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Annals of the house of Percy

Edward Barrington De Fonblanque

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ANNALS
OF
The House of Percy.

VOL. I.





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HENRY 1ST EARL OF NORTHUMBRELAND K.G.
From an illuminated M.S. in the British Museum

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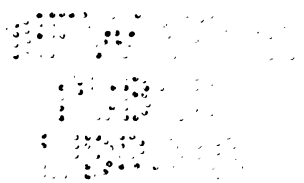
The House of Percy,

FROM THE CONQUEST TO THE OPENING
OF THE NINETEENTH
CENTURY.

BY

EDWARD BARRINGTON DE FONBLANQUE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOLUME I.



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PREFACE.



HE late Lord Henry Percy,¹ whose friendship it had been my privilege to enjoy, once expressed to me his regret that there existed no connected records of his ancestry, treated from an historical point of view ; and, in the course of subsequent references to this subject, asked me whether I should be inclined to undertake the composition of such a work, in the event of the head of his house proving willing to place the family archives at my disposal.

I was yet engaged in formulating a plan of the proposed task when Lord Henry died suddenly.

¹ Lieutenant-General Lord Henry Hugh Manvers Percy, *B.C.*, K.C.B., Colonel of the 89th Regiment of Foot, the youngest son of the fifth Duke of Northumberland, born in 1817. He entered the Grenadier Guards in 1836, and served in that corps, with a few short intervals of Staff employment, until he attained the rank of Major-General in 1865. In 1854 he accompanied the First Battalion to the Crimea, and was wounded in leading his company up the Alma heights, and again at the Battle of Inkerman, where his conspicuous gallantry won him the newly-instituted order of Valour. (See Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. v. p. 262, and Sir Frederick Hamilton's *History of the Grenadier Guards*, vol. iii. pp. 190 and 226.) In the following year he was entrusted with the duty of raising and organising an Anglo-Italian Legion in Sardinia, and was subsequently nominated English Commissioner (with the rank of Pasha) to the Turkish army,

PREFACE.

Knowing how much he had had the project at heart, I thought it right to submit the correspondence which had passed between us in this matter to the Duke of Northumberland, who at once determined to give effect to his brother's wishes, and entrusted me with the preparation of the work upon the lines suggested by me.

The materials at Alnwick Castle and Syon House—although these collections of MSS. are extensive, important and interesting—proved to fall very far short of Lord Henry's estimate, in as far as relates to their bearing upon family history. Indeed, considering the very conspicuous part which the Percies had played in public affairs for so long a period, the paucity of documents in their possession connected with the share they had taken in civil and military transactions from the Conquest downward is difficult to account for, although it may, in earlier times, have been in some measure due to the several attainders and confiscations to which the Percies had been subject. Subsequently the neglect in the preservation of family documents may be ascribed to the alienation

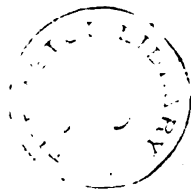
sent for the relief of Kars under Omar Pasha. When, in 1861, an expedition was fitted out in consequence of the insult offered to our Flag by the American Captain Wilkes's seizure of the Southern Commissioners on board an English mail steamer, Colonel Percy embarked for Canada in command of the First Battalion of the Grenadiers, and shortly after his return was promoted to the command of a Brigade at Aldershot, but resigned that appointment on being elected to Parliament for North Northumberland. Thenceforth, unfortunately, the precarious state of his health precluded him from reverting to that military employment to which he had devoted all the energies of his past life, and his remaining years were occupied in foreign travel and in the cultivation of his many refined and artistic tastes. He died of heart disease at his house in Eaton Square on 3rd December, 1877.

PREFACE.

of Petworth, and the Percy Fee in Yorkshire and Cumberland. Among the MSS. in the British Museum and the Record Office, however, as well as in old printed chronicles and histories, most of them long since buried under the dust of ages, I have been enabled to glean much interesting information tending to throw light upon the subject of my labours; and, in common with all others engaged in historical research, I have been deeply indebted to those invaluable *Calendars of State Papers* published under the authority of the Master of the Rolls.

E. BARRINGTON DE FONBLANQUE.

ATHENÆUM CLUB,
LONDON, 1887.





CONTENTS

OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

Origin of the ancestors of the Percies—Among the invaders under Rollo—Norman nomenclature—William de Percy accompanies the Conqueror to England—His marriage with Emma de Port, a Saxon lady—Obtains great influence in the Northern Counties—Noble conduct of the Norman clergy—Foundation of religious houses—William de Percy founds Whitby Abbey—Serlo de Percy elected Abbot of Whitby—Dispute with his brother regarding the rights of the abbey—Extent of the lands of William de Percy—Amount of land required to constitute a knight's fee—William de Percy held thirty-two knights' fees—Alan de Percy and his seven sons—William de Percy, fourth baron—Supports the usurpation of King Stephen—Obtains the lordship of Petworth—Ralph de Percy—Popular legend regarding—The heiresses Maud and Agnes—Lady Maud's bequests to Richard de Percy—Jocelyn de Louvain weds Lady Agnes de Percy—Her death—Norman line of the Percies ends with her *Pages 1—33*

CHAPTER II.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

Henry de Percy—Obtains by marriage the Manor of Leginfield—Curious condition attached to the tenure of this manor—Is succeeded by his son, William de Percy—His uncle, Richard de Percy, usurps his rights for a time, and becomes a favourite of King Richard I.—Character of King John—Harries the North of England—The baronial league against him—A scene in Parliament—William, the seventh Lord Percy—His seven sons and their various fortunes—The second Henry de Percy—His various public offices—The Earl of Warren and Surrey—Death of the ninth Baron de Percy *Pages 35—49*

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER III.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

Henry de Percy, first Lord of Alnwick—Obtains a licence to fortify his castles of Spofforth, Leginfield, and Petworth—His military exploits—Border warfare—Is rewarded for his share in the victory of Dunbar—Specimen of thirteenth century military despatches—Is appointed a Commissioner for negotiating a peace with Scotland—Scottish hostages—Equity of feudal service—Is the subject of a curious heraldic poem—Subscribes the famous letter of remonstrance to Pope Boniface—The Barons and the Church of Rome—Wallace and Percy—Obtains large grants of land in Scotland—Origin of Alnwick Castle—The French favourite, Piers de Galvestone—The Baronial Confederacy against him—He is seized and executed—Lord Percy is taken prisoner at the battle of Bannockbourne—His ransom and death—Henry, the second Lord of Alnwick—Joins the Baronial League against the new favourite—The Spensers—His share in bringing Mortimer to death—Is granted for life the castle, manor, and lands of Warkworth—Takes part in the battle of Halidon Hill, and in the wars with France—The battle of the Sluys—The victory of Crecy—Commands the English army at the battle of Neville's Cross—Derivation of the name of Percy—Last employment and death of the second Lord of Alnwick—His family—Additions made to Alnwick Castle during his lifetime—Physical traits of Henry de Percy, the third Lord of Alnwick—His marriage and military exploits—His second marriage and death—Benefactions of the Percies to York Cathedral *Pages 50—96*

CHAPTER IV.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

State of England during the life of the fourth Lord Percy of Alnwick—The French wars—At the battle of Poitiers—His marriage—Warden of the Scottish Marches—Joins the expedition to Castile—At the battle of Navaretta—Sir Thomas Percy and the fate of Chandos—Is made Seneschal of Poitou—Takes the castle of Montcontour by assault—Is taken prisoner and shortly after ransomed—Lord Percy in Scotland—In France—Returns to the Borders—Attends the "Good" Parliament—Lancaster and the Commons—John Wyclif—Is tried for defying the Pope—Tumult in the City against Lancaster and Percy—Lord Percy is reconciled to the citizens—Is created Earl of Northumberland by investiture of the sword—His various offices in the State—Sir Thomas Percy appointed Admiral of the fleet north of the Thames—His exploits at sea—A naval engagement—Henry Hotspur—Hardyng's account of the training of a young noble of the fourteenth century—Berwick Castle assaulted and taken by Hotspur—Northumberland invaded by the Scots in retaliation—The doings of the Duke of Lancaster—Northumberland appointed Admiral of the North—The feud between Lancaster and Northumberland—Border raids—Northumberland marries Maud, heiress of Lord Lucy—Possessions he obtained with her—

CONTENTS.

Plot against Hotspur—Expedition of the Duke of Lancaster to Castile—Sir Thomas Percy commands the fleet—Results of the expedition—The Scots invade England—Encounter between Hotspur and Douglas—The battle of Otterbourne—Hotspur and Sir Ralph Percy are taken prisoners—Hotspur ransomed—The ballad of Chevy Chase—Character of Richard II.—The Duke of Gloucester's league—The "wonder-working" Parliament—Hotspur made a Knight of the Garter—He proceeds on a complimentary mission to the King of Cyprus—Is made Governor of Berwick—Sir Ralph Percy—Sir Thomas Percy—Sent on an embassy to France—Festivities at the French Court—A fourteenth-century despatch—Richard I.'s expedition to Ireland, and marriage with Isabel of France—A humiliating peace—King Richard's last Parliament—The banishment of Bolingbroke—Richard's enmity to the Percies—They are proclaimed traitors—Bolingbroke lands at Ravenspur—Richard deserted by his adherents takes refuge in Conway Castle—Henry of Lancaster's usurpation—Richard's deposition—The French "Metrical Chronicle"—King Richard at Conway Castle—Northumberland negotiates with the King, and escorts him to Flint Castle—Lancaster dismisses the armies—Attitude of the Percies—Henry becomes King—Reaction of public feeling in favour of Richard—Hotspur's offices and honours—Border troubles—Northumberland proceeds on a mission to the Continent—Employments of the Earl of Worcester—Escorts Queen Isabel on her return to France—Conducts Joan of Navarre to England to become Henry's Queen—The war in Wales—Hotspur's letters—Edmund Mortimer and the Earl of March—The King's jealousy of the Percies—Invasion of the Scots—Battle of Nesbitt Moor—Battle of Homildon—The right of ransom—The King, contrary to usage, claims the prisoners—Remonstrance of the Percies—Final interview between the King and Northumberland and Hotspur—The rebellion of the Percies—The tripartite indenture—Merlin's prophecies—Hotspur's march southward—The King's arrival at Shrewsbury—Hotspur disappointed in reaching Shrewsbury before the King falls back on Little Berwick—The challenge of the Percies—Negotiations—Worcester's interview with the King—Fruitless—Evil omens—The battle of Shrewsbury—Death of Hotspur—Effects of the victory on the fortunes of the King—The rebellion suppressed—Northumberland submits and is pardoned—Fresh conspiracies—The northern castles seized by the King—Attainder and outlawry of Northumberland and Lord Bardolph—Northumberland is slain in the fight at Bramham Moor—Feudalism illustrated in the lives of successive generations of the Percies *Pages 97—240*

CHAPTER V.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Is taken to the Scottish Court by his mother—Studies at the University of St. Andrew's—His life while a prisoner in Scotland—Appeals to Henry V. for a reversal of the attainder—Restored to his titles and lands—Marries the Lady Alianore Neville—His family and domestic life—State of the Borders—Character and position of Henry V.—His French wars—His death—The

CONTENTS.

Earl of Northumberland acts as one of the executors to the deceased monarch—And frequently presides in Courts of Chivalry on questions of disputed precedency—The wager of battle—Liberation of the Scottish king—Northumberland escorts the Scottish monarch to the Borders—The battle of Piperden—Northumberland goes on a mission to Portugal—Acquires the Lordship of Doncaster—Founds scholarships at Oxford—Is defeated by the Scots in an encounter on the Borders—Is one of the judges on the trial of the Duke of Suffolk—Dispute between Northumberland and his brother-in-law the Earl of Salisbury—Letter to Lord Sayntemonde—Is slain fighting for the house of Lancaster at the battle of St. Alban's—Enumeration of additional lands acquired during his lifetime *Pages 241—268*

CHAPTER VI.

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Natural sympathy of the third Earl with Henry VI.—His public life—The avenger of St. Alban's—The conference with the Yorkists—The "Joyful Agreement"—End of the short-lived truce—Attainder of the Duke of York—The battles of Blore, Northampton, and Wakefield—Evil spirit engendered by the civil wars—The second battle of St. Alban's—The battle of Towton Fields—Northumberland and his younger brother Richard are slain—Sir Ralph Percy the only surviving brother—Efforts of Queen Margaret to retrieve her defeat—Death of Sir Ralph Percy at the battle of Hedgely Moor—Reflections on his conduct, and tradition connected with his death *Pages 269—286*

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY PERCY, FOURTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Takes refuge in Scotland—Is partially restored to his honours by Edward IV.—Appointed Warden of the Eastern Marches—Remains neutral during Edward's enforced absence—The battle of Tewkesbury—Northumberland binds himself to render service to the Duke of Gloucester—Accompanies the King to Calais—Receives various offices and honours—Death of Edward IV.—The Duke of Gloucester becomes Regent, and then King—Northumberland's petition to Richard for complete restoration of all his lands—The Earl of Richmond—The battle of Bosworth—Henry VII. confirms Northumberland in all his offices and honours—Lambert Simnel—Further offices and honours conferred on Northumberland—King Henry's obnoxious tax—Northumberland's affair with John a'Chambre—And his death—A costly funeral—His family—Marriage of his daughter Alianore to the Duke of Buckingham *Pages 287—309*

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VIII.

HENRY ALGERNON, FIFTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, SURNAMED "THE MAGNIFICENT."

His praises are sung by the Poet Laureate—Attends the King to France—Appearance of Perkin Warbeck—Aids in defeating the forces of the impostor—Remains in constant attendance on the King—Marries the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Robert Spenser—Conducts the Princess Margaret to the Border on the occasion of her marriage with the Scottish king—Somerset Herald's account of the Royal Progress—Northumberland is created a Knight of the Bath—The exactions of the Star Chamber—The case of Sir Reginald Bray—Northumberland is subjected to heavy fines—Livery and wardship—His magnificence and patronage of letters—The Northumberland "Household Book"—Extent of the Earl's domestic establishment—Mode of life, and ceremonial observances—Comparison of Italian and English culture and refinement—Accession of Henry VIII.—A French campaign—A luxurious equipment—A time of revelry and jousting—The siege of Terouenne—The battle of Flodden Field—The rise and character of Cardinal Wolsey—His haughty treatment of the nobles—Northumberland is committed to the Fleet Prison—Is released by the favour of Wolsey—Matrimonial projects—Lord Dacre, Warden of the East, West, and Middle Marches—His exploits against the Scotch—The Queen Dowager of Scotland takes refuge at the English Court—Northumberland's letter to Shrewsbury—Is appointed one of the ten Earls to wait upon Francis I. on the Field of the Cloth of Gold—Appointed Lord Warden of the Marches—Resigns the office to the regret of his followers—Exploits of Sir William Percy—Border Raids—Expedition into Scotland—Death of Northumberland—Funeral arrangements—Interference of Wolsey in family affairs. *Pages* 310—360

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY PERCY, SIXTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, SURNAMED "THE UNTHRIFTY."

Received his early training in the household of Cardinal Wolsey—The Page and the Maid of Honour—Anne Boleyn—The rude interruption of Lord Percy's courtship—His interview with the Cardinal—The lover's plea not entertained—Statement of the position in which he stood with Anne Boleyn—Broken ties—His interview with his father on the subject—He departs for the Borders—Effects of Wolsey's policy on the spirit of the old nobility—Skelton's appeal to the nobles to resist the pretensions of the Cardinal—Censorious interference of the Cardinal in the Earl's affairs—Alleged wastefulness—Subornation of his servants by the Cardinal—"Bedfellow" Arundel—Domestic troubles—Is appointed Warden-General of the Northern

CONTENTS.

Marches—The Earl of Angus—Border outrages—Capture of some of the criminals—Sir William Lisle—Wolsey's letter to Northumberland—Northumberland's reply—His zeal in the public service—Attributes his success to the Cardinal's advice—Account of the distracted state of Scotland—Letter from James V. to Northumberland—His preparations for defending England against the inroads of the Scots—Family feuds—The Duke of Richmond—Northumberland arbitrates in the disputes of the northern nobles—The plague visits England—The old Duchess of Norfolk's remedy—Financial embarrassments—A strong sense of justice a marked feature in the character of the Earl—Troublesome neighbours—The fall of Wolsey—Bitterness of his enemies—Northumberland accompanies Sir Walter Walshe to arrest the Cardinal—Wolsey's reception of him—The arrest—Death of Wolsey—The Earl's embarrassments continue to increase—His letters regarding the state of the Borders—Henry's designs upon the Scottish Crown—Scottish raids and outrages on the Borders—English lawlessness—A peace concluded with Scotland—A Court intrigue—Suspicion excited in the King's mind as to the nature of Northumberland's early connection with Anne Boleyn—State of the postal service—Sir Thomas More—Northumberland's defence against Secretary Cromwell's charges—The fall of Queen Anne—Her trial—The alleged pre-contract—Northumberland's letter to Cromwell on this subject—The execution of Anne—The insurrection known as "The Pilgrimage of Grace"—Suppression of the monasteries—Popular feeling—Robert Aske, leader of the malcontents—Sir Thomas Percy's share in the rising, and Sir Ingelram Percy's—Account of the examination of Sir Thomas Percy—The story of the rebellion—Object of the insurgents—The Earl lies sick at Wressil Castle—Is threatened by the rebels—His unwavering loyalty—Malice of his enemies—Unjust suspicions—Progress of the rebellion—The Duke of Norfolk's negotiations—Sir Francis Bigod's rising—Norfolk violates his promises to the rebels—Suppression of the rebellion—Retribution—King Henry's alleged clemency—Northumberland vests his lands in the Crown—His letters to the King and Cromwell—His illness and pecuniary embarrassments—A lonely deathbed—The widowed Countess—Sir Ingelram Percy Pages 361—479

APPENDICES.

VOL. I.

NO.	PAGE
I. CHARTER OF WHITBY ABBEY	481
II. RICHARD DE PERCY'S LITIGATION	482
II A. HENRY PERCY AND WILLIAM WALLACE	577
III. ALNWICK CASTLE	487
IV. SAFE-CONDUCT TO HENRY DE PERCY	488
V. WARKWORTH CASTLE	488
VI. SCOTTISH LANDS GRANTED TO HENRY DE PERCY	489
VII. EXCHANGE OF LANDS	490
VIII. EXPENSES OF SCOTTISH WARS	490
IX. LANDS IN POSSESSION OF THE THIRD BARON PERCY OF ALNWICK	492
X. WILL OF THOMAS DE PERCY, BISHOP OF NORWICH	501
XI. LANDS SETTLED IN DOWER UPON THE LADY MARY PLANTAGENET	504
XII. FORTIFICATION OF BERWICK, A.D. 1364—1367	504
XIII. THE EARLDOM OF NORTHUMBERLAND	505
XIV. GARRISONS OF BERWICK AND ROXBURGH	506
XV. WARDENSHIP OF ROXBURGH CASTLE	507
XVI. SIR THOMAS DE PERCY'S INDENTURE TO SERVE FRANCE	507
XVII. THE EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S RETINUE	508
XVII A. PRUDHOE CASTLE	510
XVII B. CAPTURE OF RALPH PERCY AT OTTERBOURNE	515

CONTENTS.

NO.	PAGE
X VIII. THE LORDSHIP OF ARUNDEL	515
XIX. THE OFFICE OF HIGH CONSTABLE OF ENGLAND	516
XX. GRANT OF THE ISLE OF MAN	517
XXI. EMOLUMENTS OF THE EARL OF WORCESTER	518
XXII. NEGOTIATIONS WITH SCOTLAND	519
XXIII. THE REBELLION IN WALES	520
XXIV. THE HOTSPUR CORRESPONDENCE	521
XXV. APPEAL FOR THE SOLDIERS' PAY	526
XXVI. PRINCE HENRY IN THE WELSH WARS	527
XXVII. KING HENRY'S FIRST MENTION OF THE REBELLION	528
XXVIII. THE PERCY CHALLENGE TO HENRY IV.	529
XXVIII A. DELIVERY OF HOTSPUR'S BODY TO HIS WIDOW	531
XXIX. SURRENDER TO THE KING'S COMMISSIONERS OF ALN- WICK, WARKWORTH, AND OTHER CASTLES	532
XXX. CREDENTIALS OF LORD SAY	534
XXXI. SURRENDER OF JEDWORTH CASTLE	535
XXXI A. A WRIT FOR QUARTERING THE BODY OF THE FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND	535
XXXII. HENRY PERCY'S PETITION TO THE PARLIAMENT	536
XXXIII. RELATING TO PERCY LANDS HELD IN FEE TAIL	537
XXXIV. PRUDHOE CASTLE	537
XXXV. CASTLES AND MANSION HOUSES BELONGING TO THE PERCIES FROM THE CONQUEST DOWN TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY	539
XXXV A. UNSETTLED CONDITION OF THE BORDER IN 1435	540
XXXVI. FOUNDATION OF FELLOWSHIPS AT OXFORD	541
XXXVII. LANDS IN POSSESSION OF HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, AT THE DATE OF HIS DEATH	542
XXXVII A. WARRANT OF HENRY PERCY, SON OF THE SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND	543
XXXVIII. THE POYNINGS LANDS ACQUIRED BY THE THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND	544

CONTENTS.

NO.	PAGE
XXXIX. THE AWARD MADE AT WESTMINSTER ON THE THREE- AND-TWENTIETH OF MARCH, ANNO REGNI REGIS, 36	545
XL. ABSTRACT OF THE WILL OF THE THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND	547
XLI. HENRY PERCY'S OATH OF ALLEGIANCE	548
XLII. RESTORATION OF THE FOURTH EARL OF NORTHUMBER- LAND.	548
XLIII. INDENTURE BETWEEN THE EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND RICHARD DUKE OF GLOUCESTER	549
XLIV. FUNERAL OF THE FOURTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND	550
XLV. ARMY UNDER THE FIFTH EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, OCTOBER 1523	552
XLVI. REWARD TO THE FORCES UNDER LORD OGLE AND SIR WILLIAM PERCY, 1522	552
XLVI A. "THE FALCON"	553
XLVII. THE LORD WARDEN'S PAID DEPUTIES AND GENTLE- MEN	554
XLVIII. DEMAND FOR INSTRUCTIONS	556
XLIX. GRANTS MADE BY THE SIXTH EARL OF NORTHUMBER- LAND IN 1531, FOR PIOUS PURPOSES.	558
L. LICENCE TO ALIENATE LANDS IN KENT	559
LI. PETITION OF THE ABBOT AND CONVENT OF SALLEY TO SIR THOMAS PERCY	559
LII. PART I., SIR THOMAS PERCY'S ACTS OF REBELLION . .	561
LII. PART II., SIR INGRAM PERCY'S DOINGS IN THE TIME OF THE SAID INSURRECTION, 1536	564
LIII. FALSE CHARGES AGAINST THE EARL OF NORTHUMBER- LAND	568
LIV. THE SECOND RISING	568
LV. TRIAL OF SIR THOMAS PERCY	569
LVI. PRIVATE DEBTS OF THE SIXTH EARL OF NORTHUMBER- LAND.	573

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

	PAGE
<p> PORTRAIT OF HENRY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G. From an illuminated MS. in the British Museum . . . <i>Frontispiece</i> </p>	
<p> WHITBY ABBEY </p>	17
<p> SPOFFORTH CASTLE </p>	51
<p> MALCOLM'S CROSS, ALNWICK CASTLE </p>	64
<p> ALNWICK CASTLE </p>	71
<p> ARMS ON THE GATEWAY OF THE KEEP, ALNWICK CASTLE </p>	90
<p> SEAL OF HENRY, SON AND HEIR OF HENRY, TWELFTH BARON PERCY, 1363 </p>	96
<p> COCKERMOUTH CASTLE </p>	139
<p> WRESSIL CASTLE </p>	140
<p> MEMORIAL BRASS TO THE WIDOW OF HOTSPUR AND HER HUSBAND, LORD CAMOYS, IN TROTTON CHURCH </p>	204
<p> FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPH SUBSCRIPTION OF HENRY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G. </p>	210
<p> WARKWORTH HERMITAGE </p>	246
<p> WARKWORTH CASTLE </p>	260
<p> FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPH OF HENRY, SECOND EARL OF NORTH- UMBERLAND </p>	268
<p> PERCY'S CROSS </p>	286

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPH OF HENRY, FOURTH EARL OF NORTH- UMBERLAND, K.G.	309
THE PERCY SHRINE, BEVERLEY MINSTER	322
FACSIMILE OF AUTOGRAPH OF HENRY, FIFTH EARL OF NORTH- UMBERLAND, K.G.	360
PRUDHOE CASTLE	385
FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM HENRY, SIXTH EARL OF NORTHUM- BERLAND, K.G., TO THOMAS CROMWELL	471
INSCRIPTION ON WALL OF BEAUCHAMP TOWER IN TOWER OF LONDON, RECORDING THE CAPTIVITY OF SIR INGELRAM PERCY	479
PERCY SEALS	480
<p style="margin-left: 2em;">No. 1. William de Percy, Lord of Craven, ob. 1245.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">2. Henry de Percy, afterwards First Earl of Northumberland.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">3. Henry de Percy, 1363. The same, used in the lifetime of his Father.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">4. Henry de Percy, sen., Eleventh Baron, ob. 1352.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">5. Henry de Percy, First Earl of Northumberland, 1400.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">6. Henry de Percy, Second Earl of Northumberland, 1435.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">7. Henry de Percy, Third Earl of Northumberland. Seal used as Warden of the Marches in the lifetime of his Father, 1427.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">8. Henry de Percy, Twelfth Century.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">9. Henry de Percy, Tenth Baron, 1301.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">10. Henry de Percy, Tenth Baron, 1301.</p> <p style="margin-left: 4em;">* * Nos. 9 and 10 are Counter-Seals.</p> <p style="margin-left: 2em;">11. Henry de Percy, Thirteenth Baron, afterwards First Earl of Northumberland, 1372.</p>	

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

- No. 12. Robert de Percy, Lord of Dunsley, "Secretum," 1317.
13. Henry de Percy, Twelfth Baron, 1355.
14. Henry de Percy, First Earl of Northumberland, 1386.
15. Beatrix, wife of Robert de Percy, Lord of Dunsley, 1317.
16. Henry de Percy, Thirteenth Baron, afterwards First Earl of Northumberland, 1376.
17. Thomas de Percy, Earl of Worcester, 1393.
- 15*. Agnes de Percy.
- 16*. Henry de Percy (Hotspur), 1392-97.
- 17*. Henry de Percy, Ninth Earl of Northumberland, 1593-1605.
18. Counter-Seal.
19. Henry Algernon Percy, Sixth Earl of Northumberland, 1528.
20. Algernon Percy, Tenth Earl of Northumberland.
21. Algernon Percy, Tenth Earl of Northumberland, 1636.
- *.* Nos. 20 and 21 appear to be Counter-Seals.
- Thomas, Bishop of Norwich, 1355-1369.
- Henry de Percy, Second Earl of Northumberland, 1446.
- Genealogical Table—Pedigree of Percy. In Pocket at end of Volume.

ERRATA IN VOL. I.

- Page 6, line 18, for "conquerer" read "conqueror."
 ,, 8, last line but one, for "or" read "for."
 ,, 10, footnote 4, *et passim*, for "Holinshead" read "Holinshead."
 ,, 12, footnote, for "glossarum" read "glossarium."
 ,, 20, footnote, page 36, line 11, page 51, line 5, and page 90, footnote 2, for "Fountain" read "Fountains."
 ,, 22, footnote, and page 30, line 9, for "caracute" read "carucate."
 ,, 23, line 15, for "prælia" read "prædia."
 ,, 33, marginal date, for "1314" read "1134."
 ,, 45, line 9, for "seventh" read "eighth."
 ,, 85, ,, 18, for "Tiviotdale" read "Teviotdale."
 ,, 89, footnote 1, for "cum omni modo," &c., read "cum omnimoda subjectionis et devotionis reverentia."
 ,, 90, line 8, for "1365" read "1353."
 ,, 103, footnote 3, for "bel palme" read "plaine."
 ,, 109, line 1, for "Golfe" read "Goffe."
 ,, 113, lines 16 and 17, for "the knyghtes, assenting" read "the knyghtes assenting,"
 ,, 124, line 9, for "Gomenego" read "Gomegines."
 ,, 126 and 127 *passim*, for "Calverley" read "Calveley."
 ,, 128, four lines from foot, *dele* "great."
 ,, 136, footnote 1, and page 137, footnote 2, for "Stowe" read "Stow."
 ,, 181, last line and footnote 3, for "Maudelin" read "Mandelin."
 ,, 208, first line of footnote, for "superi nimicos" read "super inimicos."
 ,, 224, for "this Hotspur Mars," read "this Hotspur, Mars."
 ,, 232, footnote 2, for "Somers" read "Somerset."
 ,, 235, ,, 4, for "Redpath" read "Ridpath."
 ,, 250, footnote, for "Wainright" read "Wainwright."
 ,, 260, line 3 from bottom, for "Salisbury" read "Shrewsbury."
 ,, 269, heading after Earl of Northumberland, *omit* **Æ. 6.**
 ,, 283, line 9, for "four" read "three" brothers.
 ,, 284, 5 lines from foot, for "Montagu" read "Montacute."
 ,, 286, footnote, for "Hume" read "See Earl of Orford's Works (Edition 1748), *Historic Doubts*, vol. ii. p. 113."
 ,, 298, footnote 1, quotation, for "theray" read "the 'ray" (array).
 ,, 323, 5 lines from foot, for "Ingleram" read "Ingelram."
 ,, 333, footnote 1, for "Gustiniani" read "Giustiniani."
 ,, 397, line 14, for "wish" read "wist."
 ,, 398, ,, 3, for "nephew" read "grand-nephew."
 ,, 398, footnote 1, for "Lanell" read "Lassells."
 ,, 420, line 24, for "Marke" read "Mark."
 ,, 434, ,, 20, for "the Duke" read "he."
 ,, 438, ,, 19, for "report" read "story."
 ,, 448, footnote 1, lines 4 and 5, for "Riton" read "Ryton."
 ,, 487, transfer footnote 1 to page 489, with reference to lines 6 and 7 from top in text.
 ,, 498, line 19, for "Devewyk" read "Denewyk."
 ,, 504, first heading, for "Platagenet" read "Plantagenet."



INTRODUCTORY.



DISTINGUISHED writer has said that "History, treat it as we may, ultimately resolves itself into biography." ¹

The converse of the proposition holds equally good, for the narratives of individual lives are but the tributary streams that feed the great ocean of national records;—the units that make up that aggregate of human effort and human action which we call history.

It has been my object in these volumes to illustrate the progressive stages of the social and political systems of England, by the lives of successive generations of a family which, through more than six centuries, played a conspicuous part in national story; to make the Percies the central figures in a continuous series of historical pictures, showing them as they moved, spoke and did; and how, by act, word and example, they contributed to shape or to influence the destinies of their country.

The abundance of the legendary element in the surroundings of my story, has frequently tempted me to overstep that narrow boundary line which separates history from romance; and to claim for the biographer

¹ Introduction to Sir Francis Palgrave's *History of Normandy and of England*.

INTRODUCTORY.

and the historian the privileges of the poet and the novelist.' In curbing this tendency, and in strictly subordinating pictorial effect to historical truth, it may be that the general interest of the work has been impaired; but are not, after all, a man's actual words and deeds of greater worth than the most brilliant achievements of a hero of fiction?

The popular estimate of Hotspur is mainly derived from Shakespeare's picture of the impetuous and hot-headed soldier; but is not the real Harry Percy as he walked the earth a more interesting object to contemplate than the poet's brilliant creation, as we see him prepare to dive into the depths of ocean, "to pluck up drownèd honour by the locks," or to soar into space, "to pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon"?

The name of Percy has come to be so closely associated with the county from which the territorial title is derived, that we are apt to look upon the family as of Northumbrian origin. The Percies, however, had no connection with that province until two centuries after their settlement in England; and even after they became the chief guardians of the frontier, by the acquisition of the old border castle and the lordship of Alnwick, by far the greater part of their possessions, and their principal residences, were in the cradle of their race—Yorkshire. The title, too, which now appears to be inseparably associated with the name of Percy, had by no means been their exclusive property. Between the Conquest and the creation of the earldom in the person

* Historical novels have been denounced as "mortal enemies to history." An enemy yet more insidious is the writer who, purporting to record historical events, draws upon his imagination for their colouring; or, when at fault for want of authentic evidence, supplements his narrative by the substitution of legend for fact, or even by a resort to the arts of fiction.

INTRODUCTORY.

of Henry Percy, fourth Lord of Alnwick, there had been no less than twelve¹ Earls of Northumberland of different families; and since that period the title, while in abeyance in consequence of attainder or the failure of heirs, has been borne by a Nevill, a Dudley, and a Fitzroy.²

The ancient Percies were from the necessities of their position as well as the character of the age, more distinguished for moral and physical vigour and energy than for political genius. Men of action, rather than of thought or words, they were all brave soldiers, most of them skilful commanders; but throughout the twenty generations from the Conquest down to the reign of the second Charles, it is doubtful whether a reputation for high statesmanship can be claimed for more than two members of the house.³ There are, however, few families that can present so great a number of picturesque types of the old English nobility in illustration of the history of their times, or who so long and uninterruptedly enjoyed the attachment and the confidence of the English people and so greatly influenced their destinies.

William Als Gernons, the Norman who made himself a home in the wilds of bleak Yorkshire, married "for conscience' sake" the Saxon maiden whose lands he had conquered, defied the authority of Crown and Church when they conflicted with his interests or his whims, and

¹ Of these twelve Earls of Northumberland seven were of Saxon, two of Scottish, and three of Norman blood. See Nicolas's *Historic Peerage of England*.

² The two latter were Dukes as well as Earls of Northumberland.

³ Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, who fell at Shrewsbury, and the Earl Algernon, Lord High Admiral under Charles I. It should, however, be borne in mind that under the martial Plantagenets, and subsequently during the Wars of the Roses, there was little room for the cultivation of statesmanship; while the jealousy of the Tudor Sovereigns virtually excluded the ancient nobility from civil employment, and caused them to be superseded in the Council Chamber by priests and lawyers.

INTRODUCTORY.

in his old age made his peace by donning "scollop shell and sandal shoon," dying a brave crusader within sight of the Holy City: his turbulent and warlike sons and grandsons, the earliest champions of feudal rights against the royal power: Richard de Percy, foremost among the sturdy Barons who extorted the charter of English liberties from King John, and defied the pretensions of the Pope of Rome: the martial and chivalrous Lords of Alnwick, "sober in peace and cruel in battail:" the first Earl of Northumberland towering above his brilliant contemporaries, haughty, daring, and generous; rising to the highest pinnacle of subject greatness, and dying, sword in hand, an outlaw and a rebel: his splendid soldier sons, Hotspur and Ralph, and his politic and accomplished brother, Worcester, general, admiral, diplomatist, courtier, and statesman: the second Earl and his four sons, all of whom fell on the battle-field in defence of the House of Lancaster: Henry the Magnificent, and, in sad contrast with him, his suffering son, the Unthrifty: "Simple Tom," dying so calmly on the scaffold in defence of his faith, and "Cruel Henry," sacrificed in the cause of the Scottish Queen: the Wizard Earl, finding a solace for his long captivity in scientific studies, and his high-minded son, the Lord Admiral of England;—where shall we find such another line of representative men?

The Percies had, as a rule, formed high and wealthy alliances, choosing their wives from among the daughters of royal houses or of the most noble of the ruling families of England, and in most instances acquiring large possessions and additional dignities by these marriages.¹ Thrice in the course of eight centuries there

¹ "Not more famous in arms than distinguished for its alliances, the House of Percy stands pre-eminent for the number and rank of the

INTRODUCTORY.

was a break in the male line of descent. Of the first Percy heiress, the Lady Agnes, we know little more than that when she conferred her hand upon the brother of the Queen of England, she stipulated to retain for herself and her heirs the name of her baronial ancestors, instead of assuming her husband's princely title; and that, pious, gracious, and charitable, she presided in regal state over her magnificent household—"our court" as she calls it. After the lapse of five centuries a daughter once more inherited the honours of the ancient house, and the wildest flights of romantic fiction could hardly be more startling than the incidents in the early girlhood of the Percy heiress, who, in her sixteenth year, married "the proud Duke" of Somerset, having then already been twice widowed without having become a wife.

Less adventurous and brilliant, but ever pleasant to contemplate, is the long life of the third heiress, the gentle Elizabeth Seymour, who married the handsome Yorkshire baronet for love, and was rewarded by the unflinching devotion of a husband who won, and placed upon her brow, the ducal coronet which their descendants have continued to wear with simple dignity and stainless honour.

Although in the course of eight hundred years there had thus been only three failures of male issue in the direct line, it is remarkable how frequently the younger branches of the house died either childless or without sons.

The founder of the English Percies had five grandsons, of whom only one left male issue. In the next

families which are represented by the Duke of Northumberland, whose banner consequently exhibits an assemblage of nearly nine hundred armorial ensigns. Among these are those of King Henry VII., of several younger branches of the blood royal, of the sovereign houses of France, Castile, Leon, and Scotland, and of the ducal houses of Normandy and Brittany, forming a galaxy of heraldic honours altogether unparalleled."—*Historic Peerage*, by Sir Harris Nicolas.

INTRODUCTORY.

generation there were three sons, of whom two died childless, and one left an only son. He again left four sons, all of whom died childless. The Lady Agnes of Louvain had four sons, of whom the eldest left two sons, neither of whom had issue. In the two following generations three out of six, and two out of three, sons died without heirs male; and of the five brothers of the third Lord Percy of Alnwick not one left male issue. The first Earl of Northumberland was one of two brothers, and by his two sons, both of whom he survived, only one was left, while of *his* nine sons only two left male issue. The fourth Earl was an only son; the only son of the seventh Earl died in infancy, and of his brother's (the eighth Earl's) eight sons, seven are believed to have died childless. Of the four sons of the ninth Earl two died in infancy and the third unmarried; while the tenth Earl had only one surviving daughter by his first wife, and by his second wife an only son, who died without male issue.

The more remote branches of the House of Percy, which had spread in considerable numbers in various parts of the three kingdoms, became, in many instances, extinct after a few generations; while most of those who survived gradually lost all trace of connection with the ruling family.

In other cases a connection was assumed for which there was no warrant. The prosperity of the original Percies after their settlement in England would appear to have tempted other Norman gentlemen from the same district to try their fortune across the Channel; and some of these, although bearing no relationship whatever to the English house, had, on emigrating, adopted the name of their common canton. Thus we are told of one "Gilbert de Percy, who, in the reign of Henry the Second, held in Dorsetshire thirty-one knights' fees, whose posterity

INTRODUCTORY.

possessed considerable property in the southern counties for many ages, and is hardly yet [1812] extinct in Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Devonshire; but who were a distinct family from that of the Lords Percy of Yorkshire and Northumberland.”¹

The system of feudal tenure naturally tended to the localisation of families, the collateral members of which grouped themselves around the head of the house from motives of attachment, duty, or self-interest. With the weakening of that system, however, these domestic ties became relaxed, and when the great noble ceased to be all-powerful within his domain; when, under altered social and political conditions, he could no longer afford protection or employment to the numerous kinsmen who had sought shelter under his castle walls and served him as their natural chief, these men would wander forth to other regions, and, shifting for themselves, with change of locality, pursuits, and habits, soon lost touch with the head of their house.²

A northern antiquary, writing towards the end of the eighteenth century, says:—

“Great and numerous as the Percy family had been about Whitbey in the reigns immediately after the Conquest, no trace of them now remains among us; and after

¹ Sir Egerton Brydges's *Continuation of Collins's Peerage*, vol. ii. p. 222.

Even in Yorkshire we come across some Percies whose connection with the noble house it is difficult to trace. Thus, in the parish church of Hessele, in the East Riding, this inscription is found over the grave of a Dame Ann Percy, “wyff to Syr Henry Percy, who to hym bare XVI. Children; which Ann departed this lyfe the XIX. day of December, 1571.” There is no known member of the family to whom this description can be made to apply.

² The alteration of the name, which with change of scene became transformed into Pierce, Pearce, Pearson, and other corruptions of the original Percy, must have contributed materially to destroy the means of identification, and to obliterate the traces of a common ancestry.

INTRODUCTORY.

the most diligent inquiry I cannot find a single person of the name now living at Whitbey, or anywhere in the Whitbey Strand.”¹

It is remarkable that whereas in the turbulent period from the Conquest down to the fourteenth century, the chiefs or immediate members of the warlike house of Percy all died in their beds, within the next two centuries no less than six Earls of Northumberland and six of their sons or brothers met with violent deaths.² These were :—

1.	Henry Percy,	1st Earl of Northumberland,			A.D.	
				who fell at Bramham Moor,		1407.
2.	Thomas	„	his brother,	}	„	Shrewsbury, 1405.
3.	Hotspur	„	his son,		„	St. Alban's, 1455.
4.	Henry	„	2nd Earl,		„	Towton Fields, 1461.
5.	Henry	„	3rd „	}		Northampton, 1460.
6.	Richard	„	his brothers,		„	Hedgeley Moor, 1464.
7.	Thomas	„	his brothers,		„	Cockledge, 1489.
8.	Ralph	„	4th Earl, murdered at			1489.
9.	Henry	„	brother of 6th Earl,			
			beheaded at Tyburn,			1537.
11.	Thomas	„	7th Earl,		„	York, 1572.
12.	Henry	„	8th „		killed in the Tower,	1585

The shortlivedness of the heads of the English House of Percy is deserving of notice, their average duration of life in the twenty-two generations, from the Conquest down to 1670, having been less than fifty years, and this average applies as much to the eleven barons who

¹ *History of Whitbey Abbey*, by Lionel Charlton, p. 224.

² In his *Life of Prince Rupert*, Eliot Warburton states that “although there were as few battles as conspiracies in which a Percy had not taken part, yet they had shed more blood on the scaffold than on the field of battle.” The foregoing table will show this statement to be erroneous.

INTRODUCTORY.

brought down the line to the end of the fourteenth century, not one of whom died a violent death, as to the later generations, of whom so many fell in battle.¹

Their wives and daughters, however, enjoyed exceptional longevity, no less than eight of them having attained or exceeded the age of threescore and ten.

¹ The average age of the eleven contemporary English sovereigns was fifty-six, although two of them came prematurely to a violent end.

The House of Percy.

 VOL. I.

B

The Norman Percies.

	<i>Contemporary English Sovereigns.</i>
<i>First Baron.</i>	
WILLIAM DE PERCY, surnamed Als Gernons, born <i>circ.</i> ¹ 1030, died 1096.	William I. <i>acc.</i> 1066 William II. „ 1087
<i>Second Baron.</i>	
ALAN, surnamed the Great, born <i>circ.</i> 1069, died 1120.	William I. William II. Henry I. „ 1102
<i>Third Baron.</i>	
WILLIAM, born 1088, died 1133.	Henry I.
<i>Fourth Baron.</i>	
WILLIAM, ² born 1112, died 1168.	Henry I. Stephen „ 1135 Henry II. „ 1154
<i>Representatives of Fifth Baron.</i>	
MAUD, Countess of Warwick, born 1132, died 1203, and	Henry I. Stephen.
AGNES, Countess of Louvain, born 1134, died 1205.	Henry II. Richard I. „ 1189 John „ 1199


¹ The reader should be warned that the dates of births in this table are by no means reliable, being in some cases indeed merely inferential guesses. The dates of the deaths rest, as a rule, upon documentary evidence more or less authentic.

² Dugdale and Banks introduce five generations from the Conquest to the failure of male issue in 1186; whereas, according to Collins and later genealogists who appear to have accepted his conclusions, the failure took place in the third generation. Under this arrangement, however, there would be a lapse of ninety-nine years between the birth of the second Baron and the death of his son, and of one hundred and twenty years between the birth of the third Baron and the death of his youngest daughter. There is hardly room for *two* intermediate generations, and in the case of Richard, the supposed fifth Baron, Dugdale has probably, as Collins suggests, confounded collaterals with descendants; but William the third Baron supplies an apparently necessary link in the chain, and I have had no hesitation in accepting him as the son of Alan, and the grandfather, instead of the father, of the co-heiresses.



CHAPTER I.

The Norman Percies.

“ HIS 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.”¹

A.D.
1030—1205
—

So writes one of the most learned and industrious of English antiquaries; and biography is too deeply indebted to genealogical research to be justified in arbitrarily rejecting its revelations for want of documentary evidence to confirm them. Tradition plays an important part in all family history, and although there exist no authentic records to establish the identity of any of the Danish invaders of Neustria before the time of Rollo, and the Sea King himself is a somewhat mythical hero until his personality emerges under the light of the tenth century,² it is quite possible that the names of some of

¹ Dugdale's *Baronage*.

² Nearly a full century had elapsed before any portion of Rollo's personal history was committed to writing, and in these records truth and fable are necessarily so closely intermingled that the exploits

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D. 1030-1205
these Scandinavian pirates may have been preserved by their descendants.

In his biographical sketch of the Percy family,¹ the accomplished Bishop of Dromore has unhesitatingly adopted Mainfred² as the founder of the French house, alleging that "the old Norman nobility were very exact in preserving their genealogies, and in this followed the example of their Teutonic and Celtic ancestors, who had their bards and scalds to record the exploits and descents of their chieftains." This statement, however, is in direct contradiction to all we know of the Danish invaders of Gaul, whose ambition it became, from the first, to merge their nationality in that of their adopted country, and to obliterate, rather than to preserve, all traces of their Scandinavian origin.³

Still, the Norman Percies must have had an ancestor, and the legend of Mainfred the Dane may be accepted as well as another, though Mainfred de Percy is obviously inadmissible.

We are not told how Mainfred signalled himself, or what ultimately became of him ; but a monkish genealogist of the fifteenth century speaks of his son as :—

"Rollo's associate that was called Jeffrey Percie
A right valiant knight, gracious and fortunate,
Whose father named Manfred was fallen into fate."⁴

popularly attributed to Rollo are believed to have been the work of several distinct Danish chieftains engaged in these piratical expeditions. See Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. i. p. 187.

¹ Contributed to the fifth edition of Collins's *Peerage*. In subsequent editions of that work the family history is considerably abridged.

² A question has indeed been raised as to whether the Danes did not use Mainfred (Man-fried) as a woman's, and not as a man's name.

³ Sir Francis Palgrave says of the Norman nobles that "not one of their order ever thought of deducing his lineage from the Hersers or Jarls or Vikings who occupy so conspicuous a place in Norwegian history, not even through the medium of any traditional fable. The very name of Rollo's father—'*Senex quidem in partibus Dacie*'—was unknown to Rollo's grandchildren, and if not known, worse than unknown, neglected."—*History of England and Normandy*, vol. i. p. 704.

⁴ *The Metrical Chronicle of the Percy Family*, by William Peeris,

THE INVADERS UNDER ROLLO.

A.D.
1030-1205

He is said to have been baptised, together with Rollo and a large number of his followers, by the Bishop of Rheims in 912, and to have been the ancestor of four generations of Norman nobles who acquired fame and fortune in the military service of their princes.¹

There is perhaps no parallel in history to the rapid transition from barbarism to a state of comparatively high civilisation which marked the progress of the Danish adventurers who, in the beginning of the tenth century, made themselves masters of the northern coast of Gaul. While retaining unimpaired their warlike character, they lost no time in adopting the faith, the language, and, to a large extent, the more refined habits of their southern neighbours.² The Pagan chief became transformed into a Christian prince; his kinsmen and companions developed into territorial lords, and assumed the style and titles of the French nobility. The horde of reckless sea-rovers who had manned the pirate fleets

clerk and priest. He was chaplain to the fifth Earl of Northumberland, and tells his readers that :

“ From the Conquest downe lineally my matter shall procede,
And if it be not eligaunt yet a trew historie ye shall rede ; ”

a promise that is not fulfilled, for the work is full of inaccuracies.

¹ I have been unable to verify the brilliant pedigree which genealogists have given to the Norman Percies before the Conquest, and therefore prefer to pass them over without special notice, agreeing as I do with a writer who, though by no means disposed to be partial (and who more than once is unjust) to the family, says : “ Both ancient and illustrious is the descent, and it needs not to be exaggerated by the false glitter derived from the fictions of the poet, the legends of the monk, or the fanciful blazonry of the herald.”—Tate’s *History of the Borough, Castle, and Barony of Alnwick*, vol. i. p. 110.

² “ Many of the Northmen were wearied of their piracy, the Romane tongue fascinated them, the comforts of France attracted them, religion subdued them. Their disposition was pliable, adaptable, cheerful, and though fierce, not inherently bloodthirsty.”—Palgrave, vol. i. p. 503.

Wace dwells admiringly upon the stern execution done by Rollo upon all offenders against the law :—

“ Larrons e robeors feseit toz demembrer ;
Crever ex, u ardre en pudre, u piez et puings coper ;
Solonc lor felonie feseit chescun pesner.”—*Roman de Rou*, v. 1970.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

settled down as industrious craftsmen and peaceful agriculturists; and the fertile soil which their lawless valour had won developed into a prosperous and a powerful state.

When a century and a half after Rollo's accession to his dukedom his reigning descendant prepared to invade England, the Canton of Perci in Lower Normandy was held by three powerful nobles, of whom one, William, fifth in descent from Rollo's companion, and described as Comte de Caux and de Poitiers, owned the Château de Perci near Villedieu in the Department of La Manche, the site of which is to this day pointed out to travellers as the birthplace of the founders of the English Percies.¹

According to our rhyming genealogist it was this nobleman who accompanied Duke William in his invasion of England,² but no such titles occur in the lists of *les grands* who landed with the Conqueror, and it is far more probable that it was a cadet of this house who settled in England. There is indeed nothing on record to establish the identity of the founder of the English Percies. That he belonged to a family of rank and importance, is clearly indicated by the position accorded to him immediately after the Conquest, and the large

¹ "There were three very important castles in the canton of Percy, each appertaining to the head of a very powerful family, and pre-eminent amongst these the Roche Tessons two of whom were at the battle of Hastings, but we hear nothing of them in England afterwards."—Palgrave, vol. ii. p. 159. This is a mistake. A Tison, or Tisson, received large grants of land in the north of England, and the name is found in juxtaposition with that of William de Perci in Domesday Book.

² We are told that this Count de Caux was—

"With William the Conqueror in favour specially;
He found none more steadfaste among his Councill;
For his merits and manhood he loved him cordially,
And into the Boreal partes he with him did resort;
A noble lady caused him to marry named Emma de Port."
Peeris's *Metrical Chronicle*.

THE CONQUEST OF ENGLAND.

grants of land he then received. All else is mere conjecture or assumption.¹ It must be borne in mind that although the contribution of men, money, and ships towards the invasion was universal on the part of the Norman nobles, of whom a considerable number embarked with William, and shared the dangers of the enterprise, comparatively few remained in the conquered country. They had, as a rule, done homage in advance for the lands they were to receive in return for their contributions or services,² but there was little to tempt them permanently to abandon their fair possessions, and to exchange the fertile fields and stately mansions of Normandy³ for a new home under the inclement sky of a wild and uncultivated region, and the companionship of an alien, and in their eyes, a barbarous people.⁴ Most of them accordingly, after having done their duty as brave soldiers in the field, obtained the King's consent to

A.D.
1030-1205
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¹ One writer is driven to argue that William de Percy would never have displayed the violent temper and impatience of opposition for which he was noted "had he not been the head of the Percy family, not only here in England, but in Normandy, and feared not the control of any relations whatever."—*History of Whitby Abbey*, by Lionel Charlton, 1772.

² These grants enabled them to make liberal provision for the younger or more remote members of their families, to whom the sacrifice of home comforts and associations was compensated for by the prospect of acquiring wealth and influence abroad, and who were doubtless willing to become, what the *beati possidentes* rarely do, the pioneers of civilisation in a foreign land, and the founders of a new social and political system.

³ William of Malmesbury contrasts the coarse prodigality of the Anglo-Saxon nobles, who in squalid houses wasted their substance in gluttonous living, with the frugal refinement of the same class in Normandy, who occupied "noble and splendid mansions."—*Gesta Regum Anglorum*, Hardy, p. 448.

⁴ The Norman invaders looked upon the inhabitants of Britain much as the Gauls had looked upon Rollo's companions a hundred and fifty years before, though with less respect. William of Poictou, one of the Conqueror's companions, in describing the battle of Hastings, says: "The cries of the Normans on the one side, and of the *Barbarians* on the other, were drowned by the clashing of arms and the groans of the dying."

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

return to their homes,¹ leaving the younger and more adventurous members of their families with such of their retainers as they chose to spare to manage the lands they had acquired.

It must not however be supposed that the military commanders at the Conquest mainly comprised the members of the noble houses of Normandy. The great bulk of the officers of William's army of invasion consisted of men of neither gentle nor Norman blood,² but of mercenaries drawn from all parts of Europe by the prospect of pay and plunder. These professional adventurers and hireling free-lances could not have been excluded from their fair share in the partition of those lands which their swords had won; and it is to this class of colonists rather than to the Norman nobility that the great majority of Englishmen who boast descent from the army of the Conqueror must be content to look or their ancestors.

At the period of the Conquest, and indeed down to

¹ The remonstrances of their wives, who were strenuously opposed to any scheme of emigration, were probably not without effect, more especially as these ladies threatened that if their lords did not speedily return to their own country, "they would be driven to seek out other consorts for themselves."—Freeman, vol. ii. p. 231.

Brady states that the Norman nobles "sorrowfully and unwillingly deserted the King" after the Conquest had been achieved, and that even among the inferior soldiery many, "wearied with the desolations of the country, importuned him for their refreshment that they might return to their fixed residences, which he willingly granted, and dismissed them with a plentiful reward for their services."—*Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 194.

² "The Anglo-Saxons seem to have had a very strong aristocratic feeling, and great regard for purity and dignity of blood. The Normans, or rather the host of adventurers whom we must comprehend under the name of Normans, had comparatively little; and not very many of the real old and powerful aristocracy, whether of Normandy or of Brittany, settled in England. . . . No one circumstance more vexed the spirit of the English than to see their fair maidens and widows compelled to accept these despicable adventurers as their husbands. Of this we have an example in Lucia, the daughter of Algar, for Talboys seems to have been a person of the lowest degree."—Palgrave, vol. iii. p. 480.

NORMAN NOMENCLATURE.

much later times, surnames¹ were rare, both among Normans and Saxons; and by a perfectly natural process men called themselves after their birthplaces or family properties, their professions, trades, or handicrafts, and not unfrequently by names indicative of some personal peculiarity.

A.D.
1030-1205

Thus our Norman William would distinguish himself from innumerable other colonists of the same baptismal name by adding the name of his paternal estate, upon the same principle as Jean, the Norman smith who shod his horses, would call himself Jean le Ferrier.²

The distinguishing appellative thus adopted would descend from father to son, and survive long after all trace of its original meaning had been lost.³

One of England's greatest historical families thus derives its name from a castle on the coast of Normandy of which no trace now remains, and with which the immediate founder of that race was but indirectly associated. Not only, however, may we safely assume that the first of the English Percies was but a cadet of the

¹ We find the words *Sur-noms* and *Sire-noms* used distinctively; the former being applied to names assumed on purely personal grounds, and the latter when derived from territorial possessions, in which cases, as a rule, the name descended from father to son.

² The practice of shoeing horses, though at least as old as the Roman Empire (according to Suetonius, Nero's wife, Poppæa, shod her mules with silver shoes), had been first introduced into England by the Conqueror, a high officer of whose court is said to have been charged with the direction and superintendence of this craft after the invasion. The noble house of Ferrers, who bear a horse-shoe on their coat-of-arms, are reputed to be descended from this person.

³ "When a Norman who bore the name of his birthplace or possession in Normandy, Robert of Bruce or William of Percy, found himself the possessor of far greater estates in England than in Normandy, when his main interests were no longer Norman but English, his Norman surname ceased to be really descriptive. It became a mere arbitrary hereditary surname; it no longer suggested the original Norman holding; it remained in use, even if the Norman holding passed away from the family. When a Bruce or a Percy had lost his original connection *with the place* Bruce or Percy, when the man no longer suggested a thought of the place, Bruce or Percy became strictly surnames in the modern sense."—Freeman.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

Norman house,² but there is some reason to doubt whether William de Percy actually accompanied the Conqueror or took part in the battle of Hastings.

There is so much diversity in the several lists which have been put forth as copies of the original roll of Battle Abbey (lost or destroyed at a very early period) that they must all be viewed with more or less suspicion as to their authenticity. In some of these the name of Percy appears,² in others we meet with names so similar that they may have been intended for it;³ in others, again, it is altogether absent.⁴ There is certainly no mention of it in any contemporary document; and later historians, writing after the Percies had become a family of note and military reputation, would be apt to assume the active participation of its founder

² It has been stated that William de Percy was a feudatory of the great Norman house of Pagnell, lords of one of the three Seigneuries which composed the canton of Perci, and that it was to him that the Conqueror had granted the lands which afterwards became vested in the Percies. See *Plumpton Papers* edited by Thomas Stapleton. For the first statement, however, there is no authority, and as regards the lands it is entirely contrary to established facts.

³ In the *Brompton Chronicle* (A.D. 1149) we find the name in a list headed: "Cognomines eorum qui cum Guillelmo Conquestore Angliam ingressi sunt," bracketed with Cruce (? Curcy) and Lacy. It also occurs in a paper entitled: "Surnoms des lynages de grandes de ceux que vendront avec William le Conquerour en Engleterre" (*Cotton MSS.* Julius, B. 12, fol. 36), but the handwriting assigns this document to the sixteenth century. Again it is met with in the lists entitled: *Magnates superstites* and *Catalogus nobilium* in Duchesne's works, as also in the *Dives Roll*, which purports to be a list of Duke William's officers, "non plus au point d'arrivée mais au point de depart de l'armée Normande," in other words, the Conqueror's Embarkation-Return, which, if authentic, would be conclusive evidence. This document was recently published by the Archæological Society of France, and the names contained in it were, in 1862, engraved upon the eastern wall in the Church of Dives, at which port the invading army embarked for England. The names, 461 in number, occupy a space of twenty-four square metres. Holinshead's List contains 646 names, and that headed "Surnoms de Graundes" only 165.

³ As in Leland's List, where we find the Sires de Pacy and Percehay.

⁴ The name does not occur in Holinshead's List nor in several of those published in Duchesne's *Historiæ Normannorum Scriptores Antiqui*.

WILLIAM DE PERCY.

in the Conquest of England and include the name, with that of others under similar conditions, without any stronger evidence or corroboration than probability.

A.D.
1030-1096

A contemporary chronicler does, however, state very distinctly that "Hugo d'Avranches (King William's nephew, and afterwards Earl of Chester) and William de Percy came into England in 1067," *i.e. the year after the Conquest.*¹ It is not to be believed that this writer could possibly have been mistaken in the date of such a national event as the invasion of England, nor does the addition of the words "with William the Conqueror" alter the case; for the King had passed into Normandy in the spring of that year and had returned to England in the autumn. If it be asked how one who had taken no part in the Conquest came to share the fruits of victory, to be rewarded with large grants of territory, and to be placed at once in a position of exceptional power and influence in the North of England, the answer that suggests itself is that William de Percy, like many other Norman gentlemen whose immigration into his dominions had been encouraged by King Edward the Confessor, had previously been a settler in England. On the first threatening of hostilities Harold had expelled these colonists as dangerous subjects,² but when the country

¹ "Memorandum quod anno Domini millesimo sexagesimo septimo Hugo comes Cestrensis et Willielmus de Percy venerunt in Angliam cum domino Willielmo Conquestore."—*Ex Registro Cartarum Abbatia de Whitebye.*—*Monast. Angl.* vol. i. p. 409.

² "Normanz ki el paiz maneient
Ki fames et enfanz aveint,
Ke Ewart i aveit menéz,
E granz chastels é fieus dunez
Fist Heraut de paiz chacier."—*Roman de Rou*, v. 11076.

Which may be rendered :

Normans who lived in that country
With their wives and children,
Whom Edward had invited over,
To whom he showed favour and granted castles and lands,
Harold sent out of the country.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

fell into the hands of the Normans they would naturally enough return to claim their possessions.

There are indeed several circumstances that tend to confirm this supposition. Percy's earnest intercession on behalf of Earl Gospatrick, when he led the Northumberland revolt in 1069, was quite in character with the disposition of one who had formerly associated on terms of friendship with the conquered race, but would have been foreign to the nature of William's arrogant soldiery. There are other indications of his sympathy with the oppressed population, and King William would not have been insensible to the advantage of encouraging a Norman gentleman possessed of local knowledge, experience, and influence, to settle in the most disturbed and disaffected district of his new dominions.

Again, colonists are apt to adopt the outward habits of those among whom they live, and it is evident, from the fact of his countrymen having given him the *sobriquet* of *Als Gernons*,¹ that Percy had followed the Anglo-Saxon fashion of letting his whiskers grow, a practice entirely at variance with the habits of the Normans.²

William de Percy married a Saxon lady of rank, but there are no records to establish her parentage. She

¹ By a far-fetched derivation *Gernons* is described as a Norman corruption of the Latin *grani*, signifying any kind of beard grown on the face. (See Du Cange, *Glossarum*, t. iii. p. 554.) *Als* or *ohlte-gernons* would thus be synonymous with *aux moustaches*, or *à la Barbe*, which latter was the sobriquet borne by one of the Conqueror's companions named in the *Roman de Rou*. The ancient by-name was, four centuries later, introduced into the Percy family under the softened form of Algernon, and has since become a generally popular baptismal name in England.

² Carte asserts that the Anglo-Saxons considered the Normans effeminate because of their smooth faces (as represented in the Bayeux tapestry); and Speed states that after a time the conquered race, following the example of their masters, "did shave their beardes, round their haire, and in garment, behaviour and diet altogether unfashioned themselves to imitate them."—*Hist. of England*, p. 422.

EMMA DE PORT.

is generally described as Emma de Port,¹ the Norman surname having probably been given to her by the invaders in right of her ownership of Semer near Scarborough, then an important seaport. A graceful legend reports her to have been a daughter of Gospatrick, Earl of Northumberland,² who conferred her hand upon the Norman knight in recompense for his having saved her father's life when, on the suppression of the rebellion, he had fallen into the hands of the Conqueror's army. According to Dugdale, however, the Saxon Earl had only one daughter, Julia, who became the wife of Ranulph de Marley, and we must fall back upon this more prosaic version of Percy's marriage in an ancient MS. : "Emma of the Porte . . . was Lady of Semer besides Skarburgh afore the Conquest, and of other lands, William Conqueror gave to Syr William Percy for his good service; and he weddid hyr that was very heir to them in discharging of his conscience."³

A.D.
1030-1096

We may thus infer that Percy having received a grant of the lands of which the Saxon maiden had been either the owner or the heiress, he compensated her for the loss of her possessions by making her his wife.

Although in the first instance the oppressive influence of Norman rule had been less felt by the population of the North than in other parts of England, Gospatrick's rebellion in 1069 led to an almost

¹ The same name was borne by one of William's knights at the invasion :

"Huc, le sire de Montfort,
Cil d'Espine and cil de Port."—*Roman de Rou*

² Charlton's *History of Whithy Abbey*, p. 50.

³ *Ex Registro Monasterii de Whitbye*, Harl. MSS. No. 692 (26), fol. 235, from which extracts are published in the *Antiquarian Repertory*, vol. iv. p. 4.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030-1205

universal confiscation of lands in Northumbria¹ and Mercia, where William's soldiery became nearly exclusively the lords of the soil. By far the largest share in this distribution fell to Hugh Lupus, the Conqueror's nephew and chief commander of the forces employed in suppressing the revolt. He showed little inclination, however, to settle in a district which he had been mainly instrumental in reducing to a desert,² and which was by nature barren and arid, and "in a manner separated by wild moors from all the rest of England."³ He accordingly disposed of his lands in the North to his friend and companion in arms, William de Percy (who had already obtained considerable grants from the King), first as would appear at a quit rent, but, not long after, absolutely on the same terms as he had held them from the Crown.⁴

Undeterred by the ruin and desolation around him, and by the sullen attitude of the conquered and down-trodden population,⁵ William de Percy made himself a

¹ The ancient kingdom of Northumbria, be it remembered, which had extended from the Humber to the Forth (Edinburgh being then a Border Fortress), was, at the time of the Conquest, reduced to the territories lying between the Tyne and the Tweed.

² Such was the destruction caused by the Conqueror's ruthless retaliation, that there remained according to the ancient historian "Inter Eboracum et Dunelmum nusquam villa inhabitata, bestiarum tantum et latronum latibula, magno itinerantibus fuere timori."—*Simeonis Dunelmensis Historia*, Twisden's Edition, vol. i. p. 199.

This is fully confirmed by William of Malmesbury, who says: "Si quis modo videt peregrinus, ingemuit; si quis superest vetus incola, non agnoscit," p. 258. Palgrave says that at the close of William's reign "the whole tract between York and Durham continued a desolate desert bounded by a wide circuit of ruins."

³ Charlton's *History of Whitby Abbey*.

⁴ The grant comprised the Town and Port of Whitby with the surrounding lands. "Conquestor dedit prædicto Hugoni villam de Whitebecum cum omnibus suis membris; et idem Hugo dedit prædicto Willielmo de Percy omnia prædicta terras et tenementa, sibi et hæredibus suis, ita liberè et quietè sicut prædictus Hugo ea habuit ex dono Regis."—*Ex Registro Cartarum Abbatie de Whitby*, Monast. Angl. p. 409.

⁵ Thierry's description of the condition to which the Anglo-Saxons

FOUNDATION OF RELIGIOUS HOUSES.

home in the wilderness, found occupation for the starving people, built and fortified the castles of Spofforth and Topcliffe, which long remained the principal seats of his descendants,¹ and laid the foundation of that influence and reputation in the northern counties which became the pride and the birthright of many future generations of his name and lineage.

A. D.
1030—1096

Our forefathers required none of those specious pretexts under cover of which modern political morality is prone to justify the wrongs which, in the exercise of superior power, of ambition, or acquisitiveness it inflicts upon others. Duke William's contemplated attack upon an unoffending neighbour, far from arousing the indignation of other states, had received the formal sanction of the head of the Church; the bloodshed and rapine which marked the Conqueror's progress called forth no reproof or remonstrance from Rome, and the crown of which he had robbed his kinsman was placed upon the

were reduced by the conquerors, although considered to be exaggerated, is so graphic that no excuse will be needed for this quotation: "Il faut s'imaginer deux nations, les Anglais d'origine et les Anglais par invasion, divisés sur le même pays, ou plutôt se figurer deux pays dans une condition bien différente: la terre des Normands riche et franche de taillages, celle des Saxons pauvre, serve et grevée de cens; la première garnie de vastes hôtels, de châteaux murs et créneles; la seconde parsemée de cabanes de chaume ou de masures dégradées; celle-là peuplée d'heureux et d'oisifs, de gens de guerre et de cour, de nobles et de chevaliers; celle-ci peuplée d'hommes de peine et de travail, de fermiers et d'artisans. Sur l'une, le luxe et l'insolence, sur l'autre, la misère et l'envie, non pas l'envie du pauvre à la vue des richesses d'autrui, mais l'envie du dépouillé en présence de ses spoliateurs. Enfin, pour achever le tableau, ces deux terres sont, en quelque sorte, entrelacées l'une dans l'autre, elles se touchent par tous les points, et cependant elles sont plus distinctes que si la mer roulait entre elles. La terre des riches parle la langue romane des provinces gauloises d'outre Loire, tandis que l'ancienne langue du pays reste aux foyers des pauvres et des serfs."—*Histoire de la Conquête d'Angleterre par les Normands*, vol. ii. 30, 31.

¹ See Surtees's *Durham*, vol. iv. p. 274. Also Camden.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A. D.
1030-1205

usurper's brow by the hands of special envoys deputed for his service by the Holy Father.

The prelates of Normandy were, however, less indulgent to the crime of their ruler. Whatever their motive may have been, it should be recorded in their honour, that with one accord they had raised their voices against the injustice and cruelty of the invasion, and by honest and unsparing censure had borne "that testimony against the unchristianity of war so rarely afforded" ¹ in an age when force was the standard measure of legality, and success seldom failed to sanction wrong.

To exact restitution was beyond their power, perhaps beyond their wishes ; but by the imposition of a general penance upon all persons, without distinction of rank, who had taken part in the conquest of England, the Norman clergy aroused the conscience of the evil doers in the hour of their triumph, and by the assertion of their authority, if they did not relieve the victims, advanced the cause of the faith.

Contrition in those days generally took the practical form of donations to the Church, and the sincerity of repentance was now measured by the extent of the surrender of their share of the spoil by the conquerors, for the purpose of founding religious houses.

Subsequently it became a fashion among the Normans settled in England to build monasteries and convents within their territories, since these establishments added to their importance and local influence ; but, at the time of which we are treating, there is little doubt but that the large contributions offered were due, if not to devotion or remorse, at any rate to a superstitious hope of thus atoning for past offences and averting the censure of the Church.

