

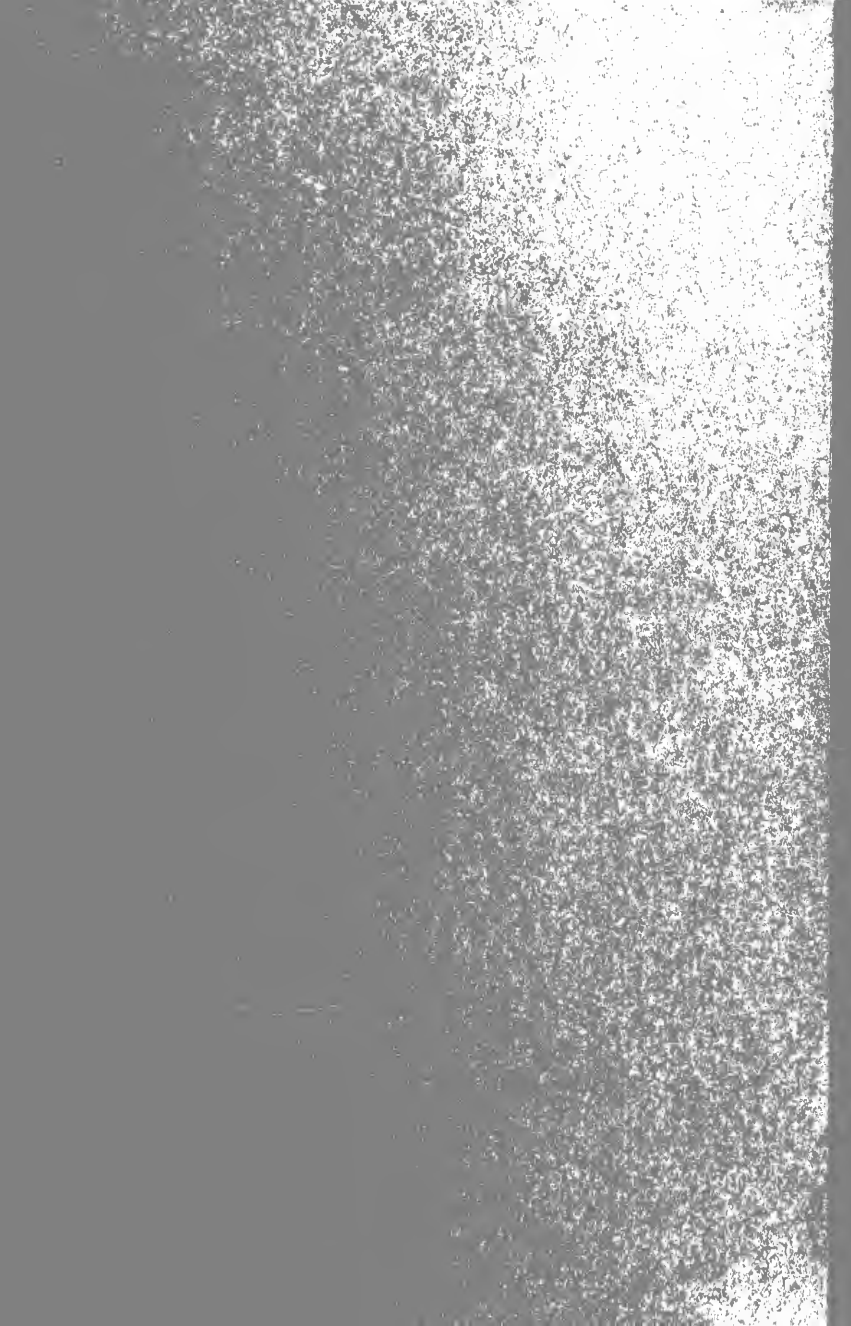


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Magna carta

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Historical Plays for Children. No. 6

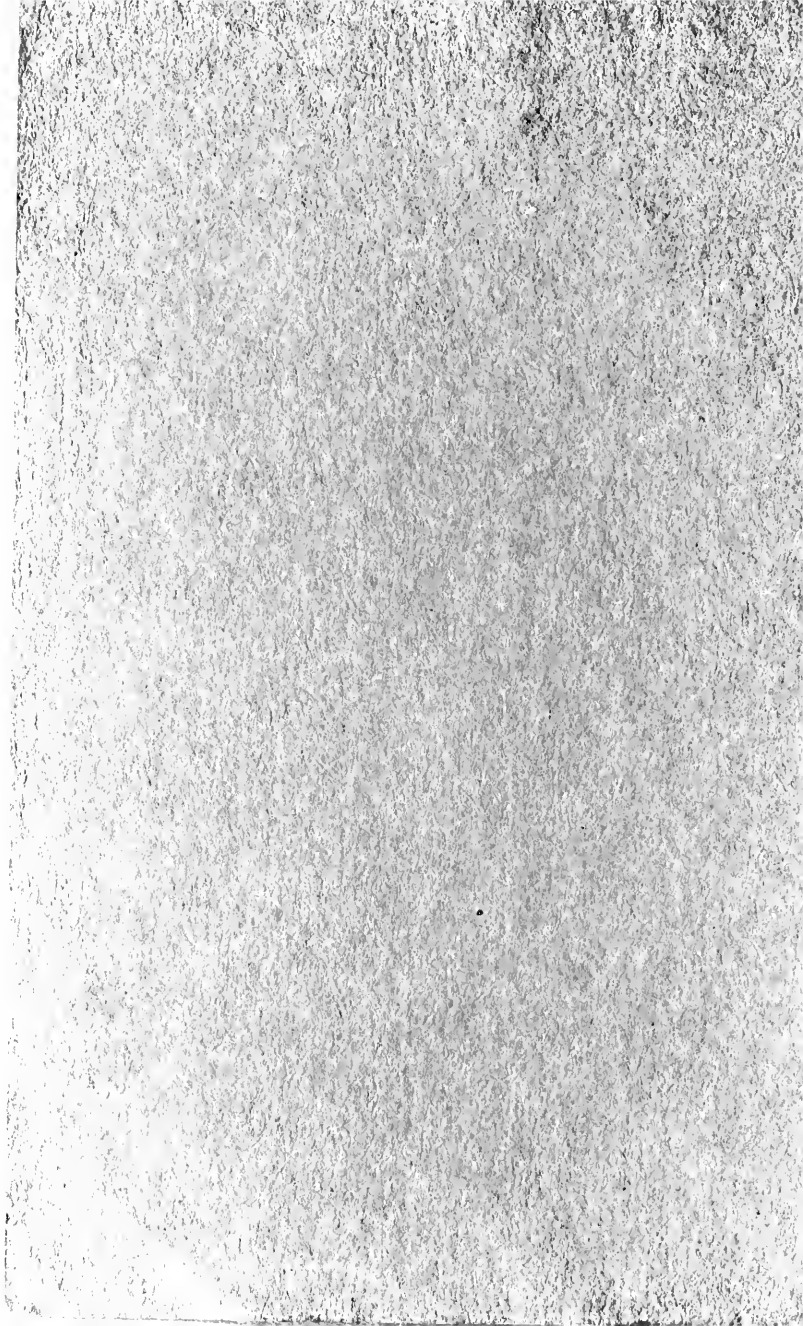
MAGNA CARTA
AND
EDWARD III

By **AMICE MACDONELL**



Onto: The Musson Book Company, Ltd.

Price 25 cents.



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AND
EDWARD III



Historical Plays for Children. No. 6

MAGNA CARTA
AND
EDWARD III

(One-Act Plays in One Book)

BY

AMICE MACDONELL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

TORONTO
THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY, LTD.
LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & SONS

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STAGE DIRECTIONS

MAGNA CARTA AND EDWARD III

THESE plays can be acted either in or out of doors. In the latter case, when an indoor scene is represented, a screen can be used as a background.

If the play is given in the house, curtains of some plain colour—brown holland or dark green, for instance—would make a good background. Two large bushes of greenery can be placed on either side of the stage. If nothing large enough can be had in a pot, wooden chairs can be completely covered with boughs and ivy; these can be pulled aside for indoor scenes.

Localities can be always indicated by placards, as “Runnymede,” “Windmill hill by Crécy,” &c.

Two of the actors, in their acting clothes, can come on to the stage between the scenes to arrange chairs, &c.

One entrance and exit, right or left, is needed.

In no case are scenery or proscenium curtain necessary. But if scenery as a background is desired, the following suggestions are made. The scenery can be painted on unbleached calico. The surface can either be covered with whitening mixed with size, or the calico can be tinted with Dolly Dye to get the general tone of the background, the dye being painted on with a large brush.

For instance, in painting a wood, the upper part of the scenery could be tinted with blue-grey as a ground on which to paint distant trees, and the lower part with brown and green dyes for the foundation of the foreground. The painting is done with powder paints (to be had at any oil-shop) mixed with size.

Trunks of trees can be cut out of brown paper of different shades, on which the shadows and lines are painted in darker brown or black paint, and pasted on to give a near effect.

Pieces of real furze or bracken could be fastened right in the foreground to throw back the rest of the scene. When the scene is to be very dark—for the interior of a stone or panelled room, for instance—the whole background calico could be dyed grey or brown before painting.

Sometimes pieces of wall-paper can be found to represent tapestry; or, to give this effect, the calico can be painted with Dolly Dyes, the patterns being first drawn in and outlined with fine silver sand to prevent the colours from running. All drawing is done with charcoal. Old houses and gable ends, suitable for mediæval backgrounds, can often be got from picture postcards. Simple background scenery looks well, framed between two dark green curtains.

With regard to the effect of dress colours, the proportions should be kept even; full, simple colours chosen, and never “art shades.” Dolly Dyes and Maypole Soaps give a good range of colours, and with a simple background, scarlet, deep blue, orange, black, green, &c., could be used, suggestive of the colours of a mediæval illumination.

For dress materials, sateen at $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. and $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. can be had in good colours, but the cheapest woollen or house flannel make better folds and give the massive effect of the garments of olden times. “Horticultural Sheeting” about 50 inches wide, 1s. a yard (Messrs. Cookson, Wellington Mills, Manchester), is useful, and can be dyed effectively with Maypole Soap.

Tunics and dresses should be made with no seam on the shoulder. A piece of stuff, double the length of the garment required, is folded in half, selvedge to selvedge; the neck-opening is cut out of the centre of the top of the fold. The folded stuff on either side of the neck-opening forms the shoulder and sleeve. The sides of the garment are shaped in to the figure. Width should be added at the bottom, and, unless the stuff is very wide, to the length of the sleeves.

If adapted, Butterick’s children’s patterns can be used as a foundation and guide for size and proportions.

For boys, the measurements generally required are: Chest,

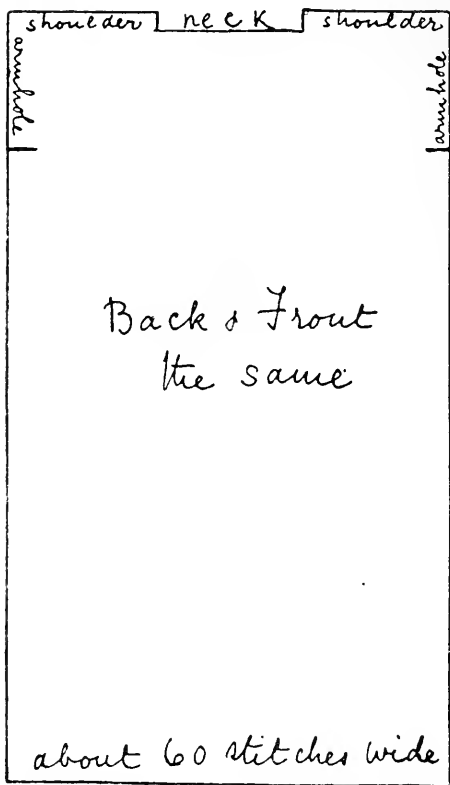
waist, neck to knee, arm, head. For girls: Bust, waist, neck to ground, arm, head. Chain mail can be made of motor cleaning material, "Kleenquick," at Whiteley's, 25 yards for 4s. 6d. It should be boiled in size, black-leaded and silvered. It will pull to any shape. Suits of chain mail can also be very effectively knitted with string. The tunic, reaching to about the knee, is made of plain knitting. For the neck, cast off $\frac{1}{3}$ of stitches in centre and continue each end for about 6 rows. Sew back and front together, joining shoulders and sides and leaving armholes.

For sleeves, cast on about 40, according to size of armhole (plain casting-on); decrease between shoulder and elbow to 30 and between elbow and wrist to 20 stitches. For leggings, cast on about 50 stitches (German fashion); knit backwards and forwards on two needles, but decrease, as for a stocking, to ankle; increase, as for heel of a stocking, and finish foot, minus the sole. Join the legging up the back and sew the foot onto a leather sole.

