yorke had forgotten themselves, inasmuch to appointe the assistance of the shier to any other than to the Deputye Warden, or to allow of the repair of your lordship*" (Northumberland) "*to the Queen of Scots, before her Highness special pleasure knowne in that behalfe; yet, nevertheless, Mr. Gargrave<sup>1</sup> utterlie denied this giving of authoriye to your lordship to interrupt the Warden in any part of his chardge, and he saith further, your lordship maid your reparaire firste, and had their allowance and letter of assistance sent after you; because they understoode by your letters that the Queen of Scots was arrived at a house of yours being an inconvenient place for her safety if her enemies should pursue her.*"<sup>2</sup>

Northumberland continued his complaints against Lowther, whom he accused of insolence both to the queen and to himself. A particular grievance was that he had not been allowed to pay his respects to Mary attended as became a person of his rank. Lowther, he stated, had refused him all access to the prisoner's<sup>3</sup> apartments, until he agreed to go thither accompanied only by a single foot-page, "*as thoughte he had been a suspect person.*"<sup>4</sup> But he obtained no satisfaction from the Court. Knollys defended the "*prudent conduct*" of Lowther in warm terms, and "*informed his lordship that he (Northumberland) had overshott himself very much, to the discontentment of her Highness.*"<sup>5</sup>

Cecil had never forgotten his old hatred of Northumberland, nor allowed a chance to slip by which he could

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gargrave, Sheriff of York.

<sup>2</sup> Knollys to Cecil. It was true that Mary had landed on one of Northumberland's manors, near Cockermouth.

<sup>3</sup> Mary was to all intents and purposes a prisoner from the time she fell into Lowther's hands.

<sup>4</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Lowther acquired some temporary favour at Court by his sturdy conduct; but he afterwards fell into disgrace during the plot to marry Mary to the Duke of Norfolk.

injure the earl without hurting himself. Such a chance appeared about the time of Queen Mary's flight to England. A rich copper deposit was discovered near Newland in Cumberland on the Percy estates. The earl had already begun to mine and sell the ore, when Cecil, hearing through his agents of what was going on, urged the queen to claim the mineral rights by plea of royal prerogative. Elizabeth readily swallowed the bait offered her by Cecil; and Commissioners were sent down to Cumberland to investigate her claim—or rather to go through the form of doing so. The Commissioners unhesitatingly declared the mine to be Crown property; but, unable to quite stifle all sense of fairness, they pleaded that the earl should be allowed some indemnity, such as an exchange of lands, or a sum of money, by way of partial atonement for the loss of his property.<sup>1</sup>

Cecil, however, set his face resolutely against giving Northumberland any *quid pro quo* whatsoever; indeed, he urged the queen to claim restitution of the ore already dug up and disposed of. And as avarice was one of Elizabeth's pet, inherited vices, she readily consented to this act of robbery. Northumberland was commanded to vacate the mine unconditionally, and to pay a heavy fine for the copper which he had drawn thence before the Crown put forward its claims.<sup>2</sup> This, and similar acts of gross injustice, serve to show that Cecil—not satisfied with having driven the chief of the Northern Catholics into private life—had now adopted the policy of goading him to the point of armed resistance. A rebellion of Queen Mary's friends upon the Border would afford the Puritans an admirable excuse for ridding themselves of what they considered a menace to their power.

<sup>1</sup> Newburn to the Privy Council, May 1567.

<sup>2</sup> The order bears date, October 1567. A similar piece of robbery was committed by Strafford during his term as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the matter of the Kilkenny iron and coal mines.

With such an end in view, the Earl of Sussex,<sup>1</sup> an active Protestant, was made President of the Northern Council. At first Sussex enacted the rôle of conciliator, visiting the principal Catholics at their houses, and entertaining them in turn at his own. Hunting and hawking parties were of daily occurrence; and Northumberland, who was no bigot, and loved venerie dearly, gladly welcomed to his forests so keen a sportsman as the new president. In April 1569 Sussex informs Cecil that he has been a guest at Topcliffe "*with other good fellows.*"<sup>2</sup> No doubt while the "good fellows" were talking rather freely of their grievances, as country gentlemen will, the courtier kept his ears open for anything which might be construed into a hint of treason. In September Lord Dacre held a hunting; and on the 15th of the same month Sussex entertained the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, Lord Talbot, the wives of these noblemen, and "*all the principall gentlemen and their wyfes of this countrie,*" in Cawood.<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to understand how such zealous followers of the chase found time to plot; yet on October 30 Sussex sends word of a great Catholic conspiracy headed by Northumberland and Westmoreland, with whom were leagued the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Arundel, Lord Talbot, and many others. Their objects, he declares, were the recognition of the Catholic faith, and the liberation of Mary Queen of Scots. The president concludes by strongly advising Elizabeth to invite Northumberland and Westmoreland to Court,<sup>4</sup> from whence they might be quietly and judiciously conveyed to safe keeping in the Tower. If no conspiracy existed (and it is highly probable that, beyond natural sympathy with the imprisoned heir to the throne and a dislike for the treatment meted out to their co-religionists, the two earls had up to this time behaved with absolute loyalty), a summons of this kind would almost certainly help to precipitate one. Too many had been

The supposed Catholic plot.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Ratcliffe, second Earl of Sussex.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*; Sussex to Cecil.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Sussex to Elizabeth, *State Papers.*

cajoled to London, and then sent to cool their heels in prison, for Northumberland and Westmoreland to miss the significance of the royal summons. The case of the Scots queen was alone sufficient to make them hesitate before trusting their lives and persons to Elizabeth's care. Norfolk, too, had just been arrested and clapt into the Tower. It is hardly surprising that, whether guilty of conspiracy or not, Northumberland and Westmoreland should seek to keep out of such treacherous hands. Accordingly, when Sussex forwarded the queen's bidding to the earls he received at first only evasive replies. Northumberland went a-hunting among his boyhood's haunts by the Tyne, while his wife replied in her absent lord's behalf to the messenger:—"My lady excuses her husband's feere upon intelligence from London, or the Cort, and she assureth, upon her lyfe, her lord will never seke to stirre the peple on to show any rebellion; and in the ende she sente me worde that he would goo to your Majesty, but he wolde firste write to your Majesty. What answer my Lord of Westmoreland will make, I knowe not; but suerly seeing the daily delayes and excuses, I doubt moche they be led by ill counsel, and therefore I dare not put your Majesty in hope that they mean to come; but by all likelihood they will in the ende either stirre open rebellion, if they may (which I trust they will not be able to do in Yorkshire), or retire themselves to some strengthes" (fortress), "or seke to flee; and therefore the sooner your plesure is knowen what should be done in every of them, seeing the matter is now openlie discovered, the speedier execution it shall have, and, I trust, a shorter end."<sup>1</sup>

Presently Northumberland returned from his hunting-trip, in the course of which it was the opinion of Sir George Bowes that he had "*seene more game than staggs*," i.e. that he had been consulting with some of his old friends as to the course to be pursued. Sussex sent to Topcliffe to meet him, and reiterated the queen's summons to Court. The reply was a vague promise to visit her Majesty at some

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*; Sussex to the queen, November 12, 1569.

future time. Westmoreland, about the same date, sent a positive refusal—acting at the instigation of his wife,<sup>1</sup> who was then as vigorous in stirring up the Catholics to rebellion as, in the hour of defeat, in striving against and betraying them.

Thus reports the President:—“*Northumberland promiseth to come, but he wryteth not when; the Erle of Westmoreland refuseth to come for fear of his enemyes, except he should come in grete force, which would be cause of offence, and therefore I intende to write the Quen's commaundments to them for their repayre to Her Majesty presentlie. My Lady Northumberland sayeth there will be no troubell; but I wyll no more trust any wordes, therefore I pray you give me good spyalls, for within six dayes, we will see the sequel of these matters.*”<sup>2</sup>

Such calm defiance of her wishes enraged Elizabeth, and rendered her more than ever desirous of securing the earls. Against Northumberland she was especially bitter, because of his friendship for her hated heir, the Scots queen. She despatched a hasty letter ordering Sussex to call the earls to Court on peril of her vengeance, and concluding:—“*We are the rather moved not to be without some hope of a better consideration in them, when they shall perceave that your sending for them is upon our commandment to come to us.*”<sup>3</sup>

In obedience to the royal wish, Sussex once more wrote to each of the earls:—“*The Queen has sent for you on your allegiance; if you come your friends will stand by you, and you need feer no enemies. If you have slipped, your friends will be suitors for you to the Queen, who never shows herself extreme, and has always borne you affection. If you refuse, you make enemies of your friends and seal the subversion of your house. Perform your duty, and do not take council of the wicked, who*

<sup>1</sup> Lady Westmoreland was a sister of the Duke of Norfolk, who had been arrested on September 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorials*, November 9, 1569.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth to Sussex, November 10, 1569, Haynes' *Burghley State Papers*, p. 552.



*would make you like themselves. If you forsake this my offer, and now my last counsel, whatsoever false parasites shall flatter and tattel in your eares, loke not to escape the plague in this worlde that God hath appointed to disobedience, and in the worlde to come the punishment that he hath promised to be dew for it. And so, my lord, I take my leave, and pray to God he may put into your heart the spirit of dew obedience."*<sup>1</sup>

This missive was carried by the President's secretary to Topcliffe, and there delivered into Northumberland's hands. He read it through carefully, and, as Sussex informs the queen, at first showed "*great anger and discontent.*" Eventually he bade the secretary say that he would "*go to London in obedience*"; but declined to fix any date for the journey.

That night a hurriedly summoned council was held at Topcliffe. The voices of Lady Northumberland and a few others were raised in favour of moderation and submission to the queen. But the great majority of those present, including the Countess of Westmoreland, Leonard Dacre, the Nortons, Markinfield, and others of influence, counselled Northumberland on no account to yield himself up, and favoured open rebellion as the preferable alternative. The earl, in spite of the hard usage which he had received, shrank as yet from an appeal to arms; but he was by no means willing to submit to almost certain imprisonment, particularly when appealed to by the unanimous voice of the Catholic North. Queen Mary was also to be considered. With Northumberland in prison, the captive heir to the throne would lose a powerful and devoted friend. The result of the deliberations was a decision on the earl's part not to allow himself to be enmeshed in the Puritan web. Next morning he sent a letter to the queen, professing unaltered loyalty to her person, but declining to accept an invitation which would put him in the power of his deadly enemy, Cecil. The charges of rebellion levelled against him were, he declared,

<sup>1</sup> Sussex to Northumberland and Westmoreland, November 12, 1569, *State Papers*.

Northumber-  
land will not  
to Court.

as yet without foundation. "Yet," the letter continues, "as the maintainers thereof in these parts are in some credit with some of your private counsellors,<sup>1</sup> who, as experience has taught me, have been willing to hear matters to my discredit, I durst not adventure to your presence, till I had craved your pardon if I have, through lack of skill, liked that which may not content your majesty, and till time had shown how untrue those slanders are."<sup>2</sup>

After the refusal of both earls to go to Court, it was of course fully understood throughout the North that strenuous efforts would be made to take them by force. This the Dacres, Nortons, and others decided should not be done, until a guarantee of fair trial was given to the accused, and pledges were forthcoming that the Border counties should not be subjected to further religious persecution in the absence of their natural chiefs. The treacherous massacre and confiscation which followed the submission of the leaders in the Pilgrimage of Grace were too recent not to be keenly remembered. In fact, old Richard Norton,<sup>3</sup> the patriarch of the Catholics, had himself ridden in the Pilgrimage; while, as we have seen, Sir Thomas Percy, the earl's gallant father, was one of the victims of that movement. Without any concerted plan whatsoever, and simply by way of protection for their families and property, the gentlemen of the North Country began to arm their retainers. Sir George Bowes, in great trepidation, wrote to Sussex that the Catholics had "*swept up all manner of weepens that can be gotten for money; for this day they bought all the bowes and arrows in Barnard Castel, and, as I heere, in Durham.*" He added that "*they make open call for men for alteration of religion, and to spoyle such as wyll not follow ther dyrections;*" but, very contradictorily, concluded with the opinion that no serious trouble would ensue, the earls intending to retire quietly to Alnwick, "*without doing of evill.*"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reference is made to Sussex, Bowes, Sadler, and others, all Cecil's agents.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers, Addenda*, vol. xv. 23, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Norton of Norton Conyers, who with eight of his sons fought in the Rising.

<sup>4</sup> Sharpe's *Memorials of the Northern Rebellion* (Bowes to Sussex).

Apparently without consulting Cecil (who had already given orders for the arrest of the earls), Elizabeth sent a private letter to Northumberland and Westmoreland, couched in the following terms:—" *We do command you upon the duty of your allegiance, furthwith to make your speedy repayre hither unto us without any delaye or excuse whatever the same may be. And this do we trust you will not forbear upon any synister and unloyall perswasions, or any other matter to induce you to any mistrust without just cause or ground; for so you shuld varye from the dutyfulnes, which as you many tymes pryvatly with grete Assurance professid to us, so have we ever made good accompt of the same, and shall do the lyke, untyll you shall give us cause of the contrary.*"<sup>1</sup>

Had the queen addressed herself to the earls directly at an earlier stage of the proceedings, instead of speaking through agents and spies whose aim it was to create discord and incite the Northerners to rebellion, all the trouble which followed might have been averted. But it was now too late. There is reason to believe that the letter was really sent on November 13, but intercepted and delayed by Cecil until the 19th.<sup>2</sup> It was then, of course, too late. Northumberland had been attacked in his castle by Sussex's soldiers, and had fled to join Westmoreland. Believing themselves already condemned, the earls had unfurled the banner of St. Cuthbert, and the Rising of the North had begun, before the belated royal courier was permitted to reach York.

In spite of the strong party among the Catholics which clamoured for rebellion, Northumberland determined that the first blow should, if possible, be struck by their enemies. Every effort was made to turn him from this resolution, but without avail. It is a curious, and, in the minds of some writers, a suspicious fact, that the two persons most eager to plunge their fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth to Northumberland and Westmoreland, November 19, 1569, Haynes' *Burghley State Papers*, p. 552.

<sup>2</sup> Haynes' *Burghley State Papers*, p. 552.

Northerners into war—Lady Westmoreland and Leonard Dacre<sup>1</sup>—should have afterwards proved traitors to their party and become pensioners of Cecil. Westmoreland's virago wife was above all others the prime instigator of the revolt. At Brancepeth, on November 15, when peaceful measures were spoken of, "*my Lady Westmoreland braste owte agaynst them with great curscs.*"<sup>2</sup> She it was who had persuaded her husband into his refusal to obey the queen's behest. Lady Northumberland, on the contrary, seems to have exercised a restraining influence upon her husband, as long as it lay within her power to do so. The "Ballad of the Rising," presently to be quoted *in extenso*, represents her as entreating him to submission :—

*"Now heaven forfend, my dearest Lord,  
That ever harm shall hap to thee :  
But goe to London to the courte,  
And fair fall truth and honestie !"*

Of these two dames we shall hear much more : how she who was mainly responsible for her husband's rebellion deserted him in days of sorrow, and left him to starve in a foreign country, while herself enjoying the bounty of Elizabeth and Cecil ; and how she that had played the peacemaker for her lord's sake bore poverty and banishment contentedly on his account, and laboured to the last to save him from the scaffold.

On the night of November 13, Northumberland retired to rest at Topcliffe after a weary day spent in consultation with his friend Swinburne and some of the sons of Richard Norton. Shortly before dawn word came that the castle was surrounded by the troops of Sussex, and that several retainers had been wounded and taken prisoners. Lady Northumberland, to whom the news was brought, at once aroused her husband. He sprang from his couch, hastily armed himself, mounted and passed through the park by a bridle-path, followed by a handful of men. Once clear

<sup>1</sup> Uncle of the last Lord Dacre of Gillesland, and claimant of the dignity.

<sup>2</sup> Sharpe's *Memorials*.

of the castle, the little troop set spurs to their horses and rode northward to Brancepeth, where the Earl of Westmoreland lay with a considerable force.

Sussex, on demanding the surrender of Topcliffe, found only Lady Northumberland there to meet him; and was afterwards bitterly reproached by Elizabeth for thus allowing his prey to slip through his fingers.<sup>1</sup> In Drake's *Eboracum* it is stated that "the queen's messengers had nearly surprised Northumberland, when he escaped by a stratagem."

Lightly attended as he was, the earl received a royal welcome at Brancepeth. It was now broad daylight, so that the beacons could not be lighted; but couriers were despatched on every side to summon the Catholic leaders to a council. Great was the joy of Lady Westmoreland and the other advocates of rebellion when they learned that Northumberland had at last abandoned his scruples against taking up arms. At the outset, however, while all were for war, there was wide difference of opinion as to how the campaign was to be begun. Leonard Dacre, old Richard Norton, Markinfield, and the Swinburnes favoured an immediate attack upon Sussex and the queen's forces. Northumberland, on the other hand, advised a rapid cavalry descent upon Tutbury, where Mary Queen of Scots was confined. This plan was eminently feasible. Tutbury Castle was ill fortified and its garrison small. Already Lord Hunsdon had warned Cecil that such a design might be carried out:—"Their meaning is to take the Scottish Queene, and therefore for God's sake let her not remain where she is, for their greatest force is horsemen."<sup>2</sup> The liberation of the heir presumptive to the throne would at once have lent dignity to the movement, won for it sympathy and aid from overseas, and drawn to the side of the insurgents many wavering English lords. But in spite of these advantages, the scheme was over-ruled, and Northumberland accused of put-

<sup>1</sup> Haynes' *Burghley Papers*, p. 521. The secret path by which the earl left Topcliffe Park was still pointed out in Bishop Percy's time.

<sup>2</sup> *Border MSS.*

ting the cause of Mary before that of the Northern Catholics. A letter from the Pope turned the scale of deliberation. Pius V. sent his blessing to the insurgents, and exhorted them to emulate St. Thomas à Becket in refusing to submit to an excommunicated sovereign.<sup>1</sup> This ill-advised epistle was read amid profound emotion; and it was straightway decided to commence operations by proclaiming the Roman Catholic religion.<sup>2</sup> At the last moment a letter arrived from the Spanish minister in London warning the Northerners that Derby, Arundel, Southampton, and others, who had pledged their support to a rising, were now engaged in making their peace with Cecil; and strongly advising Northumberland and Westmoreland "to put no matter in execution," but to escape at once to the Low Countries, whither the writer offered to procure them safe passage. The minister also pointed out that although the Duke of Alba had promised aid, he could not send it at the time. But such was the enthusiasm at Brancepeth, that this grave warning passed almost unheeded. The flag of St. Cuthbert was flung to the winds; and Sussex wrote to Elizabeth—  
*"Those simple earls are in open rebellion!"*<sup>3</sup>

One man, however, had not been carried away by the general fervour. Leonard Dacre, erstwhile one of the prime promoters of the Rising, lost heart of grace at the Spanish minister's words. Stealing out of the council, he mounted his horse under pretence of seeking reinforcements, and galloped straight as he might towards York. Sussex sent him thence under guard to London, where he threw himself at the queen's feet, divulged everything, and even had the baseness to pray for a command against the rebels. In a reign teeming with traitors, Dacre stands forth in evil prominence.<sup>4</sup>

The discovery of Leonard Dacre's desertion struck a chill

<sup>1</sup> *Lansdowne MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> Sharpe.

<sup>3</sup> *Deposition of Wilkinson*; Murdin, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> Treachery was in the man's blood. His mother was that Lady Dacre who had egged on her sister, the Countess of Northumberland, to harass the sixth earl into an early grave, and who had lied and plotted against the same unfortunate nobleman under Wolsey and Cromwell.

to many hearts hitherto eager for the fight. Whom could they trust now? Who would be the next leader to play them false? Dacre's own followers at once rode off towards Cumberland, there to await their master's bidding. But in the main, the insurgents stood fast. Lady Westmoreland and old Norton addressed them fervently; and the two earls announced their intentions of standing or falling by the Rising. Not even Northumberland's unblemished character for honour and bravery could, however, save him from some suspicion—for since Dacre's flight each man looked askance at his neighbour. The earl proposed to ride to Alnwick, there to raise troops, arms, and money. He had, as already told, left Topcliffe with only a few attendants, and carried with him less than £120—scarcely enough for his share in a campaign against the royal armies. To pay the force already mustered he contributed this sum, and also pledged "*his Garter collar and his plate.*"<sup>1</sup> But his proposed journey to Alnwick, though it would have been productive of much good for the insurgent forces, caused doubt in certain quarters. Westmoreland had escorted him on his way for about two miles out of Brancepeth, and was about to bid him farewell, when the sound of horses in pursuit was heard; and a large party headed by three of the younger Nortons arrived upon the scene. The newcomers implored him to return at once to Brancepeth, pointing out that his absence had already bred fear and misgiving among their followers. For a long time they argued the question, "*walking up and downe there, till the sun was sett, riding nether one way or other*";<sup>2</sup> but at last, when one Wightman, captain of Westmoreland's levies, sided with the Nortons, the earl (wholly against his better judgment) was persuaded to return to Brancepeth. Thus within two days two excellent projects of Northumberland—the capture of the Scots queen at Tutbury and the raising of the flag at Alnwick—were thwarted by his associates. And while these things were

<sup>1</sup> *The Earl's answers to Lord Hunsdon: State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> The Earl's deposition.

a-doing, the small force of Sussex might have been defeated, York taken, and the insurrection made general north of the Humber. It was a bad beginning; but there was worse to follow.