William de Percy became conspicuous for the liberality

¹ Palgrave, vol. iii. 485.

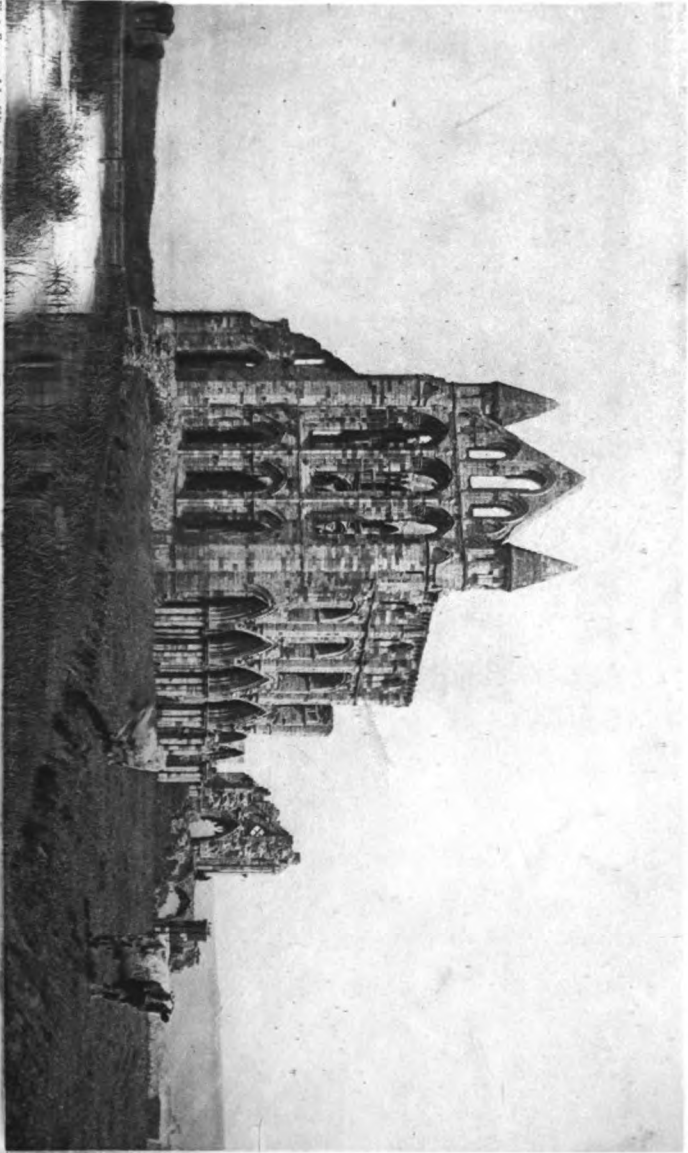


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WHITBY ABBEY.



WHITBY ABBEY.

of his endowments.¹ When Reinfred, an old companion in arms,² who had now taken the cowl and joined a Benedictine fraternity at Evesham in Worcestershire, visited him and prayed permission to build a monastery on his land, Percy, "greatly pleased with his new and unexpected guest, made him all the assistance that lay in his power . . . received him honorably, and engaged to support so laudable an undertaking."³

A.D.
1030—1096

There yet remained at that time near the town of Whitby a few broken columns and moss-grown blocks of masonry, to mark the site of the once stately Abbey of St. Hilda founded in 675, but which had been destroyed by the Danes under Bruern⁴ two hundred years later. This was the spot now chosen for the erection of a new monastery, of which Reinfred the soldier-priest became prior about 1076.⁵

A monk named Stephen, who joined the brotherhood, has left a quaint and interesting history of the new foundation and of its early struggles.⁶ He paints his patron in very unfavourable colours, and represents

¹ "William de Percy was naturally of a religious disposition, perhaps not altogether without a tincture of superstition. He revered the clergy as Christ's vicegerents upon earth, and considered the monks as a necessary order of men to help us on our way heavenwards, who, on account of their fervent piety and devotion, were sure to entail the Divine blessing on such of the laity as lived near them."—Charlton's *Whitby Abbey*.

² According to the *Metrical Chronicle*, Reinfred was a cousin of William de Percy.

³ Charlton's *Whitby Abbey*.

⁴ It was during this irruption that the Danish pirates, to avenge the cruel death of Lodebrac, the father of Henger (who had been thrown into a pit filled with venomous serpents), attacked another neighbouring convent, when all the younger nuns, by the advice of their abbess, cut off their lips and noses to save themselves from being dishonoured by the invaders. Bruern thereupon declared them to be too ugly to live, and shutting them up in their cells, set fire to the building.—*Ibid.*

⁵ "William de Percy, well-pleased with Reinfred and his fraternity, soon after their first settling at Whitby put them in possession of two carucates, or 240 acres, of land adjoining to their monastery."—*Ibid.*

⁶ The *Chronicle of Whitby Abbey*. Bodleian Library.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

himself as having been hardly used ; but as, subsequently to his removal from Whitby, we find him involved in angry disputes with his archbishop, and engaged in protracted litigation with his neighbours, we may conclude that he was not himself altogether free from blame, and accept his testimony with some qualification.

Stephen complains that when William de Percy, *quidam ex Baronibus Regis*, found that "the monks had converted the lands he had granted them, and which were then only inhabited by wild beasts and birds of prey, from a desert into fertile fields and smiling' gardens, he repented him of the good he had done us, and strove as much as possible to mischief us both by himself and followers in order to make us fly from it ; and late one night, having collected together a company of thieves and pirates, he came before us and forced us to abandon our dwelling ; took everything away we had, and such as fell into his hands he transported into unknown countries. . . ."

To seek redress for these outrages Stephen states that he crossed into Normandy, where the king then was, and having lodged his complaint, succeeded in obtaining a royal command to be reinstated in all his rights ; but that "after that time the rage and malice of William de Percy was much more vehement against us, and he never allowed us to pass one day quietly till he had driven us away from Whitby. . . ."

"What needs more? Necessity so requiring it, and being overpowered with continual oppression, and harassed with the inevitable violence of the so-often-mentioned William de Percy, who had so publicly and unjustly taken away Whitby from us, we retired to Lestingham."

"We" being evidently Stephen and a party attached to him, for it does not appear that Reinfred or his

SERLO DE PERCY.

A. D.
1030—1096

original fraternity ever left Whitby; but it is probable that the Norman knight possessed that headstrong character and impatience of opposition popularly ascribed to certain of his descendants. Charlton says apologetically:—

“It is true that William de Percy seems to have been of a haughty and choleric disposition; but I am of opinion that he never could have behaved so injuriously to any ecclesiastic without having had great provocation.”

Be this as it may, the religious zeal of the founder of Whitby Abbey seems to have been of a somewhat capricious nature. On Reinfred's death William de Percy's brother Serlo, who had also by this time exchanged the sword for the gown, who is said to have been a man of considerable learning, and who had held office in the royal household, and been the friend and companion in arms (probably, considering the difference of their ages, the tutor or governor) of Prince William,¹ the heir to the crown, succeeded to the Priory of Whitby by the unanimous vote of the brotherhood. On his election his brother confirmed the original grant, but a dispute subsequently arose between them, and notwithstanding the full rights that he had formally conferred by his charter, he now granted a large portion of the lands attached to the monastery to his faithful esquire, Ralf, afterwards (by right of his possession of one of those properties) Ralf de Eversley, a name that was honourably borne by his knightly descendants through many generations.

Serlo lost no time in appealing to the king (Rufus had by this time succeeded to the throne) who commanded William de Percy to desist from his claim, but

¹ “Familiaris ejus et socius amantissimus, quum ipsi juvenes milites essent in domo et in curia Willelmi patris ejus.”—*Harl. MSS.* No. 293, fol. 35.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030-1205
—

the old baron appears to have disregarded the royal authority; for we are told that Serlo "being desirous to be at a distance from his brother William, and to live on the demesnes of the king, lest his brother should offer him some injury or use him reproachfully, removed to Hacknesse,"¹ and that even there he was not free from persecution.

William Peeris in his *Metrical Chronicle* takes part against his own order in this quarrel, and states that Serlo had forged a title to the charter of Whitby "to entitle the king as founder," for which sin God had punished and ruefully vexed him by "a contagious canker."

Towards the end of his life however William de Percy determined to make his peace with the Church, and having become reconciled with his brother he issued a new charter confirming all the original grants except Eversley. This was subsequently supplemented by a royal charter, to which Percy's name is appended as a witness, and by which the prior and brotherhood are granted "all liberties and privileges over whatever land they may have acquired or may acquire as also over all their homagers wheresoever dwelling, as absolutely and freely as the royal power hath granted or can grant them to any church whatsoever."²

Having thus freed his conscience, William de Percy, in further atonement for past offences, joined Duke Robert of Normandy in the first Crusade. He reached the Holy Land and died in sight of Jerusalem in the autumn of 1096.³ He was buried at Antioch, but his

¹ Charlton.

² Appendix I. See also Dugdale, *Monast. Anglican.* vol. i. 412, where all the charters relating to the foundation of Whitby Abbey are recited.

³ "Nobilissimus Wilhelmus de Perci, Jerosolamiam petens, apud locum qui vocatur mons Gaudii qui est in Provincia Jerosolymitima, migravit ad Dominum, ibique a suis honorifice sepultus est."—*Memorials of Fountain Abbey*, Surtees Society.

LANDS OF WILLIAM DE PERCY.

heart was brought to England and laid in the abbey he had there founded.

A. D.
1030-1096

Serlo survived till 1102, and before his death succeeded in getting his nephew, William de Percy,¹ nominated his successor as abbot, not in consideration, as we are told, of any exceptional learning or piety, but for the more worldly reason that the monks would find him "the properest person for getting their possessions confirmed, and giving them an addition to their present power."²

* * *

Within twenty years after the Conquest, the great work of William's reign, the land survey of his new kingdom, which has served to throw so strong and clear a light upon the social history of that period, had been completed.

From these records we learn that in 1085 William de Percy was the holder *in capite*³ of no less than eighty-six lordships in the North Riding of Yorkshire, exclusive of Whitby,⁴ of thirty-two lordships in Lincolnshire, and of other lands in Essex and in Hampshire.⁵

The actual extent of these possessions it is impossible to estimate with any approach to accuracy, since

¹ According to Charlton, this nephew of William and Serlo de Percy came over from Normandy in 1096, accompanied by his sister, who married, first, Hugh de Borthorp, near Semar, and secondly, Reginald Bucel, of Ouston Bucel.

² Stephen's *Chronicle of Whitby*.

³ He was at this time still sub-tenant for certain lands held under the Earl of Chester, which he subsequently obtained *in capite*.—See *Domesday Book*, i. 305.

⁴ The Deanery of Craven is stated at the time of the Conquest to have comprised 600 square miles, five-sixths of which was waste land. The Percy fee in Craven was equal to 17,400 statute acres, and stretched twenty-five miles from north to south.—See Whitaker's *History of Craven*.

⁵ The recital of William de Percy's lands in *Domesday Book* occupies ten and a half closely-printed columns.—See vol. i. fols. 322 and 354.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A. D.
1030—1205

Domesday only gives the measurement of the arable land,¹ whereas moor, woodland, and forest then formed the principal portion of the territory in the north of England. Equally difficult it is to arrive at the value of these lands; the fisheries must, however, have been important sources of revenue, and the forests formed the feeding-ground of innumerable herds of hogs.² The money value of game, which was strictly preserved, must also have been considerable.

The quantity of land required to constitute a knight's fee, and again the number of knights' fees that went to compose a barony, appear then to have been quite undetermined by any established rule or principle. Indeed the grant of land held by knight's service, though it placed the holder in the position of a gentleman, did not in itself confer knighthood; nor did the possession of a barony confer the privileges or degree of baron, since "nobody could confer titles of honour besides the king, or persons having power and authority from him."³

It is thus difficult to compute the dignity and influence which the possession of landed property then represented. Authorities differ widely as to the number of knights' fees created by the Conqueror. According to Madox these exceeded thirty thousand; Vitalis puts them as high as fifty thousand, while modern writers contend that the revenue derived from scutage in the reign of the second William has been ascertained with sufficient approximation to accuracy to prove that the actual

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¹ The standard measure, the *carucate* (which was supposed to represent as much arable land as could be worked by one plough and its team of oxen), not only varied in different counties, ranging from eighty to 150 acres, but seems to have fluctuated with the quality of the soil.

² The value of timber was rudely assessed, not by the measurement of the trees, but by an estimate of the number of swine that could lie under their shade.

³ Madox, *Baronia Anglica*.

KNIGHTS' FEES.

numbers of knights' fees could not have exceeded two or three thousand.

A.D.
1030-1096
—

The latter estimate is probably far more below than the former ones are above the truth, for as a very considerable number of William's immediate kinsmen and chieftains individually held a hundred, a hundred and fifty, and in some cases even three hundred knights' fees, they alone would have absorbed the full extent of the number allowed by the modern computation.¹

William de Percy is stated to have held thirty-two knights' fees,² and there is no doubt whatever that he was very shortly after William's accession to the English throne summoned to his councils as a baron of the realm. His name is among the first in a "Catalogus nobilium qui immediate prælia a rege conquestore tenuerunt,"³ and again among the "Magnates superstites anno xx Regni Willelmi Conquestoris et quibus in comitibus terras tenuerunt;"⁴ and though Collins's statement that he had held the office of Magnus Constabularius—a post almost invariably filled by noblemen of the highest rank—rests upon questionable authority,⁵ the fact of his

¹ "Suppose King William the First granted to Alan, Earl of Bretagne, an honour in England of 140 knights' fees, plus minus; to Hugh Bigot, Earl of Norfolk, an honour composed of 125 knights' fees; to the Bishop of Worcester an honour made up of sixty knights' fees; to Monsieur de Percy a barony of thirty knights' fees; to Monsieur Malet, Chevalier, two knights' fees, &c. . . . in brief, to so many persons, so many knights' fees as might amount to 32,000 or some other such number."—Madox, *Baronia Anglica*.

² A knight's fee under the Conqueror comprised the obligation of furnishing the king with one armed soldier for forty days in each year, besides contributions in aid of royal marriages and large payments under the head of what is now called *succession duty*. Under Henry the Second it was allowed to be commuted into a money payment of twenty shillings.

³ Duchesne.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ The statement appears in an anonymous paper in the *Harleian MSS.* (No. 293, fol. 35), but it is doubtful whether such an office as Lord High Constable of England existed under the early Norman kings.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030-1205

having stood high in the royal confidence as a baron of the realm is established by irrefutable evidence.

* * *

History records but little to throw light upon the lives of the next three generations of the Percies. We are not even informed for what achievements Alan, the second baron, was by his contemporaries honoured with the surname of "the great."¹ He probably gained military distinction in the wars waged by Henry I. in Normandy and France, and the high consideration in which he was held is sufficiently attested by his marriage with a lady nearly allied to the royal house of England, Emma de Gant, a grandniece of the Conqueror.²

By this alliance he came into possession of considerable additional lands, including the lordship of Hunmanby in Yorkshire.

Alan de Percy left seven sons,³ of whom a younger one, Walter of Rugemont, became a baron in his own right,⁴ while William, the eldest, succeeded him as third Baron of Percy. All that we know of him is that he founded the Abbey of Handel, gave to the monks of Whitby the church of Semar, and two ox-gangs of land in Up-Lytham, and married Alice, the daughter of Everard de Ros or Rous.⁵

This is the William de Percy whom the modern

¹ His donations to Whitby Abbey and other religious houses are in the various charters described as the grants "Magni Alani."—*Monast. Angl.*

² A daughter of Gilbert de Gant, and granddaughter of Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, Queen Matilda's brother.

³ So say the modern genealogists on the strength of names which appear in various family documents of this period, but the character of the relationship of these Percies to the head of the house is by no means clearly established. Dugdale enumerates only five sons, whereas other tables quote as many as eight.

⁴ "*Walter de Percy, Baronus*" is one of the seventeen subscribers to a charter under King Stephen. See Selden's *Titles of Honor*, vol. iii. p. 718.

⁵ Dugdale's *Baronage*.

ALAN DE PERCY AND HIS SONS.

genealogists ignore, but who, according to the more ancient writers, including the Monk of Whitby,¹ the author of a memoir of the founders of that abbey, was the son and heir of Alan the Great, and the father of a Richard de Percy, mis-called fourth baron. This Richard, if he ever existed, would appear to have been a younger brother, and not a son, of the third baron, who was succeeded by his only son William, the fourth in direct descent from the Conquest.²

A.D.
1069—1133

The usurpation of the crown by Stephen had produced a disturbed political atmosphere perfectly congenial to the lawless and aggressive mood of the Norman barons, who, conscious of their strength during this crisis, took full advantage of the occasion to consolidate their powers and to extort new privileges from the hopes or fears of the king. In the northern counties, in particular, the lords of the soil now arrogated to themselves the status of independent princes; imposed taxes, and levied forces upon their individual responsibility; fortified their castles without asking the royal licence, and made raids upon each other, or combined to carry war into the neighbouring kingdom. The native population had by this time ceased to maintain even a passive resistance towards their Norman masters, and had, from the necessity of their position, become a hardy and disciplined race of soldiers, ever ready to draw sword at the command of those who, by the sword, had despoiled and subjugated them.

In the dynastic struggle which ensued William de Percy took the side of the usurper; and when King David of Scotland led an army across the border on behalf of the rights of his kinswoman, the Empress Maud, he

¹ *Harleian MSS.* No. 692 (26), fol. 235.

² Camden refers to this baron as the "great grandson" of the William de Percy who came over with the Conqueror.—See *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 241.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

was one of the chief commanders of Stephen's army,¹ and materially contributed to the defeat and rout of the Scots at Northallerton in 1137. Prominent among the chieftains opposed to him in this action was his kinsman Alan,² than whom no soldier was better loved and trusted by the Scottish king; for his military skill and judgment were reputed to be equal to the valour for which he was renowned, and had not his advice been overruled by the rash temper of less experienced warriors, the Battle of the Standard would not probably have been included in the roll of English victories.³

The fourth Baron de Percy had acquired additional lands in different parts of England, and more especially in Sussex, where he was mesne lord of manors exceeding ten thousand acres, belonging to the lordship of Pettward, afterwards called Petworth, "with suit and service to Roger, Earl of Montgomery," and which, we are informed, formed part of the twenty-three knights' fees which he held from that earl.⁴

¹ "When King David of Scotland invaded the parts of England, Archbishop Thurston, whom Stephen had appointed lieutenant-governor of the north, called together the nobility and gentry of the counties, and those adjoining to the city of York; whose names I find thus recorded by Richard, Prior of Hexham: William de Albemarle, Walter de Gant, Robert de Brus, Robert de Mowbray, Walter Espec, Ilbert de Lacy, William de Percy, Richard de Curcy, William Fossard, and Robert de Stouteville, all ancient barons of this country."—Drake's *Eboracum*.

² Not his brother, as is commonly said. He was a natural son of Alan, the second Baron de Percy.

³ Alan, we are told, had urged the king not to abandon the favourable ground he occupied, but to await the enemy's attack within his intrenchments, and David was disposed to be guided by this prudent counsel, when a Scottish noble, Malise, Earl of Strathearn, angrily demanded by what right "that Frenchman" presumed to teach them their duty. Alan replied by a defiance and a challenge to single combat, and it required the king's personal intervention to adjust or defer the quarrel. The term "Frenchman" which the ruling race in England arrogantly assumed as expressive of their superiority, was, it would appear, used in a reproachful sense by the unsubdued Scots.

⁴ See Dallaway's *Western Division of the County of Sussex*. 1815. Vol. i. pp. 205 and 207.

THE LORDSHIP OF PETWORTH.

There is here, however, some confusion. The Roger de Montgomeri, who had been granted the Honour of Arundel by the Conqueror, died early in the reign of William the Second; and his son Robert, the third and last Earl of Arundel of that name, died in 1102, when the Honour of Arundel reverted to King Henry the First, who settled it in dower upon his Queen Adeliza. Our William de Percy, who was born 1112, must therefore have held his lands in Sussex directly from the Crown.

A.D.
1112-1168
—

Like his ancestors, he was a liberal benefactor to religious houses; he granted the church of Topcliffe towards the construction of York Minster; founded the Abbey of Salley, or Sauley, in Craven,¹ and gave twenty marks a year, out of the rents of the manor and forests of Gisburne, Yorkshire, besides lands (redeemable by the monks of Salley, who held them, for £25 a year) to Sandon Hospital, in Surrey.

The condition attached to this grant was that six chaplains should be maintained, and that a lamp, and a candle of two pounds in weight, should be kept burning before the altar of the Virgin in the hospital chapel during the celebration of mass.²

William de Percy was twice married; first to Alice de Tunbridge, daughter of Richard, third Earl of Clare,³

¹ Salley or Sawley Abbey became one of the chief burial places of the Percies, but no traces of their tombs now remain. The building had no pretension to magnificence; indeed, according to Whitaker (*History of Craven*): "In this respect the ambition of the Percies did not lead them to rival their neighbours." Long after it had passed out of possession of the family the Manor of Salley reverted to one of their descendants, King James the First having granted it to his favourite, James Hay, afterwards Earl of Carlisle, at whose death in 1636 it passed to his son by his wife Lucy, daughter of the ninth Earl of Northumberland.

² See Brayley's *History of Surrey*.

³ Grandson of Gilbert Strongbow, who died in 1149.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

and commonly called Lord of Tunbridge (after his castle of that name in Kent), who bore him several sons and two daughters.

Of these sons nothing remains on record beyond their signatures as witnesses to various grants to religious houses, unless Ralph de Percy may be counted among them.¹

This Ralph, described as Lord of Smeaton,² is the hero of a popular legend, according to which he was subjected to a severe and prolonged penance for an act of sacrilege.

It appears that while hunting in the forest of Whitby with two of his companions, he had wounded a wild boar, which sought refuge in St. Hilda's Chapel, where the presiding priest mercifully afforded sanctuary to the suffering beast by closing the doors against the pursuing hounds. The three barons, enraged at this interference with their sport, slew the holy man, a crime for which they would have suffered death had he not, with his last breath, interceded on their behalf and granted them absolution for their sin, on condition that they would each, once a year upon a specified day, with their own hands, collect and carry on their backs, for delivery to the Abbot of Whitby, a bundle of stakes and wattles. This act of penance is said to have been regularly performed for a long period, not only by the culprits themselves, but by the successors in the tenure of their lands.

Sir Walter Scott thus refers to the legend :—

“Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
How to their house three barons bold
Must menial service do ;

¹ No son of this name is mentioned by the old genealogists, but the records of this period are very imperfect, and Ralph may have been one of the numerous grandsons of the second baron, all of whom inherited lands in Yorkshire.

² The Lordship of Smeaton was part of the Craven Fee.

MAUD DE PERCY.

While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry ' Fye, upon your name ;
In wrath for loss of sylvan game
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew.'
This on Ascension Day each year
While labouring on our harbour pier
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear !” *

A.D.
1132-1203
—

By his second wife, Sybilla de Vallines, William de Percy had no children, and as none of his several sons survived him, he was, on his death in 1168, succeeded in his great possessions by his two daughters, Maud and Agnes, as co-heiresses.

In the early part of this year he had “made return of knights enfeoffed of his honour, both of ancient feoffment of the time of Henry I. and of new feoffment since his death, in order that those who have not yet done liege homage, and whose names are not yet written in the Rolls of the King, might come in and do it before that Sunday”² (the first Sunday in Lent).

Maud de Percy married William de Newburgh, third Earl of Warwick, who fell in the Crusades, leaving no issue, in 1184,³ when his widow paid the Crown seven

¹ *Marmion*. See note to Canto ii.

² *Plumpton Papers*. William de Percy had in this year been assessed at thirty marks in aid of the marriage of the king's daughter (Mag. Rot. 14 Hen. II. and Rot. Everwyk 6a 575), but the principle upon which scutage was levied was still so ill defined, and varied so much in different localities, that it affords no criterion of the actual number, and still less of the value, of knights' fees.

³ According to Banks (*Extinct Baronage*), this Earl of Warwick married, *secondly*, Margaret, the daughter of John d'Ayville, celebrated in the “Song of the Barons” (written in 1263 and published by the Camden Society) as:—

“Sire Jon D'Ayville
Qui onques ni aimá treyson ne gile.”

But if this lady was ever his wife, she must have been the first, and

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030—1205

hundred marks for assignment of her dower and for licence to re-marry according to her inclination, although, if the date of her birth be correctly recorded, she must then have approached her fiftieth year.

u | a
The monks of Salley having represented to her that the climate of Craven was so damp that their corn would not ripen,¹ she compensated them by the grant of the Church of Our Lady, at Tadcaster, and the Chapel of Haselwood, with a carucate of land in her birthplace, Catton, and a yearly pension in consideration of the performance of perpetual masses for the souls of her husband and various members of her family.

The charter conferring these gifts is dated in 1186, two years after her husband's death, and its wording indicates the *quasi* royal state in which the Percy heiress then lived; the grants being made, as she expresses it, "by the advice of the Lord Vavaseur, of other of our faithful lieges, and of our whole court."²

Dying in 1203, the Countess Maud bequeathed her entire possessions, being the moiety of her father's estate, to her nephew, Richard de Percy, the youngest son of her sister Agnes. Under the terms of the will, her share should, on her decease, have reverted to the surviving heiress; but by a private agreement between the two sisters, Richard was permitted to inherit his aunt's estate, an arrangement which, as will be seen, subsequently

not the second, for there is conclusive evidence that the Lady Maud Percy survived her husband for many years.

¹ Whitaker suspects that the monks were here guilty of misrepresentation, since "in this extensive tract not a single spot can be pointed out equally warm and fertile as that which William de Percy parcelled out as the situation of a religious house."—*History of Craven*.

² "Consilio Domini Willielmi Vavasoris, et aliorum virorum et fidelium meorum, et totius Curie meæ."—*Monast. Angl.* vol. v. p. 510.

JOCELYN DE LOUVAIN.

led to further encroachments upon the rights of the lawful heir.

A.D.
1134-1205

Some years after her marriage with William de Albini,¹ Adeliza, once known as the Fair Maid of Brabant, and second wife of Henry the First, sent into France for her half-brother, Jocelyn de Louvain,² "to share her prosperity and happiness,"³ and also, as would appear, to improve his fortune by an advantageous alliance.

Agnes de Perci was the lady whom Adeliza selected for a sister-in-law, but her father was too proud of his race to allow all traces of it to be lost even by absorption in the princely house of Brabant, and he accordingly attached an important condition to the marriage of his heiress.

We read in an ancient MS. that:—"This Jocelyn . . . wedded this dame Agnes Percy upon condition that he shold be called Jocelyn Percy, or els that he shold bare the armes 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 owne armes (which be feld ore, a lion rampant, azure),⁴ for so shold he have no right title to his father's inheritance, and so of right the

¹ She had married that accomplished and chivalrous gentleman after a royal widowhood of five years, in 1140, when he became *jure uxoris*, Earl of Arundel. He was the son of William de Albini, one of the Conqueror's chief commanders, by the daughter of Robert de Bigod, Earl of Norfolk.

² The youngest son of Godfrey, Duke of Brabant, a lineal descendant of Charlemagne, by his second wife, Clementia of Burgundy. He was thus the half-brother of Queen Adeliza, though in various documents he styles himself, and is by others described, as "*frater Regina*."

³ See Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*.

⁴ The arms borne by the Norman Percies had down to this time been "azure five fusils in fess or," and these are found engraven on the seals of the charter of Sallay Abbey and of other documents. The descendants of the younger branches of the family anterior to the line of Louvain continued to bear those arms; while the elder branch adopted those of their ancestor Jocelyn.

THE NORMAN PERCIES.

A.D.
1030-1205/
—

Lord Percy shold be Duke of Brabant, tho they be not so indede."¹

The date of the marriage is not on record, but may be approximately fixed by the charter under which Adeliza's munificent wedding gift, the Honour of Petworth, was conferred upon her brother. This document was confirmed by Duke Henry of Normandy, while acting as regent in England in 1150-51, and Queen Adeliza, herself a witness to the marriage, died towards the end of the latter year, when the heiress was barely sixteen years of age.

In addition to Petworth, Jocelyn de Percy held, in his own right, lands representing five and a half knights' fees in Yorkshire.² All that we can learn of him is that he lived in great splendour and made large donations to the religious houses endowed by the Percies, as well as to the Abbeys of Lewes and Reading. He died before 1189.³

The Lady Agnes survived her husband for nearly a quarter of a century, dying at a very advanced age in 1205. She was buried upon her saint-day, a fact attested

¹ *Ex registro Monasterii de Whitbye.*—*Harl. MSS.* No. 692 (26), fol. 235. Peiris says:—

“Therefore in cō-clusyon he chose to holde his owne armys styll
And to take the name of Percy at the saide Lady Agnes wil.”

Longstaffe, in his *Percy Badges*, doubts whether Jocelyn de Louvain himself ever took the name of Percy, but he gives no authority for this opinion.

² These are quoted in the *Red Book* of the Exchequer as “Feod Jocelini de Lovaine.”

³ As may be inferred from the terms of a charter towards the end of the reign of Henry the Second, by which the Lady Agnes confers upon the monks of Sallay certain lands: “Pro salute animæ meæ et charissimi domini nostri Regis Henrici, et Reginæ Alienoræ, et Jocelini de Lovain, *quondam sponsi mei* et omnium antecessorum et hæredum meorum.”—*Monast. Angl.*

AGNES DE LOUVAIN.

upon her tombstone in Whitby Abbey by this quaint inscription :—

A.D.
1314—1205

“ Agnes, Agnetis festo tumulatur, et istis
Idem sexus, idem nomen, et una dies.”¹

With her ended the elder branch of the Norman Percies, and a new line commenced, which, for nearly five centuries, played an important and conspicuous part in the history of England.

¹ Dugdale. Wynn's *Pedigree Roll* from *Harl. MSS.* Peeris renders the inscription :—

“ In the fest of Saint Agnes, Agnes Percy
Lyeth here engravide, and they bothe aggre
In kynde, name, and lyfe.”

adding: “ this is a great commendation, and a token that this lady was of virtuous life and conversation.”

The Barons Percy of Louvain.

Sixth Baron.

HENRY DE PERCY, born *circ.* 1160, died 1196.

Seventh Baron.

RICHARD (brother), born *circ.* 1170, died 1244.

Eighth Baron.

WILLIAM (nephew), born *circ.* 1193, died 1245.

Ninth Baron.

HENRY, born *circ.* 1230, died 1272.

Contemporary English Sovereigns.

Henry II. *acc.* 1154
Richard I. „ 1189

Henry II.
Richard I.
John „ 1199
Henry III. „ 1216

Richard.
John.
Henry III.

Henry III.



CHAPTER II.

The Percies of Louvain.



N the death of Jocelyn de Louvain, his widow, as representative of the fifth Baron de Percy, continued in possession of the northern estates, but the Lordship of Petworth¹ devolved upon their eldest son, Henry,² who had married Isabel, daughter of Adam de Brus, Lord of Skelton.³ This lady brought him the Manor of Leginfield, near Beverley,

A.D.
1160—1196

¹ His claim to this Barony was contested by Brian Fitz Ralph, Lord of Middleham, Yorkshire, who had paid 100 marks for licence to prosecute his suit, promising 200 more if he succeeded in it.—See *Mag. Rot.*, Richard I., R. 16, *Sussex*. The Fitz Ralphs seem to have held some of these lands in the reign of the first Henry, for in the charter of the Monastery of Lewes (*Monast. Angl.* vol. v. p. 3) we find it stated that the Church of Bukeden, Sussex, the grant of which to that institution was therein confirmed by Jocelyn de Louvain, had originally been “a gift of William Fitz Ralph.”

² The first of this baptismal name which through fourteen subsequent generations was borne by the head of the family. He was so called after his aunt's husband, King Henry the First. Ralf, the youngest son of the Lady Agnes Percy, returned to France, settled in the south, there married a lady of rank, Mademoiselle de Jennes, and became the founder of a family of Percy, of which the last representative—an officer of the order of St. Louis—was an *émigré* in England during the revolution, and was hospitably received as a kinsman by the second Duke of Northumberland.

³ Whose great-grandfather appears in Domesday Book as the holder of

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272

Yorkshire, which long continued one of the principal seats of the Percies.

A curious condition was attached to this manorial tenure. Henry de Percy and his heirs were required to repair to Skelton Castle every Christmas morning, to lead the lady of the house from her chamber to mass in the chapel and back, and to depart after dining with her. This formality is said to have been regularly complied with until the prohibition to celebrate mass, at the Reformation, caused it to fall into abeyance.

Henry de Percy quit-claimed to Fountains Abbey, "all Litton and Littondale, excepting the venison there, for the custody whereof the monks were to present unto him two foresters, and to pay them at their own proper costs." Such reservations of the rights of the chase on the part of church patrons are frequently met with in the charters of religious houses, and occasionally gave rise to litigation, the monks being by no means disposed to forego their "command of the deer."

Dying a few weeks before his mother, Henry de Percy was succeeded by his only surviving son, William, who became the legal heir to the entire property of the house; but he being then only in his fifteenth year, his uncle Richard assumed the administration of his lands, and with this the baronial rights appertaining to the head of the family,—a position so congenial to his tastes that he could not be induced to relinquish it when his ward attained his majority.

By right of this usurped power³ Richard de Percy had

ninety-four lordships in Yorkshire, of which Skelton Castle was the capital. Its lords enjoyed the privilege of holding a weekly fair on Sundays, under the castle walls. See Brayley's *Yorkshire*.

¹ Dugdale's *Baronage*, p. 271.

² See *postea*, page 50.

³ The officially appointed guardian of the minor was William de Briwere (*Cal. Rot. Chart.* 1 King John); who seems, however, to have

RICHARD DE PERCY.

on his mother's death livery of all the lands in Yorkshire of which she had died seised, as well as of those which had been illegally bequeathed to him by his aunt the Countess of Warwick; of the greater part of these he succeeded in retaining possession during the whole of his life.

A.D.
1170-1244
—

He was a man of much ambition, daring, and strength of will¹; a fair type of those iron barons who acknowledged no law but that of the sword, and who, in their efforts to guard and extend their own powers and privileges against the encroachment of royal authority, laid the foundation of that constitution which secured the popular liberties of England.

* * *

“Am I not a good craftsman that have made a new earl out of an old bishop?” laughingly asked King Richard, when, according to old Norman fashion, he had girded the sword on Hugh de Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, in creating him Earl of Northumberland. The dignity was conferred for life in consideration of a money payment,² but when, a few years later, the king's necessities for the means of prosecuting the War of the Crusades became more urgent, he revoked the grant, and entered into negotiations with the King of Scotland for the sale of the county of Northumberland.³ These were however broken off in consequence of the vehement

wanted either the will or the power to resist Richard de Percy's high-handed proceedings.

¹ In an old MS. genealogy of the Percies preserved in St. Mary's Church, York, we read: “Quidem Ricardus, quia vir animosus erat, intravit in purpartiam matris suæ . . . sine aliquo jure hereditario, et petebat totam hæritatem sororis matris suæ prædictæ, et sic tenuit ad vitam suam.”—*Monast. Angl.* vol. v. p. 516.

² *Mat. Paris*, p. 207. The bishop had paid 1,000 marks for the earldom and the revenues of the county, together with the office of lord justiciary.

³ Fifteen thousand marks was the price offered by the Scottish king for the whole county of Northumberland, including the stronghold of Newcastle.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272
—

opposition on the part of the northern barons to the surrender of the border province to their hereditary enemy. Richard de Percy took a prominent part in resisting the proposed concession, without, however, incurring the royal displeasure; for the king continued to call him to his counsels, and among other marks of his favour conferred upon him the grant of a wealthy Jew, whom he subsequently "made over" to Queen Alianore.¹

Notwithstanding many faults, and the oppressive taxation which his warlike policy compelled him to impose, the King of the Lion Heart had by his generous nature, and the martial genius by means of which he greatly raised the prestige of England, won the attachment of his people. His brother John had no such merits to redeem his false and feeble nature. His exactions were even more burdensome than those of Richard; but the military enterprises for which they formed the pretext either collapsed in their inception or terminated in disorder and disgrace. There was not one feature in his private character to compensate for his deficiencies as a ruler. He was untruthful, treacherous, pusillanimous and vindictive. Popular rumour attributed to his hand the murder of his young nephew, Prince Arthur, and his habitual cruelty fully justified the suspicion. His licentiousness² was equal to his vindic-

¹ See Madox's *Antiquities of the Exchequer*, vol. i pp. 223, 230, 241. They had previously been a despised and persecuted race, but the systematic extortion practised upon the Jews in England originated in Richard's reign, and was improved upon by King John. Jewish traders could only ply their craft by purchasing the protection of the Crown, and even thus the greater part of their earnings found their way into the royal coffers in the shape of fines, ransoms, tallages, and compositions for obtaining justice. Private individuals were permitted to "farm" wealthy Jews for their own profit, such royal licenses being considered equivalent to a grant of land or money.

² Numerous instances are on record of his dishonouring attempts upon the wives and daughters of his nobles, who were not of a temper to allow their king such liberties.

KING JOHN.

tiveness, and it may truly be said of him, as it was in later days of Cæsar Borgia, that he had never been known to spare man in his hate, or woman in his lust.

A.D.
1170-1244

Monarchy was so essential a feature of the principle of feudalism—being indeed at once the foundation and the apex of the entire structure—that it must have required a rare combination of repellent qualities on the part of the sovereign so completely to alienate the support of his most powerful subjects, that even the provocation of a foreign enemy would not induce them to draw the sword at his command. Thus the warlike barons of England looked on in sullen inactivity while their continental possessions were overrun, and the fair provinces of Normandy re-annexed to the French Crown.

Rarely however has the loss of territory been so fraught with beneficial effects upon the destinies of a nation. Hitherto the ruling race in England had owned a divided allegiance: English lords continuing to be Norman seigneurs, Norman nobles owning large tracts of English lands only for the sake of the revenue to be derived from them, and which they expended in their own country. They had now to elect whether they would become Englishmen or Frenchmen; there was no middle course: and the lords of the soil henceforth became, in fact as well as in name, the Barons of England.¹

A long series of domestic alliances had already served to allay the resentment and jealousy of the native population towards their conquerors; and the renunciation of alien sympathies and interests, with the acknowledgment of a common nationality, now cemented the union between

¹ Lord Macaulay dates the history of England proper from the reign of King John: "In the time of Richard the First the ordinary imprecation of a Norman gentleman was 'May I become an Englishman!' his ordinary form of indignant denial was 'Do you take me for an Englishman?' The descendants of such a gentleman a hundred years later were proud of the English name."—*History of England*, vol. i. p. 16.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1166-1272

Norman and Saxon, and did much to obliterate the harsher lines of demarcation which had hitherto existed between the dominant and the subject race.

Enraged at the attitude of his rebellious subjects, King John carried an army into the north of England, desolating entire districts with fire and sword; but the barons and their dependants either joined the Scottish forces on the border, or defied him from the security of their strongholds; and he could but wreak his vengeance upon the bare walls of abandoned castles, or the unarmed populations of towns and villages.

His remorseless cruelty during this expedition¹ only served to embitter the general hatred which his vices had inspired; and when, despairing of other support, he made a humiliating peace with Rome, avowing himself and his heirs the vassals of the pope, all classes joined in an indignant protest and a stern demand for the redress of their grievances.

The curtain next rises upon the grand scene at Runnime, and among the barons who there confronted the pale king none spoke in a more uncompromising tone than Richard de Percy,² who had a personal as well as a national wrong to resent.

¹ It was while so engaged that, having been bogged in crossing Alnwick Moor (then called the Forest of Aldon), the king issued a mandate which was incorporated in their charter, requiring the freemen of Alnwick to walk across the moor in a body once a year, a ceremony which they continued to perform with waving flags and bands of music, down to a comparatively recent period.

² Matthew Paris (*Lib.* iii. p. 254) speaks of him as one of the barons "qui principes fuerunt in exactione libertatum." Another ancient historian thus enumerates the chief authors of the great charter:

Robert Fitzwalter.	Robert de Ros.
Gilbert, Earl of Clare.	Peter de Bruis.
Saher, Earl of Winchester.	Nicholas Stuteville.
- Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk.	William de Mowbray.
Geoffrey Fitzpiers, Earl of Essex.	Oliver de Vaux.
Eustace de Vescy.	
Richard de Percy.	

—*Carte*, vol. i. p. 829.

THE BARONIAL LEAGUE.

His wife's brother, William de Braose, having refused to surrender his children as hostages for his own good conduct to the Crown, had been banished the country, and in his absence the king had seized upon his wife and eldest son and caused them to be starved to death in a dungeon at Windsor.¹

A. D.
1170-1244

The sturdy Percy had espoused his kinsman's cause, and loudly denounced King John's atrocious cruelty; and when now, having been elected one of the twenty-five guardians of the charter,² he, with his hand upon the hilt of his sword, swore to enforce the concessions extorted from the reluctant sovereign, all felt confident that their rights and liberties were safe in such keeping, even in spite of the papal excommunication by which he was individually proclaimed.³

Less creditable to Richard de Percy was his participation in offering the Crown of England to a foreign prince, and in surrendering to Alexander of Scotland the county and fortresses of Northumberland as the price of his armed support of Louis of France. Even among those who most resented King John's repudiation of his solemn promises, there showed itself a strong reluctance to bear arms against him by the side of a French army, and to the very last attempts were made on the part of the

¹ Paris, *Historia Maior*, p. 230. Holinshead says that, as the "messengers . . . came unto the Lord William de Breuse requiring to have his sonnes for the said purpose, his wyfe (like a quick and hastie dame) taking the words out of her husband's mouth, made this round answer, 'that she would not deliver her sonnes unto King John, who alreadie had slaine his own nephue Arthur, whom he ought rather honorablie to have loved and preserved.'"—*Chronicles of England*, vol. ii. p. 298. The Braoses or Broases were a wealthy and influential baronial family who had held lands in Devonshire and Sussex from the Conquest. This William de Braose had become a powerful chieftain in Ireland, and one of the king's most formidable opponents. He died in Paris shortly after the murder of his wife and child.

² The conservators or guardians of the charter comprised seven earls, fifteen barons, the Lord Mayor of London and the Constable of Chester.

³ *Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 211.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272

insurgent barons to induce the king to agree to such terms as might obviate the necessity of resorting to foreign aid.

Thus in 1216 we find Richard de Percy and others making overtures for peace and compromise, an official record of which has been preserved.

“The King to Robert de Ros, William de Moebray, Eustace de Vesey, Peter de Brus, J. Fitz Robert, Richard de Percy, Richard de Umframvill, Roger de Merlay, Roger Bertram, Ranulph Fitz Robert, Bartholomew Fitz your messengers, the bearers of these presents, came to us at Dover next after the feast of the Invention of Holy Cross, having been sent (*transmissi*) to us on your behalf; but they proposed certain things to us you desire to be reconciled to us. We send back to you your same messengers, and with them Robert de Kerneford, our knight [to declare to you] our will and mind. Witness the King himself at Folkestone, the 7th day of May.”¹

It appears to have been on the failure of this negotiation that the northern barons used their combined influence to bring Yorkshire to acknowledge the pretensions of the French prince,² but the opportune death of John terminated the unhappy conflict. The nation was not disposed to visit the father's sins upon the son.³ One by one the barons abandoned the French alliance, and,

¹ *Patent Rolls*, 17 John p. 180 (the blanks are due to the decay of the Roll).

² “Robert de Ros, Peter de Bruis and Richard Percie, subdued York and all Yorkshire, bringing the same under the obeisance of Louis.”—Holinshead, vol. ii. p. 333.

³ In his appeal to the disaffected barons the Earl of Pembroke said: “Although we have persecuted the father of this young prince for his evill demeanour, and worthilie, yet this young childe, whom heere you see before you, as he is in years tender, so he is pure and innocent from his father's doings.”—*Ibid.* p. 341.

A SCENE IN PARLIAMENT.

after a final attempt to assert his authority by force of arms, Louis made his way back to his own country.

A.D.
1170-1244

Richard de Percy was among the first to return to his allegiance when his forfeited lands were restored to him,¹ and in the following year he obtained letters of safe-conduct from the Earl of Pembroke,² governor of the kingdom, and did homage to the young king.

In 1219 he was employed in an expedition against the Welsh rebels, and some time later was one of the negotiators of the treaty under which Llewelin, Prince of Wales, agreed to give such satisfaction as the Archbishop of Canterbury should direct.

Their restored loyalty did not, however, absolve the English barons from their obligations to cause the terms of the charter to be observed, and we must come to modern times to find a parallel to the vigilance and jealousy with which Parliament watched the public expenditure, and protected the national interests, against the encroachments of the Crown.

Throughout the long reign of Henry the Third every subsidy demanded became the subject of earnest deliberation and discussion; and when the king, reproved for the extravagance of his demands,³ pleaded the cost of his foreign wars, he was bluntly reminded that as these had been undertaken without the assent of Parliament, the nation could not be expected to defray their expense.

On the assembling of Parliament in 1237, Henry asked for "a thirtieth on all movables," and the demand having

¹ *Rot. Lit. Claus.* 1 Henry III. 12 May, 1217. *Ibid.* 2 Henry III. 19 July, 1218. *Fœd.* vol. i. p. 223.

² William Marshall, who was raised to the earldom on his marriage with the only daughter of Richard, the second Earl of Pembroke.

³ Their patriotic regard for the public interests would have been none the less praiseworthy had it expressed itself in more courteous terms. When Henry in 1248 applied to Parliament for a large subsidy, the reply of the House was "they admired that the king did not blush at making such demands."—M. Paris, *Historia Maior*, p. 744.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272

been duly recorded, the barons prepared, according to custom, "to withdraw to a private place² for consultation, when :

"Gilbert de Bassett, one of the King's personal friends, not so careful of his words as he might have been, said aloud to the King,

"My lord the King, send some of your friends to go along with the barons to their consultation.'

"Whereon Richard de Percy, not without reason angered at this speech (*non sine causa stomachatus*), 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."² X

* * *

It was not until the year 1234 that the long-pending litigation between Richard de Percy and his nephew terminated. The king then summoned them to appear in *curia Regis ubicunq fuerit*, and presided in person to finally adjudicate upon the case, as a peacemaker, it would appear, rather than as a judge.³

The decision was that Richard should during his life retain possession of the moiety which his aunt had illegally bequeathed to him, but that on his decease the

² The three estates of the realm at this time met in one house, and whenever it became necessary to consult and deliberate, the earls, the spiritual lords, the barons and the commons, would retire in separate groups.

² M. Paris, *Hist. Maior*, p. 435.

³ "Dominus enim Rex vult quod loquela illa terminetur, et pax inde fiat in presentia sua."—Madox, *Antiquities of the Exchequer*, p. 796. The weakness of the law to reach the powerful is illustrated by these proceedings, which afford at the same time so characteristic a picture of the legal procedure of that period that the record is quoted in full (Appendix II.). "Norman government," says Hallam, "better resembled a scramble of wild beasts where the strongest takes the best share, than a system founded upon principles of common utility."—*Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 219.

WILLIAM DE PERCY.

entire Yorkshire property left by his grandfather, the fourth baron, should revert to his nephew William, to the exclusion of Richard's son.¹

A.D.
1170-1245

Some years after the death of his first wife, the sister of William de Broase, Richard de Percy married Agnes de Nevill, who was still living as the wife of John D'Eyncourt towards the end of the thirteenth century.

Although William, the ^{eighth} seventh Lord de Percy, so far joined the barons in their resistance against the tyranny of King John as to subscribe the declaration to support the conservators of the charter *vi et armis*, he appears to have taken little part in public affairs either civil or military. Indeed there is nothing recorded of him beyond that he had paid certain fines for exemption from military service abroad,² and made the accustomed grants to religious houses. It was probably due to his lethargic nature that his ambitious and energetic guardian had been enabled to appropriate the greater part of his estates, and succeeded in deposing him from his lawful position as head of the family.³ When on his uncle's death in 1244 he had livery of his lands,⁴ he was declared liable for service of thirty knights' fees of the ancient

¹ This son, Henry, was, however, provided with considerable lands in Yorkshire, where his descendants continued for several generations. In 1249, we find the record of a royal license in his favour, to hold a fair and market at Settell or Settle.—*Close Roll*, 33 Henry III. m. 11.

² In 1242 he paid one hundred marks for exemption from joining the king in an expedition to Gascony, (*Claus.* 28 Hen. III. m. 20). Among his benefactions to the Church we find a grant of the manor of Gisburne (with reservation of forest rights) and an annuity of twenty marks for masses for his wife "Ellen" to the monks of Salley, as also of his lands in Foston, for the maintenance of six additional priests at Sandon Hospital in Surrey.—*Monast. Angl.* vol. vi. p. 676.

³ As late as in 1224, when he was in his thirty-second year, William de Percy had been rated for only fifteen knights' fees in Yorkshire, his uncle Richard holding the remaining fifteen fees forming the barony.

⁴ *Rot. Fin.* 28 Hen. III. m. 2.

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272

feoffment in Yorkshire, and two in Lincolnshire,¹ besides his Sussex holdings. He did not however live long to enjoy his restored possessions. Within one year of Richard de Percy's death he had followed him to the grave.

He had in 1233 procured the guardianship of the five daughters of William de Briwere,² one of whom he married. She is said to have died without male issue, when William de Percy took for a second wife Elena, daughter of Ingelram de Baliol,³ who brought him seven sons and one daughter.

This daughter Elena was living in 1282 as Abbess of Werewell,⁴ in Hertfordshire. Of the six younger sons, one, Ingelram, inherited his mother's Lordship of

¹ *Rot. Pip.* 30 Hen. III., Madox, *Bar. Angl.* p. 93.

² *Rot. Fin.* 17 Hen. III. m. 3. William de Briwere had been Sheriff of Devon, in which county he owned extensive lands, under King John, to whom he adhered throughout his reign, and whose cause he so warmly espoused that in 1222 he urged Henry III. to disregard the terms of the charter, since they had been extorted from his father by violence. One of his daughters married Reginald de Broase, brother of the victim of John's cruelty, and their son by this marriage, having been suspected of familiarity with the wife of Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, was invited to a feast by the jealous husband, who then hanged him in the banqueting hall, in presence of the lady and the assembled guests.

³ Dugdale makes no mention of William de Percy's second marriage, and cites Joan de Briwere as the mother of the ninth baron and his six brothers. Yet he refers to his bequest to the monks of Salley for prayers for the soul of his wife "Elena." Collins does mention it, but states that "William de Percy in 17 Henry III. (1233) gave 500 marks to the king for the wardship of the five daughters of William de Briwere and afterwards married one of them." There is some confusion here, for Henry, the ninth baron, who is described as the issue of the second marriage, had livery of his lands on attaining his majority in 1249, and must therefore have been born in 1228, or at least five years before the date thus assigned to the first marriage. Either, then, Henry de Percy was born of the first marriage, or Joan de Briwere was William's second wife; the latter indeed, is not improbable, since Joan's youngest daughter, Agnes, married Eustace de Baliol after 1254, when, had she been the issue of the first marriage, she must have been at least thirty-one years of age. In those days women of rank who did not marry early in life almost invariably retired into religious houses.

⁴ "Elena de Percy received the benediction on Lent Sunday, 1282."
—*Abbesses of Werewell Nunnery*, Herts., *Monast. Angl.* vol. ii. p. 634.

THE SECOND HENRY DE PERCY.

A.D.
1170-1224

Dalton,¹ thenceforth called Dalton Percy in Durham, and married the daughter and co-heiress of William Earl of Albemarle (she afterwards became the wife of Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster); but this branch of the family soon became extinct.

Walter was the founder of the Percies of Kildale,² from whom descended the Percies of Ormsby and of Sneton. Jeffrey, styled Lord of Semar, served with King Henry III. in the French wars, and William was Canon of St. Peter's, York.

The eldest son, Henry, the ninth baron from the Conquest, had livery of his lands, with license to marry as he pleased, in 1249, upon payment of £900, then an exceptionally large fine³ for those under the degree of an earl. He played a conspicuous part in the events of the third Henry's reign and served under his immediate command in several campaigns in Wales and Scotland.

The king had inherited the weakness and incapacity, although he was free from the more glaring vices, of his father; and the favour shown by him to his numerous French followers, upon whom he lavished the moneys

¹ He died "transmarinis" in 1262, leaving one son, William, then aged twenty-six.—*Inquis. post. mort.* 46 Hen. III.

² On this family becoming extinct, the Lordship reverted to the elder branch, in whose possession it remained (barring attainders) until 1660, when the 10th Earl of Northumberland sold the lands of Kildale to John Turner of Kirkleatham, Serjeant-at-Law.

³ *Rot. Fin.* 33 Hen. III., m. 2.—So large that he was specially permitted to pay it by annual instalments. It is difficult to arrive at a just estimate of the comparative value of money at this period, for the price of wheat, which was generally taken as a criterion, underwent extraordinary fluctuations during the reign of Henry the Third. We may, however, form some idea of what the pound sterling then represented by the purchase price and rentals of lands and buildings. Matthew Paris states that William de Trumpington, abbot of St. Albans, bought a house in London "as extensive as a great palace, with chapel, stables, and gardens, for one hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), and Gregorie de Rokeby, Lord Mayor of London, A.D. 1275-1282, rented the priory of Lewes, Sussex, as tenant at will for xx. shillings in the year, without being bounden to reparation or other charges."

THE PERCIES OF LOUVAIN.

A.D.
1160-1272

wrung from the overburdened people, and whom he encouraged in their arrogant assumption of superiority over the English, once more caused the barons to combine in organised opposition against the throne.

Henry de Percy took part with the insurgent nobles, and in 1263 we find his name in the lists of the barons whose lands were confiscated for rebellion.¹ Before long, however, the supercilious bearing and despotic temper of Simon de Montfort,² whose pre-eminent military capacity had allowed of his being acknowledged as the leader of the confederacy against foreign ascendancy, in spite of his French birth, became intolerable to the English barons; many of whom abandoned his cause and transferred their swords to the king on his engaging to make certain concessions, and to give a public guarantee for his observance of the terms of the Great Charter.³

Henry de Percy was among those who thus joined King Henry; he was with the royal army in the assault and capture of Nottingham, and was shortly after taken prisoner at the disastrous battle of Lewes.⁴

In the following year he was one of the Royal Commissioners for negotiating the treaty that resulted in the compromise under which the questions at issue between King Henry and the disaffected barons were referred to the King of France, whose decisions both parties agreed to accept as binding.⁵ This is probably the first instance

¹ The list includes "Robert de Brus, John Comyn, John de Baliol, Henry Percy, et aliis magnatibus."—*Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 772.

² Son of the great soldier who had opposed King John; he had been created Earl of Leicester, and had married a sister of King Henry III., widow of the old Earl of Pembroke.

³ Walsingham, *Ypodigma Neustriae*, p. 153.

⁴ "Capti sunt præterea (after mention of the king and princes) Humfridus de Boun, (Bohun) comes Herefordiæ. . . . Willielmus Bardolfe, Robertus de Tateshale, Rogerus de Somerset, Henricus de Percie, et Philipus Basset."—M. Paris, *Hist. Maior*, p. 996.

⁵ "Promittentis . . . quod quidquid Dominus Rex Franciæ super-

THE EARL OF WARREN AND SURREY.

on record of two factions agreeing, on the eve of armed conflict, to submit a great national dispute to the arbitration of a foreign power.¹

A.D. 1272

Henry de Percy had married Alianore the elder of the two daughters² of John Plantagenet, Earl of Warren and Surrey, by his wife Alice,³ half sister to King Henry III. This was the turbulent earl who, on an adverse judgment being pronounced against him in a civil action at law in 1262, attacked and severely wounded (Holinshead says "nearly killed") Alan de la Zouche, Lord Justiciary of England, in his seat at Westminster Hall. The dignity of our courts of justice was, however, already upheld, and the earl expiated the outrage by the most humble public submission, and the payment of a fine of 10,000 marks. The lesson does not appear to have made much impression upon him however, for when, in the following reign, the Barons of England were required to produce the titles to their landed possessions, with a view to the establishment of a system of registration, the earl appeared in the royal presence and exhibiting an ancient sword said: "By this trusty old servant did my ancestors win their lands, and by the same will I maintain them." He died at a very advanced age in 1304.

The ninth Baron de Percy died in his forty-fifth year, leaving an infant son.

omnibus prædictis vel eorum aliquibus, de alto et basso, ordinaverit vel statuerit, nos observabimus bona fide."—*Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 776.

¹ Papal mediation excepted, which rested, however, on quite different grounds.

² The second daughter married John Baliol, King of Scotland.

³ The daughter of Isabel of Angoulême, who became the queen of King John of England, and after his death married Hugh le Brun, Count of Lusignan.



CHAPTER III.

The Lords Percy of Alnwick.

	<i>Contemporary English Sovereigns.</i>
HENRY, <i>First Lord Percy of Alnwick</i> , born 1272, died 1314.	Edward I. <i>acc.</i> 1272 Edward II. „, 1307
HENRY, <i>Second Lord Percy of Alnwick</i> , born 1299, died February 27, 1352.	Edward II. Edward III. „, 1327
HENRY, <i>Third Lord Percy of Alnwick</i> , born 1320, died 1368.	

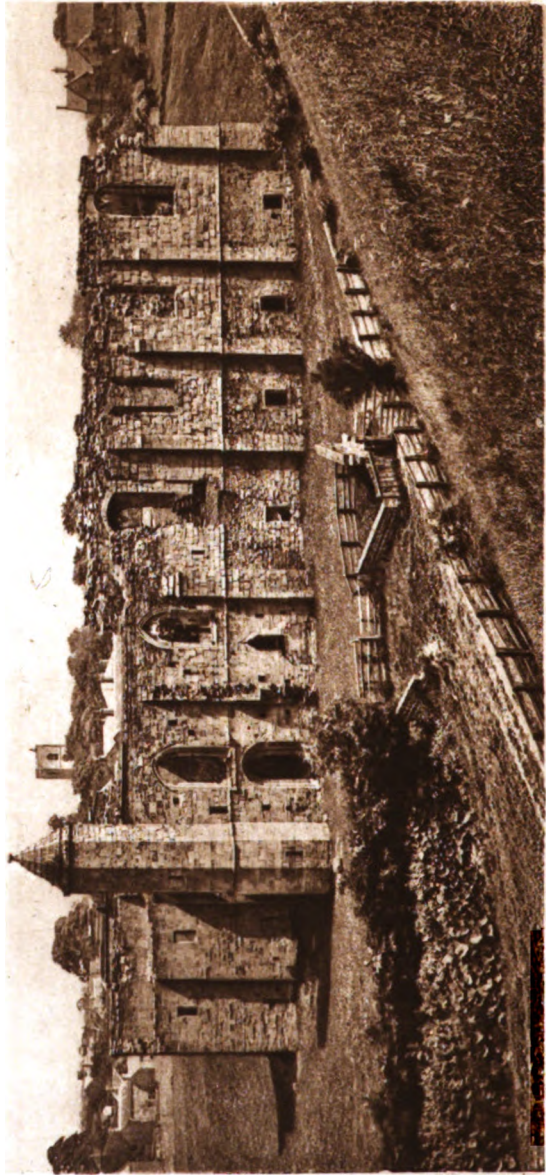
A.D.
1275-1368



HE love of the chase was, next to that of war, the predominant passion of the Norman Lords of England and their descendants. William of Malmesbury says, in animadverting upon the cruel stringency of the game laws under the early Norman rule, that the Conqueror loved the tall deer as if he were their father; and the taste survived in all its intensity among the higher, to the detriment of the less privileged classes, throughout the middle ages.

The ninth Baron Percy had long and obstinately disputed the claim of the religious orders to the rights of the chase on lands which his ancestors had ceded to the Church; but on his death, and during the long





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SPOFFORTH CASTLE.

LICENSE TO FORTIFY.

minority of his heir,¹ they appear to have re-asserted and extended their claim; and it was one of the first acts of Henry de Percy on attaining his majority to come to a formal understanding on this point with the monks of Fountains Abbey. The result was that he confirmed all the grants of his ancestors in this place, on the Abbot and Convent agreeing to "release to him in return all kinds of wild beasts and birds of prey," of which his own foresters should have the care. They also "quit-claimed to him all those meadows and pastures in Bukeden and elsewhere within the bounds of Longstrother, with the wild beasts of that chase," and agreed to pay six hundred marks in compensation for their past infractions of the forest laws.²

A.D.
1272-1314

In the same year Henry de Percy received license to fortify his castles of Spofforth, Leginfield and Petworth,³ and was confirmed in possession of the lands left by his grandfather Ingelram de Baliol to be held of the King *in capite*,⁴ Ingelram d'Umfreville, the heir-at-law, having forfeited the inheritance by rebellion.

The young baron had received his military training under his grandfather, the Earl of Warren, governor of the north; and, as soon as he had attained his majority, was intrusted with an important command against the Scots, who, taking advantage of the outbreak of war between England and France, had repudiated the terms upon which John Baliol had consented to receive

¹ The elder son, John, had died in early infancy, when Henry was placed under the guardianship of Queen Eleanor (of Castile), the Archbishop of Canterbury and John of Doncaster being at the same time appointed custodians of Petworth and the northern possessions of the Percies.—*Inquis. post. mort.* and *Abbrev. Rot. Orig.* 10 Edward I.

² *MSS. Skipton Castle.* The baronial forest rights were in their turn greatly restricted by the royal prerogative; and the grant of "freewarren," which gave an absolute right over all game, became a much coveted mark of the Royal favour.

³ *Pat.*, 2 Edward II., p. 2, m. 19.

⁴ *Abbreviatio Rotulorum Originalium*, 10 Edward I.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

the Crown from King Edward,¹ and had invaded the English territory, committing great outrages.

Scarcely however had Henry de Percy led an army across the Border than he received a command to embark at Portsmouth on an expedition, under the king's nephew, John de Bretagne, Earl of Richmond, against the French, who had overrun our possessions in Gascony.

From this time forth to the end of his life he was continuously engaged in war. He took a prominent part in the campaigns in Scotland, Wales, and France, and became distinguished among his contemporaries for military skill and daring, for the exercise of a strict, though judicious discipline, and for what was then a more rare virtue, justice and humanity in his intercourse with the unarmed population of invaded territory.

The Border warfare which now raged, and which with only occasional intervals of truce lasted for nearly the next three centuries, was most disastrous to the northern Provinces of England. Northumberland was reduced to a desert,² and the ancient Chronicles are full of laments over the desolation and misery of the land, and the ruin of its lords and people.

In a curious old poem, the composition of a Prior of Alnwick Abbey, we read—

“Lugeat Northumbria nimis desolata!
Facta est ud vidua filii orbata,
Vescy, Morley, Somerville, Bertram sunt in fata,
O quibus, et quantis, et qualibet est viduata!”³

¹ It will be remembered that King Edward had been chosen as arbitrator between the two rival claimants for the Scottish throne, Bruce and Baliol, and that on the latter being elected he had sworn fealty to the crown of England.

² Froissart, towards the end of the fourteenth century, described Northumberland as “a savage and wylde countrey full of desarts and mountaignes, and a ryghte pore countrey of everything, saving of beestis, thorough the wichc there runneth a ryver full of flynt and great stones, called the water of Tyne.”

³ *MSS. British Museum.* The poem is included in Thomas Wright's *Political Songs of England*, published by the *Camden Society*.

BORDER WARFARE.

A bitter retaliation followed upon each successful raid. Wholesale plunder, wanton destruction, indiscriminate burning and slaying, became the object of each army; and in the absence of resistance, fire and sword were turned against peaceful villages and defenceless women and children. The principal and by far the most numerous records of these Border wars which have come down to us are to be found in the works of English writers, and the accounts of atrocities attributed to the Scots must be received with some caution. *They* had, at any rate, the excuse of being engaged in a struggle for national existence, whereas England was, throughout the greater part of this conflict waging an aggressive and unjust war with a view to conquest. There was probably no greater leaning to humanity or mercy on one side than on the other.

A.D. 1296

Thus we read that when in 1296 King Edward had carried Berwick by assault—

“The nobilis all that war within the town,
And als thereout, were haillelie slane down.
Five thousand men that mekle were of maine,
Within the town that samyn day war slane.
Women and barnis also young and old,
War slane that day out of number untold.”¹

It was while lying before this fortress that the English king conferred knighthood upon Henry de Percy and his other chief commanders. The ceremony led to a serious disaster, for the English fleet off the coast,

¹ *Metrical Chronicle of Scotland*. Hector Boece says that the streams of Scottish blood shed on this occasion would have “driven a mill for two days,” a statement quoted by Grafton, but qualified by the warning that it was the tale of a Scot, and by a marginal note in which Boece is described as “a great lyer.”

The two concluding lines are almost identical with those which occur in Benoit’s description of the French soldiery in his *Metrical History of the Dukes of Normandy*:

“Ni espairgnent a rienz vivanz
Ni vielles genz—ne as enfantz.”

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

observing an unusual display of banners, concluded that an assault was about to take place, and wishing to cooperate in it, entered the harbour of Berwick, where they were attacked by the Scots and lost four out of twenty ships before they could extricate themselves.¹

For his share in the victory of Dunbar,² Sir Henry de Percy was appointed Governor of Galloway and Ayr, and custodian of the principal Border castles;³ and a humiliating peace having been imposed upon the vanquished, the king passed into Flanders with the main body of his army⁴ to prosecute his war against the French, in the full confidence that Scotland had at length been permanently subdued.

“Li Ray Sir Eduuard, Escoce fet garder ;
Li Quens, Ion de Garenne, i est chef justiser
Et Henry de Percy ad Galway a guyer.”⁵

While the monkish chroniclers, to whose industry the

¹ The incident is described in the *Chronicon de Gisseborne de rebus gestis Edvardi I., II. et III.*, after recording that the king had conferred knighthood upon “Henricum, scilicet de Percy, cum aliis multis.”—See also Seldon’s *Titles of Honour*, III., 814.

² “The king, it is said, sent Sir Hugh Spenser with Sir Henry Percy and other noblemen with a part of his hoste to lay siege unto the Castle of Patrick of Dunbarre, where, when they had lyen a certain time, an army of the Scottes came thither to remove the siege, with whom the Englishmen had a feirce and cruel battayle; but in the end, by the help of God, the Englishmen had the victorie and slew the Scottes above the number of twenty thousand.”—Grafton, p. 295.

³ *Rot. Scot.* Sept. 1296.

⁴ Henry de Percy’s name occurs in all the lists of “magnates en a compaignie le Roi,” which have been preserved. These lists also enumerate the knights and gentlemen in attendance upon the English nobles, and we find Mons Phill de Lyndesey named as in “la compaignie M. Henri Perci.”

See Sir Francis Palgrave’s *Documents and Records, Scotland*, p. 267.

⁵ Langtoft’s *Chronicle*, vol. ii. p. 258; the barbarous French in which this metrical history is written, is thus rendered by the accomplished editor, Thomas Wright:

“The King Sire Edward places Scotland under guard,
The Earl John of Warrene is there Chief Justice,
And Henry de Percy has Galloway to rule.”

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

history of England in the middle ages is so deeply indebted, had corrupted the Norman French into such jargon¹ as is here quoted, the unlettered barons continued to speak the language of their forefathers with comparative purity, and also to employ it by preference in official correspondence and documents of a public character. The following letters may be quoted as specimens of military despatches at the close of the thirteenth century :

A.D. 1296

King Edward the First to Sir Henry de Percy.

“ Purceo qu nous beoms estre al aide de Dieu a Carloil (Carlisle) la veille de la Pentecost prochain avenir, pur aler auant en la besoigne d’Escoce sur les enemy’s de la coroune & du Roiaume d’Engleterre, et pur leur desobeisance et leur malice refreindre qu’autre chose ne entendant que abesser la dite coroune et l’estat du dit Roiaume d’Engleterre a leur poer, et aussint pur mettre nos feaux e leaux ceux as queux nous auons terres donés et donerons en les parties d’Escoce en seisine et en etat de leur terres,

“ Et outre ceo que Dieu vous enseignera nous vous prions especiaument en la feu et en la ligeance que vous ester tenuz a nous, et á la corone d’Engleterre, fermement enjoignons qu au dit terme de la veille de Pentecost, soiez a nous a Carloil, as chevas et armes le plus assouement que vous purres, pur aler avant a la dite besoign selonc

¹ Which still survives in our technical law terms. The distinction between the true French and the spurious dialect then spoken and written in England was, however, perfectly understood. Thus Chaucer says of his Prioress :

“ And frensch she speak full faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
But frensch of Parys was to hyr unknowe.”

—Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*, i. 124.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A. D.
1275-1368

ceo qil serra ordone par nous, et par les bones gentz que serront ovec nous a cete heure.

“ E ceo sicom vous auez le honeur et le profits de vous et du dit nostre roiaume, et le vestre propre en nul manere le Laissez.”

Sir Henry Percy to King Edward I.

