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THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

FROM THE

INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

THE REVOLUTION IN 1688.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq.

A NEW EDITION, with the Author's last Corrections and Improvements.

To which is prefixed,

A short ACCOUNT of his LIFE, written by Himself.

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1807.

CONTENTS

OF

THE EIGHTH VOLUME.

CHAP. LXVI.

Schemes of the cabal—Remonstrances of Sir William Temple—Campaign of 1674—A parliament—Passive obedience—A parliament—Campaign of 1675—Congress of Nimeguen—Campaign of 1676—Uncertain conduct of the King—A parliament—Campaign of 1677—Parliament's distrust of the King—Marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Lady Mary—Plan of peace—Negotiations—Campaign of 1678—Negotiations—Peace of Nimeguen—State of affairs in Scotland. Page 1.

CHAP. LXVII.

The popish plot—Oates's narrative and character—Coleman's letters—Godfrey's murder—General consternation—The parliament—Zeal of the parliament—Bedloe's narrative—Accusation of Danby—His impeachment—Dissolution of the long parliament—Its character—Trial of Coleman

Coleman—Of Ireland—New Elections—Duke of Monmouth—Duke of York retires to Brussels—New parliament—Danby's impeachment—Popish plot—New council—Limitations on a popish successor—Bill of exclusion—Habeas corpus bill—Prorogation and dissolution of the parliament—trial and execution of the five Jesuits—and of Langhorne—Wakeman acquitted—State of Affairs in Scotland—Battle of Bothwell-bridge. Page 62

CHAP. LXVIII.

State of Parties—State of the ministry—Mealtub plot—Whig and Tory—A new parliament—Violence of the commons—Exclusion bill—Arguments for and against the exclusion—Exclusion bill rejected—Trial of Stafford—His execution—Violence of the commons—Dissolution of the parliament—New parliament at Oxford—Fitzharris's case—Parliament dissolved—Victory of the Royalists. 118

CHAP. LXIX.

State of Affairs in Ireland—Shaftesbury acquitted—Argyle's trial—State of Affairs in Scotland—State of the ministry in England—New nomination of sheriffs—Quo warranto's—Great power of the crown—A conspiracy—Shaftesbury retires and dies—Rye-house plot—Conspiracy discovered—Execution of the conspirators—Trial of lord Russel—His execution—Trial of Algernon Sidney—His execution—State of the nation—State of foreign affairs—King's sickness and death—and character. 161

CONTENTS.

JAMES II.

CHAP. LXX.

King's first transactions—A parliament—Arguments for and against a revenue for life—Oates convicted of perjury—Monmouth's invasion—His defeat—and execution—Cruelties of Kirke—and of Jefferies—State of affairs in Scotland—Argyle's invasion—defeat and execution—A parliament—French persecutions—The dispensing power—State of Ireland—Breach betwixt the king and the church—Court of ecclesiastical commission—Sentence against the bishop of London—Suspension of the penal laws—State of Ireland—Embassy to Rome—Attempt upon Magdalen College—Imprisonment—trial, and acquittal of the bishops—Birth of the prince of Wales.

Page 215.

CHAP. LXXI.

Conduct of the prince of Orange—He forms a league against France—refuses to concur with the King—resolves to oppose the King—is applied to by the English—Coalition of parties—Prince's preparations—Offers of France to the King—rejected—Supposed league with France—General discontents—The King retracts his measures—Prince's declaration—The prince lands in England—General commotion—Desertion of the army—and of prince George—and of the princess Anne—King's consternation—and flight—General confusion—King seized at Feversham—Second escape—King's character—

character—Convention summoned—Settlement of Scotland—English convention meets—Views of the parties—Free conference between the houses—Commons prevail—Settlement of the crown—Manners and sciences.

Page 275.

THE

HISTORY

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

CHAP. LXVI.

Schemes of the Cabal—Remonstrances of Sir William Temple—Campaign of 1674*—A Parliament—Passive obedience—A Parliament—Campaign of* 1675 *—Congress of Nimeguen—Campaign of* 1676*—Uncertain conduct of the King—A Parliament—Campaign of* 1677*—Parliament's distrust of the King—Marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Lady Mary—Plan of peace—Negotiations—Campaign of* 1678*—Negotiations—Peace of Nimeguen—State of Affairs in Scotland.*

CHAP. LXVI.

1674.

Schemes of the Cabal.

IF we consider the projects of the famous Cabal, it will appear hard to determine, whether the end which those ministers pursued was more blameable and pernicious, or the means, by which they were to effect it, more impolitic and imprudent. Though they might talk only of recovering or fixing the king's authority; their intention could be no other than that of making him absolute: Since it was not possible to regain or maintain, in opposition to

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

the people, any of those powers of the crown abolished by late law or custom, without subduing the people, and rendering the royal prerogative entirely uncontrollable. Against such a scheme, they might foresee, that every part of the nation would declare themselves, not only the old parliamentary faction, which, though they kept not in a body, were still numerous; but even the greatest royalists, who were indeed attached to monarchy, but desired to see it limited and restrained by law. It had appeared, that the present parliament, though elected during the greatest prevalence of the royal party, was yet tenacious of popular privileges, and retained a considerable jealousy of the crown, even before they had received any just ground of suspicion. The guards, therefore, together with a small army, new levied, and undisciplined, and composed too of Englishmen, were almost the only domestic resources which the king could depend on in the prosecution of these dangerous counsels.

THE assistance of the French king was, no doubt, deemed, by the Cabal, a considerable support in the schemes which they were forming; but it is not easily conceived, that they could imagine themselves capable of directing and employing an associate of so domineering a character. They ought justly to have suspected that it would be the sole intention of Lewis, as it evidently was his interest, to raise incurable jealousies between the king and his people; and that he saw how much a steady uniform government in this island, whether free or absolute, would form invincible barriers to his ambition. Should his assistance be demanded; if he sent a small supply, it would serve only to enrage the people, and render the breach altogether irreparable; if he furnished a great force, sufficient to subdue the nation, there was little reason to trust his generosity, with regard to the use which he would make of this advantage.

IN

In all its other parts the plan of the Cabal, it must be confessed, appears equally absurd and incongruous. If the war with Holland were attended with great success, and involved the subjection of the republic; such an accession of force must fall to Lewis, not to Charles: And what hopes afterwards of resisting by the greatest unanimity so mighty a monarch! How dangerous, or rather how ruinous, to depend upon his assistance against domestic discontents! If the Dutch, by their own vigour, and the assistance of allies, were able to defend themselves, and could bring the war to an equality, the French arms would be so employed abroad, that no considerable reinforcement could thence be expected to second the king's enterprises in England. And might not the project of overawing or subduing the people be esteemed, of itself, sufficiently odious, without the aggravation of sacrificing that State, which they regarded as their best ally, and with which, on many accounts, they were desirous of maintaining the greatest concord and strictest confederacy? CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

Whatever views likewise might be entertained of promoting by these measures the catholic religion; they could only tend to render all the other schemes abortive, and make them fall with inevitable ruin upon the projectors. The catholic religion, indeed, where it is established, is better fitted than the protestant for supporting an absolute monarchy; but would any man have thought of it as the means of acquiring arbitrary authority in England, where it was more detested than even slavery itself?

It must be allowed, that the difficulties, and even inconsistencies, attending the schemes of the Cabal, are so numerous and obvious, that one feels at first an inclination to deny the reality of those schemes, and to suppose them entirely the chimeras of calumny and faction. But the utter impossibility of accounting, by any other hypothesis, for those strange measures embraced by the court, as well as for the numerous circumstances which accompanied

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

them, obliges us to acknowledge (though there remains no direct evidence of it[a]) that a formal plan was

[a] Since the publication of this History, the Author has had occasion to see the most direct and positive evidence of this conspiracy. From the urbanity and candour of the Principal of the Scotch College at Paris, he was admitted to peruse James the Second's Memoirs, kept there. They amount to several volumes of small folio, all writ with that prince's own hand, and comprehending the remarkable incidents of his life, from his early youth till near the time of his death. His account of the French alliances is as follows: The intention of the king and duke was chiefly to change the religion of England, which they deemed an easy undertaking, because of the great propensity, as they imagined, of the cavaliers and church party to popery: The treaty with Lewis was concluded at Versailles in the end of 1669, or beginning of 1670, by lord Arundel of Wardour, whom no historian mentions as having had any hand in these transactions. The purport of it was, that Lewis was to give Charles 200,000 pounds a year, in quarterly payments, in order to enable him to settle the catholic religion in England; and he was also to supply him with an army of 6000 men in case of any insurrection. When that work was finished, England was to join with France in making war upon Holland. In case of success, Lewis was to have the inland provinces, the prince of Orange Holland in sovereignty, and Charles, Sluice, the Brille, Walkeren, with the rest of the sea-ports as far as Mazeland Sluice. The king's project was first to effect the change of religion in England; but the duchess of Orleans, in the interview at Dover, persuaded him to begin with the Dutch war, contrary to the remonstrances of the duke of York, who insisted that Lewis, after serving his own purposes, would no longer trouble himself about England. The duke makes no mention of any design to render the king absolute; but that was, no doubt, implied in the other project, which was to be effected entirely by royal authority. The king was so zealous a papist, that he wept for joy when he saw the prospect of re-uniting his kingdom to the catholic church.

Sir John Dalrymple has since published some other curious particulars with regard to this treaty. We find, that it was concerted and signed with the privity alone of four popish counsellors of the king's, Arlington, Arundel, Clifford, and sir Richard Bealing. The secret was kept from Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. In order to engage them to take part in it, a very refined and a very mean artifice was fallen upon by the king. After the secret conclusion and signature of the treaty, the king pretended to these three ministers, that he wished to have a treaty and alliance with France for mutual support, and for a Dutch war; and when various pretended obstacles and difficulties were surmounted, a sham treaty was

was laid for changing the religion, and subverting the constitution of England, and that the king and the ministry were in reality conspirators against the people. What is most probable in human affairs, is not always true; and a very minute circumstance, overlooked in our speculations, serves often to explain events, which may seem the most surprising and unaccountable. Though the king possessed penetration and a sound judgment, his capacity was chiefly fitted for smaller matters,[b] and the ordinary occurrences of life; nor had he application enough to carry his view to distant consequences, or to digest and adjust any plan of political operations. As he scarcely ever thought twice on any one subject, every appearance of advantage was apt to seduce him; and when he found his way obstructed by unlooked-for difficulties, he readily turned aside into the first path, where he expected more to gratify the natural indolence of his disposition. To this versatility or pliancy of genius, he himself was inclined to trust; and he thought, that after trying an experiment of enlarging his authority, and altering the national religion, he could easily, if it failed, return

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

was concluded with their consent and approbation, containing every article of the former real treaty, except that of the king's change of religion. However, there was virtually involved even in this treaty, the assuming of absolute government in England: For the support of French troops, and a war with Holland, so contrary to the interests and inclinations of his people, could mean nothing else. One cannot sufficiently admire the absolute want of common sense, which appears throughout the whole of this criminal transaction. For if popery was so much the object of national horror, that if even the king's three ministers, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale, and such profligate ones too, either would not, or durst not receive it, what hopes could he entertain of forcing the nation into that communion? Considering the state of the kingdom, full of veteran and zealous soldiers, bred during the civil wars, it is probable that he had not kept the crown two months afer a declaration so wild and extravagant. This was probably the reason why the king of France and the French ministers always dissuaded him from taking off the mask, till the successes of the Dutch war should render that measure prudent and practicable.

[b] Duke of Buckingham's character of *K. Charles II.*

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

return into the ordinary channel of government. But the suspicions of the people, though they burst not forth at once, were by this attempt rendered altogether incurable; and the more they reflected on the circumstances attending it, the more resentment and jealousy were they apt to entertain. They observed, that the king never had any favourite: that he was never governed by his ministers, scarcely even by his mistresses, and that he himself was the chief spring of all public counsels. Whatever appearance, therefore, of a change might be assumed, they still suspected, that the same project was secretly in agitation; and they deemed no precaution too great to secure them against the pernicious consequences of such measures.

THE king, sensible of this jealousy, was inclined thenceforth not to trust his people, of whom he had even before entertained a great diffidence; and, though obliged to make a separate peace, he still kept up connections with the French monarch. He apologised for deserting his ally, by representing to him all the real undissembled difficulties under which he laboured; and Lewis, with the greatest complaisance and good humour, admitted the validity of his excuses. The duke likewise, conscious that his principles and conduct had rendered him still more obnoxious to the people, maintained on his own account a separate correspondence with the French court, and entered into particular connexions with Lewis, which these princes dignified with the name of friendship. The duke had only in view to secure his succession, and favour the catholics; and it must be acknowledged to his praise, that, though his schemes were, in some particulars, dangerous to the people, they gave the king no just ground of jealousy. A dutiful subject, and an affectionate brother, he knew no other rule of conduct than obedience; and the same unlimited submission which afterwards, when king, he exacted of his people, he was ever willing, before he ascended the throne, to pay to his sovereign.

As

As the king was at peace with all the world, and almost the only prince in Europe placed in that agreeable situation, he thought proper to offer his mediation to the contending powers, in order to compose their differences. France, willing to negotiate under so favourable a mediator, readily accepted of Charles's offer; but it was apprehended, that, for a like reason, the allies would be inclined to refuse it. In order to give a sanction to his new measures, the king invited Temple from his retreat, and appointed him ambassador to the States. That wise minister, reflecting on the unhappy issue of his former undertakings, and the fatal turn of counsels which had occasioned it, resolved, before he embarked anew, to acquaint himself, as far as possible, with the real intentions of the king, in those popular measures which he seemed again to have adopted. After blaming the dangerous schemes of the Cabal, which Charles was desirous to excuse, he told his majesty very plainly, that he would find it extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to introduce into England the same system of government and religion which was established in France: That the universal bent of the nation was against both; and it required ages to change the genius and sentiments of a people: That many, who were at bottom indifferent in matters of religion, would yet oppose all alterations on that head; because they considered that nothing but force of arms could subdue the reluctance of the people against popery; after which they knew there could be no security for civil liberty: That in France, every circumstance had long been adjusted to that system of government, and tended to its establishment and support: That the commonalty, being poor and dispirited, were of no account; the nobility, engaged by the prospect or possession of numerous offices, civil and military, were entirely attached to the court; the ecclesiastics, retained by like motives, added the sanction of religion

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

Remonstrances of sir W. Temple.

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

religion to the principles of civil policy: That in England a great part of the landed property belonged either to the yeomanry or middling gentry; the king had few offices to bestow; and could not himself even subsist, much less maintain an army, except by the voluntary supplies of his parliament: That if he had an army on foot, yet, if composed of Englishmen, they would never be prevailed on to promote ends which the people so much feared and hated: That the Roman catholics in England were not the hundredth part of the nation, and in Scotland not the two-hundredth; and it seemed against all common sense to hope, by one part, to govern ninety-nine, who were of contrary sentiments and dispositions: And that foreign troops, if few, would tend only to inflame hatred and discontent; and how to raise and bring them over at once, or to maintain many, it was very difficult to imagine. To these reasonings Temple added the authority of Gourville, a Frenchman, for whom he knew the king had entertained a great esteem, "A "king of England," said Gourville, "who will be "*the man of his people*, is the greatest king in "the world: But if he will be any thing more, "he is nothing at all." The king heard, at first, this discourse with some impatience; but being a dextrous dissembler, he seemed moved at last, and, laying his hand on Temple's, said with an appearing cordiality, "And I will be the man of my "people."

TEMPLE, when he went abroad, soon found, that the scheme of mediating a peace was likely to prove abortive. The allies, besides their jealousy of the king's mediation, expressed a great ardour for the continuance of war. Holland had stipulated with Spain never to come to an accommodation, till all things in Flanders were restored to the condition in which they had been left by the Pyrenean treaty. The emperor had high pretensions in Alsace; and

as

as the greater part of the empire joined in the alliance, it was hoped that France, so much overmatched in force, would soon be obliged to submit to the terms demanded of her. The Dutch, indeed, oppressed by heavy taxes, as well as checked in their commerce, were desirous of peace; and had few or no claims of their own to retard it: But they could not in gratitude, or even in good policy, abandon allies, to whose protection they had so lately been indebted for their safety. The prince of Orange likewise, who had great influence in their councils, was all on fire for military fame, and was well pleased to be at the head of armies, from which such mighty successes were expected. Under various pretences, he eluded during the whole campaign, the meeting with Temple; and after the troops were sent into winter quarters, he told that minister, in his first audience, that till greater impression were made on France, reasonable terms could not be hoped for; and it were therefore vain to negotiate. CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

THE success of the campaign had not answered expectation. The prince of Orange, with a superior army, was opposed in Flanders to the prince of Condé, and had hoped to penetrate into France by that quarter, where the frontier was then very feeble. After long endeavouring, though in vain, to bring Condé to a battle, he rashly exposed, at Seneffe, a wing of his army; and that active prince failed not at once to see and to seize the advantage. But this imprudence of the prince of Orange was amply compensated by his behaviour in that obstinate and bloody action which ensued. He rallied his dismayed troops; he led them to the charge; he pushed the veteran and martial troops of France; and he obliged the prince of Condé, notwithstanding his age and character, to exert greater efforts, and to risque his person more than in any action, where, even during the heat of youth, he had ever commanded. Campaign in 1674.

CHAP. LXVI. 1674.

commanded. After sun-set, the action was continued by the light of the moon; and it was darkness at last, not the weariness of the combatants, which put an end to the contest, and left the victory undecided. "The prince of Orange," said Condé, with candour and generosity, "has acted, in every "thing, like an old captain, except venturing his "life too like a young soldier." Oudenarde was afterwards invested by the prince of Orange; but he was obliged, by the Imperial and Spanish generals, to raise the siege on the approach of the enemy. He afterwards besieged and took Grave; and at the beginning of winter, the allied armies broke up, with great discontents and complaints on all sides.

THE allies were not more successful in other places. Lewis, in a few weeks, reconquered Franchecomté. In Alsace, Turenne displayed, against a much superior enemy, all that military skill, which had long rendered him the most renowned captain of his age and nation. By a sudden and forced march, he attacked and beat at Sintzheim the duke of Lorrain, and Caprara, general of the Imperialists. Seventy thousand Germans poured into Alsace, and took up their quarters in that province. Turenne, who had retired into Lorrain, returned unexpectedly upon them. He attacked and defeated a body of the enemy at Mulhausen. He chased from Colmar the elector of Brandenburgh, who commanded the German troops. He gained a new advantage at Turkheim. And having dislodged all the allies, he obliged them to repass the Rhine, full of shame for their multiplied defeats, and still more, of anger and complaints against each other.

IN England, all these events were considered by the people with great anxiety and concern; though the king and his ministers affected great indifference with regard to them. Considerable alterations were about this time made in the English ministry. Buckingham

Buckingham was dismissed, who had long, by his wit and entertaining humour, possessed the king's favour. Arlington, now chamberlain, and Danby the treasurer, possessed chiefly the king's confidence. Great hatred and jealousy took place between these ministers; and public affairs were somewhat disturbed by their quarrels. But Danby daily gained ground with his master: And Arlington declined in the same proportion. Danby was a frugal minister; and, by his application and industry, he brought the revenue into tolerable order. He endeavoured so to conduct himself as to give offence to no party; and the consequence was, that he was able entirely to please none. He was a declared enemy to the French alliance; but never possessed authority enough to overcome the prepossessions which the king and the duke retained towards it. It must be ascribed to the prevalence of that interest, aided by money remitted from Paris, that the parliament was assembled so late this year; lest they should attempt to engage the king in measures against France, during the ensuing campaign. They met not till the approach of summer.[a] CHAP. LXVI. 1674. 1675. April 13.

EVERY step, taken by the commons, discovered that ill-humour and jealousy, to which the late open measures of the king, and his present secret attachments, gave but too just foundation. They drew up a new bill against popery, and resolved to insert in it many severe clauses for the detection and prosecution of priests: They presented addresses a second time against Lauderdale; and when the king's answer was not satisfactory, they seemed still determined to persevere in their applications: An accusation was moved against Danby; but upon examining the several articles, it was not found to contain any A parliament.

[a] This year, on the 25th of March, died Henry Cromwel, second son of the protector, in the 47th year of his age. He had lived unmolested in a private station, ever since the king's restoration, which he rather favoured than opposed.

CHAP. LXVI. 1675.

any just reasons of a prosecution; and was therefore dropped: They applied to the king for recalling his troops from the French service; and as he only promised that they should not be recruited, they appeared to be much dissatisfied with the answer: A bill was brought in, making it treason to levy money without authority of parliament: Another, vacating the seats of such members as accepted of offices: Another, to secure the personal liberty of the subject, and to prevent sending any person prisoner beyond sea.

THAT the court party might not be idle during these attacks, a bill for a new test was introduced into the house of peers by the earl of Lindesey. All members of either house, and all who possessed any office, were by this bill required to swear, that it was not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the king; that they abhorred the traitorous position, of taking arms by his authority against his person, or against those who were commissioned by him; and that they will not at any time endeavour the alteration of the protestant religion, or of the established government either in church or state.

Passive obedience.

GREAT opposition was made to this bill; as might be expected from the present disposition of the nation. During seventeen days, the debates were carried on with much zeal; and all the reason and learning of both parties were displayed on the occasion. The question, indeed, with regard to resistance, was a point which entered into the controversies of the old parties, cavalier and roundhead; as it made an essential part of the present disputes between court and country. Few neuters were found in the nation: But among such as could maintain a calm indifference, there prevailed sentiments wide of those which were adopted by either party. Such persons thought, that all general, speculative declarations of the legislature, either for or against resistance, were equally impolitic, and could serve to no other purpose,

pose, than to signalize in their turn the triumph of one faction over another: That the simplicity retained in the ancient laws of England, as well as in the laws of every other country, ought still to be preserved, and was best calculated to prevent the extremes on either side: That the absolute exclusion of resistance, in all possible cases, was founded on *false* principles; its express admission might be attended with *dangerous* consequences; and there was no necessity for exposing the public to either inconvenience: That if a choice must necessarily be made in the case, the preference of utility to truth in public institutions was apparent; nor could the supposition of resistance beforehand, and in general terms, be safely admitted in any government: That even in mixt monarchies, where that supposition seemed most requisite, it was yet entirely superfluous; since no man, on the approach of extraordinary necessity, could be at a loss, though not directed by legal declarations, to find the proper remedy: That even those who might, at a distance, and by scholastic reasoning, exclude all resistance, would yet hearken to the voice of nature; when evident ruin, both to themselves and to the public, must attend a strict adherence to their pretended principles: That the question, as it ought thus to be entirely excluded from all determinations of the legislature, was, even among private reasoners, somewhat frivolous, and little better than a dispute of words: That the one party could not pretend that resistance ought ever to become a familiar practice; the other would surely have recourse to it in great extremities: And thus the difference could only turn on the degrees of danger or oppression, which would warrant this irregular remedy; a difference, which, in a general question, it was impossible, by any language, precisely to fix or determine.

CHAP. LXVI. 1675.

THERE

CHAP. LXVI. 1675.

THERE were many other absurdities in this test, particularly that of binding men by oath not to alter the government either in church or state; since all human institutions are liable to abuse, and require continual amendments, which are, in reality, so many alterations. It is not indeed possible to make a law which does not innovate, more or less, in the government. These difficulties produced such obstructions to the bill, that it was carried only by two voices in the house of peers. All the popish lords, headed by the earl of Bristol, voted against it. It was sent down to the house of commons, where it was likely to undergo a scrutiny still more severe.

BUT a quarrel, which ensued between the two houses, prevented the passing of every bill projected during the present session. One Dr. Shirley, being cast in a law-suit before chancery against sir John Fag, a member of the house of commons, preferred a petition of appeal to the house of peers. The lords received it, and summoned Fag to appear before them. He complained to the lower house, who espoused his cause. They not only maintained, that no member of their house could be summoned before the peers: They also asserted, that the upper house could receive no appeals from any court of equity; a pretension which extremely retrenched the jurisdiction of the peers, and which was contrary to the practice which had prevailed during this whole century. The commons send Shirley to prison; the lords assert their powers. Conferences are tried; but no accommodation ensues. Four lawyers are sent to the Tower by the commons, for transgressing the orders of the house, and pleading in this cause before the peers. The peers denominate this arbitrary commitment a breach of the great charter, and order the lieutenant of the Tower to release the prisoners: He declines obedience: They apply to the king, and desire him to punish the lieutenant

lieutenant for his contempt. The king summons both houses; exhorts them to unanimity; and informs them that the present quarrel had arisen from the contrivance of his and their enemies, who expected by that means to force a dissolution of the parliament. His advice has no effect: The commons continue as violent as ever; and the king, finding that no business could be finished, at last prorogued the parliament. CHAP. LXVI. 1675. 8th June.

When the parliament was again assembled there appeared not in any respect a change in the dispositions of either house. The king desired supplies, as well for the building of ships, as for taking off anticipations, which lay upon his revenue. He even confessed, that he had not been altogether so frugal as he might have been, and as he resolved to be for the future; though he asserted, that, to his great satisfaction, he had found his expences by no means so exorbitant as some had represented them. The commons took into consideration the subject of supply. They voted 300,000 pounds for the building of ships; but they appropriated the sum by very strict clauses. They passed a resolution not to grant any supply for taking off the anticipations of the revenue.[c] This vote was carried, in a full house, by a majority of four only: So nearly were the parties balanced. The quarrel was revived, to which Dr. Shirley's cause had given occasion. The proceedings of the commons discovered the same violence as during the last session. A motion was made in the house of peers, but rejected, for addressing the king to dissolve the present parliament. The king contented himself with proroguing them to a very long term. Whether these quarrels between the houses 13th Oct. A parliament. 22d. Nov.

[c] Several historians have affirmed, that the commons found, this session, upon inquiry, that the king's revenue was 1,600,000 pounds a year, and that the necessary expence was but 700,000 pounds; and have appealed to the Journals for a proof. But there is not the least appearance of this in the Journals; and the fact is impossible.

CHAP. LXVI. houses arose from contrivance or accident was not certainly known. Each party might, according to their different views, esteem themselves either gainers or losers by them. The court might desire to obstruct all attacks from the commons, by giving them other employment. The country party might desire the dissolution of a parliament, which, notwithstanding all disgusts, still contained too many royalists, ever to serve all the purposes of the malcontents.

1675.

SOON after the prorogation, there passed an incident, which in itself is trivial, but tends strongly to mark the genius of the English government, and of Charles's administration, during this period. The liberty of the constitution, and the variety as well as violence of the parties, had begotten a propensity for political conversation; and as the coffee-houses in particular were the scenes, where the conduct of the king and the ministry was canvassed with great freedom, a proclamation was issued to suppress these places of rendezvous. Such an act of power, during former reigns, would have been grounded entirely on the prerogative; and before the accession of the house of Stuart, no scruple would have been entertained with regard to that exercise of authority. But Charles. finding doubts to arise upon his proclamation, had recourse to the judges, who supplied him with a chicane, and that too a frivolous one, by which he might justify his proceedings. The law, which settled the excise, enacted, that licences for retailing liquors might be refused to such as could not find security for payment of the duties. But coffee was not a liquor subjected to excise; and even this power of refusing licences was very limited, and could not reasonably be extended beyond the intention of the act. The king, therefore, observing the people to be much dissatisfied, yielded to a petition of the coffee-men, who promised for the future to restrain all seditious discourse in their houses; and the proclamation was recalled.

CHAP. LXVI.

1675.

Campaign of 1675.

This campaign proved more fortunate to the confederates than any other during the whole war. The French took the field in Flanders with a numerous army; and Lewis himself served as a volunteer under the prince of Condé. But, notwithstanding his great preparations, he could gain no advantages but the taking of Huy and Limbourg, places of small consequence. The prince of Orange, with a considerable army, opposed him in all his motions; and neither side was willing, without a visible advantage, to hazard a general action, which might be attended either with the entire loss of Flanders on the one hand, or the invasion of France on the other. Lewis, tired of so unactive a campaign, returned to Versailles; and the whole summer passed in the Low Countries without any memorable event.

TURENNE commanded on the Upper Rhine, in opposition to his great rival Montecuculi, general of the Imperialists. The object of the latter was to pass the Rhine, to penetrate into Alsace, Lorraine, or Burgundy, and to fix his quarters in these provinces: The aim of the former was to guard the French frontiers, and to disappoint all the schemes of his enemy. The most consummate skill was displayed on both sides; and if any superiority appeared in Turenne's conduct, it was chiefly ascribed to his greater vigour of body, by which he was enabled to inspect all the posts in person, and could on the spot take the justest measures for the execution of his designs. By posting himself on the German side of the Rhine, he not only kept Montecuculi from passing that river: He had also laid his plan in so masterly a manner, that, in a few days, he must have obliged the Germans to decamp, and have gained a considerable advantage over them; when a period was put to his life, by a random shot, which struck him on the breast as he was taking a view of the enemy. The consternation of his army was inexpressible. The French troops, who, a moment before,

CHAP. LXVI. 1675.

before, were assured of victory, now considered themselves as entirely vanquished; and the Germans, who would have been glad to compound for a safe retreat, expected no less than the total destruction of their enemy. But de Lorges, nephew to Turenne, succeeded him in the command, and possessed a great share of the genius and capacity of his predecessor. By his skilful operations, the French were enabled to repass the Rhine, without considerable loss; and this retreat was deemed equally glorious with the greatest victory. The valour of the English troops, who were placed in the rear, greatly contributed to save the French army. They had been seized with the same passion as the native troops of France, for their brave general, and fought with ardour to revenge his death on the Germans. The duke of Marlborough, then captain Churchill, here learned the rudiments of that art, which he afterwards practised with such fatal success against France.

THE prince of Condé left the army in Flanders under the command of Luxembourg; and carrying with him a considerable reinforcement, succeeded to Turenne's command. He defended Alsace from the Germans, who had passed the Rhine, and invaded that province. He obliged them first to raise the siege of Hagenau, then that of Saberne. He eluded all their attempts to bring him to a battle; and, having dexterously prevented them from establishing themselves in Alsace, he forced them, notwithstanding their superiority of numbers, to repass the Rhine, and to take up winter-quarters in their own country.

AFTER the death of Turenne, a detachment of the German army was sent to the siege of Treves: An enterprise, in which the Imperialists, the Spaniards, the Palatine, the duke of Lorraine, and many other princes, passionately concurred. The project was well concerted, and executed with vigour.

Mareschal Crequi, on the other hand, collected an army, and advanced with a view of forcing the Germans to raise the siege. They left a detachment to guard their lines, and, under the command of the dukes of Zell and Osnaburgh, marched in quest of the enemy. At Consarbric, they fell unexpectedly, and with superior numbers, on Crequi, and put him to rout. He escaped with four attendants only; and throwing himself into Treves, resolved by a vigorous defence, to make atonement for his former error or misfortune. The garrison was brave, but not abandoned to that total despair by which their governor was actuated. They mutinied against his obstinacy; capitulated for themselves; and, because he refused to sign the capitulation, they delivered him a prisoner into the hands of the enemy. CHAP. LXVI. 1675.

It is remarkable that this defeat, given to Crequi, is almost the only one which the French received at land, from Rocroi to Blenheim, during the course of above sixty years; and these too full of bloody wars against potent and martial enemies: Their victories almost equal the number of years during that period. Such was the vigour and good conduct of that monarchy! And such too were the resources and refined policy of the other European nations, by which they were enabled to repair their losses, and still to confine that mighty power nearly within its ancient limits! A fifth part of these victories would have sufficed, in another period, to have given to France the empire of Europe.

The Swedes had been engaged, by the payment of large subsidies, to take part with Lewis, and invade the territories of the elector of Brandenburg in Pomerania. That elector, joined by some Imperialists from Silesia, fell upon them with bravery and success. He soon obliged them to evacuate his part of that country, and he pursued them into their own. He had an interview with the king of

CHAP. LXVI. 1675. Denmark, who had now joined the confederates, and resolved to declare war against Sweden. These princes concerted measures for pushing the victory.

To all these misfortunes against foreign enemies were added some domestic insurrections of the common people in Guienne and Britany. Though soon suppressed, they divided the force and attention of Lewis. The only advantage, gained by the French, was at sea. Messina in Sicily had revolted; and a fleet under the duke de Vivonne was dispatched to support the rebels. The Dutch had sent a squadron to assist the Spaniards. A battle ensued, where de Ruyter was killed. This event alone was thought equivalent to a victory.

The French who, twelve years before, had scarcely a ship of war in any of their harbours, had raised themselves, by means of perseverance and policy, to be, in their present force, though not in their resources, the first maritime power in Europe. The Dutch, while in alliance with them against England, had supplied them with several vessels, and had taught them the rudiments of the difficult art of shipbuilding. The English next, when in alliance with them against Holland, instructed them in the method of fighting their ships, and of preserving order in naval engagements. Lewis availed himself of every opportunity to aggrandize his people, while Charles, sunk in indolence and pleasure, neglected all the noble arts of government; or if at any time he roused himself from his lethargy, that industry, by reason of the unhappy projects which he embraced, was often more pernicious to the public than his inactivity itself. He was as anxious to promote the naval power of France, as if the safety of his crown had depended on it; and many of the plans executed in that kingdom, were first, it is said,[d] digested and corrected by him.

The

[d] Welwood, Burnet, Coke.

CHAP. LXVI. 1676.

THE successes of the allies had been considerable the last campaign; but the Spaniards and Imperialists well knew that France was not yet sufficiently broken, nor willing to submit to the terms which they resolved to impose upon her. Though they could not refuse the king's mediation, and Nimeguen, after many difficulties, was at last fixed on as the place of congress; yet, under one pretence or other, they still delayed sending their ambassadors, and no progress was made in the negotiation. Lord Berkeley, sir William Temple, and sir Lionel Jenkins, were the English ministers at Nimeguen. The Dutch, who were impatient for peace, soon appeared: Lewis, who hoped to divide the allies, and who knew that he himself could neither be seduced nor forced into a disadvantageous peace, sent ambassadors: The Swedes, who hoped to recover by treaty what they had lost by arms, were also forward to negotiate. But as these powers could not proceed of themselves to settle terms, the congress, hitherto, served merely as an amusement to the public.

Congress of Nimeguen.

IT was by the events of the campaign, not the conferences among the negotiators, that the articles of peace were to be determined. The Spanish towns, ill fortified and worse defended, made but a feeble resistance to Lewis; who, by laying up magazines during the winter, was able to take the field early in the spring, before the forage could be found in the open country. In the month of April he laid siege to Condé, and took it by storm in four days. Having sent the duke of Orleans to besiege Bouchaine, a small but important fortress, he posted himself so advantageously with his main army, as to hinder the confederates from relieving it, or fighting without disadvantage. The prince of Orange, in spite of the difficulties of the season, and the want of provisions, came in sight of the French army; but his industry served to no other purpose than to render

Campaign of 1676.

CHAP. LXVI.

render him spectator of the surrender of Bouchaine. Both armies stood in awe of each other, and were
1676. unwilling to hazard an action, which might be attended with the most important consequences. Lewis, though he wanted not personal courage, was little enterprising in the field; and being resolved this campaign to rest contented with the advantages which he had so early obtained, he thought proper to intrust his army to mareschal Schomberg, and retired himself to Versailles. After his departure, the prince of Orange laid siege to Maestricht; but meeting with an obstinate resistance, he was obliged, on the approach of Schomberg, who in the mean time had taken Aire, to raise the siege. He was incapable of yielding to adversity, or bending under misfortunes: But he began to foresee, that, by the negligence and errors of his allies, the war in Flanders must necessarily have a very unfortunate issue.

On the Upper Rhine, Philipsbourg was taken by the Imperialists. In Pomerania, the Swedes were so unsuccessful against the Danes and Brandenburghers, that they seemed to be losing apace all those possessions, which, with so much valour and good fortune, they had acquired in Germany.

About the beginning of winter, the congress of Nimeguen was pretty full, and the plenipotentiaries of the emperor and Spain, two powers strictly conjoined by blood and alliance, at last appeared. The Dutch had threatened, if they absented themselves any longer, to proceed to a separate treaty with France. In the conferences and negotiations, the disposition of the parties became every day more apparent.

1677. The Hollanders, loaded with debts and harassed with taxes, were desirous of putting an end to a war, in which, besides the disadvantages attending all leagues, the weakness of the Spaniards, the

he divisions and delays of the Germans, prognos- CHAP. LXVI. 1677.
ticated nothing but disgrace and misfortune. Their commerce languished; and, what gave them still greater anxiety, the commerce of England, by reason of her neutrality, flourished extremely; and they were apprehensive, lest advantages, once lost, would never thoroughly be regained. They had themselves no farther motive for continuing the war, than to secure a good frontier to Flanders; but gratitude to their allies still engaged them to try whether another campaign might procure a peace, which would give general satisfaction. The prince of Orange, urged by motives of honour, of ambition, and of animosity against France, endeavoured to keep them steady to this resolution.

THE Spaniards, not to mention the other incurable weaknesses into which their monarchy was fallen, were distracted with domestic dissensions between the parties of the queen regent and don John, natural brother to their young sovereign. Though unable of themselves to defend Flanders, they were resolute not to conclude a peace, which would leave it exposed to every assault or inroad; and while they made the most magnificent promises to the States, their real trust was in the protection of England. They saw that, if that small but important territory were once subdued by France, the Hollanders, exposed to so terrible a power, would fall into dependance, and would endeavour, by submissions, to ward off that destruction to which a war, in the heart of their state, must necessarily expose them. They believed that Lewis, sensible how much greater advantages he might reap from the alliance than from the subjection of the republic, which must scatter its people and depress its commerce, would be satisfied with very moderate conditions, and would turn his enterprises against his other neighbours. They thought it impossible but the people and parliament of England, foreseeing these obvious

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

obvious consequences, must at last force the king to take part in the affairs of the continent, in which their interests were so deeply concerned. And they trusted, that even the king himself, on the approach of so great a danger, must open his eyes, and sacrifice his prejudices in favour of France, to the safety of his own dominions.

Uncertain conduct of the king.

But Charles here found himself entangled in such opposite motives and engagements, as he had not resolution enough to break, or patience to unravel. On the one hand, he always regarded his alliance with France as a sure resource in case of any commotions among his own subjects, and whatever schemes he might still retain for enlarging his authority, or altering the established religion, it was from that quarter alone he could expect assistance. He had actually in secret sold his neutrality to France, and he received remittances of a million of livres a year, which was afterwards increased to two millions; a considerable supply in the present embarrassed state of his revenue. And he dreaded lest the parliament should treat him as they had formerly done his father; and after they had engaged him in a war on the continent, should take advantage of his necessities, and make him purchase supplies by sacrificing his prerogative and abandoning his ministers.

On the other hand, the cries of his people and parliament, seconded by Danby, Arlington, and most of his ministers, incited him to take part with the allies, and to correct the unequal balance of power in Europe. He might apprehend danger from opposing such earnest desires: He might hope for large supplies if he concurred with them: And however inglorious and indolent his disposition, the renown of acting as arbiter of Europe would probably at intervals rouse him from his lethargy, and move him to support the character with which he stood invested.

It

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

It is worthy of observation, that, during this period, the king was, by every one, abroad and at home, by France and by the allies, allowed to be the undisputed arbiter of Europe; and no terms of peace, which he would have prescribed, could have been refused by either party. Though France afterwards found means to resist the same alliance, joined with England; yet was she then obliged to make such violent efforts as quite exhausted her; and it was the utmost necessity which pushed her to find resources, far surpassing her own expectations. Charles was sensible, that, so long as the war continued abroad, he should never enjoy ease at home, from the impatience and importunity of his subjects; yet could he not resolve to impose a peace by openly joining himself with either party. Terms advantageous to the allies must lose him the friendship of France: The contrary would enrage his parliament. Between these views, he perpetually fluctuated; and from his conduct, it is observable, that a careless, remiss disposition, agitated by opposite motives, is capable of as great inconsistencies as are incident even to the greatest imbecility and folly.

15th Feb. A parliament.

The parliament was assembled; and the king made them a plausible speech, in which he warned them against all differences among themselves; expressed a resolution to do his part for bringing their consultations to a happy issue; and offered his consent to any laws for the farther security of their religion, liberty, and property. He then told them of the decayed condition of the navy; and asked money for repairing it: He informed them, that part of his revenue, the additional excise, was soon to expire: And he added these words, "You may at any time "see the yearly established expence of the govern-"ment, by which it will appear, that, the con-"stant and unavoidable charge being paid, there "will remain no overplus towards answering those "contingencies, which may happen in all king-

"doms,

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

"doms, and which have been a considerable bur-
"then on me this last year."

BEFORE the parliament entered upon business, they were stopped by a doubt concerning the legality of their meeting. It had been enacted by an old law of Edward III., "That parliaments should "be held once every year, or oftener, if need be." The last prorogation had been longer than a year; and being supposed on that account illegal, it was pretended to be equivalent to a dissolution. The consequence seems by no means just; and besides, a later act, that which repealed the triennial law, had determined, that it was necessary to hold parliaments only once in three years. Such weight, however, was put on this cavil, that Buckingham, Shaftesbury, Salisbury, and Wharton, insisted strenuously in the house of peers on the invalidity of the parliament, and the nullity of all its future acts. For such dangerous positions, they were sent to the Tower, there to remain during the pleasure of his majesty and the house. Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton made submissions, and were soon after released. But Shaftesbury, more obstinate in his temper, and desirous of distinguishing himself by his adherence to liberty, sought the remedy of law; and being rejected by the judges, he was, at last, after a twelvemonth's imprisonment, obliged to make the same submissions; upon which he was also released.

THE commons at first seemed to proceed with temper. They granted the sum of 586,000 pounds, for building thirty ships; though they strictly appropriated the money to that service. Estimates were given in of the expence; but it was afterwards found that they fell short near 100.000 pounds. They also voted, agreeably to the king's request, the continuance of the additional excise for three years. This excise had been granted for nine years in

in 1668. Every thing seemed to promise a peaceable and an easy session. CHAP. LXVI.

1677.

But the parliament was roused from this tranquillity by the news received from abroad. The French king had taken the field in the middle of February, and laid siege to Valenciennes, which he carried in a few days by storm. He next invested both Cambray and St. Omers. The prince of Orange, alarmed with his progress, hastily assembled an army, and marched to the relief of St. Omers. He was encountered by the French under the duke of Orleans and mareschal Luxembourg. The prince possessed great talents for war; courage, activity, vigilance, patience; but still he was inferior in genius to those consummate generals opposed to him by Lewis; and though he always found means to repair his losses, and to make head in a little time against the victors, he was, during his whole life, unsuccessful. By a masterly movement of Luxembourg, he was here defeated, and obliged to retreat to Ypres. Cambray and St. Omers were soon after surrendered to Lewis. Campaign of 1677.

This success, derived from such great power and such wise conduct, infused a just terror into the English parliament. They addressed the king, representing the danger to which the kingdom was exposed from the greatness of France, and praying that his majesty, by such alliances as he should think fit, would both secure his own dominions and the Spanish Netherlands, and thereby quiet the fears of his people. The king, desirous of eluding this application, which he considered as a kind of attack on his measures, replied in general terms, that he would use all means for the preservation of Flanders, consistent with the peace and safety of his kingdoms. This answer was an evasion, or rather a denial. The commons, therefore, thought proper to be more explicit. They entreated him not to defer the entering into such alliances as might attain

that

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

that great end: And in case war with the French king should be the result of his measures, they promised to grant him all the aids and supplies, which would enable him to support the honour and interest of the nation. The king was also more explicit in his reply. He told them, that the only way to prevent danger, was to put him in a condition to make preparations for their security. This message was understood to be a demand of money. The parliament accordingly empowered the king to borrow on the additional excise 200,000 pounds at seven per cent.: A very small sum indeed; but which they deemed sufficient, with the ordinary revenue, to equip a good squadron, and thereby put the nation in security, till farther resolutions should be taken.

But this concession fell far short of the king's expectations. He therefore informed them, that, unless they granted him the sum of 600,000 pounds, upon new funds, it would not be possible for him, without exposing the nation to manifest danger, *to speak or act those things*, which would answer the end of their several addresses. The house took this message into consideration: But before they came to any resolution, the king sent for them to Whitehall, where he told them, upon the word of a king, that they should not repent any trust which they would repose in him for the safety of his kingdom; that he would not for any consideration break credit with them, or employ their money to other uses than those for which they intended it; but that he would not hazard, either his own safety or theirs, by taking any vigorous measures, or forming new alliances, till he were in a better condition both to defend his subjects and offend his enemies. This speech brought affairs to a short issue. The king required them to trust him with a large sum: He pawned his royal word for their security: They must either run the risque of loosing their money, or fail of those alliances which they had projected, and

at

at the same time declare to all the world the highest distrust of their sovereign. CHAP. XLVI.

BUT there were many reasons which determined the house of commons to put no trust in the king. They considered, that the pretence of danger was obviously groundless, while the French were opposed by such powerful alliances on the continent, while the king was master of a good fleet at sea, and while all his subjects were so heartily united in opposition to foreign enemies. That the only justifiable reason, therefore, of Charles's backwardness, was not the apprehension of danger from abroad, but a diffidence, which he might perhaps have entertained of his parliament; lest, after engaging him in foreign alliances for carrying on war, they should take advantage of his necessities, and extort from him concessions dangerous to his royal dignity. That this parliament, by their past conduct, had given no foundation for such suspicions, and were so far from pursuing any sinister ends, that they had granted supplies for the first Dutch war; for maintaining the triple league though concluded without their advice; even for carrying on the second Dutch war, which was entered into contrary to their opinion, and contrary to the manifest interests of the nation. That, on the other hand, the king had by former measures, excited very reasonable jealousies in his people, and did with a bad grace require at present their trust and confidence. That he had not scrupled to demand supplies for maintaining the triple league, at the very moment he was concerting measures for breaking it, and had accordingly employed to that purpose the supplies which he had obtained by those delusive pretences. That his union with France, during the war against Holland, must have been founded on projects the most dangerous to his people; and as the same union was still secretly maintained, it might justly be

1677. Parliament's distrust of the king.

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

be feared that the same projects were not yet entirely abandoned. That he could not seriously intend to prosecute vigorous measures against France; since he had so long remained entirely unconcerned during such obvious dangers; and, till prompted by his parliament, whose proper business it was, not to take the lead in those parts of administration, had suspended all his activity. That if he really meant to enter into a cordial union with his people, he would have taken the first step, and have endeavoured, by putting trust in them, to restore that confidence, which he himself, by his rash conduct, had first violated. That it was in vain to ask so small a sum as 600,000 pounds, in order to secure him against the future attempts of the parliament; since that sum must soon be exhausted by a war with France, and he must again fall into that dependance, which was become in some degree, essential to the constitution. That if he would form the necessary alliances, that sum, or a greater, would instantly be voted; nor could there be any reason to dread, that the parliament would immediately desert measures, in which they were engaged by their honour, their inclination, and the public interest. That the real ground, therefore, of the king's refusal, was neither apprehension of danger from foreign enemies, nor jealousy of parliamentary encroachments; but a desire of obtaining the money, which he intended, notwithstanding his royal word, to employ to other purposes. And that, by using such dishonourable means to so ignoble an end, he rendered himself still more unworthy the confidence of his people.

THE house of commons was now regularly divided into two parties, the court and the country. Some were inlisted in the court-party by offices, nay, a few by bribes secretly given them; a practice first begun by Clifford, a dangerous minister: But great numbers

numbers were attached merely by inclination; so far as they esteemed the measures of the court agreeable to the interests of the nation. Private views and faction had likewise drawn several into the country party: But there were also many of that party, who had no other object than the public good. These disinterested members on both sides fluctuated between the factions; and gave the superiority sometimes to the court, sometimes to the opposition.[e] In the present emergence, a general distrust of the king prevailed; and the parliament resolved not to hazard their money, in expectation of alliances, which, they believed, were never intended to be formed. Instead of granting the supply, they voted an address, wherein they "besought his majesty to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with the States General of the "United Provinces, against the growth and power "of the French king, and for the preservation of "the Spanish Netherlands; and to make such other "alliances with the confederates as should appear fit "and useful to that end." They supported their advice with reasons; and promised speedy and effectual supplies, for preserving his majesty's honour and ensuring the safety of the public. The king pretended the highest anger at this address, which he represented as a dangerous encroachment upon his prerogative. He reproved the commons in severe terms; and ordered them immediately to be adjourned.

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

It is certain, that this was the critical moment when the king both might with ease have preserved the balance of power in Europe, which it has since cost this island a great expence of blood and treasure to restore, and might by perseverance have at last regained, in some tolerable measure, after all past errors, 8th May

[e] Temple's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 458.

CHAP. XVII. 1677. errors, the confidence of his people. This opportunity being neglected, the wound became incurable; and notwithstanding *his* momentary appearances of vigour against France and popery, and *their* momentary inclinations to rely on his faith; *he* was still believed to be at bottom engaged in the same interest, and *they* soon relapsed into distrust and jealousy. The secret memoirs of this reign, which have since been published,[f] prove beyond a doubt that the king had at this time concerted measures with France, and had no intention to enter into a war in favour of the allies. He had entertained no view, therefore, even when he pawned his ROYAL WORD to his people, than to procure a grant of money: and he trusted, that while he eluded their expectations, he could not afterwards want pretences for palliating his conduct.

NEGOTIATIONS meanwhile were carried on between France and Holland, and an eventual treaty was concluded; that is, all their differences were adjusted, provided they could afterwards satisfy their allies on both sides. This work, though in appearance difficult, seemed to be extremely forwarded, by farther bad successes on the part of the confederates, and by the great impatience of the Hollanders; when a new event happened, which promised a more prosperous issue to the quarrel with France, and revived the hopes of all the English who understood the interests of their country.

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[f] Such as the letters, which passed betwixt Danby and Montague, the king's ambassador at Paris; Temple's Memoirs, and his Letters. In these last, we see that the king never made any proposals of terms but what were advantageous to France, and the prince of Orange believed them to have always been concerted with the French ambassador. Vol. i. p. 439.

In sir John Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 103, it appears that the king had signed himself, without the participation of his ministers, a secret treaty with France, and had obtained a pension on the promise of his neutrality: A fact, which renders his *royal word*, solemnly given to his subjects, one of the most dishonourable and most scandalous acts that ever proceeded from a throne.

CHAP. LXV. 1677.

THE king saw, with regret, the violent discontents which prevailed in the nation, and which seemed every day to augment upon him. Desirous by his natural temper to be easy himself, and to make every body else easy, he sought expedients to appease those murmurs, which, as they were very disagreeable for the present, might in their consequences prove extremely dangerous. He knew that, during the late war with Holland, the malcontents at home had made applications to the prince of Orange; and if he continued still to neglect the prince's interests, and to thwart the inclinations of his own people, he apprehended lest their common complaints should cement a lasting union between them. He saw that the religion of the duke inspired the nation with dismal apprehensions; and though he had obliged his brother to allow the young princesses to be educated in the protestant faith, something farther, he thought, was necessary, in order to satisfy the nation. He entertained, therefore, proposals for marrying the prince of Orange to the lady Mary, the elder princess, and heir apparent to the crown, (for the duke had no male issue) and he hoped, by so tempting an offer, to engage him entirely in his interests. A peace he purposed to make; such as would satisfy France, and still preserve his connexions with that crown: And he intended to sanctify it by the approbation of the prince, whom he found to be extremely revered in England, and respected throughout Europe. All the reasons for this alliance were seconded by the solicitations of Danby, and also of Temple, who was at that time in England: And Charles at last granted permission to the prince, when the campaign should be over, to pay him a visit.

THE king very graciously received his nephew at Newmarket. He would have entered immediately upon business; but the prince desired first to be acquainted with the lady Mary: And he declared

10th Oct.

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

that, contrary to the usual sentiments of persons of his rank, he placed a great part of happiness in domestic satisfaction, and would not, upon any consideration of interests or politics, match himself with a person disagreeable to him. He was introduced to the princess, whom he found in the bloom of youth, and extremely amiable both in her person and her behaviour. The king now thought that he had a double tie upon him, and might safely expect his compliance with every proposal: He was surprised to find the prince decline all discourse of business, and refuse to concert any terms for the general peace, till his marriage should be finished. He foresaw, he said, from the situation of affairs, that his allies were likely to have hard terms; and he never would expose himself to the reproach of having sacrificed their interests to promote his own purposes. Charles still believed, notwithstanding the cold, severe manner of the prince, that he would abate of this rigid punctilio of honour; and he protracted the time, hoping, by his own insinuation and address, as well as by the allurements of love and ambition, to win him to compliance. One day, Temple found the prince in very bad humour, repenting that he had ever come to England, and resolute in a few days to leave it: But before he went, the king, he said, must choose the terms on which they should hereafter live together: He was sure it must be like the greatest friends or the greatest enemies: And he desired Temple to inform his master next morning of these intentions. Charles was struck with this menace, and foresaw how the prince's departure would be interpreted by the people. He resolved, therefore, immediately to yield with a good grace; and having paid a compliment to his nephew's honesty, he told Temple, that the marriage was concluded, and desired him to inform the duke of it, as of an affair already resolved on. The duke seemed surprised; but yielded a prompt

prompt obedience: Which, he said, was his constant maxim to whatever he found to be the king's pleasure. No measure during this reign, gave such general satisfaction. All parties strove who should most applaud it. And even Arlington, who had been kept out of the secret, told the prince, "That "some things, good in themselves, were spoiled by "the manner of doing them. as some things bad "were mended by it; but he would confess that "this was a thing so good in itself, that the manner "of doing it could not spoil it." CHAP. LXVI. 1677. 23d Oct. Marriage of the prince of Orange with the lady Mary.

THIS marriage was a great surprise to Lewis, who, accustomed to govern every thing in the English court, now found so important a step taken, not only without his consent, but without his knowledge or participation. A conjunction of England with the allies, and a vigorous war in opposition to French ambition, were the consequences immediately expected both abroad and at home: But to check these sanguine hopes, the king, a few days after the marriage, prolonged the adjournment of the parliament from the third of December to the fourth of April. This term was too late for granting supplies or making preparations for war; and could be chosen by the king for no other reason, than as an atonement to France for his consent to the marriage. It appears also, that Charles secretly received from Lewis the sum of two millions of livres on account of this important service.[a]

THE king, however, entered into consultations with the prince, together with Danby and Temple, concerning the terms which it would be proper to require of France. After some debate, it was agreed that France should restore Lorrain to the duke; with Tournay, Valenciennes, Condé, Aeth, Charleroi, Courtray, Oudenarde, and Binche, to Spain, in order to form a good frontier for the Low Countries. The prince insisted that Franchecomté should Plan of peace.

[a] Sir John Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 112.

CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

should likewise be restored, and Charles thought that, because he had patrimonial estates of great value in that province, and deemed his property more secure in the hands of Spain, he was engaged by such views to be obstinate in that point: But the prince declared, that to procure but one good town to the Spaniards in Flanders, he would willingly relinquish all those possessions. As the king still insisted on the impossibility of wresting Franchecomté from Lewis, the prince was obliged to acquiesce.

NOTWITHSTANDING this concession to France, the projected peace was favourable to the allies; and it was a sufficient indication of vigour in the king, that he had given his assent to it. He farther agreed to send over a minister instantly to Paris, in order to propose these terms. This minister was to enter into no treaty. He was to allow but two days for the acceptance or refusal of the terms: Upon the expiration of these, he was presently to return: And in case of refusal, the king promised to enter immediately into the confederacy. To carry so imperious a message, and so little expected from the English court, Temple was the person pitched on, whose declared aversion to the French interest was not likely to make him fail of vigour and promptitude in the execution of his commission.

BUT Charles next day felt a relenting in this assumed vigour. Instead of Temple he dispatched the earl of Feversham, a creature of the duke's, and a Frenchman by birth: And he said, that the message being harsh in itself, it was needless to aggravate it by a disagreeable messenger. The prince left London; and the king, at his departure, assured him that he never would abate in the least point of the scheme concerted, and would enter into war with Lewis, if he rejected it.

Negotiations.

LEWIS received the message with seeming gentleness and complacency. He told Feversham, that the

the King of England well knew that he might always be master of the peace; but some of the towns in Flanders it seemed very hard to demand, especially Tournay, upon whose fortification such immense sums had been expended: He would therefore take some short time to consider of an answer. Feversham said, that he was limited to two days' stay: But when that time was elapsed, he was prevailed on to remain some few days longer; and he came away at last without any positive answer. Lewis said that he hoped his brother would not break with him for one or two towns: And with regard to them too, he would send orders to his ambassador at London to treat with the king himself. Charles was softened by the softness of France; and the blow was thus artfully eluded. The French ambassador, Barillon, owned at last, that he had orders to yield all except Tournay, and even to treat about some equivalent for that fortress, if the king absolutely insisted upon it. The prince was gone, who had given spirit to the English court; and the negotiation began to draw out into messages and returns from Paris. CHAP. LXVI. 1677.

By intervals, however, the king could rouse himself, and shew still some firmness and resolution. Finding that affairs were not likely to come to any conclusion with France, he summoned, notwithstanding the long adjournment, the parliament on the fifteenth of January; an unusual measure, and capable of giving alarm to the French court. Temple was sent for to the council, and the king told him, that he intended he should go to Holland, in order to form a treaty of alliance with the States; and that the purpose of it should be like the triple league, to force both France and Spain to accept of the terms proposed. Temple was sorry to find this act of vigour qualified by such a regard to France, and by such an appearance of indifference and neutrality between the parties. He told the king, that the resolution agreed on, was to begin the war in conjunction

CHAP. LXVI. junction with all the confederates, in case of no direct and immediate answer from France: That this
1677. measure would satisfy the prince, the allies, and the people of England; advances which could not be expected from such an alliance with Holland alone: That France would be disobliged, and Spain likewise; nor would the Dutch be satisfied with such a faint imitation of the triple league, a measure concerted when they were equally at peace with both parties. For these reasons, Temple declined the employment; and Lawrence Hyde, second son of chancellor Clarendon, was sent in his place.

1678. THE prince of Orange could not regard without contempt such symptoms of weakness and vigour conjoined in the English councils. He was resolved, however, to make the best of a measure which he did not approve; and as Spain secretly consented that her ally should form a league, which was seemingly directed against her as well as France,
6th Jan. but which was to fall only on the latter, the States concluded the treaty in the terms proposed by the king.

28th Jan. MEANWHILE the English parliament met, after some new adjournments; and the king was astonished, that notwithstanding the resolute measures which he thought, he had taken, great distrust and jealousy and discontent were apt, at intervals, still to prevail among the members. Though in his speech he had allowed that a good peace could no longer be expected from negotiation, and assured them that he was resolved to enter into a war for that purpose; the commons did not forbear to insert in their reply several harsh and even unreasonable clauses. Upon his reproving them, they seemed penitent, and voted, that they would assist his majesty in the prosecution of the war. A fleet of ninety sail, an army of thirty thousand men, and a million of money, were also voted. Great difficulties were made by the commons with regard to the army, which the house,

house, judging by past measures, believed to be intended more against the liberties of England than against the progress of the French monarch. To this perilous situation had the king reduced both himself and the nation. In all debates, severe speeches were made, and were received with seeming approbation: The duke and the treasurer began to be apprehensive of impeachments: Many motions against the king's ministers were lost by a small majority: The commons appointed a day to consider the state of the kingdom with regard to popery: And they even went so far as to vote, that, how urgent soever the occasion, they would lay no farther charge on the people, till secured against the prevalence of the catholic party. In short, the parliament was impatient for war when ever the king seemed averse to it; but grew suspicious of some sinister design as soon as he complied with their requests, and seemed to enter into their measures. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

THE king was enraged at this last vote: He reproached Temple with his popular notions, as he termed them; and asked him how he thought the house of commons could be trusted for carrying on the war, should it be entered on, when in the very commencement they made such declarations? The uncertainties indeed of Charles's conduct were so multiplied, and the jealousies on both sides so incurable, that even those who approached nearest the scene of action could not determine, whether the king ever seriously meant to enter into a war, or whether, if he did, the house of commons would not have taken advantage of his necessities, and made him purchase supplies by a great sacrifice of his authority.[s]

The king of France knew how to avail himself of all the advantages which these distractions afforded him.

[s] Temple, vol. i. p. 461.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

him. By his emissaries, he represented to the Dutch the imprudence of their depending on England; where an indolent king, averse to all war, especially with France, and irresolute in his measures, was actuated only by the uncertain breath of a factious parliament. To the aristocratical party, he remarked the danger of the prince's alliance with the royal family of England, and revived their apprehensions; lest, in imitation of his father, who had been honoured with the same alliance, he should violently attempt to enlarge his authority, and enslave his native country. In order to enforce these motives with farther terrors, he himself took the field very early in the spring; and after threatening Luxembourg, Mons, and Namur, he suddenly sat down before Ghent and Ypres, and in a few weeks made himself master of both places. This success gave great alarm to the Hollanders, who were no-wise satisfied with the conduct of England, or with the ambiguous treaty lately concluded; and it quickened all their advances towards an accommodation.

Campaign of 1678.

IMMEDIATELY after the parliament had voted the supply, the king began to inlist forces; and such was the ardour of the English for a war with France, that an army of above 20,000 men, to the astonishment of Europe, was completed in a few weeks. Three thousand men, under the duke of Monmouth, were sent over to secure Ostend: Some regiments were recalled from the French service: A fleet was fitted out with great diligence: And a quadruple alliance was projected between England, Holland, Spain, and the emperor.

BUT these vigorous measures received a sudden damp from a passionate address of the lower house; in which they justified all their past proceedings that had given disgust to the king; desired to be acquainted with the measures taken by him; prayed him to dismiss evil counsellors; and named in particular the duke of Lauderdale, on whose removal they

they strenuously insisted. The king told them, that their address was so extravagant, that he was not willing speedily to give it the answer which it deserved. And he began again to lend an ear to the proposals of Lewis, who offered him great sums of money, if he would consent to France's making an advantageous peace with the allies. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

Negotiations.

TEMPLE, though pressed by the king, refused to have any concern in so dishonourable a negotiation. But he informs us, that the king said, there was one article proposed, which so incensed him, that, as long as he lived, he should never forget it. Sir William goes no farther; but the editor of his works, the famous Dr. Swift, says, that the French, before they would agree to any payment, required as a preliminary, that the king should engage never to keep above 8000 regular troops in Great Britain.[a] Charles broke into a passion. "God's-fish," said he, his usual oath, "does my brother of France think to "serve me thus? Are all his promises to make me "absolute master of my people come to this? Or "does he think *that* a thing to be done with eight "thousand men?"

VAN BEVERNING was the Dutch ambassador at Nimeguen, a man of great authority with the States. He was eager for peace, and was persuaded, that the reluctance of the king, and the jealousies of the parliament, would for ever disappoint the allies in their hopes of succour from England. Orders were sent him by the States to go to the French king at Ghent, and to concert the terms of a general treaty, as well as procure a present truce for six weeks. The terms agreed on were much worse for the Spaniards than those which had been planned by the king and the prince of Orange. Six towns, some of them of no great importance, were to be restored

[a] To wit, 3000 men for Scotland, and the usual guards and garrisons in England, amounting to near 5000 men. Sir J. Dalrymple's App. p. 161.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678. restored to them: But Ypres, Condé, Valenciennes, and Tournay, in which consisted the chief strength of their frontier, were to remain with France.

GREAT murmurs arose in England when it was known that Flanders was to be left in so defenceless a condition. The chief complaints were levelled against the king, who, by his concurrence at first, by his favour afterwards, and by his delays at last, had raised the power of France to such an enormous height, that it threatened the general liberties of Europe. Charles, uneasy under these imputations, dreading the consequence of losing the affections of his subjects, and perhaps disgusted with the secret article proposed by France, began to wish heartily for war, which, he hoped, would have restored him to his ancient popularity.

AN opportunity unexpectedly offered itself for his displaying these new dispositions. While the ministers at Nimeguen were concerting the terms of a general treaty, the marquis de Balbaces, the Spanish ambassador, asked the ambassadors of France, at what time France intended to restore the six towns in Flanders. They made no difficulty in declaring that the king, their master, being obliged to see an entire restitution made to the Swedes of all they had lost in the war, could not evacuate these towns till that crown had received satisfaction; and that this detention of places was the only means to induce the powers of the north to accept of the peace.

THE States immediately gave the king intelligence of a pretension, which might be attended with such dangerous consequences. The king was both surprised and angry. He immediately dispatched Temple to concert with the States vigorous measures for opposing France. Temple in six days
16th July. concluded a treaty, by which Lewis was obliged to declare, within sixteen days after the date, that he would presently evacuate the towns: And in case of his refusal, Holland was bound to continue the war, and

and England to declare immediately against France, in conjunction with the whole confederacy. CHAP. LXVI.

ALL these warlike measures were so ill seconded by the parliament, where even the French ministers were suspected, with reason,[a] of carrying on some intrigues, that the commons renewed their former jealousies against the king, and voted the army immediately 1678.

[a] Sir John Dalrymple, in his Appendix, has given us, from Barillon's dispatches in the secretary's office at Paris, a more particular detail of these intrigues. They were carried on with lord Russel, lord Hollis, lord Berkshire, the duke of Buckingham, Algernon Sydney, Montague, Bulstrode, col. Titus, sir Edward Harley, sir John Baber, sir Roger Hill, Boscawen, Littleton, Powle, Harbord, Hambden, sir Thomas Armstrong, Hotham, Herbert, and some others of less note. Of these lord Russel and lord Hollis alone refused to touch any French money: All the others received presents or bribes from Barillon. But we are to remark, that the party views of these men, and their well founded jealousies of the king and duke, engaged them, independently of the money, into the same measures that were suggested to them by the French ambassador. The intrigues of France, therefore, with the parliament, were a mighty small engine in the political machine. Those with the king, which have always been known, were of infinitely greater consequence. The sums distributed to all these men, excepting Montague, did not exceed 16,000 pounds in three years; and therefore could have little weight in the two houses, especially when opposed to the influence of the crown. Accordingly we find, in all Barillon's dispatches, a great anxiety that the parliament should never be assembled. The conduct of these English patriots was more mean than criminal; and monsieur Courten says, that two hundred thousand livres employed by the Spaniards and Germans, would have more influence than two millions distributed by France. See Sir J. Dalrymple's App. p. 111. It is amusing to observe the general, and I may say national, rage excited by the late discovery of this secret negotiation; chiefly on account of Algernon Sydney, whom the blind prejudices of party had exalted into a hero. His ingratitude and breach of faith, in applying for the king's pardon, and immediately on his return entering into cabals for rebellion, form a conduct much more criminal than the taking of French gold: Yet the former circumstance was always known, and always disregarded. But every thing connected with France is supposed, in England, to be polluted beyond all possibility of expiation. Even lord Russel, whose conduct in this negotiation was only factious, and that in an ordinary degree, is imagined to be dishonoured by the same discovery.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

immediately to be disbanded. The king by a message represented the danger of disarming before peace were finally concluded; and he recommended to their consideration, whether he could honourably recall his forces from those towns in Flanders, which were put under his protection, and which had at present no other means of defence. The commons agreed to prolong the term with regard to these forces. Every thing indeed in Europe bore the appearance of war. France had positively declared that she would not evacuate the six towns before the requisite cession was made to Sweden; and her honour seemed now engaged to support that declaration. Spain and the empire, disgusted with the terms of peace imposed by Holland, saw with pleasure the prospect of a powerful support from the new resolutions of Charles. Holland itself, encouraged by the prince of Orange and his party, was not displeased to find that the war would be renewed on more equal terms. The allied army under that prince was approaching towards Mons, then blockaded by France. A considerable body of English, under the duke of Monmouth, was ready to join him.

Charles usually passed a great part of his time in the women's apartments, particularly those of the dutchess of Portsmouth; where, among other gay company, he often met with Barillon, the French ambassador, a man of polite conversation, who was admitted into all the amusements of that inglorious but agreeable monarch. It was the charms of this sauntering, easy life, which, during his later years, attached Charles to his mistresses. By the insinuations of Barillon, and the dutchess of Portsmouth, an order was, in an unguarded hour, procured, which instantly changed the face of affairs in Europe. One Du Cros, a French fugitive monk, was sent to Temple, directing him to apply to the Swedish ambassador, and persuade him not to insist on the conditions required by France, but to sacrifice

to

to general peace those interests of Sweden. Du Cros, who had secretly received instructions from Barillon, published every where in Holland the commission with which he was entrusted; and all men took the alarm. It was concluded that Charles's sudden alacrity for war was as suddenly extinguished, and that no steady measures could ever be taken with England. The king afterwards, when he saw Temple, treated this important matter in raillery; and said, laughing, that the rogue Du Cros had outwitted them all. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

THE negotiations, however, at Nimeguen still continued; and the French ambassadors spun out the time, till the morning of the critical day, which, by the late treaty between England and Holland, was to determine whether a sudden peace or a long war were to have place in Christendom. The French ambassadors came then to Van Beverning, and told him, that they had received orders to consent to the evacuation of the towns, and immediately to conclude and sign the peace. Van Beverning might have refused compliance, because it was now impossible to procure the consent and concurrence of Spain; but he had entertained so just an idea of the fluctuations in the English counsels, and was so much alarmed by the late commission given to Du Cros, that he deemed it fortunate for the republic to finish on any terms a dangerous war, where they were likely to be very ill supported. The papers were instantly drawn, and signed by the ministers of France and Holland, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. By this treaty France secured the possession of Franchecomté, together with Cambray, Aire, St. Omers, Valenciennes, Tournay, Ypres, Bouchaine, Cassel, &c. and restored to Spain only Charleroi, Courtrai, Oudenard, Aeth, Ghent, and Limbourg. August 1.

NEXT day Temple received an express from England, which brought the ratifications of the treaty lately

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

lately concluded with the States, together with orders immediately to proceed to the exchange of them. Charles was now returned to his former inclinations for war with France.

VAN BEVERNING was loudly exclaimed against by the ambassadors of the allies at Nimeguen. especially those of Brandenburgh and Denmark, whose masters were obliged, by the treaty. to restore all their acquisitions. The ministers of Spain and the emperor were sullen and disgusted; and all men hoped that the States, importuned and encouraged by continual solicitations from England, would disavow their ambassador and renew the war. The prince of Orange even took an extraordinary step in order to engage them to that measure; or perhaps to give vent to his own spleen and resentment. The day after signing the peace at Nimeguen, he attacked the French army at St. Dennis, near Mons: and gained some advantages over Luxembourg, who rested secure on the faith of the treaty, and concluded the war to be finished. The prince knew, at least had reason to believe, that the peace was signed, though it had not been formally notified to him; and he here sacrificed wantonly, without a proper motive, the lives of many brave men on both sides, who fell in this sharp and well contested action.

HYDE was sent over with a view of persuading the States to disavow Van Beverning; and the king promised that England, if she might depend on Holland, would immediately declare war, and would pursue it, till France were reduced to reasonable conditions. Charles at present went farther than words. He hurried on the embarkation of his army for Flanders; and all his preparations wore a hostile appearance. But the States had been too often deceived to trust him any longer. They ratified the treaty signed at Nimeguen; and all the other powers of Europe were at last, after much clamour and many

many disgusts, obliged to accept of the terms prescribed to them. CHAP. LXVI.

1678. Peace of Nimeguen.

LEWIS had now reached the height of that glory which ambition can afford. His ministers and negotiators appeared as much superior to those of all Europe in the cabinet, as his generals and armies had been experienced in the field. A successful war had been carried on against an alliance, composed of the greatest potentates in Europe. Considerable conquests had been made and his territories enlarged on every side. An advantageous peace was at last concluded, where he had given the law. The allies were so enraged against each other, that they were not likely to cement soon in any new confederacy. And thus he had, during some years, a real prospect of attaining the monarchy of Europe, and of exceeding the empire of Charlemagne, perhaps equalling that of ancient Rome. Had England continued much longer in the same condition, and under the same government, it is not easy to conceive that he could have failed of his purpose.

IN proportion as these circumstances exalted the French, they excited indignation among the English, whose animosity, roused by terror, mounted to a great height against that rival nation. Instead of taking the lead in the affairs of Europe, Charles, they thought had, contrary to his own honour and interest, acted a part entirely subservient to the common enemy; and in all his measures had either no project to all, or such as was highly criminal and dangerous. While Spain, Holland, the emperor, the princes of Germany, called aloud on England to lead them to victory and to liberty, and conspired to raise her to a station more glorious than she had ever before attained; her king, from mean pecuniary motives, had secretly sold his alliance to Lewis, and was bribed into an interest contrary to that of his people. His active schemes, in conjunction with France, were highly pernicious; his neutrality

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

neutrality was equally ignominious; and the jealous refractory behaviour of the parliament, though in itself dangerous, was the only remedy for so many greater ills, with which the public, from the misguided counsels of the king, was so nearly threatened. Such were the dispositions of men's minds at the conclusion of the peace of Nimeguen: And these dispositions naturally prepared the way for the events which followed.

State of affairs in Scotland.

WE must now return to the affairs of Scotland, which we left in some disorder, after the suppression of the insurrection in 1666. The king, who at that time endeavoured to render himself popular in England, adopted like measures in Scotland, and he entrusted the government into the hands chiefly of Tweddale and sir Robert Murray, men of prudence and moderation. These ministers made it their principal object to compose the religious differences, which ran high, and for which scarcely any modern nation but the Dutch had as yet found the proper remedy. As vigour and restraint had failed of success in Scotland, a scheme of *comprehension* was tried; by which it was intended to diminish greatly the authority of bishops, to abolish their negative voice in the ecclesiastical courts, and to leave them little more than the right of precedency among the presbyters. But the presbyterian zealots entertained great jealousy against this scheme. They remembered that, by such gradual steps, king James had endeavoured to introduce episcopacy. Should the ears and eyes of men be once reconciled to the name and habit of bishops, the whole power of the function, they dreaded, would soon follow: The least communication with unlawful and antichristian institutions they esteemed dangerous and criminal: *Touch not, taste not, handle not;* this cry went out amongst them: And the king's ministers at last perceived that they should prostitute the dignity of government, by making advances,

to

to which the malcontents were determined not to correspond. CHAP. LXVI.

THE next project adopted was that of *indulgence*. In prosecution of this scheme, the most popular of the expelled preachers, without requiring any terms of submission to the established religion, were settled in vacant churches; and small salaries of about twenty pounds a-year were offered to the rest, till they should otherwise be provided for. These last refused the king's bounty, which they considered as the wages of a criminal silence. Even the former soon repented their compliance. The people, who had been accustomed to hear them rail against their superiors, and preach to the times, as they termed it, deemed their sermons languid and spiritless, when deprived of these ornaments. Their usual gifts, they thought, had left them, on account of their submission, which was stigmatised as erastianism. They gave them the appellation, not of ministers of Christ, but of *the king's curates;* as the clergy of the established church were commonly denominated *the bishop's curates.* The preachers themselves returned in a little time to their former practices, by which they hoped to regain their former dominion over the minds of men. The conventicles multiplied daily in the west: The clergy of the established church were insulted: The laws were neglected: The covenanters even met daily in arms at their places of worship: And though they usually dispersed themselves after divine service, yet the government took a just alarm at seeing men, who were so entirely governed by their seditious teachers, dare to set authority at defiance, and, during a time of full peace, to put themselves in a military posture. 1678.

THERE was here, it is apparent, in the political body, a disease dangerous and inveterate; and the government had tried every remedy, but the true one, to allay and correct it. An unlimited *toleration*, after sects have diffused themselves, and are

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

strongly rooted, is the only expedient which can allay their fervour, and make the civil union acquire a superiority above religious distinctions. But as the operations of this regimen are commonly gradual, and at first imperceptible, vulgar politicians are apt, for that reason, to have recourse to more hasty and more dangerous remedies. It is observable too, that these non-conformists, in Scotland, neither offered nor demanded toleration; but laid claim to an entire superiority, and to the exercise of extreme rigour against their adversaries. The covenant, which they idolized, was a persecuting, as well as a seditious band of confederacy; and the government, instead of treating them like madmen, who should be soothed, and flattered, and deceived into tranquillity, thought themselves entitled to a rigid obedience, and were too apt, from a mistaken policy, to retaliate upon the dissenters, who had erred from the spirit of enthusiasm.

AMIDST these disturbances, a new parliament was assembled at Edinburgh;[h] and Lauderdale was sent down commissioner. The zealous presbyterians, who were the chief patrons of liberty, were too obnoxious to resist, with any success, the measures of government; and in parliament the tide still ran strongly in favour of monarchy. The commissioner had such influence as to get two acts passed, which were of great consequence to the ecclesiastical and civil liberties of the kingdom. By the one, it was declared, that the settling of all things with regard to the external government of the church was a right of the crown: That whatever related to ecclesiastical meetings, matters, and persons, was to be ordered according to such directions as the king should send to his privy council: And that these, being published by them, should have the force of laws. The other act regarded the militia,

[h] 19th of October 1669.

militia, which the king, by his own authority, had two years before established, instead of the army, which was disbanded. By this act the militia was settled to the number of 22,000 men, who were to be constantly armed and regularly disciplined. And it was farther enacted, that these troops should be held in readiness to march into England, Ireland, or any part of the king's dominions, for any cause in which his majesty's authority, power, or greatness, was concerned; on receiving orders, not from the king himself, but from the privy council of Scotland. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

LAUDERDALE boasted extremely of his services in procuring these two laws. The king by the former was rendered absolute master of the church, and might legally, by his edict re-establish, if he thought proper, the catholic religion in Scotland. By the latter, he saw a powerful force ready at his call: He had even the advantage of being able to disguise his orders under the name of the privy council; and in case of failure in his enterprises, could by such a pretence, apologise for his conduct to the parliament of England. But in proportion as these laws were agreeable to the king, they gave alarm to the English commons, and were the chief cause of the redoubled attacks which they made upon Lauderdale. These attacks, however, served only to fortify him in his interest with the king; and though it is probable that the militia of Scotland, during the divided state of that kingdom, would, if matters had come to extremities, have been of little service against England; yet did Charles regard the credit of it as a considerable support to his authority: And Lauderdale, by degrees, became the prime, or rather sole minister for Scotland. The natural indolence of the king disposed him to place entire confidence in a man who had so far extended the royal prerogative, and who was still disposed to render it absolutely uncontrollable.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

In a subsequent session of the same parliament,[1] a severe law was enacted against conventicles. Ruinous fines were imposed both on the preachers and hearers, even if the meetings had been in houses, but field conventicles were subjected to the penalty of death, and confiscation of goods: Four hundred marks Scotch were offered as a reward to those who should seize the criminals; and they were indemnified for any slaughter which they might commit in the execution of such an undertaking. And as it was found difficult to get evidence against these conventicles, however numerous, it was enacted by another law, that whoever, being required by the council, refused to give information upon oath, should be punished by arbitrary fines, by imprisonment, or by banishment to the plantations. Thus all persecution naturally, or rather necessarily, adopts the iniquities, as well as rigours, of the inquisition. What a considerable part of the society consider as their duty and honour, and even many of the opposite party are apt to regard with compassion and indulgence, can by no other expedient be subjected to such severe penalties as the natural sentiments of mankind appropriate only to the greatest crimes.

Though Lauderdale found this ready compliance in the parliament, a party was formed against him, of which duke Hamilton was the head. This nobleman, with Tweddale and others, went to London, and applied to the king, who, during the present depression, and insignificance of parliament, was alone able to correct the abuses of Lauderdale's administration. But even their complaints to him might be dangerous; and all approaches of truth to the throne were barred by the ridiculous law against leasing-making; a law which seems to have been extorted by the ancient nobles, in order to protect their own tyranny, oppression, and injustice. Great

[1] 28th of July 1670.

Great precautions, therefore, were used by the Scottish malcontents in their representation to the king; but no redress was obtained. Charles loaded them with caresses, and continued Lauderdale in his authority. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

A VERY bad, at least a severe use was made of this authority. The privy council dispossessed twelve gentlemen or noblemen of their houses;[k] which were converted into so many garrisons, established for the suppression of conventicles. The nation, it was pretended, was really, on account of these religious assemblies, in a state of war; and by the ancient law, the king, in such an emergence, was empowered to place a garrison in any house where he should judge it expedient.

IT were endless to recount every act of violence and arbitrary authority exercised during Lauderdale's administration. All the lawyers were put from the bar, nay banished, by the king's order, twelve miles from the capital, and by that means the whole justice of the kingdom was suspended for a year; till these lawyers were brought to declare it as their opinion, that all appeals to parliament were illegal. A letter was procured from the king, for expelling twelve of the chief magistrates of Edinburgh, and declaring them incapable of all public office, though their only crime had been their want of compliance with Lauderdale. The boroughs of Scotland have a privilege of meeting once a-year by their deputies, in order to consider the state of trade, and make bye-laws for its regulation: In this convention a petition was voted, complaining of some late acts, which obstructed commerce, and praying the king that he would empower his commissioner, in the next session of parliament, to give his assent for repealing them. For this presumption, as it was called, several of the members were fined and imprisoned. One

[k] In 1675.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

One More, a member of parliament, having moved in the house, that, in imitation of the English parliament, no bill should pass except after three readings; he was, for this pretended offence, immediately sent to prison by the commissioner.

THE private deportment of Lauderdale was as insolent and provoking as his public administration was violent and tyrannical. Justice likewise was universally perverted by faction and interest: And from the great rapacity of that duke, and still more of his dutchess, all offices and favours were openly put to sale. No one was allowed to approach the throne who was not dependent on him; and no remedy could be hoped for or obtained against his manifold oppressions. The case of Mitchel shews that this minister was as much destitute of truth and honour, as of lenity and justice.

MITCHEL was a desperate fanatic, and had entertained a resolution of assassinating Sharpe, archbishop of St. Andrews, who, by his former apostacy and subsequent rigour, had rendered himself extremely odious to the covenanters. In the year 1668, Mitchel fired a pistol at the primate, as he was sitting in his coach; but the bishop of Orkney stepping into the coach, happened to stretch out his arm, which intercepted the ball, and was much shattered by it. This happened in the principal street of the city; but so generally was the archbishop hated, that the assassin was allowed peaceably to walk off; and having turned a street or two, and thrown off a wig, which disguised him, he immediately appeared in public, and remained altogether unsuspected. Some years after, Sharpe remarked one, who seemed to eye him very eagerly; and being still anxious lest an attempt of assassination should be renewed, he ordered the man to be seized and examined. Two loaded pistols were found upon him; and as he was now concluded to be the author of the former attempt, Sharpe promised, that, if he would confess

fess his guilt, he should be dismissed without any punishment. Mitchel (for the conjecture was just) was so credulous as to believe him; but was immediately produced before the council by the faithless primate. The council, having no proof against him, but hoping to involve the whole body of covenanters in this odious crime, solemnly renewed the promise of pardon, if he would make a full discovery; and it was a great disappointment to them, when they found, upon his confession, that only one person, who was now dead, had been acquainted with his bloody purpose. Mitchel was then carried before a court of judicature, and required to renew his confession; but being apprehensive, lest, though a pardon for life had been promised him, other corporal punishment might still be inflicted, he refused compliance, and was sent back to prison. He was next examined before the council, under pretence of his being concerned in the insurrection at Pentland; and though no proof appeared against him, he was put to the question, and, contrary to the most obvious principles of equity, was urged to accuse himself. He endured the torture with singular resolution, and continued obstinate in the denial of a crime, of which, it is believed, he really was not guilty. Instead of obtaining his liberty, he was sent to the Bass, a very high rock, surrounded by the sea; at this time converted into a state prison, and full of the unhappy covenanters. He there remained in great misery, loaded with irons, till the year 1677, when it was resolved, by some new examples, to strike a fresh terror into the persecuted, but still obstinate enthusiasts. Mitchel was then brought before a court of judicature, and put upon his trial for an attempt to assassinate an archbishop and a privy-counsellor. His former confession was pleaded against him, and was proved by the testimony of the duke of Lauderdale, lord commissioner, lord

CHAP. LXVI. 1678. lord Hatton his brother, the earl of Rothes, and the primate himself. Mitchel, besides maintaining that the privy council was no court of judicature, and that a confession before them was not judicial, asserted, that he had been engaged to make that confession by a solemn promise of pardon. The four privy-counsellors denied upon oath that any such promise had ever been given. The prisoner then desired that the council-books might be produced in court; and even offered a copy of that day's proceedings to be read; but the privy-counsellors maintained, that, after they had made oath, no farther proof could be admitted; and that the books of council contained the king's secrets, which were on no account to be divulged. They were not probably aware, when they swore, that the clerk, having engrossed the promise of pardon in the narrative of Mitchel's confession, the whole minute had been signed by the chancellor, and that the proofs of their perjury were by that means committed to record. Though the prisoner was condemned, Lauderdale was still inclined to pardon him; but the unrelenting primate rigorously insisted upon his execution; and said, that if assassins remained unpunished, his life must be exposed to perpetual danger. Mitchel was accordingly executed at Edinburgh in January 1678. Such a complication of cruelty and treachery shews the character of those ministers to whom the king had, at this time, entrusted the government of Scotland.

LAUDERDALE'S administration, besides the iniquities arising from the violence of his temper, and the still greater iniquities inseparable from all projects of persecution, was attended with other circumstances, which engaged him in severe and arbitrary measures. An absolute government was to be introduced, which on its commencement is often most rigorous;

rigorous; and tyranny was still obliged, for want of military power, to cover itself under an appearance of law; a situation which rendered it extremely awkward in its motions, and, by provoking opposition, extended the violence of its oppressions. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

THE rigours exercised against conventicles, instead of breaking the spirit of the fanatics, had tended only, as is usual, to render them more obstinate, to increase the fervour of their zeal, to link them more closely together, and to inflame them against the established hierarchy. The commonalty almost every where in the south, particularly in the western counties, frequented conventicles without reserve; and the gentry, though they themselves commonly abstained from these illegal places of worship, connived at this irregularity in their inferiors. In order to interest the former on the side of the persecutors, a bond or contract was, by order of the privy council, tendered to the landlords in the west, by which they were to engage for the good behaviour of their tenants; and in case any tenant frequented a conventicle, the landlord was to subject himself to the same fine as could by law be exacted from the delinquent. It was ridiculous to give sanction to laws by voluntary contracts: It was iniquitous to make one man answerable for the conduct of another: It was illegal to impose such hard conditions upon men, who had nowise offended. For these reasons, the greater part of the gentry refused to sign these bonds; and Lauderdale, enraged at this opposition, endeavoured to break their spirit by expedients which were still more unusual and more arbitrary.

THE law enacted against conventicles, had called them seminaries of rebellion. This expression, which was nothing but a flourish of rhetoric, Lauderdale and the privy council were willing to understand in a literal sense; and because the western counties abounded in conventicles, though otherwise in profound peace, they pretended that these counties

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

counties were in a state of actual war and rebellion. They made therefore an agreement with some highland chieftains to call out their clans, to the number of 8000 men: To these they joined the guards, and the militia of Angus: And they sent the whole to live at free quarters upon the lands of such as had refused the bonds illegally required of them. The obnoxious counties were the most populous and most industrious in Scotland. The highlanders were the people most disorderly and the least civilized. It is easy to imagine the havoc and destruction which ensued. A multitude, not accustomed to discipline, averse to the restraint of laws, trained up in rapine and violence, were let loose amidst those whom they were taught to regard as enemies to their prince and to their religion. Nothing escaped their ravenous hands: By menaces, by violence, and sometimes by tortures, men were obliged to discover their concealed wealth. Neither age, nor sex, nor innocence, afforded protection: And the gentry, finding that even those who had been most compliant, and who had subscribed the bonds, were equally exposed to the rapacity of those barbarians, confirmed themselves still more in the resolution of refusing them. The voice of the nation was raised against this enormous outrage; and after two months free quarter, the highlanders were sent back to their hills, loaded with the spoils and execrations of the west.

THOSE who had been engaged to subscribe the bonds, could find no security but by turning out such tenants as they suspected of an inclination to conventicles, and thereby depopulating their estates. To increase the misery of these unhappy farmers, the council enacted, that none should be received any where, or allowed a habitation, who brought not a certificate of his conformity from the parish-minister. That the obstinate and refractory might not escape farther persecution, a new device was fallen

fallen upon. By the law of Scotland, any man, who should go before a magistrate, and swear that he thought himself in danger from another, might obtain a writ of *law-burrows*, as it is called; by which the latter was bound, under the penalty of imprisonment and outlawry, to find security for his good behaviour. Lauderdale entertained the absurd notion of making the king sue out writs of law-burrows against his subjects. On this pretence, the refusers of the bonds were summoned to appear before the council, and were required to bind themselves, under the penalty of two years' rent, neither to frequent conventicles themselves, nor allow their family and tenants to be present at those unlawful assemblies. Thus chicanery was joined to tyranny; and the majesty of the king, instead of being exalted, was in reality prostituted; as if he were obliged to seek the same security, which one neighbour might require of another. CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

It was an old law, but seldom executed, that a man, who was accused of any crime, and did not appear, in order to stand his trial, might be *intercommuned*, that is, he might be publicly outlawed; and whoever afterwards, either on account of business, relation, nay charity, had the least intercourse with him, was subjected to the same penalties as could by law be inflicted on the criminal himself. Several writs of intercommuning were now issued against the hearers and preachers in conventicles; and by this severe and even absurd law, crimes and guilt went on multiplying in a geometrical proportion. Where laws themselves are so violent, it is no wonder that an administration should be tyrannical.

Lest the cry of an oppressed people should reach the throne, the council forbad, under severe penalties, all noblemen or gentlemen of landed property to leave the kingdom: A severe edict, especially where the sovereign himself resided in a foreign country.

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

country. Notwithstanding this act of council, Cassilis first, afterwards Hamilton and Tweddale, went to London, and laid their complaints before the king. These violent proceedings of Lauderdale were opposite to the natural temper of Charles; and he immediately issued orders for discontinuing the bonds and the writs of law-burrows. But as he was commonly little-touched with what lay at a distance, he entertained not the proper indignation against those who had abused his authority: Even while he retracted these oppressive measures, he was prevailed with to avow and praise them, in a letter which he wrote to the privy council. This proof of confidence might fortify the hands of the ministry; but the king ran a manifest risk of losing the affections of his subjects, by not permitting even those who were desirous of it, to distinguish between him and their oppressors.

It is reported,[1] that Charles, after a full hearing of the debates concerning Scottish affairs, said, "I perceive, that Lauderdale has been guilty of "many bad things against the people of Scotland; "but I cannot find that he has acted any thing "contrary to my interest:" A sentiment unworthy of a sovereign!

DURING the absence of Hamilton and the other discontented lords, the king allowed Lauderdale to summon a convention of estates at Edinburgh. This assembly, besides granting some money, bestowed applause on all Lauderdale's administration, and in their addresses to the king expressed the highest contentment and satisfaction. But these instances of complaisance had the contrary effect in England from what was expected by the contrivers of them. All men there concluded, that in Scotland the very voice of liberty was totally suppressed; and that, by the prevalence of tyranny, grievances were so riveted,

[1] Burnet.

riveted, that it was become dangerous even to mention them, or complain to the prince, who alone was able to redress them. From the slavery of the neighbouring kingdom, they inferred the arbitrary disposition of the king; and from the violence with which sovereign power was there exercised, they apprehended the miseries which might ensue to themselves upon their loss of liberty. If persecution, it was asked, by a protestant church could be carried to such extremes, what might be dreaded from the prevalence of popery, which had ever, in all ages, made open profession of exterminating by fire and sword every opposite sect or communion? And if the first approaches towards unlimited authority were so tyrannical, how dismal its final establishment; when all dread of opposition should at last be removed by mercenary armies, and all sense of shame by long and inveterate habit?

CHAP. LXVI. 1678.

CHAP. LXVII.

The popish plot—Oates's narrative—and character—Coleman's letters—Godfrey's murder—General consternation—The parliament—Zeal of the parliament— Bedloe's narrative— Accusation of Danby—His impeachment—Dissolution of the long parliament—Its character—Trial of Coleman—Of Ireland—New elections—Duke of Monmouth—Duke of York retires to Brussels—New parliament—Danby's impeachment—Popish plot—New council—Limitations on a popish successor—Bill of exclusion—Habeas corpus bill—Prorogation and dissolution of the parliament—Trial and execution of the five jesuits—And of Langhorne—Wakeman acquitted—State of affairs in Scotland—Battle of Bothwel-bridge.

CHAP. LXVII.

1678.

THE English nation, ever since the fatal league with France, had entertained violent jealousies against the court; and the subsequent measures adopted by the king had tended more to increase than cure the general prejudices. Some mysterious design was still suspected in every enterprise and profession: Arbitrary power and popery were apprehended as the scope of all projects: Each breath or rumour made the people start with anxiety: Their enemies, they thought, were in their very bosom, and had gotten possession of their sovereign's confidence. While in this timorous, jealous disposition, the cry of a *plot* all on a sudden struck their ears:

ears: They were wakened from their slumber; and, like men affrighted and in the dark, took every figure for a spectre. The terror of each man became the source of terror to another. And an universal panic being diffused, reason, and argument, and common sense, and common humanity, lost all influence over them. From this disposition of men's minds we are to account for the progress of the POPISH PLOT, and the credit given to it; an event, which would otherwise appear prodigious and altogether inexplicable. CHAP. LXVII. 1678. The popish plot.

ON the 12th of August, one Kirby, a chemist, accosted the king, as he was walking in the park: "Sir," said he, "keep within the company: Your "enemies have a design upon your life; and you "may be shot in this very walk." Being asked the reason of these strange speeches, he said, that two men, called Grove and Pickering, had engaged to shoot the king, and sir George Wakeman, the queen's physician, to poison him. This intelligence, he added, had been communicated to him by doctor Tongue; whom if permitted, he would introduce to his majesty. Tongue was a divine of the church of England; a man active, restless, full of projects, void of understanding. He brought papers to the king, which contained information of a plot, and were digested into forty-three articles. The king, not having leisure to peruse them, sent them to the treasurer, Danby, and ordered the two informers to lay the business before that minister. Tongue confessed to Danby, that he himself had not drawn the papers, that they had been secretly thrust under his door, and that, though he suspected, he did not certainly know, who was the author. After a few days he returned, and told the treasurer, that his suspicions, he found, were just; and that the author of the intelligence, whom he had met twice or thrice in the street, had acknowledged

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

ledged the whole matter, and had given him a more particular account of the conspiracy, but desired that his name might be concealed, being apprehensive lest the papists should murder him.

THE Information was renewed with regard to Grove's and Pickering's intentions of shooting the king; and Tongue even pretended, that, at a particular time, they were to set out for Windsor with that intention. Orders were given for arresting them, as soon as they should appear in that place: But though this alarm was more than once renewed, some frivolous reasons were still found by Tongue for their having delayed the journey. And the king concluded, both from these evasions, and from the mysterious, artificial manner of communicating the intelligence, that the whole was an imposture.

TONGUE came next to the treasurer, and told him, that a pacquet of letters, written by jesuits concerned in the plot, was that night to be put into the post-house for Windsor, directed to Bennifield, a jesuit, confessor to the duke. When this intelligence was conveyed to the king, he replied, that the pacquet mentioned had a few hours before been brought to the duke by Bennifield; who said, that he suspected some bad design upon him, that the letters seemed to contain matters of a dangerous import, and that he knew them not to be the handwriting of the persons whose names were subscribed to them. This incident still further confirmed that king in his incredulity.

THE matter had probably slept for ever, had it not been for the anxiety of the duke; who, hearing that priests and jesuits, and even his own confessor, had been accused, was desirous that a thorough inquiry should be made by the council into the pretended conspiracy. Kirby and Tongue were inquired after, and were now found to be living in close connexion with Titus Oates, the person who

was

was said to have conveyed the first intelligence to C. H. A. P. LXVII. 1678.
Tongue. Oates affirmed, that he had fallen under suspicion with the Jesuits; that he had received three blows with a stick, and a box on the ear from the provincial of that order, for revealing their conspiracy: And that, over-hearing them speak of their intentions to punish him more severely, he had withdrawn, and concealed himself. This man, in whose breast was lodged a secret, involving the fate of kings and kingdoms, was allowed to remain in such necessity, that Kirby was obliged to supply him with daily bread; and it was a joyful surprise to him, when he heard that the council was at last disposed to take some notice of his intelligence. But as he expected more encouragement from the public, than from the king or his ministers, he thought proper, before he was presented to the council, to go with his two companions to sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, a noted and active justice of peace, and to give evidence before him of all the articles of the conspiracy.

Oates's narrative.

THE wonderful intelligence, which Oates conveyed both to Godfrey and the council, and afterwards to the parliament, was to this purpose.[m] The pope, he said, on examining the matter in the congregation *de propaganda*, had found himself entitled to the possession of England and Ireland on account of the heresy of prince and people, and had accordingly assumed the sovereignty of these kingdoms. This supreme power he had thought proper to delegate to the society of Jesuits; and de Oliva, general of that order, in consequence of the papal grant, had exerted every act of regal authority, and particularly had supplied, by commissions under the seal of the society, all the chief offices, both civil and military. Lord Arundel was created chancellor, lord Powis treasurer, sir William Godolphin privy seal,

[m] Oates's narrative.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

seal, Coleman secretary of state, Langhorne attorney general, Lord Bellasis general of the papal army, lord Peters lieutenant general, lord Stafford paymaster; and inferior commissions, signed by the provincial of the Jesuits, were distributed all over England. All the dignities too of the church were filled, and many of them with Spaniards and other foreigners. The provincial had held a consult of the Jesuits under his authority; where the king, whom they opprobriously called the Black Bastard, was solemnly tried and condemned as a heretic; and a resolution taken to put him to death. Father le Shee (for so this great plotter and informer called father la Chaise, the noted confessor of the French king) had consigned in London ten thousand pounds to be paid to any man who should merit it by this assassination. A Spanish provincial had expressed like liberality: The prior of the Benedictines was willing to go the length of six thousand: The Dominicans approved of the action; but pleaded poverty. Ten thousand pounds had been offered to sir George Wakeman, the queen's physician, who demanded fifteen thousand, as a reward for so great a service: His demand was complied with; and five thousand had been paid him by advance. Lest this means should fail, four Irish ruffians had been hired by the Jesuits, at the rate of twenty guineas a-piece, to stab the king at Windsor; and Coleman, secretary to the late dutchess of York, had given the messenger, who carried them orders, a guinea to quicken his diligence. Grove and Pickering were also employed to shoot the king with silver bullets: The former was to receive the sum of fifteen hundred pounds; the latter, being a pious man, was to be rewarded with thirty thousand masses, which, estimating masses at a shilling a-piece, amounted to a like value. Pickering would have executed his purpose, had not the flint at one time dropped out of his pistol, at another time the priming.

ing. Coniers, the Jesuit, had bought a knife at the price of ten shillings, which he thought was not dear, considering the purpose for which he intended it, to wit, stabbing the king. Letters of subscription were circulated among the catholics all over England to raise a sum for the same purpose. No less than fifty Jesuits had met in May last, at the White-horse tavern, where it was unanimously agreed to put the king to death. This synod did afterwards, for more convenience, divide themselves into many lesser cabals or companies; and Oates was employed to carry notes and letters from one to another, all tending to the same end, of murdering the king. He even carried from one company to another, a paper, in which they formally expressed their resolution of executing that deed; and it was regularly subscribed by all of them. A wager of a hundred pounds was laid, and stakes made, that the king should eat no more Christmas pyes. In short, it was determined, to use the expression of a Jesuit, that if he would not become R. C. (Roman Catholic) he should no longer be C. R. (Charles Rex.) The great fire of London had been the work of the Jesuits, who had employed eighty or eighty-six persons for that purpose, and had expended seven hundred fire-balls; but they had a good return for their money, for they had been able to pilfer goods from the fire to the amount of fourteen thousand pounds: The Jesuits had also raised another fire on St. Margaret's Hill, whence they had stolen goods to the value of two thousand pounds; Another at Southwark: And it was determined in like manner to burn all the chief cities in England. A paper model was already framed for the firing of London; the stations were regularly marked out, where the several fires were to commence; and the whole plan of operations was so concerted, that precautions were taken by the Jesuits to vary their measures, according to the variation of

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

the wind. Fire-balls were familiarly called among them Teuxbury mustard pills; and were said to contain a notable biting sauce. In the great fire, it had been determined to murder the king; but he had displayed such diligence and humanity in extinguishing the flames, that even the Jesuits relented, and spared his life. Besides these assassinations and fires; insurrections, rebellions, and massacres, were projected by that religious order in all the three kingdoms. There were twenty thousand catholics in London, who would rise in four-and-twenty hours or less; and Jennison, a Jesuit, said, that they might easily cut the throats of a hundred thousand protestants. Eight thousand catholics had agreed to take arms in Scotland. Ormond was to be murdered by four Jesuits; a general massacre of the Irish protestants was concerted; and forty thousand black bills were already provided for that purpose. Coleman had remitted two hundred thousand pounds to promote the rebellion in Ireland; and the French king was to land a great army in that island. Poole, who wrote the Synopsis, was particularly marked out for assassination; as was also Dr. Stillingfleet, a controversial writer against the papists. Burnet tells us, that Oates paid him the same compliment. After all this havoc, the crown was to be offered to the duke, but on the following conditions; that he receive it as a gift from the pope; that he confirm all the papal commissions for offices and employments; that he ratify all past transactions, by pardoning the incendiaries, and the murderers of his brother and of the people; and that he consent to the utter extirpation of the protestant religion. If he refuse these conditions, he himself was immediately to be poisoned or assassinated. *To pot James must go;* according to the expression ascribed by Oates to the Jesuits.

Oates, the informer of this dreadful plot, was himself the most infamous of mankind. He was the

the son of an anabaptist preacher, chaplain to colonel Pride; but having taken orders in the church, he had been settled in a small living by the duke of Norfolk. He had been indicted for perjury; and by some means had escaped. He was afterwards a chaplain on board the fleet; whence he had been dismissed on complaint of some unnatural practices, not fit to be named. He then became a convert to the catholics; but he afterwards boasted, that his conversion was a mere pretence, in order to get into their secrets and to betray them.[n] He was sent over to the Jesuits' college at St. Omers, and, though above thirty years of age, he there lived some time among the students. He was dispatched on an errand to Spain; and thence returned to St. Omers; where the Jesuits, heartily tired of their convert, at last dismissed him from their seminary. It is likely, that, from resentment of this usage, as well as from want and indigence, he was induced, in combination with Tongue, to contrive that plot of which he accused the catholics. CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

THIS abandoned man, when examined before the council, betrayed his impostures in such a manner, as would have utterly discredited the most consistent story, and the most reputable evidence. While in Spain, he had been carried, he said, to don John, who promised great assistance to the execution of the catholic designs. The king asked him, what sort of a man don John was: He answered, a tall lean man; directly contrary to truth, as the king well knew.[o] He totally mistook the situation of the Jesuits' college at Paris.[p] Though he pretended great intimacies with Coleman, he knew him not, when placed very near him; and had no other excuse than that his sight was bad in candle-light.[q] He fell into like mistakes with regard to Wakeman.

NOTWITHSTANDING

[n] Burnet, Echard, North, L'Estrange, &c. [o] Burnet, North.
[p] North. [q] Burnet, North, Trials.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

NOTWITHSTANDING these objections, great attention was paid to Oates's evidence, and the plot became very soon the subject of conversation, and even the object of terror to the people. The violent animosity, which had been excited against the catholics in general, made the public swallow the grossest absurdities when they accompanied an accusation of those religionists: And the more diabolical any contrivance appeared, the better it suited the tremendous idea entertained of a Jesuit. Danby likewise, who stood in opposition to the French and catholic interest at court, was willing to encourage every story, which might serve to discredit that party. By his suggestion, when a warrant was signed for arresting Coleman, there was inserted a clause for seizing his papers; a circumstance attended with the most important consequences.

Coleman's letters.