Northumberland's reappearance at Brancepeth restored in some degree the failing spirit of the little army. At the head of 500 horsemen the two earls descended upon Durham, which surrendered after a mere show of fight. Pilkington, who had been made bishop of the diocese after old Cuthbert Tunstall had refused to take the Oath of Supremacy, was expelled; but Northumberland protected him from the anger of the troops and escorted him to a safe retreat. High Mass was then sung in the cathedral for the first time in many years; and, according to Camden, a great bonfire of the Protestant prayer-books was made in the cathedral yard.<sup>1</sup>

While time was being spent in this wise, a messenger arrived from Sussex. The President of the North was in dread lest the insurgents, by pushing on at once to York, might crush him before reinforcements arrived from the South. He appealed to the earls' sense of loyalty to disband their men and return to their homes. To this Northumberland made answer that "*they must now seek all the ways they could to serve their turn; . . . for seeing their lives in danger, they were determined to lose them in the field.*"<sup>2</sup>

It is likely that the earls would now have marched upon York, but that they deemed their army too small for the task as yet. To replenish it, they set about issuing proclamations to the people. The surrounding country was strongly devoted to Catholicism; but action was needed, rather than words, to induce the people to follow St. Cuthbert's banner. An attack upon York, or the freeing of Queen Mary, would have done far more for the insurgents' cause than a library of proclamations and the burning of every Book of Common Prayer in the bishopric.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales*, I, 194.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers, Addenda* (1566-79), p. 107.



The first public appeal<sup>1</sup> was issued on November 15, and dealt exclusively with religious grievances :—

“ PROCLAMATION.

*“ We, Thomas Erle of Northumberland and Charles Erle of Westmorcland, y<sup>e</sup> Queene’s trewe and faithfull Sub<sup>t</sup>, to all the same, of this old and Catholique Religion : Know y<sup>e</sup> y<sup>e</sup> we, w<sup>th</sup> many other well-disposed Persons as well of y<sup>e</sup> Nobility as other, haue promised our Faith to ye Furthercnce of this, our good Meaning Fforasmuch as diuers disordered and evil disposed Persons about y<sup>e</sup> Qu<sup>e</sup>’s Ma<sup>ty</sup>, haue by their subtyll and crafty Dealings to advance themselves, overcome in this Realme y<sup>e</sup> true and Catholike Religion towarde’s God, and by y<sup>e</sup> same abused y<sup>e</sup> Queene, disordered y<sup>e</sup> Realme, and now, lastly, seeke and procure y<sup>e</sup> Destruction of y<sup>e</sup> Nobility : Wce therefore haue gathered ourselves together, to resist by Force, and y<sup>e</sup> rather by the Helpe of God and you, good People, to see Redress of these Thinges amiss, w<sup>th</sup> the restoring of all ancyeut Customs and Libertys, to Gods church, and this noble Realme ; leaste, if we should not doe it ourselves, we might be reformed by Strangers, to y<sup>e</sup> great Hazard of y<sup>e</sup> State of this our Country, whereunto we are all bounde.*

*“ God Save y<sup>e</sup> Queene ! ”*<sup>2</sup>

Two days later a second proclamation was issued simultaneously in the towns of Darlington and Richmond. It contained an attack upon Cecil, as well as a threat of foreign invasion ; and was as follows :—

*“ Thomas, Earl of Northumberland, and Charles, Earl of Westmoreland, the Queen’s most true and lawful subjects, and to all her Highness people sendeth greeting.*

*“ Whereas, diuers newe sette upp nobbles about the Quene’s Majestie, have and doe dailie not onlie goe about to overthrow and put down the ancient nobilitie of this reelme, but also have*

<sup>1</sup> Both this and the second proclamation are said to have been the work of one Marmaduke Blackston or Blakiston, a gentleman of good family attached to the rebel cause. (Deposition of Hamelyng, in Haynes’ *Burghley Papers*, p. 594.)

<sup>2</sup> *Harleian MSS.*, No. 787 (14), fol. 10.

*misused the Queene's Majesties personne, and alsoe have by the space of twelve years now past, sett upp and mayntayned a newe found religion and heresie, contrarie to Gods worde; for the amending and redressing whereof divers foren powers doo purpose shortlie to invade thes realmes, which will be our utter destruction if we doe not ourselves speedily forfend the same. Wherefore we are now constreyned at this tyme to go aboute to amende and redresse it ourselves, which if we sholde not do and forenners enter upon us, we sholde be all made slaves and bondsmen to them. These are therefore to will and require you, and euery of you, being above the age of sixteen yeares, and not sixty, as your duty towards God doth bynde you for the setting forthe of his trewe and catholick religion, and as you value the commonwealth of your contrie, to come and ressort unto us with all speede, with all such armour and furnayture as you, or any of you, have. This faile you not herein, as you will ansuere the contrarye at your perills.*

*"God Save the Queen."*<sup>1</sup>

The fears of Sussex, as to the spread of the Rising, were by this time communicated to others of the great Protestant nobles. Lord Shrewsbury implored Cecil to have the Queen of Scots removed from Tutbury. "*The castell,*" he wrote, "*is very weke and not able to resist . . . and the enemy is within 54 miles.*"<sup>2</sup> The Puritans well knew what an effect the appearance of a free Queen Mary, with an army to support her, would have upon the people of the North.

Elizabeth determined to strike a hard blow; and, if possible, prevent the further growth of the Catholic movement. Lord Warwick and the High Admiral<sup>3</sup> were ordered to raise between them a picked force of 8000 men for service against the insurgents. Ships were sent along the coast to prevent any help from abroad, and, at the same time, to cut off all chance of escape for the rebel leaders. The Regent Moray was requested to bring a powerful Scots force to the aid of his English allies; but, although special

<sup>1</sup> *Harleian MSS.*, No. 6, 990, fol. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>3</sup> *Lord Clinton.*

Commissioners were sent into Scotland to this end, Moray remained neutral. By way of reply to the insurgent proclamations, the queen bade Sussex post counter-notices in York and neighbouring towns,<sup>1</sup> casting as much discredit as possible upon the earls, their religion, and their following. The President performed this grateful task with unction, describing the leaders of the Rising as vile traitors "*who had never had care of conscience, or respected any religion*"—(a curious accusation in view of the fact that Northumberland had lost the Lord Wardenship years before on account of his religion)—"*but continued a dissolute life till they were driven to pretend a popish holiness to put false colour upon their manifold treasons.*"<sup>2</sup> The charge of having lived dissolutely might perhaps have been applied to Westmoreland, who in his youth had shared the courtly follies of the day; but when directed against Northumberland, whose worst vanity was his honest passion for field sports, and whose life from boyhood upwards had been beyond reproach, it was wantonly false, as none knew better than Sussex himself.

The crafty Cecil made use of yet another means of injuring the Rising. This was by sending an army of hireling ballad-writers and hack pamphleteers to vilify the earls from an effective, but safe distance. One Thomas Smith assailed the "*bloody-minded popish traitours*" in a pamphlet still preserved;<sup>3</sup> and was honoured for his services by a knighthood. Master Thomas Norton, barrister, said to have been an illegitimate scion of the Nortons of Norton Conyers, addressed a similar manifesto to "*the Queenes poore deceived subjectes,*" whom he warned with mingled sarcasm and virulence against "*those good men, your Erle of Westmoreland and the Other, in whom no lewdnesse lacked but rebellion, which they have now added to make up their heepe of iniquity.*"<sup>4</sup> We have numerous relics of

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth to Sussex, November 15, 1569; *Burghley State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> *British Museum*.

<sup>4</sup> Blackletter Pamphlet, printed by Henrie Bynneman, 1569; preserved in British Museum.

the ballads made and sung with the object of turning the Rising into ridicule; but it is a curious fact that while several of the insurgents' songs survive in their entirety, only scraps of the efforts of Cecil's hired bards remain. Probably most of the Puritan literature was poor stuff. A northern churchwarden's account, dated January 1570,<sup>1</sup> contains the entry:—"Item for vij Ballys" (Ballads) "*con-sarning the Rebels, to be sonng ijd.*"

The North Country men took anything but kindly to this new method of warfare; indeed, Cecil's hack-writers appear to have done their master's cause more harm than good. In their zeal, the pamphleteers overran discretion, and the attacks which they made upon Northumberland, Westmoreland, and old Norton were so extravagant as to be everywhere discredited. The farthing ballads, too, were nearly all written in southern dialect—a grave mistake. Vast crowds flocked to Durham, beside which city the earls set up their standards. Men of all classes were represented—nobles, knights, landed gentlemen, yeomen, and labouring folk. But unfortunately for the Rising, two causes militated against its success. In the first place, there was a sad scarcity of arms and money with which to prosecute the war. In the second place, the leaders, while men of bravery and honour, were fitted rather to follow than to command. Northumberland was a soldier, and a soldier of renown, but he lacked most of the requisites of a commander. Had his brother, Sir Henry Percy, been at the head of the troops, Yorkshire would have been raided long since, the stores at York seized, and Sussex sent flying south. But Henry Percy had chosen another part; and the gallant but unskilful Thomas was cursed with the curse of Reuben. So it fell out that many precious days were wasted in burning prayer-books that could do no harm, and in waiting for a Spanish wind that never blew.

The messages of the royal lieutenants abundantly betray their dread of the great host which was gathering so

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in the *British Magazine*, April 1863, p. 417.

threateningly along the Wear. Sussex pleaded with the queen to make terms before it was too late. "*All the wisest Protestants,*" he wrote, "*thinke that you should offer mercy before you drawe the sworde.*"<sup>1</sup> And on the same day he informs Cecil that "*he is a rare birde that has not some of his with the two Earles, or, in his hart, wishes not well to their cause; and I heartily wish that her Majestie would quenche all this fire at the beginning by pardon or force.*"<sup>2</sup> On November 16 the Northern Council sent word that "*the people like soe well of their cause of religion, that they doe flocke to them*" (the earls) "*in all places where they come, and manye gentlemen shewe themselves readie to serve under your Majestie whose sons and heires, or other sones, be on the other side.*"<sup>3</sup> Here we have a curious phase of humanity which was noticeable long years later, during the Jacobite rebellions in Scotland—father and son fighting on different sides, the one from conviction, the other through a desire to preserve the family estates.

As time went on, the insurgent army grew daily greater. The old Puritan Sadler bade Cecil have a care lest Popery should prevail. "*There be not in all this cuntry,*" quoth he, "*X gentilmen that do favor and allowe of her Majesties proceedings in the cause of religion; and the common people be . . . altogether blynded with th' olde papish doctrine.*"<sup>4</sup> Gargrave, Sheriff of Yorkshire (the same who had been at odds with Northumberland over Mary Queen of Scots' captivity), estimated the rebels at 20,000 about the end of November. But as not one quarter of this horde was properly armed, the numbers sent to London by Hunsdon would seem to be nearer the mark. According to the latter, the Catholic forces consisted of 4000 footmen and 1700 light horsemen, "*mostly gentlemen and their dependents.*"<sup>5</sup> Hunsdon admits that these horsemen were far

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*; Sussex to Elizabeth, November 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*; Sussex to Cecil.

<sup>3</sup> Northern Council (by Ryson) to Elizabeth, November 16; *State Papers*.

<sup>4</sup> *Sadler Papers*, vol. ii. p. 55; Sadler to Cecil, December 6.

<sup>5</sup> Hunsdon to Cecil; *State Papers*.

better mounted and in every way superior to any of the queen's cavalry. We have unprejudiced foreign evidence to the same effect; for the French ambassador, Fénelon, describes these Border troopers as "*en aussi bon equipage qu'il s'en peut trouver en Angleterre;*" and Sussex bitterly laments their superiority to his few hundreds of mounted men. The infantry, however, were in no such good condition; and, since money was absolutely wanting, and they could not scour the countryside and forage like the hardriders of the Border, these poor fellows were almost starving. The remainder of the earl's recruits were utterly undisciplined, and, for weapons, carried only staves, scythes, pitchforks, and the like.

To resist this force, Sussex had with him at York, on November 26, only 500 indifferent horsemen and 2000 foot. Moreover, his soldiers were in a state of dangerous discontent, owing to heavy arrears of pay.<sup>1</sup> The reinforcements, eagerly looked for from the South, had not yet arrived; and much difficulty was experienced in persuading the scattered Protestants of Yorkshire to leave their homes. Queen Mary still lay at Tutbury Castle, and communications had been opened between her and Northumberland.

It was at this juncture—certainly a favourable one for their attempt—that the insurgent earls at last broke up camp and gave the order to march.

Meanwhile, at Windsor, Queen Elizabeth had been revenging herself upon the Earl of Northumberland in a characteristically feminine manner. Unable to  
A very solemn ceremony. inveigle the culprit himself into her power, she procured his degradation from the Order of the Garter. The obedient heralds proclaimed him a recreant knight;<sup>2</sup> and, on November 27, the ceremony of degradation took place in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers; Sussex to Cecil, November 26.*

<sup>2</sup> The proclamation was dated on the same day as the degradation, *i.e.* November 27. Three days previously Elizabeth had issued a "Declaration Setting Forth the Treason of the Earls."

presence of the Queen herself, the French Ambassador, and the entire court. The chief officials who acted on this memorable occasion were: Sir Gilbert Dethick, Garter Principal King of Arms, and Robert Cooke, Clarencieux. It may be observed that Norroy, King of Arms (William Flower), whose jurisdiction extended over "the north parts of England," was absent, serving perhaps under the banner of the earls. Norfolk, the Earl Marshal, was a prisoner in the Tower, and his place was filled by deputy.

A minute account of the degradation has been preserved:—

*"Firste, Chester Herrold of Armes, with the Queene's Coat of armes on his backe, came to the backside of the Stalls of the same Earle, and, with a ladder being sett up agaynste his hatchments, ascended to the toppe of the ladder. Then Garter and Clarentyculxe, ii Kinges of Armes, Richmond, Rouge Dragon, and Rouge Crosse, Pursouvants of armes, came out of the Cloyster, havinge the Queene's Coat of armes on their Backes, (Waye being made by the Knighte Marshall and his men) directly agaynste the Stalle of the said Earle, and Chester being on the other side, came upon the ladder and strode by the hatchments. Then Rouge Crosse made with a loud voyce the Queene's proclamatyon of the Earles degradinge which was under Her Ma<sup>ties</sup> hand (the copy hereafter followeth); this beinge reade over agaynste the stakes, Chester did hurle doune with violence the Earles banner of armes to the ground; then his sworde, and after his creste and disappor, and after his helme ana mantle, and after beinge all throune doune, they were with lyke violence spurned from that place out of the windowe of the same chappell of Windsore by Garter King of armes aforesaid; and after he had spurned, fyrste the Banner of armes, then the swoard, then the helmete and mantles, and laste the creste and dissooper, which creste and dissooper was not only spurned out of the weste door of the same chappell, but cleane out of the ottermoste gates of the castle." <sup>1</sup>*

The French Ambassador (who seems to have regarded

<sup>1</sup> Harlian MSS., No. 304 (48) Fol. 84 b.

the whole scene from much the same standpoint as his contemporary, Cervantes, might have done), describes how the lion crest of the Percies was trodden under foot by grooms and kitcheners, eager to win a smile from the lips of royalty; and how this proud token of chivalry and valour was eventually thrown by the rabble into the castle ditch.<sup>1</sup>

The first halt made by the earls on their southward march was at Darlington. Here, writes Holinshed, they  
 The insur- "lewdly heard Mass, and besprinkled the soldiers  
 gents march with holy water." Northumberland and his  
 southward. brother chief had committed the amazing error of permitting all the ragged thousands that swarmed to their banners to accompany the army upon much the same footing as the disciplined horse and foot. The natural results soon made themselves apparent. Where a small and well-armed force could have reached York by rapid marches, living without difficulty, upon the resources of a friendly county, this huge, unwieldy, and three parts useless mass crawled tediously onward, wasting all the available sustenance, and yet continually tortured by dearth of food. From a military point of view such a state of affairs was beyond pardon, and richly deserved the disasters to which it led.

Leaving Darlington, the insurgents passed without let or hindrance through Richmond, Northallerton, and Ripon, until they reached Clifford Moor near Wetherby on November 23 :—

*"At Wetherbye they mustered their host,  
 Thirteen thousand faire to see."*<sup>2</sup>

To this place came a special messenger from the Queen of Scots (it may have been the famous Dan Carr himself<sup>3</sup>),

<sup>1</sup> "*Et puys jectés aux fosses.*" See *Recueil des Dépêches*, Nov. 1569.

<sup>2</sup> "*The Rising of the North.*"

<sup>3</sup> Dan Carr of Shylstock Braes was Mary's most trusted emissary in dealing with her friends on both sides of the Border. His doings occasioned grave anxiety both to Moray and Hunsdon.



bringing to Northumberland "a ryng of gold enamel, requyring hym to remember his promise."<sup>1</sup> What the promise was, or where it had been given, we may not know; but probably it had something to do with the hoped-for liberation of Elizabeth's royal victim. The earl already possessed another token from the hands of Mary Stuart, to wit, a thorn reputed to have formed part of the crown placed in mockery upon the Saviour's head. This venerated relic Northumberland carried, mounted in a golden cross, upon his breast, until the eve of his execution.<sup>2</sup>

For a few days the movements of the insurgents were crowned with success. The infantry succeeded in dispersing the levies which were being raised for Elizabeth's service; while the cavalry, led by Northumberland in person, fell upon and captured a body of 300 horse near Tadcaster, and so cut off royalist communications with York. The captured troopers belonged to Sussex's garrison, which was thus still further reduced; and there seems little reason to doubt that, had the advantage been pressed, and York itself attacked, the President of the North must have surrendered.<sup>3</sup> It was a golden opportunity for the two earls, but through irresolution or ill-luck they lost it for ever.

A royalist diversion from the north, on the part of Sir George Bowes, was magnified by the chattering tongues of the great, useless insurgent rearguard into the advance of a Scottish army under Elizabeth's ally, the Regent Moray. Fearing to be caught between two fires, the earls abandoned the siege of York, and fell back upon Durham. It was not until they reached Barnard Castle that the truth concerning the supposed "Scots invasion" became known. Enraged at being duped in such a fashion they fell upon Barnard, into which fortress Sir George Bowes had hastily retreated at their approach. Every effort was made to

<sup>1</sup> Deposition of Hamelyng, Haynes' *Burghley State Papers*, p. 594.

<sup>2</sup> This "*spina de corona Domini*" is still preserved at Stoneyhurst College.

<sup>3</sup> Sussex had now only 2000 men in York, and these, as has been pointed out, were discontented because of ill pay.

induce Bowes to come forth and fight, but without avail. It is even said that Northumberland offered to meet him in single combat, as Douglas had met Hotspur outside Newcastle.<sup>1</sup> But Bowes was not to be drawn from the safe shelter of the ramparts. In his own words: "*They every daye come to offer schrymishinge, and beareth in our Scoutes and Scremagers; but we take no alarom, but keepeth close.*" There is an old rhyme, quoted as a taunt in the north to this day, which had its origin in the prudence of Sir George Bowes<sup>2</sup>:—

*" Coward, a Coward o' Barney Castell,  
Darena come out to fight the Battell."*

The lines, perhaps, formed part of a contemporary satirical ballad.

Assault after assault was delivered upon the castle; and, to make matters worse for Sir George, his men "deserted to the rebels, dropping over the walls by scores." At last he was forced to capitulate; but, although defeated, he had rendered a great service to the queen's cause. While time was being spent by the insurgents in reducing Barnard Castle, Sussex had been given an opportunity to fortify York; and the Earl of Warwick and the High Admiral had advanced to Wetherby with 7000 horse and foot. The tide had turned; the days of the Rising were numbered.

One hope remained for the insurgents. With the help long since promised from abroad, they might yet win back lost ground. Northumberland attacked and took the port of Hartlepool, from whence an urgent appeal was sent to Alva in the Low Countries. But if Alva sent any answer, it arrived all too late.

The earls might have made their escape from Hartlepool, and left their army to its fate, but this they would not do.

<sup>1</sup> This, however, is merely a Northumbrian tradition.

<sup>2</sup> Bowes to Cecil, November 29; *State Papers*.