“ Sachez, Sire, que je ai receu vos lettres les queles vous me enveiestes par Richard de Thirstone, mon vadlet, e bien ai entendu, Sire, ce que vous me avez mandé de vos bosoignes e faz a saver a votre Seigneurye que je suy ale en la compagnie mon seignor le Counte a Berewike ou ly e mey e autre serrons le Samedie apres le Sainte Margerete a fournir vos mandemenz en la meilleure manere qom porra au profit e la honour de vous ; e si cest en mond com je en saueray nule certeynetee je la fray saver a vostre Seignorie ove tote la haste que je porray. Escrites a Annewik le Vendredi apres la Sainte Magarete.”¹

Lord Percy and Lord de Clifford had at this period been appointed King Edward's commissioners or “cheventains” for negotiating peace with Scotland and receiving the submission of the Border chiefs.² Robert Bruce the younger, and other of the powerful nobles in arms against England, accordingly appeared before them in June 1296, and acknowledged their various offences against their lawful sovereign, for which they offer to

¹ Royal Letter, 3342, P.R.O.

² In the several spurious documents bearing the date of about this period, by which in later times it was attempted to establish the acknowledgment on the part of the Kings of Scotland of the supremacy of the English Crown, we find the name of Henry de Percy as one of the subscribing agents. For an interesting account of these curious papers and their probable origin, see Introduction to Palgrave's *Documents and Records: Scotland*.

SCOTTISH HOSTAGES.

“fayre les amendes haut e bas a sa volente, des ditz homecides arsons et roberies; sauve a nous les pointz contenuz en un escrit le quel nous avoms de mon sire Henri de Percy, et monsire Robert de Clifforth, cheventeins del ost au noble Rey de Engleterre es parties de Escoce.”¹ A.D. 1296

The Percy seal attached to this curious document bears the Brabant lion upon a field ornamented with scrolls, surrounded with the words (indicative of the office in which he was employed) “Secretum secretorum.”

* * *

One of the conditions imposed upon the Scots by the English king was the delivery of female hostages, among whom the commissioners were ordered to receive Margery the daughter of Robert Bruce, and Christine, his sister, the wife of Christopher Lord Seton. These ladies were in the first instance ordered to be sent to the Tower of London, “pour estre mise ilueques en cage, et que ele ne parle a nul homme ne nul homme a li, fors ceux que le conestable de la Tour assignera pour la garder.” Subsequently, however, Lord Percy was authorised to receive these hostages into his own charge, “pour la mettre en Engleterre en sauve garde.”²

The truce was however, as usual, of short duration. The valour and patriotic zeal of William Wallace had rekindled the waning hopes of the Scots. At his bidding the country once more rose in arms. The Earl of Warren suffered a severe defeat, and the English garrisons in occupation of a number of scattered positions were slaughtered, or driven across the border.

¹ *Documents and Records of the History of Scotland*, by Sir Francis Palgrave, p. 198.

² *Ibid.* p. 359. Another of these hostages, the countess of Buchan, was less fortunate; she was ordered to be kept in a cage in Berwick Castle; but the story of the cage having been hung *outside* the walls of the fortress is probably a fable.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

In compliance with a writ of military summons¹ addressed to them, the Lords Percy and Clifford raised a large force in the north for an invasion of Scotland, and the character of this levy affords an illustration of the give-and-take principle of feudal service; showing that the power of the lord over his vassal was not quite as arbitrary as is generally supposed, and that the latter could and did stand upon his legal rights.

Under the Border Law,² every tenant in Northumberland and Cumberland was required to have "such a nagge as is able at anye time to beare a man twentie myles wythin Scotland and backe again without a rest;" and the Law of the Marches imposed other services of an aggressive as well as of a defensive nature, irrespective of the feudal obligations involved in tenure by knights' fees. A far heavier burden thus rested upon the population of the Border provinces than elsewhere, in consideration of which the tenantry appear to have been accorded some exceptional rights and privileges.³

Possibly the example of the bold attitude which the northern barons had more than once assumed towards the sovereign, when, in their opinion, their just rights and privileges had been threatened or invaded by royal authority, was not altogether lost upon their followers.

¹ *Equis et armis. Dors. Claus. m. 5, 26* Edward I. It is stated that no less than 198 military tenants of the Crown assembled at Carlisle in answer to this summons.

² The Border Laws were supplementary to the Laws of the Marches, and are stated to be framed, firstly, on the principles of the *jus gentium* or international obligations; secondly, with a view to "restraining the evil manners and untowardness of the subjects of both the realms;" and thirdly, to give effect to the unwritten law founded upon the local customs and acknowledged rights on both sides of the border. See Nicolson's *Leges Marchiarum*, p. 119.

³ The privileges and exemptions anciently enjoyed by the tenants and inhabitants of the northern counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham are recited in an Act passed by Parliament in 1580. A comprehensive abstract of this Bill will be found in the Alnwick MSS. vol. iii.

EQUITY OF FEUDAL SERVICE. 1297

The Cumberland men, who had, at the call of Percy and Clifford cheerfully provided a large contingent to carry the war into the heart of Scotland, now entered a formal protest against this being taken as a precedent for service due, or anything beyond a voluntary act on their part dictated by motives of personal regard for their military chiefs; who in their turn thus acknowledge the justice and propriety of the pretensions asserted by their tenantry:

A.D. 1297

“Whereas you have freely consented to make an expedition along with us against the enemies of our Lord the King into Scotland, we, having regard to your good will, grant to you, and by these our Letters Patent bind ourselves to let you have the Letters Patent of our Lord the King, sealed with his seal, between the day on which these present letters are made and the feast of St. Michael next following, that this expedition, which you of your free will make unto us, shall not be turned as a service to you, nor to your heirs, nor shall our said Lord the King, nor his heirs, be able to demand any service as of right from you, or from your heirs, by right of this expedition.”¹

* * *

In 1300 we find Percy with the Earl of Warren at the siege of Karleverok, which became the subject of a curious heraldic poem wherein the armorial bearings of the English barons are set forth with great minuteness, the banner of Henry de Percy being thus described:

“E ot en son assemblement
Henri de Perci, son neveu,²
De ky sembloit ke eust fait vou

¹ Privy Seal Papers, Record Office, 25 Sept. 1297.

² A mistake. Henry de Percy was not this earl of Warren's nephew, but his grandson.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368
—

De aler les Escoces derompant.
Jaune o un bleu lyon rampant
Fu sa baner bien vuable."¹

In the following year he was engaged in a very different conflict. Eleventh on the list of the one hundred and four barons who subscribed the famous letter of remonstrance to Pope Boniface VII.² stands the name of "Henry de Percy, Dominus de Topcliffe."³

"Our Sovereign Lord the King," said our sturdy barons, "shall in no wise answer in judgement before you . . . nor suffer his rights to be brought in question; neither shall he send any procurators unto your presence for this purpose; for such proceedings would be to the manifest disinherison of the title and right of the Crown of this realm and the dignity of the kingdom, and to the prejudice of the liberties, customs, and laws of our forefathers; to the observance and defence whereof we are bound and obliged by our oaths, and which we will, God willing, defend and maintain with all our power.

¹ Cotton MSS. Calig. A. XVIII. f. 24 b. The lines may be rendered:—

"In his retinue there was
His nephew Sir Henry de Percy,
Who seemed to have made a vow
To ride roughshod over the Scots.
Conspicuous was his banner with
A lion azure on a golden field."

² Whose pretensions, derived from King John's humiliating submission to Rome, amounted to little less than that claim to complete supremacy over the kingdom of England which, in 1245, Pope Innocent the Fourth had expressed to the Bishop of Lincoln in these arrogant words:

"Nonne rex Anglorum noster est vassalus, et, ut plus dicam, mancipium?"

³ Sir Henry Ellis attaches much interest to this document apart from its historical purport, because of its affording the earliest and most authentic evidence now extant of the armorial bearings of the baronage of England. The custom of quartering arms is of later date, and Henry de Percy's seal, attached to this document, exhibits only the arms of Brabant. For an account of the ancient armorial bearings of the house, see Longstaffe's *Badges of the Percies*, and Hartshorne's *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland*, pp. 301-307.

THE BARONS AND THE POPE OF ROME.

Neither do we, nor will we, permit, as we neither can nor ought, our aforesaid Lord the King to do or attempt to do, *even if he wished it*, any of the things aforesaid, being things unaccustomed and unlawful and at no time before ever heard of.”¹ A.D. 1301

Does not the spirit which nearly a century before animated their ancestors at Runnymede breathe through every line of this brave assertion of national independence on the part of these worthy champions of English liberties?

* * *

In the meanwhile the war in Scotland was raging with varying fortunes, and in the brave Wallace, Henry de Percy had found a foe worthy of his steel. The ancient Scottish chronicler, who has thrown a halo of romance over the career of his hero, has not failed to do justice to his English adversary,² whom he describes as “true, and ay of great avail, sober in peace and cruel in battail,” and to whose strict discipline he thus bears testimony:

“The Percies’ men in war were used weel,
Right fiercely fought, and sonzied not a deel.”³

Aylmer de Valence,⁴ then in chief command of the English armies, had, it appears, assembled the barons to consult upon the plan of campaign.

¹ *Fœdera*, tom. ii. 873.

² “The life and adventures and heroic actions of Sir William Wallace, written in Latin by Mr. John Blair his chaplain, and turned into Scots metre by one called *Blind Harry*, in the days of King James the Fourth. See Addition to Appendix II. A.

³ A contemporary monkish writer also testifies to the good conduct of Percy’s retainers, and describes him as “*vir magnanimus quia noluit injuriam pati ab aliquo sine grave vindicata*,” and who “*ita strenue gubernabat servos suos, quod in toto regno Angliæ timebantur*.”—*Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke*, Harl. MSS. 692, fol. 195-203.

⁴ Son of William de Valence, first Earl of Pembroke of that name (created 1247), who was slain at Bayonne in 1296. Aylmer was a brave and skilful soldier, but cruel and treacherous. He fell while fighting under Queen Isabel against the Spencers in 1323.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

“The Lord Piercie to Glasgow did repare,
And with wise lords he held a council there.

Sir Aymer Vallance a false traytor and strong,
In Bothwell dwelt, and there was then among.
He said, my Lord, my counsel will I give,
But ye do it, from skaith ye may not live,
Ye must take peace, without more tarrying.”

It was then proposed by him to invite the Scottish leaders to an interview, and by admitting them one by one into “the barns of Ayr,” that were so constructed as to allow of only one man entering at a time, to make away with them.

“Four great Barns that tyme stood into Ayre,
Wrought for the King, when his lodging was there,
Bigged about that no man enter might,
But one at once, nor have of other sight
There they ordained these Lordes should be slaine.

“To Piercie of this matter charge they laid ;
With sad advice to them again he said :
These men to me have kepit trewth so lang.
Deceitfully I may not see them hang.
I am their foe, and warn them will I nought ;
So I be quit, I reck not what be wrought.
From hence I will, and unto Glasgow draw,
With our Bishop to hear of his new law.”

Percy's sudden withdrawal warned Wallace that treachery was contemplated :

“Right well he wist, frae Piercey fled that land,
Great peril was to the Scots appearand ;”

and instead of negotiating he attacked Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham, who, joined by Henry de Percy, occupied Glasgow, and defeated him with heavy loss. In his account of this engagement Blind Harry has so far drawn upon his imagination as to describe the death of Percy, by the hands of the Scottish chieftain :

“Then Wallace self into that fellow throug
With his good sword, that heavy was and long,
At Piercie's face with a good will he bare ;
Both bone and brain the forged steel through share.
Four hundred men, when Lord Piercie was dead,
Out of the gate the Bishop Beck then lead.”

WALLACE AND PERCY.

In 1306, Wallace having been taken and executed in the interval, we find this dead Percy doing excellent service under the Prince of Wales,¹ and in the following year, among other exploits, making two important prisoners at Lochryan in Galloway : A.D. 1307

“ Henry Percy toke the brethren two
Of Kyng Robert, Alexander and Thomas hight.
To the justes them sent that hanged were tho,
His other brother at London hanged ryght ;²
King Robert then besieged the Percy wyght ;
But Umfreville him anon rescued
And the syege from him anon removed.”³

When King Edward lay dying at Burgh-on-the-Sands, near Carlisle, Henry de Percy, Aylmer de Valence, and Robert de Clifford stood beside him and solemnly engaged themselves to secure his son's succession, and to crown Prince Edward “in as convenient time after the king's death as they might, and to keep the land to his use until he was crowned.”⁴

* * *

It had been the policy of Edward the First to give his commanders a personal interest in their victories, by conferring upon them part of whatever territories they conquered. It was an expensive mode of rewarding service,⁵ since the lands so granted could only be held by the tenure of the sword, and as a rule reverted to their former owners on the withdrawal of English garrisons.

¹ Speed, p. 645. See also Walsingham.

² Nigel Bruce had been previously taken by Aylmer de Valence, and was hanged by the King's orders at Berwick. Percy's two royal prisoners were hanged at Carlisle. The wholesale executions of the brave Scottish soldiers who, in fighting for the defence of their country, fell into the hands of the English, are an indelible blot upon the reign of Edward the First.

³ Hardyng's *Chronicle*. Henry Percy, closely pressed by King Robert, had taken refuge in Turnberry Castle, and was only saved by an army being sent by King Edward to raise the siege. ⁴ Grafton, i. p. 307.

⁵ Sir Francis Palgrave remarks that “the king was thus enabled to pay them by expectation, and each individual would exert himself more to conquer the foe whose lands were to be his own.”

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

The grants made in this wise to Sir Henry Percy were of very considerable extent, including a great part of Galloway and the earldom of Carrick ; but he derived profit from these possessions only so long as his army remained in occupation.

He now, however, obtained the royal license to purchase an English lordship of great importance, the ownership of which, added to his other large landed possessions in the north, placed him at once in the foremost ranks of the great barons of the realm.¹

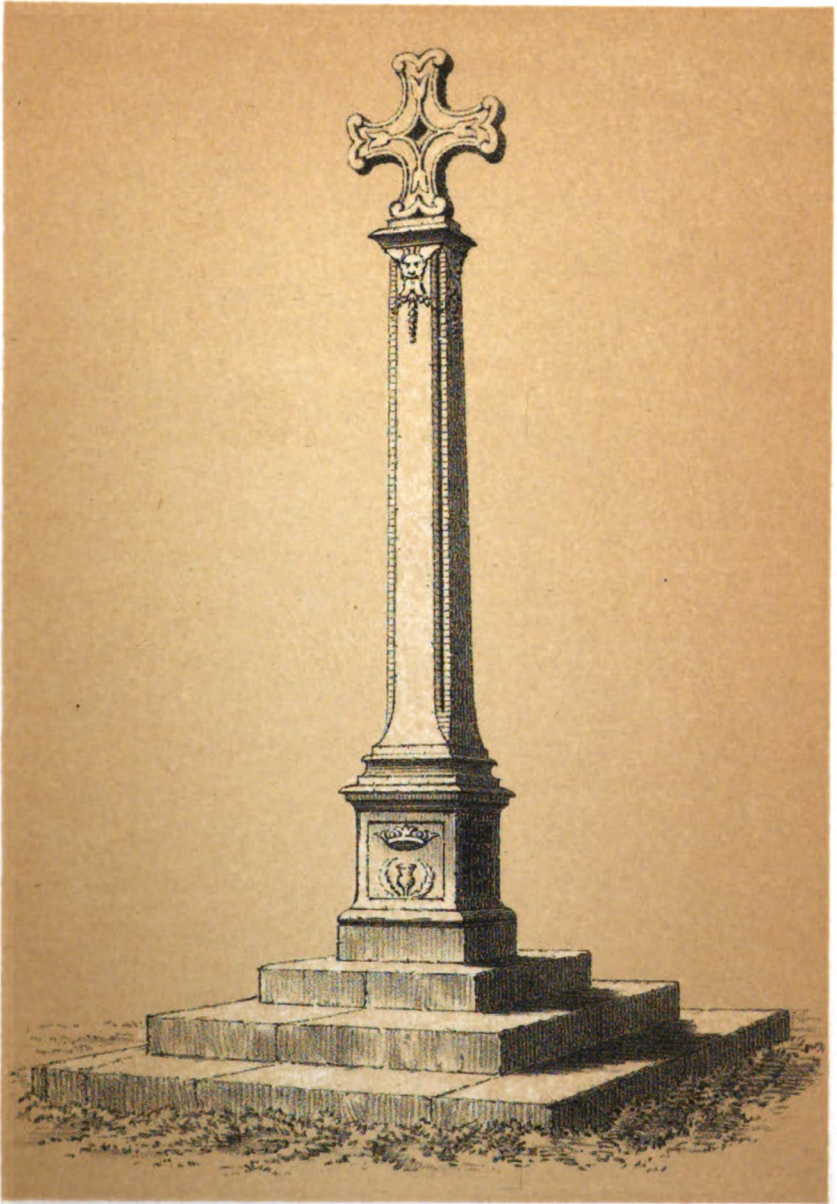
The date of the first building of Alnwick Castle is not recorded. There existed a village of the name before the Conquest, and Gilbert de Tyson, or Tesson, Duke William's standard-bearer at Hastings, was the first holder of the barony of Alnwick. Before the close of the eleventh century it had passed into the hands of the Vescys, and the site became memorable from the action fought here in 1092, in which King Malcolm of Scotland lost his life.² The ancient historians state that the king fell at the siege and under the walls of "Alnwick Castle," whence we may conclude that some kind of stronghold then existed on the banks of the Alne. In 1135 it is spoken of as "most strongly fortified," and in the course of the ensuing century it gradually increased in importance and extent, until in 1210 it covered its present area, and ranked only second, among northern fortresses, to Durham, Newcastle, Carlisle, and Norham castles.³

The barony remained in possession of the family until 1297, when William de Vescy, shortly before his death, having no lawful heir, "did, by the king's license,

¹ The connection of the Percies with the county from which their earldom derived its name dates from this period, down to which they had been exclusively a Yorkshire family.

² The cross commemorating the event still stands on the spot where he fell, and the spring to which he was carried to die is still to be seen.

³ For the extent and value of Alnwick Castle and its appurtenances, see Appendix III.



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MALCOLMS CROSS
ALNWK CASTLE



infeoff that great prelate, Anthony Beke, Bishop of Durham and Patriarch of Jerusalem,¹ in the Castle of Alnwick and divers other lands; with trust and special confidence, that he should retain them for the behoof of William de Vesci, his bastard son, at that time young, until he came of full age.”²

The old baron's "trust and special confidence" were misplaced; for the bishop, after having held this property to his own use for twelve years, claimed and obtained the right to dispose of it for his personal benefit; and, accordingly, in 1309,³ sold the Barony and Castle to Sir Henry de Percy.

There does not appear at that time to have been any question as to the validity of the title, for the transfer was confirmed by Act of Parliament in the following year, and there is no record of the intended heir having protested against the transaction.

It was not until after his death, and that of Henry de Percy himself, that Sir William Aton asserted his claim to the barony as next of kin to the old William de Vescy. Whether from recognition of his legal right, or from moral scruples, the second Lord Percy of Alnwick did not dispute the claim, but proposed a compromise, and finally obtained a formal release, in consideration of a payment of seven hundred marks.

The castle would appear to have been in a very dilapidated condition when the bishop transferred it to Henry de Percy; who, indeed, may be said to have reconstructed it, since its principal features of that date which now remain, are the work of his hand.

¹ Bishop Bek, or Beck, who played an important part in the history of his time, died in 1311, when the king made Henry de Percy guardian of the bishopric of Durham, pending the election of a new bishop, with an allowance of 300 marks a year. *Rot. Fin.* 4 Edw. II. m. 10.

² Dugdale's *Baronage*, vol. i. p. 95.

³ *Fœdera*, tom. ii. p. 183. See also *Rot. Pat.* 3 Edward II. m. 30, under which the sale was sanctioned.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

He it was who built from their foundation "the barbican, and gate-house of approach, the western garret, the Abbot's Tower, the Falconer's Tower, the Armourer's Tower, the Postern Tower or Sally-port, the Constable's Tower, the Ravine Tower, the tower and gateway betwixt the outer and middle baly, great portion of the east side of the keep, the well, and in all probability a tower standing on the foundation of the present Record Tower; as well as all the intermediate ones westwards up to the barbican. There are marks of his work more or less numerous throughout the whole building in this direction. Obliterated in some places by modern reparation, then again apparent for a few feet, mingled with earlier and disfigured by later masonry, it is yet perpetually apparent, and unmistakably shows how much of the building is due to his exertions."¹

* * *

An accomplished French knight, Piers de Galvestone, had been selected by Edward the First as a companion for his young son, the future King of England; but his profligate example and evil influence, together with an insolent bearing towards the English nobles, had given such universal offence that he had been banished the realm. It had been one of the last injunctions of the dying king at Carlisle to his son, that he would under no circumstances recall the obnoxious favourite; but the young Prince had no sooner ascended the throne than Galvestone reappeared at the English court, and was overwhelmed with favours and dignities. He was married to the king's niece, made custodian of the realm, created Earl of Cornwall,² and invested with

¹ *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland*, by the Rev. Charles H. Hartshorne, M.A., vol. ii. p. 170.

² This creation, which comprised the grant of the entire revenues of the county of Cornwall, was so offensive to the barons that they refused to address Galvestone by the title conferred upon him.

PIERS DE GALVESTONE.

A.D. 1312

large possessions and lucrative offices. So far from seeking to conciliate his numerous enemies, he re-assumed his ascendancy over the king with ostentatious arrogance ; lavished the public treasure upon his foreign followers, and treated the most powerful English barons with studied contempt and disdain.

His unrivalled skill in all martial exercises, together with extraordinary physical strength, made him a formidable competitor in joust and tournament ; and when some renowned English knight fell under the unerring thrust of his lance, he would take delight in aggravating the wounded vanity of his opponents by offensive taunts, and the stings of a trenchant and bitter wit.

In the second parliament of the new reign¹ a bill was introduced, nominally for the better regulation of the king's household ; actually to rid the country of the favourite. Lord Percy was elected one of the twelve "ordainers" for giving effect to this measure ; and the king, powerless to resist, could only so far soften the effect of Galvestone's banishment as to convert it into honourable exile by nominating him Governor of Ireland, whence he shortly after returned with a large French following in open defiance of his judges.

A second formal sentence of banishment was not more effectual, and the barons now formed themselves into an armed confederacy under the Earl of Lancaster,² and sword in hand insisted upon compliance with their demands. Edward stood by his favourite and unfurled his banners at York, having first placed Galvestone in security at Scarborough Castle, where Pembroke and Percy at once followed him, and, in spite of the king's

¹ This parliament was composed of twenty bishops, sixty-two abbots, fourteen earls, and seventy-four barons.

² Thomas Plantagenet, second Earl of Lancaster, grandson of Henry the Third. He was defeated and taken prisoner by the royal forces at Boroughbridge in 1322, and executed at Pontefract Castle.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

command, addressed to them personally, to withdraw,¹ compelled him to surrender, on condition that, if no accommodation could be effected with the king within two months, he should be reinstated in command of the castle. Notwithstanding this guarantee he was seized by the Earl of Warwick² and executed in the presence of the Earls of Lancaster, Hereford, and Surrey.

There is nothing on record to establish how far Lord Percy was implicated in this act, or responsible for the breach of faith involved in it. Pembroke's treacherous character justifies the suspicion that in satisfying Edward of his own innocence in the matter, he had thrown the blame upon his companion in arms; for while he himself retained the royal favour, orders were despatched for the arrest of Lord Percy,³ whose lands were shortly after confiscated.

The baronial league was, however, too powerful to allow of the king offering prolonged resistance. The proclamations were withdrawn; letters of safe conduct were issued to the leaders of the rebellion,⁴ and Henry de Percy was not only included in the general pardon,⁵ but in the following year received the governorship of Scarborough and Bamborough castles, and the wardenship of the forests on this side Trent, which had become vacant by Galvestone's death. About the same time he was granted free warren of all his lands in Yorkshire. Among the documents of this period we find a license

¹ *Fœdera*, tom. iii. p. 328, 17th May, 1312.

² Guy Beauchamp, second Earl of Warwick.

³ The warrant addressed to John de Mowbray for Percy's arrest set forth that he had "engaged himself under penalty of life and limb, land and tenements, to keep safe from damage Piers de Galvestone, Earl of Cornwall, for a certain time according to certain terms and conditions, to the said king and others, without the Castle of Scarborough, and that now the said Piers de Galvestone had been killed before the time stipulated."—*Fœdera*, iii. 334.

⁴ See Appendix IV.

⁵ *Fœdera*, iii. 443.

THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBOURNE.

to Lord Percy to have mass performed during the sitting of Parliament in a chapel or oratory in the house of the Friars Preachers of York, and a summons to attend a council of war convened by Archbishop Greenfield "pour trater pourvoyer et ordiner coment nostre dit pays du north pure estre meux sauve et defendu encontre les enemys d'Escoce."¹

A.D. 1314

The result of this conference was the determination to carry the war into the enemy's country on a scale hitherto unattempted. The army raised for the purpose was computed to number not less than one hundred thousand men, nearly one half of whom were mounted; and of these over three thousand are described as having been, man and horse, clad in complete armour. The King in person took the command; and crossing the border, surrounded by the flower of English chivalry, advanced unopposed upon Stirling Castle, before which Robert Bruce lay with only thirty thousand men. The bright sun of a cloudless summer's morning rose upon the first shock of these unequally matched forces; it set upon the scattered and broken remnant of the invading army, and the dead bodies of forty thousand Englishmen.²

25 June.

In early youth Lord Percy had shared in the triumphs and victories which had made the first Edward the virtual King of Scotland. He now beheld the last trace of English ascendancy obliterated in a humiliating defeat, many of his friends and companions³ and the greater part of his retainers slain; while he himself, in covering the headlong flight of the King of England, fell

¹ Reg. Archiep. Greenfield, Lambeth Palace, ii. pp. 79 and 32.

² It is so common a practice to ascribe unexpected defeat to treachery, that the charges brought against a number of English barons of having on this occasion failed in their duty are open to suspicion; but there must have been culpable negligence or incapacity, to account for the complete overthrow of the invading army by so small a Scottish force.

³ Forty-two English barons fell in this fight.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

a prisoner into the hands of the enemy.¹ Ransomed not long after, he returned to England only to die in the flower of his manhood.²

The first Lord Percy of Alnwick had married Eleanor,³ the daughter of John Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, a lineal descendant of Queen Adelicia,⁴ with whom he had obtained a considerable accession of lands in Sussex.⁵ Of their two sons, the only issue of this marriage, William, the younger, died childless in 1355, and all that we find recorded of him is the fact of his having been made a Knight of the Bath on the accession of Edward the Third.⁶

* * *

A monkish writer describes the second Baron of Alnwick as having from early youth been honourably distinguished for pre-eminence in all martial exercises,⁷ and

“ King Robert Bruys toke Robert Vmfreuile,
Erle of Angeos, Henry then lord Percy.
Th’ Erle of Marche, also the lord Neuile,
Acton and Scropen, and also the Lord Lucy
At Stryuelyn Bridge, fightyng mightyly
In the vanward of the forsaid battaill,
Taken prisoners, and rainsomed for auayle.”

Hardyng’s *Chronicle*, p. 306.

There is no mention in other histories of Lord Percy having been among the prisoners taken at Bannockbourne; but Hardyng, from his intimate association with the family, is not likely to have been misinformed on the point.

¹ See *Inquis. Post. Mort.* 8 Edward II. (1314), where it is stated that the heir was then thirteen years of age.

² “Ista Alianora obiit anno dñi MCCCXXVIII.; hæc edificavit capellam de Semar.”—*Little Pedigree Roll of Percy and Vesci*, circ. 1460.

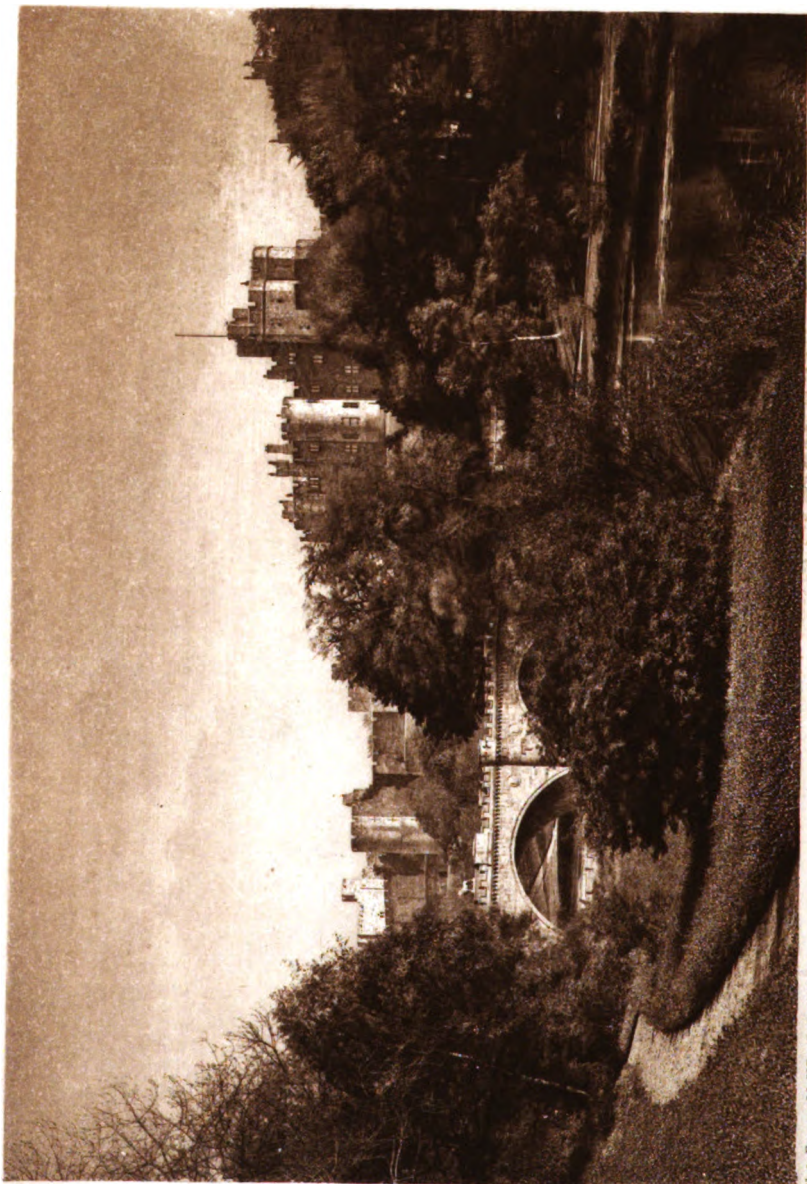
³ On the death of William d’Albini, third Earl of Arundel (Adelicia’s grandson), the earldom had passed to the son of his only daughter, Isabel, wife of John Fitzalan, Lord of Clun (he died in 1268), the immediate ancestor of thirteen successive Earls of Arundel of that name, of whom the last died childless in 1571.

⁴ According to the Return of the King’s escheator, Lord Percy held of the Earl of Arundel the manor of Petworth and advowson of church and tenements of Heyshot, by twenty-one knights’ fees; while the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Zouche, and William Paynell, held of Percy lands in the same county to the value of £81, by service of eight and a half knights’ fees.—*Inquis. Post. Mort.*, 8 Edward II., No. 65. [1314.]

⁵ See Anstis’s Roll of Knights of the Bath.

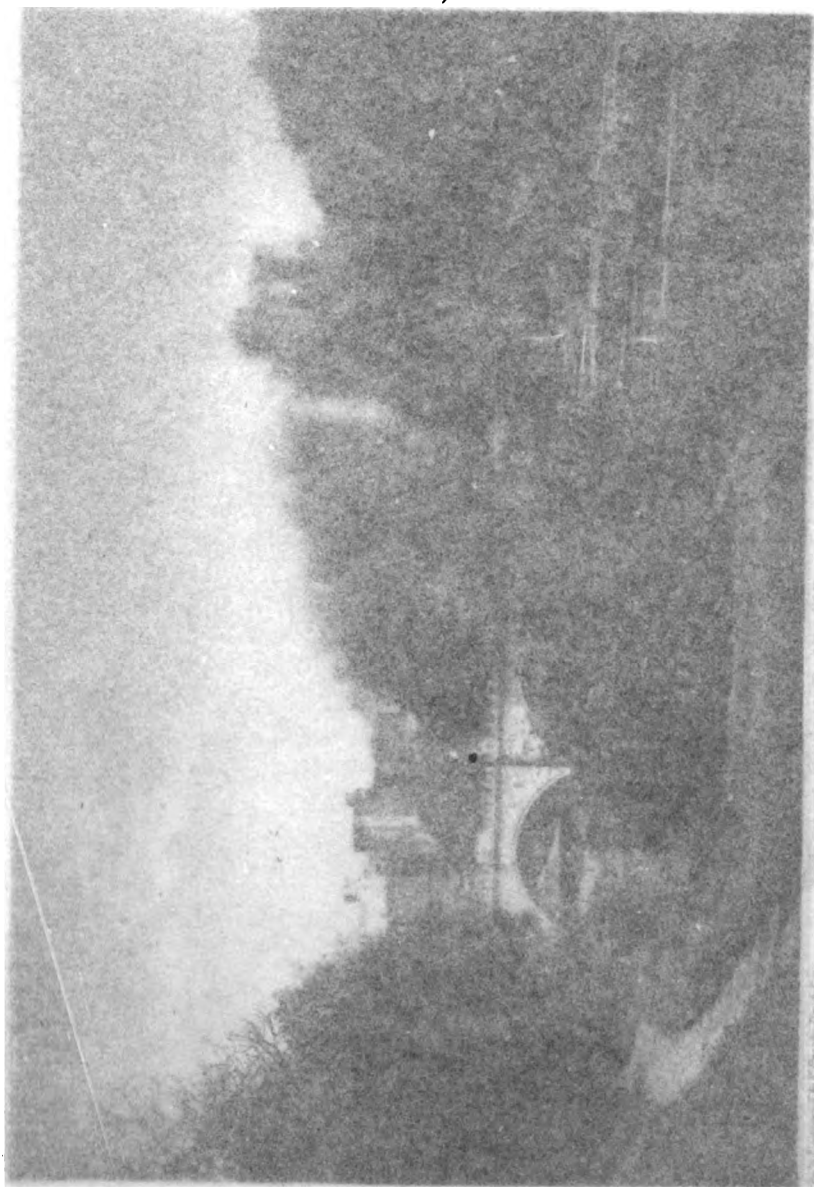
⁶ “In torneamentis et hastiludiis semper exstitit ita potens ut cum summo honore.”—*Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke*.





ALNWICK CASTLE

Photo Engraved by Y. Drakes Day & Son.



THE SECOND BARON OF ALNWICK.

as having become "beyond all his ancestors the most famous and powerful." A.D. 1322

He was only in his fourteenth year when his father died, but before attaining his majority he had so far established his military reputation in many a conflict with the Scots¹ as to have led the king not only to forego in his favour [the right of guardianship over Alnwick Castle,² (which had become the object of constant attack by the hostile Borderers, and the custody of which had, during Percy's minority, been conferred upon John de Felton,³) but also to entrust to his defence, while only in his twentieth year, the fortresses of Scarborough and Pickering.

The importance which Alnwick Castle had by this time attained as a military stronghold is indicated by a return furnished by Felton in 1314, according to which a garrison of horse and foot under three knights and thirty-seven esquires was during that year maintained within its walls at a cost of £1,137 2s. 9d.⁴

¹ Nor was it only foreign enemies against whom the northern barons had to contend. Many gentlemen in those parts who in the course of civil dissensions had fallen under attainder or outlawry, had formed armed bands at the head of which they ravaged the country and exacted contributions from the peaceful inhabitants. It was by one of these, Gilbert de Middleton, that the Pope's legates, on their way to negotiate peace with Scotland in 1316, were robbed, while the Bishop of Durham was seized and held for ransom. Henry Percy appears to have taken an active part in suppressing this brigandage, and the Exchequer Rolls contain an entry of a payment by the king's gift of £66 13s. 4d. to Thomas de Fishbourne, one of his retainers, for capturing one of the principal offenders, Richard de Middleton.

² It must be borne in mind that the Crown at this time, and down to a much later period, carried on a very profitable traffic in the estates of minors, the revenues of which were either farmed out, or appropriated to the royal use. We meet with a mandate in 1316 in favour of "the Prior of Farne, for five quarters of corn annually, out of the Castle of Alnwick in the hands of the king by the death of Henry de Percy."—*Rot. Claus.* 10 Edw. II. m. 25.

³ With an annual allowance of 100 marks.—*Abbrev. Rot. Orig.* vol. i. p. 215.

⁴ Hartshorne (p. 171) quotes this return correctly in a footnote, but in his text renders "trium militum et xxxvii. armigerorum" as "3,037 men," having evidently misread "militum" for "millium," a mistake which other writers have inadvertently copied.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

In 1322 Henry de Percy was made a Knight of the Bath, the only creation in that year, on which occasion he received from the royal wardrobe, "beside scarlet robes and murrey-coloured cloth, a tunic and cloak for his vigils."¹

In the same year he took part in an expedition into Scotland under the king,² and penetrated to the walls of Edinburgh :

"Th' Erle Edmund, then of Arundel,
Warden of the marches then constitute,
Th' erle Robert of Angous, Umfreuille,
Of his lands having no refute,
Th' erle David of Atholl destitute
Of his erledom, the Lord Percy full hardy,
The Lord Neuile, the Lord Beaumont manly,
With all the power of the north countree,
Destroyed then Scotlande and brent
Upon the march unto Lyntell Lee." ³

* * *

Unwarned by experience, King Edward had once more fallen under the evil influence of a personal favourite, who, though devoid of the attractions and accomplishments of Piers de Galvestone, acquired an equal ascendancy at court, and to an equal degree abused his position and aroused popular resentment.⁴

Hardyng includes the name of Henry de Percy in the baronial league which, under the Earl of Lancaster, had taken up arms against the new favourite :

"Th' erle Umfrey of Hereford that was bold,
Th' erle of March'e full manly as men knewe,
Th' Mowbray also, Percy and Clifford drewe,
All armed came, and the two Spensers exiled
Out fro' Englande never to be reconsyled." ⁵

¹ *History of the Order of the Bath*, by Sir Harris Nicholas.

² "King Edward departed with all his oste towards Scotland, and passed through the landes of the Lord Percy and of the Lord Nevill, who were two great lords in Northumberland, and marched on the Scottis."—Froissart. ³ Hardyng's *Chronicle*, p. 308.

⁴ Hugh Spenser, or Despenser, a man of obscure origin, had, *jure uxoris*, become Earl of Gloucester, on his marriage with the daughter and co-heiress of Gilbert de Clare, while his father had been created Earl of Winchester in 1322. They were both executed in 1325.

⁵ Hardyng's *Chronicle*, p. 309.

THE SPENSERS.

It is, nevertheless, doubtful whether Henry de Percy had joined the league at that time, or until after the return of the exiled Spensers in 1322; for when in the previous year the insurgents besieged Tickhill Castle, we find his name among those of the royal barons who in accordance with summonses addressed to them levied troops to relieve the beleaguered garrison.¹ A.D. 1327

When, however, in defiance of their sentence, the Spensers once more appeared at court, and Queen Isabel, relying upon the universal hatred that their presence inspired, landed at Harwich with her young son, Lord Percy with a powerful following at once placed himself at her disposal.

The service was generously requited as soon as, on his father's abdication, Prince Edward ascended the throne. Lord Percy was then nominated a member of the council of regency during the king's minority,² granted the custody of Skipton Castle³ in Craven, and was made Warden of the marches, with an annual allowance of one thousand marks for furnishing and maintaining a garrison of one hundred men-at-arms, and the same number of hobelars.⁴

Shortly after he was employed in negotiating a peace with Scotland, and conjointly with two other barons appointed governor of the maritime castles in the north.

* * *

We are told that when Rollo, on being confirmed in possession of the provinces he had conquered, was required publicly to acknowledge the suzerainty of the King of France, and in token of vassalage to kiss his

¹ *Parliamentary Writs*, vol. ii. p. 180.

² The council was composed of five bishops, two earls, and five barons.

³ Ten years later Henry de Percy petitioned the king that this grant of Skipton might be revoked in favour of his brother-in-law, Robert de Clifford.

⁴ *Fœdera*, tom. iv. p. 254.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

foot, the rude northman seized the extended limb only to lay its royal owner prostrate upon his back. In the same spirit, though in a manner less uncouth, the young King Edward, when he appeared at Amiens before Philip the Sixth to do homage for the Duchy of Guienne, refused to bend the knee before a French prince; and we may imagine how cordially Henry de Percy,² and the other English barons in the royal retinue, must have approved this display of independence on the part of their sovereign.

It was not long before the English nation discovered that Queen Isabel and her ally Mortimer had only displaced the Spencers in order themselves to usurp the power which these had so offensively exercised. King Edward found himself held in the strictest tutelage by his infatuated mother and her unworthy favourite, than whom Galvestone himself was not more arrogant or extortionate; and who, confident in his influence, made no attempt to conciliate the young sovereign. Having attained his eighteenth year, however, Edward determined to emancipate himself from this hateful control, and Henry de Percy was among those who stood by him in the assertion of his rights, and who brought about the fall of, and passed sentence of death upon, the offender.

* * *

In 1329 the king had granted to Lord Percy and his heirs, in consideration of a garrison to be there maintained for his service, the reversion of the castle, manor, and lands of Warkworth,³ which grant on the death of John

² According to Froissart, the king was escorted into France by a thousand horse, and his retinue comprised the "Lord Raynold Cobham, Wager, the Marshal of England, the Lords Percy, Mannyng, (Manny), and Mowbray, and more than forty other knyghtes."

³ Appendix V. For a sketch of the manorial history of Warkworth, see Hartshorne, pp. 186—194, Dugdale's *Baronage*, Vol. I., p. 109, and *Archæologia Eliana*, Vol. III., p. 100, where the original extents at different periods will be found recorded.

WARKWORTH CASTLE.

de Clavinging, three years later, was confirmed by Royal Charter and by Act of Parliament.¹ This barony had in 1158 been granted to Roger Fitz-Richard, to be held by service of one knight's fee, by King Henry the Second, and it remained in the family, passing from father to son, until, on the death without direct heirs male of John Fitz-Robert, the fifth in descent, who had taken the name of Clavinging after one of his manors in Essex, it reverted to the crown.

A.D. 1332

The castle had fallen an easy prey to King William the Lion in 1173,² but in later times it more than once successfully resisted the assaults of Scottish invaders. It could not, to judge of the site and construction, have been capable of prolonged defence, but must always have been grand and imposing from its architectural proportions, and the natural beauty of its surroundings.³

In Stockdale's *Survey of the Northumberland Estates*, 1586, we read that: "The Castle of Warkworth is a very fair and beautifull castle, scituate in the inner warde on the south syde of the ryver of Cockett, ii myles west from the sea, envyroned in part with the said ryver of Cockett and in other parts with a dry moat. The said castle was in former tymes parcell of the landes and possessions of

¹ *Cal. Rot. Claus.* 8 Edw. III. m. 19. "Iste etiam Henricus perquisivit de dono regis baroniam de Werkworth pro suo bono et crebro servitio."—*Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke.*

² The siege is described in the curious Chronicle of Jordan de Fantosme, who says:—

"Le chastel iert fiele, le mur et le terrier,
E Rogier, le fils Richart, un valiant chevalier,
L'avoit eu en garde; mes il ne l'pot garder."

³ "They pass'd the tower of Widdrington,
Mother of many a valiant son;
At Coquet Isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who owned the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name."

—*Marmion*, Canto ii.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

John Lord Clavinger, together with the manors of Newburne and Corbrigg and the Barony of Rothbury, holden of the king by entayle [viz.: to him and his heirs males, the revercion to the king and his heirs], which after the death of the said John Lord Clavinger should have come to King Edward the Third, who gave the same to Henry, then Lord Percy, and to his heirs in fee, for, and in consideration of, his noble service done at the battell of Durham,¹ and in recompense of 500 markes annuity to him for his retinue with the said king."*

The Castle forms a salient feature throughout the series of grim pictures of Border War during several centuries; and, apart from such associations, legend and fiction have contributed to invest it with exceptional popular interest. Here again tradition proves more tenacious than history; for among the throng of sight-seers from near and far, who love to wander among the picturesque ruins of Warkworth in the present day, for one who cares to recall the story of those grey walls or their ancient inmates, of siege and battle, of desperate assault and heroic defence, ten will probably be found to take a living interest in the fate of Bertram, the knightly recluse, whose imaginary sorrows form the subject of Dr. Thomas Percy's popular romance, *The Hermit of Warkworth*.

It was probably in aid of Lord Percy's obligation to maintain an additional military force for the garrison of Warkworth that the young Ralph Neville of Raby now entered into an indenture to serve his future father-in-law,³

¹ A mistake; the grant was made nearly twenty years before the Battle of Durham, or, as it is popularly called, Neville's Cross.

² Quoted by the Rev. Charles Hartshorne in his *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland*, p. 228. A more critical history of this ancient Castle will be found in Mr. Bates' work on the *Border Holds of Northumberland*, the first part of which has recently appeared in the *Archæologia Eliana* (vol. xiv. p. 81).

³ He succeeded his father as second Baron Neville of Raby in 1331.

HALIDON HILL.

A.D. 1333

for term of life with twenty men at arms whereof five to be knights,¹ against all men except the king, "receiving 100*l.* per annum, as also robes for himself and knights, and in time of war diet for himself, and gentlemen, and six grooms; and hay and oats, shoes and nails, for fifty-nine horsemen, and horses and wages for fifty-three inferior servants."²

When in this year Lord Percy concluded a peace with Scotland, a clause was, at his instance, inserted in the treaty to the effect that all Englishmen who had received lands in Scotland, and all Scotchmen who had received lands in England, should be restored to as free possession of these grants as if no war had intervened to deprive them thereof. The stipulation was strictly carried out on the part of the English,³ but whether from inability or unwillingness to enforce it, the Scots failed to comply with this condition. The result was that when Edward Baliol determined to assert his right to the crown of Scotland, a considerable number of powerful English barons, who had thus been deprived of their Scottish lands, at once placed their forces at his disposal; and although the King of England continued to maintain an outward attitude of neutrality towards his brother-

and three years later married Lord Percy's daughter Maud. From this marriage descended that Lord Langdale whose daughter, three hundred and fifty years later (1680), married Sir Hugh Smithson, the grandfather of the first Duke of Northumberland.

¹ This force would be equivalent to about one hundred men—a man-at-arms representing two horse and two foot soldiers, and a knight from six to eight men, mostly mounted.

² Alnwick MSS. By another indenture about the same date, a northern tenant agreed to serve Lord Percy for fifteen years, in peace and war, with one companion; to have yeoman's apparel, hay, oats, shoes and nails for six horses, wages for six grooms and recompense for loss of horses in war.—Tate's *Barony of Alnwick*.

³ Lord Percy had at once made restitution of the Douglas lands in Northumberland, which had been granted to him, but his extensive possessions in Galloway and Angus were not surrendered in return.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

in-law,¹ and forbade the invading army to march through his territories, thus obliging them to proceed by sea, he was known secretly to approve of the enterprise, and believed even to have lent it material support.

The northern barons, however, made no attempt to conceal the character of their project. Official lists of array were promulgated, as in the case of declared war; and in these we find the name of Lord Percy, who was required to bring into the field 146 men at arms and 260 archers.

“ Henry Percy with Edward Bailiol went
Galoway to claime as for his heritage ;
By shippe they went, all whole by one assent
At Ravenspurne, and landed with great corage.
They were accompted two thousande fighting menne
And five hundred, besides the mariners ;
At their landing their shippes they brent right then
And bored some and sanke at good leysurs.
They thought themselves of good and strong powers,
They took none hede of shippes home again
But landeway ride for all the Scottes dain.”²

Having thus, in unconscious imitation, probably, of an ancient example, burnt their ships, the small band of invaders boldly flung themselves into the heart of the country, in trustful reliance upon the sympathy and support of the population. The desperate enterprise succeeded; and the crushing defeat of the Scots at Halidon Hill, in which Lord Percy played a prominent part,³ was followed by the complete submission of the enemy, the surrender of Berwick,⁴ and other border fortresses, and the coronation of

19 July,
1333.

¹ King David had in 1329 married Joan, the sister of Edward III., then in her eighth year.

² Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

³ He is included in the list given by Barnes of "the most famous barons and leaders that were with King Edward in this battle."—*History of Edward III.*, p. 80. This was the first occasion upon which a Percy and Douglas met in the field.

⁴ The king made a formal entry into the town and "immediately placed the Lord Henry Percy as governor of his castle of Berwick, with his lieutenant Sir Thomas Grey; and the Lord Patrick Earl of Dunbar was joined in commission with them as wardens."—*Ibid.*

Edward Baliol. The English barons were restored to their Scottish possessions, and Lord Percy was granted large additional territories,¹ by right of which he was summoned to Holyrood, where he appeared in Baliol's first parliament, to do homage as a peer of Scotland. A.D. 1334

When, on King Edward passing into Guienne, the Black Prince was appointed Regent, Percy became a member of his council and was subsequently employed in negotiating with Flanders. During a peace of what was then considered of long duration,² feelings of irritation and resentment had been growing up between England and France, the former indignant at the aid which King Philip had habitually lent to their enemies the Scots; and the latter incensed and outraged at Edward having not only haughtily repudiated the French king's claim to suzerainty over Guienne, but having himself asserted his right to the titular sovereignty of all France.³

Mutual distrust and recriminations finally culminated in a declaration of war; a war which lasted, with only two short intervals of precarious truce, for nearly 125 years, and to which we may trace that antipathy between the two nations which gradually came to be cultivated on both sides as a patriotic sentiment; which survived with more or less intensity for five centuries, and some smouldering sparks of which are hardly yet extinguished.

¹ "King Baliol gave to the Lord Henry Percy of Alnwick Castle in Northumberland, a grant of the inheritance of the pele of Loughmaben, as also of Annandale and Moffatdale, with all the knights' fees and advowsons of churches within those valleys, in as full and ample manner as the Lord Thomas Ranulph, sometime Earl of Murray, ever had them."—Barnes, p. 82. Appendix VI.

See also *Cal. Rot. Claus.* 8, Edward III. m. 19.—These Scottish lands were valued at 1,000 marks per annum, and Lord Percy subsequently transferred them to the King of England in exchange for the Castle, constabulary, forest, and towns and villages of Jedworth, together with a charge of 500 marks per annum upon the customs of Berwick. Appendix VII.

² Peace with France had last been concluded in 1299.

³ King Edward had also given offence by publicly proclaiming the sovereignty of England on the ocean.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

No English sovereign had ever led so numerous or so well-equipped an army into the field as that with which Edward now prepared to conquer a new kingdom ; while France put forth its entire strength to resist and expel the invaders. The two hosts met at Viranfosse on the 22nd October. Edward counted in his retinue twenty-eight banners and eighty pennons, 6,000 men at arms, knights, and esquires, and 12,000 select archers,¹ his total force being computed at 90,000 fighting men. He had placed himself at the head of the centre division, "and had in his immediate attendance his cousin, the Earl of Derby, the Bishops of Lincoln and Durham, Lords Cobham, Percy, Rosse, Mowbray, and divers other that I cannot name."²

The French army numbered 110,000 men, a great proportion of which was cavalry ; and among the commanders there were four kings, six dukes, and twenty-six counts.

"It was a great beauty to beholde the baners and standards wavyng in the wynde, and horses barbed, and knights and squyres richly armed, and it myght well be marveyledde howe so goodly a sight of men of warr, so nere together shoulde depart without batayle."³

So it was destined to be, however. The accustomed contrast between "battle's magnificently stern array" at early dawn, and the shades of evening as they fall upon the blood-stained field where lie

"Rider and horse, friend, foe, in one red burial blent,"

was not presented on this occasion. After confronting his adversary for two days and engaging in only a few insignificant skirmishes, King Philip, in spite of his superiority in numbers, determined not to risk his crown

¹ Froissart, vol. i. 56.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

GREAT EXPEDITION TO FRANCE.

A.D. 1340

upon the issue of a single conflict ; and when the sun arose on the third morning the English looked in vain for an enemy.

The campaign of 1339 thus proved barren of results ; but it had been honourable to the English arms, and encouraging to the ambitious designs of the king, who had little difficulty in prevailing upon Parliament to furnish supplies for prosecuting the war in the following year.

The French now determined practically to test the value of Edward's pretensions to the sovereignty of the seas, and, while he was preparing to embark his army at Harwich, fitted out a large fleet to intercept him.

The English army set sail, escorted by all available war ships, including the squadron of the north under Sir Robert Morley ; and off the Flemish port of Blankenbeghe, about ten miles to the westward of the mouth of the Sluys, found themselves in face of a French fleet of 190 sail, many of a large class,¹ and manned by 35,000 trained soldiers and mariners under the command of three famous admirals, Kirier, Bahuchel, and Barbenoir, the Genoese.

Now ensued the most important naval action recorded in English history since, in 897, King Alfred defeated the Danes off the Hampshire coast.²

The superiority was with the French,³ not only in

¹ "Præstantiores naves et grandiores quales non prius viderant."—Knyghton. Barnes, with his habitual exaggeration, puts the French fleet at 400 sail, "whereof 200 were great vessels, well stuffed with Frenchmen and all manner of habiliment of war, besides Spaniards, Genoese, Normans, and Picards, all manned with above 40,000 men."—*Hist. of Edw. III.*, p. 181.

² Sir H. Nicolas is disposed to give almost equal rank to the action off Dover in 1217, when a formidable French fleet was repulsed and defeated with great loss by the English under Hubert de Burgh.—*Hist. of the Royal Navy*, vol. i. p. 178.

³ "The Englishshmen endured moche payne, for their enemies were foure agaynste one, and all good men on the sea."—Froissart, vol. i p. 73.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

numbers but in equipment, technical knowledge and position; for whereas their fleet was mainly composed of heavily-armed war ships, with galleys and other vessels constructed for fighting, that of the English consisted in great part of ordinary trading ships hastily converted into transports, encumbered with horses and war material, and crowded with ladies,¹ for whose comfort and security special provision had to be made.

King Edward, who assumed the command of the operations and bore the admiral's flag, "placed all his biggest ships foremost, being well furnished with archers and other souldiers; and always between two sail of archers he ordered one with men of arms And then he gave order to hoise up the sails, designing to come with a quarter wind, to get the advantage of the sun and wind at his back. And now both the fleets met fiercely together, the French joining the battle with many trumpets and other instruments of martial musick, and the English *altogether giving a mighty shout*, that sounded horribly upon the waters, the shoare being not far off; and at the same instant they sent a flight of deadly arrows from their long bows, which the French answered as liberally with their cross-bow shot: but the English arrows did most execution by far. Then the men at arms approached and fought with swords, spears and axes, hand to hand; for on both sides they had certain great hooks fastened to chains, called grappling irons, to cast from one ship to another, which catching fast on the tackling, or the upper deck, they were both held close together Certainly Sir Hugh Quiriel, Sir Peter Bahuchel and Sir Nicolas Barbenoire, the Genoan, were most valiant and able captains; for they maintained the

¹ "There were in the English fleet a great number of countesses, ladies, knights' wives, and other gentlewomen on their way to attend upon the English queen then at Ghent."—Froissart.

THE BATTLE OF THE SLUYS.

fight, from before ten of the clock in the morning till seven in the evening, for nine whole hours.”¹ A.D. 1340

“There the King of England,” says another chronicler, “was a noble knight of his owne hande. He was in the flower of his youth; in lykewise so was the Erle of Derby, Pembroke, Hereford, Huntyngdon, Northampton and Gloucester, Sir Raynold Cobham, Sir Richard Stafforde, the Lord Percy, Sir Walter of Manny, Sir Henry of Flanders, Sir John Beauchamp . . . who bare themselves so valyantly with some socours they had of Bruges, and of the country there about, that they obtayned the vycorie.”²

The defeat of the French was complete, and resulted in the destruction or capture of the greater part of their fleet and the loss of twenty-five thousand men. The ordinary usages of war were not at that time, nor indeed to a much later period, applied to engagements at sea. No prisoners were made, except of men of rank for the purpose of ransom; all others who fell alive into the hands of the conquerors were thrown overboard. On this occasion even one of the French admirals was treated as a pirate and hanged at the yard-arm of the King of England's ship.³ June 24.

The loss on the part of the English is put at four thousand men: a comparatively small number considering how fierce a hand-to-hand combat had prevailed for nine or ten hours;⁴ but the result was, as in so many other

¹ Barnes, p. 182.

² Froissart.

³ Admiral Bahuchel, in retaliation, as was said, for atrocities he had previously committed in his attacks upon the coast of England; but according to other accounts he had, like his comrade Kirier, fallen in the course of the action, and only his dead body was exposed to this indignity.

⁴ “This batayle was right fierce and terryble, for the batayles on the sea are more dangerous and fiercer than the batayles by lande; for on the sea there is no reculing nor fleying, there is no remedy but to fight, and to abide fortune, and every man to show his prowes.”—Froissart, i. p. 72.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

instances, in a great measure due to the skill of the English archers, to escape from whose shafts, we are told numbers of the enemy leapt into the sea.¹

Fire-arms of some kind appear to have been used in this action, for Barnes dwells upon the superiority of arrows over guns, remarking quaintly that, "bullets not being seen only hurt where they hit." Considering the character of explosive weapons at that time it is quite credible that the long-bow would prove more destructive in the hands of English soldiers than fire-arms.

King Edward's letter conveying the tidings of the victory is the first naval despatch on record, and may serve as a model of such documents; being clear, concise and, although announcing an event of great national importance, since it established the supremacy of the English upon the ocean, entirely devoid of boastfulness or vainglory.²

It is certainly not the least honourable of the many distinctions won by the second Lord Percy of Alnwick that he bore a part in this memorable action. He continued to serve in successive campaigns in France, and was with the Earl of Derby, when in 1344 he raised the siege of Auberoche,³ and by a brilliant operation

¹ It is related that King Philip's ministers and courtiers did not dare to inform him of this defeat, which was finally broken to him by his jester, who being asked why he so vehemently denounced the English as cowards, replied because "the faint-hearted rogues had not the courage to leap into the sea, so gallantly as our own Normans and gentlemen of France did."—Barnes, p. 185.

² See Barnes, p. 184; also Nicolas, vol. ii. p. 61.

³ "Greate batayle in France, in which the King of England showed himselfe a noble and valyant prince, as in like manner did the Earl of Derby and the Lord Percy and others, who showed themselves so valyant that they obtained the victory."—Grafton's *Chronicle*.

The English garrison had been put to great straits by the formidable projectiles of the besiegers, who, having, on one occasion, intercepted a messenger sent to urge the Earl of Derby to come to their relief, attached the unfortunate man to one of their most powerful engines and shot him back into the town.

THE VICTORY OF CRECY.

signally defeated the investing army under the Comte de Lisle. A.D. 1346

On the eve of his embarkation for France in 1346, King Edward, in view of the formidable military preparations in Scotland, appointed Lord Percy to the chief command of the armies of the north.‡ He was thus deprived of participation in the brilliant continental campaign of that year; but the service which he succeeded in rendering in his native country was of hardly less national importance than the crowning battle fought on the plains of Picardy, for no events of the fourteenth century more essentially contributed to paralyse the enemies of England than the victories of Crecy and Neville's Cross.

The Scots had made the most of the opportunities which the wars between France and England afforded them for retrieving their fallen fortunes. Early in 1340 Sir William Douglas recovered the whole of Tiviotdale and the Castle of Hermitage; other provinces and strongholds were freed from their English garrisons, and by the end of the year Stirling, Roxburgh, Edinburgh and Berwick alone remained, to attest the vaunted suzerainty of the King of England. One by one these too fell into the hands of the Scots, who, not content with having regained their own, repeatedly crossed the border to carry death and devastation into the northern counties.

While Edward's army, still flushed with the victory of Crecy, lay under the walls of Calais, King David invaded Northumberland with a force of 50,000 men, and penetrated to the walls of Durham.‡ August 26.

‡ *Fœdera*, vol. v. 524.

• "The king looked towards little Durham
And there he well behelde,
That the Earl Percy well armed
With his battal axe entred the feld."
"Durham Feld."—*Ancient English Ballads*.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

Seven years of continuous continental warfare had severely taxed the military resources of England; and although the king had despatched "a choice band of expert souldiers," from Calais as a reinforcement, the army raised by Lord Percy to meet his formidable enemy did not exceed 16,000 men, of whom we are told that "a great part were clergymen, priests, chaplains, fryers and the like; but . . . yet good tall trenchermen, such as were not afraid of a crack'd crown, though they had no hair to hide the wound. For piety and a love of their country laid the foundation of their valour."¹

So insufficient indeed did Lord Percy consider his forces to contend with the Scottish army that he thought it his duty to make an attempt at negotiation before coming to blows, and accordingly "despatched a herald unto the King David requiring him to cease from further invading the counties and to return into Scotland till some reasonable order for a finall peace might be agreed upon betwixt him and the king his maister, otherwise he should be sure to have battle to the utterance [*à l'outrance*] within three daies after."²

The king, confident in the strength of superior numbers, returned a defiant answer, and the two forces prepared for battle.

The baronial houses of the north were well represented in Lord Percy's little army, among the leaders of which we find the names of Umfreville, Musgrave, Scroope of Masham, Neville of Raby, Mowbray, Lucy, Grey, Leyburn de Ros, Bertram, Deyncourt, Ogle, Bellairs, and Rokeby. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishops of Durham and Carlisle took their place at the heads of the several divisions; and

¹ Barnes, p. 378. With so large a clerical element in the ranks, it is not surprising to find a bishop associated in the command of each of the four divisions.

² Holinshead, vol. ii. 384.

THE VICTORY OF NEVILLE'S CROSS.

Froissart relates how at early dawn Queen Philippa A.D. 1346
 appeared upon the field to encourage the troops, and
 "went from batayle to batayle desyring them to do their
 devoyre to defende the honour of her lorde the Kynge
 of England, and in the name of God every man to be
 of good heart and corage."

The fight was a lengthened and a desperate one; and
 the crushing defeat inflicted upon the Scots, who not only October 17.
 saw their army annihilated or scattered, but their king
 wounded and a prisoner, was by universal assent ascribed
 to Lord Percy's skilful handling of his troops.¹ Many a
 still surviving northern ballad commemorates the part he
 bore in this action (in honour of which he was ever
 after called Percy of Durham),² and his prowess at the
 Battle of Neville's Cross became the popular theme of
 chroniclers and poets, one of whom thus quaintly
 eulogises his hero :

"Inclitus Henricus Perci, partis borealis amicus
 Fit Scotis amicus constans, obstans inimicus.
 Mos girfalconis fuit illi, cor Gedeonis,
 Virtus Sampsonis, Pietas Loth, Ars Solomonis,
 Totus divinus, urbanus, ut ille Gawynus.
 "Fit sibi dulcori, nescia fama mori.
 Se probet armavit, et agmina fortia stravit.
 Sæpe reintravit, acies fortis penetravit ;
 Scoti fugerunt, latuerunt, morte ruerunt ;
 Percy persequitur, perimit, rapit, arte potitur.
 Percy Machabæus fuit, et Brus David Etheus.
 Percy non pigritat, se claro nomine ditat,
 Illustris miles, Titus, Hector, Brutus, Achilles.
 Hunc Deus instilles, Scotos fecit fore viles,
 Fortis Percy leo, quasi gigas, par Machabæo,
 Junctus amore Deo, necat hostes cum jubilæo.

¹ Walsingham allows to three others a share in the victory: "Qui vero dictam, volente Deo, fecere victoriam, fuerunt domini Willelmus de Zouche, Gilbertus de Umfrevyle, Henricus Percy, et Radulphus Nevyle."

² Dominus de Percy in senectute sua, scilicet apud Dunolmiam, in quo bello ipse fuit unus de principalibus ducibus, quando Rex Scotiæ captus erat."—John of Bridlington. For various details relating to Lord Percy's forces in the campaign, see Appendix VIII.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A. D.
1275-1368

Mittit ad infernum Scotos multos suos ictus,
Semper in æternum suos ensis sit benedictus.
Et benedicantur generosi Perci parentes ;
Sed maledicantur Scoti, mala Perci volentes.
Utens lorica fidei, probitatis amica,
Pugnans magna vicit nobis inimica,
Magnates tales debemus semper amare.”¹

The name of Percy or Piercy, as it was commonly spelt, appears to have been strongly provocative of a play upon the word, as in the above “Percy persecitur.” “Percy penetrativus,” and “Percy penetrans,” occur more than once in the works of monkish writers, and in his Metrical History John of Bridlington explains the text,

“Suspikor et clerus, penetrans cognomine verus,
Viscera Scotorum penetrabant belligerorum,”

to point to the commanders of the English army at Durham: “suspikor et clerus,” meaning the Archbishop of York and his attendant clergy, and “penetrans cognomine verus,” signifying a man true to his name, Percy meaning one who pierces or penetrates.²

The preposterous legend which found acceptance among respectable ancient historians—that the Percies derived their name from one of their ancestors who had pierced the eye of King Malcolm of Scotland at Alnwick in 1092—owes its origin to this tendency to play upon the word, which even Shakespeare could not resist, when he made Falstaff indulge in the unworthy joke: “If Piercy be alive, I’ll pierce him.”

* * *

While King David lay a prisoner in the Tower of London the Scots threw themselves upon the mercy of the conquerors for the terms of peace, and during a few

¹ Wright's *Political Poems*.

² “*Suspikor et clerus*, i.e. Willelmus de la Zouche et clerus qui cum eo erat, et *penetrans cognomine verus*, i.e. verus homo habens cognomen Percy, scilicet penetrans, et ipsi penetrabant viscera Scotorum belligerorum, cum lanceis et sagittis quos in illo bello occident.”—*Ibid.* vol. i. p 158.

LAST EMPLOYMENT.

years the border counties enjoyed an immunity from invasion to which they had long been strangers. The ruin which the Scots had worked was, however, too complete to admit of immediate repair, and in 1347 Lord Percy appealed for assistance to Pope Clement VI.,¹ representing the hopelessly impoverished condition of the country, and the inability of the decayed religious houses to afford the accustomed relief, in consequence of the sacrilegious depredations, "*per manus spoliatrix gentis Scotorum,*" over a period of forty years.

A.D.
1347-1352

Indeed, when we now contemplate those continuous raids and counter raids, undertaken with no other object than robbery and wanton destruction, which lasted for the next two centuries, we can but marvel how the population on either side escaped starvation.

In 1349 Edward Baliol once more invaded Scotland with a force of 40,000 men, towards which Lords Percy and Nevill, under an indenture with Lionel, Earl of Ulster, then guardian of the realm, agreed each to provide one hundred men-at-arms and one hundred archers.² The forces met at Perth, when the Scots sued for peace, and obtained terms upon payment of £9,000.

Towards the end of this year we find Lord Percy in the king's retinue at Calais.³ His last public employment, the commission for which was dated only about a fortnight before his death, was the arrangement of a code of laws for the government of Scotland, based upon that which had been established by King Alexander the Third.⁴

27 Jan.,
1352.

¹ The letter was couched in the most submissive tone: "Humilis et devotus filius suus, cum omni modo subjectionis et devotionis/reverentia humilia pedum oscula beatorum."—State Papers.

² *Fœdera*, vol. v. p. 545. The pay of the knights was fixed at 2s., of the squires 1s., and the archers at 4d. a day.

³ *Rot. Franc.* 21 Edward III. m. 20.

⁴ *Fœdera*, vol. v. p. 372.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

The second Lord of Alnwick died suddenly at Warkworth Castle on the 17th February, 1352.¹ In his will² he had expressed the desire to be buried in Sawley Abbey, but this clause was probably subsequently revoked, for he was the first of the Percies who found sepulchre in Alnwick Abbey.

In 1319 Lord Percy had married Idonea, the sister of Robert, second Lord Clifford³ (he died in 1365), by whom he left six sons and four daughters. The second son, Richard, Lord of Semar, was summoned to parliament as a baron throughout King Edward's reign. Thomas had been consecrated Bishop of Norwich⁴ at the early age of twenty-two, and the other sons were well provided with lands in the north, but are all believed to have died without male issue.⁵

Of the daughters, Margaret, the eldest, married Robert de Umfreville, son and heir of Gilbert, the second Earl

¹ For the lands of which he died seised, see Appendix IX.

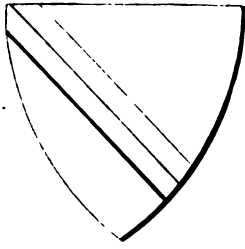
² *Testa. Ebor.* p. 57. September, 1349. Among other bequests he left fifty marks for wax candles to be burnt around his body, twenty shillings for 200 priests for masses (a very small allowance from so wealthy a testator); 100 marks for the poor, and 100 shillings for oblations at his funeral, together with £20 to the poor while on the way to the place of burial. There is also a legacy of £200 for distribution among any who might consider themselves to have been "unjustly deprived of property" by the testator, and ten marks for masses to the Abbot of Fountain.