COLEMAN, partly on his own account, partly by orders from the duke, had been engaged in a correspondence with father la Chaise, with the pope's nuncio at Brussels, and with other catholics abroad; and being himself a fiery zealot, busy and sanguine, the expressions in his letters often betrayed great violence and indiscretion. His correspondence, during the years 1674, 1675, and part of 1676, was seized, and contained many extraordinary passages. In particular he said to la Chaise, "We have here "a mighty work upon our hands, no less than the "conversion of three kingdoms, and by that per- "haps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy, "which has a long time domineered over a great "part of this northern world. There were never "such hopes of success, since the days of queen "Mary, as now in our days. God has given us a "prince," meaning the duke, "who is become (may "I say a miracle) zealous of being the author and "instrument of so glorious a work; but the oppo- "sition we are sure to meet with is also like to be "great; So that it imports us to get all the aid

"and

" and assistance we can." In another letter he said, " I can scarce believe myself awake, or the " thing real, when I think of a prince in such an " age as we live in, converted to such a degree of " zeal and piety, as not to regard any thing in the " world in comparison of God Almighty's glory, " the salvation of his own soul, and the conversion " of our poor kingdom." In other passages the interests of the crown of England, those of the French king, and those of the catholic religion, are spoken of as inseparable. The duke is also said to have connected his interests unalterably with those of Lewis. The king himself, he affirms, is always inclined to favour the catholics, when he may do it without hazard. " Money," Coleman adds, " can- " not fail of persuading the king to any thing. " There is nothing it cannot make him do, were it " ever so much to his prejudice. It has such an " absolute power over him, that he cannot resist it. " Logic, built upon money, has in our court more " powerful charms than any other sort of argu- " ment." For these reasons, he proposed to father la Chaise, that the French king should remit the sum of 300,000 pounds, on condition that the parliament be dissolved; a measure to which, he affirmed, the king was, of himself, sufficiently inclined, were it not for his hopes of obtaining money from that assembly. The parliament, he said, had already constrained the king to make peace with Holland, contrary to the interests of the catholic religion, and of his most christian majesty: And if they should meet again, they would surely engage him farther, even to the making of war against France. It appears also from the same letters, that the assembling of the parliament so late as April in the year 1675, had been procured by the intrigues of the catholic and French party, who thereby intended to show the Dutch and their confede-

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

rates,

CHAP. LXVII. rates, that they could expect no assistance from England.

1678. When the contents of these letters were publicly known, they diffused the panic, with which the nation began already to be seized on account of the popish plot. Men reasoned more from their fears and their passions than from the evidence before them. It is certain, that the restless and enterprising spirit of the catholic church, particularly of the Jesuits, merits attention, and is, in some degree, dangerous to every other communion. Such zeal of proselytism actuates that sect, that its missionaries have penetrated into every nation of the globe; and, in one sense, there is a *popish plot* perpetually carrying on against all states, protestant, pagan, and mahometan. It is likewise very probable, that the conversion of the duke, and the favour of the king, had inspired the catholic priests with new hopes of recovering in these islands their lost dominion, and gave fresh vigour to that intemperate zeal by which they are commonly actuated. Their first aim was to obtain a toleration; and such was the evidence, they believed, of their theological tenets, that, could they but procure entire liberty, they must infallibly in time open the eyes of the people. After they had converted considerable numbers, they might be enabled, they hoped, to reinstate themselves in full authority, and entirely to suppress that heresy, with which the kingdom had so long been affected. Though these dangers to the protestant religion were distant, it was justly the object of great concern to find that the heir of the crown was so blinded with bigotry, and so deeply engaged in foreign interests; and that the king himself had been prevailed on, from low interests, to hearken to his dangerous insinuations. Very bad consequences might ensue from such perverse habits and attachments; nor could the nation

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and parliament guard against them with too anxious a precaution. But that the Roman pontiff could hope to assume the sovereignty of these kingdoms; a project which, even during the darkness of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, would have appeared chimerical: That he should delegate this authority to the Jesuits, that order in the Romish church, which was the most hated: That a massacre could be attempted of the protestants, who surpassed the catholics a hundred fold, and were invested with the whole authority of the state: That the king himself was to be assassinated, and even the duke, the only support of their party: These were such absurdities as no human testimony was sufficient to prove; much less the evidence of one man, who was noted for infamy, and who could not keep himself every moment from falling into the grossest inconsistencies. Did such intelligence deserve even so much attention as to be refuted, it would appear, that Coleman's letters were sufficient alone to destroy all its credit. For how could so long a train of correspondence be carried on, by a man so much trusted by the party; and yet no traces of insurrections, if really intended, of fires, massacres, assassinations, invasions, be ever discovered in any single passage of these letters? But all such reflections, and many more, equally obvious, were vainly employed against that general prepossession with which the nation was seized. Oates's plot and Coleman's were universally confounded together: And the evidence of the latter being unquestionable, the belief of the former, aided by the passions of hatred and of terror, took possession of the whole people.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

17th Oct. Godfrey's murder.

THERE was danger, however, lest time might open the eyes of the public; when the murder of Godfrey completed the general delusion, and rendered the prejudices of the nation absolutely incurable. This magistrate had been missing some days; and, after much search, and many surmises, his body

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CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

was found lying in a ditch at Primrose-hill: The marks of strangling were thought to appear about his neck, and some contusions on his breast: His own sword was sticking in the body; but as no considerable quantity of blood ensued on drawing it, it was concluded, that it had been thrust in after his death, and that he had not killed himself: He had rings on his fingers, and money in his pocket: It was therefore inferred, that he had not fallen into the hands of robbers. Without farther reasoning, the cry rose, that he had been assassinated by the papists, on account of his taking Oates's evidence. This clamour was quickly propagated, and met with universal belief. The panic spread itself on every side with infinite rapidity; and all men, astonished with fear, and animated with rage, saw in Godfrey's fate all the horrible designs ascribed to the catholics; and no farther doubts remained of Oates's veracity. The voice of the nation united against that hated sect; and, notwithstanding that the bloody conspiracy was supposed to be now detected, men could scarcely be persuaded that their lives were yet in safety. Each hour teemed with new rumours and surmises. Invasions from abroad, insurrections at home, even private murders and poisonings, were apprehended. To deny the reality of the plot was to be an accomplice: To hesitate was criminal: Royalist, Republican; Churchman, Sectary; Courtier, Patriot; all parties concurred in the illusion. The city prepared for its defence, as if the enemy were at its gates: The chains and posts were put up: And it was a noted saying at that time of sir Thomas Player, the chamberlain, that, were it not for these precautions, all the citizens might rise next morning with their throats cut.[r]

General consternation.

In order to propagate the popular frenzy, several artifices were employed. The dead body of Godfrey

[r] North, p. 206.

frey was carried into the city, attended by vast multitudes. It was publicly exposed in the streets, and viewed by all ranks of men; and every one, who saw it, went away inflamed, as well by the mutual contagion of sentiments, as by the dismal spectacle itself. The funeral pomp was celebrated with great parade. The corpse was conducted through the chief streets of the city: Seventy-two clergymen marched before; Above a thousand persons of distinction followed after: And at the funeral sermon, two able-bodied divines mounted the pulpit, and stood on each side of the preacher, lest, in paying the last duties to this unhappy magistrate, he should, before the whole people be murdered by the papists.[s]

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

In this disposition of the nation, reason could no more be heard than a whisper in the midst of the most violent hurricane. Even at present, Godfrey's murder can scarcely, upon any system, be rationally accounted for. That he was assassinated by the catholics, seems utterly improbable. These religionists could not be engaged to commit that crime from *policy*, in order to deter other magistrates from acting against them. Godfrey's fate was no-wise capable of producing that effect, unless it were publicly known, that the catholics were his murderers; an opinion which it was easy to foresee, must prove the ruin of their party. Besides, how many magistrates, during more than a century, had acted in the most violent manner against the catholics, without its being ever suspected that any one had been cut off by assassination? Such jealous times as the present were surely ill fitted for beginning these dangerous experiments. Shall we therefore say, that the catholics were pushed on, not by policy, but by blind *revenge* against Godfrey? But Godfrey had given them little or no occasion of offence in taking

[s] North, p. 205.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

taking Oates's evidence. His part was merely an act of form, belonging to his office; nor could he, or any man in his station, possibly refuse it. In the rest of his conduct, he lived on good terms with the catholics, and was far from distinguishing himself by his severity against that sect. It is even certain that he had contracted an intimacy with Coleman, and took care to inform his friend of the danger to which, by reason of Oates's evidence, he was at present exposed.

THERE are some writers, who, finding it impossible to account for Godfrey's murder by the machinations of the catholics, have recourse to the opposite supposition. They lay hold of that obvious presumption, that those commit the crime who reap advantage by it; and they affirm that it was Shaftesbury, and the heads of the popular party, who perpetrated that deed, in order to throw the odium of it on the papists. If this supposition be received, it must also be admitted, that the whole plot was the contrivance of those politicians; and that Oates acted altogether under their direction. But it appears that Oates, dreading probably the opposition of powerful enemies, had very anxiously acquitted the duke, Danby, Ormond, and all the ministry; persons who were certainly the most obnoxious to the popular leaders. Besides, the whole texture of the plot contains such low absurdity, that it is impossible to have been the invention of any man of sense or education. It is true, the more monstrous and horrible the conspiracy, the better was it fitted to terrify, and thence to convince, the populace: But this effect, we may safely say, no one could beforehand have expected; and a fool was in this case more likely to succeed than a wise man. Had Shaftesbury laid the plan of a popish conspiracy, he had probably rendered it moderate, consistent, credible; and on that very account had never met with the prodigious

prodigious success, with which Oates's tremendous fictions were attended. CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

We must, therefore, be contented to remain for ever ignorant of the actors in Godfrey's murder; and only pronounce in general, that that event, in all likelihood, had no connexion, one way or other, with the popish plot. Any man, especially so active a magistrate as Godfrey, might, in such a city as London, have many enemies, of whom his friends and family had no suspicion. He was a melancholy man; and there is some reason, notwithstanding the pretended appearances to the contrary, to suspect that he fell by his own hands. The affair was never examined with tranquillity, or even with common sense, during the time; and it is impossible for us, at this distance, certainly to account for it.

No one doubted but the papists had assassinated Godfrey; but still the particular actors were unknown. A proclamation was issued by the king, offering a pardon and a reward of five hundred pounds to any one who should discover them. As it was afterwards surmised, that the terror of a like assassination would prevent discovery, a new proclamation was issued, promising absolute protection to any one who should reveal the secret. Thus were indemnity, money, and security offered to the fairest bidder: And no one needed to fear, during the present fury of the people, that his evidence would undergo too severe a scrutiny.

While the nation was in this ferment, the parliament was assembled. In his speech the king told them, that, though they had given money for disbanding the army,[t] he had found Flanders so exposed, that he had thought it necessary still to keep them on foot, and doubted not but this measure would meet with their approbation. He informed them, 21st Oct. The parliament.

[t] They had granted him 600,000 pounds for disbanding the army, for reimbursing the charges of his naval armament, and for paying the princess of Orange's portion.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

them, that his revenue lay under great anticipations, and at best was never equal to the constant and necessary expence of government; as would appear from the state of it, which he intended to lay before them. He also mentioned the plot, formed against his life by Jesuits; but said, that he would forbear delivering any opinion of the matter, lest he should seem to lay too much or too little; and that he would leave the scrutiny of it entirely to the law.

THE king was anxious to keep the question of the popish plot from the parliament; where, he suspected, many designing people would very much abuse the present credulity of the nation: But Danby, who hated the catholics, and courted popularity, and perhaps hoped that the king, if his life were believed in danger from the Jesuits, would be more cordially loved by the nation, had entertained opposite designs; and the very first day of the session, he opened the matter in the house of peers. The king was extremely displeased with this temerity, and told his minister, "Though you "do not believe it, you will find, that you have "given the parliament a handle to ruin yourself, as "well as to disturb all my affairs; and you will "surely live to repent it." Danby had afterwards sufficient reason to applaud the sagacity of his master.

Zeal of the parliament.

THE cry of the plot was immediately echoed from one house to the other. The authority of parliament gave sanction to that fury, with which the people were already agitated. An address was voted for a solemn fast: A form of prayer was contrived for that solemnity; and because the popish plot had been omitted in the first draught, it was carefully ordered to be inserted; lest omniscience should want intelligence; to use the words of an historian.[u]

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[u] North, p. 207.

CHAP. LXVII.

In order to continue and propagate the alarm, addresses were voted for laying before the house such papers as might discover the horrible conspiracy; for the removal of popish recusants from London; for administering every where the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; for denying access at court to all unknown or suspicious persons; and for appointing the trainbands of London and Westminster to be in readiness. The lords Powis, Stafford, Arundel, Peters, and Bellasis, were committed to the Tower, and were soon after impeached for high treason. And both houses, after hearing Oates's evidence, voted, "That the lords and commons are of opi-" nion, that there hath been, and still is, a damn-" able and hellish plot, contrived and carried on by " the popish recusants, for assassinating the king, " for subverting the government, and for rooting " out and destroying the protestant religion." 1678.

So vehement were the houses, that they sat every day, forenoon and afternoon, on the subject of the plot: For no other business could be attended to. A committee of lords was appointed to examine prisoners and witnesses: Blank warrants were put into their hands, for the commitment of such as should be accused or suspected. Oates, who, though his evidence were true, must, by his own account, be regarded as an infamous villain, was by every one applauded, caressed, and called the saviour of the nation. He was recommended by the parliament to the king. He was lodged in Whitehall, protected by guards, and encouraged by a pension of 1200 pounds a-year.

Bedloe's narrative.

It was not long before such bountiful encouragement brought forth new witnesses. William Bedloe, a man, if possible, more infamous than Oates, appeared next upon the stage. He was of very low birth, had been noted for several cheats and even thefts, had travelled over many parts of Europe under

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

under borrowed names, had frequently passed himself for a man of quality, and had endeavoured, by a variety of lies and contrivances, to prey upon the ignorant and unwary. When he appeared before the council, he gave intelligence of Godfrey's murder only, which he said, had been perpetrated in Somerset-house, where the queen lived, by papists, some of them servants in her family. He was questioned about the plot; but utterly denied all knowledge of it, and also asserted, that he had no acquaintance with Oates. Next day, when examined before the committee of Lords he bethought himself better, and was ready to give an ample account of the plot, which he found so anxiously inquired into. This narrative he made to tally, as well as he could, with that of Oates, which had been published: But that he might make himself acceptable by new matter, he added some other circumstances, and these still more tremendous and extraordinary. He said, that ten thousand men were to be landed from Flanders in Burlington Bay, and immediately to seize Hull: That Jersey and Guernsey, were to be surprised by forces from Brest; and that a French fleet was, all last summer, hovering in the Channel for that purpose: That the lords Powis and Peters were to form an army in Radnorshire, to be joined by another army, consisting of twenty or thirty thousand religious men and pilgrims, who were to land at Milford Haven from St. Iago in Spain: That there were forty thousand men ready in London; besides those, who would, on the alarm, be posted at every alehouse door, in order to kill the soldiers, as they came out of their quarters: That lord Stafford, Coleman, and father Ireland, had money sufficient to defray the expences of all these armaments: That he himself was to receive four thousand pounds, as one that could murder a man; as also a commission from lord Bellasis,

Bellasis, and a Benediction from the pope: That the king was to be assassinated; all the protestants massacred, who would not seriously be converted; the government offered to ONE, if he would consent to hold it of the church, but if he should refuse that condition, as was suspected, the supreme authority would be given to certain lords under the nomination of the pope. In a subsequent examination before the commons, Bedloe added, (for these men always brought out their intelligence successively and by piece-meal) that lord Carrington was also in the conspiracy for raising men and money against the government; as was likewise lord Brudenel. These noblemen, with all the other persons mentioned by Bedloe, were immediately committed to custody by the parliament. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

It is remarkable that the only resource of Spain, in her present decayed condition, lay in the assistance of England, and so far from being in a situation to transport ten thousand men for the invasion of that kingdom, she had solicited and obtained English forces to be sent into the garrisons of Flanders, which were not otherwise able to defend themselves against the French. The French too, we may observe, were at that very time in open war with Spain, and yet are supposed to be engaged in the same design against England; as if religious motives were become the sole actuating principle among sovereigns. But none of these circumstances, however obvious, were able, when set in opposition to multiplied horrors, antipathies, and prejudices, to engage the least attention of the populace: For such the whole nation were at this time become. The popish plot passed for incontestable: And had not men soon expected with certainty the legal punishment of these criminals, the catholics had been exposed to the hazard of an universal massacre. The torrent indeed of national prejudices ran so high, that no one, without the most imminent

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

nent danger, durst venture openly to oppose it; nay, scarcely any one, without great force of judgment, could even secretly entertain an opinion contrary to the prevailing sentiments. The loud and unanimous voice of a great nation has mighty authority over weak minds; and even later historians are so swayed by the concurring judgment of such multitudes, that some of them have esteemed themselves sufficiently moderate, when they affirmed that many circumstances of the plot were true, though some were added, and others much magnified. But it is an obvious principle, that a witness, who perjures himself in one circumstance, is credible in none: And the authority of the plot, even to the end of the prosecutions, stood entirely upon witnesses. Though the catholics had been suddenly and unexpectedly detected, at the very moment when their conspiracy, it is said, was ripe for execution; no arms, no ammunition, no money, no commissions, no papers, no letters, after the most rigorous search, ever were discovered, to confirm the evidence of Oates and Bedloe. Yet still the nation, though often frustrated, went on in the eager pursuit and confident belief of the conspiracy: And even the manifold inconsistencies and absurdities, contained in the narratives, instead of discouraging them, served only as farther incentives to discover the bottom of the plot, and were considered as slight objections, which a more complete information would fully remove. In all history, it will be difficult to find such another instance of popular frenzy and bigoted delusion.

In order to support the panic among the people, especially among the citizens of London, a pamphlet was published with this title, "A narrative "and impartial discovery of the horrid popish plot, "carried on for burning and destroying the cities "of London and Westminster, with their suburbs; "setting forth the several consults, orders, and "resolutions

" resolutions of the Jesuits, concerning the same: " By captain William Bedloe, lately engaged in " that horrid design, and one of the popish com- " mittee for carrying on such fires." Every fire which had happened for several years past, is there ascribed to the machinations of the Jesuits, who purposed, as Bedloe said, by such attempts, to find an opportunity for the general massacre of the protestants; and in the mean time, were well pleased to enrich themselves, by pilfering goods from the fire.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

THE king, though he scrupled not, wherever he could speak freely, to throw the highest ridicule on the plot, and on all who believed it; yet found it necessary to adopt the popular opinion before the parliament. The torrent, he saw, ran too strong to be controlled; and he could only hope, by a seeming compliance, to be able, after some time, to guide and direct and elude its fury. He made therefore a speech to both houses; in which he told them, that he would take the utmost care of his person during these times of danger; that he was as ready as their hearts could wish, to join with them in all means for establishing the protestant religion, not only during his own time, but for all future ages; and that, provided the right of succession were preserved, he would consent to any laws for restraining a popish successor: And in conclusion, he exhorted them to think of effectual means for the conviction of popish recusants; and he highly praised the duty and loyalty of all his subjects, who had discovered such anxious concern for his safety.

THESE gracious expressions abated nothing of the vehemence of parliamentary proceedings. A bill was introduced for a new test, in which popery was denominated idolatry; and all members, who refused this test, were excluded from both houses. The bill passed the commons without much oppo-

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

sition; but in the upper house the duke moved that an exception might be admitted in his favour. With great earnestness, and even with tears in his eyes, he told them, that he was now to cast himself on their kindness, in the greatest concern which he could have in the world; and he protested, that whatever his religion might be, it should only be a private *thing* between God and his own soul, and never should appear in his public conduct. Notwithstanding this strong effort, in so important a point, he prevailed only by two voices; a sufficient indication of the general disposition of the people. "I would not have," said a noble peer, in the debate on this bill, "so much as a popish "man or a popish woman to remain here; not so "much as a popish dog or a popish bitch; not so "much as a popish cat to pur or mew about the "king." What is more extraordinary, this speech met with praise and approbation.

ENCOURAGED by this general fury, the witnesses went still a step farther in their accusations; and though both Oates and Bedloe had often declared, that there was no other person of distinction, whom they knew to be concerned in the plot, they were now so audacious as to accuse the queen herself of entering into the design against the life of her husband. The commons, in an address to the king, gave countenance to this scandalous accusation; but the lords would not be prevailed with to join in the address. It is here, if any where, that we may suspect the suggestions of the popular leaders to have had place. The king, it was well known, bore no great affection to his consort; and now, more than ever, when his brother and heir was so much hated, had reason to be desirous of issue, which might quiet the jealous fears of his people. This very hatred, which prevailed against the duke, would much facilitate, he knew, any expedient that could be devised for the exclusion of that prince;

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and nothing farther seemed requisite for the king, than to give way in this particular to the rage and fury of the nation. But Charles, notwithstanding all allurements of pleasure, or interest, or safety, had the generosity to protect his injured consort. "They think," said he, "I have a mind to a new "wife, but for all that, I will not see an innocent "woman abused."[w] He immediately ordered Oates to be strictly confined, seized his papers. and dismissed his servants; and this daring informer was obliged to make applications to parliament, in order to recover his liberty. CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

DURING this agitation of men's minds, the parliament gave new attention to the militia; a circumstance which, even during times of greatest tranquillity, can never prudently be neglected. They passed a bill, by which it was enacted, that a regular militia should be kept in arms, during six weeks of the year, and a third part of them do duty every fortnight of that time. The popular leaders probably intended to make use of the general prejudices, and even to turn the arms of the people against the prince.[x] But Charles refused his assent to the bill, and told the parliament, that he would not, were it for half an hour, part so far with the power of the sword: But if they would contrive any other bill for ordering the militia, and still leave it in his power to assemble or dismiss them as he thought proper, he would willingly give it the royal assent. The commons, dissatisfied with this negative, though the king had never before employed that prerogative, immediately voted that all the new levied forces should be disbanded. They passed a bill, granting money for that purpose; but to shew their extreme jealousy of the crown, besides appropriating the money by the strictest clauses, they ordered it to be paid not into the exchequer, but

[w] North's Examen, p. 186. [x] Burnet, vol. i. p. 437.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

but into the chamber of London. The lords demurred with regard to so extraordinary a clause, which threw a violent reflection on the king's ministers, and even on himself, and by that means the act remained in suspense.

Accusation of Danby.

It was no wonder, that the present ferment and credulity of the nation engaged men of infamous character and indigent circumstances to become informers, when persons of rank and condition could be tempted to give into that scandalous practice. Montague, the king's ambassador at Paris, had procured a seat in the lower house; and without obtaining or asking the king's leave, he suddenly came over to England. Charles, suspecting his intention, ordered his papers to be seized; but Montague, who foresaw this message, had taken care to secrete one paper, which he immediately laid before the house of commons. It was a letter from the treasurer Danby, written in the beginning of the year, during the negotiations at Nimeguen for the general peace. Montague was there directed to make a demand of money from France; or, in other words, the king was willing secretly to sell his good offices to Lewis, contrary to the general interests of the confederates, and even to those of his own kingdoms. The letter, among other particulars, contains these words: "In case "the conditions of peace shall be accepted, the "king expects to have six millions of livres a year "for three years, from the time that this agreement "shall be signed between his majesty and the king "of France; because it will probably be two or "three years before the parliament will be in "humour to give him any supplies after the mak-"ing of any peace with France; and the ambassador "here has always agreed to that sum; but not "for so long a time." Danby was so unwilling to engage in this negotiation, that the king, to satisfy him, subjoined with his own hand these words; "This

"This letter is writ by my order, C. R." Montague, who revealed this secret correspondence, had even the baseness to sell his base treachery at a high price to the French monarch.[a] CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

THE commons were inflamed with this intelligence against Danby; and carrying their suspicions farther than the truth, they concluded, that the king had all along acted in concert with the French court; and that every step, which he had taken in conjunction with the allies, had been illusory and deceitful. Desirous of getting to the bottom of so important a secret, and being pushed by Danby's numerous enemies, they immediately voted an impeachment of high treason against that minister, and sent up six articles to the house of peers. These articles were, That he had traitorously engrossed to himself regal power, by giving instructions to his majesty's ambassadors, without the participation of the secretaries of state, or the privy-council: That he had traitorously endeavoured to subvert the government, and introduce arbitrary power; and to that end had levied and continued an army, contrary to act of parliament: That he had traitorously endeavoured to alienate the affections of his majesty's subjects, by negotiating a disadvantageous peace with France, and procuring money for that purpose: That he was popishly affected, and had traitorously concealed, after he had notice, the late horrid and bloody plot, contrived by the papists against his majesty's person and government: That he had wasted the king's treasure; and that he had, by indirect means, obtained several exorbitant grants from the crown. His impeachment.

IT is certain that the treasurer, in giving instructions to an ambassador, had exceeded the bounds of his office; and as the genius of a monarchy, strictly limited, requires that the proper minister should be answerable for every abuse of power, the commons, though they here advanced a new pretension, might justify

[a] Appendix to Sir John Dalrymple's Memoirs.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678.

justify themselves by the utility, and even necessity of it. But in other respects their charge against Danby was very ill grounded. That minister made it appear to the house of lords, not only that Montague, the informer against him, had all along promoted the money-negotiations with France, but that he himself was ever extremely averse to the interests of that crown, which he esteemed pernicious to his master and to his country. The French nation, he said, had always entertained, as he was certainly informed, the highest contempt, both of the king's person and government. His diligence, he added, in tracing and discovering the popish plot, was generally known; and if he had common sense, not to say common honesty, he would surely be anxious to preserve the life of a master, by whom he was so much favoured. He had wasted no treasure, because there was no treasure to waste. And though he had reason to be grateful for the king's bounty, he had made more moderate acquisitions than were generally imagined, and than others in his office had often done, even during a shorter administration.

THE house of peers plainly saw, that allowing all the charges of the commons to be true, Danby's crime fell not under the statute of Edward III.; and though the words, *treason* and *traitorously*, had been carefully inserted in several articles, this appellation could not change the nature of things, or subject him to the penalties annexed to that crime. They refused, therefore, to commit Danby upon this irregular charge: The commons insisted on their demand; and a great contest was likely to arise, when the king, who had already seen sufficient instances of the ill-humour of the parliament, thought proper to prorogue them. This prorogation was soon after followed by a dissolution; a desperate remedy in the present disposition of the nation. But the disease, it must be owned, the king had reason to esteem desperate. The utmost rage had been discovered by the commons,

30th Dec. Dissolution of the long parliament.

commons, on account of the popish plot; and their fury began already to point against the royal family, if not against the throne itself. The duke had been struck at in several motions: The treasurer had been impeached: All supply had been refused, except on the most disagreeable conditions: Fears, jealousies, and antipathies were every day multiplying in parliament: And though the people were strongly infected with the same prejudices, the king hoped, that, by dissolving the present cabals, a set of men might be chosen more moderate in their pursuits, and less tainted with the virulence of faction. CHAR. LXVII. 1678.

Its character.

THUS came to a period a parliament, which had sitten during the whole course of this reign, one year excepted. Its conclusion was very different from its commencement. Being elected during the joy and festivity of the restoration, it consisted almost entirely of royalists; who were disposed to support the crown by all the liberality which the habits of that age would permit. Alarmed by the alliance with France, they gradually withdrew their confidence from the king; and finding him still to persevere in a foreign interest, they proceeded to discover symptoms of the most refractory and most jealous disposition. The popish plot pushed them beyond all bounds of moderation; and before their dissolution, they seemed to be treading fast in the footsteps of the last long parliament, on whose conduct they threw at first such violent blame. In all their variations, they had still followed the opinions and prejudices of the nation; and ever seemed to be more governed by humour and party-views than by public interest, and more by public interest than by any corrupt or private influence.

DURING the sitting of the parliament, and after its prorogation and dissolution, the trials of the pretended criminals were carried on, and the courts of judicature, places which, if possible, ought to be kept more pure from injustice than even national assemblies

CHAP. LXVII. assemblies themselves, were strongly infected with the same party-rage and bigoted prejudices. Coleman, the most obnoxious of the conspirators, was first brought to his trial. His letters were produced against him. They contained, as he himself confessed, much indiscretion: But unless so far as it is illegal to be a zealous catholic, they seemed to prove nothing criminal, much less treasonable, against him. Oates and Bedloe deposed, that he had received a commission, signed by the superior of the Jesuits, to be papal secretary of state, and had consented to the poisoning, shooting, and stabbing of the king: He had even, according to Oates's deposition, advanced a guinea to promote those bloody purposes. These wild stories were confounded with the projects contained in his letters; and Coleman received sentence of death. The sentence was soon after executed upon him.[y] He suffered with calmness and constancy, and to the last persisted in the strongest protestations of his innocence.

1678. Trial of Coleman.

Of Ireland. COLEMAN'S execution was succeeded by the trial of father Ireland, who, it is pretended, had signed, together with fifty Jesuits, the great resolution of murdering the king. Grove and Pickering, who had undertaken to shoot him, were tried at the same time The only witnesses against the prisoners were still Oates and Bedloe. Ireland affirmed, that he was in Staffordshire all the month of August last, a time when Oates's evidence made him in London. He proved his assertion by good evidence, and would have proved it by undoubted, had he not most iniquitously been debarred, while in prison, from all use of pen, ink, and paper, and denied the liberty of sending for witnesses. All these men, before their arraignment, were condemned in the opinion of the judges, jury, and spectators; and to be a Jesuit, or even a catholic, was of itself a sufficient

[y] 3d of December.

cient proof of guilt. The chief justice,[z] in particular, gave sanction to all the narrow prejudices and bigoted fury of the populace. Instead of being counsel for the prisoners, as his office required, he pleaded the cause against them, brow-beat their witnesses, and on every occasion represented their guilt as certain and uncontroverted. He even went so far as publickly to affirm, that the papists had not the same principles which protestants have, and therefore were not entitled to that common *credence*, which the principles and practices of the latter call for. And when the jury brought in their verdict against the prisoners, he said, "You have done, "gentlemen, like very good subjects, and very "good Christians, that is to say, like very good "protestants; And now much good may their "30,000 masses do them:" Alluding to the masses by which Pickering was to be rewarded for murdering the king. All these unhappy men went to execution, protesting their innocence; a circumstance which made no impression on the spectators The opinion, that the Jesuits allowed of lies and mental reservations, for promoting a good cause, was at this time so universally received, that no credit was given to testimony delivered either by that order, or by any of their disciples. It was forgotten, that all the conspirators engaged in the gun-powder treason, and Garnet, the Jesuit, among the rest, had freely on the scaffold made confession of their guilt.

CHAP. LXVII. 1678. 1679. 14th Jan

THOUGH Bedloe had given information of Godfrey's murder, he still remained a single evidence against the persons accused; and all the allurements of profit and honour had not hitherto tempted any one to confirm the testimony of that informer. At last means were found to complete the legal evidence. One Prance, a silversmith, and a catholic, had been accused by Bedloe of being an accomplice, in

[z] Sir William Scroggs.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

in the murder; and upon his denial had been thrown into prison, loaded with heavy irons, and confined to the condemned hole, a place cold, dark, and full of nastiness. Such rigours were supposed to be exercised by orders from the secret committee of lords, particularly Shaftesbury and Buckingham; who, in examining the prisoners, usually employed (as it is said, and indeed sufficiently proved) threatenings and promises, rigour and indulgence, and every art, under pretence of extorting the truth from them. Prance had not courage to resist, but confessed himself an accomplice in Godfrey's murder. Being asked concerning the plot, he also thought proper to be acquainted with it, and conveyed some intelligence to the council. Among other absurd circumstances, he said that one Le Fevre bought a second-hand sword of him; because he knew not, as he said, what times were at hand: And Prance expressing some concern for poor tradesmen, if such times came; Le Fevre replied, that it would be better for tradesmen, if the catholic religion were restored: And particularly, that there would be more church work for silversmiths. All this information with regard to the plot, as well as the murder of Godfrey, Prance solemnly retracted, both before the king and the secret committee: But being again thrown into prison, he was induced, by new terrors and new sufferings, to confirm his first information, and was now produced as a sufficient evidence.

Hill, Green, and Berry, were tried for Godfrey's murder; all of them men of low stations. Hill was servant to a physician: The other two belonged to the popish chapel at Somerset-house. It is needless to run over all the particulars of a long trial: It will be sufficient to say, that Bedloe's evidence and Prance's were, in many circumstances, totally irreconcilable; that both of them laboured under unsurmountabl

unsurmountable difficulties, not to say gross absurdities, and that they were invalidated by contrary evidence, which is altogether convincing. But all was in vain: The prisoners were condemned and executed. They all denied their guilt at their execution; and as Berry died a protestant, this circumstance was regarded as very considerable: But, instead of its giving some check to the general credulity of the people, men were only surprised, that a protestant could be induced at his death to persist in so manifest a falsehood. CHAP. LXVII. 1679. Feb. 21st and 28th.

As the army could neither be kept up, nor disbanded, without money, the king, how little hopes soever he could entertain of more compliance, found himself obliged to summon a new parliament. The blood, already shed on account of the popish plot, instead of satiating the people, served only as an incentive to their fury; and each conviction of a criminal was hitherto regarded as a new proof of those horrible designs imputed to the papists. This election is perhaps the first in England, which, since the commencement of the monarchy, had been carried on by a violent contest between the parties, and where the court interested itself, to a high degree, in the choice of the national representatives. But all its efforts were fruitless, in opposition to the torrent of prejudices which prevailed. Religion, liberty, property, even the lives of men, were now supposed to be at stake; and no security, it was thought, except in a vigilant parliament, could be found against the impious and bloody conspirators. Were there any part of the nation to which the ferment, occasioned by the popish plot, had not as yet propagated itself; the new elections, by interesting the whole people in public concerns, tended to diffuse it into the remotest corner; and the consternation universally excited, proved an excellent engine for influencing the electors. All the zealots of the former parliament were re-chosen: New ones New elections.

were

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

were added: The Presbyterians in particular, being transported with the most inveterate antipathy against popery, were very active and very successful in the elections. That party, it is said, first began at this time the abuse of splitting their freeholds, in order to multiply votes and electors. By accounts which came from every part of England, it was concluded, that the new representatives would, if possible, exceed the old in their refractory opposition to the court, and furious persecution of the catholics.

THE king was alarmed, when he saw so dreadful a tempest arise from such small and unaccountable beginnings. His life, if Oates and Bedloe's information were true, had been aimed at by the catholics: Even the duke's was in danger: The higher, therefore, the rage mounted against popery, the more should the nation have been reconciled to these princes, in whom, it appeared, the church of Rome reposed no confidence. But there is a sophistry, which attends all the passions; especially those into which the populace enter. Men gave credit to the informers, so far as concerned the guilt of the catholics. But they still retained their old suspicions, that these religionists were secretly favoured by the king, and had obtained the most entire ascendant over his brother. Charles had too much penetration not to see the danger, to which the succession, and even his own crown and dignity, now stood exposed. A numerous party, he found, was formed against him; on the one hand composed of a populace, so credulous from prejudice, so blinded with religious antipathy, as implicitly to believe the most palpable absurdities; and conducted, on the other hand, by leaders so little scrupulous, as to endeavour, by encouraging perjury, subornation, lies, impostures, and even by shedding innocent blood, to gratify their own furious ambition, and subvert all legal authority. Roused from his lethargy by

by so imminent a peril, he began to exert that vigour of mind, of which, on great occasions, he was not destitute; and without quitting in appearance his usual facility of temper, he collected an industry, firmness, and vigilance, of which he was believed altogether incapable. These qualities, joined to dexterity and prudence, conducted him happily through the many shoals which surrounded him; and he was at last able to make the storm fall on the heads of those who had blindly raised, or artfully conducted it. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

ONE chief step, which the king took, towards gratifying and appeasing his people and parliament, was desiring the duke to withdraw beyond sea, that no farther suspicion might remain of the influence of popish counsels. The duke readily complied; but first required an order for that purpose, signed by the king, lest his absenting himself should be interpreted as a proof of fear or of guilt. He also desired that his brother should satisfy him, as well as the public, by a declaration of the illegitimacy of the duke of Monmouth.

Duke of Monmouth

JAMES duke of Monmouth was the king's natural son by Lucy Walters, and born about ten years before the restoration. He possessed all the qualities which could engage the affections of the populace; a distinguished valour, an affable address, a thoughtless generosity, a graceful person. He rose still higher in the public favour, by reason of the universal hatred to which the duke, on account of his religion, was exposed. Monmouth's capacity was mean; his temper pliant: So that, notwithstanding his great popularity, he had never been dangerous, had he not implicitly resigned himself to the guidance of Shaftesbury, a man of such a restless temper, such subtle wit, and such abandoned principles. That daring politician had flattered Monmouth with the hopes of succeeding to the crown. The story of a contract

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

a contract of marriage, passed between the king and Monmouth's mother, and secretly kept in a certain *black box*, had been industriously spread abroad, and was greedily received by the multitude. As the horrors of popery still pressed harder on them, they might be induced, either to adopt that fiction, as they had already done many others more incredible, or to commit open violation on the right of succession. And it would not be difficult, it was hoped, to persuade the king, who was extremely fond of his son, to give him the preference above a brother, who, by his imprudent bigotry, had involved him in such inextricable difficulties. But Charles, in order to cut off all such expectations, as well as to remove the duke's apprehensions, took care, in full council, to make a declaration of Monmouth's illegitimacy, and to deny all promise of marriage with his mother. The duke, being gratified in so reasonable a request, willingly complied with the king's desire, and retired to Brussels.

Duke of York retires to Brussels.

March 6. New parliament.

But the king soon found, that notwithstanding this precaution, notwithstanding his concurrence in the prosecution of the popish plot, notwithstanding the zeal which he expressed, and even at this time exercised against the catholics; he had nowise obtained the confidence of his parliament. The refractory humour of the lower house appeared in the first step which they took upon their assembling. It had ever been usual for the commons, in the election of their speaker, to consult the inclinations of the sovereign, and even the long parliament in 1641 had not thought proper to depart from so established a custom. The king now desired that the choice should fall on sir Thomas Meres: But Seymour, speaker to the last parliament, was instantly called to the chair, by a vote which seemed unanimous. The king, when Seymour was presented to him for his approbation, rejected him, and ordered

ordered the commons to proceed to a new choice. A great flame was excited. The commons maintained, that the king's approbation was merely a matter of form, and that he could not, without giving a reason, reject the speaker chosen: The king, that, since he had the power of rejecting, he might, if he pleased, keep the reason in his own breast. As the question had never before been started, it might seem difficult to find principles, upon which it could be decided.[a] By way of compromise, it was agreed to set aside both candidates. Gregory, a lawyer, was chosen; and the election was ratified by the king. It has ever since been understood that the choice of the speaker lies in the house; but that the king retains the power of rejecting any person disagreeable to him. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

SEYMOUR was deemed a great enemy to Danby; and it was the influence of that nobleman, as commonly supposed, which had engaged the king to enter into this ill-timed controversy with the commons. The impeachment therefore of Danby was, on that account, the sooner revived; and it was maintained by the commons, that notwithstanding the intervening dissolution, every part of that proceeding stood in the same condition in which it had been left by the last parliament: A pretension which, though unusual, seems tacitly to have been yielded them. The king had beforehand had the precaution to grant a pardon to Danby; and, in order to screen the chancellor from all attacks by the commons, he had taken the great seal into his own hands, and had himself affixed it to the parchment. He told the parliament, Danby's impeachment.

[a] In 1566, the speaker said to Q. Elizabeth, that without her allowance the election of the house was of no significance. D'Ewes's Journal, p. 97. In the parliament 1592, 1593, the speaker, who was sir Edward Coke, advances a like position. D'Ewes, p. 459. Townshend, p. 35. So that this pretension of the commons seems to have been somewhat new; like many other powers and privileges.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

ment, that, as Danby had acted in every thing by his orders, he was in no respect criminal; that his pardon, however, he would insist upon; and if it should be found anywise defective in form, he would renew it again and again, till it should be rendered entirely complete: But that he was resolved to deprive him of all employments, and to remove him from court.

THE commons were no-wise satisfied with this concession. They pretended, that no pardon of the crown could be pleaded in bar of an impeachment by the commons. The prerogative of mercy had hitherto been understood to be altogether unlimited in the king; and this pretension of the commons, it must be confessed, was entirely new. It was however not unsuitable to the genius of a monarchy strictly limited; where the king's ministers are supposed to be for ever accountable to national assemblies, even for such abuses of power as they may commit by orders from their master. The present emergence, while the nation was so highly inflamed, was the proper time for for pushing such popular claims; and the commons failed not to avail themselves of this advantage. They still insisted on the impeachment of Danby. The peers, in compliance with them, departed from their former scruples, and ordered Danby to be taken into custody. Danby absconded. The commons passed a bill, appointing him to surrender himself before a certain day, or, in default of it, attainting him. A bill had passed the upper house, mitigating the penalty to banishment; but, after some conferences, the peers thought proper to yield to the violence of the commons, and the bill of attainder was carried. Rather than undergo such severe penalties, Danby appeared, and was immediately committed to the Tower.

WHILE a protestant nobleman met with such violent prosecution, it was not likely that the catholics would be overlooked by the zealous commons. The credit of the popish plot still stood upon the

oaths

oaths of a few infamous witnesses. Though such immense preparations were supposed to have been made in the very bowels of the kingdom, no traces of them, after the most rigorous inquiry, had as yet appeared. Though so many thousands, both abroad and at home, had been engaged in the dreadful secret; neither hope, nor fear, nor remorse, nor levity, nor suspicions, nor private resentment, had engaged any one to confirm the evidence. Though the catholics, particularly the Jesuits, were represented as guilty of the utmost indiscretion, insomuch that they talked of the king's murder as common news, and wrote of it in plain terms by the common post; yet, among the great number of letters seized, no one contained any part of so complicated a conspiracy. Though the informers pretended that, even after they had resolved to betray the secret, many treasonable commissions and papers had passed through their hands; they had not had the precaution to keep any one of them, in order to fortify their evidence. But all these difficulties, and a thousand more, were not found too hard of digestion by the nation and parliament. The prosecution and farther discovery of the plot were still the object of general concern. The commons voted, that, if the king should come to an untimely end, they would revenge his death upon the papists; not reflecting that this sect were not his only enemies. They promised rewards to new discoverers; not considering the danger, which they incurred, of granting bribes to perjury. They made Bedloe a present of 500 pounds, and particularly recommended the care of his safety to the duke of Monmouth. Colonel Sackville, a member, having, in a private company, spoken opprobriously of those who affirmed that there was any plot, was expelled the house. The peers gave power to their committees to send for and examine such

CHAP. LXVII. 1679. Popish plot.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

such as would maintain the innocence of those who had been condemned for the plot. A pamphlet having been published to discredit the informers, and to vindicate the catholic lords in the Tower, these lords were required to discover the author, and thereby to expose their own advocate to prosecution. And both houses concurred in renewing the former vote, that the papists had undoubtedly entered into a *horrid* and *treasonable* conspiracy against the king, the state, and the protestant religion.

It must be owned that this extreme violence, in prosecution of so absurd an imposture, disgraces the noble cause of liberty, in which the parliament was engaged. We may even conclude from such impatience of contradiction, that the prosecutors themselves retained a secret suspicion that the general belief was but ill-grounded. The politicians among them were afraid to let in light, lest it might put an end to so useful a delusion: The weaker and less dishonest party took care, by turning their eyes aside, not to see a truth, so opposite to those furious passions, by which they were actuated, and in which they were determined obstinately to persevere.

Sir William Temple had lately been recalled from his foreign employments; and the king, who, after the removal of Danby, had no one with whom he could so much as discourse with freedom of public affairs, was resolved, upon Coventry's dismission, to make him one of his secretaries of state. But that philosophical patriot, too little interested for the intrigues of a court, too full of spleen and delicacy for the noisy turbulence of popular assemblies, was alarmed at the universal discontents and jealousies which prevailed, and was determined to make his retreat, as soon as possible, from a scene which threatened such confusion. Meanwhile, he could not refuse the confidence with which his master

master honoured him; and he resolved to employ it to the public service. He represented to the king, that, as the jealousies of the nation were extreme, it was necessary to cure them by some new remedy, and to restore that mutual confidence, so requisite for the safety both of king and people: That to refuse every thing to the parliament in their present disposition, or to yield every thing, was equally dangerous to the constitution, as well as to public tranquillity: That if the king would introduce into his councils such men as enjoyed the confidence of his people, fewer concessions would probably be required; or if unreasonable demands were made, the king, under the sanction of such counsellors, might be enabled, with the greater safety, to refuse them: And that the heads of the popular party, being gratified with the king's favour, would probably abate of that violence by which they endeavoured at present to pay court to the multitude. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

New council.

THE king assented to these reasons; and, in concert with Temple, he laid the plan of a new privy-council, without whose advice he declared himself determined for the future to take no measure of importance. This council was to consist of thirty persons, and was never to exceed that number. Fifteen of the chief officers of the crown were to be continued, who, it was supposed, would adhere to the king, and, in case of any extremity, oppose the exorbitances of faction. The other half of the council was to be composed, either of men of character, detached from the court, or of those who possessed chief credit in both houses. And the king, in filling up the names of his new council, was well pleased to find that the members, in land and offices, possessed to the amount of 300,000 pounds a-year; a sum nearly equal to the whole property of the house of commons, against whose violence

CHAP. LXVII. violence the new council was intended as a barrier to the throne.[b]

1679. THIS experiment was tried, and seemed at first to give some satisfaction to the public. The earl of Essex, a nobleman of the popular party, son of that lord Capel who had been beheaded a little after the late king, was created treasurer in the room of Danby: The earl of Sunderland, a man of intrigue and capacity, was made secretary of state: Viscount Halifax, a fine genius, possessed of learning, eloquence, industry, but subject to inquietude, and fond of refinements, was admitted into the council. These three, together with Temple, who often joined them, though he kept himself more detached from public business, formed a kind of cabinet council, from which all affairs received their first digestion. Shaftesbury was made president of the council, contrary to the advice of Temple, who foretold the consequence of admitting a man of so dangerous a character into any part of the public administration.

As Temple foresaw, it happened. Shaftesbury, finding that he possessed no more than the appearance of court-favour, was resolved still to adhere to the popular party, by whose attachment he enjoyed an undisputed superiority in the lower house, and possessed great influence in the other. The very appearance of court-favour, empty as it was, tended to render him more dangerous. His partisans, observing the progress which he had already made,

[b] Their names were; Prince Rupert, the archbishop of Canterbury, lord Finch, chancellor, earl of Shaftesbury, president, earl of Anglesea, privy-seal, duke of Albemarle, duke of Monmouth, duke of Newcastle, duke of Lauderdale, duke of Ormond, marquis of Winchester, marquis of Worcester, earl of Arlington, earl of Salisbury, earl of Bridgwater, earl of Sunderland, earl of Essex, earl of Bath, viscount Fauconberg, viscount Halifax, bishop of London, lord Roberts, lord Hollis, lord Russel, lord Cavendish, secretary Coventry, sir Francis North, chief justice, sir Henry Capel, sir John Ernley, sir Thomas Chicheley, sir William Temple, Edward Seymour, Henry Powle.

hoped that he would soon acquire the entire ascendant; and he constantly flattered them, that if they persisted in their purpose, the king, from indolence, and necessity, and fondness for Monmouth, would at last be induced, even at the expence of his brother's right, to make them every concession. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

BESIDES, the antipathy to popery, as well as jealousy of the king and duke, had taken too fast possession of men's minds, to be removed by so feeble a remedy as this new council projected my Temple. The commons, soon after the establishment of that council, proceeded so far as to vote unanimously, "That the duke of York's being a "papist, and the hopes of his coming to the crown, "had given the highest countenance to the present "conspiracies and designs of the papists against the "king and the protestant religion." It was expected that a bill for excluding him the throne would soon be brought in. To prevent this bold measure, the king concerted some limitations, which he proposed to the parliament. He introduced his plan by the following gracious expressions: "And "to shew you that, while you are doing your "parts, my thoughts have not been misemployed, "but that it is my constant care to do every thing "that may preserve your religion, and secure it for "the future in all events, I have commanded my "lord chancellor to mention several particulars; "which, I hope, will be an evidence that, in all "things which concern the public security, I shall "not follow your zeal, but lead it."

THE limitations projected were of the utmost importance, and deprived the successor of the chief branches of royalty. A method was there chalked out, by which the nation, on every new reign, could be ensured of having a parliament, which the king should not, for a certain time, have it in his power to dissolve. In case of a popish successor, the Limitations on a popish successor.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

the prince was to forfeit the right of conferring any ecclesiastical preferments: No member of the privy council, no judge of the common law, or in chancery, was to be put in or displaced but by consent of parliament: And the same precaution was extended to the military part of the government; to the lord lieutenants and deputy lieutenants of the counties, and to all officers of the navy. The chancellor, himself, added, "It is hard to invent "another restraint; considering how much the "revenue will depend upon the consent of parliament, and how impossible it is to raise money "without such consent. But yet, if any thing else can occur to the wisdom of parliament, which "may farther secure religion and liberty against a "popish successor, without defeating the right of succession itself, his majesty will readily consent to it."

It is remarkable that, when these limitations were first laid before the council, Shaftesbury and Temple were the only members who argued against them. The reasons which they employed were diametrically opposite. Shaftesbury's opinion was, that the restraints were insufficient; and that nothing but the total exclusion of the duke could give a proper security to the kingdom. Temple, on the other hand, thought that the restraints were so rigorous as even to subvert the constitution; and that shackles, put upon a popish successor, would not afterwards be easily cast off by a protestant. It is certain that the duke was extremely alarmed when he heard of this step taken by the king, and that he was better pleased even with the bill of exclusion itself, which he thought, by reason of its violence and injustice, could never possibly be carried into execution. There is also reason to believe that the king would not have gone so far, had he not expected, from the extreme fury of the commons, that his concessions would be rejected, and that the blame of

of not forming a reasonable accommodation would by that means lie entirely at their door. CHAP. LXVII.

1679.

It soon appeared that Charles had entertained a just opinion of the dispositions of the house. So much were the commons actuated by the cabals of Shaftesbury and other malcontents; such violent antipathy prevailed against popery, that the king's concessions, though much more important than could reasonably have been expected, were not embraced. A bill was brought in for the total exclusion of the duke from the crown of England and Ireland. It was there declared, that the sovereignty of these kingdoms, upon the king's death or resignation, should devolve to the person next in succession after the duke: that all acts of royalty which that prince should afterwards perform, should not only be void, but be deemed treason; that if he so much as entered any of these dominions, he should be deemed guilty of the same offence; and that all who supported his title should be punished as rebels and traitors. This important bill, which implied banishment as well as exclusion, passed the lower house by a majority of seventy-nine. Bill of exclusion.

The commons were not so wholly employed about the exclusion-bill as to overlook all other securities to liberty. The country party, during all the last parliament, had much exclaimed against the bribery and corruption of the members; and the same reproach had been renewed against the present parliament. An inquiry was made into a complaint which was so dangerous to the honour of that assembly, but very little foundation was found for it. Sir Stephen Fox, who was the pay-master, confessed to the house that nine members received pensions to the amount of three thousand four hundred pounds: And after a rigorous inquiry by a secret committee, eight more pensioners were discovered. A sum also, about twelve thousand pounds, had been occasionally

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

occasionally given or lent to others. The writers of that age pretend that Clifford and Danby had adopted opposite maxims with regard to pecuniary influence. The former endeavoured to gain the leaders and orators of the house, and deemed the others of no consequence. The latter thought it sufficient to gain a majority, however composed. It is likely that the means, rather than the intention, were wanting to both these ministers.

PENSIONS and bribes, though it be difficult entirely to exclude them, are dangerous expedients for government; and cannot be too carefully guarded against, nor too vehemently decried, by every one who has a regard to the virtue and liberty of a nation. The influence, however, which the crown acquires from the disposal of places, honours, and preferments, is to be esteemed of a different nature. This engine of power may become too forcible, but it cannot altogether be abolished, without the total destruction of monarchy, and even of all regular authority. But the commons at this time were so jealous of the crown, that they brought in a bill, which was twice read, excluding from the lower house all who possessed any lucrative office.

THE standing army, and the king's guards, were by the commons voted to be illegal: A new pretension it must be confessed; but necessary for the full security of liberty and a limited constitution.

Habeas corpus bill.

ARBITRARY imprisonment is a grievance which, in some degree, has place almost in every government, except in that of Great Britain; and our absolute security from it we owe chiefly to the present parliament; a merit which makes some atonement for the faction and violence into which their prejudices had, in other particulars, betrayed them. The great charter had laid the foundation of this valuable part of liberty; the petition of right had renewed and extended it; but some provisions were still

still wanting to render it complete, and prevent all evasion or delay from ministers and judges. The act of *habeas corpus*, which passed this session, served these purposes. By this act it was prohibited to send any one to a prison beyond sea. No judge, under severe penalties, must refuse to any prisoner a writ of *habeas corpus*, by which the gaoler was directed to produce in court the body of the prisoner, (whence the writ had its name) and to certify the cause of his detainer and imprisonment. If the gaol lie within twenty miles of the judge, the writ must be obeyed in three days; and so proportionably for greater distances: Every prisoner must be indicted the first term after his commitment, and brought to trial in the subsequent term. And no man, after being enlarged by order of court, can be recommitted for the same offence. This law seems necessary for the protection of liberty in a mixed monarchy; and as it has not place in any other form of government, this consideration alone may induce us to prefer our present constitution to all others. It must, however, be confessed, that there is some difficulty to reconcile with such extreme liberty the full security and the regular police of a state, especially the police of great cities. It may also be doubted whether the low state of the public revenue in this period, and of the military power, did not still render some discretionary authority in the crown necessary to the support of government.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

During these zealous efforts for the protection of liberty, no compliance for the crown was discovered by this parliament. The king's revenue lay under great debts and anticipations: Those branches granted in the year 1669 and 1670 were ready to expire: And the fleet was represented by the king as in great decay and disorder. But the commons, instead of being affected by these distresses of the crown, trusted chiefly to them for passing the exclusion-bill, and for punishing and displacing all the ministers

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

ministers who were obnoxious to them. They were therefore in no haste to relieve the king; and grew only the more assuming on account of his complaints and uneasiness. Jealous, however, of the army, they granted the same sum of 206,000 pounds, which had been voted for disbanding it by the last parliament; though the vote, by reason of the subsequent prorogation and dissolution, joined to some scruples of the lords, had not been carried into an act. This money was appropriated by very strict clauses; but the commons insisted not, as formerly, upon its being paid into the chamber of London.

THE impeachment of the five popish lords in the Tower, with that of the earl of Danby, was carried on with vigour. The power of this minister, and his credit with the king, rendered him extremely obnoxious to the popular leaders; and the commons hoped that, if he were pushed to extremity, he would be obliged, in order to justify his own conduct, to lay open the whole intrigue of the French alliance, which they suspected to contain a secret of the most dangerous nature. The king, on his part, apprehensive of the same consequences, and desirous to protect his minister, who was become criminal merely by obeying orders, employed his whole interest to support the validity of that pardon which had been granted him. The lords appointed a day for the examination of the question, and agreed to hear counsel on both sides: But the commons would not submit their pretensions to the discussion of argument and inquiry. They voted, that whoever should presume, without their leave, to maintain before the house of peers the validity of Danby's pardon, should be accounted a betrayer of the liberties of the English commons. And they made a demand, that the bishops, whom they knew to be devoted to the court, should be removed, not only when the trial of the earl should commence, but also when the validity of his pardon should be discussed.

THE

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

THE bishops before the reformation had always enjoyed a seat in parliament: But so far were they anciently from regarding that dignity as a privilege, that they affected rather to form a separate order in the state, independent of the civil magistrate, and accountable only to the pope and to their own order. By the constitutions, however, of Clarendon, enacted during the reign of Henry II. they were obliged to give their presence in parliament; but as the canon law prohibited them from assisting in capital trials, they were allowed in such cases the privilege of absenting themselves. A practice, which was at first voluntary, became afterwards a rule; and on the earl of Strafford's trial, the bishops, who would gladly have attended, and who were no longer bound by the canon law, were yet obliged to withdraw. It had been usual for them to enter a protest, asserting their right to sit; and this protest, being considered as a mere form, was always admitted and disregarded. But here was started a new question of no small importance. The commons, who were now enabled, by the violence of the people and the necessities of the crown, to make new acquisitions of powers and privileges, insisted that the bishops had no more title to vote in the question of the earl's pardon than in the impeachment itself. The bishops asserted that the pardon was merely a preliminary; and that, neither by the canon law nor the practice of parliament, were they ever obliged, in capital cases, to withdraw till the very commencement of the trial itself. If their absence was considered as a privilege, which was its real origin, it depended on their own choice, how far they would insist upon it. If regarded as a diminution of their right of peerage, such unfavourable customs ought never to be extended beyond the very circumstance established by them; and all arguments, from a pretended parity of reason, were in that case of little or no authority.

THE

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

THE house of lords was so much influenced by these reasons, that they admitted the bishops' right to vote, when the validity of the pardon should be examined. The commons insisted still on their withdrawing; and thus a quarrel being commenced between the two houses; the king, who expected nothing but fresh instances of violence from this parliament, began to entertain thoughts of laying hold of so favourable a pretence, and of finishing the session by a prorogation. While in this disposition, he was alarmed with sudden intelligence, that the house of commons was preparing a remonstrance, in order to inflame the nation still farther upon the favorite topics of the plot and of popery. He hastened, therefore, to execute his intention, even without consulting his new council, by whose advice he had promised to regulate his whole conduct. And thus were disappointed all the projects of the malcontents, who were extremely enraged at this vigorous measure of the king's. Shaftesbury publicly threatened that he would have the head of whoever had advised it. The parliament was soon after dissolved without advice of council; and writs were issued for a new parliament. The king was willing to try every means which gave a prospect of more compliance in his subjects; and, in case of failure, the blame, he hoped, would lie on those whose obstinacy forced him to extremities.

27th May.

Prorogation and dissolution of the parliament, 10th July.

BUT, even during the recess of parliament, there was no interruption to the prosecution of the catholics accused of the plot: The king found himself obliged to give way to this popular fury. Whitebread, provincial of the Jesuits, Fenwic, Gavan, Turner, and Harcourt, all of them of the same order, were first brought to their trial. Besides Oates and Bedloe, Dugdale, a new witness, appeared against the prisoners. This man had been steward to lord Aston, and, though poor, possessed a character somewhat more reputable than the other two:

Trial and execution of the five Jesuits,

two: But his account of the intended massacres and assassinations was equally monstrous and incredible. He even asserted that 200,000 papists in England were ready to take arms. The prisoners proved, by sixteen witnesses from St. Omers, students, and most of them young men of family, that Oates was in that seminary at the time when he swore that he was in London: But as they were catholics, and disciples of the Jesuits, their testimony, both with the judges and jury, was totally disregarded. Even the reception which they met with in court was full of outrage and mockery, One of them saying that Oates always continued at St. Omers, if he could believe his senses; "You papists," said the chief justice, "are taught not to believe your senses." It must be confessed that Oates, in opposition to the students of St. Omers, found means to bring evidence of his having been at that time in London: But this evidence, though it had, at that time, the appearance of some solidity, was afterwards discovered, when Oates himself was tried for perjury, to be altogether deceitful. In order farther to discredit that witness, the Jesuits proved, by undoubted testimony, that he had perjured himself in father Ireland's trial, whom they shewed to have been in Staffordshire at the very time when Oates swore that he was committing treason in London. But all these pleas availed them nothing against the general prejudices. They received sentence of death; and were executed, persisting to their last breath in the most solemn, earnest, and deliberate, though disregarded, protestations of their innocence. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

THE next trial was that of Langhorne, an eminent lawyer, by whom all the concerns of the Jesuits were managed. Oates and Bedloe swore, that all the papal commissions, by which the chief offices in England were filled with catholics, passed through his hands. When verdict was given against the prisoner, and of Langhorne.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

prisoner, the spectators expressed their savage joy by loud acclamations. So high indeed had the popular rage mounted, that the witnesses for this unhappy man, on approaching the court, were almost torn in pieces by the rabble: One in particular was bruised to such a degree as to put his life in danger: And another, a woman, declared that, unless the court could afford her protection, she durst not give evidence: But as the judges could go no farther than promise to punish such as should do her any injury, the prisoner himself had the humanity to wave her testimony.

So far the informers had proceeded with success: Their accusation was hitherto equivalent to a sentence of death. The first check which they received was on the trial of sir George Wakeman, the queen's physician, whom they accused of an intention to poison the king. It was a strong circumstance in favour of Wakeman, that Oates, in his first information before the council, had accused him only upon hearsay; and when asked by the chancellor, whether he had any thing farther to charge him with? he added, "God forbid I should "say any thing against sir George: For I know "nothing more against him." On the trial he gave positive evidence of the prisoner's guilt. There were many other circumstances which favoured Wakeman: But what chiefly contributed to his acquittal, was the connexion of his cause with that of the queen, whom no one, even during the highest prejudices of the times, could sincerely believe guilty. The great importance of the trial made men recollect themselves, and recal that good sense and humanity which seemed, during some time, to have abandoned the nation. The chief justice himself, who had hitherto favoured the witnesses, exaggerated the plot, and railed against the prisoners, was observed to be considerably mollified, and to give a favourable charge to the jury.

Wakeman acquitted, 18th July.

Oates

Oates and Bedloe had the assurance to attack him to his face, and even to accuse him of partiality before the council. The whole party, who had formerly much extolled his conduct, now made him the object of their resentment. Wakeman's acquittal was indeed a sensible mortification to the furious prosecutors of the plot, and fixed an indelible stain upon the witnesses. But Wakeman, after he recovered his liberty, finding himself exposed to such inveterate enmity, and being threatened with farther prosecutions, thought it prudent to retire beyond sea: And his flight was interpreted as a proof of guilt, by those who were still resolved to persist in the belief of the conspiracy. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

State of affairs in Scotland.

THE great discontents in England, and the refractory disposition of the parliament, drew the attention of the Scottish covenanters, and gave them a prospect of some time putting an end to those oppressions, under which they had so long laboured. It was suspected to have been the policy of Lauderdale and his associates to push these unhappy men to extremities, and force them into rebellion, with a view of reaping profit from the forfeitures and attainders which would ensue upon it. But the covenanters, aware of this policy, had hitherto forborne all acts of hostility; and that tyrannical minister had failed of his purpose. An incident at last happened, which brought on an insurrection in that country.

THE covenanters were much enraged against Sharpe, the primate, whom they considered as an apostate from their principles, and whom they experienced to be an unrelenting persecutor of all those who dissented from the established worship. He had an officer under him, one Carmichael, no less zealous than himself against conventicles, and who by his violent prosecutions had rendered himself extremely obnoxious to the fanatics. A company of these had waylaid him on the road near St.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679. 3d May.

Andrews, with an intention, if not of killing him, at least of chastising him so severely as would afterwards render him more cautious in persecuting the non-conformists.[c] While looking out for their prey, they were surprised at seeing the archbishop's coach pass by; and they immediately interpreted this incident as a declaration of the secret purpose of providence against him. But when they observed that almost all his servants, by some accident, were absent, they no longer doubted, but heaven had here delivered their capital enemy into their hands. Without farther deliberation, they fell upon him; dragged him from his coach; tore him from the arms of his daughter, who interposed with cries and tears; and piercing him with redoubled wounds, left him dead on the spot, and immediately dispersed themselves.

THIS atrocious action served the ministry as a pretence for a more violent persecution against the fanatics, on whom, without distinction, they threw the guilt of those furious assassins. It is indeed certain, that the murder of Sharpe had excited an universal joy among the covenanters, and that their blind zeal had often led them, in their books and sermons, to praise and recommend the assassination of their enemies, whom they considered as the enemies of all true piety and godliness. The stories of Jael and Sisera, of Ehud and Eglon, resounded from every pulpit. The officers, quartered in the west, received more strict orders to find out and disperse all conventicles; and for that reason the covenanters, instead of meeting in small bodies, were obliged to celebrate their worship in numerous assemblies, and to bring arms for their security. At Rutherglen, a small borough near Glasgow, they openly set forth a declaration against prelacy; and in the market-place burned several acts of parliament

[c] Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 28.

ment and acts of council, which had established that mode of ecclesiastical government, and had prohibited conventicles. For this insult on the supreme authority, they purposely chose the 29th of May, the anniversary of the restoration; and previously extinguished the bonfires which had been kindled for that solemnity. CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

CAPTAIN Graham, afterwards viscount Dundee, an active and enterprising officer, attacked a great conventicle upon Loudon-hill, and was repulsed with the loss of thirty men. The covenanters, finding that they were unwarily involved in such deep guilt, were engaged to persevere, and to seek, from their valour and fortune alone, for that indemnity, which the severity of the government left them no hopes of ever being able otherwise to obtain. They pushed on to Glasgow; and though at first repulsed, they afterwards made themselves masters of that city; dispossessed the established clergy; and issued proclamations, in which they declared that they fought against the king's supremacy, against popery and prelacy, and against a popish successor.

How accidental soever this insurrection might appear, there is reason to suspect that some great men, in combination with the popular leaders in England, had secretly instigated the covenanters to proceed to such extremities,[d] and hoped for the same effects that had forty years before ensued from the disorders in Scotland. The king also, apprehensive of like consequences, immediately dispatched thither Monmouth with a small body of English cavalry. That nobleman joined to these troops the Scottish guards, and some regiments of militia, levied from the well-affected counties; and with great celerity marched in quest of the rebels. They had taken post near Bothwel-castle, between Hamilton and

Battle of Bothwel-bridge.

[d] Algernon Sidney's letters, p. 90.

CHAP. LXVII. 1679. and Glasgow; where there was no access to them but over a bridge, which a small body was able to defend against the king's forces. They shewed judgment in the choice of their post; but discovered neither judgment nor valour in any other step of their conduct. No nobility and few gentry had joined them: The clergy were in reality the generals; and the whole army never exceeded 8000 men.

22d June. Monmouth attacked the bridge; and the body of rebels who defended it, maintained their post as long as their ammunition lasted. When they sent for more, they received orders to quit their ground, and to retire backwards. This imprudent measure occasioned an immediate defeat to the covenanters. Monmouth passed the bridge without opposition, and drew up his forces opposite to the enemy. His cannon alone put them to rout. About 700 fell in the pursuit; for properly speaking there was no action. Twelve hundred were taken prisoners; and were treated by Monmouth with a humanity which they had never experienced in their own countrymen. Such of them as would promise to live peaceably were dismissed. About three hundred, who were so obstinate as to refuse this easy condition, were shipped for Barbadoes; but unfortunately perished in the voyage. Two of their clergy were hanged. Monmouth was of a generous disposition; and besides aimed at popularity in Scotland. The king intended to intrust the government of that kingdom in his hands. He had married a Scottish lady, heir of a great family, and allied to all the chief nobility. And Lauderdale, as he was now declining in his parts, and was much decayed in his memory, began to lose with the king that influence which he had maintained during so many years; notwithstanding the efforts of his numerous enemies both in Scotland and England, and notwithstanding the many violent and tyrannical actions of which he had been guilty. Even at present he retained so much influence

ence as to poison all the good intentions, which the king either of himself, or by Monmouth's suggestion, had formed with regard to Scotland. An act of indemnity was granted: But Lauderdale took care that it should be so worded as rather to afford protection to himself and his associates, than to the unhappy covenanters. And though orders were given to connive thenceforwards at all conventicles, he found means, under a variety of pretences, to elude the execution of them. It must be owned however, to his praise, that he was the chief person, who, by his counsel, occasioned the expeditious march of the forces and the prompt orders given to Monmouth; and thereby disappointed all the expectations of the English malcontents, who, reflecting on the disposition of men's minds in both kingdoms, had entertained great hopes from the progress of the Scottish insurrection.

CHAP. LXVIII.

State of parties—State of the ministry—Mealtub plot—Whig and Tory—A new parliament—Violence of the commons—Exclusion-bill—Arguments for and against the exclusion—Exclusion-bill rejected—Trial of Stafford—His execution—Violence of the commons—Dissolution of the parliament—New Parliament at Oxford—Fitzharris's case—Parliament dissolved—Victory of the royalists.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1679.

THE king, observing that the whole nation concurred at first in the belief and prosecution of the popish plot, had found it necessary for his own safety, to pretend, in all public speeches and transactions, an entire belief and acquiescence in that famous absurdity, and by this artifice he had eluded the violent and irresistible torrent of the people. When a little time and recollection, as well as the execution of the pretended conspirators, had somewhat moderated the general fury, he was now enabled to form a considerable party, devoted to the interests of the crown, and determined to oppose the pretensions of the malcontents.

State of parties.

IN every mixed government, such as that of England, the bulk of the nation will always incline to preserve the entire frame of the constitution; but according to the various prejudices, interests, and dispositions of men, some will ever attach themselves with more passion to the regal, others to the popular, part of the government. Though the king, after his restoration, had endeavoured to abolish

abolish the distinction of parties, and had chosen his ministers from among all denominations; no sooner had he lost his popularity, and exposed himself to general jealousy, than he found it necessary to court the old cavalier party, and to promise them full compensation for that neglect of which they had hitherto complained. The present emergence made it still more necessary for him to apply for their support; and there were many circumstances which determined them, at this time, to fly to the assistance of the crown, and to the protection of the royal family. CHAP. LXVIII. 1679.

A PARTY, strongly attached to monarchy, will naturally be jealous of the right of succession, by which alone they believe stability to be preserved in the government, and a barrier fixed against the encroachments of popular assemblies. The project openly embraced, of excluding the duke, appeared to that party a dangerous innovation: And the design, secretly projected, of advancing Monmouth, made them apprehensive lest the inconveniencies of a disputed succession, should be propagated to all posterity. While the jealous lovers of liberty maintained, that a king whose title depended on the parliament would naturally be more attentive to the interests, at least to the humours, of the people; the passionate admirers of monarchy considered all dependence as a degradation of kingly government, and a great step towards the establishment of a commonwealth of England.

BUT though his union with the political royalists brought great accession of force to the king, he derived no less support from the confederacy, which he had, at this time, the address to form with the church of England. He represented to the ecclesiastics the great number of presbyterians and other sectaries, who had entered into the popular party; the encouragement and favour which they met with; the loudness of their cries with regard to popery

CHAP. LXVII. 1679.

popery and arbitrary power. And he made the established clergy and their adherents apprehend, that the old scheme for the abolition of prelacy as well as monarchy was revived, and that the same miseries and oppressions awaited them, to which, during the civil wars and usurpations, they had so long been exposed.

THE memory also of those dismal times united many indifferent and impartial persons to the crown, and begat a dread lest the zeal for liberty should engraft itself on fanaticism, and should once more kindle a civil war in the kingdom. Had not the king still retained the prerogative of dissolving the parliament, there was, indeed, reason to apprehend the renewal of all the pretensions and violences which had ushered in the last commotions. The one period appeared an exact counterpart to the other: But still discerning judges could perceive, both in the spirit of the parties and in the genius of the prince, a material difference; by means of which Charles was enabled at last, though with the imminent peril of liberty, to preserve the peace of the nation.

THE cry against popery was loud; but it proceeded less from religious than from party zeal in those who propagated, and even in those who adopted it. The spirit of enthusiasm had occasioned so much mischief, and had been so successfully exploded, that it was not possible, by any artifice again to revive and support it. Cant had been ridiculed, hypocrisy detected; the pretensions to a more thorough reformation, and to greater purity, had become suspicious; and instead of denominating themselves the *godly* party, the appellation affected at the beginning of the civil wars, the present patriots were content with calling themselves the *good* and the *honest* party:[e] A sure prognostic that their measures were not to be so furious, nor their pretensions so exorbitant.

THE

[e] *Temple, vol. i. p. 335.*

CHAP. LXVIII. 1679.

THE king too, though not endowed with the integrity and strict principles of his father, was happy in a more amiable manner, and more popular address. Far from being distant, stately, or reserved, he had not a grain of pride or vanity in his whole composition;[f] but was the most affable, best bred man alive. He treated his subjects like noblemen, like gentlemen, like freemen; not like vassals or boors. His professions were plausible, his whole behaviour engaging; so that he won upon the hearts, even while he lost the good opinion of his subjects, and often balanced their judgment of things by their personal inclination.[g] In his public conduct likewise, though he had sometimes embraced measures dangerous to the liberty and religion of his people, he had never been found to persevere obstinately in them, but had always returned into that path, which their united opinion seemed to point out to him. And upon the whole, it appeared to many, cruel, and even iniquitous, to remark too rigorously the failings of a prince, who discovered so much facility in correcting his errors, and so much lenity in pardoning the offences committed against himself.

THE general affection borne the king appeared signally about this time. He fell sick at Windsor; and had two or three fits of a fever, so violent as made his life be thought in danger. A general consternation seized all ranks of men, increased by the apprehensions entertained of his successor. In the present disposition of men's minds, the king's death, to use an expression of sir William Temple,[h] was regarded as the end of the world. The malcontents, it was feared, would proceed to extremities, and immediately kindle a civil war in the kingdom. Either their entire success, or entire failure,

[f] Temple, vol. i. p. 449. [g] Dissertation on Parties, letter vii.
[h] Vol i. p. 342.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1679. State of the ministry.

failure, or even the balance and contest of parties, seemed all of them events equally fatal. The king's chief counsellors therefore, Essex, Halifax, and Sunderland, who stood on bad terms with Shaftesbury and the popular party, advised him to send secretly for the duke, that in case of any sinister accident, that prince might be ready to assert his right against the opposition which he was likely to meet with. When the duke arrived, he found his brother out of danger; and it was agreed to conceal the invitation which he had received. His journey, however, was attended with important consequences. He prevailed on the king to disgrace Monmouth, whose projects were now known and avowed; to deprive him of his command in the army; and to send him beyond sea. He himself returned to Brussels; but made a short stay in that place. He obtained leave to retire to Scotland, under pretence still of quieting the apprehensions of the English nation; but in reality with a view of securing that kingdom in his interests.

2d Sept.

Though Essex and Halifax had concurred in the resolution of inviting over the duke, they soon found, that they had not obtained his confidence, and that even the king, while he made use of their service, had no sincere regard for their persons. Essex in disgust resigned the treasury: Halifax retired to his country-seat: Temple, despairing of any accommodation among such enraged parties, withdrew almost entirely to his books and his gardens. The king who changed ministers as well as measures with great indifference, bestowed at this time his chief confidence on Hyde, Sunderland, and Godolphin. Hyde succeeded Essex in the treasury.

All the king's ministers, as well as himself, were extremely averse to the meeting of the new parliament, which they expected to find as refractory as any of the preceding. The elections had gone mostly

mostly in favour of the country party. The terrors of the plot had still a mighty influence over the populace; and the apprehensions of the duke's bigoted principles and arbitrary character weighed with men of sense and reflection. The king therefore resolved to prorogue the parliament, that he might try, whether time would allay those humours, which, by every other expedient, he had in vain attempted to mollify. In this measure he did not expect the concurrence of his council. He knew that those popular leaders, whom he had admitted, would zealously oppose a resolution, which disconcerted all their schemes; and that the royalists would not dare, by supporting it, to expose themselves to the vengeance of the parliament, when it should be assembled. These reasons obliged him to take this step entirely of himself; and he only declared his resolution in council. It is remarkable, that, though the king had made profession never to embrace any measure without the advice of these counsellors, he had often broken that resolution, and had been necessitated, in affairs of the greatest consequence, to control their opinion. Many of them in disgust threw up about this time; particularly lord Russel, the most popular man in the nation, as well from the mildness and integrity of his character, as from his zealous attachment to the religion and liberties of his country. Though carried into some excesses, his intentions were ever esteemed upright; and being heir to the greatest fortune in the kingdom, as well as void of ambition, men believed that nothing but the last necessity could ever engage him to embrace any desperate measures. Shaftesbury, who was, in most particulars, of an opposite character, was removed by the king from the office of president of the council; and the earl of Radnor, a man who possessed whimsical talents and splenetic virtues, was substituted in his place.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1679.

CHAR. LXVIII. 1679.

It was the favour and countenance of the parliament, which had chiefly encouraged the rumour of plots; but the nation had gotten so much into that vein of credulity, and every necessitous villain was so much incited by the success of Oates and Bedloe, that, even during the prorogation, the people were not allowed to remain in tranquillity. There was one Dangerfield, a fellow who had been burned in the hand for crimes, transported, whipped, pilloried four times, fined for cheats, outlawed for felony, convicted of coining, and exposed to all the public infamy which the laws could inflict on the basest and most shameful enormities. The credulity of the people, and the humour of the times, enabled even this man to become a person of consequence. He was the author of a new incident, called the *meal-tub plot*, from the place where some papers relating to it, were found. The bottom of this affair it is difficult, and not very material, to discover. It only appears, that Dangerfield, under pretence of betraying the conspiracies of the presbyterians, had been countenanced by some catholics of condition, and had even been admitted to the duke's presence and the king's: And that, under pretence of revealing new popish plots, he had obtained access to Shaftesbury and some of the popular leaders. Which side he intended to cheat, is uncertain; or whether he did not rather mean to cheat both: But he soon found that the belief of the nation was more open to a popish than a presbyterian plot; and he resolved to strike in with the prevailing humour. Though no weight could be laid on his testimony, great clamour was raised; as if the court, by way of retaliation, had intended to load the presbyterians with the guilt of a false conspiracy. It must be confessed that the present period, by the prevalence and suspicion of such mean and ignoble arts on all sides, throws a great stain on the British annals.

Meal-tub plot.

ONE

ONE of the most innocent artifices, practised by party men at this time, was the additional ceremony, pomp, and expence, with which a pope-burning was celebrated in London: The spectacle served to entertain, and amuse, and inflame, the populace. The duke of Monmouth likewise came over without leave, and made a triumphant procession through many parts of the kingdom, extremely caressed and admired by the people. All these arts seemed requisite to support the general prejudices, during the long interval of parliament. Great endeavours were also used to obtain the king's consent for the meeting of that assembly. Seventeen peers presented a petition to this purpose. Many of the corporations imitated the example. Notwithstanding several marks of displeasure, and even a menacing proclamation from the king, petitions came from all parts, earnestly insisting on a session of parliament. The danger of popery, and the terrors of the plot, were never forgotten in any of these addresses. CHAP. LXVIII. 1679. 17th Nov. 1680.

TUMULTUOUS petitioning was one of the chief artifices by which the malcontents in the last reign had attacked the crown: And though the manner of subscribing and delivering petitions was now somewhat regulated by act of parliament, the thing itself still remained; and was an admirable expedient for infesting the court, for spreading discontent, and for uniting the nation in any popular clamour. As the king found no law, by which he could punish those importunate, and, as he deemed them, undutiful solicitations, he was obliged to encounter them by popular applications of a contrary tendency. Wherever the church and court party prevailed, addresses were framed, containing expressions of the highest regard to his majesty, the most entire acquiescence in his wisdom, the most dutiful submission to his prerogative, and the deepest *abhorrence* of those who endeavoured to encroach upon it,

by

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

by prescribing to him any time for assembling the parliament. Thus the nation came to be distinguished into *petitioners* and *abhorrers*. Factions indeed were at this time extremely animated against each other. The very names, by which each party denominated its antagonist, discover the virulence and rancour which prevailed. For besides petitioner and abhorrer, appellations which were soon forgotten, this year is remarkable for being the epoch of the well-known epithets of WHIG and TORY, by which, and sometimes without any material difference, this island has been so long divided. The court party reproached their antagonists with their affinity to the fanatical conventiclers in Scotland, who were known by the name of Whigs: The country party found a resemblance between the courtiers and the popish banditti in Ireland, to whom the appellation of Tory was affixed. And after this manner, these foolish terms of reproach came into public and general use; and even at present seem not nearer their end than when they were first invented.

Whig and Tory.

THE king used every art to encourage his partisans, and to reconcile the people to his government. He persevered in the great zeal which he affected against popery. He even allowed several priests to be put to death, for no other crime than their having received orders in the Romish church. It is singular, that one of them, called Evans, was playing at tennis, when the warrant for his immediate execution was notified to him: He swore, that he would play out his set first. Charles, with the same view of acquiring popularity, formed an alliance with Spain, and also offered an alliance to Holland: But the Dutch, terrified with the great power of France, and seeing little resource in a country so distracted as England, declined acceptance. He had sent for the duke from Scotland, but desired him to return, when the time of assembling the parliament began to approach.

IT

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

It was of great consequence to the popular party, while the meeting of parliament depended on the king's will, to keep the law, whose operations are perpetual, entirely on their side. The sheriffs of London by their office return the juries: It had been usual for the mayor to nominate one sheriff by drinking to him; and the common-hall had ever without dispute confirmed the mayor's choice. Sir Robert Clayton, the mayor, appointed one who was not acceptable to the popular party: The common-hall rejected him; and Bethel and Cornish, two independents, and republicans, and of consequence deeply engaged with the malcontents, were chosen by a majority of voices. In spite of all remonstrances and opposition, the citizens persisted in their choice; and the court party was obliged for the present to acquiesce.

Juries however were not so partial in the city, but that reason and justice, even when the popish plot was in question, could sometimes prevail. The earl of Castlemaine, husband to the dutchess of Cleveland, was acquitted about this time, though accused by Oates and Dangerfield of an intention to assassinate the king. Sir Thomas Gascoigne, a very aged gentleman in the north, being accused by two servants, whom he had dismissed for dishonesty, received a like verdict. These trials were great blows to the plot, which now began to stagger, in the judgment of most men, except those who were entirely devoted to the country party. But in order still to keep alive the zeal against popery, the earl of Shaftesbury appeared in Westminster-hall, attended by the earl of Huntingdon, the lords Russel, Cavendish, Gray, Brandon, sir Henry Caverly, sir Gilbert Gerrard, sir William Cooper, and other persons of distinction, and presented to the grand jury of Middlesex reasons for indicting the duke of York as a popish recusant. While the jury

23d June.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

jury were deliberating on this extraordinary presentment, the chief justice sent for them, and suddenly, even somewhat irregularly, dismissed them. Shaftesbury however obtained the end for which he had undertaken this bold measure: He showed to all his followers the desperate resolution which he had embraced, never to admit of any accommodation or composition with the duke. By such daring conduct he gave them assurance, that he was fully determined not to desert their cause; and he engaged them to a like devoted perseverance in all the measures which he should suggest to them.

As the kingdom was regularly and openly divided into two zealous parties, it was not difficult for the king to know that the majority of the new house of commons was engaged in interests opposite to the court: But that he might leave no expedient untried, which could compose the unhappy differences among his subjects. he resolved, at last, after a long interval. to assemble the parliament. In his speech, he told them that the several prorogations which he had made, had been very advantageous to his neighbours, and very useful to himself: That he had employed that interval in perfecting with the crown of Spain an alliance, which had often been desired by former parliaments, and which, he doubted not, would be extremely agreeable to them: That, in order to give weight to this measure, and render it beneficial to Christendom, it was necessary to avoid all domestic dissensions, and to unite themselves firmly in the same views and purposes: That he was determined that nothing on his part should be wanting to such a salutary end; and, provided the succession were preserved in its due and legal course, he would concur in any expedient for the security of the protestant religion: That the farther examination of the popish plot and the punishment of the criminals were requisite for the

21st Oct. A new parliament.

the safety both of king and kingdom: And after recommending to them the necessity of providing, by some supplies, for the safety of Tangiers, he proceeded in these words: "But that which I value "above all the treasure in the world, and which I "am sure will give us greater strength and reputa- "tion both at home and abroad than any treasure "can do, is a perfect union among ourselves. "Nothing but this can restore the kingdom to that "strength and vigour which it seems to have lost, "and raise us again to that consideration which "England hath usually possessed. All Europe have "their eyes upon this assembly, and think their "own happiness and misery, as well as ours, will "depend upon it. If we should be so unhappy as "to fall into misunderstandings among ourselves to "that degree as would render our friendship unsafe "to trust to, it will not be wondered at, if our "neighbours should begin to take new resolutions, "and perhaps such as may be fatal to us. Let us "therefore take care that we do not gratify our "enemies, and discourage our friends, by any un- "seasonable disputes. If any such do happen, the "world will see that it is no fault of mine: For I "have done all that was possible for me to do, to "keep you in peace while I live, and to leave you "so when I die. But from so great prudence and "so good affection as yours, I can fear nothing of "this kind; but do rely upon you all, that you "will do your best endeavours to bring this parlia- "ment to a good and happy conclusion."

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

Violence of the commons.

ALL these mollifying expressions had no influence with the commons. Every step which they took betrayed the zeal with which they were animated. They voted that it was the undoubted right of the subject to petition the king for the calling and sitting of parliament. Not content with this decision, which seems justifiable in a mixed monarchy,

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

they fell with the utmost violence on all those *abhorrers*, who, in their addresses to the crown, had expressed their disapprobation of those petitions. They did not reflect that it was as lawful for one party of men, as for another, to express their sense of public affairs; and that the best established right may, in particular circumstances, be abused, and even the exercise of it become an object of abhorrence. For this offence, they expelled sir Thomas Withens. They appointed a committee for farther inquiry into such members as had been guilty of a like crime; and complaints were lodged against lord Paston, sir Robert Malverer, sir Bryan Stapleton, Taylor, and Turner. They addressed the king against sir George Jefferies, recorder of London, for his activity in the same cause; and they frightened him into a resignation of his office, in which he was succeeded by sir George Treby, a great leader of the popular party. They voted an impeachment against North, chief justice of the common pleas, for drawing the proclamation against tumultuous petitions: But upon examination found the proclamation so cautiously worded, that it afforded them no handle against him. A petition had been presented to the king from Taunton. "How dare you deliver me such a paper?" said the king to the person who presented it. "Sir," replied he, "my name is DARE." For this saucy reply, but under other pretences, he had been tried, fined, and committed to prison. The commons now addressed the king for his liberty, and for remitting his fine. Some printers also and authors of seditious libels they took under their protection.

GREAT numbers of the abhorrers, from all parts of England, were seized by order of the commons, and committed to custody. The liberty of the subject, which had been so carefully guarded by the great

great charter, and by the late law of habeas corpus, was every day violated by their arbitrary and capricious commitments. The chief jealousy, it is true, of the English constitution, is naturally and justly directed against the crown; nor indeed have the commons any other means of securing their privileges than by commitments, which, as they cannot beforehand be exactly determined by law, must always appear in some degree arbitrary. Sensible of these reasons, the people had hitherto, without murmuring, seen this discretionary power exercised by the house: But as it was now carried to excess, and was abused to serve the purposes of faction, great complaints against it were heard from all quarters. At last, the vigour and courage of one Stowel of Exeter, an abhorrer, put an end to the practice. He refused to obey the serjeant at arms, stood upon his defence, and said that he knew of no law by which they pretended to commit him. The house, finding it equally dangerous to proceed or to recede, got off by an evasion: They inserted in their votes, that Stowel was indisposed, and that a month's time was allowed him for the recovery of his health.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

But the chief violence of the house of commons appeared in all their transactions with regard to the plot, which they prosecuted with the same zeal and the same credulity as their predecessors. They renewed the former vote, which affirmed the reality of the horrid popish plot; and, in order the more to terrify the people, they even asserted that, notwithstanding the discovery, the plot still subsisted. They expelled sir Robert Can, and sir Robert Yeomans, who had been complained of, for saying that there was no popish, but there was a presbyterian, plot. And they greatly lamented the death of Bedloe, whom they called a material witness, and on whose testimony they much depended. He had been seized with a fever at Bristol; had sent for

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

chief justice North; confirmed all his former evidence, except that with regard to the duke and the queen; and desired North to apply to the king for some money to relieve him in his necessities. A few days after he expired; and the whole party triumphed extremely in these circumstances of his death: As if such a testimony could be deemed the affirmation of a dying man, as if his confession of perjury in some instances could assure his veracity in the rest, and as if the perseverance of one profligate could outweigh the last words of so many men, guilty of no crime but that of popery.

THE commons even endeavoured, by their countenance and protection, to remove the extreme infamy with which Dangerfield was loaded, and to restore him to the capacity of being an evidence. The whole tribe of informers they applauded and rewarded; Jennison, Turberville, Dugdale, Smith, la Faria, appeared before them; and their testimony, however frivolous or absurd, met with a favourable reception: The king was applied to in their behalf for pensions and pardons: Their narratives were printed with that sanction which arose from the approbation of the house: Dr. Tongue was recommended for the first considerable church preferment which should become vacant. Considering men's determined resolution to believe, instead of admiring, that a palpable falsehood should be maintained by witnesses, it may justly appear wonderful, that no better evidence was ever produced against the catholics.

THE principal reasons, which still supported the clamour of the popish plot, were the apprehensions entertained by the people of the duke of York, and the resolution embraced by their leaders, of excluding him from the throne. Shaftesbury and many considerable men of the party, had rendered themselves irreconcileable with him, and could find their safety no way but in his ruin. Monmouth's friends

Exclusion-bill.

friends hoped that the exclusion of that prince would make way for their patron. The resentment against the duke's apostacy, the love of liberty, the zeal for religion, the attachment to faction, all these motives incited the country party. And above all, what supported the resolution of adhering to the exclusion, and rejecting all other expedients offered, was the hope artfully encouraged, that the king would at last be obliged to yield to their demand. His revenues were extremely burdened; and even if free, could scarcely suffice for the necessary charges of government, much less for that pleasure and expence to which he was inclined. Though he had withdrawn his countenance from Monmouth, he was known secretly to retain a great affection for him. On no occasion had he ever been found to persist obstinately against difficulties and importunity. And as his beloved mistress, the dutchess of Portsmouth, had been engaged, either from lucrative views, or the hopes of making the succession fall on her own children, to unite herself with the popular party; this incident was regarded as a favourable prognostic of their success. Sunderland, secretary of state, who had linked his interest with that of the dutchess, had concurred in the same measure. CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

BUT besides friendship for his brother and a regard to the right of succession, there were many strong reasons which had determined Charles to persevere in opposing the exclusion. All the royalists and the devotees to the church, that party by which alone monarchy was supported regarded the right of succession as inviolable; and if abandoned by the king in so capital an article, it was to be feared that they would, in their turn, desert his cause, and deliver him over to the pretensions and usurpations of the country party. The country party, or the whigs, as they were called, if they did not still retan some propensity towards a republic, were at least

CHAP. XVIII. 1680.

least affected with a violent jealousy of regal power; and it was equally to be dreaded, that, being enraged with past opposition, and animated by present success, they would, if they prevailed in this pretension, be willing, as well as able, to reduce the prerogative within very narrow limits. All menaces, therefore, all promises were again employed against the king's resolution: He never would be prevailed on to desert his friends, and put himself into the hands of his enemies. And having voluntarily made such important concessions, and tendered, over and over again, such strong limitations, he was well pleased to find them rejected by the obstinacy of the commons; and hoped that, after the spirit of opposition had spent itself in fruitless violence, the time would come, when he might safely appeal against his parliament to his people.

So much were the popular leaders determined to carry matters to extremities, that in less than a week after the commencement of the session, a motion was made for bringing in an exclusion-bill, and a committee was appointed for that purpose. This bill differed in nothing from the former, but in two articles, which showed still an increase of zeal in the commons: The bill was to be read to the people twice a year in all the churches of the kingdom, and every one who should support the duke's title was rendered incapable of receiving a pardon but by act of parliament.

THE debates were carried on with great violence on both sides. The bill was defended by sir William Jones, who had now resigned his office of attorney-general, by lord Russel, by sir Francis Winnington, sir Harry Capel, sir William Pulteney, by colonel Titus, Treby, Hambden, Montague. It was opposed by sir Leoline Jenkins, secretary of state, sir John Ernley, chancellor of the exchequer, by Hyde, Seymour, Temple. The arguments

10th Nov.

arguments transmitted to us may be reduced to the following topics.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

In every government, said the exclusionists, there is somewhere an authority absolute and supreme; nor can any determination, how unusual soever, which receives the sanction of the legislature, admit afterwards of dispute or control. The liberty of a constitution, so far from diminishing this absolute power, seems rather to add force to it, and to give it greater influence over the people. The more members of the state concur in any legislative decision, and the more free their voice, the less likelihood is there that any opposition will be made to those measures which receive the final sanction of their authority. In England, the legislative power is lodged in king, lords, and commons, which comprehend every order of the community: And there is no pretext for exempting any circumstance of government, not even the succession of the crown, from so full and decisive a jurisdiction. Even express declarations have, in this particular, been made of parliamentary authority: Instances have occurred where it has been exerted: And though prudential reasons may justly be alleged why such innovations should not be attempted but on extraordinary occasions, the power and right are for ever vested in the community. But if any occasion can be deemed extraordinary, if any emergence can require unusual expedients, it is the present; when the heir to the crown has renounced the religion of the state, and has zealously embraced a faith totally hostile and incompatible. A prince of that communion can never put trust in a people so prejudiced against him: The people must be equally diffident of such a prince: Foreign and destructive alliances will seem to one the only protection of his throne: Perpetual jealousy, opposition, faction, even insurrections, will be employed by the other as the

Arguments for and against the exclusion

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

the sole securities for their liberty and religion. Though theological principles, when set in opposition to passions, have often small influence on mankind in general, still less on princes; yet when they become symbols of faction, and marks of party distinctions, they concur with one of the strongest passions in the human frame, and are then capable of carrying men to the greatest extremities. Notwithstanding the better judgment and milder disposition of the king; how much has the influence of the duke already disturbed the tenor of government? How often engaged the nation into measures totally destructive of their foreign interests and honour, of their domestic repose and tranquillity? The more the absurdity and incredibility of the popish plot are insisted on, the stronger reason it affords for the exclusion of the duke; since the universal belief of it discovers the extreme antipathy of the nation to his religion, and the utter impossibility of ever bringing them to acquiesce peaceably under the dominion of such a sovereign. The prince, finding himself in so perilous a situation, must seek for security by desperate remedies, and by totally subduing the privileges of a nation which had betrayed such hostile dispositions towards himself, and towards every thing which he deems the most sacred. It is in vain to propose limitations and expedients. Whatever share of authority is left in the duke's hands, will be employed to the destruction of the nation; and even the additional restraints, by discovering the public diffidence and aversion, will serve him as incitements to put himself in a condition entirely superior and independent. And as the laws of England still make resistance treason, and neither do nor can admit of any positive exceptions; what folly to leave the kingdom in so perilous and absurd a situation; where the greatest virtue will be exposed to the most severe proscription, and where the laws can only

be saved by expedients, which these same laws have declared the highest crime and enormity. CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

THE court party reasoned in an opposite manner. An authority, they said, wholly absolute and uncontrollable is a mere chimera, and is no where to be found in any human institutions. All government is founded on opinion and a sense of duty; and wherever the supreme magistrate, by any law or positive prescription, shocks an opinion regarded as fundamental, and established with a firmness equal to that of his own authority, he subverts the principle by which he himself is established, and can no longer hope for obedience. In European monarchies, the right of succession is justly esteemed a fundamental; and even though the whole legislature be vested in a single person, it would never be permitted him, by an edict, to disinherit his lawful heir, and call a stranger or more distant relation to the throne. Abuses in other parts of government are capable of redress, from more dispassionate inquiry or better information of the sovereign, and till then ought patiently to be endured: But violations of the right of succession draw such terrible consequences after them as are not to be paralleled by any other grievance or inconvenience. Vainly is it pleaded that England is a mixed monarchy; and that a law, assented to by king, lords, and commons, is enacted by the concurrence of every part of the state: It is plain that there remains a very powerful party, who may indeed be out-voted, but who never will deem a law, subversive of hereditary right, anywise valid or obligatory. Limitations, such as are proposed by the king, give no shock to the constitution, which, in many particulars, is already limited; and they may be so calculated as to serve every purpose sought for by an exclusion. If the ancient barriers against regal authority have been able, during so many ages, to remain impregnable;

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

pregnable; how much more those additional ones, which, by depriving the monarch of power, tend so far to their own security? The same jealousy too of religion, which has engaged the people to lay these restraints upon the successor, will extremely lessen the number of his partisans, and make it utterly impracticable for him, either by force or artifice, to break the fetters imposed upon him. The king's age and vigorous state of health promise him a long life: And can it be prudent to tear in pieces the whole state, in order to provide against a contingency, which, it is very likely, may never happen? No human schemes can secure the public in all possible, imaginable events; and the bill of exclusion itself, however accurately framed, leaves room for obvious and natural suppositions, to which it pretends not to provide any remedy. Should the duke have a son, after the king's death, must that son, without any default of his own, forfeit his title? or must the princess of Orange descend from the throne, in order to give place to the lawful successor? But were all these reasons false, it still remains to be considered that, in public deliberations, we seek not the expedient which is best in itself, but the best of such as are practicable. The king willingly consents to limitations, and has already offered some which are of the utmost importance: But he is determined to endure any extremity rather than allow the right of succession to be invaded. Let us beware of that factious violence, which leads to demand more than will be granted; lest we lose the advantage of those beneficial concessions, and leave the nation, on the king's demise, at the mercy of a zealous prince, irritated with the ill usage, which, he imagines, he has already met with.

In the house of commons, the reasoning of the exclusionists appeared the more convincing; and the

the bill passed by a great majority. It was in the house of peers that the king expected to oppose it with success. The court party was there so prevalent, that it was carried only by a majority of two, to pay so much regard to the bill as even to commit it. When it came to be debated, the contest was violent. Shaftesbury, Sunderland, and Essex, argued for it: Halifax chiefly conducted the debate against it, and displayed an extent of capacity, and a force of eloquence, which had never been surpassed in that assembly. He was animated, as well by the greatness of the occasion, as by a rivalship with his uncle Shaftesbury; whom, during that day's debate, he seemed, in the judgment of all, to have totally eclipsed. The king was present during the whole debate, which was prolonged till eleven at night. The bill was thrown out by a considerable majority. All the bishops, except three, voted against it. Besides the influence of the court over them; the church of England, they imagined or pretended, was in greater danger from the prevalence of presbyterianism than of popery, which, though favoured by the duke, and even by the king, was extremely repugnant to the genius of the nation.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680. 15th Nov. Exclusion bill rejected.

THE commons discovered much ill humour upon this disappointment. They immediately voted an address for the removal of Halifax from the king's councils and presence for ever. Though the pretended cause was his advising the late frequent prorogations of parliament, the real reason was apparently his vigorous opposition to the exclusion-bill. When the king applied for money to enable him to maintain Tangiers, which he declared his present revenues totally unable to defend; instead of complying, they voted such an address as was in reality a remonstrance, and one little less violent than that famous remonstrance, which ushered in the civil wars.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

wars. All the abuses of government, from the beginning almost of the reign, are there insisted on; the Dutch war, the alliance with France, the prorogations and dissolutions of parliament; and as all these measures, as well as the *damnable* and *hellish* plot, are there ascribed to the machinations of papists, it was plainly insinuated that the king had, all along, lain under the influence of that party, and was in reality the chief conspirator against the religion and liberties of his people.

THE commons, though they conducted the great business of the exclusion with extreme violence and even imprudence, had yet much reason for the jealousy which gave rise to it: But their vehement prosecution of the popish plot, even after so long an interval, discovers such a spirit, either of credulity or injustice, as admits of no apology. The impeachment of the catholic lords in the Tower was revived; and as viscount Stafford, from his age, infirmities, and narrow capacity, was deemed the least capable of defending himself, it was determined to make him the first victim, that his condemnation might pave the way for a sentence against the rest. The chancellor, now created earl of Nottingham, was appointed high steward for conducting the trial.

30th Nov.

Trial of Stafford;

THREE witnesses were produced against the prisoner; Oates, Dugdale, and Turberville. Oates swore, that he saw Fenwic, the Jesuit, deliver to Stafford a commission signed by de Oliva, general of the Jesuits, appointing him pay-master to the papal army, which was to be levied for the subduing of England: For this ridiculous imposture still maintained its credit with the commons. Dugdale gave testimony, that the prisoner, at Tixal, a seat of lord Aston's, had endeavoured to engage him in the design of murdering the king; and had promised him, besides the honour of being sainted by

by the church, a reward of 500 pounds for that service. Turberville deposed, that the prisoner, in his own house at Paris, had made him a like proposal. To offer money for murdering a king, without laying down any scheme by which the assassin may insure some probability or possibility of escape, is so incredible in itself, and may so easily be maintained by any prostitute evidence, that an accusation of that nature, not accompanied with circumstances, ought very little to be attended to by any court of judicature. But notwithstanding the small hold which the witnesses afforded, the prisoner was able, in many material particulars, to discredit their testimony. It was sworn by Dugdale, that Stafford had assisted in a great consult of the catholics held at Tixal; but Stafford proved by undoubted testimony, that at the time assigned he was in Bath, and in that neighbourhood. Turberville had served a noviciate among the Dominicans; but, having deserted the convent, he had enlisted as a trooper in the French army; and being dismissed that service, he now lived in London, abandoned by all his relations, and exposed to great poverty. Stafford proved, by the evidence of his gentleman and his page, that Turberville had never, either at Paris or at London, been seen in his company; and it might justly appear strange, that a person, who had so important a secret in his keeping, was so long entirely neglected by him. CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

The clamour and outrage of the populace, during the trial, were extreme: Great abilities and eloquence were displayed by the managers, sir William Jones, sir Francis Winnington, and serjeant Maynard: Yet did the prisoner, under all these disadvantages, make a better defence than was expected, either by his friends or his enemies: The unequal contest in which he was engaged, was a plentiful source of compassion to every mind seasoned with humanity. He represented that during

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

during a course of forty years, from the very commencement of the civil wars, he had, through many dangers, difficulties, and losses, still maintained his loyalty: And was it credible, that now, in his old age, easy in his circumstances, but dispirited by infirmities, he would belye the whole course of his life, and engage against his royal master, from whom he had ever received kind treatment, in the most desperate and most bloody of all conspiracies? He remarked the infamy of the witnesses; the contradictions and absurdities of their testimony; the extreme indigence in which they had lived, though engaged, as they pretended, in a conspiracy with kings, princes, and nobles; the credit and opulence to which they were at present raised. With a simplicity and tenderness more persuasive than the greatest oratory, he still made protestations of his innocence, and could not forbear, every moment, expressing the most lively surprise and indignation at the audacious impudence of the witnesses.

It will appear astonishing to us, as it did to Stafford himself, that the peers after a solemn trial of six days, should, by a majority of twenty-four voices, give sentence against him. He received however with resignation the fatal verdict. *God's holy name be praised*, was the only exclamation which he uttered. When the high-steward told him that the peers would intercede with the king for remitting the more cruel and ignominious parts of the sentence, hanging and quartering, he burst into tears: But he told the lords that he was moved to this weakness, by his sense of their goodness, not by any terror of that fate which he was doomed to suffer.

It is remarkable that, after Charles, as is usual in such cases, had remitted to Stafford the hanging and quartering, the two sheriffs, Bethel and Cornish, indulging their own republican humour, and complying

complying with the prevalent spirit of their party, ever jealous of monarchy, stated a doubt with regard to the king's power of exercising even this small degree of lenity. "Since he cannot pardon "the whole," said they, "how can he have power "to remit any part of the sentence?" They proposed the doubt to both houses: The peers pronounced it superfluous; and even the commons, apprehensive lest a question of this nature might make way for Stafford's escape, gave this singular answer: "This house is *content*, that the sheriffs "do execute William late viscount Stafford by "severing his head from his body *only*." Nothing can be a stronger proof of the fury of the times, than that lord Russel, notwithstanding the virtue and humanity of his character, seconded in the house this barbarous scruple of the sheriffs. CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

In the interval between the sentence and execution, many efforts were made to shake the resolution of the infirm and aged prisoner, and to bring him to some confession of the treason for which he was condemned. It was even rumoured, that he had confessed; and the zealous partymen, who, no doubt, had secretly, notwithstanding their credulity, entertained some doubts with regard to the reality of the popish conspiracy, expressed great triumph on the occasion. But Stafford, when again called before the house of peers, discovered many schemes, which had been laid by himself and others for procuring a toleration to the catholics, at least a mitigation of the penal laws enacted against them: And he protested that this was the sole treason of which he had ever been guilty.