Keeping the port open in case of a Spanish landing,<sup>1</sup> they hurried back to the main body of their forces, which lay helplessly near Durham. They found hunger rampant throughout the army. The men clamoured for food, or for money to buy it withal; and even the faithful veterans, who had followed Northumberland in the days of his wardenship, now drew but little comfort from his words of hope. They would go with him still, they declared, but they would go despairingly. As for the undisciplined mob whose presence had encumbered the army from the first, they were loudest in their lamentations. Dissatisfaction spread fast, increased by reports of the royalist advance. Little by little the army began to melt away. Constable, one of Cecil's spies, saw men deserting "*by dosens yn severall companyes, compleaning they wolde be hangged at home, or they returned agayn to sarve without wayges.*"<sup>2</sup>

On November 27 the earls sent a joint "Protestacion" to the various great lords who, by their promises, had urged them on to insurrection. But one and all, the worthies addressed repudiated any connection with "*the rebell peeres,*" and this too in spite of the fact that Cecil possessed through his agents the strongest evidence implicating most of them. The grim secretary must have smiled, as he compared these incriminating documents with the fulsome language in which their authors now addressed the queen. All his former associates deserted Northumberland now; even as his ancestor, the first earl, had been forsaken and denied by the very men whose arguments and assurances had drawn him into conflict with Henry IV. Derby sent the "Protestacion" to the queen. Arundel and Pembroke, still pallid from their confinement in the Tower, fawned upon Cecil, and denounced the northern earls. And Norfolk—Lady Westmoreland's brother, the would-be consort of the Scots Queen, more deeply involved than the rest—even Norfolk wrote from the Tower to assure Elizabeth of his "*poor*

<sup>1</sup> The earls have been severely blamed for inviting Spanish aid; but Elizabeth and Cecil were equally culpable in regard to the Scots.

<sup>2</sup> *Sadler Papers*, ii. p. 63.

*honestie,*" and to swear that he had "*never dealt with those rebellious persons.*"<sup>1</sup>

By this time Sussex felt himself strong enough to venture out of York, and a junction was effected between his forces and those from the south at Allerton on December 10. Next day the insurgent earls issued a last proclamation, calling upon the Bailiff of Richmond to meet them "*at Staneydrop, with all able men between xvi and lx years as be within Richmond,*" and "*with victuals for six dayes to serve with all.*"<sup>2</sup> But the Bailiff, although notoriously well disposed to the Rising, would not obey the summons; while the number of desertions from the insurgent army daily increased.

Others of the queen's northern lieutenants, who, like Sussex and Bowes, had preferred the shelter of stout walls to doing battle with a large and powerful army, now began to come forth from their retreats so as to earn a share of the quarry. Among the rest, Sir John Forster (afterwards the infamous despoiler of Alnwick) raised a belated hue and cry from the direction of Newcastle. Learning of his approach, the earls turned to meet him. Forster, to his surprise, found them not in flight, but advancing to give him battle at Chester-Dean. In hot haste the discreet knight turned tail and retired to a safe distance, leaving several of his men dead upon the field.<sup>3</sup>

This was the last effort of the Rising. On December 16—realising that, with their small and exhausted following, further resistance was hopeless, and could only result in a massacre of those who had remained faithful—the earls decided to disband their troops. The Countess of Northumberland had joined her husband several days before, nor could he induce her to leave him even for the sake of her children.<sup>4</sup> Lady Westmoreland, on the contrary, had hastened to a place of safety, as soon as the first signs of failure appeared. Bidding a sad good-bye to the poor

<sup>1</sup> Haynes' *Burghley State Papers*, p. 567.

<sup>2</sup> *Orig. State Papers, Record Office.*

<sup>3</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>4</sup> Northumberland's *Deposition.*

remnant of their army, and sharing with them what money they possessed, the two fallen leaders, and Lady Northumberland fled towards Hexham. An escort of horse, mostly friends and retainers, insisted on accompanying them on their way.

The earliest news of this event reached Cecil through Valentine Browne, treasurer of Berwick. "*The Lord Rebelles,*" wrote Browne, "*at one of the clock of this present daye have given warning to the comon people to make shifte for themselves, and therefore have themselves departed with a grete number of horsemen, westward it is reported.*"<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, the fugitives had with them little more than 200, mostly friends and retainers, who refused to leave them in this emergency.

The courageous Sir John Forster, who had so lately run away from the insurgents, although his troops were superior to theirs, was one of the first to learn of the disbandment. Here was a chance for a gallant soldier to distinguish himself in the queen's eyes! here a rare opportunity to spurn the fallen crest of Percy! With 1000 light horsemen Sir John sped in pursuit. Sussex was not far behind with 1500 horse and 600 arquebusiers; and in the rear of the chase lumbered the infantry of Warwick and the High Admiral. Even Sir Henry Percy made a loyal show of pursuing his brother!<sup>2</sup>

At Hexham the earls were denied admittance; and here they bade farewell to the greater part of their escort. Only Richard Norton, two of his sturdy sons, and a few retainers accompanied them farther. Their aim was to throw themselves upon the generosity of Leonard Dacre at Naworth Castle, for at least one night, before seeking refuge across the Scottish Border. Their route lay along the Carlisle road, by Haltwhistle to Naworth. At the latter place they were doomed to disappointment. Leonard Dacre not only refused to receive them, but even threatened to join in the pursuit. His brother, Edmond Dacre, begged that at least Lady

<sup>1</sup> Valentine Browne to Cecil, Dec. 6; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> At least so Cecil told Sir Henry Norris. See *Cabala*, p. 159.

Northumberland, worn out by her long ride, and the privations of the last week, should be given an asylum. "*For surely if there were ever honour, goodness, and virtue in any woman,*" he pleaded, "*they are in her.*"<sup>1</sup> But Leonard, late the orator of the Rising, shook his head, and vowed that he would shelter no rebels. Lest worse might befall them, the little party pressed wearily onward. The Secretary of State tells with unction of their flight: *The 16th hereof they broke up their sorry army, the 18th they entered into Northumberland, and on the 19th into the mountains. They have scattered all their footmen, willing them to shift for themselves, and of one thousand horsemen there fled but few hundred. By this time they be fewer, and I trust either taken or fled into Scotland, where the Regent Murray is in good readiness to chase them to their ruin.*"<sup>2</sup>

For greater security Norton and others left the earls near the Border. These last, with Lady Northumberland and one or two devoted servants, crossed into Liddesdale: "*The Erles rebels and their principal confederates do lurk and hide themselves in the woodds and deserts of Lyddesdale, but if they tarry on the borders there is good hope to have some of them or it be long. The greatest fear is of their escape by the sea. There is no doubt but that the Regent will do all he can to get those rebels into his own handes.*"<sup>3</sup> Thus Sir Ralph Sadler to his master.

So ended the Rising of the North—famous in song and story. Rashly begun, all wrongly planned, the insurrection had been foredoomed to failure. The lot of the northern Catholics was as hard to bear as that of the French Huguenots; but it had been better far for the former to have acted—as did the Huguenots—upon the defensive, against persecution and religious intolerance, than to have rushed blindly into war without adequate resources, and without adequate leadership. Their failure placed them, bound hand and foot, in the power of Cecil.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> Cecil to Norris, 24th December 1569; *Cabala*, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Sadler to Cecil; *Sadler State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 70.

Already the axe was being sharpened for the foolish heads of those "*good fellowes*,"—the Percies, Nevills, and Nortons—that had thought to cope with the most cunning and unscrupulous man in England. Already the rope was dangling from the cross-tree for many an honest yeoman, who had gone forth trustingly to fight for the faith in which he had been bred. Already the gentry of the robe laboured lovingly upon those parchments, which were to uproot many an old northern stock from the soil in which it had thriven. And already, with expectant eyes, the godly Sadlers and grasping Forsters waited for "Popish spoils."

But in spite of all the sufferings which the rebellion entailed the hearts of the north-country folk went out to their late chiefs, and to Northumberland's devoted wife, sleeping with the hill-fox, wandering by night through the heather, and lurking forlorn and hunted still, among the wild freebooters of Liddesdale.

An echo of this feeling of loyalty to the outlawed earls, finds expression in that rare old ballad which Bishop Percy, long afterwards, took down from the lips of the people:—

"*The Rising in the North*"<sup>1</sup>

*"Listen, lively lordings all,  
Lithe and listen unto mee,  
And I will sing of a noble Earle,  
The noblest Earle in the North Countriè*

*Earle Percy is into his garden gone,  
And after him walkes his faire ladie ;  
'I heard a bird sing in myne eare,  
That I must either fight or flee.'*

*'Now heaven forefend, my dearest lord,  
That ever such harm should hap to thee :  
But goe to London to the courte,  
And fair fall truth and honestie !'*

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<sup>1</sup> *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.*

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

' Now nay, now nay, my ladye gay,  
*Alas! thy counsell suits not mee;*  
*Myne enemies prevail so fast,*  
*That at the courte I may not bee.'*

' O goe to the courte yet, good my lord,  
*And take thy gallant men with thee:*  
*If any dare to doe you wrong,*  
*Then your warrant they may bee.'*

' Now nay, now nay, thou lady faire,  
*The courte is full of subtiltiè;*  
*And if I goe to the courte, lady,*  
*Never more may I thee see.'*

' Yet goe to the courte, my lord,' she sayes,  
*' And I myselfe will ryde wi' thee:*  
*At courte then for my dearest lord,*  
*His faithfull borrowe<sup>1</sup> I will bee.'*

' Now nay, now nay, my lady deare;  
*Far lever had I lose my life,*  
*Than leave among my cruell foes*  
*My love in jeopardy and strife.*

' But come thou hither, my little foot-page  
*Come thou hither unto mee,*  
*To maister Norton thou must goe*  
*In all the haste that ever may bee.*

' Commend me to that gentlemàn,  
*And beare this letter here fro mee;*  
*And say that earnestly I praye,*  
*He will ryde in my companiè.'*

*One while the little foot-page went,*  
*And another while he ran;*  
*Untill he came to his journey's end;*  
*The little foot-page never blan.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> "Borrowe," surety, hostage.

<sup>2</sup> "Blan," loitered.



*When to that gentleman he came,  
Down he kneeled on his knee ;  
And tooke the letter betwixt his hands,  
And lett the gentleman it see.*

*And when the letter it was redd,  
Affore that goodlye companye,  
I wis, if you the truth wolde knowe  
There was many a weeping eye.*

*He sayd, ' Come thither, Christopher Norton,  
A gallant youth thou seemst to bee ;  
What dost thou counsell me, my sonne,  
Now that good Erle's in jeopardie ?'*

*' Father, my counsell's fair and free ;  
That Erle he is a noble lord,  
And whatsoever to hym you hight,  
I wold not have you breake your worde.'*

*' Gramercy, Christopher, my sonne,  
Thy counsell well it liketh mee,  
And if we speed and scape with life,  
Well advancedd shalt thou bee.*

*' Come ye hither, my nine good sonnes,  
Gallant men I trowe ye bee ;  
How many of you, my children deare,  
Will stand by that good Erle and mee ?'*

*Eight of them did answer make,  
Eight of them spake hastilie,  
' O father, till the daye we dye,  
We'll stand by that good Erle and thee.'*

*' Gramercy now, my children deare,  
You shoue yourselves right bold and brave ;  
And whethersoever I live or dye,  
A father's blessing thou shalt have.*

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

*'But what sayst thou, O Francis Norton,  
Thou art mine eldest sonne and heire :  
Somewhat lyes brooding in thy breast ;  
Whatever it bee, to mee declare.'*

*'Father, you are an aged man,  
Your hair is white, your bearde is grey ;  
It were a shame at these your yeares  
For you to ryse in such a fray.'*

*'Now fye upon thee, coward Francis,  
Thou never learnedst this of mee :  
When thou wert yong and tender of age,  
Why did I make soe much of thee ?'*

*'But father, I will wend with you,  
Unarm'd and naked will I bee ;  
And he that strikes against the crowne  
Ever an ill death may he dee.'*<sup>1</sup>

*Then rose that reverend gentleman,  
And with him came a goodlye band,  
To join with the brave Erle Percy,  
And all the flower o' Northumberland.*

*With them the noble Nevill came,  
The Erle of Westmorland was hee :  
At Wetherbye they mustered their host,  
Thirteen thousand faire to see.*

*Lord Westmorland his ancyeat<sup>2</sup> raisde,  
The Dun Bull he rays'd on hye,  
And three Doggs with golden collars  
Were there sett out most royallye.<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The sad story of Francis Norton, eldest of the brothers, is told in Wordsworth's poem *The White Doe of Rylstone*. Francis, although he took no part in the Rising, is said to have been killed by the order of Sir George Bowes.

<sup>2</sup> "Ancyeat," *ensign or standard*.

<sup>3</sup> The supporters borne by the Nevills, Earls of Westmoreland were "two Bulls Argent, ducally collared Or." The device of the three dogs' heads has not been identified as belonging to the Nevill family ; but Nevill of Chyte in Yorkshire (of the Westmoreland branch) bore for crest in 1513 a greyhound's head erased.

*Erle Percy there his ancyent spred,  
The Halfe-Moone shining all soe faire ;<sup>1</sup>  
The Norton ancyent had the crosse,  
And the five wounds our Lord did beare.<sup>2</sup>*

*Then Syr George Bowes he straightwaye rose,  
After them some spoyle to make ;  
Those noble Earles turn'd back againe,  
And aye they vowed that knyght to take.*

*That baron he to his castell fled,  
To Barnard Castell then fled hee.  
The uttermost walles were eathe<sup>3</sup> to win,  
The earles have won them presentli.*

*The uttermost walles were lime and bricke ;  
But thoughe they won them soon anone,  
Long e'er they wan the innermost walles,  
For they were cut in rocke of stone.*

*Then newes unto leeve<sup>4</sup> London came,  
In all the speede that ever might bee,  
And word is brought to our royall queene  
Of the rysing in the North Countri.*

*Her grace she turned her round about,  
And like a royall queene shee swore,  
' I will ordayne them such a breakfast  
As never was in the North before.'*

*She caus'd thirty thousand men berays'd,  
With horse and harneis faire to see ;  
She caus'd thirty thousand men be raised,  
To take the Earles i' the North Countri.*

*Wi' them the false Erle Warwicke went,  
Th' Erle Sussex and the Lorde Hunsdàn ;  
Until they came to Yorke Castell,  
I wis they never stint ne blan.*

<sup>1</sup> The Crescent was the ancient badge of Percy.

<sup>2</sup> Norton bore the sacred emblem as his device.

<sup>3</sup> "Eathe," *easy*.

<sup>4</sup> "Leeve London," *dear London*.

## THE HOUSE OF PERCY

*Now spread thy ancient Westmorland,  
The Dun Bull faine would we spye ;  
And thou, th' Erie of Northumberland,  
Now raise thy halfe moone up on kye.*

*But the Dun Bulle is fled and gone,  
And the halfe moone vanysht away ;  
The Erles, though they were brave and bold  
Against soe many could not stay.*

*Thee, Norton, wi' thine eight good sonnes,  
They doom'd to dye, alas ! for ruth !  
Thy reverend lockes thee could not save,  
Nor thum their faire and flowing yartie.*

*Wi' them full many a galliant wight,  
They cruelye bereav'd of life :  
And many a childe made fatherlesse,  
And widored many a tender wife."*

## X

WHEN the gates of Naworth were closed against them, the fugitive leaders of the Rising turned eastward again, and entered Northumberland by fording the Irthing, Flight of the earls. between But Rig and Black Fell. Their intention was to make their way by Wark and Bellingham to the friendly shelter of Redesdale. But this road of escape had already been blocked. The queen's troops under Forster, Bowes, and others, held every bridge and ford on the northern arm of the Tyne, from Bellingham to Hexham. Perforce the earls took to the hills, and for two days and nights wandered perilously through the wild country towards the north. One by one men slipped away from the little troop, until less than a hundred horse remained. Most of the travelling was done under cover of darkness, Lady Northumberland being carried on a species of litter formed of a cloak swung between spear-shafts. Avoiding Falstone, they reached Kielder Castle on the evening of November 19. Here several of the Reeds took their leave; but Richard Norton and two of his stout sons accompanied the earls farther. Late on the 20th they rode into the fastnesses of Liddesdale: "*The Earls rebelles, with their principal confeyderates and the Countess of Northumberland, did, the 20th of the present in, the night, flee into Liddesdale with about 100 horse; and there remaine under the conduction of Black Ormstone,<sup>1</sup> one of the murtherers of the Lord Darnley,*

<sup>1</sup> "Black" Ormiston, Laird of Ormiston in Teviotdale, was one of those who assisted Bothwell to blow up the house in Kirk of Field where Darnley lay. He was an associate and vassal of Bothwell, and is described as a ruffian of great size and strength. After Bothwell's downfall he became an outlaw: the family of Ormiston of that ilk bore the very inappropriate arms;—*argent* three pelicans in piety *gules*. John of the Syde, and the Laird's Jock were both Armstrongs.

*and John of the Syde and the Lairds Joke, two notable thieves of Liddesdale."*

In Liddesdale they deemed themselves secure. The district had long been recognised—informally, perhaps, but none the less strictly—as a sanctuary in which outlaws and wrongdoers from either side of the Border might deem themselves free from pursuit. Northumberland himself, while Warden of the Marches, had faithfully followed the old traditions in this respect; and hundreds of rough moss-riders owed their lives to his constant recognition of "Liddesdale liberty." They had always been safe, so long as they were content to endure the privations of this waste region; and only when they engaged in feud or foray beyond its limits were their necks in danger. It was but natural that the earl should look for refuge in a country, the ancient rights of which he had ever respected.

Westmoreland found temporary shelter under the roof of the black Laird of Ormiston, while Northumberland and his wife were the guests of an Armstrong, known as "John o' the Side." This latter character was one of the most notorious of all the Liddesdale freebooters. In the words of Sir Richard Maitland:—

*"He is wel kenn'd, John o' the Syde;  
A greater thefe did never ryde."*

The hut in which Lady Northumberland was lodged is described by Sussex as "*a cottage not to be compared to any dogge-kennel in England;*"<sup>2</sup> but the dwellings of Liddesdale were, as a rule, of this character. After the trials through which she had passed, Countess Elizabeth was, no doubt, thankful to have a roof—even one of rushes or bracken—over her weary head. The other refugees found billets as best they might among the hills and morasses of the neighbourhood; and all prepared with confidence to pass the winter among the outlaws.

But Cecil was not one to allow old customs and

<sup>1</sup> Sussex to the queen, December 22, 1569; *Orig. State Papers, Record Office.*

<sup>2</sup> Sussex to Cecil; *State Papers.*

unwritten laws to stand in the path of his vengeance. No sooner did he learn the whereabouts of the earls and their friends, than he proceeded to bring every possible influence to bear upon the Regent Moray for their expulsion from Scottish territory. But to any such measure Moray would not consent—indeed he dared not. All sides of Scottish opinion were hostile to an invasion of the time-honoured asylum of Liddesdale. Sanctuaries once violated, might be violated again; and who could tell that those then in power might not some day be driven to seek safety even as the English earls had done? So, in spite of Elizabeth's fury and the threats of her ministers, the Regent positively refused to deliver up the refugees. Fearing, however, that his attitude might tempt England into making a foray into Liddesdale on her own account, and carrying off the earls (an act which even those Scots most favourable to the English Puritans would bitterly resent, and which would almost certainly lead to his own overthrow), Moray resolved to get Northumberland and Westmoreland into his hands, if possible. Could he bring them, by force or guile, to Edinburgh, he might, at one and the same time, satisfy the Scots, stave off the dangerous possibility of an English raid, and strengthen his position against the insidious diplomacy of Cecil.

To this end he sent one of his agents, Martin Elliot, into Liddesdale. Elliot had many friends and relatives among the outlaws; and to these he was instructed to address himself, assuring them that secret advices had reached Moray of England's resolve to disregard all customs and covenants, and to invade Liddesdale with fire and sword. He also hinted that the Regent himself was disposed to assist the English; so that the men of the Dale might find themselves between two fires, and liable to the severest punishment, simply because they had given shelter to two lords from across the Border who looked down upon them and their ways, and who only used their hospitality as a temporary

The  
"Thieves of  
Liddesdale."

convenience. At words like these from a kinsman whom they trusted, and whom they knew to be well informed as regarded matters of State, the Liddesdale night-riders grew timorous, and "*felt their craigs in peril.*" Black Ormiston, John o' the Side, and the rest of these gentry, had no desire to see their territories invaded; and so the earls were tricked into leaving Liddesdale by a false message brought to them during the night, to the effect that Moray's troopers were coming to take them prisoners. Lady Northumberland's recent fatigues had brought on a fever, which rendered it impossible for her to be moved from the hut of John o' the Side; but honest John and his fellow-outlaws promised the earl that she would be treated with the utmost care and courtesy. Thus assured, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Richard Norton, and a handful of men fled towards the Debatable Land lying between Liddesdale and English territory. They were disguised in moss-trooper costume, and rode "*lyke the outlawes of Lyddesdale.*"<sup>1</sup> John o' the Syde and Ormiston accompanied them for a few miles, and then bade them adieu "*with many goode wishes, and promises to guard my lady of Northumberland from all harme.*" How well the ruffians kept their word may be judged from what follows.