The Priory of Alnwick seems to have been disappointed in its expectation of a large legacy. "Hic Henricus circa finem suum, magnum affectum habuit dictæ abbatix (Alnwick) sed heu! quasi modica infirmitate detentus in Castra de Warkworth obiit insperate et in dicta abbatia honorifice est sepultus."—*Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke*. Lord Percy had been a staunch ally of Edward Baliol, who, by his death, according to Thomas of Bridlington, "multum perdidit auxilium."

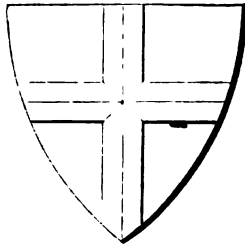
³ It was this Lord Clifford's great-great-grandson, John, the seventh baron, who married Hotspur's daughter.

⁴ He died in 1369. For his will, dated 25th May, 1368, see Appendix X.

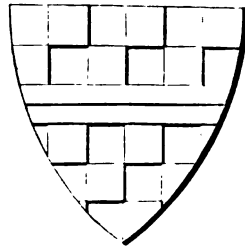
⁵ In 1358 Roger, the third son, was, with Robert Umfreville, licensed to proceed to the Holy Land: "cum hominibus, equis et harnessis suis."—*Rot. Pat.* 31 Edward III.



Tysen.



De Vesci.



Clifford.



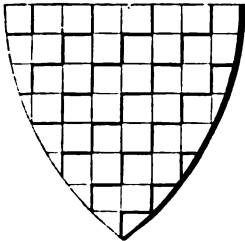
Arundel.



Bohun.



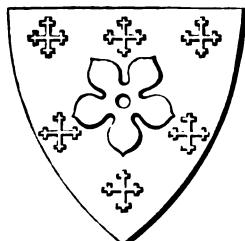
Lancaster.



Warren.



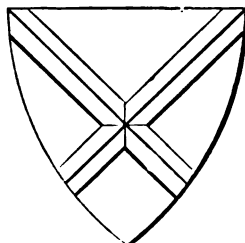
Percy.



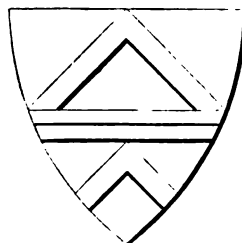
Umfreville.



Percy.



Keville.



Fitzwalter.

ARMS ON THE GATEWAY OF THE KEEP, ALNWICK CASTLE.



THE THIRD BARON OF ALNWICK.

of Angus,¹ who died during his father's lifetime; and, secondly, William, the second Lord Ferrers of Groby. Isabel became the wife of William de Aton, Matilda of Lord Neville of Raby, and Eleanor of John, seventh Lord Fitzwalter.

A.D. 1334

During the life of its second Lord, Alnwick Castle had been greatly strengthened and improved.² He it was who built the two octagonal towers forming the entrance into the inner baly, which he ornamented with escutcheons illustrative of the alliances of his family, and which include the armorial bearings of the Tysons, De Vescis, Cliffords and Arundels; of Lancaster, Warren, Umfreville, Neville, and Fitzwalter.

* * *

The old English historians and chroniclers rarely indulged in personal descriptions, and in the various records of the times we meet with nothing to enable us to form an idea of the physical traits of the Percies. The third lord of Alnwick appears, however, to have been remarkable, probably by contrast with the tall northerners, for his low stature, for he is spoken of as "hic parvus miles," and again as "vir parvæ staturæ."³ The writer who uses the latter expression adds, by way of compensation, "sed fortis fidelis et gratus," and further tells us that this lord was "of so contented a mind that he coveted not the lands of other men, but remained satisfied with those he had inherited." When

¹ English earldoms were at that time so strictly representative of English counties, that this Umfreville's right to sit in Parliament was disputed on the ground that Angus was not within the kingdom (Dugdale); but the king's writ of summons by the title was allowed to validate the claim. The Earl of Angus married the sister of Anthony, Lord Lucy, who in her widowhood, nearly thirty years later, became the second wife of the first Earl of Northumberland, and who thus married her former husband's grand-nephew.

² See Hartshorne, p. 172.

³ *Chronica Monasterii de Alnewyke.*

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

we consider the vast extent of this inheritance the merit of his contentedness becomes less apparent.

When only in his fourteenth year, Henry de Percy was married, or, more probably, "contracted in marriage," to the Lady Mary Plantagenet, daughter of Henry, Earl of Lancaster;¹ when the king, by letters patent, authorised the bridegroom's father to settle certain lands in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire upon his young kinswoman.*

As in the present day we frequently see the young children of our sport-loving country gentlemen carrying a gun over moor or stubble-field, or on horseback following the hounds across country, so the sons of the warlike barons of the north were, while yet hardly out of their nurseries, trained to the use of arms and in martial habits and exercises. In early boyhood the young Percy had ridden by his father's side in many a skirmish with the Scots, and had subsequently served in his retinue in successive campaigns in France. He had attained his twenty-fifth year when he had the good fortune to share in the victory of Crecy,³ whence he accompanied the king to the siege of Calais. While so engaged tidings arrived of King David's formidable preparations of invasion; and the young soldier hastened back to his native moors in time to join his father's forces under the walls of Durham, and to play his part in the no less memorable victory of Neville's Cross, where, as we are told by a contemporary writer, "this small but thoughtful soldier, putting forward his own body to meet the enemy, encouraged all others to do the same."⁴

¹ Son of Edmund, the second son of King Henry III., by his wife Blanche d'Artois, niece of Louis IX. of France. The marriage was celebrated at Tutbury castle in Staffordshire, in 1334.

² See Appendix XI.

³ *Rot. Franc.* 20 Edward III. i. m. 9.

⁴ Dominus Henricus de Percy, ut alter Judas Machabæus filius Matathææ, bonus proliator, hic parvus miles et providus, ad occurrendum

CONTINUOUS WARFARE.

Immediately after his father's death he was commissioned to arrange the terms upon which King David of Scotland should be permitted to return to his dominions. These negotiations were not concluded until 1354, when Lord Percy signed the treaty under which the Royal captive was set at liberty, in consideration of important cessions of territory and the payment of a fine of 90,000 marks.¹

A.D.
1354-1364

The peace involved in the restoration was, however, of short duration. In 1355 the Scots surprised Berwick and slew the greater part of its garrison, including the commanders, Thomas Percy,² Alexander Ogle, and Edward Grey. The third lord of Alnwick was in the following year engaged in the recapture of this stronghold,³ and was henceforth continuously employed in the king's service as warden of the marches, conservator of the peace, as ambassador in Brittany and in France, and in the conduct of various negotiations with the Scots,⁴ as well as those under which Edward Baliol finally surrendered his pretensions to the crown. In 1359 we find him

hostibus in prima belli acie proponens corpus proprium, cunctos sic consurgere in campo confortabat."—*Chronicon de Lanercost*, p. 350. Bannatyne Club publications, vol. 65. It is evident from the description of his person that the author here refers to the third lord of Alnwick (who was not, however, "Dominus" at the time), and not, as some writers have concluded, to his father, the Commander of the army. In calling my attention to this passage, Lady Louisa Percy wrote, in affectionate remembrance of her brother: "Do not these words apply to another Percy, who fought 500 years later in the valley of Inkerman?"

¹ *Fœdera*, vol. v. pp. 761, 787, 801.

² Holinshed, v. 386, where this Thomas Percy is described as a brother of Lord Percy; but his brother of that name was the bishop who survived for many years after, but there is no record of any other near relative of that baptismal name.

³ The Exchequer Rolls of this period abound with entries relating to Lord Percy's efforts to strengthen the fortifications of Berwick. See Appendix XII.

⁴ Among others, the surrender of the Castle of Hermitage by the widow of William Douglas in exchange for her two sons, who had been detained as hostages in England since the battle of Neville's Cross.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

in the army of King Edward at the siege of Rheims, and in the following year under the walls of Paris.¹

He had lost his wife, Mary Plantagenet, in 1362, and two years later married Joan, the daughter and heiress of John de Orby, a Lincolnshire baron of ancient race and large possessions. By the first marriage there had been two sons, whose eventful lives will form the subject of the next chapter ; by the second, only one daughter, who married John, Lord de Ros of Hamelake.

The third Lord Percy of Alnwick died in his forty-ninth year, seised of the manors of Leginfield, Clathorp, Settle, Eggeswyk, Topcliffe, Wharram-Percy, Walton, Spofforth, Nafferton, Semar, Tadcaster, and Pocklington in Yorkshire ; of the castles and manors of Alnwick and Warkworth, with their twenty dependent towns and villages, and the manors of Chatton and Harbotel, in Northumberland ; of the manors of Petworth, Sutton, Duncton, and Haystede, with the advowson of the Church of Petworth, in Sussex ; as also of several manors in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, and numerous houses and tenements in York, Newcastle, and London. These large territorial possessions were held from the crown *in capite* for service of one hundred and twenty-eight knights' fees.²

If a less conspicuous figure in the historical picture of his time than some of his ancestors, the character of the third lord of Alnwick leaves an agreeable and grateful impression as that of a brave, loyal, and modest gentleman, animated by a strong sense of duty and of justice, and who, to quote the words applied to another English worthy,³ was "ever of honest behaviour and good reputation ; favouring the virtuous, pleasuring many, and hurting none."

¹ Holinshed, ii. p. 672.

² *Inquis. Post. Mort.* 42 Edw. III. For the munificent dower of his widow, see *Rot. Claus.* 42 Edw. III.

³ Sir John Norris.

YORK CATHEDRAL.

The Percies had by this time become numerous in their county, and their names are of frequent occurrence in the public records connected with the restoration, growth, and progress of the city of York, from the time of its destruction by fire during the Northumbrian revolt of 1069.¹

A.D.
1275-1368

The old cathedral, which dated from the beginning of the eighth century, had then suffered severely, and what remained of it was levelled to the ground by a wide-spreading conflagration in 1137. It was not until nearly fifty years later that steps were taken to rebuild it, and during the two centuries that elapsed before the completion of the work successive generations of Percies were among the most munificent contributors to York Minster. Conspicuous among them was Robert, son of Walter de Percy, Lord of Rugemont,² who had placed his forest of Bolton at the entire disposal of the archbishop for the supply of whatever timber might be required for the structure as long as he lived; while at the same time Robert de Vavasour had furnished the stone from his quarries at Tadcaster.

“In memory of these two extraordinary benefactions,” says Drake, “the Church thought fit to erect two statues, one represented with a rough unhewn stone in his hand, the other with a similitude of a piece of wrought timber.”³

The example thus set them by their ancestors was

¹ It was never restored to its former greatness, for though the statement in *Polychronicon* that “the buildings of York under the Saxon kings might have vied in beauty and magnificence with those of Rome” is an exaggeration, it was undoubtedly not only the most important commercial port, but by far the most extensive, largely populated, and the handsomest city in England.

² See *ante*, p. 24.

³ *Eboracum*, p. 484. These statues remained on their original sites until the beginning of the present century, when having become much defaced and mutilated they were replaced by modern copies.

THE LORDS PERCY OF ALNWICK.

A.D.
1275-1368

piously followed by successive generations of Percies,— whose names, male and female, are of regular occurrence down to this period in the documents recording the patrons and benefactors of the Cathedral, and whose arms, carved in stone, or emblazoned on glass, are to be met with throughout the building.*

* In the great window of the northern aisle we find, side by side, the full length figures in coats armorial of Percy and Clifford. See Drake's *Eboracum*, p. 527. Other memorials will be mentioned in their proper place during the progress of these annals.



CHAPTER IV.

**Henry Percy,
First Earl of Northumberland, K.G.**

Born at Alnwick Castle, 1342.

Succeeded as Fourth Lord Percy of Alnwick, 1368.

Created Earl of Northumberland, 1377.

Fell at Bramham Moor, 17th February, 1408.

*Contemporary
English Sovereigns.*

Edward III.

Richard II. *acc.* 1377

Henry IV. „ 1399



HE life of the fourth Lord of Alnwick was cast in eventful and tumultuous times. In his nursery he may have heard the shouts of triumph resounding through the courts and halls of the old northern castle on the glad tidings of the victories at Crecy and Nevill's Cross ; and from those days down to his fall at Bramham Moor sixty-one years later, England had been, with but few short and broken intervals, continually at war. In France, in Spain, and in Flanders ; in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, English soldiers had steadily maintained the honour of their country ; and wherever the clash of arms was heard a Percy was certain to be in the thick of the fight.

A.D.
1342-1408

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Thus cradled in war, and trained, amid incessant local feuds, to hold by force that which his ancestors had won, the future Earl of Northumberland began as he ended life, with his hand on the hilt of his sword. He had, it is true, been much employed in civil duties under three successive sovereigns; he had served at Court and in Parliament, and been engaged in negotiating international treaties, royal marriages, and political alliances. But his diplomacy was essentially an armed one: the argument he best loved was a brave retinue of mounted lances; and the glitter of the coat of mail was ever visible beneath the silk and gold of the courtier's robes.

* * *

The ambition of the third Edward, practically to justify his assumption of "the vain title of King of France,"¹ was gratified by his subjects at the sacrifice of much blood and treasure. Unjust, unprofitable, and impolitic as were those wasteful wars of conquest, they yet served to kindle into a flame the military spirit of the nation, and to make the people at large direct and willing participators in the royal schemes of aggression and acquisition. Hitherto the masses had counted for little or nothing in public affairs. The crown and its feudatory lords had, according to their requirements, exacted the services of vassals, or the money of citizens, for the prosecution of wars as to the objects or the results of which the contributors were not consulted or allowed to be concerned.²

¹ Hume.

² "Sometimes they acted with, sometimes without, the previous consent of Parliament. Occasionally they issued letters to their military tenants soliciting their services as a favour; on other occasions they summoned them under penalties."—Lingard.

THE FRENCH WARS.

The strain now put upon the resources of England demanded such exceptional sacrifices, however, as could only be insured by the enlistment of universal sympathy and co-operation; and so brilliant had been our successes on the Continent, to such a height had our military reputation been raised by a long series of victories, that there was little difficulty in infecting all classes with the ambition of the sovereign, and with the warlike spirit of the feudal aristocracy. This new-born sense of individual interest and participation in a common national cause engendered a widespread consciousness of personal power and, with it, increased self-reliance and self-respect. The yeoman who had freely ventured life and limb in the service of his lord, thought the better of himself and of his order for having materially contributed to the conquests and triumphs which had raised England in the scale of nations; and the peaceful citizen, who had as freely yielded up the hard-earned fruits of his industry, felt that his sacrifices entitled him to share in those triumphs, and therefore to aspire to a higher degree of political influence and social consideration than he had hitherto claimed.

A. D.
1342-1356

Nor was the national progress at this time limited to military achievements and foreign conquests. A period of war is necessarily unfavourable to the development of civil institutions or the healthy growth of public opinion. Yet it was during Edward's long reign, under which the country was barely at peace for any two successive years, that the English Commons laid the foundation of their power, and that the English Church first raised its voice against the corruptions of Rome.

The Lord of Alnwick would indeed have been in advance of his century had he been capable of appre-

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
—

ciating at its full value the import of these two movements; it does none the less redound to his honour that he, then perhaps the most powerful subject of the English crown, was among the few of his order who espoused the cause of popular liberty and of reformed religion, while these were yet feeble and unbefriended; and that the protecting arm of the great northern Baron should have been extended over Peter de la Mere in Parliament, as over John Wyclif in St. Paul's Cathedral.

* * *

19 Sept.,
1356.

The young Percy could not have "fleshed his maiden sword" under more brilliant auspices than on that memorable autumn morning, when King John of France led the flower of his chivalry against the Black Prince and his small band of Englishmen,¹ hastily intrenched on the slopes of Maupertuis, only to recoil again and again before their indomitable front, and finally to yield his sword to the invader. It was a splendid lesson in the art of war; but a lesson yet more noble was taught the young soldier by the spectacle of the victorious prince, still hot with the fight and flushed with triumph, standing bareheaded before his royal captive, and attending him at table with all the deference he would have shown to his own sovereign and father.

* * *

We have seen how by high alliances, by good service, and yet more by a reputation for unsullied honour and

¹ Froissart estimates the French force engaged in the Battle of Poitiers at 40,000 against less than 10,000 Englishmen. Another contemporary writer arrives at about the same result when he puts the "coats of arms" under the French king at 8,000, and those under the Black Prince at 1,000.

THE BATTLE OF POITIERS.

devotion to duty, the Percies had attained a foremost place among the feudal lords of England, and an almost royal supremacy in the northern counties. The times were exceptionally favourable to the young heir of the house for consolidating and strengthening this position by military achievements, and by the cultivation of those martial virtues and graces which under the name of chivalry had begun to infuse a more gentle and generous influence into the hostile intercourse of the order of knighthood, even though it failed to mitigate the barbarity of general warfare. He proved an apt pupil; wherever he served he displayed the dauntless courage of his race, together with considerable military skill. He was possessed of that "noble port"¹ and commanding presence then considered a necessary attribute of rank and power. More than one contemporary writer refers to his courteous and winning manners, and if we may trust to the authenticity of his portraits, he must have been a strikingly handsome man.²

A.D.
1356

John of Gaunt (so miscalled after his birthplace,³ Ghent or Gant), the third son of King Edward, was but two years older than Henry Percy; and a boyish intimacy, based upon similarity of tastes, had sprung

¹ Hardyng in his *Chronicle* says of Lord Percy and his son Hotspur that they were:

“ Knightly men in wars both occupied ;
Beyond the seas great worshippe had they wonne
In many a realm, full greetly magnified
For martial actés by them multiplied,
The whiche were long here to reporte,
But in their time they were of noble porte.”

² See the beautifully illuminated Metrical History of King Richard's Deposition in the British Museum, where he is repeatedly represented.

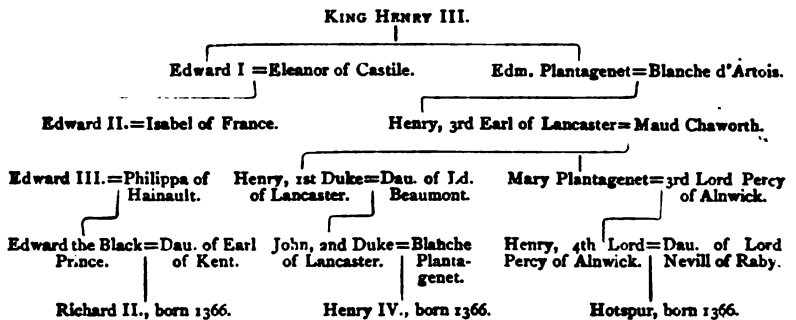
³ According to the custom then prevalent in our royal family. Thus his son was known as Henry of Bolingbroke, and Edward's grandson and successor as Richard of Bordeaux.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

up between the two cousins,² which in after life ripened into a strong though fitful and capricious friendship, and ultimately brought about portentous national results. The young Percy served under his father³ when in 1359 Edward III. carried an army of 100,000 men into the heart of France. Continental expeditions upon this scale necessitated far greater preparations than had sufficed for the wars with Scotland and Ireland, and contemporary writers record the great attention then paid to the minutest details of military economy and administration. The troops were transported in 1,100 vessels, each of which carried small boats constructed of leather, "cunninglye made and devysed, able to receive three men apeace and to passe them over water and rivers. They had at the least 6,000 cartes, and for every carte four horses which they had out of England."³ Each division of the army carried with them tents, pavilions, mills, ovens, and forges, according to a fixed scale proportioned to the numbers embarked, with a complement of masons, carpenters, and other mechanics and artificers.

² John of Gaunt and Henry Percy were descended, the one through the male, the other through the female, line, from a common ancestor, Henry III. They were further allied by the marriage of Prince John of Lancaster with the Lady Blanche Plantagenet, a first cousin of Henry Percy, as shown in this table:—



² See *History of Edward III.*, by Joshua Barnes, 1688.

³ Froissart.

PRINCE EDWARD'S SPANISH CAMPAIGN.

On the conclusion of this campaign Henry Percy returned to the north of England to assume the wardenship of the marches towards Scotland and, although only in his eighteenth year, to marry a wife.¹ This lady was Margaret, the daughter of Lord Nevill of Raby, whose brother was subsequently created Earl of Westmoreland.

A.D.
1359-1367
Oct., 1359.

He now found ample occupation for his active mind and restless sword in the duties of local administration, in restraining his unruly people, repelling the aggression of his turbulent neighbours across the border, or in leading retaliatory raids into their territory. In 1363-64,² he was with John of Gaunt fighting in France, and three years later, together with his brother Thomas, joined the expedition against Castile.

King Peter the Cruel had been deposed and expelled the country by his half brother Henry; and, as the French had joined the usurper, the Black Prince was easily prevailed upon to take part in the quarrel, and to carry an army into Spain for the purpose of restoring to his throne the most worthless of sovereigns. He accordingly started from Bordeaux with 17,000 men who, after much privation and suffering from the severity of the weather during a winter march lasting nearly three months, found themselves near the village of Navarette,³

Navarette
He

¹ The lands settled upon him by his father on the occasion of this marriage are recited in the *Calend. Rotulorum Chartarum*, 31 Edw. III.

² A truce had been established with France under the provisions of the treaty of Bretigny in 1360, but the dukedoms of Navarre and Brittany were excluded from its operation, and wars had continued to be waged in those provinces.

³ "La place ou home combati
Estoit sur un bel palme joly
Ou il n'eust arbre ne buysson,
D'une grant long environ
Silonc un beal rivère."—

Life of the Black Prince, by Chandos Herald, v. 4010.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

3 April,
1367.

confronted by a greatly superior army of French and Spanish troops occupying a strong position and commanded by the brave and chivalrous Du Guesclin.

The Black Prince, accustomed to victory against overwhelming odds, did not hesitate to lead forward his wearied and enfeebled troops, and by his first onslaught broke the ranks of the enemy. The battle lasted several hours and resulted in a complete and decisive victory for the English. The allies were routed with enormous loss,¹ and Du Guesclin, after performing prodigies of valour, was wounded and taken prisoner.

Don Pedro had entered into a formal engagement to pay and provision the English troops employed on this service;² but no sooner had these accomplished their purpose and restored him to his throne, than he repudiated his obligations. In the meanwhile the unhealthiness of the climate had produced great mortality in the English army; and after some unavailing efforts to induce the Spanish king to perform his promises, our prince carried back the remnant of his victorious but starving and discontented army, bearing within himself the seeds of that fatal fever³ which embittered his remaining days, and brought the hope and pride of England to an untimely grave.

¹ According to Hume the allied army numbered 100,000 and their loss in the battle is estimated at 20,000, whereas the English lost only fifty men. Walsingham puts the loss of the allies at 7,000 exclusive of the wounded and the large number of fugitives who were drowned in the river which for miles ran red with blood; "In tantum ut unda appareret rubra vel sanguinea per spatium milliarii, præ numerositate vulneratorum."—*Hist. Angl.* i. p. 305.

² The text of this Convention is given in *Fœdera* (vol. vi. 512), where there is also an entry (p. 557) of a reward to a retainer of the Black Prince for having brought to England the horse ridden in the battle of Navarett~~z~~ by Don Henrico.

³ "Et la c'est bien certaine
Si commença la maladie
Que puis dura toute sa vie."

—*Chandos Herald.*

THE BATTLE OF NAVARETTE. ^{p.}

A.D.
1367-1369

The refusal of the King of Spain to defray the cost of the expedition compelled the Black Prince on his return to his principality to raise the funds required for the payment of the troops by imposing upon the inhabitants of the French provinces under his rule a new and oppressive tax called the *fouage* or hearth tax, which gave rise to universal discontent, and finally led to an appeal to the King of France. Louis, rejoiced at the opportunity of striking a blow at English influence, denied the right of the prince to levy taxes on French soil, and summoned him to appear in Paris to answer for his conduct. "Je viendrai, mais le bassinet sur la tête et soixante mille hommes dans ma compagnie," was his defiant reply. From this hour, however, dates the decline of English power in France. The long-forgotten battle of Navarette¹ was the last and not the least brilliant of the many victories achieved by our Black Prince.

The attitude assumed by King Louis was met by the formal re-assumption on the part of Edward the Third of the title of King of France, and early in 1369 war was once more declared between the two countries.

Lord Percy, as he is henceforth to be called,² and his brother Sir Thomas, joined the expeditionary force³ now sent against France, and were with the Duke of Lancaster on his defiant military promenade across the country from the Channel to the Mediterranean. The march occupied four months, during which the French carefully abstained from giving battle; but by hanging upon the flanks and rear of the invading force, cutting off stragglers and convoys,

¹ Sometimes called Najara, after the river running through the village.

² He did homage in the twenty-sixth year of his age, when he had livery of his lands.—*Exchequer Rolls*, 42nd Edw. III.

³ The following entry occurs in the Issue Rolls of the Lord High Treasurer in 44th Edw. III. "To Lord de Percy for wages for himself, sixty men-at-arms, and forty servants going with him in the king's service to France, £960."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

laying waste the country wherever the enemy advanced, and preparing ambuscades, they inflicted a greater loss upon the English than half a dozen general engagements might have occasioned.¹

* * *

Sir Thomas Percy had by this time gained a high reputation. He seems to have possessed all his elder brother's warlike spirit and military accomplishments with a more politic temper and greater intellectual culture.² He had long been the friend and trusted adviser of the brave Chandos; and Froissart, who knew him personally, and rarely mentions him without praise, has left a graphic picture of the last meeting between the rising young soldier and King Edward's veteran general, who, having so nobly contributed to England's most brilliant victories on French soil, was now destined to lose his life in a nameless skirmish.

The scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Poitou, and the date is towards the end of 1370.

"Then Sir John Chandos went into a house, and caused to be made a good fyre; and there was still with

¹ John of Gaunt,—now by the death of his father-in-law (who fell a victim to the plague in 1362)—Duke of Lancaster, had planned this campaign, the effect of which was flattering to the national pride as an exhibition of English strength and power, but produced no noticeable result beyond arousing the hatred of the French people at seeing beautiful and fertile districts laid waste, and an unarmed population outraged and ruined. The cost of the expedition was enormous, and our losses in the material of war were great. According to Stow, "The Duke of Lancaster brought scantlie forty horses back with him; it was commonlie talked he had lost 30,000 horses in that unluckie voyage."—*Annals*.

² The Pope had conferred upon him the degree of a Bachelor of Arts, then a much coveted distinction (Leland's *Collectanea*, II. 352); and in a small folio MS. in possession of Emmanuel College, entitled "The Foundation of Cambridge University" (1617), we read that "Aubrey de Vere, Earl of Oxford, Thomas Percie, Earl of Worcester, and Humfrey Plantagenet, surnamed the Good Duke of Gloucester, were, circa 1396, the principal benefactors to the Logicke Schooles, sometimes called the Divinitie Schooles and Librarie, on the east side of King's College."

SIR THOMAS PERCY.

A. D.
1370

him Sir Thomas Percy, Seneschal of Rochelle, and his company, who said to Sir John Chandos: Sir, is it your intent to tarry here all this day? Yea, truly Sir, quoth he, why demand you? Sir, the cause I ask you is, since you will not stir this day, that you will give me leave, and I will ride some way with my company, to see if I can find any adventure. Go your way in the name of God, quoth Sir John; and so departed Sir Thomas Percy, with thirty speares in his company, and took the long way that led to Poitou, and Sir John Chandos abode still behind."

Percy was not long in meeting the adventure of which he went in search, for before he had ridden far he came in sight of a considerable body of French troops bent probably upon a similar errand.

"Behold, he said, yonder Frenchmen be a grete number against us, therefore let us take the advantage of the bridge and so they ranged themselves in good order to defend the bridge."

In the meantime Sir John Chandos, having scented the presence of an enemy, had set forth by an opposite road to that taken by Percy, which brought him upon the rear of the French detachment, who now turned to meet him. From the nature of the ground, however, the two English captains who thus held the Frenchmen in front and rear, were ignorant of one another's presence for "Sir Thomas Percy who was on the other side of the bridge knew nothings, for the bridge was high in the middle, so that none could see other."

Chandos, greatly outnumbered in the hand-to-hand conflict which ensued, fell mortally wounded, while Percy remaining on the other side of the river, in ignorance of the fight raging within a few hundred yards of him, and finally believing that the enemy had retired, "departed with his company and took the way to Poitou, as they knew nothing of that business."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

The Governorship of Poitou now vacant by the death of the brave old Chandos was conferred upon Thomas Percy, with emoluments fixed by letters patent under the hand of the Prince of Wales dated at Taunay, Charente, 5 November 1370.¹

“For the good services rendered by his dear cousin Thomas de Percy, Seneschal of Poitou, and in satisfaction of 100 marks due to him (yearly) for life, the prince gives to him for life, in case the Sieur de Reys should become the prince’s enemy, and rebel, the lands, rents, etc. of the said Sieur, in the prince’s principality of Aquitaine, which may be worth 1,000 livres yearly; doing homage and other duties to the prince. In case this do not happen, the prince assigns to his said cousin the said sum of 100 marks out of the revenue of the lands confiscated by rebellion in the prince’s country of Poitou, *wherever his said cousin can find them*, which lands are to be put in his hands till the 100 marks be paid, provided they have not heretofore been given to others of the prince’s lieges.”

Thomas Percy would appear to have been selected or to have volunteered for the execution of any service requiring exceptional daring. Thus the castle of Montcontour having, as the English complained, “traueyled them more than any other garrison being marvellous strong and fayre,” and being held by a picked body of 3000 French troops, he advanced upon it with 500 lances and 2000 foot, and after a short investment carried it by assault “with so good order that by clene force they pearced the walls and entered in and conquered the Frenchmen.”² Shortly after he successfully assaulted St. Sevère, which the French had surprised and taken some time before, on which occasion his cousin, Sir William

¹ *Exchequer Queen’s Remembrancer, Miscell. Army* $\frac{49}{132}$ ii.

² Froissart.

MILITARY ACHIEVEMENTS.

Percy,² together with Sir Richard Golfe and Sir Richard Home, "all captaynes too good to be lost,"² were killed.

A.D.
1370-1375

He was less fortunate in the attempt to relieve Soubise, where he was wounded and taken prisoner in a sortie led by the Welsh soldier-priest Owen. For his ransom the Prince of Wales surrendered to the French the castle of Levroux,³ whereupon by letters patent dated at Poitiers, 2nd October, 1374, John, Duc de Berry and d'Auvergne and Count of Poitou, pardoned and released "Messire Thomas de Pressy (*sic*), Knight, subject of the King of England and prisoner of the King of France (having been delivered to the said Prince John in whose faith he is) of his said imprisonment and faith which he owes to the prince."⁴

* * *

While his brother was thus doing good service on the Continent, Lord Percy had been as actively engaged in his own country. A drunken brawl during the Fair annually held at Roxburgh,⁵ and which was always largely attended by the people from over the border, had in 1370 led to an indiscriminate attack upon the Scotch there assembled, in the course of which many, and among these some immediate servants or tenants of Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, were slain. Failing to receive the redress which he demanded at Lord Percy's hands, the earl invaded England with a

¹ A son of William de Percy of Kirk Levingstone, with whom that branch would appear to have become extinct.

² Froissart.

³ Froissart. According to Walsingham it was Castellum de Liziniaco, which Dugdale renders Limosin, but which appears to be Lisieux in Normandy.

⁴ *Exchequer Queen's Remembrancer, Miscell. Army* $\frac{4}{12}$ i. Appendix.

⁵ Lord Percy had been made Governor of Berwick and Roxburgh on coming of age, but subsequently resigned the Wardenship of the latter Castle to his brother.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

large force, ravaged the country around Carlisle, and returned carrying with him some hundreds of English prisoners, and great booty in horses and cattle. A series of retaliatory raids ensued on both sides; and finally Lord Percy raised a numerous and well-equipped army, of which a large proportion were mounted men, and entering Scotland—

“With sevin thousand of nobill men and wycht,
He came till Duns and thair he baid all nycht.”¹

A fatal night for him, for here it was that his fine army was completely routed by the simple device of a few Scottish shepherds who, taking advantage of the darkness, succeeded by means of the rude instruments used by them to frighten the deer and wild cattle off their pastures, in making so deafening and unearthly a noise as produced a stampede among the horses, and a panic among the troops in the English camp. The former breaking loose from their fastenings, scampered wildly over the country, while soldiers, who would have met any number of visible enemies with undaunted front, fled headlong before the imaginary danger of supernatural agency.

“Sone be the flouries in the dew did feit,
And leit the Persie pas hame on his feit,
For all his bost, with mekle lak and schame,
And far les honour na he come fram hame.”²

Early in the following year Lord Percy once more crossed the Channel, having in his personal retinue twelve knights, forty-seven squires, and one hundred and sixty mounted archers and men at arms.³ His son

¹ *The Buik of Cronickis of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 396; a metrical version of the history of Hector Boece, containing full and very quaintly expressed descriptions of wars and border raids extending over eight centuries. There is also a detailed account of this expedition in Holinshead's *Chronicles of Scotland*, and in Buchanan's *Rerum Scotticorum Historia*, lib. ix. p. 41.

² *Metrical Chronicles*.

³ *Exchequer Rolls, Army*, 45 Edw. III.

BORDER WARS.

Henry, then in his ninth year, accompanied him in the capacity of a page. By this time the greater part of the English provinces on French territory were in open revolt. The Black Prince, prostrated by disease, and his spirit broken by repeated reverses, had returned to England, leaving the Duke of Lancaster to act as governor of Gascony and captain-general of Aquitaine. John of Gaunt however lacked both the good fortune and the military capacity of his elder brother, and was besides personally much disliked by the French.

A.D.
1373-1376

The populations whom a series of brilliant successes and the display of invincible power had reconciled to alien rule, were disposed to resume their natural allegiance as soon as victory ceased to smile upon our legions. The English army had met with a severe defeat in Brittany at the hands of Du Guesclin, and the fleet in which Sir Thomas Percy was serving under the Earl of Pembroke was all but annihilated off Rochelle, by the Spanish Admiral Cabeja de la Baca. It was looked upon as an evil omen, when the King of England, having embarked for Calais in order to take the personal command of his forces, was tossed about for weeks by adverse winds, and finally compelled to abandon the attempt to reach the French coast. After some desultory fighting a truce between the two countries was once more patched up.

23 June,
1376.

Lord Percy only returned from France to meet the enemy on his own soil, a Scottish force having attacked Roxburgh and burnt the town after a wholesale massacre of the inhabitants. He retaliated by an invasion in which he utterly devastated the lands of Sir John Gordon, who, in his turn, again crossed the border to burn and slay with relentless ferocity.

There is a sad monotony in the descriptions of these miserable feuds, and but little difference between Scotch

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

and English in the barbarous method of warfare pursued.
On the one side we are told—

“They spairit nother man nor wyfe,
Young or old of mankind that buir lyfe ;
Like wilde wolfis in furiositie,
Bayth brint and slewe with grete crudelitie ;”

while on the other—

“So boldin were the bernis that war bald
That same they spairit nother young nor ald ;
Man or wyfe, ether in felde or firthe,
Was nane that tyme that gat mercie or girth ;”¹

The Chieftains who might have been expected to use their influence to restrain the excesses of their followers appear to have been either unwilling or unable to prevent the repeated acts of individual outrage and violence which generally led to these disastrous raids.

Lord Percy, it is true, addressed frequent remonstrances to the Scottish nobles, while in his turn the Earl of March complains—

“To make redress alls far as they had failed,
Recht oft the Percie so he has assailed—
Askend redress of all was done beforne,
And he againe no answer got but scorne
With great derision, each day more and more ;”²

but on neither side can we trace any serious effort to repress outrage, and even the Kings of England and Scotland when they appealed to one another for redress, proved disposed rather to justify than to rebuke the lawlessness of their subjects on the borders.

* * *

In the meantime the reverses sustained by our arms on the Continent, and the loss of territory which had been acquired at the cost of much blood and treasure, had produced great irritation among the people of England. The heavy taxation necessitated by the wastefulness of the

¹ *Metrical Chronicles.*

² *Ibid.*

THE "GOOD" PARLIAMENT.

king and his favourites embittered the prevailing discontent, and when in 1376 "the good Parliament" was required to vote a further subsidy, "the knyghttes of the shyre (ynspyred so it is thought by the Holy Ghoste) after dyligent delyberacion in the matter, refused to answer to such petitions without the counsell of the Nobles."¹

A. D.
1376

Four bishops were accordingly named to assist the Commons, and these in their turn claimed the co-operation of four barons "which should entyrelly love the kyngdome and his maiestyes dygnytye; with whose favour they might be backed and defended if any sought to wrong them, and by them be more incouraged stoutlye to prosecute any matter that should be brought to passe for the safetye of the kyngdome, and his maiestyes bodye and soule, yea, although he should take the same in evyl parte. The knyghtes/ assenting four lordes without whose consent they neyther cold nor wold make any ainsers in so weightye a matter" were elected; these were Henry de Percy, Richard de Stafford, Guy de Bryan, and Henry de Beauchamps, and to this council of twelve four earls were ultimately added.²

The firm attitude assumed by the Commons was intended as a demonstration against the Duke of Lancaster, whose influence at Court was now paramount. There is nothing to explain the motives which induced Lord Percy to join the popular league against his old friend and ally. One of Lancaster's partisans³ contends that he did so in the

¹ This and the further quotations on the same subject are from a curious manuscript Chronicle preserved in the British Museum, and published in *Archeologia*, vol. xxii. It is the work of a contemporary writer, and bears internal evidence of authority and truthfulness.

² The Peers (Les Grandz) at this time already sat apart from the Commons; their meetings being held in Westminster Hall, while the Commons assembled at the Chapter House.

³ Godwin, in his *Life of Chaucer*, which contains a "Memoir of Lancaster" highly coloured in his favour.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Duke's interest, but this is belied by the active part he took in support of the agitation against the Court.¹

Lancaster angrily resented the pretensions of the Commons to control the action of the King. "What do these base and unnoble knyghtes attempt?" he asked of Percy. "Do they thynke they be kynges or princes of the lande?" It was only when his cousin convinced him that his resistance would be futile, if not perilous to himself, that the Duke was induced to forego further opposition, and ultimately even to consent to the removal from Court of Lord Latimer and other of the king's obnoxious counsellors. Indeed it appears to have been entirely due to Percy's influence that Lancaster "contraye to all expectacion showed himselfe so favorable and so mylde that he drew them all into admiration."²

June 8,
1376.

When a few months later the death of the Black Prince and the declining health of the king placed Lancaster's star once more in the ascendant, he lost no time in revenging himself upon the "base and unnoble knyghtes" who had presumed to thwart his policy, and, but for Lord Percy's intercession,³ Peter de la Mere, the first Speaker of the Commons,⁴ would have paid with his life for the boldness of his language.

¹ Holinshead says that at first Lord Percy showed "a burning desyre to apprehend the traytours of the realme;" adding, "Wold to God he had continued the same unto the ende!" The meaning of this qualifying phrase seems to refer to the Wyclif incident in the following year.

² Holinshead.

³ "Nisi Dominus de Percy ducem suis inimicis impedisset."—Walsingham.

⁴ Peter de la Mere had acted as the spokesman of the council of twelve in the Good Parliament, and did not actually become Speaker of the Commons until the opening of the following Parliament (October 13th, 1377), when, for the first time, they elected a member to preside over their deliberations and "pour avoir la parole de par la communauté."—See *Rolls of Parliament*, 1st Rich. II. In succeeding parliaments the Commons were formally required at the commence-

LANCASTER AND THE COMMONS.

Richard was now heir to the throne, and between this boy and his uncle, who had already put forward his claims as the next heir, there stood Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, then Lord Marshal of England, whose military services and personal character had made him eminently popular in the country. Virtually wielding the royal power at this time, Lancaster determined to have the crown settled upon his heirs male (to the exclusion of the heirs of Lionel, his elder brother) in case of Richard's decease without issue; and with this object in view thought it expedient to rid himself of the presence of a formidable rival. He accordingly obtained the king's order for the Earl of March to proceed to Calais on pretext of that stronghold requiring to be placed in better defence. "But the erle, as he was a man of good wit, considered that it was a dangerous tyme—he chose therefore rather to lose the rod than his life wherefore he restored the rod of the marshalshippe;" which was at once conferred upon Lord Percy, who "by this meanes was joyned to the duke, but incurred as much hatred of the whole commonalty as he had gotten favor and love of the duke."¹

A. D.
1376

* * *

In this year Lord Percy granted the hospital of St. Leonard's to the abbot and convent of Alnwick,² and the abbot in return gave a magnificent banquet in honour of his patron, when 120 nobles, 86 superior gentry, and 1,020 of the people were entertained with

ment of each session to elect a Speaker to act as their direct medium of communication with the other House.

¹ *Stow's Annals*. According to Canon Stubbs, Henry Percy had been previously induced, "probably by the promise of the marshal's staff, to join the duke's party."—*Const. Hist.*

² *Rot. Chart.*: 50 Edw. III.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

lavish hospitality.¹ Shortly after Lord Percy was nominated to the chief command of the English forces in France, and embarked for Calais with a personal retinue of 400 men-at-arms and mounted archers. He soon returned to England, however, to take part in another and, to him, novel description of warfare.

As early as in 1365 Pope Urban V. had demanded payment of the tribute which a century and a half before King John had conceded to be his due, but which, since the early years of the reign of Edward III. had been permitted to lapse. It was an unfavourable moment for pressing such claims, for never was the English nation less disposed to acknowledge papal pretensions than now.² John Wyclif had followed up his denunciations of the practices of the priesthood in his *Last Days of the Church* (published as early as in 1356)³ by a protest against certain fundamental doctrines of the faith; and Chaucer in his humorous exposure of the tricks of the *Sompnours* and *Pardoners* who, like pedlars, travelled about the country with packs of indulgences, dispensations and benisons,⁴ only gave expression and point to the prevalent feeling throughout large classes of the laity. A poet enjoying the favour of the sovereign,⁵ the personal friendship of the great, and

¹ *Chron. Monast. de Alnwyke.*

² The influence of Rome had not indeed, down to this period, been so powerful as it became in after times. The Conqueror had refused fealty to Gregory VII., and his immediate successors could not be induced to acknowledge the pope's temporal sovereignty. King John's slavish submission to Rome had offended the popular sentiment and been repudiated by the barons.

³ This work was dedicated to John of Gaunt, who to the last remained the poet's patron.

⁴ "His wallet laye before him in his lappe
Brimful of pardons come from Rome all hote."
—*Canterbury Tales.*

⁵ Edward III. had employed Chaucer on several important diplomatic missions, including an embassy to Genoa in 1370. Richard confirmed

JOHN WYCLIF.

a wide-spread popularity among the masses was not likely to fall an easy victim to ecclesiastic persecution; but the indifference with which the Church might pass over the irreverent pleasantries of Chaucer could hardly be extended to the earnest and laboured heresies propounded by a member of the priesthood. The pope now issued a bull empowering the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London to act as his delegates for the trial of "Johannes Wiclif, Hæreticus," who was summoned to appear before his judges in St. Paul's, early in the following year.¹

A.D.
1376-1377

It requires no vivid imagination to conjure up a picture of the scene in and around the old cathedral. The judges supported by the papal Nuncio, the English Bishops, and a number of "Dukes, Earls, and Barons, that were there to hear the trial," are seated behind the high altar in our Lady's Chapel. All available space in the building is thronged with spectators, while without, a dense and motley crowd of citizens so blocks the way that the armed authority of the Earl Marshal is employed to enable the accused to gain access to the building.²

Now all eyes are turned upon the bold priest who has dared to cast defiance at the Pope of Rome; a small,

the pensions and emoluments allowed him during his grandfather's reign, and granted him a pipe of wine annually from the royal cellars. This is probably the origin of the still existing grant of a butt of sherry to the poet laureate. In Chaucer's case, however, this contribution was subsequently commuted into a money payment of £13 6s. 8d., as appears from an entry in *Fœdera*.

¹ In his *Life of Wyclif* (1719), Mr. Lewis places these events in the reign of Richard; the trial actually began on 19th February.

² "There being a vast concourse of people about the Church, Dr. Wiclif could not get through the crowd to the place where the Court sat, upon which the Earl Marshal going first made use of his authority to disperse the people and make way for him; but notwithstanding, such was the greatness of the throng, that it was not without great difficulty that the two Lords and Dr. Wiclif could pass through it."
— *Life of Wyclif*, by John Lewis, M.A. 1719.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

fragile man, with a careworn, pale face, and quick, deep-set eyes. He carries in his hand a black-bound volume—his only weapon of defence against his formidable judges. As he advances up the aisle and stands facing the tribunal, he bears himself with the humility becoming a Christian priest, and the calm resolution of a Christian martyr. Yet the idea of martyrdom is dispelled by the aspect of his supporters, for by his side appear the commanding forms of Lancaster and Percy, in brilliant and martial attire, "Bishop Courtenay¹ not being well pleased to see Dr. Wiclif so honourably attended."²

The reading of the indictment occupies some time, during which the accused stands facing his judges; whereupon "the Earl Marshal, out of tenderness for Dr. Wiclif, and having but little regard to a Court which owed all its authority to a foreign power, bid him sit down, telling him he had many things to answer to and therefore had need of a soft seat to rest him upon during so tedious an attendance."³

But now the Bishop's patience is exhausted, and he says: "Lord Percy, if I could have known that you would have played the master here, I should have prevented your coming."

Lancaster: "Ay, but he shall play the master here for all of you."

Bishop: "It is unreasonable that a clergyman cited before his ordinary (the Lord Pope) should sit down during his answer. He shall stand."

Lancaster: "My Lord Percy is in the right, and for you, my Lord Bishop, you have grown so proud and

¹ Although Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury was by right of his rank the presiding judge, the Bishop of London took the leading part throughout these proceedings.

² Lewis.

³ *Ibid.*

SCENE IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

A. D.
1377

arrogant, I will take care to humble your pride, and that of all the prelates in England. Thou dependest upon the credit of thy relations, but, far from being able to help thee, they shall have enough to do to support themselves."

Bishop: "I place no confidence in my relations, or in any man else, but in God alone, who will give me the boldness to speak the truth."

Lancaster (softly to Lord Percy): "Rather than take this at the Bishop's hands, I will drag him by the hair of his head out of the Church."¹

It must be allowed that the dignified bearing attributed to the bishop forms a grateful contrast to the bluster of his princely opponent, but as the contemporary accounts of these proceedings that have come down to us are by the hands of Wyclif's opponents,² we may justly suspect them to be strongly tinged with the *odium theologicum*. In all probability the intemperate language ascribed to Lancaster is as much exaggerated as the Christian-like humility of the bishop,³ who was certainly not noted for the moderation of his temper, and who, in his subsequent proceedings, displayed little forbearance or scrupulousness.

The London citizens, then by no means animated by religious bigotry or personal reverence towards Churchmen, and accustomed to allow great license to their princes and nobles, were not likely to have been moved to fury by Lancaster's language to the Bishop, or by his avowed championship of the religious reformer. But there were other means by which their sympathies might

¹ Lewis.

² Most of these and many of the succeeding writers derived their facts from Walsingham, who could hardly fail to take a strong part against the heretic and his supporters.

³ Fuller in his *Church History* speaks of "the Duke and the Byshopes revylyng one another."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

be enlisted. "The liberties of the City in danger" was a cry they would never disregard; and this cry (though it is impossible to trace any just grounds for the suspicions it implied) the bishop, or his more zealous agents, now raised with an effect greatly exceeding his intentions. Lancaster was accused of a design of usurping the civic authority of London, and of placing the city under the rule of the Earl Marshal. The rumour was no sooner spread than the populace rose in uncontrollable anger. Smarting under a sense of wounded dignity the bishop had hoped to humble the arrogance of his adversaries, but he had not contemplated their murder. When, alarmed at the violence of the passions he had aroused and at the consequences which the excesses of the citizens would entail he endeavoured to allay the storm, his voice had lost its power.

With the capriciousness which generally marks the temper of excitable masses when suddenly urged to violent action, the turbulent Londoners now directed their fury at least as much against Percy, who had hitherto been one of their idols, as against Lancaster, whom they had never loved. They attacked and ransacked his house in Aldersgate Street,¹ tore down his arms, and

¹ According to the old topographers Percy House stood on the west side of Aldersgate Street, on the site of the present Bull and Mouth Inn; but Maitland, in his exhaustive *History of London*, makes mention of two city mansions belonging to the family; one being "near the west end of Aldersgate Street in Bull and Mouth Street," and another "lower down on the west side of the Martin's Inn in the Parish of St. Anne almost by Aldersgate," which is described as "one great house, commonly called Northumberland House. It belonged to Henry Percy." On the attainder of the first earl, Henry IV. granted this mansion to his queen, and it was then called the Queen's Wardrobe. The other house probably belonged to Sir Thomas Percy, for after his death at Shrewsbury, the king granted "the Earl of Worcester's house in Bishops-gate Street" to the Scottish Earl of March.—*Fœdera*, viii. 243. Hotspur owned a house in Wood Street, near the Goldsmith's Hall, where we are told he entertained King Richard and the Duke of Lancaster at supper.

TUMULT IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

A. D.
1377

slew an unfortunate priest whom in their blind rage they mistook for the obnoxious lord in disguise. Finding out their error, and learning that the duke and the Lord Marshal had gone to dine at the house of John of Ypres,¹ at Ypres Inn, in St. Thomas Apostle, they proceeded thither. The intended victims, in complete ignorance of the storm raging without, had not yet sat down to table, but, according to a custom since revived, were whetting their appetites for the coming banquet by an ante-prandial course of oysters,² when one of Percy's retainers rushed in to warn them of the approaching mob. Hurriedly escaping by a back-door, they reached the river side and took boat for Lambeth.

The last days of the old king, who lay, much suffering, at his palace at Sheen, were disturbed by the recriminatory charges arising out of these events, but the influence of Lancaster now prevailed over all other considerations. The Bishop of London thought himself fortunate to escape with an offensive reprimand and a threat of deprivation. The city was heavily mulcted to compensate for the damage done to the residences of the duke and Lord Percy; the Lord Mayor, Staple, was displaced in favour of a nominee of Lancaster's,³ and the municipal authorities were removed from office, and compelled to form a penitential procession to St. Paul's, there to place a huge wax candle emblazoned with the Lancaster arms

¹ A wealthy London merchant and a confidential friend of Edward III., who appointed him one of his executors. See Nicholl's *Royal Wills*. He claimed to be a direct descendant of the William of Ypres who came over from the Low Countries to the aid of King Stephen against the Empress Maud in 1138, was created Earl of Kent, and was subsequently attainted and banished.

² "*Erant, quum entravit miles, circumstantes ostreas.*"—Walsingham.

³ Sir Nicholas Brember, afterwards one of King Richard's evil counsellors, and who was sentenced to death by "the wonder-working parliament" of 1388.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408
—

before the image of the Virgin, and to keep it burning at the cost of the city for an indefinite period.¹

These severe measures were accompanied by a threat of placing the city under military control in the event of any further disturbances; but, although Lancaster continued to be viewed with distrust, Percy soon regained his popularity among the Londoners, and on the death of the king in the following June, the ceremonies attending Richard's accession afforded an opportunity for complete reconciliation with both.

Holinshead relates how, during the royal progress to the Tower on the day preceding the coronation of the boy king, "the said Duke and the Lord Percy riding on great horses before King Richard, as by virtue of their office, to make way before, used themselves courtiouslye, modestlye, and pleasantlye; that wherefore they two, who were greatly suspected of the common people by reason of their great puissance in the realme and huge route of retayners, they ordered the matter so that neyther this daye, nor the morrow after, being the daye of the king's coronation, they offended any manner of person; but rather by gentle and sweet demeanour they reclaymed the hartes of manie of whom before they were greatly held in suspycine and thought evill of."²

Immediately after the coronation Lord Percy was created Earl of Northumberland by investiture of the sword (*per cincturam gladii*). The patent under which

¹ The deposed mayor and aldermen submitted to this sentence, but the citizens refused to take part in the procession.

² Holinshead is mainly indebted to Walsingham (*Hist. Angl.* i. 331) for these and other details relating to Richard's coronation, on which occasion, he informs us, the water conduits throughout the route were running with wine for three hours, while "from a Tower in the upper ende of Cheape four virgins of stature and age like the kynge stood up and blew leves of gold into his face."

THE EARLDOM OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1377

the dignity was conferred is a curiously-worded document, commencing with a dissertation on the privilege and policy of royalty in surrounding itself with powerful nobles, whose presence adds lustre to the crown even as the stars add brightness to the heavens.¹ The only pecuniary grant attached to the earldom by this instrument is a charge of £20 per annum on the revenues of the county of Northumberland; ² but all lands already possessed by the earl were to be considered part and parcel of the new dignity.³

Henry Percy at the same time became one of the Council of Regency appointed to conduct the Government during the king's minority, and thereupon resigned, in favour of the Earl of Arundel, the office of lord marshal, on the plea of the manifold and arduous duties now devolving upon him.⁴ Nor was this a vain pretext, for few names appear more frequently in the records of the period in connection with the public service. For many successive years he acted assiduously as one of the "tryers of petytions," upon whom devolved a great part of the work in parliament,⁵ and it would be a wearisome task to

¹ See Appendix XIII.

² Under King Stephen each English earldom was endowed with the third penny of the revenues of the county which it represented. At this rate the public income of the county of Northumberland would at this date have amounted to £4,800 per annum.

³ Three other earls were created at the same time, viz. : Thomas of Woodstock, Lord Guiscard d'Angoulesme, and Lord Mowbraie, under the titles of Buckingham, Huntingdon, and Nottingham. The House of Peers under Richard's first parliament consisted (exclusive of the royal princes) of one duke, thirteen earls, forty-seven barons, and twelve judges and privy councillors. Northumberland's first summons to this parliament was not addressed to him under his new title, but as "Henry de Percy, Mariscallo Angliæ."

⁴ "Asserens se non posse propriis commode rebus præesse et tantæ gravitatis officio."—Walsingham. One of his duties in this year was the leading of an army of 10,000 men into Scotland, when the lands of the Earl of March were devastated in retaliation for the attack upon Roxburgh in the previous year.

⁵ Powerful as were the great feudal lords of England, it is noteworthy

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

recount the number of times that he was employed in negotiating treaties of precarious peace and hollow truces with Scotland. In his judicial capacity, and in the administration of the local laws, civil, criminal, and commercial, which fell to him by right of his chief wardenship of the marches, and governorship of fortified towns in the north, he attained a high reputation for impartiality and moderation. He was one of the "special judges," by whom Lord Gomenogo and Sir William de Weston elected to be tried upon the charge of having, contrary to their duty, surrendered to the enemy certain castles in France; and in 1383 he was appointed chief commissioner for negotiating the ransom still due by David Bruce. Independently of his duties as general and admiral, he figures throughout the greater part of Richard's reign as ambassador, legislator, statesman, courtier, and confidential adviser.

The state of the Borders alone furnished full occupation to the northern chieftains, upon whom the responsibility for the defence of their frontiers was imposed,¹ whose action was, however, not unfrequently very mischievously impeded by court intrigues or political combinations among the king's relations or favourites. A striking instance of such interference in the case of the Earl of Northumberland will be hereafter referred to.

* * *

Sir Thomas Percy had been as actively, and almost

how ready parliament was to entertain and minutely to investigate all complaints preferred against them by such of their dependents as considered themselves aggrieved or oppressed. The Rolls of Parliament abound in records of these petitions, but in the course of twenty years only one complaint occurs against the Earl of Northumberland. This is dated in 1388, the petitioner being one William Heron, a Northumberland man, who alleged an infraction of the terms of a lease that he held.

¹ Appendix XIV.

SIR THOMAS PERCY AS ADMIRAL.

as variously, employed as his elder brother. During the first five years of Richard's reign we find him named on no less than seven occasions to act as commissioner or conservator of the peace in Scotland, and thrice as ambassador in France,¹ while he at the same time held the Governorship of Roxburgh² and of Brest.³

A. D.
1377-1379

It was at sea, however, that he principally distinguished himself at this period.

In 1377, while convoying a merchant fleet in the Channel, he fell in with fifty Spanish and Flemish ships. As England was then at peace with Spain he required the Flemings to withdraw and separate from their allies, and on their refusal to do so, attacked and utterly defeated both.

In the following year he was appointed Admiral of the Fleet north of the Thames, in which capacity he was authorised "to arrest all mariners from London Bridge to Southampton for the king's service, and to punish by imprisonment or castigation all who refused."⁴ In 1379 he was advanced to the post of Admiral of the North,⁵ in which capacity he attempted to carry an English army to the relief of the Duke of Brittany, but, being prevented from landing by the large fleet of galleys collected by the French on the coast, his forces "turned ageyn to Calais, and riden by lande thorw France, where they brent and killed without any resistance."⁶ Some

¹ Most of these appointments will be found recorded in *Fœdera*.

² Appendix XV.

³ The Issue Rolls contain an entry directing the collector of Hull "to pay Thomas de Percy his wages as Governor of Brest."

⁴ *Rot. Franc.* 2 Rich. II. m. 11.

⁵ John de Radington, Prior of the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, was at the same time made Admiral of the West, and between them they were required to bring "300 men-at-arms, knights, and esquires, each of whom shall have a valet to attend him, and 300 men of arms, of whom 100 shall be crossbows, and 400 archers."—From Sir William Le Neve's MS. *Penes*, T. Astle, Arm. fol. 15.

⁶ Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

Cancel

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

d/

months later, however, he effected the junction with the Duke of Brittany,¹ and having, conjointly with Sir Henry Calveley, been made "Chief Admiral of the Seas," they took many shippes, and caused grete plente of all manner merchandise in this land."³

The noble story of our naval warfare records no exploits more gallant than some of those by which Thomas Percy and Hugh Calveley struggled to maintain English supremacy on the ocean. A fleet fitted out in aid of our ally the Duke of Brittany in 1379 was for some time delayed in the Southampton waters by contrary winds. One of the squadrons was commanded by the licentious and luxurious Sir John Arundel,⁴ whose crews, unchecked by discipline, and as little accustomed, it would appear, to moral restraint as their chief, committed many atrocities on the English coast, and before putting to sea carried on board their ships the inmates of a neighbouring convent. A terrific gale which ensued, and in which Arundel with twenty-five ships and above one thousand sailors was lost,⁵ was

d.

¹ See Appendix XVI.

² By an indenture dated 22nd Feby. 3 Rich. II., under which Sir Thomas de Percy and Hugh de Calvely (Calveley) bind themselves to serve the king as joint admirals of a navy of xx shippes, xx barges, and xx with seven hundred and xx men-at-arms, and 725 archers, and 140 crossbow-men.—Le Neve's MS. *Penes*, fol. 13b.

³ Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

⁴ Properly Fitzalan, a younger son of the Earl of Arundel, but who, in accordance with a custom common enough in those days, assumed the titular instead of the family name.

⁵ If ever the sins of men called for the retaliatory interposition of a superior Power, they had done so in this instance, for when the storm broke out the sailors, in order to lighten their decks, remorselessly flung overboard the unfortunate nuns whom they had abducted. Arundel had on board his ship "two-and-fifty new sutes of apparel of cloth of golden tissue, all of which, together with his horses and geldings, amounting in all to the value of ten thousand marks, was lost at sea."—Holinshead. See also Strutt's *Regal Antiquities*, where Arundel's wardrobe, and the fact of Richard having possessed a coat valued at 30,000 marks, are quoted as striking instances of the growing luxury of the time.

A NAVAL ENGAGEMENT.

attributed by contemporary writers to this act of sacrilege. Unfortunately for this argument, however, the rest of the English fleet, as well as the French, Spanish and Portuguese fleets, who had done nothing to merit punishment, suffered in an equal degree. Only seven out of eighty of Calveley's ships succeeded in reaching land; and Sir Thomas Percy's fleet was so completely dispersed that he was left solitary and disabled, drifting helplessly in his vessel, when he was suddenly attacked by a large and heavily armed Spaniard.

A. D.
1379

The monkish writer, to whose annals history is deeply indebted for a knowledge of the events of this period, has presented us with a graphic picture of the fight which now ensued. "The Spanish ships," says Stow, "were to ours like as castles to cottages," and Percy's rudderless vessel, which now required all the efforts of a crew worn out with hunger, sleeplessness, and hard work to keep her afloat, must have appeared an easy prey to the enemy who now swooped down upon her. But nothing was farther from the thoughts of the English admiral than to decline the unequal conflict. Exhorting his men to expend their last remaining strength upon the enemy, and, if they failed, to die an honourable death,¹ he attached himself by chains and grappling-irons to his formidable assailant, and gave the order to board.

After a desperate hand-to-hand combat of three hours' duration, Percy took the ship, carried her into port, and there pledged her for £100, which he distributed among the crew in compensation for the loss of their equipment during the storm.²

17 Nov.

¹ "Si victoria negaretur, vitam honeste finire."—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* i. p. 426.

² Grafton. 1

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Gradually the small remnant of his fleet collected at Brest, whence "having repaired the damage done by storms, he set out again with only one great ship, two barks, and some other smaller vessels, and meeting fifty ships laden with French goods he set upon them altogether, inasmuch as they, being terrified with his valour supposing he had more ships behind, made but small resistance, so that he took twenty of them, and returned home with that success as exceeded all expectation."¹

In the same year he inflicted a crushing defeat on the French fleet off St. Malo, when, we are told, their commander, Bertrand du Guesclin, who like Thomas Percy was indiscriminately employed as admiral and general, vied with our ally the Duke of Brittany in his laudation of the valour of English sailors.



Lancaster had continued to intrigue for the establishment of his son's title to the English crown, and although his alleged "right by blood"² was almost universally rejected, he persisted in his claim against that of Roger, Earl of March,³ who, as the grandson of Richard's ~~great~~ uncle the Duke of Clarence, had been acknowledged as heir apparent. The Earl of Northumberland did not support Lancaster's pretensions, and there were already

¹ Grafton.

² The grounds of Lancaster's claims are thus recited by a contemporary writer: "The Duke of Lancaster axed and desired that his sone shold by the parliament have be declared and demyd as next heir to the Crowne; but the Earl of March withsaide it, and saide he was son of Sir Lionel the second son of King Edward; and the Duke said the King Harry III. had ij sones, Edmund and Edward, the which Edmunde hadde a croked bak, and was a mysshape and an unlyk."—From the *English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV.*, published by the Camden Society in 1855.

³ The founder of this family was Roger de Mortimer (the notorious paramour of Queen Isabella), who was attainted and executed in 1331.

HOTSPUR.

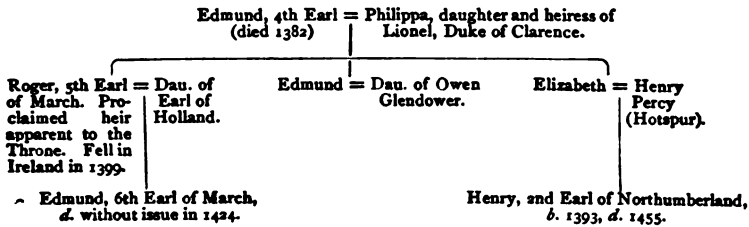
symptoms of a smouldering mistrust on the one side and of resentment on the other, which a few years later blazed forth into open enmity and mutual defiance.

A.D.
1366
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It is now time to introduce upon the scene another Percy who was destined to win world-wide renown as a soldier, and to play an important part in history. Henry, the eldest of the three sons¹ of the first Earl of Northumberland, by his first wife, and better known under the *nom de guerre* of Hotspur, was born at Alnwick Castle on 20th May, 1366.²

His grandson Roger was restored as third Earl of March in 1361, and married a daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, leaving one son :



¹ The reputations of the two younger sons, Thomas and Ralph, were thrown into the shade by the fame of their elder brother, but they had both done admirably good service wherever an enemy of England was to be encountered. Both fell victims to war, Thomas succumbing to fever during Lancaster's last campaign in Castile, and Ralph falling in battle in the Holy Land. It was Thomas Percy of whom Froissart relates that while engaged under Henry of Lancaster in fighting "the pagans and idolaters" in Prutzenland (*i.e.* the Baltic Provinces), and hearing of a probable engagement between the kings of England and France in the neighbourhood of Artois, he was so eager to take part in the fray that, leaving his retinue and baggage to follow as they might, he performed the journey which under ordinary circumstances would have occupied forty days in fourteen: "Such goodwill and gallantry," says the chronicler, "deserve much praise."

² Different dates have been assigned to Hotspur's birth, some writers placing it as early as 1360; but the year is fixed on his own authority in the evidence given by him in the *Scrope and Grosvenor* trial in 1386, when he stated that he was twenty years of age and had borne arms since the attack of Berwick in 1378. His father in giving his evidence in the same case in the following year, cited his age as forty-five. The

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Hardyng, who in his fifteenth year had entered Hotspur's service as a page, and had remained by his side until he fell on the field of Shrewsbury, gives us this spirited account of the training of a young noble of the fourteenth century:—

“ And as Lordes sonnes bene sette at four yere age,
To scole at lernit the doctrine of lettrure,
And aft' at six to have them in language,
And sit at mete semely in alle nurture ;
At ten to twelve, to revel in their cure
To dance and sing, and speake of gentlesse ;
At fourteen yere they shall to felde I sure,
At hunt the dere, and catch an hardynesse.
At sixteen yere, to werry and to wage,
To juste and ryde, and castells to assayle
To scarmyse als', and make sykure scourage
And set his watch for peryl nocturnayle.”

“ And every day his armure to assaye
In feate of armes with somé of his meyne,
His might to preve, and what that he doe may
If that he were in such a jupertee
Of werre befalle ; that by necessité
He myght algates with wapyns him defende ;
Thus would he lerne in his priorité
His wappyns alle in armés to dispende.”¹

But the young Percy had anticipated the periods here fixed for the progressive stages in military education.

precise origin of Harry Percy's famous sobriquet cannot be traced. According to the *Metrical Chronicle*:

“ For his sharpe quicknesse and speedinesse at need
Henry Hotspur he was called in very dede.”

The French writers commonly called him “*Chaudépron*,” “*ainsi nommé*,” says Froissart, “*à cause de son humeur violente et emportée*.” Walsingham speaks of him as “*Juvenis in quo totius probitatis et militiæ specimen elucebat ; . . . et revera perante, dum fuisset custos villæ Berewici, gentem omnino inquietam, id est, Scotos, quiescere compulit, et sua alacri inquietudine multotiens fatigavit. Ob quam causam, illorum lingua ipsum Henricum ‘Hatspore’ vocaverunt, quod ‘calidum calcar’ sonat*” (*Hist. Angl.* ii. 144). Holinshead, in his *Chronicles of Scotland*, says he received the name “from his so often pricking, as one that seldom time rested when there was any service to be done about.” Buchanan says: “*Cognomento Plexippus, uti erat ingenio ferox.*”

¹ Hardyng's *Chronicle*, from the *Lansdowne MSS.* No. 200, fol. 12.

BERWICK CASTLE ASSAULTED.

A. D.
1378

He had heard the clash of arms in his cradle, and had witnessed the pomp and circumstance, if not the fierceness, of war, when in his ninth year he served in his father's retinue in France. He had barely attained his twelfth birthday when he was knighted (at Richard's coronation), and shortly after had learnt not only "castelles to assayle," but to capture them.

In the autumn of 1378 a band of Scottish marauders,¹ under John Hogg and Alexander Ramsay, had, on a dark night, surprised and gained possession of Berwick—that everlasting bone of contention between the two countries—and massacred a great part of the garrison, with their chief Sir Robert Boynton, the Deputy-Governor of the castle. The Earl of Northumberland at once proceeded to recapture the stronghold under his charge, and after a siege of nine days the Scots having refused to surrender, permitted his son to lead the assault,² and to claim the honour of the victory which ensued. In revenge for the death of Hogg and his followers, all of whom were put to the sword as common felons, for having in breach of the covenants of the truce and without the authority of their sovereign, committed murder, arson, and robbery,³ a body of Scots again invaded Northumberland, committing such exceptional acts of barbarity that the Earl of Northumberland determined to carry the war into the heart of the enemy's

¹ According to the Northern Registers the party consisted of "xliij. Scotch latrones."

² "*Qui primo tunc suum vexillum displicuit.*"—Walsingham. The Earl of Douglas had advanced to raise the siege, but, being met by a superior force, retired. It was in pursuing him that Sir Henry Musgrave fell into an ambush and was taken prisoner with 150 of his followers.