Stafford now prepared himself for death with the intrepidity which became his birth and station, and which was the natural result of the innocence and integrity which, during the course of a long life, he had ever maintained. His mind seemed even to collect

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680. 29th Dec.

collect new force from the violence and oppression under which he laboured. When going to execution, he called for a cloak to defend him against the rigour of the season: "Perhaps," said he, "I may "shake with cold; but I trust in God not for fear." On the scaffold he continued, with reiterated and earnest asseverations, to make protestations of his innocence: All his fervour was exercised on that point: When he mentioned the witnesses, whose perjuries had bereaved him of life, his expressions were full of mildness and of charity. He solemnly disavowed all those immoral principles, which overzealous protestants had ascribed without distinction to the church of Rome: And he hoped, he said, that the time was now approaching, when the present delusion would be dissipated; and when the force of truth, though late, would engage the whole world to make reparation to his injured honour.

and execution.

THE populace, who had exulted at Stafford's trial and condemnation, were now melted into tears at the sight of that tender fortitude which shone forth in each feature, and motion, and accent of this aged noble. Their profound silence was only interrupted by sighs and groans. With difficulty they found speech to assent to those protestations of innocence, which he frequently repeated: "We believe "you, my lord! God bless you, my lord!" These expressions with a faultering accent flowed from them. The executioner himself was touched with sympathy. Twice he lifted up the ax, with an intent to strike the fatal blow; and as often felt his resolution to fail him. A deep sigh was heard to accompany his last effort, which laid Stafford for ever at rest. All the spectators seemed to feel the blow. And when the head was held up to them with the usual cry, *This is the head of a traitor*, no clamour of assent was uttered. Pity, remorse, and astonishment, had taken possession of every heart, and displayed itself in every countenance.

THE

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

THIS is the last blood which was shed on account of the popish plot: An incident which, for the credit of the nation, it were better to bury in eternal oblivion; but which it is necessary to perpetuate, as well to maintain the truth of history, as to warn, if possible, their posterity and all mankind never again to fall into so shameful, so barbarous a delusion.

THE execution of Stafford gratified the prejudices of the country party; but it contributed nothing to their power and security: On the contrary, by exciting commiseration, it tended still farther to increase that disbelief of the whole plot, which began now to prevail. The commons, therefore, not to lose the present opportunity, resolved to make both friends and enemies sensible of their power. They passed a bill for easing the protestant dissenters, and for repealing the persecuting statute of the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth: This laudable bill was likewise carried through the house of peers. The chief justice was very obnoxious for dismissing the grand jury in an irregular manner, and thereby disappointing that bold measure of Shaftesbury and his friends, who had presented the duke as a recusant. For this crime the commons sent up an impeachment against him; as also against Jones and Weston, two of the judges, who, in some speeches from the bench, had gone so far as to give to many of the first reformers the appellation of fanatics.

THE king, in rejecting the exclusion bill, had sheltered himself securely behind the authority of the house of peers; and the commons had been deprived of the usual pretence, to attack the sovereign himself, under colour of attacking his ministers and counsellors. In prosecution, however, of the scheme which he had formed, of throwing the blame on the commons in case of any rupture, he made them a new speech. After warning them, that a neglect of this opportunity would never be

CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

retrieved, he added these words: "I did promise "you the fullest satisfaction, which your hearts "could wish, for the security of the protestant re- "ligion, and to concur with you in any remedies, "which might consist with preserving the suc- "cession of the crown in its due and legal course "of descent. I do again, with the same reserva- "tions, renew the same promises to you: And "being thus ready on my part to do all that can "reasonably be expected from me, I should be glad "to know from you, as soon as may be, how far I "shall be assisted by you, and what it is you desire "from me."

THE most reasonable objection against the limitations proposed by the king, is, that they introduced too considerable an innovation in the government, and almost totally annihilated the power of the future monarch. But considering the present disposition of the commons and their leaders, we may fairly presume, that this objection would have small weight with them, and that their disgust against the court would rather incline them to diminish than support regal authority. They still hoped, from the king's urgent necessities and his usual facility, that he would throw himself wholly into their hands; and that thus, without waiting for the accession of the duke, they might immediately render themselves absolute masters of the government. The commons, therefore, besides insisting still on the exclusion, proceeded to bring in bills of an important, and some of them of an alarming, nature: One to renew the triennial act, which had been so inadvertently repealed in the beginning of the reign: A second to make the office of judge during good behaviour: A third to declare the levying of money without consent of parliament to be high treason: A fourth to order an association for the safety of his majesty's person, for defence of the protestant religion, for the preservation of the protestant subjects against

Violence of the commons.

against all invasions and opposition whatever, and for preventing the duke of York or any papist from succeeding to the crown. The memory of the covenant was too recent for men to overlook the consequences of such an association: And the king, who was particularly conversant in Davila, could not fail of recollecting a memorable foreign instance, to fortify this domestic experience. CHAP. LXVIII. 1680.

THE commons also passed many votes, which, though they had not the authority of laws, served however to discover the temper and disposition of the house. They voted, that whoever had advised his majesty to refuse the exclusion-bill, were promoters of popery and enemies to the king and kingdom. In another vote, they named the marquis of Worcester, the earls of Clarendon, Feversham, and Halifax, Laurence Hyde, and Edward Seymour, as those dangerous enemies; and they requested his majesty to remove them from his person and councils for ever: They voted that, till the exclusion-bill were passed, they could not, consistently with the trust reposed in them, grant the king any manner of supply. And lest he should be enabled, by any other expedient, to support the government, and preserve himself independent, they passed another vote, in which they declared that whoever should hereafter lend, by way of advance, any money upon those branches of the king's revenue, arising from customs, excise, or hearth-money, should be judged a hinderer of the sitting of parliament, and be responsible for the same in parliament.

The king might presume that the peers, who had rejected the exclusion-bill, would still continue to defend the throne, and that none of the dangerous bills, introduced into the other house, would ever be presented for the royal assent and approbation. But as there remained no hopes of bringing the commons to any better temper, and as their farther sitting served only to keep faction alive, and to perpetuate

CHAP. LXVIII.

petuate the general ferment of the nation, he came secretly to a resolution of proroguing them. They got intelligence about a quarter of an hour before the black rod came to the door. Not to lose such precious time, they passed in a tumultuous manner some extraordinary resolutions. They voted, *That* whosoever advised his majesty to prorogue this parliament to any other purpose than in order to pass the bill of exclusion, was a betrayer of the king, of the protestant religion, and of the kingdom of England; a promoter of the French interest, and a pensioner of France: *That* thanks be given to the city of London for their manifest loyalty, and for their care and vigilance in the preservation of the king, and of the protestant religion: *That* it is the opinion of this house, that that city was burned in the year 1666 by the papists, designing thereby to introduce arbitrary power and popery into the kingdom: *That* humble application be made to his majesty for restoring the duke of Monmouth to all his offices and commands, from which, it appears to the house, he had been removed by the influence of the duke of York: And, *That* it is the opinion of the house that the prosecution of the protestant dissenters upon the penal laws is at this time grievous to the subject, a weakening to the protestant interest, an encouragement of popery, and dangerous to the peace of the kingdom.

1681. 10th Jan. Dissolution of the parliament.

THE king passed some laws of no great importance: But the bill for repealing the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth, he privately ordered the clerk of the crown not to present to him. By this artifice, which was equally disobliging to the country party as if the bill had been rejected, and at the same time implied some timidity in the king, that salutary act was for the present eluded. The king had often of himself attempted, and sometimes by irregular means, to give indulgence to non-conformists: But besides that he had usually expected to compre-

hend the catholics in this liberty, the present refractory disposition of the sectaries had much incensed him against them; and he was resolved, if possible, to keep them still at mercy. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE last votes of the commons seemed to be an attempt of forming indirectly an association against the crown, after they found that their association bill could not pass: The dissenting interest, the city, and the duke of Monmouth, they endeavoured to connect with the country party. A civil war indeed never appeared so likely as at present; and it was high time for the king to dissolve a parliament, which seemed to have entertained such dangerous projects. Soon after, he summoned another. Though he observed, that the country party had established their interest so strongly in all the electing boroughs, that he could not hope for any disposition more favourable in the new parliament, this expedient was still a prosecution of his former project, of trying every method by which he might form an accommodation with the commons: And if all failed, he hoped that he could the better justify to his people, at least to his party, a final breach with them.

IT had always been much regretted by the royalists, during the civil wars, that the long parliament had been assembled at Westminster, and had thereby received force and encouragement from the vicinity of a potent and factious city, which had zealously embraced their party. Though the king was now possessed of guards, which in some measure overawed the populace, he was determined still farther to obviate all inconveniencies; and he summoned the new parliament to meet at Oxford. The city of London showed how just a judgment he had formed of their dispositions. Besides re-electing the same members, they voted thanks to them for their former behaviour, in endeavouring to discover the depth of the *horrid* and *hellish* popish plot,

CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

plot, and to exclude the duke of York, the principal cause of the ruin and misery impending over the nation. Monmouth with fifteen peers presented a petition against assembling the parliament at Oxford, "where the two houses," they said, "could "not be in safety; but would be easily exposed to "the swords of the papists and their adherents, of "whom too many had crept into his majesty's "guards." These insinuations, which pointed so evidently at the king himself, were not calculated to persuade him, but to inflame the people.

THE exclusionists might have concluded, both from the king's dissolution of the last parliament, and from his summoning of the present to meet at Oxford, that he was determined to maintain his declared resolution of rejecting their favourite bill: But they still flattered themselves that his urgent necessities would influence his easy temper, and finally gain them the ascendant. The leaders came to parliament, attended not only by their servants, but by numerous bands of their partisans. The four city members in particular were followed by great multitudes, wearing ribbons, in which were woven these words, *No popery! no slavery!* The king had his guards regularly mustered: His party likewise endeavoured to make a show of their strength: And on the whole, the assembly at Oxford rather bore the appearance of a tumultuous Polish diet, than of a regular English parliament.

March 21. THE king, who had hitherto employed the most gracious expressions to all his parliaments, particularly the two last, thought proper to address himself to the present in a more authoritative manner. He complained of the unwarrantable proceedings of the former house of commons; and said that, as he would never use arbitrary government himself, neither would he ever suffer it in others. By calling, however, this parliament so soon, he had sufficiently shewn that no past irregularities could inspire

New parliament at Oxford.

spire him with a prejudice against those assemblies. He now afforded them, he added, yet another opportunity of providing for the public safety; and to all the world had given one evidence more, that on his part he had not neglected the duty incumbent on him. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE commons were not overawed by the magisterial air of the king's speech. They consisted almost entirely of the same members; they chose the same speaker; and they instantly fell into the same measures, the impeachment of Danby, the repeal of the persecuting statute of Elizabeth, the inquiry into the popish plot, and the bill of exclusion. So violent were they on this last article, that no other expedient, however plausible, could so much as be hearkened to. Ernley, one of the king's ministers, proposed that the duke should be banished, during life, five hundred miles from England, and that on the king's demise the next heir should be constituted regent with regal power: Yet even this expedient, which left the duke only the bare title of king, could not, though seconded by sir Thomas Littleton and sir Thomas Mompesson, obtain the attention of the house. The past disappointments of the country party, and the opposition made by the court, had only rendered them more united, more haughty, and more determined. No method but their own, of excluding the duke, could give them any satisfaction.

THERE was one Fitz-harris, an Irish catholic, who had insinuated himself into the dutchess of Portsmouth's acquaintance, and had been very busy in conveying to her, intelligence of any libel written by the country party, or of any designs entertained against her or against the court. For services of this kind, and perhaps too, from a regard to his father, sir Edward Fitz-harris, who had been an eminent royalist, he had received from the king a present of 250 pounds. This man met with one Everard, Fitz-harris's case.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

Everard, a Scotchman, a spy of the exclusionists, and an informer concerning the popish plot; and he engaged him to write a libel against the king, the duke, and the whole administration. What Fitz-harris's intentions were, cannot well be ascertained: It is probable, as he afterwards asserted, that he meant to carry this libel to his patron, the dutchess, and to make a merit of the discovery. Everard, who suspected some other design, and who was well pleased on his side to have the merit of a discovery with his patrons, resolved to betray his friend: He posted sir William Waller, a noted justice of peace, and two persons more, behind the hangings, and gave them an opportunity of seeing and hearing the whole transaction. The libel, sketched out by Fitz-harris, and executed partly by him, partly by Everard, was the most furious, indecent, and outrageous performance imaginable; and such as was fitter to hurt than serve any party, which should be so imprudent as to adopt it. Waller carried the intelligence to the king, and obtained a warrant for committing Fitz-harris, who happened, at that very time, to have a copy of the libel in his pocket. Finding himself now delivered over to the law, he resolved to pay court to the popular party, who were alone able to protect him, and by whom he observed almost all trials to be governed and directed. He affirmed, that he had been employed by the court to write the libel, in order to throw the odium of it on the exclusionists: But this account, which was within the bounds of credibility, he disgraced by circumstances which are altogether absurd and improbable. The intention of the ministers, he said, was to send about copies to all the heads of the country party; and the moment they received them, they were to be arrested, and a conspiracy to be imputed to them. That he might merit favour by still more important intelligence, he commenced a discoverer of the great popish plot; and he failed not to

confirm

confirm all the tremendous circumstances insisted on by his predecessors. He said, that the second Dutch war was entered into with a view of extirpating the protestant religion, both abroad and at home; that father Parry, a Jesuit, on the disappointment by the peace, told him, that the catholics resolved to murder the king, and had even engaged the queen in that design; that the envoy of Modena offered him 10,000 pounds to kill the king, and upon his refusal the envoy said, that the dutchess of Mazarine, who was as expert at poisoning as her sister, the countess of Soissons, would, with a little phial, execute that design; that upon the king's death, the army in Flanders was to come over, and massacre the protestants; that money was raised in Italy for recruits and supplies, and there should be no more parliaments; and that the duke was privy to this whole plan, and had even entered into the design of Godfrey's murder, which was executed in the manner related by Prance. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE popular leaders had, all along, been very desirous of having an accusation against the duke; and though Oates and Bedloe, in their first evidence, had not dared to go so far, both Dugdale and Dangerfield had afterwards been encouraged to supply so material a defect, by comprehending him in the conspiracy. The commons, therefore, finding that Fitz-harris was also willing to serve this purpose, were not ashamed to adopt his evidence, and resolved for that end to save him from the destruction with which he was at present threatened. The king had removed him from the city-prison, where he was exposed to be tampered with by the exclusionists; had sent him to the Tower; and had ordered him to be prosecuted by an indictment at common law. In order to prevent his trial and execution, an impeachment was voted by the commons against him, and sent up to the lords. That they might shew the greater

CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

greater contempt of the court, they ordered, by way of derision, that the impeachment should be carried up by secretary Jenkins; who was so provoked by the intended affront, that he at first refused obedience; though afterwards, being threatened with commitment, he was induced to comply. The lords voted to remit the affair to the ordinary courts of justice, before whom, as the attorney-general informed them, it was already determined to try Fitz-harris. The commons maintained, that the peers were obliged to receive every impeachment from the commons; and this indeed seems to have been the first instance of their refusal: They therefore voted, that the lords, in rejecting their impeachment, had denied justice, and had violated the constitution of parliament. They also declared, that whatever inferior court should proceed against Fitz-harris, or any one that lay under impeachment, would be guilty of a high breach of privilege. Great heats were likely to ensue; and as the king saw no appearance of any better temper in the commons, he gladly laid hold of the opportunity, afforded by a quarrel between the two houses; and he proceeded to a dissolution of the parliament. The secret was so well kept, that the commons had no intimation of it, till the black rod came to their doors, and summoned them to attend the king at the house of peers.

Parliament dissolved.

THIS vigorous measure, though it might have been foreseen, excited such astonishment in the country party, as deprived them of all spirit, and reduced them to absolute despair. They were sensible, though too late, that the king had finally taken his resolution, and was determined to endure any extremity rather than submit to those terms which they had resolved to impose upon him. They found, that he had patiently waited till affairs should come to full maturity; and having now engaged a national

national party on his side, had boldly set his enemies at defiance: No parliament, they knew would be summoned for some years; and during that long interval, the court, though perhaps at the head of an inferior party, yet being possessed of all authority, would have every advantage over a body dispersed and disunited. These reflections crowded upon every one; and all the exclusionists were terrified, lest Charles should follow the blow by some action more violent, and immediately take vengeance on them for their long and obstinate opposition to his measures. The king on his part was no less apprehensive lest despair might prompt them to have recourse to force, and make some sudden attempt upon his person. Both parties therefore hurried from Oxford; and in an instant, that city, so crowded and busy, was left in its usual emptiness and tranquillity. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE court party gathered force from the dispersion and astonishment of their antagonists, and adhered more firmly to the king, whose resolutions, they now saw, could be entirely depended on. The violences of the exclusionists were every where exclaimed against and aggravated; and even the reality of the plot, that great engine of their authority, was openly called in question. The clergy especially were busy in this great revolution; and being moved, partly by their own fears, partly by the insinuations of the court, they represented all their antagonists as sectaries and republicans, and rejoiced in escaping those perils, which they believed to have been hanging over them. Principles the most opposite to civil liberty were every where enforced from the pulpit, and adopted in numerous addresses; where the king was flattered in his present measures, and congratulated on his escape from parliaments. Could words have been depended on, the nation appeared to be running fast into voluntary servitude, and seemed even ambitious of resigning into the king's

Victory of the royalists.

CHAP. LXVIII. king's hands all the privileges, transmitted to them, through so many ages, by their gallant ancestors.

1681. But Charles had sagacity enough to distinguish between men's real internal sentiments, and the language which zeal and opposition to a contrary faction may sometimes extort from them. Notwithstanding all these professions of duty and obedience, he was resolved not to trust, for a long time, the people with a new election, but to depend entirely on his own œconomy for alleviating those necessities under which he laboured. Great retrenchments were made in the household: Even his favourite navy was neglected: Tangiers, though it had cost great sums of money, was a few years after abandoned and demolished. The mole was entirely destroyed; and the garrison, being brought over to England, served to augment that small army, which the king relied on, as the solid basis of his authority. It had been happy for the nation, had Charles used his victory with justice and moderation equal to the prudence and dexterity with which he obtained it.

The first step, taken by the court, was the trial of Fitz-harris. Doubts were raised by the jury with regard to their power of trying him, after the concluding vote of the commons: But the judges took upon them to decide the question in the affirmative; and the jury were obliged to proceed. The writing of the libel was clearly proved upon Fitz-harris: The only question was with regard to his intentions. He asserted, that he was a spy of the court, and had accordingly carried the libel to the dutchess of Portsmouth; and he was desirous that the jury should, in this transaction, consider him as a cheat, not as a traitor. He failed however somewhat in the proof; and was brought in guilty of treason by the jury.

Finding himself entirely in the hands of the king, he now retracted all his former impostures with regard to the popish plot, and even endeavoured to

to atone for them by new impostures against the country party. He affirmed, that these fictions had been extorted from him by the suggestions and artifices of Treby the recorder, and of Bethel and Cornish, the two sheriffs: This account he persisted in even at his execution; and though men knew, that nothing could be depended on, which came from one so corrupt, and so lost to all sense of honour; yet were they inclined, from his perseverance, to rely somewhat more on his veracity in these last asseverations. But it appears that his wife had some connexions with Mrs. Wall, the favourite maid of the dutchess of Portsmouth; and Fitz-harris hoped, if he persisted in a story agreeable to the court, that some favour might, on that account, be shown to his family. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

It is amusing to reflect on the several lights in which this story has been represented by the opposite factions. The country party affirmed, that Fitz-harris had been employed by the court, in order to throw the odium of the libel on the exclusionists, and thereby give rise to a protestant plot: The court-party maintained, that the exclusionists had found out Fitz-harris, a spy of the ministers, and had set him upon this undertaking, from an intention of loading the court with the imputation of such a design upon the exclusionists. Rather than acquit their antagonists, both sides were willing to adopt an account the most intricate and incredible. It was a strange situation, in which the people at this time were placed; to be every day tortured with these perplexed stories, and inflamed with such dark suspicions against their fellow-citizens. This was no less than the fifteenth false plot, or sham-plot, as they were then called, with which the court, it was imagined, had endeavoured to load their adversaries.[1]

[1] College's Trial.

CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE country party had intended to make use of Fitz-harris's evidence against the duke and the catholics; and his execution was therefore a great mortification to them. But the king and his ministers were resolved not to be contented with so slender an advantage. They were determined to pursue the victory, and to employ against the exclusionists those very offensive arms, however unfair, which that party had laid up in store against their antagonists. The whole gang of spies, witnesses, informers, suborners, who had so long been supported and encouraged by the leading patriots, finding now that the king was entirely master, turned short upon their old patrons, and offered their service to the ministers. To the disgrace of the court and of the age, they were received with hearty welcome; and their testimony, or rather perjury, made use of in order to commit legal murder upon the opposite party. With an air of triumph and derision it was asked, "Are not "these men good witnesses, who have established the "popish plot, upon whose testimony Stafford and so "many catholics have been executed, and whom "you yourselves have so long celebrated as men of "credit and veracity? You have admitted them into "your bosom: They are best acquainted with your "treasons: They are determined in another shape "to serve their king and country: And you cannot "complain, that the same measure, which you meted "to others, should now, by a righteous doom or ven-"geance, be measured out to you."

IT is certain, that the principle of retaliation may serve in some cases as a full apology, in others as an alleviation, for a conduct which would otherwise be exposed to great blame. But these infamous arts, which poison justice in its very source, and break all the bands of human society, are so detestable and dangerous, that no pretence of retaliation can be pleaded as an apology or even an alleviation of the crime

crime incurred by them. On the contrary, the greater indignation the king and his ministers felt, when formerly exposed to the perjuries of abandoned men, the more reluctance should they now have discovered against employing the same instruments of vengeance upon their antagonists. CHAP. LXVIII. 1681.

THE first person, on whom the ministers fell, was one College, a London joiner, who had become extremely noted for his zeal against popery, and was much connexed with Shaftesbury and the leaders of the country party: For as they relied much upon the populace, men of College's rank and station were useful to them. College had been in Oxford armed with sword and pistol during the sitting of the parliament; and this was made the foundation of his crime. It was pretended that a conspiracy had been entered into to seize the king's person, and detain him in confinement, till he should make the concessions demanded of him. The sheriffs of London were in strong opposition to the court; and it was not strange, that the grand jury named by them rejected the bill against College. The prisoner was therefore sent to Oxford, where the treason was said to have been committed. Lord Norris, a courtier, was sheriff of the county; and the inhabitants were in general devoted to the court party. A jury was named, consisting entirely of royalists; and though they were men of credit and character, yet such was the factious rage which prevailed, that little justice could be expected by the prisoner. Some papers, containing hints and directions for his defence, were taken from him, as he was conducted to his trial: An iniquity, which some pretended to justify by alleging, that a like violence had been practised against a prisoner during the fury of the popish plot. Such wild notions of retaliation were at that time propagated by the court party.

THE

CHAP. LXVIII. 1681. The witnesses produced against College were Dugdale, Turberville, Haynes, Smith; men who had before given evidence against the catholics; and whom the jury, for that very reason, regarded as the most perjured villains. College, though beset with so many toils, and oppressed with so many iniquities, defended himself with spirit, courage, capacity, presence of mind; and he invalidated the evidence of the crown, by convincing arguments and undoubted testimony: Yet did the jury, after half an hour's deliberation, bring in a verdict against him. The inhuman spectators received the verdict with a shout of applause: But the prisoner was nowise dismayed. At his execution, he maintained the same manly fortitude, and still denied the crime imputed to him. His whole conduct and demeanour prove him to have been a man led astray only by the fury of the times, and to have been governed by an honest, but indiscreet, zeal for his country and his religion.

Thus the two parties, actuated by mutual rage, but cooped up within the narrow limits of the law, levelled with poisoned daggers the most deadly blows against each other's breast, and buried in their factious divisions all regard to truth, honour, and humanity.

CHAP. LXIX.

State of affairs in Ireland—Shaftesbury acquitted—Argyle's trial—State of affairs in Scotland—State of the ministry in England—New nomination of Sheriffs—Quo warrantos—Great power of the crown—A conspiracy—Shaftesbury retires and dies—Rye-house plot—Conspiracy discovered—Execution of the conspirators—Trial of lord Russel—His execution—Trial of Algernon Sidney—His execution—State of the nation—State of foreign affairs—King's sickness and death—and character.

CHAP. LXIX.

1681.

State of affairs in Ireland.

WHEN the Cabal entered into the mysterious alliance with France, they took care to remove the duke of Ormond from the committee of foreign affairs; and nothing tended farther to increase the national jealousy, entertained against the new measures, than to see a man of so much loyalty, as well as probity and honour, excluded from public councils. They had even so great interest with the king as to get Ormond recalled from the government of Ireland; and lord Robarts, afterwards earl of Radnor, succeeded him in that important employment. Lord Berkeley succeeded Robarts; and the earl of Essex, Berkeley. At last, in the year 1677, Charles cast his eye again upon Ormond, whom he had so long neglected; and sent him over lieutenant to Ireland. "I have done every thing," said the king, "to disoblige that man; but it is not in my "power to make him my enemy." Ormond, during his disgrace, had never joined the malcontents, nor encouraged those clamours, which, with too much reason, but often for bad purposes, were raised against the king's measures. He even thought it his duty, regularly, though with dignity, to pay

CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

his court at Whitehall; and to prove that his attachments were founded on gratitude, inclination, and principle, not on any temporary advantages. All the expressions, which dropped from him, while neglected by the court, showed more of good humour, than any prevalence of spleen and indignation. "I can do you no service," said he to his friends, "I have only the power left by my appli-"cations to do you some hurt." When colonel Cary Dillon solicited him to second his pretensions for an office, and urged that he had no friends but God and his grace: "Alas! poor Cary," replied the duke, "I pity thee: Thou couldst no have "two friends that possess less interest at court." "I am thrown by," said he, on another occasion, "like an old rusty clock; yet even that neglected "machine, twice in twenty-four hours, points right."

On such occasions, when Ormond, from decency, paid his attendance at court, the king, equally ashamed to show him civility and to neglect him, was abashed and confounded. "Sir," said the profligate Buckingham, "I wish to know whether it be "the duke of Ormond that is out of favour with "your majesty, or your majesty with the duke of "Ormond; for, of the two, you seem the most out "of countenance."

When Charles found it his interest to show favour to the old royalists, and to the church of England, Ormond, who was much revered by that whole party, could not fail of recovering, together with the government of Ireland, his former credit and authority. His administration, when lord lieutenant, corresponded to the general tenor of his life; and tended equally to promote the interests of prince and people, of protestant and catholic. Ever firmly attached to the established religion, he was able, even during those jealous times, to escape suspicion, though he gratified not vulgar prejudices by any persecution of the popish party. He increased the

the revenue of Ireland to three hundred thousand pounds a-year: He maintained a regular army of ten thousand men: He supported a well-disciplined militia of twenty thousand: And though the act of settlement had so far been infringed, that catholics were permitted to live in corporate towns, they were guarded with so careful an eye, that the most timorous protestant never apprehended any danger from them. CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

THE chief object of Essex's ambition was to return to the station of lord lieutenant, where he had behaved with honour and integrity: Shaftesbury and Buckingham bore an extreme hatred to Ormond, both from personal and party considerations: The great aim of the anti-courtiers was to throw reflections on every part of the king's government. It could be no surprise, therefore, to the lord lieutenant to learn, that his administration was attacked in parliament, particularly by Shaftesbury; but he had the satisfaction, at the same time, to hear of the keen, though polite defence, made by his son, the generous Ossory. After justifying several particulars of Ormond's administration against that intriguing patriot, Ossory proceeded in the following words: "Having spoken of what the lord lieutenant "has done, I presume with the same truth to tell "your lordships what he has not done. He never "advised the breaking of the triple league; he never "advised the shutting up of the exchequer; he "never advised the declaration for a toleration; "he never advised the falling out with the Dutch "and the joining with France: He was not the "author of that most excellent position, *Delenda est* "*Carthago*, that Holland, a protestant country, "should, contrary to the true interests of England, "be totally destroyed. I beg that your lordships "will be so just as to judge of my father and all "men, according to their actions and their coun-"sels." These few sentences, pronounced by a plain

CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

gallant soldier, noted for probity, had a surprising effect upon the audience, and confounded all the rhetoric of his eloquent and factious adversary. The prince of Orange, who esteemed the former character as much as he despised the latter, could not forbear congratulating by letter the earl of Ossory on this new species of victory which he had obtained.

OSSORY, though he ever kept at a distance from faction, was the most popular man in the kingdom; though he never made any compliance with the corrupt views of the court, was beloved and respected by the king. An universal grief appeared on his death, which happened about this time, and which the populace, as usual wherever they are much affected, foolishly ascribed to poison. Ormond bore the loss with patience and dignity; though he ever retained a pleasing, however melancholy, sense of the signal merit of Ossory. "I would not exchange my dead "son," said he, "for any living son in Christendom."

THESE particularities may appear a digression; but it is with pleasure, I own, that I relax myself for a moment in the contemplation of these humane and virtuous characters, amidst that scene of fury and faction, fraud and violence, in which at present our narration has unfortunately engaged us.

BESIDES the general interest of the country party to decry the conduct of all the king's ministers, the prudent and peaceful administration of Ormond was in a particular manner displeasing to them. In England, where the catholics were scarcely one to a hundred, means had been found to excite an universal panic, on account of insurrections, and even massacres, projected by that sect; and it could not but seem strange that in Ireland, where they exceeded the protestants six to one, there should no symptoms appear of any combination or conspiracy. Such an incident, when duly considered, might even in England shake the credit of the plot, and diminish the authority of those leaders, who had so long, with such

such industry, inculcated the belief of it on the nation. Rewards, therefore, were published in Ireland to any that would bring intelligence or become witnesses; and some profligates were sent over to that kingdom, with a commission to seek out evidence against the catholics. Under pretence of searching for arms or papers, they broke into houses, and plundered them: They threw innocent men into prison, and took bribes for their release: And after all their diligence, it was with difficulty that that country, commonly fertile enough in witnesses, could furnish them with any fit for their purpose. CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

At last, one Fitzgerald appeared, followed by Ivey, Sanson, Dennis, Bourke, two Macnamaras, and some others. These men were immediately sent over to England; and though they possessed neither character sufficient to gain belief even for truth, nor sense to invent a credible falsehood, they were caressed, rewarded, supported, and recommended by the earl of Shaftesbury. Oliver Plunket, the titular primate of Ireland, a man of peaceable dispositions, was condemned and executed upon such testimony. And the Oxford parliament entered so far into the matter as to vote, that they were entirely satisfied in the reality of the *horrid* and *damnable* Irish plot. But such decisions, though at first regarded as infallible, had now lost much of their authority; and the public still remained somewhat indifferent and incredulous.

After the dissolution of the parliament, and the subsequent victory of the royalists, Shaftesbury's evidences, with Turberville, Smith, and others, addressed themselves to the ministers, and gave information of high treason against their former patron. It is sufficiently scandalous, that intelligence, conveyed by such men, should have been attended to; but there is some reason to think, that the court agents, nay the ministers, nay the king himself,[k] went

[k] See captain Wilkinson's narrative.

CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

went farther, and were active in endeavouring, though in vain, to find more reputable persons to support the blasted credit of the Irish witnesses. Shaftesbury was committed to prison, and his indictment was presented to the grand jury. The new sheriffs of London, Shute and Pilkington, were engaged as deeply as their predecessors in the country party; and they took care to name a jury devoted to the same cause: A precaution quite necessary, when it was scarcely possible to find men indifferent or attached to neither party. As far as swearing could go, the treason was clearly proved against Shaftesbury; or rather so clearly as to merit no kind of credit or attention. That veteran leader of a party, enured from his early youth to faction and intrigue, to cabals and conspiracies, was represented as opening without reserve his treasonable intentions to these obscure banditti, and throwing out such violent and outrageous reproaches upon the king, as none but men of low education, like themselves, could be supposed to employ. The draught of an association, it is true, against popery and the duke, was found in Shaftesbury's cabinet; and dangerous inferences might be drawn from many clauses of that paper. But it did not appear, that it had been framed by Shaftesbury, or so much as approved by him. And as projects of an association had been proposed in parliament, it was very natural for this nobleman, or his correspondents, to be thinking of some plan, which it might be proper to lay before that assembly. The grand jury, therefore, after weighing all these circumstances, rejected the indictment; and the people, who attended the hall, testified their joy by the loudest acclamations, which were echoed throughout the whole city.

Shaftesbury acquitted.

About this time a scheme of oppression was laid in Scotland, after a manner still more flagrant, against a nobleman much less obnoxious than Shaftesbury; and as that country was reduced to a state of almost total subjection,

subjection, the project had the good fortune to succeed. CHAP. LXIX.

1681.

THE earl of Argyle, from his youth, had distinguished himself by his loyalty, and his attachment to the royal family. Though his father was head of the covenanters, he himself refused to concur in any of their measures: and when a commission of colonel was given him by the convention of states, he forbore to act upon it, till it should be ratified by the king. By his respectful behaviour, as well as by his services, he made himself acceptable to Charles, when that prince was in Scotland: And even after the battle of Worcester, all the misfortunes which attended the royal cause, could not engage him to desert it. Under Middleton he obstinately persevered to harass and infest the victorious English; and it was not till he received orders from that general, that he would submit to accept of a capitulation. Such jealousy of his loyal attachments was entertained by the commonwealth and protector, that a pretence was soon after fallen upon to commit him to prison; and his confinement was rigorously continued till the restoration. The king, sensible of his services, had remitted to him his father's forfeiture, and created him earl of Argyle; and when a most unjust sentence was passed upon him by the Scottish parliament, Charles had anew remitted it. In the subsequent part of this reign, Argyle behaved himself dutifully; and though he seemed not disposed to go all lengths with the court, he always appeared, even in his opposition, to be a man of mild dispositions and peaceable deportment. Argyle's trial.

A PARLIAMENT was summoned at Edinburgh this summer, and the duke was appointed commissioner. Besides granting money to the king, and voting the indefeasible right of succession, this parliament enacted a test, which all persons, possessed of offices, civil, military, or ecclesiastical, were bound to take. In this test, the king's supremacy was asserted, the covenant renounced, passive obedience

CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

obedience assented to, and all obligations disclaimed of endeavouring any alteration in civil or ecclesiastical establishments. This was the state of the test, as proposed by the courtiers; but the country party proposed also to insert a clause, which could not with decency be refused, expressing the person's adherence to the protestant religion. The whole was of an enormous length, considered as an oath; and what was worse, a confession of faith was there ratified, what had been imposed a little after the reformation, and which contained many articles altogether forgotten by the parliament and nation. Among others, the doctrine of resistance was inculcated; so that the test, being voted in a hurry, was found on examination to be a medley of contradiction and absurdity. Several persons, the most attached to the crown, scrupled to take it: The bishops and many of the clergy remonstrated: The earl of Queensberry refused to swear, except he might be allowed to add an explanation: And even the privy council thought it necessary to publish for general satisfaction a solution of some difficulties attending the test.

THOUGH the courtiers could not reject the clause of adhering to the protestant religion, they proposed, as a necessary mark of respect, that all princes of the blood should be exempted from taking the oath. This exception was zealously opposed by Argyle; who observed that the sole danger to be dreaded for the protestant religion must proceed from the perversion of the royal family. By insisting on such topics, he drew on himself the secret indignation of the duke, of which he soon felt the fatal consequences.

WHEN Argyle took the test as a privy counsellor, he subjoined, in the duke's presence, an explanation, which he had beforehand communicated to that prince, and which he believed to have been approved by him. It was in these words: "I have considered

"the

" the test, and am very desirous of giving obedience CHAP. LXIX.
" as far as I can. I am confident that the parliament
" never intended to impose contradictory oaths: 1681.
" Therefore I think no man can explain it but for
" himself. Accordingly, I take it as far as it is
" consistent with itself and the protestant religion.
" And I do declare, that I mean not to bind my-
" self, in my station, and in a lawful way, from
" wishing, and endeavouring any alteration, which
" I think to the advantage of church or state, and
" not repugnant to the protestant religion and my
" loyalty: And this I understand as a part of my
" oath." The duke, as was natural, heard these words with great tranquillity: No one took the least offence: Argyle was admitted to sit that day in council: And it was impossible to imagine that a capital offence had been committed, where occasion seemed not to have been given, so much as for a frown or reprimand.

ARGYLE was much surprised, a few days after, to find that a warrant was issued for committing him to prison; that he was indicted for high-treason, leasing-making, and perjury; and that from these innocent words an accusation was extracted, by which he was to forfeit honours, life, and fortune. It is needless to enter into particulars, where the iniquity of the whole is so apparent. Though the sword of justice was displayed, even her semblance was not put on; and the forms alone of law were preserved, in order to sanctify, or rather aggravate, the oppression. Of five judges, three did not scruple to find the guilt of treason and leasing-making to be incurred by the prisoner: A jury of fifteen noblemen gave verdict against him: And the king, being consulted, ordered the sentence to be pronounced; but the execution of it to be suspended till farther orders.

IT was pretended by the duke and his creatures, that Argyle's life and fortune were not in any danger, and

CHAP. LXIX. 1681.

and that the sole reason for pushing the trial to such extremities against him was in order to make him renounce some hereditary jurisdictions, which gave his family a dangerous authority in the highlands, and obstructed the course of public justice. But allowing the end to be justifiable, the means were infamous; and such as were incompatible, not only with a free, but a civilized government. Argyle had therefore no reason to trust any longer to the justice or mercy of such enemies: He made his escape from prison; and till he should find a ship for Holland, he concealed himself during some time in London. The king heard of his lurking-place, but would not allow him to be arrested.[1] All the parts, however, of his sentence, as far as the government in Scotland had power, were rigorously executed; his estate confiscated, his arms reversed and torn.

State of affairs in Scotland.

It would seem, that the genuine passion for liberty was at this time totally extinguished in Scotland: There was only preserved a spirit of mutiny and sedition, encouraged by a mistaken zeal for religion. Cameron and Cargil, two furious preachers, went a step beyond all their brethren: They publicly excommunicated the king for his tyranny and his breach of the covenant; and they renounced all allegiance to him. Cameron was killed by the troops in an action at Airs-Moss; Cargil was taken and hanged. Many of their followers were tried and convicted. Their lives were offered them if they would say, *God save the King*: But they would only agree to pray for his repentance. This obstinacy was much insisted on as an apology for the rigours of the administration: But if duly considered, it will rather afford reason for a contrary inference. Such unhappy delusion is an object rather of commiseration than of anger: And it is almost impossible

[1] Burnet, vol. i. p. 522.

sible that men could have been carried to such a degree of frenzy, unless provoked by a long train of violence and oppression. CHAP. LXIX. 1682.

As the king was master in England, and no longer dreaded the clamours of the country party, he permitted the duke to pay him a visit; and was soon after prevailed on to allow of his return to England, and of his bearing a part in the administration. The duke went to Scotland, in order to bring up his family, and settle the government of that country; and he chose to take his passage by sea. The ship struck on a sand-bank, and was lost: The duke escaped in the barge; and it is pretended that, while many persons of rank and quality were drowned, and among the rest Hyde, his brother-in-law, he was very careful to save several of his dogs and priests: For these two species of favourites are coupled together by some writers. It has likewise been asserted, that the barge might safely have held more persons, and that some who swam to it were thrust off, and even their hands cut, in order to disengage them. But every action of every eminent person, during this period, is so liable to be misinterpreted and misrepresented by faction, that we ought to be very cautious in passing judgment on too slight evidence. It is remarkable, that the sailors on board the ship, though they felt themselves sinking, and saw inevitable death before their eyes, yet, as soon as they observed the duke to be in safety, gave a loud shout, in testimony of their joy and satisfaction.

The duke, during his abode in Scotland, had behaved with great civility towards the gentry and nobility; and by his courtly demeanour had much won upon their affections: But his treatment of the enthusiasts was still somewhat rigorous; and in many instances he appeared to be a man of a severe, if not an unrelenting temper. It is even asserted, that he sometimes assisted at the torture of criminals, and looked

CHAP. LXIX. 1682.

looked on with tranquillity, as if he were considering some curious experiment.[m] He left the authority in the hands of the earl of Aberdeen, chancellor, and the earl of Queensberry, treasurer. A very arbitrary spirit appeared in their administration: A gentleman of the name of Weir was tried, because he had kept company with one who had been in rebellion; though that person had never been marked out by process or proclamation. The inferences upon which Weir was condemned (for a prosecution by the government and a condemnation were in Scotland the same thing) hung upon each other after the following manner: No man, it was supposed, could have been in a rebellion without being exposed to suspicion in the neighbourhood: If the neighbourhood had suspected him, it was to be presumed that each individual had likewise heard of the grounds of suspicion: Every man was bound to declare to the government his suspicion against every man, and to avoid the company of traitors: to fail in this duty was to participate in the treason: The conclusion on the whole was, You have conversed with a rebel; therefore you are yourself a rebel. A reprieve was, with some difficulty, procured for Weir; but it was seriously determined to make use of the precedent. Courts of judicature were erected in the southern and western counties, and a strict inquisition carried on against this new species of crime. The term of three years was appointed for the continuance of these courts; after which an indemnity was promised Whoever would take the test, was instantly entitled to the benefit of this indemnity. The presbyterians, alarmed with such tyranny, from which no man could deem himself safe, began to think of leaving the country; and some

[m] Burnet, vol. i. p. 583. Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 169. This last author, who is much the better authority, mentions only one instance, that of Spreul, which seems to have been an extraordinary one.

some of their agents were sent to England, in order to treat with the proprietors of Carolina for a settlement in that colony. Any condition seemed preferable to their living in their native country, which, by the prevalence of persecution and violence, was become as insecure to them as a den of robbers. CHAP. LXIX. 1682.

ABOVE two thousand persons were outlawed on pretence of their conversing or having intercourse with rebels,[n] and they were continually hunted in their retreat by soldiers, spies, informers, and oppressive magistrates. It was usual to put ensnaring questions to people living peaceably in their own houses; such as, "Will you renounce the cove-"nant? Do you esteem the rising at Bothwel to "be rebellion? Was the killing of the archbishop "of St. Andrew's murder?" And when the poor deluded creatures refused to answer, capital punishments were inflicted on them.[o] Even women were brought to the gibbet for this pretended crime. A number of fugitives, rendered frantic by oppression, had published a seditious declaration; renouncing allegiance to Charles Stuart, whom they called, as they, for their parts, had indeed some reason to esteem him, a tyrant. This incident afforded the privy-council a pretence for an unusual kind of oppression. Soldiers were dispersed over the country, and power was given to all commission-officers, even the lowest, to oblige every one they met with to abjure the declaration; and, upon refusal, instantly, without farther questions, to shoot the delinquent.[p] It were endless, as well as shocking, to enumerate all the instances of persecution, or, in other words, of absurd tyranny, which at that time prevailed in Scotland. One of them, however, is so singular, that I cannot forbear relating it.

THREE

[n] Wodrow, vol. ii. Appendix, 94.
[o] Ibid. vol. ii. passim.
[p] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 434.

CHAP. LXIX. 1682.

THREE women were seized;[q] and the customary oath was tendered to them, by which they were to abjure the seditious declaration above mentioned. They all refused and were condemned to a capital punishment by drowning. One of them was an elderly woman: The other two were young; one eighteen years of age, the other only thirteen. Even these violent persecutors were ashamed to put the youngest to death: But the other two were conducted to the place of execution, and were tied to stakes within the sea-mark at low-water: A contrivance which rendered their death lingering and dreadful. The elderly woman was placed farthest in, and by the rising of the waters was first suffocated. The younger, partly terrified with the view of her companion's death, partly subdued by the entreaty of her friends was prevailed with to say, *God save the king*. Immediately the spectators called out that she had submitted; and she was loosened from the stake. Major Winram the officer who guarded the execution, again required her to sign the abjuration; and upon her refusal, he ordered her instantly to be plunged in the water, where she was suffocated.

THE severity of the administration in Scotland is in part to be ascribed to the duke's temper, to whom the king had consigned over the government of that country, and who gave such attention to affairs as to allow nothing of moment to escape him. Even the government of England, from the same cause, began to be somewhat infected with the same severity. The duke's credit was great at court. Though neither so much beloved nor esteemed as the king, he was more dreaded; and thence an attendance more exact, as well as a submission more obsequious, was paid to him. The saying of Waller was remarked, that Charles, in spite to the parliament, who had determined that the duke should not succeed

[q] Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 505.

succeed him, was resolved that he should reign even in his lifetime. CHAP. LXIX.

1682.

The king, however, who loved to maintain a balance in his councils, still supported Halifax, whom he created a marquis, and made privy seal, though ever in opposition to the duke. This man, who possessed the finest genius and most extensive capacity of all employed in public affairs during the present reign, affected a species of neutrality between the parties, and was esteemed the head of that small body known by the denomination of *Trimmers*. This conduct, which is more natural to men of integrity, than of ambition, could not, however, procure him the former character; and he was always, with reason, regarded as an intriguer rather than a patriot. Sunderland, who had promoted the exclusion-bill, and who had been displaced on that account, was again, with the duke's consent, brought into the administration. The extreme duplicity, at least variableness, of this man's conduct, through the whole course of his life, made it be suspected that it was by the king's direction he had mixed with the country party. Hyde, created earl of Rochester, was first commissioner of the treasury, and was entirely in the duke's interests. State of the ministry in England.

The king himself was obliged to act as the head of a party; a disagreeable situation for a prince, and always the source of much injustice and oppression. He knew how obnoxious the dissenters were to the church, and he resolved, contrary to the maxims of toleration which he had hitherto supported in England, to gratify his friends by the persecution of his enemies. The laws against conventicles were now rigorously executed; an expedient which, the king knew, would diminish neither the numbers nor influence of the non-conformists; and which is therefore to be deemed more the result of passion than of policy. Scarcely any persecution

CHAP. LXIX.

persecution serves the intended purpose but such as amounts to a total extermination.

1682.

THOUGH the king's authority made every day great advances, it still met with considerable obstacles, chiefly from the city, which was entirely in the hands of the malcontents. The juries, in particular, named by the sheriffs, were not likely to be impartial judges between the crown and the people; and, after the experiments already made in the case of Shaftesbury and that of College, treason, it was apprehended, might there be committed with impunity. There could not therefore be a more important service to the court than to put affairs upon a different footing. Sir John Moore, the mayor, was gained by secretary Jenkins, and encouraged to insist upon the customary privilege of his office, of naming one of the sheriffs. Accordingly, when the time of election came, he drank to North, a Levant merchant, who accepted of that expensive office. The country party said, that, being lately returned from Turkey, he was on account of his recent experience, better qualified to serve the purposes of the court. A poll was opened for the election of another sheriff; and here began the contest. The majority of the common-hall, headed by the two sheriffs of the former year, refused to acknowledge the mayor's right of appointing one sheriff, but insisted that both must be elected by the livery. Papillon and Dubois were the persons whom the country party agreed to elect: Box was pointed out by the courtiers. The poll was opened; but as the mayor would not allow the election to proceed for two vacancies, the sheriffs and he separated, and each carried on the poll apart. The country party, who voted with the sheriffs for Papillon and Dubois, were much more numerous than those who voted with the mayor for Box: But as the mayor insisted

New nomination of sheriffs.

24th of June.

insisted, that his poll was the only legal one, he declared Box to be duly elected. All difficulties, however, were not surmounted. Box, apprehensive of the consequences which might attend so dubious an election, fined off; and the mayor found it necessary to proceed to a new choice. When the matter was proposed to the common-hall, a loud cry was raised, No election! No election! The two sheriffs already elected, Papillon and Dubois, were insisted on as the only legal magistrates. But as the mayor still maintained, that Box alone had been legally chosen, and that it was now requisite to supply his place, he opened books anew: and during the tumult and confusion of the citizens, a few of the mayor's partisans elected Rich, unknown to and unheeded by the rest of the livery. North and Rich were accordingly sworn in sheriffs for the ensuing year; but it was necessary to send a guard of the train bands to protect them in entering upon their office. A new mayor of the court party was soon after chosen, by means, as is pretended, still more violent and irregular. CHAP. LXII. 1682. Octob. 25.

THUS the country party were dislodged from their strong hold in the city; where, ever since the commencement of factions in the English government, they had, without interruption, almost without molestation, maintained a superiority. It had been happy, had the partialities, hitherto objected to juries, been corrected, without giving place to partialities of an opposite kind: But in the present distracted state of the nation, an equitable neutrality was almost impossible to be attained. The court and church party, who were now named on juries, made justice subservient to their factious views; and the king had a prospect of obtaining full revenge on his enemies. It was not long before the effects of these alterations were seen. When it was first reported, that

CHAP. LXIX.

that the duke intended to leave Scotland, Pilkington, at that time sheriff, a very violent man, had broken out in these terms, "He has already burned "the city; and he is now coming to cut all our "throats!" For these scandalous expressions, the duke sued Pilkington; and enormous damages, to the amount of 100,000 pounds, were decreed him. By the law of England, ratified in the great charter, no fines or damages ought to extend to the total ruin of a criminal. Sir Patience Ward, formerly mayor, who gave evidence for Pilkington, was sued for perjury, and condemned to the pillory: A severe sentence, and sufficient to deter all witnesses from appearing in favour of those who were prosecuted by the court.

1682.

1683. BUT though the crown had obtained so great a victory in the city, it was not quite decisive; and the contest might be renewed every year at the election of magistrates. An important project, therefore, was formed, not only to make the king master of the city, but by that precedent to gain him uncontrolled influence in all the corporations of England, and thereby give the greatest wound to the legal constitution, which the most powerful and most arbitrary monarchs had ever yet been able to inflict. A writ of *quo warranto* was issued against the city; that is, an inquiry into the validity of its charter. It was pretended, that the city had forfeited all its privileges, and ought to be declared no longer a corporation, on account of two offences which the court of aldermen and common council had committed. After the great fire in 1666, all the markets had been rebuilt, and had been fitted up with many conveniencies; and, in order to defray the expense, the magistrates had imposed a small toll on goods brought to market: In the year 1679, they had addressed the king against the prorogation

Quo warrantos.

of

of parliament, and had employed the following terms: "Your petitioners are greatly surprised at "the late prorogation, whereby the prosecution of "the public justice of the kingdom, and the mak- "ing of necessary provisions for the preservation "of your majesty and your protestant subjects, "have received interruption." These words were pretended to contain a scandalous reflection on the king and his measures. The cause of the city was defended against the attorney and solicitor generals by Treby and Pollexfen. CHAP. LXIX. 1682.

THESE last pleaded, that, since the foundation of the monarchy, no corporation had ever yet been exposed to forfeiture, and the thing itself implied an absurdity: That a corporation, as such, was incapable of all crime and offence, and none were answerable for any iniquity but the persons themselves who committed it: That the members, in choosing magistrates, had entrusted them with legal powers only; and where the magistrates exceeded these powers, their acts were void, but could never involve the body itself in any criminal imputation: That such had ever been the practice of England, except at the reformation, when the monasteries were abolished; but this was an extraordinary case; and it was even thought necessary to ratify afterwards the whole transaction by act of parliament: That corporate bodies, framed for public good, and calculated for perpetual duration, ought not to be annihilated for the temporary faults of their members, who might themselves, without hurting the community, be questioned for their offences: That even a private estate, if entailed, could not be forfeited to the crown, on account of treason committed by the tenant for life; but upon his demise went to the next in remainder: That the offences, objected to the city, far from deserving so severe a punishment, were not even worthy of the smallest repre-

C. 2 & P. LXIX. 1683.

hension: That all corporations were invested with the power of making bye-laws; and the smallest borough in England had ever been allowed to carry the exercise of this power farther than London had done in the instance complained of: That the city, having, at its own expence, repaired the markets, which were built too on its own estate, might as lawfully claim a small recompence from such as brought commodities thither, as a man might require rent for a house of which he was possessed: That those who disliked the condition might abstain from the market; and whoever paid had done it voluntarily: That it was an avowed right of the subjects to petition; nor had the city in their address abused this privilege: That the king himself had often declared, the parliament often voted, the nation to be in danger from the popish plot; which, it is evident, could not be fully prosecuted but in a parliamentary manner: That the impeachment of the popish lords was certainly obstructed by the frequent prorogations; as was also the enacting of necessary laws, and providing for the defence of the nation: That the loyalty of the city, no less than their regard to self-preservation, might prompt them to frame the petition; since it was acknowledged, that the king's life was every moment exposed to the most imminent danger from the popish conspiracy: That the city had not accused the king of obstructing justice, much less of having any such intention; since it was allowed, that evil counsellors were alone answerable for all the pernicious consequences of any measure: And that it was unaccountable, that two public deeds which had not, during so long a time, subjected to any, even the smallest penalty, the persons guilty of them, should now be punished so severely upon the corporation, which always was, and always must be, innocent.

It

CHAP. LXIX. 1683. 12th June.

It is evident, that those who would apologise for the measures of the court, must, in this case, found their arguments not on law, but reasons of state. The judges, therefore, who condemned the city, are inexcusable; since the sole object of their determinations must ever be the pure principles of justice and equity. But the office of judge was at that time held during pleasure; and it was impossible that any cause, where the court bent its force, could ever be carried against it. After sentence was pronounced, the city applied in a humble manner to the king; and he agreed to restore their charter, but in return they were obliged to submit to the following regulations: That no mayor, sheriff, recorder, common serjeant, town clerk, or coroner, should be admitted to the exercise of his office without his majesty's approbation: That if the king disapprove twice of the mayor or sheriffs elected, he may by commission appoint these magistrates: That the mayor and court of aldermen may, with his majesty's leave, displace any magistrate: And that no alderman, in case of a vacancy, shall be elected without consent of the court of aldermen, who, if they disapprove twice of the choice, may fill the vacancy.

Great power of the crown.

All the corporations in England, having the example of London before their eyes, saw how vain it would prove to contend with the court, and were, most of them, successively induced to surrender their charters into the king's hands. Considerable sums were exacted for restoring the charters; and all offices of power and profit were left at the disposal of the crown. It seems strange, that the independent royalists, who never meant to make the crown absolute, should yet be so elated with the victory obtained over their adversaries, as to approve of a precedent, which left no national privileges in security, but enabled the king, under like pretences, and by means of like instruments, to recall

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

recall anew all those charters, which at present he was pleased to grant. And every friend to liberty must allow, that the nation, whose constitution was thus broken in the shock of faction, had a right, by every prudent expedient, to recover that security of which it was so unhappily bereaved.

WHILE so great a faction adhered to the crown, it is apparent, that resistance, however justifiable, could never be prudent; and all wise men saw no expedient but peaceably to submit to the present grievances. There was, however, a party of malcontents, so turbulent in their disposition, that, even before this last iniquity, which laid the whole constitution at the mercy of the king, they had meditated plans of resistance; at a time when it could be as little justifiable as prudent. In the spring 1681,[r] a little before the Oxford parliament, the king was seized with a fit of sickness at Windsor, which gave great alarm to the public. The duke of Monmouth, lord Russel, lord Gray, instigated by the restless Shaftesbury, had agreed, in case the king's sickness should prove mortal, to rise in arms, and to oppose the succession of the duke. Charles recovered; but these dangerous projects were not laid aside. The same conspirators, together with Essex and Salisbury, were determined to continue the Oxford parliament, after the king, as was daily expected, should dissolve it; and they engaged some leaders among the commons in the same desperate measure. They went so far as to detain several lords in the house, under pretence of signing a protest against rejecting Fitz-harris's impeachment:

A conspiracy.

[r] Lord Gray's Secret History of the Rye-house Plot. This is the most full and authentic account of all these transactions; but is in the main confirmed by bishop Sprat, and even Burnet, as well as by the trials and dying confessions of the conspirators: So that nothing can be more unaccountable than that any one should pretend that this conspiracy was an imposture like the popish plot. Monmouth's declaration, published in the next reign, confesses a consult for extraordinary remedies.

ment: But hearing that the commons had broken up in great consternation, they were likewise obliged at last to separate. Shaftesbury's imprisonment and trial put an end for some time to these machinations; and it was not till the new sheriffs were imposed on the city that they were revived. The leaders of the country party began then to apprehend themselves in imminent danger; and they were well pleased to find that the citizens were struck with the same terror, and were thence inclined to undertake the most perilous enterprises. Besides the city, the gentry and nobility in several counties of England were solicited to rise in arms. Monmouth engaged the earl of Macclesfield, lord Brandon, sir Gilbert Gerard, and other gentlemen in Cheshire; lord Russel fixed a correspondence with sir William Courtney, sir Francis Rowes, sir Francis Drake, who promised to raise the west; and Trenchard in particular, who had interest in the disaffected town of Taunton, assured him of considerable assistance from that neighbourhood. Shaftesbury, and his emissary Ferguson, an independent clergyman, and a restless plotter, managed the correspondence in the city, upon which the confederates chiefly relied. The whole train was ready to take fire; but was prevented by the caution of lord Russel, who induced Monmouth to delay the enterprise. Shaftesbury, in the mean time, was so much affected with the sense of his danger, that he had left his house, and secretly lurked in the city; meditating all those desperate schemes, which disappointed revenge and ambition could inspire. He exclaimed loudly against delay, and represented to his confederates that having gone so far, and entrusted the secret into so many hands, there was no safety for them but in a bold and desperate prosecution of their purpose. The projects were therefore renewed: Meetings of the conspirators were appointed in different houses, particularly in Shephard's,

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

hard's, an eminent wine merchant in the city: The plan of an insurrection was laid in London, Cheshire, Devonshire, and Bristol: The several places of rendezvous were concerted; and all the operations fixed: The state of the guards was even viewed by Monmouth and Armstrong, and an attack on them pronounced practicable: A declaration to justify the enterprise to the public was read and agreed to; And every circumstance seemed now to render an insurrection unavoidable; when a new delay was procured by Trenchard, who declared, that the rising in the west could not for some weeks be in sufficient forwardness.

SHAFTESBURY was enraged at these perpetual cautions and delays in an enterprise which, he thought, nothing but courage and celerity could render effectual: He threatened to commence the insurrection with his friends in the city alone; and he boasted, that he had ten thousand *brisk boys*, as he called them, who, on a motion of his finger, were ready to fly to arms. Monmouth, Russel, and the other conspirators, were, during some time, in apprehensions lest despair should push him into some dangerous measure; when they heard that, after a long combat between fear and rage, he had at last abandoned all hopes of success, and had retired into Holland. He lived in a private manner at Amsterdam; and for greater security desired to be admitted into the magistracy of that city: But his former violent counsels against the Dutch commonwealth were remembered; and all applications from him were rejected. He died soon after; and his end gave neither sorrow to his friends, nor joy to his enemies. His furious temper, notwithstanding his capacity, had done great injury to the cause in which he was engaged. The violences and iniquities which he suggested and encouraged, were greater than even faction itself could endure; and men could not forbear

Shaftesbury retires and dies.

forbear sometimes recollecting, that the same person, who had become so zealous a patriot, was once a most prostitute courtier. It is remarkable, that this man, whose principles and conduct were, in all other respects, so exceptionable, proved an excellent chancellor; and that all his decrees, while he possessed that high office, were equally remarkable for justness and for integrity. So difficult is it to find in history a character either wholly bad or perfectly good; though the prejudices of party make writers run easily into the extremes both of panegyric and satire!

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

After Shaftesbury's departure, the conspirators found some difficulty in renewing the correspondence with the city malcontents, who had been accustomed to depend solely on that nobleman. Their common hopes, however, as well as common fears, made them at last have recourse to each other, and a regular project of an insurrection was again formed. A council of six was erected, consisting of Monmouth, Russel, Essex, Howard, Algernon Sidney, and John Hambden, grandson of the great parliamentary leader. These men entered into an agreement with Argyle and the Scottish malcontents; who engaged, that, upon the payment of 10,000 pounds for the purchase of arms in Holland, they would bring the covenanters into the field. Insurrections, likewise, were anew projected in Cheshire, and the west, as well as in the city; and some meetings of the leaders were held, in order to reduce these projects into form. The conspirators differed extremely in their views. Sidney was passionate for a commonwealth. Essex had embraced the same project. But Monmouth had entertained hopes of acquiring the crown for himself. Russel, as well as Hambden, was much attached to the ancient constitution, and intended only the exclusion of the duke, and the redress of grievances. Lord Howard was a man of no principle, and was ready to embrace

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

brace any party which his immediate interest should recommend to him. But notwithstanding this difference of characters and of views, their common hatred of the duke and the present administration united them in one party; and the dangerous experiment of an insurrection was fully resolved on.

Rye-house plot.

WHILE these schemes were concerting among the leaders, there was an inferior order of conspirators, who held frequent meetings; and, together with the insurrection, carried on projects quite unknown to Monmouth and the cabal of six. Among these men were colonel Rumsey, an old republican officer who had distinguished himself in Portugal, and had been recommended to the king by mareschal Schomberg; lieutenant-colonel Walcot, likewise a republican officer; Goodenough, undersheriff of London, a zealous and noted party-man; West, Tyley, Norton, Ayloffe, lawyers; Ferguson, Rouse, Hone, Keiling, Holloway, Bourne, Lee, Rumbald. Most of these last were merchants or tradesmen; and the only persons of this confederacy who had access to the leaders of the party, were Rumsey and Ferguson. When these men met together, they indulged themselves in the most desperate and most criminal discourse: They frequently mentioned the assassination of the king and the duke, to which they had given the familiar appellation of *lopping:* They even went so far as to have thought of a scheme for that purpose. Rumbald, who was a maltster, possessed a farm, called the Rye-house, which lay on the road to Newmarket, whither the king commonly went once a-year, for the diversion of the races. A plan of this farm had been laid before some of the conspirators by Rumbald, who showed them how easy it would be, by overturning a cart, to stop at that place the king's coach; while they might fire upon him from the hedges, and be enabled afterwards, through bye-lanes and across the fields, to make their

their escape. But though the plausibility of this scheme gave great pleasure to the conspirators, no concerted design was as yet laid, nor any men, horses, or arms, provided: The whole was little more than loose discourse, the overflowings of their zeal and rancour. The house, in which the king lived at Newmarket, took fire accidentally; and he was obliged to leave that place eight days sooner that he intended. To this circumstance his safety was afterwards ascribed, when the conspiracy was detected; and the court party could not sufficiently admire the wise dispensations of Providence. It is indeed certain, that as the king had thus unexpectedly left Newmarket, he was worse attended than usual; and Rumbald informed his confederates with regret, what a fine opportunity was thus unfortunately lost. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

Among the conspirators I have mentioned Keiling, a salter in London. This man had been engaged in a bold measure, of arresting the mayor of London, at the suit of Papillon and Dubois, the outed sheriffs; and being liable to prosecution for that action, he thought it safest to purchase a pardon, by revealing the conspiracy, in which he was deeply concerned. He brought to secretary Jenkins intelligence of the assassination-plot; but as he was a single evidence, the secretary, whom many false plots had probably rendered incredulous, scrupled to issue warrants for the commitment of so great a number of persons. Keiling, therefore, in order to fortify his testimony, engaged his brother in treasonable discourse with Goodenough, one of the conspirators; and Jenkins began now to give more attention to the intelligence. The conspirators had got some hint of the danger in which they were involved; and all of them concealed themselves. One person alone, of the name of Barber, an instrument-maker, was seized; and as his confession concurred in Conspiracy discovered. June 12.

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

in many particulars with Keiling's information, the affair seemed to be put out of all question; and a more diligent search was every where made after the conspirators.

West, the lawyer, and colonel Rumsey, finding the perils to which they were exposed in endeavouring to escape, resolved to save their own lives at the expence of their companions; and they surrendered themselves with an intention of becoming evidence. West could do little more than confirm the testimony of Keiling, with regard to the assassination plot; but Rumsey, besides giving additional confirmation of the same design, was at last, though with much difficulty, led to reveal the meetings at Shephard's. Shephard was immediately apprehended; and had not courage to maintain fidelity to his confederates. Upon his information, orders were issued for arresting the great men engaged in the conspiracy. Monmouth absconded: Russel was sent to the Tower: Gray was arrested, but escaped from the messenger: Howard was taken, while he concealed himself in a chimney; and being a man of profligate morals, as well as indigent circumstances, he scrupled not, in hopes of a pardon and a reward, to reveal the whole conspiracy. Essex, Sidney, and Hambden, were immediately apprehended upon his evidence. Every day some of the conspirators were detected in their lurking-places, and thrown into prison.

Execution of the conspirators.

Lieutenant-colonel Walcot was first brought to his trial. This man, who was once noted for bravery, had been so far overcome by the love of life, that he had written to secretary Jenkins, and had offered, upon promise of pardon, to turn evidence: But no sooner had he taken this mean step than he felt more generous sentiments arise in him: and he endeavoured, though in vain, to conceal himself. The witnesses against him were Rumsey, West,

West, Shephard, together with Bourne, a brewer. His own letter to the secretary was produced, and rendered the testimony of the witnesses unquestionable. Hone and Rouse were also condemned. These two men, as well as Walcot, acknowledged, at their execution, the justness of the sentence; and from their trial and confession it is sufficiently apparent, that the plan of an insurrection had been regularly formed; and that even the assassination had been often talked of, and not without the approbation of many of the conspirators. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

THE condemnation of these criminals was probably intended as a preparative to the trial of lord Russel, and served to impress the public with a thorough belief of the conspiracy, as well as a horror against it. The witnesses produced against the noble prisoner were, Rumsey, Shephard, and lord Howard. Rumsey swore, that he himself had been introduced at the cabal at Shephard's, where Russel was present; and had delivered them a message from Shaftesbury, urging them to hasten the intended insurrection: But had reeeived for answer, that it was found necessary to delay the design, and that Shaftesbury must therefore, for some time, rest contented. This answer, he said, was delivered by Ferguson; but was assented to by the prisoner. He added, that some discourse had been entered into about taking a survey of the guards; and he thought that Monmouth, Gray, and Armstrong, undertook to view them. Shephard deposed, that his house had beforehand been bespoken by Ferguson for the secret meeting of the conspirators, and that he had been careful to keep all his servants from approaching them, and had served them himself. Their discourse, he said, ran chiefly upon the means of surprising the guards; and it was agreed, that Monmouth and his two friends should take a survey of them. The report, which they brought next meeting, was, that Trial of lord Russel.

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

that the guards were remiss, and that the design was practicable: But he did not affirm that any resolution was taken of executing it. The prisoner, he thought, was present at both these meetings; but he was sure that at least he was present at one of them. A declaration, he added, had been read by Ferguson in Russel's presence: The reasons of the intended insurrection were there set forth, and all the public grievances fully displayed.

Lord Howard had been one of the cabal of six, established after Shaftesbury's flight; and two meetings had been held by the conspirators, one at Hambden's, another at Russel's. Howard deposed, that at the first meeting it was agreed to begin the insurrection in the country before the city; the places were fixed, the proper quantity and kind of arms agreed on, and the whole plan of operations concerted: That at the second meeting, the conversation chiefly turned upon their correspondence with Argyle and the discontented Scots, and that the principal management of that affair was entrusted to Sidney, who had sent one Aaron Smith into Scotland with proper instructions. He added, that in these deliberations no question was put, or votes collected; but there was no contradiction; and, as he took it, all of them, and the prisoner among the rest, gave their consent.

Rumsey and Shephard were very unwilling witnesses against lord Russel; and it appears from Gray's Secret History,[1] that, if they had pleased, they could have given a more explicit testimony against him. This reluctance, together with the difficulty in recollecting circumstances of a conversation which had passed above eight months before, and which the persons had not at that time any intention to reveal, may beget some slight objection to their evidence. But on the whole it was undoubtedly proved,

[1] Page 43.

proved, that the insurrection had been deliberated on by the prisoner, and fully resolved; the surprisal of the guards deliberated on, but not fully resolved; and that an assassination had never once been mentioned nor imagined by him. So far the matter of fact seems certain: But still, with regard to law, there remained a difficulty, and that of an important nature. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

THE English laws of treason, both in the manner of defining that crime, and in the proof required, are the mildest and most indulgent, and consequently the most equitable, that are any where to be found. The two chief species of treason, contained in the statute of Edward III. are the compassing and intending of the king's death, and the actually levying of war against him; and by the law of Mary, the crime must be proved by the concurring testimony of two witnesses, to some overt act, tending to these purposes. But the lawyers, partly desirous of paying court to the sovereign, partly convinced of ill consequences which might attend such narrow limitations, had introduced a greater latitude, both in the proof and definition of the crime. It was not required that the two witnesses should testify the same precise overt act: It was sufficient, that they both testified some overt act of the same treason; and though this evasion may seem a subtilty, it had long prevailed in the courts of judicature, and had at last been solemnly fixed by parliament at the trial of lord Stafford. The lawyers had used the same freedom with the law of Edward III. They had observed, that, by that statute, if a man should enter into a conspiracy for a rebellion, should even fix a correspondence with foreign powers for that purpose, should provide arms and money, yet, if he were detected and no rebellion ensued, he could not be tried for treason. To prevent this inconvenience, which it had been better to remedy by a new law, they had commonly laid their indictment for

CHAP. LXIX. 1683. for intending the death of the king, and had produced the intention of rebellion as a proof of that other intention. But though this form of indictment and trial was very frequent, and many criminals had received sentence upon it, it was still considered as somewhat irregular, and was plainly confounding, by a sophism, two species of treason, which the statute had accurately distinguished. What made this refinement still more exceptionable was, that a law had passed soon after the restoration; in which the consulting or the intending of a rebellion was, during Charles's lifetime, declared treason; and it was required, that the prosecution should be commenced within six months after the crime was committed. But notwithstanding this statute, the lawyers had persevered, as they still do persevere, in the old form of indictment; and both sir Harry Vane, and Oliver Plunket, titular primate of Ireland, had been tried by it. Such was the general horror entertained against the old republicans and the popish conspirators, that no one had murmured against this interpretation of the statute; and the lawyers thought that they might follow the precedent, even in the case of the popular and beloved lord Russel. Russel's crime fell plainly within the statute of Charles the IId; but the facts sworn to by Rumsey and Shephard were beyond the six months required by law, and to the other facts Howard was a single witness. To make the indictment, therefore, more extensive, the intention of murdering the king was comprehended in it; and for proof of this intention the conspiracy for raising a rebellion was assigned; and what seemed to bring the matter still nearer, the design of attacking the king's guards.

Russel perceived this irregularity, and desired to have the point argued by counsel: The chief justice told him, that this favour could not be granted, unless

unless he previously confessed the facts charged upon him. The artificial confounding of the two species of treason, though a practice supported by many precedents, is the chief, but not the only hardship, of which Russel had reason to complain on his trial. His defence was feeble; and he contented himself with protesting, that he never had entertained any design against the life of the king: His veracity would not allow him to deny the conspiracy for an insurrection. The jury were men of fair and reputable characters, but zealous royalists: After a short deliberation, they brought in the prisoner guilty. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

APPLICATIONS were made to the king for a pardon: Even money, to the amount of a hundred thousand pounds, was offered to the dutchess of Portsmouth by the old earl of Bedford, father tō Russel. The king was inexorable. He had been extremely harassed with the violence of the country party; and he had observed, that the prisoner, besides his secret designs, had always been carried to the highest extremity of opposition in parliament. Russel had even adopted a sentiment, similar to what we meet with in a letter of the younger Brutus. Had his father, he said, advised the king to reject the exclusion-bill, he would be the first to move for a parliamentary impeachment against him. When such determined resolution was observed, his popularity, his humanity, his justice, his very virtues, became so many crimes, and were used as arguments against sparing him. Charles therefore would go no farther than remitting the more ignominious part of the sentence, which the law requires to be pronounced against traitors. "Lord Russel," said he, "shall find, that I am possessed of that prerogative, "which, in the case of lord Stafford, he thought "proper to deny me." As the fury of the country party had rendered it impossible for the king, without the imminent danger of his crown, to pardon

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

so many catholics, whom he firmly believed innocent, and even affectionate and loyal to him; he probably thought, that, since the edge of the law was now ready to fall upon that party themselves, they could not reasonably expect that he would interpose to save them.

RUSSEL's consort, a woman of virtue, daughter and heir of the good earl of Southampton, threw herself at the king's feet, and pleaded with many tears the merit and loyalty of her father, as an atonement for those errors, into which honest, however mistaken, principles had seduced her husband. These supplications were the last instance of female weakness (if they deserve the name) which she betrayed. Finding all applications vain, she collected courage, and not only fortified herself against the fatal blow, but endeavoured by her example to strengthen the resolution of her unfortunate lord. With a tender and decent composure they took leave of each other on the day of his execution. "The bitterness of death is now past," said he, when he turned from her. Lord Cavendish had lived in the closest intimacy with Russel, and deserted not his friend in the present calamity. He offered to manage his escape by changing clothes with him, and remaining at all hazards in his place. Russel refused to save his own life, by an expedient which might expose his friend to so many hardships. When the duke of Monmouth by message offered to surrender himself, if Russel thought that this measure would anywise contribute to his safety; "It will be no advantage to me," he said, "to have "my friends die with me." Some of his expressions discover, not only composure, but good humour in this melancholy extremity. The day before his execution he was seized with a bleeding at the nose. "I shall not now let blood to divert this "distemper," said he to doctor Burnet who attended him; "that will be done to-morrow." A little

little before the sheriffs conducted him to the scaffold, he wound up his watch, "Now I have done," said he, "with time, and henceforth must think "solely of eternity." CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

THE scaffold was erected in Lincoln's Inn Fields, a place distant from the tower; and it was probably intended, by conducting Russel through so many streets, to shew the mutinous city their beloved leader, once the object of all their confidence, now exposed to the utmost rigours of the law. As he was the most popular among his own party; so was he ever the least obnoxious to the opposite faction: And his melancholy fate united every heart, sensible of humanity, in a tender compassion for him. Without the least change of countenance, he laid his head on the block; and at two strokes, it was severed from his body. July 21. and execution.

IN the speech, which he delivered to the sheriffs, he was very anxious to clear his memory from any imputation of ever intending the king's death, or any alteration in the government: He could not explicitly confess the projected insurrection without hurting his friends, who might still be called in question for it; but he did not purge himself of that design, which, in the present condition of the nation, he regarded as no crime. By many passages in his speech he seems to the last to have lain under the influence of party zeal; a passion which, being nourished by a social temper, and clothing itself under the appearance of principle, it is almost impossible for a virtuous man, who has acted in public life, ever thoroughly to eradicate. He professed his entire belief in the popish plot: And he said, that, though he had often heard the seizure of the guards mentioned, he had ever disapproved of that attempt. To which he added, that the massacring of so many innocent men in cool blood was so like a popish practice, that he could not but abhor it. Upon the whole, the integrity and virtuous inten-

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

tions, rather than the capacity, of this unfortunate nobleman, seem to have been the shining parts of his character.

Trial of Algernon Sidney.

ALGERNON SIDNEY was next brought to his trial. This gallant person, son of the earl of Leicester, had entered deeply into the war against the late king; and though no wise tainted with enthusiasm, he had so far shared in all the counsels of the independent republican party, as to have been named on the high court of justice, which tried and condemned that monarch: He thought not proper, however, to take his seat among the judges. He ever opposed Cromwel's usurpation with zeal and courage; and after making all efforts against the restoration, he resolved to take no benefit of the general indemnity, but chose voluntary banishment, rather than submit to a government and family which he abhorred. As long as the republican party had any existence, he was active in every scheme, however unpromising, which tended to promote their cause: But at length, in 1677, finding it necessary for his private affairs to return to England, he had applied for the king's pardon, and had obtained it. When the factions, arising from the popish plot, began to run high, Sidney, full of those ideas of liberty, which he had imbibed from the great examples of antiquity, joined the popular party; and was even willing to seek a second time, through all the horrors of civil war, for his adored republic.

FROM this imperfect sketch of the character and conduct of this singular personage, it may easily be conceived how obnoxious he was become to the court and ministry: What alone renders them blameable was the illegal method which they took for effecting their purpose against him. On Sidney's trial they produced a great number of witnesses, who proved the reality of a plot in general; and when the prisoner exclaimed, that all these evidences said

said nothing of him, he was answered, that this method of proceeding, however irregular, had been practised in the prosecutions of the popish conspirators; a topic more fit to condemn one party than to justify the other. The only witness who deposed against Sidney, was lord Howard; but as the law required two witnesses, a strange expedient was fallen on to supply this deficiency. In ransacking the prisoner's closets, some discourses on government were found; in which he had maintained principles, favourable indeed to liberty, but such as the best and most dutiful subjects in all ages have been to known to embrace; the original contract, the source of power from a consent of the people, the lawfulness of resisting tyrants, the preference of liberty to the government of a single person. These papers were asserted to be equivalent to a second witness, and even to many witnesses. The prisoner replied, that there was no other reason for ascribing these papers to him as the author, besides a similitude of hand; a proof which was never admitted in criminal prosecutions: That allowing him to be the author, he had composed them solely for his private amusement, and had never published them to the world, or even communicated them to any single person: That, when examined, they appeared, by the colour of the ink, to have been written many years before, and were in vain produced as evidence of a present conspiracy against the government: And that where the law positively requires two witnesses, one witness, attended with the most convincing circumstances, could never suffice; much less, when supported by a circumstance so weak and precarious. All these arguments, though urged by the prisoner with great courage and pregnancy of reason, had no influence. The violent and inhuman Jefferies was now chief justice; and by his direction a partial jury was easily prevailed on to give verdict against Sidney. His

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

CHAP. LXIX. 1683. Dec. 17. His execution.

His execution followed a few days after: He complained, and with reason, of the iniquity of the sentence; but he had too much greatness of mind to deny those conspiracies with Monmouth and Russel, in which he had been engaged. He rather gloried, that he now suffered for that *good old cause*, in which, from his earliest youth, he said, he had inlisted himself.

The execution of Sidney is regarded as one of the greatest blemishes of the present reign. The evidence against him, it must be confessed, was not legal; and the jury, who condemned him, were for that reason, very blameable. But that after sentence passed by a court of judicature, the king should interpose and pardon a man, who, though otherwise possessed of merit, was undoubtedly guilty, who had ever been a most inflexible and most inveterate enemy to the royal family, and who lately had even abused the king's clemency, might be an act of heroic generosity, but can never be regarded as a necessary and indispensable duty.

Howard was also the sole evidence against Hambden; and his testimony was not supported by any material circumstance. The crown lawyers therefore found it in vain to try the prisoner for treason: They laid the indictment only for a misdemeanour, and obtained sentence against him. The fine imposed was exorbitant; no less than forty thousand pounds.

Holloway, a merchant of Bristol, one of the conspirators, had fled to the West Indies, and was now brought over. He had been outlawed; but the year allowed him for surrendering himself was not expired. A trial was therefore offered him: But as he had at first confessed his being engaged in a conspiracy for an insurrection, and even allowed that he had heard some discourse of an assassination, though he had not approved of it, he thought it more expedient to throw himself on the king's

king's mercy. He was executed, persisting in the same confession. CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

SIR Thomas Armstrong, who had been seized in Holland, and sent over by Chidley, the king's minister, was precisely in the same situation with Holloway: But the same favour, or rather justice, was refused him. The lawyers pretended, that, unless he had voluntarily surrendered himself before the expiration of the time assigned, he could not claim the privilege of a trial; not considering that the seizure of his person ought in equity to be supposed the accident which prevented him. The king bore a great enmity against this gentleman, by whom he believed the duke of Monmouth to have been seduced from his duty: He also asserted that Armstrong had once promised Cromwel to assassinate him; though it must be confessed, that the prisoner justified himself from this imputation by very strong arguments. These were the reasons of that injustice which was now done him. It was apprehended that sufficient evidence of his guilt could not be produced; and that even the partial juries, which were now returned, and which allowed themselves to be entirely directed by Jefferies and other violent judges, would not give sentence against him.

ON the day that Russel was tried, Essex, a man eminent both for virtues and abilities, was found in the Tower with his throat cut. The coroner's inquest brought in their verdict, *self-murder:* Yet because two children ten years old (one of whom too departed from his evidence) had affirmed that they heard a great noise from his window, and that they saw a hand throw out a bloody razor; these circumstances were laid hold of, and the murder was ascribed to the king and the duke, who happened that morning to pay a visit to the Tower. Essex was subject to fits of deep melancholy, and had been seized with one immediately upon his commitment: He was accustomed to maintain the lawfulness

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

lawfulness of suicide: And his countess, upon a strict inquiry, which was committed to the care of Dr. Burnet, found no reason to confirm the suspicion: Yet could not all these circumstances, joined to many others, entirely remove the imputation. It is no wonder, that faction is so productive of vices of all kinds: For, besides that it inflames all the passions, it tends much to remove those great restraints, honour and shame; when men find, that no iniquity can lose them the applause of their own party, and no innocence secure them against the calumnies of the opposite.

BUT though there is no reason to think that Essex had been murdered by any orders from court, it must be acknowledged that an unjustifiable use in Russel's trial was made of that incident. The king's counsel mentioned it in their pleadings as a strong proof of the conspiracy; and it is said to have had great weight with the jury. It was insisted on in Sidney's trial for the same purpose.

State of the nation.

SOME memorable causes, tried about this time, though they have no relation to the Rye-house conspiracy, shew the temper of the bench and of the juries. Oates was convicted of having called the duke a popish traitor; was condemned in damages to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds; and was adjudged to remain in prison till he should make payment. A like sentence was passed upon Dutton-Colt for a like offence. Sir Samuel Barnardiston was fined ten thousand pounds; because in some private letters, which had been intercepted, he had reflected on the government. This gentleman was obnoxious, because he had been foreman of that jury which rejected the bill against Shaftesbury. A pretence was therefore fallen upon for punishing him; though such a precedent may justly be deemed a very unusual act of severity, and sufficient to destroy all confidence in private friendship and correspondence.

THERE

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

THERE is another remarkable trial, which shews the disposition of the courts of judicature, and which, though it passed in the ensuing year, it may not be improper to relate in this place. One Rosewel, a presbyterian preacher, was accused by three women of having spoken treasonable words in a sermon. They swore to two or three periods, and agreed so exactly together, that there was not the smallest variation in their depositions. Rosewel on the other hand made a very good defence. He proved, that the witnesses were lewd and infamous persons. He proved that, even during Cromwel's usurpations, he had always been a royalist; that he prayed constantly for the king in his family; and that in his sermons he often inculcated the obligations of loyalty. And as to the sermon of which he was accused, several witnesses, who heard it, and some who wrote it in short-hand, deposed that he had used no such expressions as those which were imputed to him. He offered his own notes as a farther proof. The women could not shew, by any circumstance or witness, that they were at his meeting. And the expressions, to which they deposed, were so gross, that no man in his senses could be supposed to employ them before a mixt audience. It was also urged, that it appeared next to impossible for three women to remember so long a period upon one single hearing, and to remember it so exactly, as to agree to a tittle in their depositions with regard to it The prisoner offered to put the whole upon this issue: He would pronounce, with his usual tone of voice, a period as long as that to which they had sworn; and then let them try to repeat it, if they could. What was more unaccountable, they had forgotten even the text of his sermon; nor did they remember any single passage, but the words to which they gave evidence. After so strong a defence, the solicitor-general thought not

CHAP. LXIX. 1683.

not proper to make any reply: Even Jefferies went no farther than some general declamations against conventicles and presbyterians: Yet so violent were party prejudices, that the jury gave a verdict against the prisoner; which however appeared so palpably unjust, that it was not carried into execution.

THE duke of Monmouth had absconded on the first discovery of the conspiracy; and the court could get no intelligence of him. At length Halifax, who began to apprehend the too great prevalence of the royal party, and who thought that Monmouth's interest would prove the best counterpoise to the duke's, discovered his retreat, and prevailed on him to write two letters to the king, full of the tenderest and most submissive expressions. The king's fondness was revived; and he permitted Monmouth to come to court. He even endeavoured to mediate a reconciliation between his son and his brother; and having promised Monmouth, that his testimony should never be employed against any of his friends, he engaged him to give a full account of the plot. But, in order to put the country party to silence, he called next day an extraordinary council, and informed them, that Monmouth had shewed great penitence for the share which he had had in the late conspiracy, and had expressed his resolutions never more to engage in such criminal enterprises. He went so far as to give orders, that a paragraph to the like purpose should be inserted in the Gazette. Monmouth kept silence till he had obtained his pardon in form: But finding that, by taking this step, he was entirely disgraced with his party, and that even though he should not be produced in court as an evidence, his testimony, being so publicly known, might have weight with juries on any future trial, he resolved at all hazards to retrieve his honour. His emissaries, therefore,

therefore, received orders to deny that he had ever made any such confession, as that which was imputed to him; and the party exclaimed, that the whole was an imposture of the court. The king, provoked at this conduct, banished Monmouth his presence, and afterwards ordered him to depart the kingdom.

THE court was aware, that the malcontents in England had held a correspondence with those of Scotland; and that Baillie of Jerviswood, a man of merit and learning, with two gentlemen of the name of Campbel, had come to London, under pretence of negotiating the settlement of the Scottish presbyterians in Carolina, but really with a view of concerting measures with the English conspirators. Baillie was sent prisoner to Edinburgh; but as no evidence appeared against him, the council required him to swear, that he would answer all questions which should be propounded to him. He refused to submit to so iniquitous a condition; and a fine of six thousand pounds was imposed upon him. At length, two persons, Spence and Carstares, being put to the torture, gave evidence which involved the earl of Tarras and some others, who, in order to save themselves, were reduced to accuse Baillie. He was brought to trial; and being in so languishing a condition from the treatment which he had met with in prison, that it was feared he would not survive that night, he was ordered to be executed the very afternoon on which he received sentence.

THE severities exercised during this part of the present reign, were much contrary to the usual tenor of the king's conduct; and though those who studied his character more narrowly, have pronounced, that towards great offences he was rigid and inexorable, the nation were more inclined to ascribe every unjust or hard measure to the prevalence of the duke, into whose hands the king had, from

CHAP. LXIX. from indolence, not from any opinion of his brother's superior capacity, resigned the reins of government. The crown indeed gained great advantage from the detection of the conspiracy, and lost none by the rigorous execution of the conspirators: The horror entertained against the assassination plot, which was generally confounded with the project foran insurrection, rendered the whole party unpopular, and reconciled the nation to the measures of the court. The most loyal addresses came from all parts; and the doctrine of submission to the civil magistrate, and even of an unlimited passive obedience, became the reigning principle of the times. The university of Oxford passed a solemn decree, condemning some doctrines which they termed republican, but which indeed are, most of them, the only tenets on which liberty and a limited constitution can be founded. The faction of the exclusionists, lately so numerous, powerful, and zealous, were at the king's feet; and were as much fallen in their spirit as in their credit with the nation. Nothing that had the least appearance of opposition to the court, could be hearkened to by the public.*

1683.

1684. THE king endeavoured to increase his present popularity by every art; and knowing, that the suspicion of popery was of all others the most dangerous, he judged it proper to marry his niece, the lady Anne, to prince George, brother to the king of Denmark. All the credit, however, and persuasion of Halifax, could not engage him to call a parliament, or trust the nation with the election of a new representative. Though his revenues were extremely

* In the month of November this year died prince Rupert, in the sixty-third year of his age. He had left his own country so early, that he had become an entire Englishman, and was even suspected, in his latter days, of a bias to the country party. He was for that reason much neglected at court. The duke of Lauderdale died also this year.

extremely burthened, he rather chose to struggle with the present difficulties, than try an experiment which, by raising afresh so many malignant humours, might prove dangerous to his repose. The duke likewise zealously opposed this proposal, and even engaged the king in measures which could have no tendency, but to render any accommodation with a parliament altogether impracticable. Williams, who had been speaker during the two last parliaments, was prosecuted for warrants, issued by him, in obedience to orders of the house: A breach of privilege, which it seemed not likely any future house of commons would leave unquestioned. Danby and the popish lords, who had so long been confined in the Tower, and who saw no prospect of a trial in parliament, applied by petition, and were admitted to bail: A measure just in itself, but deemed a great encroachment on the privileges of that assembly. The duke, contrary to law, was restored to the office of high admiral, without taking the test. CHAP. LXIX. 1684.

HAD the least grain of jealousy or emulation been mixed in the king's character; had he been actuated by that concern for his people's or even for his own honour, which his high station demanded, he would have hazarded many domestic inconveniencies rather than allow France to domineer in so haughty a manner as that which at present she assumed in every negotiation. The peace of Nimeguen, imposed by the Dutch on their unwilling allies, had disjointed the whole confederacy; and all the powers engaged in it had disbanded their supernumerary troops, which they found it difficult to subsist. Lewis alone still maintained a powerful army, and by his preparations rendered himself every day more formidable. He now acted as if he were the sole sovereign in Europe, and as if all other princes were soon to become his vassals. Courts or chambers State of foreign affairs.

CHAP. LXIX. 1684.

bers were erected in Metz and Brisac, for re-uniting such territories as had ever been members of any part of his new conquests. They made inquiry into titles buried in the most remote antiquity. They cited the neighbouring princes to appear before them, and issued decrees, expelling them the contested territories. The important town of Strasbourg, an ancient and a free state, was seized by Lewis: Alost was demanded of the Spaniards, on a frivolous, and even ridiculous, pretence; and upon their refusal to yield it, Luxembourg was blockaded, and soon after taken.[t] Genoa had been bombarded, because the Genoese had stipulated to build some gallies for the Spaniards; and in order to avoid more severe treatment, that republic was obliged to yield to the most mortifying conditions. The empire was insulted in its head and principal members; and used no other expedient for redress, than impotent complaints and remonstrances.

SPAIN was so enraged at the insolent treatment which she met with, that, without considering her present weak condition, she declared war against her haughty enemy: She hoped that the other powers of Europe, sensible of the common danger, would fly to her assistance. The prince of Orange, whose ruling passions were love of war and animosity against France, seconded everywhere the applications of the Spaniards. In the year 1681, he made a journey to England, in order to engage the king into closer measures with the confederates. He also proposed to the States to make an augmentation of their forces; but several of the provinces, and even the town of Amsterdam, had been gained by the French, and the proposal was rejected. The prince's enemies derived the

[t] It appears from sir John Dalrymple's Appendix, that the king received from France a million of livres for his connivance at the seizure of Luxembourg, besides his ordinary pension.

the most plausible reasons of their opposition from the situation of England, and the known and avowed attachments of the English monarch.

No sooner had Charles dismissed his parliament, and embraced the resolution of governing by prerogative alone, than he dropped his new alliance with Spain, and returned to his former dangerous connexions with Lewis. This prince had even offered to make him arbiter of his differences with Spain; and the latter power, sensible of Charles's partiality, had refused to submit to such a disadvantageous proposal. Whether any money was now remitted to England, we do not certainly know: But we may fairly presume, that the king's necessities were in some degree relieved by France.[u] And though Charles had reason to apprehend the utmost danger from the great and still increasing naval power of that kingdom, joined to the weak condition of the English fleet, no consideration was able to rouse him from his present lethargy.

It is here we are to fix the point of the highest exaltation, which the power of Lewis or that of any European

[u] The following passage is an extract from M. Barillon's letters kept in the *Depôt des Affaires etrangeres* at Versailles. It was lately communicated to the author while in France. "Convention verbale arretée le 1 Avril 1681. Charles II. s'engage à ne rien omettre pour pouvoir faire connoitre à sa majesté qu'elle avoit raison de prendre confiance en lui; a se degager peu à peu de l'alliance avec l'Espagne, et à se mettre en etat de ne point etre contraint par son parlement de faire quelque chose d'opposé aux nouveaux engagemens qu'il prenoit. En consequence, le roi promet un subside de deux millions, la premiere des trois années de cet engagement et 500,000 écus les deux autres, se contentant de la parole de sa majesté Britannique, d'agir à l'egard de sa majesté conformement aux obligations qu'il lui avoit. Le Sr. Hyde demanda que le roi s'engagea à ne point attaquer les pays bas & même Strasbourg, temoignant que le roi son maitre ne pourroit s'empecher de secourir les pays bas, quand même son parlement ne seroit point assemblé. M. Barillon lui repondit en termes generaux par ordre du roi, que sa majesté n'avoit point intention de rompre la paix, & qu'il n'engageroit pas sa majesté Britannique en choses contraires à ses veritables intérêts."

CHAP. LXIX. 1684.

European prince, since the age of Charlemagne had ever attained. The monarch, most capable of opposing his progress, was entirely engaged in his interests; and the Turks, invited by the malcontents of Hungary, were preparing to invade the emperor, and to disable that prince from making head against the progress of the French power. Lewis may even be accused of oversight, in not making sufficient advantage of such favourable opportunities, which he was never afterwards able to recall. But that monarch, though more governed by motives of ambition than by those of justice or moderation, was still more actuated by the suggestions of vanity. He contented himself with insulting and domineering over all the princes and free states of Europe; and he thereby provoked their resentment without subduing their power. While every one, who approached his person, and behaved with submission to his authority, was treated with the highest politeness; all the neighbouring potentates had successively felt the effects of his haughty imperious disposition. And by indulging his poets, orators, and courtiers, in their flatteries, and in their prognostications of universal empire, he conveyed faster, than by the prospect of his power alone, the apprehension of general conquest and subjection.

1685.

The French greatness never, during his whole reign, inspired Charles with any apprehensions; and Clifford, it is said, one of his most favoured ministers, went so far as to affirm, that it were better for the king to be viceroy under a great and generous monarch, than a slave to five hundred of his own insolent subjects. The ambition, therefore, and uncontrolled power of Lewis were no diminution of Charles's happiness; and in other respects his condition seemed at present more eligible than it had ever been since his restoration.

A mighty

A mighty faction, which had shaken his throne, and menaced his family, was totally subdued; and by their precipitate indiscretion had exposed themselves both to the rigour of the laws and to public hatred. He had recovered his former popularity in the nation; and what probably pleased him more than having a compliant parliament, he was enabled to govern altogether without one. But it is certain that the king, amidst all these promising circumstances, was not happy or satisfied. Whether he found himself exposed to difficulties for want of money, or dreaded a recoil of the popular humour from the present arbitrary measures, is uncertain. Perhaps the violent, imprudent temper of the duke, by pushing Charles upon dangerous attempts, gave him apprehension and uneasiness. He was overheard one day to say, in opposing some of the duke's hasty counsels, "Brother, I am too old to go again to "my travels: You may, if you choose it." Whatever was the cause of the king's dissatisfaction, it seems probable, that he was meditating some change of measures, and had formed a new plan of administration. He was determined, it is thought, to send the duke to Scotland, to recal Monmouth, to summon a parliament, to dismiss all his unpopular ministers, and to throw himself entirely on the good-will and affections of his subjects.* Amidst these truly wise and virtuous designs, he was seized with a sudden fit, which resembled an apoplexy; and though he was recovered from it by bleeding, he languished only for a few days, and then expired, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign. He was so happy in a good constitution of body, and had ever been so remarkably careful of his health,

CHAP. LXIX. 1685.

King's sickness, and death, 6th Feb.

* King James's Memoirs confirm this rumour, as also D'Avaux's Negotiations, 14. Dec. 1684.

CHAP. LXX. health, that his death struck as great a surprise into his subjects, as if he had been in the flower of his youth. And their great concern for him, owing to their affection for his person, as well as their dread of his successor, very naturally, when joined to the critical time of his death, begat the suspicion of poison. All circumstances however considered, this suspicion must be allowed to vanish; like many others, of which all histories are full.

During the few days of the king's illness, clergymen of the church of England attended him; but he discovered a total indifference towards their devotions and exhortations. Catholic priests were brought, and he received the sacrament from them, accompanied with the other rites of the Romish church. Two papers were found in his cabinet, written with his own hand, and containing arguments in favour of that communion. The duke had the imprudence immediately to publish these papers, and thereby both confirmed all the reproaches of those who had been the greatest enemies to his brother's measures, and afforded to the world a specimen of his own bigotry.

and character. If we survey the character of Charles II. in the different lights which it will admit of, it will appear various, and give rise to different and even opposite sentiments. When considered as a companion, he appears as the most amiable and engaging of men; and indeed, in this view, his deportment must be allowed altogether unexceptionable. His love of raillery was so tempered with good breeding, that it was never offensive: His propensity to satire was so checked with discretion, that his friends never dreaded their becoming the object of it: His wit, to use the expression of one who knew him well, and who was himself

himself a good judge,[z] could not be said so much to be very refined or elevated, qualities apt to beget jealousy and apprehension in company, as to be a plain, gaining, well-bred, recommending kind of wit. And though perhaps he talked more than strict rules of behaviour might permit, men were so pleased with the affable, communicative deportment of the monarch, that they always went away contented both with him and with themselves. This indeed is the most shining part of the king's character; and he seems to have been sensible of it: For he was fond of dropping the formality of state, and of relapsing every moment into the companion. CHAP. LXIX. 1685.

In the duties of private life, his conduct, though not free from exception, was, in the main, laudable. He was an easy, generous lover, a civil, obliging husband, a friendly brother, an indulgent father, and a good-natured master.[a] The voluntary friendships, however, which this prince contracted, nay, even his sense of gratitude, were feeble; and he never attached himself to any of his ministers or courtiers with a sincere affection. He believed them to have no motive in serving him but self-interest; and he was still ready, in his turn, to sacrifice them to present ease or convenience.

With a detail of his private character we must set bounds to our panegyric on Charles. The other parts of his conduct may admit of some apology, but can deserve small applause. He was indeed so much fitted for private life, preferably to public, that he even possessed order, frugality, and œconomy, in the former; was profuse, thoughtless, and negligent in the latter. When we consider him as a sovereign, his character, though not altogether

[z] Marquis of Halifax. [a] Duke of Buckingham.

CHAP. LXIX. 1685.

altogether destitute of virtue, was in the main dangerous to his people, and dishonourable to himself. Negligent of the interests of the nation, careless of its glory, averse to its religion, jealous of its liberty, lavish of its treasure, sparing only of its blood; he exposed it by his measures, though he ever appeared but in sport, to the danger of a furious civil war, and even to the ruin and ignominy of a foreign conquest. Yet may all these enormities, if fairly and candidly examined, be imputed, in a great measure, to the indolence of his temper: A fault which, however unfortunate in a monarch, it is impossible for us to regard with great severity.

It has been remarked of Charles, that he never said a foolish thing nor ever did a wise one: A censure which, though too far carried, seems to have some foundation in his character and deportment. When the king was informed of this saying, he observed, that the matter was easily accounted for: For that his discourse was his own, his actions were the ministry's.

If we reflect on the appetite for power inherent in human nature, and add to it the king's education in foreign countries, and among the cavaliers, a party which would naturally exaggerate the late usurpations of popular assemblies upon the rights of monarchy; it is not surprising, that civil liberty should not find in him a very zealous patron. Harassed with domestic faction, weary of calumnies and complaints, oppressed with debts, straitened in his revenue, he sought, though with feeble efforts, for a form of government, more simple in its structure and more easy in its management. But his attachment to France, after all the pains which we have taken, by inquiry and conjecture, to fathom it, contains still something, it must be confessed, mysterious and inexplicable. The hopes of rendering himself absolute by Lewis's assistance seem

so chimerical, that they could scarcely be retained with such obstinacy by a prince of Charles's penetration: And as to pecuniary subsidies, he surely spent much greater sums in one season, during the second Dutch war, than were remitted him from France during the whole course of his reign. I am apt therefore to imagine, that Charles was in this particular guided chiefly by inclination, and by a prepossession in favour of the French nation. He considered that people as gay, sprightly, polite, elegant, courteous, devoted to their prince, and attached to the catholic faith; and for these reasons he cordially loved them. The opposite character of the Dutch had rendered them the objects of his aversion; and even the uncourtly humours of the English made him very indifferent towards them. Our notions of interest are much warped by our affections; and it is not altogether without example, that a man may be guided by national prejudices, who has ever been little biassed by private and personal friendship. CHAP. LXIX. 1685.

THE character of this prince has been elaborately drawn by two great masters, perfectly well acquainted with him, the duke of Buckingham and the marquis of Halifax; not to mention several elegant strokes given by sir William Temple. Dr. Welwood likewise and bishop Burnet have employed their pencil on the same subject: But the former is somewhat partial in his favour; as the latter is by far too harsh and malignant. Instead of finding an exact parallel between Charles II. and the emperor Tiberius, as asserted by that prelate, it would be more just to remark a full contrast and opposition. The emperor seems as much to have surpassed the king in abilities, as he falls short of him in virtue. Provident, wise, active, jealous, malignant, dark, sullen, unsociable, reserved, cruel, unrelenting, unforgiving; these are the lights under which the Roman tyrant has been transmitted to us.

CHAP. LXIX. 1685.

us. And the only circumstance in which it can justly be pretended he was similar to Charles, is his love of women, a passion which is too general to form any striking resemblance, and which that detestable and detested monster shared also with unnatural appetites.

JAMES II.

CHAP. LXX.

King's first transactions—A parliament—Arguments for and against a revenue for life—Oates convicted of perjury—Monmouth's invasion—His defeat—and execution—Cruelties of Kirke—and of Jefferies—State of affairs in Scotland—Argyle's invasion—defeat—and execution—A parliament—French persecutions—The dispensing power—State of Ireland—Breach betwixt the king and the church—Court of ecclesiastical commission—Sentence against the bishop of London—Suspension of the penal laws—State of Ireland—Embassy to Rome—Attempt upon Magdalen College—Imprisonment—trial and acquittal of the bishops—Birth of the Prince of Wales.

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE first act of James's reign was to assemble the privy council; where, after some praises bestowed on the memory of his predecessor, he made professions of his resolution to maintain the established government, both in Church and State. Though he had been reported, he said, to have imbibed arbitrary principles, he knew that the laws of England were sufficient to make him as great a monarch as he could wish; and he was determined never to depart from them. And as he had heretofore ventured his life in defence of the nation, he would

CHAP. LXX. would still go as far as any man in maintaining all its just rights and liberties.

1685. THIS discourse was received with great applause, not only by the council, but by the nation. The king universally passed for a man of great sincerity and great honour; and as the current of favour ran at that time for the court, men believed that his intentions were conformable to his expressions. "We "have now," it was said, "the word of a king; and "a word never yet broken." Addresses came from all quarters, full of duty, nay of the most servile adulation. Every one hastened to pay court to the new monarch:[b] And James had reason to think, that, notwithstanding the violent efforts made by so potent a party for his exclusion, no throne in Europe was better established than that of England.

THE king, however, in the first exercise of his authority, shewed, that either he was not sincere in his professions of attachment to the laws, or that he had entertained so lofty an idea of his own legal power, that even his utmost sincerity would tend very little to secure the liberties of the people. All the customs and the greater part of the excise had been settled by parliament on the late king during life, and consequently the grant was now expired; nor had the successor any right to levy these branches of revenue. But James issued a proclamation, ordering the customs and excise to be paid as before; and this exertion of power he would not deign to qualify by the least act or even appearance of condescension. It was proposed

[b] The quakers' address was esteemed somewhat singular for its plainness and simplicity. It was conceived in these terms: "We "are come to testify our sorrow for the death of our good friend "Charles, and our joy for thy being made our governor. We are "told thou art not of the persuasion of the church of England, no "more than we: Wherefore we hope thou wilt grant us the same "liberty which thou allowest thyself. Which doing, we wish thee "all manner of happiness."

proposed to him, that, in order to prevent the ill effects of any intermission in levying these duties, entries should be made, and bonds for the sums be taken from the merchants and brewers: But the payment be suspended till the parliament should give authority to receive it. This precaution was recommended as an expression of deference to that assembly, or rather to the laws: But for that very reason, probably it was rejected by the king, who thought, that the commons would thence be invited to assume more authority, and would regard the whole revenue, and consequently the whole power of the crown, as dependent on their good will and pleasure. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE king likewise went openly, and with all the ensigns of his dignity, to mass, an illegal meeting: And by this imprudence he displayed at once his arbitrary disposition, and the bigotry of his principles: Those two great characteristics of his reign, and bane of his administration. He even sent Caryl, as his agent to Rome, in order to make submissions to the pope, and to pave the way for a solemn re-admission of England into the bosom of the catholic church. The pope, Innocent the XIth, prudently advised the king not to be too precipitate in his measures, nor rashly attempt what repeated experience might convince him was impracticable. The Spanish ambassador, Ronquillo, deeming the tranquillity of England necessary for the support of Spain, used the freedom to make like remonstrances. He observed to the king, how busy the priests appeared at court, and advised him not to assent with too great facility to their dangerous counsels. "Is it not the custom in Spain," said James, "for the king to consult with his "confessor?" "Yes," replied the ambassador, "and it is for that very reason our affairs succeed "so ill."