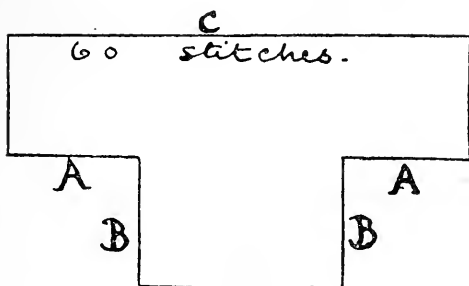
The bottom of the head-covering is sewed into the neck of the tunic.

The leggings are fastened up under the tunic with black elastic to a belt. The whole suit, when finished, can be dyed grey, with black Maypole Soap, or with Horles' blue-black ink, and water. When dry, it can be silvered here and there. Plate armour can be made of buckram, or of felt, damped and put on a mould—a large bottle will do—to give the round of the leg or arm. While on the mould, it is painted over with plaster of Paris. Strings, to fasten on the leg and arm pieces, must be attached before the plaster hardens. When hard and dry, it must be black-leaded and silvered. Housemaids' gloves, black-leaded and silvered, make excellent gauntlets. For large quantities of gilding and silvering it is easier and cheaper to use gold or aluminium silver powder (about 6d. an oz.) mixed with "White Polish." Borders and embroideries can be stencilled with this paint or done with gold braid, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per dozen yards, from Burnet & Co., 22 Garrick Street, Covent Garden.

Tunic.

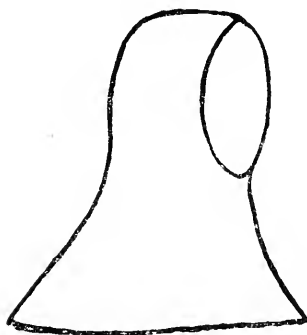


Hood



Beginning of Hood.

A to C is length from forehead to back of head.
Join A and B to form a hood.



Finished Hood.

Shields can be made of cardboard, and swords and spears of wood; all black-leaded and then silvered.

White stockings, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pair, can be had and dyed brown or any colour, as can common white canvas shoes.

King John, on his monument at Worcester, wears a tunic, with wide sleeves, to a little below the knee. Beneath this is a longer, tight-sleeved tunic. The end of his belt hangs down to the bottom of the super-tunic. His cloak is fastened far back on his shoulders.

Ecclesiastical dress is clearly shown on the seal of Stephen Langton in the British Museum. He wears the chasuble, cut in an elliptic shape so as to hang in a point, back and front, and to be shorter on the arms; under this is the wide-sleeved dalmatic, beneath which appears the long alb with tight sleeves to the wrist. He has the pall, a narrow strip of embroidered cloth worn by an archbishop.

Benedictine monks wore a black habit. The canons had a black cloak, fitting to the shoulders, and hanging down behind to the ground; in front the cloak only reaches to above the waist.

The generality of people in John's reign wore short tunics and hoods. The legs were sometimes "cross-gartered" to the knee. Green seems to have been a fashionable colour.

Women wore long, loose gowns, fastened with a girdle. The head and shoulders were wrapped in a wimple.

Warriors were completely clad in chain mail. Over the hauberk or coat of mail was worn a linen surcoat, fastened with a belt. A square-shaped helmet was often worn over the hood of mail. Sometimes there was a steel head-covering under the "coif de mailles," giving to the whole head a square appearance.

The dress of Edward III.'s reign was rich and fantastic in colour and material. Parti-coloured garments were fashionable; mottoes were embroidered on borders; rich jewelled belts were worn. It was the age of tournaments and heraldry, and both men and women had their arms emblazoned on surcoats and dresses.

The fashionable garment was the "cote-hardie" or very

tight-fitting tunic, buttoned all the way down the front and reaching to the middle of the thigh. A long mantle was worn over this tunic, fastened on the right shoulder. When hanging down, it covered the wearer to his ankles. With the cloak, a hood was often worn which fitted the shoulders.

Poor men wore looser, belted tunics, short cloaks and hoods; linen or woollen trousers which were held in at the ankle by leather boots.

Chain mail was now much superseded by plate armour. The Black Prince, in his effigy at Canterbury, wears a conical helmet to which is fastened the "camail" or tippet of mail. Over his chain mail coat, which is hidden, he wears a surcoat of stuff, emblazoned with his arms.

Queen Philippa and the ladies of her time are recognised at once by the two masses of square plaits at the sides of the face. The plaits and the back of the head were covered with a gold net.

The figure of Princess Joan on Edward III.'s tomb shows the costume of the time; the long close-fitting gown; the streamers from the over-sleeve; the pocket in the front of the dress.

Ordinary women wore a short over-dress, the skirt often open at the side, and showing the longer under-dress. Their heads were wrapped in veils or hoods.

Edward III. quartered the fleurs-de-lys of France with the English lions or "leopards," as they were heraldically called. The arms of Holland and Chandos were, respectively: Azure, semé of fleurs-de-lys, a lion rampant argent; and or, a pile gules.

The chief colours for heraldry are indicated thus: vertical lines signify gules, or red; horizontal lines represent azure, or blue; vertical and horizontal lines crossing each other, sable, or black; a dotted surface, or, or gold; and the plain surface, argent, silver or white.

The figures on Edward III.'s tomb in Westminster Abbey give an excellent idea of both men and women's dress in this reign. Numerous pictures of ecclesiastical, military, and civil dress of the reigns of both John and Edward III. are found in F. W. Fairholt's "Costume in England" (Bohn's Artists'

Series), vol. i., and in J. R. Green's "History of the English People," vol. i.

The prologue in the first play can be sung to a Gregorian or to any solemn chant.

The music for the songs, &c., in "Edward III." is found in most collections of old English melodies. The Weavers' Song is, "When the King enjoys his own again"; the Knights' song, "You Gentlemen of England." The dance is a Morris Dance, the "Maypole." These are numbers 72, 6, and 65, in "Songs of the British Islands," W. H. Hadow, J. Curwen, 2s. 6d.

The song at the end of Scene III. in "Edward III." is "Agincourt," published in "Old English Popular Music" by Chappell & Co., who have kindly given special permission for its reproduction here. Though composed in honour of the battle fought nearly seventy years later, the ancient melody and words serve aptly as a triumph song for Crécy.

PROPERTIES: MAGNA CARTA

ACT I

SCENE I.—Chair. Table. Shield. Bag of money.

SCENE II.—Throne. Benches. A charter.

SCENE III.—A couch. Table. Food, jug, cups, &c. Straws and rushes. Parchment.

SCENE IV.—Throne. Table. Bench. Parchments; ink-horns, pens, taper, wax. Scroll. Banner. The Great Charter. Seal.

PROPERTIES: EDWARD III

ACT I

SCENE I.—Bushes of green.

SCENE II.—Bushes. Bow and arrows. Bag of money.

SCENE III.—Bushes. Log or bench. Food. Cup. Bow and arrows. King's helmet, crown, shield. Parchment.

SCENE IV.—Two thrones. Table. Chair. Pie. Bundle, containing kirtle, &c. Dishes. Broom. Shield. Guild banners. Sacks of wool. Veil.

MAGNA CARTA
IN ONE ACT

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

KING JOHN.

STEPHEN LANGTON, Archbishop of Canterbury.

WILLIAM MARSHAL, Earl of Pembroke.

ROBERT FITZ-WALTER, Castellan of London.

HENRY DE BOHUN, Earl of Hereford.

ROGER BIGOD, Earl of Norfolk.

SAER DE QUINCY, Earl of Winchester.

EUSTACE DE VESCY, Northern Baron.

ROBERT DE ROS, Northern Baron.

WILLIAM DE BRAOSE, Baron of Welsh Marches.

WILLIAM DE BRAOSE, eldest son of the former.

GILES DE BRAOSE, Bishop of Hereford, second son of William de Braose.

FALKES DE BREAUTÉ, }
GERALD DE ATHIES, } Mercenaries of King John.

TWO LONDONERS.

TWO MONKS.

A CANON OF ST. PAUL'S.

A MESSENGER.

MAUD DE ST. VALÉRIE, wife of William de Braose.

ACT I

SCENE I.—About the year 1208. In a castle of William de Braose on the Marches of Wales.

SCENE II.—August 1213. London. St. Paul's Cathedral.

SCENE III.—About Easter, 1215. In a castle of King John.

SCENE IV.—June 15, 1215. Runnymede.

The incidents of the meeting held at St. Paul's in 1213 have been slightly interwoven with later events, as that of the barons' assembly at St. Edmund's in the following year.

The hostage demanded was the grandson and not the son of William de Braose.

MAGNA CARTA

PROLOGUE

Spoken or chanted by one of the MONKS

Lo, now is virtue fastly bound
While evil walketh wide and free ;
And proud oppression sitteth crowned,
And homeless wanders charitie,—
When shall our sorrows have an end
When will this trouble God amend ?

For now is justice bought and sold,
Her sword upheld by villanie ;
And truth is counted less than gold,
And pity pleadeth bootlessly ;
When shall injustice have an end,
And God, His law and counsel send ?

Now is our day become as night ;
The battle is for them who flee ;
And might through all the land is right,
Which hath none other sovereigntie ;
When will He help from heaven send,
When will our trouble God amend ?

ACT I

SCENE I

About the year 1208.

A room in the castle of WILLIAM DE BRAOSE. A chair and a table on right. Shield hanging on wall.

Enter, left, MAUD DE BRAOSE, leading her eldest son, followed by FALKES DE BREAUTÉ and GERALD DE ATHIES; she comes centre: turns left and faces the two men; son stands right, beside her.

Maud. Away with you! Why should I give my son as hostage to the King?

Falkes (*shows piece of parchment*). If ye'd know why, then read the King's word against your husband. Nay, I'm not clerk to read it, but I know how 'tis set. For that which the King gave him in Limerick is William de Braose bound to render 500 marks a year. This he hath not done. The King complains neglect of aid and service from a vassal to whom he gave rich lands, fair castles——

Maud. Which he held bravely for the King——

Son. It was but fitting recompense——

Maud. Aye, recompense for faithful service. (*Aside.*) Or gifts, perchance, to silence the tongue of one who knew perforce too much of his dark counsels. (*Aloud.*) If we have served him well, why should we yield up our eldest son as hostage?

Gerald (*creeps towards MAUD and whispers aloud*). Because the King doth doubt your husband's loyalty.

*Enter, left, WILLIAM DE BRAOSE and his son,
GILES DE BRAOSE.*

William. Who doubts my loyalty? I have served the King as well as any man—I am ready to make answer to the King at any place and time which he will name.

Giles. Who dare make accusation against a noble and an honourable house?

William. The lords de Braose have been faithful, e'en since Duke William's days.

Falkes. Nathless, William de Braose, the King doth doubt you; believes that ye are leagued with his enemies. He suffers no uncertain servants to dwell on the Marches of rebellious Wales. The King requires security from you; a hostage to hold fast in one of his castles.

Gerald (*aside*). To hang on the first oak tree if ye should prove a rebel!

Falkes. He now commands that, without let or hindrance, you give up your eldest and well-loved son.

[*Seizes young DE BRAOSE.*

William (*puts out hand*). This is a hard command.

Son. I will not go with you!

Falkes. Ye shall. (*Drags him left.*) Come!

[*GERALD sets on him.*

Maud (*rushes forward*). He shall not take him!

William (*aside to Wife*). Think you, we dare so openly defy the King?

[*FALKES holds Son.*

Maud. I dare! (*To HUSBAND.*) Oh, do not let him go. He never will return. (*To FALKES.*) He shall not have him! I will not give my son into the hands of a King who foully murdered Arthur, his own brother's child!

Falkes. Ye say this——?

Maud. Yea, verily; I say this—I, Maud de Braose, say this of King John.

Gerald. And you shall bitterly repent your words.

Falkes. Aye indeed—you and yours.

William. Wife, what have ye done?

Maud. I have but spoke truth. Ye know it too. Ye know that black deed done 'twixt eve and cock-crow, not six Aprils since in Rouen. (*Raises arms.*) All the world shall know it!

Falkes (bows mockingly). I will be careful that the King hears your hardy answers.

Gerald (aside). He will devise, methinks, some curious recompense for you.

William (turns away). Wife, your rash words will cost our lives.

Maud (clasps hands). Nay, nay, my lord, upbraid me not. Ye still are silent. Husband, sons, have ye less courage now than I? Defy a King who is a murderer!

William. Silence! Ye are mad.

Maud. If I am mad, then 'tis with bitter grief; with wrong done unto you, my lord.

William. Alas! Your rage is bootless.

Maud. Nay, it is not! (*Turns on FALKES and GERALD.*) Now get you hence! Falkes de Breauté, Gerald de Athies: outlandish, low-born hirelings!

Falkes. Insolent woman! We are servants of the King!

Maud. I know you both—mud of Ponthieu and dust of Normandy. You—to insult a noble baron in his own castle. Hence! Out of my sight!

Falkes. We will not stay. Nay, never! But go straightway, report your sayings to the King.

Gerald. I vow that you and yours shall rue this day!

[FALKES and GERALD go out left.

[WILLIAM sinks down in chair, buries face in his hands. Two sons stand behind on right; whisper anxiously together from time to time.