³ "*Quo facto precepit interficere praedictum Johannum cum omnibus sociis suis, et capita eorum fecit ponere super Castellum.*"—*Northern Registers*. The Warden of the Scottish Marches disavowed their action, and assured the Earl of Northumberland that so far from the capture of Berwick having been authorised, he would, if necessary, himself "help to recover it to the King of England's use."—Holinshead.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

country, and to demand reparation in Edinburgh at the hands of the king in person. To this end he had called a levy *en masse*, and, having collected a powerful army was on his march for the Border, when he received a peremptory order from the king to abstain from hostilities.¹ The Northerners smarting under the atrocities recently committed within their territories, urged their chief to disregard a command which they, justly enough as it proved, attributed to some unworthy personal motive on the part of the king's advisers. The Earl, however, refused to be guilty of an act of direct disobedience. He halted his army, sending at the same time a somewhat angry remonstrance to the king, requiring to be informed for what cause he had been ordered to sheath the sword at a moment so favourable for successful invasion. Richard returned a conciliatory answer, desiring that the enterprise should be suspended until after the next "March Day,"² when it was usual for Scotch and English commissioners to meet in every year on neutral ground for the adjustment of their differences. Shortly after it was notified that an army was being raised which Lancaster would lead into the north to co-operate in an invasion of Scotland on a large scale, in the event of full redress not having been afforded in the interim, and by these means to secure a peace upon such terms as would finally put an end to these destructive raids.

¹ "The Scots had invaded Cumberland and Westmoreland, killing all they met and miserably laying waste to the whole county . . . they came to Penrith on a market day, and killing many of the people, put the rest to flight and spoiled the town . . . the Earl of Northumberland would have pursued them, but the king would not suffer him though he had lost 1,000 marks by the fury and rapine of the invaders."—*Historical MS. Account of the City of Carlisle*, by the Rev. Hugh Todd, Prebendary of Carlisle.

² "Qui blande, mox accepto responso, et Diem Marchiae, quem annis singulis Angli simul tenent et Scoti, expectare jussus, recessit, nihil acturus usque ad diem praefinitum."—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* i. 438.

THE DUKE OF LANCASTER.

A. D.
1379

The Northerners, however, soon had reason to regret the assistance furnished by Lancaster; who, instead of carrying the war into the enemy's country, entered into negotiations, and in the meantime allowed his soldiery to waste and ravage the provinces they had come to protect, and to make such extortionate demands for their subsistence that complaints were formally sent to the king with a request for the speedy removal of allies, whose presence was represented as more destructive than Scottish irruptions.¹

After some months passed in inactivity Lancaster, always more successful in negotiation than in warfare, proceeded in person to the Scottish court, where he concluded a peace upon terms so unjustly and palpably favourable to the enemy, that the northern lords refused to be bound by the treaty.

The Duke's attitude throughout these proceedings was calculated to create mistrust. He had been suspected of an attempt to win favour with the Scots when he prevented Northumberland's invasion. The abject conditions to which he now agreed confirmed these suspicions; while other circumstances made it evident that the main object of his expedition had been the conclusion of a secret and intimate alliance with the Scottish king. Richard appears to have shared in these misgivings, for the order which he now issued, that no armed bodies of men should be admitted into the northern fortresses without his special authority, could only have been suggested by doubts of his uncle's good faith.

¹ Walsingham gives a pitiable account of the hardships inflicted upon the population of the northern counties by Lancaster's army: "In tantum, ut provinciales juramento firmarent, magis æquanimiter adventum Scotici exercitus pertulisse, quibus legaliter sive licite poterant restitisse, quam Anglorum adventantium ea vice, de quibus, reverentia cognitionis et patriæ, necnon metu legum, non poterant vindicari." —*Hist. Angl.* i. p. 446.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

When, accordingly, on his return from Scotland in 1382, Lancaster presented himself with his retinue before the gates of Berwick, he was refused admission by Sir Matthew Redmayne, the Deputy Governor, under the Earl of Northumberland.

“How cometh this to passe, Sir Redmayne?” demanded the Duke in much anger. “Is there in Northumberland a greater sovereign than I am?” in reply to which the Deputy pleaded the command of his immediate chief the Earl, “a pryncipall and soveraigne of all the heades of Northumberland.” Furious at the rebuff, the Duke laid his complaint before the king, and, at a royal banquet given on Assumption Day, at Berkhamsted, openly reproached the Earl with ingratitude and disloyalty,¹ saying: “Henry Percy, I beleevd not that ye hadde bene so greete in Englande as to close the gates of citie, towne, or castell, agaynst the Duke of Lancaster? The Erle understood whereof the Duke meent, and he tempered his speech and sayde: Sir, I deny not that the Knyghte dyde, for I cannot; for by the commandment of the King’s grace here presente, he straightly enjoyned and commanded me that, on myne honor and my life, I shulde not suffer any manner of person, lorde or other, to enter into cytie, town, or castell, in Northumberland, without he were herytor of the place.” The Duke answered: “I saye ye have acqytted yourselfe right yuill, and the blame and slander ye have brought me in to purge in the presence of the Kyng, here present, I cast down my gage; rayse it an ye dare!”

It was not in the nature of a Percy to decline such a challenge, and “the Earl, *after the manner of his race,*”

¹ “Deposuit querimoniam contra Comitem, quod non solum inobediens, sed infidelis et ingratus, extitisset ei, prout præmittitur, turbationis generalis tempestate.”—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* ii. 44.

² “Comes impatiens (mori gentis suæ).”—Walsingham. It is not

THE ADMIRAL OF THE NORTH.

A.D.
1383

not able to forbear, broke out into hard words, when the Duke kept silence in humble manner at the first bidding when the King commanded him to keep his peace ;¹ so that, by reason of the Earl's disobedience in that behalf, he was arrested," but subsequently, at the intercession of the Earls of Warwick and Suffolk, released and pardoned.

The King, assuming the responsibility for the command he had given, and expressing his regret at not having made a special exception in favour of the members of his family, the quarrel was patched up ; but Lancaster's was not a forgiving nature, and before long he found an opportunity of wreaking his revenge.

In 1383 Northumberland was appointed Admiral of the North,² in which capacity we find him in consultation with the Lord Mayor of London on the means to be adopted for the naval defences of the kingdom. The juxtaposition of two such offices for such a purpose is calculated to provoke a smile ; but it must be remembered that the King's navy was then principally maintained by a direct tax upon commerce, supplemented by special contributions from the wealthier merchants, many of whom, even down to a much later period, on their own responsibility and at their own cost, built, equipped and maintained armed vessels for exploration and the protection of merchandise on the seas ; and vied with each other in an honorable ambition to establish the maritime supremacy of England.

clear whether the *gens* is meant to refer to the race of Percy, or to the Northerners generally, who were often described as of irascible temper.

¹ The contrast between the politic temper of the Duke, and the impetuosity of his adversary is well exemplified by Walsingham in this passage.

² See Nicolas's *History of the English Navy*. The jurisdiction of the Admiral of the North extended to all the coast and ports from the mouth of the Thames to Scotland.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
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The remonstrance, which the merchants had in this year presented to Parliament against the depredations committed on English commerce by French and Spanish cruisers, and for which they desired to hold the admirals of the fleet responsible, was one of the questions under discussion between the admiral and the civic dignitary. The earl argued with some show of reason that while he and his colleague, the Earl of Devon, were bound to use their best efforts to protect merchant shipping, they could not be expected to guarantee complete immunity from loss or capture.¹ He engaged, however, to secure the appropriation of sums contributed by the city towards naval expenditure (which appear occasionally to have found their way into wrong pockets) to their legitimate object. About the same time he submitted to Parliament the draft of a more stringent code of laws for securing the personal services with the Fleet of such of the able-bodied inhabitants of seaside towns as could not, or would not, contribute to national defence by money payments.²

The feud between Lancaster and Northumberland was not healed, and on the assembly of Parliament in this year, the two nobles met one another with large armed retinues in undisguised defiance.

“The Duke laie with his people in the suburbs. . . .

¹ “The Earl of Northumberland promised for himself and the Earl of Devonshire, Admiral of the West, safely to keep the seas so far as the charge granted by the Commons therefor would serve, viz. of *vid.* of every pound of merchandise, and 2s. of every tun of wine.”—*Stowe's Annals*, p. 291. Sixpence a *pound* on merchandise is a preposterous rate of insurance; it probably should be per *ton*.

² The men of Scarborough appear to have been notorious for their breach of these regulations, and there are frequent records of fines imposed upon the town in consequence of the refusal to furnish the requisite complement of mariners. One William Percy appears to have been the leader in this opposition to the law, and was as such specially excepted from the operation of a general pardon granted to the townsmen in 1383.—*Rot. Parl.* 6 Richd. II.

DANGEROUS ASSEMBLAGES.

the Erle being lodged within the cytie, having greate friendship shown towards him by the citizens, who promised to assist him at all times when necessity requyred, so that his parte seemed to be overstrong for the Duke, if they should have come to any tryel of their forces at that tyme. . . Every daye when they went to Parlement House at Westminster, both parties went thither in armor, with an exceeding number of armed men, to the great terror of those that were wise and fearing some mischief to fall forth."¹ It finally required a special and peremptory command from the king² to induce them to dispense with these escorts during their attendance on Parliament.

A.D.
1383

In this year Sir Thomas Percy and Hotspur accompanied the Bishop of Norwich in his military expedition against Flanders, when "the preests and religious men fought most eagerlie, some of them slaying sixteen of the enemies," without achieving any result, however. On the conclusion of this fruitless campaign, Thomas Percy proceeded on a mission to Paris for the purpose of once more negotiating a truce with France.

* * *

Lancaster's intrigues with the Scottish king, so far from bringing about peace, had aggravated the feeling of mutual irritation. On neither side of the Border were the lords able to disband their forces, and the Earl of Northumberland alone kept on foot a retinue consisting of four bannerets, sixty-seven knights, and over one

¹ Holinshead. The Rolls of Parliament record "La grant force de gentz d'armes et d'archiers abroiez au pied de guerre venuz au parlement de l'un et l'autre partie."

² "Great debate rose between the Duke of Lancaster and the Earl of Northumberland, and . . . the King with his counsel and nobles were much busied to appease the same, the King therefore adjourned the said Parliament till Saturday after."—Stow's *Annals*, p. 195.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

thousand esquires, and archers, besides foot soldiers.¹ In the course of one of the ensuing raids the Scotch succeeded in once more gaining possession of Berwick, with the connivance, it was generally believed, of the officer who, in Sir Matthew Redmayne's absence, had been entrusted with the custody of the fortress. Lancaster seized the opportunity to strike a blow at his absent rival, who was now impeached on the charge of having twice during this reign allowed an important post in his custody to fall into the hands of the enemy. The proceedings were curt and arbitrary; without being called upon for his defence, the earl was summarily sentenced to attainder and death.² The course he adopted in his vindication was no less prompt and decisive. The defences of Berwick had been greatly strengthened since its last capture, and he now so closely invested the place that it was said that "a bird could not have escaped." On hearing, however, that a strong Scottish army was approaching to raise the siege he offered terms to the garrison, who consented to march out in consideration of a money payment of two thousand marks.³ The king's authority being thus restored, Parliament revoked the sentence passed upon the Earl, and, much to Lancaster's displeasure,⁴

¹ See Appendix XVII.

² "The Duke of Lancaster, who had no good wylle to the said erle, was well affraid that he had no good matter to charge his adversary withal, so that through his meanes the Earl of Northumberland was sore accused, and had much ado to escape the danger of being reputed a traytor."—Froissart.

³ "Scoti Berivicum capiunt per proditionem
Et damnatur ab hoc inditus, ille comes
Northumbrae; sed ei villam sub conditione
Restituunt, marcis mille bis datis."

—*Memorial Verses of the Reigns of Edward III. and Richard II.*, edited by Thomas Wright.

⁴ "Cujus executionis vindicta per regem postea cito relaxata fuit, quamvis id Duci, ut dictum, displecerit."—Walsingham. The letters patent



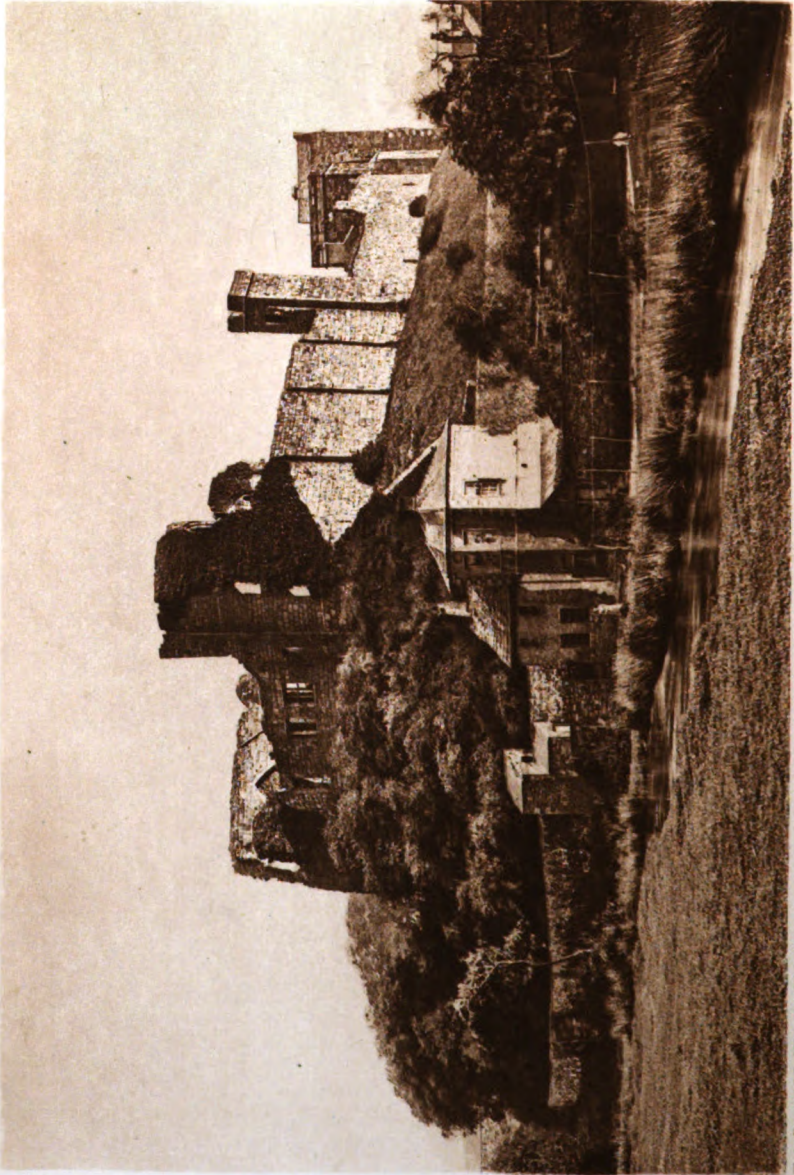


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COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

King Richard fully exonerated him from all blame in the matter.

Later in the year the King took the personal command of an expedition into Scotland, with a force of 15,000 men. Northumberland accompanied the force, bringing into the field with him 400 men-at-arms and 300 archers; Houspér brought 100 and his brother Thomas sixty of each; but the result of the campaign was as usual quite inadequate to the extent of these preparations.

In 1389 the Earl of Northumberland took for a second wife² Maud, sister and heiress of Anthony, Lord Lucy, and widow of his cousin, Gilbert d'Umfraville, Earl of Angus. By her, who died in 1392, he obtained the honour of Cocker-mouth, with nine manors, besides other large possessions in Northumberland, Cumberland, and Lincolnshire, and 8,000 acres of meadow and forest land in Abandale,³ all of which, in the event of her having no issue, she settled upon his heirs male, on condition that they should bear the arms of Lucy.

¹ Dated 17th February, 1385, reprinted in *Calendar of Documents Relating to the Reign of Edward III.*, in the reign of the reign of Edward III. (London, 1892), p. 100. The original is in the possession of the Earl of Northumberland, who has kindly allowed his honours, &c., to be printed in this volume. See also *Calendar of Documents Relating to the Reign of Edward III.*, p. 100.

² Her name only exceeded in numbers by the name of the Earl of Northumberland. His first wife, the daughter of Lord Northumberland, died in 1372.

³ Lord Lucy, on Lucy, had deceased in 1369, the year of the death of the Earl of Northumberland, who, during the following year, was succeeded in his possessions by her niece, Maud Lucy, then the wife of Gilbert d'Umfraville, Earl of Angus.

There had previously been a connection between the family of the Umfravilles, Maud's mother, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, and the family of the Lucys, having married the son of the preceding Earl of Northumberland in 1369.

⁴ The name of the ancient possession of the Earl of Northumberland is very generally stated to have come to the Earl of Northumberland, but such was not the case. See Appendix A.

⁵ *Calend. Rot. Courtarum*, 6th Richard II.



THE LUCY HEIRESS.

King Richard fully exonerated him from all blame in the matter.

A. D.
1386

Later in the year the King took the personal command of an expedition into Scotland, with a force of 15,000 men. Northumberland commanded the rere-ward, bringing into the field with him 400 men-of-arms and 300 archers¹; Hotspur brought 100, and his brother Thomas sixty of each; but the result of the campaign was as usual quite inadequate to the extent of these preparations.

* * *

In 1386 the Earl of Northumberland took for a second wife² Maud, sister and heiress of Anthony, Lord Lucy, and widow of his cousin Gilbert de Umfreville, Earl of Angus.³ By her, who died in 1392, he obtained the honour of Cocker-mouth, with nine manors, besides other large possessions in Northumberland, Cumberland, and Lincolnshire,⁴ and 8,000 acres of meadow and forest land in Allandale,⁵ all of which, in the event of her having no issue, she settled upon his heirs male on condition that they should bear the arms of Lucy

dated 17th February, 1385, recite the earl's alleged offence "quem in hoc parte reputamus innocentem," and conclude with a full restoration of all his honours, dignities, and possessions.—*Fœdera*, vii. 463.

¹ A retinue only exceeded in numbers by that of the king himself.

² His first wife, the daughter of Lord Nevill of Raby, had died in 1372.

³ Lord Lucy, or Lucie, had deceased in 1369, leaving an only daughter Elizabeth who, dying in the following year, was succeeded in her possessions by her aunt Maud Lucy, then the wife of Gilbert de Umfreville, Earl of Angus.

There had previously been a connection between the Percies and the Umfrevilles, Margaret, daughter of the second Lord Percy of Alnwick, having married the son of the preceding Earl of Angus. See ante p. 90.

⁴ Prudhoe Castle, an ancient possession of the Umfrevilles, is very generally stated to have come to the Percies by this marriage, but such was not the case. See Appendix XVII^A.

⁵ *Calend. Rot. Chartarum*, 9th Richard II.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

quartered with their own ; " which promise," says Holinshead, " the Percies have *bonâ fide* performed, presenting so near a relation between the two coates that in a maner *mutuo se ponunt et auferunt*, so that if either both are seen together." *

Fuller accords this lady an honourable place among his worthies, " partly because of her harmless device to perpetuate her family, partly because of her great affection for her husband, she but a second and no wife of his youth, bringing him no children, and having no doubt heirs of her owne name and blood, though she were barren, would be bountiful to endue that family with possessions which she could not endow with posteritie. Say not the Percy's profit was the Lucy's loss ; for what saith the Scripture ? Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? "

Among other possessions which this alliance brought into the Percy family was the manor of Wressill, in Yorkshire, which, either by gift or sale, was subsequently acquired by Sir Thomas Percy, who made it his principal residence, and expended large sums upon its improvement. Indeed, he would appear to have almost entirely

* " This said Maud Lucie as I understand
Married herself condicional to aforesaid seventh Henry, Earl of
Northumberland
As to saie that the Lord Percie should beare continuallye
The Blue Lion and the Lucies' silver in his armes quarterlye."

From a contemporary poem in Grose's *Antiquarian Repertory*. The settlement of the Lucy lands and arms upon the sons of the first Earl of Northumberland by his previous marriage was validated by letters patent. *Rot. Fin.* 8, Richard II., Appendix XVII^B.

* In the course of some structural alterations in Beverley Cathedral in 1671 the tomb of this lady was opened, when her body is reported to have been found in a state of perfect preservation " in a fine coffin of stone, embalmed, and covered with cloth of gold, and on her feet slippers embroidered in silver and gold, and therein a wax lamp and candles and a plated candelstick."—Drake's *History of York*. See also on this subject Whittock's *County of York* and Gough's *Scpulch. Monum.*



W. P. S. I. C. A. T. L. E.



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WRESSILL CASTLE.



A PLOT AGAINST HOTSPUR.

rebuilt the castle with stone said to have been imported from France.

A. D.
1386

Writing in 1538, Leland¹ says of it:

“The house is one of the most proper beyond Trente and semith as newly made, yet was it made by a yonger brother of the Percy’s, Erle of Worcester, that was yn hygh favor with Richard the secunde, and bought the manor of Wressill, mounting at that time to little above 30 li by the yere, and for lak of heirs of hym and by favour of the kyng, it came to the Erles of Northumberland.”

* * *

Early in 1386 Hotspur, who was then at Yarmouth with his brother Ralph, at the head of a force of 300 men-at-arms and 600 lances, there collected to resist a threatened French invasion, impatient at the enemy’s delay, took the offensive, and crossing the Channel “made such ridings into the quarters about Callis that they never wish a worse neighbour.”² His services had by this time won him the love and admiration of his countrymen; he had become the people’s idol,

“And by his light
Did all the chivalry of England move
To do brave acts . . . the glass
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves.”³

Even his personal defects became the fashion, and we are told that a certain thickness or hesitation of speech with which he was afflicted was, with the sincere flattery of imitation, assumed by his admirers. All were proud of the skilful and dauntless young soldier who had

¹ *Itinerary*. The author does not seem to have been aware that Wressill had been brought into the family by the Earl’s marriage with the Lady Maud Lucy.

² Speed.

³ *Second Part of Henry IV.*, Act ii. Sc. 3.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

succeeded "in making his name as much feared by the French on the seas as by the Scots on the Border,"¹ and in whom the brilliant courage, knightly courtesy, and endearing manners of the Black Prince lived again,² to gladden and inspire with hope the heart of England.

The envy which ever dogs the steps of fame was not, however, now absent in high quarters, and Richard was greatly under the influence of a few evil counsellors, who maintained their ascendancy by pandering to his passions, and working upon his foibles. The Earl of Northumberland had persistently opposed and thwarted these men, who now sought an opportunity of at once revenging themselves upon an enemy too powerful for overt attack, and of damaging a popular idol. They accordingly induced the king to order Hotspur to take the command, against a powerful French fleet in the Channel, of a naval expedition so insufficient and so ill-equipped that its defeat appeared inevitable. The unworthy plot was carefully laid. Whether their victim fell in the unequal struggle, or survived a crushing defeat, or if, recognising the hopelessness of the conflict, he declined the service, their object of tarnishing his military reputation would be alike attained. The latter contingency was the least to be apprehended. Hotspur had never paused to calculate chances when the command to strike was given, and now, "either ignorant or not much waieing of that which they craftilye had arranged agaynste him, he boldlie and valiantlie executed the business enjoyed him, and having remained abroad the whole time of his appointed service, returned safelie home."³

¹ *Harleian MSS.* 3634, vol. 193.

² Of Hotspur's extreme impetuosity of temper, as represented by Shakespeare, there is no record in contemporary works.

³ Holinshead; who charges the king's advisers with this base design

THE EXPEDITION TO CASTILE.

A.D.
1386

Under the convention entered into on Lancaster's marriage with the daughter of Peter the Cruel, he should, on the death of King Henry of Castile, have succeeded to that throne in right of his wife. Henry's son, however, had disregarded this act of settlement and assumed the crown in succession to his father. Lancaster had long meditated an expedition for the recovery of his personal rights, and now availed himself of his influence over Richard to obtain a large subsidy towards the costs of a war in which England had no concern, and from the results of which she could derive no advantage. The time too, was ill-chosen for denuding the country of ships and soldiers, for the northern coasts and seaports of France were swarming with armies and fleets, collected with the avowed object of an invasion of the kingdom.

But Lancaster allowed no consideration to stand between him and his ambitious projects. He raised an army of 20,000 picked men, of whom over 1,000 were knights and squires,¹ and who were embarked in a fleet of 200 ships under the command of Sir Thomas Percy. The expedition sailed from England in the early summer "when the seas were calm, the aire sweet, and the winds pleasant and agreeable."²

8th July.

against Hotspur, "because he had got a name amongst the common people to be a very hardie and valyant gentleman as well among Englishmen and Scotchmen." Tyrrell writes in the same strain, and attributes the jealousy of the court to the young soldier's "great reputation and the fear of the increese of it; yet he undertook the employment, and, having behaved gallantly against the French, he returned home in safety, very much to the disappointment of his enemies." Both these writers derive their information from Walsingham. See *Hist. Angl.* ii. p. 157.

¹ "One thousand speres of knyghtes and squiers, and of good men-at-arms, and two thousand archers, and one thousand of other tawle yeomen."—Froissart.

² Holinshead. Froissart says, "It was a greate beautye to see the galleys glyde on the sea approaching the lande full of men-of-armes and archers sekinge for some adventures."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

There was a holiday air in all the accompaniments of this campaign, and a great deal more negotiation than fighting. On the arrival of his fleet at the mouth of the Tagus, Lancaster proceeded to arrange a marriage between his eldest daughter and the King of Portugal, who thereupon agreed to furnish a contingent to join in the war against Castile ; but months were passed in jousts, banquets, and costly festivities before an attempt was made to invade Spanish territory, and in answer to Lancaster's challenge, King John said, mockingly : " The Englishmen were wont to say that we could better dance than make war, but now it is tyme that *they* rest and syng and we keep the feldes."

After a few desultory engagements, without any decisive result, a treaty was concluded under which Lancaster surrendered his personal claims to the throne of Spain in consideration of a very large money payment¹ and a marriage between the Prince of Asturias and his youngest daughter Katherine, who thus became the future Queen of Castile.²

Sir Thomas Percy had during this expedition been alternately employed at sea, in the field, and in a variety of courtly and diplomatic duties. He had a hand-to-hand

¹ "The condycion was that the Kynge of Spayne should in recompencacion of his costys paye so many wedgis of golde as shulde charge or lade viii charattis, and over that yearlie, during the lyves of the saide Duke and his wyfe, he shulde at his proper cost and charge delyver to the Duke's assyneys ten thousande marks of golde."—Fabian's *Chronicle*.

² The lady was in her thirteenth, and her spouse in his seventh, year. Lancaster in his previous appearance as a matchmaker at Lisbon is amusingly described by Froissart : "Syr," he said to the king, "I have in the towne of Santiago (St. James) two daughters. I will give you one of them whom it pleseth you to choose. Syr, send thyther your counsayle and I will hand her to you." The king appears to have understood that he was offered two wives, for he is made to reply : "Syr, I thanke you ; ye offer me more than I desyre. As for my cosyn Katheryne I wyll leave her styll with you, but as to Phylip your daughter, her I demande, and wyll wedde her, and make her Queen of Portuygele."

RESULTS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

combat at the gates of Noya with the Chevalier Barrois des Barres, a famous French knight ; he took part in the various raids in Galicia, and led the successful attack on Ribadivia with 300 spears and 500 archers. After the marriage by proxy of the Lady Philippa he was entrusted to convey the young queen to the court of Portugal. We next find him with the Duke and Duchess of Lancaster and their daughter Katherine, "sporting them under the shadows of the fair olive trees," whence he was summoned to receive the submission of Betancos, and having garrisoned that stronghold, he proceeded to escort the duchess to Oporto on a visit to her newly-married daughter. Finally, he was the principal negotiator of the treaty with the King of Castile, and a subscribing witness to the Lady Katherine's marriage.

A.D.
1386

So far as the Duke of Lancaster was concerned the Spanish expedition had not been barren of results ; he returned to England a much richer man after having placed the crowns of Portugal and Castile on the heads of his two daughters. England, however, had nothing to show in return for her sacrifices ; not even one military triumph to compensate for an enormous expenditure, while of the magnificent army which had sailed a year before barely one-third had survived the fatal fevers prevalent in those parts, or the privations incident to this fruitless campaign.*

In this year another treaty of peace with Scotland was concluded between the Earls of Northumberland and

* The climate of Spain had proved as fatal to Lancaster's army as it had to that of the Black Prince twenty years before. Among those who fell victims to the prevailing epidemic, "three great Barons of England and rich men dyed in their beds, which was greate damage and a greate loss to the country : Sir Richard Burley, Lord Poynings, and the Lord Percy" (whom Froissart describes as cousin-german to the Earl of Northumberland, but who was his second son). Lord Poynings had on the eve of his embarkation made his will, under which he had appointed "William Percy" executor.—*Testamenta Vetusta*.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

July, 1388.

Douglas. The indenture¹ is couched in magniloquent, if somewhat unintelligible, language, and proved no more binding than the innumerable other treaties, the ratification of which seems to have been resorted to periodically as a prelude to the outbreak of fresh hostilities. It was certainly such in this instance, for, after several less important raids, the Scots invaded England with an army of 40,000 men in two columns, of which one under the Earl of Fife entered Cumberland and advanced upon Carlisle, "sparing neither fier nor sword all the way as he passed,"² while Douglas,³ led the other across the Tyne, and after having ravaged the country as far as Durham proceeded to invest Newcastle, the defence of which the Earl of Northumberland (while himself employed at Alnwick⁴ in raising a force to intercept the enemy) had entrusted to his two sons Henry and Ralph:

It was no uncommon practice in the wars of those times for the leaders of armies to challenge one another to single combat, or, as a preliminary, to break a few spears

¹ The preamble runs as follows: "Yis indenture made at the water of Eske, beside Salom, the xv day of March the 3^{hr} of our lorde, mcccclxxxiv. betwix noble lordes and meghty seignuris, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumbre of the ta parte, and Archbald of Douglas Lord of Galway on the toyer parte."—*Fœdera*, vii. 468.

² Holinshead's *Scotland*. "It was during this expedition that the Scots, finding that 200 old men, women, and children had taken refuge in a disused building, set fire to it and roasted them alive."

³ William Earl of Douglas, grandson of Archibald Lord Douglas, who fell at Halidon. Speed calls him "a noble young knight, a parallel in the honor of arms of Hotspur."

⁴ Holinshead attributes the earl's absence from Newcastle to his being "by reason of extreme age not able to sturre abroad (anie thing to purpose) himself." He was actually at this time in his forty-seventh year and certainly showed no signs of decrepitude at the battle which ensued a few days later. According to the better informed French chronicler, the earl said to his sons, "Ye shall go to Newcastle and all the country shall assemble there, and I shall tarry at Alnwick, which is a passage that they must passe by. If we may inclose them we shall spede well."—*Froissart*.

HOTSPUR AND DOUGLAS.

A.D. 1388

in test of their personal prowess. In the course of the siege of Newcastle, "Henrie Percie, desirous to make some proof of his singular manhood wherein he greetlie trusted, required to fight with the Erle of Douglass, man to man, which request the erle granting, they came mounted on too greeete coursers with sharpe grounde speeres at the utterance."¹

The result of the combat is quaintly described in these lines :—

"Thir forcie freikis that tyme face for face,
They ran togedder with ane awful race.
The Douglas wes rycht sle, and could ryde weill,
The Piersies spier, that heidit was with steill,
Umshevit has withoutin ony skaith ;
With his awin spyer that greite and long was baythie
He hytt the Piersie so upoun the syde,
Suppois he was rycht weill leirit to ryde,
For ony fence that tyme that he could mak
He laid him braidlings than upoun his bak."²

Hotspur had met his match for once, and would have been taken prisoner (for a knight in armour unhorsed and prostrate was at the mercy of his adversary) but that "the Englishmen that stode without the gate made for the rescue, recovered him on foot, and brought him forthwith back into the town."³

Douglas thereupon made a final assault upon the stronghold, and "filling the dytches with haie faggots came with ladders to the walls, but the Englishmen so well defended themselves that the Scottes were beaten back, not without great loss and struggles to their people."⁴

Before retiring, Douglas had taunted Hotspur with the loss of his lance and pennon, saying: "Syr, I shall bear this token of your prowess into Scotland, and

¹ Holinshed. Other writers allege that there was no such challenge or preconcerted combat, and that the encounter took place in a sortie led by Hotspur when the two leaders accidentally met face to face.

² *Metrical Chronicles of Scotland.*

³ Froissart.

⁴ *Ibid.*

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

shall sett it on high in my castle of Dalkeith, that it may be seen far off. Syr, quoth Sir Henry, ye may be sure ye shall not passe the boundes of the countrys till ye be mett withal in such wyse that ye shall make none avaunt thereof. Well, Syr, quod the Erle of Dowglasse, come thys nyghte to my lodgyngs and seek for your penon ; I shall sett it before my lodgyng and see if ye will come and take it away.”¹

It is possible that but for this insulting challenge the Scots might have recrossed the border unmolested, and the life of the brave Douglas and of some thousands of others have been spared. Such a defiance, however, was more than a Percy could brook ; and although Hotspur's impetuosity was so far restrained as to induce him to yield to the counsel of cooler heads and to defer pursuit of the enemy until he could effect a junction with his father's forces, he determined to regain the trophy of the Scottish chief before it should pass from English soil.*

Retiring by slow marches, and committing by the way as much depredation and plunder as the ruined state of the district admitted of, Douglas encamped his army near the castle of Otterbourne about fifteen miles to the north of Newcastle, where he was overtaken by the Earl of Northumberland.³ The sun had already set when the English forces assaulted Douglas in his camp. “ Then

¹ Froissart.

² In a memorandum by the Bishop of Dromore, among the MSS. at Syon House, it is stated that “the family of Douglas of Cavers, hereditary sheriffs of Teviotdale have long had in their possession an old standard, which they believe to be the very penon won from Hotspur by the Earl of Douglas, to whom their ancestor was standard-bearer in the expedition. On Sept. 7, 1774, I was at Cavers and was shown the old standard.”

As this flag, however, is described as having borne not the Percy but the Douglas badges and motto, it could not have been the property of Hotspur.

³ The great diversity in the various contemporary accounts of the battle of Otterbourne extends even to the date, which ranges according to different authorities from 31st July to 15th August.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

A. D.
1388

they cryed Percy! the other party cryed Douglas! their two banners met and their menne; there was a sore fight; the Englishmen were so stronge and fought so valyantlye that they reculed the Scots backe."¹

All the records of the battle up to this point concur in assigning the advantage to the English; but the night closing in, Douglas was enabled to rally his forces and when, on the moon rising, the fight was resumed, he in his turn took the offensive. The Northumbrians were thrown into some disorder by an attack upon their rear made by the Bishop of Durham who, coming late into the field with reinforcements, had mistaken his allies for the enemy. The struggle proceeded for several hours with varying fortunes, but with unflagging spirit. "Of all the bataylles and encountrynges," says Froissart, "that I have made mencion of heretofore in all this my story greet 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 knyghts nor squyer but that did his devoyre and foughte hande to hande The Erle of Northumberland and his sonnes Sir Henry and Sir Rafe Percie, who were chefe sovereign capytaynes, acquitted themselves nobly."

Twice or thrice did the young rival leaders meet face to face in mortal combat,² but there is no direct evidence to confirm the popular tradition of Douglas having fallen by the hand of Hotspur.³

¹ Froissart.

² "Erat ibidem cernere pulchrum spectaculum, duos tam proclaros juvenes manus conserere et pro gloria decertare."—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* ii. 176.

³ "At Otterbourne as chronyclers doo tell
Henry Percy with small hoste on theym fell,
And slew Douglas, and many put to flyght
And gate the feld upon his enemys ryght."

—Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

Hardyng did not enter the service of Hotspur till two years after the

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Contemporary writers differ so widely in their estimate of the numbers engaged, that it is hopeless to attempt to arrive at any conclusion on the subject. The carnage, however, appears to have been exceptionally great, and the victory was (not an unusual occurrence in these wars) claimed by both sides.¹

Hotspur, according to most authorities, continued to join the fight after he had been abandoned by his troops, and

“ Into the feld almaist left than allane,
That samyn tyme with Scottismen was tane,
The lief all fled and durst na langer byde.”²

But Fordun insists that the English had held their ground manfully until the two Percies were taken prisoners, when, as usual in the absence of leaders, they wavered and broke.

Ralph Percy had “entered in so farre among his enemyes that he was closed in and hurte, and so sore handeled that his brethe was so shorte that he was taken prysoner by a knyghte of the Earl of Moray called Sir John Maxwell. It was dark and he could not make out who he was when Sir Rafe was so overcome and bledde fast; so at the last he said, I am Rafe Percy. Sir Rafe, reschew or no reschew? I am Maxwell! Well, quoth Sir Rafe, I am contente—

battle, but during the twelve years that he remained by his side, first as page and later as esquire, he must have had opportunities of learning whether or not his lord claimed to have personally overthrown his opponent, which he evidently believed to be the case. Against this we must put the report that when Douglas fell mortally wounded it was his last prayer, that his death should be concealed lest the tidings should dishearten his troops. Such a precaution would hardly have been taken if Hotspur had been able to proclaim the fact of the Scottish leader having fallen by his hand.

¹ Mackenzie, in his *History of Newcastle*, says that “the English were rather unfortunately than dishonorably defeated,” and that the Earl of Northumberland was wounded in the battle; but he gives no authority for the latter statement, which does not appear elsewhere.

² *Metrical Chronicles*.

SIR RALPH PERCY.

but pray take some hede to me for I am sore hurte ; my hosen and my greues are full of blode."¹ A.D. 1388

He was humanely treated by his captor and finally handed over to the Earl of Moray, who was greatly pleased, and said: "Makyrell, thou hast well won thy spurs."²

Hotspur was shortly afterwards ransomed³ upon a payment of 3,000*l.*, towards which the English parliament voted 1,000*l.*⁴

The battle of Otterbourne was, from a national point of view, of no more importance than many long since forgotten border conflicts, and owes its fame far more to the ballads which have celebrated it than to any historic value attaching to the event itself. Nearly five centuries have elapsed since, wandering from village to village, now in the poor man's cottage, now in the halls of princes and nobles, these songs were sung by "some blinde crowder with no rougher voice than rude style ;" yet this wild

¹ According to the *Metrical Chronicles*,

"Sir Radulf Percie in that samyn stound (hour)
In his boddie buir mony bludie wound,"

and his captor permitted him to be conveyed on parole to Newcastle, "to seike him leichis that were fine and gude."

The humane treatment of wounded prisoners appears to have been a redeeming feature in the barbarous warfare of the borders.

² Froissart. According to other historians it was Sir Henry Preston who took Ralph Percy and handed him over to King Robert, who granted him the Barony of Fermartyne and the lands of Fyvie as the price of the prisoner. See *Appendix XVII*B.

³ The honour of Hotspur's capture was claimed by several Scottish warriors, but John, Lord Montgomery, or, according to others, Sir Hew Montgomerie, whose son had been killed in the course of the battle, would appear to have been entitled to it. The latter is said to have built the castle of Polnoon with the proceeds of the ransom.

⁴ "To Henry de Percy, son and heir of the Erle of Northumberland, for money paid to him by assignment made this day in part payment of 1,000*l.*, which the Lord the King, with the advice of his counsel, commanded to be paid to the said Henry of his gift in aid of his ransome having been lately taken in the Scotts war: 500*l.*"—*Issue Rolls*, 12th Richard II. (15th July, 1389).

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

music is to this day as fresh and inspiring as when it made our glorious Sidney "feel his heart stirred more than with a trumpet." †

What can be finer than the involuntary outbreak of admiration at his adversary's prowess on the part of each combatant in the pauses of his savage onslaught?

"At last the Douglas and the Persè met,
 Lyk to captayns of myght and mayne,
 The swapte together tyll the both swat,
 With swordes that wear of fyn myllàn (fine Milan),
 Thes worthè freckys for to fyght,
 Ther-to the wear full fayne,
 Tyll the bloode owt off thear basnetes sprente
 As ever dyd heal or rayne.
 Holde the, Persè! said the Doglas,
 And i' feth I shall the brynge
 Wer thowe shalte have a yerl's wagis
 Of Jamy our Scottish kyng.
 'Thou shalt have thy ransom fre,
 I hight the hear this thinge;
*For the manfullyst man yet art thowe
 That ever I conqueryd in filde fyghtyng.'*
 'Nay then,' sayd the Lord Persè,
 'I tolde it the beforeme,
 That I wolde never yeldyde be
 To no man of a woman borne.'
 With that ther cam an arrowe hastely,
 Forthe off a mightie wane;
 Hit hath strekene the yerle Douglas
 In at the Brest Bane.
 Thoroue lyvar and longs bathe
 The sharp arrowe ys gane,
 That never after in all his lyffe dayes
 He spayke mo wordes but ane—
 That was, 'Fyghte ye, my myrry men, whyllys ye may,
 For my lyff dayes ben gan!'
 The Persè leanyde on his brande,
 And sawe the Douglas de,
*He tooke the dede man be the hande
 And sayd, 'Wo ys me for thee!
 To have sayyde thy lyffe I wolde have pertyd with
 My landes for years thre,
 For a better man of hart, nare of hande,
 Was not in all the north countrè.'*"²

† Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*.

² The ancient Ballad of Chevy Chace.—*Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, vol. i. p. 10.

THE BALLAD OF CHEVY CHACE.

There is no record of any such incident as forms the story of "Chevy Chace;" yet it is not at all impossible that the battle of Otterbourne, the leading incidents of which have been introduced into this ballad, owed its origin to, and was the final result of, some such conflict in the Cheviot Hills. According to the international law of the Marches, neither Scotch nor English could without special invitation or license hunt in one another's grounds. It would have been quite consistent with the character and temper of Hotspur, that in revenge for some offence committed by a rival and hereditary enemy, or even out of a mere spirit of defiance, he should vow

A.D. 1388

"That he wolde hunte in the mountayns
Off Chyviat within dayes thre,
In the maugre of doughte Dogles,
And all that ever with him be."

The first part of the ballad concludes with Douglas entering upon the scene, finding Percy's men "brytling" the "hundrith fat hartes," which they had slain, and challenging the English chief to single combat. Such an incident would be quite within the limits of reality, and the curtain would now appropriately fall upon the first act of the drama.¹

The date assigned to the earliest extant version of the ballad (which was doubtless in its original form the

¹ This is the view taken by the Bishop of Dromore, to whose research and critical taste and judgment we are indebted for those fascinating volumes from which so much of our knowledge of English minstrelsy from the middle ages downwards is derived. Dr. Percy says, "Douglas would not fail to resent the insult and endeavour to repel the intruders by force. This would naturally produce a conflict between the two parties, something of which it is probable did really happen, though not attended with the tragical circumstances recorded in the ballad, for those are evidently borrowed from the battle of Otterbourne, a very different event, but which after times would easily confound with it."—*Introduction to the ballad Chevy Chace.*

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

composition of a contemporary, though perhaps never reduced to writing) is the reign of Henry VI. We may conclude that in the interval the song underwent those mutilations, corruptions, and additions to which legendary lore is ever liable, and that in the endeavour to supply missing links, and to give continuity to the narrative, much extraneous matter was introduced. A careful reading between the lines would seem to suggest that the original ballad contained an intermediate part representing the invasion of Northumberland, with the siege of Newcastle and the joust between Hotspur² and Douglas. The concluding part as it now stands would then appropriately commemorate the last act of the drama at Otterbourne.³ Upon some such theory alone is it possible to reconcile the burden of the original ballad with historical fact, which, however apt it was to become distorted by poetic license or exaggerated by popular fancy, always formed the groundwork of our national minstrelsy.

Indeed, the practice of transferring the incidents of one period to another, for purposes of pictorial effect, may well be excused in an anonymous ballad-singer, since it was adopted by so high an authority as Walter Scott, who has not hesitated to introduce into his dramatic poem of Halidon Hill the principal events which occurred, seventy years later, at the battle of Homildon. He justifies this on the ground of there having been many features of resemblance in the two actions—a Scottish army under a Douglas being on both occasions

² It is noteworthy that in the ballad as we have it Henry Percy is not once called by that sobriquet.

³ Dr. Percy assigns priority of date to the ballad of Otterbourne over "Chevy Chace." In spite of some anachronisms, the result, doubtless, of more recent interpolations, the former is much the more accurate in matters of fact. On the other hand, it is less impartial, and its strong leaning to the English cause points to its author as a partisan of the Percies.

THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER'S LEAGUE.

defeated by the superior strategy of the English, and a Gordon being left on the field of battle. He might have added another coincidence, for at Halidon, as at Homildon, the victorious army was commanded by a Percy.

A.D.
1386-1388

* * *

King Richard's character was disfigured by certain features peculiarly offensive to the national sentiment of his age. He does not appear to have been wanting in personal courage, but whatever warlike spirit he inherited from his father and grandfather was obscured and deadened by irresolution and indolence. A long tutelage had been little conducive to strengthening his moral constitution; and when, by an occasional spasmodic effort of the will, he asserted himself and shook off his unwelcome counsellors, it was but to fall under the influence of intriguing courtiers, who were ever ready to purchase the royal favour at the expense of the best interests of their country. The English court had attained to a degree of effeminate luxury and wastefulness unknown under former reigns; and the gratification of the king's extravagant tastes no less than the insatiable cupidity of his favourites necessitated ever increasing impositions upon a people already irritated by a foreign policy mainly directed to the maintenance of peace upon humiliating terms, and by means of repeated surrender of territory.

The Duke of Gloucester, the most energetic and warlike of the king's uncles, made himself the exponent of popular opinion, for the assertion of which he placed himself at the head of a league of powerful nobles, who from respectful remonstrance gradually rose to an attitude of open defiance and hostility. The court party

¹ See for an interesting illustration of these facts Strutt's *Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities*.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

was led by the king's favourite, Robert de Vere, Duke of Ireland,¹ and was indirectly supported by Lancaster. The Earl of Northumberland held himself aloof from both extremes,² only departing from his neutral position to restrain by his counsel the violence of the malcontents or to exhort the king to the redress of grievances. Most conspicuous among the league of nobles, by the intemperance of his language, was the Earl of Arundel, whom Northumberland was now commanded to arrest and to bring before the king's presence as a prisoner.³

The Earl proceeded to Reigate accordingly, but, either finding his rebellious kinsman too strong for him, or, as is not improbable, from sympathy with the cause, he returned without having accomplished his mission, and interceded with Richard for compromise and reconciliation.

At a council held at Clarendon, on 13th September, he expressed the hope that "bon amour et amitie puissent estre establee entre le Roy et les Seigneurs de son conseil d'un part, et les ditz Duc de Gloucester, le Comte de Arundel et le Comte de Warwick d'autre part."⁴ Finding the king irresolute he proceeded to win him over by this appeal:

"Sir, there is no doubt but these lordes who now be in the field 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 Maiesty, that seeke to oppress them; and verilye

¹ Gloucester had a personal grievance against Robert de Vere, who had married his niece and subsequently, without any fault on her part, but in order to form another alliance, repudiated and divorced her.

² "The Earl of Northumberland and others refused to fight for the Duke of Ireland."—Knighton, ii. 698.

³ *Ypodigma Neustria*, p. 353.

⁴ Nicolas's *Proceedings of the Privy Council*.

THE "WONDERWORKING" PARLIAMENT.

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 there in armes speciallie in this case which they reckon to be yours and your realmes. 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 to them to come before your presence in some public place, where they can declare unto you the entent and purpose of their coming accompanied by so greete a nombre of people unto these partes, and I beleeve it verilye they will show such reasons that you will hold them excused."¹

A. D.
1386-1388

The earl's arguments were earnestly supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, and the king finally yielded to their counsels. A meeting between him and the armed league of nobles took place at Westminster; the court party was once more discomfited; the obnoxious favourites fled, or were banished or imprisoned, and in the ensuing parliament the Earl of Northumberland joined in insisting upon the redress of the grievances complained of, and the infliction of condign punishment upon the authors of these evils.

February,
1388.

As a member of the new council, he took a prominent part in reducing the royal power within what would now be called constitutional limits, in restraining him from "burthening the realm with a greater charge than was requisite," and from incurring expenditure which the council could not "justify to parliament."²

In like manner, when Richard had caused letters to be

¹ Holinshed.

² These expressions occur in the course of a discussion on a proposal to increase the emoluments of the Earl Marshal, which is quoted *in extenso* in Nicolas's *Proceedings of the Privy Council*.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

written recognising the accession of the Pope elected on the death of Urban VI., the earl induced him to cancel these and to "nulle determiner de obeir le nouvel dit, mais qu'il attende pour avoir l'avis de tous les grandz de son royaume et de son peuple."¹

* * *

Towards the end of this year Richard conferred upon Hotspur the custody of Carlisle and the wardenship of the West Marches, and shortly after made him a Knight of the Garter, in recognition of his services at the battle of Otterbourne. This honour had been previously conferred on the earl and his brother, and it may be doubted whether there can be found another instance, royalty excepted, of three members of the same family so nearly related being at the same time in the enjoyment of this distinction, in an age, too, when the order was only conferred for eminent public service.

It is noteworthy that in the more ancient lists of Knights of the Garter created by their founder, Edward III., and by Richard II., the names of the three Percies do not occur, owing, it is evident, to the practice which then existed of expunging the records of knights who, like the Percies, had been removed from the order for attainder or forfeiture.² That they were all three

¹ *Issue Rolls*, 20th Nov. 1389.

² At a later period the names remained intact, but had the words *Vah, Proditor!* appended to them. Ashmole, who wrote his *History of the Garter* in the reign of Charles II., makes no mention of these Percies. Beltz, in his more accurately compiled *Memorials*, after alluding to the negligence with which the earlier records of the order were kept, their destruction and dispersion during the civil wars, and the practice of supplying omissions from memory, mentions a number of distinguished men, of whose membership there can be no doubt, who are excluded from Ashmole's lists. He adds, with reference to the omission of the names of the first Earl of Northumberland, his brother and son: "But for the recent discovery of the wardrobe accounts we should not now have been authorised to render this act of justice to their memory."

KNIGHTS OF THE GARTER.

Knights Companion of the Garter is established by the entries in the wardrobe accounts, of mantles and robes of the order presented to them,¹ as well as by the several descriptions of feasts of the order in which their names are repeatedly introduced. The date of the Earl of Northumberland's creation in 1365—6, as given in Beltz's *Memorials*, is, however, open to question. It is most improbable that this honour should have been conferred upon him in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and during the lifetime, and to the exclusion, of his distinguished father.

A.D.
1389—1393

It may be concluded either that the Henry Percy then created was the third Lord of Alnwick, at whose decease the son may have been permitted to succeed to the vacant stall, or that his creation was of a later date, possibly not until after his elevation to the earldom.²

During the remainder of Richard's reign the Percies were actively engaged in a multiplicity and variety of public employments.

From 1386 to 1389, when sentence was finally pronounced, the Earl of Northumberland was the presiding judge in the celebrated controversy³ between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor. In 1390 he was appointed Governor of Calais, presided over the

¹ The Earl of Northumberland's name appears in these accounts in no less than ten, and that of Sir Thomas Percy in three, different years during Richard's reign, as the recipient of robes of the order.—See Anstis's *History of the Garter*, 1724.

² According to Beltz, the Earl and Sir Thomas Percy were respectively the 44th and 60th of the sixty-three knights created by Edward III., and Hotspur the 15th of the thirty created by Richard II.; the dates assigned to the three creations being 1365, 1376, and 1388.

³ It is characteristic of the times that a question involving nothing of greater national importance than the right of a private gentleman to bear a certain emblem upon his coat-of-arms should have absorbed the public attention of all England, excited keen interest in continental states, and given rise to a judicial inquiry extending over a period of three years. Sir Harris Nicolas has published an exhaustive history of the case.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

jousts there held, to which the Earl of Huntingdon had invited the flower of French chivalry, and thence proceeded on a special mission to Paris. From this service he was recalled to the North of England to aid in the expulsion of the Scots who, taking advantage of the Lord Warden's absence, had overrun and devastated the East Marches.

In 1394 the earl had endeavoured, by means of a direct negotiation with King Robert of Scotland, to establish a permanent peace with that country on the basis of a marriage between the reigning families of the two kingdoms; and in the following year he was the principal member of the more successful matrimonial mission, which resulted in King Richard's marriage with Isabel of France.

Hotspur had in 1390 commanded a second expedition despatched for the purpose of raising the siege of Brest.¹ In 1393 he presided at Carlisle in his capacity of governor over a combat, by royal license, between Richard de Redmayne, a Cambrian, and William de Halliburton, a Scot.² In the same year he proceeded on a complimentary mission to King James of Cyprus, who in this high-flown language returns his thanks to Richard for having sent him so gracious an ambassador:

NICOSSÆ, July 15th, 1393.

JACOBUS DEI GRATIA JERUSALEM ET CYPRI REX.

Serenissime et illustrissime princeps frater carissime, salutem et fraternæ dilectionis continuum incrementum! Et super hoc quæ nobilis consanguineus vester, dominus Henricus Percy, retulit vobis nos sibi fecisse

¹ He had in the previous year been formally "retained in the king's service for life" with an annual allowance of £100.—Grafton.

² *Fwdera*, vii. 745.

HOTSPUR IN CYPRUS.

curialitatem et honorem (et de hoc nobis regratiamini) frater carissime; ipse dixit sua curialitate et nobilitate quid sibi placuit, sed nos tenemus quod ipse nobis fecit maximum honorem nos visitasse, et sibi multum regratiamur.¹

A. D. 1393

The Duke of Lancaster's appointment by Richard as Prince of Aquitaine and Gascony had been resented by the inhabitants of those provinces, who denied the king's right to demand of them a transfer of their allegiance from himself to another ruler; and such was his unpopularity that when now Hotspur was appointed Governor of Bordeaux, he was refused admittance into the town until he succeeded in satisfying the authorities that he came as the representative of Richard, and not of the Duke whose nomination as their Prince they repudiated and cancelled. In the year following Henry Percy was made Governor of Berwick, and in 1396 served in his uncle's retinue in the brilliant escort despatched to Paris, to conduct the child-queen Isabel to Calais where Richard awaited his bride.

His last recorded service in this reign was the conclusion of a treaty of amity and alliance with George Dunbar, Earl of March.²

Sir Ralph Percy, whom we last saw weltering in his blood on the field of Otterbourne, gained much distinction by his successful defence of the West Marches when invaded by the Scotch during the Earl's absence in 1390.³ Two years later he was sent on an embassy to

¹ This curious specimen of royal correspondence is included in the collection of *Extracts from Historical Papers and Letters from the Northern Registers* (p. 425).

² In connection with which he petitioned the King of England for safe conduct and grazing over many miles of meadows near Caldbrands-
peth of two flocks of 1600 sheep belonging to the Scottish Countess of March and her sister. *Harleian Charters*, Rot. Scot. II.

³ "*Laudabatur, diligebatur, et ore omnium predicabatur,*" whereas in

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Scotland, in payment of the wages and expenses of which mission he was granted the moderate sum of £26 1s. 3d.¹ We hear nothing more of him but that in 1399 he proceeded to Palestine, where he fell in an action with the Saracens.

* * *

Sir Thomas Percy had in 1390 been appointed Vice Chamberlain and justiciary in Wales, but resigned the former office in the following year because, according to Froissart, of his determination not to become involved in the then prevalent Court intrigues: "that gentyl knight Sir Thomas Percy had been long soveraygn squyer of the kynges house, for all the state of the kyng passed through his handes. He then, consydyryng the greete hatereddes that encreased betweene the kyng and his Uncle of Gloscester, and among other grete Lordes of England, among whom he was beloved, like a sage knyghte he imagined that the conclusions coulde not be goode, so that he gave up his office as honorably as he coulde, and took leave of the kyng, and the kyng gave him leave sore agaynst his wyll."

Two years later, however, he resumed his position at court in a higher office, that of Lord Steward, in which capacity he introduced Froissart to the king in 1395.

consequence of the Earl not having been at his post when the irruption was made "*Magnum murmur excrevit contra comitem*" on the part of the plundered inhabitants.—Walsingham.

¹ *Issue Rolls*, 15th Richard II. In the same records of the following year we find this curious entry:—"To Stephen Percy, Clerk, sent from London to Queensborough Castle, there to ask for the King's great Crown and bring it from thence to Westminster to be delivered to the Lord the King for celebrating the solemnisation of the translation of Edward, the King and Confessor, in the Church of the blessed Peter Westminster on Oct. 13th last past. His wages and expenses of certain archers riding in his retinue and conduct of the same Crown and hire of horses, £2 4s. 11½d." It is impossible to discover who this Percy is, but the family had by this time a great number of collateral branches all over England.

AN EMBASSY TO PARIS.

This accomplished French knight had been at Edward's court in his youth, and his quaint description of his second visit to England, after an interval of nearly a quarter of a century, recalls Washington Irving's picture of the bewildered Hollander when, after twenty years' sleep, he returned to his native village :

A.D. 1395

" I found no man of my knowledge, it was so long syth I had been in England, and the houses were all newly changed, and young children were become men, and the women knew me note nor I theym. Then I thought to go to the house of Sir Thomas Percy, great seneschal of Englande, who was then with the kynge, so I ac-
quaynted me with hym, and I found him ryght honorable and gracyous, and he offered to present me and my letters to the kynge, whereof I was ryght joyfull."

We are indebted to the pen of this knight for an authentic record of Sir Thomas Percy's proceedings when shortly after he was despatched, together with two colleagues, on a mission to the King of France.

His account of what passed in the French capital 500 years ago is so evidently the result of personal observation, that no other words could possibly convey an equally graphic and life-like description of the scene.

" These knyghtes of Englande, Syr Thomas Percy, and other, alyghted 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 Lowre (Louvre) to the kynge, where he, with his brother and his uncles were redye to receyve the Engliche embassadours. . . . there they receyved them honourably and broughte them into the chambre where the kynge tarryed for them ; then they did of (off) their bonettes and kneeled down. Sir Thomas Percy had the letters of credence that the Kynge of Englande had sent to the French

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

kynges. He delyvered them to the kynges, who tooke them, and caused the knyghtes to stand up. Then they stept somewhat bak. The kynges opened the letters and red them, and sawe well that they had credence. Then he called to hym his brother, and his uncles, and showed them the letters. Then his uncles said, 'Syr, call forthe the knyghtes, and hear what they will saye.' Then they approached, and were commanded to declare their credence. Then Sir Thomas Percy spake and sayd: 'Dere syr, the entencion of our soveraign lorde, the Kynges of Englande, is that he wolde gladly that such of his specyall counsayle as his uncles, Dukes of Lancaster, Yorke, and Gloucester, and other prelates of Englande, such as his specyall trust is in, myght come into your presence and to your counsayle, as shortlye as myghte be, to treat for a manor of peace whereof he wolde be ryght joyfull; and for that entente wolde noyther spare his owne payne and labour, nor yet none of his men, noyther to come himselfe, or to send suffycient persons over the sea to the city of Amyence, or to any other place assygned.' Then the kynges answered and sayde: 'Syr Thomas Percy, you and all your company are ryght heartilye welcome, and of your comyng and wordes we are ryght joyfull. Ye shall tarry here in Paris a season, and we wyll speeke with our counsayle, and make you such convenable answer ere you departe, that it shall suffyce you.' With this answer the Englysshmen were well content. Then it was neer dyner tyme, and the Englysshmen were desyred to tary and dyne: and so the Lord of Coucy brought them into a chambre, and the Lord de la Riviere; there they dynd at their leysers; and after dyner they returned into the kynges's chambre, and there they had wyne and spyces, and then took their leave of the kynges, and went to their lodgynges. . . . These Englysshmen taryed at Paris vi days, and every

FESTIVITIES AT THE FRENCH COURT.

A.D. 1395

daye dyned with one of the Dukes of France; and in the meene season it was determyned that the French Kyng, his uncles, and the Privye Counsaile, shulde be at Amyance by the myddle of March next after, then to abyde the comynge of the Kyng of Englande, his uncles, and his counsaile, if they wulde com thyder; and the Englysshe knyghttes sayd they made no dout but at the lest the Kyng of Englande's uncles shulde be at the day assygned at Amyance. This was the conclusion of this treatie.

"The daye before that they shulde departe out of Paris, the kyng came to the palays where his uncles were, and then he made a dyner to the Englysshe knyghtes, and caused Syr Thomas Percy to sit at his borde, and called him cosyn, by reason of the Northumberland blode;¹ at which dyner there was gyven to Sir Thomas Percy and the Englysshe knyghtes and squires grete gifts and fair jewels;² but in gyving of them they over stypte Syr Robert Briquet,³ and Syr Peter Villers, chefe steward unto the French Kyng, delyvered the gyftes, and he sayd to Syr Robert Briquet, 'Syr, when you have done such servyse to the kyng, my master, as shall

¹ It must be remembered that, independently of their common Carovingian descent, Sir Thomas Percy was nearly related to the reigning house of France through his mother, Mary Plantagenet, a direct descendant of King Louis VIII. by his Queen, Blanche of Castile.

² These did not probably represent any considerable money value, for Richard's gift, of which on this occasion Sir Thomas Percy was the bearer to the French King, is described "as a golde ring set with one diamond," for payment of which the sum of £26 13s. 4d. is authorised. *Issue Rolls*, 15th Richard II.

³ "He was a Frenchman born, but alwayes he held himself Navarese and Englyshe, and as then he was one of the Kyng of Englande's Privy Chamber. The French Kyng dissimuled with him sagely, for when he spake with them always the Kyng would turne to Syr Thomas Percy or Sir Toys Clifford."—Froissart. The employment upon such a mission of a Frenchman by birth who had fought against his native country is not easily accounted for.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

please hym, he is rych enough and puissant enough to reward you.' With whiche wordes Syr Robert Briquet was sore abashed, and perceyved well thereby that the kynge loved him not, but he was fayne to suffre it."

Not so Sir Thomas Percy, who would not without remonstrance permit a colleague, who, like himself, represented the King of England, to be affronted in the performance of his duty.

"After dyner mynstrels began to play; that pastyme once past, Syr Thomas Percy came to the kynge and said, 'Syr, I and my compayne have grete marvayl of one thing: that you have made us so goode cheere, and have gyven us so greate gifts, that Syr Robert Briquet hath nothyng, who is a knyghte of our master's privie chamber. Syr, we desire to know the cause why?' Thereunto answered the French Kynge and sayde, 'Syr, the knyghte that ye speak of, syth ye wyll know the matter, he hath no nede to be in a batayle agaynst me, for if he were taken prysoner his ransome shulde sune be payde,' and therewith the kynge entered into other comunicacions. Then wyne and spyces were brought, and so took leave and returned to their lodyng and made a reconyng and payde for everything. The next day they departyd and spedde so on their journey that they arryved in Englande and showed the kynge and his uncles how they had spedde, and greatly praysed the French Kynge and the cheere that he had made them, and showed off the gyftes and jewels that he had gyven them."

The meeting at Amiens took place accordingly, the King of England being represented by the Dukes of York and Lancaster, who, accompanied by the Earl of Huntingdon and Sir Thomas Percy, "parted from Calys mo than xiic horse; it was a goodlye syghte to see them

A FOURTEENTH CENTURY DESPATCH.

ryde in good order,"¹ and as they approached the walls of Amiens "the Duke of Burbon, the Lords Coucy and the Erle of Saynte Poule came to theym and so rode togyder with amorous wordes." A.D. 1395

The negotiations which ultimately resulted in a treaty of peace for four years were protracted, and on the departure of the princes continued to be conducted by Sir Thomas Percy and a French Commissioner. One of Percy's letters of this period to the Privy Council has been preserved,² and may be quoted as a specimen of diplomatic correspondence in the fourteenth century :

"Tres reverents pers en Dieu et mes tres honores Seigneurs. Je me recomans a vous, et vous plese a savoyr que jay montré a mons. de Giayne les adysions de les artykles de Bretaynge, a lesquel il ce agré bien, mes il vodroyt voluntres savoyr a plus tost que il purroyt sy le Duk³ se vodroyt acorder a les dit artiquels ou non, a cause que sy les Fransoys ne vorroyent comprendre le dit Duk com notre alye quel chose nous dusoms fere en selle cas. Car sy le Duk⁴ susdit ne vorroyt acorder a nos artikels et treté, et que pour amour de luy nous ne fesoyoms notre profit ovek les Fransoys, ce serroyt grandement notre damage par coy la voluté de Monseigneur serroyt de savoyr la volunte de dit Duk a plus tost que ce purra bonement estre fet.

"Je ne say plus dire a sest foy mes que je prie a luy tout puyant que vous doynt mes tres honores seigneurs bone vie et longe. Escrit a Doure le Dymange de

¹ Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

² *Cott. MSS.*, Julius, B. vi. Fol. 66.

³ This refers to our ally John, Duke of Brittany, who had married first a daughter of Edward III. and secondly a daughter of the Earl of Kent, half-sister to Richard II.

⁴ It is characteristic of the orthography of this, 'as of much later periods, that the same words are frequently spelt in a variety of ways in one and the same document. This applies even to proper names of persons and places.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Demy Caresme. Quant est de notre passage le portour
de sestés vous en dirra tout.

“ Le votre,

“ T[HOMAS] PERCY.”

Addressed :—A tres reuerent pe[re en] Dieu et mes tres
honn[re Srs] le Chanseler et Tresorer.

Richard's queen, Anne of Bohemia, died in this year, and it is said to have been for the purpose of distracting his sorrow at her loss that he fitted out an expedition on a large scale for subduing the troubles in Ireland. The Earl of Northumberland, with his son and brother¹ and a brilliant retinue, accompanied him; but in the following year the king sought a more gentle solace for his grief. The first overtures for the alliance with Isabel of France, which Sir Thomas Percy had been authorised to make, had not been favourably received, the extreme youth of the Princess² and the fact of her hand having been promised to the Duke of Brittany, being made the grounds of refusal. A second embassy under the Earl of Northumberland in 1396 was however more successful, and in the autumn of that year the two kings met in person “and pitched their tents fast by Calays,”³ four hundred English and the same number of French knights mounting guard with drawn swords, in the space intervening between the two royal pavilions. On this occasion Northumberland was one of the four English Earls appointed to wait upon the French king.

This marriage was made the foundation of a treaty of peace for twenty-five years, from the expiration of the

¹ Sir Thomas Percy was in chief command of the fleet, and had hoisted his flag on board the *Trinity*.—*Rot. Pat.*, 17 Richard II.

² She was then in her sixth year, and Richard was only two years younger than his future father-in-law.

³ Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

A HUMILIATING PEACE.

existing truce; one of the conditions of which was the surrender of Brest and Cherbourg. The king's council seems to have been kept in ignorance of the terms of this treaty, which on becoming known aroused a storm of indignation throughout England. A.D. 1397

During the greater part of the preceding reign the people had cheerfully contributed their blood and their treasure for the prosecution of those aggressive wars which gratified the prevalent thirst for military glory and extended dominion.

They now witnessed with dismay the gradual decay of that commanding influence abroad which Edward's conquests had established at so heavy a cost, and were little disposed to continue such sacrifices, as they saw their dearly-bought possessions in France slipping from their grasp one by one. The wound to national vanity was not even assuaged by pecuniary relief, for the public expenditure was greater than ever, and they who had cheerfully borne the heavy burden of successful war now groaned under the unlightened weight of an inglorious and humiliating peace.¹

Gloucester as usual became the mouthpiece of popular discontent, which was aggravated by a rumour of negotiations for the sale of Calais to the French king being in progress.

Richard, once more roused to an effort at self-assertion, determined to emancipate himself from the control of his council, but, knowing the weakness of his cause and

¹ Shakespeare makes the Earl of Northumberland thus express the national feeling on Richard's wasteful expenditure of the revenue of England:—

“ Wars have not wasted it, for warred he hath not,
But basely yielded upon compromise
That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows;
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.”

—*Richard II.*, Act ii. Scene 1.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

the temper of his adversaries, he took the precaution of observing all the outward forms of law and precedent. It required then but a slight degree of manipulation to enable the sheriffs of counties to create a legislature according to royal command; and the parliament which now assembled at Nottingham was as subservient and ductile as the most despotic sovereign could desire. The various statutes which had been enacted to limit the royal prerogative were reviewed, and condemned as illegal. All the acts passed in 1388 were revoked and their authors and abettors were seized, tried, and sentenced for high treason. The Earl of Arundel was beheaded on Tower Hill,¹ and Gloucester having been placed in the custody of John Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, at Calais, was secretly put to death. The league of nobles was completely broken up, the power of the king was declared to be virtually absolute, and parliament was dissolved after having elected a committee of twelve lords (of whom Northumberland was one) and six commoners, whom they endowed with authority to finish all business which they had not had time to transact.

In these proceedings Sir Thomas Percy, who had hitherto taken little part in domestic politics, sided with the king, to whom this adherence was of exceptional importance, since in addition to his personal influence it secured his vote as the chosen representative in parliament of the whole body of the clergy. On their first assembling in this year "the Commons requested that the clergy might appoint a procurator to represent

¹ No fresh crime had been charged against him. He suffered for an alleged offence for which in the Parliament of 1388 he had received the royal pardon. On his attainder a great part of his lands was bestowed upon John Holland, Duke of Exeter, who now petitioned that the homages and services heretofore rendered to the Earl of Arundel by the Earl of Northumberland, as holder *in capite* of Petworth, should be rendered to him.—*Issue Rolls*, 21 Richard II. See Appendix XVIII.