JAMES

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

JAMES gave hopes on his accession, that he would hold the balance of power more steadily than his predecessor; and that France, instead of rendering England subservient to her ambitious projects, would now meet with strong opposition from that kingdom. Besides applying himself to business with industry, he seemed jealous of national honour, and expressed great care, that no more respect should be paid to the French ambassador at London than his own received at Paris. But these appearances were not sufficiently supported, and he found himself immediately under the necessity of falling into an union with that great monarch, who, by his power as well as his zeal, seemed alone able to assist him in the projects formed for promoting the catholic religion in England.

NOTWITHSTANDING the king's prejudices, all the chief offices of the crown continued still in the hands of protestants. Rochester was treasurer; his brother Clarendon chamberlain; Godolphin chamberlain to the queen; Sunderland secretary of state; Halifax president of the council. This nobleman had stood in opposition to James during the last years of his brother's reign; and when he attempted, on the accession to make some apology for his late measures, the king told him, that he would forget every thing past, except his behaviour during the bill of exclusion. On other occasions, however, James appeared not of so forgiving a temper. When the principal exclusionists came to pay their respects to the new sovereign, they either were not admitted, or were received very coldly, sometimes even with frowns. This conduct might suit the character, which the king so much affected, of sincerity: But by shewing, that a king of England could resent the quarrels of a duke of York, he gave his people no high idea either of his lenity or magnanimity.

ON

1685.

On all occasions, the king was open in declaring that men must now look for a more active and more vigilant government, and that he would retain no ministers, who did not practise an unreserved obedience to his commands. We are not indeed to look for the springs of his administration so much in his council and chief officers of state, as in his own temper, and in the character of those persons with whom he secretly consulted. The queen had great influence over him; a woman of spirit, whose conduct had been popular till she arrived at that high dignity. She was much governed by the priests, especially the Jesuits; and as these were also the king's favourites, all public measures were taken originally from the suggestion of these men, and bore evident marks of their ignorance in government, and of the violence of their religious zeal.

The king, however, had another attachment, seemingly not very consistent with this devoted regard to his queen and to his priests: It was to Mrs. Sedley, whom he soon after created countess of Dorchester, and who expected to govern him with the same authority which the dutchess of Portsmouth had possessed during the former reign. But James, who had entertained the ambition of converting his people, was told, that the regularity of his life ought to correspond to the sanctity of his intentions; and he was prevailed with to remove Mrs. Sedley from court: A resolution in which he had not the courage to persevere. Good agreement between the mistress and the confessor of princes is not commonly a difficult matter to compass: But in the present case these two potent engines of command were found very incompatible. Mrs. Sedley, who possessed all the wit and ingenuity of her father, sir Charles, made the priests and their counsels the perpetual objects of her raillery; and it is not to be doubted, but they, on their part, redoubled their exhortations

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

exhortations with their penitent to break off so criminal an attachment.

How little inclination soever the king, as well as his queen and priests, might bear to an English parliament, it was absolutely necessary, at the beginning of the reign, to summon that assembly. The low condition, to which the whigs or country party had fallen during the last years of Charles's reign, the odium under which they laboured on account of the Rye-house conspiracy; these causes made that party meet with little success in the elections. The general resignation too of the charters had made the corporations extremely dependent; and the recommendations of the court, though little assisted, at that time, by pecuniary influence, were become very prevalent. The new house of commons, therefore, consisted almost entirely of zealous tories and churchmen; and were of consequence strongly biassed by their affections, in favour of the measures of the crown.

A parliament.

19th of May.

THE discourse which the king made to the parliament, was more fitted to work on their fears than their affections. He repeated indeed, and with great solemnity, the promise which he had made before the privy-council, of governing according to the laws, and of preserving the established religion. But at the same time he told them, that he positively expected they would settle his revenue, and during life too, as in the time of his brother. "I might use many arguments," said he, "to enforce this demand; the benefit of trade, "the support of the navy, the necessities of the "crown, and the well-being of the government "itself, which I must not suffer to be precarious: "But I am confident, that your own consideration, "and your sense of what is just and reasonable, "will suggest to you whatever on this occasion "might be enlarged upon. There is indeed one "popular

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

"popular argument," added he, "which may be "urged against compliance with my demand: Men "may think, that by feeding me from time to time "with such supplies as they think convenient, they "will better secure frequent meetings of parliament: "But as this is the first time I speak to you from the "throne, I must plainly tell you, that such an expe- "dient would be very improper to employ with me, "and that the best way to engage me to meet you "often, is always to use me well."

It was easy to interpret this language of the king. He plainly intimated, that he had resources in his prerogative for supporting the government, independently of their supplies; and that so long as they complied with his demands, he would have recourse to them; but that any ill usage on their part would set him free from those measures of government, which he seemed to regard more as voluntary than as necessary. It must be confessed, that no parliament in England was ever placed in a more critical situation, nor where more forcible arguments could be urged, either for their opposition to the court, or their compliance with it.

Reasons for and against a revenue during life

It was said on the one hand, that jealousy of royal power was the very basis of the English constitution, and the principle to which the nation was beholden for all that liberty which they enjoy above the subjects of other monarchies. That this jealousy, though, at different periods, it may be more or less intense, can never safely be laid asleep, even under the best and wisest princes. That the character of the present sovereign afforded cause for the highest vigilance, by reason of the arbitrary principles which he had imbibed; and still more, by reason of his religious zeal, which it is impossible for him ever to gratify, without assuming more authority than the constitution allows him. That power is to be watched in its very first encroachments; nor is any thing ever gained by timidity and submission,

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

submission. That every concession adds new force to usurpation; and at the same time by discovering the dastardly dispositions of the people, inspires it with new courage and enterprise. That as arms were intrusted altogether in the hands of the prince, no check remained upon him but the dependent condition of his revenue; a security therefore which it would be the most egregious folly to abandon. That all the other barriers, which, of late years, had been erected against arbitrary power, would be found, without this capital article, to be rather pernicious and destructive. That new limitations in the constitution stimulated the monarch's inclination to surmount the laws, and required frequent meetings of parliament, in order to repair all the breaches, which either time or violence may have made upon that complicated fabric. That recent experience during the reign of the late king, a prince who wanted neither prudence nor moderation, had sufficiently proved the solidity of all these maxims. That his parliament, having rashly fixed his revenue for life, and at the same time repealed the triennial bill, found that they themselves were no longer of importance, and that liberty, not protected by national assemblies, was exposed to every outrage and violation. And that the more openly the king made an unreasonable demand, the more obstinately ought it to be refused; since it is evident, that his purpose in making it cannot possibly be justifiable.

On the other hand it was urged, that the rule of watching the very first encroachments of power could only have place, where the opposition to it could be regular, peaceful, and legal. That though the refusal of the king's present demand might seem of this nature, yet in reality it involved consequences, which led much farther than at first sight might be apprehended. That the king in his speech had intimated, that he had resources in his prerogative, which, in case of opposition from parliament, he thought

thought himself fully entitled to employ. That if the parliament openly discovered an intention of reducing him to dependence, matters must presently be brought to a crisis, at a time the most favourable to his cause, which his most sanguine wishes could ever have promised him. That if we cast our eyes abroad, to the state of affairs on the continent, and to the situation of Scotland and Ireland; or, what is of more importance, if we consider the disposition of men's minds at home, every circumstance would be found adverse to the cause of liberty. That the country party, during the late reign, by their violent, and in many respects unjustifiable measures in parliament, by their desperate attempts out of parliament, had exposed their principles to general hatred, and had excited extreme jealousy in all the royalists and zealous churchmen, who now formed the bulk of the nation. That it would not be acceptable to that party to see this king worse treated than his brother in point of revenue, or any attempts made to keep the crown in dependence. That they thought parliaments as liable to abuse as courts, and desired not to see things in a situation, where the king could not, if he found it necessary, either prorogue or dissolve those assemblies. That if the present parliament, by making great concessions, could gain the king's confidence, and engage him to observe the promises now given them, every thing would by gentle methods succeed to their wishes. That if, on the contrary, after such instances of compliance, he formed any designs on the liberty and religion of the nation, he would, in the eyes of all mankind, render himself altogether inexcusable, and the whole people would join in opposition to him. That resistance could scarcely be attempted twice; and there was therefore the greater necessity for waiting till time and incidents had fully prepared the nation for it. That the king's prejudices in favour of popery, though in the main pernicious, were

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

were yet so far fortunate, that they rendered the connexion inseparable between the national religion and national liberty. And that if any illegal attempts were afterwards made, the church, which was at present the chief support of the crown, would surely catch the alarm, and would soon dispose the people to an effectual resistance.

THESE last reasons, enforced by the prejudices of party, prevailed in parliament; and the commons, besides giving thanks for the king's speech, voted unanimously, that they would settle on his present majesty, during life, all the revenue enjoyed by the late king, at the time of his demise. That they might not detract from this generosity by any symptoms of distrust, they also voted unanimously, that the house entirely relied on his majesty's royal word, and repeated declarations to support the religion of the church of England; but they added, that that religion was dearer to them than their lives. The speaker, in presenting the revenue bill, took care to inform the king of their vote with regard to religion; but could not, by so signal a proof of confidence, extort from him one word in favour of that religion, on which, he told his majesty, they set so high a value. Notwithstanding the grounds of suspicion which this silence afforded, the house continued in the same liberal disposition. The king having demanded a farther supply for the navy and other purposes; they revived those duties on wines and vinegar, which had once been enjoyed by the late king; and they added some impositions on tobacco and sugar. This grant amounted on the whole to about six hundred thousand pounds a year.

THE house of lords were in a humour no less compliant. They even went some lengths towards breaking in pieces all the remains of the popish plot; that once formidable engine of bigotry and faction.

A LITTLE

CHAP. LXX.

1685. Oates convicted of perjury.

A LITTLE before the meeting of parliament, Oates had been tried for perjury on two indictments. One for deposing that he was present at a consult of jesuits in London the twenty-fourth of April 1679: Another for deposing that father Ireland was in London between the eighth and twelfth of August, and in the beginning of September in the same year. Never criminal was convicted on fuller and more undoubted evidence. Two and twenty persons, who had been students at St. Omers, most of them men of credit and family, gave evidence, that Oates had entered into that seminary about Christmas in the year 1678, and had never been absent but one night till the month of July following. Forty-seven witnesses, persons also of untainted character, deposed that father Ireland, on the third of August 1679, had gone to Staffordshire, where he resided till the middle of September; and, what some years before would have been regarded as a very material circumstance, nine of these witnesses were protestants, of the church of England. Oates's sentence was, to be fined a thousand marks on each indictment, to be whipped on two different days from Aldgate to Newgate, and from Newgate to Tyburn, to be imprisoned during life, and to be pilloried five times every year. The impudence of the man supported itself under the conviction, and his courage under the punishment. He made solemn appeals to Heaven, and protestations of the veracity of his testimony: Though the whipping was so cruel, that it was evidently the intention of the court to put him to death by that punishment, he was enabled, by the care of his friends, to recover: And he lived to king William's reign; when a pension of four hundred pounds a year was settled on him. A considerable number still adhered to him in his distresses, and regarded him as the martyr of the protestant cause. The populace were

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

affected with the sight of a punishment, more severe than is commonly inflicted in England. And the sentence of perpetual imprisonment was deemed illegal.

THE conviction of Oates's perjury was taken notice of by the house of peers. Besides freeing the popish lords Powis, Arundel, Bellasis, and Tyrone, together with Danby, from the former impeachment by the commons, they went so far as to vote a reversal of Stafford's attainder, on account of the falsehood of that evidence on which he had been condemned. This bill fixed so deep a reproach on the former proceedings of the exclusionists, that it met with great opposition among the lords; and it was at last, after one reading, dropped by the commons. Though the reparation of injustice be the second honour which a nation can attain; the present emergence seemed very improper for granting so full a justification to the catholics, and throwing so foul a stain on the protestants.

Monmouth's invasion.

THE course of parliamentary proceedings was interrupted by the news of Monmouth's arrival in the west with three ships from Holland. No sooner was this intelligence conveyed to the parliament, than they voted that they would adhere to his majesty with their lives and fortunes. They passed a bill of attainder against Monmouth; and they granted a supply of four hundred thousand pounds for suppressing his rebellion. Having thus strengthened the hands of the king, they adjourned themselves.

MONMOUTH, when ordered to depart the kingdom, during the late reign, had retired to Holland; and as it was well known that he still enjoyed the favour of his indulgent father, all marks of honour and distinction were bestowed upon him by the prince of Orange. After the accession of James, the prince thought it necessary to dismiss Monmouth and

and all his followers; and that illustrious fugitive retired to Brussels. Finding himself still pursued by the king's severity, he was pushed, contrary to his judgment as well as inclination, to make a rash and premature attempt upon England. He saw that James had lately mounted the throne, not only without opposition, but seemingly with the good-will and affections of his subjects. A parliament was sitting, which discovered the greatest disposition to comply with the king, and whose adherence, he knew, would give a sanction and authority to all public measures. The grievances of this reign were hitherto of small importance; and the people were not as yet in a disposition to remark them with great severity. All these considerations occurred to Monmouth; but such was the impatience of his followers, and such the precipitate humour of Argyle, who set out for Scotland a little before him, that no reasons could be attended to; and this unhappy man was driven upon his fate. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE imprudence, however, of this enterprise did not at first appear. Though on his landing at Lime in Dorsetshire, he had scarcely a hundred followers; so popular was his name, that in four days he had assembled above two thousand horse and foot. They were, indeed, almost all of them, the lowest of the people; and the declaration which he published, was chiefly calculated to suit the prejudices of the vulgar, or the most bigoted of the whig party. He called the king duke of York; and denominated him a traitor, a tyrant, an assassin, and a popish usurper. He imputed to him the fire of London, the murder of Godfrey and of Essex, nay the poisoning of the late king. And he invited all the people to join in opposition to his tyranny. 11th June.

THE duke of Albemarle, son to him who had restored the royal family, assembled the militia of Devonshire to the number of 4000 men, and took

CHAP. LXX. 1685. post at Axminster, in order to oppose the rebels; but observing that his troops bore a great affection to Monmouth, he thought proper to retire. Monmouth, though he had formerly given many proofs of personal courage, had not the vigour of mind requisite for an undertaking of this nature. From an ill-grounded diffidence of his men, he neglected to attack Albemarle; an easy enterprise, by which he might both have acquired credit, and have supplied himself with arms. Lord Gray, who commanded his horse, discovered himself to be a notorious coward; yet such was the softness of Monmouth's nature, that Gray was still continued in his command. Fletcher of Salton, a Scotchman, a man of signal probity and fine genius, had been engaged by his republican principles in this enterprise, and commanded the cavalry together with Gray: But being insulted by one who had newly joined the army, and whose horse he had in a hurry made use of, he was prompted by passion, to which he was much subject, to discharge a pistol at the man; and he killed him on the spot. This incident obliged him immediately to leave the camp; and the loss of so gallant an officer was a great prejudice to Monmouth's enterprise.

THE next station of the rebels was Taunton, a disaffected town, which gladly and even fondly received them, and reinforced them with considerable numbers. Twenty young maids of some rank presented Monmouth with a pair of colours of their handiwork, together with a copy of the bible. Monmouth was here persuaded to take upon him the title of king, and assert the legitimacy of his birth; a claim which he advanced in his first declaration, but whose discussion he was determined, he then said, during some time to postpone. His numbers had now increased to six thousand; and he was obliged every day, for want of arms, to dismiss a great

a great many who crowded to his standard. He entered Bridgewater, Wells, Frome; and was proclaimed in all these places: But forgetting that such desperate enterprises can only be rendered successful by the most adventurous courage, he allowed the expectations of the people to languish, without attempting any considerable undertaking. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

WHILE Monmouth, by his imprudent and misplaced caution, was thus wasting time in the west, the king employed himself in making preparations to oppose him. Six regiments of British troops were called over from Holland: The army was considerably augmented: And regular forces, to the number of 3000 men, were dispatched under the command of Feversham and Churchill, in order to check the progress of the rebels.

MONMOUTH, observing that no considerable men joined him, finding that an insurrection, which was projected in the city, had not taken place, and hearing that Argyle, his confederate, was already defeated and taken; sunk into such despondency, that he had once resolved to withdraw himself, and leave his unhappy followers to their fate. His followers expressed more courage than their leader, and seemed determined to adhere to him in every fortune. The negligent disposition, made by Feversham, invited Monmouth to attack the king's army at Sedgemoor near Bridgewater; and his men in this action showed what a native courage and a principle of duty, even when unassisted by discipline, is able to perform. They threw the veteran forces into disorder; drove them from their ground; continued the fight till their ammunition failed them; and would at last have obtained a victory, had not the misconduct of Monmouth and the cowardice of Gray prevented it. After a combat of three hours the rebels gave way; and were followed with great slaughter. About 1500 fell in the battle and pursuit. And thus was concluded in a few weeks this enterprise,

5th July Monmouth defeated;

CHAP. LXX.

enterprise, rashly undertaken, and feebly conducted.

1685. Monmouth fled from the field of battle above twenty miles till his horse sunk under him. He then changed clothes with a peasant in order to conceal himself. The peasant was discovered by the pursuers, who now redoubled the diligence of their search. At last, the unhappy Monmouth was found lying in the bottom of a ditch, and covered with fern: His body depressed with fatigue and hunger; his mind by the memory of past misfortunes, by the prospect of future disasters. Human nature is unequal to such calamitous situations; much more, the temper of a man, softened by early prosperity, and accustomed to value himself solely on military bravery. He burst into tears when seized by his enemies; and he seemed still to indulge the fond hope and desire of life. Though he might have known, from the greatness of his own offences, and the severity of James's temper, that no mercy could be expected, he wrote him the most submissive letters, and conjured him to spare the issue of a brother, who had ever been so strongly attached to his interest. James, finding such symptoms of depression and despondency in the unhappy prisoner, admitted him to his presence, in hopes of extorting a discovery of his accomplices: But Monmouth would not purchase life, however loved, at the price of so much infamy. Finding all efforts vain, he assumed courage from despair, and prepared himself for death, with a spirit better suited to his rank and character. This favourite of the people was attended to the scaffold with a plentiful effusion of tears. He warned the executioner not to fall into the error which he had committed in beheading Russel, where it had been necessary to repeat the blow. This precaution served only to dismay the executioner. He struck a feeble blow on Monmouth, who raised his head from the block, and

and executed, 15th July.

and looked him in the face, as if reproaching him for his failure. He gently laid down his head a second time; and the executioner struck him again and again to no purpose. He then threw aside the axe, and cried out that he was incapable of finishing the bloody office. The sheriff obliged him to renew the attempt; and at two blows more the head was severed from the body. CHAP. LXX. 1685

THUS perished, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, a nobleman, who, in less turbulent times, was well qualified to be an ornament of the court, even to be serviceable to his country. The favour of his prince, the caresses of faction, and the allurements of popularity, seduced him into enterprises which exceeded his capacity. The good-will of the people still followed him in every fortune. Even after his execution, their fond credulity flattered them with hopes of seeing him once more at their head. They believed that the person executed was not Monmouth, but one who, having the fortune to resemble him nearly, was willing to give this proof of his extreme attachment, and to suffer death in his stead.

THIS victory, obtained by the king in the commencement of his reign, would naturally, had it been managed with prudence, have tended much to increase his power and authority. But by reason of the cruelty with which it was prosecuted, and of the temerity with which it afterwards inspired him, it was a principal cause of his sudden ruin and downfal.

SUCH arbitrary principles had the court instilled into all its servants, that Feversham, immediately after the victory, hanged above twenty prisoners; and was proceeding in his executions, when the bishop of Bath and Wells warned him, that these unhappy men were now by law entitled to a trial, and that their execution would be deemed a real murder. This remonstrance, however, did not stop the

CHAP. LXX.

1685. Cruelty of colonel Kirke,

the savage nature of colonel Kirke, a soldier of fortune, who had long served at Tangiers, and had contracted, from his intercourse with the Moors, an inhumanity less known in European and in free countries. At his first entry into Bridgewater, he hanged nineteen prisoners, without the least inquiry into the merits of their cause. As if to make sport with death, he ordered a certain number to be executed, while he and his company should drink the king's health, or the queen's, or that of chief-justice Jefferies. Observing their feet to quiver in the agonies of death, he cried that he would give them music to their dancing, and he immediately commanded the drums to beat and the trumpets to sound. By way of experiment, he ordered one man to be hung up three times, questioning him at each interval, whether he repented of his crime: But the man obstinately asserting, that, notwithstanding the past, he still would willingly engage in the same cause, Kirke ordered him to be hung in chains. One story, commonly told of him, is memorable for the treachery, as well as barbarity, which attended it. A young maid pleaded for the life of her brother, and flung herself at Kirke's feet, armed with all the charms which beauty and innocence, bathed in tears, could bestow upon her. The tyrant was inflamed with desire, not softened into love or clemency. He promised to grant her request, provided that she, in her turn, would be equally compliant to him. The maid yielded to the conditions: But, after she had passed the night with him, the wanton savage the next morning showed her, from the window, her brother, the darling object for whom she had sacrificed her virtue, hanging on a gibbet, which he had secretly ordered to be there erected for the execution. Rage and despair and indignation took possession of her mind, and deprived her for ever of her senses. All the inhabitants of that country, innocent as well as guilty, were

were exposed to the ravages of this barbarian. The soldiery were let loose to live at free quarters; and his own regiment, instructed by his example, and encouraged by his exhortations, distinguished themselves in a particular manner by their outrages. By way of pleasantry he used to call them *his lambs*; an appellation which was long remembered with horror in the west of England. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE violent Jefferies succeeded after some interval; and showed the people, that the rigours of law might equal, if not exceed, the ravages of military tyranny. This man, who wantoned in cruelty, had already given a specimen of his character in many trials where he presided; and he now set out with a savage joy, as to a full harvest of death and destruction. He began at Dorchester; and thirty rebels being arraigned, he exhorted them, but in vain, to save him, by their free confession, the trouble of trying them: And when twenty-nine were found guilty, he ordered them, as an additional punishment of their disobedience, to be led to immediate execution. Most of the other prisoners terrified with this example, pleaded guilty; and no less than two hundred and ninety-two received sentence at Dorchester. Of these, eighty were executed. Exeter was the next stage of his cruelty: Two hundred and forty-three were there tried, of whom a great number were condemned and executed. He also opened his commission at Taunton and Wells; and every where carried consternation along with him. The juries were so struck with his menaces, that they gave their verdict with precipitation; and many innocent persons, it is said, were involved with the guilty. And on the whole, besides those who were butchered by the military commanders, two hundred and fifty-one are computed to have fallen by the hand of justice. The whole country was strewed with the heads and limbs of traitors. Every village almost beheld the dead

CHAP. LXX. 1685. dead carcase of a wretched inhabitant. And all the rigours of justice, unabated by any appearance of clemency, were fully displayed to the people by the inhuman Jefferies.

Of all the executions, during this dismal period, the most remarkable were those of Mrs. Gaunt and lady Lisle, who had been accused of harbouring traitors. Mrs. Gaunt was an anabaptist, noted for her beneficence, which she extended to persons of all professions and persuasions. One of the rebels, knowing her humane disposition, had recourse to her in his distress, and was concealed by her. Hearing of the proclamation, which offered an indemnity and rewards to such as discovered criminals, he betrayed his benefactress, and bore evidence against her. He received a pardon as a recompence for his treachery; she was burned alive for her charity.

Lady Lisle was widow of one of the regicides who had enjoyed great favour and authority under Cromwel, and who having fled, after the restoration, to Lauzanne in Swisserland, was there assassinated by three Irish ruffians, who hoped to make their fortune by this piece of service. His widow was now prosecuted for harbouring two rebels the day after the battle of Sedgemoor; and Jefferies pushed on the trial with an unrelenting violence. In vain did the aged prisoner plead, that these criminals had been put into no proclamation; had been convicted by no verdict; nor could any man be denominated a traitor, till the sentence of some legal court was passed upon him: That it appeared not by any proof, that she was so much as acquainted with the guilt of the persons, or had heard of their joining the rebellion of Monmouth: That though she might be obnoxious on account of her family, it was well known, that her heart was ever loyal, and that no person in England had shed more tears for that tragical event, in which her husband had

had unfortunately borne too great a share: And that the same principles, which she herself had ever embraced, she had carefully instilled into her son, and had, at that very time, sent him to fight against those rebels, whom she was now accused of harbouring. Though these arguments did not move Jefferies, they had influence on the jury. Twice they seemed inclined to bring in a favourable verdict: They were as often sent back with menaces and reproaches; and at last were constrained to give sentence against the prisoner. Notwithstanding all applications for pardon, the cruel sentence was executed. The king said, that he had given Jefferies a promise not to pardon her: An excuse which could serve only to aggravate the blame against himself. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

It might have been hoped, that, by all these bloody executions a rebellion, so precipitate, so ill supported, and of such short duration, would have been sufficiently expiated: But nothing could satiate the spirit of rigour which possessed the administration. Even those multitudes, who received pardon, were obliged to atone for their guilt by fines, which reduced them to beggary; or where their former poverty made them incapable of paying, they were condemned to cruel whippings or or severe imprisonments. Nor could the innocent escape the hands, no less rapacious than cruel, of the chief justice. Prideaux, a gentleman of Devonshire, being thrown into prison, and dreading the severe and arbitrary spirit, which at that time met with no control, was obliged to buy his liberty of Jefferies at the price of fifteen thousand pounds; though he could never so much as learn the crime of which he was accused.

Goodenough, the seditious under-sheriff of London, who had been engaged in the most bloody and desperate part of the Rye-house conspiracy, was taken prisoner after the battle of Sedgemoor, and resolved to save his own life by an accusation of Cornish

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

Cornish, the sheriff, whom he knew to be extremely obnoxious to the court. Colonel Rumsey joined him in the accusation; and the prosecution was so hastened, that the prisoner was tried, condemned, and executed in the space of a week. The perjury of the witnesses appeared immediately after; and the king seemed to regret the execution of Cornish. He granted his estate to his family, and condemned the witnesses to perpetual imprisonment.

THE injustice of this sentence against Cornish was not wanted to disgust the nation with the court: The continued rigour of the other executions had already impressed an universal hatred against the ministers of justice, attended with compassion for the unhappy sufferers, who, as they had been seduced into this crime by mistaken principles, bore their punishment with the spirit and zeal of martyrs. The people might have been willing on this occasion to distinguish between the king and his ministers: But care was taken to prove, that the latter had done nothing but what was agreeable to their master. Jefferies, on his return, was immediately, for those eminent services, created a peer; and was soon after vested with the dignity of chancellor. It is pretended, however, with some appearance of authority, that the king was displeased with these cruelties, and put a stop to them by orders, as soon as proper information of them was conveyed to him.*

State of affairs in Scotland.

WE must now take a view of the state of affairs in Scotland; where the fate of Argyle had been decided before that of Monmouth. Immediately after the king's accession, a parliament had been summoned at Edinburgh; and all affairs were there conducted by the duke of Queensberry the commissioner, and the earl of Perth chancellor. The former had resolved to make an entire surrender of the liberties of his country; but was determined still to adhere

* Life of lord keeper North, p. 260. King James's Memoirs, p. 144.

adhere to its religion: The latter entertained no scruple of paying court even by the sacrifice of both. But no courtier, even the most prostitute, could go farther than the parliament itself towards a resignation of their liberties. In a vote, which they called an offer of duty, after adopting the fabulous history of a hundred and eleven Scottish monarchs, they acknowledged, that all these princes, by the primary and fundamental law of the state, had been vested with a *solid* and *absolute* authority. They declared their abhorrence of all principles and positions, derogatory to the king's sacred, supreme, sovereign, absolute power, of which none, they said, whether single persons or collective bodies, can participate, but in dependence on him and by commission from him. They promised that the whole nation, between sixteen and sixty, shall be in readiness for his majesty's service, where and as oft as it shall be his royal pleasure to require them. And they annexed the whole excise, both of inland and foreign commodities, for ever to the crown. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

ALL the other acts of this assembly savoured of the same spirit. They declared it treason for any person to refuse the test, if tendered by the council. To defend the obligation of the covenant, subjected a person to the same penalty. To be present at any conventicle, was made punishable with death and confiscation of moveables. Even such as refused to give testimony, either in cases of treason or nonconformity, were declared equally punishable as if guilty of those very crimes: An excellent prelude to all the rigours of an inquisition. It must be confessed, that nothing could equal the abject servility of the Scottish nation during this period, but the arbitrary severity of the administration.

IT was in vain that Argyle summoned a people, so lost to all sense of liberty, so degraded by repeated indignities, to rise in vindication of their violated laws Argyle's invasion;

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

laws and privileges. Even those who declared for him were, for the greater part, his own vassals; men who, if possible, were still more sunk in slavery than the rest of the nation. He arrived, after a prosperous voyage in Argyleshire, attended by some fugitives from Holland; among the rest, by sir Patrick Hume, a man of mild dispositions, who had been driven to this extremity by a continued train of oppression. The privy council was beforehand apprised of Argyle's intentions. The whole militia of the kingdom, to the number of twenty-two thousand men, were already in arms; and a third part of them, with the regular forces, were on their march to oppose him. All the considerable gentry of his clan were thrown into prison. And two ships of war were on the coast to watch his motions. Under all these discouragements he yet made a shift, partly from terror, partly from affection, to collect and arm a body of about two thousand five hundred men; but soon found himself surrounded on all sides with insuperable difficulties. His arms and ammunition were seized; his provisions cut off: The marquis of Athole pressed him on one side; lord Charles Murray on another; the duke of Gordon hung upon his rear; the earl of Dunbarton met him in front. His followers daily fell off from him; but Argyle, resolute to persevere, broke at last with the shattered remains of his troops into the disaffected part of the low countries, which he had endeavoured to allure to him by declarations for the covenant. No one shewed either courage or inclination to join him; and his small and still decreasing army, after wandering about for a little time, was at last defeated and dissipated without an enemy. Argyle himself was seized and carried to Edinburgh; where, after enduring many indignities with a gallant spirit, he was publicly executed. He suffered on the former unjust sentence which had been passed upon

defeat;

and execution.

upon him. The rest of his followers either escaped or were punished by transportation: Rumbold and Ayloffe, two Englishmen; who had attended Argyle on this expedition, were executed. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE king was so elated with this continued tide of prosperity, that he began to undervalue even an English parliament, at all times formidable to his family; and from his speech to that assembly, which he had assembled early in the winter, he seems to have thought himself exempted from all rules of prudence, or necessity of dissimulation. He plainly told the two houses, that the militia, which had formerly been so much magnified, was now found, by experience in the last rebellion, to be altogether useless; and he required a new supply, in order to maintain those additional forces which he had levied. He also took notice, that he had employed a great many catholic officers, and that he had, in their favour, dispensed with the law requiring the test to be taken by every one that possessed any public office. And to cut short all opposition, he declared, that, having reaped the benefit of their service during such times of danger, he was determined, neither to expose them afterwards to disgrace, nor himself, in case of another rebellion, to the want of their assistance. 9th Nov. A parliament.

SUCH violent aversion did this parliament bear to opposition; so great dread had been instilled of the consequences attending any breach with the king; that it is probable, had he used his dispensing power without declaring it, no inquiries would have been made, and time might have reconciled the nation to this dangerous exercise of prerogative. But to invade at once their constitution, to threaten their religion, to establish a standing army, and even to require them, by their concurrence to contribute towards all these measures, exceeded the bounds of their patience; and they began, for the first time, to

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

to display some small remains of English spirit and generosity. When the king's speech was taken into consideration by the commons, many severe reflections were thrown out against the present measures; and the house was with seeming difficulty engaged to promise, in a general vote, that they would grant some supply. But instead of finishing that business, which could alone render them acceptable to the king, they proceeded to examine the dispensing power; and they voted an address to the king against it. Before this address was presented, they resumed the consideration of the supply; and as one million two hundred thousand pounds were demanded by the court, and two hundred thousand proposed by the country-party, a middle course was chosen; and seven hundred thousand, after some dispute, were at last voted. The address against the dispensing power was expressed in most respectful and submissive terms; yet it was very ill received by the king, and his answer contained a flat denial, uttered with great warmth and vehemence. The commons were so daunted with this reply, that they kept silence a long time; and when Coke, member for Derby, rose up and said, "I hope we are all English-"men, and not to be frightened with a few hard "words;" so little spirit appeared in that assembly, often so refractory and mutinous, that they sent him to the Tower for bluntly expressing a free and generous sentiment. They adjourned, without fixing a day for the consideration of his majesty's answer; and on their next meeting, they submissively proceeded to the consideration of the supply, and even went so far as to establish funds for paying the sum voted, in nine years and a half. The king, therefore, had in effect, almost without contest or violence, obtained a complete victory over the commons; and that assembly, instead of guarding their liberties, now exposed to manifest peril, conferred an

an additional revenue on the crown; and by rendering the king in some degree independent, contributed to increase those dangers with which they had so much reason to be alarmed. CHAP. LXX. 1685.

THE next opposition came from the house of peers, which has not commonly taken the lead on these occasions; and even from the bench of bishops, where the court usually expects the greatest complaisance and submission. The upper house had been brought, in the first days of the session, to give general thanks for the king's speech; by which compliment they were understood, according to the practice of that time, to have acquiesced in every part of it: Yet notwithstanding that step, Compton, bishop of London, in his own name and that of his brethren, moved that a day should be appointed for taking the speech into consideration: He was seconded by Halifax, Nottingham, and Mordaunt. Jefferies, the chancellor, opposed the motion; and seemed inclined to use in that house the same arrogance to which on the bench he had so long been accustomed. But he was soon taught to know his place; and he proved, by his behaviour, that insolence, when checked, naturally sinks into meanness and cowardice. The bishop of London's motion prevailed.

THE king might reasonably have presumed, that, even if the peers should so far resume courage as to make an application against his dispensing power, the same steady answer which he had given to the commons would make them relapse into the same timidity; and he might by that means have obtained a considerable supply, without making any concessions in return. But so imperious was his temper, so lofty the idea which he had entertained of his own authority, and so violent the schemes suggested by his own bigotry and that of his priests, that, without any delay, without waiting for any

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

farther provocation, he immediately proceeded to a prorogation. He continued the parliament during a year and a half by four more prorogations; but having in vain tried, by separate applications, to break the obstinacy of the leading members, he at last dissolved that assembly. And as it was plainly impossible for him to find among his protestant subjects a set of men more devoted to royal authority, it was universally concluded, that he intended thenceforth to govern entirely without parliaments.

NEVER king mounted the throne of England with greater advantages than James; nay, possessed greater facility, if that were any advantage, of rendering himself and his posterity absolute: But all these fortunate circumstances tended only, by his own misconduct, to bring more sudden ruin upon him. The nation seemed disposed of themselves to resign their liberties, had he not, at the same time, made an attempt upon their religion: And he might even have succeeded in surmounting at once their liberties and religion, had he conducted his schemes with common prudence and discretion. Openly to declare to the parliament, so early in his reign, his intention to dispense with the tests, struck an universal alarm throughout the nation; infused terror into the church, which had hitherto been the chief support of monarchy; and even disgusted the army, by whose means alone he could now purpose to govern. The former horror against popery was revived by polemical books and sermons; and in every dispute the victory seemed to be gained by the protestant divines, who were heard with more favourable ears, and who managed the controversy with more learning and eloquence. But another incident happened at this time, which tended mightily to excite the animosity of the nation against the catholic communion.

LEWIS

CHAP. LXX. 1685.

LEWIS XIV. having long harassed and molested the protestants, at last revoked entirely the edict of Nantz; which had been enacted by Harry IV. for securing them the free exercise of their religion; which had been declared irrevocable; and which, during the experience of near a century, had been attended with no sensible inconvenience. All the iniquities inseparable from persecution were exercised against those unhappy religionists; who became obstinate in proportion to the oppressions which they suffered, and either covered under a feigned conversion a more violent abhorrence of the catholic communion, or sought among foreign nations for that liberty of which they were bereaved in their native country. Above half a million of the most useful and industrious subjects deserted France; and exported, together with immense sums of money, those arts and manufactures which had chiefly tended to enrich that kingdom. They propagated every where the most tragical accounts of the tyranny exercised against them, and revived among the protestants all that resentment against the bloody and persecuting spirit of popery, to which so many incidents in all ages had given too much foundation. Near fifty thousand refugees passed over into England; and all men were disposed, from their representations, to entertain the utmost horror against the projects which they apprehended to be formed by the king for the abolition of the protestant religion. When a prince of so much humanity, and of such signal prudence as Lewis could be engaged, by the bigotry of his religion alone, without any provocation, to embrace such sanguinary and impolitic measures, what might not be dreaded, they asked, from James, who was so much inferior in these virtues, and who had already been irritated by such obstinate and violent opposition? In vain did the king affect to throw the highest blame on the persecutions in France: In vain did

CHAP. LXX. he afford the most real protection and assistance to the distressed Hugonots. All these symptoms of
1685. toleration were regarded as insidious; opposite to the avowed principles of his sect, and belied by the severe administration which he himself had exercised against the non-conformists in Scotland.

1686. THE smallest approach towards the introduction of popery, must, in the present disposition of the people, have afforded reason of jealousy; much more so wide a step as that of dispensing with the tests, the sole security which the nation, being disappointed of the exclusion-bill, found provided against those dreaded innovations. Yet was the king resolute to persevere in his purpose; and having failed in bringing over the parliament, he made an attempt, with more success, for establishing his dispensing power, by a verdict of the judges. Sir Edward Hales, a new proselyte, had accepted a commission of colonel; and directions were given his coachman to prosecute him for the penalty of five hundred pounds, which the law, establishing the tests, had granted to informers. By this feigned action, the king hoped, both from the authority of the decision, and the reason of the thing, to put an end to all questions with regard to his dispensing power.

Dispensing power.

IT could not be expected that the lawyers appointed to plead against Hales would exert great force on that occasion: But the cause was regarded with such anxiety by the public, that it has been thoroughly canvassed in several elaborate discourses;[a] and could men divest themselves of prejudice, there want not sufficient materials on which to form a true judgment. The claim and exercise of the dispensing power is allowed to be very ancient in England; and though it seems at first to have been

[a] Particularly sir Edward Herbert's Defence in the State Trials, and sir Robert Atkins's Inquiry concerning the Dispensing Power.

been copied from papal usurpations, it may plainly be traced up as high as the reign of Henry III. In the feudal governments, men were more anxious to secure their private property than to share in the public administration; and provided no innovations were attempted on their rights and possessions, the care of executing the laws, and ensuring general safety, was without jealousy entrusted to the sovereign. Penal statutes were commonly intended to arm the prince with more authority for that purpose; and being in the main calculated for promoting his influence as first magistrate, there seemed no danger in allowing him to dispense with their execution, in such particular cases as might require an exception or indulgence. That practice had so much prevailed, that the parliament itself had more than once acknowledged this prerogative of the crown; particularly during the reign of Henry V. when they enacted the law against aliens,[b] and also when they passed the statute of provisors.[c] But though the general tenor of the penal statutes was such as gave the king a superior interest in their execution beyond any of his subjects, it could not but sometimes happen, in a mixed government, that the parliament would desire to enact laws, by which the regal power, in some particulars, even where private property was not immediately concerned, might be regulated and restrained. In the twenty-third of Henry VI. a law of this kind was enacted, prohibiting any man from serving in a county as sheriff above a year; and a clause was inserted by which the king was disabled from granting a dispensation. Plain reason might have taught, that this

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

[b] Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. V. n. xv.

[c] Ibid. 1 Hen. V. n. xxii. It is remarkable, however, that in the reign of Richard the Second, the parliament granted the king only a temporary power of dispensing with the statute of provisors. Rot. Parl. 15 Rich. II. n. i. A plain implication that he had not, of himself, such prerogative. So uncertain were many of these points at that time.

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

this law, at least, should be exempted from the king's prerogative: But as the dispensing power still prevailed in other cases, it was soon able, aided by the servility of the courts of judicature, even to overpower this statute, which the legislature had evidently intended to secure against violation. In the reign of Henry VII. the case was brought to a trial before all the judges in the exchequer-chamber; and it was decreed, that, notwithstanding the strict clause above mentioned, the king might dispense with the statute: He could first, it was alledged, dispense with the prohibitory clause, and then with the statute itself. This opinion of the judges, though seemingly absurd, had ever since passed for undoubted law: The practice of continuing the sheriffs had prevailed: And most of the property in England had been fixed by decisions, which juries, returned by such sheriffs, had given in the courts of judicature. Many other dispensations of a like nature may be produced; not only such as took place by intervals, but such as were uniformly continued. Thus the law was dispensed with, which prohibited any man from going a judge of assize into his own county; that which rendered all Welchmen incapable of bearing offices in Wales; and that which required every one who received a pardon for felony, to find sureties for his good behaviour. In the second of James I. a new consultation of all the judges had been held upon a like question: This prerogative of the crown was again unanimously affirmed:[d] And it became an established principle in English jurisprudence, that though the king could not allow of what was morally unlawful, he could permit what was only prohibited by positive statute. Even the jealous house of commons, who extorted the petition of right from Charles I. made no scruple, by the mouth of Glanville,

[d] Sir Edward Coke's Reports, seventh Report.

Glanville, their manager, to allow of the dispensing power in its full extent;[e] and in the famous trial of ship-money, Holborne, the popular lawyer, had freely, and in the most explicit terms, made the same concession.[f] Sir Edward Coke, the great oracle of English law, had not only concurred with all other lawyers in favour of this prerogative, but seems even to believe it so inherent in the crown, that an act of parliament itself could not abolish it.[g] And he particularly observes, that no law can impose such a disability of enjoying offices as the king may not dispense with; because the king, from the law of nature, has a right to the service of all his subjects. This particular reason, as well as all the general principles, is applicable to the question of the tests: nor can the dangerous consequence of granting dispensations in that case be ever allowed to be pleaded before a court of judicature. Every prerogative of the crown, it may be said, admits of abuse: Should the king pardon all criminals, law must be totally dissolved: Should he declare and continue perpetual war against all nations, inevitable ruin must ensue: Yet these powers are entrusted to the sovereign; and we must be content, as our ancestors were, to depend upon his prudence and discretion in the exercise of them.

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

THOUGH this reasoning seems founded on such principles as are usually admitted by lawyers, the people had entertained such violent prepossessions against the use which James here made of his prerogative, that he was obliged, before he brought on Hales's cause, to displace four of the judges, Jones, Montague, Charleton, and Nevil; and even sir Edward Herbert, the chief justice, though a man of acknowledged virtue, yet, because he here supported the pretensions of the crown, was exposed to

[e] State Trials, vol. vii. first edit. p. 205. Parl. Hist. vol. viii. p. 132. [f] State Trials, vol. v. first edit. p. 171.
[g] Sir Edward Coke's Reports, twelfth Report, p. 18.

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

to great and general reproach. Men deemed a dispensing to be in effect the same with a repealing power; and they could not conceive that less authority was necessary to repeal than to enact any statute. If one penal law was dispensed with, any other might undergo the same fate: And by what principle could even the laws which define property be afterwards secured from violation? The test act had ever been conceived the great barrier of the established religion under a popish successor: As such, it had been insisted on by the parliament; as such, granted by the king; as such, during the debates with regard to the exclusion, recommended by the chancellor. By what magic, what chicane of law, is it now annihilated, and rendered of no validity? These questions were every where asked; and men, straitened by precedents and decisions of great authority, were reduced either to question the antiquity of this prerogative itself, or to assert that even the practice of near five centuries could not bestow on it sufficient authority.[h] It was not considered, that the present difficulty or seeming absurdity had proceeded from late innovations introduced into the government. Ever since the beginning of this century, the parliament had, with a laudable zeal, been acquiring powers and establishing principles favourable to law and liberty: The authority of the crown had been limited in many important particulars: And penal statutes were often calculated to secure the constitution against the attempts of ministers, as well as to preserve a general peace, and repress crimes and immoralities. A prerogative, however, derived from very ancient, and almost uniform practice, the dispensing power, still remained, or was supposed to remain, with the crown; sufficient in an instant to overturn this whole fabric, and to throw down all fences of the constitution.

[h] Sir Robert Atkins, p. 21.

constitution. If this prerogative, which carries on the face of it such strong symptoms of an absolute authority in the prince, had yet, in ancient times, subsisted with some degree of liberty in the subject; this fact only proves, that scarcely any human government, much less one erected in rude and barbarous times, is entirely consistent and uniform in all its parts. But to expect that the dispensing power could, in any degree, be rendered compatible with those accurate and regular limitations, which had of late been established, and which the people were determined to maintain, was a vain hope; and though men knew not upon what principles they could deny that prerogative, they saw that, if they would preserve their laws and constitution, there was an absolute necessity for denying, at least for abolishing it. The revolution alone, which soon succeeded, happily put an end to all these disputes: By means of it a more uniform edifice was at last erected: The monstrous inconsistence, so visible between the ancient Gothic parts of the fabric and the recent plans of liberty, was fully corrected: And to their mutual felicity, king and people were finally taught to know their proper boundaries.[1]

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

WHATEVER

[1] It is remarkable, that the convention, summoned by the prince of Orange, did not, even when they had the making of their own terms in *the declaration of rights*, venture to condemn the dispensing power in general, which had been uniformly exercised by the former kings of England. They only condemned it so far, *as it had been assumed and exercised of late*, without being able to tell wherein the difference lay. But in the *bill of rights* which passed about a twelvemonth after, the parliament took care to secure themselves more effectually against a branch of prerogative incompatible with all legal liberty and limitations; and they excluded, in positive terms, all dispensing power in the crown. Yet even then the house of lords rejected that clause of the bill, which condemned the exercise of this power in former kings, and obliged the commons to rest content with abolishing it for the future. There needs no other proof of the irregular nature of the old English government than the existence of such a prerogative, always exercised and never questioned, till the acquisition of real liberty discovered, at last, the danger of it. See the Journals.

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

WHATEVER topics lawyers might find to defend James's dispensing power, the nation thought it dangerous, if not fatal to liberty, and his resolution of exercising it may on that account be esteemed no less alarming, than if the power had been founded on the most recent and most flagrant usurpation. It was not likely, that an authority, which had been assumed, through so many obstacles, would in his hands lie long idle and unemployed. Four catholic lords were brought into the privy-council, Powis, Arundel, Bellasis, and Dover. Halifax, finding that, notwithstanding his past merits, he possessed no real credit or authority, became refractory in his opposition; and his office of privy seal was given to Arundel. The king was open as well as zealous, in the desire of making converts; and men plainly saw, that the only way to acquire his affection and confidence was by a sacrifice of their religion. Sunderland, some time after, scrupled not to gain favour at this price. Rochester, the treasurer, though the king's brother-in-law, yet, because he refused to give this instance of complaisance, was turned out of his office: The treasury was put in commission, and Bellasis was placed at the head of it. All the courtiers were disgusted, even such as had little regard to religion. The dishonour, as well as distrust, attending renegades, made most men resolve, at all hazards, to adhere to their ancient faith.

State of Scotland.

IN Scotland James's zeal for proselytism was more successful. The earls of Murray, Perth, and Melfort, were brought over to the court religion; and the two latter noblemen made use of a very courtly reason for their conversion: They pretended, that the papers found in the late king's cabinet had opened their eyes, and had convinced them of the preference due to the Catholic religion. Queensberry who shewed not the same compliance, fell into

into total disgrace, notwithstanding his former services, and the important sacrifices which he had made to the measures of the court. These merits could not even ensure him of safety against the vengeance to which he stood exposed. His rival, Perth, who had been ready to sink under his superior interest, now acquired the ascendant; and all the complaints exhibited against him were totally obliterated. His faith, according to a saying of Halifax, had made him whole. CHAP. LXX. 1686.

State of Ireland.

BUT it was in Ireland chiefly, that the mask was wholly taken off, and that the king thought himself at liberty to proceed to the full extent of his zeal and his violence. The duke of Ormond was recalled; and though the primate and lord Granard, two protestants, still possessed the authority of justices, the whole power was lodged in the hands of Talbot, the general, soon after created earl of Tyrconnel; a man who, from the blindness of his prejudices and fury of his temper, was transported with the most immeasurable ardour for the catholic cause. After the suppression of Monmouth's rebellion, orders were given by Tyrconnel to disarm all the protestants, on pretence of securing the public peace, and keeping their arms in a few magazines for the use of the militia. Next, the army was new-modelled; and a great number of officers were dismissed, because it was pretended that they or their fathers had served under Cromwel and the republic. The injustice was not confined to them. Near three hundred officers more were afterwards broken, though many of them had purchased their commissions: About four or five thousand private soldiers, because they were protestants, were dismissed; and being stripped even of their regimentals, were turned out to starve in the streets. While these violences were carrying on, Clarendon, who had been named lord lieutenant, came over; but he soon found, that, as he had refused to give the

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

king the desired pledge of fidelity by changing his religion, he possessed no credit or authority. He was even a kind of prisoner in the hands of Tyrconnel; and as he gave all opposition in his power to the precipitate measures of the catholics, he was soon after recalled, and Tyrconnel substituted in his place. The unhappy protestants now saw all the civil authority, as well as the military force, transferred into the hands of their inveterate enemies; inflamed with hereditary hatred, and stimulated by every motive, which the passion either for power, property, or religion, could inspire. Even the barbarous banditti were let loose to prey on them in their present defenceless condition. A renewal of the ancient massacres was apprehended; and great multitudes, struck with the best-grounded terror, deserted the kingdom, and infused into the English nation a dread of those violences, to which, after some time, they might justly, from the prevalence of the catholics, think themselves exposed.

ALL judicious persons of the catholic communion were disgusted with these violent measures, and could easily foresee the consequences. But James was entirely governed by the rash counsels of the queen and of his confessor, father Peters, a jesuit, whom he soon after created a privy-counsellor. He thought too, that, as he was now in the decline of life, it was necessary for him, by hasty steps, to carry his designs into execution; lest the succession of the princess of Orange should overturn all his projects. In vain did Arundel, Powis, and Bellasis, remonstrate, and suggest more moderate and cautious measures. These men had seen and felt, during the prosecution of the popish plot, the extreme antipathy which the nation bore to their religion; and though some subsequent incidents had seemingly allayed that spirit, they knew that the settled habits of the people were still the same, and that the smallest incident was sufficient to

to renew the former animosity. A very moderate indulgence, therefore, to the catholic religion, would have satisfied them; and all attempts to acquire power, much more to produce a change of the national faith, they deemed dangerous and destructive.[1] CHAP. LXX. 1686.

Breach betwixt the king and the church.

On the first broaching of the popish plot, the clergy of the church of England had concurred in the prosecution of it, with the same violence and credulity as the rest of the nation: But dreading afterwards the prevalence of republican and presbyterian principles, they had been engaged to support the measures of the court; and to their assistance chiefly, James had owed his succession to the crown. Finding that all these services were forgotten, and that the catholic religion was the king's sole favourite, the church had commenced an opposition to court measures; and popery was now acknowledged the more immediate danger. In order to prevent inflammatory sermons on this popular subject, James revived some directions to preachers, which had been promulgated by the late king, in the beginning of his reign, when no design against the national religion was yet formed, or at least apprehended. But in the present delicate and interesting situation of the church, there was little reason to expect that orders founded on no legal authority, would be rigidly obeyed by preachers, who saw no security to themselves but in preserving the confidence and regard of the people. Instead of avoiding controversy, according to the king's injunctions, the preachers every where declaimed against popery; and among the rest, Dr. Sharpe, a clergyman of London, particularly distinguished himself, and affected to throw great contempt on those who had been induced to change their religion by such pitiful arguments as the Romish missionaries could suggest. This

[1] D'Avaux, 10 January, 1687.

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

This topic, being supposed to reflect on the king, gave great offence at court; and positive orders were issued to the bishop of London, his diocesan, immediately to suspend Sharpe, till his majesty's pleasure should be farther known. The prelate replied, that he could not possibly obey these commands, and that he was not empowered, in such a summary manner, to inflict any punishment even upon the greatest delinquent. But neither this obvious reason, nor the most dutiful submissions, both of the prelate and of Sharpe himself, could appease the court. The king was determined to proceed with violence in the prosecution of this affair. The bishop himself he resolved to punish for disobedience to his commands; and the expedient, which he employed for that purpose, was of a nature at once the most illegal and most alarming.

Among all the engines of authority formerly employed by the crown, none had been more dangerous, or even destructive, to liberty, than the court of high commission, which, together with the star-chamber, had been abolished in the reign of Charles I. by act of parliament; in which a clause was also inserted, prohibiting the erection, in all future times, of that court, or any of a like nature. But this law was deemed by James no obstacle; and an ecclesiastical commission was anew issued, by which seven[k] commissioners were vested with full and unlimited authority over the church of England. On them were bestowed the same inquisitorial powers, possessed by the former court of high commission: They might proceed upon bare suspicion; and the better to set the law at defiance, it was expressly inserted in their patent itself, that they

Court of ecclesiastical commission.

[k] The persons named were the archbishop of Canterbury, Sancroft; the bishop of Durham, Crew; of Rochester, Sprat; the earl of Rochester, Sunderland, chancellor Jefferies, and lord chief justice Herbert. The archbishop refused to act, and the bishop of Chester was substituted in his place.

they were to exercise their jurisdiction, notwithstanding any law or statute to the contrary. The king's design to subdue the church was now sufficiently known; and had he been able to establish the authority of this new-erected court, his success was infallible. A more sensible blow could not be given, both to national liberty and religion; and happily the contest could not be tried in a cause more iniquitous and unpopular than that against Sharpe and the bishop of London. CHAP. LXX. 1686.

THE prelate was cited before the commissioners. After denying the legality of the court, and claiming the privilege of all christian bishops to be tried by the metropolitan and his suffragans; he pleaded in his own defence, that, as he was obliged, if he had suspended Sharpe, to act in the capacity of a judge, he could not, consistent either with law or equity, pronounce sentence without a previous citation and trial: That he had by petition represented this difficulty to his majesty; and not receiving any answer, he had reason to think that his petition had given entire satisfaction: That in order to shew farther his deference, he had advised Sharpe to abstain from preaching, till he had justified his conduct to the king; an advice which, coming from his superior, was equivalent to a command, and had accordingly met with the proper obedience: That he had thus, in his apprehension, conformed himself to his majesty's pleasure; but if he should still be found wanting to his duty in any particular, he was now willing to crave pardon, and to make reparation. All this submission, both in Sharpe and the prelate, had no effect: It was determined to have an example: Orders were accordingly sent to the commissioners to proceed: And by a majority of votes the bishop, as well as the doctor, was suspended. Sentence against the bishop of London.

ALMOST the whole of this short reign consists of attempts always imprudent, often illegal, sometimes both, against whatever was most loved and revered by

CHAP. LXX. 1686.

by the nation: Even such schemes of the king's as might be laudable in themselves, were so disgraced by his intentions, that they serve only to aggravate the charge against him. James was become a great patron of toleration, and an enemy to all those persecuting laws which, from the influence of the church, had been enacted both against the dissenters and catholics. Not content with granting dispensations to particular persons, he assumed a power of issuing a declaration of general indulgence, and of suspending at once all the penal statutes, by which a conformity was required to the established religion. This was a strain of authority, it must be confessed, quite inconsistent with law and a limited constitution; yet was it supported by many strong precedents in the history of England. Even after the principles of liberty were become more prevalent, and began to be well understood, the late king had, oftener than once, and without giving much umbrage, exerted this dangerous power: He had, in 1662, suspended the execution of a law which regulated carriages: During the two Dutch wars, he had twice suspended the act of navigation: And the commons, in 1666, being resolved, contrary to the king's judgment, to enact that iniquitous law against the importation of Irish cattle, found it necessary, in order to obviate the exercise of this prerogative, which they desired not at that time entirely to deny or abrogate, to call that importation a nuisance.

Penal laws suspended.

THOUGH the former authority of the sovereign was great in civil affairs, it was still greater in ecclesiastical; and the whole despotic power of the popes was often believed, in virtue of the supremacy, to have devolved to the crown. The last parliament of Charles I. by abolishing the power of the king and convocation to frame canons without consent of parliament, had somewhat diminished the supposed extent of the supremacy; but still very considerable remains

mains of it, at least very important claims, were preserved, and were occasionally made use of by the sovereign. In 1662, Charles pleading both the rights of his supremacy and his suspending power, had granted a general indulgence or toleration; and in 1672 he renewed the same edict: Though the remonstrances of his parliament obliged him on both occasions to retract; and in the last instance, the triumph of law over prerogative was deemed very great and memorable. In general we may remark, that where the exercise of the suspending power was agreeable and useful, the power itself was little questioned: Where the exercise was thought liable to exceptions, men not only opposed it, but proceeded to deny altogether the legality of the prerogative on which it was founded. CHAP. LXX. 1687.

JAMES, more imprudent and arbitrary than his predecessor, issued his proclamation, suspending all the penal laws in ecclesiastical affairs; and granting a general liberty of conscience to all his subjects. He was not deterred by the reflection, both that this scheme of indulgence was already blasted by two fruitless attempts; and that in such a government as that of England, it was not sufficient that a prerogative be approved of by some lawyers and antiquaries: If it was condemned by the general voice of the nation, and yet was still exerted, the victory over national liberty was no less signal than if obtained by the most flagrant injustice and usurpation. These two considerations indeed would rather serve to recommend this project to James; who deemed himself superior in vigour and activity to his brother, and who probably thought that his people enjoyed no liberties, but by his royal concession and indulgence.

IN order to procure a better reception for his edict of toleration, the king, finding himself opposed by the church, began to pay court to the dissenters; and he imagined that, by playing one party

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

against another, he should easily obtain the victory over both; a refined policy which it much exceeded his capacity to conduct. His intentions were so obvious, that it was impossible for him ever to gain the sincere confidence and regard of the non-conformists. They knew that the genius of their religion was diametrically opposite to that of the catholics, the sole object of the king's affection. They were sensible, that both the violence of his temper, and the maxims of his religion, were repugnant to the principles of toleration. They had seen that, on his accession, as well as during his brother's reign, he had courted the church at their expence; and it was not till his dangerous schemes were rejected by the prelates, that he had recourse to the non-conformists. All his favours, therefore, must, to every man of judgment among the sectaries, have appeared insidious: Yet such was the pleasure reaped from present ease, such the animosity of the dissenters against the church, who had so long subjected them to the rigours of persecution, that they every where expressed the most entire duty to the king, and compliance with his measures; and could not forbear rejoicing extremely in the present depression of their adversaries.

But had the dissenters been ever so much inclined to shut their eyes with regard to the king's intentions, the manner of conducting this scheme in Scotland was sufficient to discover the secret. The king first applied to the Scottish parliament, and desired an indulgence for the catholics alone, without comprehending the presbyterians: But that assembly, though more disposed than even the parliament of England, to sacrifice their civil liberties, resolved likewise to adhere pertinaciously to their religion; and they rejected for the first time the king's application. James therefore found himself obliged to exert his prerogative; and he now thought it prudent to interest a party among his subjects, besides

sides the catholics, in supporting this act of authority. To the surprise of the harassed and persecuted presbyterians, they heard the principles of toleration every where extolled, and found that full permission was granted to attend conventicles; an offence, which, even during this reign, had been declared no less than a capital enormity. The king's declaration, however, of indulgence, contained clauses sufficient to depress their joy. As if popery were already predominant, "he declared, "that he never would use force or *invincible necessity* "against any man on account of his persuasion or "the protestant religion:" A promise surely of toleration given to the protestants with great precaution, and admitting a considerable latitude for persecution and violence. It is likewise remarkable, that the king declared in express terms, "that he "had thought fit, by his sovereign authority, pre-"rogative royal, and *absolute* power, which all his "subjects were to obey *without reserve*, to grant this "royal toleration." The dangerous designs of other princes are to be collected by a comparison of their several actions, or by a discovery of their more secret counsels: But so blinded was James with zeal, so transported by his imperious temper, that even his proclamations and public edicts contain expressions which, without farther inquiry, may suffice to his condemnation. CHAP. LXX. 1687.

THE English well knew, that the king, by the constitution of their government, thought himself entitled, as indeed he was, to as ample authority in his southern, as in his northern kingdom; and therefore, though the declaration of indulgence published for England was more cautiously expressed, they could not but be alarmed by the arbitrary treatment to which their neighbours were exposed. It is even remarkable, that the English declaration contained clauses of a strange import. The king there promised, that he would maintain

CHAP. LXX. 1687. his loving subjects in all their properties and possessions, as well of church and abbey lands as of any other. Men thought, that if the full establishment of popery were not at hand, this promise was quite superfluous; and they concluded, that the king was so replete with joy on the prospect of that glorious event, that he could not, even for a moment, refrain from expressing it.

State of Ireland. But what afforded the most alarming prospect, was the continuance and even increase of the violent and precipitate conduct of affairs in Ireland. Tyrconnel was now vested with full authority; and carried over with him as chancellor one Fitton, a man who was taken from a jail, and who had been convicted of forgery and other crimes, but who compensated for all his enormities by a headlong zeal for the catholic religion. He was even heard to say from the bench, that the protestants were all rogues, and that there was not one among forty thousand that was not a traitor, a rebel, and a villain. The whole strain of the administration was suitable to such sentiments. The catholics were put in possession of the council-table, of the courts of judicature, and of the bench of justices. In order to make them masters of the parliament, the same violence was exercised that had been practised in England. The charters of Dublin and of all the corporations were annulled; and new charters were granted, subjecting the corporations to the will of the sovereign. The protestant freemen were expelled, catholics introduced; and the latter sect, as they always were the majority in number, were now invested with the whole power of the kingdom. The act of settlement was the only obstacle to their enjoying the whole property; and Tyrconnel had formed a scheme for calling a parliament, in order to reverse that act, and empower the king to bestow all the lands of Ireland on his catholic subjects. But in this scheme he met with opposition from the moderate

rate catholics in the king's council. Lord Bellasis went even so far as to affirm with an oath, "that "that fellow in Ireland was fool and madman "enough to ruin ten kingdoms." The decay of trade, from the desertion of the protestants, was represented; the sinking of the revenue; the alarm communicated to England: And by these considerations the king's resolutions were for some time suspended; though it was easy to foresee, from the usual tenor of his conduct, which side would at last preponderate. CHAP. LXX. 1687.

BUT the king was not content with discovering in his own kingdoms the imprudence of his conduct: He was resolved, that all Europe should be witness of it. He publicly sent the earl of Castlemaine ambassador extraordinary to Rome, in order to express his obeisance to the pope, and to make advances for reconciling his kingdoms, in form, to the catholic communion. Never man, who came on so important an errand, met with so many neglects, and even affronts, as Castlemaine. The pontiff, instead of being pleased with this forward step, concluded that a scheme, conducted with so much indiscretion, could never possibly be successful. And as he was engaged in a violent quarrel with the French monarch, a quarrel which interested him more nearly than the conversion of England, he bore little regard to James, whom he believed too closely connected with his capital enemy. Embassy to Rome.

THE only proof of complaisance which James received from the pontiff was his sending a nuncio to England, in return for the embassy. By act of parliament any communication with the pope was made treason: Yet so little regard did the king pay to the laws, that he gave the nuncio a public and solemn reception at Windsor. The duke of Somerset, one of the bed-chamber, because he refused to assist at this ceremony, was dismissed from his employment. The nuncio resided openly in London during

CHAP. LXX. 1687. during the rest of this reign. Four catholic bishops were publicly consecrated in the king's chapel, and sent out, under the title of vicars apostolical, to exercise the episcopal function in their respective dioceses. Their pastoral letters, directed to the lay catholics of England, were printed and dispersed by the express allowance and permission of the king. The regular clergy of that communion appeared at court in the habits of their order; and some of them were so indiscreet as to boast, that, in a little time, they hoped to walk in procession through the capital.

WHILE the king shocked in the most open manner all the principles and prejudices of his protestant subject, he could not sometimes but be sensible, that he stood in need of their assistance for the execution of his designs. He had himself, by virtue of his prerogative, suspended the penal laws, and dispensed with the test; but he would gladly have obtained the sanction of parliament to these acts of power; and he knew that, without this authority, his edicts alone would never afford a durable security to the catholics. He had employed, therefore, with the members of parliament many private conferences, which were then called *closetings;* and he used every expedient of reasons, menaces, and promises, to break their obstinacy in this particular. Finding all his efforts fruitless, he had dissolved the parliament, and was determined to call a new one, from which he expected more complaisance and submission. By the practice of annulling the charters, the king was become master of all the corporations, and could at pleasure change every where the whole magistracy. The church party, therefore, by whom the crown had been hitherto so remarkably supported, and to whom the king visibly owed his safety from all the efforts of his enemies, was deprived of authority; and the dissenters, those very enemies, were, first in London, and afterwards

wards in every other corporation, substituted in their place. Not content with this violent and dangerous innovation, the king appointed certain regulators to examine the qualifications of electors; and directions were given them to exclude all such as adhered to the test and penal statutes.[1] Queries to this purpose were openly proposed in all places, in order to try the sentiments of men, and enable the king to judge of the proceedings of the future parliament. The power of the crown was at this time so great; and the revenue, managed by James's frugality, so considerable and independent; that, if he had embraced any national party, he had been ensured of success, and might have carried his authority to what length he pleased. But the catholics to whom he had entirely devoted himself, were scarcely the hundredth part of the people. Even the protestant non-conformists, whom he so much courted, were little more than the twentieth; and what was worse, reposed no confidence in the unnatural alliance contracted with the catholics, and in the principles of toleration, which, contrary to their usual practice in all ages, seemed at present to be adopted by that sect. The king, therefore, finding little hopes of success, delayed the summoning of a parliament, and proceeded still in the exercise of his illegal and arbitrary authority.

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

THE whole power in Ireland had been committed to catholics. In Scotland, all the ministers whom the king chiefly trusted, were converts to that religion. Every great office in England, civil and military, was gradually transferred from the protestants.

[1] The elections in some places, particularly in York, were transferred from the people to the magistrates, who by the new charter, were all named by the crown. Sir John Reresby's Memoirs, p. 272. This was in reality nothing different from the king's naming the members. The same act of authority had been employed in all the boroughs of Scotland.

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

testants. Rochester and Clarendon, the king's brothers-in-law, though they had ever been faithful to his interests, could not, by all their services, atone for their adherence to the national religion; and had been dismissed from their employments. The violent Jefferies himself, though he had sacrificed justice and humanity to the court; yet, because he refused also to give up his religion, was declining in favour and interest. Nothing now remained but to open the door in the church and universities to the intrusion of the catholics. It was not long before the king made this rash effort; and by constraining the prelacy and established church to seek protection in the principles of liberty, he at last left himself entirely without friends and adherents.

FATHER Francis, a Benedictine, was recommended by the king's mandate to the university of Cambridge for the degree of master of arts; and as it was usual for the university to confer that degree on persons eminent for learning, without regard to their religion; and as they had even admitted lately the secretary to the ambassador of Morocco; the king on that account thought himself the better entitled to compliance. But the university considered, that there was a great difference between a compliment bestowed on foreigners, and degrees which gave a title to vote in all the elections and statutes of the university, and which, if conferred on the catholics, would infallibly in time render that sect entirely superior. They therefore refused to obey the king's mandate, and were cited to appear before the court of ecclesiastical commission. The vice-chancellor was suspended by that court; but as the university chose a man of spirit to succeed him, the king thought proper for the present to drop his pretensions.

Attempt upon Magdalen college.

THE attempt upon the university of Oxford was prosecuted with more inflexible obstinacy, and was attended

attended with more important consequences. This university had lately, in their famous decree, made a solemn profession of passive obedience; and the court probably expected that they would shew their sincerity, when their turn came to practise that doctrine: which, though, if carried to the utmost extent, it be contrary both to reason and to nature, is apt to meet with the more effectual opposition from the latter principle. The president of Magdalen college, one of the richest foundations in Europe, dying about this time, a mandate was sent in favour of Farmer, a new convert, but one who, besides his being a catholic, had not, in other respects, the qualifications required by the statutes for enjoying that office. The fellows of the college made submissive applications to the king for recalling his mandate; but before they received an answer, the day came, on which, by their statutes, they were obliged to proceed to an election. They chose Dr. Hough, a man of virtue, as well as of the firmness and vigour requisite for maintaining his own rights and those of the university. In order to punish the college for this contumacy, as it was called, an inferior ecclesiastical commission was sent down, and the new president and the fellows were cited before it. So little regard had been paid to any consideration besides religion, that Farmer, on inquiry, was found guilty of the lowest and most scandalous vices; insomuch that even the ecclesiastical commissioners were ashamed to insist on his election. A new mandate, therefore, was issued in favour of Parker, lately created bishop of Oxford, a man of a prostitute character, but who, like Farmer, atoned for all his vices by his avowed willingness to embrace the catholic religion. The college represented, that all presidents had ever been appointed by election, and there were few instances of the king's interposing by his recommendation in favour of any candidate; that having already made a regular

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

a regular election of a president, they could not deprive him of his office, and, during his life-time, substitute any other in his place; that, even if there were a vacancy, Parker, by the statutes of their founder, could not be chosen; that they had all of them bound themselves by oath to observe these statutes, and never on any account to accept of a dispensation; and that the college had at all times so much distinguished itself by its loyalty, that nothing but the most invincible necessity could now oblige them to oppose his majesty's inclinations. All these reasons availed them nothing. The president and all the fellows, except two who complied, were expelled the college; and Parker was put in possession of the office. This act of violence, of all those which were committed during the reign of James, is perhaps the most illegal and arbitrary. When the dispensing power was the most strenuously insisted on by court lawyers, it had still been allowed, that the statutes which regard private property, could not legally be infringed by that prerogative. Yet in this instance it appeared, that even these were not now secure from invasion. The privileges of a college are attacked: Men are illegally dispossessed of their property, for adhering to their duty, to their oaths, and to their religion: The fountains of the church are attempted to be poisoned; nor would it be long, it was concluded, ere all ecclesiastical, as well as civil preferments, would be bestowed on such as, negligent of honour, virtue, and sincerity, basely sacrificed their faith to the reigning superstition. Such were the general sentiments; and as the universities have an intimate connexion with the ecclesiastical establishments, and mightily interest all those who have there received their education, this arbitrary proceeding begat an universal discontent against the king's administration.

THE

CHAP. LXX. 1687.

THE next measure of the court was an insult still more open on the ecclesiastics, and rendered the breach between the king and that powerful body fatal, as well as incurable. It is strange that James, when he felt, from the sentiments of his own heart, what a mighty influence religious zeal had over him, should yet be so infatuated as never once to suspect that it might possibly have a proportionate authority over his subjects. Could he have profited by repeated experience, he had seen instances enow of their strong aversion to that communion, which, from a violent imperious temper, he was determined, by every possible expedient, to introduce into his kingdoms.

1688. THE king published a second declaration of indulgence, almost in the same terms with the former; and he subjoined an order, that, immediately after divine service, it should be read by the clergy in all the churches. As they were known universally to disapprove of the use made of the suspending power, this clause, they thought, could be meant only as an insult upon them; and they were sensible, that, by their compliance, they should expose themselves, both to public contempt, on account of their tame behaviour, and to public hatred, by their indirectly patronizing so obnoxious a prerogative.[m] They were determined therefore, almost universally, to preserve the regard of the people; their only protection, while the laws were become of so little validity, and while the court was so deeply engaged in opposite interests. In order to encourage them in this resolution, six prelates, namely, Lloyde, bishop of St. Asaph, Ken of Bath

[m] When Charles dissolved his last parliament, he set forth a declaration giving his reasons for that measure, and this declaration the clergy had been ordered to read to the people after divine service. These orders were agreeable to their party prejudices, and they willingly submitted to them. The contrary was now the case.

CHAP. LXX. 1688.

Bath and Wells, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Bristol, met privately with the primate, and concerted the form of a petition to the king. They there represent in few words, that, though possessed of the highest sense of loyalty, a virtue of which the church of England had given such eminent testimonies; and though desirous of affording ease, in a legal way, to all protestant dissenters; yet, because the declaration of indulgence was founded on a prerogative formerly declared illegal by parliament, they could not, in prudence, honour, or conscience, so far make themselves parties as the distribution of it all over the kingdom would be interpreted to amount to. They therefore besought the king, that he would not insist upon their reading that declaration.[a]

THE king was incapable, not only of yielding to the greatest opposition, but of allowing the slightest and most respectful contradiction to pass uncensured. He immediately embraced a resolution (and his resolutions, when once embraced, were

[a] The words of the petition were: That the great averseness found in themselves to their distributing and publishing in all their churches your majesty's late declaration for liberty of conscience, proceeds neither from any want of duty and obedience to your majesty, (our holy mother the church of England, being both in her principles and her constant practice unquestionably loyal, and having to her great honour been more than once publicly acknowledged to be so by your gracious majesty) nor yet from any want of tenderness to dissenters, in relation to whom we are willing to come to such a temper as shall be thought fit, when the matter shall be considered and settled in parliament and convocation. But among many other considerations, from this especially, because that declaration is founded upon such a dispensing power as hath been often declared illegal in parliament, and particularly in the years 1662 and 1672, and in the beginning of your majesty's reign, and is a matter of so great moment and consequence to the whole nation both in church and state, that your petitioners cannot in prudence, honour, or conscience, so far make themselves parties to it as a distribution of it all over the nation, and the solemn publication of it once and again, even in God's house, and in the time of divine service, must amount to in common and reasonable construction.

were inflexible) of punishing the bishops, for a petition so popular in its matter, and so prudent and cautious in the expression. As the petition was delivered him in private, he summoned them before the council; and questioned them whether they would acknowledge it. The bishops saw his intention, and seemed long desirous to decline answering: But being pushed by the chancellor, they at last avowed the petition. On their refusal to give bail, an order was immediately drawn for their commitment to the Tower; and the crown lawyers received directions to prosecute them for the seditious libel which, it was pretended, they had composed and uttered. CHAP. LXX. 1688.

THE people were already aware of the danger to which the prelates were exposed; and were raised to the highest pitch of anxiety and attention with regard to the issue of this extraordinary affair. But when they beheld these fathers of the church brought from court under the custody of a guard, when they saw them embark in vessels on the river, and conveyed towards the Tower, all their affection for liberty, all their zeal for religion, blazed up at once; and they flew to behold this affecting spectacle. The whole shore was covered with crowds of prostrate spectators, who at once implored the blessing of those holy pastors, and addressed their petitions towards Heaven for protection during this extreme danger to which their country and their religion stood exposed. Even the soldiers, seized with the contagion of the same spirit, flung themselves on their knees before the distressed prelates, and craved the benediction of those criminals whom they were appointed to guard. Some persons ran into the water, that they might participate more nearly in those blessings, which the prelates were distributing on all around them. The bishops themselves, during this triumphant suffering, augmented the general favour, Imprisonment.

CHAP. LXX. 1688.

favour, by the most lowly submissive deportment; and they still exhorted the people to fear God, honour the king, and maintain their loyalty; expressions more animating than the most inflammatory speeches. And no sooner had they entered the precincts of the Tower than they hurried to chapel, in order to return thanks for those afflictions, which Heaven, in defence of its holy cause, had thought them worthy to endure.

trial.

THEIR passage, when conducted to their trial, was, if possible, attended by greater crowds of anxious spectators. All men saw the dangerous crisis to which affairs were reduced, and were sensible that the king could not have put the issue on a cause more unfavourable for himself than that in which he had so imprudently engaged. Twenty-nine temporal peers (for the other prelates kept aloof) attended the prisoners to Westminster-hall; and such crowds of gentry followed the procession, that scarcely was any room left for the populace to enter. The lawyers for the bishops were sir Robert Sawyer, sir Francis Pemberton, Pollexfen, Treby, and Sommers. No cause, even during the prosecution of the popish plot, was ever heard with so much zeal and attention. The popular torrent, which, of itself, ran fierce and strong, was now farther irritated by the opposition of government.

THE counsel for the bishops pleaded, that the law allowed subjects, if they thought themselves aggrieved in any particular, to apply by petition to the king, provided they kept within certain bounds, which the same law prescribed to them, and which, in the present petition, the prelates had strictly observed: That an active obedience, in cases which were contrary to conscience, was never pretended to be due to government; and law was allowed to be the great measure of the compliance and submission of subjects: That when any person

person found commands to be imposed upon him which he could not obey, it was more respectful in him to offer his reasons for refusal, than to remain in a sullen and refractory silence: That it was no breach of duty in subjects, even though not called upon, to discover their sense of public measures, in which every one had so intimate a concern: That the bishops in the present case were called upon, and must either express their approbation by compliance, or their disapprobation by petition: That it could be no sedition to deny the prerogative of suspending the laws; because there really was no such prerogative, nor ever could be, in a legal and limited government: That even if this prerogative were real, it had yet been frequently controverted before the whole nation, both in Westminster-hall, and in both houses of parliament; and no one had ever dreamed of punishing the denial of it as criminal: That the prelates, instead of making an appeal to the people, had applied in private to his majesty, and had even delivered their petition so secretly, that, except by the confession extorted from them before the council, it was found impossible to prove them the authors: And that though the petition was afterwards printed and dispersed, it was not so much as attempted to be proved that they had the least knowledge of the publication. CHAP. LXX. 1688.

THESE arguments were convincing in themselves, and were heard with a favourable disposition by the audience. Even some of the judges, though their seats were held during pleasure, declared themselves in favour of the prisoners. The jury, however, from what cause is unknown, took several hours to deliberate, and kept, during so long a time, the people in the most anxious expectation. But when the wished-for verdict, *not guilty*, was at last pronounced, the intelligence was echoed through the hall, 17th June and acquittal of the bishops.

CHAP. LXX. 1688.

hall, was conveyed to the crowds without, was carried into the city, and was propagated with infinite joy throughout the kingdom.

Ever since Monmouth's rebellion, the king had, every summer, encamped his army on Hounslow-heath, that he might both improve their discipline, and by so unusual a spectacle overawe the mutinous people. A popish chapel was openly erected in the midst of the camp, and great pains were taken, though in vain, to bring over the soldiers to that communion. The few converts, whom the priests had made, were treated with such contempt and ignominy, as deterred every one from following the example. Even the Irish officers, whom the king introduced into the army, served rather, from the aversion borne them, to weaken his interest among them. It happened, that the very day on which the trial of the bishops was finished, James had reviewed the troops, and had retired into the tent of lord Feversham, the general; when he was surprised to hear a great uproar in the camp, attended with the most extravagant symptoms of tumultuary joy. He suddenly inquired the cause, and was told by Feversham, "It was nothing but the rejoicing of "the soldiers for the acquittal of the bishops." "Do you call that nothing?" replied he; "but so "much the worse for them."

The king was still determined to rush forward in the same course, in which he was already, by his precipitate career, so fatally advanced. Though he knew that every order of men, except a handful of catholics, were enraged at his past measures, and still more terrified with the future prospect; though he saw that the same discontents had reached the army, his sole resource during the general disaffection; yet he was incapable of changing his measures, or even of remitting his violence in the prosecution of them. He even struck out two of the judges, Powel

Powel and Holloway, who had appeared to favour the bishops: He issued orders to prosecute all those clergymen who had not read his declaration; that is, the whole church of England, two hundred excepted: He sent a mandate to the new fellows, whom he had obtruded on Magdalen college, to elect for president in the room of Parker, lately deceased, one Gifford, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and titular bishop of Madura: And he is even said to have nominated the same person to the see of Oxford. So great an infatuation is perhaps an object of compassion rather than of anger: And is really surprising in a man who, in other respects, was not wholly deficient in sense and accomplishments. CHAP. LXX. 1688.

A FEW days before the acquittal of the bishops, an event happened, which, in the king's sentiments, much overbalanced all the mortifications received on that occasion. The queen was delivered of a son, who was baptised by the name of James. This blessing was impatiently longed for, not only by the king and queen, but by all the zealous catholics both abroad and at home. They saw, that the king was passed middle age; and that on his death the succession must devolve to the prince and princess of Orange, two zealous protestants, who would soon replace every thing on ancient foundations. Vows, therefore, were offered at every shrine for a male successor: Pilgrimages were undertaken, particularly one to Loretto, by the dutchess of Modena; and success was chiefly attributed to that pious journey. But in proportion as this event was agreeable to the catholics, it increased the disgust of the protestants, by depriving them of that pleasing, though somewhat distant prospect, in which at present they flattered themselves. Calumny even went so far as to ascribe to the king the design of imposing on the world a suppositious child, who might be educated in his principles, and after his death

10th June. Birth of the prince of Wales.

CHAP. LXX. 1688.

support the catholic religion in his dominions. The nation almost universally believed him capable, from bigotry, of committing any crime; as they had seen, that, from like motives, he was guilty of every imprudence: And the affections of nature, they thought, would be easily sacrificed to the superior motive of propagating a catholic and orthodox faith. The present occasion was not the first, when that calumny had been invented. In the year 1682, the queen, then dutchess of York, had been pregnant; and rumours were spread that an imposture would at that time be obtruded upon the nation: But, happily, the infant proved a female, and thereby spared the party all the trouble of supporting their improbable fiction.[o]

[o] This story is taken notice of in a weekly paper, the observator, published at that very time, 23d of August 1682. Party zeal is capable of swallowing the most incredible story; but it is surely singular, that the same calumny, when once baffled, should yet be renewed with such success.

CHAP. LXXI.

Conduct of the prince of Orange—He forms a league against France—refuses to concur with the king—resolves to oppose the king—Is applied to by the English—Coalition of parties—Prince's preparations—Offers of France to the king—rejected—Supposed league with France—General discontents—the king retracts his measures—Prince's declaration—The prince lands in England—General commotion—Desertion of the army—and of prince George—and of the princess Anne—King's consternation—and flight—General confusion—King seized at Feversham—Second escape—King's character—Convention summoned—Settlement of Scotland—English convention meets—Views of the parties—Free conference between the houses—Commor prevail—Settlement of the crown—Manners a sciences.

WHILE every motive, civil and religiou concurred to alienate from the king ever, rank and denomination of men, it might be expected that his throne would, without delay, fall to pieces by its own weight: But such is the influence of established government; so averse are men from beginning hazardous enterprises; that, had not an attack been made from abroad, affairs might long have remained in their present delicate situation, and James might at last have prevailed in his rash and ill-concerted projects.

CHAP. LXXI.

1688. Conduct of the prince of Orange.

THE prince of Orange, ever since his marriage with the lady Mary, had maintained a very prudent conduct; agreeably to that sound understanding with which he was so eminently endowed. He made it a maxim to concern himself little in English affairs, and never by any measure to disgust any of the factions, or give umbrage to the prince who filled the throne. His natural inclination, as well as his interest, led him to employ himself with assiduous industry in the transactions on the continent, and to oppose the grandeur of the French monarch, against whom he had long, both from personal and political considerations, conceived a violent animosity. By this conduct, he gratified the prejudices of the whole English nation: But as he crossed the inclinations of Charles, who sought peace by compliance with France, he had much declined in the favour and affections of that monarch.

JAMES on his accession found it so much his interest to live on good terms with the heir apparent, that he showed the prince some demonstrations of friendship; and the prince, on his part, was not wanting in every instance of duty and regard towards the king. On Monmouth's invasion, he immediately dispatched over six regiments of British troops, which were in the Dutch service; and he offered to take the command of the king's forces against the rebels. How little soever he might approve of James's administration, he always kept a total silence on the subject, and gave no countenance to those discontents which were propagated with such industry throughout the nation.

IT was from the application of James himself, that the prince first openly took any part in English affairs. Notwithstanding the lofty ideas which the king had entertained of his prerogative, he found that the edicts emitted from it still wanted much of the authority of laws, and that the continuance

of

of them might in the issue become dangerous, both to himself and to the catholics, whom he desired to favour. An act of parliament alone could insure the indulgence or toleration which he had laboured to establish; and he hoped that, if the prince would declare in favour of that scheme, the members, who had hitherto resisted all his own applications, would at last be prevailed with to adopt it. The consent, therefore, of the prince to the repeal of the penal statutes and of the test was strongly solicited by the king; and in order to engage him to agree to that measure, hopes were given,[p] that England would second him in all those enterprises which his active and extensive genius had with such success planned on the continent. He was at this time the centre of all the negociations of Christendom. 1688.

He forms a league against France.

THE emperor and the king of Spain, as the prince well knew, were enraged by the repeated injuries which they had suffered from the ambition of Lewis, and still more by the frequent insults which his pride had made them undergo. He was apprised of the influence of these monarchs over the catholic princes of the empire: He had himself acquired great authority with the protestants: And he formed a project of uniting Europe in one general league against the encroachments of France, which seemed so nearly to threaten the independence of all its neighbours.

No characters are more incompatible than those of a conqueror and a persecutor; and Lewis soon found, that besides his weakening France by the banishment of so many useful subjects, the refugees had inflamed all the protestant nations against him, and had raised him enemies who, in defence of their religion as well as liberty, were obstinately resolved to oppose his progress. The city of Amsterdam

[p] Burnet, vol. i. p. 711. D'Avaux, 15th of April 1688.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

sterdam and other towns in Holland, which had before fallen into a dependence on France, being terrified with the accounts which they every moment received of the furious persecutions against the Hugonots, had now dropped all domestic faction, and had entered into an entire confidence with the prince of Orange.[q] The protestant princes of the empire formed a separate league at Magdeburg for the defence of their religion. The English were anew enraged at the blind bigotry of their sovereign, and were disposed to embrace the most desperate resolutions against him. From a view of the state of Europe during this period, it appears, that Lewis, besides sullying an illustrious reign, had wantonly by this persecution raised invincible barriers to his arms, which otherwise it had been difficult, if not impossible to resist.

THE prince of Orange knew how to avail himself of all these advantages. By his intrigues and influence there was formed at Augsburg a league, in which the whole empire united for its defence against the French monarch. Spain and Holland became parties in the alliance. The accession of Savoy was afterwards obtained. Sweden and Denmark seemed to favour the same cause. But though these numerous states composed the greater part of Europe, the league was still deemed imperfect and unequal to its end, so long as England maintained that neutrality, in which she had hitherto persevered.

JAMES, though more prone to bigotry, was more sensible to his own and to national honour than his brother; and had he not been restrained by the former motive, he would have maintained with more spirit the interests and independence of his kingdoms. When a prospect, therefore, appeared of

[q] D'Avaux, 24th of July 1681; 20th of June, 15th of October, 11th of November, 1688; vol. iv. p. 30.

of effecting his religious schemes by opposing the progress of France, he was not averse to that measure; and he gave his son-in-law room to hope, that, by concurring with his views in England, he might prevail with him to second those projects which the prince was so ambitious of promoting. 1688.

Refuses to concur with the king.

A MORE tempting offer could not be made to a person of his enterprising character: But the objections to that measure, upon deliberation, appeared to him insurmountable. The king, he observed, had incurred the hatred of his own subjects: Great apprehensions were entertained of his designs: The only resource which the nation saw, was in the future succession of the prince and princess: Should *he* concur in those dreaded measures, he would draw on himself all the odium under which the king laboured: The nation might even refuse to bear the expence of alliances, which would in that case become so suspicious: And he might himself incur the danger of losing a succession which was awaiting him, and which the egregious indiscretion of the king seemed even to give him hopes of reaping, before it should devolve to him by the course of nature. The prince, therefore, would go no farther than to promise his consent to the repeal of the penal statutes, by which the non-conformists as well as catholics were exposed to punishment: The test he deemed a security absolutely necessary for the established religion.

THE king did not remain satisfied with a single trial. There was one Stuart, a Scotch lawyer, who had been banished for pretended treasonable practices; but who had afterwards obtained a pardon, and had been recalled. By the king's directions, Stuart wrote several letters to pensionary Fagel, with whom he had contracted an acquaintance in Holland; and besides urging all the motives for an unlimited toleration, he desired that his reasons should,

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

should, in the king's name, be communicated to the prince and princess of Orange. Fagel during a long time made no reply; but finding that his silence was construed into an assent, he at last expressed his own sentiments and those of their Highnesses. He said, that it was their fixed opinion, that no man, merely because he differed from the established faith, should ever, while he remained a peaceable subject, be exposed to any punishment or even vexation. That the prince and princess gave heartily their consent for repealing legally all the penal statutes, as well those which had been enacted against the catholics as against the protestant nonconformists; and would concur with the king in any measure for that purpose. That the test was not to be considered as a penalty inflicted on the professors of any religion, but as a security provided for the established worship. That it was no punishment on men to be excluded from public offices, and to live peaceably on their own revenues or industry. That even in the united provinces, which were so often cited as models of toleration, though all sects were admitted, yet civil offices were enjoyed by the professors of the established religion alone. That military commands, indeed, were sometimes bestowed on catholics; but as they were conferred with great precaution, and still lay under the control of the magistrate, they could give no just reason for umbrage. And that their Highnesses, however desirous of gratifying the king, and of endeavouring, by every means, to render his reign peaceable and happy, could not agree to any measure which would expose their religion to such imminent danger.

WHEN this letter was published, as it soon was, it inspired great courage into the protestants of all denominations, and served to keep them united in their opposition to the encroachments of the catholics.

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On the other hand, the king, who was not content with a simple toleration for his own religion, but was resolved that it should enjoy great credit, if not an absolute superiority, was extremely disgusted, and took every occasion to express his displeasure, as well against the prince of Orange as the United Provinces. He gave the Algerine pirates, who preyed on the Dutch, a reception in his harbours, and liberty to dispose of their prizes. He revived some complaints of the East India company with regard to the affair of Bantam.[r] He required the six British regiments in the Dutch service to be sent over. He began to put his navy in a formidable condition. And from all his movements, the Hollanders entertained apprehensions, that he sought only an occasion and pretence for making war upon them. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE prince in his turn resolved to push affairs with more vigour, and to preserve all the English protestants in his interests, as well as maintain them firm in their present union against the catholics. He knew that men of education in England were, many of them, retained in their religion more by honour than by principle;[s] and that, though every one was ashamed to be the first proselyte, yet if the example were once set by some eminent persons, interest would every day make considerable conversions to a communion which was so zealously encouraged by the sovereign. Dykvelt therefore was sent over as envoy to England; and the prince gave him instructions, besides publicly remonstrating on the conduct of affairs both at home and abroad, to apply in his name, after a proper manner, to every sect and denomination. To the church party, he sent assurances of favour and regard, and protested, that his education in Holland had nowise prejudiced Resolves to oppose the king.

[r] D'Avaux, 21st of January 1687. [s] Burnet.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

prejudiced him against episcopal government. The non-conformists were exhorted not to be deceived by the fallacious caresses of a popish court, but to wait patiently till, in the fulness of time, laws, enacted by the protestants, should give them that toleration which, with so much reason, they had long demanded. Dykvelt executed his commission with such dexterity, that all orders of men cast their eyes towards Holland, and expected thence a deliverance from those dangers with which their religion and liberty were so nearly threatened.

Is applied to by the English.

MANY of the most considerable persons, both in church and state, made secret applications to Dykvelt, and through him to the prince of Orange. Admiral Herbert too, though a man of great expence, and seemingly of little religion, had thrown up his employments, and had retired to the Hague, where he assured the prince of the disaffection of the seamen, by whom that admiral was extremely beloved. Admiral Russel, cousin-german to the unfortunate lord of that name, passed frequently between England and Holland, and kept the communication open with all the great men of the protestant party. Henry Sidney, brother to Algernon, and uncle to the earl of Sunderland, came over under pretence of drinking the waters at Spa, and conveyed still stronger assurances of an universal combination against the measures of the king. Lord Dumblaine, son of the earl of Danby, being master of a frigate, made several voyages to Holland, and carried from many of the nobility tenders of duty, and even considerable sums of money,[t] to the prince of Orange.

THERE remained, however, some reasons, which retained all parties in awe, and kept them from breaking out into immediate hostility. The prince, on

[t] D'Avaux, 14th and 24th of September, 8th and 15th of October, 1688.

on the one hand, was afraid of hazarding, by violent measures, an inheritance which the laws ensured to the princess; and the English protestants, on the other, from the prospect of her succession, still entertained hopes of obtaining at last a peaceable and a safe redress of all their grievances. But when a son was born to the king, both the prince and the English nation were reduced to despair, and saw no resource but in a confederacy for their mutual interests. And thus the event, which James had so long made the object of his most ardent prayers, and from which he expected the firm establishment of his throne, proved the immediate cause of his ruin and downfal. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

ZUYLESTEIN, who had been sent over to congratulate the king on the birth of his son, brought back to the prince invitations from most of the great men in England, to assist them, by his arms, in the recovery of their laws and liberties. The bishop of London, the earls of Danby, Nottingham, Devonshire, Dorset, the duke of Norfolk, the lords Lovelace, Delamare, Paulet, Eland, Mr. Hambden, Powle, Lester, besides many eminent citizens of London; all these persons, though of opposite parties, concurred in their applications to the prince. The whigs, suitably to their ancient principles of liberty, which had led them to attempt the exclusion bill, easily agreed to oppose a king whose conduct had justified whatever his worst enemies had prognosticated concerning his succession. The tories and the church party, finding their past services forgotten, their rights invaded, their religion threatened, agreed to drop for the present all over-strained doctrines of submission, and attend to the great and powerful dictates of nature. The non-conformists, dreading the caresses of known and inveterate enemies, deemed the offers of toleration more secure from a prince, educated in those principles, and accustomed to that practice. And thus all faction Coalition of parties.

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CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

was for a time laid asleep in England; and rival parties, forgetting their animosity, had secretly concurred in a design of resisting their unhappy and misguided sovereign. The earl of Shrewsbury, who had acquired great popularity by deserting, at this time, the catholic religion, in which he had been educated, left his regiment, mortgaged his estate for forty thousand pounds, and made a tender of his sword and purse to the prince of Orange. Lord Wharton, notwithstanding his age and infirmities, had taken a journey for the same purpose. Lord Mordaunt was at the Hague, and pushed on the enterprise with that ardent and courageous spirit, for which he was so eminent. Even Sunderland, the king's favourite minister, is believed to have entered into correspondence with the prince; and at the expence of his own honour and his master's interests, to have secretly favoured a cause, which, he foresaw, was likely soon to predominate.[u]

THE prince was easily engaged to yield to the applications of the English, and to embrace the defence of a nation, which, during its present fears and distresses, regarded him as its sole protector. The great object of his ambition was to be placed at the head of a confederate army, and by his valour to avenge the injuries, which he himself, his country, and his allies, had sustained from the haughty Lewis. But while England remained under the present government, he despaired of ever forming a league which would be able, with any probability of success, to make opposition against that powerful monarch. The ties of affinity could not be supposed to have great influence over a person of the prince's rank and temper; much more as he knew, that they were at first unwillingly contracted by the king, and had never since been cultivated by any essential favours

[u] D'Avaux was always of that opinion. See his negotiations 6th and 20th of May, 18th, 27th of September, 22d of November, 1688. On the whole that opinion is the most probable.

favours or good offices. Or should any reproach remain upon him for violating the duties of private life; the glory of delivering oppressed nations would, he hoped, be able, in the eyes of reasonable men, to make ample compensation. He could not well expect, on the commencement of his enterprise, that it would lead him to mount the throne of England: But he undoubtedly foresaw, that its success would establish his authority in that kingdom. And so egregious was James's temerity, that there was no advantage, so great or obvious, which that prince's indiscretion might not afford his enemies. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE prince of Orange, throughout his whole life, was peculiarly happy in the situations in which he was placed. He saved his own country from ruin, he restored the liberties of these kingdoms, he supported the general independency of Europe. And thus, though his virtue, it is confessed, be not the purest which we meet with in history, it will be difficult to find any person, whose actions and conduct have contributed more eminently to the general interests of society and of mankind.

Prince's preparations.

THE time, when the prince entered on his enterprise, was well chosen; as the people were then in the highest ferment, on account of the insult which the imprisonment and trial of the bishops had put upon the church, and indeed upon all the protestants of the nation. His method of conducting his preparations was no less wise and politic. Under other pretences he had beforehand made considerable augmentations to the Dutch navy; and the ships were at that time lying in harbour. Some additional troops were also levied; and sums of money, raised for other purposes, were diverted by the prince to the use of this expedition. The States had given him their entire confidence; and partly from terror of the power of France, partly from disgust at some restraints laid on their commerce in that kingdom, were sensible how necessary success

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CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

in this enterprise was become to their domestic happiness and security. Many of the neighbouring princes regarded him as their guardian and protector, and were guided by him in all their counsels. He held conferences with Castanaga, governor of the Spanish Netherlands, with the electors of Brandenburgh and Saxony, with the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and with the whole house of Lunenbourg. It was agreed, that these princes should replace the troops employed against England, and should protect the United Provinces during the absence of the prince of Orange. Their forces were already on their march for that purpose: A considerable encampment of the Dutch army was formed at Nimeguen: Every place was in movement; and though the roots of this conspiracy reached from one end of Europe to the other, so secret were the prince's counsels, and so fortunate was the situation of affairs, that he could still cover his preparations under other pretences; and little suspicion was entertained of his real intentions.

THE king of France, menaced by the league of Augsbourg, had resolved to strike the first blow against the allies; and having sought a quarrel with the emperor and the elector palatine, he had invaded Germany with a great army, and had laid siege to Philipsbourg. The elector of Cologne, who was also bishop of Liege and Munster, and whose territories almost entirely surrounded the United Provinces, had died about this time; and the candidates for that rich succession were prince Clement of Bavaria, supported by the house of Austria, and the cardinal of Furstemberg, a prelate dependent on France. The pope, who favoured the allies, was able to throw the balance between the parties, and prince Clement was chosen; a circumstance which contributed extremely to the security of the States. But as the cardinal kept possession of many of the fortresses, and had applied to France

France for succour, the neighbouring territories were full of troops; and by this means the preparations of the Dutch and their allies seemed intended merely for their own defence against the different enterprises of Lewis. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

ALL the artifices, however, of the prince could not entirely conceal his real intentions from the sagacity of the French court. D'Avaux, Lewis's envoy at the Hague, had been able, by a comparison of circumstances, to trace the purposes of the preparations in Holland; and he instantly informed his master of the discovery. Lewis conveyed the intelligence to James; and accompanied the information with an important offer. He was willing to join a squadron of French ships to the English fleet; and to send over any number of troops, which James should judge requisite for his security. When this proposal was rejected, he again offered to raise the siege of Philipsbourg, to march his army into the Netherlands, and by the terror of his arms to detain the Dutch forces in their own country. This proposal met with no better reception. Offers of France to the king, rejected

JAMES was not, as yet, entirely convinced, that his son-in-law intended an invasion upon England. Fully persuaded, himself, of the sacredness of his own authority, he fancied that a like belief had made deep impression on his subjects; and notwithstanding the strong symptoms of discontent which broke out every where, such an universal combination in rebellion appeared to him nowise credible. His army, in which he trusted, and which he had considerably augmented, would easily be able, he thought, to repel foreign force, and to suppress any sedition among the populace. A small number of French troops, joined to these, might tend only to breed discontent; and afford them a pretence for mutinying against foreigners, so much feared and hated by the nation. A great body of auxiliaries might indeed secure him both against an invasion from

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

from Holland, and against the rebellion of his own subjects; but would be able afterwards to reduce him to dependence, and render his authority entirely precarious. Even the French invasion of the Low Countries might be attended with dangerous consequences; and would suffice, in these jealous times, to revive the old suspicion of a combination against Holland, and against the protestant religion; a suspicion, which had already produced such discontents in England. These were the views suggested by Sunderland; and it must be confessed, that the reasons on which they were founded, were sufficiently plausible; as indeed the situation, to which the king had reduced himself, was, to the last degree, delicate and perplexing.

STILL Lewis was unwilling to abandon a friend and ally, whose interests he regarded as closely connected with his own. By the suggestions of Skelton the king's minister at Paris, orders were sent to D'Avaux to remonstrate with the States, in Lewis's name, against those preparations which they were making to invade England. The strict amity, said the French minister, which subsists between the two monarchs, will make Lewis regard every attempt against his ally as an act of hostility against himself. This remonstrance had a bad effect, and put the States in a flame. What is this alliance, they asked, between France and England, which has been so carefully concealed from us? Is it of the same nature with the former; meant for our destruction, and for the extirpation of the protestant religion? If so, it is high time for us to provide for our own defence, and to anticipate those projects which are forming against us.

EVEN James was displeased with this officious step taken by Lewis for his service. He was not reduced, he said, to the condition of the cardinal of Furstemberg, and obliged to seek the protection of France. He recalled Skelton, and threw him into the

the Tower for his rash conduct. He solemnly disavowed D'Avaux's memorial; and protested, that no alliance subsisted between him and Lewis, but what was public and known to all the world. The States, however, still affected to appear incredulous on that head;[x] and the English, prepossessed against their sovereign, firmly believed that he had concerted a project with Lewis for their entire subjection. Portsmouth, it was said, was to be put into the hands of that ambitious monarch: England was to be filled with French and Irish troops: And every man, who refused to embrace the Romish superstition, was by these bigoted princes devoted to certain destruction. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THESE suggestions were every where spread abroad, and tended to augment the discontents, of which both the fleet and army, as well as the people, betrayed every day the most evident symptoms. The fleet had begun to mutiny; because Stricland, the admiral, a Roman catholic, introduced the mass aboard his ship, and dismissed the protestant chaplain. It was with some difficulty the seamen could be appeased; and they still persisted in declaring, that they would not fight against the Dutch, whom they called friends and brethren, but would willingly give battle to the French, whom they regarded as national enemies. The king had intended to augment his army with Irish recruits, and he resolved to try the experiment on the regiment of the duke of Berwick, his natural son: But Beaumont, the lieutenant-colonel, refused to admit them; and to this opposition five captains steadily adhered. They were all cashiered; and had not the discontents

[x] That there really was no new alliance formed betwixt France and England appears both from Sunderland's apology, and from D'Avaux's negotiations, lately published: See vol. iv. p. 18. Eng. translations, 27th of September 1687, 16th of March, 6th May, 10th of August, 2d, 23d, and 24th of September, 5th and 7th of October, 11th of November, 1688.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

tents of the army on this occasion become very apparent, it was resolved to have punished those officers for mutiny.

THE king made a trial of the dispositions of his army, in a manner still more undisguised. Finding opposition from all the civil and ecclesiastical orders of the kingdom, he resolved to appeal to the military, who, if unanimous, were able alone to serve all his purposes, and to enforce universal obedience. His intention was to engage all the regiments, one after another, to give their consent to the repeal of the test and penal statutes; and accordingly, the major of Litchfield's drew out the battalion before the king, and told them, that they were required either to enter into his majesty's views in these particulars, or to lay down their arms. James was surprised to find that, two captains and a few popish soldiers excepted, the whole battalion immediately embraced the latter part of the alternative. For some time he remained speechless; but having recovered from his astonishment, he commanded them to take up their arms; adding with a sullen, discontented air, "That for the future, he would not do them "the honour to apply for their approbation."