William. Now all is lost, lost utterly. Alas (*wrings hands*), our glory is departed, and the wealth, the lands I strove for year by year, all lost. (*Looks up.*) Unhappy wife, what have ye done?

Maud (*kneels beside him*). I have done naught wherein there was offence to you. Turn not from me. Dear my lord (*takes his hand*), ye know that ye were doomed to his displeasure long ago. E'en while the King put gifts into your hands he hated you. You knew too much of Arthur's death. All your long service and friendship are worth naught, beside your crime of being honest, of having hands unstained by innocent blood. Look not with anger on me. To-day I have only brought myself within the ranging of his fury, where you were before—and I shall fall with you, I reckon not how.

Son. We'll all die together if need be. Who comes in haste?

Enter, left, WILLIAM MARSHAL.

William (*rises*). The Earl of Pembroke.

Marshal. William de Braose, I counsel you to leave your castle and to flee. The anger of the King is hot against you and your family. Come with me now to Ireland where the De Lacys will receive and shield you.

Maud. We're hunted, driven—

Marshal (to MAUD). I do advise you to keep silence now.

William (to MAUD). Aye indeed. (To MARSHAL.) Think you our danger presses?

Marshal. Verily, the King cometh against you; is not three leagues hence. He bringeth fire and sword along with him.

William. Know you the cause of his coming now?

Giles. Sooner inquire why lightning, whirlwind, or the thunderbolt do come!

Marshal. Stay not for rede or question. Take what gold you have and haste unto the coast, where I have boats in readiness. Ere it be dark, ye must be on the sea.

William. This castle will fall into his hands. He can make my proud towers lie even with the grass!

Marshal. Alas! methinks you are doomed.

William. I knew I should not long escape, and certain rash words to his messengers have hastened on our ruin. Come, wife and son; there's naught but flight. (*Takes out bag of money.*) What gold and treasure we have stored, we'll take.

Maud (*wraps veil round her*). Thus forced to creep like thieves from our own castle and domain!

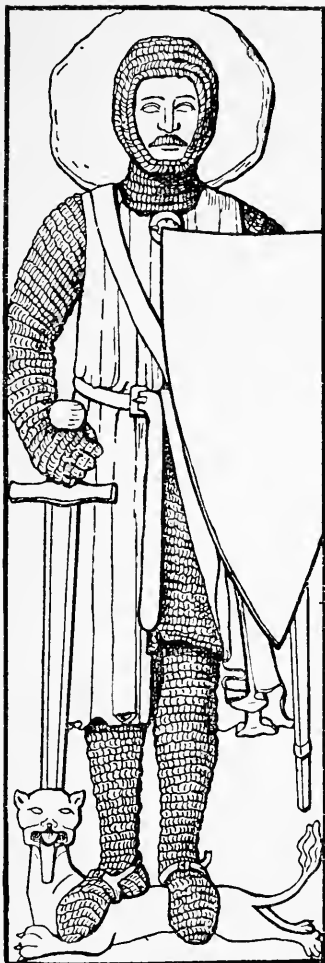
Giles. Mother, we have no choice——

Marshal. Take comfort. Many a brave knight has fled the country in these troubled times.

William (*takes down shield*). Troubled—aye, good sooth, could the skies look more hard? We will to Ireland.

Marshal (*aside*). I pray that even yonder ye be not trapped and slain.

William (*draws sword*). With this sword, since I was made a knight, I have served the King. I fought



William Marshal.
From his tomb, Temple Church.

for Richard—peace be to the Lion-hearted! Then, by the wrath of heaven, was I doomed to fight for John. (*To MARSHAL.*) For him, ye know, I did mine utmost,—for a craven and a murderous King who turns from battle though he turneth not from slaughter. (*Sheathes sword.*) Oh, I have done with all that's past. I break allegiance to a lord whom men call "Soft Sword," though, heaven knows, his heart is hard. When I return to England, if I do return—I come with this sword drawn against the King.

Son. Aye, against the King!

William. I'll burn his lands. (*To GILES.*) Farewell, good son. Hie you to France for safety. These are ill days for bishop as for baron; perilous for clerk and soldier who are not servants in the devil's pay.

Giles. Farewell, my father, mother, brother; get you to safety with the good Earl of Pembroke who is still our friend. Bishop of Hereford am I—the mournful shepherd of a sad and scattered flock; and yet as such, I bless you. (*Lifts his hand; they bend their heads.*) And as son (*kneels*), I beg your blessing. (*Father and mother lift their hands.*) Now fare you well. I pray ye fall not victims to the fury of the King. I think we shall not ever meet again.

Maud. If we must die, then may our dying call down vengeance from on high; may it cry out for mercy on this miserable land!

[WILLIAM DE BRAOSE, Wife *and* Son, go
out left with WILLIAM MARSHAL.]

Giles. So I am left alone, alone—all fled, and the earth darkens, and the tide of woe arises day by day. O most unhappy country, shamed in the eyes of all Christendom by thy most shameful King; cursed,

laid under interdict ; with Church despoiled ; the archbishop in exile. We cry, "How long? how long?" The noblest barons are treated as slaves ; taxed unlawfully, dragged o'er the seas to fight the losing battle of a caitiff. Evil is crowned in England, good is dead. Where shall I turn or go for help. Alone there standeth Stephen Langton, the archbishop. He is a rock on which God builds ; a pilot for His Ark almost o'erwhelmed with waves ; a star to herald dayspring in our night. I will go to him. He perchance can save our cause ere all be lost.

[*Goes out left.*]

SCENE II

August 1213.

London, St. Paul's. A throne in centre, with benches or seats on either side.

Enter, left, a MONK and a CANON OF ST. PAUL'S.

Monk. 'Tis a great gathering in your cathedral to-day.

Canon. Verily. The archbishop—late returned from exile since the King made truce with Holy Church—hath summoned many here.

Monk. Know you who come ?

Canon. I saw the roll of those who meet to-day within our walls. Our bishop—William of London—will be here, and Peter of Winchester, Eustace of Ely, Giles of Hereford ; bishops, abbots, priors, aye, and mark you, many barons of the realm.

Monk. A goodly company, I trow. They will be here anon. (*Touches CANON'S arm.*) Why, think you, they are come together now?

Canon. Is it not to talk of Church dues; atonement for despoiled revenues?

Monk. Aye, perchance; and yet methinks there's other business a-foot. Armed barons come not only to talk of Mother Church and her distress; they've other work, I think.

Canon. I pray that help is nigh for this poor country and for the Church; that gates of Tartarus may not prevail against us! [*Goes out left.*]

Monk. Exurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus!

[*Goes out left.*]

Enter, left, ROBERT FITZ-WALTER and EUSTACE DE VESCY.

Fitz-Walter. Well met, Eustace de Vescy. You and I are home from exile none too quickly. You from Scotland, I from France, where we fled for safety. Faith! the world wags strangely; the impious King is pardoned and hath given his kingdom to the Pope. We've come home to find, I think, our wrongs increased. What hath the King done in our absence? My Baynard's Castle, here in London, burnt; my lands in Essex wasted; woods, warrens, fisheries——

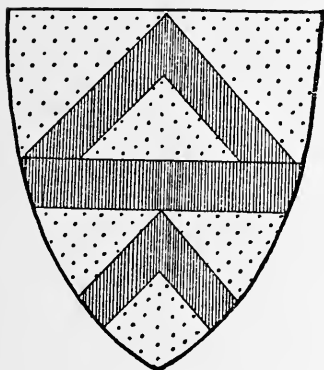
De Vescy. I have no less complaint.

Enter, left, ROBERT DE ROS.

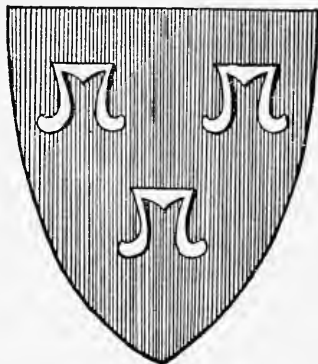
De Vescy. Will ye not bear witness, Robert de Ros, that we barons of the north are likewise driven to extremity?

De Ros. Aye indeed, why should we give unjust scutage; be urged beyond endurance? We northerners do well to say him nay. (*To DE VESCY.*) Your Alnwick castle is in ruins; burnt in your absence by the King!

De Vescy. That is my welcome home, writ large in flames! My towers are ruined. I shall laugh



Arms of Robert Fitz-Walter.
Or, a fesse between 2 chevrons gu.



Arms of Robert de Ros.
Gu., 3 water bougets argt.

bitterly to see the north wind blow the ashes of my roof-tree to and fro!

De Ros. We'll fan some flames and light another fire! See who now come; the earls, of Hereford, of Norfolk, and of Winchester.

*Enter, left, HENRY DE BOHUN, ROGER BIGOD,
SAER DE QUINCY.*

Can we not also kindle fires? Roger Bigod, will your east country burn for us?

Bigod. I guess your meaning. Verily, 'twill burn.

It is as stubble ready for the flame. Is't not, De Bohun ?

De Bohun. Truly, good friends ; the west is ready too. And here comes one who hath as great a cause for grief as any of us here.

Enter, left, GILES DE BRAOSE ; head shrouded in his mantle ; sits right.

Giles. Ah, I have grief which almost robs me of a tongue to speak. Who can tell the ruin of our house ; who declare our woe ?

Fitz-Walter. Your father, William de Braose, is exiled ?

Giles. Exiled, aye, exiled ; beggared, dead——

De Vescy. Your brother, mother ?

Giles. Dead. (*Rises and approaches him.*) How dead ? Shall I whisper, Eustace, in your ear how Maud de Braose and her son did die ?

[*Whispers.* DE VESCY starts in horror.]

De Vescy. What, starved ? Nay, was it so ? Slowly, day by day ? Done thus to death in the castle tower.

Fitz-Walter. Oh, enemy of Nature, John !

Giles. Are there no swords to avenge the wrong I never can forget ; or justice to calm my grief-distracted mind ?

Fitz-Walter. I trow there shall be ! Here's my sword ; I'll fight.

De Bohun. And I.

All Generally. And I.

Bigod (lifts sword). We all will fight, if he refuse redress.

De Bohun. Who'll guide our counsel ; set forth our wrongs before the King ?

Enter, left, ARCHBISHOP LANGTON with WILLIAM MARSHAL, two MONKS, and CANON with a parchment.

Fitz-Walter. Stephen the archbishop, he shall speak for us. (*To LANGTON.*) Hail, holy father! Now at last, brought to your flock in England.

Langton (*stands centre, lifts right hand; all bow their heads*). Blessing upon you all, my sons. My heart hath yearned for you, when, as an exile, I lived across the sea, watching, praying for the sheep I might not feed or guide; pleading at Rome for our poor Church. (*GILES kneels, right, at his feet; LANGTON places hand on his head.*) I know your griefs, almost past bearing, and I fain would carry all your woes, my children; wear out in mine own body all the sorrows of the land, if that might be.

Fitz-Walter. We ask your counsel, father. How shall our wrongs be set right?

De Vescy. If the King will not hear us, shall we not rise, burn, harry——

Langton (*sternly*). Ye shall not fill the land with war and wild confusion; rebellion, lawless fighting, man 'gainst man, as 'twas in Stephen's time, when the poor cried in vain, saying God's saints did sleep.

De Vescy. The saints sleep now——

Marshal (*points to LANGTON*). Nay, Eustace, they do watch continually for us.

[*LANGTON seats himself in centre; MONKS, CANON, GILES behind him; MARSHAL, DE VESCY, DE ROS, DE QUINCY on right; DE BOHUN and BIGOD on left.*]

De Vescy (*aside to DE ROS*). Were it not better

that a soldier counselled us? This is no hour for mild rede or mercy.

De Ros (rises). Verily, it should be war, war—I have a wrong I will avenge.

Fitz-Walter. I have a greater wrong than yours, I trow.

Langton. If ye fight, each man for his own vengeance, ye will fail and all be brought to naught. Remember that the King hath riches, many followers still and hirelings from abroad. See that ye act together.

Marshal. Truly, else all will fail.

Langton. Remember your allegiance, that shall be broken only in extremity. We must restore good laws and customs. That alone will help us. Hearken all of ye!

All. We hearken.

Langton. Did ye hear how when I absolved the King at Winchester—'tis scarce a month ago—I made him swear that he would do away with unjust laws and would recall good laws and make them to be observed within his kingdom?

Fitz-Walter. Truly, we remember this.

Langton. Here in this cathedral where we are gathered, has a charter of the first Henry now been found, by which, if you desire, you may bring back your long-lost rights and former liberties——

Marshal. That were a prudent course.

Fitz-Walter. Where is it?

Langton (to CANON). Bring forth this charter.

[*Takes roll from CANON.*

Langton. Here did Henry, son of King William, promise when he was crowned, to rule well and lawfully.

Fitz-Walter (rises). If we had aught like this it would be well.

De Quincy (rises). Aye——

[*Others rise.*

Langton. Barons of England, if ye could win a charter such as this and maybe wider, our country would revive and live.

Marshal (rises). My lord, you shall set forth a charter for us now, and I and every man who wishes well to England and her King, will urge the King's acceptance of the same.