KING RICHARD'S LAST PARLIAMENT.

them, and they accordingly elect M. Thomas de Percy knight to whom they commit full power, so that whatever shall be done by him in the premises should be received at all future times."¹

A.D. 1397

All the statutes in this parliament are thus recorded as having been enacted by "the lords temporal and Sir Thomas de Percy,"² who in the following September was created Earl of Worcester.³

The Earl of Northumberland, although he supported the king's authority, took a far less conspicuous part in this parliament than his brother. He did not vote for the death of Arundel, but on the contrary interceded to obtain a remission of the sentence.⁴ The execution of this nobleman for an offence for which ten years before he had received a full pardon had excited much sympathy for the victim, and Richard himself, who was not by nature cruel, was now haunted by remorse for this ill-judged act of severity. His sleep was broken by visions of the dead earl which appeared at his bedside night after night, with threatening gestures,⁵ and of whose death, according to popular belief, Providence had marked its reprobation by reuniting the severed head to the body. To allay his superstitious fears the king now required Northumberland to proceed to the church

¹ *Rolls of Parliament*, 21 Richard II.

² The concluding clause of the act of impeachment of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, runs thus:—"Wherefore the king, and all the lords temporal, and Monsieur Thomas Percy, having sufficient power from the prelates and clergie, . . . judged and declared him a traytour."—Brady's *History of England*.

³ The patent is dated 29 September, 1398. The Duke of Lancaster's son was at the same time created Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Nottingham, in recognition of his recent secret services at Calais, Duke of Norfolk.

⁴ Grafton's *Chronicle*.

⁵ "Post cujus mortem, Rex diversis imaginibus in somnis est turbatus; videbatur nempe umbra comitis, mox ut dormire cœpisset, ante oculos suos volitare, minarique sibi, et eum indicibiliter deterrere."—Walsingham, ii. p. 225.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

of the Augustine Friars in Moorgate Street, where his victim was interred, and to satisfy himself by personal inspection whether the alleged miracle was founded in fact.¹ This was the last duty performed by the Earl of Northumberland in the service of King Richard.

The circumstances attending the death of Gloucester did not transpire until after the accession of Henry IV., and even then it did not clearly come to light who had been the actual instigators of the crime.² That Mowbray should, upon his own responsibility have caused his prisoner to be murdered is not credible, and the authority for the commission of such a deed could only have emanated from the king or from Lancaster. The latter was personally so unpopular that suspicion would naturally attach to him, and the notable quarrel between the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk was not improbably connected with a desire on the part of the former to vindicate his father against the charge of Gloucester's murder. The decision to refer the issue to trial of battle, the king's subsequent prohibition of the combat, and the banishment of the disputants are matters of history, a picturesque version of which has been popularised by Shakespeare.³ It was not without difficulty that Lancaster succeeded in so far mitigating the sentence passed upon his son as to obtain letters patent authorising him to constitute attorneys to receive any estates that might fall to him. A recollection of these facts is necessary for the comprehension of the

¹ "Qui corpus ejus effodi faceret, et aspiceret si caput corpori esset junctum, prout fama communis erat."—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* ii. 226.

² Most contemporary writers are of opinion that Nottingham had received direct orders from the king to put Gloucester to death. "Rex jussit Comiti Marescallo ut eum occulte occideret."—*Ibid.*

³ The passages referring to these events in his *Richard II.* form a truthful, though somewhat idealised, epitome of the various accounts of contemporary historians.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE BANISHED.

subsequent attitude assumed by the Percies. Henry Bolingbroke, as he was commonly called, was, next to Hotspur, perhaps, the most popular among England's young nobles,¹ and his banishment created a national outcry. On the eve of his embarkation, "there came to him the Earl of Northumberland and Sir Henry Percy² his son, with a greete nombre of other knyghtes and squyers of Englande, such as loved him, and were soore displeased that he must avoyde the relme,"³ while the populace pursued him with tears and lamentations: "'Gentle Earl, why shall we leave you? Ye never dyd nor thought yvell,' thus men and women piteously spoke."⁴

A.D. 1399

Richard's emancipation from parliamentary control was as detrimental to the Commonwealth as it ultimately proved fatal to himself. To gratify his wastefulness and the rapacity of his favourites he illegally imposed the most oppressive taxes, and on the death of the Duke of Lancaster, he revoked the letters patent he had granted

4 February.

¹ He had been much engaged in Continental warfare, and had fought not only the French and the Spaniards, but the Mohammedan in Barbary and the Pagan tribes of the Baltic in Lithuania. He was one of the band of young knights among whom Ralph Percy had embarked for the Holy Land, but had stopped short at Rhodes. He had joined Gloucester's league against Richard, but made his peace in time to escape the consequences, and subsequently showed himself zealous in the king's service.

² Shakespeare represents Henry Bolingbroke after his landing at Ravenspur as meeting Hotspur for the first time:—

North. Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

Percy. No, my goode lorde, for that is not forgot
Which ne'er I did remember; to my knowledge,
I never in my life did look on him.

North. Then learn to know him now; this is the duke!

—*Richard II.* Act ii. Scene 3.

The poet's supposition, that Hotspur should have been unacquainted with his companion in arms and kinsman, was probably due to a misapprehension on his part as to the ages of the two men, which will be found referred to hereafter.

³ Froissart.

⁴ *Ibid.*

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

to his banished son, on the pretext that they had been issued "without due advice or mature deliberation;" he confiscated his lands, and extended the sentence already passed to perpetual banishment, on a vague charge of his having held intelligence with the king's enemies abroad.

This act of injustice and bad faith offended and alienated many of the powerful nobles, and among others the Earl of Northumberland and his son, who, after a vain remonstrance in favour of the rights of their absent kinsman, left the court and retired into the north.

Summoned shortly after to appear before the king, who had been advised to "collect them by pryson or otherwyse," for having accused him of governing foolishly and of being under the influence of evil counsellors, they pleaded that the state of the border did not admit of their absenting themselves at that time. According to Froissart they took this course under the advice of Thomas Percy who, cognisant of the king's intentions, warned them not to trust themselves into his power, and "stopped their coming not without good cause, for they were showed that if they came they were in ieopardie of their lyves." Sentence of banishment and confiscation was then passed upon them.

"This was published throughout all the cyties and good townes of Englande and specyallye in London, whereof the Londoners had grete marvayle, and they culde not know for what cause it was; for the Erle and his son were reputed for noble and vallyant men as any within the reelme, and they sayde, peradventure the Erle and his sonne have spoken some wordes upon the kynge and his counsayle, for the yvil governing of the realme, and culde not be hearde though they sayde the truthe, and for their thus saying now they be punished;

THE PERCIES PROCLAIMED TRAITORS.

but we thinke hereafter they wyll be punished who judge them." ¹ A.D. 1399

The King of Scotland offered the Earl and his son honourable reception at his court, until the sentence of banishment should be revoked, but they appear to have remained within their own territories.

It is probable that Richard was glad of a rational pretext for escaping the complications in which he found himself involved.

Roger Earl of March, the heir apparent to the throne, had in the beginning of this year fallen in a skirmish with the Irish, and the king now took personal command of an expedition fitted out to revenge the death of his brave kinsman. Worcester was appointed Admiral of the Fleet, and embarked at Milford Haven early in May with a retinue of "thirty-five knights, squires and men at arms, and 100 mounted archers, and to each archer one carpenter and one mason." In the meanwhile Henry Bolingbroke had no sooner heard of his father's death, and of the act which deprived him of his hereditary rights, than gathering together a few friends and a small military force he embarked for England touching at different points on the coast, to proclaim his wrongs and win adherents, till he finally landed at Ravenspur. Here "there mette with hym the Erle of Northumberland with a grete power to helpe and succoure the said Duke, *that cam for none other entent as he saide than to chalange the Duchie of Lancaster his enheritance.*" ³

4 July.

With the progress of events however Lancaster's attitude became more menacing; and when Richard,

¹ Froissart.

² Indenture between King Richard II. and the Earl of Worcester, 9th April, 1399. Le Neve's MS. Penes, fol. 3.

³ *The Englissh Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV.*, published by the Camden Society.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

hurrying back from Ireland, landed at Milford Haven and found how universal the defection from his cause had become, he scarcely made an attempt to stem the tide of his unpopularity. One by one his few remaining adherents fell from him; his appeal to the counties for military aid¹ remained unanswered, and so hopeless did he at length consider his chances of successfully asserting his authority, that he commanded his lord steward to dismiss the royal household, relieved him from further attendance² and with only a few followers took refuge in Conway Castle.

Modern research has failed to throw much new light upon this chapter of English history, or to enable us to trace the motives of the principal actors in the scenes attending Henry of Lancaster's usurpation. Of his own ultimate duplicity there can be no question; but it is by no means established that when he landed in England he had any intentions beyond those which he openly professed.

Such evidence as exists rather points to Richard's irresolution, and the general defection from his cause, as suggesting to Henry's ambitious mind the idea of snatching the sceptre from his kinsman's feeble grasp. He must have known, however, that the premature declaration of such a project would have defeated its accomplishment by depriving him of the support of those

¹ The Earl of Northumberland was included among "the faithful lieges" whom the king now called upon to aid him in the maintenance of his authority against the threatened danger.—*Fœdera*, viii., p. 85.

² The Earl of Worcester has been charged with having deserted the king in the hour of adversity; even his friend Froissart speaks doubtfully on the point: "Syr Thomas Percy broke his white staffe *either* being so commanded by the kyng, *or else* upon displeasure (as some write) that the kyng had proclaimed his brother the Earl of Northumberland traytor." Walsingham, however, who as a rule is far from partial to the Percies, states distinctly that Richard had commanded the lord steward to dismiss his household, "*Dimisit igitur familiam, monens per Senescallum, Dominum Thomam Percy, ut se reservarent ad tempora meliora.*"

LANCASTER'S USURPATION.

A.D. 1399

English nobles, who were ready to stand by him for the restoration of his legitimate rights but by no means disposed to acknowledge his claims to the throne. The Percies were above all others interested in maintaining the existing dynasty in favour of the heir apparent. They were ready to take part in measures of coercion to re-establish their influence in the royal council, but they could not have contemplated Richard's deposition in favour of one whose father's pretensions to the crown they had ever repudiated and opposed. Henry accordingly continued to dissemble, and submitted to take the solemn oath which limited his armed resistance to the attainment of his professed objects. He thus succeeded in averting suspicion, and in making the Percies and others the unconscious instruments of his unscrupulous designs.¹ When, finally, he threw off the mask; when, in bold disregard of all his pledges he proclaimed himself King of England, they were not strong enough successfully to dispute his pretensions, and the protests of the duped nobles were drowned in the shouts of popular acclamation amidst which Henry of Lancaster ascended the throne. The Earl of Northumberland, his son and his brother, remonstrated, and then submitted to the inevitable. It would doubtless have been more dignified had they now, instead of condoning the act by taking service under the usurper, recorded their protest and retired from a court the legitimacy of which they were not disposed to acknowledge. Circumstances however were little encouraging to such a course, for throughout the greater part of England Henry's accession to the throne was hailed with enthusiasm.²

¹ "Northumberland, the ladder upon which
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends the throne."
—*Richard II.*, Act v., Scene 1.

² The attachment to Richard survived longer in the northern
VOL. I. 177 N

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
—

Richard's abdication once an accomplished fact, the attempt to put forward the claims of his infant heir would have plunged the country into civil war, and subjected the Percies to a suspicion of seeking their own personal aggrandisement by the exercise of the Royal power during the long minority of their kinsman.¹ They accordingly accepted the position, while Henry in return overwhelmed them with honours and gifts ; but the seeds of mistrust and suspicion were already sown. The Percies could not forget that they had been duped, and that their good name had been tarnished in the process. As little could Henry forget the heavy debt he had incurred towards those powerful subjects ; and a sense of humiliating injury on the one part, and of oppressive obligation on the other, afforded little promise of prolonged harmony.

* * *

It is remarkable that we should be mainly indebted to foreign sources for the personal details connected with King Richard's deposition. Walsingham it is true has a good deal to say on the subject, but the "*ut vulgariter dicitur*," with which he is ever apt to qualify his doubtful statements, becomes of more than ordinary frequency in these passages, and most of the old historians have drawn upon him for their facts. In three French works we have however the evidence of actors in, or eye-witnesses of, the scenes described. The first of these is a MS., the authorship of which is attributed to a French knight in the service of the Earl

counties than elsewhere ; it was there said that Henry had been made king by "the villains of London," among whom his popularity was unbounded.

¹ Edmund Mortimer, the only son of the 5th Earl of March, was in his sixth year at the time of Lancaster's usurpation.

THE FRENCH "METRICAL CHRONICLE."

of Huntingdon,¹ the second is a metrical chronicle by a gentleman of France who accompanied King Richard on his last expedition to Ireland and remained with him until his removal to the Tower;² the third is our old friend Froissart. The metrical chronicle is written with a strong bias in favour of Richard, and the author admits having occasionally supplemented the necessities of his verse by drawing upon his imagination.³ Those events which he personally witnessed are accordingly represented in a light ever favourable to Richard; those scenes, on the other hand, at which he could not have been present, such as Lancaster's instructions to Northumberland on the subject of the mission of the latter to Conway Castle, must be taken with ample allowance for poetic license, if not as altogether imaginary. As a record, however, of Richard's personal demeanour from his landing at Milford Haven to his departure from Flint Castle, there is nothing extant more reliable or more graphically illustrative of the king's character. The work is altogether a very remarkable one, and the

A.D. 1399

¹ *MS. Ambassades*, No. 22, Beluze Collection, in the King's Library at Paris.

² *Histoire du Roy d'Angleterre Richard, traitant particulièrement la rebellion de ses subiectz et prinse de sa personne. Composé par un gentilhomme françois de marque, qui fut a la suite du dit Roy, avecq permission du Roy de France*, 1399. Strutt, in his *Antiquities*, renders this "French gentleman of mark" as "François de la Marque, a French gentleman." A beautifully illuminated copy on vellum of this curious MS. is preserved (Harl. MSS., No. 1319,) in the British Museum. The figures in the illustrations are valuable as portraits. An excellent translation of the chronicle, with reproductions of the drawings and copious notes by the Rev. John Webb, was published in *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

³ When about to describe the events attending Richard's captivity he determines to drop into prose with a view to greater accuracy—

"Car il semble,
Aucune foiz qu'on adiouste, on assemble
Trop de langaige
A la matière de quoy on fait l'ouvrage."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D. 1342-1408. opening lines deserve quotation as a specimen of its literary style :

“ Au departir de la froide saison,
Que printemps a fait reparaçon
De verdur, et quau champ et maint buisson
Voit on flourir ;
Et les oyseaux doucement resioir ;
Le roussignol peut on chanter oir,
Qui maint amant fait souvent devenir
Joyeux et gay ;
Cinq jours devant le premier jour de May,
Que chacun doit laisser dueil et esmay,
Un chevalier, que de bon cœur amay
Moult doucement,
Me dit : Amy, je vous pri charement
Qu'en Albion vueillez joyusement
Avecques moy venir, prochainement
Y vueil aller.
Je respondi : Monseigneur, commander
Povez sur moy ; je suis pres d'encliner
Ma volonté a votre bon penser ;
N'en doutez ja.”

The author proceeds to relate how he joined Richard on the eve of his embarkation for Ireland, and their landing at Waterford on 1st June. He sketches some excellent outlines of Irish warfare, and describes the king's abrupt return to England on receiving the tidings of Lancaster's arrival, the dismissal of his household, and his flight to Conway Castle. Here the Earl of Northumberland is brought upon the scene, who, we are told, assured Henry of Lancaster, in reply to his injunctions not to return without the king, that he would bring him “by reason or by craft;”¹ that he had set forth from Chester with 400 lances and 1000 archers, and that having by the way seized and garrisoned the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan, and left a strong body concealed in a pass a few miles from Conway under command of Sir Thomas Erpingham,² he sent a messenger to

¹ “ Par sens ou par cautelle je lamenray.”

² Who sixteen years later opened the battle of Agincourt.

KING RICHARD AT CONWAY CASTLE.

Richard praying for an interview as Lancaster's envoy. The request was granted upon condition that he came unattended.¹ In the illustration of this scene Northumberland is represented kneeling before the king² dressed in a long robe of blue dotted with golden stars. The face is somewhat long, with handsome features and a pointed beard.

A.D. 1399

Being required to deliver his message, the Earl says in effect, that Henry of Lancaster desired nothing more than the lands and dignities which by hereditary right belonged to him; that he acknowledged Richard as his rightful king, but accused him of having misgoverned the country and done much injustice to his people. If he would restore Lancaster to his possessions, be "a good judge and true" in the future, and consent to deliver the Dukes of Exeter and Surrey, the Earl of Salisbury, the Bishop of Carlisle and Maudelin³ the

¹ According to most of the old historians it was at the king's own request that Northumberland was sent to negotiate terms between himself and Lancaster. Upon this point, however, the evidence of the French knight—an eye-witness of the interview—is conclusive.

² In his *Richard II.* Shakespeare has generally adhered so closely to historical authority that it is difficult to account for his having attributed a disrespectful demeanour to Northumberland in his interview with the king, who is made to say:—

"We are amazed; and thus long have we stood
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee,
Because we thought ourselves thy lawful king;
And if we be, how dare thy joints forget
To pay their awful duty to our presence?"

³ The king's favourite chaplain, and one of the most dangerous and unscrupulous of his creatures; he was reported to be a natural son of the Black Prince, and bore so remarkable a resemblance to Richard,

"Qu'il n'est homme qui le vist,
Qu'il ne certifiest et dist
Que ce fu le roy ancien."

Some writers state that the body subsequently exposed in London as being King Richard's was that of Maudelin; this report was probably spread to confirm the belief in Richard's survival, which was long professed by Henry's enemies.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

priest, to be tried by parliament for their complicity in Gloucester's murder, then he would "humbly on his knees sue for mercy." Richard had never shown any reluctance to sacrifice his friends to his own comfort or safety, and now offered no opposition to the proposed surrender of his few faithful adherents. Before accepting these terms, however, he, at the instance of the Bishop of Carlisle, required Northumberland to take a solemn oath¹ that Lancaster would conscientiously fulfil his engagements. This the Earl unhesitatingly did;² and there is no reason to doubt that, however resolved he may have been to obtain possession of the king's person, he then believed in the sincerity of Lancaster's professions, and did not for a moment contemplate the treachery which ensued. The chronicler, however, charges him with deliberate perjury.³ At the same time he convicts Richard of the grossest duplicity, by attributing to him these words addressed to the Bishop and Salisbury: "I swear to you that whatever assurance I may give him (it is not quite clear whether the king here refers to Lancaster or Northumberland), he shall

¹ The illustration represents the Earl kneeling before an altar in the act of taking the oath.

² Shakespeare in a few lines epitomises Northumberland's address to the king, which concludes with an expression of his full confidence in Lancaster's sincerity:—

"This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;
And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him."

³ The translator also, in his commentary, denounces "the deep and daring dissimulation of Northumberland," which he can only palliate on the ground that in that age "the grossest perjury was lightly thought of and unblushingly committed in England;" adding that "the abuses of absolution by the Church perniciously weakened the effect of such bonds of conscience." He subsequently, however, does the Earl the justice to admit that, "like many others who have attempted to effect violent political changes, he had been deceived, hurried beyond his original designs, and by force of circumstances compelled to yield to Henry's acts, and finally to fall before his superior power." Hume, in his *History of England*, takes the same view.

NORTHUMBERLAND NEGOTIATES WITH THE KING.

for this be surely put to a bitter death for the outrage and injury he hath done unto us ; and doubt it not, no parliament shall be held at Westminster upon this business." This is fully confirmed by the MS. *Ambassades*, where it is stated that after the king's acceptance of the proposals of Henry of Lancaster, he remarked to his friends :

A.D. 1399

" It seems to me that a good peace may be made between us two if it be as the Earl says. But in truth, whatever agreement or peace he may make with me, if I can get him to any advantage I will cause him to be foully put to death, just as he hath earned."¹ On the acceptance of the terms the Earl urged the king to set out on his journey to Flint Castle, where it was arranged that Lancaster should meet him ; to which Richard replied, " We can set out when you will, but I think it ryght that you should go on before to Rhuddlan that dinner may be prepared there." " Just as you please," replied the Earl, and departed.² " The Earl rode on till he saw his men under the mountain, and then was he well pleased when he saw that they were careful with good order to guard the pass. So he related to them the whole matter, how he had succeeded and that the king would presently come to them."

As it was obviously impossible for a gentleman in Richard's retinue at Conway to know what was passing in Northumberland's encampment some miles in advance, this may be taken as one of our knight's poetic flights, but there is much obscurity in the whole of this stage of the proceedings. The king, who set forth with twenty-one attendants, is described as suddenly, on reaching a

¹ " *Je le feray mourir malvaisement, ainsi comme il a gaognie.*"

² In the *Ambassades* MS. we are told that the Earl had himself proposed his riding in advance in order to prepare for the interception of the king.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

rocky eminence,' coming in sight of a body of armed men in the valley below. "When he beheld them he was greatly astonished, saying 'I am betrayed, what can these be? Lord of Heaven, help me!' Then were they known by their banners. 'I think,' said he, 'it is the Earl who hath drawn us forth upon his oath.'"

It is not intelligible why Northumberland, having found the king perfectly willing to accompany him to Flint Castle, should have alarmed him on the way by an unnecessary display of military force. If he had reasons, however, for preparing an ambush, he would surely have kept his troops out of sight, instead of permitting them to appear with his banners flying, at such a distance as would have enabled Richard on seeing the danger, to retrace his steps to Conway. The king proceeded, however, we are told, on his way, and when he came within bowshot of the party, the Earl² advanced to meet him, and "kneeling quite to the ground," said, "Be not displeased that I should come to seek you for your better security, for the country as you know is disturbed by war."

Richard reproached him with breach of faith, said he could dispense with such an escort and spoke of returning to Conway; but Northumberland justified himself

¹ The spot is supposed to have been on the Welsh cliffs a few miles to the eastward of Orme's Head,

"Under whose craggy government there was
A niggard narrow way for men to pass;
And here, in hidden cliffs, conceal'd lay
A troop of armed men to intercept
The unsuspecting king, that had no way
To free his foot that into danger stept.
The dreadful ocean on the one side lay,
The hard encroaching mountain th'other kept."

Daniel's *Civil Wars*.

² The illustration represents Northumberland at the head of a body of troops, dressed in coat of mail and carrying a battle-axe.

ESCORTS HIM TO FLINT CASTLE.

A.D. 1399

and promised to conduct the king straightway to Duke Henry.¹ The king now vented his grief and anger in an outburst, in which pious sentiments and personal lamentations are curiously blended with curses upon his enemies :

“ Mais sil plait que ie muire,
 A ! Jesu Christ ! mame vueille conduire
 En paradis ! car echapper ne fuire
 Je ne puis
 Or est trop tard ; las ! pourquoy creumes nous
 Northumbrelant, qui en la main des loups
 Nous a livrez ? Je me doute que tous
 Ne soions mors.
 Car cels gens cy nont en eux nul remors.
 Dieu leur confonde les ames et les corps ! ”

Occasionally, however, Richard rises from these depths of despondency to the hopes of a brighter future when, re-established in his full regal authority and power, he will be enabled to revenge himself upon his foes even to flaying them alive.² The only self reproach he utters

¹ “ Lors dit le Comte, Monseigneur,
 Deshonneur ne mettez sus ;
 Mais je vous jure je vous menray
 Au Duc Henry le plus droit que pourray.”

The writer of the *Ambassades* MS. gives a different version :—“The Earl of Northumberland then came up with xi others, saying ‘Now I am come to meet you.’ The king asked who the people were whom he saw below in the valley. ‘I have seen none,’ said Northumberland. ‘Look before you, then,’ said the Earl of Salisbury ; ‘there they are.’ ‘They are your men,’ said the Bishop ; ‘I know your banner.’—‘Northumberland,’ said the king, ‘if I thought you capable of betraying me it is not yet perhaps too late for me to return to Conway.’ ‘You shall not return thither,’ said Northumberland, *throwing off the mask and seizing the bridle of the king’s horse*. ‘I shall conduct you to the Duke of Lancaster, for I do not break *all* my promises.’”

The chronicler, who was an eye-witness of the scene, would certainly have recorded the violent action attributed to the Earl had it taken place, but, on the contrary, he represents him as studiously respectful. The concluding sentence may be read according to the emphasis either as a distinct admission on Northumberland’s part of his duplicity, or as an insulting reflection upon Richard’s habitual want of truthfulness.

² “ Ils seront a la mort mis
 De telz je feray escorcher tous vifs.”

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

is for having been so weak as to have spared Lancaster's life on several occasions, when it had been justly forfeited for his offences; as when he drew his sword upon him in the queen's chamber, leagued against him with Gloucester, and conspired to murder him. But he had spared him even against the advice of the old Duke himself, who thought his son deserved to die;¹ and now he had learnt "how true it is that we have no greater enemy than the man we save from the gallows."²

No sooner did Lancaster receive the welcome tidings of Richard's arrival at Flint Castle than he broke up his camp at Chester and advanced with a body of 80,000 men, among whom were the Earl of Worcester and Hotspur with their contingents.³ The French knight describes the sense of hopeless grief under which the poor king from the terrace of the castle beheld this splendid army defiling along the sea-shore. Lancaster's demeanour towards the king on their first meeting was marked by profound respect. "As soon as he perceived him at a distance he bowed very low, and as they approached he bowed a second time with his cap in his hand; and then the king took off his bonnet and spoke first in this manner: 'Fair Cousin of Lancaster, you be right welcome.' Both men were acting a part, and each knew it, but it was not for long. On Richard's arrival at Chester, he was placed under a military guard, and now it was that Lancaster took the precaution of disarming

¹ This is quite incredible. It was for the sake of this son, whom he had always loved, and grief at whose banishment is said to have hastened his end, that John of Gaunt had persistently intrigued against the Mortimers for the heirship of the English crown. He personally could hardly have expected to supplant or to outlive Richard.

² MS. *Ambassades*.

³ According to the *Chronicle*, Hotspur was in chief command of Lancaster's army: "De tout l'ost du Duc estoit principal Capitaine Messire Henri de Persi, qu'ilz tiennent pour le meilleur chivalier d'Engleterre."

LANCASTER DISMISSES THE ARMIES.

A.D. 1399

such of the nobles as he could not rely upon to support him in his contemplated usurpation. Calling his adherents together, he represented the inexpediency and difficulty of carrying so large an army to London, alleging that thirty or forty thousand men would amply suffice for the king's escort and for holding him to the performance of his promises. He thanked them for the support which had now secured the only object he had in view, the recovery of his inheritance, and was anxious to relieve them of the heavy burden which the maintenance of such large forces entailed upon them. In compliance with this suggestion, sixty thousand men were dismissed to their homes; and among them the armed retainers of the Earl of Northumberland, Worcester, and Hotspur.*

Events now marched rapidly, but still Lancaster held his hand; and when the unfortunate king made his enforced entry into the city, the Londoners received him with their accustomed sullen respect and greeted Lancaster as nothing more than their "good Duke."

Some of the old historians have attributed to Northumberland a prominent part in having, by threats and violence, extorted Richard's abdication in favour of Bolingbroke, after his committal to the Tower; and Shakespeare has, in one of his finest scenes, confirmed popular tradition on this point.

There is not an atom of evidence to support the charge, and there is much to prove its inherent improbability.

* "Ainsi fist le duc retraire la plus grant partie de ses gens."—*Metrical Chronicle*. This is confirmed by Hardyng, who says:—

"The Erle of Northumberland then *had sent*
His power home by council of Duke Henry;
So did his sonne Henry, that truly ment,
Supposyng well the Duke wold not vary
From his othe, ne in no wyse contrary;
And he and his kepte all theyr power,
Tyll he was crowned kyng as did appere."

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

Most of the circumstances connected with Richard's deposition and with the allegation of his having "purely, voluntarily, simply, and absolutely" resigned his crown, are involved in mystery; but the few facts that can be gleaned from among the mass of fable and romance in which these events are enshrouded, would indicate the part played by Northumberland to have been the very reverse of that attributed to him.

The English editor of De la Marque's *Metrical Chronicle* asserts that the Percies had "continued the struggle" against Lancaster's pretensions "to the very evening of the day on which Henry challenged the crown,"¹ and that they persistently urged the claims of their young kinsman the Earl of March.

That the earl may have entered into negotiations in order to induce the king to abdicate in favour of his lawful heir is quite possible; but it is obvious that no threats or violence would have been needed to effect an object which would have enabled Richard to defeat the plans of his hated rival Bolingbroke.

There is weightier proof, however, in the fact of the Percies having made it one of the chief points in their indictment against King Henry before the Battle of Shrewsbury, that he had compelled Richard to sign his deposition under fear of death,² an accusation which they could hardly have made had they been accomplices in the act.

Perhaps the most convincing testimony, however, is that of Hardyng, who, although he had been in the service of the Percies,³ and may therefore be considered

¹ *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

² "Tu ipsum dominum tuum et regem nostrum imprisonasti infra turrim London, quousque resignaverat, metu mortis, regna Angliæ et Franciæ."

³ "Truly I, the maker of this boke, wase brought up fro twelve yere

THE ATTITUDE OF THE PERCIES.

a partisan, wrote his *Chronicle* many years after the proscription and death of his patrons, and when he could have had no motive for misrepresenting facts in their favour.¹ A.D. 1399

Hardyng asserts that he had "herde the Erle of Northumberland saie divers tymes, that he herde Duke John of Lancastre amonge the Lordes in counsels and in parlementes, and in the Common House among the Knyghtes chosyn for the Commons, aske by bille for to beene admytte heir apparaunte to Kynge Richarde, consydering howe the Kynge wase like to have no issue of his bodie. To the which the Lordes spirituell and temporell and the Commons in the Common House, be hoole aduyse, seide that the Erle of March, Roger Mortymere, wase his next heire to the Crown, of full discent of blode, and they wold have noone other . . . for whiche, when the Duke of Lancastre wase so putt bie, he and his counsell feyned and forged the saide Chronicle, that Edmonde should be the elder brother, to mak his son Henry a title to the Crown, and wold have hade the seide Erle of Northumberland and Sir Thomas Percy his brother of counsaile thereof; for that they were discent of the said Edmonde by a sister, *but they refused it*; whiche Chronicle, so forged, the Duke dide put in divers abbaies and in freres, as I herde the saide Erle ofte tymes saie and recorde to divers persouns, for to be kepte for the enheritaunce of his sonne to the Crown, which title he

of age in Sir Henry Percy house to the battail of Shrewsbury, where I wase with hym armed of xxvth yere of age, as I had beene before at Homyldon, Cokelaw, and at dyvers rodes and feeldes wyth hym, and knewe his entent and had it wretyn."—Prose additions to Hardyng's *Chronicle*. Harl. MS.

¹ He has been accused of having forged certain documents relating to the Scottish succession—which if true would undoubtedly invalidate his testimony in other matters—but the charge rests upon very hostile and otherwise questionable evidence.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1401

put furste forth after he hade Kynge Richarde in the Toure, *but that tittle the Erle Percy put aside.*"

He goes on to say that Duke Henry, as soon as Richard was in custody in the Tower, produced the forged documents which his father had deposited in various places, whereupon "all the chronycles of Westmynster and of the other notable monasteries were hade in the Councell at Westmynstre, and examyned amonge the Lordes, and proued well by all their cronycles, that the Kynge Edwarde wase the older brother, and the saide Edmonde the younger brother, and not croukebacked nother maymed, but the semeliest person of Englande, except his brother Edwarde. *Wherefore that Chronycle which Kynge Henry so put forth was adnulled and reproued.*"

There are no authentic records to enable us to glean any knowledge of what actually took place in Parliament on the day of Henry's election, but contemporary writers here and there afford us a few glimpses of the outward state of things. Among others, Hardyng asserts that Parliament was induced to set aside the claims of Edward Mortimer in consideration of his extreme youth; that in view of Henry's large military force "there durst none hym deny," and that to the last moment the Percies maintained a passive opposition.¹

¹ "Th Erles two then of Northumberlande,
Of Worcester, and Syr Henry Percy,
And therle also of Westmerlande
Councelled hym then *fro' his othe not to varye* ;
And though at eue he did to them applie,
On the morrowe by a pryvie counsayl,
He wuld be crowned kyng withouton fayle."

This is also confirmed by the MS. *Ambassades*, where the antagonistic attitude of the Percies is indicated by the fact that, in spite of Henry's representation that "he was his brother and had always been his friend," they refused to recognise the old Duke of Lancaster's son

KING HENRY IS CROWNED.

A.D. 1399

It seems then that, having resisted Henry's pretensions as long as possible, when they found themselves in a hopeless minority and disarmed, they ceased to struggle, and joined in the vote which established the new dynasty. Their demeanour, however, gave rise to suspicion, for it is mentioned by several of the old chroniclers that Northumberland and Worcester "did not take their places in the assembled Parliament, but passed to and fro," and the author of the French *Metrical History* expresses himself puzzled to account for the conduct of the Earl of Northumberland at the ceremonial. The fact of his having officiated as one of the sword-bearers on that occasion,¹ leaves, however, no room for doubt as to his willingness to afford public recognition of the usurpation.

Thus, as Hume expresses it, "Henry became King of England, nobody could tell how or wherefore." The great nobles ranged themselves around his throne, and his recent opponents, vying with his most enthusiastic adherents in professions of loyalty, ostentatiously took their part in the pageantry of the new court.

Finally only one man, Merks, Bishop of Carlisle,²

by Catherine Swinton (who in 1397 had been created Marquess of Dorset and Somerset), or to take their seats by his side.

¹ "Portoit lespée de Justice le Prince de Galles son ainsne filz, et lespée de leglise Messire Henry de Persy, Conte de Northombrelant, et connestable d'Angleterre."—*Chronique de la Grande Bretagne*, par Jehan de Waurin, vol. ii. p. 5.

² Shakespeare has celebrated the courage of the bishop who dared to denounce the usurper to his face :

"My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king ;"

and puts in his mouth an eloquent and prophetic warning of the disastrous civil wars that would result from this outrage. He also makes the Earl of Northumberland resent these words and arrest the speaker for high treason ; but this is a mistake. It was the Earl of Westmoreland who, in his capacity of Earl Marshal, "attacked" the bishop.—Hall, p. 6.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

raised his voice against the vote which consigned the deposed sovereign to life-long imprisonment.¹

The sentence, which, among that of others, bears the signature of the three Percies, runs thus :

“ Qu’il serroit mys en saufe et secre garde, et en tiel lieu ou nul concours des gentz y est ; et qu’il soit gardez par seures et sufficientz persones ; et que nul qu’ ad esté familier du dit nadgairs Roy soit ascunement autour sa persone ; et que ceo soit fait en le plus secre manere que faire se purra.”²

From the time that Richard was consigned to Pomfret Castle public interest in him seems to have died out ; and when, shortly after, his death was made known, even the prevalent rumours of his having been foully murdered, or made away with by the lingering agony of starvation, excited but little sympathy. The turn of the tide however, was not long in setting in. While Henry, beset by avowed and secret foes, groaned under the weight of his usurped crown, the vices which had made Richard’s rule obnoxious faded from the public memory, and his better qualities, exaggerated by distance, were contrasted with the treachery and duplicity of his perjured successor. The nation was seized with remorse at having sacrificed its allegiance to a sovereign whom their glorious King Edward and their beloved Black Prince had bequeathed to them as a sacred heritage ; and the popular sentiment displayed itself in sullen resentment

¹ On the 23rd October “ the Earl of Northumberland asked Parliament to advise the king as to the disposal of the deposed monarch ; ” “ coment leur semble que serroit ordeignez de Richard, nadgairs Roy, pur luy mettre en saufe garde ; sauvant sa vie, quele le Roy voet que luy soit sauvez en toutes maneres.”—*Rot. Parl.* 1st Henry IV., iii. 426.

² *Rot. Parl.* 1st Henry IV. The young Earl of March, who, according to Hume, “ consulted his safety by keeping silence with regard to his title,” was now consigned to honourable captivity at Windsor, and after one or two feeble attempts to assert his rights, sank contentedly into the position of a pensioner on the bounty of the usurper.

GRANT OF THE ISLE OF MAN.

towards Henry, and a vague hope, gradually hardening into a firm conviction, that the deposed monarch had escaped from prison and was still living.¹

A.D. 1399

It was for a future generation, however, to reap the bitter fruit of the crime their forefathers had condoned, and to pay for the gratification of one man's illicit ambition with the lives of untold thousands of England's best and noblest sons.

* * *

The first charter to which King Henry IV. attached his signature was that under which on the eve of his coronation he conferred upon the Earl of Northumberland the office of High Constable of England.² Shortly after he granted him the Isle of Man and its dependencies; and the wording of the instrument conveying this fief clearly indicates the royal intention of placing the adhesion of the Percies on record in ineffaceable letters. By the acceptance of this princely gift, under the conditions attached to it the earl undoubtedly incurred, on behalf of himself and his heirs, the obligation of loyally supporting the new dynasty.

Nor was the royal bounty limited to the head of the house.

The Earl of Worcester was associated with Prince John, the king's second son, in the office of Lord High

¹ So strong a hold did this belief gain on the popular mind that special laws were enacted to punish the propagators of such rumours with imprisonment and death. In May, 1402, the Earl of Northumberland was commanded under a royal warrant to arrest all persons so offending. Yet the belief only became the more prevalent for the attempts to suppress it. How the unfortunate monarch came to his end at Pomfret Castle will never be known, and all the ingenious theories on the subject are based upon mere surmise or conjecture; but of his death at that time there can be no reasonable doubt. It is evident that Henry thought it less perilous to remain under the suspicion of complicity in Richard's murder than to admit the possibility of his survival.

² For transcripts of these Charters see Appendix XIX. and XX.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Steward ; he was made Governor of the Prince of Wales, Admiral of the Fleet, Treasurer of England, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Lieutenant of South Wales and Cardigan, and Governor of Aquitaine. The various grants that had been made to him during the two preceding reigns were confirmed, and to these were added charges upon various customs and port dues, and on the revenues of towns and corporations.*

Hotspur became Warden of the East Marches, Governor of Berwick and Roxburgh, Justiciary of Chester, North Wales and Flintshire, and Constable of Chester, Flint, Conway, Carnarvon, and Bamborough Castles. He was granted the county of Anglesey* and Beaumaris for life ; besides lands of the annual value of £500 in Essex and Cumberland.

Such exceptional favours called for zealous service in the cause of the donor, and during the ensuing three years the Percies were ever foremost when the king's enemies had to be met or his rule to be supported.

The Earl of Northumberland took a leading part in Parliament and in the Council Chamber, and even condescended to the performance of ceremonial court

* Among these grants were £100 a year from the Sheriffs of London, £100 a year from the Exchequer of Wales, £500 a year from the Manor of Eye in Suffolk, £100 a year from the revenues of Knaresborough, £40 a year from fines and issues of London and county of Worcester, and £181 10s. from the King's Exchequer.—*Patent Rolls, 1st Henry IV., p. 1, m. 21.* When to these grants are added his military emoluments and the salaries of his several governorships, they amount to what in those days represented a very large annual income. The validity of the letters patent having been subsequently called in question, a formal re-confirmation, in which all the grants are related, was made in 4th Henry IV.—See Appendix XXI.

* On the Prince of Wales attaining the fifteenth year of his age, the Council proposed that Anglesey should be then offered to him, Henry Percy being compensated by lands belonging to the Earl of March, but he refused to be enriched at the cost of his kinsman.—*Acts of the Privy Council.*

duties, as when he conveyed the king's invitation to the members of the two Houses of Parliament :

“ Et pria as toutz les Seigneurs Espirituel et temporell et as toutz les comunes sus dit, detre le dimange ensuant a mangier avec le roi notre Seigneur.”¹

In the north he was fully employed in alternately negotiating and fighting with the Scotch. In the first year of Henry's reign, on his refusal to deliver up George Dunbar, Earl of March, who had taken refuge at Alnwick Castle, they had declared war, and the king at once carried a large army across the Border, the principal contingent of which was furnished by the Percies. The outbreak of Owen Glendower's rebellion in Wales led to the premature withdrawal of this force, and to the conclusion of an unfavourable peace, the terms of which, however, appear to have been little regarded on either side.

The Earl of Douglas had repeatedly remonstrated against the aggressions of the English Borderers, and early in 1401 complained to Henry that his hereditary foe, the Earl of Northumberland, had broken the truce agreed upon, requesting at the same time that Commissioners should be appointed “ devant lesquelx a l'aide de Dieu je ferai clerement estre cognu que le dit Comte de Northumbre n'ay pas fait comme sa lettre de certification conteint et importe ; et que les dites treves de cest an et le redres de tous atemptatez au devant faitez sont plainement empeschés [et fail]lies en son default.”²

The king, after inquiry, completely exonerated Northumberland from these charges, and replied that he had satisfied himself, that the earl “ rien ne fesoit sinon de comun avys et assent des dites persones a lui assoziez come noz commissaires, pour conformentz a l'instruction pour nous a eux donees ;” at the same time he

¹ Cotton's Abridged Acts.

² Cott. MSS., Vespasian F. vii. fol. 120.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

accuses Douglas of having suppressed certain facts "dout nous esmerveillons," and of having himself been the principal agent in breaking the truce. He consented however to appoint Commissioners; and it affords a striking proof of the condition to which these continuous Border raids had reduced the country, that the Duke of Rothsay proposed that the meeting should be held at Melrose Abbey instead of in the West Marches, because the English Marches, like those of Scotland, had been so utterly devastated "qil n'est nul vivre pour gentz et chivalx d'assembler en manere accustumez."¹

In the same year² the earl proceeded to the Continent on a mission having for its object the negotiation of a marriage between Henry's eldest daughter and the son and heir of the Emperor of Germany. This alliance, although for some time delayed for want of the stipulated dower of the princess, was ultimately concluded.³

¹ State Papers. See also (Appendix XXII) a letter from Earl of Northumberland to the Council, dated 24th of March, 1401, in which it is stated that the Duke of Rothsay urged the immediate ratification of the treaty of peace before the arrival of the French Commissioners, who, like Douglas and other of the more warlike Scottish nobles, considered its terms humiliating. This is not to be wondered at, since Northumberland requests to be furnished with transcripts of "the evidences and records proving that the crown of Scotland belongs to England," upon which pretension the treaty was based. The assassination of the Duke a few days later broke off the negotiations, and hostilities were renewed with greater violence than ever.

² About this time the earl had been granted the custody of Jedworth Castle, with a fee of 100 marks in peace and 200 marks in war, in exchange for the Castle of Lochmaben and other places in Scotland, which had been conferred upon his grandfather in 8th Edward III.—*Harleian Charters*, 2 Henry IV.

³ The impoverished state of the Exchequer in the earlier part of Henry's reign is very remarkable. "*In Thesaurò nihil*" was the stereotyped reply to the most ordinary demand for funds to meet the requirements of the public service; and so impoverished had the king become that on the 1st March, 1402, we find him soliciting the loan of £40 in aid of the expenses attendant upon his daughter's approaching marriage: "Vous prions chierement que, pour les susdites causes, en ceste nostre necessitee, apprester nous veuillez la somme de quarante livres."—*Fœdera*, vol. viii., p. 245.

THE EARL OF WORCESTER.

In the meanwhile the Earl of Worcester had been employed in important duties abroad.

A.D.
1400-1401

Richard's deposition and death had caused much consternation in the French provinces under English rule where the late king had enjoyed great popularity. The French Court endeavoured to turn this feeling to profitable account, and the Duc de Bourbon proceeded in person to Bordeaux in the hope of winning over the people and inducing them to shake off the yoke of their foreign rulers and to return to their natural allegiance.

The Londoners, who, in the tenacity with which they clung to our conquered territories in France, represented popular feeling throughout the country, no sooner received these tidings than they petitioned the king to take steps for securing the integrity of these possessions by the despatch of military reinforcements, and by the employment of a diplomatic mission composed of "valyant and wyse men that is beloved amongst them, some such as hath governed, and this is the Lord Thomas Percy;"¹ whom Henry accordingly selected for the duty.

The *Bourdellois* seem to have been disposed to take a practical view of the question of nationality. "If the Frenchmen govern over us they will give us the same usage, for they know how the realme of France is vexed with tayles and towage, and shameful exactions all to get money, and if the French govern over us they will bring us to the same usage. It is better to be Englishe for they keep frank free. If the Londoners have deposed King Richard what is that to us? We have and shall always have a kynge, and we understand that the Bishop

¹ Froissart. "Les Anglois furent frappés de crainte et pour empecher la revolte des Bourdellois envoyèrent en Guienne Thomas de Persi et l'evêque de Londres et les chargèrent de les retenir dans leur obeysance."
—*Dissertation sur les Monnoyes par l'Abbé Venutis*. Bordeaux, 1754.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
—

of London and Sir Thomas Percy shortly will be here ; they will inform us of the truth.”¹

Worcester embarked for Bordeaux in the early spring with a retinue of 200 men-at-arms and 400 archers ;² and “at his arrival so wisely entreated the noblemen, so gravelie persuaded the magistrates of the cities and townes, and so gentlie and familiarlie used and treated the commons, that he not only appeased their furie and malice but brought them to own and conform obeyance, receiving their oaths of obedience in loial fealty . . . and returned again to Englande with great thanks.”³

Shortly after Worcester was despatched to Paris for the purpose of negotiating a peace with France, one of the proposed conditions of which was a marriage between the widowed Queen Isabel and the Prince of Wales.⁴ The French Court, however, peremptorily rejected their advances, and the king demanded that his daughter should be forthwith restored to him together with the dower and jewels she had carried into England.

It was not until the following summer that Queen Isabel actually returned to her native land ;⁵ and the Earl

¹ Froissart.

² “The chieftest captaines that accompanied the earl in this iournie were his nephew Hew Hastings, Sir Thomas Colville, Sir William Lisle, John de Graille, base son to the Captal de Buch, Sir William Drayton, Sir John d’Ambreticourt, and the Bishop of London.”—Holinshed.

³ Holinshed, vol. iii., p. 15. Froissart.

⁴ The fact of this marriage having been proposed effectually disposes of the legend of Richard having survived and made his escape from prison, since the King of England would not have urged an alliance between the Prince of Wales and Isabel had he not been satisfied that she was a widow. According to Monstrelet, the negotiation for this marriage was renewed four years later, when Henry offered to abdicate in favour of his son if the arrangement were effected. Isabel, however, showed no desire to become for a second time a queen of England. She married her cousin, the young Duc d’Orleans, in 1408, and died young.

⁵ By a royal ordinance of 22nd June “three Balingers and two armed Barges were required to be in readiness at Dover on 1st July, 1402, for conveyance of the queen.”—*Fœdera*, vol. viii., 204.

QUEEN ISABEL RETURNS TO FRANCE.

of Worcester, who only three years before had acted as chamberlain at her marriage, was now entrusted with the charge of restoring the child-widow to her father. Attended by a retinue of 500 persons, "including some of the noblest ladies of England,"¹ she embarked at Dover for Boulogne, whence she was conducted to Amiens, where her uncle, the Duc d'Orleans, met and received her from Worcester's hands.²

A.D. 1402

July.

The author of the Metrical History appears to have been an eye-witness of this ceremony, and testifies to the grace and delicacy with which Worcester acquitted himself in this his last duty to the poor queen, whose life's troubles had thus begun in early childhood.³

The story is best told in his own quaint words :—

“ Quand ilz furent ensemble mis
 En la chapelle, un chevalier
 Qui d'angloiz est tenu moult chier,
 Cest sire Thommas de Persi,
 Print a parler, disant ainsi :
 Le roy Henri, roy d'Engleterre,
 Mon Souverain Seigneur en terre,
 Desirant l'accomplissement
 De sa promesse ligement,

¹ “The queen embarked under the conduct of the Earl of Worcester, associated with divers other noble and honorable personages both men and women, having with her all the jewels, ornaments and plate which she had brought to England, with a great surplusage besides gyven to her by the king.”—Holinshead. The restoration of the jewels was not so complete as is represented. Henry is said to have retained the greater part, and as late as in July, 1403, the French ambassadors in England were instructed to make reclamation for these.—*Fœdera*, viii. 315. Miss Strickland says: “The royal virgin was approaching her fifteenth year when thus plundered, and wearing the dress and weeds of widowhood she embarked at Dover for Calais, escorted by the same Sir Thomas Percy who had attended her as chamberlain during her espousals.”—*Queens of England*. She was not in her fifteenth but barely in her twelfth year at this time.

² “Granting a regular receipt for her delivery worded somewhat like a receipt for a bale of merchandise.”—Hall.

³ “My queen to France; from whence, set forth in pomp,
 She came adorned hither like sweet May,
 Sent back like Hallowmas or shortest day.”

—Richard II.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408
—

Et de voulente tres affine,
A cy ma Dame, la Royne
D'Engleterre fait amener,
Pour la rendre et restituer
A son pere le roy de France,
Bien deliée, quitte et franche,
De tous liens de mariage,
Et de tout autre servage,
Dette ou obligacion.
Et que, sur la damnacion
De son ame ainsi le prenoit
Et oultre plus, q'elle estoit
Aussi saine et aussi entière,
Qu'au jour que dedans sa litière,
Fu amenee au roy Richart ;
Et s'il estoit nul, quelque part,
Fut roy, duc, comte, chrestien,
Ou dautre estat grant ou moien,
Qui voulsist a se contredire,
Il trouveroit, sans plus rien dire,
Ne sans querir plus long conseil,
Un homme d'estat tout pareil,
En Engleterre soustenant
Ceste querelle, et par devant
Tout bon juge exposerait
Son corps, que tout ainsi estoit.

* * *
Lors Sire Thommas de Persi,
La jeune royne saisi
Par les bras en plourant moult fort,
Et la livra par bon accord
Au Messages, qui furent la,
Et aussi on leur delivra
Certains lettres de quittance,
Qu'avoient promis ceux de France."

Shortly after having thus restored the widow of the deposed king to her family, Worcester was employed in the more grateful duty of conducting Joan of Navarre from Brittany as the new queen of England.

* * *
The only authentic writings under Hotspur's hand which have hitherto come to light are comprised in his French correspondence with the Council, while he was engaged in fighting Owen Glendower's warlike and barbarous hordes in Wales.

THE WAR IN WALES.

Shakespeare ascribes to his hero a profound contempt for the whole tribe of "Metre ballad-mongers" and their "mincing poetry;" and certainly nothing could be less mincing, or more prosaic and matter of fact, than the style of these letters. Although he offers excuses for his *royde et feble manère*, his compositions are strongly marked by that directness of purpose which characterised his speech and actions; and if they are sometimes "royde" in expression, they are never "feble." As indicating the first causes and symptoms of the estrangement between the king and the Percies, these despatches¹ possess much historical value, apart from the personal interest attaching to them.

A.D.
1402-1403

The failure of the Government to provide funds for the conduct of the Welsh war forms the principal subject of this correspondence. King Henry's finances during the earlier period of his reign were, as already stated, at a very low ebb, and the difficulty of meeting the cost of military establishments, although habitually exaggerated by the Council, did doubtless exist.

The emoluments of the wardens of the Northern Marches, be it remembered, were only the subsidies payable by the State for maintaining garrisons on the border, and for supplementing the feudal armies which the great nobles maintained at their own cost. When, as in the present instance, the war ceased to be localised the expenses of raising and subsisting troops became greatly increased; and Hotspur's letters show that it was not until he and his father had completely exhausted their private resources in the king's service, that they

¹ They are preserved among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum, and will be found printed in Nicolas's *Proceedings of the Privy Council*. The Earl of Northumberland's letters of the same period are also in this collection, and are quoted by Sharon Turner as excellent examples of the literary style of Englishmen of the highest rank in the fourteenth century.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

made urgent appeals for payment of the stipulated allowances, the withholding of which made it impossible for them to meet their engagements towards the army in Wales and in the north marches. It does not appear that at this time either of them doubted the good faith of the king, but that they attributed the failure of funds to some inimical influence in the Council.¹

When, early in 1401, William Tudor,² who had seized upon Conway castle, was besieged by Hotspur and forced to surrender, Henry granted the latter £200 "as a reward for the cost and expense incurred by him in having continued the siege for four weeks at his own cost, and without the assistance of the people of the locality."³ The grant however existed on paper only.

On the 2nd May following, writing from Carnarvon, Hotspur begs the Council to "remember how I have repeatedly applied for payment of the king's troops at Berwick and in the East Marches of England, who are in such distress as they can no longer bear or endure for want of money, and I therefore implore you to order that they may be paid as was agreed upon between the treasurer and myself at our last meeting, if better means cannot be adopted, as otherwise I shall have to go to you in person to claim payment to the neglect of other duties."⁴

A fortnight later he represents the great labours and expenses he has incurred in the king's service, "which in good faith I am unable to bear beyond the end of this month or a few days more," praying the Council to provide the necessary funds and thus to avert much mischief, and promising in return to place "all his power by sea

¹ See Hotspur's letter. Appendix XXIVA.

² See his petition to the king.—*Ibid.* XXIII.

³ Issue Rolls, 3 Henry IV.

⁴ Appendix XXIVB.

HOTSPUR'S LETTERS.

A.D.
1402-1403

and land, his persons and his goods," at the disposal of the State.¹

Early in June² he again writes that if "good and speedy remedy do not come . . . and if I depart from this country before some order is taken, which becomes a matter of necessity to me for I cannot bear the costs I am at," the complete success of the rebels is to be apprehended. Finally he represents that having, after repeated applications, failed to receive the promised subsidies for maintaining troops or the stipulated allowances to which he and the Earl were entitled as wardens of the marches and governors of strongholds, and having from time to time been put off with evasive answers, he had written to the king warning him that if, which Heaven forefend, evil should happen to any town, castle, or march, under his rule for want of subsistence of the troops, not he, but they who will not make payment in accordance with the royal commands, must bear the blame. He states that he was quite at a loss to understand how the Council could plead their inability to meet the charges of the marches under his father and himself, which amount only to £5000, while they had no difficulty in providing £37,000 for military defences elsewhere; and concludes, with the apology for his style already referred to, in expressing a hope that the Council will not be displeased at the urgency of his demands, which have been made not on his own account, but in consideration of his soldiers, who are in extreme want for which it is entirely out of his power to provide a remedy.³

Matters had not improved when in the following year the young Earl of March joined his uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, in an expedition against Owen Glendower, by whom they were both taken prisoners. Henry, at first

¹ Appendix XXIVc.

² *Ibid.* XXIVd.

³ *Ibid.* XXIVe.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
—

expressed his concern at the capture of "notre tres cher and tres amé cousyn,"¹ and stated that he intended proceeding to Wales in person to avenge it and "pour resister a la malice des nos rebelles";—but he soon after changed his tone, charged Edmund Mortimer (whose zeal in his service had hitherto been unquestioned) with having voluntarily and treacherously surrendered himself to the Welsh chieftain, and refused in harsh and insulting terms the prayer of the Percies for the ransom of their common kinsman.²

The attitude now assumed by the king is perfectly intelligible. The Earl of March, the legitimate possessor of the crown of England, was a weak self-indulgent and unambitious boy, from whom personally the usurper knew that he had nothing to fear. Hotspur, however, had married the young earl's aunt, Elizabeth,³ sister of Edmund Mortimer,⁴ an alliance which might produce formidable results, since their offspring would stand within measurable distance of the throne; and the military reputation, the popularity, and the overgrown power of

¹ King Henry IV. to the Council June 25, 1402.—*Proceedings of the Privy Council.*

² "Shall our coffers then
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?
Shall we buy treason, and indent with fears,
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?
No, on the barren mountains let him starve!"

1st Part of *Henry IV.* Act. 1, Scene 3.

Historical evidence bears out the character of the language here imputed to the king.

³ This lady, born at Usk in 1371, subsequently married Lord Camoys, a distinguished soldier who fell in the French wars under Henry V. She was still living in 1427, when she had livery of the manor of Newborn, which the first Earl of Northumberland had settled upon her on her marriage with his son.

⁴ The circumstance of both uncle and nephew bearing the name of Edmund caused the two to be confounded by most of the old writers, who speak of Hotspur's wife as the *sister* of the Earl of March. Shakespeare fell into the same error.



BRASS TO THE WIDOW AND HER
and Her Husband, Love, 1815.
• THE WIDOW AND HER

of the king's army at the capture of "notre chiere ville de Valenciennes," and stated that he intended to "reprendre vengeance de la mort de son freres," in person, to avenge it to "la mort de son freres";—but he soon after changed his mind, changed Edward Mortimer to the Earl of March, and it shortly been unquestioned that the king's army had already surrendered to the Earl of March, and refused in haste at the prayer of the Percies for the king's pardon to the Earl of March's "brother."

The attitude now assumed by the king is perfectly intelligible. The Earl of March, the legitimate possessor of the throne of England, was a weak self-indulgent man, from whom personally the usurper had nothing to fear. Hotspur, however, the young earl's aunt, Elizabeth, sister of Edward Mortimer,⁴ an alliance which might produce a child, since their offspring would stand within measurable distance of the throne; and the military reputation, the popularity, and the overgrown power of

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Historical evidence bears out the character of the language here imparted to the king.

³ This lady, born at Usk in 1371, subsequently married Lord George, a distinguished soldier who fell in the French wars under Henry V. She was still living in 1427, when she had livery of the castle of Northorn, which the 1st Earl of Northumberland had seized upon her marriage with his son.

⁴ The circumstance of both uncle and nephew bearing the name of Mortimer, led the two to be confounded by most of the old writers, and the name of Mortimer's wife as the *sister* of the Earl of March, and not the *aunt*, fell into the same error.



Photo Engraved by V. Brooks Day & Son.

**BRASS TO THE WIDOW OF HOTSPUR
and Her Husband Lord Camoys.
• in Trotton Church.**



BATTLE AT NESBITT MOOR.

his family were already a source of danger to the House of Lancaster. They had done him good service, it is true, but they were too apt to remind him of his indebtedness; and as they had now a personal interest in making themselves the supporters and representatives of King Richard's lawful heir, their power must be crushed.

A. D.
1402-1403
—

Such were the sentiments which the old writers attribute to the king at this juncture, and which history has generally accepted.¹

Hotspur being more immediately concerned in the liberation of his brother-in-law and nephew than the other members of his family, was probably unguarded in the expression of his views upon the king's conduct.

"Behold,!" he is reported to have said on leaving the royal presence, "the heyre of the realme is robbed of his right, and the robber, with his owne, will not redeem him."*

His personal resentment, however, gave way before his soldierlike spirit and sense of public duty, and on the first appearance of a foreign enemy, Hotspur forgetful of his grievances, hastened to the scene of danger.

The Scots, taking advantage of the rebellion in Wales, had become more arrogant in their disregard of the existing treaty of peace. In the spring of 1402 they had advanced in great force, under Hepburn, as far as the borders of Durham, whence, after ravaging and devastating whole districts, they were slowly returning with their booty; when the Earl of Northumberland, accompanied by his son and brother and a number of northern lords, overtook them at Nesbitt Moor, and, in a fiercely-contested battle, completely

7th May.

¹ "He rather desyred and wished all his lineage in heaven, for then his title had been out of all doubt."—Holinshed. "The king began to muse on this request and not without cause, for indeed it touched him as nere as his shirt, for that he was nere of the blood of King Richard and had good cause to make clayme of the throne."—Hall.

² Hall.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

defeated them, making their commander a prisoner and slaying, it is reported, no less than 10,000 of their number.¹

14th Sept.

To avenge this loss, a second expedition of 12,000 men, was, in the autumn, led across the border by an hereditary foe of the Percies, Archibald, Earl of Douglas, whom Henry Hotspur hurried forward to meet. The Scots occupied a commanding position on the heights of Homildon,² near Wooler; and Hotspur had, with his accustomed impetuosity, given the order to charge them up hill, when the more wary Earl of March (Dunbar), who had entered into a formal alliance with the English, advised that the attack should be opened by a continuous discharge of arrows.³ The archers were accordingly called to the front, and poured a shower with unerring aim into the closely serried ranks of the enemy, who, taken by surprise, but unwilling to abandon their vantage ground by seeking shelter, fell by hundreds.⁴

¹ The king on 30th June formally communicated to the Council the defeat of the Scots by "*notre très chier el foial Cousin le Conte de Northumberland*," and urges reinforcements being at once sent to the North.—*Proceedings of the Privy Council*.

² Called also Holmidon and Humbledon. In a memo. by Dr. Thomas Percy among the Syon House MSS. it is stated that when he visited the scene a street in this village continued to bear the name of *Percy's Row*.

³ "Sed comes Marchiæ retinebat Percy per frenum, dicens eum non debere movere, sed debere mittere sagittarios, et Scotos, quasi signum ad sagittas, posse de facili penetrare, et sic eos victos captivare, sicut rei exitus patefecit."—Fordun, *Scotichronicon*, Lib. XV. cap. 14, p. 1149.

⁴ By the bold anachronism previously referred to (p. 154), Sir Walter Scott has introduced this incident into his dramatic poem on the Battle of *Halidon Hill*, where the following dialogue is ascribed to King Edward III. and Henry Percy:

"*Percy*. The thick volley
Darkens the air and hides the sun from us.

"*Edward*. It falls on those shall see the sun no more;
The winged, the resistless plague is with them.
How their vast host is reeling to and fro,

THE BATTLE OF HOMILDON.

A.D. 1402

Sir David Swinton, a Scottish knight, impatient under the slaughter inflicted upon the helpless soldiery, exclaimed, "What fascinates you to-day that you stand like deer or fawns in a park to be shot, instead of meeting your foes hand to hand? Let them that will follow me!"¹

They then charged down hill; but the tactics that had proved so successful were continued. The archers, still in the van of the English army, fell back as the enemy advanced, halting from time to time to pour their deadly volleys into them. The Scots were thrown into confusion; in the attempt to rally them most of their leaders, including Douglas himself and the Earl of Fife, King Robert's nephew, were slain or taken prisoners; and of the thousands that had crossed the border a few days before only a few hundreds are said to have succeeded in regaining their native soil. The tidings of this decisive victory, which was attained with insignificant loss to the English,² were received with universal rejoicing. The king conferred an annuity of 40*l* a year upon the messenger who brought him the welcome intelligence;³ and when Parliament in the

Like the chafed whale with fifty lances in him.
They do not see, they cannot shun the wound;
The storm is viewless as death's sable wing,
Unerring as his scythe.

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

¹ Fordun, Lib. XV. cap. 14, p. 1149.

² "In hac pugna nullus dominus, nullus miles aut scutifer, hostibus ictum intulit, sed solummodo Deus Omnipotens arcitenentibus Anglorum victoriam miraculose contulit, proceribus et armatis effectis belli spectatoribus otiosis."—Walsingham, ii. 252.

³ The grant was confirmed by an Act of Parliament, dated 25th September, 1402, in favour of Nicholas Sherbury, described as an Esquire of the Earl of Northumberland, "qui nobis primo reportavit certitudinem boni ac placentis et gratiosi viagii nuper apud Homildon juxta Wollere in Northumbria, per prædictum consanguineum nostrum,

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

following year petitioned him to reward the Earl of Northumberland "et luy honorer et tenir en chère, et luy mercier de ses grandes labours et diligences,"¹ he granted him the whole of the Scottish estates of the Earl of Douglas,² the only drawback to the enjoyment of which consisted in the necessity of their being conquered by their new owner before he could claim their revenues.

Accompanying this mark of the royal favour in acknowledgment of a national service, came the king's peremptory mandate prohibiting the earl or Hotspur from parting with the prisoners they had taken, whom they were required to hold at the king's disposal "certis et urgentibus de causis nos ad præsens moventibus."³

The ransom of prisoners had hitherto been considered as one of the principal prizes of war, and it is difficult to understand why King Henry should have made a brilliant victory the occasion for disputing this right,⁴ unless from a determination to offend the Percies. These however were by no means disposed to submit to his claim. The earl represented that by immemorial border custom "they who had undergone the danger of battle should have all the advantage of pay and prisoners," and that the kings of England had always allowed this right "to the lords of the north, to encourage them in defending their dominions, and to

et alios legios nostros in comitiva sua, facti super inimicos nostros Scotiæ ad devictionem eorumdem."—*Records in the Tower*. The grant was renewed by an Act passed in 1st Henry V.

¹ Cotton's Abridged Acts of Parliament, 3rd Henry IV.

² *Fœdera*, viii. 289.

³ Royal proclamation, September 22, 1402.—*Fœdera*, viii. 278.

⁴ Edward III. had, it is true, established a precedent when he required the captors to deliver up King John of France and King David after the battles of Poitiers and Nevill's Cross. These prisoners of war were, however, as crowned heads, in an exceptional position, and both Copeland and Morbergue were fully indemnified for the surrender by payment of a munificent ransom.

THE KING CLAIMS THE PRISONERS.

keep up the damages caused by the continual depre-
dations of these faithless people"—the Scots. A.D. 1402

The following manly and dignified letter, written at a time when the Percies were using their whole power and making great personal sacrifices in order that England might reap the fullest benefit from their recent victories over the Scots at Nesbitt Moor and Homildon, places the Earl of Northumberland's position in its true light, and affords the most powerful testimony to the unworthy treatment which the Percies had met with at the hands of their sovereign. It is not the exhaustion of his own resources in the national cause of which the writer complains ; but the fact of his honour, and that of his son, being involved in the fulfilment of their engagements towards the troops ; and of the disgrace which will be cast upon their order if promises solemnly made by them in the king's name were broken, and poor men who had abandoned house and home to fight his battles, were left to starve.²

" Mon tresredoute Sr. souverain, je me recommans a vostre magestee roiale, a la quele plese entendre, qe jay receu voz treshonourables lettres purportantz vostre estat et sauntee, a grand pleisir et confort de moy. Et, mon tresredoute Sr., quant a ce qe vous mavez escrit, qe vous pensez qe je serray assetz fort a le chastell' de Ormeston le jour limitez, sanz charge de vous, nientmeins, puis qe vous avez consideracion, come piert en mesmes voz lettres, qe sanz coustages de moy et de mon filz il ne purra estre fait, vous avez ordenez une certaine somme de monoie pur estre envoiez a nous deux en haste, de la quele je ne say nul jour de paiement, ne quantitee de la somme ; et mon honur y est sibien come lestat de vostre roialme, et le dit jour si court, qe si le paiement ne soit

² See also his letter to the Council, Appendix XXV.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

briefment ordenez, il est bien semblable qe le bone renome du chivalerie de vostre roialme ne serra gardez en cett, endroit, et outrement deshonor et desesance a moy et mon dit filz, qi sumes voz loialx lieges; le quel nous quidons qe ne serroit vostre pleisir, ne auxi nous ne lavons deservy. Et, mon tresredoute Sr. souverain, si nous deux feussions paieez de les sommes de lx MI livres puis vostre coronation, come jay entenduz qe vous estez enformez par ceux qi ne veullent vous enformer la veritee, adonques nous purriens mieulz sustenir un tiel charge, mes a cest jour sont nous duez clerement, come il purra bien estre monstrez, xx. MI livres et plus. Par quoy, mon tresredoute Sr. souverain, vous supplie et requere, qe vous plese ensi charger vostre Conseil et Tresorer, qe nous poons estre paieez et preferrez, selonc la grante et ordenance faites en vostre darrein Parlement, et forme de noz endentures, de une notable somme, et si par temps, qe pur defaute de ce qe nous est due ne soions defait et en meschief en ceste nostre necessitee et labour pur defense de vostre roialme. Mon tresredoute Sr. souverain, je prie luy toutpuissant Dieux qil vous eit touz jours en sa seintisme garde. Escrit a Helawe le xxvj. jour de Juyn (1403).

Vostre Mathathias, qe vous
suplie de prendre son estat
et laboure a quere a cest
bosoigne.—H.”¹

¹ Cotton MSS. *Vesp.* F. XIII. Fol 16. The endorsement by a contemporary hand is, “Litera Comitum Northumbriæ directa nostro regi in qua subscripsit idem comes manu sua propria,” in reference to the concluding lines in the Earl’s handwriting. The signature *Mathathias*, which he used on several occasions, appears to have been a familiar name by which the Earl was called by the king in the days of their intimacy. Its origin is not known; Lingard states that it bore reference to “some prophecy or romance,” but he gives no authority for this opinion. A duplicate of the foregoing letter (*Vesp.* F. VII. f. 25) is signed, “Vostre humble liege le Conte de Northumbr’, Conestable Dengleterre.”



Fac-simile of the
original text



REMONSTRANCE OF THE PERCIES.