WHILE the king was dismayed with these symptoms of general disaffection, he received a letter from the marquis of Albeville, his minister at the Hague, which informed him with certainty, that he was soon to look for a powerful invasion from Holland, and that pensionary Fagel had at length acknowledged that the scope of all the Dutch naval preparations was to transport forces into England. Though James could reasonably expect no other intelligence, he was astonished at the news: He grew pale, and the letter dropped from his hand: His eyes were now opened, and he found himself on the brink of a frightful precipice, which his delusions had hitherto concealed from him. His ministers and counsellors, equally astonished, saw no resource

resource but in a sudden and precipitate retraction of all those fatal measures by which he had created to himself so many enemies, foreign and domestic. He paid court to the Dutch, and offered to enter into any alliance with them for common security: He replaced in all the counties the deputy-lieutenants and justices, who had been deprived of their commissions for their adherence to the test and the penal laws: He restored the charters of London, and of all the corporations: He annulled the court of ecclesiastical commission: He took off the bishop of London's suspension: He reinstated the expelled president and fellows of Magdalen college: And he was even reduced to caress those bishops whom he had so lately persecuted and insulted. All these measures were regarded as symptoms of fear, not of repentance. The bishops, instead of promising succour, or suggesting comfort, recapitulated to him all the instances of his mal-administration, and advised him thenceforwards to follow more salutary counsel. And as intelligence arrived of a great disaster which had befallen the Dutch fleet, it is commonly believed, that the king recalled, for some time, the concessions which he had made to Magdalen college: A bad sign of his sincerity in his other concessions. Nay, so prevalent were his unfortunate prepossessions, that amidst all his present distresses, he could not forbear, at the baptism of the young prince, appointing the pope to be one of the god-fathers.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

The king retracts his measures.

THE report, that a suppositious child was to be imposed on the nation, had been widely spread, and greedily received, before the birth of the prince of Wales: But the king, who, without seeming to take notice of the matter, might easily have quashed that ridiculous rumour, had, from an ill-timed haughtiness, totally neglected it. He disdained, he said, to satisfy those who could deem him capable of so base and villainous an action. Finding that

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

the calumny gained ground, and had made deep impression on his subjects, he was now obliged to submit to the mortifying task of ascertaining the reality of the birth. Though no particular attention had been beforehand given to ensure proof, the evidence, both of the queen's pregnancy and delivery, was rendered indisputable; and so much the more, as no argument or proof of any importance, nothing but popular rumour and surmise, could be thrown into the opposite scale.

Prince's declaration.

MEANWHILE, the prince of Orange's declaration was dispersed over the kingdom, and met with universal approbation. All the grievances of the nation were there enumerated: The dispensing and suspending power; the court of ecclesiastical commission; the filling of all offices with catholics, and the raising of a Jesuit to be privy counsellor; the open encouragement given to popery, by building every where churches, colleges, and seminaries, for that sect; the displacing of judges, if they refused to give sentence according to orders received from court; the annulling of the charters of all the corporations, and the subjecting of elections to arbitrary will and pleasure; the treating of petitions, even the most modest, and from persons of the highest rank, as criminal and seditious; the committing of the whole authority of Ireland, civil and military, into the hands of papists; the assuming of an absolute power over the religion and laws of Scotland, and openly exacting in that kingdom an obedience without reserve; and the violent presumptions against the legitimacy of the prince of Wales. In order to redress all these grievances, the prince said that he intended to come over to England with an armed force, which might protect him from the king's evil counsellors: And that his sole aim was to have a legal and free parliament assembled, who might provide for the safety and liberty of the nation, as well as examine the proofs of the prince of Wales's

Wales's legitimacy. No one, he added, could entertain such hard thoughts of him as to imagine, that he had formed any other design than to procure the full and lasting settlement of religion, liberty, and property. The force which he meant to bring with him was totally disproportioned to any views of conquest; and it were absurd to suspect, that so many persons of high rank, both in church and state, would have given him so many solemn invitations for such a pernicious purpose. Though the English ministers, terrified with this enterprise, had pretended to redress some of the grievances complained of; there still remained the foundation of all grievances, that upon which they could in an instant be again erected, an arbitrary and despotic power in the crown. And for this usurpation there was no possible remedy, but by a full declaration of all the rights of the subject in a free parliament. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

So well concerted were the prince's measures, that, in three days, about four hundred transports were hired; the army quickly fell down the rivers and canals from Nimeguen; the artillery, arms, stores, and horses, were embarked; and the prince set sail from Helvoet-Sluice, with a fleet of near five hundred vessels, and an army of above fourteen thousand men. He first encountered a storm, which drove him back: But his loss being soon repaired, the fleet put to sea under the command of admiral Herbert, and made sail with a fair wind towards the west of England. The same wind detained the king's fleet in their station near Harwich, and enabled the Dutch to pass the streights of Dover without opposition. Both shores were covered with multitudes of people, who, besides admiring the grandeur of the spectacle, were held in anxious suspense by the prospect of an enterprise, the most important, which, during some ages, had been undertaken in Europe. The prince had a prosperous voyage, 21st of October.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

voyage, and landed his army safely in Torbay on the fifth of November, the anniversary of the gun-powder-treason.

The Dutch army marched first to Exeter; and the prince's declaration was there published. That whole county was so terrified with the executions which had ensued upon Monmouth's rebellion, that no one for several days joined the prince. The bishop of Exeter in a fright fled to London, and carried to court intelligence of the invasion. As a reward of his zeal, he received the archbishopric of York, which had long been kept vacant, with an intention, as was universally believed, of bestowing it on some catholic. The first person who joined the prince was major Burrington; and he was quickly followed by the gentry of the counties of Devon and Somerset. Sir Edward Seymour made proposals for an association, which every one signed. By degrees the earl of Abingdon, Mr. Russel, son of the earl of Bedford, Mr. Wharton, Godfrey, Howe, came to Exeter. All England was in commotion. Lord Delamere took arms in Cheshire, the earl of Danby seized York, the earl of Bath, governor of Plymouth, declared for the prince, the earl of Devonshire made a like declaration in Derby. The nobility and gentry of Nottinghamshire embraced the same cause; and every day there appeared some effect of that universal combination into which the nation had entered against the measures of the king. Even those who took not the field against him, were able to embarrass and confound his counsels. A petition for a free parliament was signed by twenty-four bishops and peers of the greatest distinction, and was presented to the king. No one thought of opposing or resisting the invader.

General commotion.

But the most dangerous symptom was the disaffection which from the general spirit of the nation, not from any particular reason, had crept into the army. The officers seemed all disposed to prefer

fer the interests of their country and of their religion to those principles of honour and fidelity, which are commonly esteemed the most sacred ties by men of that profession. Lord Colchester, son of the earl of Rivers, was the first officer that deserted to the prince; and he was attended by a few of his troops. Lord Lovelace made a like effort; but was intercepted by the militia under the duke of Beaufort, and taken prisoner: Lord Cornbury, son of the earl of Clarendon, was more successful. He attempted to carry over three regiments of cavalry; and he actually brought a considerable part of them to the prince's quarters. Several officers of distinction informed Feversham, the general, that they could not in conscience fight against the prince of Orange.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688. Desertion of the army.

Lord Churchill had been raised from the rank of a page, had been invested with a high command in the army, had been created a peer, and had owed his whole fortune to the king's favour: Yet even he could resolve, during the present extremity, to desert his unhappy master, who had ever reposed entire confidence in him. He carried with him the duke of Grafton, natural son of the late king, colonel Berkeley, and some troops of dragoons. This conduct was a signal sacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life; and required, ever after, the most upright, disinterested, and public-spirited behaviour, to render it justifiable.

The king had arrived at Salisbury, the headquarters of his army, when he received this fatal intelligence. That prince, though a severe enemy, had ever appeared a warm, steady, and sincere friend, and he was extremely shocked with this, as with many other instances of ingratitude, to which he was now exposed. There remained none in whom he could confide. As the whole army had discovered symptoms of discontent, he concluded it full of treachery; and being deserted by those whom he had most favoured and obliged, he no longer expected

CHAP. LXXI.

pected that others would hazard their lives in his service. During this distraction and perplexity, he embraced a sudden resolution of drawing off his army, and retiring towards London: A measure which could only serve to betray his fears, and provoke farther treachery.

1688. 25th of November.

BUT Churchill had prepared a still more mortal blow for his distressed benefactor. His lady and he had an entire ascendant over the family of prince George of Denmark; and the time now appeared seasonable for overwhelming the unhappy king, who was already staggering with the violent shocks which he had received. Andover was the first stage of James's retreat towards London; and there prince George, together with the young duke of Ormond,[a] sir George Huet, and some other persons of distinction, deserted him in the night-time, and retired to the prince's camp. No sooner had this news reached London, than the princess Anne, pretending fear of the king's displeasure, withdrew herself in company with the bishop of London and lady Churchill. She fled to Nottingham; where the earl of Dorset received her with great respect, and the gentry of the county quickly formed a troop for her protection.

and of prince George,

and of the princess Anne.

THE late king, in order to gratify the nation, had entrusted the education of his nieces entirely to protestants; and as these princesses were deemed the chief resource of the established religion after their father's defection, great care had been taken to instil into them, from their earliest infancy, the strongest prejudices against popery. During the violence too of such popular currents as now prevailed in England, all private considerations are commonly lost in the general passion; and the more principle any person possesses, the more apt is he, on

[a] His grandfather the first duke of Ormond, had died this year, on the 21st of July.

on such occasions, to neglect and abandon his domestic duties. Though these causes may account for the behaviour of the princess, they had nowise prepared the king to expect so astonishing an event. He burst into tears, when the first intelligence of it was conveyed to him. Undoubtedly he foresaw in this incident the total expiration of his royal authority: But the nearer and more intimate concern of a parent laid hold of his heart; when he found himself abandoned in his uttermost distress by a child, and a virtuous child, whom he had ever regarded with the most tender affection. "God help "me," cried he, in the extremity of his agony, "my own children have forsaken me!" It is indeed singular, that a prince whose chief blame consisted in imprudences, and misguided principles, should be exposed, from religious antipathy, to such treatment as even Nero, Domitian, or the most enormous tyrants that have disgraced the records of history, never met with from their friends and family.

CHAP. LXXI. 1668. King's consternation.

So violent were the prejudices which at this time prevailed, that this unhappy father, who had been deserted by his favourite child, was believed, upon her disappearing, to have put her to death: And it was fortunate, that the truth was timely discovered; otherwise the populace, even the king's guards themselves, might have been engaged, in revenge, to commence a massacre of the priests and catholics.

THE king's fortune now exposed him to the contempt of his enemies; and his behaviour was not such as could gain him the esteem of his friends and adherents. Unable to resist the torrent, he preserved not presence of mind in yielding to it; but seemed in this emergence as much depressed with adversity, as he had before been vainly elated by prosperity. He called a council of the peers and prelates who were in London; and followed their

CHAP. LXXI. 1688. their advice in issuing writs for a new parliament, and in sending Halifax, Nottingham, and Godolphin, as commissioners to treat with the prince of Orange. But these were the last acts of royal authority which he exerted. He even hearkened to imprudent counsel, by which he was prompted to desert the throne, and to gratify his enemies beyond what their fondest hopes could have promised them.

THE queen observing the fury of the people, and knowing how much she was the object of general hatred, was struck with the deepest terror, and began to apprehend a parliamentary impeachment, from which, she was told, the queens of England were not exempted. The popish courtiers, and above all, the priests, were aware, that they should be the first sacrifice, and that their perpetual banishment was the smallest penalty which they must expect from national resentment. They were, therefore, desirous of carrying the king along with them; whose presence, they knew, would still be some resource and protection to them in foreign countries, and whose restoration, if it ever happened, would again reinstate them in power and authority. The general defection of the protestants made the king regard the catholics as his only subjects, on whose counsel he could rely; and the fatal catastrophe of his father afforded them a plausible reason for making him apprehend a like fate. The great difference of circumstances was not during men's present distractions, sufficiently weighed. Even after the people were inflamed by a long civil war, the execution of Charles I. could not be deemed a national deed: It was perpetrated by a fanatical army, pushed on by a daring and enthusiastical leader; and the whole kingdom had ever entertained, and did still entertain, a violent abhorrence against that enormity. The situation of public affairs, therefore, no more resembled what it was forty years before,

fore, than the prince of Orange, either in birth, character, fortune, or connexions, could be supposed a parallel to Cromwel. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE emissaries of France, and among the rest, Barillon, the French ambassador, were busy about the king; and they had entertained a very false notion, which they instilled into him, that nothing would more certainly retard the public settlement, and beget universal confusion, than his deserting the kingdom. The prince of Orange had with good reason embraced a contrary opinion; and he deemed it extremely difficult to find expedients for securing the nation, so long as the king kept possession of the crown. Actuated, therefore, by this public motive, and no less, we may well presume, by private ambition, he was determined to use every expedient which might intimidate the king, and make him quit that throne which he himself was alone enabled to fill. He declined a personal conference with James's commissioners, and sent the earls of Clarendon and Oxford to treat with them: The terms which he proposed, implied almost a present participation of the sovereignty: And he stopped not a moment the march of his army towards London.

THE news which the king received from all quarters, served to continue the panic into which he was fallen, and which his enemies expected to improve to their advantage. Colonel Copel, deputy governor of Hull, made himself master of that important fortress; and threw into prison Lord Langdale, the governor, a catholic; together with lord Montgomery, a nobleman of the same religion. The town of Newcastle received Lord Lumley, and declared for the prince of Orange and a free parliament. The duke of Norfolk, lord lieutenant of the county of that name, engaged it in the same measure. The prince's declaration was read at Oxford

CHAP. LXXI. 1688. ford by the duke of Ormond, and was received with great applause by that loyal university, who also made an offer of their plate to the prince. Every day, some person of quality or distinction, and among the rest the duke of Somerset, went over to the enemy. A violent declaration was dispersed in the prince's name, but without his participation; in which every one was commanded to seize and punish all papists, who, contrary to law, pretended either to carry arms, or exercise any act of authority. It may not be unworthy of notice, that a merry ballad, called Lillibullero, being at this time published in derision of the papists and the Irish, it was greedily received by the people, and was sung by all ranks of men, even by the king's army, who were strongly seized with the national spirit. This ncident both discovered, and served to increase, the ineral discontent of the kingdom.

THE contagion of mutiny and disobedience had also reached Scotland, whence the regular forces, contrary to the advice of Balcarras, the treasurer, were withdrawn, in order to reinforce the English army. The marquis of Athole, together with viscount Tarbat, and others, finding the opportunity favourable, began to form intrigues against Perth, the chancellor; and the presbyterians and other malcontents flocked from all quarters of Edinburgh. The chancellor, apprehensive of the consequences, ou d it expedient to abscond; and the populace, as if that event were a signal for their insurrection, immediately rose in arms, and rifled the popish chapel in the king's palace. All the catholics, even all the zealous royalists, were obliged to conceal themselves; and the privy council, instead of their former submissive strains of address to the king, and violent edicts against their fellow subjects, now made applications to the prince of Orange, as the restorer of law and liberty.

THE

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE king every moment alarmed, more and more, by these proofs of a general disaffection, not daring to repose trust in any but those who were exposed to more danger than himself, agitated by disdain towards ingratitude, by indignation against disloyalty, impelled by his own fears and those of others, precipitately embraced the resolution of escaping into France; and he sent off beforehand the queen and the infant prince, under the conduct of count Lauzun, an old favourite of the French monarch. He himself disappeared in the night-time, attended only by sir Edward Hales; and made the best of his way to a ship which waited for him near the mouth of the river. As if this measure had not been the most grateful to his enemies of any that he could adopt, he had carefully concealed his intention from all the world; and nothing could equal the surprise which seized the city, the court, and the kingdom, upon the discovery of this strange event. Men beheld, all of a sudden, the reins of government thrown up by the hand which held them; and saw none, who had any right, or even pretension, to take possession of them.

and flight. 12th Dec.

THE more effectually to involve every thing in confusion, the king appointed not any one, who should, in his absence, exercise any part of the administration; he threw the great seal into the river; and he recalled all those writs which had been issued for the election of the new parliament. It is often supposed, that the sole motive which impelled him to this sudden desertion, was his reluctance to meet a free parliament, and his resolution not to submit to those terms which his subjects would deem requisite for the security of their liberties and their religion. But it must be considered, that his subjects had first deserted him, and entirely lost his confidence; that he might reasonably be supposed to entertain fears for his liberty, if not for his life; and

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

and that the conditions would not probably be moderate, which the nation, sensible of his inflexible temper, enraged with the violation of their laws and the danger of their religion, and foreseeing his resentment on account of their past resistance, would, in his present circumstances, exact from him.

By this temporary dissolution of government, the populace were masters; and there was no disorder, which during their present ferment, might not be dreaded from them. They rose in a tumult and destroyed all the mass-houses. They even attacked and rifled the houses of the Florentine envoy and Spanish ambassador, where many of the catholics had lodged their most valuable effects. Jefferies, the chancellor, who had disguised himself, in order to fly the kingdom, was discovered by them, and so abused, that he died a little after. Even the army, which should have suppressed those tumults, would, it was apprehended, serve rather to increase the general disorder. Feversham had no sooner heard of the king's flight, than he disbanded the troops in the neighbourhood, and without either disarming or paying them, let them loose to prey upon the country.

In this extremity, the bishops and peers who were in town, being the only remaining authority of the state, (for the privy council, composed of the king's creatures, was totally disregarded) thought proper to assemble, and to interpose for the preservation of the community. They chose the marquis of Halifax speaker: They gave directions to the mayor and aldermen for keeping the peace of the city: They issued orders, which were readily obeyed, to the fleet, the army, and all the garrisons: And they made applications to the prince of Orange, whose enterprise they highly applauded, and whose success they joyfully congratulated.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

THE prince, on his part, was not wanting to the tide of success which flowed in upon him, nor backward in assuming that authority which the present exigency had put into his hands. Besides the general popularity attending his cause, a new incident made his approach to London still more grateful. In the present trepidation of the people, a rumour arose, either from chance or design, that the disbanded Irish had taken arms, and had commenced an universal massacre of the protestants. This ridiculous belief was spread all over the kingdom in one day; and begat every where the deepest consternation. The alarm bells were rung; the beacons fired; men fancied that they saw at a distance the smoke of the burning cities, and heard the groans of those who were slaughtered in their neighbourhood. It is surprising, that the catholics did not all perish, in the rage which naturally succeeds to such popular panics.

WHILE every one, from principle, interest, or animosity, turned his back on the unhappy king, who had abandoned his own cause, the unwelcome news, arrived, that he had been seized by the populace at Feversham, as he was making his escape in disguise; that he had been much abused, till he was known; but that the gentry had then interposed and protected him, though they still refused to consent to his escape. This intelligence threw all parties into confusion. The prince sent Zuylestein with orders, that the king should approach no nearer than Rochester; but the message came too late. He was already arrived in London, where the populace, moved by compassion for his unhappy fate, and actuated by their own levity, had received him with shouts and acclamations.

King seized at Feversham.

DURING the king's abode at Whitehall, little attention was paid to him by the nobility or any persons of distinction. They had, all of them, been previously

CHAP. LXXI. 1688. previously disgusted on account of his blind partiality to the catholics; and they knew that they were now become criminal in his eyes, by their late public applications to the prince of Orange. He himself shewed not any symptom of spirit, nor discovered any intention of resuming the reins of government which he had once thrown aside. His authority was now plainly expired; and as he had exercised his power, while possessed of it, with very precipitate and haughty counsels, he relinquished it by a despair equally precipitate and pusillanimous.

NOTHING remained for the now ruling powers but to deliberate how they should dispose of his person. Besides that the prince may justly be supposed to have possessed more generosity than to think of offering violence to an unhappy monarch, so nearly related to him, he knew that nothing would so effectually promote his own views as the king's retiring into France, a country at all times obnoxious to the English. It was determined, therefore, to push him into that measure, which, of himself, he seemed sufficiently inclined to embrace. The king having sent lord Feversham on a civil message to the prince, desiring a conference for an accommodation in order to the public settlement, that nobleman was put in arrest, under pretence of his coming without a passport: The Dutch guards were ordered to take possession of Whitehall, where James then resided, and to displace the English: And Halifax, Shrewsbury, and Delamere, brought a message from the prince, which they delivered to the king in bed after midnight, ordering him to leave his palace next morning, and to depart for Ham, a seat of the duchess of Lauderdale's. He desired permission, which was easily granted, of retiring to Rochester, a town near the sea-coast. It was perceived, that the artifice had taken effect; and

and that the king, terrified with this harsh treatment, had renewed his former resolution of leaving the kingdom. CHAP. LXXI. 1688.

He lingered, however, some days at Rochester, under the protection of a Dutch guard, and seemed desirous of an invitation still to keep possession of the throne. He was undoubtedly sensible, that, as he had at first trusted too much to his people's loyalty, and, in confidence of their submission, had offered the greatest violence to their principles and prejudices; so had he, at last, on finding his disappointment, gone too far in the other extreme, and had hastily supposed them destitute of all sense of duty or allegiance. But observing that the church, the nobility, the city, the country, all concurred in neglecting him and leaving him to his own counsels, he submitted to his melancholy fate; and being urged by earnest letters from the queen, he privately embarked on board a frigate which waited for him; and he arrived safely at Ambleteuse in Picardy, whence he hastened to St. Germains. Lewis received him with the highest generosity, sympathy, and regard; a conduct which, more than his most signal victories, contributes to the honour of that great monarch. Second escape. 23d Dec.

Thus ended the reign of a prince, whom, if we consider his personal character rather than his public conduct, we may safely pronounce more unfortunate than criminal. He had many of those qualities which form a good citizen: Even some of those which, had they not been swallowed up in bigotry and arbitrary principles, serve to compose a good sovereign. In domestic life, his conduct was irreproachable, and is entitled to our approbation. Severe, but open in his enmities, steady in his counsels, diligent in his schemes, brave in his enterprises, faithful, sincere, and honourable in his dealings with all men: Such was the character with which the King's character.

CHAP. LXXI. 1688. duke of York mounted the throne of England. In that high station, his frugality of public money was remarkable, his industry exemplary, his application to naval affairs successful, his encouragement of trade judicious, his jealousy of national honour laudable: What then was wanting to make him an excellent sovereign? A due regard and affection to the religion and constitution of his country. Had he been possessed of this essential quality, even his middling talents, aided by so many virtues, would have rendered his reign honourable and happy. When it was wanting, every excellency which he possessed became dangerous and pernicious to his kingdoms.

THE sincerity of this prince (a virtue on which he highly valued himself) has been much questioned in those reiterated promises which he had made of preserving the liberties and religion of the nation. It must be confessed, that his reign was almost one continued invasion of both; yet it is known, that, to his last breath, he persisted in asserting, that he never meant to subvert the laws, or procure more than a toleration and an equality of privileges to his catholic subjects. This question can only affect the personal character of the king, not our judgment of his public conduct. Though by a stretch of candour we should admit of his sincerity in these professions, the people were equally justifiable in their resistance of him. So lofty was the idea which he had entertained of his *legal* authority, that it left his subjects little or no right to liberty, but what was dependent on his sovereign will and pleasure. And such was his zeal for proselytism, that whatever he might at first have intended, he plainly stopped not at toleration and equality: He confined all power, encouragement, and favour, to the catholics: Converts from interest would soon have multiplied upon him: If not the greater, at least the better part of the people, he would have flattered himself, was brought

brought over to his religion: And he would in a little time have thought it just, as well as pious, to bestow on them all the public establishments. Rigours and persecutions against heretics would speedily have followed; and thus liberty and the protestant religion would in the issue have been totally subverted; though we should not suppose that James, in the commencement of his reign, had formally fixed a plan for that purpose. And, on the whole, allowing this king to have possessed good qualities and good intentions, his conduct serves only, on that very account, as a stronger proof, how dangerous it is to allow any prince, infected with the catholic superstition, to wear the crown of these kingdoms. CHAP. LXXI. 1688

After this manner, the courage and abilities of the prince of Orange, seconded by surprising fortune, had effected the deliverance of this island; and with very little effusion of blood (for only one officer of the Dutch army and a few private soldiers fell in an accidental skirmish) had dethroned a great prince, supported by a formidable fleet and a numerous army. Still the more difficult task remained, and what perhaps the prince regarded as not the least important: The obtaining for himself that crown which had fallen from the head of his father-in-law. Some lawyers, entangled in the subtleties and forms of their profession, could think of no expedient, but that the prince should claim the crown by right of conquest; should immediately assume the title of sovereign; and should call a parliament, which, being thus legally summoned by a king in possession, could ratify whatever had been transacted before they assembled. But this measure, being destructive of the principles of liberty, the only principles on which his future throne could be established, was prudently rejected by the prince, who, finding himself possessed of the good-will of the nation, resolved to leave them entirely to

CHAP. LXXI.

their own guidance and direction. The peers and bishops, to the number of near ninety, made an address desiring him to summon a convention by circular letters; to assume, in the mean time, the management of public affairs; and to concert measures for the security of Ireland. At the same time, they refused reading a letter, which the king had left in order to apologize for his late desertion, by the violence which had been put upon him. This step was a sufficient indication of their intentions with regard to that unhappy monarch.

1688.

THE prince seemed still unwilling to act upon an authority which might be deemed so imperfect: He was desirous of obtaining a more express declaration of the public consent. A judicious expedient was fallen on for that purpose. All the members who had sitten in the house of commons during any parliament of Charles II. (the only parliaments whose election was regarded as free) were invited to meet; and to them were added the mayor, aldermen, and fifty of the common council. This was regarded as the most proper representative of the people that could be summoned during the present emergence. They unanimously voted the same address with the lords: And the prince, being thus supported by all the legal authority which could possibly be obtained in this critical juncture, wrote circular letters to the counties and corporations of England; and his orders were universally complied with. A profound tranquillity prevailed throughout the kingdom; and the prince's administration was submitted to, as if he had succeeded in the most regular manner to the vacant throne. The fleet received his orders: The army, without murmur or opposition, allowed him to new-model them: And the city supplied him with a loan of two hundred thousand pounds.

Convention summoned.

1689.

THE conduct of the prince with regard to Scotland, was founded on the same prudent and moderate

rate maxims. Finding that there were many Scotchmen of rank at that time in London, he summoned them together, laid before them his intentions, and asked their advice in the present emergency. This assembly, consisting of thirty noblemen and about fourscore gentlemen, chose duke Hamilton president; a man who, being of a temporising character, was determined to pay court to the present authority. His eldest son, the earl of Arran, professed an adherence to king James; a usual policy in Scotland, where the father and son, during civil commotions, were often observed to take opposite sides, in order to secure, in all events, the family from attainder. Arran proposed to invite back the king upon conditions; but as he was vehemently opposed in this motion by sir Patrick Hume, and seconded by nobody, the assembly made an offer to the prince of the present administration, which he willingly accepted. To anticipate a little in our narration; a convention, by circular letters from the prince, was summoned at Edinburgh on the twenty-second of March; where it was soon visible, that the interest of the malcontents would entirely prevail. The more zealous royalists, regarding this assembly as illegal, had forborne to appear at elections; and the other party were returned for most places. The revolution was not in Scotland, as in England, effected by a coalition of whig and tory: The former party alone had overpowered the government, and were too much enraged by the past injuries which they had suffered, to admit of any composition with their former masters. As soon as the purpose of the convention was discovered, the earl of Balcarras and viscount Dundee, leaders of the tories, withdrew from Edinburgh; and the convention having passed a bold and decisive vote, that king James, by his mal-administration and his abuse of power, had *forfeited* all title to the crown, they made

CHAP. LXXI.

1689. 7th Jan. Settlement of Scotland.

CHAP. LXXI.

made a tender of the royal dignity to the prince and princess of Orange.

1689. 22d Jan. English convention meets.

THE English convention was assembled; and it immediately appeared, that the house of commons, both from the prevailing humour of the people, and from the influence of present authority, were mostly chosen from among the whig party. After thanks were unanimously given by both houses to the prince of Orange, for the deliverance which he had brought them, a less decisive vote than that of the Scottish convention was in a few days passed by a great majority of the commons, and sent up to the peers for their concurrence. It was contained in these words: "That king James II. having endeavoured to sub- "vert the constitution of the kingdom, by breaking "the original contract between king and people; "and having, by the advice of Jesuits and other "wicked persons, violated the fundamental laws, "and withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, has "abdicated the government, and that the throne is "thereby vacant." This vote, when carried to the upper house, met with great opposition; of which it is here necessary for us to explain the causes.

THE tories and the high-church party, finding themselves at once menaced with a subversion of the laws and of their religion, had zealously promoted the national revolt, and had on this occasion departed from those principles of non-resistance, of which, while the king favoured them, they had formerly made such loud professions. Their present apprehensions had prevailed over their political tenets; and the unfortunate James, who had too much trusted to those general declarations, which never will be reduced to practice, found in the issue, that both parties were secretly united against him. But no sooner was the danger past, and the general fears somewhat allayed, than party prejudices resumed, in some degree, their former authority; and the

the tories were abashed at that victory, which their antagonists, during the late transactions, had obtained over them. They were inclined, therefore, to steer a middle course; and, though generally determined to oppose the king's return, they resolved not to consent to dethroning him, or altering the line of succession. A regent with kingly power was the expedient which they proposed; and a late instance in Portugal seemed to give some authority and precedent to that plan of government.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689. Views of the parties.

In favour of this scheme the tories urged, that, by the uniform tenour of the English laws, the title to the crown was ever regarded as sacred, and could, on no account, and by no mal-administration, be forfeited by the sovereign: That to dethrone a king and to elect his successor, was a practice quite unknown to the constitution, and had a tendency to render kingly power entirely dependent and precarious: That where the sovereign, from his tender years, from lunacy, or from other natural infirmity, was incapacitated to hold the reins of government, both the laws and former practice agreed in appointing a regent, who, during the interval, was invested with the whole power of the administration: That the inveterate and dangerous prejudices of king James had rendered him as unfit to sway the English sceptre, as if he had fallen into lunacy; and it was therefore natural for the people to have recourse to the same remedy: That the election of one king was a precedent for the election of another; and the government, by that means, would either degenerate into a republic, or, what was worse, into a turbulent and seditious monarchy: That the case was still more dangerous, if there remained a prince, who claimed the crown by right of succession, and disputed, on so plausible a ground, the title of the present sovereign: That though the doctrine of non-resistance might not, in every possible circumstance, be absolutely true, yet

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CHAP. LXX. 1689.

was the belief of it very expedient; and to establish a government which should have the contrary principle for its basis, was to lay a foundation for perpetual revolutions and convulsions: That the appointment of a regent was indeed exposed to many inconveniencies; but so long as the line of succession was preserved entire, there was still a prospect of putting an end, some time or other, to the public disorders: And that scarcely an instance occurred in history, especially in the English history, where a disputed title had not, in the issue, been attended with much greater ills, than all those which the people had sought to shun, by departing from the lineal successor.

THE leaders of the whig party, on the other hand, asserted, that if there were any ill in the precedent, that ill would result as much from establishing a regent, as from dethroning one king, and appointing his successor; nor would the one expedient, if wantonly and rashly embraced by the people, be less the source of public convulsions than the other: That if the laws gave no express permission to depose the sovereign, neither did they authorise resisting his authority, or separating the power from the title: That a regent was unknown, except where the king, by reason of his tender age or his infirmities, was incapable of a will; and in that case, his will was supposed to be involved in that of the regent: That it would be the height of absurdity to try a man for acting upon a commission, received from a prince, whom we ourselves acknowledge to be the lawful sovereign; and no jury would decide so contrary both to law and common sense, as to condemn such a pretended criminal: That even the prospect of being delivered from this monstrous inconvenience was, in the present situation of affairs, more distant than that of putting an end to a disputed succession: That allowing the young prince to be the legitimate

timate heir, he had been carried abroad; he would be educated in principles destructive of the constitution and established religion; and he would probably leave a son liable to the same insuperable objection: That if the whole line were cut off by law, the people would in time forget or neglect their claim; an advantage which could not be hoped for, while the administration was conducted in their name, and while they were still acknowledged to possess the legal title: And that a nation thus perpetually governed by regents or protectors, approached much nearer to a republic than one subject to monarchs, whose hereditary regular succession, as well as present authority, was fixed and appointed by the people. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THIS question was agitated with great zeal by the opposite parties in the house of peers. The chief speakers among the tories were, Clarendon, Rochester, and Nottingham; among the whigs, Halifax and Danby. The question was carried for a king by two voices only, fifty-one against forty-nine. All the prelates, except two, the bishops of London and Bristol, voted for a regent. The primate, a disinterested but pusillanimous man, kept at a distance both from the prince's court and from parliament.

The house of peers proceeded next to examine piecemeal the vote sent up to them by the commons. They debated, "Whether there were an "original contract between king and people?" and the affirmative was carried by fifty-three against forty-six; a proof that the tories were already losing ground. The next question was, "Whether king "James had broken that original contract?" and, after a slight opposition, the affirmative prevailed. The lords proceeded to take into consideration the word *abdicated;* and it was carried that *deserted* was more proper. The concluding question was, "Whether king James, having broken the origi-

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CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

nal contract and *deserted* the government, the "throne was thereby vacant?" This question was debated with more heat and contention than any of the former; and upon a division, the tories prevailed by eleven voices, and it was carried, to omit the last article with regard to the vacancy of the throne. The vote was sent back to the commons with these amendments.

THE earl of Danby had entertained the project of bestowing the crown solely upon the princess of Orange, and of admitting her as hereditary legal successor to king James; passing by the infant prince, as illegitimate or suppositious. His change of party in the last question gave the tories so considerably a majority in the number of voices.

Free conferences betwixt the houses.

THE commons still insisted on their own vote, and sent up reasons why the lords should depart from their amendments. The lords were not convinced; and it was necessary to have a free conference, in order to settle this controversy. Never surely was national debate more important, or managed by more able speakers; yet is one surprised to find the topics insisted on by both sides so frivolous; more resembling the verbal disputes of the schools, than the solid reasonings of statesmen and legislators. In public transactions of such consequence, the true motives which produce any measure are seldom avowed. The whigs, now the ruling party, having united with the tories, in order to bring about the revolution, had so much deference for their new allies, as not to insist that the crown should be declared *forfeited*, on account of the king's mal-administration: Such a declaration, they thought, would imply too express a censure of the old tory principles, and too open a preference of their own. They agreed, therefore, to confound together the king's abusing his power, and his withdrawing from the kingdom; and they called the whole

whole an *abdication;* as if he had given a virtual, though not a verbal, consent to dethroning himself. The tories took advantage of this obvious impropriety, which had been occasioned merely by the complaisance or prudence of the whigs; and they insisted upon the word *desertion* as more significant and intelligible. It was retorted on them, that however that expression might be justly applied to the king's withdrawing himself, it could not, with any propriety, be extended to his violation of the fundamental laws. And thus both parties, while they warped their principles from regard to their antagonists, and from prudential considerations, lost the praise of consistency and uniformity. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE managers for the lords next insisted, that even allowing the king's abuse of power to be equivalent to an abdication, or, in other words, to a civil death, it could operate no otherwise than his voluntary resignation, or his natural death, and could only make way for the next successor. It was a maxim of English law, *that the throne was never vacant;* but instantly, upon the demise of one king, was filled with his legal heir, who was entitled to all the authority of his predecessor. And however young or unfit for government the successor, however unfortunate in his situation, though he were even a captive in the hands of public enemies; yet no just reason, they thought, could be assigned why, without any default of his own, he should lose a crown, to which, by birth, he was fully entitled. The managers for the commons might have opposed this reasoning by many specious, and even solid arguments. They might have said, that, the great security for allegiance being merely opinion, any scheme of settlement should be adopted in which it was most probable the people would acquiesce and persevere: That though, upon the natural death of a king whose administration had been agreeable to the laws, many

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CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

and great inconveniencies would be endured, rather than exclude his lineal successor; yet the case was not the same when the people had been obliged, by their revolt, to dethrone a prince whose illegal measures had, in every circumstance, violated the constitution: That, in these extraordinary revolutions, the government reverted, in some degree, to its first principles, and the community acquired a right of providing for the public interest by expedients which, on other occasions, might be deemed violent and irregular: That the recent use of one extraordinary remedy reconciled the people to the practice of another, and more familiarised their minds to such licences, than if the government had run on in its usual tenor: And that king James, having carried abroad his son, as well as withdrawn himself, had given such just provocation to the kingdom, had voluntarily involved it in such difficulties, that the interests of his family were justly sacrificed to the public settlement and tranquillity. Though these topics seem reasonable, they were entirely forborne by the whig managers; both because they implied an acknowledgement of the infant prince's legitimacy, which it was agreed to keep in obscurity, and because they contained too express a condemnation of tory principles. They were content to maintain the vote of the commons by shifts and evasions; and both sides parted at last without coming to any agreement.

But it was impossible for the public to remain long in the present situation. The perseverance, therefore, of the lower house obliged the lords to comply; and, by the desertion of some peers to the whig party, the vote of the commons, without any alteration, passed by a majority of fifteen in the upper house, and received the sanction of every part of the legislature which then subsisted.

It happens unluckily for those who maintain an original contract between the magistrate and people, that

that great revolutions of government, and new settlements of civil constitutions, are commonly conducted with such violence, tumult, and disorder, that the public voice can scarcely ever be heard; and the opinions of the citizens are at that time less attended to than even in the common course of administration. The present transactions in England, it must be confessed, are a singular exception to this observation. The new elections had been carried on with great tranquillity and freedom: The prince had ordered the troops to depart from all the towns where the voters assembled: A tumultuary petition to the two houses having been promoted, he took care, though the petition was calculated for his advantage, effectually to suppress it: He entered into no intrigues, either with the electors or the members: He kept himself in a total silence, as if he had been nowise concerned in these transactions: And so far from forming cabals with the leaders of parties, he disdained even to bestow caresses on those whose assistance might be useful to him. This conduct was highly meritorious, and discovered great moderation and magnanimity; even though the prince unfortunately, through the whole course of his life, and on every occasion, was noted for an address so cold, dry, and distant, that it was very difficult for him, on account of any interest, to soften or familiarise it.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

At length the prince deigned to break silence, and to express, though in a private manner, his sentiments on the present situation of affairs. He called together Halifax, Shrewsbury, Danby, and a few more; and he told them, that having been invited over to restore their liberty, he had engaged in this enterprise, and had at last happily effected his purpose. That it belonged to the parliament, now chosen and assembled with freedom, to concert measures for the public settlement; and he pretended not to interpose in their determinations. That

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

That he heard of several schemes proposed for establishing the government: Some insisted on a regent; others were desirous of bestowing the crown on the princess: It was their concern alone to choose the plan of administration most agreeable or advantageous to them. That if they judged it proper to settle a regent, he had no objection: He only thought it incumbent on him to inform them, that he was determined not to be regent, nor ever to engage in a scheme which, he knew, would be exposed to such insuperable difficulties That no man could have a juster or deeper sense of the princess's merit than he was impressed with; but he would rather remain a private person than enjoy a crown which must depend on the will or life of another. And that they must therefore make account, if they were inclined to either of these two plans of settlement, that it would be totally out of his power to assist them in carrying it into execution; his affairs abroad were too important to be abandoned for so precarious a dignity, or even to allow him so much leisure as would be requisite to introduce order into their disjointed government.

THESE views of the prince were seconded by the princess herself, who, as she possessed many virtues, was a most obsequious wife to a husband, who, in the judgment of the generality of her sex, would have appeared so little attractive and amiable. All considerations were neglected, when they came in competition with what she deemed her duty to the prince. When Danby and others of her partisans wrote her an account of their schemes and proceedings, she expressed great displeasure; and even transmitted their letters to her husband, as a sacrifice to conjugal fidelity. The princess Anne also concurred in the same plan for the public settlement; and being promised an ample revenue, was content to be postponed in the succession to the crown. And as the title of her infant brother was,

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in the present establishment, entirely neglected, she might, on the whole, deem herself, in point of interest, *a gainer by this revolution.* CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE chief parties, therefore, being agreed, the convention passed a bill, in which they settled the crown on the prince and princess of Orange, the sole administration to remain in the prince: The princess of Denmark to succeed after the death of the prince and princess of Orange; her posterity after those of the princess, but before those of the prince by any other wife. The convention annexed to this settlement of the crown a declaration of rights, where all the points which had, of late years, been disputed between the king and people, were finally determined; and the powers of royal prerogative were more narrowly circumscribed and more exactly defined, than in any former period of the English government.

THUS have we seen, through the whole course of four reigns, a continual struggle maintained between the crown and the people: Privilege and prerogative were ever at variance: And both parties, beside the present object of dispute, had many latent claims, which, on a favourable occasion, they produced against their adversaries. Governments too steady and uniform, as they seldom are free, so are they, in the judgment of some, attended with another sensible inconvenience: They abate the active powers of men; depress courage, invention, and genius; and produce an universal lethargy in the people. Though this opinion may be just, the fluctuation and contest, it must be allowed, of the English government were, during these reigns, much Manners, arts, and sciences.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

much too violent both for the repose and safety of the people. Foreign affairs, at that time, were either entirely neglected, or managed to pernicious purposes: And in the domestic administration there was felt a continued fever, either secret or manifest; sometimes the most furious convulsions and disorders. The revolution forms a new epoch in the constitution; and was probably attended with consequences more advantageous to the people, than barely freeing them from an exceptionable administration. By deciding many important questions in favour of liberty, and still more by that great precedent of deposing one king, and establishing a new family, it gave such an ascendant to popular principles, as has put the nature of the English constitution beyond all controversy. And it may justly be affirmed, without any danger of exaggeration, that we, in this island, have ever since enjoyed, if not the best system of government, at least the most entire system of liberty, that ever was known amongst mankind.

To decry with such violence, as is affected by some, the whole line of Stuart; to maintain, that their administration was one continued encroachment on the *incontestable* rights of the people; is not giving due honour to that great event, which not only put a period to their hereditary succession, but made a new settlement of the whole constitution. The inconveniencies suffered by the people under the two first reigns of that family, (for in the main they were fortunate) proceeded in a great measure from the unavoidable situation of affairs; and scarcely any thing could have prevented those events, but such vigour of genius in the sovereign, attended with such good fortune, as might have enabled him entirely to overpower the liberties of his people. While the parliaments, in those reigns, were taking advantage of the necessities of the prince, and attempting every session to abolish, or circumscribe,

scribe, or define, some prerogative of the crown, and innovate in the usual tenor of government: What could be expected, but that the prince would exert himself in defending, against such inveterate enemies, an authority which, during the most regular course of the former English government, had been exercised without dispute or controversy? And though Charles II. in 1672, may with reason be deemed the aggressor, nor is it possible to justify his conduct; yet there were some motives, surely, which could engage a prince so soft and indolent, and at the same time so judicious, to attempt such hazardous enterprises. He felt that public affairs had reached a situation at which they could not possibly remain without some farther innovation. Frequent parliaments were become almost absolutely necessary to the conducting of public business; yet these assemblies were still, in the judgment of the royalists, much inferior in dignity to the sovereign, whom they seemed better calculated to counsel than controul. The crown still possessed considerable power of opposing parliaments; and had not as yet acquired the means of influencing them. Hence a continual jealousy between these parts of the legislature: Hence the inclination mutually to take advantage of each other's necessities: Hence the impossibility, under which the king lay, of finding ministers, who could at once be serviceable and faithful to him. If he followed his own choice in appointing his servants, without regard to their parliamentary interest, a refractory session was instantly to be expected: If he chose them from among the leaders of popular assemblies, they either lost their influence with the people, by adhering to the crown, or they betrayed the crown, in order to preserve their influence. Neither Hambden, whom Charles I. was willing to gain at any price; nor Shaftesbury, whom Charles II. after the popish plot, attempted to engage in his counsels, would renounce their

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

popularity for the precarious, and, as they esteemed it, deceitful favour of the prince. The root of their authority they still thought to lie in the parliament; and as the power of that assembly was not yet uncontrollable, they still resolved to augment it, though at the expence of the royal prerogatives.

It is no wonder that these events have long, by the representations of faction, been extremely clouded and obscured. No man has yet arisen, who has paid an entire regard to truth, and has dared to expose her, without covering or disguise, to the eyes of the prejudiced public. Even that party amongst us, which boasts of the highest regard to liberty, has not possessed sufficient liberty of thought in this particular, nor has been able to decide impartially of their own merit, compared with that of their antagonists. More noble perhaps in their ends, and highly beneficial to mankind; they must also be allowed to have often been less justifiable in the means, and in many of their enterprises to have payed more regard to political than to moral considerations. Obliged to court the favour of the populace, they found it necessary to comply with their rage and folly; and have even, on many occasions, by propagating calumnies, and by promoting violence, served to infatuate, as well as corrupt that people, to whom they made a tender of liberty and justice. Charles I. was a tyrant, a papist, and a contriver of the Irish massacre: The church of England was relapsing fast into idolatry: Puritanism was the only true religion, and the covenant the favourite object of heavenly regard. Through these delusions, the party proceeded, and, what may seem wonderful, still to the increase of law and liberty; till they reached the imposture of the popish plot, a fiction which exceeds the ordinary bounds of vulgar credulity. But however singular these events may appear, there is really nothing altogether new in any period of modern history:

history: And it is remarkable, that tribunitian arts, though sometimes useful in a free constitution, have usually been such as men of probity and honour could not bring themselves either to practise or approve. The other faction, which, since the revolution, has been obliged to cultivate popularity, sometimes found it necessary to employ like artifices. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE whig party, for a course of near seventy years, has, almost without interruption, enjoyed the whole authority of government; and no honours or offices could be obtained but by their countenance and protection. But this event, which, in some particulars, has been advantageous to the state, has proved destructive to the truth of history, and has established many gross falsehoods, which it is unaccountable how any civilized nation could have embraced with regard to its domestic occurrences. Compositions the most despicable, both for style and matter, have been extolled, and propagated, and read; as if they had equalled the most celebrated remains of antiquity.[y] And forgetting that a regard to liberty, though a laudable passion, ought commonly to be subordinate to a reverence for established government, the prevailing faction has celebrated only the partisans of the former, who pursued as their object the perfection of civil society, and has extolled them at the expence of their antagonists, who maintained those maxims that are essential to its very existence. But extremes of all kinds are to be avoided; and though no one will ever please either faction by moderate opinions, it is there we are most likely to meet with truth and certainty.

WE shall subjoin to this general view of the English government, some account of the state of the finances, arms, trade, manners, arts, between the restoration and revolution.

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[y] Such as Rapin Thoyras, Locke, Sidney, Hoadley, &c.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE revenue of Charles II. as settled by the long parliament, was put upon a very bad footing. It was too small, if they intended to make him independent in the common course of his administration: It was too large, and settled during too long a period, if they resolved to keep him in entire dependence. The great debts of the republic, which were thrown upon that prince; the necessity of supplying the naval and military stores, which were entirely exhausted;[z] that of repairing and furnishing his palaces: All these causes involved the king in great difficulties immediately after his restoration; and the parliament was not sufficiently liberal in supplying him. Perhaps too he had contracted some debts abroad; and his bounty to the distressed cavaliers, though it did not correspond either to their services or expectations, could not fail, in some degree, to exhaust his treasury. The extraordinary sums granted the king during the first years, did not suffice for these extraordinary expences; and the excise and customs, the only constant revenue, amounted not to nine hundred thousand pounds a year, and fell much short of the ordinary burdens of government. The addition of hearth money in 1662, and of the other two branches in 1669 and 1670, brought up the revenue to one million three hundred fifty-eight thousand pounds, as we learn from lord Danby's account: But the same authority informs us, that the yearly expence of government was at that time one million three hundred eighty-seven thousand seven hundred and seventy pounds;[a] without mentioning contingencies, which are always considerable, even under the most

[z] Lord Clarendon's speech to the parliament, Oct. 9, 1665.

[a] Ralph's History, vol. i. p. 288. We learn from that lord's Memoirs, p. 12. that the receipts of the Exchequer, during six years, from 1673 to 1679, were about eight millions two hundred thousand pounds, or one million three hundred sixty-six thousand pounds a year. See likewise, p. 169.

most prudent administration. Those branches of revenue, granted in 1669 and 1670, expired in 1680, and were never renewed by parliament: They were computed to be above two hundred thousand pounds a year. It must be allowed, because asserted by all cotemporary authors of both parties, and even confessed by himself, that king Charles was somewhat profuse and negligent. But it is likewise certain, that a very rigid frugality was requisite to support the government under such difficulties. It is a familiar rule in all business, that every man should be payed in proportion to the trust reposed in him, and to the power which he enjoys; and the nation soon found reason, from Charles's dangerous connexions with France, to repent their departure from that prudential maxim. Indeed, could the parliaments in the reign of Charles I. have been induced to relinquish so far their old habits, as to grant that prince the same revenue which was voted to his successor, or had those in the reign of Charles II. conferred on him as large a revenue as was enjoyed by his brother, all the disorders in both reigns might easily have been prevented, and probably all reasonable concessions to liberty might peaceably have been obtained from both monarchs. But these assemblies, unacquainted with public business, and often actuated by faction and fanaticism, could never be made sensible, but too late and by fatal experience, of the incessant change of times and situations. The French ambassador informs his court, that Charles was very well satisfied with his share of power, could the parliament have been induced to make him tolerably easy in his revenue.[b]

If we estimate the ordinary revenue of Charles II. at one million two hundred thousand pounds a year during his whole reign, the computation will rather exceed than fall below the true value. The convention

[b] Dalrymple's Appendix, p. 142.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

convention parliament, after all the sums which they had granted the king towards the payment of old debts, threw, the last day of their meeting, a debt upon him amounting to one million seven hundred forty-three thousand two hundred sixty-three pounds.[c] All the extraordinary sums which were afterwards voted him by parliament, amounted to eleven millions four hundred forty-three thousand four hundred and seven pounds; which, divided by twenty-four, the number of years which that king reigned, make four hundred seventy-six thousand eight hundred and eight pounds a year. During that time, he had two violent wars to sustain with the Dutch; and in 1678, he made expensive preparations for a war with France. In the first Dutch war, both France and Denmark were allies to the United Provinces, and the naval armaments in England were very great: So that it is impossible he could have secreted any part, at least any considerable part, of the sums which were then voted him by parliament.

To these sums we must add about one million two hundred thousand pounds, which had been detained from the bankers on shutting up the Exchequer in 1672. The king payed six per cent. for this money during the rest of his reign.[d] It is remarkable, that notwithstanding this violent breach of faith, the king, two years after, borrowed money at eight per cent.; the same rate of interest which he had payed before that event.[e] A proof that public credit, instead of being of so delicate a nature as we are apt to imagine, is, in reality, so hardy and robust, that it is very difficult to destroy it.

The revenue of James was raised by the parliament to about one million eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds;[f] and his income, as duke of York, being added, made the whole amount to two millions

[c] Journals. 29th of December 1660. [d] Danby's Memoirs, p. 7. [e] Id. p. 65. [f] Journ. 1st. of March 1689.

lions a year; a sum well proportioned to the public necessities, but enjoyed by him in too independent a manner. The national debt at the revolution amounted to one million fifty-four thousand nine hundred twenty-five pounds.[g] CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE militia fell much to decay during these two reigns, partly by the policy of the kings, who had entertained a diffidence of their subjects, partly by that ill-judged law which limited the king's power of mustering and arraying them. In the beginning, however, of Charles's reign, the militia was still deemed formidable. De Wit having proposed to the French king an invasion of England during the first Dutch war, that monarch replied, that such an attempt would be entirely fruitless, and would tend only to unite the English. In a few days, said he, after our landing, there will be fifty thousand men at least upon us.[h]

CHARLES, in the beginning of his reign, had in pay near five thousand men, of guards and garrisons. At the end of his reign he augmented this number to near eight thousand. James, on Monmouth's rebellion, had on foot about fifteen thousand men; and when the prince of Orange invaded him, there were no fewer than thirty-thousand regular troops in England.

THE English navy, during the greater part of Charles's reign, made a considerable figure, for number of ships, valour of the men, and conduct of the commanders. Even in 1678, the fleet consisted of eighty-three ships;[i] besides thirty, which were at that time on the stocks. On the king's restoration he found only sixty-three vessels of all sizes.[k] During the latter part of Charles's reign, the navy fell somewhat to decay, by reason of the narrowness of the king's revenue: But James, soon after his accession,

[g] Journ. 20th of March 1689. [h] D'Estrades, 20th of October 1666. [i] Pepy's Memoirs, p. 4.
[k] Memoirs of English affairs, chiefly naval.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

cession, restored it to its former power and glory; and before he left the throne carried it much farther. The administration of the admiralty under Pepys, is still regarded as a model for order and œconomy. The fleet at the revolution consisted of one hundred seventy-three vessels of all sizes; and required forty-two thousand seamen to man it.[1] That king, when duke of York, had been the first inventor of sea-signals. The military genius, during these two reigns, had not totally decayed among the young nobility. Dorset, Mulgrave, Rochester, not to mention Ossory, served on board the fleet, and were present in the most furious engagements against the Dutch.

THE commerce and riches of England did never, during any period, increase so fast as from the restoration to the revolution. The two Dutch wars, by disturbing the trade of that republic, promoted the navigation of this island; and after Charles had made a separate peace with the States, his subjects enjoyed, unmolested, the trade of Europe. The only disturbance which they met with, was from a few French privateers who infested the channel; and Charles interposed not in behalf of his subjects with sufficient spirit and vigour. The recovery or conquest of New York and the Jerseys was a considerable accession to the strength and security of the English colonies; and together with the settlement of Pennsylvania and Carolina, which was effected during that reign, extended the English empire in America. The persecutions of the dissenters, or, more properly speaking, the restraints imposed upon them, contributed to augment and people these colonies. Dr. Davenant affirms,[m] that the shipping of England more than doubled during these twenty-eight years. Several new manufactures were established; in iron, brass, silk, hats,

[1] Lives of the Admirals, vol. ii. p. 476.

[m] Discourse on the Public Revenues, part ii. p. 29. 33. 36.

hats, glass, paper, &c. One Brewer, leaving the Low Countries, when they were threatened with a French conquest, brought the art of dying woollen cloth into England, and by that improvement saved the nation great sums of money. The increase of coinage during these two reigns was ten millions two hundred sixty-one thousand pounds. A board of trade was erected in 1670; and the earl of Sandwich was made president. Charles revived and supported the charter of the East-India company; a measure whose utility is by some thought doubtful: He granted a charter to the Hudson's Bay company; a measure probably hurtful.

We learn from sir Josiah Child,[n] that in 1688, there were on the Change more men worth 10,000 pounds than there were in 1650 worth a thousand; that 500 pounds with a daughter was, in the latter period, deemed a larger portion than 2000 in the former; that gentlewomen, in those earlier times, thought themselves well cloathed in a serge gown, which a chambermaid would, in 1688, be ashamed to be seen in; and that, besides the great increase of rich clothes, plate, jewels, and household furniture, coaches were in that time augmented a hundred fold.

The duke of Buckingham introduced from Venice the manufacture of glass and crystal into England. Prince Rupert was also an encourager of useful arts and manufactures: He himself was the inventor of etching.

The first law for erecting turnpikes was passed in 1662: The places of the turnpikes were Wadesmill, Caxton, and Stilton: But the general and great improvement of highways took not place till the reign of George II.

In 1663, was passed the first law for allowing the exportation of foreign coin and bullion.

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[n] Brief Observations, &c.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689. In 1667 was concluded the first American treaty between England and Spain: This treaty was made more general and complete in 1670. The two states then renounced all right of trading with each other's colonies; and the title of England was acknowledged to all the territories in America, of which she was then possessed.

The French king, about the beginning of Charles's reign, laid some impositions on English commodities; And the English, partly displeased with this innovation, partly moved by their animosity against France, retaliated, by laying such restraints on the commerce with that kingdom as amounted almost to a prohibition. They formed calculations, by which they persuaded themselves that they were losers a million and a half, or near two millions a-year, by the French trade. But no good effects were found to result from these restraints; and in king James's reign they were taken off by parliament.

Lord Clarendon tells us, that in 1665, when money, in consequence of a treaty, was to be remitted to the bishop of Munster, it was found, that the whole trade of England could not supply above 1000 pounds a-month to Frankfort and Cologne, nor above 20,000 pounds a-month to Hamburgh: These sums appear surprisingly small.°

At the same time that the boroughs of England were deprived of their privileges, a like attempt was made on the colonies. King James recalled the charters, by which their liberties were secured; and he sent over governors invested with absolute power. The arbitrary principles of that monarch appear in every part of his administration.

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° Life of Clarendon, p. 237.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

THE people, during these two reigns, were, in a great measure, cured of that wild fanaticism, by which they had formerly been so much agitated. Whatever new vices they might acquire, it may be questioned, whether, by this change, they were, in the main, much losers in point of morals. By the example of Charles II. and the cavaliers, licentiousness and debauchery became prevalent in the nation. The pleasures of the table were much pursued. Love was treated more as an appetite than a passion. The one sex began to abate of the national character of chastity, without being able to inspire the other with sentiment or delicacy.

THE abuses in the former age, arising from overstrained pretensions to piety, had much propagated the spirit of irreligion; and many of the ingenious men of this period lie under the imputation of deism. Besides wits and scholars by profession, Shaftesbury, Halifax, Buckingham, Mulgrave, Sunderland, Essex, Rochester, Sidney, Temple, are supposed to have adopted these principles.

THE same factions which formerly distracted the nation, were revived, and exerted themselves in the most ungenerous and unmanly enterprises against each other. King Charles, being in his whole deportment a model of easy and gentleman-like behaviour, improved the politeness of the nation; as much as faction, which of all things is most destructive to that virtue, could possibly permit. His courtiers were long distinguishable in England by their obliging and agreeable manners.

TILL the revolution, the liberty of the press was very imperfectly enjoyed in England, and during a very short period. The star-chamber, while that court subsisted, put effectual restraints upon printing. On the suppression of that tribunal in 1641, the long parliament, after their rupture with the king,

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

king, assumed the same power with regard to the licensing of books; and this authority was continued during all the period of the republic and protectorship.[p] Two years after the restoration, an act was passed reviving the republican ordinances. This act expired in 1679; but was revived in the first of king James. The liberty of the press did not even commence with the revolution. It was not till 1694 that the restraints were taken off; to the great displeasure of the king and his ministers, who, seeing no where, in any government, during present or past ages, any example of such unlimited freedom, doubted much of its salutary effects, and probably thought, that no books or writings would ever so much improve the general understanding of men, as to render it safe to entrust them with an indulgence so easily abused.

In 1677, the old law for burning heretics was repealed; a prudent measure, while the nation was in continual dread of the return of popery.

Amidst the thick cloud of bigotry and ignorance which overspread the nation, during the commonwealth and protectorship, there were a few sedate philosophers, who, in the retirement of Oxford, cultivated their reason, and established conferences for the mutual communication of their discoveries in physics and geometry. Wilkins a clergyman, who had married Cromwel's sister, and was afterwards bishop of Chester, promoted these philosophical conversations. Immediately after the restoration, these men procured a patent, and having enlarged their number, were denominated the *Royal Society*. But this patent was all they obtained from the king. Though Charles was a lover of the sciences, particularly chemistry and mechanics; he animated them by his example alone,

[p] Scobell, i. 44. 134. ii. 88. 290.

alone, not by his bounty. His craving courtiers and mistresses, by whom he was perpetually surrounded, engrossed all his expence, and left him neither money nor attention for literary merit. His contemporary, Lewis, who fell short of the king's genius and knowledge in this particular, much exceeded him in liberality. Besides pensions conferred on learned men throughout all Europe, his academies were directed by rules, and supported by salaries: A generosity which does great honour to his memory; and, in the eyes of all the ingenious part of mankind, will be esteemed an atonement for many of the errors of his reign. We may be surprised that this example should not be more followed by princes; since it is certain that that bounty, so extensive, so beneficial, and so much celebrated, cost not this monarch so great a sum as is often conferred on one useless overgrown favourite or courtier. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

BUT though the French academy of sciences was directed, encouraged, and supported by the sovereign, there arose in England some men of superior genius who were more than sufficient to cast the balance, and who drew on themselves and on their native country the regard and attention of Europe. Besides Wilkins, Wren, Wallis, eminent mathematicians; Hooke, an accurate observer by microscopes; and Sydenham, the restorer of true physic; there flourished during this period a Boyle and a Newton; men who trod with cautious, and therefore the more secure steps, the only road which leads to true philosophy.

BOYLE improved the pneumatic engine invented by Otto Guericke, and was thereby enabled to make several new and curious experiments on the air, as well as on other bodies: His chemistry is much admired by those who are acquainted with that art: His hydrostatics contain a greater mixture of reasoning and invention with experiment than

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

than any other of his works; but his reasoning is still remote from that boldness and temerity which had led astray so many philosophers. Boyle was a great partisan of the mechanical philosophy; a theory which, by discovering some of the secrets of nature, and allowing us to imagine the rest, is so agreeable to the natural vanity and curiosity of men. He died in 1691, aged 65.

In Newton this island may boast of having produced the greatest and rarest genius that ever rose for the ornament and instruction of the species. Cautious in admitting no principles but such as were founded on experiment; but resolute to adopt every such principle, however new or unusual: From modesty, ignorant of his superiority above the rest of mankind; and thence less careful to accommodate his reasonings to common apprehensions: More anxious to merit than acquire fame: He was, from these causes, long unknown to the world; but his reputation at last broke out with a lustre, which scarcely any writer, during his own life-time, had ever before attained. While Newton seemed to draw off the veil from some of the mysteries of nature, he shewed at the same time the imperfections of the mechanical philosophy; and thereby restored her ultimate secrets to that obscurity in which they ever did and ever will remain. He died in 1727, aged 85.

This age was far from being so favourable to polite literature as to the sciences. Charles, though fond of wit, though possessed himself of a considerable share of it, though his taste in conversation seems to have been sound and just, served rather to corrupt than improve the poetry and eloquence of his time. When the theatres were opened at the restoration, and freedom was again given to pleasantry and ingenuity; men, after so long an abstinence, fed on these delicacies with less taste and avidity, and the coarsest and most irregular species

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of wit was received by the court as well as by the people. The productions represented at that time on the stage, were such monsters of extravagance and folly; so utterly destitute of all reason or even common sense; that they would be the disgrace of English literature, had not the nation made atonement for its former admiration of them, by the total oblivion to which they are now condemned. The duke of Buckingham's Rehearsal, which exposed these wild productions, seems to be a piece of ridicule carried to excess; yet in reality the copy scarcely equals some of the absurdities which we meet with in the originals.[a]

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

This severe satire, together with the good sense of the nation, corrected, after some time, the extravagancies of the fashionable wit; but the productions of literature still wanted much of that correctness and delicacy which we so much admire in the ancients, and in the French writers, their judicious imitators. It was indeed during this period chiefly, that that nation left the English behind them in the productions of poetry, eloquence, history, and other branches of polite letters; and acquired a superiority, which the efforts of English writers, during the subsequent age, did more successfully contest with them. The arts and sciences were imported from Italy into this island as early as into France; and made at first more sensible advances. Spencer, Shakespeare, Bacon, Johnson, were superior to their cotemporaries, who flourished in that kingdom. Milton, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Harvey, were at least equal to their cotemporaries. The reign of Charles II. which some preposterously represent as our Augustan age, retarded the progress of polite literature in this island; and it was then found, that the immeasurable licentiousness, indulged or rather applauded at court, was

[a] The duke of Buckingham died on the 16th of April 1688.

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

was more destructive to the refined arts, than even the cant, nonsense, and enthusiasm of the preceding period.

Most of the celebrated writers of this age remain monuments of genius, perverted by indecency and bad taste; and none more than Dryden, both by reason of the greatness of his talents, and the gross abuse which he made of them. His plays, excepting a few scenes, are utterly disfigured by vice or folly, or both. His translations appear too much the offspring of haste and hunger: Even his fables are ill-chosen tales, conveyed in an incorrect, though spirited versification. Yet, amidst this great number of loose productions, the refuse of our language, there are found some small pieces, his Ode to St. Cecilia, the greater part of Absalom and Achitophel, and a few more, which discover so great genius, such richness of expression, such pomp and variety of numbers, that they leave us equally full of regret and indignation, on account of the inferiority, or rather great absurdity of his other writings. He died in 1701, aged 69.

The very name of Rochester is offensive to modest ears; yet does his poetry discover such energy of style and such poignancy of satire, as give ground to imagine what so fine a genius, had he fallen in a more happy age, and had followed better models, was capable of producing. The antient satirists often used great liberties in their expressions; but their freedom no more resembles the licentiousness of Rochester, than the nakedness of an Indian does that of a common prostitute.

Wycherley was ambitious of the reputation of wit and libertinism; and he attained it: He was probably capable of reaching the fame of true comedy, and instructive ridicule. Otway had a genius finely turned to the pathetic; but he neither observes strictly the rules of the drama, nor the rules, still more essential,

tial, of propriety and decorum. By one single piece, the duke of Buckingham did both great service to his age, and honour to himself. The earls of Mulgrave, Dorset, and Roscommon, wrote in a good taste, but their productions are either feeble or careless. The marquis of Halifax discovers a refined genius; and nothing but leisure and an inferior station seems wanting to have procured him eminence in literature. CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

Of all the considerable writers of this age, sir William Temple is almost the only one that kept himself altogether unpolluted by that inundation of vice and licentiousness which overwhelmed the nation. The style of this author, though extremely negligent, and even infected with foreign idioms, is agreeable and interesting. That mixture of vanity which appears in his works, is rather a recommendation to them. By means of it, we enter into acquaintance with the character of the author, full of honour and humanity; and fancy that we are engaged, not in the perusal of a book, but in conversation with a companion. He died in 1698, aged 70.

Though Hudibras was published, and probably composed, during the reign of Charles II., Butler may justly, as well as Milton, be thought to belong to the foregoing period. No composition abounds so much as Hudibras in strokes of just and inimitable wit; yet there are many performances which give us great or greater entertainment on the whole perusal. The allusions in Butler are often dark and far-fetched; and though scarcely any author was ever able to express his thoughts in so few words, he often employs too many thoughts on one subject, and thereby becomes prolix after an unusual manner. It is surprising how much erudition Butler has introduced with so good a grace into a work of pleasantry and humour: Hudibras is perhaps one of the most learned compositions that is to be found in

CHAP. LXXI. 1689.

any language. The advantage which the royal cause received from this poem, in exposing the fanaticism and false pretensions of the former parliamentary party, was prodigious. The king himself had so good a taste, as to be highly pleased with the merit of the work, and had even got a great part of it by heart: Yet was he either so careless in his temper, or so little endowed with the virtue of liberality, or, more properly speaking, of gratitude, that he allowed the author, a man of virtue and probity, to live in obscurity, and die in want.[b] Dryden is an instance of a negligence of the same kind. His Absalom sensibly contributed to the victory which the Tories obtained over the Whigs, after the exclusion of parliaments: Yet could not this merit, aided by his great genius, procure him an establishment which might exempt him from the necessity of writing for bread. Otway, though a professed royalist, could not even procure bread by his writings; and he had the singular fate of dying literally of hunger. These incidents throw a great stain on the memory of Charles, who had discernment, loved genius, was liberal of money, but attained not the praise of true generosity.

[b] Butler died in 1680. aged 68.

GENERAL INDEX.

N. B. The Roman Numerals direct to the Volume, and the Figures to the Page.

A.

ABBEY LANDS, the immediate inconveniencies resulting from their alienation into lay-hands at the reformation, iv. 327.

Abbeys, their rich revenues, iv. 184. The hospitality exercised by them, *ib.* See *Monasteries*.

Abbot, archbishop, is suspended and confined, for refusing to license Sibthorp's sermon on general loans, vi. 226. Is employed by the lords, to moderate the pretensions of the commons, in the petition of right, 251.

Abbots, are excluded from their seats in the house of lords, iv. 205. See *Monasteries*.

Abhorrers and *petitioners*, an account of the origin of those party distinctions, viii. 126. The former persecuted, and the latter countenanced, by the house of commons, 129.

Acadie is yielded to the French by the treaty of Breda, vii. 423.

Acca, daughter of Ælla king of Deira, is married to Ethelfred king of Bernicia, i. 26.

Acre, a city in Palestine, besieged by the Christians, ii. 13. Taken by the assistance of Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, 15. The garrison butchered, 22.

Adela, daughter of king William the Conqueror, her issue, shewing the foundation of king Stephen's pretensions, i. 350.

Adelfrid, king of Bernicia, establishes the kingdom of Northumberland, i. 26. 40. Great slaughter of British monks by, 41. Destroys the vast monastery of Bangor, *ib.* Defeated and killed by Redwal, king of the East Angles, 42.

Adjournment of parliament, distinction between that by the king, and the house of commons by themselves, vi. 275, *note*.

Admiral, lord high, an account of those who filled that post during the reign of James I. vi. 156. Those in the reign of Charles I. vii. 153.

Adrian, emperor, builds his famous rampart between Britain and Caledonia, i. 10. Completed by Severus, *ib.*

Adrian III. an English pope, his motives for making a grant of Ireland to Henry II. of England, i. 426.

Adrian VI. pope, his conduct toward the reformers, iv. 89. Dies, 48.

Adultery, the legal composition for, among our Saxon ancestors, i. 220.

Ælla, a Saxon, defeats the Britons, and settles in Sussex, i. 22. See *Sussex*.

———, another Saxon of that name, is made king of Deira, i. 26.

Ætius, why unable to listen to the embassy of the Britons for assistance i. 14.

Agitators, or representatives of the army, in a military parliament, chosen, vii. 87. Send cornet Joyce to seize the king from Holdenby, 88. Their meetings forbid by Cromwel, 109. Disorders committed by them, 166. Are suppressed by the generals, 167.

Agnes Sorrel, mistress of Charles VII. assists the queen in recovering him from his dejection on the siege of Orleans, iii. 141.

Agricola, Julius, finally subdues the Britons, as far as Caledonia, i. 9. How he secures their subjection, *ib.* His civil institutions, *ib.*

Agriculture, evidence of the bad state of, in the time of Henry VIII. iv. 278. State of, during the reign of James I. vi. 188.

Aix la Chapelle, treaty of, in result of the triple alliance, vii. 437.

Alasco, John, a Polish nobleman, being expelled, turns protestant preacher, and takes refuge with his congregation in England, iv. 347. Is protected by the council, *ib.* Is forced to leave England at the accession of queen Mary, 378.

Albano, the pope's legate, excommunicates prince Richard, son of Henry II. for rebelling against his father, i. 460.

Albany, duke of, brother to Robert III. king of Scotland, assumes the administration, iii. 75. Enjoys the regal power by the death of his brother and the captivity of his nephew, *ib.* Sends forces to the dauphin of France, who defeat and kill the duke of Clarence, 114. Dies, 128. Character of his son Murdac, *ib.*

——, duke of, is invited over by the influence of the lord Hume, to accept the regency of Scotland, iv. 6. The state of the kingdom as it appeared to him at his arrival, *ib.* Is prejudiced against Hume by the enemies of that nobleman, 7. The young king carried off by his mother, *ib.* Lord Hume makes war against him, and is put to death by him, 8. Goes over to France, *ib.* Returns to Scotland, 42. Concludes a truce with the English, and returns to France, 43. Comes back, but his operations against England disconcerted, 45. Leaves Scotland finally, *ib.*

Albemarle, earl of, foments a rebellion of the barons against Henry III. ii. 153. Loses Rockingham castle, but gains Fotheringay, and others, *ib.* Is excommunicated by Pandolf the legate, *ib.* Submits, and is pardoned, 154.

————, general Monk, created duke of, vii. 350. Procures the condemnation of Argyle, 368. Engages the Dutch admiral for four days, 410. His death and character, 467, *note.*

Albert and Theodin appointed legates to inquire into the murder of Thomas à Becket, i. 431. Their accommodation with Henry II. on the account of it, 432. Absolve him, 433.

Albigenses, who they were, ii. 66. A crusade against them published by pope Innocent III. *ib.* Exterminated, 67.

Albiney, William de, defends the castle of Rochester for the barons against king John, ii. 93. Is obliged to surrender, *ib.*

Alcuin, a clergyman, sent by Offa, king of Mercia, to the emperor Charlemagne, and becomes his preceptor in the sciences, i. 50.

Alderman and Earl, synonymous terms in the Saxon laws and annals, i. 576.

Aldred, archbishop of York, crowns king Harold, i. 179. Crowns William the Conqueror, 236. Dies in grief, 257.

Ale, its price in the reign of Henry III. ii. 224.

Alençon, besieged by John king of England, ii. 50. The siege raised by the address of Philip of France, 51.

———, duke of, created duke of Anjou, v. 239.

Alexander II. pope, his motives for declaring in favour of the Norman invasion, i. 185. 256. Sends Ermenfroy legate to William the Conqueror, *ib.*

——— III pope, driven from Rome, by the antipope Victor IV. 381. Abject honours paid to, by the kings of France and England, *ib.* Annuls the Constitutions of Clarendon, 396. Deceives the intentions of Henry II. in the grant of a legantine commission, *ib.* His honourable reception of archbishop Becket, and cool behaviour to Henry's embassy, 403. Attempts by his nuncios to reconcile them, 410. Appeased by Henry's submissions on the occasion of Becket's murder, 420. Canonizes Becket, 421. Issues bulls at Henry's desire against his sons, 437.

——— IV. pope, publishes a crusade against Sicily, ii. 173. His levies on the English clergy to carry it on, *ib.* Threatens the kingdom with an interdict for non-payment of his demand, 174.

——— VI. pope, sends a nuncio to engage Henry VII. of England in a crusade against the Turks, iii. 384.

— III. king of Scotland, espouses the sister of Edward I. of England, ii. 245. His death, *ib.*

Alexis Comnenus, emperor of Greece, his policy to get rid of the crusaders, i. 309.

Alford, encounter there, between Montrose and Baillie, vii. 51.

Alfred, accompanies his father Ethelwolf in his pilgrimage to Rome, i. 71. Assists his brother king Ethelred against the Danes, 74. Succeeds him to the crown, 76. Is anointed at Rome by pope Leo III. *ib.* Progress of his education, 77. Is worsted by the Danes, *ib.* Fights several battles with them, 79. Forced to relinquish his dominions in the disguise of a peasant, 80. Anecdote of him during this concealment, *ib.* Collects some retainers in a secret retreat, *ib.* Sallies and routs the Danes, 81. Enters their camp disguised like a harper, 82. Defeats them again and admits them to settle, 83. His civil institutions, 84. 91. Forms a naval force, 85. Routs Hastings the Dane, 87. Routs Sigefert the Northumbrian pirate, 89. His character, 90. State of the nation at the defeat of the Danes, 91. Divides England into districts for the easy execution of justice, 92. The modes of justice established by him, *ib.* Appoints juries for judicial decisions, 93. His regard for the liberties of his people, 96. His care for the advancement of learning, *ib.* His œconomy of his time, 97. How he inculcated morality, *ib.* His literary performances,

formances, 98. His attention to the promotion of arts, manufactures, and commerce, *ib.* His great reputation abroad, 99. His children, *ib.*

Alfred, a Saxon nobleman, accused of conspiring against king Athelstan, his extraordinary fate, i. 103.

Alfric, duke of Mercia, his infamous character and history, i. 131. Treacherously saves the Danish fleet, 132. Another instance of his perfidy, 142.

Algiers is compelled to peace by admiral Blake, vii. 254.

Alice Pierce becomes the favourite of Edward III. but is removed from court, ii. 483.

Allen, John, his character, iv. 17. Is made judge of cardinal Wolsey's legantine court, *ib.* Is prosecuted and convicted of iniquity, 18.

Alliance, triple, formed against Lewis XIV. vii. 435.

Allison, his cruel prosecution in the star-chamber for slander, vi. 303.

Allodial and feudal possessions, the difference between, explained, and the preference of the latter in the early ages shewn, ii. 105, 106.

Alnwick, William king of Scotland defeated and taken prisoner there by the English, i. 445.

Altar removed from the wall into the middle of the church by the first English reformers, v. 152.

Alva, duke of, concerts with Philip of Spain, Catharine de Medicis, and the cardinal of Lorraine, a massacre of the French Protestants, v. 93. See *Hugonots* and *Medicis*. Enters into a negotiation with the earl of Northumberland for an insurrection in England, 163. Is employed by Philip to oppress the Flemings, 193. His character, *ib.* His cruelties, *ib.* Some money sent for him from Genoa, seized by queen Elizabeth, 194. Revenges himself on the English merchants, 195. His cruel extortions on the Flemings, *ib.* Attempts to disturb the English government in favour of Mary queen of Scots, 196. Revolt of Holland and Zealand, 215. Condemns the prince of Orange as a rebel and confiscates his possessions, *ib.* His cruelty on reducing Harlem, 216. Is finally repulsed at Alcmaer, and solicits to be recalled from the Low Countries, *ib.* Boasts of his infamous conduct, 217.

Amboyna, cruelties practised by the Dutch towards the English factors there, vi. 185. Why this injury was not properly resented, *ib.*

Ambrosius commands the Britons against Hengist, i. 21.

Amerciaments, the arbitrary manner of opposing, by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 136.

America, when first discovered, iii. 404. Great alterations in the European nations in consequence of this discovery, *ib.* The different claims made by the European nations to their discoveries in, vi. 95. Colonies established there by James I. 186.

Amiens, the states of France summoned there by Lewis XI. on the appeal to him by Henry III. and the barons of England, ii. 201. The appeal decided in favour of Henry, *ib.* Treaty of alliance there between the dukes of Bedford, Burgundy, and Britany, iii. 128.

Ancram, battle of, iv. 249.

Angles, who, and where they settled in Britain, i. 22. 25.

Anglesey, attacked by Suetonius Paulinus, i. 8. The Druids destroyed there, *ib.*

Anglia, East, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 46.

Anglo-Norman government, the executive power of, where lodged, iii. 121. The judicial power how distributed, *ib.* The crown revenue, in what it consisted, 125. Talliages levied by, 126.

Angus, earl of, marries Margaret, widow of James IV. of Scotland, iv. 5. She gets a divorce from him, and marries again, 123. Is forced to fly into England by the young king, *ib.* Joins the English army against James V. of Scotland, 228. Returns to Scotland, and takes part with the earl of Arran against cardinal Beaton, 232. Conducts the retreat of the Scots army from the English on the flight of Arran, 248. Inspires Arran with resolution to face the English again, who are defeated at Ancram, 249. Commands the van at the battle of Pinkey, 303.

Anjou, duke of, brother to Charles IX. of France, defeats and kills the prince of Condé at the battle of Jarnac, v. 186. Defeats Coligni at Montcontour, 188. Is proposed as a husband to Elizabeth queen of England, 189. Is elected king of Poland, 210. Takes possession of the crown of France, on the death of his brother Charles, *ib.* See *Henry* III. of France.

——— the duke of Alençon, created duke of, v. 239. Sends over Simier to prosecute his suit with queen Elizabeth, *ib.* See *Simier*. Pays Elizabeth a private visit, 240. Articles for his marriage prepared, 241. Is sent in the service of the States to the Low Countries, 242. His operations there, 243. Comes over to England, *ib.* Receives a ring from Elizabeth, 244. The queen breaks off the match with him, 247. Is expelled the Netherlands, returns home and dies, *ib.*

Anlaf heads the Danish pirates against king Athelstan, i. 105. His stratagem to gain intelligence in Athelstan's camp, *ib.* Athelstan's prudent conduct on the occasion, 106.

Annates, an act of parliament passed by Henry VIII. against levying, iv. 107.

Anne, sister of the emperor Winceslaus, and queen of Richard II. her ineffectual suit to the duke of Gloucester in favour of Sir Simon Burley, iii. 22.

——— princess, lady of Beaujou, her character, iii. 335. Vested with the government of France during the minority of Charles VIII. *ib.* The administration disputed by Lewis duke of Orleans, 336. Motives of her embassy to Henry VII. of England, 337.

——— of Cleves, is sent over to be married to Henry VIII. of England, iv. 202. Henry sees her privately, and is disgusted with her, *ib.* Is nevertheless married by him, 204. Is divorced from Henry, 209. Her insensibility under this treatment, 210. Refuses to return home, *ib.*

——— lady, daughter of James duke of York, married to prince George of Denmark, viii. 204. Deserts with her husband to the prince of Orange, 296. Is declared successor to the crown on failure of the issue of her sister Mary, 319.

Anselm, a Norman abbot, appointed archbishop of Canterbury by William Rufus, 301. Opposes the violences of the king, 302. Preaches successfully

successfully against the then fashionable modes of dress, 303. Espouses the pretensions of Urban to the papacy, *ib.* In what manner he furnished his quota of soldiers demanded by the king for his expedition against Wales, 304. Retires to Rome, and his temporalities confiscated, *ib.* Assists at the council of Bari, *ib.* Recalled by Henry I. 317. Refuses homage to him, 318. Assists at a council to debate on the king's intended marriage, *ib.* Acquires the king's confidence, 320. Procures an accommodation between the king and his brother Robert, 321. Refuses to consecrate the bishops invested by Henry, 328. Retires to Rome, and his revenues again confiscated, 329. Returns to his monastery in Normandy, *ib.* Compromise with, *ib.* 333.

Antient history, causes of the uncertainty of, pointed out, i. 1. 19.

Antonio, Don, prior of Crato, solicits assistance from England to assert his pretensions to the crown of Portugal, v. 348. Obtains a small fleet, 349. The expedition fails, 350.

Antwerp, joyful reception of the English merchants there, on the renewal of commerce with Flanders by Henry VII. iii. 378. A revolt of the protestants there against the catholic worship, v. 192. The insurgents suppressed by the prince of Orange, *ib.*

Appeals from inferior to superior courts, how appointed by the laws of Alfred, i. 93. From the barons' courts, how regulated by parliament, in the reign of Henry III. ii. 223. To Rome, forbid by parliament, iv. 112. From chancery to the house of peers, first came into practice, vi. 110, *note.*

Apprentices of London petition the long parliament, vi. 475.

Archangel, a passage to, discovered, and a trade opened with Muscovy, v. 478.

Arcemboldi, a Genoese bishop, farms the sale of indulgences in Saxony, of Magdalen, pope Leo's sister, iv. 34. Appoints the preaching of them to the Dominicans, *ib.* See *Indulgences* and *Luther.*

Archy, the king's fool, loses his place for exercising his wit on archbishop Laud, vi. 313.

Ardes, interview between Henry VIII. of England, and Francis I. of France, in a plain near, iv. 22. Grand tournament held by them there, 25.

Argyle, earl of, with his son lord Lorn, enters into the association of reformers called the *Congregation of the Lord,* v. 22. Attends the queen-regent in her attempt to suppress the protestant riots, 27. Signs the new covenant of the *Congregation,* 30. Enters into a conspiracy against Mary at Stirling, 90. Is forced to fly into England, 91. Is invited back by Darnley, 97. Is reconciled to the queen, *ib.*

——, earl of, his character, vi. 336. Subscribes to the covenant, *ib.* Deserts his army at the approach of Montrose, vii. 49. Refuses any intimacy with Charles II. on his arrival in Scotland, 186. Submits to the commonwealth, 207. Is tried and executed, 368.

——, earl of, see *Lorn,* Is again condemned for leasing-making, viii. 169. Escapes to Holland, 170. Engages in the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, 185. Urges Monmouth to rebel against James II. 228. Invades Scotland, 237. Is taken and executed, 238.

Arians,

Arians, two burnt during the reign of James I. vi. 163.

Arlington, Bennet earl of, made secretary of state by Charles II. vii. 393. Becomes one of the *cabal* ministry, 458. His character, 460. Is sent to Holland, to treat with Lewis XIV. concerning peace with the states, 493.

Armada, the invincible one of Spain, preparations for the equipment of, v. 333. Sails from Lisbon and is scattered by a storm, 339. Its strength when repaired, 340. Makes an unsuccessful attack on the English fleet, 342. Is attacked and disconcerted at Calais by the English admiral, 343. Sails northward on its return home, and is destroyed by a storm, 344.

Armagnacs and *Burgundians*, these party denominations in France explained, and the troubles occasioned thereby, iii. 94. 104.

Armies, standing, the first rise of, iii. 405. When first introduced into England, vii. 360. Number of standing forces kept up from the restoration to the revolution, viii. 326.

Arminianism, is persecuted in the United Provinces, vi. 57. Reflections on the opinion of, 166. Is attacked by the house of commons, 274.

Armorica. See *Britany*.

Arms, coats of, custom of using them first introduced into Europe during the crusades, ii. 38.

Armstrong, Sir Thomas, is seized and executed without trial, for engaging in the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, vii. 189.

Army, feudal, its disadvantages, ii. 265. Becomes disused in favour of a mercenary one, 266.

——, parliamentary, first raised, and the command given to the earl of Essex, vi. 490. See its operations under the respective generals, *Essex*, *Fairfax*, *Manchester*, &c. Mutiny of, vii. 85. Forms a military parliament, 87. Seizes the king, 88. Chooses Cromwel general, 90. Is marched to St. Albans, 91. Enters into a negotiation with the parliament, 96. Accuses the presbyterian leaders in parliament of high treason, *ib.* Removes to Reading, after obtaining its demands, 97. Marches back to Hounslow heath, where the speakers of the two houses arrive, and implore its protection, 101. Arrives in London, and reinstates the speakers, 103. Schemes of, for settling the nation, 108. Is reduced to obedience by Cromwel, 109. Subdues the scattered parties of royalists, 120. For its future operations, see *Cromwel*. Is disbanded at the restoration, 355.

——, Scots. See *Leven*, earl of *Lesley*, *Montrose*, and *Scotland*.

Arran, James earl of, his pretensions to the administration of Scotland, during the minority of Mary, daughter of James V. iv. 232. Opposes and confines cardinal Beaton, *ib.* Contracts the infant-queen to prince Edward of England, 233. Evades the demand of the stipulated hostages, made by Sadler the English ambassador, 234. Attempts to seize the young queen, but fails, and enters into an accommodation, 235. Renounces the reformed religion, 240. Attaches himself to Beaton in opposition to Lennox, 241. Forces Lennox to fly to England, 245. His feeble opposition to the English

lish incursions, 248. The English defeated at Ancram, 249. Ravages the borders of England, *ib.* Refuses to concur in the execution of Wishart the reformer, 227. Engages the duke of Somerset at Pinkey, 303. Receives succours from France, 310. Obtains a pension from France, and is created duke of Chatelrault, 312. See *Chatelrault.*

Arran, James Stuart of Ochiltree, made earl of, v. 247. The king taken from the power of him and Lennox, by an association of Scots nobility, 248. Is confined to his own house, 249. Is recalled to court on the king's escape, 255. His violent tyrannical conduct, 256. Is degraded from his authority, and deprived of his title and estate, *ib.*

Arras, congress at, between Charles VII. of France and the dukes of Bedford and Burgundy, III. 161.

Array, commissions of, issued by Charles I. in opposition to the militia under parliamentary authority, VI. 488.

Arteville, James de, a brewer at Ghent, becomes a leader of the populace against the Flemish nobility, II. 395. Is employed by Edward III. of England to bring the Flemings to assist his pretensions to the crown of France, 396. His death, 437.

Arthur, prince of the Silures, is the prince so celebrated by the British bards, I. 24.

———, posthumous son of Geoffrey, third son of king Henry II. of England, invested in the dutchy of Britany, under the guardianship of his grandfather, I. 456. Is declared successor by Richard I. on his entering into a crusade, II. 40. His title asserted by the barons of the French provinces, *ib.* Is taken under protection of, and educated by, Philip of France, 41. Joins with Philip, and commits hostilities against his uncle John, 46. Is knighted, and marries Philip's daughter, *ib.* Is taken prisoner by John, *ib.* His resolute behaviour in a conference with him, 47. Is murdered by John, *ib.*

———, prince, eldest son of Henry VII. born, III. 322. Married to Catharine of Arragon, 385. Dies, 386.

Articles, six, the law of, passed by the parliament, in the reign of Henry VIII. for abolishing diversity of opinions in religion, IV. 194. A view of them, *ib.* Numerous prosecutions commenced on this act, 200. Is rigorously enforced, 212. The penalties on the marriage of priests mitigated, 222. A farther mitigation of this law, 243. This statute repealed, 306.

———, lords of. See *Lords.*

Artillery, reflections on the effects of, in war, II. 432. First used at the battle of Crecy, *ib.* When first used at sieges, III. 148. The art and management of, improved sooner than fortification, 188.

Artois, Robert de, his character, and how he lost his patrimony, II. 393. Is favourably received by Edward III. of England, *ib.* Stimulates Edward to assert his pretensions to the crown of France, *ib.* Joins the army of Edward on his invasion of France, 404. Is routed at St. Omer's, *ib.* Is sent with English succours to Britany, where he is killed, 420.

Arts, the advantages of cultivating in society, iii. 400. State of, during the reign of Charles I. vii. 341.

Arundel, Humphry, an insurrection in Devonshire excited and headed by him, to oppose the reformation, iv. 330. He is taken by lord Russel, and executed, *ib.*

———, earl of, condemned by the house of peers, and executed, iii. 31.

———, earl of, is appointed one of the commissioners, at Hampton-court, to inquire into the conduct of Mary queen of Scots, v. 139. was the first who introduced coaches into England, 484.

———, earl of, is sent with an army to reduce the Scotch covenanters, vi. 339.

Ascham, envoy from the English commonwealth to Madrid, murdered there by banished royalists, vii. 250.

Ascue, Anne, cruelly tortured by Wriothesely, chancellor, for denying the real presence in the eucharist, iv. 257. Is burnt with other heretics, *ib.*

Ashley, lord, one of the *cabal* ministry, his character, vii. 458. Is made earl of Shaftesbury. See *Shaftesbury*.

Aske, Mr. raises an insurrection in the north of England, against Henry VIII. under the name of the *Pilgrimage of Grace*, iv. 171. Takes Hull and York, 172. Is joined by the archbishop of York and lord Darcy, *ib.* His negotiations with the duke of Norfolk, sent against him, 173. His adherents separate, 174. Is executed, 175.

Assassins, whence the origin of the term derived, their prince, and his dangerous authority and principles, ii. 18. Causes Conrade marquis of Monferrat to be assassinated, 19.

Assembly, general, of the church of Scotland, addresses queen Mary on occasion of the riot at the house of Alison Craig, v. 52. Exhorts Mary to change her religion, 88. Appoints a fast to free king James from the danger of evil counsellors, 247. Is summoned by James, 248. Votes any settlement between James and his mother a most wicked undertaking, 250. Appoints a fast on the day fixed for entertaining the French ambassadors, *ib.* Is induced to submit to the king's authority, and admit the jurisdiction of bishops, vi. 89. Admits the ceremonies enjoined by the king with great reluctance, 90. The bishops neglect to summon it, 322. One summoned under the influence of the covenanters, 333. Meets at Glasgow, and abolishes episcopacy, 334. Concessions obtained of the king, 343. Meets by their own authority together with a convention of states, 540. Concurs in delivering up the king to the English parliament, vii. 79.

——— of divines at Westminster, new regulation of religion by, vii. 32. Votes the divine right of presbytery, 70. Its power restricted by parliament, *ib.*

Astley, lord, general for Charles I. is defeated by Colonel Morgan, vii. 65.

Athelstan, natural son of Edward the Elder, his reign, i. 102. Conspired against by Alfred, one of his nobles, 103. Appoints Sithric the

the Dane king of Northumberland, 104. His wars against Sithric's sons and the Scots, *ib.* His character, 107.

Athelwold, favourite of king Edgar, his treacherous behaviour to his master in the affair of Elfrida, 124. Killed by Edgar, 125.

Atherton moor, battle of, between the royalists and the parliamentary forces under Lord Fairfax, vi. 535.

Athole, earl of, forms a confederacy of Scots nobles, to protect prince James from the attempts of Bothwel, and to punish the murderers of his father, v. 118. Bothwel escapes, and Mary resigns herself into the hands of the confederacy, 119.

Audley, lord, heads an insurrection in the west, against Henry VII. iii. 374. Defeated at Blackheath, and executed, 376.

———, Sir Thomas, speaker of the house of commons, made lord chancellor on the resignation of sir Thomas More, iv. 110.

Augmentation, court of, erected for the management of the revenues of the suppressed monasteries, iv. 150.

Augsburg, a German league formed there against Lewis XIV. viii. 277.

Augustine, a Roman monk, sent by pope Gregory to preach Christianity in Britain, i. 33. Assisted in his mission by queen Brunehaut, *ib.* Is favourably received by Ethelbert king of Kent, 34. His character and successful mission, 35. Cases of conscience proposed by, to the pope, 36. Created archbishop of Canterbury, 37.

———, friars church, granted to Alasco and his followers, iv. 347.

Augustus Cæsar dissuades his successors from enlarging their empire, i. 6.

Avisa, daughter to the earl of Gloucester, married to John, fourth son of Henry II. ii. 2. Is divorced by him, 43.

Auray, du Guesclin, defeated by the English near Calais, and taken prisoner, ii. 473.

Ayscue, admiral Sir George, reduces the English colonies in America to obedience to the common-wealth, vii. 205. Engages de Ruyter the Dutch admiral, 214. His ship taken by the Dutch on the Gallopersands, 412.

Azincour, battle of, iii. 100. Compared with those of Crecy and Poictiers, *ib.* 103.

B.

BABINGTON, Anthony, his character, v. 284. Engages in the service of Mary queen of Scots, 258. Enters into a conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth, 286. He and his associates seized and executed, 290.

Bacon, Sir Nicholas, is made one of the council, and lord keeper of the great seal on the accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 5. A solemn religious disputation held before him, 12. Is appointed one of the commissioners to inquire into the conduct of Mary queen of Scots, 139. Prohibits the parliament by the queen's order from meddling with any matters of state, 173. Reprimands the commons for their presumption at the close of this session, 181.

Bacon, lord, remarks on his account of Perkin Warbec, iii. 455. Displays to the privy-council the undutiful expressions in the earl of Essex's letters, v. 414. The former friendly patronage afforded him by Essex, 416. By the queen's order draws up a narrative of Essex's examination before the council, *ib.* His officious assistance at the trial of Essex, 428. Preserves Hayward, an author, from the indignation of queen Elizabeth, by his pleasantry, 457. His speech against purveyance, 519. Makes a speech in parliament in favour of an union between England and Scotland, vi. 40. 42. Attempts without success to procure an establishment for the cultivation of natural philosophy, 167. Is discovered to have taken bribes while chancellor, 109. Is impeached, confesses the charge, is fined, and committed to the Tower, *ib.* His writings, and character, *ib.* Considered as a philosopher, and writer, 194.

Badlesmere, lord, insults Isabella, queen to Edward II. and kills some of her retinue, ii. 347. Is punished by the king, *ib.* Is taken at the defeat of the earl of Lancaster, tried, and executed, 389.

Badon, Cerdic, the Saxon, worsted there by the Britons, i. 24.

Bagnal, Sir Henry, the English general in Ireland, is defeated and killed by Tyrone, v. 403.

Bajadon, marquis of, and viceroy of Peru, is, with his wife and daughter, burnt on board a Spanish galleon, by some of Blake's squadron, vii. 257.

Baillie, of Jerviswood, his trial and execution on account of the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, viii. 203.

Barnham, James, cruelly treated by Sir Thomas More, for heresy, iv. 132. Is burned in Smithfield, *ib.*

Baldwin, earl of Flanders, receives Tosti duke of Northumberland, i. 177. Assists the Norman invasion, 184.

Balfour, Sir James, deputy-governor of Edinburgh castle, betrays a casket of queen Mary's letters to Bothwel into the hands of chancellor Morton, v. 142.

Baliol, John, his pretensions of succession to the crown of Scotland, ii. 248. Recognizes the king of England's superiority over Scotland, 256. Edward pronounces decision in his favour, 258. Swears fealty to Edward, who puts him in possession of the kingdom, *ib.* Is incensed by the usurpations of Edward, 259. Forms an alliance with Philip of France, 265. Refuses compliance with the summons and demands of Edward, 280. Assembles an army to oppose the attacks of Edward, *ib.* Sets Edward at defiance, 281. Swears fealty and makes his submissions to Edward, on his subduing Scotland, 282. Carried prisoner to London, and committed to the Tower, 283. Obtains his liberty and retires to France, *ib.* Dies in a private station, *ib.* His character, and a summary view of his conduct, 312.

——, Edward, son of John, the occasion of his renewing his father's pretensions to the crown of Scotland, ii. 381. Raises a force, and is joined by divers English barons, 383. Invades Scotland, *ib.* Defeats and kills the earl of Mar, regent, 384. Takes Perth, 385. Is crowned at Scone, *ib.* Is routed by Sir Archibald Douglas, and flies to England, *ib.* Edward III. undertakes to restore him, 386.

Is restored, 388. But the Scots revolt whenever the English king retires, *ib.* Resigns his pretensions to Scotland to Edward, and lives retired, 453.

Ball, John, a seditious preacher in the reign of Richard II. inculcates levelling principles among the people, III. 7. See *Tyler.*

Ballard, John, a priest of Rheims, comes to England to concert an assassination of queen Elizabeth, v. 284. See *Babington.*

Bangor, great slaughter of the monks of, by Adelfrid, king of Northumberland, I. 40. The large monastery of, destroyed, *ib.*

Bannockburn, battle of, between Edward II. and Robert Bruce, king of Scotland, II. 340.

Banqueting-house, at Whitehall, when built, vi. 173.

Barbadoes, the island of, when planted by the English, vi. 188.

Barebone, praise God, a member of Cromwel's parliament, the parliament denominated from him, VII. 229. Origin of the appellation, 230, *note.*

Bari, a council called there, I 304.

Barillon, M. his relation of a private contract between Charles II. and Lewis XIV. VIII. 207, *note.*

Barnard, lecturer of St. Sepulchre's, prays for the queen's conversion, and is reproved by the high commission court for it, VI. 295.

Barnes, Dr. procures Lambert to be accused for denying the real presence in the eucharist, IV. 190. Is himself burnt, 212.

Barnet, battle of, between Edward IV. and the earl of Warwic, III. 249.

Barons, of England, the first indications of a regular association and plan of liberty among them, II. 43. Intimidated by John, and attend him in his Norman wars, *ib.* Desert him and return to England, 51. Accused and fined by him on his return, 54. Again refuse to assist him in France, 74. Their situation and discontents under John, 78. Exhorted by cardinal Langton to insist on a renewal of the charter of liberties granted by Henry I. 79. Confederate for that purpose, at St. Edmond's Bury, *ib.* Make a formal demand of the renewal from John, 80. Appeal to the pope, 81. Assemble their retainers, *ib.* Deliver to the king a list of their demands, *ib.* Choose Robert Fitzwalter for their general, on the king's refusal, 83. Commence hostilities against John, 84. Obtain the great charter from him, *ib.* The chief heads of this charter, 85. Remarks upon it, 87. John makes farther concessions for security of this grant, 89. List of the conservators of this charter, 90. The charter annulled by the pope, 92. Langton refuses to publish the pope's bull of excommunication against them, *ib.* The king takes Rochester from them, and the cruel devastation of the country by both parties, 93. Those in the north ally with Alexander king of Scotland, 94. The rest offer the kingdom to Lewis, son of Philip of France, *ib.* Give hostages to Philip for their fidelity, 95. Are disgusted at Lewis's behaviour, 96. Their contest suspended by the death of John, 97. The origin of their power, and the nature of military service explained, 102. A view of their civil offices, 109. Their power over their vassals, 110. The power of their courts, 111. Their usual way of life, *ib.* Their importance in parliament, 115.

The nature of their courts, 117. Exercised a kind of sovereign authority, 138. More arbitrary in their respective jurisdictions than their kings, *ib.* Obtain a new charter of liberties from Henry III. 146. And a confirmation of it, 147. Obtain a charter of forests, *ib.* Are recovered from their foreign alliance by the judicious endeavours of the earl of Pembroke, protector of the realm, 148. Conclude a peace with him, 151. Their commotions on the death of the earl of Pembroke, 152. Refuse to surrender their fortresses into the king's hands, 156. Confederate against Hubert de Burgh, *ib.* A reconciliation effected by the prelates, *ib.* Procure the dismission of Hubert, 160. Combine against his successor the bishop of Winchester, 161. Confederate with Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, 182. Assemble in parliament dressed in armour, 183. A supreme council of twenty-four chosen by, in parliament, at Oxford, to regulate the government, *ib.* Regulations formed by this council, 184. The council combine to perpetuate their authority, 186. Impose an oath of obedience to them on the whole nation, *ib.* Appoint a committee of equal authority with parliament, to act in the intervals between the sessions of parliament, 187. Send and propose the oath of obedience to the provisions of Oxford, to Richard King of the Romans on his intended visit to England, *ib.* The people begin to be jealous of this council, 187. The knights of the shires appeal to prince Edward against their proceedings, 188. His message to them on the occasion, *ib.* The council form a code of trivial ordinances, 189. The pope disinclined toward them, 191. The pope absolves Henry and the nation from their oath to them, 193. The parliament empowers Henry to resume the authority out of their hands, 194. They confederate with the earl of Leicester, 195. Imprison the bishops who published the pope's absolution, 197. Levy war on the king, 198. Reduce him to comply again with the provisions of Oxford, 199. Their disputes with Henry referred to the arbitration of Lewis king of France, 200. Lewis decides in favour of Henry, 201. They reject Lewis's decision, and take arms, *ib.* Associate with Fitz-Richard the mayor, and the citizens of London, 202. Mutual hostilities by them and the king's army, 203. Defeat Henry at Lewes, and take him prisoner, 205. Another appeal to arbitration, 206. Are ill treated by Leicester, 207. Their army defeated at Evesham, and the earl of Leicester killed, 215. The lenity of Henry toward them, 218. Prohibited to appear in parliament without being particularly summoned by writ, 269. The distinctions among them, *ib.* Confirm the two charters in parliament, which are also confirmed by Edward I. in Flanders, 291. Obtain a limitation of forests, 293. Obtain a full, free, and final confirmation of the two charters, 294. Are allowed by Edward I. to entail their estates, 321. Are disgusted at the attachment of Edward II. to Piers Gavaston, 329. A confederacy of, formed by Thomas earl of Lancaster, against Gavaston, 331. Procure his banishment, *ib.* Procure the authority of government to be vested in a junto, 333. Seize Gavaston, and put him to death, 336. The king's rage on this murder, *ib.* He is reconciled to them, *ib.* Insist on a renewal of the ordinances after the defeat at Bannockburn, 342. They combine to ruin the Despensers,

spensers, 344. Causes of their discontents, 345. They peremptorily demand a dismission of Despenser, *ib.* Obtain of the parliament a sentence of forfeiture and perpetual exile against the Despensers, 346. They join the invasion of Isabella, 353. Murder Despenser, the father, at Bristol, 356. Are discontented with Richard II. iii. 15. Ancient and modern nobility, their ways of life contrasted, 400.

Baronet, that title invented by the earl of Salisbury, and sold to supply king James with money, vi. 71.

Bartholomew, massacre of the Hugonots at Paris, on the eve of that festival, v. 205.

Barton, a Scotsman, obtains letters of mark of James IV. against the Portuguese, but commits piracies on the English, iii. 425. Is destroyed by the English admirals, *ib.*

———, Elizabeth, commonly called the *holy maid of Kent,* her hysterical fits attributed to inspiration, iv. 135. Is engaged by Masters and Boking to carry on the imposture, *ib.* Confesses the artifice, and is punished with her associates, 137.

Basilides, John, Czar of Muscovy, the cause and particulars of his treaty with queen Elizabeth, v. 478. The privileges by him granted to the English, revoked by his son Theodore, *ib.*

Bastardy, disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical courts concerning, in the reign of Henry III. ii. 222. Memorable reply of the nobility to the prelates on this occasion, *ib.*

Bastwick, a physician, is cruelly sentenced by the star-chamber, vi. 306. His sentence reversed by the commons, 377. See *Burton.*

Battle, trial by, allowed by Henry II. to be evaded, by appeal to a jury, i. 450.

———. See under the name of the places where they were respectively fought.

Battle abbey, founded by William the Conqueror, i. 237.

Bavaria, duke of, defeats the elector palatine at Prague, vi. 104. Publishes the ban of the empire against the elector, and conquers the Upper Palatinate, 112. Obtains the electoral dignity, 123.

Baudricourt, governor of Vacouleurs, applied to by Joan d'Arc, sends her to king Charles VII. iii. 143.

Baugé, battle of, between the duke of Clarence and the Dauphin of France, iii. 114.

Bayonne, a massacre of the French Hugonots, planned at a meeting there, v. 93. See *Medicis,* Catharine de; *Philip* of Spain, &c.