Langton. If I do so, then must ye all stand together and uphold the honour of the Church and each one of you do justice to your men—mark this—as ye would have the King deal rightfully with you. (*Rises.*) Only if he refuse, shall ye make war upon the King. Will you swear to this?

All. We will.

De Vescy. And fight, if need be, for our charter. If we are forced to battle, father, who shall lead our host?

Marshal. Fitz-Walter is a brave and valiant soldier.

Langton. Would you have Fitz-Walter for your leader?

All. Aye so.

Langton (to FITZ-WALTER). If you are called to fight for this our cause, be called the Marshal of God's Army and of the Holy Church.

Fitz-Walter (kneels centre, before LANGTON). May I be worthy! (*Rises.*) I vow before the archbishop in this holy place, that I will maintain the charter, and, if the King refuse, will fight for it till death.

[*Lifts sword.*

De Bohun (steps forward). And so I swear. (*Lifts*

sword.) Until with his own seal the King confirms what we require.

Bigod. And I the same.

De Vescy (moves centre). And I; remembering the flames of Alnwick and my blackened lands.

[His hand on sword.

De Ros. The barons of the North so speak.

De Quincy (lifts sword). I, Earl of Winchester, do swear, with hatred for a coward and a faithless lord, deep in my heart.

Giles (comes forward). Though I am priest, not soldier, I will go with you. For those who died unpitied, I will swear. (*Lifts arm.*) Father, mother and brother, witness me!

Langton. Ye all are bound by oath.

[All raise swords on either side of LANGTON, who stands centre with hands clasped.

All. We all are bound by oath.

Langton. I will uphold your cause before the King. I have no fear. I will guide you because I love this land and have been made a shepherd and a father to you all. I vow to never leave you. Go in peace! (*Raises hand; all bend their heads.*) I will set forth your charter, and, William Marshal, since you are older, wise above the rest, and most faithful, you shall go with me to the King and we will show him what you all demand. With earnest words we will strive to win his true consent.

[LANGTON goes out, left, followed by GILES DE BRAOSE, CANON and MONKS, WILLIAM MARSHAL, FITZ-WALTER, DE VESCY, DE ROS, DE BOHUN, BIGOD, DE QUINCY.

SCENE III

About Easter, 1215.

A courtyard in one of KING JOHN'S castles. A couch centre; table beside it, right, with food, cups, &c. A few straws or rushes scattered on ground.

Enter, left, KING JOHN, a roll of parchment in his hand, followed by FALKES DE BREAUTÉ and GERALD DE ATHIES.

John (*flings roll on ground*). Demands of the barons—redress of ills! I'll none of them! (*Throws himself down on couch. To GERALD.*) Fetch me wine—I'm hot and weary with this westward march. Haste and bring me wine. [*Exit, left, GERALD.*

(*To FALKES.*) Thou—hast thou done my bidding and sent spies to watch the rebels?

Falkes. I have, my lord.

John (*calls*). Here, bring the wine! I'm parched and dry. A murrain on the fool to keep me waiting so!

Re-enter hastily GERALD with wine; he pours it into goblet, which JOHN snatches.

Give me to drink. (*Drinks.*) Nay, more. (*Drinks again.*) Away with thee! I've other work for both of ye to do. I shall need more soldiers from whence you came.

Falkes. My lord, I can raise many men across the sea to serve you.

Gerald. And I also. But they, like us, are poor and needy men, my lord.

John (laughs). Who want their wages, as ye do. I catch thy meaning. Well, I can pay you all, ye curs! I have money, and more gold I mean to get. Methinks the clergy and the Jews alone can pay you. Clergy and Jews (*laughs*), 'tis all the same to me which do it. I have many means, as fines, imprisonment and fetters, to find money when I need it. Have I not?

Gerald. That is true, my lord.

John. Dost thou remember how I had 10,000 marks from the Jew at Bristol?

Gerald. Verily.

John. That stubborn one did love his gold, and, day by day, a tooth was drawn until the 10,000 marks were duly paid. Go both of you and learn what news my messengers do bring.

[FALKES and GERALD go out left.]

John (rises and paces up and down). Oh, I will force the barons to obedience once again! De Braose can arise no more; I've silenced those shrewd tongues. I now will teach De Vescy, Fitz-Walter, and their friends a lesson which they will not soon forget.

Re-enter, left, FALKES.

Falkes. My King, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Pembroke are without and crave to speak with you on weighty matters.

John. A plague upon them! Stephen Langton—would thou hadst followed Archbishop Hubert Walter to the grave! I hate thy gentle cunning, subtle meekness, proud humility. Evil light on thee! (*To FALKES.*) Bring them before me here!

[Sits down on couch.]

Falkes (aside, as he goes out). I thought their

coming would much anger him. He hates the archbishop as viper's blood! [Goes out, left.]

John (*throws himself back on couch*). I am weary! When shall I feast at leisure in my halls, or follow the tall deer through silent woods; and then, hot with the chase, among my dogs, lie down by hidden fountains in the shade? Come quickly, Stephen Langton, come and get you gone, you and all such disturbers of mine ease!

Enter, left, STEPHEN LANGTON and WILLIAM MARSHAL, followed by FALKES.

Langton (*raises hand*). Greeting and blessing unto you, my King! [MARSHAL bows low.]

John. Blessing? Do I need more? I have lately had the blessing of my lord the Pope.

Langton. Whose most unworthy servant in this land I am——

John. Enough. You are installed at Canterbury now. You have your lands and wealth and should be satisfied. We will not talk of Holy Church to-day; I have no mind to do so. Kill a stag or fly a hawk were nigher to my present pleasure. So speak some other message briefly and have done. [Drinks wine on table.]

[LANGTON approaches JOHN; MARSHAL stands left; FALKES right.]

Langton. My lord, we come on matters which concern you closely. You will not send me hence when I come to plead in the name of all your realm.

John. Langton, you have ever consorted with my enemies.

Langton. My King, I am your friend and faithful servant. (*Takes parchment roll from floor.*) Your people should not be your enemies. I counsel you

to use your wisdom and agree to their most just demands. [*Holds out parchment.*

John (*snatches it*). Unjust demands, say I!

Marshal. My liege, 'tis little new or strange the barons ask.

John. New or old, I care not. Their askings are vain dreams, supported by no plea of reason. Aye, I've heard what they desire. Why did not the barons among their unjust demands ask to take my kingdom also?

Langton. My lord, we beseech you now to *keep* that kingdom; not to let it fall in other hands.

Marshal (*kneels*). Truly, my King.

Langton. By righteous rule and justice alone, can you do so. You will not keep the kingdom otherwise.

John. I'll keep it as I will—no other way.

Marshal (*rises*). My lord, the barons are roused to great anger.

John. Are they so angered? I will let them see *my* wrath! I'll lay their castles low, burn, waste——

Langton. Remember it is not long since I absolved you at Winchester. With the kiss of peace and tears of joy, you were received and made a Christian King once more. By that rite and by the hallowing and anointing of the day when you were given high power and holy trust, so that men should love and honour you above your fellows—by these, I do conjure you now to hearken to your people's prayer. (*Puts hand on John's arm.*) Set up the rightful laws. Drive hence these foreign hirelings (*looks sternly at FALKES*) who make war on your own subjects. Be King of England once again!

John (*shakes off LANGTON; springs up*). I will be King of England! There you speak truth! I will be King, and not a slave! Think you I will listen to commands from my own vassals? (*Crushes parchment*

roll.) Out of my sight, ye traitors! (*To MARSHAL.*) You and your fellow barons shall rue this. (*To LANGTON.*) Nay, I care not who you be, archbishop, cardinal—I here defy you! Away, and tell the barons I will punish them for this.

Marshal (moves left). Alas.

Langton. My lord, you move me to much sorrow by your words, which we must faithfully report unto the barons assembled now at Brackley.

John. Say what ye will—I care not!

Langton. I pray some future day you may be moved to give us better hearing.

[LANGTON and MARSHAL go out left.]

John. Nay, never! Sooth-tongued priest! You, one and all, shall smart for this. (*Drinks.*) To their destruction do I drink. (*To FALKES.*) Pledge me, sirrah! (*FALKES drinks.*) Have any messengers returned whom I sent forth to bring us tidings of our enemies? Go and look forth. [FALKES goes left and looks out.]

Falkes. One cometh even now, my lord. He rides in haste.

John. Who is't?

Falkes. Gerald de Athies; he has returned, my lord.

John (paces up and down). Will he bring evil news? Naught but black tidings— The stars are cursed that rule this day!

Falkes (goes left). He comes, my lord.

Enter, left, GERALD.

John. What news? What news of the rebels?

Gerald. Then slay me not if I do speak bad tidings. (*Kneels.*) Spare me!

John (strides up; seizes him by neck). Play me no tricks. Speak out thy news, or I will shake it from thy throat. (*Lets go.*)

Gerald (*gasps*). 'Tis so ; the barons are encamped at Brackley ; gathered in force for battle——

John. What ?

Gerald (*rises trembling*). Scarce any do remain upon your side. 'Tis said they have 2000 knights, foot and horse soldiers, archers, cross-bowmen, all fully armed and bound by oath.

John. Against me ?

Gerald. They are—if you refuse—so resolved ; in battle to the uttermost.

John. I can withstand them still ; crush them as I have done before.

Gerald. Nay, alack, your castles will all be taken now. Scarce seven knights are left to you. 'Tis said the men of London mean to ope their gates unto your enemies.

John. I'll get more soldiers from across the sea ; the Pope shall ban them——

Falkes. Rome is far off. It would be long ere you could get more men hired from abroad to fight your battles. [FALKES and GERALD draw together, right.

John (*flings himself on couch*). What, have they all deserted me ? Am I betrayed, defied, the mock of priests, of every varlet in the barons' camp ? Oh, how I hate you all ! Would I could bend you as I do these rushes. (*Picks up, breaks and bites rushes and straws.*) Grind all to nothing as I do these straws ! (*Flings them away.*) Some time I will outwit them. Be it so. If they have victory to-day, to-morrow I ! Falkes de Breauté, ride in haste and bring back the archbishop and the earl. Tell them that I will hear their prayers, grant their charter.

Falkes (*amazed*). Is't so ?

John. Yea, it's so. Gape not in amazement. Go, tell them that we will be gracious now ; we will appoint



King John.
From his tomb at Worcester.

a day, a place for meeting—somewhere beyond our castle on the Thames—to hear them.

Falkes. My lord ?

John. Be gone and give my message ! I will grant their charter ! (*Laughs.*) [FALKES goes out left.

I'll say I do it for the sake of peace, the exaltation and the honour of the realm. (*Laughs.*) And do they think I'll keep the charter ? Let them dream ! (*To GERALD.*) Go after him and see my message is delivered instantly. [GERALD goes out left.

One day, they will rue it. (*Rises.*) I will scourge the land for this. Is it in springtime, then I'll take the seed ; cut down the hedges so that forest beasts devour their lambs and patient husbandry. In harvest, I will burn the standing corn ; the whole land shall hunger till my wrath is spent. [*Goes out left.*

SCENE IV

Monday, June 15, 1215. Runnymede.

*A throne placed centre ; a table in front of it ;
a low bench in front of table.*

Enter, left, two MONKS and CANON ; they carry parchment, ink-horns, pens ; one has a taper ; then come ROBERT FITZ-WALTER, with banner of London, HENRY DE BOHUN, ROGER BIGOD, SAER DE QUINCY, GILES DE BRAOSE, EUSTACE DE VESCY, ROBERT DE ROS, two LONDONERS.

Fitz-Walter (stands centre). This meadow—Runnymede—beside the Thames, is named our meeting-place, where we now attend the coming of the King and the archbishop and the Earl of Pembroke. Here we set up our standard. (*To MESSENGER.*) Read forth the names of the chief barons who are here or coming to this place.

Messenger (*reads from scroll*). Robert Fitz-Walter, Castellan of London, Chief Banneret of the City, Baron of Dunmow and Marshal of the Barons' Army?

Fitz-Walter. Here am I.

Messenger. Henry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and Constable of England, stand you here?

De Bohun. Yea; with all my men.

Messenger. Roger Bigod, the Earl of Norfolk?

Bigod. Ready; prepared!

Messenger. Speak, Saer de Quincy, Earl of Winchester.

De Quincy. I and my following, fully armed.

Messenger. Eustace de Vescy, Baron of Northumberland, guardian of Durham?

De Vescy. Ready to fight, in sooth, as is De Ros and many another northerner.

De Ros. Aye, and all my men from Holderness.

Fitz-Walter. Let each man grasp his sword. We are prepared. We stand together.

All. Aye, we stand together.

Enter, left, a MESSENGER.

De Vescy. See you, a messenger comes from the King.

Messenger. My lords, at length, the King approaches. Long hath been the debate touching peace with you and granting of these liberties.

Fitz-Walter. The King will meet us now?

Messenger. The archbishop hath prevailed on him with strong entreaty.

De Vescy (*aside*). Methinks our line of battle, seen upon the banks of Thames, gives force to his entreaties.