No sooner were the earls out of the way, than the men of Liddesdale, headed by Black Ormiston, broke into the hut where Lady Northumberland lay, and utterly regardless of her ill-health, pillaged her of well nigh everything she possessed. "*The laird of Ormestoune . . . spoulzeist the Erle of Northumberland's house and his wyff of all her jewellis, her claithing and porse,*"<sup>2</sup> says a contemporary chronicler. No doubt that "*great thefe,*" John o' the Syde, had a hand in the transaction as well as Ormiston; perhaps, since Lady Northumberland was the tenant of his hovel, he looked upon the taking of her goods as a species of rent-levy. Only the clothes which she wore were left to the unfortunate woman; and such of her friends and

<sup>1</sup> *Sadler Papers*, ii. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Sharpe; *Memorials*, p. 343.





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41



retainers as had remained with her were treated in a like manner.<sup>1</sup>

Stretched upon rushes, in the bare hut, Lady Northumberland lay racked with fever until the New Year. Fortunately one of her husband's physicians had accompanied the party from Hexham, and remained behind in Liddesdale to watch over the countess. Without the aid of his skill, she could hardly have survived through so many privations. Happily, too, the ill news of the disaster which had overtaken Northumberland was not brought to her, until her health had improved sufficiently to bear it. Her servants, left by Ormiston unarmed and with scarcely a rag to cover them, "snared the small game of the forest, and even used the mosses and lichens for food."<sup>2</sup>

At length, on January 6, a kindly Scots gentleman, Ker of Fernieherst, vindicated the chivalry of the Border-side by riding at his own risk into Liddesdale and succouring the countess. This action had the effect of arousing all Scotland to a sense of the heroism of Lady Northumberland, and of the inhuman treatment from which she and her loyal adherents had suffered.<sup>3</sup>

Believing his wife to be safe under the protection of the men of Liddesdale, Northumberland, with his brother earl, **Betrayal of the earl.** and Richard Norton, camped in the Debatable Ground, "using caves and hollows of the rocks for their habitations."<sup>4</sup> But the Regent's spies pursued them even to these wilds. Martin Elliot, who had successfully incited the Liddesdale outlaws to expel the earls, was now sent to capture Northumberland. A plot was laid by which the earl was to be enticed away from his friends, and betrayed to a body of horse sent by Moray for the purpose. The instrument chosen by

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe; *Memorials*. It is an eloquent commentary upon the policy of Cecil that he should have urged the Regent Moray to grant a free pardon to the ruffian Ormiston as a reward for this "service to the Queen."

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Sanders to Alva, *Archives des Pays Bas, Bruxelles*.

<sup>3</sup> See later, p. 309-13.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Sanders' *Letters*.

Elliot, for the carrying out of his design, was one Heckie, or Hector, Armstrong. This man, who owned a strong fortress at Harselaw, near Canobie, was trusted by the refugees and freely admitted to their camp, for the reason that, when himself an outlaw and banished from his native land, he had been protected and housed by Northumberland. Under the circumstances, his treachery seems all the blacker.

Perhaps the fairest account of the transaction is to be found in the words of a contemporary Scottish writer :  
*"Upoun the xxv day of the said moneth of' December, my Lord Regent convenit with Mairtene Elliot that he sould betraie Thomas Erle of Northumberland, quha wes fled in Liddisdaill, out of England for refuge, in this maner; that is to say the said Mairtine causit Heckie Armystrong desyre my Lord of Northumberland to cum and speik with him under tryst, and causit the said Erle believe that, efter speiking, gif my Lord Regent wold persew him, that he and his freindis sould tak plane pairt with the Erle of Northumberland. And when the said Erle come with the said Heckie Armystrong to speik the said Mairtine he causit certane licht horsmen of my Lord Regentis with vtheris his freindis to ly at a wait, and quhen thay sould sie the said Erle and the saide Mairtyne speiking togidder, that they suld come and tak the said Erle; and sua as was devysit, sua come to pass.*

*"And the said Erle being tane under traist, as said is, certane of his assistaris followed, and persewed the said Martine and his company, purposing to have releivit the said Erle; and in their perforce, Capitaine Johne Borthwick, Capitan of my Lord Regentis horsmen, was slane, and the remanent raid to Hawick; quhairto they brocht the said Erle, and thairefter to Jedburgh, quha gat na presens of my Lord Regent quhill the xxvij day of December, at the quhilk tyme they wer comand to Edinburgh."*<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed that the betrayal of the earl occurred on Christmas Eve. No attempt was made to snare

<sup>1</sup> "Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents;" published in the *Transactions of the Bannatyne Club*, 1833.

Westmoreland. Hector Armstrong's base treachery had, no doubt, opened the eyes of the refugees to the danger of putting trust in any of the Scots outlaws upon the marches: and Moray realised that the capture of the other earl would be a matter of the utmost difficulty. Some seven of Northumberland's personal followers loyally made their way to Jedburgh at the peril of their lives, and implored permission to be allowed to wait upon him in captivity. Although these men are styled "servants" in the letters and despatches, they were not all such in the modern acceptance of the word. At least two—John Swinburne and Robin, or Robert, Reed—belonged to ancient and gentle families of the North Country. Their prayer was granted after some delay; and, when the earl was carried to Edinburgh, we find them in attendance upon him. Robin Reed was afterwards entrusted with an important letter to Sir Henry Percy.<sup>1</sup>

The Regent held back from a personal interview with Northumberland for three days after the latter's arrival in the capital.<sup>2</sup> The reason for this delay is not difficult to find. Cecil had redoubled his efforts for the earl's surrender: and so powerful were the arguments which he advanced, that Moray wavered between his original scheme of retaining Northumberland in custody for diplomatic purposes, and his present fear of hostilities with England. Lord Hunsdon, Elizabeth's northern lieutenant,<sup>3</sup> believed at one time that he had succeeded in persuading the Regent into compliance. But a fresh element entering into the situation caused Moray to decide against giving up the earl, and upset Hunsdon's hopes. The Scots nobility spoke out loudly and persistently against any such inhospitable act as that which they believed to be meditated by the Regent. The truth concerning Northumberland's betrayal by Elliot

<sup>1</sup> Wright's *Life of Queen Elizabeth*; Alan King to Sir H. Percy.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> He was also the queen's cousin-german, which may account for the liberty of speech allowed him. Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon, Warden of the Northern Marches, was son of Mary Boleyn by William Carey, esquire of the body to Henry VIII., and thus nephew of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother. Although a zealous servant of the queen, he was an honest gentleman and no fanatic.

and Armstrong had reached Edinburgh, and awakened shame and anger among all save those absolutely blinded by prejudice against the friends of Queen Mary. So strongly was public opinion opposed to the surrender, that hardly one of the Regent's councillors advised in its favour. Moray hesitated no longer; and, on December 30, Hunsdon wrote to Elizabeth that, for the time at least, it was impossible to induce the Scots to yield up their prisoner. "*The most parte of the nobyllette of Scotland,*" he explained, "*and especyally a' this syde Edenburro, thynkes yt a grete reproche and ygnominy too the hole country, to deilver any banyshit man to the slaughter; accounting ytt a lybertye and freedome, yncydent to all nacions to succor banyshit men.*"<sup>1</sup>

On December 31, the day after Hunsdon had received this answer, Moray paid his first visit to Northumberland.

Although they had but little in common, a certain friendliness sprang up between the two earls. A respite for earl and countess. According to a letter, presently to be quoted in full, their subsequent meetings were frequent and amicable.

In January, gallant Ker of Fernieherst<sup>2</sup> succeeded in bringing Lady Northumberland safely out of Liddesdale to his own house. Here she was enabled to rest in comfort for the first time since the flight from Hexham. The good ladies of Fernieherst bustled their briskest to pay her all the attentions which the Border castle could afford; and her pitiful story, noised far and wide, brought her offers of assistance from the greater folk of the neighbourhood, irrespective of creed or party. Lord Home, an active Protestant, was so moved that he invited the countess to Home Castle; and, learning from her that the Earl of

<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to the Queen, December 30, 1570; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Ker or Carr of Fernieherst was son of Sir John Ker of Fernieherst by Katherine, daughter of Walter Ker of Cessford. The lady of Fernieherst at the time of Lady Northumberland's visit was Janet, daughter of William Scott the younger of Buccleugh and Braxholm. One of Fernieherst's sons was Robert Carr, afterwards Viscount Rochester, the notorious favourite of James I. Fernieherst Castle, near Jedburgh, is now owned by the Marquis of Lothian, a direct descendant of Lady Northumberland's benefactor.

Westmoreland was still hiding in the Debatable Ground, sent servitors to bring him forth. When Hunsdon threatened him with the loss of Cecil's friendship, and punishment at the hands of Moray, Home swore that rather than "*do so vyil a deid*" as to betray either Westmoreland or the countess, he would "*give his head.*"<sup>1</sup> Indeed the menaces of the English court seem to have had a curious effect upon him, for, soon afterwards, he became a Roman Catholic, had an altar erected in the old chapel at Home,<sup>2</sup> and heard "*two or three masses daily.*"<sup>3</sup>

On January 8, 1569-70, Sir Ralph Sadler reported to the Lord Admiral as follows: "*The Erle of Northumberland is in the custodie of the Regent; and the Countess of Northumberland, Erle of Westmoreland and others be receyved, ayded and maytayned agenst the Regent's will, by the Lord Hume, the Lord of Farnyherst, the Lady of Buclough and others.*"<sup>4</sup>

About this time Alan King wrote to Sir Henry Percy, asking him to do his duty towards his brother, and the chief of his house: "*My Lord of Northumberland is in Edenbrough, and not in ward, but in the keeping of my Lord Regent, who hath gyven my Lord license to lye in the town of Edenburgh with a garde of the Regent's men; and my Lord hath of his owne men seven principal. . . . My Lord's request is by Robert<sup>5</sup> to you; who is both in grete distresse and miserye at this present, cleane without apparell or money, of your brotherlynes to extend your liberalitie to releve him withal at this his present necessitie; and also he desyreth you to write, or send him word of such newes as you may impart him withal; first what lykeing the nobility hath of his trouble; secondly, how and in what case his frendes, men, and those were with him are used; thirdly of his children.*

"*My Lady of Northumberland hath her heartily commended unto you, who craveth and desyreth of your counsell in the*

<sup>1</sup> Maitland.

<sup>2</sup> Home Castle, some three miles south of Greenlaw in the Merse, is now dismantled and deserted.

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*; Gargrave to Cecil.

<sup>4</sup> *Sadler Papers*.

<sup>5</sup> Robert, or Robin, Reed.

*behalf of my Lord. My Lady lyeth as yet at Fernyhurst, but the Lord Hume hath written licence for her to come to hym, which she wyll. She might have accesse to my Lord to Edinburg, but she thynketh not so good as yet, till she have some more warrtent from the Lord Regent; for that she being at libertye, she is able to make some shifte for my Lord now, and hath alreadye sent home to her frendes, as to my Lord of Worcester. Her request also is, that if you wolde send some trustye man of your owne to my Lord and her, you might pleasure them very much, and they would discourse unto him of such things as are yet in safetie, which might be now to their releves, or at the least it might come to your handes. Farther my lady wolde that you should understand, that disagreement that was amongst them chiefly was the cause of this their mishappe and ill fortune to sever and flie; also for my Lord Dakers breach, which hath been aforesaid, he hath showed himself a sorrowful man, who is as yet thought, and no otherwise knowne to my lady, but that he will assiste them if they will cumme into England, or when they cumme.<sup>1</sup>*

*"At my Lord of Northumberland's first cumming into Scotland, the Regent did not, nor wolde not, talk with him in three dayes together; but after they had mett and talked, they otherwyse agreed and many times talked.*

*"My Lady Northumberland hath sent to my Lady,<sup>2</sup> and earnestlye desyreth her to send her some apparell, as she is destitute both of wollen and linnen."<sup>3</sup>*

Had Northumberland known the truth he would have had cold comfort in his guarded Edinburgh lodgings. His brother was plotting against him; his "*freundes, men and those that were with him,*" had fallen victims to the queen's vengeance; and his little girls—the eldest but a child of eleven—were left, without fuel or food, to face the rigours of a Yorkshire winter. In the same week that

<sup>1</sup> Leonard Dacre had already repented of his treachery towards his own party, had quarrelled with Elizabeth, and had been driven across the Border by Sussex. He subsequently died on the Continent.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry Percy's wife.

<sup>3</sup> Alan King to Sir H. Percy, in Wright's *History of Queen Elizabeth*.



saw Alan King's letter sent southward, Sir Henry Percy visited his nieces (presumably at Topcliffe): "*Passing by the younge ladys, I founde them in harde case, for nether had they any provisions, nor one penny to relyve with, but some lyttel things from me. They would gladly be removye; their want of fire is grette, whose yeres may not suffer that lacke.*"<sup>1</sup>

The English agents at first believed that the Regent intended to place Lady Northumberland under arrest, as he had done her husband. They were soon to be undeceived. Moray visited Jedburgh for the purpose of inquiring into the case of the countess. He was met there by Home and others, who told him so much concerning the lady's sufferings and loyalty to her husband, that he unhesitatingly declared in her favour, and promised not to interfere with those that harboured her. A few days later, Hunsdon learned that the countess had set out for Home Castle; and wrote in great wrath to the Regent: "*Upon Thursday night last the Countess of Northumberlande was brought by Farnehurst toward Heume Castell, and was fayne to staye by the waye at Rocksborrowe,<sup>2</sup> by the soreness of the wether (being a greate storme); so as it was eight of the clock on Fridaie morning or she came to Heume, and is ther yett, onlesse this daie she be convoyed to Fauze Castell.*"<sup>3</sup>

"*Your Grace knowes well that the Quenes Maiestie cannot take this well at ther hands; espetically at my Lord Heumes, with whom she may easelie be quittaunce, and make him repent his follie, as I doubt not but she will.*"<sup>4</sup>

Lady Northumberland's hospitable reception by Protestants like Home, was all the more resented by Elizabeth, because particular pains had been taken to insert the name of the countess in the list of fifty-seven persons attainted

<sup>1</sup> Sir H. Percy to Sussex, January 9, 1570; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> Roxburgh.

<sup>3</sup> Fast Castle, a strong fortress of Lord Home, situated on the coast a few miles N.W. from St. Abb's Head. It is supposed to have been the "Wolf's Crag" of Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*.

<sup>4</sup> Hunsdon to the Regent Moray, January 9, 1570; Haynes' *Cecil Papers*.

for the Rising. To Hunsdon's remonstrance, the Regent replied :—

*"I deme you will not think it strange, although it sal be reported that the Countesse of Northumberland is in Hume Castell; for then it is that at my being in Jedburgh, hearing of her great miserie, and inhuman usage be the outlawes and theves, I declared to the Countrymen that I wolde not take it in evill parte, whosoever resett"* (received) *"her, making me privie thereto."*<sup>1</sup> When, later on, the Earl of Westmoreland was also reported to be a guest on Lord Home's estates, and Hunsdon once more remonstrated against what he termed "ingratitude" towards the queen, Moray evasively replied that no reliable information concerning Westmoreland's whereabouts had been brought to his knowledge.

Having failed to secure their ends by the ordinary ways of diplomacy, Elizabeth and Cecil now had recourse to a different plan of operations. From the secretary's large army of spies, several were chosen whose antecedents and apparent loyalty to the causes which had prompted the Rising were likely to win the confidence of the fugitive insurgents. These persons were despatched into Scotland to ferret out and report upon the movements of Westmoreland, Lady Northumberland, and others of importance. Full authority was given to them to promise anything—free pardons, even—if by such means some of the escaped leaders of the Rising might be lured across the Border and captured.

A typical member of this "Black Brigade," as it has been called, was a young man named Constable—the penniless cadet of an honourable Yorkshire family which had remained constant to the Roman Catholic faith. He had many kinsfolk and connections of rank; the Earl of Westmoreland, indeed, being his near relative. His grandfather had fought and died under St. Cuthbert's banner in the "Pilgrimage of Grace"; and he himself had always

<sup>1</sup> Murray to Sussex, January 14; *State Papers*.

professed the strongest attachment towards the ancient religion, even while he was actually in Cecil's pay as a secret agent. When instructed to cross the Border, and make every endeavour to gain the friendship of his cousin, Westmoreland, Constable wrote to Cecil accepting the commission with an unholy glee. "*I am,*" he declared "*prepared to trap them that trust in me, as Judas trapped Christ.*"<sup>1</sup>

It is agreeable to record that, as far as Westmoreland was concerned, this zealous instrument of English Puritanism failed in his mission. Either his true character was suspected by the earl; or else Lord Home—who knew a good deal concerning Cecil and his tools—unmasked the would-be "Judas." Constable left Home Castle without having even seen the man whom he had hoped to trap. His reports to Cecil must have been anything but gratifying. Wherever he went throughout the Lowlands, he found strong opposition to any surrender of the insurgent leaders. Bitter indignation prevailed against Hector Armstrong of Harselaw, who, although indebted to the Earl of Northumberland for protection and hospitality, had betrayed his benefactor under the guise of friendship. Constable heard chance acquaintances at inns and upon the road express their hatred of the traitor, and some even wished to "*eat Hector's head at supper.*" This account of popular feeling against Armstrong is corroborated by Sir Richard Maitland; who adds that the expression "*to take Hector's cloak*" became a proverb on the Border for the betrayal of a friend.<sup>2</sup>

Sadler now advised Cecil to place strong garrisons along the Northern Marches "*to the ende that if those proud Scots will not delyver the said rebels they may be persecuted by her majestie's forces, and have their houses, landes and goods overthrowen, wasted and destroyed by fyre and sword.*"<sup>3</sup> Cecil's spies having failed to accomplish aught of moment, he

<sup>1</sup> Haynes' *Cecil Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> *Maitland MSS.* (Pinkerton, p. 132).

<sup>3</sup> *Sadler Papers*.

recommended this new plan to the queen, and it was adopted. Detachments of trusty men were drafted from the southern counties, and placed at frontier posts such as Norham, Coldstream, Wark, Naworth, and the like. The design was to frighten Moray into submission; or else, by a display of force upon the Border, to excite the Scots into hostilities, whereby it could afterwards be said that any war which might result was not of the queen's beginning. This force having been duly posted, Sir Henry Gates, its chief captain, sent to Moray, insolently demanding the surrender of all English insurgents then harboured in Scotland. Moray was unprepared for war, and had no intention of giving up Northumberland and the others, without receiving in return some substantial gain for Scotland. He sought to temporise; meanwhile keeping the English demand secret, lest its publication should still further arouse the country on behalf of the refugees, and so, not improbably, lead to serious conflicts on the Border. Queen Mary, he pointed out, had long been detained upon English soil without the consent of her subjects. Elizabeth at once offered to give the Scots queen her liberty, in exchange for the surrender of the Earl of Northumberland.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this was what Moray had been waiting for; yet he requested further time for consideration. No council was summoned; so far as can be discovered the Regent acted in the matter entirely upon his own authority. It is by no means improbable, however, that he may have informed Northumberland of the offer made by England. The earl, as we know, was devotedly attached to Mary, whom he regarded as "the rightful heir to the English throne." This fact, taken in combination with the simple, loyal nature of the man—shown in a thousand ways, before and after this time—make it almost certain that, if consulted by Moray, he would have gladly offered to surrender himself to Elizabeth (and to certain death), if by such a course he could have set the Scots queen at liberty. However

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

this may be, the Regent after the brief time which he took for "consideration," accepted Elizabeth's terms.

A council was hastily summoned at Linlithgow for the purpose of ratifying the treaty drawn up by Hunsdon and Moray. At the English court great jubilation prevailed; already Cecil was busy making arrangements for the arrest of Northumberland upon the Border, and his conveyance to London. But fate intervened at the last moment to spoil their plans. Instead of sending Northumberland to his death, the Regent met death himself. On the very day for which the council had been called—January 22—an assassin's bullet ended the career of James Stuart, Earl of Moray.<sup>1</sup> He died the next morning, leaving the treaty of exchange unratified and unsigned. Queen Mary's prison-doors, ajar for the moment, were closed again. The friends of Northumberland breathed more freely; and before the new-raised altar in Home Castle, a pale woman thanked Heaven for her husband's safety.

Robbed of her prey by the assassination of Moray, the Queen of England proved in the clearest manner that she was indeed a daughter of the eighth Henry. Northumberland she could not touch, nor many of the other leaders of the Rising: but the wretched peasantry of the north—the poor creatures who had but followed their feudal lords, and taken up arms in defence of their faith—these were at her mercy. Just as, after the "Pilgrimage of Grace," Henry had turned upon the North Country with blind fury, slaughtering innocent and guilty alike; so now, Elizabeth proclaimed a "war of retribution" against the Catholics of the Northumbrian counties—the mere fact that these unfortunates were suspected of following the ancient faith, being held as proof sufficient of their complicity in the insurrection. The age reeked of fanaticism, and cruelties done in the name of what men called their

<sup>1</sup> He was shot by James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh while passing through the streets of Linlithgow on his way to the council.