Beaton, primate of Scotland, made a cardinal, iv. 231. Is accused of forging the will of James V. *ib.* Joins the interest of the queen dowager, and obtains possession of the government, 232. Is confined by the earl of Arran, his competitor for the administration, 233. Recovers his liberty, and cabals with the clergy, against Arran, *ib.* Procures the retinue of the English ambassador to be insulted, to occasion a rupture between the two crowns, 234. Applies to France for succours, *ib.* Attaches himself to Arran, 241. Causes Wishart the reformer to be apprehended and executed for heresy, 297. Is assassinated, *ib.* His murderers protected by Henry VIII. of England, 299.

Beauchamp, of Holt, lord, is condemned for treason, iii. 22. Was the first peer created by patent, 60.

Beaufort, duke of, the French admiral, misses the Dutch fleet, and escapes the English, vii. 414.

Beaumont, lord, the motive of his engaging Edward Baliol to renew his father's pretensions to the crown of Scotland, ii. 382.

Beauvais, bishop of, taken prisoner in battle, by Richard I. ii. 32. His coat of mail sarcastically sent to the pope, who claimed him, *ib.* Is set at liberty by John, 42.

————, bishop of, petitions for the trial of Joan D'Arc for sorcery, iii. 156.

Becket. See *Thomas* à Becket.

Bedford, duke of, brother to Henry V. left by him regent of France, iii. 116. Appointed, by parliament, protector or guardian of England, during the minority of Henry VI. 124. His character, *ib.* Espouses the princess of Burgundy, 127. Considerations on which he formed his conduct in France, *ib.* Treaty at Amiens, *ib.* Restores and forms an alliance with James I. king of Scotland, 129. His great successes over the French, *ib.* Raises the siege of Crevant, *ib.* Defeats the earl of Buchan at Verneuil, 131. His succours intercepted by Gloucester, and applied to his private disputes, 134. His ineffectual endeavours to compromise his brother's quarrels, 135. Reconciles Gloucester and the bishop of Winchester, *ib.* Situation of affairs in France at his return, 136. Reduces the duke of Britany to maintain the treaty of Troye, 137. His prudent conduct on the successes of Joan D'Arc, 152. His supplies from England fail, 153. Persuades the bishop of Winchester to lend him the men he was conducting into Bohemia, *ib.* His prudent caution in avoiding an action with Charles, *ib.* Gets young Henry VI. crowned at Paris, 154. His cruel prosecution of Joan D'Arc, 155. Bad situation of the English affairs in France, 159. Death of the dutchess of Bedford, and its consequences, *ib.* Agrees to a congress at Arras, 161. The English ministers leave the congress, which is concluded without them, *ib.* Dies, 163.

————, Russel, earl of, is sent over to Boulogne, to negociate peace with Henry II. of France, iv. 342. Suppresses Sir Peter Carew's insurrection in Devonshire, 388. Is made one of the council on the accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 5. Is sent by Elizabeth to officiate at the baptism of prince James of Scotland, 100.

————, earl of, is sent by the parliament with forces against the marquis of Hertford, vi. 503. Deserts to the king at Oxford, 529.

Bedloe, his character, viii. 79. His narrative of Godfrey's murder, and the popish plot, 80. His narrative published, 82. Circumstances of his death, 133.

Bele, Dr. instigates an insurrection against foreign artificers in London iv. 274.

Bell, Robert, a puritan member, makes a motion in the house of commons against a monopoly, v. 178. Is severely reprimanded in council for his temerity, 180.

Benedictines, an Italian order of monks, described, i. 110.
Benefices, how they first came into the hands of laymen, iv. 183.
Benevolences, when first levied, iii. 58., Levied by Henry VII. 350. The power of levying established by parliament, 367. See *Loans*.
Bennet. See *Arlington*.
Bentivoglio, cardinal, his remark on the English government, vi. 568.
Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, king of Navarre, married to Richard I. of England, at Cyprus, and attends him on the crusade, ii. 12.
Berkely, lord, Edward II. delivered into his custody, jointly with Mautravers and Gournay in rotation, ii. 358. The king murdered by the two latter, during his confinement by sickness, 369.
————, judge, is seized upon the bench, by order of the house of commons, on account of Hambden's trial, vi. 373.
Berkstead, one of the king's judges, is seized in Holland, brought home, and executed, vii. 380.
Bermudas, when first settled by the English, vi. 187.
Bernard, St., preaches a crusade, and engages several English in it, i. 367.
Bernicia, the Saxon kingdom in Britain, by whom founded, i. 26. See *Northumberland*.
Bertha, queen of Kent, her zeal for the propagation of Christianity, i. 32.
Berwick taken by assault by Edward I. and the garrison put to the sword, ii. 281.
Bible, a translation of, made by Tindal the reformer, iv. 131. Bishop Tonstal's artifice to enable Tindal to make a more correct translation, *ib.* Debates in convocation concerning the expediency of a translation for the use of the people, 151. A translation finished and printed at Paris, 154. Single copies only allowed to be chained in some churches, with restrictions as to reading it, 177. Granted to every family, 200. The use of it prohibited to the lower classes of the people, 224.
Bicocca, battle of, between marshal Lautrec and the Imperialists, iv. 42.
Bigod, Hugh, his artifice to bring the archbishop of Canterbury to countenance the pretensions of king Stephen, i. 352. Preparing to revolt against Henry II. is reduced to surrender his castles, 445.
————, *Roger*, earl of *Norfolk*. See *Norfolk*.
Bilney, Thomas, a priest, embraces the reformation, iv. 133. Is burnt in Norfolk, *ib.*
Biron, lord, commands the forces sent from Ireland to Charles I. and reduces Cheshire, vii. 7. His forces dispersed by Fairfax, *ib.*
Bishops, English, subscribe the Constitutions of Clarendon, i. 395. Their opposition to the pope's levies for the crusade against Sicily, ii. 173. Are forced to submit on the menace of excommunication, 174. Their election appointed by Parliament, to be by *congé d' elire*, or letters patent from the king, without recourse to Rome, iv. 118. Take out new commissions from the crown, 119. Are kindly received by queen Elizabeth, at her accession, excepting Bonner, v. 3. Become disgusted at her steps toward restoring the protestant religion, and refuse officiating at the coronation, 8. The nomination of, annexed

to the crown, with other powers relating to them, 12. Degraded for refusing the oath of supremacy, 15. Begin to be slighted in parliamentary proceedings, vi. 384. A meeting of twelve present a protestation to the king and peers, against their injurious treatment, 465. Are impeached by the commons, sequestered from parliament, and confined, *ib.* The bill against their votes passed, 479. Episcopal authority abolished, vii. 69. The survivors re-admitted to their seats, at the restoration, 362. Are restored to their seats in parliament, 372. How excluded from sitting in the house of lords, on capital trials, vii, 109. Their right of voting in the case of the earl of Danby contested by the commons, *ib.* Four catholic bishops consecrated, 262. Six, with the primate, committed to the Tower, for petitioning James II. against the declaration of indulgence, 269. Are tried, 270. Acquitted, 271.

Bishoprics, six new ones erected by Henry VIII. iv. 183.

Black, minister of St. Andrew's, his opinion of kings, and manner of praying for the queen, vi. 87.

—— book of the exchequer, its origin, ii. 267. *note.*

Blackheath, battle of, between the lord Daubeny and the Cornish rebels, iii. 375.

Blake, admiral, his rise and abilities in the navy, vii. 204. Pursues and harasses prince Rupert's fleet, *ib.* Quarrels with Tromp, the Dutch admiral, in Dover road, 212. Engages Tromp, *ib.* Falls upon the Dutch herring busses, 213. In conjunction with Bourne and Pen defeats De Witte and De Ruyter, 214. Is worsted by Tromp and De Ruyter, *ib.* Engages Tromp for three days, and defeats him, 215. Defeats Tromp in an engagement of two days' continuance, 235. Attacks and seizes a squadron of French ships 249. His successes in the Mediterranean, 253. The Spanish galleons taken and destroyed by part of his squadron, 257. Burns a Spanish fleet in Santa Cruz harbour, 258. His death and character, *ib.*

Blood, the circulation of, when and by whom discovered, vii. 347.

——, of Christ, a relique shewn at Hales in Gloucestershire, the artifice of exposed, iv. 180.

——, a disbanded officer, escapes to England, after the defeat of his intended insurrection at Dublin by the duke of Ormond. vii, 447. Seizes Ormond at London, with intent to hang him at Tyburn, 462. Forms a design of seizing the regalia, but is taken in the attempt, 470. Obtains the king's pardon, with the grant of an estate, 471.

Blore heath, battle of, between the earl of Salisbury and lord Audley, iii. 203.

Boadicea, her successes against the Romans, i. 8. Defeated, 9.

Bochor, Joan, or Joan of Kent, the doctrines propagated by her, iv. 324. King Edward VI. very unwilling to consent to her execution, *ib.* Is burnt, *ib.*

Bocking, Dr., canon of Canterbury, engages in the imposture of the holy maid of Kent, iv. 135. Confesses the scheme, and is punished, 137.

Bockland, and Folkland, in the Saxon tenures, explained, i. 229.

Bohemia, the blind king of, killed at the battle of Crecy, ii. 436. His crest and motto assumed by prince Edward, *ib.* The states of, take

arms against the house of Austria, vi. 101. Offer their crown to Frederic elector palatine, 102. Frederic defeated by the duke of Bavaria, 104. The reformed religion severely oppressed there, 112. See *Frederic.*

Bohun, Humphrey de. See *Barons.*

Boleyn, lady Anne, her character and family, iv. 78. Attracts the notice of Henry VIII. 79. Is prepossessed against cardinal Wolsey, 91. Contributes to his disgrace, 93. Is inclined towards the doctrines of the reformation, 100. Is created marchioness of Pembroke, and married to Henry, 111. Birth of the princess Elizabeth, 113. Favours the reformers, 129. Is brought to bed of a dead son, and loses Henry's affections, 154. The king becomes jealous of her free behaviour, 155. Is calumniated by her sister-in-law the viscountess of Rochford, *ib.* Is committed to the Tower, with some of her attendants, and her brother Rochford, 157. Confesses some innocent levities, *ib.* Her letter to the king, 454. Is tried by a jury of peers, 159. Condemned, 160. Her marriage annulled, *ib.* Reason given by the parliament for annulling her marriage, 163. Is executed, 161. Reflections on her fate, *ib.* Is attainted by parliament, and the princess Elizabeth illegitimated, 164.

Bombay, the fort of, yielded to Charles II. as part of the dowry with the princess Catharine of Portugal, vii. 378.

Boniface of Savoy made archbishop of Canterbury by Henry III. ii. 163. The king's repartee to him, 178.

Boniface VIII. pope, his character, ii. 284. Prohibits, by a bull, all princes from levying taxes on the clergy, without his consent, 285. At whose solicitation this bull was procured, *ib.* The differences between Philip of France and Edward I. of England referred to his decision, 297. His award between them, *ib.* Writes to Edward to engage him to desist from his attempts against Scotland, 307.

Bonner, made bishop of Hereford, iv. 189. First opposes, but afterwards acquiesces in the steps toward reformation, by the protector and regency during the minority of Edward VI. 292. Is deprived of his see and confined, for asserting the real presence, 322. Is released by queen Mary, 374. Is employed by Gardiner to persecute the reformers, which he performed with brutal cruelty, 413. Degrades archbishop Cranmer, 429. Is ill received by queen Elizabeth at her accession, v. 3.

Bonnivet, admiral of France, is sent ambassador to England by Francis I. iv. 13. Courts the confidence of cardinal Wolsey, *ib.* Is sent to invade Milan, 53. Blockades the city, 55.

Books, heretical, a proclamation issued against, rendering it capital to keep any such, iv. 419.

Booth, Sir George, enters into a conspiracy to restore Charles II. vii. 300. Seizes Chester, 301. Is routed and taken prisoner by general Lambert, 302. Is set at liberty by parliament, 320.

Boroughs, English, why so dependent on great men among the Saxons, i. 205. Their state at the time of the Norman conquest, ii. 117. Representatives of, first sent to Parliament, 210. See *Corporations.*

Borough-bridge, battle of between Sir Andrew Harcla and Thomas earl of Lancaster, ii. 348.

Borsholder, his office according to Alfred's institution, i. 92.
Boscobel, Charles II. secreted there, after the battle of Worcester, vii. 197.
Bosworth field, battle of between Richard III. and Henry earl of Richmond, iii. 294.
Bothwell, earl of, distinguishes himself against the army of the protestant association in Scotland, called the *Congregation of the Lord*, v. 33. Is concerned with the marquis of Elbeuf in a debauch and riot, at the house of Alison Craig, which the church takes cognizance of, 52. Becomes the favourite of Mary, and intercedes for Rizzio's murderers, 99. A character of him, 105. Reports spread of his intimacy with the queen, *ib.* Is suspected of murdering the king, 107. Is charged with the murder by the earl of Lenox, 108. Is tried and acquitted, 109. Is recommended by the nobility as a husband for Mary, 110. Seizes the queen, by concert with her, to oblige her to marry him, 111. Is divorced from his former wife, 112. Is made Duke of Orkney, 113. See *Orkney*.
————, earl of, descended from a natural son of James V. is expelled Scotland for treasonable attempts, and is protected by queen Elizabeth, v. 372. Forfeits Elizabeth's favour, and dies in exile, 373.
-bridge, battle of, between the duke of Monmouth, and the Scots covenanters, viii. 116.
Bouchain, taken by the duke of Orleans, viii. 21.
Bovines, battle of, between Philip king of France, and the emperor Otho, ii. 77.
Bologne, siege of, by Henry VII. iii. 354. Is taken by Henry VIII. iv. 247. Is surrendered to the French, 342.
Bourbon, Charles duke of, constable of France, his character, iv. 50. Rejects proposals of marriage made to him by Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis I. *ib.* Revolts against Francis, and enters into the emperor's service, *ib.* Battle of Pavia, and captivity of Francis, 57. Conquers the Milanese, 69. Attacks Rome, and is killed in scaling the walls, *ib.*
Bourchier, archbishop of Canterbury, crowns Henry VII. iii. 315.
Bowes, Sir Robert, makes incursion into Scotland, and is defeated by the lords Hume and Huntley, iv. 228.
Boyle, his improvements in natural philosophy, viii. 333.
Brabançons, account of these banditti, i. 438. Occasionally employed by princes, *ib.* A number of them engaged by Henry II. against his sons, *ib.* Two of them left governors of Normandy by John, on his retiring from thence to England, ii. 53.
Bradoc-down, battle of, between the royalists, and Ruthven, the parliament general, vi. 516.
Bradshaw, a lawyer, is appointed president of the court for the trial of Charles I. vii. 136. His reply to the king's objections to the authority of the court, 139. Sentences the king, *ib.* Is named one of the council of State, 158.
Brandenburg, elector of, takes part with the United Provinces against Louis XIV. vii. 499. Commands the German troops, and is chased from Colmar by Turenne, viii. 10. Drives the Swedes out of his territories,

ritories, 19. Is obliged to restore his acquisitions, by the treaty of Nimeguen, 46.

Brandon, Sir Charles, favourite of Henry VIII. created duke of Suffolk for his services at the battle of Flowden, iii. 440. See *Suffolk*.

Brause, William de, his wife and son starved to death in prison, for an imprudent reflection on king John, ii. 66.

Bread, the assize of, how settled in the 35th year of Henry III. ii. 224.

Breda, negotiations there, between Charles II. and the Scots commissioners, vii. 173. Treaty of peace there, between the English, Dutch, and French, 419.

Brehon law or custom in Ireland, explained, vi. 58. Is abolished, 59.

Brembre, Sir Nicholas, his unjust trial and execution, iii. 20.

Breteuil, William de, treasurer to William Rufus, forced to deliver up his charge to Henry, William's successor, i. 313.

Bretigni, treaty of, between Edward III. and France, ii. 469.

Bribery, the first instance of, being practised toward members of parliament, vi. 305. A bribe given to a mayor for an election, with the probable reason for it, v. 183. *note*.

Brill, attacked and seized by the Flemish exiles, v. 214.

Bristol, when first erected into a bishopric, iv. 183. Is besieged and taken by prince Rupert, vi. 522.

———, Digby, earl of, sent ambassador to Spain, by James I. to conclude the Spanish match, vi. 125. His favourable accounts of the progress of the treaty, 127. His negotiations obstructed by Buckingham's bringing the prince to Spain, 136. Is disgraced on coming home, 147. Is impeached in the reign of Charles, and in return impeaches Buckingham, 215.

———, earl of, impeaches the chancellor Clarendon in the house of lords, vii. 392.

Britain, by whom first peopled, i. 2. 471. The manners and government of the inhabitants previous to the landing of Cæsar, 3. Their religion, 4. Invaded by Julius Cæsar, 6. How regarded and treated by his successors, *ib*. Caractacus defeated, 7. Boadicea defeated, 8. Its subjection effected by Julius Agricola, 9. Abandoned by the Romans, 11. Harassed by the Picts and Scots, 12. Assisted by the Romans in rebuilding Adrian and Severus's wall, and finally deserted by them, 13. Why they were unable to resist the Picts and Scots, *ib*. Their third application to Rome for assistance ineffectual, 14. Conjectures as to their civil government, when left by the Romans, 15. Invite the Saxons over, 16. Are subjected by these auxiliaries, 19. Some of them take refuge, and settle in Britany in France, 21. Consequences of their being overrun by the Saxons, 27. See *England*.

Britany, by whom settled, i. 21. For Arthur duke of, see *Arthur*. For Conan, see *Conan*. The Britons chuse Alice for their sovereign, on the murder of Arthur by his uncle John king of England, ii. 48. They appeal to Philip, who judges John to have forfeited all his possessions in France, 49. Guy de Thouars, who governs for his daughter Alice, being jealous of Philip's power, joins with John, 55. Contests between Charles de Blois, and the count de Mountford,

ford, for the possession of that dutchy, ii. 416. State of, at the time of Henry VII. of England, iii. 335. The barons incite an invasion by the king of France, 336. Assisted too late by the English, 345. Cause of their domestic dissensions, 346. The young duchess married to Maximilian, *ib.* Annexed to France by marriage, 349.

Britany, duke of, accedes to the treaty of Troye, iii. 127. His interest, how cultivated by the duke of Bedford, *ib.* Withdraws from the English interest, 136. Created constable of France, *ib.* Forced by the duke of Bedford to renounce his new alliance, 137.

———, Francis II. duke of, his character, iii. 335. His favourite, Peter Landius, put to death by the nobles, *ib.* Protects Lewis duke of Orleans at his court, who forms a party there, 336. Appoints Orleans to oppose the invasion of the king of France, *ib.* Obliged to fly, 337. His answer to the offer of mediation by Henry VII. 341. His fortune ruined, and his death, 343.

———, Anne, dutchess of, married by proxy to Maximilian king of the Romans, iii. 346. Pressed to a marriage with the king of France, 349. The dutchy annexed to the crown of France by this marriage, *ib.*

Broke, lord, a parliament general, account of his death, vi. 514.

Brook-house committee, inquiry into their conduct towards Charles II. vii. 455. 531.

Brounker, inquiry into his conduct, in the engagement between the duke of York and Opdam the Dutch admiral, vii. 403.

Bruce, Robert, his claim of succession to the crown of Scotland, how founded, ii. 248. Acknowledges the claim of Edward I. as superior lord of Scotland, 256. His claim to Scotland rejected by Edward, in favour of Baliol, 258. Countenances the revolt of William Wallace, 300.

Bruce, Robert, the younger, serves in the English army, at the battle of Falkirk, ii. 305. His conference with William on the banks of Carron, *ib.* Is gained over to the Scots interest by Wallace, 306. Succeeds to his father's pretensions to the crown of Scotland, 312. Opens his designs in confidence to John Cumming the late regent, 313. Is betrayed by Cumming, 314. Retreats to Scotland, *ib.* His declaration to the Scots nobility, *ib.* Kills Cumming, 316. Routs the English, and is crowned at Scone, 317. Is defeated by Aymer de Valence, *ib.* Reduces the castles, and is acknowledged by the whole country, 337. The prudent disposition of his forces, against the appearance of Edward's army, 339. Defeats Edward at Bannockburn, 340. His independency secured by his victory, 341. Makes an unsuccessful expedition to Ireland, 342. Repulses an attempt of Edward, and concludes a truce with him for thirteen years, 350. Invades England on the death of Edward II. 372. Concludes a treaty with Mortimer, 376. Dies, and is succeeded by his son David. See *David*.

———, David, succeeds his father, Robert, in the kingdom of Scotland, and left under the guardianship of the earl of Murray, ii. 381. Is disturbed by the pretensions of Baliol, 382. The regency committed to the earl of Marre, on Murray's death, 383. Is sent to France on the conquest of Scotland by Edward Baliol, 385. Is recalled

called to Scotland, 439. Invades England during Edward's absence, *ib.* Is taken prisoner by queen Philippa, 440. Recovers his liberty, 461.

Buchan, earl of, defeats the duke of Clarence at Baugé in Anjou, iii. 114. Rewarded with the office of Constable of France, *ib.* Defeated and killed by the duke of Bedford at Verneuil, 132.

Buchanan, George, assists in the hearing the cause of Mary queen of Scots, before the English commissioners, v. 134.

Buckingham, duke of, harangues the people in favour of the duke of Gloucester's pretensions to the crown, iii. 278. Offers the crown to him as a popular tender, 279. His pedigree and family connections, 282. Created constable, with other emoluments, 283. Becomes discontented, and forms schemes against Richard, 284. Raises forces, but is disappointed by great rains, 289. Tried and executed, *ib.*

———, duke of, offends cardinal Wolsey, iv. 27. Is tried and executed for indiscreet expressions against Henry VIII, *ib.* Was the last who enjoyed the office of constable, 28.

———, George Villiers, created duke of, vi. 79. Is made lord high admiral, *ib.* His character, 128. Persuades prince Charles to a journey to Madrid, 129. His boisterous importunity with James to gain his consent, 131. His behaviour odious to the Spaniards, 136. Affronts Olivarez the Spanish minister, *ib.* Determines to break off the treaty of marriage, 137. Misrepresents the affair to parliament, 140. Cabals with the puritans, 142. Procures the treasurer Middlesex to be impeached, 144. Begins to lose the king's favour, 146. Prevails on the king to send Bristol to the Tower on his return, 147. Remarks on his character, and its influence on parliamentary conduct, 201. Is impeached by the earl of Bristol, 215. And by the commons, *ib.* Is chosen chancellor of the university of Cambridge, 217. Makes love to the queen of France, 234. Is rivalled by cardinal Richlieu, *ib.* Determines to engage England in a war with France, *ib.* Commands a fleet sent to assist the Rochellers, who refuse to admit him, 236. His indiscreet attack of the isle of Rhé, *ib.* Is forced to return, *ib.* Is assassinated by Felton at Portsmouth, 261. Remarks on his Spanish negotiation, 571.

———, Villiers, duke of, advises Charles II. to accept the terms offered by the Scots commissioners at Breda, vii. 175. Is the only courtier allowed to attend Charles in Scotland, 193. Aims at a comprehension with the presbyterians, and a toleration of other sects, 453. Is one of the *cabal* ministry, 458. His character, 459. Goes over to France, to concert the war against the States, 465. Lord Ossory's speech to him, on Blood's attempt on the duke of Ormond, 470. Is sent to Holland to treat with Louis XIV. about peace with the States, 492. Is examined on his conduct at the bar of the house of commons, 512. Is dismissed from the ministry, viii. 10. Favours, in conjunction with Algernon Sidney and others, the intrigues of France, and receives bribes from that court, 43. *note.* Introduces the manufacture of glass from Venice, 329. Character of his rehearsal, 335.

Bullion, and foreign coin, when first allowed to be exported, viii. 329.

Burchet, Peter, a puritan, wounds captain Hawkins by mistake, instead of Hatton, Elizabeth's favourite, v. 455.

Burdet,

Burdet, Thomas, cruel execution of, in the reign of Edward IV. iii. 261.

Burgesses of corporations, when first summoned to parliament, ii. 210. The principles that operated to their forming one body of the legislature, with the representatives of counties, 277.

Burgundians and Armagnacs, import of those distinctions in France, and the troubles occasioned by, iii. 94. 104.

Burgundy, John duke of, disputes the administration of affairs with the duke of Orleans, on the insanity of Charles VI. iii. 93. His deceitful reconciliation with Orleans, *ib.* Causes him to be assassinated, *ib.* Avows and justifies the assassination, *ib.* Expelled France, and solicits the aid of England, 98. Attempts to seize the government, but is disappointed, 104. His treaty with Henry V. and secret one with the Dauphin, 107. Distrustful precautions in the interview between him and the Dauphin, 108. Assassinated by the Dauphin's retinue, *ib.*

———, Philip, duke of, treats with Henry V. yields every thing to him, for the marriage of his sister with the duke of Bedford, and the revenging his father's murder, iii. 110. Articles of this treaty, *ib.* Reflections on this treaty, 111. Review of his conduct, 126. Marries his sister to the duke of Bedford, 127. His quarrels with the duke of Glocester on account of Jaqueline countess of Hainault, 134. Detaches himself from the English interest, 136. Recalls his troops from the siege of Orleans, 140. His alliance with the duke of Bedford renewed, 152. Besieges Compeigne, and takes Joan D'Arc prisoner, 155. Differs with the Duke of Bedford, 160. Attends the congress at Arras, 161. Makes his peace with Charles, 162. His herald ill treated at London, *ib.* Besieges Calais, 164. Retreats on the defiance sent by the duke of Gloucester, 165. Concludes a truce with the English, 167.

———, Charles duke of, makes an alliance with Edward IV. of England, iii. 231. Marries Edward's sister, 232. Assists him with a fleet against the earl of Warwick, 240. Assists him covertly after his expulsion, 245. Renews his alliance with Edward, 252. His death and character, 259.

———, Margaret duchess of, her character, iii. 328. How induced to patronise the pretensions of Lambert Simnel against Henry VII. *ib.* Sends forces to his assistance, *ib.* Raises up the imposture of Perkin Warbeck, 356. Her public reception of him, 358.

Burleigh, Cecil lord, discovers to Elizabeth the duke of Norfolk's conspiracy, v. 198. Is made treasurer, and with others ordered by Elizabeth to prepare the articles of marriage between her and the duke of Anjou, 241. His vigilance and artifices in detecting conspiracies, 257. His death and character, 392. Was the proposer of a scheme for levying a general loan, 460. And of exacting money by erecting a court for the correction of abuses, 462. His computation of the queen's gifts to Essex, 474. His magnificent hospitality, 487.

Burley, Sir Simon, short history of, iii. 22. Executed by Gloucester and his party, notwithstanding the queen's earnest solicitations for him, 23.

Burton, a divine, is cruelly sentenced by the star-chamber, vi. 306. His sentence reversed by the commons, 377. See *Bastwick*.

Butler, a character of his Hudibras, viii. 337.

CABAL, a character of the ministry known under that name, vii. 458. The counsels given by, to the king, 461. Remarks on the schemes adopted by, viii. 1. Concert a plan for restoring popery, 4. *note.*

Cabot, Sebastian, sent out by Henry VII. on discovery in America, iii. 405. Discovers Newfoundland, 406.

Cade, John, assumes the name of Mortimer, iii. 189. Heads an insurrection in Kent, *ib.* Gets possession of London, *ib.* His followers discouraged and dispersed, 190. Cade killed, *ib.*

Cadiz, an expedition against, under lord Effingham and the earl of Essex, v. 379. Is taken and plundered, 380.

Caedwalla, the last British chief who withstood the Saxons, defeated, i. 44.

Caen, in Normandy, is taken and plundered by Edward III. ii. 428. Its principal citizens carried over to England, *ib.*

Cæsar, Julius, invades Britain, i. 6.

Calais, in Normandy, is besieged by Henry III. ii. 437. The governor reduced to a parley, and his manly behaviour therein, 440. Edward's rigorous terms to the inhabitants, 441. Queen Philippa's intercession for them, 443. Its inhabitants turned out, and peopled with English, *ib.* The treachery of the new governor, 444. His double treachery, *ib.* Great expense of maintaining that city, 121. Is besieged by the duke of Burgundy, 164. The siege raised, 165. Taken by the duke of Guise, iv. 435.

Caledonia remains unsubdued by the Romans, i. 10. See *Scotland.*

Calixtus II. pope, calls a council at Rheims, i. 336. His character of Henry I. of England, 337.

Cambray, league of, against the Venetians, iii. 415. Peace of, between the emperor Charles V. and Francis I. of France, iv. 98.

Cambridge university, by whom said to be founded, i. 46. Trinity college there, when founded, iv. 279. The vice-chancellor of, suspended for the refusal of a decree to a Benedictine monk recommended by James II. viii. 264.

Camden, a character of his history of queen Elizabeth, vi. 195.

Campbell, prior of the Dominicans in Scotland, accuses Patrick Hamilton of heresy, and insults him at the stake, iv. 214. His extraordinary death, 215.

Campe, peace of, between Henry VIII. of England and Francis I. of France, iv. 253.

Campeggio, cardinal, is appointed, jointly with Wolsey, by pope Clement VII. to try the validity of the marriage of Henry VIII. with Catharine of Arragon, iv. 85. His ambiguous behaviour, *ib.* The trial opened, 87. His abrupt prorogation of the court, 90. Is deprived of his English bishopric by parliament, 118.

Campion, a jesuit, executed for treasonable practices, v. 239.

Cannon, when first applied with success in sieges, iii. 139.

Canon law, commissioners appointed by Edward VI. to frame a body of, iv. 341.

Canterbury, the clandestine election of Reginald to that see, on the death of Hubert, ii. 57. John De Gray, bishop of Norwich, elected at the instance of king John, 58. Appeals to the pope on both sides, *ib.* Disputes with the pope concerning the election of Ralph de Neville to that see, 168. Terminated by the election of Edmond, *ib.* The chapter lands of that see seized by Henry VIII. iv. 222. Archbishops of, during the reign of James I. vi. 154. During the reign of Charles I. vii. 152.

Canute, the Great, son of Sweyn, his ravages in England, i. 145. His cruel treatment of the English hostages, *ib.* Obtains by compromise with Edmond Ironside the northern parts of his kingdom, 147. Succeeds to the crown of England, 148. His political conduct, 149. Marries Emma, widow of Ethelred, 150. Goes to Denmark to oppose the Swedes, 151. Goes again and conquers Norway, *ib.* His piety to the church, 152. Undertakes a pilgrimage to Rome, *ib.* Exposes the preposterous flattery of his courtiers, *ib.* His expedition against the Scots, 153. His sons, 154.

Cape of good Hope, first discovered, and a passage to the East Indies that way, iii. 404.

Capel, Sir William, convicted on some penal statutes, and fined by Henry VII. iii. 365. Fined again, and committed to the Tower, 394.

Capet, Hugh, state of France at his accession to that kingdom, i. 371. 374.

Caractacus defeated by the Romans, i. 7.

Carew, Sir Peter, raises an insurrection in Devonshire against queen Mary, on account of the Spanish match, iv. 388. Is suppressed by the earl of Bedford, and flies to France, *ib.*

Carlisle, bishop of, defends the cause of Richard II. when accused in parliament, iii. 43. Imprisoned in the abbey of St. Albans, 46. The city taken from Charles I. by the Scots, vii. 61.

Carolina, when settled, viii. 328.

Carre, Robert, a Scottish gentleman, arrives in London from his travels, vi. 64. How introduced to king James I. *ib.* Is made viscount Rochester, and promoted to the privy council, 65. His education undertaken by James, *ib.* Contracts a friendship with Sir Thomas Overbury, 66. Contracts a familiarity with lady Essex, 67. Is instigated by her to ruin Sir Thomas Overbury, 68. Procures the divorce of lady Essex, marries her, and is created Earl of Somerset, 70. See *Somerset*.

Carte, Mr. remarks on his account of the first formation of the house of commons, ii. 277. 507. His notion of the nature of the homage paid by the kings of Scotland to those of England examined, 502. Examination of his account of Perkin Warbeck, iii. 454.

Cassilis, earl of, taken prisoner by the English at the battle of Solway, iv. 230. Is released by Henry on conditions, 231. Is the only prisoner who complies with the order to return to England, 234. Is graciously treated by Henry, and released by his brothers, *ib.*

Cassimir, prince, leads an army of German protestants to the assistance of the French Hugonots, v. 211. Is assisted by queen Elizabeth with money for this purpose, 213.

Castile, Peter king of, his cruelties, ii. 474. Imprisons and poisons his wife, Blanche de Bourbon, *ib.* Is chased from his dominions by Du

Du Guesclin the French general, 476. Is protected by prince Edward, *ib.* Henry, natural brother to Peter, seizes the kingdom, 477. Peter restored by prince Edward, 478. His ingratitude to Edward, *ib.* Peter murdered by his brother Henry, who obtains the kingdom, *ib.* Henry intercepts the earl of Pembroke by sea, and takes him and his army prisoners, 482. Isabella, queen of, married to Ferdinand king of Arragon, iii. 385. Comes to Philip archduke of Austria, by marriage with Joan daughter to Isabella, on the death of Isabella, 390. Returns to Ferdinand on the death of Philip, 394. The states of, oppose the emperor Charles marrying the princess Mary of England, iv. 76.

Castles of the nobility, the mischievous purposes they served, i. 360. The number of, in England, in the early part of the reign of Henry III. ii. 156.

Castlemain, earl of, is accused of an intention to assassinate the king, but acquitted, viii. 127. Is sent ambassador to the pope by James II. 261.

Cateau Cambresis, peace of, between Philip of Spain, Henry of France, and Elizabeth of England, v. 16.

Catesby, concerts the famous gunpowder-plot, to blow up the king and parliament, vi. 31. Flies on the discovery of the scheme, 36. Is killed, *ib.* Remarks on his former good character, 37.

Catharine, princess of France, married to Henry V. of England, iii. 112. Brought to bed of a son, afterwards Henry VI. 115. Marries, after her husband's death, Sir Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, and thus founds the future grandeur of that name, 118. See *Tudor*.

———of Arragon, married to prince Arthur of England, iii. 385. On the death of her husband married to prince Henry, afterwards Henry VIII. 386. Henry entertains scruples concerning his marriage with her, iv. 76. Solicits the emperor her nephew's assistance. 87. Her behaviour at the trial of her marriage, *ib.* Her appeal received at Rome, 110. Refuses Cranmer's citation to appear before him, 112. Her marriage declared null, 113. Is degraded to the rank of princess dowager of Wales, but insists on being served as queen, *ib.* Her death and letter to Henry, 143.

———Howard, lady. See *Howard*.

———princess of Portugal, is married to king Charles II. viii. 378. Is accused by Oates and Bedloe, of being concerned in the popish plot, viii. 84.

Catholics. See *Reformation, Protestants, Heresy, &c.*

Cavaliers, the appellation of, when and to whom given, vi. 464.

Cavendish, Sir Thomas, his successful expedition against the Spaniards, and voyage round the world, v. 328.

Ceaulin, son of Kenric, king of Wessex, his successes against the Britons, i. 53. Crushed by a confederacy under Ethelbert, king of Kent, *ib.*

Cecil, Sir William, is committed to the Tower, along with the protector Somerset, iv. 338. When secretary of state, signs the patent for the succession of the lady Jane Grey, 364. Is made secretary of state on the accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 5. Encourages her to re-establish the

the protestant religion, *ib.* Remonstrates to Elizabeth the expediency of assisting the protestant malcontents in Scotland, 33. Signs the treaty of Edinburgh with Dr. Wotton on the part of Elizabeth, 36. Informs the house of commons of the queen's promise to marry, and of her reasons against naming a successor, 101. His advice to Elizabeth, on Mary taking refuge in England, 129. Is appointed one of the commissioners to inquire into the conduct of Mary, 139. Interposes with queen Elizabeth in favour of the reformation, 153. *note.* 155. His great influence over Elizabeth, 158. Is sent with proposals to Mary, who concludes a treaty with Elizabeth, 169. Writes a letter to Lenox, the regent, on this business, calculated to frustrate it, 170. Is created lord Burleigh, 198. See *Burleigh.*

Cecil, Sir Robert, is made secretary of state, v. 384. Is made master of the wards, 409. Is created Earl of Salisbury, vi. 5. See *Salisbury.*

——, Sir Edward, is sent with a fleet against Cadiz, but fails, vi. 212. Is forced to return, by the plague among his men, *ib.*

Celestine III. pope, refuses to absolve Philip of France from his engagements to Richard I. of England, ii. 15. Renews the legantine authority to Longchamp bishop of Ely, 17. Is written to by Eleanor, queen dowager of England, on the captivity of Richard in Germany, 23. Threatens the emperor with excommunication on this account, 27.

Celibacy, the political motives of enforcing it on the Romish clergy, i. 110. Synods called to establish it, 271. 334. See *Reformation.*

Cenulph, king of Mercia, his unfortunate reign, i. 56.

Ceodwalla, king of Wessex, his history, i. 54.

Ceorles, among the Anglo-Saxons, import of that denomination, i. 210.

Cerdic, the Saxon, arrives in Britain with his son Kenric, i. 23. Defeats the Britons, 24. Establishes the kingdom of Wessex, 25. See Wessex.

Cerimbra, in Portugal, a rich carrack taken there, by an English fleet, v. 444.

Chair, sedan, the first seen in England, used by the duke of Buckingham, vi. 168. Gave great indignation at first to the people, 169.

Chalons, rencontre there, between Edward I. and the French knights, incensed at his successes in a tournament there, ii. 234.

Chamberlain, Thomas, is executed for robbing the fair at Boston in Lincolnshire, ii. 244.

Champernon, Henry, raises, with queen Elizabeth's leave, a body of volunteers to assist the French protestants, v. 188.

Chancellor of England, the nature of his office in the time of Henry II. i. 384. A list of those during the reign of James I. vi. 156. During the reign of Charles I. vii. 152.

Chapter lands, seized by Henry VIII. from the sees of Canterbury, York, and London, iv. 222.

Charlemagne, emperor, enters into an alliance with Offa, king of Mercia, i. 50. His bigoted cruelty to the pagans in Germany, 66. Consequences of his conduct, 67.

Charles, prince, second son of James I. becomes prince of Wales, by the death of his elder brother Henry, vi. 62. A marriage with the second

second daughter of Spain proposed for him, 100. Is persuaded by Buckingham to go to Madrid to visit the infanta, 129. The difficulty with which he obtained permission of James, 131. His reception in Spain, 133. Returns home, 135. Obtains a high character in Spain, 136. Is persuaded by Buckingham to oppose the marriage, 137. Vouches the truth of Buckingham's misrepresentation of the affair to parliament, 141. A marriage with the princess Henrietta of France proposed, 149. Death of his father, 153. *See the next article.*

Charles I. summons a parliament on his accession, vi. 199. Prorogues it on account of his marriage with the princess Henrietta, *ib.* Inquiry into the cause of the small supply voted to him by the commons, 201. Character of the Duke of Buckingham, and his great influence over him, *ib.* A plan concerted by the commons for the assertion of civil liberty, 204. Entertains high ideas of monarchical power, 205. Adjourns the parliament to Oxford on account of the plague, 206. Represents his necessities to parliament, *ib.* Is refused on account of the assistance sent against the Rochellers, 207. His moderation towards the Catholics aggravates the popular disquiets, 210. Dissolves the parliament on the plague appearing at Oxford, 211. Issues privy seals for borrowing money, 212. Ineffectual attempt on Cadiz, *ib.* Calls a second parliament, *ib.* Threatens the commoners, 218. Imprisons two commoners who managed Buckingham's impeachment, 219. Is forced to release them, *ib.* His reflections on the proceedings of the commons, 221. Dissolves the parliament, 222. Publishes a declaration in defence of himself, *ib.* Raises money by dispensing with the penal laws against Catholics, 224. Solicits loans from the nobility, and from the city, *ib.* Is refused by the city, *ib.* Levies ship-money for the first time, 225. Resolves to levy a general loan, *ib.* Imprisons those who refuse compliance, 227. Other oppressions exercised on refusal, 230. Engages in a war with France, 232. Sends a fleet to the assistance of the Hugonots in Rochelle, 236. Calls a third parliament, 239. His threatening address to it, 240. Five subsidies voted by the commons, 245. Sends a message to the house, 251. His farther expostulations with the commons, *ib.* And with the lords, 252. His evasive manner of passing the petition of right, 253. Gives his full assent to it, 256. Prorogues the parliament, 259. His behaviour on information of Buckingham's assassination, 262. Discovers an intention to elude the petition of right, 265. Levies tonnage and poundage, after the expiration of the grant of those duties, 267. Pleads his necessity for this measure, 268. The commons insist on his discontinuing this prerogative, *ib.* His embarrassment at this demand, *ib.* His religious sentiments, 273. His quarrel with the commons augmented on the subject of tonnage and poundage, 275. Dissolves the parliament, 276. Imprisons some of the members, *ib.* Makes peace with France and Spain, 279. Assists Gustavus, king of Sweden, in his invasion of Germany, 281. His domestic character, 282. Promotes the popular leaders, 284. Characters of Strafford and Laud, 285. Orders by proclamation no one to propose the calling of another parliament, 293. Levies money irregularly by his regal authority, *ib.* Encourages the magnificent repair of St. Paul's cathedral,

cathedral, 295. Revives monopolies, 296. Enlarges the powers of the council of York, and court of star-chamber, 297. Renews his father's edict for recreations on Sunday, 299. Takes a journey to Scotland, *ib.* Levies ship-money over the whole kingdom, 301. Arbitrary sentences of the star-chamber, 303—305. Equips a fleet to attack the Dutch herring-fishery, and obtains a sum for licence to fish, 306. Stops the emigration of Puritans to America, 308. Trial of John Hambden for refusing to pay ship-money, 313. Reason of his attachment to church-authority, 320. Declares a general resumption of crown-lands in Scotland, 321. Introduces the canons and liturgy there, 325. Tumults at Edinburgh on this account, 327. Enforces the liturgy by proclamation, 329. Revolt of the Scots, and the covenant framed and universally subscribed, 330. Sends the marquis of Hamilton to treat with the covenanters, *ib.* Frames a covenant on his part, which is rejected, 332. Episcopacy abolished in Scotland by the general assembly, 334. Refuses the proposal of a neutrality as to the low countries, 335. Sends the marquis of Hamilton with a fleet and army against the Scots, 339. Joins an army under the Earl of Arundel, and marches to Berwick, *ib.* Receives proposals for a treaty from the covenanters, *ib.* His reflections on the proposal, 340. Concludes an imprudent pacification with them, 341. How induced to this measure, 342. Disbands an army, 344. Assembles a fourth parliament, after an interval of eleven years, 345. Lays before it an intercepted letter from the Scots malcontents to the king of France, *ib.* His pleas for supplies, 346. Desires the good offices of the peers with the commons, 348. His concessions to the commons, 349. Dissolves the parliament abruptly, 353. His arbitrary proceedings against obnoxious members, 354. Publishes a declaration of his reasons for dissolving the parliament, 355. His schemes for supplying himself with money, 356. Prepares another armament against the Scots, 357. Names commissioners to treat with the Scots at Rippon, 358. Summons a great council of the Peers at York, 359. The treaty of Rippon adjourned to London, 360. Promises the Earl of Strafford protection, 367. Meeting of the long parliament. *ib.* Impeachment of Strafford, *ib.* Of Laud, 369. Of Finch, 371. Votes of the commons regarding grievances, 372. His observations to parliament on their proceedings, 381. Endeavours to regain confidence by complying to the disposition of parliament, 392. Receives limited grants for tonnage and poundage, *ib.* Passes the act for triennial parliaments, 393. Changes his ministry, 394. Countersigns the petition of the army, 411. Interposes with the lords in favour of Strafford, 413. Strafford's letter to him, 414. Gives his assent to Strafford's attainder by commission, *ib.* Passes the bill for not proroguing, adjourning, or dissolving the parliament without their own consent, 416. Passes the bill for abolishing the high commission court, and star-chamber, 420. Goes to visit Scotland, 422. A committee of both houses appointed to attend him, 423. Laws passed by the Scots parliament, 426. Endeavours to conciliate the affections of the Scots, 428. Is obliged by the English commons to reduce the Irish army, 431. Is thwarted in his intention of sending the disbanded men into the Spanish service,

service, 432. Sir Phelim O'Neale forges a commission from him for the Irish massacre, 443. Communicates his intelligence of the Irish insurrection to the Scots parliament, *ib.* Informs the English parliament of it, 444. Returns to London, and is presented with the remonstrance and petition of the commons, 456. Answers the remonstrance, *ib.* Impeaches lord Kimbolton and five commoners, 467. Orders the impeached members to be delivered up, 514. Goes himself to the house to demand them, *ib.* Orders a common council of London to be assembled, which he attends, 470. His treatment by the Londoners, 471. Retires to Hampton-court, 472. Remarks on his conduct towards parliament, 473. Messages between him and the parliament, 474. Passes the bills sent to him, 477. The commons prepare to defend their measures by arms, 478. Evades assenting to the bill appointing the lieutenants of counties by the commons, 480. His reply to their solicitations to pass it, 482. Removes to York, 484. Is encouraged by the principal nobility and gentry, 485. Refuses to pass the militia bill, and issues proclamations against the proceedings of the commons, *ib.* Answers their memorials by the assistance of lord Falkland, 487. Issues commissions of array, in opposition to the militia, 488. Is refused admittance to Hull, 489. The county of York levies a guard for him, *ib.* Receives military stores from Holland, 490. His answer to the propositions of agreement sent by the parliament, 492. Erects his standard at Nottingham, 493. State of parties at the commencement of the civil war, 494. His revenue stopped by parliament, 496. Is prevailed upon to make overtures for a treaty, 499. His declarations before his army, 503. Prince Rupert defeats a party of Essex's army, 505. Marches from Shrewsbury to meet Essex, 506. Battle of Edge-hill, *ib.* Takes possession of Oxford, 508. Marches toward London, *ib.* Receives an address from the parliament for a treaty, *ib.* Defeats two regiments at Brentford, 509. Returns to Oxford, *ib.* Demands of the parliament in the negotiation there, 510. Reading taken from him by the Earl of Essex, 512. Cornwal reduced to obedience to him by Sir Ralph Hopton, 515. His generals defeat the parliament commanders, at Bradoc-down and Stratton, 516. Sends prince Maurice and the marquis of Hertford into the west, 518. Lord Wilmot, sent with cavalry to the west, defeats Sir William Waller on Roundway-down, 515. Receives a reinforcement brought over by the queen, 522. Bristol taken by prince Rupert, *ib.* Publishes a manifesto, and renews his protestation, 524. Joins the camp at Bristol, *ib.* Besieges Gloucester, 525. Raises the siege on the approach of Essex, 531. Battle of Newbury, 532. Establishes a garrison in Reading, 533. Applies to Ireland for assistance, 536. His reply to the offer of mediation made by the Scots commissioners, 538. Orders Ormond to conclude a cessation with the Irish rebels, 546. Receives troops from Ormond, *ib.* A vindication of his innocence as to the Irish rebellion, 580. Endeavours to form a parliament at Oxford, in opposition to that at London, vii. 3. Circulates privy seals for loans, 4. Solicits a treaty, *ib.* Declares the parliament at London not to be a free one, or invested with authority, 5. Writes to the parliament, which rejects his offers,

offers, *ib.* Prince Rupert is defeated at Marston-Moor, 12. York and Newcastle taken from him, 14. Appoints Ruthven, earl of Brentford, general under him, 15. Routs Sir William Waller at Cropredy bridge, 16. Reduces Essex's army in the west, *ib.* Is defeated at Newbury, 17. Makes fresh proposals for a treaty, 30. Sends commissioners to Uxbridge, 31. His offers with regard, to church government, 33. His offers with regard to the militia, 35. The licentious disposition and practices of his troops, 54. Relieves Chester, 55. Takes Leicester, 56. Battle of Naseby, 57. Is defeated, 58. His cabinet of letters seized, and published by the parliament, *ib.* Recalls prince Rupert's commission on the loss of Bristol, 61. Is again defeated at Chester, *ib.* Retires to Oxford, *ib.* Lord Ashley defeated, 65. His fortitude under his disasters, *ib.* Is refused a treaty by the parliament, 66. His commission to the earl of Glamorgan with regard to Ireland, 67. Glamorgan's conduct, *ib.* Justifies himself in this affair, *ib.* Retires from Oxford, and puts himself into the hands of the Scots army before Newark, 73. Is put under a guard by them, *ib.* His treatment by the preachers, 74. Is obliged to order his garrisons to surrender, 75. Receives fresh proposals from the parliament and the Scots, 76. Is delivered up to the English commissioners, 80. Is conducted to Holdenby, *ib.* Is seized by Cornet Joyce, and conveyed to the army, 88. The indulgence of the army toward him, 97. The army enters into treaty with him, for the settlement of the nation, 99. His offers to Cromwel and Ireton, 100. Is brought by the army to Hampton-court, 104. His confinement increased, 106. Flies to the Isle of Wight, 107. Entrusts himself to Hammond the governor, who lodges him in Carisbroke castle, *ib.* Negotiates again with the parliament, 111. The parliament votes against all farther treaty with him, 113. Is closely confined, 114. The Scots commissioners treat with him for arming Scotland in his favour, 116. A fleet in the river declares for him, 119. Treats with commissioners of the parliament sent for that purpose, 122. The points debated between them, *ib.* Is again seized by the army, and confined in Hurst castle, 130. Is brought to London to be tried, 135. His trial opened, 136. His speech against the authority of the court, 137. Is condemned, 139. Reflections on this event, 140. His behaviour after sentence, 142. His execution, 144. His character, 146. His children, 152. Inquiry into the authenticity of the *Icon Basilikè*, 153. Character of this work, and its supposed influence in producing the restoration of his son, 154. His love for the fine arts, 341. His pictures and furniture sold, 342. His death how first resolved upon, 519. Vindicated from the charge of insincerity, 523.

Charles, prince of Wales, son of Charles I. is sent by his father, general into the west, vii. 60. Retires over to Paris to his mother, 63. Takes command of a fleet which declares for the king, 119. Is proclaimed king by the Scots, 159. Is obliged to remove from Holland, 172. Desires the Scots commissioners to attend him at Breda, 173. The terms proposed to him there, *ib.* His treatment on landing in Scotland, 183. The declaration he is forced to publish, 184. Is obliged to sign twelve articles of repentance, 185. Goes

Goes to the Scots camp; but is ordered by the clergy to leave it, 189. Is crowned at Scone, 192. Is reproved by a committee of ministers for his gallantries, 193. Is detected in an attempt to escape, *ib.* Is permitted to join the camp, 194. Marches into England, 195. Is routed by Cromwel at Worcester, 196. Secretes himself at Boscobel, 197. Travels in disguise to Bristol, 198. Takes refuge with colonel Windham, *ib.* Embarks at Shoreham, in Sussex for Normandy, 200. Encourages an insurrection of the Royalists against the protector, 243. Is forced to retire from France, 249. Forms a league with Philip of Spain, and keeps a court at Bruges, 278. His reception by the French and Spanish ministers, at the treaty of the Pyrenees, 306. Sends a letter to Monk, 311. His letter delivered to parliament, 327. He is proclaimed, 328.

Charles II. is restored by parliament, vii. 32. The respect shewn to him by foreign powers on this event, 329. Lands at Dover, 330. His character and personal qualifications, 349. Forms his ministry 350. Settlement of the State, 352. The late king's judges ordered to surrender, on exclusion from pardon, 353. Passes an act of indemnity, *ib.* His revenue settled, 354. Restores episcopacy and the liturgy, 362. His reasons for restoring episcopacy in Scotland, 366. Restores the bishops to their seats in parliament, 372. All military authority surrendered to him, 373. The regulation of corporations granted to him, 374. His motives for marrying Catharine of Portugal, 378. Sells Dunkirk to the French, 385. Issues the declaration of indulgence, 387. Is attached to the catholic religion, 388. Becomes disgusted with Clarendon, 392. Is ruled by his mistress the Duchess of Cleveland, *ib.* His character and conduct, 393. Demands, and obtains, a repeal of the triennial act, 395. Sends Sir Robert Holmes to attack the Dutch settlements, 399. Obtains a sum from the city of London for the Dutch war, 400. Declares war against the United Provinces, 402. Endeavours to engage France to unite against the Dutch, 404. Denmark declares against him, 406. Passes the five-mile act, 407. Makes advances toward a peace with the States, 417. Treaty of Breda, 422. Banishment of Clarendon, 427. Concludes the triple alliance, 435. Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 437. Is forced to pass the bill against the importation of Irish cattle, 448. As also the act against conventicles, 456. Character of his *cabal* ministry, 458. The counsels instilled into him by, 461. Is prevailed on to desert his triple alliance, and to league with France, by his sister the duchess of Orleans, 464. Is influenced also by his French mistress, the duchess of Portsmouth, *ib.* Pardons Blood for his attempt on the regalia, and promotes him, 472. Bestows a peerage and the treasurer's staff on Sir Thomas Clifford, for his expedient of shutting up the exchequer, 475. A second declaration of indulgence, 476. Suspension of the navigation act, 477. Martial law revived, *ib.* Declares war against the Dutch, 478. His reflections on the successes of Lewis in the Low Countries, 492. His demands from the States, 494. His speech to parliament, 500. His declaration of indulgence opposed by the commons, 503. Recalls the declaration, 505. Prorogues the parliament, 512. Asks advice of parliament respecting

respecting making peace with the Dutch, 513. Peace concluded, *ib.* Proof of his entering into a scheme for restoring popery, viii. 4, *note*, Duplicity of his conduct on this occasion, *ib.* Sir William Temple's free remonstrance to him, 7. Is unable to obtain a supply for taking off anticipations of his revenue, 15. Suppresses coffee-houses by proclamation, 16. Recalls the proclamation, *ib.* His embarrassed situation at the time of the congress of Nimeguen, 24. His speech to parliament, 25. Is exhorted by parliament to guard against the growing power of France, 27. Requests supplies, and pledges his honour for the proper application of them, 28. Is addressed by the parliament to form an alliance with the States against France, 31. Adjourns the parliament, *ib.* Secretly signs a treaty with France, and obtains a pension from that court on promise of his neutrality, 32. Receives the prince of Orange at Newmarket, 33. Concludes a marriage between him and the princess Mary, 35. Concerts the terms of peace with the prince, *ib.* Sends the terms to Paris, 36. His instructions to Sir William Temple, with Temple's reply, 37. Concludes an alliance with the States, to oblige France to peace, 38. The parliament still distrustful of him, 39. Receives a passionate address from the commons, 40. Concludes a treaty with the States to oblige Lewis to an immediate evacuation of the towns in Flanders, 42. His conduct in regard to the treaty of Nimeguen, 47. His observation on the complaints made of Lauderdale's administration in Scotland, 60. Is warned of a popish plot, 63. Publishes proclamations for the discovery of the murderers of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, 77. His speech to parliament, *ib.* Ridicules the popish plot privately, 83. Protects his queen from the accusation of Oates and Bedloe, 85. Refuses to pass the militia bill, *ib.* His private contract with Lewis, for the peace of Nimeguen, discovered by Danby's letters, in the house of commons, 86. Dissolves the parliament to screen Danby, 88. Is obliged to summon a parliament again for money, 93. Desires his brother to retire beyond sea, 95. Declares the illegitimacy of the duke of Monmouth, 96. Asserts the prerogative of rejecting the speaker chosen by the commons, 97. The pretension compromised, *ib.* Asserts his intention of protecting Danby against the resentment of the commons, 98. Chooses a new council by the advice of Sir William Temple, 101. A list of the new council, 102. Proposes to parliament limitations on a popish successor to the crown, 103. Habeas corpus act passed, 107. The parliament takes advantages of his necessities, *ib.* Prorogues, and after dissolves, the parliament, 110. The popularity of his behaviour, 121. Is prevailed on by the duke of ork to deprive Monmouth of his command, and send him abroad, 122. Is strongly petitioned for a parliament, 125. His speech to the new parliament, 129. Evades passing a repeal of the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth, 148. Dissolves the parliament, and summons another to meet at Oxford, 149. His speech to the new parliament, 150. Dissolves it, 154. Persecutes the Dissenters, 175. Issues a writ of *quo warranto* against the city of London, 178. Conditions on which he restored the charter, 181. Makes profit by the surrender of corporation charters, *ib.* How he escaped the Rye-house plot, 186. His motives for not sparing lord Russel, 193. Marries the lady Anne to

prince George of Denmark, 204. particulars of a private agreement between him and Lewis XIV. 207, *note.* Is conjectured to have intended an alteration of his political measures, 208. Dies 209. His private character, 210. His political character, 211. Compared with the emperor Tiberius, 213. The royal society instituted by him, 332. Why unable to encourage literary merit, 333.

Charles the Simple, king of France, resigns Neustria to Rollo the Dane, and gives him his daughter, i. 138.

———the Fair, king of France, the grounds of his dispute with Edward II. of England, ii. 350. Secretly countenances the conspiracy of his sister, queen Isabella, against Edward, 252.

———, dauphin of France, is seduced by Charles king of Navarre, ii. 450. Repents, and betrays Charles into the hands of his father John, 451. His government renounced on his father's captivity, and all affairs thrown into confusion, 462. Rejects the dishonourable treaty concluded by his father at London, 465. His prudent disposition on Edward's invasion, *ib.* Succeeds to the crown on his father's death, 472 The first acts of his reign, *ib.* Acknowledges the young count de. Mountford duke of Britany, 473. Is engaged by the count de Transtamare to invade Peter king of Castile, 475. Summons prince Edward to Paris, 480. Invades the English provinces in France, 481.

———VI. of France, his situation compared with that of Richard II. of England, iii. 92. Disorders the kingdom became subject to, from the devolving of the regal power on the duke of Orleans and Burgundy on his insanity, 93. See *France, Burgundy,* and *Orleans.* Dies, 118.

———VII. of France, his character, and situation at the death of his father, iii. 125. His distressed situation after the battle of Verneuil, 132. How recovered from his despair on the siege of Orleans, 141. Determines, on the success of Joan D'Arc, to take the field, 151. Marches into Rheims, and is crowned there, *ib.* His volunteer army disbands, 153. Makes peace with the duke of Burgundy at Arras, 161. His advantages in the war with the English, 165. Concludes a truce with the English, 169. His prudent employment of this interval, 175. Renews the war, 176. Takes Rouen, and Recovers the province of Normandy, 177. Recovers Guienne, *ib.* Dies 223.

———VIII. king of France, encourages the Flemings in their opposition to his father-in-law Maximilian, king of the Romans, iii. 334. Invades Britany by invitation of the Barons, 336. Marries the duchess of Britany, 449. Returns the daughter of Maximilian, to whom he had been contracted, *ib.* Makes peace with Spain, and his cessions to that court, 354. Receives Perkin Warbec, and patronizes him, 358. Invades Italy, 368.

———IX. of France, his mother Catharine de Medicis appointed regent during his minority, v. 42. See *Medicis.* League of Bayonne for the extirpation of the Hugonots, 93. Is forced to an accommodation with the prince of Condé, 136. Concludes a second accommodation with the protestants, 188. His dissimulation toward the protestant leaders, 204. Marries his sister to the prince Navarre, 205. Orders the poisoning of the queen of Navarre, *ib.* Massacre of Paris, *ib.* The massacre of the Hugonots extended to the provinces, 206. Extorts a recantation of the protestant religion from the young king of Navarre, and prince of

of Condé. *ib.* Calumniates the protestants at foreign courts, to palliate these barbarities, *ib.* His death and character, 210.

Charles, grandson of Ferdinand of Arragon, succeeds him in the kingdom of Spain, iv. 12. Is chosen emperor of Germany, 18.

———V. emperor of Germany, his character compared with that of his competitor Francis I. of France, iv. 19. His extensive dominions, *ib.* Motives of his visit to Henry VIII. 21. Pays his court to cardinal Wolsey, *ib.* A second interview between him and Henry, at Gravelines, 24. His grants to Wolsey, 25. Makes war against France, *ib.* His exorbitant demands from Francis, 26. Concludes an alliance with the pope and Henry, against Francis, *ib.* Comes over again to England, 40. Renews his court to Wolsey, *ib.* Is installed knight of the garter, *ib.* The duke of Bourbon revolts against Francis, and enters his service, 50. Invades France, and takes Fontarabia, 52. A new treaty between him and Henry for the invasion of France, 54. Invades Provence, 55. Battle of Pavia, and captivity of Francis, 57. His hypocrisy on this occasion, 58. His exorbitant demands for the ransom of Francis, 64. Carries Francis to Madrid, 65. Visits him, *ib.* Restores Francis by the treaty of Madrid, 66. His hypocrisy on the news of the taking of Rome by the Imperial troops, 70. War declared against him by France and England, 73. Challenges Francis to single combat, *ib.* Intimidates the pope, 82. Peace of Cambray with Francis, 98. Sultan Solyman conquers Hungary, and besieges Vienna, 99. Makes advances toward an accommodation with Henry, 143. His unsuccessful invasion of France, 145. Concludes a truce with Francis for ten years, 176. Asks of Francis permission to pass through France to the Netherlands, 203. Is honourably received and conducted through, 204. His ungrateful insincerity towards Francis, 211. Irritates Henry against Francis, and concludes an alliance with him, *ib.* 236. His remark on Henry's suppression of the monasteries, 237. Reduces the duchy of Cleves, 239. Besieges Landrecy, *ib.* Is forced to abandon the siege, 240. Invades France in concert with Henry, 245. Takes St. Disier, 247. Concludes a separate peace with Francis, *ib.* His conduct relating to the council of Trent, 294. His artful and treacherous behaviour toward the princes of the protestant league, *ib.* His reasons for declining an alliance with the protector Somerset on the part of Edward VI. 334. Is reduced to grant an equitable peace to the protestants, by Maurice, elector of Saxony, 382. Makes an unsuccessful attempt on Metz, *ib.* Proposes his son Philip as a husband to queen Mary of England, 383. His reasons for stopping cardinal Pole on his journey to England, 384. Sends over a large sum to bribe the English parliament, 394. Instructs cardinal Pole to exhort Mary to moderation toward her protestant subjects, 411. resigns all his hereditary dominions to his son Philip, 425. Retires to a monastery in Estremadura, *ib.* His employment, in his retreat, 426. His character, compared with that of Pope Paul IV. 427.

———king of Navarre, some account of, and his character, ii. 449. Procures Charles de la Cerda, constable of France, to be assassinated, and his behaviour on that occasion, 450. John, king of France,

purchases a peace with him, *ib.* Seduces the dauphin, Charles, who betrays him into the hands of his father, 451. Is thrown into prison, *ib.* Escapes, 464.

Charles X. of Sweden, his success in the north, vii. 246. Besieges Copenhagen, but is forced to desist, by an English and Dutch fleet, 304.

——de Blois, marries the niece of John III. duke of Britany, and is acknowledged successor to that duchy, ii. 416. Besieges the countess de Mountfort in Hennebonne, 418. Is forced to raise the siege by the arrival of succours from England, 420. Is taken prisoner by the countess de Mountfort, 438. Is slain in Britany, 478.

Charmouth, battle there between the English and Danes, i. 68.

Charter of liberties granted to the English by Henry I. i. 314. Review of this charter, 317. Renewed by Stephen, and confirmed by Henry II. ii. 78. The great charter, called *Magna Charta*, granted by John, 84. The principal heads of this charter, 85. Remarks upon it, 87, 141. Securities for the fulfilment of it, 89. A new one granted by Henry III. 146. The differences between this charter, and the *Magna Charta* of John, *ib.* A confirmation of it by Henry, 147. A charter of forests granted by him, *ib.* The great charter renewed and confirmed by a parliament at Oxford, 155. A solemn confirmation of the great charter by Henry, 179. The two charters confirmed by parliament at home, and by Edward I. in Flanders, 292. Are confirmed by him in the fullest manner on his return, with farther securities, *ib.* A free and full confirmation of them by Edward I. 294. Above twenty parliamentary confirmations of the great charter, granted by Edward III. 488.

Chartres, the city of, besieged by the prince of Condé, v. 186.

Chateau Gaillard on the frontier of Normandy, described, ii. 51. Is besieged and taken by Philip of France, 52.

Chatelrault, the earl of Arran, created duke of, iv. 312. Resigns his authority as regent of Scotland to the queen dowager, 439. Interposes and effects an accommodation between the queen regent and the *Congregation of the Lord*, v. 31. Joins the *Congregation*, *ib.* Is discontented at the marriage of Mary with the lord Darnley, 89. Enters into a conspiracy against Mary at Stirling, 90. Is forced to take refuge in England, 91. Is pardoned on condition of retiring to France, 92. Arrives in London during the conference at York, but is detained by Elizabeth till Murray's return, 145. Lays down his arms on the detection of Norfolk's conspiracy, 203.

Chauntry, what, iv. 252, *note.*

Cherington, battle there, between Waller and Hopton, vii. 8.

Chester, when first erected into a bishopric, iv. 183.

Child, Sir Josiah, his account of the great increase of wealth after the restoration, viii. 329.

Chivalry, the passion for, when first introduced among the English, ii. 140. The romantic principles of, deduced, *ib.* How improved during the times of the crusades, 141.

Christ church, Oxford, history of its first foundation, iv. 279.

Christianity, its first introduction among the Anglo-Saxons, i. 30.

Church, the power of the, in the times of the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 139. The authority of, detached from the state, by the ill-judged policy of William the Conqueror, *ib.* Estimate of its revenues in the reign of Henry IV. iii. 81. Proposal formed by the commons to convert them to civil purposes, *ib.* For its reformation from popery, see *Reformation*. An examination of its principles of reformation, v. 149. Reflections on the revolution of its doctrines concerning the absolute decrees of God, vi. 166.

Churchill, captain, distinguishes himself in the French army against the Imperialists. viii. 18. Joins the prince of Orange, on his invasion of England, 295.

Circuits, by itinerant justices, established by Henry II. i. 450.

Cities in England, the state of, at the time of the Norman conquest, i. 209. See *Corporations*.

Civil laws, a view of the state of, as modelled by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 140.

Civil society, the advantages of, in comparison of barbarous ages, i. [illegible]

Claims, a court of, erected for the division of lands in Ireland, vii. 446.

Clanricarde, earl of, forms a combination among the Irish catholics, and drives the nuncio Rinuccini out of the island, vii. 163. Invites Ormond back from France, *ib.* Is obliged to submit to the parliament, retires, and dies, 207.

Clarence, Lionel duke of, second son of Edward III. a brief view of his life, ii. 486.

———, Thomas duke of son of Henry IV. iii. 83. Attends his brother Henry V. to France, 110. Defeated and slain at the battle of Baugé 114.

———George duke of, second brother to Edward IV. leagues with the Earl of Warwic, iii. 230. Marries his daughter, *ib.* Confused accounts of their subsequent operations, 234. Raises men in conjunction with Warwick, but despairing of success disbands them, and flies to France, 236. Secretly reconciled to his brother Edward, 239. Deserts with his forces from Warwick, 249. Hindered from marrying the heiress of Burgundy, by his brother Edward, 260. Prosecution and execution of two of his friends, Burdet and Stacy, 261. Confined and tried for his reflections on these proceedings, 262. Drowned in a butt of malmsey, 263. Reflections on the unfortunate fate of his children, *ib.*

Clarendon, summary of the constitutions of, i. 393. Subscribed by the bishops, 395. Abrogated by pope Alexander, 396.

———, Hyde earl of, and chancellor, his character as an historian, vii. 347. Persuades Charles II. to disband the republican army, 360. His character and influence with the king, *ib.* His daughter married to the duke of York, 361. Is impeached in the house of lords by the earl of Bristol, 392. Causes of the decline of his credit with the king, *ib.* The causes of his fall inquired into, 423. The great seal taken from him, 425. Is impeached by the commons, *ib.* 530. Retires to Calais, and writes from thence to the house of lords, 426.

Is banished, and composes his history of the civil war, 427. Review of his life and conduct, *ib.*

Claypole, Mrs. daughter of Oliver Cromwel, her character and death, vii. 283.

Clement V. Pope, the order of knights templars abolished by him, ii. 364.

———VII. of the family of Medicis, elected to the papacy, iv. 48. Grants to Wolsey the legantine commission for life, 49. Gives Francis I. of France a dispensation from fulfilling the treaty of Madrid, 68. Rome sacked by the Imperial troops, and himself taken prisoner, 69. Is applied to by Henry VIII. for a divorce from Catharine of Arragon, 79. Causes of his hesitation in that affair, 81. His character, 82. Is intimidated by the emperor, *ib.* Grants a commission to Campeggio and Wolsey, to try the king's marriage, 85. Evokes the cause to Rome, 91. Receives queen Catharine's appeal, 110. Is instigated by the conclave to proceed to extremities against Henry, but only threatens him, 114. Is disgusted with Charles, and leagues with Francis, *ib.* Motives which prevented an accomodation with Henry, 115. Pronounces sentence against Henry precipitately, which he afterwards repents, 116. His authority renounced by the English convocation and parliament, 119. Dies, 140.

———, prince of Bavaria, is chosen elector of Cologne, viii. 286.

———, Jacques, assassinates Henry III. of France, v. 357.

Clementines and Urbanists, the source of those distinctions, iii. 57.

Clergy, review of the usurpations of the, in the reign of Henry II. i. 382. Their artifices to obtain money, 390. Claim an exemption from the civil magistrate, *ib.* Enormities committed by, *ib.* How they evaded the celibacy enjoined them, ii. 64. Reflections on their case, *ib.* By what titles they obtained seats in the ancient feudal parliaments, 114. Of use as mediators in disputes between the kings and their barons, 157 Italian, an estimate of the value of their benefices in England, in the early part of the reign of Henry III. 170. Deprived of all protection from the laws, by Edward I. on their refusal to grant him supplies, 286. The bad circumstances to which they were reduced by the exclusion, *ib.* Are reduced to compliance, 287. A view of the supplies granted by, to Edward I. 323. Why assiduous in promoting the study and observance of civil law, iii. 299. Not to beg without a licence at the time of Henry VII. 403. All obliged to take the oath of supremacy, by act of Elizabeth's parliament, v. 76. Their disposition toward Romish ceremonies and church authority, under the countenance of bishop Laud, vi. 292. The right of taxing their revenues resigned to parliament, vii. 401. Parochial, obtain the right of voting at elections, 402. See *Church* and *Bishops*.

———, reformed in Scotland, their gross behaviour to Mary, on her arrival in Scotland, v. 49. Are ruled in this, by John Knox, *ib.* The real cause of their ill humour, 54. See *Knox*, *Reformation*, *Assembly*, *Congregation of the Lord*, *Ecclesiastical Commission*, and *Scotland*.

———of the church of Rome their authority and union dangerous to the civil magistrate, iv. 32. But the encouragement of the fine arts in some

some measure owing to them, 33. See *Indulgences*, *Luther*, and *Reformation*.

Clermont, a council called there by pope Martin II. to resolve on a holy war, i. 295.

Cleves. See *Anne* of.

Cleveland, duchess of, mistress to Charles II. her character and influence over the king, vii. 392.

Clifford, Sir Robert, engages in the imposture of Perkin Warbec, iii. 359. Prevailed on by Henry VII. to betray his secrets, and be his spy upon him, 361. Returns to England, and accuses Sir William Stanley as an accomplice, 362.

———, Sir Thomas, one of the *cabal*, his character, vii. 460. Obtains a peerage and the treasurer's staff, for the hint of shutting up the Exchequer, 475. Is excluded by the test act, 512.

Clinton, lord, commands queen Mary's fleet for a descent on the coasts of Britany, iv. 443. Lands at Conquet, but is driven off, *ib.* Is appointed one of the commissioners to inquire into the conduct of Mary queen of Scots, v. 139.

Coaches, when first introduced into England, v. 483.

Coal, when first dug in England, ii. 230.

Coats of arms, when they first came into vogue, ii. 140.

Cobbet, one of the king's judges, is seized in Holland, brought home, and executed, vii. 380.

Cobham, Sir John Oldcastle, lord, his character as head of the Lollards, iii. 89. Singled out as a victim by Arundel archbishop of Canterbury, *ib.* Conference between him and the king, *ib.* Condemned, *ib.* Escapes, *ib.* Conspires against the king, 90. Taken and executed, *ib.*

———, lord, condemned, but pardoned, for a conspiracy against James I. vi. 9. His inconsistent accusation of Sir Walter Raleigh, 10.

Coffee-houses, a proclamation for the suppression of, viii. 16. The proclamation suppressed, *ib.*

Coin, Swedish bullion imported, and good money coined, iv. 350. Is regulated by queen Elizabeth, v. 59. Amount of, from 1599 to 1619, vi. 185. Amount of, during the reign of Charles I. and the succeeding commonwealth, vii. 340. Great increase of, after the restoration, viii. 329.

Coke, Sir Edward, a curious passage from his Institutes, relating to the suppression of the monasteries, iv. 456. Queen Elizabeth's haughty treatment of him when speaker of the house of commons, v. 363. His severe treatment of the earl of Essex, 414. Grossly abuses Sir Walter Raleigh on his trial, vi. 10. Is ordered by James to prosecute the murderers of Sir Thomas Overbury, 77.

Colchester is forced to capitulate to Fairfax and Ireton, vii. 128.

Coleman is arrested, and his papers seized, on account of the popish plot, viii. 70. Discoveries made by his letters, *ib.* Is tried and executed, 90.

Coligni, admiral, makes an unsuccessful attempt on Boulogne, v. 333. Defends St. Quintin against the Spanish army, 434. The town taken, *ibid.*

ibid. a scheme for the taking of Calais, which is executed by the duke of Guise, 435. Declares in favour of the protestants in France, v. 41. Commands the protestant forces after the battle of Dreux, 72. Obtains supplies from Q. Elizabeth, 73. His progress in Normandy, 77. Is apprised of the league of Bayonne against the protestants, and concerts a scheme to frustrate it, 185. Battle of St. Dennis, 186. Collects the protestant forces after the defeat of Jarnac, and besieges Poictiers, 187. Is defeated by the duke of Anjou, at Montcontour, 188. Is deceived by the dissimulation of Charles, 204. Is wounded by an assassin, 205. Is killed in the massacre of Paris, *ib.*

Colingbourne, William, executed for a distich against Richard III. iii. 290.

College, a joiner, his extraordinary trial and execution, viii. 159.

Colonies settled by the English in America, vi. 186. See *America.* Are peopled by the restraints imposed on dissenters, viii. 328. Their charters recalled by James II. 330.

Colonna, Prosper, the Spanish general, defends Milan, against the French invasion under the admiral Bonnivet, iv. 53.

Columbus, Christopher, his first voyage for discovery of the western world, iii. 404. Sent his brother Bartholomew to England to make his proposals to Henry VII. 405. How Henry was deprived of the honour of the discovery of America, *ib.*

Combat, single, trial by, in the Anglo-Saxon laws, how instituted, i. 323. ii. 140.

Commerce, a view of the state of, during the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 37. Remarks of the state of, during the reign of Henry III. 224. Industry, and state of, in the reign of Edward III. 494. State of, during the reign of Henry IV. iii. 84. Regulations of, in the reign of Henry VII. 401. Great extension of, in this reign, 404. The privileges of the merchants of the still yard taken away, iv. 349. A treaty of, made with Gustavus Ericson, *ib.* State of, during the time of queen Mary, 447. The great oppression of, by the enormous grants of monopolies by queen Mary, v. 439. State of, during the reign of queen Elizabeth, 477. Establishment of the East-India company, *ib.* Trade with Muscovy opened, *ib.* Turkey company erected, 479. In the beginning of the reign of James. I. almost wholly monopolised by exclusive companies, vi. 23. A decay of shipping occasioned by this evil, 24. Amount of the customs in this reign, 51. State of, during this reign, 180. Exports and imports, 185. State of, during the reign of Charles I. and the succeeding commonwealth, vii. 339. Great increase of, after the restoration, viii. 328.

Commission, ecclesiastical or high. See *High* commission court.

Committee of safety, formed by the officers after the expulsion of the long or rump parliament, vii. 304. Negotiates with general Monk, 311.

Commodities, prices of, in the reign of Richard I. ii. 36. Remarks on the price of, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 497, *note.*

Common-prayer book, composed by a commitee of bishops and divines, iv. 320. In what respects it differed from the old mass-book, 321.

Is revised, 348. Is authorised by the parliament, 354. See *Liturgy* and *Reformation*.

Commons, the first efforts towards sending representatives of, to parliament, ii. 184. Begin to assemble separate from the peers, 188. Remonstrate against the delays of the council of barons, *ib.* Appeal to prince Edward. *ib.* The house of, regularly formed by the earl of Leicester, with the admission of members from boroughs, 210. Farther regulations with respect to the representatives of counties, 271. The real epoch of the house of 272. The election of representatives considered as a hardship both by them and their constituents, 275. The gradual increase of their influence on government, 276. Refuse granting supplies for the expedition of Edward III. against France, 400. The consequence they arrive to in his reign, 487. Lawyers frequently excluded the house at this time, *ib.* Choose a speaker for the first time, iii. 3. Petition the lords to appoint a council, &c. during the minority of Richard II. *ib.* Petition Richard II. against the confederacies of the barons, *ib.* 447. Impeach Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, 15. Their proceedings against Richard's ministry, 20. Their compliance to the king on the crushing of Gloucester's faction, 30, 449. Impeach Fitz-Allen archbishop of Canterbury, 31. Petition for an act to check the clergy in eluding the mortmain act, 56. Their importance greatly increased, 78. Insist on an answer to their petitions, before they make any grants, *ib.* Other acts of resolution by them, *ib.* Oppose Henry IV. in his attempt to exclude females from succession to the crown, 80. Advise the king to seize the temporalities of the church, *ib.* Scheme formed by them for an estimate of the ecclesiastical revenues, 81. Apply for a mitigation of the statutes against Lollards, *ib.* Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk, 185. A second, 187. Temper of the house which met on the assertion of the duke of York's pretensions, 196. Address the king to remove certain peers from his presence, *ib.* Their spirit of opposition to the encroachments of the church of Rome, during the reign of Henry VI. 214. Petition for the execution of the duke of Clarence, brother to Edward IV. 262. Their grants to Henry VIII. at the instance of cardinal Wolsey, and their speaker Sir Thomas More, iv. 47. The arbitrary speech of Henry to Edward Montague, a member, 451. Thomas Cromwel, a member, warmly defends his patron, cardinal Wolsey, against the charge of the peers, 94. Pass several bills to restrain the impositions of the clergy, 95. Extraordinary speech of a member on the subject of religion, 96. Complaint to the king of the reflections cast on them by Fisher, bishop of Rochester, 97. Grant the king a discharge of his debts, *ib.* Petition for indemnity from the statute of the provisors, 107. Prefer a complaint to the king against the oppressions of ecclesiastical courts, 108. Reject a bill framed by the king, respecting his right of wardships, &c. 109. Comply with an act relating to the possession of lands, framed by the king, 151. The gross flattery of the speaker to the king, 163. Grant Henry supplies, but very reluctantly, 206. Pass the bill for Cromwel's death unwillingly, 208. Petition the king to lay the case of his marriage with Anne of Cleves before the convocation, 209. Pass a bill of attainder against the duke of Norfolk

Norfolk in obedience to the king's message, 264. Cruel treatment of Strode, a member in Cornwall, for bringing in a bill concerning tin, 271. Lord Seymour attainted, 319. Alter the bill against treason, passed by the lords, and pass another, 355. Reject a poor-bill framed by the lords, and pass another, 356. Refuse to pass the attainder of Tonstal, bishop of Durham, or to ratify the attainder of Somerset, 357. A new election of, under Northumberland's influence, 358. Grant subsidies to the king, 359. Remonstrate against Mary marrying Philip of Spain, and are dissolved for it 385. A new election under Mary and Gardiner's influence, 399. Some members punished for secession, 403. Their reason for refusing a subsidy to the queen, 422. Grants made by a new house to the queen, 441. Oppose the act confirming the queen's sale, or grant of crown lands, *ib.* Copley, a member, imprisoned for speaking irreverently of the queen, 442. Vote a subsidy, and other grants to queen Elizabeth, v. 13. Address her to make choice of a husband, *ib.* Repeat this address, 73. Are stopped by Elizabeth in their debates concerning the settlement of the succession, 101. Farther debates on this subject, 102. Her speech at dissolving them, 103. Strickland introduces a bill for the amendment of the Liturgy, 174. Speech of Pistor on kneeling, and making the sign of the cross, 175. Strickland prohibited by the queen from attending the house, *ib.* Yelverton's free speech on the occasion, *ib.* Farther debates on this matter, 176. Strickland restored to the house, 177. Are checked by the lords in debating of matters of religious reformation, *ib.* Speeches on the queen's prerogative, occasioned by Bell's motion against an exclusive patent granted to a trading company at Bristol, 178. Bell severely reprimanded by the council for his temerity. 180. Are reproved by the lord keeper at the close of the session for their freedom, 181. A bribe given to a mayor for an election, with the probable reason for it, 183, *note.* Address the queen for the duke of Norfolk's execution, 200. Apply to the queen for the trial and execution of Mary queen of Scots, 201. Pass two bills for regulating ecclesiastical ceremonies, but are checked by the queen, *ib.* Speech of Peter Wentworth in favour of liberty, 225. Behaviour of the house on this occasion, 227. Oppose encroachments of the upper house, 228. Appoint a general fast, at the motion of Paul Wentworth, 236. Are reprimanded by the queen for it, *ib.* Apply to the bishops for farther reformation, 261. Complain of the court of ecclesiastical commission, *ib.* Are prohibited by the queen from intermeddling with ecclesiastical affairs, 345. Are checked in their endeavours to regulate purveyance, 347. The queen's haughty reply to the requests of Sir Edward Coke, speaker, 363. Peter Wentworth resumes the subject of the succession, 364. He and several others sent to prison, *ib.* Treatment of Morrice for opposing abuses of ecclesiastical power, 366. Yelverton a lawyer chosen speaker, 385. Grant supplies to the queen, *ib.* Dispute about forms with the lords, 386. Extraordinary assertions of the regal prerogative in the debates concerning monopolies, 441. The abject acknowledgments of the house on the queen's promise to cancel the most oppressive of the patents, 442. Grant the queen an extraordinary supply, 443. Review of the practice of

of the chancellors, in issuing new writs to supply the places of members, whom they judged incapable of attending, vi. 15. Votes of the house on this occasion, 16. Inquiry into the question, whether an outlaw can be chosen a member, 17. Restore Sir Francis Goodwin to his seat, which had been vacated by the chancellor on account of his outlawry, 18. Refuse a conference with the lords on this affair, 19. Are commanded by the king to confer with the judges, *ib.* Spirited debates on this subject, *ib.* A committee of, inquire into the monopolies of trade, 23. Attempt to free the nation from the burden of wardships and feudal tenures, 24. And from purveyance, *ib.* Are willing to grant any supplies to the king, 26. Reject a bill from the lords, for entailing the crown lands on the king and his successors, *ib.* Grant supplies, 40. Are averse to the union between England and Scotland, 41. Frame a petition for rigour toward popish recusants, and lenity toward scrupulous protestant clergymen, but are checked by the king, 43. order their journals to be regularly kept, 44. Refuse to supply the king's necessities, 47. Reflections on their conduct, 48. Their views extend to establish the constitution on freer principles than formerly, 51. Attempt to check the regal prerogative in ecclesiastical affairs, 53. Remonstrate against the high commission court, 54. Are alarmed at reports of the king's influence in elections, 72. Dispute the king's power of levying money by his prerogative, 73. Are dissolved in anger, and some of the members imprisoned, *ib.* Grant supplies to assist the Elector Palatine, 107. Make a representation of grievances to the king, 108. Impeach the lord chancellor Bacon, 109. Remonstrate to the king in favour of the elector Palatine, and against the Spanish match, 112. Are approved by the king, 113. Remonstrate again, 114. The king's speech to their committee, 115. Protest against the king's denial of their privileges, 116. This protestation tore out of their journal by the king, *ib* Are dissolved, and the refractory members punished, *ib.* The arguments urged by both parties concerning the disputes between the king and them, 118. Vote supplies for a Spanish war, 143. Impeach the earl of Middlesex, 144. Inquiry into the cause of the small supply granted by them in the first parliament of Charles I. 201. Their leaders and their views, 204. Continue obstinate in denying farther supplies, notwithstanding the king's remonstrances, 207. Are disgusted at the assistance sent against Rochelle, *ib.* Complain of the growth of popery, 210. A supply voted, but its passing into a law postponed, 213. Impeach the duke of Buckingham, 215. The two members who managed this impeachment imprisoned by the king, 219. Remonstrate against conferring trusts on catholics, 220. Are dissolved, but publish a remonstrance previous to their dissolution, 222. A character of this house in the third parliament, 239. Sir Francis Seymour's speech, 241. Sir Robert Philip's speech, 242. Sir Thomas Wentworth's speech, 244. Five subsidies voted, 245. The famous petition of right taken under consideration, 248. Farther expostulations, by the king, 251. The petition of right passed by them, 253. Impeach Manwayring, for asserting in a sermon the real prerogative of levying taxes independent of parliament, 255. Attach the commission for levying money, 257.

Present

Present a remonstrance against the duke of Buckingham's conduct, 258. Insist on the king's discontinuing the levying the duties of tonnage and poundage, 268. Attack Arminianism, 171. An allusion made use of by Rouse, a member, 274. First appearance of Oliver Cromwel, *ib.* Call officers to account for levying tonnage and poundage, *ib.* Sir John Elliot reads a remonstrance against these duties, *ib.* The speaker forcibly held in the chair till a remonstrance is framed and passed, 275. Are dissolved, *ib.* Members punished, 276. The complexion and reasoning of the house in the fourth parliament, now summoned after eleven years interval, 346. The substance of Pym's speech, 348. Enter into the consideration of grievances, *ib.* Resent the interposition of the lords, *ib.* Summary of the arguments urged by the court and popular parties, 349. Are abruptly dissolved, 353. Strafford impeached by, in the long parliament, 369. Impeach archbishop Laud, *ib.* Impeach the lord keeper Finch, 371. Vote several proceedings of lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants of counties illegal, and the parties exercising them delinquents, for assessing ship-money, 372. Sheriffs voted delinquents for assessing ship-money, 373. The officers who levied tonnage and poundage fined, *ib.* The star-chamber and high commission courts condemned, *ib.* Accuse the judges for their determination on Hambden's trial, *ib.* Expel monopolists and projectors, 374. Remarks on their proceedings, 375. Reverse the sentence of the star-chamber on Prynne and others, 377. The rapid progress of their regulations, 380. Agree to pay the Scots army, 381. Begin to attack episcopal authority, 385. Harass the clergy, 387. Vote a removal of all catholics from the army, 389. Make limited grants of tonnage and poundage, 392. Frame a bill for triennial parliaments, which is passed, 393. Pass a bill of attainder against Strafford, 409. Form a protestation, and order it to be signed by the whole nation, 412. Are offended at the king's interposition for Strafford, 413. Disband the English and Scots armies on the king's journey to Scotland, 423. Insist on the reduction of the Irish army raised by Strafford to reduce the Scots, 431. Oppose their being hired by the Spaniards, 432. Their zeal for the presbyterian discipline, 445. Credit the report of the Irish Massacre being ordered by the king, 447. An account of the famous remonstrance framed by them, 449. Pass the remonstrance, and publish it without sending it up to the lords, 451. Reasoning of the parties on both sides with regard to it, *ib.* Present the remonstrance to the king on his return, 456. Pass the bill for pressing soldiers for Ireland, 458. The interposition of peers in elections declared to be a breach of privilege, 459. Their proceedings against the bishops, 460. Declare to the lords an intention of rejecting their authority, if opposed by them, 461. Excite apprehensions in the people, 462. Impeach the bishops who sign a protestation, 465. Five members impeached by the king, 467. The impeached members are demanded, 468. Are demanded by the king in person, 469. Adjourn the house on this occasion, 470. Order a committee to sit in Merchant-Taylors-Hall, 471. The accused members take their seats, 472. Messages between them and the king, 474. Encourage petitions from the common people, 475. Impeach the attorney-general, and prosecute

their plan of the militia, 478. Form a magazine at Hull, and appoint Sir John Hotham governor, 479. Appoint governors of Portsmouth and the Tower, *ib.* Warn the kingdom to prepare for a defence against papists and ill-affected persons, *ib.* Appoint all the lieutenants of counties, and restore their powers, *ib.* Press the king by messages to pass the bill, 481. His reply, 482. Their vote on this reply, 483. Carry the militia bill into execution without the king's concurrence, 485. Vote all to be traitors who assist the king, 489. Raise an army, and appoint the earl of Essex general, 490. For those transactions wherein both houses concur, see *Parliament.* Carry an impeachment of the queen up to the lords, vii. 10. Pass the self-denying ordinance, 27. Choose Henry Pelham speaker in the room of Lenthal, on his going to the army, 102. Their violent accusation against the king, 114. Pass a vote for bringing the king to a trial, 134. This vote being refused by the lords, they pass an ordinance for bringing him to trial by their own authority, *ib.* Vote the house of lords useless, and abolish monarchy, 151. Readmit some of the secluded members, 158. Name a council to carry on the administration of government, *ib.* Enlarge the laws of high treason, 167. Dissolution of, by Cromwel, 219. Retrospect of their proceedings, 220. Character of Barebone's Parliament, 228. In the protector's parliament, refuse to acknowledge the house of lords summoned by him, 277. The new house of, after the final dissolution of the long parliament, meet and choose Sir Harbottle Grimstone speaker, 327. Receive a letter from Charles II. and appoint a committee to answer it, *ib.* The king proclaimed, 328. Vote presents to the king and his brothers, *ib.* Pass a vote against the indignities practised by the Dutch towards the English trade, 396. Impeach the earl of Clarendon, 425. Oblige the king to pass the act against the importation of Irish cattle, 448. Address the king for a proclamation against conventicles, 453. Obstruct the tolerating maxims of the court, *ib.* Resent the lords taking cognizance of Skinner's case, 454. As also with their altering a money-bill, 468. Coventry act, on what occasion passed, 469. Vacancies supplied by writs from the chancellor, annulled, 502. Grants to the king, *ib.* Frame and support a remonstrance against the declaration of indulgence, 503. Remonstrances against the duke of York's intended marriage, and the standing army, 511. Motions carried, on the expected prorogation, *ib.* Inquire into grievances at the next meeting, *ib.* Prepare to impeach Buckingham and Arlington, 513. Their discontented measures, viii. 11. Quarrel with the lords on the case of Fag and Shirley, 14. Refuse the king a supply to free his revenue from anticipations, 15. Grant supplies for the navy, 26. Their reasons for putting no confidence in the king's promises, 29. Are reproved and adjourned for the address recommending an alliance with the states against France, 31. Continue distrustful of the king's intentions, 38. Make a passionate address to the king, 40. Vote the disbanding of the army, 43. Impeach the earl of Danby, 87. Contest the choice of a speaker with the king, 97. The dispute compromised, *ib.* Danby attainted, 98. Resume the search after the popish plot, 99. Pass the bill of exclusion against the duke of York

York, 105. A bill brought in to exclude all members possessing lucrative offices, 106. Vote the king's guards and standing army to be illegal, *ib.* Resume the impeachment of Danby, 108. Dispute with the lords on the right of the bishops' votes in Danby's case *ib.* Persecute the *abhorrers*, and protect the petitioners, 30. Revive alarms about the popish plot, 131. The exclusion-bill resumed, 134. The arguments used for and against the exclusion-bill, 135. Pass the exclusion-bill, 139. Present an address to the king, concerning abuses in government, 140. Their violent proceedings, 146. Impeach Fitz-harris, in the parliament at Oxford, 153. Grant a revenue to James II. during life, 224. Address him concerning his exercise of a dispensing power, 240. In the convention parliament vote the throne to be vacant, 310. Their conference with the lords, 314. See *Lords* and *Parliament*.

Commonwealth of England, commencement of, viii. 151. State of, after the battle of Worcester, 201. Its confused management of ecclesiastical affairs, 202. Maintains a formidable power abroad, 203. Admiral Blake disperses prince Rupert's fleet, 204. Sir George Ayscue reduces the colonies, 205. Scotland reduced by Monk, 207. Attempts a coalition with the united provinces, 209. Determines on a war with them, 210. Engagement between Blake and Tromp, 212. See *Blake, Ayscue*, &c. Their advantage at sea owing to the ship money levied by Charles, 215. The long parliament dissolved by Cromwel, 219. State of parties at this time, 226. Is terminated by Cromwel, being chosen protector, 232. Is restored by the resignation of Richard Cromwel, and re-assembling the long parliament, 298. The parliament expelled, and a committee of safety appointed, 303. State of foreign affairs, 304. Dissolution of the long parliament, 320. Charles II. restored, 328. A review of manners, &c. at this time, 330.

Communion-service, a new one framed on the abolition of private masses, iv. 309.

Communion-table, removed from the wall into the middle of the church, by the first English reformers, v. 152.

Companies, exclusive, almost all the foreign trade of England in the hands of, at the commencement of the reign of James I vi. 23.

Compeigne besieged by the duke of Burgundy, and Joan d'Arc taken prisoner there, iii. 154.

Comprehension of Episcopists and Presbyterians, a conference held in the Savoy for effecting, viii. 359. The popular argument for and against this measure, *ib.*

Compurgators among our Saxon ancestors, what, i. 222.

Conan, duke of Britany, yields Nantz to king Henry II. of England, i. 378. Betroths his daughter to Henry's third son, Geoffrey, *ib.*

Condé, prince of, declares in favour of the protestants in France, v. 41. Is seized and condemned to death by the influence of the Guises, 42. Saved by the death of the king, *ib.* Takes arms in favour of the protestants against the royal party, 69. Enters into a treaty with Elizabeth of England for assistance, 70. Taken prisoner by the catholics at the Battle of Dreux, 72. Obtains his liberty by treaty, and is reinstated in his

his officers, 79. Assists at the siege of Havre de Grace, 79. Is apprised of the league of Bayonne against the protestants, and joins in a scheme to prevent it, 185. Battle of St. Dennis, 186. Forms the siege of Chartres, and obliges the court to an accommodation, *ib.* Is killed at the battle of Jarnac, *ib.*

Condé, the young prince of, is, with Henry prince of Navarre, placed at the head of the protestants by Coligni, after the defeat of Jarnac, and death of his father, v. 186. Is obliged by Charles to renounce the protestant faith as the price of his life, during the massacre of Paris, 206. Puts himself at the head of the German protestant auxiliaries, 210. Is defeated by the duke of Guise, 355.

———, prince of, his obstinate battle with the prince of Orange at Seneffe, viii. 9. Louis XIV. serves under him as a volunteer, 17. Succeeds Turenne in Alsace, *ib.* Forces the Imperialists to repass the Rhine, 18.

Congregation of the Lord, an association of Reformers in Scotland so styled, account of the bond they entered into, v. 22. Present a petition to the queen regent against the scandalous lives of the clergy, 25. Petition the parliament and convocation, *ib.* Raise men to oppose the regent, 27. Their address to her, and remonstrance to such of their party as joined her, *ib.* Their address to the established church, 28. The regent enters into an accommodation with them, 29. Charge the regent with infringing the capitulation, *ib.* Sign a new covenant, 30. Give themselves up to the guidance of John Knox, *ib.* Take Perth and Edinburgh, *ib.* Come to an agreement with the regent, 31. Are joined by the duke of Chatelherault, *ib.* Deprive the queen dowager of the regency, and order all French troops to depart the kingdom, 32. Request assistance from queen Elizabeth, 33. Conclude a treaty with Elizabeth, and receive a fleet and forces from her, 35. Treaty of Edinburgh, 36. Call a parliament, suppress the Catholic religion, and establish the presbyterian discipline, 38. Send to the queen for a ratification, which she refuses, 39. Carry their plan into execution, and again request the assistance of England, *ib.*

Connaught. See *Ireland.*

Conquerors, in the feudal times, an estimate of their merits, ii. 486.

Conrade, marquis of Montserrat, conducts the German army to Palestine, on the death of his father the emperor Frederic, ii. 7. Claims the kingdom of Jerusalem, in opposition to Guy de Lusignan, 14. Is assassinated by order of the Old Man of the Mountain. See *Assassins.*

Conservators of the public liberties. See *Barons.*

———— of the peace, appointed in Scotland, vi. 119.

Constable of England, reflections on the arbitrary office, and court of, iii. 451. The office of, forfeited by the duke of Buckingham, and never revived, iv. 28.

Constance, council of, deposes pope John XXIII. and elects Martin V. iii. 118. Burns John Huss and Jerome of Prague, 119.

Constantia, aunt to William II. king of Naples and Sicily, is left by him successor to his dominions, ii. 9. Is married to the emperor Henry VI. *ib.* Is dispossessed by her natural brother Tancred, *ib.*

———, mother of Arthur duke of Britany, is hated by Eleanor, queen dowager

dowager of England, ii. 40. How induced to surrender her son to his uncle John, king of England, 42. Appeals to Philip on the murder of Arthur by John, 48.

Constantine, king of Scotland, defeated by Athelstan, king of England, i. 104. Confederates with the Danish pirates and Welsh princes, but is worsted by Athelstan, 105.

Constantinople taken by the Turks, and the consequences of that event, ii. 406.

Constitution of England, an historical view of, to the time of Henry VII. iii. 304. The different periods of, pointed out, v. 452, *note*. Indications of a spirit in the house of commons to alter it on principles of freedom, vi. 51. Never thoroughly understood until fixed on principles of liberty by parliament, 52. The arguments urged on both sides in the disputes between James I. and the parliament, 117.

Conventicles, act of parliament against, passed, viii. 456. A severe law against, in Scotland, viii. 52. Are rigorously dispersed, and suppressed, 114. Are strictly suppressed in England, 175. Are allowed by the declaration of indulgence, 256.

Convention of States, called in Scotland, without the king's authority, vi. 539. Enforce the Solemn League and Covenant, 542.

——— parliament. See *Parliament*.

Convocation, the first assembling of deputies of the inferior clergy, by Edward I. ii. 278. Scruple to assemble on the king's writ, 279. The objection how accommodated, and the reason why the clergy formed two houses of, *ib*. Refuses the demands of Edward toward a French war, 285. The consequences of this refusal, 286. Summoned by Henry VIII. and intimidated by cardinal Wolsey, into the grant of a moiety of ecclesiastical revenues, iv. 46. Henry's marriage with Catharine of Arragon declared to be invalid by, 103. Compounds with the king for a prosecution carried on against the clergy, on the statute of provisors, 106. Acknowledges the king's supremacy, with a reservation, *ib*. The papal authority renounced by, 119. Debates on the expediency of a translation of the scriptures, 151. The bishops for and against reformation enumerated, 165. Articles of faith framed by, 166. The influence of protestant principles in their articles estimated, 167. Grants supplies to Henry, 206. Annuls Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves, 210. Grants supplies for a French war, 237. Votes Henry a subsidy of six shillings in the pound, 252. Meets, when the first parliament of Edward VI. was summoned by the duke of Somerset, 308. Meets in queen Mary's reign, and disputes on transubstantiation, 385. The debate adjourned to Oxford, *ib*. Votes a subsidy to queen Elizabeth, v. 77. Its proceedings in the sitting after the dissolution of the fourth parliament of Charles I. vi. 390.

Conway, lord, is appointed general of the horse, in the army sent against the Scots, vi. 357. Is routed at Newburn, *ib*.

Copenhagen is besieged by Charles X. of Sweden, but relieved by an English and Dutch fleet, viii. 304.

Copley, a member of the house of commons, imprisoned for speaking irreverently of queen Mary, iv. 442.

Copper Coin, when first introduced, vi. 186.

Corn, remarks on the statute prices of, during the reign of Henry III. ii. 225. The exportation of, allowed in the reign of Henry VI. iii. 215. Other regulations of the trade in, *ib.* Prices of, during the reign of James I. vi. 175. Public magazines of, established, *ib.*

Cornish, sheriff of London, is convicted on false evidence, and executed, viii. 236.

Cornwall, an insurrection there against Henry VII. on account of levying a subsidy, iii. 373. Headed by the lord Audley, 374. The rebels defeated at Blackheath, 375.

———, Richard, earl of, son of king John, his disputes with his brother Henry III. and Waleran de Ties, concerning the restitution of a manor in his earldom, ii. 157. Refuses the kingdom of Sicily, offered to him by pope Innocent IV. 171. Is elected king of the Romans, 174. Spends all his treasures in Germany, 175. Is obliged to swear obedience to the provisions of Oxford, before the barons allow him to return to England, 187. His son Henry joins the confederacy of barons against the king, 196. Is taken prisoner by the barons at the battle of Lewes, 205. Recovers his liberty by the battle of Evesham, 216. His son Henry d'Almaine assassinated by their cousins, 218. Dies, 221.

Corporations, when first erected in France, and with what view, ii. 118. Are a great check upon industry, iii. 404. The regulation of, granted to the king by parliament, vii. 374. Most of them surrender their charters to Charles II. viii. 181. Conditions on which they were restored, *ib.*

Corren, Dr. preaches before Henry VIII. and justifies his conduct against the reproaches of friar Peyto, iv. 134.

Cospatrick, why made earl of Northumberland by king William the Conqueror, i. 205, *note*, 251. Created earl of Dunbar, by Malcolm, king of Scotland, 264.

Cottereaux. See *Brabançons*.

Cottington, Sir Francis, opposes prince Charles's journey to Spain, vi. 132. Is abused for it by Buckingham, *ib.*

Covenant, one framed and subscribed in Scotland, against receiving the canons in liturgy, vi. 330. Is enforced by the general assembly under pain of excommunication, 335. See *League*.

Coventry, Sir John, is assaulted and maimed, for a satirical reflection on Charles II. vii. 468. Which occasions the famous act against maiming, known under his name, 469.

Coverdale, bishop of Exeter, is imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary, iv. 326.

Council of the North, abolished by the long parliament, vi. 422.

——— *of Officers*, summoned by Oliver Cromwell, resolves on bringing Charles I. to trial, vii. 110. Demands a dissolution of the parliament, and seizes the king, 129. The parliament purged by, 131. Plans a republican form of government, 133. Turns the members out of the house by violence, 219. Chooses Oliver Cromwel protector, 232. One is summoned by Richard Cromwel, 295. Deposes the protector, 297. Restores the long parliament, 298.

——— *of States*, nominated by parliament to carry on the administration of government after the execution of the king, vii. 168. Appoints

Cromwel lord lieutenant of Ireland, 158. One appointed on the dissolution of the long parliament, 321.

Council of Wales, abolished by the long parliament, vi. 422.

——— ecclesiastical. See *Synods*.

Counties, the first division of England into, i. 92. The first attempts at appointing members for, to parliament, ii. 184. See *Commons*.

Palatine, the jurisdiction of, annexed to the crown, v. 489.

County Courts, first appointment of, i. 94. Are peculiar to England, and the nature of them explained, ii. 122, *note*.

Coverfeu bell, the observance of, in England, no mark of slavery, i. 477, *note*.

Court and country, when those parties first began in parliament, vi. 106. 560.

Court baron, the ancient form and nature of, ii. 117. 122.

Courts, civil and ecclesiastical, law enacted for their re-union, on the accession of Henry I. i. 347. Remained without effect, from the opposition of archbishop Anselm, *ib*.

Court of high commission. See *High-commission*.

Courtney, son of the marquis of Exeter, is released from the Tower, and made earl of Devonshire, by queen Mary, iv. 374. See *Devonshire*.

Coutras, battle of, between Henry III. of France, and Henry king of Navarre, v. 355.

Cowley, his character as a poet, vii. 345. His death, 346.

Cozens, dean of Peterborough, his superstitious zeal for ecclesiastical ceremonies, and haughty assertion of church authority, vi. 386.

Craig, a protestant minister of Edinburgh, is ordered to publish the banns between queen Mary and Bothwel, which he refuses, v. 113. Remonstrates against this marriage before the council, and from the pulpit, *ib*.

———, Alison, a Scots courtezan, a riot at her house, taken cognizance of by the church, v. 52.