Messenger. Now do the trumpets sound here and along the river. The King is coming.

Fitz-Walter. Give answer loud. Hold high our

banner! The archbishop who made the Charter, shall present it to the King.

Enter, left, KING JOHN, STEPHEN LANGTON with the Great Charter, WILLIAM MARSHAL, FALKES DE BREAUTÉ, GERALD DE ATHIES. JOHN seats himself on throne. BARONS, headed by FITZ-WALTER, stand right; on left stand LANGTON, next the KING, the MONKS and CANON; MARSHAL on extreme left. The KING'S MESSENGER, FALKES and GERALD stand behind the throne.

Langton. My lord, the barons, gathered from all parts of your kingdom, and assembled here at Runnymede—the place which you appointed—greet you true and loyally.

De Vescy (*aside*). True and loyal if we have our liberties—if not——

Langton. They here present this Charter, wherein are found good laws and customs for the country, such as were upheld of old.

[*Lays Charter on table before* JOHN.]

John. I know their asking.

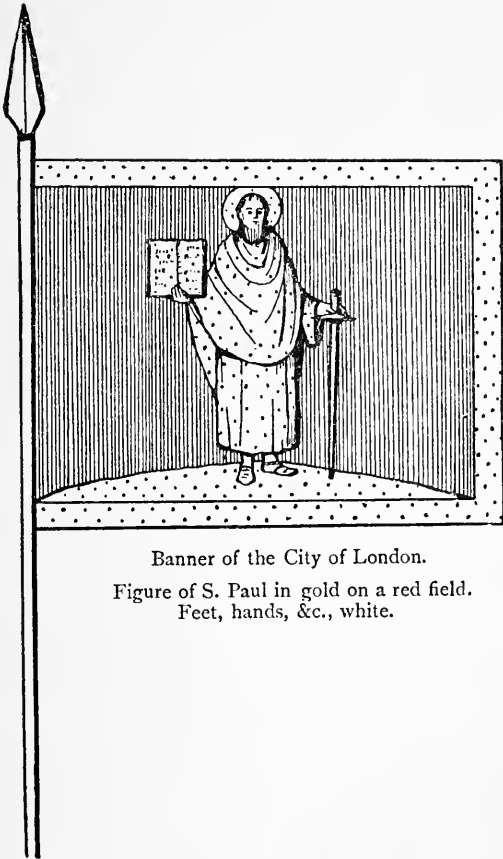
Langton (*to BARONS*). All that is contained herein hath been examined closely with the King. We have discussed and measured each matter in the Charter.

Barons. The Charter, aye, the Charter; give us that!

John (*aside*). Rebels and dogs! (*Aloud.*) I grant it. I am minded to be clement. For peace and for protection of my kingdom, and by the advice of certain of the realm—as Archbishop Stephen Langton, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, and many whose names are written there—I grant the Charter.

Langton (*hands Charter to first MONK*). Read.

Monk (*reads*). “John, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Anjou, to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justiciars, foresters, sheriffs,



Banner of the City of London.

Figure of S. Paul in gold on a red field.
Feet, hands, &c., white.

reeves, servants and all bailiffs and his faithful people, greeting.”

[MONK *hands Charter to LANGTON.*

Langton. Here are set forth some sixty-three and separate matters, beginning with the English Church, which shall be free to hold its rights and liberties uninjured.

Giles (aside). Then not in vain our prayers have been.

Langton. All the good laws and customs are to be maintained. The heir shall take his heritage with no extortion. The widow shall not be oppressed nor orphans robbed by those who guard their lands.

Fitz-Walter. 'Tis well.

Langton. The Common Pleas shall not follow the King's Court, but be held in one place whither all men may resort conveniently.

General Murmur of approval. Aye, aye.

Langton. The citizens of London——

Londoners (aside). Ah, what for London?

Langton. The citizens of London shall have their ancient liberties and free customs as well by land as water, and this is for all other cities, boroughs, villages and ports.

First to Second Londoner (aside). Good tidings these.

Langton. Scutage and aid shall be just, and only according to the tenant's holding from the King.

De Vescy (aside). Taxes and grievous payments in lieu of battle-service will not be forced.

Langton. The barons shall also deal justly with their men. Now, hearken well. Save in certain instances, as for the King's ransom if he is taken prisoner, for the making of his eldest son a knight, and for his eldest daughter's dower, no tax or aid shall ever be imposed, but by the common council of the kingdom.

De Quincy. May that be so for ever!

Langton. To this common council of the realm

prelates and greater barons shall be summoned by the King; and all tenants-in-chief, by his sheriffs and bailiffs.

General Murmur. Aye, aye.

Langton. For fines, no man shall lose his means of livelihood; the merchant his merchandise nor the poor man his waggon. Sheriffs and bailiffs shall not seize a freeman's horses, waggon or wood for the King's use without payment or consent. Which law, by heaven's grace, shall somewhat protect the poor. Hostages shall be now returned unscathed. All foreign soldiers—the names of many are writ here—who came to make war upon the land, are to be driven hence.

Gerald (aside). Our day is done.

John. What further? (*Aside.*) I will find other soldiers.

Langton. Full many other matters follow, as touching rents and forests, measures, weirs, trials, and witnesses. And, mark ye well—no freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, dispossessed or banished, save by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.

General Murmur. So be it ever.

Langton. Moreover, the King hath said, "To no man will we sell, to no man will we deny, to none will we delay, right and justice." (*To BARONS.*) Twenty-five of the great barons of the land shall be chosen by you to see this Charter is observed.

Fitz-Walter. We will appoint them.

Langton. These liberties are ordained both for yourselves and for your heirs for ever. Nor King nor people shall disregard the law. So the Great Charter closes (*hands it to MONK*) in the King's words.

First Monk (reads). "Sworn, moreover, as well on our part as on the part of the barons, that these things above should be observed in good faith and without any evil intent. (*JOHN smiles scornfully.*) Witness the above named and many others."

Langton (*turns to JOHN*). Will you be pleased, my lord, to lay your hand upon the Charter ?

[*JOHN puts his hand on Charter from which MONK reads.*

Monk. "Given by our hand in the meadow which is called Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines, on the 15th day of June, in the 17th year of our reign."

Langton (*takes Charter and places it on table before JOHN*). My lord, will you now set your great seal on the Charter ?

John. Here is the seal. (*Aside.*) Would I had lightning in mine eyes to strike you all !

First Monk. The brown wax is on the strip of parchment, ready for the good round seal.

Second Monk. The light. (*Warmes wax with taper.*) The wax is soft.

[*JOHN impresses seal; all watch in breathless silence.*

Langton (*looks up*). The seal is set. 'Tis done.

John. There, I have put my impress on the wax. (*Aside.*) I'll cut my image deeper in your hearts. (*Springs up.*) There, take it ; take your Charter, ye barons ! (*Aside.*) And may it perish with you ! (*Aloud.*) I go. Follow me not. (*Aside.*) I fain would wipe you from my sight.

[*Sweeps out, followed by FALKES, GERALD, MESSENGER; all bow low as the KING goes out, left.*

Langton (*to MONKS*). Are the scribes ready here to make copies of the Charter ?

First Monk. Ready, my lord. I make a copy now for Salisbury Cathedral.

[*Sits right end of bench and writes on his parchment.*

Second Monk. And I for Lincoln.

[*Sits centre of bench and writes.*



Stephen Langton.
From his Seal, British Museum.

Canon. I haste to copy it for St. Paul's.

[*Sits left of bench and writes.*

Langton. Let copies be quickly sent to Canterbury and to each cathedral in the land.

Giles. Aye, and they shall be guarded well.

Langton (*stands centre in front of table, &c., all the others grouped on either side; he holds Charter in his hands*). To-day we have fought a fight; to-day we have sown good seed. Not for us, perchance, the fullest joy of harvest or of the victors who divide the spoil. The whole accomplishment is yet far off, though men, in days to come, may remember us sometimes; bless us, perhaps, for that we strove to do. We trusted God, and we shall therefore rest in hope. This Charter which I hold within my hands—parchment and ink and names of those who will be dust in a few years—this Charter will not perish; it will stand, type of a vow between the King and people. Noble kings will rise hereafter in this land, worthy to be the nation's leaders. Barons of the kingdom, people of England, will ye do your part and hold the laws of freedom faithfully; for yourselves; in memory of those departed hence, and for the sake of those who come hereafter?

Fitz-Walter (*kneels, with standard*). Aye, we will.

General Murmur. Aye, we will.

Langton. Will you uphold the Charter now; come life, come death? If so, let each man put his hand upon his sword and cry "Amen; so be it."

All (**BARONS** *put hands on swords; MONKS, &c., raise their hands*). "Amen; so be it."

[**LANGTON**, *carrying Charter, moves out left, followed by GILES DE BRAOSE, MONKS, CANON, FITZ-WALTER with the banner, MARSHAL, DE BOHUN, BIGOD, DE VESCY, DE ROS, SAER DE QUINCY. A solemn and triumphal march is played as they leave the stage.*

EDWARD III

IN ONE ACT

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

KING EDWARD THE THIRD.

EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE, his son.

SIR WALTER DE MANNY, }
SIR THOMAS HOLLAND, } Knights.
SIR JOHN CHANDOS. }

ROGER, a Londoner.

PETER OF ONGAR, an English archer, Roger's nephew.

SIMON, }
STEPHEN, } of the London Weavers' Guild.

ADAM, a dyer.

JOHN, a fuller.

A COOK.

A MESSENGER.

GOBIN AGACE, of Ponthieu.

A FRENCH SOLDIER.

QUEEN PHILIPPA, wife to Edward III.

PRINCESS ISABELLA, }
PRINCESS JOAN, } daughters to Edward III. and Philippa.

LADY-IN-WAITING.

KATHERINE, daughter to Roger.

MARGERY, }
PETRONILLA, } Londoners.

Almost all the shorter parts can be doubled and acted by the same boy or girl.

ACT I

SCENE I.—August 1346. France. Oisement, near the banks of the Somme.

SCENE II.—The next day. On the opposite banks of the river.

SCENE III.—August 26th. On the Windmill hill by Crécy.

SCENE IV.—Autumn of 1347. After siege of Calais. London. The hall in a rich merchant's house.



Edward, the Black Prince.
From his tomb at Canterbury.

EDWARD III

ACT I

SCENE I

August 1346.

Near the banks of the Somme ; at Oisement.

*Enter, left, KING EDWARD, with the BLACK PRINCE
and SIR JOHN CHANDOS.*

King. Philip of Valois—I will not call him King of France, for I am King ; Edward Plantagenet is King of France—Philip of Valois with a mighty host pursues us. He is close upon our heels.

Chandos (*points left*). And in front of us lies the full and salt flood of the Somme.

King. There's naught but death for my brave little army if we cannot cross the river before to-morrow morn.

*Enter, left, SIR THOMAS HOLLAND, followed by
PETER OF ONGAR.*

Sir Thomas Holland, are all the bridges across the Somme destroyed ?

Holland. My lord, your good marshals, the Earl of Warwick and Geoffrey of Harcourt, have sent forth men ; we've ridden up and down the land, but the French have the bridges well defended, and all those which they cannot hold are burned or laid in ruins for our welcome.

Chandos. Alas, no way of escape is left for us.

King. We will not die like rats caught in a trap. Are there none, among the prisoners that we took, who know this country well ; who could tell us of a hidden ford or secret shallow of the river ?

[PETER OF ONGAR *approaches* KING.]

Peter (kneels). My King, I'm but a poor bowman, yet I have a word of counsel if I dare speak——

King. Speak on, brave archer. Have no fear.

Peter (rises). Then, noble King, there is a prisoner here ; one that we took upon the road by Oisement. He is of Ponthieu ; knows all this land, men say.

King. Land ! 'Tis of the water we lack counsel.

Peter. Verily, and this man dwells beside the river ; knows each turning of the Somme, so please your Grace.

King. Then he perchance can help us. Go quickly, bring the man and we will question him.

Peter (bows). I will, my King. (*Aside.*) A simple bowman hath a word of counsel even for a king.

[*Goes out left.*]

King (to HOLLAND). How far hath Philip gained upon us ? See you our messengers returning ?

Holland (moves right ; looks out). I see no sign of our coureurs. But the French host cannot be far behind us now. We did well (*walks back to KING*), my liege, to leave Airaines in haste and not to tarry longer there.

King. The French would laugh to see the haste we made. They'd find our camp just as we left it ; smouldering fires and meat upon the spit.

Black Prince. They'd laugh and pledge us English in our undrunk wine. Oh, my father, could we but meet them face to face and fight !

King. Which soon we shall, but not, I trust, until we stand upon the other side of the dark, rushing Somme. We're nearer to our Flemish allies then, and if need be, we have retreat to Flanders open. Here comes our archer with his prisoner.

Re-enter, left, PETER OF ONGAR, with GOBIN AGACE.

Peter (bows). Behold the prisoner, my King.

King (to GOBIN). Thou art of Ponthieu?

Gobin. Yea, my lord.