Slaughter  
and  
spoliation.

religion ; yet, with the possible exception of Alva's atrocities in the Netherlands, no similar crime of the period surpassed in the number of its victims, and the utter injustice with which it was carried out, this northern massacre of the "good Queen Bess."

It is impossible to say how many persons were actually put to death by Sussex, Bowes, and the other perpetrators of this cold-blooded butchery. Among the peasantry, and those unable to escape the gallows by dint of bribery, the slaughter was enormous. The queen, over her own signature, absolutely forbade any of the ordinary forms of justice, complaining that quite enough valuable time was wasted in the hanging of a Papist, without allowing him the benefit of trial.<sup>1</sup> Unrecorded hundreds were piked to death upon the moors, or left swinging from the trees of Richmondshire. From the reports of the executioners themselves, the fury of the persecution may be fairly judged. Sir George Bowes,<sup>2</sup> the very cautious defender of Barnard Castle, was, as might be expected, among the first to draw his sword against the disarmed and helpless insurgents. Surrounded by a strong force, he marched through Tyne-dale and Redesdale, murdering, plundering, and destroying "*with greate zeal and loyaltie*;" and it was his loudly expressed opinion that "*the best fruite a tree can bear is a dead traytour.*"<sup>3</sup> On January 23, he boasted that, in less than a fortnight he had put to death about 600 "*suspected rebels.*" Nor was the Earl of Sussex behindhand in carrying out the queen's wishes. His first report announced the hanging of 314 Papists from Durham alone. Fearing that this might seem in his sovereign's eyes but a paltry offering, he promised (and subsequently performed) "*a like execution in Richmondshire, when the Marshall has finished this; as also at Allerton, Topcliffe and Thirske; besides which there shall be no towne whence any man went to serve the Earles . . .*"

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe ; *Memorials*, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Bowes' wrath against the men who had taunted him with cowardice outside Barnard Castle procured for him the post of Provost Marshal to Sussex.

<sup>3</sup> *Sadler Papers*, ii. 82.

*but one or more shall be executed for example."*<sup>1</sup> But in spite of these efforts of the president, Elizabeth's thirst for blood was as yet only whetted. Seven days after the receipt of the above despatch, she wrote: "*We marvel that we have heard of no execution by martial law, as was appointed, of the meaner sort of rebels in the north. If the same be not already done, you are to proceed thereunto, for the terror of others, with expedition.*"<sup>2</sup>

If Sussex was deemed remiss, however, not so Thomas Gargrave, Sheriff of York, who won golden opinions at court because of his extreme diligence in hanging and beheading. Gargrave had an old grudge against the Earl of Northumberland<sup>3</sup>; and his attacks were chiefly directed against the friends and tenants of the house of Percy. Elizabeth sent him an autograph letter, warmly commending the rigorous measures which he had taken, but, at the same time, warning him not to reject any substantial sums of money which might be offered in extenuation of treason. "*I counsel you,*" she concludes, "*to preserve for our use all goods and lands within your sheriffwyck, belonging to the rebels.*"<sup>4</sup> As a means of securing the confiscation thus urged upon him, Gargrave advised that all Catholics refusing "service and communion," should be attainted and put to death for heresy, in case the charge of rebellion could not be proved against them.<sup>5</sup> This suggestion was eagerly adopted: but Cecil showed himself by no means satisfied with the mere execution of "Popish recusants." He held that preliminary torture, and the starvation of heretic prisoners, would produce an excellent effect among the northern malcontents, besides serving to bring to light the connection of Norfolk and other great lords with the late Rising. It is good to find that honest man, Hunsdon, protesting stoutly against rack and thumbscrew. He was

<sup>1</sup> Sussex to Cecil, January 4, 1570 (*Original State Papers, Record Office*).

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth to Sussex, January 11, 1570 (*Original State Papers*).

<sup>3</sup> This grudge had its origin in Northumberland's action after the flight of Mary Queen of Scots into England.

<sup>4</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>5</sup> Gargrave to Cecil, January 6; *State Papers*.

as staunch a Puritan as any; but he saw no reason for reviving the torments of the Middle Ages, for the punishment of these "*poore simple creatures*," as he termed them. The keen zest which Cecil experienced in persecution can best be realised from his official letters. "*I would have you,*" he writes, "*make the examples grete in Ripon and Tadcaster; and therefore if you find not sufficient nombres within the towns that be in the doings of the late rebellion, take of other towns, and bryng them to the execution in these places.*"<sup>1</sup> Alva, that "man of blood," could not have played the master-butcher more coolly than this Puritan closet-minister. Sussex, Bowes, and Gargrave, stirred to greater exertions than ever, emulated each other in the bloody work. Lord Huntingdon reported 700 persons hanged, "mostly peasants," the gentry being held for ransom. Thomas Plumtre, who had celebrated mass in Durham Cathedral, was arraigned before the Provost Marshal, convicted of being a Popish priest, and sentenced to death. "On his arriving at the place of execution, his life was offered to him if he would renounce the Catholic faith."<sup>2</sup> He refused; and was hanged outside the great doors of Durham minster, which were left open "*so that he could look upon the altar which he had profaned.*" According to Surtees, his body was left thus hanging for ten days.<sup>3</sup> Several of the Catholic aldermen and other leading townspeople of Durham suffered at the same time.

The following noblemen and gentlemen were attainted, and declared outlaws: "Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland; Charles Nevill, Earl of Westmoreland; Anne, Countess of Northumberland; Leonard Dacre, called Lord Dacre, of Harlsey, Yorks; Edward Dacre, esquire, of Morton, Yorks; Sir John Nevill, knight, of Leversedge, Yorks; John Swinbourne, esquire,

Some of the victims.

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe; *Memorials*, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Bridgewater; *Concertatio Ecclesiae in Anglia*.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Plumtre has since been beatified by Rome. Beyond celebrating mass, he took no part in the Rising.



of Chopwell, Durham ; Thomas Markenfield, esquire, of Markenfield, Yorks ; Egremounde Ratcliffe, esquire, of the City of York ; Christopher Nevill, esquire, of Kirby-More-side, Yorks ; Richard Norton, esquire, of Norton Conyers ; Francis Norton, esquire, of Baldersbie, Yorks ; George Norton, gentleman ; Sampson Norton, gentleman ; William Norton, gentleman ; Christopher Norton, gentleman ; Marmaduke Norton, gentleman ; Thomas Norton, gentleman ; Robert Tempest, esquire, of Holmside in the Bishopric ; Michael Tempest, his son ; William Smith, esquire, of Nunstanton, Durham ; Bryan Palmer, esquire, of Morton, Durham ; George Strafford, esquire ; Thomas Bishop, the elder, gentleman, of Pucklington, Yorks ; Marmaduke Blake-stone, gentleman ; Cuthbert Nevell, esquire ; Christopher Danby, esquire, of Beiston, Yorks ; John Trolopp, esquire, of Thornley, Durham ; Anthony Hebborne, esquire, of Hardwyke, Durham ; Ralph Conyers, esquire, of Layton ; John Gower, gentleman, of Richmond, Yorks ; Tristram Fenwick, gentleman, of Brinckebourne, Northumberland ; Anthony Wilberie, gentleman, of Bransepeth ; John Saltmershe, gentleman, of Rednes, Yorks ; Henry Johnson, esquire, of Waltonhead, Yorks ; Simon Digby, esquire, of Askew, Yorks ; John Fulthropp, esquire, of Islebeck, Yorks ; Leonard Metcalfe, esquire, of Burreparke, Yorks ; Robert Claxton, gentleman, of Old Park, Durham ; Robert Lambert, esquire, of Owton, Durham ; Ralph Conyers, esquire, of Cottam, Durham ; Cuthbert Wytham, gentleman, of Bretonby, Yorks ; Robert Heighington, gentleman, of Richmond, Yorks ; Thomas Jenny, gentleman ; Cuthbert Fenwick, gentleman, of South Shields ; Cuthbert Armorar, gentleman, of Belford ; Richard Dacre, gentleman, of Ayketon, Cumberland ; William Dacre, gentleman, of St. Bees, Cumberland ; Robert Collingwood, gentleman, of Alberwicke, Northumberland ; Robert Collingwood, gentleman, of Etel, Northumberland ; John Welborne, gentleman, of Bransepeth ; George Horsley, gentleman, of Ackelington Park, Northumberland ; Thomas Taylour, yeoman, of Tad-caster ; Thomas Green, yeoman, of Tadcaster ; John Cowper,

tailor, of Kiswyke, Yorks ; Ralph Swynnowe, gentleman, of the city of Durham ; and James Swynnowe, gentleman, of Thornehill in the Bishoprick." It will be noticed that while the name of Lady Northumberland was included in this list, that of Lady Westmoreland (who had done far more to spread the flames of rebellion) was omitted.

The official returns of those executed, "*for treason or Popish heresy,*" between January 4 and May 27, 1570, are thus given in the State Papers: "*January; at Durham (100 to 106 persons)*"—(the very numbers were uncertain)—"*including the Rev. Thomas Plumtre, and Alderman Struther.—At Barnard Castle (20).—At Darlington (99 to 105).—At Eslington (20).—At Stockton (55).—At Chester-le-Street (20 to 21).—In Richmondshire (231).—In various parts of Northumberland (19).—At Ripon, the Constables of the West Riding, the townsmen of Ripon, and the serving-men of the West Riding (about 320).—At Wetherby, Topcliff, Boroughbrig and Tadcaster, the Constables, townsmen, and serving-men, engaged in the rebellion (about 280); at Thirske, the townsmen of Thirske, with the Constables and serving-men of the North Riding (about 250).—January 16, at Allerton, the following; Christopher Hancock, Richard Wynde, Randall Horner, Robert Hickley, Henry Thompson, Allan Lysley, and William Tayler.—Jan. 22, at Craven, and other places;—Robt. Araye, Richard Cayley, William Scranston and others.—Jan. 27, at Yarm and other places, James Hill, Hugh Stoker, John Atkinson, William Topley, John Johnson, Richard Yonge, John Pearson, Robert Thompson.—March 24, at York; Simon Digby Esq., John Fulthropp Esq., Robt. Penyman, Thomas Bishop the younger, gentleman, and others.—May 27, at Tyburn, Thomas Norton gentleman, and Christopher Norton gentleman,<sup>1</sup> with others." How many unfortunates were included under the vague expression "*and others,*" who can say? When we consider that the Provost Marshal's men did not stop to make certain whether their tale of*

<sup>1</sup> Two of the sons of old Richard Norton of Norton Conyers. The confiscated estates of the Norton family remained in possession of the Crown until 2 or 3 Jas. I., when they were granted to the Earl of Cumberland.

victims amounted to "100 or 106"—when five or six dead Papists, more or less, did not greatly matter—the estimate of 2000 persons executed during the first five months of 1570, seems but a moderate one. Of the many done to death without even the poor pretence of martial law, no earthly account was taken.

In the confusion following upon Moray's assassination, all negotiations for the surrender of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland to the English were broken off. Sympathy with the refugees grew apace in Scotland, especially along the Borders, where Westmoreland, Lady Northumberland, and many others prominent in the Rising were sheltered. The massacres and confiscations by which Elizabeth sought to revenge herself upon the defeated insurgents, excited the fiercest indignation among the Scots; and several serious raids were made into English territory, under Ker of Fernieherst, the Scotts, and other Border chieftains. Sadler accuses the Earl of Westmoreland of having accompanied at least one of these expeditions, when cattle and goods (recently confiscated from the Northern Catholics), were taken at the sword's point from "the Queen's loyal servants."<sup>1</sup> Enraged by these evidences of how her policy was regarded beyond Tweed, even by the extreme Puritans, Elizabeth temporarily stayed the butchery in Northumbria, and ordered a general invasion of Scotland.<sup>2</sup> About the middle of April the English army crossed the frontier in three columns. Sussex and Hunsdon advanced from the East Marches into Teviotdale; Forster and Scrope made similar movements from the Middle and West Marches respectively. But the "invasion" degenerated into a mere Border raid upon an extensive scale. Sussex reported to the queen,<sup>3</sup> that he had destroyed about fifty castles, and burnt over five hundred villages and hamlets. No engagement of any consequence took place; nor was Forster—who had been specially

Raid and counter-raid: Northumberland in Lochleven.

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe, *Memorials*, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Cecil to Norris, May 22; *Cabala*, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *Cabala*, p. 164.

delegated for that purpose—able to capture either Westmoreland or Lady Northumberland. Fernieherst Castle, which had sheltered the fugitive countess, was, however, taken and dismantled; and Home Castle was also attacked. An unfortunate retainer of Lady Northumberland—one of those who remained faithful to that hapless woman after she had been stripped by Black Ormiston in Liddesdale—was captured by Sir Ralph Sadler near Berwick. Every endeavour was made to wring from the prisoner some information concerning his mistress's whereabouts, but without avail; and Sadler sourly reports that the Papist rogue went to his death without making a confession. Indeed the secret of Lady Northumberland's hiding-place remains a secret to this day.<sup>1</sup>

The English raid over, the countess emerged from her place of concealment, and resumed her interrupted endeavours for her husband's liberation. Northumberland had been removed by command of the new Regent, Mar, to Lochleven Castle, where he occupied the same apartments which had formerly been the prison of Mary Stuart. It is probable that he was at first allowed a certain amount of liberty; and he himself declares that, on one occasion, he enjoyed his favourite pastime of hunting in the neighbouring forest of Falkland. But his gaoler, William Douglas of Lochleven, had an eye to the main chance, and took good care that this important captive should not escape without ransom. The countess was informed (probably through the medium of Morton, rather than of Mar) that her husband's release might be purchased—in other words, that if a sufficiently large sum of money were forthcoming, he might be allowed to escape overseas. She at once set about raising the bribe. Her own relatives and friends were at first appealed to; but they refused to help the outlawed earl in any way. Indeed, Lord Worcester positively declined to receive his sister's emissary; and was so proud

<sup>1</sup> One gratifying result of this raid was that, owing to a mistake, Ormiston Tower, the home of "Black" Ormiston, who had so cruelly robbed Lady Northumberland, was burnt by the English.

of this act of loyalty that he sent post-haste to report it to Cecil, and to lay the written appeal of the countess before the Council.<sup>1</sup> Thus repulsed, Lady Northumberland turned to her brother-in-law, Sir Henry Percy. But Sir Henry was at this time in alliance with the Puritans; and, instead of sending help to the head of his house, he asked the queen's leave to correspond with Northumberland with a view to inducing the latter to surrender. The behaviour of Henry Percy at this juncture is, certainly, open to grave suspicion. He was heir to his brother's titles and estates, so that he had much to gain and nothing to lose by the earl's capture or death. Under these circumstances it surely behoved him, at least, to remain neutral in the matter, if, through prudence or religious conviction,<sup>2</sup> he was disinclined to assist his brother. Yet, having obtained Elizabeth's permission to write to the earl, he addressed him in the following terms (the letter having first been submitted to Cecil for revision):—<sup>3</sup>

*"My lord, I pray let no fantastical bruit make you have opinion of a future time, nor any aid, assistance or maintenance that shall come from any other places to support the action you have entered in; for they be but devices, and who trusteth unto them shall be deceived. And to make an end, if that I find your lordship not willing and glad to seek means to attain unto the Queen's majesty's favour, accept and take me for one of the greatest enemies you have living, and one that shall be most glad to be employed to correct your offence; which otherwise you shall find me as natural, diligent and travaillsome a brother as any man shall have.*

*"And thus, desiring of God that you may give occasion to attain unto the Queen's mercy, as also her Majesty willing to receive the same; which shall be my daily prayer. From Beamish,<sup>4</sup> the vij<sup>th</sup>. of June, 1570. H. Percy."<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry Percy at this time proclaimed himself "a true and loyall Protestant;" but he afterwards reverted to, and indeed died in, the Roman Catholic faith.

<sup>3</sup> The spelling of this letter is here modernised.

<sup>4</sup> Beamish was the residence of Sir Henry's mother.

<sup>5</sup> *Original State Papers (Domestic Series, Elis.),* Record Office.

To his sister-in-law, Sir Henry made no reply of any kind.

Thus disappointed of aid from friends and kinsfolk at home, the devoted countess resolved to betake herself to the Continent, and there seek the intervention of Rome or Spain. As a preliminary to her departure, however, she entered into an agreement with the earl's custodians as to the exact sum which was to be paid to them by way of ransom. Under the protection of Lord Seton she journeyed to Edinburgh, where the necessary pledges were given and received. Lord Westmoreland and others of the fugitives accompanied her; and there is little doubt but that the Regent was fully cognisant of the whole affair, as the party travelled openly and without concealment. From the capital, they journeyed overland to Old Aberdeen, still guarded by Seton. Since they passed so near to Lochleven, it seems hard to believe that the countess was not permitted to see and speak with her lord; especially as Northumberland's consent to the arrangements made was desirable. But the watchful English spies were unable to learn anything about such an interview; and, if it took place, it was the last meeting in this world of Anne and Thomas Percy. The exiles gathered at Old Aberdeen during the first week of June 1570. While waiting for the vessel which was to convey her to the Continent, Lady Northumberland was delivered of a fifth daughter, the Lady Maria.<sup>1</sup> This "*childe of sorrowe*," as her mother called her, was the only one of the countess's offspring who crossed the seas. We shall hear of her again as the founder of a religious house, and the comfort of her mother's last days. Her birth occurred on June 11;<sup>2</sup> and, as soon as possible after this event, the entire party set sail on a trading ship for the Low Countries.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstand-

<sup>1</sup> She is confounded by the Rev. G. E. Phillips and other writers with her elder sister, Lady Mary Percy, who married Sir Thomas Grey of Wark.

<sup>2</sup> According to a MS. quoted by the *Catholic Magazine* of August 1838.

<sup>3</sup> Cobham to Cecil; Sept. 4, 1570.

ing his swarm of secret agents, Cecil did not learn of the fugitives' escape, until they were safely under Spanish protection.

Lady Northumberland, Westmoreland, and their companions, to the number of about a score, reached Antwerp at the end of August. They were absolutely penniless, and their clothing was coarse and almost ragged. Friends, however, came to their assistance; and the countess was enabled to hasten on to Mechlin, where the Duke of Alva lay with the main body of his army. Her story had preceded her, and the grim "Unbeaten Commander" received this representative of a lost cause with almost royal honours.<sup>1</sup> Whatever were Alva's faults, he knew how to value loyalty and courage. The letter which he wrote on behalf of the countess to Philip II., urged upon that monarch in the strongest terms the desirability of contributing largely to Northumberland's ransom.<sup>2</sup> In reply, Philip authorised the payment of 6000 crowns for that purpose. "*Et pourtant,*" wrote the king, "*que touche l'assistance de deniers que la dite comtesse demande pour mettre son dit muri en liberté (je) vous en ay aultres escript en espagnble, que (je) seroye content d'y employer jusqu'à six mille écus, selonquoy vous pouvez régler.*"<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime several English Catholic clergymen living at Antwerp had memorialised the Pope to a similar effect; and Dr. Alleyne brought from Rome a promise of another 4000 crowns—thus making the full sum of 10,000 crowns required by Douglas of Lochleven (or his masters) for the release of the earl. But here, when all seemed plain sailing, a new and serious difficulty arose. The agents of Rome and Spain somewhat distrusted Douglas, and demanded a written guarantee that Northumberland would really be released, before they permitted the countess to pay over the money. On the other hand, Lochleven

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> *Archives des Pays Bas (Brussels).*

<sup>3</sup> King of Spain to Duke of Alva, Nov. 1570: *Archives des Pays Bas, Bruxelles.*

required the full sum agreed upon before he gave the earl his freedom. For all that a man's life hung in the balance, there was an element of comedy in the negotiations which ensued. It was bargain-making between chapmen, each of whom believed the other a cheat. The canny Scot was pitted against the Jesuit. The Jesuit had money in plenty at his command ; but the Scot controlled the merchandise desired, and knew full well that, if this transaction should fall through, other wealthy bidders might be found elsewhere. So, it will be seen at a glance, that the Scot had a decided advantage in the dealing.

Poor Lady Northumberland laboured with all her might to bring affairs to a happy issue. On January 27, 1571—  
A faithful wife. after months had been spent in chaffering—she wrote to Lochleven a letter of appeal, which few men of honour and ordinary humanity could have withstood.<sup>1</sup> She pledged her own personal faith that the money should be paid to the last stiver ; she implored her husband's gaoler to display that knightly courtesy and generous spirit which had ever prevailed between the houses of Douglas and Percy ; she even offered herself as a hostage in Northumberland's stead. Lochleven was plainly moved by this communication, and answered it with a civility which renewed the hopes of the earl's friends.