A.D. 1402

Henry may have had some difficulty in overcoming the parsimony in military expenditure of his ministers; but when it suited his purpose to assert his authority the necessary funds were forthcoming. Of this we have an instance in the case of his son, who having joined the army in Wales, had represented that unless provided with money to pay the troops he would be obliged to return to England "ou estre honteux pour toujours."¹ The king, who had turned a deaf ear to similar complaints from Hotspur, commanded the Council to make an immediate remittance of funds "aufin que notre dit filz puisse le mieulx continuer a resister a la malice de noz rebelz galois . . . quelle chose il ne pourra faire sil n'ait de quoy."²

The demand now made by the king upon his powerful subjects to surrender to him their right of ransoming their prisoners, which ransoms would have enabled them partially to satisfy the claims of their soldiery, could have left no doubt upon their minds as to his disposition towards them. The accounts of what personally passed between them upon this matter greatly differ, and there are no authentic records to afford a clue to the truth. The ancient historians, however, concur in attributing a defiant attitude to the Percies.

The earnestness with which the Earl of Worcester now championed the cause of his family is said to have led to his dismissal from court; but whether he was commanded

¹ Prince Henry to the King, June 1402. Cotton MSS., *Cleopatra F.* III. f. 123.

² The King to the Council, Appendix XXVI. Sir Harris Nicolas assigns the date of 1403 to this letter, and argues from a passage in which Henry refers to "noz treschiers et foialx cousins le Comte de Northumberland et Henri Perci son filz," that within a few days of the battle of Shrewsbury the king had no suspicion of the disaffection of the Percies. The letter, however, bears conclusive internal evidence of having been written with reference to Prince Henry's representations in the previous year.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

to withdraw, or of his own accord retired to his stronghold in the North, is left in doubt.¹

The final interview between the king and Northumberland and his son is thus described :

“ The Earl, having urgently demanded 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.’² The earl said, ‘ When you entered the kingdom you promised to rule according to our counsel ; you have now year by year received large sums from the country, and yet you have nothing, and pay nothing, which irritates your commons. God grant you better counsel!’

“ Then came in like manner his son Henry Percy, who was married to the sister of the captive Edmund Mortimer in Wales, and he prayed the king that he 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

¹ Shakespeare follows tradition, if not history, in making the king address Worcester in these terms :—

“ Your presence is too bold and peremptory,
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow.
You have good leave to leave us ; when we need
Your use and counsel, we shall send for you.”

Lingard states that the friendship between the king and the Percies had been for some time on the wane. “ *They* were incessantly calling for large sums of money due to them for the custody of the marches and the expense of the Scottish wars ; *he*, whether he were unable or unwilling, paid them but seldom and then only by small and tardy instalments.”—*History of England*.

How “small and tardy” these instalments were is established by reference to the Issue Rolls in which all such payments were recorded, and which fully bear out Northumberland’s statements in contradiction to the king’s assertion that he had met their claims.

² *Aurum non habeo—aurum non habebis.*

THE TRIPARTITE INDENTURE.

you will not help us?' 'Thou art a traitor!' said the king angrily, 'and wouldst 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 on him.¹ 'Not here,' said Henry, 'but in the field,' and so departed."²

A.D 1403

The rebellion of the Percies was no sudden outbreak, but was approached deliberately by distinct stages at intervals of time. Their refusal to surrender the prisoners was perhaps conveyed in no such positive terms as to amount to open disobedience. The alliance with Douglas,³ who with his forces took up his quarters at Alnwick, followed shortly after by a treaty of peace with Henry's declared enemy, Glendower,⁴ were, however, unmistakable indications of disaffection; while the subscription by the Earl of Northumberland, his brother, and his son, of the Tripartite Indenture,⁵ which they do not appear to have kept secret, constituted an overt act of treason.

Shakespeare has represented Hotspur as ridiculing

¹ "*Rex traxit contra eum pugionem.*" Jehan de Wavrin in his *Chroniques d'Engleterre* (Dupont, Vol. I. p. 178), so far improves upon this version as to assert that the King boxed Hotspur's ears: "à laquele parole le roy se couroucha, et donna audit de Persy ung grant soufflet." Had such an affront been offered it is probable that the quarrel would have been decided on the spot and that the Battle of Shrewsbury would never have been fought.

² *Eulogium Historiarum*, Vol. III. 396.

³ "It was accorded betwixt him and the said Henry Hotspur, that aiding him and his accomplices against King Henry, if it chanced the said King Henry to be vanquished and put from the crowne, according to their intent and purpose, then should the said Earl Douglas be released from his ransom and have the town of Berwick rendered unto him in reward of his aid and assistance."—Holinshed's *Chronicles; Scotland*.

⁴ While Hotspur had made an ally of his noble Scottish prisoner of war, his brother-in-law, Edmund Mortimer, had married the daughter of Glendower and accepted service in the Welsh army.

⁵ Under the terms of this document the kingdom was to be divided into three parts: one of which, the English territories to the north of the Trent, was to become an independent sovereignty under the Earl of Northumberland; Wales was to fall to the share of Glendower; and the residue of England to the rule of the Earl of March. No project more rife with the elements of future discord could well have been devised, and it may be doubted whether its realisation would not have proved as

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Glendower's pretensions to supernatural power, and denouncing his mystic and prophetic utterances as "a deal of skimble-skamble stuff." There is no reason to believe, however, that he was actually so far above the superstitions of his age as to claim exemption from a belief in soothsayers and omens;¹ and the Percies were probably as willing as the Welsh magician himself to put faith in Merlin's prophecies, more especially when these might be interpreted in favour of their own sympathies and aspirations. Certain it is that the *quasi*-religious sanction which attached to the acceptance of such predictions would be admirably calculated to secure the adhesion and to stimulate the zeal of their followers.

"And now after these 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 reste with peace and glory, with the most joy and triumph that the like was never seen this many yeres before. . . . These three shall rise agaynst the Moldewarpe, which is accursed of God. . . . Also they shall thrust him forth from the realme, and the Moldewarpe shall flee and take a ship to save himself, for he shall have no more power over this realme; and after that he shall be glad to give the third part (? three parts) of his realme to have the fourth in peace, and he shall not get it, for the will of God is that no man shall have mercy but he that is merciful."²

Oracular and ambiguous utterances of this character readily admit of practical application to current events, and in the public mind "the Moldewarpe accursed

disastrous to the nation as the series of civil wars which, from Henry's victory at Shrewsbury to King Richard's defeat at Bosworth, devastated and depopulated the country, through four succeeding generations.

¹ Witness his reflections on missing his favourite sword before the battle of Shrewsbury.

² This prophecy is referred to as a cause of the rebellion, and is quoted, more or less at length, by most of the ancient historians, including Hall, Holinshed and Speed.

MERLIN'S PROPHECIES.

A.D. 1403

of God" came to be easily identified with the unpopular prince who had usurped the throne; while the families bearing the Badges of Dragon, Wolf, and Lion, would not be reluctant to recognise themselves under those emblems as the agents predestined by Providence to dethrone a perjured and usurping sovereign.

Henry's conduct at this juncture is difficult of explanation. Throughout their hostile preparations the Percies had openly courted the sympathy and co-operation of the great families of England,¹ a fact of which the king and his Council could hardly have remained in ignorance; and although the state of the Border may have necessitated military preparations,² the scale upon which forces were now levied in the north could hardly have failed to arouse suspicion.

Yet still the king displayed no distrust, and when in the month of May he led an army to the North, his avowed purpose was nothing more than to strengthen his garrisons against the Scots.

¹ Hardyng, in his *Chronicle*, asserts that after the attainder of the Percies, and when he was constable of Warkworth Castle under the Umfrevilles, he had seen letters under their seals from nearly all the most powerful lords of England, promising their support to the Earl of Northumberland.

² According to Fordun, Hotspur had raised powerful armies on pretext of taking advantage of the demoralisation produced in Scotland, by their losses at Nisbett Moor and Homildon, to over-run their country—"to demolish all the fortresses in those parts, and so to go on in a kind of regular plan to burn and destroy all before him, without interruption, quite to the Scottish Sea;" that in accordance with this plan, he laid siege to the Castle of Cocklawes in Teviotdale, but that having reduced this stronghold, instead of capturing it, he made terms with the garrison, allowing them several weeks for the surrender, in order to gain time for further increasing his forces, such forces being really intended, not for the conquest of Scotland, "but that he might overthrow his own sovereign, Henry, King of England, as was soon after put out of doubt."—*Scotichronicon*, lib. xv. 1152. There are probably some grounds for this accusation, although so deep laid a design was more likely to have originated with the Earl of Northumberland, or his brother Worcester, than with the impulsive Hotspur.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408

Even after Hotspur was on his march southward, halting here and there to draw recruits to his banners, and during his progress making public proclamation of his aims and intentions,¹ Henry continued to affect ignorance of any design against his authority, for it cannot be believed that he could have really entertained any doubt as to the actual situation after he once knew that the Percies had advanced with an army from Newcastle. He may have thought that by concealing his suspicions he would find it more easy to win over, or at any rate to disarm the opposition of, such of the nobles as had not already openly thrown in their lot with his enemies; and that an assured confidence on his part in the loyalty of his northern subjects would tend to weaken the influence of the insurgent leaders. It is not, however, impossible that he dissembled, pending Hotspur's advance, in the hope of surprising and crushing him before he could be reinforced by the advancing levies under the earl and the Welsh chieftain.

On the morning of the 17th of July the two armies were within fifty miles of each other, Hotspur lying at Chester and the king at Burton-on-Trent; and it was doubtless a recognition of the immediate danger of the threatened junction with the Welshmen that induced the king to throw off the mask. He accordingly issued a proclamation, and required the lieutenants of counties to raise a levy *en masse* throughout the kingdom for the suppression of the rebellion,² though even now in addressing the Council he makes light of the matter:—

¹ In these proclamations Hotspur spoke of himself as having been one of the main instruments for placing the king upon the throne ("unus de illis qui maxime agebat ad expulsionem Ricardi et introductionem Henrici"), but that having now discovered that Henry acted more illegally than the sovereign who had been deposed, he was resolved to purge the country of its oppressor.—*Eulogium Historiarum*.

² *Fœdera*, viii. 313.

THE MARCH UPON SHREWSBURY.

“ Toutes voies nous faceons assavoir que Henry Percy
qi sest levez contre nous et notre regalie come est dit et
sicome jatarde certifiez vous avons, *nous n'apelle fors*
Henry de Lancastre, et fait aussi diverses proclamacions
parmy le Countee de Cestre, que le roy Richard est encore
en vie, a l'entente de xciter notre poeple de lever avec luy
en afforcan de son faulx propos si ainsi soit, mais
nepurqant vous signifions pour votre consolacion que le
Dieu mercy, nous sumes assex fort encountre tous les
malveullantz de nous et de notre roiaulme.”¹

A.D. 1403

It was evidently Hotspur's intention, as the king advanced in a north-westerly direction, to follow a parallel line in the opposite course, on the left flank of Henry's line of march, with a view to effecting a junction with Glendower in rear of the royal forces, and thus barring their retreat; while his father, approaching with a second army, should engage them in their front. Shrewsbury was his immediate objective point, as its possession would give him the command of the Severn and thus facilitate the passage of the Welshmen. This plan Henry now determined to anticipate, and with his accustomed energy and promptitude he suddenly fell back upon the threatened city. Hotspur no sooner heard of the king's retrograde march than he hastened forward to intercept him.

It was a close race, but the king had had the start, and reached the walls of Shrewsbury a few hours before his adversary. To these hours he probably owed his crown. The citizens threw open their gates, and received their king with the welcome which would doubtless have greeted Hotspur had he been the first to claim admittance. Having taken the precaution to demolish such parts of the suburbs as might have afforded shelter to the enemy he occupied the town.

¹ Appendix XXVII.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1342-1408
—

Hotspur, on finding the king in possession, and despairing of successful attack under existing conditions, and with an army exhausted by forced marches, fell back upon Little Berwick; and later in the evening, for strategical purposes, withdrew yet further to some fields to the north of the village where, his right flank resting on the Severn and the rear protected by rising ground, he encamped for the night.

• • •

King Henry. How bloodily the sun begins to peer
Above yon dusky hill! The day looks pale
At his distemperature.

Prince Henry. The southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes,
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves
Foretells a tempest and a blustering day.¹

While Henry is thus represented as watching the sun as he rose upon the day destined to decide the fate of the House of Lancaster, Hotspur called to his presence two of his most trusted esquires, and to their hands committed the formidable indictment against the King of England, which they were commanded to deliver to him in person, under the walls of Shrewsbury.²

This document, the authorship of which was ascribed to Richard Scroope, Archbishop of York, but which bore only the signatures of the three Percies, was couched in simple, vigorous, and very outspoken language, and charges the king with a series of crimes for each of which he is declared to have forfeited his right to the throne. He is accused of being false and forsworn, in having broken the oath solemnly made to the Percies that he would seek nothing beyond his rightful in-

¹ First Part of *Henry IV.* Act 5.

² "And all their quarrel they (the Percies) sent unto the King Henry in the field writtyn under the seales of theirs and their armes, by Thomas Kneyton and Roger Salome, Squyers of Sir Henry Percy."—Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

THE PERCY CHALLENGE.

heritance as Duke of Lancaster; of having caused King Richard to be starved to death; levied taxes without the consent of Parliament, and not only usurped the throne to the exclusion of the lawful heir, but refused to liberate him, when in the king's service he was taken prisoner, accusing those who, at their own cost, did ransom him of treason and rebellion, for which reasons: "We (the three Percies) defy thee, thy aiders and helpers as common traytors and destroyers of the realme, and the invaders, oppressors, and confounders of the very true and right heirs of the crown of England, which things we entend with our handes to prove this daye, Almighty God helping us."¹ Never did sovereign receive from subject a more defiant challenge; but Henry's politic temper would not allow resentment to hurry him into an act of rashness or imprudence. To the surprise of the messengers, and the dismay it is said of his own followers,² he dismissed them with gentle and courteous words, bidding them inform their masters that he would forthwith despatch an answer by the mouths of trusty envoys.

The Bishop of Salisbury and the Lord Privy Seal accordingly appeared in the rebel camp, and invited Hotspur and Worcester to attend upon the king,³ whose earnest hope it was to remove the grievances of which they complained, and to avert bloodshed. The motives which induced Henry to display this rare moderation, under conditions which might well have provoked anger and retribution, have been variously interpreted; and the notorious duplicity of Henry's nature justly

A.D. 1403

¹ For the full text of this remarkable document, see Appendix XXVIII.

² Walsingham says that the king, in his anxiety to come to terms with the rebels, humbled himself to a degree unbecoming his royal dignity.

³ *Ypodigma Neustriae*, p. 399.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

subjected him to the suspicion of setting negotiation on foot with a view only to gaining time, and allowing the large reinforcements on their way from the south to reach him before he engaged in hostilities. Such delay would however have been beneficial, in at least an equal degree, to his adversaries; for the Earl of Northumberland was approaching with a strong force from Yorkshire,¹ and the scouts of Glendower's army were already in sight on the opposite banks of the river.

It is more likely, however, that the king was perfectly sincere in wishing to avoid the impending conflict. His courage could never be called in question, but he might well hesitate to risk his crown on the issue of a single battle while a possibility existed of securing his ends by compromise and concession. If he could, by fair words and promises, induce Worcester and Hotspur to accept terms and disband their forces, not only would the rebellion collapse, but the influence of its leaders would be weakened, and his own triumph would be all the more complete for the magnanimity by which it had been achieved. As for any engagements he might enter into as the condition of peace, their fulfilment would not weigh heavily upon his conscience, and might be directed by time and opportunity.

Meanwhile Hotspur, at the head of his army drawn up in battle array, impatiently awaited the return of his esquires, little doubting but that his challenge would be answered by the king's immediate advance. The arrival of pacific envoys disconcerted him, and, according to Walsingham, he felt much moved by his sovereign's gracious message. Whether, however, it was from an apprehension of being deluded by Henry's persuasive

¹ His advance had, unfortunately for his cause, been checked by a severe and almost fatal illness with which he was seized while within two days' march of Shrewsbury.

WORCESTER'S INTERVIEW WITH THE KING.

A.D. 1403

powers, or, on the contrary, from a mistrust of his own temper in the presence of one by whom he thought himself and his house so seriously affronted and aggrieved, he declined to attend upon the king in person; and Worcester, accompanied by one or two knights, undertook the mission. The defeated, like the absent, are generally put in the wrong; and contemporary writers are almost unanimous in attributing the failure of the negotiations to Worcester's having wilfully misrepresented the purport of the king's propositions.¹

Not only is there an entire absence of evidence to justify this harsh opinion, but, setting aside the fact of such duplicity being quite inconsistent with the truthful and loyal nature universally attributed to him,² Worcester could have had no personal reason for refusing to entertain terms of peace had he believed in their sincerity.

¹ "Contraria referens responsis regis exacerbavit mentem juvenis, (Hotspur) et ad bellum impulit, etiam non volentem."—*Ypodigma Neustria*, p. 401.

² "That Achitophel, the Earl Thomas, pretending to be a mediator between them, played but false to both, and was, alas! the cause of all the ruin."—Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

Most of the later historians have echoed these statements, and Shakespeare adopted the popular view of Worcester's duplicity, making him argue:—

"My nephew's trespass may be well forgot,
It hath the excuse of youth, and heat of blood,
And an adopted name of privilege:
A harebrained Hotspur, governed by a spleen.
All his offences live upon my head,
And on his father's; we did train him on;
And, his corruption being ta'en from us,
We, as the spring of all, shall pay for all.
Therefore, good cousin, let not Harry know,
In any case, the offer of the king."

—First Part of *Henry IV.* Act 5.

² The writers who do not hesitate to brand Worcester with this act of perfidy, in other respects hold him up as a model of truthfulness. Among other proofs of his proverbial good faith, Froissart declares that the continental sovereigns and statesmen were ever as ready to accept Sir Thomas Percy's plain word in ratification of treaties and conventions as the most formal documents.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Of the two men indeed, Hotspur was always the more difficult to prevail upon to sheath the sword. It is probable, however, that the wary old soldier-statesman mistrusted the king; and that, convinced that he would never forgive the Percies for the part they had played, or fulfil his promises when once the danger of armed resistance had been removed, he had, on those grounds, counselled rejection of the proffered terms.

To Henry's tender of pardon, Hotspur accordingly replied, "In gratia tua non confido." "I pray the Lord that thou mayest be responsible for the blood to be spilt this day, and not I,"¹ was the king's dignified rejoinder, as he gave the order for the advance of his army.²

Hotspur now bid his page gird him with the sword he had worn at Homildon, and on being informed that the weapon had been left overnight at the village where they had halted ("illa parva villa retro se vulgariter Berwicus noncupata"), he changed colour, exclaiming, "Now I see that my ploughshare is drawing to its last furrow, for a soothsayer once told me in my own country that I should perish at Berwick. Alas! he deceived me by that name, which I believed to mean Berwick in the north."³ It is a noteworthy coincidence that Hotspur's first and last feat of arms should thus have been associated with the name of Berwick.

Had the soothsayer's prediction, coupled with the ill-omen attached to the fact that, on the eve of the battle, the comet which had appeared in that year was seen immediately above his head,⁴ cast a shadow over

¹ *Eulogium*, p. 397.

² "Precor dominum, dixit rex, quod tu habeas respondere pro sanguine hic hodie effundendo, et non ego! Procede signifer! (quod est dictu *en avant baner* /)"—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* ii. 396.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ "Super caput Henrici Percy apparuit stella comata, malum significans eventum."—*Ibid.*

EVIL OMENS.

Hotspur's sanguine spirits? His address to his army was certainly marked by a tone of despondency unusual to the light-hearted and victorious soldier. A.D. 1403

“ This day,” he said, “ will be a glorious one to all of us if we conquer, or will set us free for ever if we are defeated ; for it is better to fall on the battle-field in the cause of the common weal, than after the battle to die by the sentence of our enemies.”¹

Several hours had been lost in fruitless negotiation, and the sun was high in the heavens before the two armies confronted one another in battle array. In point of numbers the royalists had considerably the advantage, their total being estimated at not less than twenty thousand men, whereas Hotspur's did not exceed fourteen thousand.* These were picked soldiers however, including the sturdy Northerners whom he had led to victory on many a field, and the famous archers of Cheshire, of whom King Richard had formed his body-guard. Henry's forces were in great part composed of raw, untrained recruits, hastily levied in the vicinity of London.

The king's army had advanced from Shrewsbury in two columns ; the left under the nominal command of the young Prince of Wales,³ resting upon Berwick, and the right

¹ “ Pulchrior est in bello cadere pro republica, quam post bellum mori, hostis nostri sententia.”—Walsingham, ii. 256.

² According to Hardyng, Hotspur's force did not exceed nine thousand men, but in this his enumeration he evidently omitted the foot soldiers :—

“ With Percy was the Earl of Worcester
With nine thousand *gentles*, all that were
Of knyghts and squyers and chosen yeomanry,
And archers fine, *withouten raskaldry*.”

A description which recalls Cromwell's rank and file, composed of “ no discharged serving-men and tapsters, but honest and God-fearing citizens.”

³ The influence of popular fiction on historical belief is markedly illustrated by the general acceptance, on the authority of Shakespeare,

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

overlapping Hotspur's left flank. The king himself commanded the centre.¹ The most elaborate word-painting of modern "military correspondents" would fail to produce so vivid a picture of the opening scene as is conveyed in this simple and concise language of an old historian :—

"Then sodaynly the trumpets blew. The kynge's parté cried, 'Saint George, upon them!' The adversaries cried, 'Esperance, Percy!' and so furiously the armies joyned."²

As the swordsman engaged in mortal combat aims at the heart of his adversary, so Hotspur now determined to strike at the heart of the army in the person of the king. With a band of devoted followers, he made a furious onslaught on the centre, where the royal standard waved in token of his presence. Nothing could resist the impetuosity of the charge; man and

of the idea of Hotspur and the Prince of Wales being of the same age. King Henry, contrasting Harry Percy's glorious career with the frivolous life led by his own son, represents that the heir of Northumberland,

"Being *no more in debt to years than thou,*
Leads ancient lords and reverent bishops, on
To bloody battle and to bruising arms.
Thrice hath *this Hotspur Mars in swathing clothes,*
This infant warrior, in his enterprises
Discomfited great Douglas."

and with the petulance of age grumbles at being compelled, by the young prince's want of duty, "to crush my old limbs in ungentle steel," against this youthful rebel.

In point of fact, the king who complains of his old limbs was then in the very prime and vigour of life and precisely the same age as the "Mars in swaddling clothes;" (they were both born in 1366, and were therefore in their thirty-eighth year at the battle of Shrewsbury); while Prince Henry, who is introduced not only as the rival in arms of the most renowned soldier of his time, but as measuring swords with him on the battle-field and overcoming him in single combat, had then barely completed his seventeenth year, having been born towards the end of 1386.

¹ There is an admirable account of these military operations in Blakeway's *History of Shrewsbury*. ² Hall.

THE BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY.

A.D. 1403

horse go down before its shock as a feeble barrier of woods yields under the rush of the mountain torrent.¹ There is a fierce struggle around the standard; its bearer falls cleft from skull to shoulder; the Earl of Stafford, hurrying to the rescue, is slain; and then a warrior, above whose closed vizor the royal crest glitters, engages in a hand-to-hand combat with Hotspur, under whose sword he falls. The cry is raised: "The king is dead! Victory! The king is dead!" Seized with a panic, a large body of the royal forces waver and fly from the field; but in the van of battle another King Henry appears, rallying the troops with voice and gesture. The battle-axe of the grim Douglas lays him low; but *his* features again are not those of Henry of Lancaster, and still the king is seen wherever the fight is thickest. For five hours the battle rages with varying fortunes—the combatants reeling to and fro in a deadly embrace; earls and esquires, knights and foot-soldiers fighting hand to hand, breast to breast, life for life.

Suddenly another shout is heard: "Hotspur is dead! Long live the king! Hotspur is dead!" Louder and louder rises the cry till it swells into a chorus of triumph that carries dismay into the rebel ranks. Hotspur is dead! His followers look around in vain for the waving plume and the uplifted sword they know so well. Never again shall they hear the ringing tones that have so often led them to victory; low lies their hero, trampled

¹ Walsingham describes the effect of Hotspur's charge as resembling the fall of leaves under an autumnal gale:

"Igitur arcitenentes Henrici proelium inchoarunt, nec erat ad terram jaculis locus, sed in corpore ferrum omne ruit, caduntque de parte regis ad instar foliorum decidentium Brumali tempore post pruinam . . . Cadunt proinde utrinque plurimi velut cum poma ruunt in autumnno cum moventur ab Africo."—*Hist. Angl.* ii. 257.

² "Multaque simul millia de loco belli fugiunt, putantes Regem sagittis occisum."—*Ibid.*

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

under the feet of friends and foes, an arrow through his brain.¹ "Young Harry Percy's spur was cold."

"St. George, upon them!" There is no voice now to echo "Esperance, Percy!" and, "as if the whole army had but one heart, the courage of all others fell into their feet, which was now all they trusted to."²

"The sorrie Battle of Shrewsburie"³ was a duel between King Henry and Hotspur, and now that the Percy had fallen the conflict was at an end. What followed was but the slaughter of a vanquished and flying host, and the relentless punishment of defeated rebellion.⁴

When the brave old Worcester beheld his nephew lying dead, tears rose to his eyes, and he exclaimed that now he cared not for anything that evil fortune might have in store for him.⁵ He had not long to wait; by Henry's command he was decapitated on the field of battle.⁶ By the same authority the body of Hotspur, which had found a soldier's sepulture at the hands of a kinsman, Thomas Nevill, was exhumed and exhibited, "bound upright betweane two millstones, that all men might see that he was dead."⁷ His head was then struck off, and placed over the walls of Shrewsbury, while his

¹ All contemporary writers agree in assigning the death of Hotspur to an unknown hand. "Henricus Percy cui fortuna semper hactenus blandita fuerat . . . quasi solus stans et conclusus trucidatur . . . dubium cujus manu."—*Eulogium*. "And Harri Percy after the pro-perté of his name percid or presed in so far that he was ded, and no man knew of whom."—Capgrave's *Chronicle*. He is generally reported to have received his death wound in the act of raising his vizor to wipe his brow. ² Speed. ³ So called in the *Chronicle of London*.

⁴ The still existing Church of Battlefield is said to have been built over the pit in which over four thousand of the Percy host were buried.—Blakeway.

⁵ *Chron. Monast. Albani*.
⁶ His head was placed over the gates of Shrewsbury.—*Fœdera*, viii. 320. According to Grafton he was carried into Shrewsbury and there hanged, drawn, and quartered, but no contemporary writer makes any such statement.

⁷ *Chronicle of London*. "Sir Henry Percy's hed was smyte off and set up at York lest his men wolde have said that he hadde be alive."—*English Chronicle of Richard II. and Henry IV.* Camden Society.

THE DEATH OF HOTSPUR.

quarters were distributed among different northern cities to be in like manner exposed.¹ A.D. 1403

No event in Henry's reign had more tended to the stability of his throne than the victory of Shrewsbury. Its effect upon his enemies had been in proportion discouraging, and all the more so from their full confidence in the success of the Percies. Nor was this confidence without justification, since, but for the delay in Northumberland's advance and the unaccountable defection of his Welsh allies, the rebel forces could hardly have failed to crush the king. No explanation has been afforded of Glendower's inactivity at the critical hour. He had actually carried his contingent to the river-side while the fight was raging, and when his presence on the field would in all probability have turned the scale. Instead of crossing the ford, however, he is said to have watched the battle from the safe shelter of a tree on the eastern bank, which long bore the name of Glendower's Oak.²

"Henricus mortuus decollatur ne sui dicerent eum vivere, et caput ejus super portum Eborum ponitur."—Walsingham. The Archbishop of York denounced the "*cruentia bestia*" of the king in exhuming and mutilating the dead body of England's bravest soldier ("Henricus Percy non solum semel occidit sed, quantum in ipse est, bis et ter interfecit"), but the object undoubtedly was to prevent or dispel a belief in the survival of one whose very name was a menace to the stability of the throne. In the Issue Rolls by Henry IV., there occurs an entry of 5*l.* 10*s.* as payment of "various messengers" employed in proclaiming Hotspur's death throughout the kingdom, and even his wife seems to have been thought a danger to the State, since a warrant under the king's hand was addressed to Robert Waterton, to arrest the Lady Elizabeth Percy.—*Fœdera*, viii. 334.

¹ The king subsequently authorised the collection of Hotspur's mutilated and scattered remains and their delivery to his widow, as well as the burial of the Earl of Worcester's decapitated body by the Abbot of Shrewsbury. (See *Appendix*, XXVIII A.) A tomb in St. Mary's Church in that city being opened in the course of some repairs in 1816, was found to contain a headless skeleton, and this grave, which had long been popularly known as Hotspur's tomb, was not improbably that of his uncle, Worcester. There is no record of Hotspur's place of burial.

- "Even from that day misfortune dire,
As if for violated faith,
Pursued him with relentless step,
Vindictive still for Hotspur's death."—SCOTT.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

Edmund Mortimer, too, and his young nephew, whose cause was the main pretext of the rebellion, are reported to have withdrawn from the field even before the balance had turned in the king's favour.

Hotspur's favourite page, Hardyng, who had been by his master's side throughout the fight, and on his fall succeeded in making his escape, accuses the Earl of Northumberland of having sacrificed his son, "and fayled him foule withouten wit or rede."¹ But this charge is unjust; for the earl, so prostrated by his illness as to be unable to mount his horse,² was being carried forward in a litter at the head of his army, when he was met by a large body of the king's troops³ under the Earl of Westmoreland. On receiving the tidings of Hotspur's defeat and death, he fell back; and finally, on being refused admittance into Newcastle, disbanded his forces and sought refuge in his stronghold of Warkworth. Summoned thence to answer for his conduct, he attended upon the king at York and made his submission. There are different versions of this interview, some writers asserting that he threw himself unconditionally upon Henry's mercy,⁴ others that he denied complicity in the rebellion, representing that he had remained neutral, and was on his way to intercede between the two parties;⁵ others, again, that he bore him-

¹ Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

² The *Metrical Chronicles* attribute the earl's condition at this time to the decrepitude of old age instead of illness:

"So agit was, nicht nother gang no ryde."

He was actually only in his sixty-first year at this time.

³ "And soon after the Erle of Northumberland came with myty band to help Henry his son havynge no knowyng of his deth. Then met him the Erle of Westmorland and made him turn ageyn."—Capgrave's *Chronicle*.

⁴ "Non tamen susceptus est familiaritate solita, sed potius more supplicis, gratiam requirentis."—Walsingham, ii. 259.

⁵ "The earl came to the king on the overthrow of the rebellion and

THE REBELLION SUPPRESSED.

A.D. 1403

himself haughtily and justified the action taken by himself and his family. The materials for forming a judgment on the subject do not exist. It stands recorded, however, under the earl's own hand,¹ that he did not repudiate his share in the movement but, on the contrary, admitted having acted unlawfully, for which offence he claimed the king's grace.

It is evident, however, that while he made a formal show of submission, and Henry an equally formal show of clemency,² neither trusted the other; the one, knowing that he had sinned past the royal forgiveness; the other, confident that the deaths of Hotspur and Worcester would not rest unavenged by the head of their house. Henry accordingly determined to seize the opportunity of weakening his still too powerful subject, who was only permitted to return to Warkworth on the understanding that he should be prepared to surrender the custody of his castles in the north to Commissioners to be nominated by the crown.³

A few weeks later the Earl of Westmoreland despatched Lord Say⁴ to the king, then in Wales, urging him to return to the north without delay "pour l'establissement du pais et la sauvacion de la pees, et pour pluseurs autres bonnes et necessaires causes celles parties."⁵ In this letter it is represented that the adherents of the Percies, wearing on their sleeves the badge of the family

excusing himself as one neyther partie nor knowynge of the doynge or enterprise."—Hall.

¹ See his petition to the king, *postea*, p. 231.

² "The king dissembled the matter and gave him fayre wordes, fearing his power while yet in possession of his strongholds in the north."—Hall.

³ Appendix XXIX.

⁴ William Heron, Lord Say, a sturdy northern baron, who in his will dated in 1404, left to the Earl of Northumberland a legacy of 20*l*. "I having been a soldier under the said earl and received more than I deserved."—*Testamenta Vetusta*.

⁵ See credentials of Lord Say. Appendix XXX.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

(leurs cressans au bras), were spreading reports of the king's death and stirring up rebellion among the populace, and that immediate steps should be taken for obtaining possession of Berwick, Alnwick, Warkworth, and other of the earl's strongholds, to which end engines, guns, artillery, and other necessary implements of war should be provided.¹

Although the king now took the precaution of requiring the sheriffs of the northern provinces to call upon the inhabitants to take an oath that they would not obey the Earl of Northumberland when his orders were at variance with those of the Government,² the actual custodians of the Percy strongholds showed no disposition to transfer their allegiance without remonstrance or resistance. Sir William Clifford refused to surrender Berwick to the king's officers except under condition of Hotspur's son, whose guardian he had become, being restored to all rights and privileges belonging to him as the heir of Northumberland, and of his remaining under his wardship during his minority. He further stipulated for a free pardon for himself and his garrison, and full payment of their wages, "as I have layd my trowth of my body to souldiers of the toune and of the castle of Berwick, for to paye them fayre wages from the deth of my lord Sir Henry Percy."³

¹ "Canons, artillerie et autres choses necessaires pour assautes des chateaux." This is among the first instances of the word artillery being employed in its modern sense, although towards the end of the fourteenth century cannon were in general use in siege operations, and Englishmen had become so familiarised with the employment of fire arms that Chaucer makes use of this illustration:—

"Swift as a pellet out of goune
When fire is in the powder rounne."

—*House of Fame*, Book iii. (written in 1387).

² *Fœdera*, viii. 401.

³ *Proceedings of the Privy Council*.

NORTHUMBERLAND SUBMITS.

A.D.
1403-1404

The earl himself thus remonstrated against the threatened seizure of his possessions :

“ To my most dredful and soverain liege lord, I youre humble lige beseche youre hyness to have in remembrance my coming to youre worshippe^e presence in York of my free will, be youre goodly lettres when I put me in youre grace, *as I that nagh have kept your laws and statys, as ligeance askithe*, and specielly of gederyng of power and gevyng of liverees. At that time I put me in youre grace and yet do, ye saying, and hit like to your hynesse, that all graceless I shoulde not go. Wherefore I beseche you that youre high grace be sene on me at this tyme and of other thynges which for example nee of I have told you playnly, and of all I put me holly in your grace.”

The king it seems accepted this letter as an admission of guilt, and submitted it to the law officers as the ground of an indictment. The earl, however, denied their right to judge him and claimed to be tried by his peers, who, concurring in his view,¹ desired him to appear before parliament in his defence. After a protracted inquiry, they found that he had committed neither treason nor felony, but had been guilty of a trespass ; for which he was justly liable to such fine as the king in his pleasure should determine.²

Upon this finding his estates were restored to him, whereupon he thanked the king and the Lords for their “*droitural jugement*” and the Commons “*de lour bon*

¹ “The Earl of Northumberland came into parliament before the King and Lordes and there by his petition to the King acknowledged to have acted against his allegiance, whereof he craved pardon. The King delivered this petition to the Judges to be by them considered but the Lordes made protestation against it and that the ordering thereof lay with themselves.”—Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*.

² “Pas treson ne félonie, mes trespas tout soulement, pur quel trespas le dit cont deust fayre fyn et ranceon a la volonté du roy.”—*Proceedings of the Privy Council*.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

coeur et diligence," and having first exonerated the Duke of York, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others under suspicion, of all complicity in the rebellion, he took the oath of allegiance¹ to Henry and his heirs.

The Lords formally returned their acknowledgments to the king for his grace and pardon towards their brother peer; and Northumberland, having in conformity with the royal command become reconciled to the Earls of Westmoreland and March,² once more retired to his northern home partially rehabilitated in fortune,³ but broken in health and inconsolable under the loss of the son and brother he so dearly loved. It had been well if his active life had ended here, and he had passed his remaining days in the peaceful enjoyment of the position to which he had now been

¹ See *Historic Peerage* by Sir Harris Nicolas. Taking the oath of allegiance seems to have degenerated into a mere formality at this period, which was gone through by every knight of the shire or peer on each meeting of parliament.

² George Dunbar, who on being exiled from Scotland had sought refuge at Henry's court and fought on his side at Shrewsbury, in return for which he received a large grant of lands, including the Earl of Worcester's house in Bishopsgate Street, under letters patent dated 8 October 1403. Everything belonging to Worcester, even to his armour and clothing, was confiscated on behalf of the crown. Among his property we find mention of three silver cups and other pieces of plate seized at his residence in Calais by the Earl of Somers.—*Issue Rolls* 5th, Henry IV. A et

³ "Comes Northumbriæ restitutus est suæ dignitati pristinae, bonisque mobilibus et immobilibus, integraliter, et haeredes sui.—Walsingham. The restitution was very imperfect, and the king's jealousy of the earl's influence is shown by his depriving him of his strongholds in Berwick and Jedburgh which, under a formal convention dated 9 July 1404, he was required to surrender to the royal commissioners in consideration of other lands of equivalent value. (See Appendix xxxi.) He was further deprived of the high constablership and of the wardenship of the west marches, which were conferred upon his rival the Earl of Westmoreland. The grant of the Isle of Man was not renewed. "For rising against the king A.D. 1403, though the Earl of Northumberland was restored to his former dignity, lands, and goods, the Isle of Man excepted, he was presently deprived thereof by the authority of Parliament."—*The Supposed True Chronicle of the Isle of Man, Townley's Journal*. See also *Fœdera*, viii. 398.

FRESH CONSPIRACIES.

restored. Conspiracy was once more abroad, however, and it was doubtless an easy matter for designing men to work upon the mind of the old earl as by his desolate hearth he brooded over the past. Rumours of King Richard's survival, and of his raising forces in Scotland with a view to the recovery of his crown, were eagerly received, credited, and circulated by the disaffected. Northumberland had no reason to believe in a pretender who had declined to submit to the ordeal of a personal interview for the purpose of identification,¹ but he was none the less ready to allow this pretext to lead him into participation in fresh plots against Henry, and even to enter into an alliance with the foreign enemies of the state. He informed the French ambassadors in Scotland: "Que a l'aide de Dieu de la votre et de plusours mes allies, j'ai intention et ferme purpos de sustenir la droite querelle de mon Souveraigne Seigneur le Roy Richard, sil est vif, et si mort est, de venger sa mort, et aussi de sustenir la droite querelle."²

A.D. 1404

Notwithstanding the jealousy and suspicion displayed towards him by the king, it is impossible to find an excuse for these proceedings on the part of one who had so recently received the royal pardon and who continued to profess loyalty and attachment to the person of the sovereign. The old earl appears, however, to have been completely in the hands of the Archbishop of York and Thomas Moubraie, the Earl Marshal, the principal instigators of this new rebellion, which, in spite of King Henry's late triumph, threatened to assume very

¹ "When the elder Percie did often and importunatelie require to talk with him, he could never be persuaded by any man's words to come or enter speech to or with the said Earl of Northumberland, fearing (belike) least his deceit would be understood by him which knewe his owne and true kynges very well."—Holinshead's *Chronicle of Scotland*. See also Buchanan, *Rerum Scotticorum Historia*. Lib. x., xvii.

² *Rolls of Parliament*.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

dangerous proportions. Lord Westmoreland was on the spot to guard the royal interests, and endeavoured to counteract treason by treachery. By these means he succeeded in getting most of the leaders into his hands, but "Matathyas" knew better than to trust himself in the royal power, and thus declined Henry's invitation on the plea of illness and old age:

"Mon tresredoute Sr. Soverain, je me recommans humblement a vostre magestee roiale. A la quele plese entendre qe jay receu voz honorables lettres Samady, tierce jour de Janver present, par les quelles jay entenduz vostre bone estat et prosperitee dont je mercie Dieux de entier cuer; et auxi coment vous desirez ma personele venue at Westm' pur y conseiller ovesque autres de vostre conseil qe y serront en les octaves de Seint Hiller prochein; a la quele matire mon soverain Sr je vous supplie qe vous plese considerer ma tarde venue en Northumbr', et auxi ma grande age et fieblesse; et la longe et malveys voie en cest temps de yverne, et sur ce avoir la venue de moy a vous a ceste foiz pur excusee come celuy qi serra toutdys prest de faire service a vostre hautesse a mon petit poiare. Et pleust a Dieu qe je fusse en auxi bone poire de corps et biens come jay voluntee de faire service a vous et a vostre roialme. Si prie a Dieu, mon tresredoute Sr Soverain, qil' vous ottroit honuree vie joye et sauntee a treslong duree. Escrit a Werkeworthe le xij jour de Janver susdit.

"Vostre humble,

"MATATHYAS."¹

With the execution of the archbishop, Mowbray and others who had confided in Westmoreland's solemn assurances that his only object in proposing a conference

¹ Cotton MS., Vespas. F. xiii. fol. 16.

THE NORTHERN CASTLES SEIZED BY THE KING.

was to enable him to consider their grievances, the danger was at an end, and when the king in person once more advanced against his enemies, Northumberland and his intimate ally Lord Bardolf¹ fled across the border and sought refuge at the Scottish court. A.D. 1405

Henry met with little serious opposition in the north.* One by one, after more or less resistance, the earl's strongholds fell into his hands. The captain of Warkworth did not yield until after the seventh discharge of artillery³ against the walls, and Henry Percy, of Athol, who had been left in command of Alnwick Castle, refused the king's summons to surrender until Berwick should have fallen :—

“Wynne Berwick once, he should have his entent,”⁴ but these were isolated instances of a hopeless resistance ; and the king, dating from “our Castle of Warkworth,” informs his council that the rebellion was once more crushed.

“De par le Roy,

“Tresreverent et reverentz peres en Dieu, et noz treschiers et foiaux. Nous vous salvons souvent, savoir vous faisantz, a vostre consolation, que nous sumes en

¹ A brave soldier animated by a violent hatred of Henry IV., who seems, however, to have possessed no qualification for successful rebellion beyond his physical powers.—Walsingham describes him as, “Vir armis strenuus et lineamentis corporis ac statura nulli secundus in regno.”

² In January 1404, the constable of Bamborough wrote to inform the king that Berwick, Alnwick, and Warkworth were “held by main force by Master William de Clifford, Henry Percy, and Thomas Percy, who will hold the said castles against you if they can,” and that they had “procured for themselves a great multitude of your men and given them the livery of the crescent, and have sworn to keep them by force against you and all others.”—Hingeston's *Historic Letters*.

³ Speed says, on the authority of Walsingham, that this was the first occasion upon which cannon were used in England, but this is an error.

⁴ Redpath's *Border Wars*. Hardyng.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

bonne sante de nostre personne, la merci nostre Createur, qui ce vous vuille ottoier. Et pour ce que nous savons bien que vous orriez volontiers bonnes nouvelles de nostre exploit pardeca, vous signifions que puis le chastel de Prodhowe, que feut au Conte de Northumbr', estoit a nous rendu, nous nous le chastel de Werkworthe; et a nostre venue illeoques nous envoiasmes au capitain de mesme livree dicel, liquel capitain soy tenant assez fort, si bien de gens comme de vitaille, et de tout autre estuffe refusa outrement de le faire, disant quil vourroit garder le dit chastel al . . . du dit Conte. Et ce a nous rapp[orte] pour finale response, nous envoiasmes incontinent a ycel chastel noz canones, qui y firent a nous tiel service, que dedeinz sept gettes, le dit capitain et tous les autres de sa compaignie, criantz merci, se soubmistrent a nostre grace en hault et en bas, et firent a nous livreee du susdit chastel, a savoir, le primer jour de cest mois de Juillet; dedeinz quel nous avons mis noz gens. Et si sont a nous renduz tous les chastelx du dit Conte, except le chastel de Alnewike, de qui nous confions que par la grace de Dieu, apres si bonne et gracieuse exploit de tous les autres, nous averons nostre entier desir, et ce en brief, si Dieu plect. Tresreverent et reverentz peres en Dieu, et noz treschiers et foiaulx, autres ne nous escrivons apresent, mais vous prions que prier pour nous vuilliez, et pour lestat et prosperite de nostre royaume. Et nostre Sr. vous ait tousdis en sa sainte garde. Donne souz nostre signet a nostre dit chastel de Werkworthe le second jour de Juillet."†

In June of the following year, Northumberland and Bardolf were summoned to appear before Parliament to answer to their impeachment for high treason within fourteen days, after the expiration of which term they were in default adjudged traitors and outlaws, with forfeiture of

† Cotton MS., Vespas. F. vii. f. 24.

ATTAINDER AND OUTLAWRY.

titles and estates, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, or decapitated at the king's pleasure.¹ Of the earl's northern possessions the greater part was conferred upon the king's brother, the Duke of Bedford,² and the remainder upon his queen, who received also a grant of his residence in Aldersgate Street, which thenceforth bore the name of the Queen's Wardrobe.

A. D.
1405-1407

Commissioners were at the same time appointed to treat with the Court of Edinburgh for the surrender of the two rebel lords in exchange for Scottish prisoners of war; but a timely warning from Sir David Fleming of Cumbernauld³ enabled them to escape by sea and to find refuge with Owen Glendower in Wales.

For two years the great northern chieftain roved a houseless outlaw, now in the forests of Brittany, now in the Welsh mountains, again on the Scottish border,⁴ whence he made occasional raids into English territory. A price had been set upon his head, and it is said that one of his former officers, Thomas Rokeby, Sheriff of York, anxious to secure the credit of having destroyed the king's most formidable enemy, had led his old chief to believe that a powerful party only awaited his appearance in England to rise against Henry. Trusting to these assurances, the earl hastily collected a body of troops, and, accompanied by his old friend in misfortune, Lord Bardolf, crossed the Border and advanced

¹ *Rolls of Parliament*, 7 Henry IV.

² He had previously received a great part of the possessions of Worcester and Hotspur.—*Patent Rolls*, 5 Henry IV. The Isle of Man was in 1405 conferred upon Sir John Stanley, on condition of his providing two falcons on coronation days. The lordship remained in this family until 1735 when it reverted to the crown in default of heirs male.

³ He paid with his life for this act of friendship, having been assassinated a few days later by some Scotch lords interested in the contemplated surrender of the English outlaws.

⁴ See Buchanan, lib. x. xvii.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408
17th Feb.

into Yorkshire, only to meet the death prepared for him.¹

On reaching Bramham Moor, near Tadcaster, he found himself surrounded by a greatly superior force under Rokeby who, "with a standard of St. George's spread, set fiercely upon the earl, who, under a standard of his own, encountered his adversary with great manhood."²

Northumberland and Bardolf fought with all their native courage, stimulated by the energy of despair, for a felon's death awaits those who shall fall alive into the hands of the enemy. The unequal conflict is furious, but short; the battle-axe wielded by Bardolf's giant arm deals death around with every sweep, until transfixed by a lance through his throat he is overpowered, while his companion, bleeding from many a wound, falls dead.

"And thus," says the monkish writer, "was the prophecy fulfilled, 'Stirps Persitina periet confusa ruina;'³

¹ The story of Sir Thomas Rokeby's treachery, though it was adopted by more recent historians, among others by Holinshed, rests mainly upon the authority of Scottish writers and the English adherents of the Percies. Buchanan gives these details: "Ibi cum de reditu in patriam per occultos nuncios frequenter ageret, ad quendam vetustum amicum et, ut putabat, fidum, Randolphum Rokesbium scripsit: 'Sibi e scotis atque anglis non defore copias, quibus fretus patrimonium se recuperaturum non desperabat si opera ipsius adjuvaretur.' . . . Is, cum falsa spe auxilii Percium illuc attraxisset, conjuratione regi indicata, miserum amicum in insidias illexit; caputque occisi Londinium ad regem misit."—Lib. x. xvii. He calls Rokeby Ralph instead of Thomas, but describes him correctly as being the Sheriff of York. Fordun (*Scotichronicon*, p. 1167) speaks to the same effect, alleging that Rokeby had appointed the time and place for their meeting, and having prepared an ambush fell with overpowering numbers upon his unsuspecting victim. Whether or not Rokeby was guilty of this conduct, it appears probable that some such ruse had been employed, since Northumberland would hardly have advanced as far as Tadcaster with only a small following, had he not been led to expect local support. Rokeby was rewarded by a grant of Spofforth Castle and some of the Earl of Suffolk's lands.—*Fiedera*, viii. 529.

² Holinshed.

³ Walsingham does not state where this prophecy originated, but the statement that the family had now become extinct was accepted by later historians on his authority, and may probably have led Miss Strickland

THE FIGHT AT BRAMHAM MOOR.

for this earl was the stock and main root of all that were left alive called by the name of Percy, by whose misfortunes the people were not a little grieved, remembering his valour, renown, and honour, to whom they applied the words of Lucan's lamentation :

A.D. 1408

“Sed nos nec sanguis nec tantum vulnera nostri
Affecere senis, quantum gestata per urbem
Ora ducis, quæ transfixo sublimia pilo
Vidimus—”¹

for his head, full of silver hoary hairs, was set on a stake and openly carried through London and set upon the bridge of that city.”²

* * *

In the individual lives of successive generations of Percies, from the Conquest down to this period, we may trace the growth and development of a system to which, opposed as it is to every principle of modern political life, and in spite of the vices inherent in a purely military aristocracy, England in past ages owed much of her greatness and prosperity; a system which not only fostered a manly, national spirit but, by acting as a

into the belief that Hotspur had died without issue, “as acknowledged by all ancient heralds.” See *Lives of the Queens of England*.

¹ *Pharsalia*, lib. ix. 136.

² See *Appendix XXXI.A.* Walsingham adds that the earl's head remained on the city walls for a long time, till the king ordered it to be taken down, when it was found to be “as fresh as ever, and kept the same comeliness it had had when living.” Another contemporary writer sums up the final chapter of the Percies' rebellion in these words: “And the Shrieve of Yorkshire raised peple, and took thayme (the insurgent chiefs) and smoot of their heddis; and the hedde of the Erle and a quarter of Lord Bardolf were set on London Brigge.”—*Englishe Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV.* Camden Society. Having caused the usual indignities to be inflicted upon the dead bodies of the leaders of the rebellion, Henry took pains to win over the disaffected, and within two months after the battle of Bramham Moor extended a full pardon to all the Percies' adherents who should give in their submission, excepting only Richard Darel, Richard Wilkynson, William Winlayton, John Caperon, Thomas Brygham, John de Wath de Astynby, and John Roe or Roo.—*Letters Patent*, 25 April 1048.—*Fœdera*, viii. 520.

HENRY PERCY, FIRST EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1342-1408

barrier against the arbitrary power of the Crown, served to secure popular liberties.

In the wars of King Stephen the Norman Percies had represented the early stages of feudalism ; under King John, a Percy was among the foremost champions of its progress and a prominent figure in its final triumph. The Lords of Alnwick, ready as they ever were to fight the foreign enemies of the king, were jealous guardians of baronial rights against royal encroachment. In the person of the first Earl of Northumberland feudalism had attained the zenith of its power ; his fall marked the earliest stage of its decline.

The devastating Wars of the Roses, and the persistent policy of the Tudors to vest all authority in the Crown, sapped and gradually destroyed the power of the great nobles of England, and with it the system which they represented ; but the first fatal blow inflicted upon feudalism was dealt by the sword which struck down the Earl of Northumberland on Bramham Moor.



CHAPTER V.

**Henry Percy,
Second Earl of Northumberland.**

Born at Alnwick, 3rd February, 1394.
Restored, 16th March, 1416.
Fell at St. Alban's, 22nd May, 1455.

*Contemporary
English Sovereigns.*
Richard II.
Henry IV.
Henry V. *acc.* 1413
Henry VI. „ 1422



ENRY PERCY was in his tenth year when, on the overthrow of Hotspur at Shrewsbury, his widowed mother carried him to the Scottish Court,¹ where he was cordially received by King Robert, and became the friend and intimate companion of his eldest surviving son,² afterwards James I. They were fellow students at the then recently founded University of St. Andrew's, where they had been placed under the immediate charge of Bishop Wardlaw, who, apprehensive of the designs of the

A.D.
1394-1455

¹ His signature appears to a charter dated 18th January, 1404, under which Robert Duke of Albany conferred certain lands in Clackmannan upon his son-in-law, Duncan Campbell of Lochaw. The document is preserved among the MSS. of the Duke of Argyll.

² Prince David, the eldest son, had been put to death by the Duke of Albany.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1394-1455

Regent Albany, induced the king to remove the heir to the throne for greater security to the Court of France. Henry Percy was permitted to accompany him ; but they had not proceeded far on their voyage when the vessel in which they were embarked ran ashore at Flamborough Head,¹ and the young prince was, in contravention of treaty obligations, made a prisoner by Henry IV. and detained in honourable captivity for eighteen years. The English king would, no doubt, at the same time gladly have secured so valuable a hostage for the good conduct of the outlawed Earl of Northumberland as the young Percy, who appears, however, to have succeeded in making his escape and in returning to Edinburgh, where he resumed his studies at St. Andrew's, an education greatly in advance of that then accorded to any but candidates for the Church or the law. Nor was his military training neglected, since he took part in some of the civil feuds of his adopted country, and in an expedition under the impostor Trumpington, who continued to personate Richard II.

In his own county the son of Hotspur was not forgotten ; and although there is no evidence to establish that he ever actually recrossed the Border until recalled by the grace of his sovereign, the adventures and hair-breadth escapes of the young Percy in the course of supposed clandestine visits to the home of his ancestors became the theme of many a Northumbrian legend and ballad,² and served to keep alive the hope of the exile's

¹ According to David Scott, in his *History of Scotland* (Westminster, 1728, p. 222) ; but Buchanan, in his account of this incident, is doubtful whether the ship went ashore or whether the prince had landed at his own request in order to "refresh himself from his sea vomit and nausea."

² As late as in the present century (1819) some of these idle tales were woven into a five-act drama and put upon the stage, under the title of "Percy's Masque," a composition more remarkable for its bold

A PRISONER IN SCOTLAND.

ultimate restoration to the honours and territories of his forefathers.

A. D.
1415-16

It would not have become him to sue for the favour of the sovereign who had defeated and degraded his father and overthrown his house; but on the accession of Henry V. he lost no time in making an appeal for the reversal of the attainder. This claim was supported by the powerful influence of his kinswoman (afterwards his mother-in-law) Joan, Countess of Westmoreland;¹ and the king, partly no doubt from policy, but also, it may be believed, from a recollection of the services once rendered to his house by the Percies, showed his readiness to perform this act of grace.²

The petition was accordingly referred to Parliament, who reported that "*le dit suppliant est deinz age, et detenu en Escose encontre son bon gré et volonté,*" and recommended compliance with the prayer.³

We have here the first intimation of Henry Percy having been forcibly detained in Scotland, but there is no evidence to explain the circumstances under which King Robert's young guest had become converted into a prisoner of

disregard of historical fact than for literary merit. The young Percy is represented as the leader of a conspiracy against the King of England, while serving in disguise and under an assumed name in the household of the Earl of Westmoreland, of whose daughter he is enamoured. Betrayed by a rival lover, an army is brought against the rebel by Henry IV. who is himself made prisoner, and released only on condition of a free pardon to all the conspirators and the restoration of the Percy to the earldom of Northumberland.

¹ She was the daughter of John of Gaunt (consequently aunt of the king) and second wife of Ralph Nevill, first Earl of Westmoreland, himself the son of Maud Percy, a daughter of the second Lord Percy of Alnwick.

² "Such a restitution, besides being grateful to many of the English nobility, could not fail to win the hearts of the Northumbrians, and it was a point of no small importance to the king to attach them to his interest when he was on the eve of a war with France, such wars seldom failing to produce an attack from Scotland."—Ridpath's *Border Wars*.

³ *Rot. Pat.* 3 Henry V. m. 21.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

State.¹ It may have been either in reprisal for the capture of Prince James or a device on the part of the Regent to enable him to put pressure upon King Henry for the restoration of his son Murdoch, Earl of Fyffe, who had remained a prisoner in England ever since his capture by Hotspur at Homildon. Certain it is that the preliminary negotiations for the liberation of Henry Percy were based upon his surrender in exchange for the son of the Duke of Albany.² The treaty appears to have been signed in the early part of 1415, but the discovery of the conspiracy of the Earl of Cambridge, who in his formal confession implicated not only the Earl of March but Henry Percy,³ caused the negotiations to

¹ Buchanan makes no mention of the fact, but speaks of the young king "qui apud gubernatorem relictus fuerat." Hardyng, however, alludes to the son of his patron as having been "layde in hostage by his Graund Sires folly." Holinshead says, "By the lawes of armes he was no captive, yet the unjust detayning of James, the sonne of the Kynge of Scottes, stopped the mouths of the English that they could not complayne of any injurie done in detayning him; the doing whereof so little offended this Percie, that while he lived he did with all kind of courtesie give witness of the humanity showed unto him by the Scottes."—*Chronicle*, vol. v. 411.

² The English Commissioners were Richard Lord de Grey and John Lord Nevill, who were instructed to deliver up the Earl of Fyffe after the surrender by the Regent of "*consanguineum nostrum Henricum Percy, nepotem comitis Northumbriae, quam jam diu habuit in sua potestate detentus.*"—*Fœdera*, ix., 244, 323. Their orders were to convey the prisoner from the Tower to Newcastle, thence to Warkworth, and finally to Berwick, where the exchange was to be formally effected. In the event of Henry Percy not being produced, they were ordered to take Murdoch back to the Tower. Before being released the Scottish prisoner was required to pay the ransom which Hotspur had imposed eighteen years before, while Percy's restoration was made conditional upon his entering into a recognisance with the king for the sum of £10,000.—*Proceedings of the Privy Council*, vol. ii. pp. 160 and 162. Yet so poor were both nobles at this time that grants of £200, and 100 marks, were required to enable them to make a suitable appearance at their respective Courts.—*Issue Rolls*, 8 Feb., 1416.

³ The Earl of Cambridge stated that it had been a part of his plan to bring into England "that persone wych they namyd Kynge Richard, and Henry Percy oute of Scotland, wyth a power of Scottys."—*Fœdera*, ix. 300.

RESTORATION.

be interrupted. It is not credible however, that at a time when his restoration was on the eve of accomplishment, the young Percy should have engaged in plots for the dethronement of the king, and he ultimately succeeded in clearing himself from all suspicion. In the following spring he appeared in Parliament at Westminster, and having done homage¹ was formally reinstated in the Earldom² and in possession of the family estates³ on condition of proof of entail by record of Chancery, and, shortly after, appointed Governor of Berwick, and General Warden of the East Marches towards Scotland.⁴

A.D.
1416-17

The great bulk of the Percy lands had on the first earl's attainder been bestowed upon the Duke of Bedford, who, on their now being restored to their original owners, was granted an annual allowance of 3000 marks in compensation, until other lands of equivalent value should be conferred upon him. The present restitution was however far from complete, since the Crown had reserved to itself all the lands which the first earl, Worcester, and Hotspur, had held in fee simple, and which, according to law, should not have been affected by the attainder. A subsequent act of Parliament was obtained to remedy this injustice.⁵ Even thus, however, Henry

¹ "*Fit overttement son homage à Roy notre très souveraine Seigneur, en manère come les ancestres de même celuy Henry, fils Henry fils Henry, et autres countes et piers du roialme ont fait a mesme notre Seigneur le Roy, et a ses nobles progeniteurs, jadyz roys d' Angleterre p' devant.*"—*Rot. Parl.*, 2 Henry V.

² See note to Appendix XXXII.

³ "*Pro restitutione ad nomen et ad omnia hæreditamenta.*"—*Patent Rolls*, 3 Henry V. "*Eum non solum honorare statuens ejus revocatione, sed ut sublimaret comitis Northumbrorum nomine et dignitate.*"—Walsingham. See Appendix XXXII.

⁴ "*With same powers as Lord Grey formerly had.*"—*Rot. Scot.*, 4 Henry V., 23rd Feb., 1417.

⁵ See Appendix XXXIII.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

Percy did not succeed to the full possessions of his family.¹

According to popular report the young Percy had been clandestinely married to the Lady Alianore Nevill² at the Warkworth Hermitage some years before his restoration, during one of his stolen visits to England.³ This romantic story, however, is discredited by the fact that the lady had been previously contracted, if not actually married, to Lord Spenser, who did not die until the end of 1415.⁴

About the time of his own marriage, Henry Percy's only sister, Elizabeth, became the wife of John, Lord Clifford, and after his decease, four years later, of the

¹ In the succeeding reign he procured an Act of Parliament enabling him to obtain possession of all the lands which his grandfather, his father, and the Earl of Worcester had held in fee tail, at the time of their attainder, which formed a very considerable addition to his landed estates; but Prudhoe Castle was not restored to him until after a long litigation, in 1441 (Appendix XXXIV.), and Wressil remained to a yet later period in possession of the Crown.

² One of the twenty-two children of the first Earl of Westmoreland, a contemporary of the first Earl of Northumberland, but who survived him for more than twenty years. The frequent alliances which took place between the Percies and Nevills do not appear to have conduced to harmony, the two houses having, as a rule, been opposed to one another, in the field as well as in the Council, until towards the end of the sixteenth century, when they were united in a common ruin.

³ The Bishop of Dromore adopted the tale in his charming poem, the *Hermit of Warkworth*, on the authority, it would seem, of a gossiping monk, who attributes the exertions of the Countess of Westmoreland to bring about Henry Percy's restoration to the fact of his being at the time the husband of her daughter.—See *Ex Registro Monasterii de Whitby*, Harl. MSS., No. 692, 26, Fol. 235. The date of the marriage is nowhere recorded; but the numerous births succeeded each other with unfailing regularity year by year, and, as the first child was not born till 1419, we may assume that the marriage took place in the preceding year.

⁴ In the old genealogical tables the second Earl of Northumberland is stated to have married *the widow* of Lord Spenser; but as that nobleman died in his fifteenth year, the probability is that they were simply "contracted" or if married, only nominally so. He was the son of Thomas Spenser, or Despenser, Earl of Gloucester who had been executed for treason in 1400.

did not succeed to the full possessions of his father.

According to popular report the young Henry had been clandestinely married to the Lady Alianore Neville at the White North Hermitage some years before his restoration, during one of his stolen visits to England. This romantic story, however, is discredited by the fact that the lady had been previously contracted, if not actually married, to Lord Spenser, who did not die until the end of 1417.*

At the time of his own marriage, Henry Percy's first wife, Elizabeth, became the wife of John, Lord de Warenne, after his decease, four years later, of a

* It is not clear how the Act of Parliament could be procured to give Henry Percy all the lands which his grandfather, his father, and he himself had held in fee tail, at the time of his restoration, and a very considerable addition to his estates, as the White Castle was not restored to him until after a long litigation (Appendix XXXIV.), and Wressill remained in the hands of the Crown.

* One of the twenty-two children of the first Earl of Westmorland, a younger son of the first Earl of Northumberland, but who survived him for more than twenty years. The frequent alliances which took place between the Percies and Is was do not appear to have extended to Normandy, the two houses being, as a rule, born opposed to each other, in the field as well as in the Council, until towards the end of the sixteenth century, when they were united in a common cause.

* The Bishop of Drogheda adopted the title in his chartering of the *Hermit of Warnefort*, on the authority, it would seem, of a contemporary monk, who attributes the exertions of the Countess of Westmorland to bring about Henry Percy's restoration to the fact of her being the only husband of her daughter.—See *The Augustinian Chronicle of Whitty*, Harl. MSS., No. 602, 20, Fol. 235. The date of the marriage is nowhere recorded, but the numerous births succeeded each other with unfailing regularity year by year, and, as the first child was not born till 1419, we may assume that the marriage took place in the previous year.

* In the old genealogical tables the second Earl of Northumberland is stated to have married *the daughter* of Lord Spenser; but as that nobleman died in his fifteenth year, the probability is that they were only "contracted" or if married, only nominally so. He was the son of Thomas Spenser, or Despensers, Earl of Gloucester who had been executed for treason in 1400.



WARKWORTH HERMITAGE.



LADY ALIANORE NEVILL

second Earl of Westmoreland.¹ Although Hotspur's two children thus married the one a daughter and the other a grandson of Ralph Nevill, there was no disparity of age in these alliances, since the Earl of Westmoreland's grandchildren by his first were older than his children by his second marriage. A.D. 1418

It is to be regretted that the writers of this period rarely, if ever, relaxed from the dignity of history to indulge in those literary recreations which serve to illustrate domestic life in its more familiar and intimate relations. The actions of men afford but a one-sided picture of the social system, and it would be an interesting and grateful task to gauge the extent of the influence of women at a time when the spirit of chivalry had begun to exercise a refining and softening influence upon manners, and necessarily altered the character of the relations that had previously existed between the sexes.² French literature of this period did not disdain to occupy itself with this subject; but of the home life, the social status, and the intellectual condition of the women of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,³ we are more ignorant than of the domestic economy and family relations of Greece and Rome under Alexander and the Cæsars.⁴

¹ The grandson of the first earl, whose son had pre-deceased him.

² Hardyng has given us minute details of the training of a young noble, but although, as a page in the Percy household, he must have had ample opportunities of observation, he makes no allusion to the education, pursuits, or habits of the ladies of the family.

³ A century later we begin to be admitted to personal acquaintance with English gentlewomen, and may note with admiration, not unmingled with surprise, how high a degree of culture they had then as a class attained, and how powerful an influence they exercised.

⁴ In the charming scene between Hotspur and his wife, to which Shakespeare introduces us, the hero's playful and affectionate manner indicates but little respect, while the lady herself appears somewhat frivolous; but in another passage (*Second Part of King Henry IV.*) Hotspur's

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

Popular rumour had occupied itself with the youthful loves of the Earl and Countess of Northumberland, but of their married life little is recorded beyond the fact of her having borne her lord twelve children and survived him eight years.¹ We hear of the king being entertained at a banquet at Leckinfield, and again we catch a glimpse of the earl proceeding with his wife and children from that place to Beverley, for the purpose of witnessing the Corpus Christi Plays periodically acted in that town, and which, like the Bavarian Passion Play of the present time, occupied eight or ten successive days in representation;² but so far from being admitted into the domestic circle we are not even able to ascertain at which of his numerous northern seats³ he principally resided.

The young earl ever retained a grateful recollection of the kind treatment he had met with at the Scottish court, and in the negotiations for securing a permanent settlement of the disputes between the two kingdoms in which he now became frequently engaged, he was doubtless more in earnest than most of his ancestors had

widow is represented as an eloquent and high-minded woman, urging her views upon the Earl of Northumberland with no sense of intellectual inferiority. These pictures, however, cannot be considered as in any way historical; even the name by which Hotspur calls his wife is fictitious.

¹ As a widow in 1459, and again in 1461, she made grants of the advowson of the parish church of Leckinfield and of certain lands to the convent of St. Mary, Alnwick.—*Calend. Inquis. ad quod damnnum*, 37 and 39 Henry VI.

² See Poulson's *Beverlac*. The town of Beverley being an ecclesiastical fief, the burgesses sought the support and protection of the powerful nobles, and more especially of the Percies, to whom they made frequent "offerings and oblations" in return for their favour. Among others, there is an entry, in 1456, of a gift of £3 to Maister William Percy (afterwards Bishop of Carlisle) in honour of the celebration of his "prime misse."

³ See Appendix XXXV.

STATE OF THE BORDERS.

been.¹ Unfortunately these efforts, perfectly sincere on the part of both Governments, were continually defeated by the unruly spirit of the Borderers, whose excesses it was impossible to restrain. In the midst of the deliberations of the Commissioners a destructive raid, frequently followed by a retaliatory massacre, would arouse the anger of both nations and neutralise the action of the peacemakers.

A.D. 1419

Thus in 1419, Sir William Haliburton without provocation crossed the Tweed, and, having surprised Wark Castle, massacred the entire garrison and hoisted his flag in defiance on the battlements. The Earl of Northumberland at once advanced and laid siege to the place, which was obstinately defended. Some of his troops, however, effected an entrance by night through a sewer, and, having overcome the enemy, slew every Scotchman within the walls.*

* * *

The fifth Henry had no sooner ascended the throne than he gave evidence of the vigorous action which, no less in obedience to his own warlike tastes than to his father's dying injunctions, he purposed to pursue towards France. In spite of the drain upon the resources of England caused by our continuous wars in that country for the greater part of a century, he knew that in renewing these he might not only reckon upon popular support, but that they would serve firmly to establish him in the national favour. An Englishman of that age had come to consider dominion over France much in the same light as he now views British supremacy in India ;

¹ It would be wearisome to recapitulate his numerous employments as Commissioner, Conservator of the peace, Arrayer of armies and fleets, and other public offices in the north during this and the succeeding reign. They are all duly recorded in *Foedera*.

² Holinshead, v. p. 411.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

and by re-conquering French territories, lost or ceded during the two preceding reigns, and once more practically asserting his right to style himself King of France, Henry felt that he would do more to confirm his precarious title to the English crown than his father had effected for the validation of his claims by all his politic devices and audacious frauds.

He was not unconscious of the moral weakness of his cause, of the legal strength of that of his adversaries, nor of the fact that a large and powerful section of the nation looked upon his dynasty with a passive dislike and suspicion that only required opportunity to be kindled into active opposition. Never was there a more favourable moment for the exercise of that common resource of immoral statesmanship which consists in diverting domestic difficulties by the prosecution of a popular foreign war; and the young king, with his habitual sagacity and resolution, now threw himself upon national sympathy for the realisation of his ambitious schemes.