King. Which, with many another fair, broad land in France, is mine by right. Ponthieu—wealth of my mother; heritage of Margaret, wife to Edward my grandfather. What is thy name?

Gobin. Gobin; Gobin Agace. A grace some call me, but there's little enough o' grace to tell about me.

Peter (aside). I'll warrant that.

King. Thou wert in arms against me?

Gobin. Aye, but I reckon not which I serve; king of France or England. 'Tis alike to me and to the men who fought beside me here. We found ill days under the French King. The English King maybe will use us better.

King. Dost know this river and the river banks?

Gobin. Aye, indeed I know it well; (*aside*) well as I knew the farm, the plots of corn which have been burned.

King. Then knowest thou of any ford across the river? Gobin Agace, I will not use thee harshly. If thou canst show a way by which I and my army can pass o'er in safety, I will reward thee; make thee free and quit of ransom with twenty of thy company.

Gobin. My lord—?

King. Verily. Speak but the truth to me.

Gobin. Sire, take my head if what I say be not the truth. I will surely lead you to a place where you and all your host may pass over without danger to man or beast.

King. Where ?

Gobin. North-east (*points left*) from here, you come to the river below Abbeville. Away near the Port village, the Somme doth widen on a sudden, with low banks and willows overhanging. There is the ford. A stranger ne'er could find it. There, twice between the night and morn, twelve men can cross abreast and the water will not reach above their knees. But when the tide rises, then the river waxes so great, no man can cross at all. The ford is good ; the ground beneath the water, all of hard white stones, wherefore men call it the Blanche-tache.

King. Blanche-tache ; and there my men and baggage can pass over ?

Gobin. Truly on horseback and afoot. But, my lords, ye must be ready to depart from here betimes. For the ebb-tide, ye must be at Blanche-tache by sunrise.

King. Now, if thy tale be true, 'tis good. But the French have also remembered this ford, methinks.

Holland. Yea, surely. Agace, if ye betray us——

King. Woe unto thee indeed !

Gobin (*creeps towards the KING*). My lord, 'tis true the French King knows of your moving, by his spies, and he has bidden a great baron of Normandy, Sir Godemar du Fay, defend the passage of Blanche-tache upon the further shore.

King. Ha ! ha ! Then Godemar awaits us on the further shore.

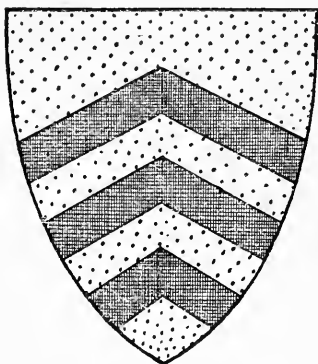
Holland and Chandos. A trap, a snare !

Gobin. Yet methinks you could force the passage and drive them from the banks.

King. We will. I have many a good soldier who would as lief fight in the water as on dry land. We'll force our way, my men, right through the rushing stream and spite of twenty Godemars.

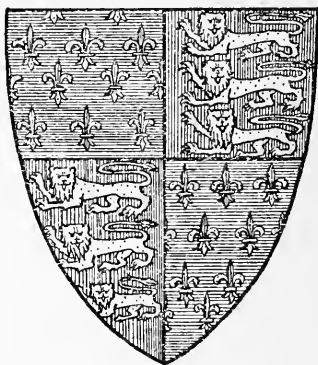
Peter. I care not how wet I be, so as I keep my good bow dry.

King. We may not tarry longer. Philip is gaining



Arms of Sir Walter Manny.

Or, 3 chevrons sa.



Royal Arms of England. Edward III.

France and England quarterly.

on us, hour by hour. (*To HOLLAND.*) Send word to our Marshals. Let all be in readiness to march. There's little time for sleep to-night. At midnight shall the trumpet sound; all must arise, saddle the horses, and go forth. The harvest moon will light us to the river bank.

Gobin. I will be there to guide you.

[KING goes out left, followed by BLACK PRINCE, SIR THOMAS HOLLAND, SIR JOHN CHANDOS, PETER OF ONGAR and GOBIN AGACE.]

SCENE II

The next day.

On the opposite banks of the Somme.

Enter, left, PETER OF ONGAR, clapping his hands, followed by GOBIN AGACE, sadly.

Peter (*waves his bow*). Hey! hey! Safe o'er the flood! Safe landed! Agace, ye led us well.

Gobin. Aye, aye. But see (*looks at PETER'S cloak*), this cloak is all a-dripping from the Somme. You fell, methinks, half-way across when ye beheld the Frenchmen's cross-bows bent upon you.

Peter (*scornfully*). Frenchmen's cross-bows!

Gobin. Ye stumbled in the flood, and from the cloak I'll wring the drops which tell the tale.

[*Wrings out end of cloak.*]

Peter (*pulls off cloak; tosses it up in air*). A cloak wet with French rivers, cross-bows of Frenchmen's hirelings, what are they to me? (*Starts.*) My bow? (*Examines bow.*) Ah, 'tis unharmed; my good white bow made of a single stave of Essex yew. My long-bow; that's my life; Peter of Ongar's glory and his life!

Enter, left, BLACK PRINCE and SIR THOMAS HOLLAND.

Holland. So we have won the passage, though the landing was a bitter fight and they fought well to keep us back.

Black Prince (*points left*). But Godemar hath fled. When he saw he could no longer hold the landing-place—

Enter, left, KING.

My father, we have done with Godemar!

King. Aye, he is gone. But look ye now behind ; on the far bank of the river.

[*Leads PRINCE towards left, and is followed by SIR T. HOLLAND, PETER and GOBIN; they all look intently.*]

Holland. Aye, indeed ; on the far shore is the French host.

Black Prince. They were not far behind, in sooth !

Enter, left, SIR JOHN CHANDOS.

Chandos. The French are there already. Oh, near was our escape ! They reached the flood e'en while our last company were crossing. If we have any laggards, they are ta'en, I fear. But see, my lord, the tide is rising fast.

King. Blanche-tache serves not our enemies. (*Points.*) Look how the waters rise ! Each moment they come mounting up. Ha ! ha ! (*Calls out.*) Philip of Valois, lo, I mock at you !

Prince, Holland, Chandos and Peter. We mock at you.

King (*laughs*). His river is rebellious. It will teach him patience for some good twelve hours.

Holland. While we move on and choose our battle-ground.

King (*moves centre, followed by others*). Gobin Agace, thou hast led us well, and I will well requite thy service.

Gobin. I said ye should pass over safely. Ah, I know the deeps and shallows of the Somme if I know naught else in this dark world.

King (*to AGACE*). I make thee free, with twenty of thy company. (*To Holland*). See you to this.

Holland. Aye, my liege.

King (*to AGACE*). Moreover, for thy ready rede, I

give thee a good horse and these golden nobles in thy hand. *[Gives him bag of money.]*

Peter (*aside*). 'Tis wise, methinks, to be a traitor!

Gobin (*kneels*). Thanks, gracious King. Your gifts are good. A horse—twenty nobles here in my hand. I think I will be your servant always, mighty King. (*Rises.*) The King of France hath never given me aught. My house was ruined three years ago come the Toussaints. I'd as lief follow you across the seas as now bide here.

King. Do as thou wilt.

Peter. We'll teach you archery and how to use an English bow. Come with me, Agace, Agace—the name is never glib upon my honest Essex tongue!

King. To-morrow in pitched battle we shall meet our foe.

All (*but GOBIN*). Aye, aye!

King. Our field of battle is well chosen. Where the road from Abbeville passes by Crécy village. 'Tis a good and safe position. Below us lies a hollow, Vallée aux Clercs 'tis called. To the north, beyond the river Maie, the road to Flanders. Westward and south are woods and thickets for defence.

Black Prince. Oh, let me take my sword and win my spurs to-morrow!

King. Ye shall! If we win Crécy, then the next is Calais. Brave knights, true to your King as were the Knights of Table Round to Arthur. Fight with me still, and I will give you part in such a day as shall not be forgotten. Come hence and set our arms in readiness. To-morrow's August sun will shine upon the battle-field of Crécy!

[KING goes out left, followed by BLACK PRINCE, SIR T. HOLLAND, SIR J. CHANDOS, PETER and AGACE.]

SCENE III

Saturday, August 26.

The Windmill hill by Crécy. A log or a bench centre.

Enter, left, PETER OF ONGAR, with food and a cup in his hands. Sits centre and eats.

Peter. Well, here has a fine Saturday dawned. The King commanded that we should sleep well last night, each man in his cloak. Some will sleep yet sounder perchance to-morrow! "Let the soldiers have good food," says our King. I warrant Philip had no such care for his men! The French were marching hungry, while we were dreaming or filling ourselves with victuals which make courage (*eats*), give straightness to the eye. (*Draws bow.*) My arrows. (*Counts arrows in quiver.*) All well-wrought shafts made by the worthy Matthew, our good arrowsmith—heaven rest him—he sleeps by the yew trees which furnished much for archery.

Enter, left, GOBIN AGACE.

Here comes our path-finder through the waters. Oh, but he should hold his head high, for he has a horse of his own, and twenty nobles in his purse. (*To AGACE.*) Would I had your money! Threepence a day; that is the payment to a poor drawer of long-bows.

Gobin. My twenty nobles cannot buy me what is clean gone. Methinks, you, with your threepence, Peter, and your home across the seas, are still the richer man.

Peter. Maybe. But mourn not. In these days of battle-fields, 'tis lightly come and lightly gone. Come, sit you down and eat.

Gobin. Nay. They brought me food in plenty.

Peter. Archery, archery, that is the cure for every sick heart, whether it be behind the bow or in the face of the flying arrow. (*Springs up.*) Come, I will show you how to use the bow. (*Leads AGACE forward; takes bow in his hands.*) Fair shooting (*takes out an arrow*) cometh of many things, as standing (*plants feet firmly*); nocking (*places arrow*); drawing (*draws*); holding (*keeps arrow drawn*) and loosing. (*Gives bow and arrow to AGACE.*)

Gobin. Aye, aye.

Peter. Now drawing is the best part of archery. My father taught me how to draw, how to lay my body in my bow and not to draw with strength of arm as other nations do, but with strength of body. See you——

Entr, left, KING, with SIR T. HOLLAND, who carries KING'S helmet, SIR J. CHANDOS carrying his shield. PETER and AGACE bow low.

King. The hour of battle has come. Set on my helmet and my crown. I vow to you they shall not leave my living brows till I have been victorious. (*Takes helmet and puts it on.*)

Chandos. Here is your shield, sire. (*Hands shield.*)

King. Wrought with my golden leopards, and with lilies, mark you well, to show my right. "Dieu et mon Droit" in France I will maintain.

Holland, Chandos, Prince (*draw swords on either side of the King; PETER waves his bow*), **All** (*but GOBIN*). God and your right in France we will maintain!

King (*holds out his hand*). I thank you and look to you all for aid to-day. Here, from the Windmill hill, I command the field. Hark! our trumpets sound!

Holland (*listens*). The French reply! Now list again; the trumpets blare.

Enter, left, MESSENGER.

King. Is all prepared?

Messenger. Aye, my liege. The prince clad in his armour, chafes for battle.

King. He shall fight. Look, the sun shines forth as a good omen.

Peter (*aside*). Aye, and 'tis in the foemen's eyes, which favours us.

King. Now let our trumpets speak again. Bid all our archers bend their bows and send a rain thicker than yonder storm that passes seaward. Hark, the French shout!

Chandos (*listens*). "Montjoie! St. Denis!" they cry.

King (*listens*). Our people answer them with shouts of "God and St. George for England!" (*Lifts sword.*) Lift high our standard! Forward, banners, now! God and St. George for England, charge!

[**KING** goes out left, followed by **HOLLAND**, **CHANDOS**, with drawn swords, **MESSENGER**, **PETER** and **AGACE**, shouting, "God and St. George for England!"

Re-enter HOLLAND, in pursuit of a French knight.

Holland. Yield you, proud Frenchman! My prisoner! Unhorsed by me!

[*Pursues him round stage; they exchange blows with swords; FRENCHMAN flies out left, pursued by HOLLAND.*

Re-enter KING and CHANDOS.

Chandos. The French fall back before our archers now. See (*points*), my lord, they turn and smite their hireling Genoese who do retreat.

King (*looks left*). All is confusion ; flying men and horses. (*Lifts sword.*) On ! On ! St. George for England ! Charge again ! (*CHANDOS rushes out left ; KING is suddenly arrested by MESSENGER, who enters left in haste.*) See, who comes ? A messenger in haste.

Messenger. From Sir Thomas Holland, gracious King, I come.

King. How fares my son ? Tell me ; speak swift thy news !

Messenger. Those who fight with the Prince beseech you to send succour. More men for help immediate. The French do rally now.

King. Tell me, is the Prince slain ?

Messenger. Nay, nay, my liege, he lives.

King. Then, is he wounded grievously ?

Messenger. He lives unhurt. But the Prince is sore beset ; great is his danger.