Cranmer Dr. his first introduction to Henry VIII. iv. 100. Is engaged by Henry to write in favour of his divorce, 101. Is made archbishop of Canterbury, 112. The number of bulls necessary for his installation, remarked, from bishop Burnet, 453. Is appointed to examine the validity of the king's marriage, *ib*. Declares Catharine contumacious for non-appearance, and pronounces the marriage invalid, 112. Favours the protestant tenets, 129. Intercedes with Henry in behalf of queen Anne Bullen, 158. Is constrained to annul the marriage, 160. Encourages farther reformations in religion, 189. Opposes the law of the Six Articles, 195. Dismisses his wife in obedience to them, *ib*. Communicates to Henry an account of queen Catharine Howard's lewdness, 218. Loses a powerful friend by the death of the duke of Suffolk, 254. Is protected by the king against the catholic courtiers, 255. Attends Henry in his dying moments, 265. Is named one of the regency during the minority of Edward VI. 281. His importunity with the young king to sign the warrant for the execution of Joan Bocher, 324. Adheres to Somerset the protector in his distress, 337. Opposes the attainder of Tonstal, bishop of Durham, 357. Is induced to sign the patent for the succession of lady Jane Grey, 394. Is imprisoned and convicted of treason, owing to

to his indiscreet zeal against masses, 377. Is sent under a guard to Oxford to debate on transubstantiation, 385. Is cited to Rome for heresy, 429. Is condemned as contumacious, though in custody, *ib.* Is degraded, *ib.* Subscribes to the pope's supremacy, and the real presence, 430. Contradicts this subscription by public declaration, *ib.* Is burnt, and his fortitude at the stake, *ib.* A character of him, 431.

Crecy, battle of, between Edward III. of England, and Philip de Valois of France, ii. 434. The great slaughter of the French at, 436.

Credit, national, low state of, previous to the reign of Elizabeth, v. 476.

Crema, cardinal de, disgraceful anecdote of, i. 343.

Crequi, marshal, is defeated by the Imperialists in an endeavour to relieve Treves, viii. 19.

Cressingham, treasurer of Scotland, is joined in the administration with Ormesby, on earl Warrenne leaving his government there, ii. 298. Exasperates the Scots by his oppressions, *ib.* Urges Warrenne to give battle to Wallace, 301. Is slain in the action with Wallace, *ib.* His body contemptuously treated by the Scots, *ib.*

Crevant, in Burgundy, besieged by the French and Scots, but raised by the English, iii. 129.

Criminal law, among the Anglo-Saxons, a view of, i. 215.

Criminals, a comparison of the yearly execution of, in England, at different periods, iv. 275. v. 469.

Cromwel, Thomas, defends his patron cardinal Wolsey, against a charge of the peers, in the house of commons, iv. 94. Is made secretary of state, 129. The king's supremacy over the church delegated to him, under the title and office of vicar-general, 148. Appoints commissioners to visit the monasteries, *ib.* Great abuses charged upon them, *ib.* Presides in the convocation as vicar general, 165. Articles of faith framed by this meeting of convocation, 166. The clergy incensed against him for his regulations in religious matters, 170. Pronounces sentence against Lambert, 192. His account of Henry's disputation with Lambert, 459. Is made a peer, and appointed one of the committee of lords, to frame articles for abolishing diversities of opinion in religion, 194. Assists the king in his arbitrary prosecutions, 198. Obtains precedency of the other officers of state, 200. Mitigates the prosecutions on the law of the Six Articles, *ib.* Promotes Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves, 202. Henry harbours a secret displeasure against him on that account, 204. Is made earl of Essex, and knight of the garter, 205. The causes which procured his fall, 206. Is committed to the Tower, 208. His accusation and condemnation, *ib.* His moving letter to the king, *ib.* His execution and character, *ib.*

Cromwel, Oliver, complains in the house of commons, of a preacher, for popish doctrines, vi. 274. Is stopped, with other puritans, from transporting himself to America, 309. Defeats the royalists at Gainsborow, 535. Distinguishes himself at the battle of Horncastle, *ib.* His gallant behaviour at the battle of Marston-Moor, vii. 12. Assists in defeating the king at Newbury, 17. Becomes a leader of the independents, 21. Difference between him and the earl of Manchester, 22. His speech in parliament relative to the self-denying ordinance, 26. How he eluded the self-denying ordinance as to himself, 28.

His character, 29. New-models the army, 52. The fanatical spirit of the officers and soldiers, 53. Commands the right wing at the battle of Naseby, 57. His successes afterwards, 62. Foments the discontents of the army, 87. Is the secret cause of the king being seized by the army, 89. His profound hypocrisy, *ib.* Is chosen general by the army, 90. Marches the army toward London against the parliament, 91. Retires to Reading, 97. Pays court to the king and enters privately into treaty with him, 98. The army marches to London, 103. Remarks on his conduct between the king and parliament, 104. Suppresses the agitators and reduces the army to obedience, 109. Calls a meeting of officers at Windsor, to settle the nation, wherein it is resolved to bring the king to a trial, 110. Prevails with the parliament to vote against all farther treaty with the king, 113. Defeats Langdale and Hamilton, and marches into Scotland, 127. Sends a remonstrance to the parliament on its treating with the king, 129. Seizes the king, and confines him in Hurst-castle, 130. Marches the army to London, to purge the parliament, 131. His speech in the house on the ordinance for bringing the king to a trial, 134. Is appointed one of the king's judges, 136. His hypocritical conduct towards Fairfax, during the time of the king's execution, 145. His general character, and great influence in the army, 157. Is named one of the council of state, 158. Procures himself to be appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, 165. Suppresses the agitators, 167. Arrives at Dublin, 169. Storms Tredah, and puts the garrison to the sword, *ib.* Storms Wexford with the same cruelty, 170. All Munster submits to him, 171. Takes Kilkenny, *ib.* Leaves Ireland, 187. Is declared captain-general of all the forces in England, and marches an army to Scotland, 188. Is forced to retire, and is followed by Lesly, 189. Defeats Lesly at Dunbar, 190. Writes polemical letters to the Scots clergy, 191. Follows Charles II. into England, 195. Defeats Charles at Worcester, 196. Summons a council of officers to remonstrate to the parliament for a new election, 217. Expels the members from the house, and locks the door, 219. An account of his birth and private life, 221. Receives addresses on the dissolution of the parliament, 225. Summons a new parliament, 227. His address to it, 228, *note.* The parliament resigns up its authority to him, 231. Is declared protector, 232. His powers, *ib.* Makes peace with the Dutch, 236. Executes the Portuguese ambassador's brother, for assassination, 237. Summons a parliament, 238. His equitable regulation of elections, *ib.* Discontents against his administration, 239. The parliament disputes his authority, 240. Dissolves it, after obtaining a recognition, 242. An insurrection of royalists at Salisbury suppressed, 243. Divides England into twelve military jurisdictions, under major-generals, to suppress the royalists, 244. Issues letters of reprisals against France, 249. His influence over the French minister Mazarine, 250. Reflections on his foreign negotiations, 251. Sends a fleet under Blake to the Mediterranean, 253. Sends a fleet under Pen and Venables to the West Indies, 254. Jamaica taken, *ib.* Sends Pen and Venables to the Tower, 255. The vigour of his foreign transactions, 258. His domestic administration, 259. Establishes a militia, 260. Establishes

blishes a commission of *Tryers*, to present to ecclesiastical benefices, 261. His general conduct in religious matters, 262. His address in procuring secret intelligence, 263. His general deportment, 264. His vein of pleasantry sometimes leads him into inconsistencies; instanced in an anecdote, 265. His plan of administration in Scotland, 266. In Ireland, 267. Endeavours to be made king, 269. Destroys the authority of the major-general, *ib.* The crown is offered to him by parliament, 270. Is afraid to venture on it, 271. Extracts from his speech on refusing it, 273, *note.* The motives of his refusal, 274. His protectoral authority confirmed by Parliament, 275. Brings his son Richard to court, and marries his daughters, 276. Summons a new parliament in two houses as formerly, 277. Dissolves it, on his house of peers not being owned by the commons, 278. Concludes an alliance with France, *ib.* Sends an army to join Turenne in Flanders, 279. Dunkirk delivered to him, *ib.* Parties formed against him at home, 280. Discovers a plot of the royalists, 281. Escapes assassination by Sindercome, 282. Is disturbed with apprehensions and domestic troubles, 283. Falls sick, 285. Dies, 286. His character, 287. An apology for his conduct, 290. Anecdotes of his family, 291. Remarks on his political situation at the time of his death, 292. His regard to literary merit, 341. His account to lord Orrery, of the first cause of determining on the death of Charles I. 519.

Cromwel, Richard, is brought to court by his father, vii. 276. His character, *ib.* Is acknowledged protector, 293. Calls a parliament, 294. Cabal of Wallingford-house against him, 295. Is persuaded to call a general council of officers, who also cabal against him, *ib.* Is forced to resign the protectorship, 297. Passes the remainder of his life in peace, *ib.*

———, Henry, second son of Oliver, his character, vii. 267. Is made lord lieutenant of Ireland, *ib.* Resigns his command, and retires to England, 297. His death, viii. 11, *note.*

Cropedy bridge, battle of, between Charles I. and Sir William Waller, vii. 15.

Crown, entail of, by the first parliament of Henry VII. iii. 316. A review of powers claimed by, to the time of Charles I. vi. 160.

Crusades, the commencement of, i. 292. The universal rage for engaging in, 296. The political use made of this frenzy by the European princes, 299. Why less attended to by William Rufus than by other princes, *ib.* History of, continued, 309, 456. Richard I. prepares to engage in, ii. 3. The emperor Frederick marches on, 7. Richard I. of England and Philip of France engage in, *ib.* Their transactions at Sicily, 9. At Cyprus, 12. Acre in Palestine taken by their assistance, 15. Lewis IX. of France, and prince Edward, son of Henry III. engage in one, 219. Lewis dies, 220. Edward recalled by his father, who dies quickly after, *ib.*

Cumberland, earl of, fits out a fleet at his own charges against the Spaniards, but meets with ill success and misfortunes, v. 351. Undertakes another expedition, which fails, 362. Endeavours to mitigate the sentence of the council against the earl of Essex, 416.

Cumnin of Badenoch, associated with the Stewart of Scotland, in the regency of that kingdom, ii. 303. Is routed at Falkirk, by Edward, 304. ——, John, chosen regent of Scotland, ii. 309. Defeats John de Segrave, Edward's guardian of Scotland, *ib.* Makes his submission to Edward, 310. Betrays young Robert Bruce's secrets to Edward, 314. Is killed by Bruce, 316.

Curson, Sir Robert, governor of Hammes, employed by Henry VII. to betray the secrets of the earl of Suffolk, iii. 392.

Customs, produce of, in queen Elizabeth's reign, v. 474. The amount of these duties in the reign of James I. vi. 57. 191. Amount of, in the reign of Charles I. before the civil wars, vii. 363.

Cyprus, part of the fleet of Richard I. shipwrecked and pillaged on that coast, in their way to the Holy Land, ii. 12. Isaac, prince of, conquered and thrown into prison by Richard, *ib.* Richard espouses Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, king of Navarre, there, 13. Lusignan made king of, by Richard, 19.

D.

DACRES, Leonard, excites an insurrection in the North of England, i. 264.

D'Albert, constable of France, extraordinary defeat of, at Azincour, by Henry V. of England, iii. 100.

D'Albiny, Philip, defeats the French fleet coming to England to succour prince Lewis, and his stratagem on that occasion, ii. 150.

D'Almaine, Henry, son to Richard king of the Romans, and earl of Cornwal, joins Leicester and the barons, against Henry III. ii. 196. Is gained over to the royal cause by prince Edward, 200. Commands the main body of the king's army at the battle of Lewes, in conjunction with his father, 204. Is surrendered, together with Edward, to Leicester, to gain the liberty of Henry and his father, 206. Recovers his liberty, with the other prisoners, by the battle of Evesham, 216. Is assassinated by his cousins, at Viterbo, 218.

Danby, Sir Thomas Osborne, treasurer, made earl of, vii. 512. His character, viii. 11. Receives information of the popish plot, 63. Communicates it to the house of lords, 78. His letter to Montague ambassador at Paris, produced before the house of commons, 86. Is impeached by the commons, 87. His defence of himself, 88. His impeachment revived by the following parliament, 97. Is committed to the Tower, 98. Is admitted to bail, 205. Is freed by the house of lords, on the accession of James II. 226. Concurs in an invitation to the prince of Orange, 283. His conduct in parliament on the abdication of James, 313.

Danes, the nature of their first piratical inroads into England, i. 69. A body of them take up their winter quarters here, 70. Sack Winchester, 74. Seize York and other places, 75. Defeat Alfred, and continue their depredations, 78. Reduce the Saxons to despair, 79. Routed by Alfred, 82, 83. Admitted to settle, and baptized, 84. Revolt, 87. Renew their invasions, 131. Receive tribute from king Ethelred, 133. Their piratical conduct accounted for, 137. Settle in Normandy,

Normandy, *ib.* Retain their ancient rude ferocity in England, 140. Ever ready to betray the English to their foreign countrymen, 141. A massacre of, *ib.* Destroy the English fleet, 143. See *Canute* and *Denmark.*

Danegelt, occasion of imposing that tax, i. 153. Remitted, 353. 469.

Dangerfield, the author of the meal-tub plot, his character, viii. 124.

D'Aquila, Don John, commands the Spanish troops in an invasion of Ireland, v. 436. Is forced to capitulate to Mountjoy the deputy, 438.

Darcy, lord, joins Aske's insurrection in the North, iv. 172. Is imprisoned on the suppression of it, 174. Is executed, 175.

Darnly, lord, son of the earl of Lenox, is proposed as husband for Mary queen of Scotland, v. 85. His pedigree, *ib.* Is married to her, 89. Is insulted from the pulpit by John Knox, *ib.* His character, 94. Resents the queen's neglect of him, 95. Becomes jealous of David Rizzio, *ib.* Enters into a plot with the chancellor Morton for the destruction of Rizzio, 97. Causes Rizzio to be assassinated in the queen's presence, 98. Avows his orders for this action, *ib.* Is prevailed on by Mary to disavow all concern in Rizzio's murder, and is then left by her in disdain, 99. Is reduced to despair by her neglect, 105. His illness attributed to poison, 106. The queen's apparent reconciliation, and tenderness of him, *ib.* Is blown up with gunpowder, in a lone house where he was lodged, 107. A confederacy of nobles formed to punish his murderers, 118.

Darvel, Gatharin, a Welsh Romish idol, brought to London, and employed to burn friar Forest, iv. 180.

Daubeney, lord, general of Henry VIIth's army against the Scots, ordered to march against the Cornish rebels, iii. 347. Engages them at Blackheath, *ib.* Taken prisoner by them, but rescued, 376. Defeats them, *ib.*

D'Aubigny, count, his family and character, v. 231. Is sent by the duke of Guise, to detach James of Scotland from the English interest, *ib.* Insinuates himself into favour with James, and is created earl of Lenox, 232. See *Lenox.*

David king of Scotland, invades England in favour of the empress Matilda, i. 357. Routed, *ib.* Confers knighthood on Henry son of the empress, 367.

——, eldest son and heir of Lewellyn prince of Wales, does homage to Henry III. and delivers his brother Griffin into his hands, ii. 190. Is taken prisoner by Edward I. and tried and executed as a traitor, 242.

Davis's straits discovered, v. 477.

Davison, secretary, is ordered by queen Elizabeth, to prepare a warrant for the execution of Mary queen of Scots, v. 310. Is persuaded by the council to send the warrant to be put into force, 311. Is punished in the star-chamber for so doing, 322. His account of Elizabeth's behaviour, in justification of himself, *ib.*

Dauphin, the occasion of the eldest sons of the kings of France obtaining that appellation, ii. 451.

D'Esse, commands a body of French troops sent to the assistance of the Scots, iv. 310. Besieges Haddington, 311. Retires, 313.
D'Ewes, Sir Simon, his character of queen Henrietta, consort of Charles I. vii. 59, *note*.
De Gray, John, bishop of Norwich, chosen to the see of Canterbury, in opposition to the clandestine election of Reginald, ii. 58.
De la Mare, Peter, the first speaker of the house of Commons, chosen, iii. 3.
De Ruyter, the Dutch Admiral, engages Sir George Ayscue, vii. 214. In conjunction with De Wit, is defeated by Blake and others, *ib*. He and Tromp defeat Blake, *ib*. Attacks the English settlements in the next war with Charles II. 399. He and Tromp engage the English fleet for four days, 410. Is defeated at the mouth of the Thames, 413. Sails up the Medway and Thames, and burns the English ships, during the treaty of Breda, 421. Battle of Solebay, 485. Is twice engaged with prince Rupert, the English admiral, 507. Engages prince Rupert again, at the mouth of the Texel, 508. Is killed, viii. 20.
De Thermes, the French governor of Calais, makes an irruption into Flanders, but is defeated by count Egmont, with the casual assistance of an English fleet on the coast, iv. 443.
De Vienne, John, governor of Calais, his prudent precautions on that city being besieged by Edward III. ii. 437. His manly parley with the English, 441.
De Wit, Cornelius, is, with De Ruyter, defeated by the English fleet under Blake, vii. 214. Goes on board de Ruyter's fleet, as deputy from the states, 485. Comes on shore for his health, and is tortured on an accusation of attempting to poison the prince of Orange, 495. Is, with his brother, cruelly murdered by the populace, 496.
———, John, the Dutch minister, his character, vii. 402. Takes the command of the fleet himself, after the defeat and death of Opdam, 404. Motive of his protracting the negotiations of Breda, 420. His negotiations with Sir William Temple, to oppose the French conquests in the Netherlands, 434. Concludes the triple alliance with England and Sweden, 435. His friendly visit to Temple, 463. Is opposed in his preparations for war, by the Orange faction, 482. Opposes the repeal of the perpetual edict, 494. Is, with his brother, cruelly murdered by the populace, 496.
Deadly Feud, among our Saxon ancestors, what, and how compounded, i. 217.
Debt, when first contracted on parliamentary security, iii. 215.
Decretals of pope Gregory IX. a character of, ii. 229.
Defender of the faith, this title bestowed by pope Leo. X. on Henry VIII. iv. 36.
Deists, a character of, under the commonwealth, vii. 226.
Delinquents, this term when introduced, and how applied, by the house of commons, vi. 372.
Denham, Sir John, his character as a poet, vii. 346. His death, *ib*.
Denmark; see *Danes*. James VI. of Scotland, goes over to, and marries a princess of, v. 352. King of, his treachery toward the Dutch East India fleet, vii. 405. His treachery toward Charles II. of England, 406.

Joins the confederates against Louis XIV. viii. 19. Prince George of, married to the lady Anne, daughter of James duke of York, 205. Prince George joins the prince of Orange, 296. See *Anne*, princess of.

Derby, Henry earl of, son of the earl of Lancaster, is sent by Edward III. to protect the province of Guienne, ii. 423. His military operations there, *ib.* Instance of his generous regard to his promise, *ib. note.* His farther successes, 438. Becomes earl of Lancaster, 450. See *Lancaster*.

——, countess of, is the last person who submitted to the forces of the commonwealth, vii. 205. Letter from the earl of, in answer to Ireton's summons, 528.

Dermot Macmorrogh, king of Leinster, his tyrannic conduct, i. 427. Solicits the assistance of Henry II. of England, *ib.* Engages Strongbow, Fitzgerald, and Fitz-stephens, to undertake expeditions in his favour, 428.

Desborough, brother-in-law to Oliver Cromwell, opposes his accepting the title of king, vii. 274. Engages in the cabal at Wallingford-house, 295. Obliges Richard Cromwell to dissolve his parliament, 296.

Despenser, Hugh le, the chief justiciary, appointed by the council of barons, removed by Henry III. ii. 194. Is restored by the earl of Leicester, 199. Refuses to abide by the award of Lewis of France, 202. Is killed at the battle of Evesham, 215.

———, Hugh le, favourite of Edward II. his character, ii. 344. Character of his father, *ib.* The earl of Lancaster and the barons combine against him, *ib.* Is married to Edward's niece, coheir of the earl of Gloucester, *ib.* His lands ravaged by the barons, 345. The parliament forced to pronounce a sentence of forfeiture and exile upon him, and his father, 346. Is recalled by the king, with his father, 347. His rapaciousness after the forfeitures of the duke of Lancaster's party, 349. His father murdered by the barons, 356. Is himself put to death, *ib.* Particulars of his father's losses by the barons, 367. Remarks on these losses, and conclusions drawn from them, *ib.*

Devonshire, an insurrection there to oppose the reformation, headed by Humphrey Arundel, iv. 329. Exeter besieged by the insurgents, 330. They are defeated by the lord Russel, *ib.*

————, Courtney earl of, is proposed as a husband to queen Mary, iv. 380. Incurs her resentment on declining it, 381. Is released from confinement by the mediation of Philip, and dies abroad, 402.

Digby, Sir Everard, engages in the gunpowder plot, vi. 33. Is executed for it, 37. Evidences of his former good character, *ib.*

Directory for public worship, one established by the assembly of divines at Westminster, in the room of the liturgy, vii. 32.

Dispensing power, the house of commons address James II. on his exercising it, viii. 240. His obstinate continuance of it, 244. The ancient claim, and exercise of, by the crown, 245. Arguments against it, 247. Is abolished by the bill of rights, 249, *note.*

D'Oisel, a Frenchman, attends the queen dowager of Scotland, to assist her in the administration, iv. 439. Projects a tax to maintain a standing force there, *ib.* This scheme opposed, *ib.* Is reproved by the council for his hostile attacks on the English borders, 440.

Domesday-book, the nature of, explained, i. 275.
Dominicans and Franciscans, observations on the institutions of those new orders of religious, ii. 229.
Donne, a character of his satires, vi. 195.
Doring, a protestant minister, openly reproves queen Elizabeth for obstructing the reformation, v. 153, *note*.
Dorislaus, his history, and murder, vii. 172, 173.
Dorset, marquis of, commands the English forces at the expedition to Fontarabia, iii. 420. Discovers the double dealing of his auxiliary Ferdinand of Arragon, 421. Returns to England, 422.
Douay, a seminary founded there by Philip II. of Spain, for the education of English catholics, v. 236.
Dover, a tumult there, occasioned by the retinue of Eustace count of Boulogne, i. 163. Burnt by Philip of France, ii. 265.
Douglas, lord, appointed by Robert Bruce joint commander, with the earl of Murray, of the Scots army invading England, on the death of Edward II. ii. 372. His bold attempt to sieze Edward III. in his camp, 375. Retires home, *ib.* Goes to Spain, on a crusade against the Moors, 383.
———, Sir Archibald, defeats Edward Baliol, and drives him to England, ii. 385. Is defeated and killed by Edward III. at Halidown-hill, 387.
———, earl his irruption into England, and defeat, iii. 68. Assists young Piercy, at the battle of Shrewsbury, 71.
———, George, assists with others in assassinating David Rizzio, v. 98.
Downing, the English resident in Holland, seizes Berkstead, Corbet, and Okey, three of the king's judges, and sends them to England, vii. 380. Presents a memorial of English complaints to the States, 399. Is again sent over on the removal of Sir William Temple, 453.
Drake, Francis, his voyage round the world, and depredations on the Spaniards, v. 234. Is knighted by Elizabeth, 235. His expedition to the Spanish West Indies, 274. Destroys a Spanish fleet at Cadiz, 327. Takes a rich carrack at Tercera, *ib.* Commands against the Spanish armada, under lord Effingham, 335. Takes two large vessels belonging to it, 342. Undertakes an expedition against Portugal, 348. Destroys a Spanish fleet at the Groyne, 349. Makes an unsuccessful attack on Lisbon, 350. Burns Vigo, and returns, *ib.* Makes an unsuccessful attempt on Porto Rico, 378. Is repulsed at Darien, where he dies, *ib.*
Dreux, battle of, between the constable Montmorency and the prince of Condé, v. 72.
Druids, their office and power, i. 4. Excommunication by them, fatal consequences of incurring, *ib.* Their doctrines, *ib.* Their places of worship, 5. Their rites, *ib.* Their treasures how preserved, *ib.* Their religion not abolished without force, *ib.* Their chief seat at Anglesea destroyed, and themselves burnt, by Suetonius Paulinus, 8.
Dryden, his character as a poet, viii. 335. Was suffered to remain in poverty, 336.
De Guesclin, a gentleman of Britany, his character, ii. 472. Is employed in the wars of Charles king of France, *ib.* Is employed to enlist the companies of banditti to serve against Castile, 475. His absolute demands of the pope at Avignon, *ib.* Chases Peter king of Castile from his

his dominions, 476. Is defeated by prince Edward, 477. Is made constable of France, 482.

Dublin, a conspiracy formed for seizing the castle of, by Roger More, vi. 436. The plot discovered, *ib.* Receives the English fugitives from the other provinces, 441. Its distress during the devastation of Ireland, 544.

Dudley, a lawyer, the instrument employed by Henry VII. in oppressing his people, his character, iii. 387. His mode of practice, *ib.* Chosen speaker of the house of commons, 389. Summoned before the privy council of Henry VIII. 411. Committed to the Tower, 412. Tried, *ib.* Executed to gratify the people, *ib.*

———, the lord Guilford, married to the lady Jane Grey, iv. 361. Is apprehended with the lady Jane, on the acknowledgment of queen Mary, 372. Is sentenced together with his lady, 373. Is executed on occasion of Suffolk's fresh conspiracy, 392.

———, lord Robert, becomes the declared favourite of queen Elizabeth, v. 60. Is created earl of Leicester, and proposed by Elizabeth as a husband for Mary queen of Scots, 82. See *Leicester*.

Duelling, when and on what occasion the general practice of, first took rise, iv. 73.

Dunbar, the castle of, surrendered to Edward I. ii. 281. Sir George Hume, created earl of, vi. 4. Battle of, between Oliver Cromwell and the Scots general, Lesley, vii. 190.

Duncan, natural son of Malcolm king of Scotland, seizes the kingdom, i. 291.

Dundee is taken by general Monk, and the inhabitants put to the sword, vii. 207.

Dunes, battle of, between the combined army of English and French, and the Spaniards, vii. 279.

Dunfermling, abbot of, is appointed one of the commissioners, on the part of the king and kingdom of Scotland, to inquire into the conduct of Mary queen of Scots, v. 134. Elizabeth's declaration to him respecting the treaty she had entered into with Mary, 171. Is appointed by the Scots parliament a commissioner to treat with Elizabeth concerning Mary, *ib.* Is dismissed by her without concluding on any thing, 172. Joins an association of the nobility, who seize James from the hands of Lenox and Arran, 248.

Dunkirk, is taken from the Spaniards, and delivered to Oliver Cromwell, vii. 279. Is sold to the French by Charles II. 386.

Dunois, count of, raises the siege of Montargis, iii. 137. Defeated and wounded in an action with Sir John Falstaff, 140. Over-rules Joan D'Arc's instructions for conducting the convoy to Orleans, 145. Yields to her in a second instance, 146. Prevails on her to alter her scheme of a general attack of the English trenches, 147. Probably prompted all her measures, 150. Persuades her to stay, on her wanting to return home, 154. His farther successes against the English, 159. Besieges and takes Maine, refused to be surrendered according to treaty by the governor, 174. Assists at the final reduction of Normandy, 176. Recovers Guienne from the English, 178. Commands the troops of Britany under his father, 337. Gained over to the interests of France, 348.

Dunstan, St., *Abbot* of Glastonbury, his ascendancy over king Edred, i. 109. His life and character, 111. Is placed at the head of the treasury, 112. His insolent behaviour to king Edwy, 115. Banished, 116. Returns, and heads the rebellion against Edwy, 117. Promoted to the see of Canterbury, *ib.* Enjoins Edgar penance for sacrilege, 122. Crowns king Edward the Martyr, 127. His motives for adhering to Edward in preference to his brother, *ib.* Miracles in favour of, 128.

Durham, Hugh de Puzas, bishop of, purchases the office of chief justiciary and the earldom of Northumberland, of Richard I. ii. 5. Is appointed joint guardian of the realm with Longchamp bishop of Ely, during Richard's absence on the crusade, 6. See *Ely*.

E.

EADBALD, succeeds his father in the kingdom of Kent, i. 38. Why he renounced christianity, *ib.* Receives it again, *ib.*

Eadburga, wife of Brithric king of Mercia, her infamous character, i. 57.

Earl and alderman, synonymous appellations among the Saxons, i. 575. The original nature of this dignity explained, ii. 269.

Earpwold, king of East Anglia, apostatises from christianity, i. 46. History of his successors, *ib.*

East Anglia, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 46.

East India, the new passage to, round the Cape of Good Hope, first discovered, iii. 404.

——— company, the first patent granted to, by queen Elizabeth, v. 477. A new patent granted to, by James I. vi. 184. Differences between, and the Dutch company, *ib.* Cruelties practised by the Dutch at Amboyna, 185. Its charter revived and supported by Charles II. viii. 329.

Easter, disputes among the Saxon clergy concerning computing the time of that feast, i. 63.

Ecclesiastical courts, a complaint preferred by the commons to Henry VIII. against the oppressions of, iv. 108.

——— government of England, innovations made in by William the Conqueror, i. 255.

——— *revenues*, the taxation of, resigned to parliament, vii. 401.

——— *and civil powers*, advantages resulting from an union between, i. 380. 405.

Ecclesiastics, their homage to laymen for temporalists condemned by the council of Bari, i. 304. Why unfit for being intrusted with the great offices under the crown in the papal times of England, ii. 409. Causes which favoured their promotion to them, *ib.* Their encouragement secured by the attachment of mankind to their doctrines, iv. 30. The political motives to fixing their salaries, and bribing them to indolence, 31. These motives the foundation of religious establishments, 32. How they became dangerous to the civil authority, See *Bishops*, *Heresy*, and *Reformation*.

Edgar, successor to Edwy king of England, his wise administration, i. 117. Establishes a formidable navy, 118. His barge said to be rowed by eight tributary kings, *ib.* His attachment to the monks, *ib.*

Inveighs

Inveighs against the secular clergy, 119. His address to Dunstan, *ib.* How he gained his good character, 121. Instances of his licentious conduct, *ib.* Treacherous conduct of Athelwold towards him, 123. Kills Athelwold, 125. Espouses Elfrida, *ib.* Encourages foreigners to settle, *ib.* Clears the country of wolves, 126.

Edgar Atheling, judged unfit for the succession by King Edward the Confessor, i. 169. 172. Proclaimed by Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, 232. Submits to William the Conqueror, 234. Kindly treated by him, 238. Attends William to Normandy, 239. Retires to Scotland with his sisters, and marries one to king Malcolm, 248. Returns and excites an insurrection, 249. Received into favour, 261. Sent into Scotland to restore Edgar, the right heir to that kingdom, 308. Lives long, and dies in peace, 325.

Edge hill, battle of, between Charles I. and the earl of Essex, vi. 506.

Edinburgh, taken by Edward I. ii. 281. Is burnt by Richard II. iii. 12. Seized by Henry IV. 68. Pillaged and burnt by Henry VIII. iv. 215. Riot of protestants there on the festival of St. Giles, v. 24. Receives the army of the congregation of the Lord, 30. Treaty signed there by the English plenipotentiaries and those of France, 36. A tumult there on introducing the liturgy, vi. 327. The solemn league and covenant framed there, 540. Is seized by Cromwell after the victory of Dunbar, vii. 190.

Editha, a nun, carried off and ravished by king Edgar, i. 121. Penance enjoined him by Dunstan on this occasion, 122.

———, daughter of earl Godwin, is married to Edward the Confessor, i. 159. Is hated by her husband on her father's account, 163.

Edmond, primate of England, procures the dismission of the bishop of Winchester, by his menace to Henry III. ii. 162. His prudent conduct in result, 163. How he obtained the see of Canterbury, 168.

——— *Ironside*, son of Ethelred king of England, state of the kingdom at his accession, i. 146. His battle with Canute, 147. Shares his kingdom with him, *ib.* Murdered, *ib.* Fate of his children, 148.

Edmund, successor to Athelstan, king of England, his short reign and violent death, i. 107.

Edred, successor to Edmund king of England, quells the Danes, and receives homage of Malcolm king of Scotland, i. 108. Advantages taken of his superstition, 109.

Edric, son of Egbert, dispossessed by his uncle Lothaire of the kingdom of Kent, i. 39. Defeats him, and obtains the succession, *ib.*

——, duke, his treacherous behaviour, i. 143, 144. Deserts to Canute, 145. Returns to the service of Edmond Ironside, and betrays him, 147. Executed by Canute, 149.

Edward the Elder, son of Alfred, his reign, i. 99. His title contested by Ethelwald, his cousin-german, *ib.* The rebellion suppressed, 100. His wars against the Northumbrians and Danes, 101. Repels the Scots, 102. Account of his sister Ethelfleda, *ib.*

Edward the Martyr, son of Edgar king of England, crowned by Dunstan, i. 127. His tragical death, 129.

Edward the Confessor, the Saxon line restored by his accession to the crown of England, i. 159. His partiality to the Normans, 161. Espouses Editha, daughter of earl Godwin, 162. His attempts to exclude Harold from the succession, 169. His death and character, 178. Compiled a body of laws, *ib.* The first who touched for the evil, *ib.* Terrible famine in the time of, 227. Some of his laws restored, 260.

———, prince, eldest son of Henry III. shews early indications of a great spirit, ii. 186. Is obliged to swear obedience to the council of twenty four barons, appointed by the Oxford parliament, 187. The knights of the shires appeal to him against the delays and proceedings of the council of barons, 188. His conduct on this occasion, *ib.* Refuses to avail himself of the pope's absolution from his oath, to observe the provisions of Oxford, 193. Is taken prisoner by Leicester, 199. Is restored by the king's treaty and compliance with the barons, 200. Forms a party against the barons, *ib.* His ardour at the battle of Lewes occasions his father to be defeated and taken prisoner, 204. His treaty with Leicester, 206. His treatment by Leicester, 212. Escapes from his custody, 214. Defeats Simon de Montfort coming to join his father, *ib.* Defeats and kills the earl of Leicester at Evesham, 215. Saves his father's life in this battle, *ib.* His gallant defeat of Adam de Gourdon, and generous treatment of him, 217. Is prevailed on by the king of France to engage in a crusade to the Holy Land, 219. Takes the earl of Gloucester with him, *ib.* Arrives at Tunis, and finds Lewis dead, 220. Escapes assassination, *ib.* Is recalled by his father, who dies quickly after, *ib.*

Edward I. proclaimed, ii. 232. Guardians of the realm appointed until his return to England, 233. Influence of his known character in keeping the kingdom quiet, *ib.* His different emotions at hearing of the deaths of his father and of his infant son, how explained by him, *ib.* Spends a year in France before his return to England, *ib.* Incenses the French knights by his successes in a tournament at Chalons, 234. Does homage to Philip at Paris for his French dominions, *ib.* Is crowned at Westminster, *ib.* Applies himself to rectifying the disorders of government, *ib.* Calls a parliament with this intention, 235. Appoints itinerant commissioners for the punishment of criminals, *ib.* Annuls the commission, 236. His cruelty towards the Jews accused of adulterating the coin, *ib.* Banishes them, 237. His frugal management of his revenue, 238. Supplies granted to him, *ib.* Summons Lewellyn prince of Wales to renew his homage, 240. Reduces him on his non-compliance, 241. Takes his brother and successor, David, prisoner, tries and executes him as a traitor, 242. Puts all the Welsh bards to death, 243. Traditional account of the annexation of the principality of Wales to the crown, and its giving title to the king's eldest son, *ib.* Goes abroad to mediate a peace between Alphonso king of Arragon and Philip of France, *ib.* Negotiates a treaty of marriage between prince Edward and Margaret of Norway queen of Scotland, 246. This marriage frustrated by her death, 247. The claims of the competitors for the crown of Scotland referred to his decision, 250. His reflections and schemes on this appeal to him, *ib.* Searches monastic records to establish a claim to the kingdom of Scotland, 251. Goes with an army to Norham on the south

south of the Tweed, to determine the right of the Scottish crown, 253. Declares to them his right to dispose of the crown, as liege lord of Scotland, *ib.* Requires of the competitors an acknowledgement of his superiority, 255. Obtains this concession from them, 256. Claims and obtains possession of the Scotch fortresses, *ib.* The Scots barons and prelates swear fealty to him, 257. Decides in favour of John Baliol, 258. Baliol swears fealty to him, and is put in possession of the crown, *ib.* Provokes the Scots and their new king by his acts of usurpation over them, 259. Mutual depredations committed by the ships of France and England, occasioned by a private quarrel, 260. His offers to accommodate the difference rejected, *ib.* Loses the province of Guienne by the artifice of Philip of France, 263. His attempts to recover it defeated by Philip, 264. The occasion of changing the feudal military service into pecuniary supplies, 265. The consequences of this alteration, 270. The first beginnings of popular government to be dated from his reign, 272. Summons the representatives of the people in parliament to obtain their consent to supplies for government, 274. Summons deputies of the inferior clergy to parliament, 278. They scruple to assemble on his writ, 279. This objection accommodated, and the two houses of convocation formed, *ib.* Summons John Baliol to assist him against France, and makes other demands which he refuses, 280. Assembles an army to chastise him, *ib.* Takes Berwick by assault, and puts the garrison to the sword, 281. The Scots beat Earl Warrenne, and the castle of Dunbar surrendered, *ib.* Takes Edinburgh, and subdues all Scotland, *ib.* Baliol swears fealty to him, 282. Carries him prisoner to the Tower of London, 283. Carries away the famous stone, destroys the Scots records, breaks their great seal, and leaves earl Warrenne governor of Scotland, 282, 283. Makes another unsuccessful attack upon Guienne, 283. Marries his daughter to John earl of Holland, and forms alliances against France, 284. Obtains grants from parliament, *ib.* Is opposed in his demands by the clergy, *ib.* The occasion of this opposition, *ib.* Prohibits all rent to the clergy, 285. Excludes them from all protection of the laws, 286. Reduces them to compliance, 287. His oppressive extortions on trade, 288. Norfolk, Hereford, and other barons, refuse to serve in the expedition to Gascony, 289. The two former refuse to attend him to Flanders, *ib.* Appoints a new constable and mareschal to act in their places for the present service, 290. Reconciles himself with the clergy, and appoints the archbishop of Canterbury and Reginald de Grey tutors to prince Edward, *ib.* Apologizes to his nobility for the irregularity of his former conduct, *ib.* Promises a reformation of government at his return, *ib.* A remonstrance presented to him at his departure, by the earls of Norfolk and Hereford, *ib.* Seals the two charters in Flanders, which are previously confirmed by parliament at home, 292. Is obliged to confirm them again, on his return, in the fullest manner, *ib.* His reluctance to limiting the boundaries of forests, 293. Obtains from the pope an absolution from his engagements to observe the charters, 294. Confirms them again with an exception to the late perambulation of the forests, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Philip of France, and submits the differences between them to pope Boniface, 296.

The pope's award between them, 297. Marries Margaret the sister of Philip, *ib.* The Scots rise against him, under William Wallace, 299. His army under earl Warrenne defeated by Wallace, 301. Advances with a great army to Scotland, 302. Overthrows the Scots at Falkirk, 304. Is applied to by pope Boniface in behalf of Scotland, 307. His answer to the pope, *ib.* Appoints John de Segrave guardian of Scotland, 309. Returns to Scotland, scours the whole country, and receives the submission of the Scots, 310. Endeavours to fix his government over Scotland, 311. Wallace betrayed into his hands, *ib.* Executes Wallace as a traitor, *ib.* His army under Aymer de Valence defeats Robert Bruce, 317. Dies, 318. His character, *ib.* His legislative acts, 319 Allowed his barons to entail their estates, 321. Was the first who passed a statute of mortmain, 322. His probable motives in this law, *ib.* His children, 323. A summary view of the supplies granted him by the parliament and clergy, 325.

Edward, prince, second son of Edward I. the traditional account of his being made prince of Wales, ii. 243. A treaty of marriage negotiated between him and Margaret of Norway, queen of Scotland, 246. This marriage frustrated by her death, 247. The archbishop of Canterbury and Reginald de Grey appointed tutors to him, 290. Is made guardian of the realm during his father's expedition to Flanders, *ib.* Is obliged by the earls of Norfolk and Hereford, to confirm the charters of liberties during his father's absence, 292. Is contracted to Isabella, daughter of Philip of France, 297. Succeeds to the crown, 327.

—— II. his accession, ii. 327. Indications of his weakness of mind, *ib.* His feeble attempt against Scotland, 328. His attachment to Piers Gavaston, *ib.* Appoints him guardian of the realm, on his journey to France, 330. Marries Isabella of France, *ib.* Is obliged to banish Gavaston, 331. Sends him lord lieutenant of Ireland, *ib.* Obtains of the pope a dispensation for Gavaston's oath never to return, 332. The authority of government vested in a council of twelve, 333. Makes a secret protestation against their ordinances, 334. Invites Gavaston back from his second banishment by the ordainers, *ib.* Thomas earl of Lancaster raises an army against him, 335. His narrow escape from Lancaster, *ib.* His rage at Gavaston's murder, 336. Is reconciled to his barons, 337. Makes a fruitless expedition to Scotland, 338. Assembles a great army against the Scots, 339. Is defeated by Robert Bruce at Bannockburn, 340. The dependency of Scotland lost by this defeat, 341. The barons obtain a renewal of the ordinances from him, 342. Reflections on his incapacity for government, 343. Character of Hugh le Despenser, and his father, his favourites, 344. Enrages the barons, who combine against the Despensers, *ib.* Seizes the barony of Gower from John de Mowbray, and gives it to Hugh le Despenser, 345. The barons peremptorily insist on his dismissing Despenser, *ib.* His queen insulted by lord Badlesmere, 347. Punishes this lord, *ib.* Recalls the Despensers, banished by parliament, *ib.* Overpowers his barons, *ib.* Lancaster declares his alliance with Scotland, and raises an army against him, 348. Lancaster defeated and executed, *ib.* 349. Makes another fruitless attempt against Scotland, 350. Concludes a truce with

with Robert Bruce for thirteeen years, *ib.* His disputes with France, *ib.* His queen Isabella goes to Paris to mediate between her husband and brother, 351. Resigns Guienne to his son Prince Edward, *ib.* Intimacy between his queen and Roger Mortimer, 352. Her reply when he sent for her back again, 353. Isabella forms a conspiracy against him, *ib.* Isabella invades Suffolk, and is joined by the barons, 354. He leaves London, and retires to the West, 355. Retreats to Wales, *ib.* Is seized by the earl of Leicester, and confined in Kenilworth castle, 356. Is deposed by parliament, *ib.* A resignation extorted from him, 357. Is pitied by the people, *ib.* Is taken from the custody of Leicester, and delivered to lord Berkley, 358. His cruel usage, *ib.* Is murdered by Mautravers and Gournay, 359. His character, 360. Comparison between his reign and that of his father, 361. Prices of commodities in his reign, 365. His children, 370.

Edward, prince, son to Edward II. is invested by his father with the dutchy of Guienne, II. 351. Goes to Paris to do homage for it 352. Is affianced by his mother Isabella to Philippa, daughter of the count of Holland and Hainault, 354.

———III. his accession, II. 371. The earl of Lancaster appointed guardian to him, 372. Marches with an army to oppose the Scots, *ib.* His difficulty in coming up with them, 374. His defiance to the Scots generals, how answered, *ib.* His narrow escape from the bold attempt of earl Douglas, 375. Enters into a scheme to seize Mortimer, 379. Assumes the exercise of government, 380. His strict regard to the suppression of robbery, *ib.* Encourages secretly the pretensions of Edward Baliol to the crown of Scotland, 383. Undertakes to restore Edward Baliol when driven out of Scotland, 389. Defeats the Scots at Halidown hill, 387. The foundation of his claim to the crown of France, 389. The weakness of his pretension shewn, 391. Is summoned to do homage for Guienne, 392. Is obliged to perform it, *ib.* Prepares for a war with France, 394. Engages the Flemings to assist him, through the means of James D'Arteville, 396. Raises a force, and passes over to Flanders, *ib.* Is created vicar of the German empire, 397. Assumes the title of king of France, *ib.* Contracts his son Edward to the daughter of the duke of Brabant, 399. Invades France, but retires into Flanders, and disbands his army, *ib.* 400. Is greatly impoverished by his fruitless expedition, 400. Remarks on his present situation with his parliament, *ib.* Obtains conditional grants from them, 401. The resolutions of parliament on his assumed title as king of France, 402. Obtains a great victory over the French fleet, 403. Besieges Tournay, 405. Philip's reply to his defiance, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Philip, by the mediation of Jane countess of Hainault, 407. Is deserted by his allies, 408. His ill-humour toward his ministers on his return, *ib.* Archbishop Stratford enters into a combination against him, 410. Stratford's letter to him, 411. Is reconciled to him, *ib.* Review of his present situation, *ib.* Is obliged to pass an act for redress of grievances before he obtains any grants, 412. Makes a secret protest against it, 414. Issues an edict against the validity of this act, *ib.* Patronizes the pretensions of the count de Mountfort to

the dutchy of Britany, 416. Relieves the countess besieged at Hennebonne, 420. Sends another fleet to her assistance under Robert d'Artois, *ib.* Goes over to Britany in person, 421. His treaty with the French, *ib.* How induced to break this truce, 423. Sends the earl of Derby to defend Guienne, *ib.* Invades Normandy, 426. His successes there, *ib.* Seizes and plunders Caen, 428. Penetrates as far as Paris, *ib.* Disposition of his army at Crecy, 430. His address to his army, 431. Defeats the French at Crecy, 435. His moderate expectations from this victory, 437. Besieges Calais, *ib.* His terms to the besieged, 441. Queen Philippa intercedes for the deputies ordered by him to execution, 443. Turns out the inhabitants, and peoples it with Englishmen, *ib.* Concludes a truce with France, *ib.* Discovers the treachery of his governor at Calais and engages him to deceive the French, 444. Engages the French army which was to have seized Calais, and routs it, *ib.* His affability to his prisoners, 445. Institutes the order of the garter, 447. Traditional accounts of the occasion of this institution, 448. Concerts two invasions of France, 452. Invades France from Calais, while his son invades it from Guienne, *ib.* Battle of Poictiers, 454. John king of France brought Prisoner to London, 460. Restores king David Bruce on a ransom, 461. Concludes a treaty with John, which is rejected by the dauphin and states of France, 465. Invades France with a vast force, 466. Progress of his arms, *ib.* Is induced to conclude a more moderate treaty, by the duke of Lancaster, 457. Treaty of Bretigny, 469. His succours to prince Edward, under the earl of Pembroke, seized at sea, by Henry king of Castile, 482. Loses most of his territories in France, 483. Attaches himself to Alice Pierce, but is forced to remove her from court, *ib.* Dies, 484. His character, *ib.* Retrospect of his reign, 485. His children, *ib.* 486. His regard to parliaments, 487. Cases of high treason limited in his reign. *ib.* His frequent confirmations of the great charter, *ib.* Windsor-castle built by him, and by what means, 490. His great exertion of the prerogatives of the crown, *ib.* His frequent levies of taxes without authority of parliament, *ib.* His open avowal of this power, *ib.* Passes the statute of provisors. 492. State of the internal police in this reign, 493. State of commerce and industry, 494. His reign an interesting period of our history, 499.

Edward, prince of Wales, son to Edward III. is contracted to the daughter of the duke of Brabant, II. 399. Is appointed guardian of the realm during his father's absence in Flanders, 400. Calls a parliament, but is unable to procure his father any supplies, *ib.* Attends his father in an expedition to France, 425. His gallant behaviour at the battle of Crecy, 434. His father's behaviour to him that day, 435. Invades and ravages Languedoc and other parts of France, 452. Endeavours to join his father, 454. Defeats king John at Poictiers, and takes him prisoner, 458. His noble behaviour to his prisoner, 459. Concludes a truce, 460. Is invested with the principality of Aquitaine, 476. Recalls his soldiers from the service of Henry count of Transtamare, and protects Peter king of Castile, 477. Defeats Transtamare, and restores Peter, *ib.* Peter's ingratitude to him, 478. Is involved by this expedition, and taxes his principality of Wales to repay it, *ib.* His reply to the French

French king's summons, 480. Goes to France to oppose the French hostilities, where his health declines, 481. Loses most of his French possessions, and concludes a peace, 482. His death and character, 484. How he obtained the appellation of the Black Prince, 485.

Edward, prince, son to Henry VI. born, iii. 198. Extraordinary adventure of, with his mother Margaret, in a forest, 224. Married to lady Anne, daughter to the earl of Warwick, 238. Killed, 250.

——— IV. proclaimed, iii. 212. Reflections on this event, *ib.* His character, 216. Instance of his cruelty, 217. The parties of York and Lancaster how distinguished, *ib.* Routs the Lancastrians at Touton, 218. His title recognised by parliament, 221. Executes divers by martial law, 223. Gets possession of Henry VI. and imprisons him in the Tower, 225. His behaviour during this interval of peace, 226. Becomes enamoured with the lady Elizabeth Grey, 227. Marries her, *ib.* Disgusts the Earl of Warwick, 228; who makes a party against him, 229. Makes an alliance with Charles duke of Burgundy, 231. Bestows his sister on him, 232. Leagues also with the duke of Britany, *ib.* Insurrection in Yorkshire, *ib.* Confusion in this period of the English history, 234. Quells an insurrection in Lincolnshire, 235. Secretly gains over Clarence from Warwick's interest, 238. Marches against Warwick's army, 241. Chased from his own camp by the treachery of the marquis of Montacute, *ib.* Flies to Holland, 242. Assisted by the duke of Burgundy, he lands in Yorkshire, and pushes for London, 246. Enters London, and gets possession of Henry VI. 247. Defeats Warwick at Barnet, 249. Defeats queen Margaret's army at Tewksbury, 250. Resigns himself to gaiety on the return of peace, 252. Projects an invasion of France, *ib.* Invades France, 253. Lewis agrees to buy peace by a tribute, 255. Interview with Lewis, *ib.* Obstructs the duke of Clarence's marriage with the heiress of Burgundy, 260. Procures his trial and execution, 262. Contracts marriage for all his children, without effect, 264. His death, character, and family, 265. Reflections on the state of the court at this period, 266. Leaves his brother the duke of Gloucester regent, during the minority of his son, 267. His legitimacy denied by the duke of Gloucester, 277.

——— V. State of parties at his accession, iii. 266. The duke of Gloucester left regent during his minority, 267. His person intrusted to the earl of Rivers, 268. His guardian arrested by the duke of Gloucester, 270. Is murdered in the Tower with his brother the duke of York, by order of Richard III. 280. Their bodies found in the reign of Charles II. 281.

———, prince, son of Henry VIII. born, iv. 176. His mother, queen Jane Seymour, dies, *ib.* Is contracted to Mary the infant queen of Scotland, 233. His father Henry VIII. dies, 265.

——— VI. his accession, iv. 281. Names of the regency during his minority, *ib.* The earl of Hertford chosen protector, and made duke of Somerset, 283. Somerset obtains a confirmation of his authority by patent, 286. Discovers a propensity to literature, 288. His reluctance at signing the warrant for the execution of Joan Boacher, 324. Is removed to Windsor-castle by the protector, 337. Is addressed by the

council to dismiss Somerset, which he complies with, 338. A new council of regency formed, 339. His grief at his sister the lady Mary's obstinacy in the catholic faith, 347. Is induced by Northumberland to write circular letters to the sheriffs for choosing a new parliament, 358. Subsidies granted him by parliament, 359. Amount of the crown debts at this time, *ib.* His health declines, 360. 362. Orders the judges to prepare a deed of settlement for the succession of lady Jane Grey, *ib.* Signs the patent for the succession, 364. His physicians dismissed, and his cure intrusted to an old woman, *ib.* Dies, 365. His character, *ib.*

Edwin, successor to Adelfrid, king of Northumberland, his wise government, i. 42. His singular escape from assassination, *ib.* Converted to christianity, 43. Slain in battle by Penda king of Mercia, 44. His kingdom divided, and his family extinguished, *ib.*

———and *Morcar*. See *Morcar*.

Edwy, successor to Edred, king of England, his personal character, i. 114. His subjects revolt at the instigation of the clergy, 116.

Effingham, lord, is sent with a squadron to Spain, to convoy Philip to England, but is afraid of his seamen, iv. 397. Is one of queen Elizabeth's ambassadors at the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, v. 17.

———, lord Howard of, commands the English navy destined to oppose the Spanish invincible armada, v. 335. Is attacked by the armada, under the duke of Medina Sidonia, 342. Attacks and disconcerts the armada at Calais, 343. Takes command of the fleet sent against Cadiz, 379. Cadiz taken and plundered, 380. Is created earl of Nottingham, 381. See *Nottingham*.

Egbert, son of Ercombert, king of Kent, his cruel scheme to secure the succession to his son, i. 59.

———, king of Wessex, his descent, i. 56. 58. Takes refuge, and improves himself in the court of Charlemagne, 56. Recalled to enjoy the succession, 57. State of Wessex at his accession, 58. Defeats the Mercians, *ib.* Conquers Kent and Essex, 59. The East Angles put themselves under his protection, *ib.* Conquers Mercia, *ib.* Northumberland, *ib.* Unites the heptarchy under his government, *ib.* 66.

Egmont, count, the Spanish general, defeats De Thermes, the French governor of Calais, in Flanders, by the accidental assistance of an English Squadron then on the coast, iv. 444. Is put to death by the duke d'Alva, v. 194.

Eland, Sir William, governor of Nottingham-castle, betrays Roger Mortimer into the hands of Edward III. ii 379.

Elbeuf, marquis of, accompanies queen Mary in her return to Scotland, v. 45. Is concerned in a riot at the house of Alison Craig, which the church takes cognizance of, 52.

Eleanor, daughter of William duke of Guienne, why divorced from Lewis VII. of France, i. 367. Married to prince Henry, son of Stephen, King of England, 368. Instigates her sons to revolt against their father, 436. Attempts to escape to France, and is confined by her husband, *ib.* Obtains her hereditary dominions from her husband, 455. Is released and made regent by her son Richard I. until his arrival

rival in England, ii. 2. Carries Berengaria, her son's intended bride, to him at Messina, and returns, 12. Writes to the pope on Richard's being imprisoned in Germany, 23. Arrives in Germany with the stipulated ransom, and releases him, 28. Her aversion to Constantia, mother of Arthur Duke of Britany, 40.

Eleanor, daughter of the count of Provence, married to Henry III. of England, ii. 163. The bounties bestowed on her relations, *ib.* The populace of London insult her, 199. Prepares a force abroad, to restore her husband from the tyranny of Leicester, which is dispersed by bad winds, 209. Dies, 257.

Elections to Parliament, review of the laws relating to, during the reign of Henry VI. iii. 213. How regulated under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwel, vii. 238.

Elfleda, a waiting maid, how she became mistress to king Edgar, i. 122.

Elfrida, the daughter of Olgar earl of Devonshire, treacherously obtained in marriage by Athelwold, favourite to king Edgar, i. 124. Espoused by Edgar, 125. Causes her son in-law king Edward the martyr, to be killed, 129.

Elgiva, wife to Edwy, king of England, shockingly murdered by the clergy, i. 116. Other representations of this story, 473.

Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, born, iv. 113. Is created princess of Wales, *ib.* Treaty entered into by her father for marrying her to the duke of Angouleme, 141. Her mother beheaded, 161. Is illegitimated by parliament, 163. Is restored to her right of succession by parliament, 242. Is addressed by the lord Seymour, 315. Raises a body of horse to support her sister Mary, against the lady Jane Grey, 372. Cause of her sister's first declared animosity to her, 380. Is confined by her sister under colour of Wyat's insurrection, 390. Is released by the mediation of Philip, 402. Owes this protection to his policy, *ib.* Retires into the country, and devotes herself to study, 442. Her prudence on the proposal of marriage made by the king of Sweden, *ib.* Her caution with regard to religion, 443. Her sister Mary dies, 445. Great joy manifested both by parliament and people at her accession, v. 2. Her behaviour on arriving at the Tower, *ib.* Receives all the bishops kindly excepting Bonner, 3. Notifies her election to foreign courts, *ib.* Her motives for declining Philip's offers of marriage, 4. Notifies her accession to the pope, and his expressions on the occasion, *ib.* Recalls her ambassador from Rome, 5. Forms her council, *ib.* Makes Cecil secretary of state, *ib.* Is advised by Cecil to restore the protestant religion, *ib.* Her caution in this matter; 7. Prohibits all preaching without licence, to suppress the violent attacks of catholics and reformers on each other, *ib.* Prohibits the elevation of the hoste, 7. The bishops disgusted, 8. Is crowned, *ib.* Her popular behaviour, *ib.* Her title recognized by the new parliament, 9. Is declared governess of the church by parliament, 10. The powers conferred under this title, *ib.* All Edward's statutes concerning religion confirmed, *ib.* The mass abolished, and liturgy restored, 12. Grants voted to her by the commons, 13. Her answer to the address of the commons to fix on the choice of a husband, *ib.* Her address in conciliating the catholics to the reformed religion, 15.

Rejects the proposal of Philip, for her adhering to the Spanish alliance against France, 16. Her treaty with Henry, respecting the restitution of Calais, 17. Henry solicits her excommunication at the court of Rome, 19. Mary, queen of Scotland, and her husband the Dauphin, assume the arms and title of England, *ib.* The rise of her violent jealousy against Mary, 20. Receives a deputation from the protestant malecontents in Scotland for assistance, and is persuaded by Cecil to grant it, 33. Sends a fleet and army to Scotland, 35. Concludes a treaty with the association called *The Congregation of the Lord*, *ib.* Treaty of Edinburgh, 36. Review of her conduct in this affair, 37. Receives a second deputation from the Scots reformers, with thanks, and desire of farther aid, 39. Applies to Mary, queen of Scots, for a ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh, and a renunciation of her pretensions to the English crown, which she refuses, 42. Denies Mary a passage through England, on her return to Scotland, *ib.* Mary's spirited reply on the occasion, *ib.* Equips a fleet with a supposed design of intercepting Mary, who escapes it, 45. Her reply to Mary's request of being declared successor to the English crown, 56. Is apparently reconciled to her, 59. Her prudent administration, *ib.* Divers proposals of marriage made to her, 60. Gives a gentle refusal to them all, 61. Her aversion to the idea of a successor, *ib.* Cruelly persecutes the earl of Hertford and his lady from this motive, 62. Pardons Arthur Pole, and others, convicted of a conspiracy, *ib.* Philip of Spain begins to manifest his enmity to her, 68. Enters into a treaty with the prince of Condé, and has Havre-de-Grace put into her hands, 71. Assists the French protestants, after the battle of Dreux, 73. Falls dangerously ill of the small-pox, *ib.* Is addressed by the commons to marry, *ib.* Her reflections on this subject, 74. Her replies, 75. Supplies granted her by parliament and convocation, 77. Her manifesto on taking possession of Havre-de-Grace, *ib.* Is neglected in the treaty between Condé and the French court, and resolves to retain Havre, 79. Havre taken, and the plague brought into England by the garrison, 80. Makes a resignation of her claim to Calais, *ib.* Maintains an amicable correspondence with Mary, but declines an interview, 81. Her address in preventing Mary from contracting a foreign alliance by marriage, 82. Proposes the earl of Leicester to her, *ib.* Her duplicity in this proposal, 83. Exposes her weakness and rivalship in her conversation with Melvil the Scots ambassador, 84. Favours the marriage of Mary with Lord Darnly, 86. Her duplicity again manifested in this instance, 87. Encourages the Scots malcontents to rise against Mary, 90. Disavows any connection with them on the failure of the enterprise, 91. Her behaviour on receiving news of the birth of prince James of Scotland, 100. Promises the commons to marry, and gives her reasons against naming a successor, 102. Prohibits their debates on this subject, *ib.* Revokes her prohibition, 103. Her speech at dissolving the parliament, *ib.* Remonstrates with Mary against her marriage with Bothwell, 115. Sends Throgmorton ambassador to Scotland, on the captivity of Mary, 121. The tenor of his commission, *ib.* Sends Mary offers of assistance on her escape

escape from Lochleven-castle, 127. Mary, after being defeated by Murray, takes refuge in England, and desires her protection, 128. Cecil's advice to her on this occasion, 129. Requires Mary to clear herself from the murder of her husband, 132. Requires Murray to justify his conduct towards Mary, *ib.* Appoints commissioners for hearing the cause at York, 134. Queries proposed to her by Murray, 138. Transfers the conferences to Hampton-court, and appoints additional commissioners, 139. Her answer to Murray's queries, *ib.* Lays the result of the conference before her privy council, 143. Her reply to the Scots commissioners, 144. Dismisses Murray with a present for his expences, 145. Detains the duke of Chatelherault till Murray's departure, *ib.* Still refuses to acknowledge the young king, 146. Mary refuses all concessions, *ib.* Renews her demand for the restitution of Calais, 147. The chancellor L'Hopital's pleas to elude the demand, *ib.* Enters into a fruitless negotiation for marriage with the archduke Charles, 148. Instances of her reluctance in the work of church reformation, 152. Is attached to the doctrine of the real presence, 153, *note.* Endeavours to depress the puritans, 155. Her great regard and attachment to Cecil, 158. Gives the duke of Norfolk hints of her knowledge of his negotiations in order to a marriage with Mary queen of Scots, 160. Norfolk committed to the Tower, 162. Mary removed to Coventry, and more strictly guarded, *ib.* The earls of Northumberland and Westmorland raise an insurrection in the north, 163. Releases Norfolk on promise of relinquishing thoughts of Mary, 165. Amuses Mary with negotiations, *ib.* Her proposals to Murray in her behalf, 166. Sends Sussex with forces to Scotland, to check the progress of Mary's party, 168. Desires the Scots, on Murray's death, not to elect another regent, *ib.* Her ambiguous conduct to balance the factions in Scotland, 169. Sends terms of a treaty to Mary, who agrees to them, 170. Her measures to frustrate this treaty, 171. Commissioners sent by the Scots parliament to treat with her, *ib.* Is disgusted with their republican principles, *ib.* Dismisses them without concluding any thing, 172. Is excommunicated by pope Pius V. *ib.* Summons a parliament after five years interval, 173. Prohibits them from meddling with affairs of state, *ib.* Summons Strickland a commoner before the council, for introducing a bill for amending the liturgy, 175. Prohibits him from attending the house, *ib.* Yelverton's speech in the house on that occasion, *ib.* Restores Strickland to his seat, 177. Employs the house of lords to check the commons in debating of religious reformation, *ib.* Bell, a commoner, severely reprimanded by the council, for a motion against an exclusive patent granted to a trading company at Bristol, 180. Orders the lord keeper Bacon to reprove the commons at the close of the session for their freedom, 181. Remarks on her notion of the proper objects of parliamentary concern, *ib.* Her frugality and schemes to avoid asking supplies of parliament, 184. Assists the queen of Navarre with money, and allows men to be raised for the assistance of the French protestants, 187. Receives proposals of marriage with the duke of Anjou, 189. Protects the Flemish refugees, 194. Seizes some money intended for the duke of Alva, *ib.* Discovers Norfolk's conspiracy, who

who is tried and executed, 199. Remonstrates with Mary concerning her conduct, 200. Reduces Mary's party in Scotland, 203. Concludes a defensive alliance with France, 204. Her reception of Fenelon, the French ambassador, ordered to excuse the massacre of Paris to her, 206. Her prudent reflection and conduct on this occasion, 208. Assists the German levies for the service of the Hugonots, 213. Is obliged to deny giving farther countenance to the Flemish exiles. 214. Receives an embassy from the revolted Hollanders to implore assistance, 218. Sends for Henry Cobham to intercede with Philip in their behalf, 219. Concludes a treaty with the prince of Orange, and agrees to assist him against the Spaniards, 220. Her representations to Philip on the occasion, 221. A view of her situation at this time, 222. Renders the confinement of Mary stricter, *ib.* Her lenity in religious matters, *ib.* Her watchful regard over the puritans 223. Her frugality, and punctuality in paying loans, 224. Is petitioned by parliament for church reformation, 228. Interposes with the Scots administration, in favour of the earl of Morton, 232. Ireland invaded by the Spaniards, 233. Her displeasure at the cruelty exercised in reducing them, 234. Countenances the depredations of Francis Drake, and knights him, 235. Obtains supplies from parliament, *ib.* Reprimands the commons for appointing a fast, 236. Her great attachment to Simier, the duke of Anjou's agent, 239. Is informed by him of Leicester's marriage, 240. Receives a private visit from the duke of Anjou, *ib.* Orders a contract of marriage to be prepared between her and Anjou, 241. Receives a splendid embassy from France on the occasion, *ib.* Sends Walsingham ambassador to Paris, 242. The strange fluctuations of her conduct on this affair, *ib.* The duke of Anjou comes over to England, 243. Gives him a ring from her own finger, 244. Is dissuaded from this marriage, particularly by sir Philip Sidney, 245. Rejects the duke of Anjou, 247. Sends an embassy to Scotland, on James being taken from the power of Lenox and Arran, 249. Receives a pathetic letter from Mary, 250. Her reflections on this letter, 252. Opens a negotiation in Scotland for Mary's liberty, 254. Reproaches James with inconstancy, 255. Sends Walsingham to Scotland, to discover the character of James, *ib.* Procures a change in the Scots ministry, 256. Artifices practised by her ministry to detect conspiracies, 257. An association formed to protect her against all violence, 258. Calls a parliament, 259. Receives supplies from it, 260. Establishes the court of ecclesiastical commission, 262. Her speech to parliament, on the applications made for farther reformation, 264. Enlarges the powers of the ecclesiastical court, 265. Conspiracies formed against her life, *ib.* Concludes another league with the States, and takes possession of the towns assigned her for security, 271. Sends sir Francis Drake against the Spanish West Indies, 274. Her motives in sending Dr. Wotton ambassador to Scotland, 277. Concludes a league with James for their mutual defence, 279. Appoints a commission for the trial of Mary queen of Scots, 291. Calls a parliament on Mary's condemnation, 300. Appears unwilling to carry Mary's sentence into execution, 301. Mary's last letter to her, 303. The duplicity of her conduct in regard to Mary, 307. Her behaviour on the execution of Mary, 320.

Her letter to James, 321. Recalls Leicester from Holland, 329. Prepares for defence against the Spanish invincible armada, 334. Her vigilance and prudence, 336. Her lenity towards her catholic subjects at this time, 337. Visits the camp at Tilbury, 338. Receives supplies from parliament on the destruction of the armada, 345. Prohibits the commons from meddling with ecclesiastical affairs, 346. Checks their intended regulations of purveyance, 347. Retains great jealousy of James of Scotland, 351. Endeavours to prevent James from marrying, 352. Assists Henry of Navarre against the king of France, 355. Sends him men and money on his accession to the crown of France, 357. Sends him farther assistance by treaty, 359. 361. Calls a parliament, 363. Her haughty reply to the usual requests of the speaker of the commons, *ib.* Sends several members to prison for reviving the question about the succession, 364. Her injunctions to the speaker, on Morris's motion against ecclesiastical abuses of power, 365. Her speech to parliament, 367. Her advice and conduct to James of Scotland, on the discovery of a conspiracy against him, 371. Her physician receives a bribe from the Spanish ministers to poison her, and is executed for it, 373. Concludes a new treaty with the United Provinces, 375. Fits out an armament which takes and plunders Cadiz, 379. Makes Essex earl marshal of England, 384. Calls a parliament, 385. Her pleas for a supply, *ib.* Obtains a grant, *ib.* Gives Essex a box on the ear, 391. Concludes a new treaty with the States, 393. Sends Essex lord lieutenant to Ireland, 404. Orders Essex to displace the earl of Southampton, 405. Is displeased with his conduct, 409. Her behaviour to him on his unexpected journey to court, 410. Her sorrow on his illness, 411. Sends lord Mountjoy to Ireland, in the room of Essex, 413. Causes Essex to be examined before the privy council, 414. Refuses to renew his patent for the monopoly of sweet wines, 418. Is informed that Essex ridicules her person and age, 420. Is informed of Essex's rebellious schemes, 425. Her irresolution with regard to the execution of Essex, 429. Consents to his death, 430. Meditates a new system of policy for Europe, in conjunction with Henry IV. of France, 433. Is induced to pay her soldiers in Ireland with base money, 435. Her enormous grants of monopolies, 439. Is induced to restrain them, 441. The abject acknowledgements of the house of commons, on her promise to cancel the most oppressive of the patents, *ib.* Falls into a profound melancholy, 445. Inquiry into the cause, *ib.* The countess of Nottingham confesses her treachery to Essex, 446. Her unconquerable grief on this occasion, *ib.* Dies, 447. Her character, 448. Review of her administration, 451. Her arbitrary exertion of her prerogatives, 452. Star-chamber, 453. Court of high commission, 454. Martial law, 455. Orders vagabonds to be punished by martial law, 456. Her indignation against Hayward, an author, averted by the pleasantry of Bacon, 457. Her method of oppressing turbulent subjects, 459. Her arbitrary exaction of loans, 460. Victualled her navy by means of her prerogative of purveyance, 461. Her arbitrary use of embargoes, 462. Disallowed the legislative power of parliament, *ib.* Her tyrannical proclamations, 463. Oppressive and cruel acts of power by her and her ministry, 464.

464. Bad state of morals, and remiss execution of justice, during her reign, 469. Her revenues, 472. She threatens to deprive the bishop of Ely of his see for not fulfilling an engagement concerning the exchange of some land, *ib. note.* Her curious letter to him on that subject, *ib.* The true reason of her parsimony, *ib.* Debts owing to her by foreign princes, 473. Her extraordinary charges, and presents to Essex, 474. Amount of the supplies she received from parliament, *ib.* Her credit established in the city of London, 476. Her commercial regulations, 477. Her improvement of the navy, 480. Her ostentation in dress, 488. Her extraordinary learning, 490. Reports to her prejudice, which were communicated to her by Mary queen of Scots, 506. Her speech in the camp of Tilbury, 516. Remarks on her partiality to the earl of Leicester, 517. The gallant style in which her courtiers used to address her, and speak of her, 526. Harrison's account of her navy, 533.

Elizabeth, princess, daughter of James I. is married to Frederic, elector Palatine, VI. 63.

————, princess, daughter of Charles I. his charge to her, before his execution, VII. 142. Dies of Grief, 151.

Elliot, Sir John, reads a remonstrance framed by him in the house of commons, against tonnage and poundage, VI. 275. His sentence by the court of King's-bench, 276. Dies, 277.

Elston, friar, interrupts Dr. Corren, preaching before Henry VIII. and justifies friar Peyto's abuse of the king, IV. 134. Is censured by the council for it, *ib.*

Ely, Longchamp bishop of, appointed joint guardian of the realm, with the bishop of Durham, by Richard I. during his absence on the crusade, II. 6. His character and preferments, 7. Arrests his coadjutor the bishop of Durham, and extorts a resignation of the earldom of Northumberland from him, 16. His ostentatious assumption of the sole administration of government, *ib.* Forced to fly beyond the sea by prince John, 17. Intrigues with Philip of France, *ib.*

Embargoes, the arbitrary sinister use of, by queen Elizabeth, V. 462.

Emma, sister of Richard duke of Normandy, married to Ethelred king of England, I. 135. Ethelred dies, 146. Marries Canute his successor, 150. Flies to Flanders, 155. Confined to the monastery of Winchester, by Edward the confessor, 161.

Empson, a lawyer, and the instrument of the oppressions exercised by Henry VII. his character, III. 387. His mode of practice, *ib.* Extract from his private Memorandums, 396, *note.* Summoned before the privy council of Henry VIII. 411. His shrewd apology for his conduct, *ib.* Committed to the Tower, 412. Tried, *ib.* Executed to please the people, *ib.*

England, see *Britain,* and the several kingdoms which composed the Saxon heptarchy. See also its princes under their respective names. When united into one kingdom, I. 59. 66. Divided into shires, &c. 92. Pays tribute to the Danes, 133. Conquered by the Normans, 193. Review of the Saxon government in, 197. Brief state of, at the accession of Henry II. 373. Review of, at his death, 464. The operation of the interdict it was laid under on account of king John's opposition

sition to pope Innocent III. ii. 62. The executive and judicial powers, where lodged under the Anglo-Norman government, 121. A general view of its situation at the time of Henry III. 193. The bad internal police at that time, 227. Intentions even then formed for shaking off the papal yoke, 229. The first beginnings of popular government in, 272. The source of the long antipathy between the natives of, and those of France, 397. A great plague in, 448. The popular sentiments of papal power over, in the reign of Edward III. 493. State of its exports and imports in the year 1354, 495. An inquiry into the nature of the homage paid to the kings of, by those of Scotland, 501. Why generally successful in its contests with France, iii. 98. Reflexions on the ancient historians of, 296. Extension of the regal authority by Henry VII. 396. An inquiry how far the disposition of the people co-operated with the designs of Henry VIII. in renouncing all subjection to the church of Rome, iv. 125. The lesser monasteries suppressed, 150. The authority of the bishop of Rome totally renounced by parliament, 164. Articles of faith framed by the convocation, 166. The reformation promoted by the accession of Edward VI. 287. Battle of Pinkey, 303. Grievances of the people at the infancy of the reformation, 326. Insurrections, 329. Articles of marriage between queen Mary and Philip of Spain, 387. Reflections of the people on this match, *ib.* Cruel persecution of reformers, 411, 430. Is engaged by Philip in his war with France, 432. Calais taken by the duke of Guise, 435. Death of queen Mary, 446. State of the navy during her reign, 448. Laws respecting trade, *ib.* An embassy sent by the czar of Muscovy, 449. The mean nasty manner of living among the English at this time, 450. Great alteration in this respect, 462. Accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 1. The protestant religion restored, 10. Peace of Cateau Cambresis, 17. The plague brought over from Havre de Grace by the earl of Warwic, 80. Useful manufactures introduced by the Flemish refugees, 194. A treaty concluded by Elizabeth with the revolted Hollanders, 220. A voyage round the world, performed by sir Francis Drake, 234. Seminaries founded abroad for the education of English catholics, 236. Establishment of the court of ecclesiastical commission, 262. Preparations for resisting the Spanish invincible armada, 334. The armada destroyed, 343. Enormous grants of monopolies by Elizabeth, 439. Death of queen Elizabeth, 447. Review of the state of, during her reign, 451. Compared with the Turkish government, 459. Bad state of morals, and remiss execution of justice, during her reign, 469. First establishment of the East India company, 477. An exclusive patent granted by John Basilides, czar of Muscovy, of the whole trade with that country to the English, 478. This privilege taken away by the czar Theodore, *ib.* Commencement of the trade with Turkey, 479. State of the navy in this reign, 480. Number of the people, 482. The first law for the relief of the poor, when passed, 484. The current specie in, at the end of queen Elizabeth's reign, 485. Review of manners at this time, *ib.* State of literature, 490. Accession of James VI. of Scotland to the crown, vi. 1. Great alteration observable in, at this time, by the progress of letters and improvemen

ment in arts, 21. Almost all the foreign trade of, monopolised by exclusive companies, 23. Peace concluded with Spain, 27. The hostile laws respecting Scotland abolished, 41. Crown and people, how affected by the discovery of the West Indies, 47. Death of James I. 153. Miscellaneous remarks on this period of history, 157. Colonies established in America, 186. Characters of its early writers on the revival of learning, 190. Peace concluded with France and Spain, 279. The present happy state of its foreign affairs, *ib.* The long parliament summoned, 365. Reflections on the commencement of the civil war, 485. State of parties when the king erected his standard at Nottingham, 494. Battle of Edge-hill, 506. Bristol taken by prince Rupert, 523. Battle of Newbury, 534. Battle of Marston-moor, vii. 11. Second battle of Newbury, 17. Meeting of the assembly of divines at Westminster, 32. Battle of Naseby, 57. Bristol taken and Prince Rupert dismissed, 61. The presbyterian discipline established by parliament, 69. Trial of the king, 136. Execution of Charles I. 143. Confused state of the nation after this event, 156. Battle of Worcester, 196. Confused state of religion, 202. Its foreign exertions at this time, 203. See *Commonwealth* of England. Engagement between Blake and Tromp, the Dutch admiral, 212. War commenced with the states, 213. See *Blake, Ascue, Pen,* &c. The advantages now gained at sea owing to the ship-money levied by Charles, 216. The long parliament terminated by Cromwell, 219. State of parties at this time, 226. A new parliament summoned by Cromwell, 227. Cromwell chosen protector, 232. See *Protectorate.* Peace with the Dutch, 236. Is divided into twelve military jurisdictions, under so many major-generals, 244. Tunis bombarded by Blake, 254. Jamaica taken by Pen and Venables, *ib.* The foreign and domestic administration of Cromwell, 258. Death of Oliver Cromwell, 286. Accession of Richard Cromwell, 293. He resigns, 297. The long parliament restored, 298. The parliament expelled by the army, and a committee of safety appointed, 303. State of foreign affairs, 304. The long parliament again restored, 313. The long parliament dissolved, 320. Charles II. proclaimed, 328. A review of internal circumstances at this period, 330. Dunkirk sold to the French, 386. Motives which produced the Dutch war, 397. New York taken, 399. Alteration in the method of taxing the clergy, 401. War declared against the States, 402. Great Plague of London, 408. Fire of London, 415. Peace of Breda, 422. Triple alliance, 435. Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 437. Charles contracts a private league with Louis XIV, 464. War with Holland, 479. Peace with Holland, 513. The princess Mary married to the prince of Orange, viii. 35. The popish plot, 63. *A-quo warranto* issued against the city of London, 178. Conditions on which the charter was restored, 181. Most of the corporations surrender their charters, *ib.* Death of Charles II. and accession of his brother James II. 209. The duke of Monmouth defeated at Sedgmoor, 229. The court of high commission revived by James, 254. Declaration of indulgence published, 256. A solemn embassy to Rome, 261. Case of Magdalen college, 265. The English make applications to the prince of Orange, 282. The prince of

of Orange's preparations, 285. His declaration published, 290. Lands at Torbay, 294. The king deserts his kingdom, and embarks for France, 305. The convention-parliament called, 308. State of parties at this critical time, 310. The crown settled on the prince and princess of Orange, 319. Reflexions on this revolution, *ib.* Remarks on the administration of the Stuart family while they enjoyed the government, 320. State of finances since the restoration, 324. State of the navy between the restoration and revolution, 325. State of commerce, 328. Great increase of wealth, 329. State of manners, 331. Royal society instituted, 332. Account of learned men at this period, 333.

Entails, a statute passed by Edward I. to allow, ii. 321. A law of Henry VII. to empower the owners of estates to break them, iii. 400. Important effects of this statute, *ib.*

Episcopacy, is abolished in Scotland, vi. 334. Is abjured in England, vii. 32. Is restored in England, 361. Is tacitly restored in Scotland, 366.

Erasmus, his account of the mean nasty manner of living among the English, iv. 448.

Ercombert, son of Eadbald king of Kent, his piety celebrated by Bede, i. 39.

Ermenfroy, bishop of Sion, sent by pope Alexander, as his legate, to William the Conqueror, i. 256. Summons a council at Winchester, *ib.* Degrades Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, 257.

Erne, two engagements on the banks of, between Edward Baliol and earl of Mar, ii. 384.

Erudition of a Christian man, a treatise so called, published by Henry VIII. iv. 223. Subscription to this work enjoined by parliament, 238.

Escheats, the great advantages made of them by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 128.

Escus, the son of Hengist king of Kent, his character, i. 28.

Essex, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 51.

——, Cromwel earl of. *See Cromwel.*

——, the young earl of, attends his father-in-law the earl of Leicester, in his expedition to the United Provinces, v. 273. Joins sir Francis Drake secretly in his expedition against Portugal, 350. Commands a body of forces sent to the assistance of Henry IV. of France, 360. Commands the forces sent against Cadiz, 379. Takes Cadiz by assault, and plunders it, 380. His eagerness to prosecute farther advantages, 381. Is appointed to command a second armament against Spain, 382. Is by a storm forced to alter his destination to the intercepting the Indian fleet, *ib.* Misses all but three ships, 384. Is made earl marshal of England, *ib.* Instances of his lofty spirit and rash conduct, 390. His resentment on receiving a blow from Elizabeth, 391. Solicits the government of Ireland, 403. Is sent to Ireland under the title of lord lieutenant, 404. His formidable army and extensive powers, *ib.* Disobeys the queen in promoting the earl of Southampton, 405. Is misled in his first movements by the Irish council, 406. His unsuccessful expedition into Munster, 407. His treaty with Tyrone, 408. His sudden journey to London, and

and conference with the queen, 409. Is committed to custody, and falls ill, 410. Is examined before the privy council, 414. His defence, *ib.* The sentence pronounced against him by the lord-keeper, 415. His patent for the monopoly of sweet wines refused to be renewed by the queen, 418. His intrigues against the queen, 419. Indulges his ill-humour in satirical reflections against her, 420. Concerts a plan for obliging the queen to declare James of Scotland her successor, 421. Maintains a correspondence with James, 422. Enters into a conspiracy at Drury-house, 423. Is summoned to the council, 424. Sallies out with his friends into the city, 425. Meeting with no countenance, he returns and surrenders, 427. Is tried and condemned, *ib.* 428. Makes a full confession to the council, 429. Is executed, 430. His character, 431. The countess of Nottingham's treachery towards him discovered, 446. Amount of the queen's gifts to him, 473. His letter on receiving the blow from Elizabeth, 524.

Essex, Devereux, the young earl of, marries the lady Frances Howard, vi. 67. Her obstinate aversion to him, *ib.* The secret motive of his disgust, *ib.* Is divorced from his lady, 70. Encourages the opposition of the Commons to Charles I. 462. Is made general of the parliament's army, 490. The separate bodies of forces all assemble under him at Northampton, 503. A body of his forces defeated by prince Rupert, 505. Marches from Worcester to meet the king, 506. Battle of Edge-hill, *ib.* Arrives at London, 509. Is joined by the city trained bands, *ib.* Takes Reading, 512. Is joined by Sir William Waller, 515. His army surprised by prince Rupert, and Hambden killed, 521. Retires toward London, 522. Exhorts the parliament to peace, 530. Marches to the relief of Gloucester, 531. Obliges the king to raise the siege, *ib.* Battle of Newbury, 532. Returns to London, 533. Is applied to by the royal party, but resists all personal treaty with them, vii. 5. His forces in Cornwall reduced by the king, 16. Collects his army again, and, in conjunction with Manchester and Cromwel, defeats the king at Newbury, 17. Resigns his command in consequence of the self-denying ordinance, 28. Dies, 81.

——, earl of, is made treasurer on the removal of the earl of Danby, viii. 102. Resigns, 122, *ib.* Enters into the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, 182. Is apprehended, 188. His extraordinary death, 199.

Estates, the entailment of, allowed, ii. 321. Are admitted to be broken, iii. 400. Important consequences of this latter law, *ib.*

Etching, the art of, by whom invented, viii. 329.

Ethelbert, associated with his father Hermenric in the kingdom of Kent, i. 29. His wars, by which he acquired a superiority in the heptarchy, *ib.* Espouses a christian princess, daughter of Caribert king of Paris, 31. His speech to Augustine the monk on his arrival, 34. Is converted to christianity, 35. Publishes a body of written laws, 37. Dies, 38.

Ethelburga, wife of Edwin king of Northumberland, converts her husband to christianity, i. 43.

Etheldred, brother to Wolfhere, king of Mercia, his history, i. 47.

Ethelfleda, sister of king Edward the Elder, some account of, with her character, i. 102.

Ethelred, brother and successor of king Edward the Martyr, harrassed by the Danes, i. 131. 132. 141. Revenges the treachery of Alfric duke of Mercia, by putting out his son's eyes, 132. Becomes tributary to the Danes, 133. Marries Emma, sister of Richard II. duke of Normandy, 135. Causes a massacre of the Danes, 141. His fleet destroyed by the Danes, 143. Consequent distress and confusion, *ib.* Retreats to Normandy, *ib.* Returns, 144. His death, and an account of his children, 146. 150.

Ethelwald, cousin-german to king Edward the elder, rebels against him, i. 90. Joins the East Anglian Danes, 100. Killed in battle, 101.

Ethelwolf, son of Egbert, king of England, harrassed by the Danish invasions, i. 69. Gains a victory over them at Okely, 71. Undertakes a pilgrimage to Rome, *ib.* Marries the daughter of the emperor Charles the bald, *ib.* Shares his kingdom with his son, 72. Grants to the clergy their claim of tithes, *ib.* Leaves his kingdom between his two elder sons, 74.

Ethered, son of Ethelwolf, succeeds his brothers, Ethelbald and Ethelbert, in the kingdom of England, i. 74.

Evers, lord, conducts an inroad into Scotland, and boasts of his progress, iv. 248. Is killed at the battle of Ancram, 249.

Evesham, battle of, between prince Edward and Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, ii. 215.

Evidence, the state of, under the old Anglo-Saxon law, i. 223.

Evil, Edward the confessor the first who touched for it, i. 178.

Europe, influence of the free constitutions of the Germans in new-modelling the governments of, i. 197. State of, at the commencement of the crusades, 296. State of, at the accession of Henry II. 379. The balance of power in, well secured at the commencement of the reign of Henry VIII. iii. 415. The great revolution made in, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, by the diffusion of letters and progress of arts, vi. 21. The liberties of the people in, how abridged, 101. Account of the revival of letters in, 190. A review of the state of, at the time of the English protectorate, under Oliver Cromwel, vii. 245.

Eustace, count of Bologne, fray between his retinue and the townsmen of Dover, i. 163. Endeavours, in conjunction with the Kentishmen, to seize the castle of Dover from the Normans, 242.

———, son of king Stephen, is refused to be anointed as his father's successor, by the archbishop of Canterbury, i. 368.

Exchange, royal, by whom first built, v. 483.

Exchequer, court of, or *Curia Regis*, the primitive institution of, ii. 122. Causes in, often heard by the king personally, *ib.* The first of the four courts of record, among which its ancient jurisdiction is now divided, 123. Appeals to, in what cases anciently allowed, 125. Extraordinary instances produced from the records, of bribery, and the sale of justice, 131. Black book of, its origin, 266. Divided into four distinct courts, 320. Shut up by Charles II. vii. 475.

Excise, the first introduction of, in England, by the long parliament, vii. 4.

Exclusion-bill, against James duke of York, passed by the house of commons, viii. 105. Is resumed by the new parliament, 134. The arguments urged for and against it, 135. Is passed by the commons, and rejected by the lords, 139.
Excommunication, by the ecclesiastical courts in Scotland, the nature of, explained, vi. 86.
Executions of criminals, the extraordinary number of, in the reign of Henry VIII. and great decrease of, since, v. 533.
Exeter, besieged by Perkin Warbec, iii. 379. He raises the siege, 380.
———, Courteney, marquis of, enters into a conspiracy with cardinal Pole, iv. 187. Is executed for it, *ib.*

FAERIE Queen of Spenser, a character of that poem, v. 492.
Fag, a member of the house of commons, is protected by the house against an appeal in a law-suit to the house of lords, viii. 14.
Fairfax, a character of his translation of Tasso, vi. 193.
———, lord, commands for the king in the north of England, vi. 513. Is defeated at Atherton-moor by the parliamentary forces, 535. Raises forces and secures York, vii. 313. His death and character, 474, *note*. His daughter married to the duke of Buckingham, *ib.*
———, Sir Thomas, defeats the royalists at Wakefield, vi. 535. Distinguishes himself in the battle of Horn castle, *ib.* Reduces the Irish forces under lord Biron, vii. 7. Defeats colonel Bellasis at Selby, 8. Is joined by the Scots under the earl of Leven, *ib.* Is joined by the earl of Manchester, and lays siege to York, 10. Defeats prince Rupert at Marston-moor, 12. Takes possession of York, 14. Is appointed general in the room of Essex, 28. His scheme to retain Cromwel in command, notwithstanding the self-denying ordinance, *ib.* His character, 29. Battle of Naseby, 56. Defeats the king, 58. Retakes Leicester, 59. Reduces Bridgewater, Bath, and Sherborne, 60. Takes Bristol, 61. Reduces the west of England, 62. His moderation on the finishing of the war, 75. The army grows discontented, and petitions him, 85. A parliament of agitators formed by his army, 87. The king is seized and brought to the army without his knowledge, *ib.* Cromwel is chosen general, 90. Is appointed, by the parliament, general in chief of all the forces, 100. Takes Colchester, 128. The army under his nominal command, but under Cromwel's influence, marches to London to purge the parliament, 131. His lady interrupts the trial of the king, 137. How detained from rescuing the king from execution, 145. Resigns, 188.
Falconbridge, lord, successful stratagem of, at the battle of Touton, iii. 218.
Falkirk, battle of, between Edward I. and the Scots, ii. 304.
Falkland, lord, secretary to Charles I. assists the king in drawing up his memorials against the commons, vii. 502. Is killed at the battle of Newbury, vi. 533. A short summary of his life and character, *ib.* Is the first who affords any regular definition of the English constitution, 583.

Famines in England, i. 142. 227. 360. ii. 127. 342. 364.
Farm-houses, remarks on the statute of Henry VII. for upholding, iii. 403.
Fastolf, Sir John, defeats the count of Dunois, who attacked his convoy to the siege of Orleans, iii. 140. Retreats from the French at Patay, and is degraded from the order of the garter, 149.
Fauconberg, lord, marries a daughter of Oliver Cromwel, vii. 276. Is sent to Louis XIV. at Dunkirk, where he is honourably received, 280.
Fawkes de Breaute, seizes and imprisons a judge for finding verdicts against his unjust practices in the reign of Henry III. ii. 154. His punishment, *ib.*
———, Guy, an officer in the Spanish service is brought over to execute the gunpowder plot, vi. 32. Is apprehended, 35. Discovers the conspiracy, *ib.*
Fayal is taken by Sir Walter Raleigh, v. 383.
Fee-farm rents of the crown, Charles II. empowered by parliament to sell them, viii. 456.
Felonies. See *Criminals* and *Vagrants*.
Felton, John, is executed for fixing the pope's bull of excommunication against queen Elizabeth on the gate of the bishop of London's palace, v. 172.
———, an account of his motives for attempting the life of Villiers duke of Buckingham, vi. 260. Stabs the duke at Portsmouth, 261. Is seized and examined, 262.
Fenelon, the French ambassador, declares his detestation of the massacre at Paris, v. 206. His reception by queen Elizabeth, when ordered to represent it to her, *ib.*
Ferdinand, king of Arragon, loses his wife Isabella, queen of Castile, iii. 390. His daughter Joan married to Philip, archduke of Austria, *ib.* His character, *ib.* Obtains possession of Castile by the death of Philip, 394. Agrees with Lewis XII. of France, on a seizure and partition of the kingdom of Naples, 414. Seizes it for himself, *ib.* Acquires the epithet of *Catholic*, 418. Glories in outwitting his neighbours, 419. Deludes Henry VIII. into an expedition to Guienne, to facilitate his conquest of Navarre, *ib.* Disavows the alliance signed by his ambassador with Henry and Maximilian against France, 427. Engages in a treaty with Lewis, 451. Dies, and is succeeded by his grandson Charles, iv. 12.
———, brother to the emperor Charles V. is elected king of the Romans, iv. 427. Engages in an alliance to subdue the Bohemians, vi. 102. Puts the elector palatine under the bann of the empire, 112.
Feudal system, its introduction into England, i. 253. Extended to the church, 254. State of, in England, at the accession of king Stephen, 349. Review of the disorders occasioned by, 466. Its operation in England, ii. 77. Its origin, 101. The nature of it explained, 104. The preference of possessions held under it, to allodial ones in the early ages, shewn, 106. Its union with civil jurisdiction, 107. The civil services implied under it, 109. State of the common people under it, 111. Comparative view of its operation on hereditary and

elective monarchies, 112. The declension of, at the time of Richard II. iii. 59. The advantage of, in the early ages, 299. The decay of, to be dated from the revival of the arts, 301. Instance of the barons being sensible of this, 302, *note*.

Faversham, earl of, is sent by Charles II. with the terms of the pacification to Paris, viii. 36. Defeats the duke of Monmouth at Sedgemoor, 229. His cruelty after the battle, 231.

Fictions in law, when first invented, and their use, ii. 320.

Fiefs, how they came to descend hereditarily in families, ii. 105.

Fifteenths, and tenths, the nature, amount, and method of levying these taxes, vi. 173 Are changed into a land-tax, 175.

Finances. See *Revenues*.

Finch, Sir John, speaker of the house of commons, is forcibly held in the chair, until a remonstrance is passed against tonnage and poundage, vi. 275. Is impeached by the long parliament, and flies to Holland, 371.

Fines, amerciaments, and oblates, the great and scandalous advantages made of, by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 130. Arbitrarily exacted by Henry VII. iii. 365. 387.

——— and recoveries for breaking the entailments of estates, when first introduced, iii. 400.

First-fruits, when first levied on ecclesiastical benefices, ii. 323.

Fisher, bishop of Rochester, reflects on the commons, and offends the duke of Norfolk, iv. 96. Refuses to take the oath regulating the succession of the crown, 119. Is attainted by parliament, 121. Is imposed on by the stories of the *holy maid of Kent*, 136. Is imprisoned on this account, 137. His cruel treatment, 138. Is created a cardinal by the pope, 139. Is condemned and beheaded for denying the king's supremacy, *ib*. Extract from a speech of his, on the proposal for suppressing the lesser monasteries, 456.

Fitton, chancellor of Ireland, his character and conduct, viii. 260.

Fitz-Allan, archbishop of Canterbury, excommunicates all who should oppose the proceedings of the duke of Gloucester, and his party, against Richard II.s ministry, iii. 23. Is removed from his office of chancellor by the king, 24. Impeached by the commons, banished, and his temporalities sequestered, 31.

Fitz Arnulf, a citizen, hanged for a rebellious commotion in London, ii. 154.

Fitz-Gerald. See *Fitz Stephens*.

Fitz-Harris, his case, viii. 151. Is impeached by the commons, 153. Is tried by common law, and executed, 156.

Fitz Osbet, a popular lawyer in the reign of Richard I. his oppressive practices, ii. 36. Is executed, 37.

Fitz-Richard, mayor of London, joins the barons and Leicester against Henry III. and encourages tumults in the city, ii. 198. Violently prolongs his authority, and aids Leicester by exciting seditions, 202. His bloody schemes disconcerted by the battle of Evesham, 217. Is punished by fine and imprisonment, 218.

Fitz-Stephens, and Fitz-Gerald, engaged by Dermot, king of Leinster, to undertake an expedition to Ireland in his favour, i. 428. Their successes, *ib*. See *Strongbow*.

Fitz-Walter, Robert, chosen general of the baron's army, on king John's refusal to confirm their liberties, ii. 83.
Five-mile act passed, viii. 408.
Flambard, Ralph, bishop of Durham, dispossessed and imprisoned by Henry I. i. 317.
Flammoc, Thomas, a lawyer, heads an insurrection in Cornwal, against Henry VII. iii. 373. Encourages them with hopes of assistance in Kent, 374. Defeated and executed, 376.
Flanders, a summary view of the state of that territory at the time of Edward III. forming his pretensions to the crown of France, ii. 395. Licentious popularity of James d'Arteville the brewer, *ib.* The Flemings assist Edward in his sea-fight with the French, 408. Their forces under Robert d'Artois, routed at St. Omers, 404. Siege of Tourney by Edward, 405. All commerce with, prohibited by Henry VII. iii. 361. Commissioners sent to London to treat of an accommodation, 378. The *Intercursus magnus*, or great treaty of commerce, concluded, *ib.* All English rebels excluded from, by this treaty, *ib.* A neutrality stipulated with, by Henry VIII. iv. 97. See *Netherlands*, and *United Provinces*.
Fleetwood, his speech in the house of commons on the regal prerogative in granting patents, v. 178.
———, colonel, marries Ireton's widow, and obtains the government of Ireland, vii. 267. Opposes his father-in-law's accepting the title of king, 274. Estranges himself from the protector, 283. Cabals against Richard, 295. Is appointed lieutenant-general by the long parliament, now restored, 299. His commission vacated, 303. Instances of his fantacism, 313.
Flesh meat, the statute prices of, in the reign of king Henry VIII. iv. 277.
Florence, revolts from the authority of the family of Medicis, v. 83. Is again subdued to their sovereignty, 98.
Flouden, battle of, between the earl of Surry and James IV. of Scotland, iii. 438.
Folkland, in the Saxon tenures, explained, i. 229.
Fontarrabia fruitless expedition to, by Henry VIII. iii. 419. Is taken by the emperor Charles V. iv. 52.
Fontralles, a French officer, his gallant expedition for the relief of Terrouane, besieged by Henry VIII. iii. 434.
Ford, lady, taken prisoner by James IV. of Scotland, whose affections she gains, iii. 437.
Foreigners, their superiority to the English in arts, in the time of Henry VIII. iv. 274. An insurrection against them in London, *ib.* Edict of the Star-chamber against, 275.
Forests, severe laws renewed against offenders in, by Richard I. ii. 36. The oppressive nature of these laws, 136. A charter of, granted by Henry III. 147. Confirmed by Edward I. 292, 293. The perambulations of, made, and the boundaries of, fixed, 293.
Forma pauperis, suits in, first granted to the poor, iii. 398.
Forest, friar, burnt for heresy in Scotland, iv. 215.

Fortescu, Sir Faithful, deserts from the earl of Essex to the king, at the battle of Edge-hill, vi. 506.

Fotheringay-castle, Mary queen of Scots tried there, v. 294. Is executed there, 319.

Formigni, battle of, the only action fought in defence of Normandy by the English, iii. 177.

Fox, Richard, his character, iii. 319. Becomes confidant to Henry VII. *ib.* Called to the privy-council, and made bishop of Exeter, 320. His translation to Winchester, and made privy-seal, *ib.* Admonishes Henry VIII. against his pleasures and extravagances, 410. Introduces Wolsey to him, 428. Supplanted in Henry's confidence by him, *ib.* His advice to Henry, on his retiring, iv. 4.

——, bishop of Hereford, is sent by Henry VIII. to treat with the German protestants, iv. 142. Is zealous for a thorough reformation, but dies, 189

——, George, his enthusiastic disposition, vii. 333. Founds a new sect, who are denominated Quakers, *ib.*

France, is invaded by the Normans, i. 67. 137. Rollo the Dane obtains the province of Neustria, and marries the daughter of Charles the Simple, 138. Character of the Normans, 182. 316. See *Normandy* and *William*. State of, at the accession of Henry II. of England, 371. The barons of England offer the crown to the dauphin Lewis, ii. 94. Lewis goes over to England with an army, 95. Returns, 151. The province of Normandy ceded to Lewis IX. by Henry III. of England, 190. Mutual depredations committed by the ships of, and those of England, occasioned by a private quarrel, 260. The province of Guienne how recovered by, 263. Guienne restored, 297. New disputes with England concerning, 350. Cruel treatment of the Knights Templars there, 362. An inquiry into the foundation of the Salic law, 389. Edward III. of England assumes the title of king of, 397. Edward's victory over the fleet of, 403. Normandy invaded and overrun by Edward, 426. Philip defeated at Crecy, by Edward, 433. State of France at the death of Philip, 449. Is invaded by Edward, and his son the Black Prince, in two parts, 452. John taken prisoner at Poictiers by Prince Edward, 458. Confused state of, on the king's captivity, 461. The populace renounce all government, and commit cruel outrages against the nobles, 463. Is invaded by Edward with a great army, 466. Peace of Bretigni, 469. John released, 470. He returns to London, and dies, 471. State of the kingdom at this period, 472. Is infested with bands of robbers, the remains of Edward's army, 473. The regency of Charles VI. send assistance to the Scots, to invade England, iii. 12. The French return home disgusted, 13. Prepare to invade England, but hindered by a storm, *ib.* Motives to this invasion, *ib.* State of, at the commencement of Henry V.'s war with that kingdom, 92. Comparison between the situation of Charles VI. and Richard II. of England, *ib.* Distracted by the contentions of the Burgundians and Armagnacs, 94. The share the university of Paris, the fraternities of butchers and carpenters, bore in these broils, 94. Continuation of the distractions in, 104. General confusion renewed

newed by the assassination of the duke of Burgundy, 109. Treaty of Troye, 110. Reflections on this treaty, 111. Duke of Bedford appointed regent, 116. Charles VI. dies, and Charles VII. crowned, 118. State of France at the accession of Henry VI. of England, 124. Amazing transactions of Joan d'Arc, 142. Charles VII. crowned again at Rheims, 151. Reflections on the management of the war, 165. A truce concluded with, 169. State of France at this juncture, 175. Renewal of the war, 176. Normandy recovered, *ib.* Guienne also, 177. Accession of Lewis XI. 223. Sends forces to the assistance of Henry VI. *ib.* State of, at the time of Henry VII. of England, 334. 352. The government intrusted to the princess Anne of Beaujeu, during the minority of Charles VII. 335. The administration disputed by Lewis duke of Orleans, 336. Britany annexed to, by the marriage of Charles with the dutchess of 349. War with, by Henry VII. 353. Peace concluded, 354. Invaded by Henry VIII. 433. Peace concluded with England, 443. Lewis XII. marries Henry's sister, 444. Dies, *ib.* Accession of Francis, *ib.* See *Francis I.* Interview between Francis I. and Henry VIII. of England, IV. 22. War declared against, by England, 40. The powers of Italy join the alliance of the emperor against, 49. Battle of Pavia, and captivity of Francis, 57. Treaty of Madrid, and restoration of Francis, 66. War declared against the emperor, 73. The emperor challenges Francis to single combat, *ib.* Peace of Cambray, 98. James V. of Scotland married to Mary of Guise, 201. Accession of Henry II. 295. Mary the young queen of Scotland, sent there, and betrothed to the Dauphin, 312. England engages in the Spanish war with, 433. Montmorency defeated by the Spaniards at St. Quintin, 434. The general consternation at this event, *ib.* The duke of Guise recalled from Italy, 435. Calais taken from the English, *ib.* The dauphin Francis married to Mary the young queen of Scotland, 440. Peace of Cateau Cambresis, V. 16. The Guises engross all the authority of government, 40. Rigorous persecution of the reformers, 41. Summary view of the civil wars in that kingdom, 68. Battle of Dreux, 72. A massacre of the Hugonots concerted, 94. See *Medicis*, Catharine de, *Lorraine*, cardinal of, &c. Battle of St. Dennis, and siege of Chartres, 186. The court agrees to an accommodation with the protestants, *ib.* Battle of Montcontour, 188. Massacre of the Hugonots at Paris, 205. Death of Charles IX. 210. Accession of Henry III. *ib.* Battle of Coutras, 355. Assassination of the duke of Guise and his brother, 356. The king assassinated, 357. Accession of Henry IV. *ib.* Henry renounces the protestant faith, 370. Henry IV. assassinated by Ravailac, VI. 56. Character of the early writers in, 191. Reduction of Rochelle, 266. Its conduct toward England, during the troubles of, VII. 247. Improvement of, under Lewis XIV. and cardinal Mazarine, *ib.* The ships of, seized by the English, 249. An alliance concluded with Oliver Cromwel, 278. Treaty of the Pyrenees with Spain, 305. Joins the Dutch in the war with England, 409. Treaty of Breda, 422. War with Spain, 431. War with Holland, 479. How it became formidable by sea, VIII. 20. Peace of Nimeguen, 46. Ambitious schemes, and haughty behaviour of

of Lewis XIV. 206. Revocation of the edict of Nantz, and its consequences, 242. A league formed against, by the prince of Orange, 278.