Henry Percy, who to his dying day repaid the favour of his sovereign with unflinching attachment, lost no time in giving practical evidence of his zeal and loyalty. He was still an exile in Scotland when the king embarked on his first campaign against France in 1415, and was thus excluded from participating in the victory of Agincourt.¹ No sooner was he restored, however, than by an indenture dated 30th May, 1416, he bound himself

¹ Banks, in his *Extinct Baronage of England*, states that the second Earl of Northumberland had taken part in this battle; and Wainright, in his *History of Yorkshire*, speaks of him as "this noble and magnanimous veteran who had gallantly distinguished himself at Agincourt;" but this is clearly an error. The only Percies who shared in that victory were Sir Henry (of Athol) and his brother Sir Thomas, the former with "six men-at-arms and eighteen horse," and the latter with "two men-at-arms, William Fayrechyde and William Fowley."—See Nicolas's *Battle of Agincourt*.

THE WARS IN FRANCE.

to serve the king abroad with forty men-at-arms (of whom four were knights) and eighty archers,¹ and by his example and influence induced other of the northern nobles who had hitherto remained aloof to rally under the banners of Harry of Monmouth. He does not, however, appear ever to have held an important command, or to have played a prominent part in these wars. We miss the mention of individual prowess on the part of the Percies, which is of such frequent occurrence in the campaigns chronicled by Froissart, and almost the only notices we find of the young earl are that he embarked for France with a certain number of followers at different dates, or that he figured in the royal retinue among the numerous nobles by whom Henry loved to be surrounded. We thus hear of him as one of the ten earls who accompanied the English king on his triumphant entry into Rouen, in 1419, and again at the siege of Melun in the following year, when the number of English earls and barons carrying banners in the royal train amounted to twenty-three. When, after an almost unbroken series of triumphs and victories, Henry concluded peace on the basis of his marriage with a daughter of France, and his succession to the throne of that country,² Northumberland took an active part in the pending negotiations, and finally

A.D.
1415-20

April 9th,
1420.

¹ His own pay was fixed at four shillings, that of the knights at two shillings, the men-at-arms at one shilling, and the archers at sixpence a day. — *Fœdera*, ix, p. 356. It must be borne in mind that each man-at-arms, being accompanied by his squire and lance-bearer, represented three mounted men, and sometimes even more. Vaillant, in his *History of France*, puts 3000 men-at-arms as equal to a force of 12,000 men.

² In this treaty Henry is described as "By the grace of God King of England, Regent of France, and Lord of Ireland," and under the sixth clause of the Articles it is stipulated that, on the death of King Charles, "the crown and realme of France, with all rights and appurtenances," shall devolve upon Henry and his heirs for evermore." — *Fœdera*, ix. 877.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455
August
31st, 1422.

officiated as Lord High Steward on the occasion of the queen's coronation.¹

Henry's death in the flower of his manhood was perhaps the greatest calamity that at that juncture could have befallen England. Never was it more indispensable to the prosperity of the country that the sceptre should be wielded by a strong hand than now when the usurped crown devolved upon an infant in the cradle.

The brilliant military successés achieved under the late king, had given to his throne a stability which could defy the intrigues of all rival claimants; but it could hardly be expected that under the divided rule of a long regency dynastic dissensions should not revive, and it required no prophetic inspiration to enable Henry, already smitten by the fatal illness that hurried him to an untimely grave, to foreshadow the fate that awaited his unhappy son.*

The death of his benefactor had not weakened the Earl of Northumberland's zeal in his cause. He became at once one of the assistants to the Duke of Bedford in the Protectorate, "the which Lords ben condescended to take it upon them in the manner and form that sueth,"³ and a member of the king's Council. He was actively employed in the duties of executorship under the will of Henry V., and in the following year proceeded as Ambassador to the General Council assembled at Paris.⁴

¹ The ceremonial was followed by a lenten dinner on an enormous scale, the curious details of which are given by Holinshead, iii. p. 125.

² On receiving the tidings of the birth of an heir at Windsor, "were it that he were warned by some prophecie, or had some foreknowledge, or else judged himself his sonnes fortune, he said unto the Lord Fitzhugh, his trusted chamberlain, these words:—'I Henry, born at Monmouth, shall small time reigne and much get, and Henry, born at Windsor, shall long time reign, and all loose.'"—Holinshead.

³ *Rot. Parl.*, 1 Henry VI.

⁴ He was granted the sum of 66s. 8d. a day while employed on this service (*Fœdera*, x. 271), and £100 "for wages of the said Erle

ACCESSION OF HENRY THE SIXTH.

We find him frequently presiding as judge in courts of chivalry and in questions of disputed precedency,¹ and on one occasion he appeared as the principal in a dispute with a Cumbrian knight who had challenged his right to a certain manor of which he held possession. Instead of referring the question to a legal tribunal, it was determined to decide it by a combat between two champions to be chosen by the disputants.

A.D.
1422-25

The case is fully reported, and affords a curious illustration of the manners of the age.*

“Sir Peter Cokain (? Cockaigne) Knight, presents Brief of Right against Henry Percy, in the County of Northumberland, for the Manor 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 his 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

in going and returning upon the embassy aforesaid.”—*Issue Rolls*, 1 Henry VI.

¹ These were solemn tribunals held under the authority of Parliament, as in a dispute between the Lord Marshal and the Earl of Warwick, when Northumberland was elected umpire.—*Rot. Parl.*, 3 Henry VI.

* The document in its original Law-Court French, is preserved among the MSS. at Syon House.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

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 bareheaded 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 said 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 (*fingstal*) one penny. And then he gave one glove to the Champion of the tenant and one glove to the Champion of the defendant, but he took no notice which of the gloves he gave to the one or to the other for this is unimportant (*car il nest pas forse*)."

The Champions being asked whether they were prepared to do battle, and both answering in the affirmative the justice inquires of Paston and Strange if they had mispleaded, or not sufficiently pleaded, or wished to amend their pleas, or if the Court had misruled, or whether from any other cause it was desired to delay the Battle, and no objection being raised on either side the Justice said :

"We award the champions to be here in the Place in their array to do the battle on Saturday next ensuing and he gave one glove to the one champion, and said to him : ' This day is the day of St. Paul, and

WAGER OF BATTLE.

A.D. 1425

therefore we command that thou go to St. Paul's, and there before the North Door pray that God would give the Victory to him that hath a right to the land.' In the same manner he gives the other glove to the other champion and commands him to go to Westminster Abbey and there make his prayer as aforesaid at the shrine of St. Edward And it was commanded to the ruling Parties that they should give surety that their champions should not approach or speak to each other. . . . Then the Court first called for the Demandant, Sir P. C., and he appeared by his attorney and had his champion ready at the Bar all arrayed in Red Lead (*en redde Ledd*), and was commanded that one should hold the Ruby shield and the Ruby Baton behind the champion's back which was done accordingly, but neither his head was shaven as the head of a Prover or Challenger is, nor had his Baton a knob (*un knowe*) at the end as the Baton of a Prover or challenger should have; but it was said by Martin when he saw this Baton that in truth it should have had a knob at the end, to which no answer was made.

"Then was the tenant, Sir Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, solemnly demanded that he should come with his champion to darraign this Battle in his defence against the said Knight, Sir Peter Cokain, and his champion for the Manor of Cappenhow in the County of Cumberland, or otherwise the said Earl should lose this land for himself and his heirs for ever, and all this was demanded three times by command of the Justices."

The Earl failing to put in his appearance, the Court awarded sentence in favour of Sir Peter Cokain, granting him and his heirs the land in dispute, and that the Earl should be "placed at the king's mercy"; but being a Peer of the Realm that the Court would not impose a

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

fine upon him, but leave him to be amerced according to his rank and estate by his brother peers, "*et tout ceo just solemneint fait.*"

It may be presumed that the Earl, having, in the course of these proceedings, satisfied himself of the justice of his adversary's claim, withdrew his champion, and submitted to be mulcted in the penalties awarded by this strange tribunal.

* * *

The Earl of Northumberland took a very active part in maintaining rule in the north, as Warden of the Marches and Governor of Berwick,¹ and in 1424 joined the expedition to France under the Duke Regent, Bedford, which resulted in the brilliant victory over the army of the Comte de Narbonne at Verneuil.

In Parliament he distinguished himself by his zeal in the king's service, and appears to have shown considerable capacity for the conduct of public business, raising, and even personally guaranteeing, national loans,² and conducting several important negotiations with foreign courts.

The liberation of James of Scotland had been more than once under consideration during the late reign, but Henry V. could not be induced to part with a prisoner whose presence with his armies in France, was calculated to weaken the zeal of the Scottish levies fighting against him in that country.³ On the death of the Duke

¹ He had held both these offices under successive patents since 1421, when the pay for the wardenship was fixed at £5000 a year in war and £2500 in peace.—*Fœdera* x. 126.

² On Parliament repudiating a loan made by the Bishop of Winchester, the earl became personally responsible for the repayment, in consideration of the money having been lent to the king "*en sa grande necessite.*" *Rot. Parl.*, 18 Henry VI.

³ This effect would have been produced to a far greater extent, but that the Earl of Buchan had induced many of the Scottish lords in the service of France, to refuse to acknowledge James as their sovereign

LIBERATION OF THE SCOTTISH KING.

A.D. 1423

of Albany, who as Regent had administered the government of Scotland since 1406, he was succeeded by his son Murdoch (who had been exchanged for Henry Percy in 1416) but who proved utterly incapable of maintaining order in his dominions. An opportunity was thus afforded for restoring James to the vacant throne upon conditions very favourable to England.¹

Unjust and arbitrary as had been his capture and his detention for eighteen years,² James had no reason to complain of the treatment he had met with at the English Court. His education had been conducted with scrupulous care, and had resulted in his acquiring accomplishments then unknown in his own country.³ He had been trained in the conduct of State affairs, and had acquired much experience in military matters during successive campaigns in France, in which, false as was his position, he bore himself bravely and honourably. He was generous enough to remember these benefits rather than the pains of captivity, and throughout his reign he exerted himself to maintain friendly relations with England, although he could not always curb the

while he was a prisoner of the King of England. So constant and valuable an ally did France in those times find in Scotland that it was a common saying, attributed originally to the first Earl of Westmoreland :—

“He that would France win
Must with Scotland first begin.”

¹ The principal terms of the treaty were the acknowledgment on the part of King James of the suzerainty of the King of England, his marriage with an English lady (a daughter of the Duke of Somerset), and the payment of 40,000 marks, an unworthy exaction, as the charge of personal maintenance during his illegal detention.—*Fœdera*, x. 299.

² Once only during that period James had been permitted to visit his kingdom, when the Earl of Northumberland was required to receive hostages for his return.—*Letters Pat.*, 6 Dec., 1416. *Fœdera*, ix. 417.

³ “He had such perfect instructors to teach him as well the understanding of tongues as the Sciences that he became quite expert and cunning in every of them. . . . He had good knowledge in musike, and could plaie on sundrie instruments right perfectlie.”—Holinshed, vol. v. 408.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

turbulent spirit of his people, and proved unable to break off the alliance with France.

Sept. 10
1423

It became the grateful duty of Northumberland to escort the royal companion of his boyhood, now about to take his seat on the Scottish throne, from Durham to the Border,² and when, some years later, a conference on English ground was arranged between James and the Cardinal St. Eusebius, the earl selected Berwick as the place of meeting, and there attended upon the king for sixteen days with a retinue of one hundred horsemen.²

A less agreeable duty was the collection of the royal ransom, which had remained in arrears for a long time, and which the earl was personally interested in receiving, since it was made the source of his military emoluments, or, more accurately speaking, of the pay of the king's garrisons in the north.³

With the best intentions King James was unable to put a stop to the constant depredations of the Borderers, or the more serious raids of his unruly nobles, and these increased in number and violence towards the end of his reign.⁴ In 1435 the Earl of Northumberland, to provide against a threatened invasion, requested and obtained the royal license to inclose and fortify the town of Alnwick,⁵

¹ "Cum omni quo valetis honore."—*Fœdera*, x. 332.

² The sum of £50 was granted him for his "grete cost and expense" on this duty.—*Issue Rolls*, 8 and 9 Henry VI.

³ By Letters Patent of 9th June, 1425, the earl was authorised to retain for payment of the troops in Berwick the sum of £2,000, remitted to him by the King of the Scots as an instalment of his ransom.—*Fœdera*, x. 344.

⁴ Aeneas Sylvius, *Concilia Scotia*, p. xcvi.—*Appendix XXXVA*.

⁵ "De advisamento et assensu concilii nostri, concessimus licentiam Car^{mo} Consanguineo nostro, Henrico Com. Northriæ, dictæ villæ et castri ac burgensibus ejusdem villæ quod ipsi dictam villam de Alnewyke, legitime includere, et murare circa totam villam prædictam, ac muros ejusdem villæ batellare, necnon alias res defensibile quâcunque circa et suprae osdem muros facere et ordinare valeant, absque impeditioe quâcunque."—*Rot. Pat.*, 1 June, 12 Henry VI. See also *Petyt MSS.* vol. xxxiv. p. 281, in the Library of the Inner Temple.

THE BATTLE OF PIPERDEN.

A.D.
1435-1437

and two years later an alleged breach in the truce induced him to lead an army of 5,000 men against the Border. Whether he acted under royal authority, or simply in satisfaction of a private feud between himself and William Douglas, Earl of Angus, is doubtful.¹ Be this as it may, a sanguinary action ensued near the village of Piperden or Pepperden in the Cheviot Hills, resulting in the complete defeat of Northumberland, and the loss of half his army. Forty English knights, including Sir Richard Percy,² and 1,500 gentlemen were left upon the field, and five hundred prisoners remained in the hands of the victors, whose losses were trifling.³ The probability is that the Scots had prepared an ambush, into which the Earl, whose courage and impetuosity appear to have been more conspicuous on this occasion than his generalship, allowed his army to fall.⁴

Encouraged by success, the Scots advanced under the king in person and laid siege to Roxburgh with an army of 30,000 men; but being, after a siege of twenty days during which Sir Ralfe Grey defended the castle, attacked in force by the Earl of Northumberland, they were driven back with great slaughter,⁵ and shortly after

¹ "*Incertum cujus autoritate, an privata, an regis.*"—*Boece*, p. 353.

² Described by some writers as the son of the Earl of Northumberland; but this is evidently an error. The earl's son Richard was then an infant in his cradle, and survived to take a prominent part in the Wars of the Roses. This Sir Richard must have belonged to one of the then numerous collateral branches of the Percy family.

³ Holinshed. Ridpath.

⁴ This is the battle of which some of the incidents seem to have formed the groundwork of the ballad of Chevy Chase. See *ante*, p. 153.

⁵ "King James being then advertised that the Earl of Northumberland was coming to fight with him, fled with no lesse losse than dishonour, and enough of both."—Holinshed, iii. 189. Among the Scotch this unfortunate expedition was long remembered under the name "the dirtin raid." Hardyng says:

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

—*Chronicle*, p. 397.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

the earl once more concluded a treaty of peace with his troublesome neighbours.¹

These services were acknowledged by the grant of a life annuity of £100,² and towards the end of the year Northumberland was despatched on a mission for the purpose of delivering the Order of the Garter to the King of Portugal, the grandson of John of Gaunt.

It was about this time that he acquired the lordship of Doncaster by purchase from Sir John Salvayne, and that he erected the keep at Warkworth Castle, the solid remains of which now form one of the most attractive features of that magnificent ruin.

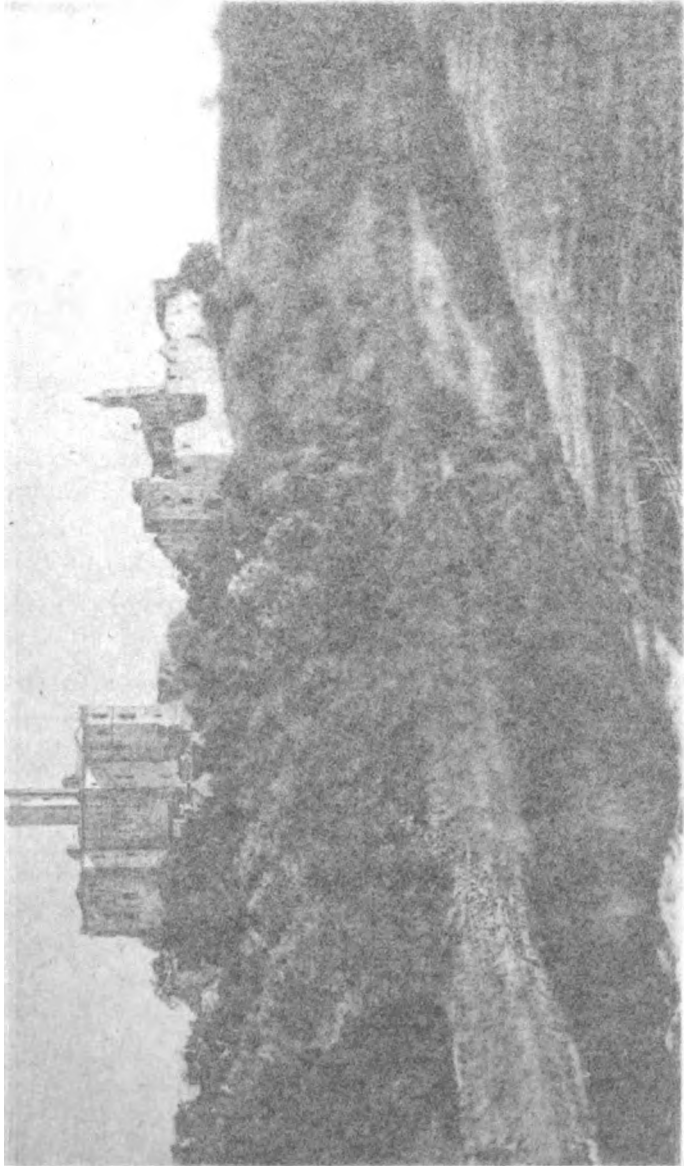
In the later campaigns in France, where the tide of our successes had begun to turn,³ the Earl of Northumberland appears to have taken no prominent part, and the statement accepted by several of the genealogists, that he had there "distinguished himself in many exploits, in the reign of Henry V. and also in that of Henry VI,"⁴ is entirely devoid of foundation in fact. Indeed the rare occurrence of the name of Percy in the chronicles of the French wars of this period is a remarkable circumstance, when we consider the love of fighting which characterised the race, and of which the second earl, as well as all the immediate members of his family, gave most conspicuous evidence in the civil wars of his own country and on the northern borders.

¹ *Pat.*, 16 Henry VI., p. 2, m. 17.

² *Rot. Scot.*, 16 Henry VI., m. 6.

³ Rymer quotes the curious letter written by the Duke of Bedford to the King (Cotton MSS., Titus, E. 5), and dated from the camp before Orleans on 20th October, 1428, in which he alludes to the death of Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the defeat of his army, "caused in grete partie, as I trowe, of lakke of sadde beleve, and of unlevefulle doubte that they hadde of a disciple and lyme of the Feende, called the Pucelle, that used false enchauntments and sorcerie."—*Fœdera*, x. 408. The date assigned to this letter is evidently erroneous. Salisbury fell on 12th October, 1428, and the Maid of Orleans did not appear upon the scene until the following April.

⁴ Banks' *Baronage of England*, vol. ii. 421.



the second earl more concluded a treaty of peace with his enemies, and laboured.

His services were acknowledged by the grant of a barony, *cap. 20*,¹ and towards the end of the year 1428, he was despatched on a mission for the purpose of bringing the Order of the Garter to the King of Portugal, the grandson of John of Gaunt.

It was about this time that he acquired the lordship of Dunstun, or by purchase from Sir John Salwayne, and that he obtained the keep at Warkworth Castle, the still remains of which now form one of the most attractive objects of interest in that magnificent ruin.

It was during these campaigns in France, where the tide of our fortunes began to turn,² the Earl of Northumb'land took no prominent part, and the story told by several of the genealogists, that he distinguished himself in many exploits, in the reign of Henry V. and also in that of Henry VI. is entirely devoid of foundation in fact. Indeed the occurrence of the name of Percy in the chronicles of the French wars of this period is a remarkable circumstance when we consider the love of fighting which characterises the race, and of which the second earl, as well as all the immediate members of his family, gave most conspicuous evidence in the civil wars of his own country and on the northern borders.

¹ *Pitt.*, 16 Henry VI., p. 2, m. 17.

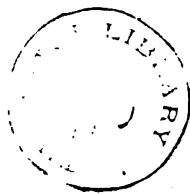
² *Act. Scot.*, 16 Henry VI., m. 6.

³ Rymer quotes the curious letter written by the Duke of Bedford to the King (Cotton MsS., Titus, E.5), and dated from the camp of the Orleans on 25th October, 1428, in which he alludes to the death of Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the defeat of his army, "caused in grete part by the trowe, of lakke of sadde beleve, and of unlevefelle doubte that the knyghte of a discipule and tyme of the freende, called the Pucelle, that used to doo enchantments and soicerie."—*Fœdera*, x. 408. The date assigned to this letter is evidently erroneous. Salisbury fell on 12th October, 1428, and the Mail of Orleans did not appear upon the scene until the following April. ⁴ *Barth's Baronage of England*, vol. ii. 421.



WARKWORTH CASTLE.

Returned by Mrs. A. J. J. J. J.



FOUNDATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS.

A.D. 1448

It was probably in grateful recollection of his own training that the earl founded three Divinity Fellowships in University College, Oxford, in favour of natives of Durham, Carlisle, and York,¹ which after the lapse of nearly four and a half centuries still continue in force. He also granted an acre of land pertaining to the Honour of Petworth, to Eton College,² and obtained the royal license (6th July, 26 Henry VI.) to found a grammar school at Alnwick, towards the endowment of which he granted lands of the value of £40 per annum.³

After a more than usually prolonged cessation of hostilities, the Scots in 1448 again invaded England, ravaging whole districts with fire and sword, and laying the town of Alnwick in ashes. The Earl of Northumberland hereupon led a considerable army against them, and, having crossed the Solway, encamped on the banks of the River Sark, in Annandale, where he was attacked by the Earl of Ormond⁴ with a superior force.

The fight was a furious one, and the victory at first inclined to the English arms, but the Lord Maxwell appearing on the field with reserves turned the scale.⁵

¹ *Rot. Parl.*, 21 Henry VI. The grant consisted of the advowson of Arncliffe, which had been part of the Percy fee since the Conquest, with three acres of land, then worth £46.—Whitaker's *Craven*. This seems a small sum for the purpose; but, as late as the reign of Henry VIII., £6 was accepted by University College for the endowment of a Fellowship.

² *Rot. Parl.*, 23 Henry VI. See also Appendix XXXVI. This deed bears the signature of the earl, his countess, and their two sons, Henry and Thomas, as parties to the grant.

³ See Clarkson's Survey, 1567, A 1. No. 1, part xviii.

⁴ It is noteworthy how, generation after generation, the Percies and Douglasses were opposed to one another as leaders in the Border wars. Indeed throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the latter house represented in Scotland much the same power as was exercised by the Percies in the north of England, and both races were equally distinguished by their warlike spirit and personal contempt of danger.

⁵ "Having the rear Lord Maxwell won the field; Ormond and the rest of the leaders of the army being almost discomfitt."—*The Book of Carlevarock*, vol. i. p. 137.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D.
1394—1455

Northumberland was defeated with great loss, and only escaped capture by the devotion of his son, who was taken prisoner in rescuing him.¹

In the following year however, when King James II. in person led an army across the Border, the earl succeeded in repelling the invasion, to the utter discomfiture of the Scots, on which occasion he and his son Sir Ralfe received the formal thanks of King Henry VI. for their "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 cuntrye and sujettes."

In this year the earl was one of the judges on the trial of the Duke of Suffolk (de la Pole), for complicity in the murder of the Duke of Gloucester, the surrender of several French provinces committed to his charge, and other crimes.² As a mark of the royal favour he received a grant of Wressill Castle,³ one of the confiscated possessions of his great-uncle the Earl of Worcester, which had not been included in the original restoration, and was created Lord High Constable of England.⁴ About

¹ "Numerous prisoners were taken including Sir John Pennington and Lord Percy: the latter of whom was made prisoner whilst courageously rescuing his father the Earl of Northumberland from the victors."—*The Book of Carleverock*, vol. i. p. 137. Holinshed, in enumerating the prisoners, mentions "the Lord Persie, sonne to the Erle of Northumberland, who holpe his father to horsebak, whereby he escapid by flight."—*Chronicles*, v. 437.

² Having submitted to the king's mercy, he was temporarily banished the realm; but the Commons, enraged at this lenient sentence, caused him to be intercepted on his way to France and beheaded on the spot. He was subsequently attainted.

³ According to some authorities, it was granted not to the Earl but to his second son, Thomas, Baron Egremont. In 1469 it passed into the possession of John Nevill, Lord Montacute (subsequently created Earl of Northumberland), but was restored to the Percies (the fourth Earl) by Henry VII., and remained in their possession until transferred by the fifth Duke of Somerset to the Wyndham family in 1750. A full description of the castle will be found in the *Northumberland Household Book*, p. 451.

⁴ *Fœdera*, xi. 270.

A FACTION FIGHT.

the same time his second son Thomas was created Baron Egremont.¹ A.D. 1452

* * *

Symptoms of the storm which a few years later burst over the throne of the unfortunate young King of England now began to make themselves felt. The politic Duke of York, without overtly asserting his claims to the crown, fomented the growing discontent of the English people, then groaning under the weight of an intolerable taxation and of mortification at the inglorious loss of dearly-bought possessions in France. Already the great nobles took sides, attaching themselves to the parties opposing, or supporting the reigning sovereign; and a conflict which took place in 1454 between the cadets of two great houses and their followers, was but the precursor of the rebellion which ensued, and which led to one of the most disastrous civil wars recorded in history.

In the year of grace 1452, "there arose for diverse causes a greet discorde betwixt the Earl of Northumberland and Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury, his wyfe's brother,² in so much that many were beeten and slaine and hurt, and in the year 1453, at Steyneford Bridge, besydes York,³ there was a battayl set betwixt Thomas, Lord Egremont, and Richard his brother, the sonnes of the said Erle of Northumberland on one partie and two sonnes of the said Erle of Salisbury on the other partie, but, through the Treason and withdrawing of Peris of Lounde, the first Lord Egremont and his brother

¹ *Pat.*, 28 Henry VI. p. 10, m. 1. See Madox's *Baronia Anglica*, p. 142.

² The second son of Ralph Nevill, Earl of Westmoreland, created Earl of Salisbury in 1428.

³ Stanford, or Stamford, Bridge (sometimes called the Bridge of the Battle) had been the scene of the desperate conflict between the Norwegians and Harold on 23rd September, 1066.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

Richard were taken and committed to prison in London." According to another historian, "dyverse men were maymed and slayne etweene theym" in this encounter, but in the end Lord Egremont "was founden in much defaulte," and sentenced by the justices at York to pay to the Earl of Salisbury the large fine of 14,800 marks; "for lakke of payment thereof, or of putting suretie for the same, the sayd Lorde Egremonde was commytted to Newgate."¹ He succeeded, however, in making his escape with three other prisoners, "to the grete charge of the sheriffs," who thus became responsible for the fine imposed.²

The following letter, written by the Earl of Northumberland to his "Right worshipfull and right entirely welbeloved Cousyn ye Lorde Sayntemonde," belongs to this period.

"Right worshipfull, and with all myne hart right entierly beloved Cousyn, I comānde me unto you in ye moste hartely wise yt I kan; and liket yow to witt yt

¹ *The Englishe Chronicle*. A petition was presented by Parliament praying the king to summon before the Council "Thomas Percy, knight, Lord Egremond, and Richard, knight, his brother, having raisede and assembled and gadrede your people of the shires of York, Cumberlande, Westmorelande, and Northumberlande in grete numbre, togeider with manye other idel men of grete riotous rule and misgovernance, so that the peaceful people be sore hurt, vexed and troubled, and dare noon entré make, ne action attempt upon ne agaynst them at law for fere of deth and their lykely destruction."—*Rot. Parl.*, 23 Henry VI.

Grafton places these events after the death of the second Earl of Northumberland, implying that the enmity between the two houses had been created by the result of the battle of St. Alban's. In Stow's *Survey*, they are stated to have occurred as late as 1457, but the earlier date appears to be the more accurate.

² *Fabian*, p. 632. According to Stow, "Lord Egremond 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."—*Survey*, vol. i. p. 20.

LETTER TO SAYNTEMOND.

A.D. 1454

ye vii day of yis prst moneth of Avrill come a writt unto me charging me in right streate wise yat I shuld be at yis P'lement ye x day of yis same moneth, the which God knoweth lies nought in my power for shortnes of time, gif I were in als goode helth als ence I was. Wherfor, Cousin, I pray yow as hartely as I kan yat ye would doo so moche for me as to enforme ye Kyng our Sov^m Lord how yat I am to greatly vissett with sekeness yat trewly I may nought travell without grete Juberté of my life. Beseeching the Kyng of his hieghness for to p'done me of my ¹, as nowe unto tyme yat it list his goode grace to comande me for to come unto hym when I may better travel yan I may nowe. And right worshipful cousyn, my Son, ye Lord Egremont, broght me word tofore Christemess yat ye Kyng of his goode grace excused me of my ¹ to p'lement, and trewly cousyn and I shuld be compelled nowe for to ryde in yis Sesson of ye yere and in ye sekenes yat I am in, I trust verrelly yat I shuld fall so seke by ye way yat I shuld neuer mowe cover il withowt ye grace of God, and to put me in p'ell of my life, and by such labure I shuld be broght in such febilnes yat I should neuer be of power and myght in my psone for to do ye kyng s'vice hereafter. And I trust so much in his goode grace yat he wuld gladlier have my s'vice hereafter rather yan thugh suche ympotent labure I should be casten downe in sekenes and to enfeble my p'sone so yat I myght not do hym s'vice to his plesir and comandement hereafter.* Praying yow, cousyn, also ye wuld beseche ye Kyng of his heighnes yat he wuld vouchesave of his goode grace for to consider my grete age and ye grete labure and bissynes yat I had in his s'vice yis last yere,

¹ These words are obliterated in the *MS.*

* How sincere these professions were was proved a few months later at St. Alban's.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394—1455

and how that my good will is, and at all tymes shall be redy for to do hym s'vice at my power what tyme as I may labure and travell for sekeness. For trewly it is noght longe sith I tooke grete sekeness from travel in ys same session of ye yere withe wekes togedir, so yat I and all my servants wer in grete dispare of my life. And therefore worshipful Cousyn, I pray yow as hartely as I kan or may to acquite yow so in yis matter for myne excuse as my singular trust is in yow, yat ye fully so will doo. And yat ye woull geve full feith and credence unto my well beloved Squier, Christopher Spencer, berar herof in yat he shall say unto yow by mouthe on my behalfe. And I besech oure Lord God evrmore to have yow in his gracious keping. Writen at Leykyngfeld ye ix day of Avrill. Your aisne Cosyne,
"H. NORTHUMBERLAND."¹

March 1455 The influence of the Yorkists had caused the Duke of Somerset to be committed to the Tower, but at a Council held at Greenwich, the Earl of Northumberland had strenuously supported the queen's efforts to liberate and to restore him to power.² The Duke of York, whose commission as Lieutenant of the Kingdom had been cancelled, determined upon a bold effort to counteract his rival's influence, and placing himself with the Earl of Warwick at the head of a considerable army, overtook the king at St. Alban's. After some show of negotiating, he suddenly attacked the Lancastrians, who, greatly outnumbered, were, after a short but fierce conflict, utterly defeated. Henry escaped to London, where he fell into the hands of the Duke of York; but the greater part of the nobles who had fought in his defence were slain, and among them the Earl

¹ From the Evidences, Syon House.

² *Fœdera*, vol. xi. p. 561.

THE BATTLE OF ST. ALBAN'S.

A.D. 1455

of Northumberland,¹ who thus with his heart's blood crowned his long and faithful services to the House of Lancaster.²

His fate, with that of other of their chieftains, was the signal for the dispersion of the Royalist army,³ and the Duke of York became at once, in all but name, the King of England; his only formidable enemy, now that the leading nobles around the throne were killed, captured, or exiled,⁴ being the feeble Henry's brave, ambitious, and high-spirited queen.

* * *

Although the restitution of his ancestral lands under Henry V. has been shown to have been far from

¹ "Therle then of Northumberland was there,
Of sodeyn chaunce drawn forth with the kyng,
And slayne unknowne by any man ther were."
—Hardyng's *Chronicle*.

Warwick. "I wonder how the king escaped our hands.
York. "While we pursued the horsemen of the north,
He slyly stole away, and left his men:
Whereat 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."
—*Third Part of King Henry VI.*, Act i., Scene 1.

² "This," says Hume, "was the first blood spilt in that fatal quarrel, which was not finished in less than a course of thirty years, which was signalised by twelve pitched battles, which opened a scene of extraordinary fierceness and cruelty, is computed to have cost the lives of eighty princes of the blood, and almost entirely annihilated the ancient nobility of England."—*History of England*.

³ "When the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Clifford were slain, the men threw down their arms and fled."—*Rot. Parl.*, 33 Henry VI.

⁴ "For there died under the sign of the Castle" ("underneath an ale-house paltry sign") "Edward Duke of Somerset, Henry 2nd Earl of Northumberland, Humphrey Earl of Stafford, John [Thomas] Lord Clifford, with VII M. men or more."—Hall's *Chronicle*. The number of the Lancastrian soldiers killed is here exaggerated. Some of the old writers put their loss at only 800. According to Hume, the killed amounted to 5000.

HENRY PERCY, SECOND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1394-1455

complete, and his wife had but a comparatively moderate dower, the second Earl of Northumberland acquired considerable additions of territory during his life-time, dying seized of

41 townships and 20 manors in Northumberland ;

12 manors and other lands in Cumberland ;

15 manors in Yorkshire ;

3 manors in Essex ;

1 manor in Leicester, in Suffolk, and in Kent ;

besides the Sussex estates and extensive house property in London, York, Newcastle, and Hull.¹

He was buried in York Minster, where a painted window (which was taken down for repairs in 1590 and never replaced) represented him and his countess, with their twelve children kneeling around them.²

¹ For a list of these possessions see Appendix XXXVII.

² See the Plate representing "Percy's Window" in Drake's *History of York*, p. 306.

FACSIMILE OF SIGNATURE OF THE 2ND EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.



CHAPTER VI.

**Henry Percy,
Third Earl of Northumberland, K.G.**

Born at Leconfield, July 25, 1421.¹

Succeeded to the Earldom, 1455.

Fell at Towton Fields, March 29, 1461.

*Contemporary
English Sovereigns.*

Henry VI.

Edward IV. *acc.* 1461.



HE loyalty which had ever inspired the second Earl of Northumberland survived him in four of his sons, all of whom, like himself, fell on the battle-field in defending the rights of their sovereign.

A.D.
1421-1461

Circumstances had created a natural sympathy between the third earl and King Henry VI. Born and married within the same year, and knighted on the same day,² they had been fellow students in their youth, companions in arms as they advanced to manhood, and attached friends at all times. While the struggle lasted

¹ He was the fourth son ; his three elder brothers having pre-deceased their father.

² Prince Henry received knighthood on May 4, 1426, when in his fifth year, at the hands of the Duke of Bedford, and immediately after conferred the same honour on his play-fellow, Henry Percy.—*Fadera*, x. 356.

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

the chief of the Percies and his three brothers were forward in the field wherever the king's enemies showed themselves; and when these prevailed, and the unfortunate Henry was deposed and consigned to the Tower for his remaining days, they continued to fight his battles till, one by one, they fell, sword in hand, in the attempt to restore him to the throne.

Like his father, the third earl took a more prominent part in domestic affairs, warlike and pacific, than in the French campaigns; and was constantly employed in alternately fighting and pacifying the Scots. We find him as early as in 1440 acting as one of the Border Commissioners and Conservators, and two years later the royal assent was given to his father's resignation in his favour of the wardenship of the East marches² and the governorship of Berwick Castle. By his marriage, in 1443, with Eleanor, the granddaughter and sole heiress of Robert, Lord Poynings,² Henry Percy acquired the baronies of Poynings, Fitzpayne, and Bryan, together with large landed estates in Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Somerset and Kent,³ and was summoned to Parliament as *Dominus de Poynings*. In 1449 the king granted him a moiety of the confiscated lands of Sir Robert Ogle,⁴ and on his

² The office was conferred upon him for a term of ten years, with an allowance of £5,000 a year in war and £2,500 in peace. On his re-appointment in 1455, the emoluments were reduced to £2,566 13s. 4d. in peace or war.—*Claus*, 20 Henry VI. m. 30. See his Warrant addressed to Christopher Spencer, Appendix XXXVIIA.

³ Sir Richard Poynings, the lady's father, had pre-deceased Lord Poynings, having fallen during the siege of Orleans in 1429. He had married the widow of the Earl of Arundel, who, by her will dated in 1455, left to "my dear daughter Lady Eleanor Percy a golden collar for her neck with a jewel set with precious stones hanging thereat; also a basin of silver with the arms of the said Poynings and of Sir John Berkeley my father thereon; likewise a ewer of silver and C. £ sterling."—*Testamenta Vetusta*.

³ See Appendix XXXVIII.

⁴ *Pat.* 27 Henry VI. p. 1, m. 20. The other moiety was bestowed upon Sir Richard Manners, then serving under the second Earl of

A.D.
1457

father's death he was permitted "free livery without inquisition taken for proof of age," of his inheritance, in consideration of his services in his custody of the town of Berwick and the wardenship of the marches, and "in repelling the Scots upon their siege of that town and castle, at his great expences."¹ Shortly after he was granted the honourable and lucrative post of Justiciary of the royal forests beyond Trent.²

We have seen Henry Percy fighting by the side of his father, and rescuing him from the hands of the enemy at the cost of his own liberty; he was not less zealous in assisting and supporting the earl in his peaceful duties. Their names appear side by side in a number of judicial and administrative documents, and more especially in those repeated treaties with the Scots which appear only to have had the effect of provoking fresh hostilities.³ Sir Henry Percy was engaged on the borders in renewing one of these precarious truces, while the first battle of St. Alban's was being fought in the south, when he at once headed the band of young nobles leagued to avenge the deaths of their fathers.⁴ The feeble king's whole influence, however, was now exerted to avert further bloodshed, and to this end he summoned a conference of Yorkists to meet their adversaries for the discussion and redress of mutual grievances. It was no easy task to

Northumberland in the capacity of "Maister Forester," a post subsequently held by Sir Ralph Percy.

¹ *Rot. Fin.* 33 Henry VI. m. 6. Free livery involved the remission of the heavy fines payable to the crown on succession to titles or lands, and which formed an important source of the royal revenues.

² *Pat.* 38 Henry VI. p. 2, m. 7.

³ One of these treaties, dated 15 August, 1451, stipulated for a peace to last from the rising of the sun on that day to the setting of the sun on 15 August, 1454. It actually remained in operation for three weeks, when it was succeeded by another formal undertaking of the same kind.

⁴ "The relations of the lords slain at St. Alban's loudly demanded vengeance, and their adversaries surrounded themselves with bands of armed and trusty retainers."—Lingard.

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461
—

reconcile such antagonistic elements, but the two parties were so evenly balanced that neither was prepared to take the responsibility of rejecting an honourable compromise.

The meeting, which was presided over by the king in person, was convened for the 15th March, but the attitude of the nobles assembled held out little promise of a pacific solution.

The Earl of Northumberland, the Lord Egremont, and the Lord Clifford came to London with a large force of armed retainers, loudly proclaiming the wrongs they had suffered and their firm resolve to exact full reparation. So threatening was their demeanour, that, according to a contemporary chronicler, "the cytie wolde not receyve theyem bycause they came agaynst the pease. The Duke of York and the Erle of Salisbury came out onely with ther householde men in pesyble manner, thinking none harme, and were lodgyd withyne the cyte; but the abouesade came for to destroy utterly the said Duke of Yorke, armed for to withstande the malice of the young Lordes yf ned had be."¹

This writer appears to have been a partisan of the Yorkists, for others attribute no such moderation to the followers of the Duke of York, who were evidently as much prepared for armed conflict as their adversaries:—"The Earle of Salisburie came with 500 men on horseback, and was lodged in the Herber; Richard Duke of York, with 400 men, lodged at Baynard Castle. The Duke of Excester and Somerset with 800 men, and the Earle of Northumbreland, the Lord Egremont, and the

¹ From *An Englische Chronicle*, published by the Camden Society. According to Grafton, however, the young lords, and their party generally, preferred to take up their quarters in the suburbs of London, because "as the Jews disdained the company of the Samaritans, soe they abhorred the familiaritie of the Yorkshire linage."

THE "JOYFUL AGREEMENT."

Lord Clifford with 1,500 men. Richard, Earl of Warwick, with 600 men, all in red jackets embroidered with ragged staves before and behind, was lodged in Warwick Lane. In whose house there was oftentimes six oxen eaten at a breakfast; and every tavern was full of his meat. For he that had any acquaintance in that house might have there so much of sodden and rost meat as he could prick and carry upon a long dagger." ¹

A.D. 1458

With thousands of armed men collected within and around the city walls, all eagerly awaiting an excuse for striking a blow in the cause of their lords, it became necessary to adopt extraordinary precautions to maintain peace between the two factions. A royal proclamation forbid all hostile demonstrations under pain of death, and the civic authorities organised a powerful force and "kept greate watche as well by daie as by night, riding about the cite by Houlbourne and Fleet Street with four thousand men well armed and arrayed to see good order and peace at all times kept." ²

The Archbishop of Canterbury and other prelates became the intercessors between the two parties, and finally succeeded in exacting a promise from the nobles on both sides that they would "forget all old rancours and be friends to each other and obedient to the king." ³

The meeting accordingly took place, and resulted in an award, under which the Yorkists were required to found a chantry in perpetuity for the repose of the souls of the three lords slain at St. Albans, and to pay a pecuniary fine to each of their successors; ⁴ while the Earl of Salisbury was mulcted in a very large sum by the remission of the still unpaid fine due to him and his

¹ Stow's *Survey of London*, p. 72.

² Holinshead, iii. p. 640.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ The young Duke of Somerset received 5,000, and Lord Clifford 1,000, marks, but the Earl of Northumberland declined to accept pecuniary compensation for his father's death.

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

family by Lord Egremont, for the riot at Staynsford Bridge six years before, on the latter giving security to keep the peace for ten years.

So far the award had been unfavourable to the party of aggression, but the powerful influence of the Yorkists is indicated by an article in the Report which formally justifies their action at St. Albans, while appearing only to excuse that of the nobles who fell in support of the royal authority. The Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland, and the Lord Clifford are declared to have been "true and faithful liegemen to the king, so to be held and reputed on the day of their deaths, *as well as* the said Duke of York, Earls of Warwick and Salisbury."¹

The loyalty of the men who attacked, and of those who defended, the King of England being thus alike vindicated, the "ioifull agreement" was made public by a solemn thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral, King Henry being present "in habitt royall, with his crown on his head," the Duke of York leading the queen "with great familiaritie in appearance," and the reconciled nobles joining hands and walking side by side in the procession.²

It proved but a hollow and a short-lived truce. Within little more than a year, the influence of the queen, whose high spirit could not brook the undisguised pretensions to the regal power of the Duke of York, summoned "the young lordes," who, appearing in London with a powerful following, once more proclaimed their grievances and demanded the punishment of the murderers of their fathers and the rebels against their king. Before the Yorkists could muster their forces and organise an effective opposition, the queen's party, utterly regardless of the compromise which they had accepted in the previous year, brought charges of high treason against

¹ For the text of this curious document see Appendix XXXIX.

² Holinshead, iii. 648.

ATTAINDER OF THE DUKE OF YORK.

the Duke of York and his principal allies, who were indicted for having waged war against the king and “feloniously slayne dyvers Lordes of ye blode, that is to saye the Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland and the Lorde Clifford.”¹

A.D. 1459

An act of attainder was passed against them in a parliament assembled at Coventry, and the authority of the feeble king was once more nominally established.

28th Nov.

From the strongholds in which they had prudently sought refuge the Yorkists in their turn denounced the weak and harmless Henry as a fraudulent usurper, who had robbed the true and lawful heir of his crown. Their appeal was warmly responded to by the nation which had ever held the birthright of their kings in reverence; and was but weakly met by the Lancastrians, who had now abandoned all pretence to rest their sovereign's claim to the throne upon legitimacy of descent, and could only oppose an act of parliament to the hereditary right under the divine sanction of which the Duke of York pursued his ambitious schemes.² So strong indeed was the popular feeling in his favour, that he might at this time probably have attained his ends without a resort to arms but for the indomitable spirit of the queen, and the zealous support which, under her inspiration, was lent to the House of Lancaster by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and other of the warlike nobles of the north, in whom the military strength of the kingdom was mainly centred.³ The question was now committed to the

¹ *Rot. Parl.* 27 Henry VI.

² The Duke of York, it must be borne in mind, was the son of the Earl of Cambridge by the sister of Edward Mortimer, last Earl of March (who died without issue in 1425), and claimed the throne by right of his descent from Lionel, Duke of Clarence.

³ “The whole north of England, the most warlike part of the kingdom, was by means of these two noblemen warmly engaged in the interests of Lancaster.”—Hume's *History of England*. The influence

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

Sept. 23,
1459.

July 10,
1460.

arbitrament of the sword. The defeat of the royalists under Lord Audley by the Earl of Salisbury at Blore Heath, was shortly after counterbalanced by the defection of the greater part of Warwick's army, which under Sir Andrew Trollope passed over to the king, and for a time so discouraged the Yorkists that they again retired to their different strongholds. In the following year, however, the rival forces once more met in the open field. The royal army, nominally commanded by the king in person, lay at Northampton, where it was attacked by the Earl of March, the eldest son of the Duke of York, and the Earl of Warwick who had landed from Calais with a picked body of troops. After a fierce conflict of several hours the royalists were defeated with great slaughter,¹ and the poor king, who at this time was hardly responsible for his actions, was left a prisoner in the hands of his uncle.

Among the many nobles who fell in the battle on the side of the Lancastrians was Lord Egremont who "full stoute in feate of warre,"² was slain while fighting near the king's tent,³ having, it is said, been singled out for his vengeance by the Earl of Warwick, who had a personal grievance against him.⁴ The queen, who had been present

and power of these nobles is illustrated by the fact of their having been able to raise large armies in their own county, although the great mass of the northern people had always sympathised with the deposed dynasty, and continued to lean to the side of York, even after the red and white rose had been united in a wedding wreath.

¹ Hall, who puts the Lancastrian loss at "few lesse than XM talle Englishmen," says that the Earl of Northumberland entered the field "determined to take Warwick alive or dead." ² Hardyng.

³ According to an account of this battle in the *New History of Northamptonshire*, vol. i. 430.

⁴ See Stubbs's *Constitutional History*. He left a son, John Percy, described in a deed of transfer dated in 1480 as *filius et heres Thomas Percy, militis, Dominus, dum vixit, de Egremont*. From the fact of his never having assumed the title it may be concluded that Lord Egremont had been attainted before his death, though there is no record of any such attainder previous to 1461.

THE BATTLES OF NORTHAMPTON AND WAKEFIELD.

throughout with the young Prince Edward, now fled A.D. 1460
under the escort of the Earl of Northumberland to the north, there to raise a fresh army.

Meanwhile the Duke of York availed himself of this success to induce parliament to declare him regent of the kingdom and heir to the throne; and Henry is described as cheerfully assenting to an act which, though it left him nominally in possession of the crown during his life, sacrificed the rights of his only son. The queen indignantly repudiated this arrangement, and when, at the instance of the Duke of York, who feared her influence and power, the king sent her a summons to join him in London, she returned a haughty and defiant refusal. The new regent, conscious that while so formidable an enemy remained in arms against him there could be no peace, conceived the rash design of advancing into the north for the purpose of securing her person and that of her son, and of finally crushing armed opposition. Arriving at Wakefield, in Yorkshire, with less than 10,000 men, he found himself confronted by the queen at the head of an army of 20,000, commanded by generals devoted to her cause, including the Duke of Somerset, the Earls of Northumberland, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, and the Lord Clifford. Unable to cope with such a force the Duke of York was prevailed upon to take refuge in Sandal Castle, there to await reinforcements, but after a short time, chafing under inactivity and ashamed to be "held at bay by a woman," he left his intrenchments and advanced to give battle to the queen. The struggle was hopeless: "Inuironed on every side, like fish in a net, he fought manfullie yet was he within half an hour slain and dead and his whole army discomfited."¹

31 Decr.

¹ Holinshead; according to whom 2,800 Yorkists were killed, "whereof manie were young gentlemen and heires of great parentage in the South Partes."

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

Civil wars are proverbial for arousing the fiercest passions of human nature, and stifling those sentiments of generosity and pity which in international conflicts mitigate the horrors of the battlefield. Never was this more strongly illustrated than in the Wars of the Roses, where kinsmanship served rather to inflame than to soften hatred. What must have been the violence of faction, to convert the queen—a refined woman, an attached, if an imperious, wife, and a fond mother—into a cruel virago, gloating over the last agonies of her conquered and wounded adversary, seeking to aggravate the pains of his death by bitter insults, and finally venting her rage upon his inanimate body? More repulsive even was the conduct of the Lord Clifford, when in cold blood, he, with his own hand, stabbed his prisoner, the young Earl of Rutland, a boy of twelve years, whose only offence was being the son of his father.

By way of grateful contrast with such scenes we may turn to Shakespeare's tribute to that exceptional spirit of humanity which had at all times been a characteristic of the warlike Percies, and which he now attributes to "the rude Northumberland," who is represented as moved to tears by the suffering of his fallen enemy under the cruelty of Queen Margaret.¹

¹ "*Northumberland*. Beshrew me, but his passions move me so,
That hardly can I check my eyes from tears . . .
Had he been slaughterman to all my kin,
I should not for my life but weep with him,
To see how inly sorrow gripes his soul.

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

—Third Part of *King Henry VI*.

And again, in *Richard the Third* (Act i. Scene 3), in allusion to the murder of Rutland:

"Northumberland, then present, wept to see it."

THE SECOND BATTLE OF ST. ALBANS.

The Earl of March was on his way to reinforce his father when he received the tidings of his defeat and death. Shortly after he was met by the Earl of Pembroke, whom the queen had sent to intercept him, while she herself, with an army commanded by Northumberland, advanced to attack the Earl of Warwick who was actively recruiting his forces in and around London. Pembroke was defeated with heavy loss at Mortimer's Cross, but Northumberland utterly routed Warwick on the scene of his father's death six years before, slaying over 3,000 men and taking numerous prisoners. Among them was the poor king, who, shuffled to and fro with the varying fortunes of war, was now transferred from the clement custody of his uncle to the imperious companionship of his wife.

A.D. 1461

2 February.

15 Feb.

This victory, however, availed but little to the Lancastrians, for the Earl of March, returning to the south by forced marches, compelled the queen to fall back, while he entered London in triumph, and was, by his army and the populace, proclaimed King of England.

Queen Margaret had returned to the north, where Northumberland succeeded in raising another army of 60,000 men. The young Duke of York, or as he was now called, King Edward IV., was as determined as his father had been before him to crush the only power that continued to threaten the stability of his throne, and advancing with a large force prepared to refer the fate of his house to the issue of battle.

* * *

The feudal system, while calculated to foster a warlike spirit, and to train the nation in martial exercises and the use of arms, was in its nature adverse to the development of defined principles of scientific warfare. The art of war had not yet been reduced to a science, and each chieftain who brought a contingent into the field had his own

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

ideas as to the most effectual method of employing his forces. The armies which a King of England could call together were accordingly an aggregate of units greatly differing in character and strength, and not necessarily bound to one another by any common tie of duty or sympathy. The sovereign authority was thus filtered through a number of distinct channels; and although in some exceptional cases—as in that of the Black Prince—the genius and influence of the supreme commander enabled him to fuse the heterogeneous mass for his own purposes to a common end, yet as a rule the vassal recognised no authority but that of his own immediate lord, whose lead he was ever ready to follow, and whose fall or capture relieved him from the obligations of service, and was commonly the signal for flight or surrender on his part.

Of generalship, or great tactical combinations, we see few traces in the English wars of the middle ages; but, if ignorant of military science, long practice in war had taught the commanders of feudal armies some valuable lessons. It is noticeable that they rarely failed to show a just appreciation of the advantages of geographical position and promptly profited by the blunders or misfortunes of their adversaries. Both these qualities were now displayed. Warwick had no sooner reached Pontefract and learnt the disposition of the enemy, than recognising the importance which the command of the river Ayre would give him, he sent forward a detachment under Lord Fitzwalter to secure the bridge of Ferriby. The Lancastrians, becoming conscious of their neglect in not having possessed themselves of so commanding a post, despatched an overwhelming force under Lord Clifford, who succeeded in securing it after a desperate struggle, in which Lord Fitzwalter and the greater part of his followers were slain. None knew

THE BATTLE OF TOWTON FIELDS.

better than Edward and his adherents how much depended upon the issue of the coming struggle, and when Warwick saw the discouragement produced in his ranks by the appearance in the camp of the few fugitives who had escaped the massacre of Ferriby, he revived the *morale* of his army by one of those acts of theatrical display which, before and since those times, have in critical moments so often turned the scale of battle. Ordering his horse to be brought to him in presence of the assembled troops, he with his own hand stabbed the animal, declared his intention of fighting on foot like any common soldier, and, bidding those who were not prepared to follow him to the death to retire from the field, he led the attack. The example was contagious. Clifford was in his turn defeated and slain, and the bridge remained in possession of the Yorkists. On the following day—

A.D. 1461

29 March.

Palm Sunday—the two armies confronted one another at Towton Fields, where 100,000 of England's best and bravest sons—princes, nobles, knights, yeomen and peasants—once more prepared to join in a death struggle. The morning was harsh and boisterous, and a heavy snow-storm was raging, under cover of which the Yorkists attacked the enemy, who, blinded by the drift blowing in their faces, discharged their arrows wildly. Lord Falconbridge, who led the van, improved this advantage by ordering his archers to fall back after each discharge from their bows, a manoeuvre not perceptible to the Lancastrians, whose shots continued to fall short of their mark. So fatal is this device said to have been to them, that while they emptied their quivers without inflicting any damage, the other side actually collected the harmless arrows, and returned them winged with death into the ranks of their owners.¹ The Earl of Northumberland, seeing his men

¹ "The Northern men, feling the shoot, but by reason of ye snow not wel vewing ye distance betwene theym and their enemyes, like hardy

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461
—

falling before an unseen enemy, gave the order to charge, sword in hand, and placing himself at their head led the way upon the enemy's centre. The conflict now became a mere trial of brute strength, inspired by desperate courage: there was no thought of quarter or retreat, no idea beyond killing. This carnage continued with varying fortune for ten hours; in the end the Yorkists prevailed, and defeat as usual became the signal for headlong flight and ruthless massacre. Nearly 38,000 men are said to have fallen, three-fourths of whom were Lancastrians; and it was not without difficulty that Margaret, with the poor king whom she carried in her train and the young prince, succeeded in escaping from the field, and ultimately passing the border into Scotland.

Even the brave queen's indomitable spirit must have sunk under this crushing blow. One half of her fine army slaughtered, the remainder fugitives or prisoners, and most of her faithful and trusted commanders left dead upon the field; among them the Earl of North-

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 xl taylors yardes."—Hall.

¹ "This deadly battayle and bloody conflicte continued x houres in doubtful victorie, the one parte sometime flowing and sometime ebbynge."—*Ibid.*

² "In those two days were slayn thirty-seven thousand seven hundred three score and sixteen persons—all Englischemen and of one nacion, whereof the chief were the Erles of Northumberland and Westmorland."—Holinshead. In a private letter from Edward IV. to his mother the Lancastrian loss alone is put at 28,000 men.—Fenn's *Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 217.

³ "*King Edw.* What valiant foemen, like to autumn's corn,
Have we mow'd down in tops of all their pride!
Three Dukes of Somerset, threefold renown'd
For hardy and undoubted champions;
Two Cliffords, as the father and the son,
And two Northumberlands; two braver men
Ne'er spurr'd their coursers at the trumpet's sound."

—Third Part of *King Henry VI.*

SIR RALPH PERCY.

umberland, who had "led the vanguard in lusty youth and fresh courage,"¹ and his brave young brother Richard.² In the following year Edward's legal right to the crown was affirmed by parliament; the statutes validating the succession of the Lancastrian kings, and all grants made during their reigns, were repealed; and a special act was passed attainting King Henry, his queen and son, and, among other of their adherents, the dead Earl of Northumberland and the four brothers who had fought by his side.³

A.D.
1461-1464

Of these Sir Ralph was now the only survivor;⁴ and when the last of the Lancastrian armies was annihilated,

¹ Hall. "The earl commanded the vanguard, but there being a snow direct in the men's faces, whereby they could not discern how they shot, he led them on to charge sword in hand, in which bloody onset it was supposed he fell."—Wainwright's *History of York*. Sheahan and Willan, in their *History of Yorkshire*, state that the earl had been carried mortally wounded into York, where he died the same day. It is related by the same authors that in the year 1786 a gold ring, weighing more than an ounce, bearing the Percy crest and supposed to have belonged to this Earl of Northumberland, was found on the site of the battle of Towton.—For an abstract of his will see Appendix XL.

² See Drake's *History of York*, p. 111. Among others of the slain in this battle were the Earls of Shrewsbury, Westmoreland, the Lords Clifford, Beaumont, Nevill, Willoughby, Roos, Scales, Grey, Fitzhugh, Molineux, and Bedingham. The Earl of Devonshire was taken prisoner and executed by Edward's order, his head being stuck over the gate of York Castle in place of that of the Duke of York, which Margaret had placed there after the battle of Wakefield.

³ *Rot. Parl.* v. 480, 1 Edward IV. (November 9, 1461).

⁴ Of the second earl's nine sons three had died in infancy, four fell in battle, the other two, George and William, had taken priests' orders. Fuller gives the following quaint account of William Percy, who became Bishop of Carlisle in 1452 and died ten years later:—

"As a base child in the point of his father is subject to a shameful, so is the nativity of this prelate as to the place thereof, attended with an honorable uncertainty; whose noble father had so many houses in the northern parts, that his son may be termed a *native of North England*, but is placed in Topcliff as the principle and most ancient seat of this family."—Fuller's *Worthies of Yorkshire*. Of the earl's three daughters one died a nun, the second, married in succession Sir Thomas Hungerford, Sir Lawrence Rainesford, and Sir Hugh Vaughan, all good Lancastrian knights, and the third became the wife of Edmond Grey de Ruthyn, Earl of Kent.

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

the leaders slain or in exile, the king deposed, and the queen a suppliant fugitive in Scotland and France hopeless of the success of his cause,¹ he, together with the Duke of Somerset, gave in his submission to Edward, who granted him his pardon, and allowed him to retain the custody of the important Castle of Dunstanborough,² which had hitherto successfully held out for the Lancastrians; but the governorship of Alnwick was transferred to a Yorkist, Sir John Astley. Queen Margaret, though defeated, was not, however, yet subdued. By a promise of the surrender of Berwick to the Scots, and of Calais to France, she succeeded in obtaining armed support from those countries, and once more made an irruption into her kingdom with a stirring appeal to her former subjects to rally under her standard. Among the first to place their swords at her disposal were the Duke of Somerset and Sir Ralph Percy.³ The latter surrendered to her the stronghold in his custody which she "stuffed with Scotts."⁴ Whereupon, foiled in an attempt to surprise Alnwick Castle, he advanced with a small force under the Duke of Somerset, and the Lords Hungerford and Roos, to encounter John Nevill, Lord Montagu, at Hedgely Moor, near Chillingham Castle in Northumberland. The Lancastrians were so greatly outnumbered that after a mere show of resistance the commanders fled from the field, leaving Ralph Percy, who refused to turn his back upon the foe, exposed with a

25 April,
1464.

¹ "The Duke of Somerset, Sir Raufe Percye and dyvers others, lay in despayre and oute of hope of all good chaunce that might heppen to King Henry the Sixt, and came humbly and submitted themselves, whom the King gently entertayned and lovinglye receyved."—Grafton, vol. ii. 2.

² *Rot. Parl.* 2 Edward IV. and V. 511.

³ "When the Duke of Somerset heard these newes he without delaye refused Kyng Edward and rode in poste to his kinsman Kyng Henry the Sixt, verifying the olde proverbe 'kin will creepe when it may not goe'. . . . with him fled also Sir Raulfe Percie and mony other of the Kyng's friendes."—Grafton, vol. ii. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*

“THE BIRD IN MY BOSOM.”

few faithful followers to the Yorkshire host.¹ Fighting desperately while his arm could yet wield a sword, he fell covered with wounds and “died like a man.”²

A.D. 1464

The act of attainder passed upon all the chief actors in Margaret's last struggle recites that “Ralf Percy, Knight, after his long abode in rebellion, was by our sovereign lorde taken benygnye unto his grace . . . yet nevertheless unkyndlye rered werre agaynste the kyng, and surrendered the castles of Bamburgh and Dunstanburgh to the said Henry, the kyng's enemye.”³

It is impossible to question the justice of the terms of this sentence, or to defend Ralph Percy's betrayal of the trust reposed in him by the sovereign, whose pardon he had solicited and obtained. Yet some plea may be offered in extenuation of his offence.

It is one of the curses of civil wars that the instability of national institutions which they produce reacts upon individual character, and so warps the moral sense as to tempt, sometimes almost to compel, honourable men to accept, under political pressure, an allegiance which in their consciences they condemn and repudiate, and which under altered conditions they feel bound to disavow.⁴ Never was this more commonly exemplified than in the Wars of the Roses, when “on neither side do there seem

¹ “When sodaynely the sayde Lordes withoute stroke stryking fled, and onely Syr Rauf Percie abode and was there manfullie slayne with dyvers others.”—Grafton. The skirmish, for it was little more, was followed by the complete defeat of the Lancastrians at Hexham on May 15 following, when the nobles who had deserted Ralph Percy were taken prisoners and executed.

² *Year Book, Term Paschal*, 4 Edward, v. 19.

³ *Rot. Parl.* 4 Edward IV.

⁴ The Earl of Salisbury is made to excuse his breach of fealty to King Henry by the argument that :

“It is great sin to swear unto a sin ;
But greater sin to keep a sinful oath.”
—*Second Part of King Henry VI.*

HENRY PERCY, THIRD EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

A.D.
1421-1461

to have been any scruples. Yorkists and Lancastrians, Edward and Margaret of Anjou, entered into any engagements, took any oaths, violated them and indulged their revenge as often as they were defeated or victorious.”¹

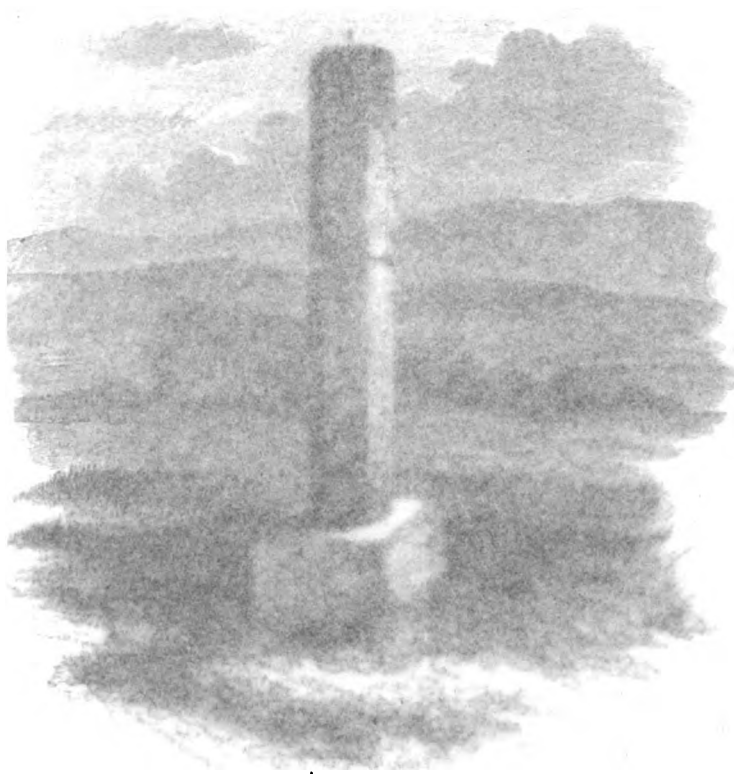
If the prevalence of this demoralisation among all classes do not suffice to palliate his guilt, may not Ralph Percy's death and parting words plead for him ?

Loyalty to the House of Lancaster, in defence of which his father and three brothers had fallen in battle, had been bequeathed to him as a sacred inheritance, and when the brave queen made her final appeal, he forgot all considerations—fealty, fortune, liberty, and life—all but his devotion to her cause and person. The desperate game was played and lost ; he stood alone, manfully prepared to pay the penalty, and glorying that he had remained true to the allegiance of his house, he cried with his last breath :

“ I HAVE SAVED THE BIRD IN MY BOSOM.”

A rudely-carved column, bearing the Percy badges, marks the spot where the fallen warrior breathed those touching words. A spring of water close by, at which he is said to have taken his last draught, still bears the name of *Percy's Well* ; and for many successive generations this was the spot around which the sturdy Northerners would assemble to hold their annual contests of football and wrestling, and where old men sat and told the assembled children the story of the last Percy who fought and died for the Lancastrian Kings.

¹ Hume.



did not have any scruples. Yorkists and Lancastrians alike had sworn Margaret of Anjou entered into any agreements, took any oaths, violated them and indulged in any rancour as often as they were defeated or captured.

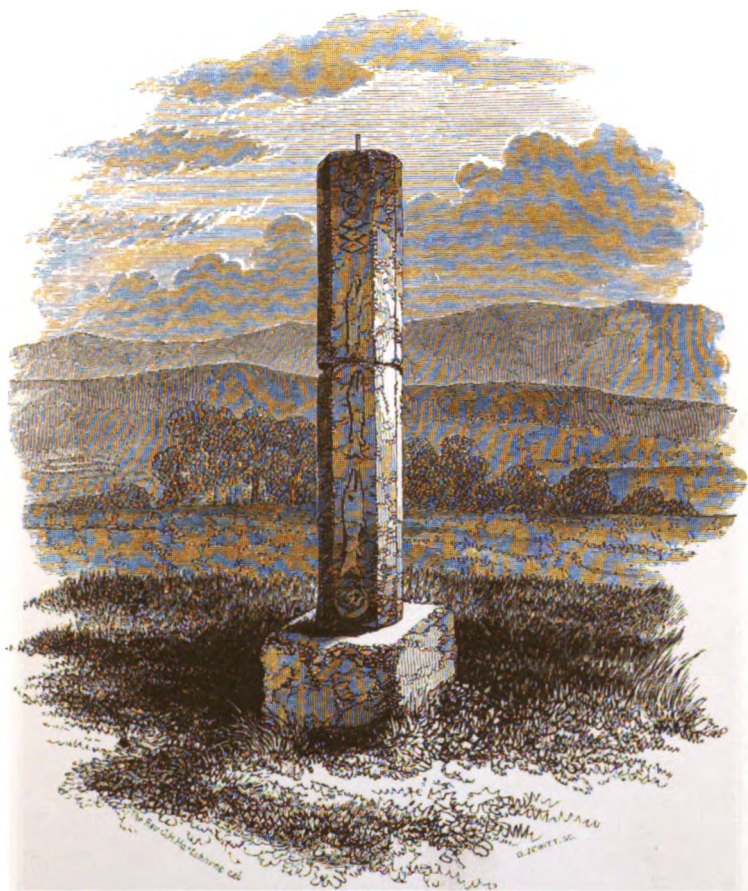
Of the prevalence of this demoralisation among the masses do not suppose to palliate his guilt, may not that Hero's death and parting words plead for him?

Loyalty to the House of Lancaster, in defence of which his father and three brothers had fallen in battle, had been bequeathed to him as a sacred inheritance, and when the brave queen made her final appeal, he forsook not his allegiance—fealty, fortune, liberty, and life. He was true to his cause and person. The desperate struggle was over; he stood alone, manfully accepting the consequences of his fault, and glorying that he had done his duty to the alliance of his house, he died with his hands clasped.

"I HAVE SEEN THE BIRD IN MY BOSEY"

A rudely-carved column, bearing the Percy helmet, marks the spot where the fallen warrior breathed his last touching words. A spring of water close by, and he is said to have taken his last draught, said to be the name of *Percy Well*, and for many successive generations this was the spot around which the sturdy North-countrymen would assemble, to hold their annual contests of football and wrestling, and where old men sat and to the assembled children the story of the last battle fought and died for the Lancastrian Kings.

* Home.



PERCY'S CROSS.



al.

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