King. If he lives yet unwounded I will not send him any help. Say I would have him win his spurs at Crécy. I desire that, if it be God's will, the honour of this day shall be for him and those who fight beside him. Go tell the Prince and his companions my command.

Messenger. I will, my liege. Who would not die but to have part in such a day ! [*Goes out left.*]

Enter, left, SIR J. CHANDOS, wounded.

King. Here cometh Chandos. How goes the battle ? You are wounded, my brave knight ?

Chandos. I am, my lord ; 'tis but a little thing. A moment's grace to breathe. (*Lifts helmet.*) Ah, gracious King, I'd kneel to tell you the good news ; only a faintness from my wound——

[*Sinks on ground ; KING bends over him.*

King. My faithful knight !

Chandos (*rises slowly*). I grow strong again ; strong with the news I bring. The French are flying now before our arrows. Our bowmen would seem a match for all the chivalry of France !

King. And where is Philip ?

Enter, left, SIR T. HOLLAND.

Holland. Philip hath left the field. The French are flying now on every side.

King. The victory is ours ! Oh, wondrous field of Crécy !

MESSENGER *re-enters left.*

How fares the Prince ?

Messenger. He cometh even now to greet your grace.

Enter, left, BLACK PRINCE, followed by PETER and AGACE.

Prince. All hail, my father ! (*Kneels.*) I hail you King of France and England !

King. And hail to you, fair son ; the heir of France and England ! (*Places hands on his shoulders.*) Well have you fought to-day. You have shown yourself worthy of the name you bear ; worthy, one day, to hold the realm. [*Raises PRINCE.*

Prince. Thanks, my King. But (*points to HOLLAND*) those who were with me helped to win the day.

King. A day which men will long remember. I

owe you thanks, my lords, and will requite your services. I shall not forget the good soldiers who fought at Crécy. (*To HOLLAND.*) Have you the list of those found dead upon the field?

Holland (*shows parchment*). Many are the names. The French who fell do near outnumber our whole army. See, the King of Bohemia, the noble counts, Alençon, Flanders, Blois, Aumale, with many more. Methinks we e'en might weep over the roll of such illustrious dead.

King (*lifts off his helmet*). I lift my helm which hath not left my head this day. Give honourable burial at Montreuil to the great allies and to the lords of France. We will not quit the field to-night, but rest our weary men. Let us give thanks for this great victory and make no boast. The glory is not ours!

Holland. You have not broken bread to-day. Will you not eat and drink, my lord?

King. Verily. Bring food and wine. See to our men. Come (*to HOLLAND*), we will sup together. (*To CHANDOS.*) Have we no tidings of our brave Sir Walter de Manny? Doth he not well maintain our battle in the south, which we have fought so well to-day in northern France?

Chandos. My lord, our messengers report that they have held Auberoche and Aiguillon right gallantly for you. He hastens now to join us——

King. At Calais. When we have Calais—then to England, where our people wait to welcome us triumphant from the wars in France!

[KING, BLACK PRINCE, HOLLAND, CHANDOS,
MESSENGER, PETER and AGACE, all
*slowly leave the stage and go out left,
singing.*

EDWARD III

De - o gra - ci - as . . . an - - gli - a, red -

de pro vic - - - to - - - - ri - - a.

Owre Kynge went forth to Nor - man - - dy, With

grace and myght of chy - val - - ry: Ther God for

him wrought mer - vel - us - ly. Wher - fore Eng - londe may

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the lower staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music is written in a medieval style with square notes and a simple harmonic structure.

calte and cry, De - - - o gra - - ci - as.

The second system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the lower staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music continues with square notes and a simple harmonic structure.

De - o gra - ci - as . . . an - - - gli - - - .

The third system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the lower staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music continues with square notes and a simple harmonic structure.

Chorus.

a red - de pro vic - to - - - ri - - - a.

The fourth system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the lower staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music continues with square notes and a simple harmonic structure.

SCENE IV

Autumn, 1347.

London. In the hall of a rich merchant's house. Two thrones set centre. Table right; chair beside it. A pie on the table. A broom against the wall, on left. A shield hanging up.

Enter, left, PETER OF ONGAR with a bundle.

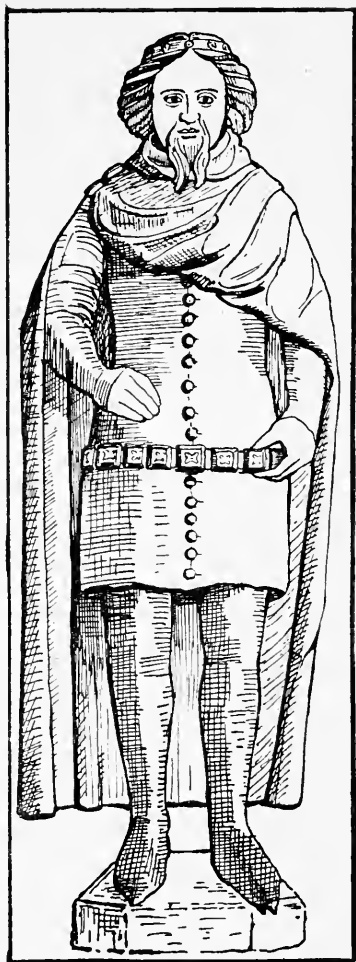
Peter. Well, and here am I, bowman Peter, back once more in England safe and sound; and not returned to Ongar yet, but stayed in London here to see the great rejoicing when the King comes home. (*Looks round.*) I've many friends in London; e'en in rich merchants' houses like this which entertains the King. Here my uncle Roger is steward; my cousin is fair Katherine. (*Goes left and calls.*) Hi! good uncle, where are ye? No answer; he is busy preparing for the feast! (*Calls.*) Uncle, your valiant nephew is returned from the French wars;—what, no answer still! A murrain on these kinsfolk who do not worthily esteem their soldiers from across the seas! (*Shouts.*) I have returned from France! Old Roger hath grown deaf, I think. (*Walks right, to table.*) Ah, there's a pasty for a king. (*Examines pie.*) A royal scent! I'm fain to nibble just a bite.

[*Stands with back to entrance, nibbling.*]

Enter, left, ROGER.

Roger. Hi! hi! A thief!

Peter (*without turning*). I am your nephew back from France.



Two of Edward III.'s Children.
From his tomb at Westminster.

Roger. Nephew, good sooth! A thief! (*Seizes a broom and chases PETER round and round room.*) I'll teach you how to eat our pies!

Enter, left, KATHERINE.

Katherine. Mercy! good father! What is now afoot?

Roger (*still running after PETER*). I am! This rascal! I'll catch him; put him in the stocks!

Katherine (*darts forward, catches ROGER*). Hold! It is no thief! It is our Peter from the wars!

[*ROGER and PETER stop suddenly and face each other; ROGER drops broom; KATHERINE stands between them.*]

Roger. It is! It is! (*They embrace.*) Welcome, brave, noble Peter!

Katherine. Welcome, good cousin!

Peter. Thanks, uncle and sweet Katherine. Am I so tanned with sun and rain of France, ye did not know me?

Roger. Nay, nay, ye look lusty enough. (*Pants.*) Ye can run well enough; which is scarce virtue in a soldier!

Katherine. I trow he never ran away! Poor Peter, were you wounded in the wars?

Peter. Yea, yea, a trifle. Oh, I have seen great sights; pitched battles; sallies; assaults; night marches——

Roger (*picks up broom; sits down in chair*). Tell us about your fighting.

Katherine. Oh, tell us, brave Peter!

Peter. We, the King's archers, did much work in France; ever in the van!

Roger (*waves his hand*). Aye, aye, the good bowmen of England! Tirra la! Tirra la! (*Swings the broom; breaks off suddenly; rises.*) A truce to these follies! I've no time! Where is the cook? Know ye the King and Queen and all the Court will come to-day at noon? Oh, it will be a goodly feast!

Peter. What shall be served? Tell us, good uncle, what will the nobles eat to-day?

Roger. Ah, 'tis a gracious list. (*Sets down broom; reckons upon his fingers.*) First, comes boar's head, larded; beef and mutton too; pork and swan roasted.

Peter. O uncle!

Roger. 'Tis but the first course. Now, follows mallard, pheasants, chickens, malachies.

Katherine. They will not complain of scanty fare, methinks.

Roger. The best is yet to come; conies in gray—*that's a master-dish!* Hare in brasé, for pottage; teals, woodcocks, snipes, hedgehogs roasted in their spines.

Peter. A fair feast!

Roger. Much labour 'tis for those who do prepare it. Since dawn of day, we've been astir. No rest for me! The kitchen folk call out for spices, wine, white flour, each moment.

Cook (*calls outside*). Hi! Master Roger!

Roger. Yea, there the cook doth call. What is't?

Cook (*calls*). The almonds fail us!

Roger. Almonds? I gave ye plenteously of almonds.

Cook (*appears at entrance, left, with dish*). Master we are undone; no almonds left! Moreover, we have now no sandal-wood wherewith to colour our fair dish.

Roger. What do you make? What dish?

Cook. Conies in gravy; an it please you, sir.

Roger. A goodly dish. But stand not idly gaping; get to work!

Cook (comes in). Pardieu! Alas, my mind is mazed. I am not used to roast and bake for kings and queens. Conies in gravy! Methinks, I have forgot some notable part! Alas, I cannot tell now how it should be served.

Roger (turns angrily). Worthless knave! To call yourself a cook and cannot learn a dish like this!

Cook. Have pity, sir!

Roger. Bring here the dish. (*COOK approaches.*) Now, villain, listen. 'Tis written thus. Take conies and parboil them.

Cook. Verily, I did so.

Roger. Chop them in gobbets. That ye did not do. And seethe them in a pot. Make broth in which are almonds ground. Then pour the broth o'er the conies. Now add—mark well my words (*COOK counts on his fingers and repeats*)—cloves, mace, kernels of pine-cones. Colour with sandal-wood. Lastly, add wine and cinnamon and vinegar.

Cook (eagerly). I see; I see!

[*Rushes out left, with dish.*]

Roger. Aye, go to work in haste! Some brothers of the Weavers' Guild will soon be here against the coming of the King. Katherine, idle wench, get ye to work!

[*Goes out left.*]

Peter. Now he is gone, sweet Katherine, and e'er the weavers and the other home-come soldiers join us here, I'll show what I have brought for you from France.

Katherine. For me?

[*Claps her hands.*]

Peter. Aye, for you, Kate. Know ye that Peter hath done valorous deeds; and—speak it low, lest thievish folk do envy us—hath got some booty, since a year ago he left our Ongar with naught but his good bow, and scanty archer's wages in his pouch.

Katherine. I know ye have done noble deeds, and they of Ongar and my father's kinsfolk here should have much pride of you.

Peter. Our bows at Crécy turned the fortune of the battle, well I wot. All will be glad to see me home and run to meet me on the village green. For them, and for my London kin, I've brought some spoils of France.

Katherine. Spoils of France?

Peter. Yea. In here (*opens out bundle on table*) are gay clothes which we took in Normandy. Ha! ha! (*Pulls out kirtle.*) This was at the sacking of Caen city.

Katherine. Ah, Peter; but 'tis fair.

Peter. Aye, indeed; for Caen is a great city, full of merchandise. This kirtle did belong unto a wealthy wife of Caen.

Katherine. Peter, it is not made for such as I—

Peter. Nay, fair Kate; but put it on. (*She slips on kirtle.*) It suits you well. Walk to and fro and give yourself the air and bearing of a dame of France.

[KATHERINE *walks up and down room*;
PETER *admiring.*

Peter. Oh, you go bravely!

Katherine. Would I could see myself and how I do appear! Here, good Peter, lend me that shield, and in the shining face I'll view poor Katherine

all translated. (*PETER fetches shield and holds it up.*)
 Oh, I am fairer than my father's peacock who struts
 his feathers in the sun. The Queen herself is
 not——

*Enter, left, STEPHEN and SIMON, with MARGERY and
 PETRONILLA. WEAVERS have sacks of wool and the
 Guild banner which they set down.*

Margery. Hey day! What is this sight?

Katherine. Yea, friends, ye scarce can know
 me.

Petronilla. Where did ye get that goodly kirtle?
 (*Examines it.*) Embroidered—in sooth!

Katherine (*points to PETER.*) 'Tis Peter, my good
 cousin, who hath just returned from France.

Stephen. From France? He took that at the
 sacking of the towns, I trow.

Simon (*examines stuff*). I warrant our Kentish
 broadcloth is more excellent than this.

Margery. Some soldier might have brought *me*
 back a silken veil!

Petronilla. Yea, or a caul of golden net.

Margery. A chain at least!

Petronilla. Buttons of silver were a little thing!

Peter. Fair maids, I'll give you what I have!
 (*Searches in bundle and pulls out a veil.*) That's a fair
 veil; we came by that in Rouen!

Margery. Ah, Master Peter; 'tis of red, which
 colour likes me well.

Petronilla. Pale cheeks! Margery, ye had better
 choose another dye!

[*PETER pulls out a hood which MARGERY takes
 eagerly.*]

Margery. Nay, Petronilla, keep the veil; this hood is what I do desire. [*Puts on hood.*]

Stephen. Ye idle jades! Hold to good English cloths; that is the rule for all.