On the same date, the countess wrote to her husband, warning him against putting any trust in his brother, Sir Henry Percy, who was still trying to bring about a surrender to Elizabeth's "mercy." She says: "*Heare are so many bruits of your brother's being and cuming away, and so many imaginacions thereupon, both by them that be wise and others, as it were good that his frends understode partlie what they might aunswer on that behalf. For myne owne parte, I am persuaded that his doeings cannot be as is convenyent towards you, bothe bicause Nature will binde him thereunto, and that his own wealthe and welldoeng dothe stande thereupon; in the contrary whereof he can reap no benefite.*"

<sup>1</sup> Murdin, p. 186.



Continuing, she advises the earl, if released, to take ship from Aberdeen, and pass into Denmark. A faithful servitor will be needed, and she has just such a one in her mind :  
*"Wherin I thinke John Swynborne were a man for your Lordship to advise withall, and to accompany you, both bicause I am persuaded that he lovithe you dearely, is honest, wise, of good experience, and well acquainted with the Natures and Condiçions of the Contry Men, wherby he is the better hable to discern what Way or Meane is best for you to take, and with what persone you may most safeliest deale."*<sup>1</sup>

The countess dwells for a space upon some of the exiled Catholics in whom her husband may place his trust ; and then passes on to other matters, such as the possibility of obtaining funds from his friends and tenants in England, and the best means of having his children carried to the Continent :—

*"Dr. Knott, a Civilian, a Man of greate Gravitie and well languaged ; Mr. Fenne, Master of Arts and Preste, a Man verey eloquent, and wittie, . . . and Dr. Alyn, the most singuler Man in myne Opinion, next to Mr. Sanders, on this side the Seas ; if he might be hadde, I thinke you could not have the choise of the like, whensoever God should send you hither. . . . I trust you do see to get into your owne handes or into safe custodie, as much of your owne out of England, as you may procure. Michaell and Witherington,<sup>2</sup> as I writ to you before, best knowethe where they are ; and how nedeful it will be for you to have as much in store as you may get, being in a strange Contry, I doubt not but you will consider. For your Children, the best Meanes that I can imagine to have them transported hither, were for a sewte to be made to have them lycensed to cumme to see you, and then, being left with the Lady Hume, or somme of your other Friends, they may be transported hither. . . . I ende with prayeng to our Lorde to be*

<sup>1</sup> Murdin, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> "Michaell" was Michael Tempest, son of Robert Tempest of Holmside, and one of the earl's agents. He had been sentenced for complicity in the Rising, but had purchased his pardon. Witherington was a member of the ancient family of that name, and another devoted friend. He is frequently mentioned in the letters.

*your Director, and to send you good Spede and Successe in all your Attempes, that you may enjoy your Fredome and Libertie, and be a Comfort to a Nombre which lyve in daily expectation of you, and pray for your Delyverance and Welfare.*

*"This 28th January,*

*"You know by Whom."*

Three days later, on January 31, the countess sent a third important letter to Scotland. She had learned, through secret channels, that Douglas of Lochleven was a mere puppet in the hands of that other Douglas, the future Regent, Morton. To Morton, therefore, she wrote from Mechlin, praying him to hasten the negotiations for her husband's release.<sup>1</sup> To the Earl of Mar, she does not seem to have made any appeal.

It need hardly be said that Cecil did not leave un-  
 watched so powerful a colony of English Catholics as  
 that dwelling in the Low Countries. Numerous  
 spies kept my Lord Burghley informed of nearly  
 everything that went on among the refugees at  
 Antwerp, Mechlin, and Amsterdam. Chief among  
 these, by reason of his exceptional gifts of cunning and  
 duplicity, was one John Lee, who made his headquarters  
 at the first-named city. Lee posed as a devout Romanist,  
 whose estates in England had been confiscated for his  
 devotion to the old faith. He loudly proclaimed his de-  
 votion to Queen Mary Stuart, and railed against the "base-  
 born harlot," as he termed Elizabeth. His views were  
 only shared by the most extreme of the exiles; but none  
 thought of questioning the good faith of so sturdy a son  
 of Mother Church, who went to his religious duties so  
 regularly, and had suffered so much at the hands of the  
 Puritans. When Lady Northumberland and her fellow-  
 voyagers landed at Antwerp quays, weary and in sore  
 need, Master John Lee was among the first to bid them  
 welcome. Indeed the Earl of Westmoreland went to lodge

Spies among  
 the exiles:

Master

John Lee.

<sup>1</sup> Mardin, p. 193.

at this good man's house ; and more than one of that forlorn company was beholden to Master Lee for food and raiment. All of which was duly detailed (together with other information of far more useful nature), by the kind-hearted benefactor to his employer, Burghley.

Lee was a glib talker, and a clerk of skill ; facts which led to his being made letter-writer in ordinary to many of the English Catholics who had little knowledge of penmanship. Both the countess and Lord Westmoreland trusted him implicitly, and made him the medium by which most of their letters were sent into England. These epistles were allowed to reach their destinations—the scheme would have been suspected otherwise—but not before they had been carefully examined by Lord Burghley or his secretaries. Thus when, in order to curry favour at Court, the Earl of Worcester sent his sister's pleadings to be read by the Council, he took a great deal of needless trouble, and was probably only laughed at for his pains. Thanks to Master Lee's activity, both queen and minister had been enabled to read the poor countess's tear-stained pages long before. Lee informed Burghley of the advances promised by Spain and the Pope. On November 9, 1571, he sent word that Lords Seton and Dacre had entered into a compact to free the Earl of Northumberland, after which it was resolved to enter the English Marches, and once more "raise the North." To this plot, he declared that the Duke of Norfolk was privy. The movements of Lady Northumberland between Antwerp and the Duke of Alba's camps were faithfully chronicled, as well as everything of importance that Westmoreland—then a resident in the spy's house—had said or done.

From Scotland Hunsdon forwarded exhaustive reports of the progress of events in that kingdom. Douglas of Lochleven, it seemed, had been boasting openly of the large sum of money which he was to receive for setting Northumberland free. Hunsdon informed his chief that "*the Scotch Commissioners having made resytal of the chargis that the Lorde of Lochlevyn hath byne att with the saide Erle,*

. . . *th' Erle hath offered the Lorde of Lochlevyn 4000 markes sterlinge to be paide presentlie to him in hande to lette hym goe.*"<sup>1</sup> Burghley began to realise that, since he had failed to terrorise the Scots into yielding up their prisoner, his best policy was to take a leaf out of Lady Northumberland's book, and tempt their cupidity by the offer of a counter bribe. Hunsdon was instructed to sound the Regent on this delicate subject; and did so, with results which more than justified the change of policy. Lochleven, from being satisfied with the proposals of the countess, suddenly resumed his old attitude of churlish distrust towards that lady and her agents. Four thousand crowns as earnest money no longer seemed to him sufficient. He had heard that the full ten thousand crowns could be raised, if necessary; and he held out for the entire sum, with which Lady Northumberland's friends were not disposed to trust him. In this dilemma the harassed wife had resort to a stratagem. She wrote to her husband a secret letter of advice, enclosing a second missive intended for his gaoler's eye. The latter, which was brief and business-like, pointed out that it was better for Lochleven to take the four thousand crowns in hard cash, with the assured prospect of more when Northumberland was free, than to trust to the promises of so notoriously treacherous a politician as Burghley. Any English bribe would have to be waited for, and perhaps eventually shared with Mar and others; whereas, if the laird treated directly with Northumberland's friends, he might keep the earnest money for himself, "*with all benevolence, favor and commendacion.*" The private note to the earl was of a somewhat different character. It contained information for the prisoner's knowledge alone, and was to be destroyed immediately after perusal. "*I write this other letter,*" the countess continues, "*so that you may show the same to the Larde, if you think it so good; and for that I heare it from France that the Larde is perswaded that you should have from the Pope and the King 10,000 Crownes towards your Redemption. . . . I*

<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, Nov. 22, 1571.

*do all that I can to have the same persuasion pulled out of his Heade. . . . Tho' I have no Mistrust of his Truthe, yet I thinke it not mete to have commytted the full Certentie to his knowledge, and wold do what I could to bring the Larde to some reasonable conditions."* Even this honest and honourable woman had begun to learn duplicity from her adversaries!

Rarely indeed has the world seen such an example of wifely devotion as that shown by Lady Northumberland. "Far above rubies." When the Rising of the North collapsed, she might have remained safely in England, like Westmoreland's wife, and left her husband to bear alone the burden of his rashness. But neither fear of the future nor the entreaties of the earl could induce her to turn her palfrey's head from what she deemed the path of duty. She had been "as great a rebel as any one of them," she declared; and so she joined in the flight across the Border, shared her lord's hardships until treachery parted them, and endured all the misery and suffering which followed with a courage that moved even Cecil's callous heart to admiration. Puritan Home turned Papist, "for that such a creed had brought forth such a woman;" and savage Alva wonderingly told his master that in this frail Ann Percy he had found the embodiment of tireless loyalty and truth.

Through the weary years of doubt and striving, while she toiled for her husband's liberation, Lady Northumberland's spirit never faltered. One after another she saw her hopes shattered; one after another her friends grew cold and fell away. But she never lost heart; nor did the prisoner of Lochleven ever learn from letter of hers how desperate his chances had become. To him she wrote confidently, even blithely—talked of merry meetings at Antwerp or Copenhagen, of the delight of seeing their children again, and sometimes of hawking and hunting, those gentle sports which Northumberland loved so well. All the while she was hurrying to and fro—now interceding with Alva, now reasoning with the agents of Rome, now

sending urgent letters to Morton or Lochleven. Dr. Sanders bears testimony to her ceaseless industry, in a letter written by him to the earl (probably Northumberland's first intimation of the sacrifices which his wife was making in his behalf): "*What travail My Lady hath taken for your delivery not only do I know, who was a part of it,<sup>1</sup> but all men see, because she was no longer able to work by private means, but was forced to follow the Court, and to press upon the Duke's Grace,<sup>2</sup> even agaynst his will. God saw her tears, and heard her prayers; but what say I? hers? He saw and heard yours, which were so earnest that they also appearede in her.*"<sup>3</sup>

What a contrast is presented in the conduct of Lady Westmoreland, wife of the other insurgent leader! This woman, who had done so much to force her husband and his associates into war against the Crown—who had mocked at their prudence, and urged them on with taunts, and even with oaths—was one of the first to desert the broken cause, and to buy her own safety at the expense of her former friends. She now upbraided her husband as fiercely as she had formerly encouraged him. With a covert sneer, Cecil records how she humbly prayed for permission to cast herself at the queen's feet. "*Permit me to sue for her grace's pardon,*" she implored, "*although My Lord's doings are such as must abase me to do so.*"<sup>4</sup> To prove her new-born devotion to the queen, whom six months before she had styled "bastard," she wrote in angry terms to Lord Westmoreland, condemning him for his traitorous practices, and advising him to submit unconditionally to the queen's mercy. Sir Henry Percy had acted similarly towards Northumberland; but then Sir Henry had taken no part in the Rising. The queen received this fair penitent when she had humbled herself sufficiently; and about the same time that her brother, the Duke of Norfolk, was beheaded in the Tower, my lady of

<sup>1</sup> Sanders had acted as agent in the negotiations with Rome.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Alva.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Richard Sanders to Northumberland, from Louvaine, Jan. 8, 1572: *Original State Papers*.

<sup>4</sup> Lady Westmoreland to Cecil, March 23, 1570; *State Papers*.

Westmoreland was granted a Royal Pardon, and permitted to convert a large slice of the confiscated Nevill estates to her own use. She took care that no portion of this property found its way overseas to the earl, who was compelled to dwell abroad to the end of his long life, subsisting upon the very scanty pension allowed him by Spain. We catch occasional glimpses of this last of a proud line, creeping in patched and faded garments along the quays of Antwerp, and eagerly sharing bottle or platter with the chance English traveller; while his gorgeous consort, high in Elizabeth's favour, flourished at Court, and trained up her children to hate their father's name.

Burghley's broad hints regarding the surrender of the Earl of Northumberland having been favourably received at Edinburgh, Lord Hunsdon was now authorised to demand the exact sum in return for which Mar and Morton were prepared to yield up their "guest."<sup>1</sup> This left two courses, both profitable, open to the Scottish Government. They might on the one hand, by conniving at the earl's escape, pocket the two thousand pounds or thereabouts, offered as ransom by the countess, with the prospect of a still larger amount later on. Or they might, by selling Northumberland to England, secure a considerable sum, while at the same time placing Elizabeth and her minister under an obligation. Popular sentiment in Scotland no doubt favoured setting the earl free; but then a powerful English army menaced the Borders, and Elizabeth, if thwarted, might endeavour to wreak her vengeance upon the Regency itself. In the end, fear prevailed over avarice. Hunsdon was informed that the captive earl would be placed at his disposal, in exchange for the sum of £2000 sterling. Only one condition was attached to the offer. For appearance' sake, and to shield himself from popular indignation, Mar insisted that the English Court should present a formal demand for

<sup>1</sup> The earl was never spoken of by Morton as a "prisoner," but always as a "guest."

Northumberland's surrender, advancing the plea of "treaty obligations." Such obligations had, of course, no existence. In 1570 a treaty had certainly been drawn up, by the terms of which Mary Stuart was to have recovered her throne, or, at least, her liberty, if she consented to betray Northumberland to England. But the Queen of Scots had positively refused to sign or sanction any such document, on the ground that it did not "*stande with her honour to delyver those who . . . come for refuge within her country.*"<sup>1</sup> Mar (who had none of Mary's scruples concerning honour or hospitality) now asked Burghley to make believe that some such agreement had actually been adopted by the two countries. The Cecilian conscience was little likely to be troubled by so small a deviation from the truth. The bribe of £2000 being considered surprisingly modest, Burghley was quite ready to pay it, and to lend (temporary) countenance to this tale of an international treaty, if by these means he could get Northumberland into his clutches.

But here again, as in the case of Lady Northumberland's negotiations, the Scots evinced a deep distrust of the persons with whom they were dealing. In vain Hunsdon blustered, and Elizabeth gave her royal promise that the blood-money should be forwarded to Edinburgh immediately after the surrender. Mar's agents demanded their pay in advance. "*They mean to delyver hym very shortlie,*" wrote Hunsdon, "*but will not delyver hym without the money.*"<sup>2</sup> Haggling over this point prolonged the transaction until the end of May 1572. At length Burghley agreed to have the gold counted out before the accredited representative of the Regent, and duly placed in his hands "*immediatly upon the receipt of the person of Thomas Percy, formerly Earl of Northumberland.*" The Scots expressed themselves satisfied at this arrangement; but, as will be seen, they continued watchful and suspicious to the very last moment. Mar gave his final consent to the bargain, merely expressing the wish, worthy of Pilate, that, if possible, Northumberland's life might be spared.

<sup>1</sup> Haynes, p. 609.

<sup>2</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, April 1572; *State Papers*.





*Thomas, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northumberland.*

4A

16

The manner in which Earl Thomas was betrayed into the hands of his enemies is soon told. To have brought him towards the Border by land might have provoked The earl sold to his doom. a popular tumult; for his friends were many, and sufficiently influential to cause grave trouble to the Government. It was therefore decided to have him conveyed by sea; and a shooting expedition to the Bass Rock was made the pretext upon which he was lured from Lochleven. Northumberland's keen enjoyment of every form of sport has been alluded to more than once in these pages,<sup>1</sup> so that it will be understood how gladly he welcomed such a chance to vary the monotony of prison life. The Laird of Cleish, a considerable landed proprietor on the shores of the loch, was the individual chosen to carry out the plot. Cleish won the earl's confidence by his cunning discourse upon the subject of hawk and hound, "which things he understood right well, for a Scott." Accompanied by a few boatmen and servants, they sailed from one of the ports on the Firth of Forth (Douglas of Lochleven having given leave for the journey, after much pretence of reluctance). It is probable that the Bass was visited; but instead of returning to the Firth, after their shooting was done, Cleish made for Dunbar. Here a body of foot-soldiers had been posted to await their coming, and Northumberland was for the first time made aware of Cleish's treachery.

From Dunbar the prisoner was conveyed to Coldingham, where he was left in custody while Cleish hurried on to Berwick to inform Lord Hunsdon. On May 29, Hunsdon sent the "good news" to Cecil (incidentally calling attention to the fact that the Scottish agent was still fearful lest the English, by trickery or force of arms, might seek to possess themselves of the earl without paying the price agreed on):—

*"Yesternight came thyther unto me the Larde of Clyshe, who had delt with me hertofore, about the Erle of Northum-*

<sup>1</sup> He is understood to have been the Blandamour of Spenser's *Fairy Queen*:—

"A jolly youthful knight,  
That bore great sway in arms and venerie."

Westmoreland was the Paridel of Spenser.

berland, who declared too mee that he had brought the saide Erle to Coldingham, and was come to know what tyme I would receve hym thys daye at Aymouthe, as also, bycause it would be teduous to have the money towld there, that he myght tell it here and seale it upp, and so upon the receyving of the Erle too delyver the money."<sup>1</sup> This was accordingly done, and the earl was handed over to Hunsdon at Eyemouth, some five miles south of Coldingham, about noon on May 29. From Eyemouth he was carried to Berwick, and there lodged for the time being in the house of the treasurer, Valentine Browne.

Hunsdon continues: "*I have had no greate talk with hym, but trewly he seems to follow his old humors, reddyer to talk of hawks and hounds than anything els, very much abasht and sorrowful, and beyng in grete feere of his lyfe, and yett reddyer to talke of these vayne matters than otherwyse. . . . I wold be glad to knowe how I should ease hym, and would fayne be quigly delyvered of him, yf ytt will please Her Majesty that I shall bring hym upp.*"<sup>2</sup>

Hunsdon was anxious that he alone should have the credit of escorting the earl to London. It had been originally intended that one Vaughan, a member of the Northern Council, should perform this duty; but Hunsdon wrote to his sovereign relative, begging that he might take Vaughan's place. "*Your Maiestie may doe your pleaser, but sewrly yt wyll touch meyne credytt to have any other man bryng him upp.*"<sup>3</sup>

Naturally the shameful surrender of the earl caused a great outcry both in England and Scotland. Hunsdon felt that it was unsafe to detain the noble prisoner too long at Berwick, surrounded as the castle was on every side by persons devoted to the Percy family. On June 7 he informs Cecil that he looks "*howrly for a discharge of the Erle, of whom I am right weary; for I assure your Lordship I have slept few quiet sleeps since I had hym; for as there is no strong or safe house to keepe him in, I am faine to keepe watch and warde round the howse day and night.*"<sup>4</sup> Later he adds: "*I wonder*

Outcry  
against the  
traitors.

<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, May 29; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

*no order is taken for the Earl of Northumberland; praye have him sent somewhere els. I dare not undertake to keep him here; so if he happen to escape, it cannot be said that I have not warned you. I am afraid some of my unfriends procure his abode here, to procure me displeasure if he escape."*<sup>1</sup>

That these fears were not without foundation may be gathered from the angry flood of ballads and verses which the treachery of Mar and Morton called forth on both sides of the Border. The best known of these is the "Ballad of Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas," quoted by Bishop Percy in his *Reliques*. In this poem Morton is made the Regent instead of Mar—an error which may be explained by the facts that the former nobleman had actually succeeded to the Regency at the period of Northumberland's execution, and that he was well known to have played a prominent part in all the events leading up to the betrayal. The ballad relates how Northumberland, while confined at Lochleven, is warned by the Regent's sister that he is about to be sold to the English Puritans. He has a high opinion of Douglas chivalry, however, and refuses to credit the story—

*"Now nay, now nay, thou goodly lady,  
The Regent is a noble lord;  
Ne for the gold in all England,  
The Douglas wuld not break his word."*<sup>2</sup>

*When the Regent was a banisht man,  
With me he did faire welcome find;  
And whether weal or woe betide,  
I still shall find him true and kind."*

The pretext of the shooting party, by means of which Northumberland was induced to leave the mainland and embark in a boat, is then described. Berwick is given as the landing-place, instead of Dunbar or Coldingham—

*"When they had sailed other fifty mile,  
Other fifty mile upon the sea,  
They landed him; at Berwick tounne  
The Douglas landed Lord Percie."*

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, vol. ii.

In the Cotton MSS., preserved in the British Museum, may be found many bitter metrical attacks upon the Scots by English admirers of Thomas Percy. One of these exclaims—

*“Fy on thee, Scotland, and thy seed,  
Aboue all realmes woe thee befall!  
Thy lordes have done so shameful deed,  
That traytours ay men will you call.  
You are so greedie on English gold,  
That all your credit now is sold!”*<sup>1</sup>

And another of a similar character, written by one Singleton, “a Gentleman of Lancashire, now prisoner at York for religion,” is even more virulent—

*“Who shall hereafter trust a Scot?  
Or who will doe that nation good?  
That so themselves doe stayne and blott,  
In selling of such noble blood?  
Let Lordes of this a mirror make,  
And in distresse that lande forsake!  
Their Lordes and Limmours are forlorne,  
Their people curst of each degree;  
Their faith and promise all too torne  
And rumor rings it to the sky,  
How they for money sold their guest  
Unto the shambles like a beast!”*<sup>2</sup>

It was, of course, grossly unjust to blame the entire kingdom of Scotland for the evil deed of the Regent, Black Morton and their venal associates. The surrender of Northumberland was looked upon by the great majority of Scots with abhorrence. The following verses were evidently written to defend the nation as a whole against the charge of base treachery, while, at the same time, condemning the real culprits—

*“Although some traitours be amang us,  
In blaming all forsuith ye wrang us,  
Thoch sum have playèt Judas’ pairt,  
In selling gud Northumberland,*

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., *Caligula*, B. IV. 243, British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Cotton MSS.