Simon. Aye, that's the rule.

Re-enter, left, ROGER.

Look you, here comes good Master Roger.

Roger. Greeting, gentle friends; fair maids— I'm sore beset. (*Runs about room.*) Ten guests can sit here—nay twenty, methinks. Good master weavers, I rejoice to see you— The serving-men sit there; 'twill not allow of thirty to sit here. (*Starts, seeing KATHERINE.*) Katherine, where did ye get those rich garments? Have ye been stealing, wretched child? To bring your father's grey head to the grave——!

Katherine. Nay, nay, good father. It was Peter who brought them from the wars for me and for all these happy maids.

Roger. Mercy upon us! These are most strange days; the daughters of simple men dressed like to ladies of the Court! There will be strict laws of sumptuary made ere long; mark my words!

Stephen. Aye, and laws to make men wear good woollen cloths of England.

Simon. In sooth, not foreign frippery. When comes the King?

Roger. The King, the King? Yea, he will be here anon. Oh, such a work of boiling and of baking meats! The cook is near distracted! I left him raving madly mid the pots. (*Voice outside, "Help!"*) Hark! now he calls.

Cook (outside). Help ! help ! The conies burn !

Roger. They burn ! Alas ! I come. Ye are all idlers !
[Rushes out left ; KATHERINE follows him, but is drawn back by PETER.]

Peter. Nay, Katherine, stay with us here.

Simon. 'Tis early. The King will not be here awhile.

Stephen. We'll bide a little.

Peter. Let us be merry and all care forget.

[ROGER rushes in left.]

Roger. Forget, d'you say ? What have I now forgot ?

Peter. Nay, naught. We'll have a dance.

Roger (sinks down in chair). Dance ? I am too hot, too weary and too old !

Katherine. Oh, let us dance !

Petronilla and Margery. A dance ! a dance !

Country dance : Morris dance, "The Maypole."

PETER and KATHERINE, STEPHEN and PETRONILLA, SIMON and MARGERY dance ; ROGER sits and beats time ; COOK comes dancing in with completed dish and dances alone.

MESSENGER enters left ; all suddenly stop dancing.

Messenger. Good citizens ! The King and Queen are coming. They'll pass through this hall unto the feast.

Roger (springs up). Here, some of ye ! *(Marshals them about.)* You weavers, ye stand there ! *(Drags STEPHEN and SIMON to extreme right.)* Yea, take your banner. Hold it high. Peter, stand there, next to the weavers. Ye maids, stand thus.

[*Puts* KATHERINE, PETRONILLA, and MARGERY *right centre*; MESSENGER *stands left*.

Messenger. Room for the King!

Enter, left, KING, QUEEN, BLACK PRINCE, PRINCESSES, LADY-IN-WAITING, HOLLAND, MANNY, CHANDOS; ROGER, &c., *bow low*.

All. Hail, gracious King!

Peter. Long live our King victorious and our noble Queen!

King. Greeting to you, good people all. We enter London joyfully to-day after our absence long and wars in France. We bring our son whose prowess is beyond his scanty years.

All. Long live Edward, the Black Prince!

Roger (*advances*). Great King— What was set in my speech? We beg; we pray— (*Aside to SIMON.*) What cometh next? Ah—that ye deign to enter neath this noble— I should say this humble roof.

Peter (*aside*). Now to the Queen.

Roger. O gracious Queen—

Queen. Yea, honest citizen—

Roger. We do welcome you.

King. We will rest upon this throne a moment e'er we move unto the feast.

[*Hands* QUEEN *to throne beside him*; BLACK PRINCE *stands by* KING, *with* KNIGHTS *and* MESSENGER *on left*; PRINCESSES *and others on right*.

Simon (*bows low*). The Guild of Weavers wait upon your Grace to thank you for all benefits conferred. Our friends the dyers and the fullers come likewise.

Enter, left, ADAM, a dyer, and JOHN, a fuller, each with a banner. The fuller carries the Clothworkers' banner.

Adam. Hail, noble King! We are the dyers. See, our motley hands! Who would have fair scarlet cloth and green and blue if 'twere not for the dyers? We know our work; we know the plants that make the dyes. The grain-tree berries, woad and madder, broom, and many another furnish us.

John (bows low). And do not shame the fullers. We, who cleanse the cloth and beat it with our staves in earth.

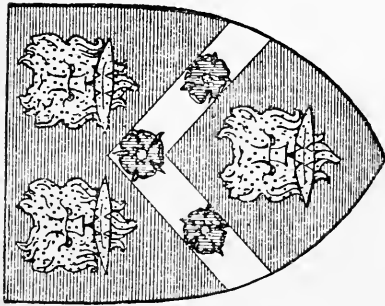
ADAM and JOHN stand right, by WEAVERS.

ALL, except KING and COURT, sing.

TUNE—"When the King enjoys his own again."

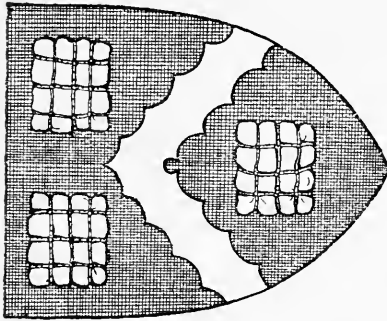
Hail, merry weavers, forty strong ;
Sing with the guild, the websters' song !
The fullers too their banner bring ;
The combers and the dyers sing ;
O ancient craft and noble misterie !
That lasteth to the day of doom ;
The weft well, I trow, the warp crosseth now
When the shuttle flies through the loom !

Let Norfolk worsted weaving show,
East country say and baize men know ;
To sing their praise I am not loth
The Lincoln green and Kendal cloth ;
In June, woad-waxen buddeth on the hill ;
In haytime blows the dyers' broom ;
Now fast as ye tread so flies on the thread,
And ye hear the whirl of the loom.



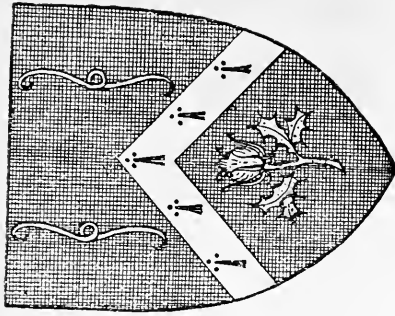
Arms of London Weavers.

Az. on a chevron argt. between 3 leopards' faces or, each having in the mouth a shuttle of the last, as many roses gu. seeded of the third, barbed vert.



Arms of London Dyers.

Sa. a chevron engr. argt. between 3 bags of the last, corded or.



Arms of London Cloth Workers.

Sa. a chevron ermine, between 2 habicks in chief argt. and a teasel in base or.

Hail, lusty brothers of St. Blaise !
 Proudly your combs and teasels raise ;
 Soon all the wool is turned to gold
 The which buys glories manifold ;
 O golden craft and mighty misterie !
 For weavers now the folk make room
 And cloth for the King well wrought we will bring,
 And we'll join in the song of the loom.

Queen. I am right glad that weaving hath thriven since the day my Flemings settled here.

Roger. Happy the towns they enter, men do say, for there wealth and prosperity increase.

Simon. Bring now the sacks of wool and lay them at the King's feet.

[SIMON and STEPHEN lay sacks before KING.]

King. Which hath brought us riches and the means to wage our war. Thanks, good citizens. And now, fair knights, I call you, to-day, as Arthur called his Knights of Table Round. Who are here present of our new founded order ?

Black Prince. I am !

Holland. And I, my lord.

King. Ye know the commandment which we gave for mantles and surcoats to be worn by members of our order.

Messenger. Aye, sire, 'tis written they shall wear blue, powdered o'er with broidered garters, lined with scarlet, and surcoats furred with miniver.

King. The gentle ladies shall attend our festival, else were joy lacking. Now let us to the feast ! Each knight will choose the lady who will watch and praise his prowess in the tournaments we hold.

Manny (to LADY). Then, may I wear some favour on my helm?

Lady (to MANNY; *gives him a veil*). Yea, verily, Sir Knight.

King. Good citizens, ye shall all see the jousts. We do decree that tournaments be held at Cheapside and at Smithfield, from this winter-time until May-day, with great rejoicing and good cheer. Ye'll prove yourselves, my knights, as gay and courtly now, as ye were valorous in the wars with France.

ALL *sing*.

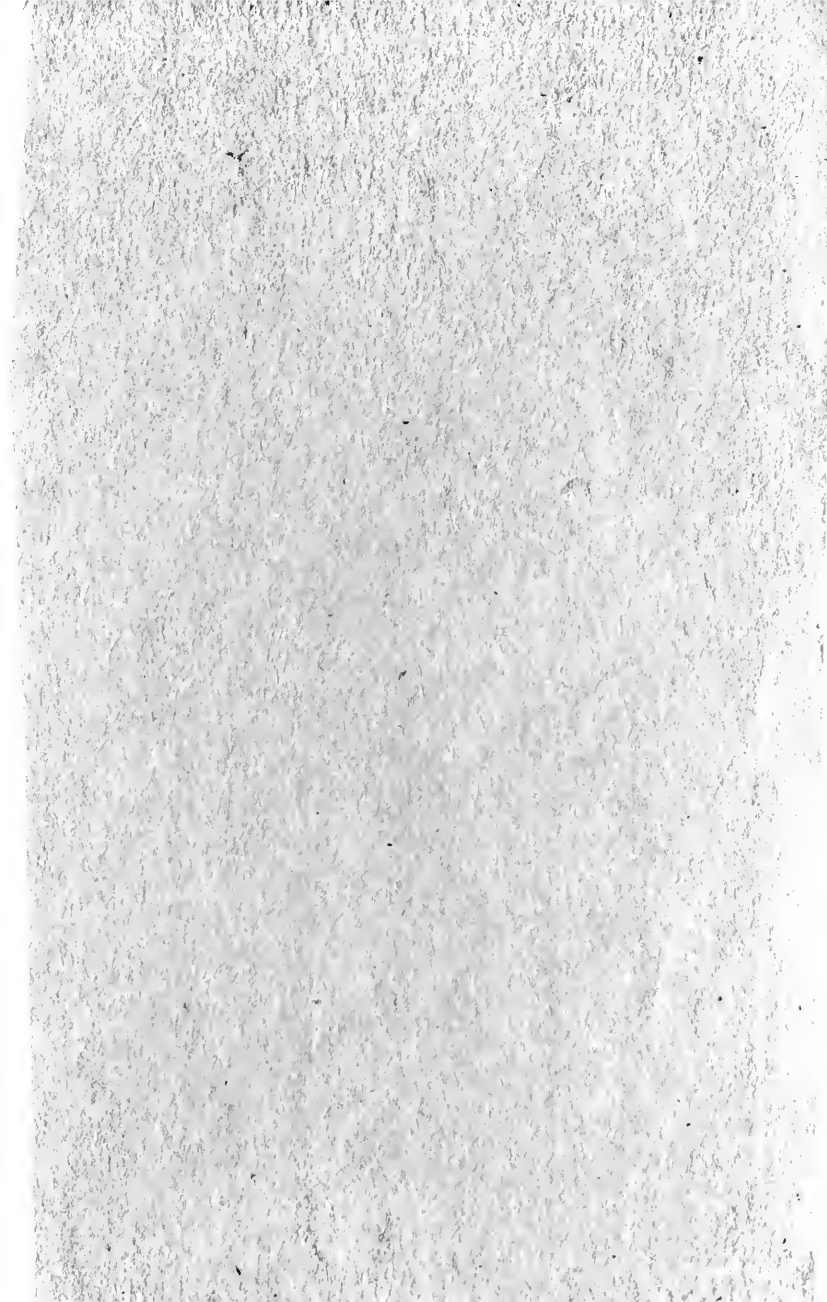
TUNE—" *You Gentlemen of England.*"

St. George for Merry England!
 Loud was our battle-cry;
 And to the winds of heaven
 The red cross streaming high;
 And evermore the names resound
 Of Calais and Crécy;
 Trumpet call, trumpet call,
 To England's chivalry!

"Dieu et mon Droit" through fair France
 Is lit in lines of flame,
 And Edward's golden leopards
 The royal lilies claim;
 And evermore the names resound
 Of Calais and Crécy;
 Trumpet call, trumpet call,
 To England's chivalry!

In the beleaguered cities,
Auberoche and Aiguillon ;
God and St. George for England
Held high our gonfalon ;
And evermore the names resound
 Of Calais and Crécy ;
Trumpet call, trumpet call,
To England's chivalry !

[*During last verse, KING and QUEEN lead procession round stage, followed by BLACK PRINCE, PRINCESSES, LADY, SIR T. HOLLAND, SIR W. MANNY, SIR J. CHANDOS, MESSENGER, SIMON and STEPHEN with Weavers' banner, ADAM with Dyers' banner, JOHN with Clothworkers' banner ; ROGER, PETER, KATHERINE, MARGERY, PETRONILLA, COOK ; all go out left.*



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