*Quhy suld they thoill for their desert,  
That faime would have that fact withstand?  
Or yet the country bear the blame?  
Let them that sould him have the shame!*

*Mar, and the devilishe Douglassis,  
And namely Morton and Lochleuin;  
M<sup>c</sup>Gill and Orkney, Scottish assis,  
And Cleishe, quhunto the gold was given.  
Dumferling that the Ploy prepared,  
And lowst Lindsay, quho was his guairde.”<sup>1</sup>*

In addition to the ballads and epigrams, a great number of pamphlets were published on the subject, nearly all expressing sympathy with the doomed earl, and holding up the Scots Government to scorn and detestation.

The cause of the delay in dealing with Northumberland, which had given Hunsdon so much anxiety, was soon brought to light. Elizabeth's first intention was to have him put to death at once, and no sooner did the news of his capture reach London than she signed a warrant for his execution. But the hereditary Tudor avarice intervened, and gave the earl a brief respite. According to the patents of Queen Mary, the Northumberland titles and estates were to pass, in default of male issue of Thomas Percy's body, to his brother, Sir Henry Percy. Thus even were Earl Thomas attainted and executed as a traitor, his attainder would not affect the succession of the said brother. Now, ever since the earl's outlawry the Crown had farmed and enjoyed the fruits of his great estates. With his execution this state of things would cease, and the property would revert to that "good Protestant," the hitherto loyal Sir Henry Percy, thus depriving Queen Bess of a large annual income. Such a calamity must be averted, if possible; and the astute Cecil advised that the order for Northum-

<sup>1</sup> From *Poems by Unknownin Makars*, collected by Pinkerton. Attributed to John Maitland, Lord Thirlestane, son of the poet Sir Richard Maitland.

berland's death should be temporarily withdrawn, until some good excuse might arise for retaining the Percy estates under royal control. Accordingly the earl was respited. Honest Hunsdon, while fully understanding the benefits accruing to his sovereign during the outlawed Percy's life, believed that Elizabeth meant to spare the prisoner's life; and under this very mistaken impression wrote to Cecil:—

*"I am not sorry, for trewly though he have fully by law deserved to dye, yet, consydering what loss Her Majesty shall receive by his deathe, . . . Her Majesty hath and doth show as great mercy to a number that as well deserved to dye as he, without any benefyt to hyr."*<sup>1</sup>

While Burghley cast about for a plan to keep the inconveniently loyal Sir Henry Percy out of his inheritance,<sup>2</sup> he instructed Hunsdon to secure, by fair or foul means, confession from the earl. The character of this unprincipled and cynical minister is all too clearly exemplified in the letter of advice which he wrote upon this occasion (under the Queen's name):—

*"In the dealyngs herein you may use such speeches as may justly terrify him with all extremite of punishment if he shall conceal anything; and sometymes, as you may see cause, you may also comforte him with some hope, so it be not in our name nor by us warranted, if he will utter the truth of every person, without regard to any, whatsoever they be, though he may think they be in place of credite. As for any chargeable entertaynment of his in his diet we lyke not, consydering him as a person attaynted; by over tender usage he may gather comfort to persist in denial of things to his knowledge."*<sup>3</sup> In other words, the prisoner was to be tortured with the torture of hope deferred; to be now bullied, now coaxed

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.* The last allusion is probably to Lady Westmoreland, among others.

<sup>2</sup> Burghley himself was particularly well disposed towards Sir Henry; but Elizabeth was determined to retain the Percy revenues as long as possible, and the minister was obliged to carry out her wishes.

<sup>3</sup> To Hunsdon, June 5, 1572; *State Papers.*



into revealing the secrets of the Northern Rising; and to be stinted even in his daily bread, lest good food should give him strength to flout his persecutors.

Fortunately Hunsdon was not one to carry out these orders too stringently. So far from tormenting the earl, he appears to have treated him with courtesy and forbearance. When first the prisoner came to Berwick, he had absolutely no money, and his only apparel consisted of an old suit which he had donned for sea-going purposes. Hunsdon induced Sir Valentine Browne, the treasurer of Berwick, to advance £12 from his secret service accounts for the purpose of suitably clothing the earl, and supplying him with a little pocket-money.<sup>1</sup>

Before turning to the subject of the "Confession," it may be noted that, even in his perilous state, Northumberland drew considerable amusement from the rumours which reached him of wrangling and disputing among his betrayers over the English blood-money. Douglas of Lochleven claimed, as his share, £1000 (or half the entire amount), alleging that he had spent more than that "in entertaining the Percy." The other gentry scoffed at this demand; and Cleish quoted the earl himself, to the effect that, while in custody at Lochleven, he "*seldom or ever had a morsel of goode meate.*"<sup>2</sup> When it came to his turn, the laird of Cleish asked for £100, since "*only by his great travail*"<sup>3</sup> he had carried the earl to Coldingham and Eyemouth. When all had been allotted their shares, these were found to be so small that wrath and disappointment prevailed; and from recriminations the conspirators came to blows.

Border tradition has it that "no luck attended any of those who participated in this perfidy." Mar died within the twelvemonth, by poison it was said; and Morton (whom many accused of having been the poisoner) perished miserably on the block a few years later.

<sup>1</sup> Browne to Burghley; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> Hunsdon to Cecil; *State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

On June 12, 1572, Hunsdon and Sir Valentine Browne visited the earl for the purpose of taking his official deposition, should he desire to make one. The preliminary questions sent by Cecil and the queen seem to have dealt chiefly with affairs of religion; and on this head Hunsdon reports that his prisoner was more obstinately affected towards Romanism than ever; while Browne adds that the earl had "*nothing altered from his old mummish opynions, whiche he wolde persuade to be taken for the cause of the rebellion.*"<sup>1</sup> That there was another, and an equally important cause (the recognition of Mary Stuart as next heir to the throne), Northumberland's own statement, presently to be quoted, serves to prove. Hunsdon appears to have respected this religious "obstinacy"; nor did they seek (as was afterwards done by Forster at York) to argue the earl into accepting the new doctrines.

To all questions put to him in respect of his own conduct during the Rising, Northumberland answered without fear or concealment. But when the inquisitors touched upon the names of his associates, he either answered evasively, or refused to reply at all. Westmoreland he was particularly anxious to shield, hoping, no doubt, to pave the way for that nobleman's pardon. Of hope in his own case he seems to have had little or none; at least he made no attempt to excuse his treason, or to lay the blame of it upon others. "*Having answered,*" reports Hunsdon to Burghley, "*he requyred me presentlye, as hys memory is short, and that he wold not wyllingly consele anythyng utteryd, that I wold leve them*" (the reports of his answers taken down by Sir Valentine Browne) "*with hym that nyght, and lycence hym to have paper and ynke; which I dyd.*"

Northumberland's reasons for this request are easily penetrated. He knew by hard experience my lord Burghley's skill in juggling with the words and phrases of others, and feared lest any unwary expression of his

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers, Domestic Series, Add.*, June, 1572.

should be twisted into a meaning dangerous to the lives and liberties of those who had been associated with him in the rebellion. Distrusting his own mental powers, he would not accept the written answers at the first reading, but asked leave to consider them carefully and alone, so as to make certain that they compromised none of his loyal friends. A man of the Cecil type would have refused such a boon upon the spot; but Hunsdon, who doubtless understood the prisoner's true motives, gave him all he asked. Through the night, therefore, Northumberland pored over the written deposition, altering words and even whole sentences wherever he believed the sense to be prejudicial to the interests of his wife, of Westmoreland, or of the other insurgent chiefs. At daybreak on June 12 he had finished his task, and set his name to the document.

His personal statement concludes by giving the motives which had induced him to take arms against the ministers of Elizabeth; towards the queen herself, he declares, the insurgents bore only sentiments of loyalty. They rose, to quote the earl's words, "*for the reformation of relygion, and for the preservation of the Second Person*" (of the realm) "*the Queen of Scotts, whom we accompted by God's lawe and man's lawe to be the right heire. . . . I was in hope (although I had little for me) both the Erle of Leycester and my lorde Burleghe had beene blessit with some godly inspiracion by this tyme of the daye to discern cheese from chalke;*<sup>1</sup> *the matters being so evidently discourssed by the learned divines of thys our tyme. . . . And now, finding myself deceved of that expectacion, I can no more doe, but shall praye faythefully to Almyghtie God to imbue Her Highnes and them with His grace, that they may knowe hym and feare hym aright.*"<sup>2</sup>

In forwarding the earl's signed statement to Burghley, Hunsdon remarks: "*I think the Erle hath answered truthfully. He doth greatlye excuse my Lord of Westmoreland, and sayeth plainlye that they could never gett howld of him tyll the*

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the Stuart succession, and the question of religious toleration.

<sup>2</sup> Sharpe, *Memorials*, p. 202.

*last owre, and that by procurement of hys wyfe . . . who was more vehement than any other.*"<sup>1</sup> This attack upon Lady Westmoreland (the sole case in which Northumberland wittingly gave evidence against his former associates) is surely pardonable, when one remembers how traitorously the countess had behaved to the insurgents, how she had left her husband to starve in exile after first luring him and others into the plot, and how she was even then enjoying the favour of Elizabeth as the price of her treachery. Hunsdon, while admiring the courage and extraordinary generosity of Northumberland, has but a slender opinion of his worldly wisdom. "*I assure your Majestye,*" the report concludes, "*I dyd never thynke hym so sympell as now I fynde hym, and yf his confessyon ys trew, he was greatlye urged to yt by others; and yett in this whole matter he excusyth Westmoreland more than hymselfe.*"<sup>2</sup> Truly there was little of selfishness or cunning in the nature of Thomas Percy.

The inquisition having failed to elicit any evidence of importance against Northumberland's fellow-insurgents, Elizabeth speedily dropped her cruel pretence of clemency towards the prisoner at Berwick. There was no longer any make-belief squeamishness with regard to signing the earl's death-warrant; and Hunsdon, who had been duped into believing that his captive's life might perhaps be spared, was rudely disillusioned by letters from his royal cousin, and from Burghley. Between Northumberland and the sturdy Warden of the Eastern Marches a friendship had sprung up; and the two were accustomed to spend hours in each other's company, either in the prisoner's cell, or upon the ramparts of Berwick Castle. Hunsdon now determined to do all he could in the doomed man's interests; and with this end in view wrote to Elizabeth, urging that imprisonment or exile should be substituted for capital

The earl's  
doom is  
sealed.

<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, June 12; *Orig. State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

punishment. Knowing his kinswoman's weak points, he used what he believed to be the most forcible argument in favour of mercy, *i.e.* that were Northumberland put to death, the Percy estates and the emoluments therefrom would pass out of royal control into the possession of the earl's "loyal" brother, Sir Henry. It was a likely plea, and had been used effectively a short time before; but in the meantime the queen's advisers had successfully hatched out a crafty plan, whereby even the loyal Percy was entrapped into a quarrel with the Government, arrested on various vague charges,<sup>1</sup> and lodged in the Tower. It would now be an easy matter to behead Earl Thomas and at the same time attain his heir, so that the broad acres of the family might continue to produce abundantly for her Majesty's benefit. Thus it came to pass that Hunsdon's kindly efforts went for naught. The queen had nothing to gain by keeping Northumberland alive any longer; and at the next meeting of her Council she signed the warrant for his execution.

The warrant was handed to Lord Hunsdon on July 11, as he was "*syting downe to dynner*"; and he (in his own homely phrase) "*wanted no dynner after gettyng it.*" By the terms of the document the Warden was commanded to escort his prisoner to York, and there superintend the details of the latter's execution. This was probably a characteristic piece of Burghley's spite; for the Secretary had learned through his spies of the consideration and courtesy shown to Northumberland, in defiance of ministerial wishes, and of the mutual liking which existed between Hunsdon and his charge. But if Burghley had hoped to indulge his brutal cynicism by forcing upon the Warden duties so painful as those of chief executioner to a condemned friend, he reckoned without the courage and resolution of the man whom he thus sought to punish. Henry Carey knew by this time that he could not save

<sup>1</sup> It was pretended that he had engaged in a plot to liberate the Queen of Scots.

Northumberland's life; but despite Burghley, Leicester,<sup>1</sup> Killigrew, and the rest of them, despite the *fiat* of Elizabeth herself, he was firmly resolved not to stain his hands with the earl's blood. His duties as Governor of Berwick and Warden of the East Marches supplied him with some sort of excuse for refusing to carry out the terms of the warrant; but even were this disallowed, he was prepared to bear imprisonment rather than comply. To Burghley he wrote in bitter complaint:—

*"Fyndyng myselve hardly delt withal to be a carryer of any nobelman to executyon yntoo a place wherein I have nothyng to do. My charge ys butt in thys toune and the Este Wardenry, and therefore for mee to be putt to bryng him to York to be executed, I can neyther thynke that hyr Majestie deales wyth mee thereyn, nor that I have anye suche frendes about Her Majestie as I accounted of; and sewrly I wyll rather suffer sum ymprysonment than doo yt. Sir John Forster hathe bothe the comodity and proffytt of all hys landes yn Northumberland,<sup>2</sup> and he is fyttest to have the carryage of hym to York, and I wyll delyver hym safely att Alnwyck, but no farther, by my wyll."<sup>3</sup>*

This vigorous letter at once astonished and angered the Secretary; but Elizabeth refused to punish her cousin for his temerity, and, after efforts had been vainly made to break Hunsdon's resolution, he was allowed to have his way. A fresh warrant was, of course, rendered necessary by the change of plans; and the Warden renewed his arguments and entreaties in favour of clemency, with some apparent success, for the queen granted Northumberland another respite. The earl had two friends, at least, who laboured zealously in his behalf until the end. Of

<sup>1</sup> There was an old feud between the families of Dudley and Percy; beginning in the prosecution of the notorious Dudley, the minister of Henry VII., and continued when Warwick assumed the title of Duke of Northumberland in the reign of Edward VI. Leicester was, after Burghley, perhaps the bitterest enemy of the seventh earl.

<sup>2</sup> Forster was lessee under the Crown of most of the Northumberland estates and factor or agent over the rest.

<sup>3</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, from Berwick, July 11, 1572; *State Papers*.

these, one was Hunsdon; the other, Lady Northumberland. Although her husband's betrayal by Mar and Morton had temporarily daunted even the great heart of Countess Ann, new hopes had arisen there of late, and the earl's cause was pleaded eloquently and persistently at the Courts of France and Spain. The spy, John Lee, informed Burghley that Lady Northumberland had gone in person to Paris, and implored the king to use his influence with Elizabeth; and that Alva had been persuaded by the devoted wife's prayers to make one more effort in the earl's behalf at Madrid.<sup>1</sup> But although both Philip and Louis replied with fair words and assurances of sympathy, neither could be induced to move in the matter.

The new death-warrant was signed early in August, Sir John Forster being substituted for Hunsdon as the person delegated to bring Northumberland to York, and there superintend his execution. But here another unexpected delay occurred. Elizabeth received an appeal for mercy, written, as some say, by the Queen of Scots, but more probably by Lady Northumberland. When Burghley, waiting for news of his enemy's death, wrote to demand why the prisoner had not been delivered up to Forster, Lord Hunsdon replied that he stood ready to obey the warrant on the date fixed, but on that very morning he had "*received the Queen's Majestie's letter to stave hym*" (the earl) at his discretion, and to disregard all other orders, until he "*heerde from hyr ageyne.*"<sup>2</sup>

During the few days Elizabeth flattered her vanity by aping the merciful sovereign, reluctant to shed blood. She had acted similarly in the case of the Duke of Norfolk; she was to repeat the hypocrisy in later years when Mary Stuart and when Essex came to die. Burghley, knowing his royal mistress, and having no doubts as to the final issue of these "scruples," allowed her to play the grim farce out without remonstrance. Twice in that

<sup>1</sup> John Lee to Burghley, July 14; *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, August 9; *State Papers*.

brief time Hunsdon was bidden to hand over his prisoner, and twice the order was set aside.<sup>1</sup> At length her Majesty tired of the game, and a final command was issued to the Warden, who on August 17 escorted Northumberland to Alnwick Castle, and there, in the ancient stronghold of the Percies, placed him in the custody of Sir John Forster.<sup>2</sup>

Disarmed and terrorised as the North had been, Forster did not dare to have it known that Thomas Percy, chief of his name, was being borne to a shameful death along the very road whereby his fathers had so often marched to victory. Accordingly it was given out that the earl had at last made his peace with the queen, and that he journeyed south solely for the purpose of being reinstated in his titles and possessions.<sup>3</sup> This specious tale was spread far and wide, and eagerly received by the country-folk along the line of march; but in order to guard the more surely against rescue and disturbance, Forster surrounded his captive with a considerable force of picked men "drawn from the shires," well armed and mounted. The size of this body of horse can only be judged from the fact that their expenses for the short journey amounted to over £150.<sup>4</sup> Under the pretence that he had but recently recovered from an illness the earl was conveyed in a coach, so that the crowds which assembled to greet him between Alnwick and Durham were only able to catch passing glimpses of their late leader. The vehicle—in itself an object of curiosity to the Northerners—was protected on every side by the so-called "escort" of armed men.<sup>5</sup>

The earl's last progress occupied three days in all; one night being spent at Newcastle, and another at Darlington. After crossing the Tyne, Forster relaxed his vigilance to the extent of permitting several old friends and associates of the prisoner—Tempests, Conyerses, Swinburnes, and

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Martyrium Thoma Percci*, by Dr. Sanders, in Bridgewater's *Concertatio* (Treves, 1589). . . . *Life of the Blessed Thomas Percy*, by Rev. G. E. Phillips.

<sup>4</sup> Sharpe, *Memorials*, pp. 333-34.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*





4A

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others—to hold converse with him. The gaoler himself was always present at these interviews however, and no opportunity was given “for the plotting of treasons.” Northumberland was apparently resigned to his fate. “Life,” he told his friends, “would be more pleasing to my flesh than death; that I neither can nor will deny, provided that my conscience be not injured. But rather than that should suffer, let death come, and life depart.”<sup>1</sup>

On August 21 there was a midday halt at Topcliffe, once the earl’s favourite seat, but somewhat out of the main road from Darlington. No doubt Forster, as agent or lessee under the Crown of the earl’s northern estates, found it convenient to obtain food and forage for his troops at this place. But it is to be hoped that Northumberland was not brought to his old home without being permitted to see and embrace, for the last time, his four little daughters, who were still sheltered by the good people of the neighbourhood. Neither Forster’s reports nor the *Memorials* mention that this humane privilege was accorded to the prisoner; but from indirect evidence it may be assumed that an interview between parent and children actually took place. Allusion has been made to a sacred relic, a supposed thorn from the crown of Christ, presented by the Queen of Scots to her champion, and carried by him through the days of his exile and imprisonment. This token, set in a golden cross, was, we are told, given by Northumberland, about the time of his execution, to his eldest daughter, Elizabeth.<sup>2</sup> It is more than probable that he placed it in the child’s own hands during the brief stay at Topcliffe, and that this brief wayside halt brought him the sad consolation of a visit from his little ones.

Elizabeth Percy<sup>3</sup> guarded her father’s precious gift with loving care from the hour of its bestowal until, when on

<sup>1</sup> Sanders in *Bridgewater’s Concertatio*. Phillips’ *Life of the Blessed Thomas Percy*.

<sup>2</sup> De Fonblanque; Phillips.

<sup>3</sup> She subsequently married Richard Woodroffe of Woolley, Co. York, and died a Catholic.

her deathbed, she in turn bequeathed it to her confessor, the Jesuit Father Gerard. This relic is now at Stonyhurst College, enclosed in a handsome casket, upon which are inscribed the words: "*Hæc spina de Corona Domini sancta fuit primo Mariæ Reginae Scotiæ Martyris, et ab ea data Comiti Northumbriæ Martyri, qui in morti misit illam filia suæ, Elizabethæ, quæ dedit Societate.*"

Between Topcliffe and York large bodies of gentlemen and yeomanry joined the party, and when the Northern capital was reached the streets were found to be thronged with people. Forster, fearful lest his carefully laid plans should be spoiled at the last moment by some untoward outbreak, allowed his prisoner less than twenty-four hours in which to prepare for death. But a day more or less mattered little to Northumberland after his weary months of captivity. Carried to York Castle, and lodged there under a double guard, he was not permitted to see a priest of his own faith, or even to write a farewell letter to his wife. Sanders asserts that the earl's life was offered to him by the queen's agents, Forster, and a Protestant clergyman named Palmer, on condition that he publicly abjured the doctrines of the Roman Church, and took the oath of supremacy; and that he refused the offer with contempt.<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Allen makes a similar statement,<sup>2</sup> adding that Forster and others vainly argued with the condemned man until late on the evening of August 21, when they left him to die in his belief.

There was confined in York Castle at the time an aged gentleman, Sir Thomas Metham by name, whose sole crime appears to have been his religion. He had taken no part whatever in the Rising, but owed his imprisonment to the fact that he was "a most wilful Papist."<sup>3</sup> Learning of Northumberland's arrival, the venerable knight and his wife (also a captive) implored Forster for permission to see the earl, whose father and grandfather they had known. The

<sup>1</sup> Bridgewater's *Concertatio*.

<sup>2</sup> *Responsio ad Persecutores*; Bridgewater Edition.

<sup>3</sup> *Domestic State Papers*, February 6, 1570.

boon was granted out of respect for Metham's years. Lady Metham proved too feeble to venture forth, but Sir Thomas was assisted from his cell to that of his fellow-prisoner; and we are told by Dr. Sanders that he saw Northumberland, "held converse with him, and bade him a last adieu. Then, returning to his own place of confinement, he gave up his soul to God a little while afterwards."<sup>1</sup>

Northumberland's execution was fixed for 2 P.M. on the following day—Friday, August 22; and a scaffold had been hastily erected in The Pavement, then the principal market-place of York. During the night of August 21 the earl refused to take any rest, in spite of the pleadings of his faithful body-servant, old John Clarke. Save for portion of an hour, he spent in prayer and fasting the entire interval between the departure of Sir Thomas Metham and the coming of Forster and Sheriff Gargrave to call him to the scaffold. The messengers of death found him in readiness. His request for a confessor was again refused, although there were at least two Catholic priests in York Castle at the moment; and Forster insisted that he should be attended to the block by a clergyman of the Established Church, the Mr. Palmer already mentioned. The events which followed are thus minutely described by Dr. Sanders, who, if he was not present himself, derived his information directly from John Clarke and other eye-witnesses: "On arriving at the place of execution, the earl took off his cloak, and again making the sign of the cross, not only on his forehead, but also on the steps, he mounted cheerfully to the platform, where Palmer, the same Protestant minister who had visited him the night before, began to urge him to acknowledge his crime against the queen in presence of the assembled crowd.

"On this the earl, turning towards the people, said: 'I should have been content to meet my death in silence, were it not that I see it is the custom for those who

<sup>1</sup> *Martyrium T. Perci*, in *Bridgewater's Concertatio*.

undergo this kind of punishment, to address some words to the bystanders as to the cause of their being put to death. Know, therefore, that, from my earliest years down to the present day, I have held the Faith of that Church which, throughout the whole Christian world, is knit and bound together ; and that in the same Faith I am about to end this unhappy life. But as for this new Church of England, I do not acknowledge it.'

"Here Palmer, interrupting him, cried out in a loud voice : 'I see that you are dying an obstinate Papist ; a member, not of the Catholic, but of the Roman Church.' To this the earl replied : 'That which you call the Roman Church is the Catholic Church, which has been founded on the teaching of the Apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being its corner-stone, strengthened by the blood of Martyrs, honoured by the recognition of the holy Fathers ; and it continues always the same, being the Church against which, as Christ our Saviour said, the gates of Hell shall not prevail.'

"When Palmer tried a second time to interrupt him, the earl said : 'Cease, pray, to further trouble me, for of this truth my mind and conscience are most thoroughly convinced.' And when Palmer still would not be silent, the earl, turning to the people, said :—'Beware, beloved brothers, of these ravening wolves, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, whilst, meantime, they are the men that devour your souls.' At this, rushing straight down from the platform, as though he had received a blow, Palmer left the earl free to finish his address. . . . After commending to his brother's care his children, his servants, and some small debts, he begged all present to forgive him, declaring that he on his part forgave all from his heart. Then kneeling he finished his prayers.

"Then, after kissing a cross, which he traced upon the ladder of the scaffold, with his arms so folded as to form a cross, he stretched himself upon the block ; and as soon as he had said 'Lord, receive my soul !' the executioner struck off his head. At that same instant, a great groan,

which sounded like a roll of thunder, burst from the weeping spectators, as with one voice they called on God to receive his soul into eternal rest.

"It was thought very wonderful that, from the moment of his laying himself upon the block, he gave not the slightest sign of fear, and made no movement whatever of either head or body. The people gathered up the martyr's blood so diligently with handkerchiefs and linen cloths, that not even a straw stained with it was suffered to remain without their carrying it home to be treasured as a sacred relic. For throughout his life he was beyond measure dear to the whole people."<sup>1</sup>

That this version of the death of Northumberland was coloured by the prejudices of the writer is of course probable; but it is in the main borne out by the report of the Protestant Sir Thomas Gargrave, written the day after the execution:—"So farre as may appere by any talk or doyings of the late Erle of Northumberland, at or before his dethe, he contynued obstynate in relygion, and declared he wold dye a Catholyke of the Pope's Churche. He compted his offence nothynge, and especyally after he knew he shold dye. . . . He confessyd he was reconcyled to the Pope; he affermyd this realme was in a scysme, and that all were sysmatykes. He said here was nether pitye nor mercye. In his talke with dyvers he namyd hymselfe 'Symple Thome,' and sayd 'Symple Thome must dye to sett up crewell Henry'<sup>2</sup> [or 'crewell Heresy.'] 'At his dethe he wysshed his brother to be of his relygion, and that if he had hys lyvyng, he trysted he wold pay his dettes and helpe his chyldren and servantes. He dyd not here either pray for the Queene's Majestie, nor even wysshed her well, nor yet wold confesse he had offendyd Her

<sup>1</sup> Sanders; *Martyrium Thoma Percei*, in Bridgewater's *Concertatio* (Treves, 1589).

<sup>2</sup> This is the reading adopted by the printed version of the original letter, and followed by the majority of historians. In the original, however, the two last words are so indistinct as to be almost illegible; and in Wright's *Queen Elizabeth and Her Times* they are quoted as "crewell Heresy," instead of "crewell Henry." Yet other authorities read "cunning Henry." It seems most probable that the earl did refer to his brother, Henry Percy.

*Majestie ; whereat many was offendyd and thoyght he had no deutyfull consideration of her Ma<sup>tie</sup>; and on the other syde, the styf-neckyd popystes rejoyced moche of his stedfastnes in their crede of popyshe relygyon."*<sup>1</sup> The Spanish Ambassador in London, writing to the Duke of Alva on August 30, mentioned the execution, adding:—"On the scaffold he said he died in the Catholic faith, and that if he had a thousand lives he would sacrifice them all for its sake; that this sect was bad and false; and other matters of the same sort."<sup>2</sup>

The actual hour of Northumberland's death was three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, August 22, 1572.<sup>3</sup>

The body of Earl Thomas was buried by John Clarke and others in the Church of the Holy Cross, known as Crux Church, at one end of The Pavement.

Interment of the earl, and his beatification by the Roman Church.

None attended the funeral "save two men and three maid domestics, and a stranger in disguise, who, causing suspycyon, immediately fled."<sup>4</sup>

The servants probably belonged to the earl's former household at Topcliffe, while the disguised stranger may have been an agent of Lady Northumberland—perhaps the same Dr. Sanders who leaves so minute (and apparently accurate) an account of the execution. No memorial of any kind was erected; and when Crux Church was pulled down, and the site built over in 1788, all vestiges of the grave disappeared. In the parish register of St. Margaret's, Walmgate, there is a simple entry:—"Dominus Percy decollatus erat XXII die Augusti."

With regard to the decapitated head, more than one legend survives. This ghastly trophy of Cecil's hatred was set upon a high pole over Micklegate Bar, and continued in that position for nearly two years, when it was stolen

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS., Caligula, c. iii. fol. 394; Sir Thos. Gargrave to Burghley.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Galba, c. iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Domestic State Papers*, Addenda, Sept. 2, 1572.

*Beckwith MS.*, "History of York."



by friends and never afterwards recovered.<sup>1</sup> One story has it that the head was buried by midnight according to the rites of the Catholic Church in the woods of Topcliffe ;<sup>2</sup> another, that it was "carried overseas hid in a roll of new cloth," and eventually delivered to Lady Northumberland. An old pamphlet,<sup>3</sup> following a legend still current in Yorkshire, credits the famous seeress, Mother Shipton, with a prophecy on the subject. She is said to have stopped the earl, then only Sir Thomas Percy, upon the highway, and accosted him in these boding words :—" *My lord, shoot your horse in the quicke, and you shall do well ; but your bodie will be buried in Yorke pavement, and your head shall be stolne from the Barre, and carryed into France.*"<sup>4</sup>

Among Roman Catholics, the seventh Earl of Northumberland is recognised as the Blessed Thomas Percy.<sup>5</sup> "By the Brief of December 29, 1886," says the Rev. G. E. Phillips, "a large group of our English martyrs were beatified, as we commonly say, but, as we should more correctly say, recognised as having in days long past attained to that honour. Gregory XIII., as this Brief of 1886 tells us, granted in their honour several privileges appertaining to public and ecclesiastical worship, and chiefly that of using their relics in the consecration of altars, when relics of ancient holy martyrs could not be had. Moreover . . . he permitted also the martyrs of the Church in England, both of ancient and more recent times, to be represented in like manner by the same artist (Nicholas Circiniani) in the English Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Rome, including those who from the year 1535 to 1583 had died under Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth for the Catholic faith and for the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff." These pictures were destroyed by the French in 1809 ; but copies

<sup>1</sup> Drake's *Hist. of York*, vol. i. p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> The park is still said to be haunted by Earl Thomas's spectre, headless and bearing a skull.

<sup>3</sup> Printed by Richard Loundes in 1641, and preserved in the British Museum.

<sup>4</sup> Antiquarians point out that as Mother Shipton was not a contemporary of the 7th earl, the prophecy must have been uttered by some other soothsayer.

<sup>5</sup> *The Blessed Thomas Percy*, p. 66.

had fortunately been preserved, and to fifty-four of these copies the names of the originals were attached. All these martyrs were beatified,—*i.e.* “their veneration was sanctioned”—by the Church in 1886. There remained, however, nine portraits (among them that of Thomas Percy), to which no names were attached; and these were held back for due investigation. Eventually, after much sifting of evidence, the nine paintings were identified, and a supplementary decree sanctioning their *cultus* was issued on May 13, 1895. With Percy were beatified Adrian Fortescue, three Benedictine abbots, and four Benedictine monks. With the exception of the earl, all had suffered for their religion during the persecutions of Henry VIII.<sup>1</sup>

Before turning to the next inheritor of the Northumberland honours, it remains but to follow briefly the fortunes of the widowed countess and her children. The four elder children of Earl Thomas remained for some time after his death in the care of tenants and retainers at Topcliffe, being prevented by Cecil's petty spite from joining their mother in the Low Countries. Lady Northumberland, however, succeeded in slightly bettering their condition through the influence which she exercised over her niece and sister-in-law, the wife of the eighth earl.<sup>2</sup> The change of heart which came over this latter nobleman, after his second release from the Tower, also proved beneficial to “the young ladies,” as he had called them. They were removed from their peasant surroundings, and permitted to reside with their cousins at Petworth. Fate had bestowed upon them a fair share of comeliness, if not of worldly wealth, and all four were happily married. The eldest, Elizabeth, wedded a Catholic squire, Richard Woodroffe of Woolley, near Wakefield, who had loved and won her, while she still dwelt among the good folk of Topcliffe. There is a pleasant story to the effect that

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, *B. Thomas Percy*.

<sup>2</sup> Katherine Latimer, consort of Earl Henry, was (as previously stated) daughter of a Somerset, and niece as well as sister-in-law of Countess Ann.

Lady Elizabeth remained true to Master Woodroffe, in spite of the many distractions which London and Petworth must have presented to one reared as she had been. The new countess, who possessed the kindly nature of her aunt, fostered instead of discouraging this attachment; and the squire of Woolley's wooing was crowned with success. It was Elizabeth Woodroffe who presented to the Jesuit priest Gerard the "relic of the Crown of Thorns" now preserved at Stonyhurst College. Another north countryman, Sir Thomas Grey of Wark, espoused the second of the daughters, Mary Percy. The third, Lucy, was married to Sir Edward Stanley, K.B. of Eynsham, Co. Oxford<sup>1</sup>; and the fourth, Jane, to Lord Henry Seymour, son of Edward, Earl of Hertford. Maria, the youngest of all Northumberland's children (who was born before the embarkation of the exiles at Old Aberdeen, on June 11, 1570), remained her mother's constant companion until the latter's death. In 1598 Lady Maria founded at Brussels a community of Benedictine nuns, and, taking the veil, became herself prioress of the convent. The direct successors of these religious have, since the relaxation of the laws against Catholicism in England, settled at East Bergholt in the Abbey of St. Mary. The memory of Thomas Percy is naturally held in peculiar veneration by the good sisters, who allude to him as their "grandfather," and to his daughter as their "mother."<sup>2</sup>

The execution of Northumberland filled his widow's heart with a bitter hatred of England and England's Puritan rulers. The whole nature of Countess Ann appeared to change from the time that the woeful news reached her ears. She had been a patient, pleading woman, a humble suitor at the thrones of the great, bearing her privations uncomplainingly, and toiling only to save the life of Thomas Percy. Robbed of the man she loved, she became the very incarnation of hate and scorn, eager

**The brave  
countess.**

<sup>1</sup> The second daughter of this union was the wife of Sir Kenelm Digby.

<sup>2</sup> Phillips; De Fonblanque.

to avenge her husband's shameful death upon Elizabeth and Elizabeth's chief minister. In vain her advisers counselled silence. Ann of Northumberland was not to be silenced. The time that others of her sex might have given to sorrow, or to prayer, she spent in the composition of a scathing attack upon the English government, and upon Burghley in particular. This work, entitled "*Discours des troubles du Comte de Northumberland*," was published at Liège in August, 1572, and circulated far and wide by the countess and her agents. Copies even made their appearance in England, and lashed Elizabeth to fury by the daring and plausible charges levelled against her. Even the phlegmatic Burghley, who affected a contempt for the onslaughts of such enemies, allowed himself to be betrayed into anger, and even wrote a lengthy "*Reply*" to the accusing pamphlet. The truth seems to have been that, while Lady Northumberland's resentment led her at times into exaggeration of language, there was much in the "*Discours*" which could not conveniently be disproved. The "*Reply*," while evidently compiled with Cecilian care, fails to convince the reader, since it glosses over or evades so many of these accusations, instead of denying (and supporting the denial with evidence) that his government had deliberately goaded the North into rebellion in order to provide an excuse for the overthrow of Roman Catholic influence, Burghley prefers to ignore such charges altogether. Moreover he attempts to prove that the rising was a revolt against Crown and Constitution, rather than a protest against the treatment of the Catholics. No attempt is made to justify the behaviour of the Government towards Earl Thomas in regard to the Wardenship, the Cumberland Mines, and the score of other cases of spiteful persecution, by which, according to the "*Discours*," a loyal and useful nobleman was driven into armed resistance. Lady Northumberland showed her contempt for Burghley's laboured sophistries by translating them into French, and republishing them in conjunction with her own work, to which only a few notes and comments had been added. This course

aroused Burghley to a pitch of fury ; for he dreaded ridicule keenly. The countess, apparently, could not be worsted in fair argument ; therefore her opponent had recourse to weapons with which he was more familiar. Through his spies, John Lee and Edward Woodshaw,<sup>1</sup> he knew the whereabouts of most of the Catholic exiles. By a bribe, euphemistically described as a "loan or subsidy," to William of Orange, he hoped to induce that prince to follow the example of Mar and Morton in delivering up the English refugees who were sheltered in the territory under his control. William was sorely in need of funds, so that the temptation was likely to prove irresistible ; and in order to secure the discreet carrying out of his scheme, Burghley chose Sir Thomas Gresham, the great London merchant, as his prime agent. Gresham had resided in Holland as the queen's factor, and spoke Flemish fluently. The Prince of Orange was easily persuaded into accepting the conditions attached to the English "loan"; and it was decided that the exiles at Louvain, Mechlin, and other cities favourable to William should be surprised, captured, and sent prisoners to London. Fortunately for those who trusted in Flemish honour and hospitality, the Spanish Ambassador in London heard of the plot in time, and was able to notify the Duke of Alva, by letter of September 16, that Gresham had been sent secretly to the Low Countries with a considerable sum of money, in order "*to claim the Countess of Northumberland, who resides at Malines, the Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Morley<sup>2</sup> and others, who live at Louvain, if they have been found in any of the towns which welcomed Orange. He (Gresham) is ready to pay a large sum of money to get these people into his hands, and send them hither ; and much importance is attached to this, so that if the poor people*

<sup>1</sup> This worthy was, at the time, endeavouring to secure a troop of Light Horse in the Spanish service. His headquarters were at Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Parker, 4th Lord Morley, at the time in exile for his religion, had married the daughter of the 3rd Earl of Derby. His grandson was William Parker, Lord Monteaule, who discovered the Gunpowder Plot ; and from both was directly descended Alfred, Lord Tennyson, late Poet Laureate of England.

*have not fled before the town's surrender, they will be bought by these English."*<sup>1</sup>

Alva hastily sent word by young Egremounde Ratcliffe to Lady Northumberland and her friends, so that they were able to save themselves in time. When the troops of Orange entered Mechlin they found that Countess Ann had escaped to Antwerp. Her house was sacked and burnt by William's orders; and with this poor revenge Burghley had to rest content. A short-lived revenge it proved, for the countess returned to Mechlin in the following year, where we find her engaged in fostering various schemes prejudicial to English interests. One of these was a project for the union of Mary, Queen of Scots, with Don John of Austria,<sup>2</sup> the laurels of whose splendid victory at Lepanto were still fresh, and who had already been designated as the successor of Alva in the Netherlands. During the summer of 1573 Lady Northumberland petitioned Philip II., through the Duke of Medina-Celi, for the due payment of a pension which had been allotted to her, but which, in accordance with Spanish habits, was continually in arrears. At the same time she asked the King's help for her husband's cousin, Thomas Markenfield,<sup>3</sup> for the now repentant traitor, Leonard Dacre, and for others at Louvain.<sup>4</sup> From Mechlin the countess moved to Brussels, where she became so active that Elizabeth, inspired by Burghley, demanded and obtained her temporary banishment from the Low Countries. The favour of the new viceroy, Don John of Austria, soon brought her back to the old haunts, and she continued her efforts to bring about a match between Philip's brother and the imprisoned Scots Queen. The untimely death of Don John put an end to this prospect; but Lady Northumberland continued to mix prominently in all the plots which

<sup>1</sup> *Cotton MSS., Galba, c. iv.*

<sup>2</sup> Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell; *Don John of Austria*. Mary Stuart was four years older than the hero of Lepanto.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Markenfield, of Markenfield in York, was one of those attainted for rebellion in 1571. His pension from Spain was eighteen crowns per month.

<sup>4</sup> The original petition is preserved at Simancas.

were hatched for Mary's release. In 1590 she was living comfortably at Namur, with a pension (somewhat irregularly paid) of about 1200 crowns a year.<sup>1</sup> She died on September 9, 1591. A fortnight later, Charles Paget,<sup>2</sup> one of the busiest agents of the exiled Catholics, wrote from Antwerp to Giles Martin in London:—"I want meenes to signify to Lady Jane Percy<sup>3</sup> that her mother, the Countess of Northumberland died fourteen days ago of the small-pox, and has left jewels and goods behind worth having; and to advise her to come over soone, for unlesse she is present she cannot enjoy them, and besides she may procure the discounts<sup>4</sup> of her mother, which arise to two thousand crowns of gold, I must not be known to have advysed this, nor with having intelligence with her; but hearing that she is not in the best state for wealthe, she would be unwise to lose this commodity." Paget, in his zeal for Jane Percy's interests, would appear to have completely forgotten that lady's youngest sister, Lady Maria. The latter had been her mother's constant companion and solace from the time, twenty years before, when they left Old Aberdeen together, until death came to break the union. Lady Maria had surely the best right to what little the countess left; and the Spanish Government probably took this view of the matter, for the youngest of Northumberland's five daughters remained in the Low Countries, and founded there the religious community already alluded to.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*; Woodshaw, the spy, to Burghley.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Paget, 4th son of William, 1st Lord Paget, was, like Lady Northumberland, implicated in most of the Catholic and Marian plots of the day. We shall hear of him again in connection with the 9th Earl of Northumberland. After an adventurous and chequered career, he made his peace with the English Government, and died a country squire in Somerset.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards wife of Lord Henry Seymour.

<sup>4</sup> This probably refers to the accumulated arrears of Lady Northumberland's Spanish pension.

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