Francis I. of Angouleme, succeeds to the crown of France on the death of Lewis XII. iii. 444. His character, *ib.* Defeats the Swiss at Marignan, iv. 10. Sends Bonnivet, his ambassador, to England, 13. His flatteries to Wolsey, 15. Is unsuccessful in his pretensions to the Imperial crown, 18. His character contrasted with that of the emperor Charles V. his competitor, 19. Is visited by Henry in a plain near Ardres, 22. The ceremony of their meeting regulated by cardinal Wolsey, *ib.* His frank disregard of the formality observed between him and Henry, 23. Which is returned by Henry, *ib.* Grand tournament held by them, 24. Is attacked by the emperor, 25. An ineffectual congress with the emperor, under the mediation of Wolsey, at Calais, 26. The pope, emperor, and Henry, conclude an alliance against him, *ib.* War declared against, by Henry, 41. Repulses the earl of Surrey's invasion, *ib.* Is worsted in Italy, 42. The powers of Italy unite with the emperor against him, 49. The duke of Bourbon revolts against him, and enters the emperor's service, 50. The duke of Suffolk invades Picardy, 51. Sends the admiral Bonnivet to invade Milan, 53. Bonnivet defeated 54. Passes the Alps in person to invade the Milanese, 55. Besieges Pavia, 56. Is defeated and taken prisoner by the Imperialists, 57. His letter to his mother, 58. His proposals to Charles for his liberty, 65. Is carried to Madrid, and falls sick, *ib.* Is visited by Charles, *ib.* Recovers his liberty by the treaty of Madrid, 66. Evades the execution of the treaty, 68. Meets Wolsey, and concludes fresh treaties with Henry, 71. Declares war against the emperor, 73. Is challenged by Charles to single combat, *ib.* Peace concluded with Charles at Cambray, 98. His interview with Henry at Boulogne, 111. Leagues with the pope, 115. Endeavours an accommodation between the pope and Henry, *ib.* Renews his friendship with Henry, 141. Marries his daughter Magdalen to James V. of Scotland, 146. Apologises to Henry for this match, who refuses to see his ambassador, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Charles for ten years, 176. Refuses Henry's proposals toward marriage with Mary of Guise, 201. Sends her to Scotland, *ib.* Other proposals of marriage fruitless, *ib.* Allows the emperor an honourable passage through France to the Netherlands, 203. Promises to assist cardinal Beaton in Scotland, 236. Over-runs Luxembourg and takes Landrecy, 239. Forces Charles to abandon the siege of Landrecy, 240. Is invaded by Charles and Henry, 245. Concludes a separate peace with Charles, 247. Equips an armament for a descent on England, 250. Makes Peace with Henry at Campe, 253.

Francis, dauphin of France, is married to the young queen of Scotland, iv. 440. Assumes the title and arms of England, in right of his queen v. 19. Becomes king by the death of his father, 20. See *the next article.*

——— II. of France, excites the enmity of Elizabeth by assuming the title of king of England, v. 20. Treaty of Edinburgh. 36. Is wholly governed by the Guises, 40. Dies, and is succeeded by his brother Charles IX. 42.

Francis, father, is recommended by James II. to Cambridge for a degree, but is refused, VIII. 264.
Franciscans and Dominicans, reflections on the institution of those two religious orders, II. 229.
Frank Almoigne, the nature of this tenure of lands explained, II. 266.
Franks, females excluded from the succession to the sovereign authority, by the ancient usages of that people, II. 390.
Frederic I. emperor of Germany, engages in a crusade, I. 458. II. 7. Dies, *ib.*
——— II. emperor, the pope's sentence of excommunication published against him, by Henry III. of England, his brother-in-law, II. 164.
———, king of Naples, his kingdom conquered jointly by France and Spain, and seized by the latter, III. 414.
———, elector palatine, is married to the princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I. of England, VI. 63. Is offered the crown of Bohemia, by the states of that kingdom, 102. Is defeated at Prague, and takes refuge in Holland, 104. Is put under the bann of the empire, 112. His electoral dignity transferred to the duke of Bavaria, 123. Is persuaded to submission by James, 124. Is totally dispossessed of his patrimonial dominions, 151. His nephew restored in part by the treaty of Westphalia, VII. 246.
French Language, its prevalence in England after the Norman invasion, I. 259. The use of that language in law proceedings abolished, II. 498.
Fretteval, Philip of France routed there, and his records taken by Richard I. II. 30.
Fridwit, in the German law, what, I. 217.
Frobisher, Sir Martin, undertakes a cruize against the Spaniards, V. 362. Is killed at the taking of Morlaix, 374. Three trials made by him for the discovery of a north-west passage, 477.
Froissart, the historian, his character and representation of the duke of Gloucester's schemes against Richard II. III. 30. Numberless mistakes of, invalidate his testimony, II. 511.
Fulk, count of Anjou, protects William, son of Robert duke of Normandy, I. 335. Marries his daughter to William, eldest son of king Henry I. of England, 336. Marries her afterwards to William, son of duke Robert, 340. Marries his son Geoffrey to the daughter of Henry I. *ib.*
——, curate of Neuilly, his bold counsel to Richard I. II. 6. Richard's reply to him, *ib.*

G

GAINSBROW, battle of, between Oliver Cromwel and Cavendish, VI. 535.
Galilæo, a comparison between, and lord Bacon, VI. 194.
Gama, Vasquez de, his first passage to the East Indies, round the Cape of Good Hope, III. 404.
Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, joins the duke of Norfolk in opposing the reformation, IV. 129. Acts covertly against the religious innovations, 189. Foments a cruel persecution of heretics, 212. Proposes certain Latin terms to be retained in the English version of the Scriptures,

tures, 224. Is sent ambassador to the emperor, 254. Dissuades Henry from farther alterations in religion, *ib.* Endeavours to procure an impeachment of queen Catharine Parr, for heresy, 258. Opposes the steps toward reformation taken by the protector and regency during the minority of Edward V. 290. Writes an apology for holy water, *ib.* His remonstrances against religious innovations, 292. Is committed to the Fleet, and harshly used, *ib.* His objections to the homilies, 293. Is committed to the Tower for denying the supremacy of the regency during a minority, 222. Refuses to subscribe articles propounded to him, 344. Is deprived, and closely confined, *ib.* Is released by queen Mary, 374. His generous assistance to Peter Martyr, 378. Is made chancellor, and promotes the Spanish match, 383. His moderate counsel on the occasion, *ib.* His speech at the opening a new parliament, 395. Debates with Cardinal Pole, about the expediency of punishing heretics, 405. Procures Rogers, prebendary of St. Paul's, to be burnt for heresy, 411. Engages Bonner and others to persecute the reformers, 413. Dies, 421.

Gardening, and garden stuff, when first introduced into England, iv. 273.

Garnett, a Jesuit, engages in the famous gunpowder plot, vi. 32. Is executed, 37. Is regarded in Spain as a martyr, *ib.*

Garter, institution of that order of knighthood, ii. 447. Traditional account of the occasion of it, 448.

Gascoigne judge, imprisons prince Henry afterwards Henry V. for insulting him in his office, iii. 86. His kind reception by Henry, when king, 87.

Gascony, a descent made on that province by invitation of some factious lords, without effect, iii. 198.

Gaston de Foix, nephew to Lewis XII. of France, his character, iii. 423. Is killed in a victory he gained over the Spanish and papal armies, *ib.*

Gavaston, Piers, his character, ii. 328. His ascendancy over prince Edward, *ib.* Is banished by Edward I. 329. Is recalled by Edward II. *ib.* His preferments, *ib.* His vanity, *ib.*; and contempt of the English, *ib.* Is left guardian of the realm, on the king's journey to France, 330. A confederacy formed against him by Thomas earl of Lancaster, *ib.* His banishment demanded by Lancaster in parliament, *ib.* Returns, 332. Banished again by the council of ordainers, 334. Is recalled by the king, *ib.* Is taken prisoner by Pembroke at Scarborough, 336. Is seized by the earl of Warwick, and beheaded in Warwick castle, *ib.*

Gaucour, lord, is Governor of Orleans, when besieged by the earl of Salisbury, iii. 138.

Gavelkind, origin of, i. 228. In the Irish customs, how regulated, vi. 59. Is abolished there, *ib.*

Gauls, their ancient manners described, i. 3. See *France*.

Gaunt, John of. See *Lancaster*.

——, Mrs. her cruel fate, viii. 234.

Genoa is bombarded by Lewis XIV. and forced to submit to terms prescribed by him, viii. 206.

Geoffrey, son of Fulk count of Anjou, married to the daughter of Henry I. i. 341.

Geoffrey, brother of king Henry II. invades Anjou and Maine, i. 377. Accepts a pension in lieu, *ib.* Dies, *ib.*

———, third son of king Henry II. invested by his father with the dutchy of Britany, i. 434. Instigated by his mother Eleanor to revolt against him, 436. Is reconciled to him, 447. Rebels again, 459. Is slain in a tournament, *ib.* His son Arthur invested in the dutchy of Britany, *ib.* See *Arthur*.

———, natural son of Henry II. is the only child who retained his duty to him, i. 463. When archbishop of York, swears fidelity to his brother Richard I. on his departure on the crusade, ii. 6. Is imprisoned by Longchamp, 17.

———, archdeacon of Norwich, his behaviour in the court of exchequer on hearing of the excommunication of king John, ii. 67. How killed by John, *ib.*

Geography, strange instance of the ignorance of the English in, at the time of Edward III. ii. 499.

Gerard, and his heretical followers, cruel treatment of, in the reign of Henry II. i. 422.

———, Baltazar, assassinates the prince of Orange, v. 267.

———, and Vowel, two royalists, executed for a conspiracy against the protector, v. ii. 237.

Germans, ancient, a character of, i. 16. Their government, 16. 197. Their manners, 17. Flock over into Britain, 22. Nature of their religion, 30. Are the first founders of the feudal law, and on what principles, ii. 102. The nature of their establishments explained, 103.

Germany, how divided under the feudal system, i. 182. Henry IV. emperor, permits his vassals to assist the Norman invasion, 185. The free nature of the several states in, 197. The Anglo-Saxon criminal law traced from, 215. The commencement of the reformation in, by Martin Luther, iv. 35. Progress of the reformation among the princes of, *ib.* A peace, favourable to the protestants, procured from the emperor by Maurice elector of Saxony, 382. See *Charles* V. and *Maurice*. The crown of Bohemia offered to the elector palatine, vi. 102. See *Frederic*. Battle of Prague, 104. The elector palatine put under the bann of the empire, 112. His electoral dignity transferred to the duke of Bavaria, 123. Successes of Gustavus king of Sweden there, 283. The long wars in, terminated by the treaty of Westphalia, vii. 246. A league formed at Augsburg, under the influence of the prince of Orange, against Lewis XIV. viii. 278.

Ghent, the treaty called the pacification of, v. 219. Is taken by Lewis XIV. viii. 42.

Gibson, a Scotch preacher, curses James VI. in his pulpit, v. 280.

Gifford, a priest, is employed by Walsingham to forward the correspondence between Mary queen of Scots and Babington, v. 218. Carries the letters to Walsingham, *ib.*

Gilbert, Sir Humphrey, his speech in the house of commons, in defence of the regal prerogative, v. 179.

Githa, mother of Harold, excites an insurrection at Exeter, against William the Conqueror, i. 244. Retreats to Flanders, *ib.*

Glamorgan, earl of, his commission from Charles I. with regard to Ireland, vii. 67. Concludes a secret treaty with the council of Kilkenny, *ib.* Is committed to prison by the lord lieutenant, 68. Vindication of the king from the charge of authorising this secret treaty, 516.

Glass, the manufacture of, when first brought into England, viii. 329.

Glendour, Owen, his insurrection in Wales, iii. 67. Takes the earl of Marche and his uncle prisoners, *ib.*

Gloucester, when first erected into a bishopric, iv. 183.

———, Robert, earl of, natural son of Henry I. swears a conditional fealty to king Stephen, i. 355. Consequences of this example, *ib.* Retires abroad, and defies the king, 357. Returns with the empress Matilda, 359. Defeats Stephen, and takes him prisoner, 361.

———, earl of, confederates with the earl of Leicester against Henry III. ii. 182. Joins the royal party, 195. Dies, *ib.*

–, Gilbert, earl of, son to the former, joins the earl of Leicester, ii. 195. Refuses with Leicester to abide by the arbitration of Lewis of France, 202. Commands a body of troops at the battle of Lewes, 204. Takes Henry prisoner, 205. Is ill-treated by Leicester, 207. Retires from Leicester's parliament, 212. Assists prince Edward in escaping from the custody of Leicester, 213. Rebels again, 219. Henry's lenity toward him, *ib.* Attends prince Edward on a crusade, *ib.* Marries the daughter of Edward I. 257. Is fined for violences committed on Bohun, earl of Hereford, *ib.* His son killed at the Battle of Bannockburn, 340.

–, duke of, uncle to Richard II. his character, iii. 2. Supplanted in his influence over the king by Robert de Vere earl of Oxford, 14. Prevails on the house of commons to impeach Michael de la Pole earl of Suffolk, 15. Deprives Richard of his regal power, by the appointment of a council of fourteen to continue for a year, 17. Raises forces against the king, 19. Defeats Robert de Vere, duke of Ireland, 20. His arbitrary proceedings against the ministry, *ib.* Rejects the queen's humble solicitation in favour of Sir Simon Burley, 23. Is removed from the council-board, 24. His cabals against the king, 27. Sent over to Calais by the king, 29. Appealed against, in the house of peers, 31. Proceedings against his party, *ib.* Murdered, 32. His revenue, 121.

———, Humphry, duke of, brother to Henry V. left by him regent of England, during the minority of Henry VI. iii. 116. Constituted by parliament guardian of the kingdom only during the duke of Bedford's absence, 124. Enters into a precipitate marriage with the countess of Hainault, 135. Fatal consequences of that measure, *ib.* Reconciled to the bishop of Winchester by the duke of Bedford, 134. Fresh disputes with him, which throw the English affairs into confusion, 163. His duchess tried for witchcraft, 171. Murdered, 172. His character, 173.

–, Richard, duke of, brother to Edward IV. reported to have stabbed prince Edward, son of Henry VI. iii. 250. Commands in an invasion of Scotland, and takes Berwic, which is yielded by treaty, 265. Left regent of the kingdom by his brother Edward IV. during the minority of his son, 367. His character and views, 268. Arrests the earl

earl of Rivers, the young king's guardian, 270. Made protector of the realm, 272. Orders the death of the earl of Rivers, *ib.* Marks out lord Hastings for destruction, 273. His extraordinary behaviour in council, 274. Concerts the immediate murder of lord Hastings, *ib.* Declares his brother's marriage invalid, 276. Declares his brother illegitimate, 277. Procures Dr. Shaw to establish these points in a sermon at St Paul's, *ib.* Ill success of this scheme, 278. Accepts the crown offered by the duke of Buckingham as a popular tender, 280. Orders the murder of Edward V. and the duke of York in the Tower, *ib.* See *Richard* III.

Gloucester, duke of, youngest son of Charles I. his father's discourse to him before his execution, vii. 142. Is sent abroad by Cromwel, 151. A present voted to him by parliament on his brother's restoration, 328. His death and character, 358.

Godfrey of Bouillon, created king of Jerusalem, i. 312.

———, sir Edmondbury, murdered, viii. 74. The general confusion on this event, *ib.* His extraordinary funeral, 75 His death not to be accounted for, 76. Green, Berry, and Hill, tried and executed for this murder, 92.

Godwin, earl, his bravery under Canute in Denmark, i. 151. Rewarded by obtaining his daughter in marriage, *ib.* Murders Alfred son of king Ethelred, 155. His method of appeasing Hardicanute for this act, 157. Marries his daughter to king Edward the Confessor, 159. His exorbitant power, 162. Raises an army against Edward, 164. Flies to Flanders, 165. Makes descents on the English coast, *ib.* Received to favour, 166.

Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, remonstrates against sir Walter Raleigh's expedition to Guiana, vi. 64. Offers the second daughter of Spain for prince Charles, 100.

Goodwin, sir Francis, his seat in parliament vacated on account of outlawry by the chancellor, vi. 18. Is restored to his seat by the house, 19. Disputes on this occasion, *ib.* How compromised, 20.

Gordon, lady Catharine, a Scots lady, married to Perkin Warbec, iii. 371. Taken prisoner by Henry VII. and generously treated, 380.

Gorges, sir Ferdinando, returns from Dieppe with his ship, contrary to orders, vi. 208.

Goring, enters into an association with other officers to petition king and parliament against popular invitations, vi. 410. Betrays the secret to the commons, 411. Is made governor of Portsmouth by the commons, 479. Declares for the king, and is reduced by the parment's forces, 501. His letter to the king intercepted by Fairfax vii. 60.

Gossipping, among women, a proclamation against, iv. 274.

Government, the feudal frame of, introduced by the Norman conquest, i. 253. The first beginnings of the popular frame of, in England, ii. 273. Amidst all its fluctuations, the will of the monarch never absolute and uncontrollable, iii. 304. That of England, in the time of queen Elizabeth, compared with that of Turkey, v. 459. Remarks on, with reference to the case of king Charles I. vii. 148.

———, ecclesiastical, a review of, during the reign of James I. vi. 163.

Gourdon, a Norman archer, wounds Richard I. with an arrow, which occasions his death, ii. 33. His noble reply to Richard, 34. His cruel fate, *ib.*

———, Adam de, his troops vanquished, and himself taken prisoner by prince Edward, son of Henry III. ii. 217. Is taken into favour by that prince, *ib.*

Gournay and Mautravers, the keepers of the deposed king Edward II. cruelly murder him, ii. 359. Their fates, *ib.*

Gower, barony of, commotions excited against the barons, by the seizure of, from John de Mowbray, ii. 345.

Gowry, earl of, enters into an association for seizing the young king James from the power of Lenox and Arran, v. 248. Is tried and executed, 256.

Graham, captain, is repulsed in an attack on a conventicle at Loudon-hill, viii. 115.

Granvelle, cardinal, his arbitrary conduct in the Low Countries occasions a revolt of the Flemish protestants, v. 192.

Granville, sir John, sends Dr. Monk to negotiate for the king, with his brother the general, vii. 311. Comes over to Monk himself, and prevails with him to declare his intentions, 322. Presents the king's letter to the house of commons, who appoint a committee to answer it, 327.

Gratian and Vivian, nuncio to pope Alexander III. attempt in vain to reconcile Henry II. and Becket archbishop of Canterbury, i. 410.

Gravelines, battle there, between count Egmont, the Spanish general and de Thermes, the French governor of Calais, iv. 444. Interview there between the emperor Charles V. and Henry VIII. iv. 24.

Gray, lord, is sent by queen Elizabeth with forces to the assistance of the protestant malcontents in Scotland, v. 35. Besieges and takes Leith from the French party, *ib.* Assists the earl of Ormond in reducing the Spanish general San Josepho in Ireland, v. 233. His cruelty in this affair, 234.

———, the lady Elizabeth, her history, iii. 226. Captivates Edward IV. *ib.* Married to him, 227. Honours conferred on her family, 229. Her father and one of her brothers murdered by the Yorkshire insurgents, 233. Orders the earl of Rivers to levy an army to escort the young king Edward V. to London, 269. Persuaded to the contrary by the duke of Gloucester, *ib.* Retires with her children into the sanctuary of Westminster, on the duke of Gloucester's arresting the earl of Rivers, 270. Forced to deliver up the duke of York, 271. Her marriage declared invalid by Gloucester, 276. Consents to a marriage between the princess Elizabeth and Henry earl of Richmond, 288. Consents, after, to her marriage with Richard III. 291. The princess married to Henry VII. 320. Supposed to be privy to the insurrection of Lambert Simnel, 324. Seized and confined, 326. Dies in confinement, 327.

———, lady Jane Dudley, duke of Northumberland proposes to Edward VI. to alter the succession in her favour, iv. 360. Is married to the lord Guildford Dudley, 361. Is appointed to the succession by a deed of settlement, 364. Her amiable character, 368. Is unwilling to accept the offer of the crown, 369. Is proclaimed, *ib.*

Is

Is deserted by the council and the people, 371. Returns to private life, 372. Is taken into custody with all the heads of her party, *ib.* Sentence passed upon her, 373. Is executed on account of a new conspiracy of her father's, 392. Her noble behaviour and dying declarations, 393.

Gray, lady Catharine, is married to lord Herbert, son of the earl of Pembroke, iv. 361. Is divorced from him, and privately married to the earl of Hertford, v. 61. Is committed to the Tower by queen Elizabeth on this account, where she dies, 62.

Great Harry, the first ship properly of the royal navy, built by Henry VII. iii. 406.

Greek language, how imported and cultivated in Europe, iii. 406.

Greenland, when discovered, vi. 183.

Greenville, sir Richard, vice-admiral of the English fleet under lord Thomas Howard, his ship the first English ship of war taken by the Spaniards, v. 361. Circumstances of his death, 523.

Gregory the Great, pope, specimens of his talents in punning, i. 32. His ignorant intemperate zeal against paganism, 33. Sends Augustine the monk into Britain, *ib.* Writes to Ethelbert king of Kent, 35. His solution of the cases of conscience propounded by Augustine, *ib.* His injunctions to him, i. 37.

———VII. pope, his ambitious character, i. 267. His disputes with the emperor Henry IV. 268. His usurpations over other princes, 269. Prohibits the marriage of priests, 271. Projects a confederacy against the Mahometans, 294. See *Crusades.*

———VIII. pope, engages the emperor and kings of England and France in a new crusade, i. 458.

———IX. pope, a character of his decretals, ii. 229.

———XI. pope, issues a bull for taking Wickliffe into custody, iii. 53. The seat of the papacy fixed at Rome after his death, 57.

Gresham, sir Thomas, procures queen Elizabeth a loan from the company of merchant adventurers in London, v. 476. Builds the royal Exchange, 483.

Grey, lord Leonard, executed for treason, iv. 213.

Griffin, second son to Lewellyn prince of Wales, rebels against his father, and drives him to obtain the protection of Henry III. against him, ii. 196. Is taken prisoner by his elder brother David, given up to Henry, and committed to the Tower, *ib.* Loses his life in attempting an escape, *ib.*

Grimstone, sir Harbottle, is chosen speaker of the parliament which restored Charles II. vii. 327.

Grindal, archbishop, is persecuted in the star-chamber for favouring the puritans, v. 262.

Groine, the ships and troops there, defeated by sir Francis Drake, v. 349.

Gualo, the pope's legate, assists at the coronation of Henry III. and receives his homage to the see of Rome, ii. 145. Excommunicates those barons who adhere to Lewis, 149. Punishes the clergy who had countenanced the invasion of Lewis, 152. Pandolf reinstated in the office of legate in his stead, 153.

Guelf and Ghibbelin, the rise of these factions in Italy, i. 269.

Guiana, sir Walter Raleigh's first expedition to, v. 377. Is taken possession

session of by sir Walter Raleigh for the English crown, vi. 95. Is afterward taken possession of by the Spaniards, *ib.* Raleigh's second expedition to, *ib.* St. Thomas plundered by Raleigh, 96. See *Raleigh.*

Guido, legate from Rome, is ordered to excommunicate the earl of Leicester, and the barons in rebellion against Henry III. ii. 209. Dares not come himself, but sends the bull, which is torn and flung into the sea, *ib.* Becomes pope, 210.

Guienne, province of, is with Poictou mortgaged to William Rufus, i. 306. Edward I. deprived of that province by the artifice of Philip of France, ii. 263. Ineffectual attempts of the English to recover, 264. Again unsuccessfully attacked, 283. Restored to Edward I. by treaty with Philip, 297. Homage done for it by Edward II. 330.

———, William, duke of, his preparations to engage in the crusade, i. 307. Marries his daughter to the empress Matilda's son Henry, 367.

Guinegate, battle of, iii. 435.

Guise, duke of, repulses the emperor Charles V. in his attack upon Metz, iv. 382. Is recalled from Italy, on the defeat of St. Quintin, 435. Takes Calais from the English, *ib.* Henry arrives at his camp, 444. Instigates the claim of his niece Mary of Scotland to the crown of England, v. 19. He and his family engross all the authority of the French government, 40. His influence lessened by the death of Francis II. 42. Strengthens himself against the protestants by an alliance with Philip II. of Spain, 70. Commands under Montmorency at the battle of Dreux, 72. Besieges Orleans, 78. Is assassinated by Poltrot, *ib.*

———, duke of, son of the former, defends Poictiers, besieged by the admiral Coligni, v. 187. His character, *ib.* Massacre of Paris, 205. Becomes discontented with the conduct of Henry III. 212. Forms the famous catholic league against the Hugonots, *ib.* Sends the count d'Aubigney, of the house of Lenox, to detach James of Scotland from the English interest, 231. Revives the league, 268. Defeats the German auxiliaries of the Hugonots, 355. Is with his brother assassinated by the king's order, 356.

———, Mary of, widow of the duke de Longueville, marries James V. of Scotland, iv. 201. Death of her husband, 230. Is brought to bed of the princess Mary, *ib.* Attaches herself to cardinal Beaton to oppose the pretensions of the earl of Arran, 232. Is promised support by Francis, 236. Goes to France to solicit assistance against the earl of Arran, 438. Her conversation with Edward VI. in her return through England about his marriage with her daughter, *ib.* Obtains from Arran a resignation of his office as regent of Scotland, 439. Is attended by D'Oisel a Frenchman to assist her in the administration, *ib.* Gains the good-will of the Scots by her prudent conduct, 440. Endeavours to engage the Scots to take part in the quarrel with France against England, *ib.* Her daughter, the young queen Mary, married to the dauphin of France, *ib.* Protects the English reformers who fled from the persecutions of queen Mary, v. 21. Is petitioned by the association of reformers called the *Congregation of the Lord,* 25. Her motives for temporising between the religious parties, *ib.* Is induced to a more rigorous conduct, by orders from France, *ib.* Assembles an army to suppress the protestant riots, 27. Enters into an accommodation

Accommodation with the *Congregation*, 29. Is received into Perth, *ib.* Improbable violence of expression charged upon her, *ib.* Is forced to retire and fortify herself in Dunbar, 31. Remonstrates with the *Congregation*, ib. Grants them a toleration, *ib.* Receives reinforcements from France, *ib.* Is deprived of the regency by the *Congregation*, 32. Her death and character, 36.

Gunilda, a Danish princess, her death and prophecy, i. 141.

Gunpowder, when invented, iii. 406.

Gunpowder-plot, a history of, vi. 31. The conspiracy discovered, 34. The conspirators punished, 36.

Gurth, brother to king Harold, his advice to him on the Norman invasion, i. 190. Killed at the battle of Hastings, 194.

Gustavus, king of Sweden, his character, and exploits in Germany, vi. 280. Is killed at the battle of Lutzen, 282.

Guthrum, the Danish chief, and his army, baptized, i. 84.

H.

HABEAS Corpus act passed, viii. 107. The personal securities afforded by this statute, *ib.*

Haddington, taken by the duke of Somerset, and fortified, iv. 310. Is besieged by the Scots and French, *ib.* Is dismantled, 332.

Hainault, Jane countess of, procures a truce between Edward III. of England and Philip de Valois of France, ii. 406.

————, Jaqueline countess of, her character and that of her husband the duke of Brabant, iii. 133. Leaves her husband and puts herself under the protection of the duke of Gloucester, *ib.* Enters into a precipitate marriage with him, *ib.* Fatal consequences of this measure, 134. Her contract with Gloucester annulled by the pope, 135.

Hales, Sir James, positively refuses to sign the patent for the succession of lady Jane Gray, iv. 364. Is imprisoned for opposing queen Mary's schemes, and kills himself, 376.

————, Sir Edward, is prosecuted on the test act with a view to establishing the dispensing power in the king, viii. 244.

Hallidown-hill, battle of between Edward III. and Sir Archibald Douglas, ii. 387.

Halifax, marquis of, his character, viii. 175. His motive for endeavouring a reconciliation between the duke of Monmouth and the king, 202. His reception by king James on his accession, 218. The privy seal taken from him, 250. Joins in the invitation to the prince of Orange, 283. Is chosen speaker of the house of peers on the king's flight, 302.

Hambden, John, attempts to go over to America, but is prevented, vi. 309. Is tried by all the judges in England, for refusing to pay ship-money, 314. The consequences of this trial, 317. His sentence cancelled, 380. Is appointed one of the committee to attend the king to Scotland, 423. Is impeached by the king, 467. Is killed in a skirmish with the royalists, 520. His character, 521.

————, John, grandson of the former, enters into the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, viii. 185. Is tried and fined for misdemeanour only, 198. Joins in the invitation to the prince of Orange, 283.

Hamilton, Patrick, controverts the popish doctrines in a conference at St. Andrew's, iv. 214. Is burnt, *ib.*

———, primate of Scotland, tries and condemns Walter Mill the reformer to the flames for heresy, v. 23 Extraordinary zeal of the people of St. Andrew's against this act of cruelty, 24.

———, marquis of, is sent by Charles I. to treat with the Scots covenanters, vi. 330. His fruitless attempts at a compromise, 331. Is sent with a fleet and army against the covenanters, 339. Is created a duke, vii. 43. His conduct with regard to Montrose, *ib.* His sincerity in the king's cause, how rendered problematical, 45. Is imprisoned by the king, 46. Recovers his liberty, and raises a Scots army in the king's favour, 117. Enters England, 126. Is defeated and taken prisoner by Cromwell, 127. Is tried as earl of Cambridge, and executed, 152.

———, duke, becomes head of a party formed against the duke of Lauderdale, and applies to the king, viii. 52. Again represents the oppressions exercised by Lauderdale, to the king, 60.

Hammond, governor of the isle of Wight, receives Charles I. into Carisbroke castle, vii. 107. Is ordered to confine the king closely, 114.

Hampton-court palace, built by cardinal Wolsey, and presented by him to Henry VIII. iv. 64. The conferences concerning Mary queen of Scots adjourned thither from York, v. 139. A conference of divines summoned there by James I. to debate on points of faith and religious discipline, vi. 10. The subjects disputed, 13. The event of this conference, *ib.*

Hanse towns, the inhabitants of, encouraged to settle in England, iv. 349. Their privileges taken away, *ib.* Disputes between the merchants of, and queen Elizabeth, v 479.

Harcla, Sir Andrew, defeats Thomas earl of Lancaster, at Boroughbridge, ii 348. Is made earl of Carlisle, 349. Is executed for a treasonable correspondence with the Scots, *ib.*

Harcourt, Geoffrey de, his history, ii. 426. Persuades Edward III. of England to invade Normandy, *ib.* Is made mareschal of the English army, 427.

Hardicanute, son of Canute king of England, put in possession of Denmark, i. 154. Obtains, by treaty with his brother Harold Harefoot, a part of England, 155. Succeeds to the whole, 156. Loses the affections of his subjects, 158. Dies of intemperance, *ib.*

Harfleur besieged and taken by Henry V of England, iii. 98.

Harlem, its vigorous defence against the Spaniards, and its inhabitants massacred in revenge, v 216.

Harold, son of earl Godwin, succeeds to his father's possessions, i. 167. His contests with Algar, governor of East Anglia, *ib.* Obtains the dukedom of Northumberland, 169. Shipwrecked on the coast of France, 173 Swears to William duke of Normandy, to renounce his own pretensions to the English crown, and forward those of William, 174. Evades his oath, 175. Checks the depredations of the Welsh, *ib* Deserts his brother Tosti, recommends Morcar to supersede him as duke of Northumberland, and marries

marries Morcar's sister, 177. Makes open pretensions to the crown, *ib.* Succeeds quietly at the death of Edward the confessor, 179. Justifies himself to duke William's ambassadors, 180. His preparations to oppose the Norman invasion, 187. Defeats Tosti with his Danish armament, 188. Disadvantages of this victory, 190. Disposition of his army the morning of battle, 193. Battle of Hastings, *ib.* Killed by an arrow, 194. His body carried to duke William, but restored, 195.

Harold Harefoot, son of Canute, succeeds to the crown of England, i. 153. Shares it by treaty with his younger brother Hardicanute, 155. His body dug up and thrown into the Thames by Hardicanute, 156.

Harrington, a character of his Oceana, vii. 347. His death, *ib.*

Harrison, colonel, conducts Charles I. to London in order to his trial, vii. 135. Is appointed one of the king's judges, 136. Detains Fairfax in prayer till the king is executed, 145. Becomes an enemy to Cromwel on his usurping the supreme authority, and is deprived of his commission, 260. Is tried and executed, 350.

Harvey, Dr. discovers the circulation of the blood, vii. 347. Is exposed to reproach for this signal discovery, and his practice diminished greatly on that account, *ib.* His death, 348.

Hastings, battle of, between William duke of Normandy, and Harold king of England, i. 103.

———, the Danish chief, ravages Kent, i. 86. Routed by Alfred, and departs, 88.

, lord, not joining in the duke of Gloucester's schemes, is marked by him for destruction, iii. 273. Extraordinary murder of, 275.

Sir Edward, raises men for the lady Jane Grey, and carries them to the assistance of queen Mary, iv. 370.

lady Anne, refuses to become empress of Muscovy, v. 478.

Hatfield, a synod called there by Theodore archbishop of Canterbury, against the Monothelites, i. 64.

Hatton, Sir Christopher, his exhortation to Mary queen of Scots, to submit to trial, v. 293. Is made chancellor, though no lawyer, 330.

Haukes, Thomas, burnt for heresy, iv. 415.

Havre de Grace, is delivered up to queen Elizabeth, by treaty with the prince of Condé, v. 71. The earl of Warwic takes the command of it, 72. Is besieged by the French, 79. The garrison infected by the plague, *ib.* Is surrendered by capitulation, 80.

Haxey, a member of parliament in the reign of Richard II. anecdote of, iii. 450.

Hayward, an author, incurs the resentment of queen Elizabeth, v. 457. Is saved by the pleasantry of sir Francis Bacon, 458.

Hazelrig, Sir Arthur, is prevented from transporting himself, with other puritans, to America, vi. 309. Is impeached by the king, 467. Is named one of the council of state after the king's execution, vii. 158. *note.* Is created a peer by the protector, but chooses to take his seat with the commons, 277. His character, 314.

Heath, archbishop of York, appointed chancellor on the death of bishop Gardiner, iv. 421. Notifies the death of queen Mary to the parliament, v. 2.

Helie, lord of la Fleche, disturbs William Rufus in his Norman possessions, i. 305. Is besieged by William without success, 306.

——, de St. Saen, why made tutor to William son of Robert duke of Normandy, i. 335. Carries his pupil to the court of the duke of Anjou, *ib.*

Hengist and Horsa, Saxons and brothers, popular account of their descent, i. 18. Land with a body of Saxons in Britain, 20. Horsa killed, *ib.* Hengist subdues the Britons, *ib.* Calls over his brother Octa, and founds the kingdom of Kent, 22. Is succeeded by his son Escus, 28. See *Kent*.

Henrietta, princess of France, comes over to England, and is married to Charles I. vi. 199. Her French attendants dismissed by the instigation of Buckingham, 234. Her character, 283. Obtains contributions from the catholics, to assist the king against the Scots covenanters, 338. Is threatened by the commons with an impeachment and prepares to fly, 477. Goes over to Holland, 480. Sends military stores over to the king, 491. Brings over a reinforcement to the king at Oxford, 522. Is impeached by the commons, and retires to Exeter, vii. 9. Flies to France, 63. Her distressed situation there, 248. Visits her son on his restoration, 258.

Henry, youngest son of William the Conqueror, his future greatness predicted by his father, i. 280. Raises an insurrection in Normandy, 289. Reduced by his brothers, 290. Seizes England on the death of William Rufus, his brother, 313.

——— I. grants a charter of liberties, i. 314. Lodges a copy in every county, 315. Disregards his promises, *ib.* Review of this charter, 316. Weds Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, 318. Invaded by his brother Robert, 319. Treaty between them, 321. Severe treatment of his barons, 322. Attacks Normandy, 323. His dispute with the pope concerning investitures, 325. Sends three bishops to him, 328. The pope's insolent answer to, 329. Compromise between, 332. Goes over to defend his Norman dominions, 336. His admonitions to the English bishops sent him to the council at Rheims, 337. Defeats Lewis king of France, *ib.* Loses his eldest son William, 338. Marries Adelais daughter of Godfrey duke of Lorraine, 340. Marries his daughter Matilda to Henry V. emperor of Germany, *ib.* Marries her afterwards to Geoffrey son of Fulk count of Anjou, *ib.* Review of his government, 341. Goes to Normandy to visit his daughter Matilda, 344. Causes the nobility to swear fealty to her, *ib.* His death and character, 345. Particulars of a charter given by him, granting to London the privileges of a corporation, 347.

———, son of the empress Matilda, and grandson of king Henry I. born, i. 344. Brought over to England to assist his mother, 365. Is knighted by David king of Scotland, 367. Invested with the dutchy of Normandy, *ib.* Marries Eleanor daughter of William duke of Guienne, 368. His succession to the crown of England confirmed by Stephen, *ib.* His continental possessions at his accession, 373.

——— II. The first act of his government, i. 376. Goes over to quiet his brother Geoffrey, *ib.* Punishes the incursions of the Welsh. 377. Visits the king of France, and contracts his infant son Henry to Margaret daughter of France, 378. His acquisitions on the continent, *ib.*

Compounds the personal service of his Norman vassals for money, 380. His wars in France, *ib.* Accommodates his differences with Lewis by the pope's mediation, 381. Opposes the encroachments of the clergy, 383. His grateful remembrance of Theobald archbishop of Canterbury, *ib.* Creates Thomas à Becket chancellor, 384. Instance of his familiarity with him, 385. Makes him archbishop of Canterbury, 386. Provoked by his arbitrary conduct, 388. Calls an assembly of the clergy, to acknowledge a submission to the civil laws, 391. Determines to check the clerical usurpations, 392. Constitutions of Clarendon, 393. Applies to the pope for a legantine commission, which is rendered abortive by the pope, 396. Procures Becket to be sued for some lands, 397. Calls a council at Northampton, at which Becket is condemned for contempt, 398. Makes another demand on Becket, 399. Sequesters the revenues of Canterbury on Becket's flight, 404. Inhibits all appeals to the pope, *ib.* Suspends the payment of Peter-pence, 406. Endeavours at an alliance with the emperor Frederick Barbarossa, *ib.* An accommodation prevented by the inflexibility of Becket, 408. Obtains a dispensation for the marriage of his third son Geoffrey with the heiress of Britany, *ib.* Several ineffectual attempts of reconciliation with Becket, *ib.* Detaches Lewis from Becket by his fair conduct, 411. Is reconciled to Becket, *ib.* Associates his son Henry with him in the regal dignity, *ib.* His exclamation on hearing the continuance of Becket's arbitrary behaviour, and the consequences, 416. His perplexity on the murder of Becket, 419. His submissions to the pope on the occasion, *ib.* Imposes a tax for the holy war, 422. Goes on an expedition to Ireland, 423. Solicits a grant of that island from Rome, 426. How prevented from the immediate execution of it, 427. Goes over to Ireland, and finds it already subdued by Strongbow and his associates, 429. This conquest improperly secured, 430. Recalled from Ireland by the menaces of the legates Albert and Theodin, to answer at the inquiry into Becket's murder, 432. His concessions to them on that occasion, *ib.* Receives absolution, 433. Review of his present flourishing situation, *ib.* Assigns portions to his sons, 434. His eldest son Henry revolts against him, 436. as do Geoffrey and Richard, at the instigation of queen Eleanor, *ib.* Confines his queen, *ib.* Appeals in vain to the pope against his sons, 437. Employs a body of Brabançons, 438. Deceived by king Lewis of France before Verneuil, 440. Quells the disturbances in Britany, *ib.* An ineffectual conference with Lewis, 441. His conduct in this critical situation, 442. Returns to quell the commotions in England, and does penance at Becket's tomb, 444. Raises the siege of Rouen, 447. Makes peace with his sons, *ib.* Exacts homage of William king of Scotland, taken prisoner by his forces, and of all the Scots nobles, for his ransom and crown, 448. Reforms the administration of justice in his dominions, 450. Demolishes the new-erected castles of his nobility, *ib.* Provides for the defence of the kingdom, *ib.* Punishes the murderers of Thomas à Becket, 451. Mediates a peace between Philip king of France, and his family, 454. His son Henry revolts again, but submits, *ib.* His grief for his son Henry's death, 455. His son Geoffrey rebels again, 456. Is guardian

to Geoffrey's posthumous son, 456. Engages in a crusade, 458. Raises a tenth of moveables to carry it on, *ib.* War between him and Philip of France, occasioned by another revolt of his son Richard, 459. Disadvantageous peace, 462. His grief at finding John a party in Richard's revolt, *ib.* Dies, *ib.* His character, 463. Miscellaneous transactions in his reign, 464. Manners of his court, *ib.* His vigilance in correcting disorders, 466. Instance of his reputation for justice, 467. Commutes personal service in war, 468. Remits Danegelt, 469. His issue, 470.

Henry, eldest son of Henry II. contracted in his infancy to Margaret, daughter of France, i. 378. Associated with his father in the kingdom, 412. His repartee to his father at his coronation, 435. Is crowned again together with his queen Margaret, *ib.* Expence of their coronation robes, *ib. note.* Revolts against his father, 436. Leagues with Lewis king of France, 439. Besieges Verneuil in conjunction with him, 440. Is reconciled to his father, 447. Revolts again, but submits, 454. Dies, 455.

—— III. his accession, ii. 145. Is crowned at Gloucester, *ib.* Swears fealty, and does homage to the pope, *ib.* The earl of Pembroke chosen protector during his minority. *ib.* Grants a new charter of liberties, at the instance of Pembroke, 146. Grants a renewal of the great charter in a parliament at Oxford, 155. Is declared by the pope of age for government, *ib.* Rochelle taken from him by Lewis VIII. of France, 157. His contests with his brother Richard earl of Cornwall, concerning the restitution of a manor in that county, 158. His character, *ib.* Removes Hubert de Burgh from offices, 160. Makes Peter bishop of Winchester, his chief minister, *ib.* His imprudent encouragement of the Poictevins, 161. Combinations among the barons on this occasion, *ib.* His plea for not observing the great charter, 162. Dismisses the bishop of Winchester and his foreigners at the menace of Edmond the primate, *ib.* Marries Eleanor daughter of the count of Provençe, 163. His bounties to her relations, *ib.* Publishes the pope's sentence of excommunication against the emperor Frederick, his brother-in-law, 164. His maternal half-brothers come over to England to visit him, *ib.* Bestows riches and honour upon them, *ib.* Disgusts among the people on these grants to foreigners, 165. Denied by parliament, he procures loans from the Londoners, *ib.* Declares war against Lewis IX. and makes an unsuccessful expedition to Guienne, 166. His remark on the wealth of the Londoners, 167. His contests relating to the election of the archbishop of Canterbury, 168. Complains to the council of Lyons of the possessions of Italian clergy in England, 170. Is threatened with excommunication for opposing the pope's claims, 171. Accepts the offer made by the pope, of the kingdom of Sicily for his second son Edmond, 172. The heavy debts he was involved in on this occasion, *ib.* Is refused aids to discharge it by parliament, *ib.* The commotions among the clergy on account of the levies for the crusade against Sicily, 173. Is threatened with excommunication for non-payment of the pope's demands, 174. His incapacity for quieting the discontents of his barons, 175. The bold remonstrances of his parliament to him, 177. Endeavours to prevail on them, under the vow of a crusade, 178. His sarcastical reply

reply to a deputation of prelates, 179. Obtains a supply on a solemn confirmation of the great charter, *ib.* His sister married to Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, 180. His dispute with that nobleman, 181. His barons assemble in parliament, dressed in armour, 183. How addressed by Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, *ib.* The sovereign authority vested in a council of twenty-four barons by the parliament at Oxford, to redress grievances, 184. Is forced to banish his maternal half-brothers, 185. Makes a treaty with Lewis IX. of France, and cedes Normandy to him, 190. Applies to the pope, and obtains absolution from his oath to observe the provisions of Oxford, 193. His proceedings against the council in consequence of this absolution, 194. Calls a parliament, which authorises him to resume the government, *ib.* Refers the differences between him and Leicester to the determination of Margaret of France, 195. Is applied to for protection by Lewellyn prince of Wales, against his rebellious son Griffin, 196. Griffin delivered up to him by his elder brother David, who does homage to him, *ib.* Griffin's son Lewellyn succeeds, who renews the homage, 197. Lewellyn invades the borders, *ib.* Is reduced to comply again with the provisions of Oxford, 199. Is influenced by the barons taking prince Edward prisoner, *ib.* His disputes with the barons referred to the arbitration of Lewis of France, 200. Lewis decides in his favour, 201. The barons refuse to abide by the decision, and take arms, *ib.* He raises an army against them, 202. Mutual hostilities, 203. Is defeated and taken prisoner in the battle of Lewes, 205. How he obtained his liberty, 206. Stipulations between him and Leicester, 213. His narrow escape from death at the battle of Evesham, 215. Consequences of this battle, 216 His lenity toward the rebel barons, 217. His son Edward engages in a crusade, *ib.* He calls him home again, 220 Dies, 221. His character, *ib.* His piety, 222. His children, *ib.* Laws enacted during his reign, *ib.* State of commerce in his reign, 224. The high interest of money, 225. Extortions practised upon the Jews by him, 226. Bad internal police of the country in his reign, 227. Excuse made by the officers of his household for their robberies, 228.

Henry IV. (See *Hereford* and *Lancaster.*) Remarks on his title to the crown, iii. 61. Tumultuous assembly of the parliament, 62. Quells an insurrection of the degraded lords, 63. Attaches himself to the church and passes a law condemning heretics to the flames, 65. The first execution of this kind in England, *ib.* Truce with France renewed, 66. Insurrection in Wales, *ib.* Marches against the Scots, and seizes Edinburgh, 68. Defeats and kills young Piercy at Shrewsbury, 71. Executes the rebellious archbishop of York, 72. Takes prince James of Scotland prisoner, and educates him in England, 75. Foments divisions in France, 76. Parliamentary transactions of this reign, 77. Concessions made to the house of commons, 78. His difficulties in establishing the succession of his family, 79. Attempts to adopt the Salic law, but is opposed by the commons, *ib.* Advised by his commons to seize on the temporalities of the church, 80. His death, 82. His character, *ib.* His marriages and children, 83. Cutting out any person's tongue, or putting out his eyes, made felony by an act of the fifth of his reign, *ib.* Annual expence

expence of his household, 84. State of commerce during his reign, *ib.*

Henry V. eldest son and successor to Henry IV. the cause of his youthful extravagances pointed out, III. 85. His sudden reformation on his accession, 87. His regard to the friends and memory of Richard II. *ib.* Averse to the prosecution of lord Cobham, 89. Confers with him, *ib.* Cobham plots against him, is seized and executed, 90. His large demands on France, 96. Detects the conspiracy of the earl of Cambridge, lord Scrope, and sir Thomas Grey, 97. The conspirators executed, *ib.* Invades France, and seizes Harfleur, 98. Battle of Azincour, 100. Compared with those of Crecy and Poictiers, *ib.* 103. Invades France again, 106. Treaty with the queen and Burgundy, 107. Takes Rouen, 109. Treaty with the young duke of Burgundy, 110. Articles of, 111. Reflections on this treaty, *ib.* Marries the princess Catharine, 112. Returns to England for supplies, 113. Carries the young Scots king to France with him, 114. His forces under the duke of Clarence defeated by the Scots auxiliaries at Baugé, *ib.* Takes Meaux, and other places, 115. His son, afterwards Henry VI. born, *ib.* Falls sick, and prepares for death, 116. The trusts he left during the minority of his infant son, *ib.* Dies, 117. His character, *ib.* Miscellaneous transactions in his reign, 118. His scanty revenues, 120.

—— VI. comes to the crown an infant, the administration regulated by parliament, III. 123. His education committed, by parliament, to Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, 124. Crowned at Paris, 154. His character on arriving at manhood, 169. Married to Margaret of Anjou, 170. Normandy recovered by the French, 176. Guienne lost, 177. Pretensions of the duke of York to the crown, 180. Dissipation of the royal revenues during the minority, 184. His title to the crown, how defended, 191. How answered by the partisans of York, 193. List of nobility who adhered to the Lancaster prince in possession, 195. Marches an army to oppose the duke of York, 187. The duke retires after a parley, *ib.* Unsuccessful attempt on the province of Gascony, 198. Prince Edward born, *ib.* His imbecility of mind increases, 199. Taken prisoner by the duke of York at the battle of St. Albans, 200. Reinstated in his regal authority, 202. A formal reconciliation between the partisans of York and Lancaster, *ib.* Taken prisoner at Northampton, 205. The duke of York's right of succession determined by the lords, 207. Is retaken by queen Margaret at the battle of St. Albans, 210. Deposed by the election of Edward IV. 212. Reflections on this event, *ib.* Miscellaneous transactions of his reign, 213. Retires to Scotland after the defeat at Touton, 219. Act of forfeiture and attainder passed against him, 222. Receives assistance from Lewis XI. of France, 223. Imprisoned in the Tower, 225. Restored by the earl of Warwick, 243. Again in the power of Edward, 247. His death, 250.

—— VII. his accession, III. 307. Accepts Richard III.'s crown found in Bosworth-field, *ib.* His title to the crown of England, 308. His impolitic prejudices against the house of York, 311. Commits the young earl of Warwick to the Tower, 312. His joyful reception in his journey to London, 313. Renews his promise of marriage with the princess Elizabeth,

Elizabeth, 314. Defers it till after his coronation, *ib.* His coronation, *ib.* Creation of peers, *ib.* Institution of yeomen of the guard, 315. His prior attainder, how qualified, *ib.* His cautious entail of the crown, 316. Procures a papal sanction of his right to the crown, 317. Attainders of the York-party, 318. Reflections on, *ib.* The duties of tonnage and poundage granted him for life, *ib.* Proclaims a pardon to those who took arms against him, on surrender, 319. Titles of nobility conferred by him, *ib.* His choice of ministers, *ib.* Married to the princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV. 320. Makes a progress into the north, 321. Disperses an insurrection at Worcester, *ib.* Birth of prince Arthur, 322. His government unpopular, 323. Revolt of Ireland under Lambert Simnel, 325. Musters troops against him, 328. Defeats the earl of Lincoln, Simnel's general, at Stoke, 330. Entertains Simnel as a scullion, *ib.* His rigorous persecution of Simnel's partisans, *ib.* Crowns his queen, 331. State of foreign affairs at this period, 332. Makes a truce for seven years with the Scots, 333. His politic motives for not assisting the French in their designs on Britany, 339. His offers of mediation, how answered by the duke of Britany, 340. Obtains a supply from parliament to assist Britany, 343. Insurrection in the north on levying it, *ib.* Suppressed, 344. Sends lord Willoughby de Broke to Britany, 345. His vexation on the marriage of Charles of France with the Duchess of Britany, 350. Levies a benevolence on his people, *ib.* Promises his parliament to claim the crown of France, 351. Carries over an army to France, 353. Makes peace with France, 354. Causes the murder of Edward V. and the duke of York to be ascertained, on account of Perkin Warbec's imposture, 360. His policy in searching into the conspiracy, *ib.* Gains over Sir Robert Clifford to betray Perkin's secrets, 361. Publishes Perkin's secret history, *ib.* Remonstrates to the archduke on the occasion, and prohibits all commerce with the Low Countries, *ib.* Executes Perkin Warbec's secret adherents, 362. Detects and executes sir William Stanley, 364. Oppresses his people by arbitrary fines, 365. Caresses lawyers, and curbs his nobility, *ib.* Passes a law to indemnify all who act under the authority of the king for the time being, 366. Sends Sir Edward Poynings over to reduce the malcontents in Ireland, 367. Poyning's memorable statute, *ib.* Leagues with the Italian states against France, 368. Obtains a subsidy from Parliament, 372. Insurrection in Cornwal on occasion of levying it, 373. His prudent disposition to oppose the Cornish insurgents, 375. Defeats them at Blackheath, 376. Employs Hialas, Ferdinand's ambassador, to negociate a truce with Scotland, 377. Concludes a treaty of commerce with the Flemings. 378. Perkin Warbec lands in Cornwal, and besieges Exeter, 379. The siege raised, and Perkin's followers disperse, 380. His generous treatment of Perkin's wife, *ib.* Conducts Perkin in mock-triumph to London, 381. Publishes Perkin's confession, 382. Executes the young earl of Warwic for concerting an escape with Perkin Warbec, 383. Reflections on this execution, *ib.* His excuse for it, *ib.* His interview with the archduke Philip at Calais, 384. The pope sends a nuncio to engage him in a crusade against the Turks, *ib.* Makes a conditional promise to attend

attend him, 385. Is chosen protector of the knights of Rhodes, *ib.* Marries Arthur prince of Wales, to Catharine of Aragon, *ib.* The prince dies, 386. Marries her to his second son Henry, *ib.* Marries his eldest daughter Margaret to James IV. of Scotland, *ib.* His remark on this connexion, *ib.* Death of his queen, *ib.* His present situation, 387. His avarice, and oppression of his people by his two ministers, Empson and Dudley, *ib.* Their modes of extortion, *ib.* His great wealth acquired by these means, 389. His political attention to the state of Europe, 390. Is visited by Philip king of Castile, forced by a storm on the coast of England, 391. The advantage he took of this occurrence to obtain possession of the earl of Suffolk, whom Philip protected, 392. Commits Suffolk to the Tower, 393. Affiances his daughter Mary to Charles archduke of Austria, 394. His remorse for his oppressions, and his deeds of atonement, *ib.* Yet continues his extortions, *ib.* His death and character, 395. More absolute in his conduct than any former king, 396. The people's submission accounted for, *ib.* His laws calculated for the good of the nation, 397. Star-chamber, the authority of, established in this reign, *ib.* Suits *in forma pauperis*, first given, 398. Benefit of clergy abridged, *ib.* Passed frequent laws against retainers, 399. Anecdote of his behaviour to the earl of Oxford on account of, *ib.* Empowers his nobility and gentry to break the ancient entails of estates, 400. Depresses old families, and caresses new ones, 401. Commerce rather hurt than advanced by some of his laws, *ib.* Instances, *ib.* Remarks on the comparative prices of commodities and labour at that time, 402. Review of other commercial regulations, 403. America, and the new passage to the East Indies, discovered in this reign, 405. Great alterations in the European nations in consequence of these extraordinary events, *ib.* How he lost the honour of the first discovery of America, *ib.* Sebastian Cabot sent out by him on discoveries in America, *ib.* Newfoundland discovered by Cabot, 406. The first ship of the royal navy, called the *Great Harry*, built by Henry, *ib.* Circumstances which tended to the promotion of literature about this time, *ib.* The nation rejoiced at his death, 408. His dying injunction to his son, to protest against his marriage with Catharine of Aragon, iv. 75.

Henry, second son of Henry VII. created prince of Wales on the death of his brother Arthur, iii. 386. Forced by his father into a marriage with Catharine of Aragon, Arthur's widow, *ib.*

——— VIII. the general satisfaction of the people at his accession, iii. 408. His personal qualifications, *ib.* How he acquired a literary education, 409. His choice of ministers, *ib.* His taste for gaiety and pleasure encouraged by the earl of Surrey, 410. Dissipates his father's treasures, *ib.* Music and literature his favourite pursuits, *ib.* Thomas Aquinas his favourite author, 411. Punishes the instruments of his father's oppressions, *ib* Motives to the consummation of his marriage with Catharine of Aragon, 413. Takes part with pope Julius II. against France, 418. Supplies granted by parliament for a war with France, 419. Deluded by Ferdinand of Spain into a fruitless expedition to Guienne, to facilitate his conquest of Navarre, *ib.* A naval engagement between sir Thomas Knevet and the French,

422. A poll-tax to carry on the war against France, the proportions how rated, 424. Receives a vessel of provisions, a present from the pope, 425. Disputes with Scotland, *ib.* Concludes an alliance with Maximilian and Ferdinand against France, 426. Wolsey introduced to him by Fox, bishop of Winchester, 428. The maxims inculcated by Wolsey, *ib.* Admits him to his privy-council, 429. Raises an army and fleet against France, 430. Invades France in person, 433. The emperor Maximilian serves under him, and receives pay, *ib.* Besieges Terouane, 434. Defeats the French at the battle of Spurs, 435. Terouane capitulates, *ib.* Takes Tournay, 437. Makes Wolsey bishop of Tournay, *ib.* Returns to England, *ib.* Defeats the Scots at Flodden, 440. Makes peace with Scotland, *ib.* Enraged at Ferdinand's alliance with France, 442. Peace with France negociated by the duke of Longueville, *ib.* Terms of the treaty, 443. The princess Mary, Henry's sister, married to Lewis, who dies quickly after, *ib.* His disgusts against Francis I. of France, iv. 11. Is persuaded by Wolsey to deliver up Tournay, 13. Forms pretensions to the empire, but is too late, 18. His political advantages lessened by the defects of his temper, 20. Is visited by the emperor Charles V. 21. Goes over to Ardres to visit Francis, by Wolsey's persuasion, who regulates the ceremonial of their meeting, 27. Instance of his delicacy towards Francis, *ib.* His return of Francis's familiarity and confidence, 23. Grand tournament held by them, 24. Visits the emperor and Margaret of Savoy at Gravelines, *ib.* His endeavours to mediate a peace between the emperor and Francis frustrated, 26. An alliance concluded by Wolsey, between him and the emperor, with the pope, against Francis, *ib.* Trial and execution of the duke of Buckingham, 22. Writes against the opinions of Luther the reformer, 36. Receives the title of *Defender of the Faith* from the pope, *ib.* Is sharply answered by Luther, *ib.* Is again visited by the emperor Charles, whom he instals a knight of the garter, 40. Declares war against France, *ib.* Operations against Scotland, 43. His father's treasure being dissipated, imposes arbitrary taxes, 46. Summons a parliament, *ib.* Levies the grants before the stipulated time, 48. His arbitrary behaviour to Edward Montague, a member of the house of commons, *ib. note.* Sends a force under the duke of Suffolk to invade Picardy, 51. A new treaty between him and the emperor for the invasion of France, 54. Concludes an alliance with Louise, the regent of France, on the captivity of Francis, 38. Sends Tonstal, bishop of London, ambassador to the emperor, 60. Levies taxes, by Wolsey's advice, without his parliament, 61. Discontents of the people on this exertion of the prerogative, 62. Wolsey makes him a present of Hampton-court palace, 64. Joins the holy league against the emperor, 68. His treaties with Francis, 70. Declares, with France, war against the emperor, 73. Account of his scruples with regard to his marriage with Catharine of Aragon, 75. Has a son by lady Catharine Blount, 77. Consults his prelates, who confirm his scruples concerning his marriage, *ib.* Becomes enamoured with the lady Anne

Anne Boleyn, 79. Applies to the pope for a divorce, *ib.* The motives of the pope's hesitation in that affair, 80. Lays the pope's conduct before his ministers, and their advice thereupon, 81. The cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio appointed by the pope to try his marriage, 85. The trial opened, 87. The court abruptly prorogued by Campeggio, 90. Deprives Wolsey of the great seal, 92. Orders Wolsey to depart from York palace, and confiscates his moveables there, *ib.* Orders him to be prosecuted in the star-chamber, 93. Pardons him, 95. The commons grant him a discharge of his debts, 97. Sends Francis I. of France a generous acquittal of a debt owing to him, 98. A view of his inducements to break off all connexion with the court of Rome, 99. The first introduction of Dr. Cranmer to him, 101. Engages Cranmer to write in favour of his divorce, *ib.* An examination into the general question of marriage within affinity, with reference to this case, *ib.* He obtains the decision of many universities in favour of his divorce, 102. Engages his nobility to write to the pope concerning, 103. Refuses the pope's summons to appear at Rome, *ib.* Is concerned at Wolsey's death, 106. Prosecutes his clergy on the statute of provisors, which is compounded with him by the convocation, *ib.* The convocation acknowledges his supremacy, with an artful reservation, *ib.* Issues a pardon to the laity from the statute of provisors, 107. Passes an act against levying annates, *ib.* The commons reject a bill to secure his right of wardships, &c. and his conduct thereupon, 108. Explains his scruples about his marriage to sir Thomas Audley, speaker of the house of commons, 109. His interview with Francis at Boulogne, 111. Celebrates his marriage with Anne Boleyn, *ib.* Passes an act against all appeals to Rome, on suits cognizable in ecclesiastical courts, 112. Publishes his marriage with Anne Boleyn, *ib.* His marriage with Catharine declared invalid by archbishop Cranmer, 113. Birth of the princess Elizabeth, *ib.* Creates her princess of Wales, *ib.* Degrades Catharine to the quality of princess-dowager of Wales, *ib.* Accident which produced his final breach with the pope, 116. The papal authority excluded from the regulation of monasteries, and election of bishops, by parliament, 117. The succession to the crown, regulated by parliament, 118. Is declared supreme head of the church, by parliament, 120. Was the most absolute prince in Europe, 127. His hatred towards the reformers accounted for, 128. His courtiers, how disposed with regard to the reformation, 129. His passions made use of, by both parties, 130. Is abused personally by friar Peyto from the pulpit, 134. Orders Dr. Corren to preach before him, who justifies him, *ib.* Detects and punishes *the holy maid of Kent*, and her associates, 137. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, executed for denying his supremacy, 139. Trial and execution of sir Thomas More, 140. The court of Rome enraged against him on account of these executions, *ib.* Is desirous of a reconciliation with pope Paul III., *ib.* Is excommunicated by the pope, 141. Renews his friendship with Francis, and proposes marrying the princess Elizabeth to the duke of Angouleme, *ib.* Remits money to the German protestants, 142. Invites over the principal German

German divines, 142. Death of Catharine of Aragon, and her dying letter to him, 143. His reply to the emperor's advances toward an accommodation, 144. Is disgusted with Francis for marrying his daughter to James V. of Scotland, 146. Appoints Cromwel his vicar-general, 148. A visitation of the monasteries, *ib.* Many monasteries surrender their revenues, 150. Their doors opened, *ib.* The lesser monasteries suppressed by parliament, *ib.* Becomes jealous of queen Anne, 155. His jealousy strengthened by the calumnies of the viscountess of Rochford, *ib.* Becomes enamoured with the lady Jane Seymour, 156. Orders the queen and some of her attendants to be confined, 157. The queen's letter to him, 158. Trial of the queen, 159. Marries the lady Jane Seymour the next day after Anne Boleyn's execution, 162. Receives the princess Mary into favour on her compliance with the acknowledgement of his supremacy, *ib.* The princesses Mary and Elizabeth illegitimated by parliament, 163. Articles of faith framed by convocation, and corrected by him, 166. Remarks on his skill in conducting the alterations in religion, *ib.* Discontents excited among the people by the dispersed monks, 170. An insurrection against him, headed by Dr. Mackrel, 171. Prevails on the insurgents to desert their chief, who is executed, *ib.* An insurrection termed the *Pilgrimage of Grace*, raised in the north, by Mr. Aske, *ib.* His manifesto against them, 174. The insurrection suppressed by the Duke of Norfolk, 175. Prince Edward born, and the death of the queen, 176. Negociates with the German protestants, but without effect, 177. Allows only single copies of the bible to be chained in some churches, with restrictions as to the reading of it, *ib.* Suppresses the larger monasteries, 178. Pillages the shrine of Thomas à Becket, and burns his bones, 182. Makes liberal grants of the revenues of the religious houses, 183. Erects six new bishoprics, Westminster, Oxford, Peterborough, Bristol, Chester, and Gloucester, *ib.* The rage expressed against him by the court of Rome on his suppression of the religious houses, 184. Procures cardinal Pole to be dismissed from his legantine charge in Flanders, 186. Executes some noblemen who had entered into a conspiracy with Pole, 187. Declares against the authority of the council of Mantua, 188. Is obstinately attached to the doctrine of the real presence, 189. Enters into a formal disputation with Lambert concerning the eucharist, 191. Sentences Lambert to the stake, 192. Passes the bill of six articles, for abolishing diversity of opinions in religion, 194. The parliament grants the force of laws to his proclamations, 196. Propounds a question to the judges respecting the power of parliament in attainders, 198. The abbey-lands confirmed to him by parliament, 199. Grants a general possession of the bible, 200. Solicits the duchess-dowager of Longueville in marriage, 201. Is refused by Francis, on account of her previous contract to the king of Scotland, *ib.* Demands Anne of Cleves of her father, 202. Sees her privately and dislikes her, *ib.* Marries her, nevertheless, from political motives, 204. His disgust increases, *ib.* Complains to parliament of the diversity of religions, 205. Creates Cromwel earl of Essex, and knight of the garter, *ib.* Obtains of parliament a dissolution of the order of St. John of Jerusalem,

rusalem, or knights of Malta, 205. Requires, and with difficulty obtains, grants from parliament and convocation, 206. Fixes his affections on the lady Catharine Howard, 207. Is influenced by the duke of Norfolk to commit Cromwel to the Tower, 208. Cromwel's moving letter to him, *ib.* Is divorced from Anne of Cleves, 209. Concludes an alliance with the emperor, 211. Marries Catharine Howard, *ib.* Persecutes the reformers, 212. Makes a progress into the north, 213. Exhorts the king of Scotland to seize the church revenues, 216. James evades a promised interview with him, 217. Is informed by Cranmer of the queen's dissolute conduct, 218. The queen attainted with her associates, 219; and executed, 221. Dissolves divers colleges, hospitals, and other foundations, and seizes their revenues, *ib.* Extorts a surrender of chapter-lands from divers bishops, *ib.* Ireland erected into a kingdom, and added to his titles, *ib. note.* Mitigates the penalties of the six articles, so far as regards the marriages of priests, 222. Appoints a commission to establish a religion for the nation, *ib.* Writes and publishes his *Institution of a Christian Man*, 223. Publishes the *Erudition of a Christian Man*, 224. Prohibits the lower classes of people to read the scriptures, *ib.* Reviews and alters the mass books, 225. Suppresses the interludes in ridicule of the former superstitions, *ib.* Publishes a manifesto previous to his war with Scotland, 227. Sir Robert Bowes defeated by the Scots, 228. Battle of Solway, 229. Death of James, 230. Proposes a marriage to the Scots nobles, between prince Edward and the infant queen of Scotland, 231. This marriage contracted by treaty with the earl of Arran, 233. Is disgusted with Francis, 235. Leagues with the emperor against Francis, 236. Obedience to his *Erudition of a Christian Man* enforced by parliament, 238. Marries Catharine Par, 239. Influences parliament to restore the princesses Mary and Elizabeth to their right of succession, dependent on his will, 242. His regal style settled, 243. Is released by parliament from his debts contracted by a general loan, *ib.* Requires new loans from his people, and raises the value of specie, 244. Extorts a benevolence from his people, *ib.* Invades Scotland, and burns Edinburgh, 245. Concerts an invasion of France with the emperor, *ib.* Passes over to France, and leaves the queen regent, 246. Takes Boulogne, 247. Charles makes a separate peace with Francis, *ib.* Returns to England, 248. Subsidies granted him by parliament and convocation, 251. Obtains a parliamentary grant of university revenues, which he declines, *ib.* The gross flattery of parliament to him, 252. His speech on proroguing it, *ib.* Sends the earl of Hertford with forces over to Calais, 253. Makes peace with France and Scotland, *ib.* His high encomium on the duke of Suffolk at his death, 255. Protects Cranmer against the cabals of his catholic courtiers, *ib.* The queen's tender care of him in his illness, 258. Orders her to be impeached for heresy, 259. Her prudent caution in evading this danger, *ib.* Abuses Wriothesely on his coming to take the queen to the Tower, 260. Commits the duke of Norfolk and the earl of Surrey to the Tower, 262. Trial and execution of Surrey, 263. Expedites the proceedings against Norfolk, 264. Orders him for execution, *ib.* Dies, 265. His behaviour

viour at his death, 265. The succession how settled by his will, *ib.* His character, 266. The number of parliaments summoned by him, 268. His rigorous and contradictory statutes against heresy and treason, 269. A recapitulation of his statutes, *ib.* His military laws, 270. Tonnage and poundage arbitrarily levied by him, 272. State of commerce in this reign, 273. His laws to restrain the decay of tillage, and throwing lands into pasturage, 277. His attention to the advancement of literature, 279 List of the regency appointed by his will during the minority of Edward VI. 282.

Henry, prince of Wales, eldest son of James I. his death and character, vi. 62.

———, bishop of Winchester. *See Winchester.*

——— II. of France, his character, iv. 295. His conduct towards the protestant league in Germany, *ib.* Makes an ineffectual attempt on Boulogne, 333. His treaty with England for the surrender of Boulogne, 342. Agrees to a marriage between his daughter Elizabeth and Edward VI. *ib.* Invades Germany, in favour of Maurice, elector of Saxony, 382. The emperor repulsed from Metz, *ib.* Montmorency defeated, at St. Quintin, 434. Calais taken, 435. Requires the queen-dowager of Scotland to take part in his quarrel against England, 440. Concludes the marriage between the dauphin and the young queen, Mary of Scotland, *ib.* Peace of Cateau Cambresis with Spain and England, v. 16. Solicits the excommunication of queen Elizabeth, 19. Orders the dauphin and his queen to assume the title and arms of England, *ib.* Is killed at a tournament. 20.

——— III. of France, his character and first views on his accession, v. 211. Grants a peace to the Hugonots, 212. Declares himself as head of the catholic league, but is suspected by both parties, *ib.* Loses the good will of his subjects, 213. Sends a splendid embassy to Elizabeth, on the intended marriage between her and his brother the duke of Anjou, 241. Declares war against the Hugonots, 268. Is defeated by Henry of Navarre, 355. Is driven from Paris, *ib.* Orders the duke of Guise and his brother to be assassinated, 356. Is assassinated himself, 357.

IV. of France, his accession, v. 357. Receives aid from queen Elizabeth of England, to oppose the catholic league, *ib.* Possesses himself of the suburbs of Paris, 358. Battle of Yvrée, *ib.* Is disconcerted by the duke of Parma, *ib.* Receives fresh assistance from Elizabeth, 359. 361. Motives of his changing his religion, 369. Renounces the protestant faith, 370. Declares war against Spain, 374. His representations to his allies respecting peace with Spain, 387. Concludes a separate peace, 389. He and queen Elizabeth, unknown to each other, entertain the same thoughts of establishing a new system of policy in Europe, 434. His passionate admiration of the picture of queen Elizabeth, 527. Concludes a treaty with James for the support of the United Provinces, vi. 7. Is assassinated by Ravaillac, 56.

——— IV. emperor of Germany, his disputes with pope Gregory VII. about the right of investitures, i. 267.

Henry, VI. emperor of Germany, obtains possession of Richard I. of England, arrested by the archduke Leopold, ii. 23. His ignominious treatment of him, 24. Produces and accuses him before the diet at Worms, 26. Richard's spirited answer, *ib.* Is threatened by the pope with an excommunication for detaining him, 27. Consents to release Richard on a ransom, 28. Richard's narrow escape out of his hands, *ib.*

Heptarchy, Saxon, in Britain, establishment of, ii. 26. See *Kent, Northumberland, East Anglia, Mercia, Essex, Sussex, Wessex.*

Herbert, attorney-general, impeaches, by the king's order, Lord Kimbolton, and the five commoners, vi. 467. Is impeached by the commons for it, 478.

Hereford, Humphry de Bohun earl of, confederates with Leicester and other barons against Edward I. ii. 182. Is a party in forming the provisions of Oxford, 183. Is gained over by prince Edward to the royal cause, 200. Refuses to serve in the expedition against Gascony, and his quarrel with the king on the occasion, 289. Refuses to attend the king to Flanders, *ib.* A new constable appointed in his room for that service, 290. He and the earl of Norfolk present a remonstrance to him at his departure, *ib.* They obtain from parliament a confirmation of the charters and indemnity for themselves, which are confirmed by the king abroad, 291. Joins in the confederacy of Thomas earl of Lancaster, against Piers Gavaston, 335.

———, Henry duke of, accuses the duke of Norfolk in parliament in Richard II's time, iii. 35. Duel between them stopped by the king, 36. Banished for ten years, *ib.* Succeeds his father in the dukedom of Lancaster, 37. See *Lancaster* and *Henry* IV.

Heresy, an act passed in the reign of Richard II. enjoining sheriffs to apprehend the preachers of, iii. 54. Repealed, 55. The repeal suppressed by the clergy, *ib.* The law of the six articles for abolishing, passed, iv. 194. See Articles.

———, persons burnt for, William Sautree, iii. 65. A Lollard, 81. James Bainham, iv. 132. Thomas Bilney, 133. Lambert, 193. Four Dutch anabaptists, *ib.* Dr. Barnes, Jerome, and Gerard, 212. Abel, Fetherstone, and Powel, 213. Patrick Hamilton, in Scotland, 214. Anne Ascue, Nicholas Belenain, John Lassels, and John Adams, 258. Wishart the Scots reformer, 297. Joan Bocher, and Van Paris, 324. Rogers prebendary of St. Paul's, 411. Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, 412. Sanders, *ib.* Taylor parson of Hadley, *ib.* Philpot, archbishop of Winchester, 413. Ferrar, bishop of St. David's, 414. Ridley bishop of London, and Latimer of Worcester, *ib.* Hunter, an apprentice, 415. Thomas Hawkes, *ib.* A woman at Guernsey and her infant, *ib.* An express commission issued more effectually to extirpate it, 419. A proclamation rendering the possession of heretical books capital, *ib.* An estimate of the number of persons burnt, *ib.* Archbishop Cranmer burnt, 430. Walter Mill, in Scotland, v. 23. Two Arians, by James I. vi. 163. A madman, *ib.*

Heretics, old law for burning of, repealed, viii. 332

Hereward, an East Anglian nobleman, assembles his followers, and shelters himself in the isle of Ely, i. 250. Reduced by William the Conqueror, and received into favour, 261.

Heriot, in the Anglo-Saxon law, what, i. 225, *note*.

Herries, lord, is sent by Mary queen of Scots, then in England, to Elizabeth, to express her readiness to justify herself as to her husband's murder, v. 132. His fluctuating conduct in this negotiation, 133. Is appointed by Mary one of the commissioners in this cause, 134. Refuses to answer Murray's allegations against Mary at Hampton-court, 140. He and his associates break up the conference, 143. Elizabeth's reply to them, 144.

Herrings, battle of, between sir John Fastolf and the count of Dunois, iii. 140.

Hertford, earl of, son of the protector Somerset, is privately married to the lady Catharine Grey, v. 61. Is with his lady committed to the Tower, 62. Is prosecuted in the star-chamber, *ib.* Is released on his wife's death, *ib.*

———, marquis of, anecdotes of his life, vi. 502. Is made governor to the prince, *ib.* Raises forces for the king, and is named general of the western counties, *ib.* Is sent with prince Maurice into the west, 518. Battle of Lansdown, *ib.*

Hexham, battle of, between Montacute, brother of the earl of Warwick, and the Lancastrians, iii. 224.

Heyle, serjeant, his extraordinary assertion of the legal prerogative in the house of commons, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 532.

Hialas, Peter, sent ambassador from Ferdinand, king of Arragon, to Henry VII. to negotiate a marriage between Prince Arthur and the Infanta Catharine, iii. 377. Negotiates a truce between Henry and James IV. of Scotland, *ib.*

Hickes, Dr. his account of a Saxon sodalitium or compact, i. 206.

High commission, or ecclesiastical commission, origin of that court, v. 262. Its great power and arbitrary exertion of it, 263. Its powers extended by the queen, 265. 454. The commons remonstrate against this court, vi. 54. One established in Scotland, 89. A review of the offences cognizable by this court, 158. Its authority moderated by James I. *ib.* Is abolished in Scotland by the general assembly, 334. Is abolished in England by parliament, 420. Is revived by king James II. viii. 267.

Highlanders, and Irish, the same people, i. 473. Came originally from the Irish, *ib.*

Highways, the first toll mentioned for repairing, ii. 496. The first general law for the repair of, by parish duty, iv. 449.

Historians, monkish, a character of, i. 28.

History, ancient, causes of its uncertainty pointed out, i. 1. 18.

Hobbes, a character of his philosophy and politics, vii. 346. His death, *ib.*

Hobby, Sir Philip, is employed by the protector Somerset to solicit an alliance with the emperor Charles V. but fails, iv. 333. His account of his negotiation, 334.

Holgate, archbishop of York, is imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary, iv. 376.

Holland. See *Netherlands* and *United Provinces.*

Hollingshed, his account of the manner of living among the common people just preceding his time, iv. 449. Curious remarks by him of the growth of luxury, 462.

Hollis, forcibly detains the speaker of the house of commons in his chair until a remonstrance is passed against tonnage and poundage, vi. 275. His sentence by the court of king's bench, 276. Is impeached by the king, 467. Proposes the declaring the generals of the parliamentary army traitors, vii. 131. Is made a lord by Charles II. 350. When ambassador at Paris, endeavours to make the French take part with the English against the Dutch, 404. Is sent ambassador to treat with the Dutch at Breda, 419. Agrees to favour the intrigues of France, but refuses to accept a bribe, viii. 43, *note.*

Holloway, a merchant of Bristol, is executed for the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, viii. 198.

Holmes, Sir Robert, his expedition against the Dutch settlements, vii. 399. Burns a fleet of Dutch ships in harbour, 414. His attempt on the Dutch Smyrna fleet, 478.

Holy Land. See *Crusades.*

Homeldon, battle of, between the Percies and the earl of Douglas, iii 68.

Homilies, twelve, published to be read to the people, iv. 291. Bishop Gardiner's objections to them, 293. The slavish principles inculcated in them, v. 468.

Honorius, pope, his avaricious demands on the clergy, ii. 169.

Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, is imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary, iv. 376. Is cruelly burnt for heresy, 412. An account of his scruples at consecration, and the compromise he obtained, v. 150.

Hops, the planting of, much increased in the reign of James I. vi. 183.

Hopton, Sir Ralph, reduces Cornwal for Charles I. vi. 515. Is defeated at Torrington, vii. 62.

Horn-castle, battle of, between the earl of Manchester and the royalists, vi. 535.

Horses forbid to be exported by Henry VII. iii. 401.

Hospitality, causes and effects of the decay of, in England, v. 487.

Hotham, Sir John, is by the house of commons made governor of Hull, vi. 479. Refuses the king admittance into Hull, 489. Is detected in an intention of giving up the place, and is, with his son, sent up to London and executed, 535.

Hotspur. See *Piercy.*

Howard, Sir Edward, admiral, son of the earl of Surrey, destroys Barton the Scots pirate, iii. 425. Ravages the coast of France, 431. Is killed in an engagement in Conquet harbour, *ib.* His idea of naval courage, *ib. note.*

———, lord, commands the main body of the English army at the of Flouden, iii. 438. Created earl of Surrey, 440.

———, lady Catharine, becomes the object of the affections of Henry VIII. on his disgust against Anne of Cleves, iv. 207. Is married to Henry, 211. Is accused to the king of incontinency, 218. Her confession,

fession, 219. Is attainted by parliament, 220. Beheaded with the viscountess of Rochford, 221.

Howard, lady Frances, is married to the earl of Essex, vi. 67. Receives him from his travels with obstinate disgust, *ib.* Contracts a familiarity with Carre viscount Rochester, *ib.* Procures the disgrace of sir Thomas Overbury, 68. Is divorced and married to Carre, then earl of Somerset, 70. Procures Overbury to be poisoned, *ib.* Is found guilty of Overbury's death, 77. Is pardoned, 78. Dies in obscurity, *ib.*

———, lord, one of the cabal of six, his evidence against lord Russel, viii. 190. Gives evidence against Algernon Sidney, 197; and against Hambden, 198.

Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, and chief justiciary, punishes Fitz-Osbert, a licentious lawyer, ii. 37. Assists John, in his claim to the succession on Richard's death, 41. Summons a synod by his legantine authority, 56. Dies, 57.

———, a servant of earl Bothwel, is executed for the murder of Darnley, and charges queen Mary with being accessary to it, v. 142.

——— de Burgh, chief justiciary, is chosen joint protector of the realm with the bishop of Winchester, on the death of the earl of Pembroke, ii. 152. Takes Rockingham castle on the earl of Albemarle's rebellion, 153. Executes Constantine Fitz Arnulf and his associates for a rebellious riot in London, 154. Obtains of the pope a bull, declaring Henry III. of age for government; 155. His character, 159. His removal from the ministry, and subsequent vicissitudes, 160.

Hudibras, the event on which that poem was founded, vii. 332. Character of that performance, viii. 337.

Hudson's Bay company, its charter when first granted, viii. 329.

Hugonots, or French protestants. See *Condé*, *Coligni*; *Navarre*, Anthony king of; *Guise*, *Medicis*, Catharine de, *Montmorency*, &c.— Battle of Dreux, 572. Battle of St. Dennis, and siege of Chartres, 186. The court agrees to an accommodation, *ib.* A scheme formed for seizing the prince of Condé and the admiral Coligni, *ib.* Battle of Jarnac and death of Condé, *ib.* Battle of Moncontour, 188. Charles marries his sister to the prince of Navarre, 205. The queen of Navarre poisoned, *ib.* Massacre of Paris, *ib.* Are calumniated at foreign courts to palliate these barbarities, 206. Take arms again, 209. Make peace with Henry III. 212. The catholic league formed against them by the duke of Guise, *ib.* War declared against them again, 268. Assistance sent to the king of Navarre by Elizabeth, 355. The English ships sent against Rochelle desert, vi. 208. The Dutch assist the French in reducing that town, 209. Rochelle reduced, 263. A toleration continued to them, *ib.* Are persecuted and driven out of France by the revocation of the edict of Nantz, viii. 243.

Hull, a magazine formed there by the parliament, and sir John Hotham appointed governor, vi. 479. The king refused admittance into, 489.

Hume, lord, procures the regency of Scotland to be conferred on the duke of Albany, iv, 6. Is traduced to the regent, 7. Makes war against the regent, and is put to death, 8.

Hume, Sir David, assassinates Darcy, warden of the marches in Scotland, iv. 8.
———, lord, joins a confederacy of Scotch nobles, to protect prince James against the attempts of Bothwel, and to punish the murderers of Darnley, v. 119. Surrounds Mary and Bothwel in Borthwic castle, who escape from him, *ib.*
———, lord, signs a protestation against the liturgy in Scotland, vi. 329.
Hunter, an apprentice, burnt for heresy, iv. 415.
Husbandry, remarks on the regulations to promote it, enacted by Henry VII. iii. 403.
Huss, John, burnt for heresy by the council of Constance, iii. 119.
Hyde, Sir Edward, is made chancellor, and created earl of Clarendon. vii. 351. See *Clarendon*.

J.

JAMAICA, the island of, taken from the Spaniards by Penn and Venables, vii. 255.
James I. of England, an examination into his pretensions to the crown, vi. 1. His succession admitted by Elizabeth on her deathbed, 2. Forbids the resort of people to him on his journey to London, 3. His profuse distribution of titles, *ib.* His partiality to his countrymen, *ib.* Receives embassies of congratulation, 6. Concludes a treaty with France, for the support of the United Provinces, 7. A conspiracy against him detected, 8. Summons a conference of divines at Hampton-court, on points of faith and religious discipline, 10. Why averse to the puritans, 11. His behaviour at the conference, 13. His reply when solicited in favour of prophesyings 14. Summons a parliament, *ib.* Orders that no outlaw shall be chosen, 18. Orders the commons to confer with the judges concerning the election of sir Francis Goodwin, an outlaw, 19. Compromises the affair with them, *ib.* His mistaken notions of government and regal prerogative, 22. Calls in and annuls all patents for monopolies, 23. Public spirited attempts of the commons, 24. Is desirous of an union between the two kingdoms, 25. The commons backward in granting supplies to him, 26. Prorogues the parliament, 27 Concludes a peace with Spain, *ib.* His eagerness for a cessation of hostilities, 28. Why ignorant of foreign politics, 29. Is strict in executing the penal laws against papists, 30. History of the gunpowder conspiracy, 31. Receives obscure hints of it, 34. His speech to parliament on this occasion, 38. His religious sentiments explained, *ib.* Remarks on his speech in favour of the projected union of the two kingdoms, 40. Assumes the style of king of Great Britain, 42. Checks the commons in an intended petition against popish recusants, and for lenity toward the puritans, 43. Lays open his necessities to parliament, but is mortified with a refusal of suitable supplies, 46. Causes of the present poverty of the crown, 47. How induced to arbitrary exertions of his prerogative, 49. A spirit discoverable among the commons for reforming the constitution on free principles, 51.
Owns

Owns proclamations not to be equal to laws, but pleads precedents and utility for them, 52. Enters into a treaty for relinquishment of wardships and purveyance, 54. His pleasant conceit on the occasion, *ib. note.* Procures Vorstius, an Arminian professor of divinity, to be banished from the United Provinces, 57. How induced at length to alter his opinion of the absolute decrees of God, 166. Founds a college at Chelsea for the refutation of papists and puritans, 167. His plan for the civilizing Ireland, 58. Death and character of Henry prince of Wales, 62. Marries the princess Elizabeth to the elector palatine, 63. His rapid promotion of Robert Carre, a young Scots gentleman, 64. Undertakes his education, *ib.* Unites the families of Howard and Devereux by marriage, 66. Is prevailed on to procure the divorce of lady Essex, 69. Creates Carre earl of Somerset, 70. Raises money by the sale of titles, 71. Calls a parliament, *ib.* Dissolves it in anger, and imprisons some of the members, 73. Instance of his indiscretion in political conversation, 74. Young George Villiers introduced to him, 76. Makes Villiers his cup-bearer, *ib.* Is informed of the secret of sir Thomas Overbury's death, 77. Orders a strict inquiry into the affair, *ib.* Pardons Somerset and his lady, 78. His conduct in this instance extenuated, 79. Creates Villiers duke of Buckingham, *ib.* and lord high admiral, *ib.* Delivers up the cautionary towns to the Dutch for money, 80. His motives to this composition explained, *ib.* Proposes to visit Scotland, 83. His former endeavours to establish episcopal authority in Scotland, 84. Proposes to the Scots parliament a law, for the government of the church to be vested in him and the bishops, 89. Is forced to drop the act, 90. Summons a meeting of Scots bishops and clergy at St. Andrews, *ib.* Is referred by them to a general assembly, *ib.* Reluctance of the general assembly in admitting the ceremonies enjoined by him, *ib.* Allows, by proclamation in England, sports and exercises on the Sunday, 92. Releases sir Walter Raleigh, and grants permission for his expedition to Guiana, 94. Executes Raleigh on his return, 99. Why he refused to acknowledge the elector palatine as king of Bohemia, 103. The nation discontented at his inactivity in the elector's cause, 104. Obtains supplies from parliament, 107. His reply to the representation of grievances, 108. Fall of the chancellor Bacon, 109. Prorogues the parliament, 110. Recals his patents for monopolies, and redresses grievances, 111. The commons remonstrate to him in favour of the elector palatine, and against the Spanish match, 112. Reproves the house for this measure, 113. They repeat their remonstrance, 114. His behaviour to the committee who present it, 115. Tears the protestation of the commons out of their journals, 116. Dissolves the parliament, and punishes the leaders of the opposition, *ib.* The remarks of both parties on these disputes between him and the parliament, 118. Negotiates with the emperor in favour of the elector palatine, 122. Persuades him to submission, 124. His want of spirit ridiculed abroad, *ib.* His efforts to conclude the Spanish match, *ib.* His consent obtained for prince Charles's journey to Spain, which he repents afterwards, 130. Is bullied by Buckingham into compliance, 131. Concessions in favour of the catholic religion made by him in the marriage treaty, 135. Yields to Buckingham's

ingham's opposition to the match, 137. Assents to Buckingham's insincere representation of the affair to parliament, 141. Agrees to a war with Spain, 142. Endeavours to justify the earl of Middlesex, impeached by the commons, 144. Begins to estrange himself from Buckingham, 146. Receives intimations of Buckingham's schemes from the Spanish ambassador, 147. Sends forces to assist the Dutch against Spain, 149. Enters into a treaty for the marriage of Charles with the princess Henrietta of France, *ib.* Undertakes the recovery of the palatinate, but to no purpose, 151. Dies, 153. His character, *ib.* Character of his queen, 154. The number of peers created by him, *ib.* His moderation in causes tried before the court of high commission, 158. Two Arians burnt in his reign, 163. A review of manners during this reign, 166. Discouraged the gentry living in town, 169. Instance of his liberality, 173. His attention to the navy, 180. His aversion to tobacco, 188. His character as a writer, 196. His reason for expelling Toby Matthews from the house of commons, 550. His notions of the regal power, from his book of *The true laws of free monarchies*, 553. Inquiry into his conduct in the case of sir Walter Raleigh, 555. Remarks on his administration in general, 560. Is acknowledged by parliament to have allowed more freedom of debate than any of his predecessors, 566. The general notions of the English government at this time, *ib.* Testimony of the advantages derived from his peaceable disposition, 568.

James II. his accession and first professions, viii. 215. Orders by proclamation a continuance of the customs and excise, 216. Goes publicly to mass, 217. Sends an agent to the pope, *ib.* His reception of the exclusionists, 218. His attachment to Mrs. Sedley 219. Summons a parliament, 220. His speech to parliament on the subject of his revenue, *ib.* Receives a grant of his revenue during life, 224. Monmouth's rebellion suppressed, 229. His undisguised and peremptory language to parliament, 239. Prorogues, and after dissolves it, 242. Remarks on his imprudence with respect to religion, *ib.* His resolute exertion of the dispensing power, 244. Endeavours to establish it by the case of Sir Edward Hales, *ib.* Displaces four judges, 247. Brings four popish lords into the privy council, 250. His violent measures for the establishment of popery in Ireland, 251. Revives the court of high commission, 254. Issues a declaration of general indulgence, and suspends the penal laws against nonconformity, 256. Suspends all penal laws in ecclesiastical affairs, and grants a general liberty of conscience, 257. Pays court to the dissenters, 258. Sends a solemn embassy to Rome, 260. Four catholic bishops consecrated, 262. Dissolves the parliament, *ib.* Recommends a Benedictine to a degree at Cambridge, 264. His contest with Magdalen-college, 265. Repeats his declaration of indulgence, and orders it to be read in churches, 267. Commits six bishops, with the primate, to the Tower, for petitioning against the declaration of indulgence, 269. Orders Gifford, doctor of the Sorbonne, to be elected president of Magdalen college, 273. Birth of the prince of Wales, *ib.* Applies to the prince of Orange for his concurrence in his schemes, 279. Shews his displeasure against the Dutch, 281.

Is informed by Lewis XIV. of the prince of Orange's schemes, 287. Disavows Lewis's memorial to the States in his favour, 289. His army and navy become disaffected and mutinous, *ib.* Retracts his measures, 291. The prince of Orange lands at Torbay, 294. His chief officers and soldiery desert him, 295. Is deserted by prince George of Denmark, and the princess Anne, 296. His consternation at his misfortunes, 297. Issues writs for a new parliament, and sends commissioners to treat with the princess of Orange, 298. Sends away the queen and prince, and flies, 301. Is seized by the populace, and brought back to London, 303. Embarks for France, 305. His character, *ib.*

James, son of Robert king of Scotland, afterwards James I. taken prisoner and educated by Henry IV. of England, iii. 75. His father dies, *ib.* Carried to France by Henry V. 114. Restored by the duke of Bedford, 128. Murdered, 129.

——— II. of Scotland, general view of his conduct, iii. 220. How killed, *ib.*

——— III. of Scotland, his character, iii. 332. Enters into a seven years truce with Henry VII. 333. Murdered, 352.

——— IV. of Scotland, succeeds on the murder of his father, iii. 352. Receives Perkin Warbec, and marries him to a Scots lady, 371. Invades England in conjunction with Perkin, *ib.* Makes a truce with Henry VII. and sends Perkin away, 378. Marries Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII. 386. Sends a fleet to assist the French against Henry VIII. 426. Ravages Northumberland, 437. Loses his time with lady Ford, *ib.* Defeated, and supposed to be killed at the battle of Flouden, 439.

——— V. of Scotland, is withdrawn by his mother Margaret from the power of the duke of Albany, regent of Scotland, iv. 7. Flies from the power of the earl of Angus, 125. Takes the government into his own hands, *ib.* Refuses to concur with his uncle Henry of England in shaking off the yoke of Rome, 124. Assists Francis against the emperor, 145. Is married to Francis's daughter Magdalen, 146. Death of queen Magdalen, *ib.* Is betrothed to the dutchess-dowager of Longueville, whom Henry notwithstanding solicits in marriage, 201. She is sent to Scotland, *ib.* Is persuaded by Henry to join him in his religious innovations, 216. His clergy dissuade him, *ib.* Henry publishes a manifesto against him, 227. Sir Robert Bowes defeated by the lords Hume and Huntley, 228. Is disconcerted in his operations by the disaffection of his nobility, 229. Removes lord Maxwell, and appoints Oliver Sinclair general of this army, *ib.* Battle of Solway, *ib.* His death and character, 230.

———, prince, son of Mary queen of Scotland and her husband lord Darnley, born, v. 100. Is protected by an association of nobility from the attempts of Bothwel to get him into his power, 118. His mother forced to resign the crown, 124. See the next article.

——— VI. of Scotland, proclaimed and crowned, an infant, v. 125. His party openly espoused by queen Elizabeth, 202. 209. The earl of Morton resigns the regency to him, 231. Count d'Aubigny is sent by the duke of Guise to detach him from the English interest, *ib.*

Creates d'Aubigny earl of Lenox, 232. Is seized by an association of the nobility from out of the hands of Lenox and Arran, 248. Summons a parliament and convention of estates, *ib.* Receives an embassy from Elizabeth, 249. Is induced to dissemble his resentment at his detention, 250. Makes his escape, and summons his friends to attend him, 254. Walsingham sent by Elizabeth to discover his true character, 255. Summons a parliament, 256. Writes a copy of verses in praise of sir Philip Sidney, 277. Escapes from the artifices of the English ambassador, Dr. Wotton, 279. Concludes a league with Elizabeth for their mutual defence, *ib.* Licentiousness of his clergy, 280. Remonstrates to queen Elizabeth against the execution of his mother, 321. His behaviour on this event, 323. Prepares to assist Elizabeth against the Spanish invasion, 336. Marries a daughter of Denmark, 352. Goes over to Norway to fetch his bride, 353. Philip of Spain excites conspiracies against him, 371. Drives the catholic lords who combined against him out of the kingdom, 373. Negotiates to ensure his succession to England, 421. Sends an embassy to Elizabeth on the suppression of Essex's insurrection, 432. Is appointed heir to the English crown by Elizabeth, 447. See *James* I. of *England*.

Jane Grey lady. See *Grey*.

Jaqueline, countess Hainault. See *Hainault*.

Jarnac, battle of, between the duke of Anjou and prince of Condé, v. 186.

Icon Basiliké, of Charles I. an inquiry into its authenticity, vii. 153. A character of the work, 154.

Ida, the Saxon prince, arrives in Britain, conquers Northumberland, and founds the kingdom of Bernicia, i. 25.

Jefferies, lord chief justice, procures the conviction of Algernon Sidney, viii. 187. His cruelty towards those who had engaged in Monmouth's rebellion, 233. Is rewarded with the chancellorship and a peerage, 236. Is appointed one of the commissioners on the revival of the court of high commission, 254, *note*. Declines in favour by his adherence to the protestant faith, 264. Is killed by the mob, 302.

Jephson, colonel, makes a motion in parliament for giving Cromwel the title of king, vii. 269.

Jergeau, the earl of Suffolk besieged and taken prisoner there, iii. 149.

Jerome of Prague burnt for heresy by the council of Constance, iii. 119.

Jerusalem, conquered by the Mahometan Arabs, i. 293. Mastered by the Turks, *ib.* Their depredations on the Christian pilgrims, the first rise of Crusades, *ib.* See *Crusades*. Taken by the crusaders, 311. Godfrey of Boullon made king of, 312.

Jesuits, the motives of the establishment of that order, v. 237. Character of, *ib.* Campion and Parsons sent into England, 238. Campion executed, 239. Five executed for the popish plot, viii. 110.

Jews, a character of that people, ii. 3. How they came to practise usury, *ib.* Forbidden by an edict to appear at the coronation of Richard I. *ib.* A massacre of, *ib.* The great oppressions exercised against them under the Anglo-Norman kings, 136. A massacre and plunder of, encouraged by

by Fitz-Richard, mayor of London, ii. 198. Extortions practised upon them during the reign of Henry III. 225. The pretences made use of to oppress them, 226. Are accused of adulterating the coin, and cruelly used by Edward I. 236. Banished by him, and robbed and persecuted at the cinque-port towns, 237.

Images, when they began to be worshipped, i. 65.

Imprisonment, arbitrarily inflicted by officers of state during the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 456. 465. See *Petition* of right.

Ina, king of Wessex, his wise and glorious reign. i. 54. Bequeaths his kingdom to Adelard, his queen's brother, 55.

Incident in Scotland, an account of, and its effects, vi. 428.

Inclosures, observations on the law of Henry VII. against, iii. 403. An insurrection in Northamptonshire for the destruction of, vi. 44.

Independents, rise and character of that party, vii. 18. Is the first Christian sect which admitted of toleration, 20. Adopt republican principles, 21. Form a party in parliament against the presbyterians, *ib.* Reduce the parliament under subjection to the army, 104. Affront the Scots commissioners on their departure, 115. Obtain the entire command of the parliament, by the violent exclusion of the presbyterian members by the army, 131.

Indies. See *East and West*.

Indulgence, the declaration of, published by king Charles II. vii. 387. Repeated, 476. Recalled, 504. A general declaration of, published by James II. viii. 256. Is repeated, and ordered to be read in churches, 267.

Indulgences, from what motives the sale of them promoted by pope Leo X. iv. 33. The produce from, how applied by him, 34. Licentious conduct of the venders of them, *ib.* The sale of, preached against by Martin Luther. See *Luther* and *Reformation*. A large cargo of, taken on board two Spanish Ships, v. 362. Not productive of a total dissolution of morality, 451.

Industry, inquiry into the causes of the low state of, in the time of Henry VII. iii. 403.

Infantry, Swiss, their advantages over the heavy-armed cavalry, in use at the time of Henry VIII. iii. 432.

Innocent III. pope, his character, and state of the papacy, at his promotion, ii. 56. Levies a fortieth of ecclesiastical revenues for the relief of the Holy Land, *ib.* His conduct on the double election of Reginald and John de Gray to the see of Canterbury, 58. Sets both of them aside, and appoints cardinal Langton to be primate, 60. His mysterious present to John to pacify him, *ib.* Lays the kingdom under an interdict on account of John's opposition, 62. Excommunicates the emperor Otho, 66. Publishes a crusade against the Albigenses, *ib.* Excommunicates John, 67. Absolves John's subjects from their allegiance to him, 68. Offers John's kingdom to Philip of France, 69. His private instructions to Pandolf, his legate to Philip. 70. Takes off his interdicts, 76. Inclines to favour John against his barons, 81. Is applied to by John, complaining of his being forced to grant the great charter by his barons, 91. Annuls the charter by a bull, 92.

Innocent IV. pope, calls a general council at Lyons, to excommunicate the emperor Frederic, ii. 170. His claims of ecclesiastical revenues, *ib.* Offers the kingdom of Sicily to Richard earl of Cornwal, who refuses it, 171.

Inoiosa, the Spanish ambassador, gives James I. a paper, discovering the schemes of the duke of Buckingham, vi. 147.

Institution of a Christian man, a treatise so called, wrote and published by Henry VIII. iv. 223.

Intercursus magnus, or great treaty of commerce, concluded between England and the Flemings, iii. 378.

Interest of money, when first regulated by law, iv. 278. Declared illegal by parliament, 354. The rates of, how limited in England and France in the time of queen Elizabeth, v. 483. The rates of, in the reign of James I. vi. 172.

Investitures, dispute between pope Gregory VII. and the emperor Henry IV. concerning, i. 267. Between pope Pascal II. and Henry I. of England, 326. Artifices of the popes, to annex the privileges of, to the papacy, ii. 59.

Joan d' Arc, commonly called the *Maid of Orleans*, her history previous to her public actions, iii. 142. Becomes inspired with a desire to assist Charles VII. oppressed by the English, *ib.* Applies to the governor at Vaucouleurs, who sends her to the king, 143. Offers to raise the siege of Orleans, *ib.* Examined by the theologians and parliament, 144. Entrusted with the command of a convoy to supply Orleans, 145. Enters Orleans with safety, 146. Another convoy enters unmolested, *ib.* Drives the English from one of their posts, 147. Masters two others, 148. Wounded, *ib.* The besiegers retire, 149. Takes Jergeau, whither the earl of Suffolk had retired, by assault, *ib.* The probable share she had in these enterprises, 150. Attends the coronation of Charles at Rheims, 152. General terror which the reports of her raised, *ib.* Inclines to return home, but is retained by Dunois, 154. Goes to the assistance of Compeigne, and is taken prisoner, *ib.* Review of her conduct, 155. Tried for sorcery, 156. Interrogatories put to her, 157. Condemned, *ib.* Recants her pretensions to inspiration, 158. Burnt, *ib.*

John fourth son of king Henry II. his father's kind intentions in his favour, i. 434. Sent to reduce Ireland, without effect, 453. His father's grief on finding him a party in his brother Richard's revolt, 462. The bounty of his brother Richard I. to him, ii. 2. Marries Avisa, daughter of the earl of Gloucester, *ib.* Summons a council at Reading, in his brother Richard's absence, to oppose the tyranny of Longchamp, bishop of Ely, guardian of the realm, 17. Is seduced from his allegiance by the offers of Philip of France, *ib.* Abets Philip's invasion of Normandy, 24. Claims the kingdom of England, as heir to his brother, whom he reported to be dead, 25. Returns to France, and openly acknowledges his alliance with Philip, *ib.* All his possessions in England forfeited on account of this treason, 29. The laconic letter sent him by Philip on Richard's release, 30. His treacherous conduct to Philip, previous to his submitting to his brother, 31. Retrospect of his measures to secure the succession,

succession, while his brother was absent in Palestine, 40. His accession to the crown on Richard's death, 41. Concludes a peace with Philip, 42. Procures a divorce from his wife, and espouses Isabella, daughter of the count of Angouleme, who had been married to the count de la Marche, 43. His nobles refuse to attend him to quell the commotions in France, without a confirmation of their privileges, *ib.* But are intimidated by him, 44. Incenses the Norman barons against him, *ib.* Violates his engagements to Philip, 45. Takes young Arthur, duke of Britany, prisoner, with the count de la Marche, and other Norman barons, 46. His conference with Arthur, 47. Kills him, *ib.* Generally detested for this cruel act, 48. Is summoned before Philip to answer for this murder, and on non-appearance, sentenced to forfeit all his royalties in France, 49. Besieges Alençon, but obliged to abandon it by the address of Philip, *ib.* Resigns himself to a stupid inactivity, 50. Flies over to England on the taking of Chateau Gaillard, 53. The possession of Normandy recovered by the French, 54. Oppresses his barons for deserting him in Normandy, *ib.* Makes ineffectual preparations for recovering Normandy, 55. Makes a disgraceful expedition to Rochelle, *ib.* Remarks on the tendency of his behaviour, *ib.* His conduct on the clandestine election of Reginald to the see of Canterbury, 57. Procures John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, to be elected, 58. Appeals to the pope on the occasion, *ib.* His rage on the pope's setting aside both competitors, and appointing cardinal Langton to the primacy, 61. Expels the monks of Christ church, *ib.* Is threatened with an interdict, 62. His opposition and incapacity to support it, *ib.* The kingdom interdicted, and the immediate consequences of it, *ib.* His retaliation, 64. His cruel treatment of William de Braouse's wife and son, 66. Is excommunicated, *ib.* His treatment of Geoffrey archdeacon of Norwich, 67. His bishops withdraw themselves out of the kingdom, 68. Is deserted by his nobility, *ib.* Proposes a conference with Langton, but his terms rejected by him, *ib.* His subjects absolved from their allegiance to him, *ib.* His kingdom offered by the pope to Philip of France, who prepares an armament to take possession of it, 69. Assembles his vassals at Dover to oppose him, 70. Is prevailed on by the legate Pandolf to submit to the pope, *ib.* Resigns his kingdom to the pope, 71. His mean homage to Pandolf, 72. His cruel resentment to Peter of Pomfret, 73. Proposes an invasion of France, but is deserted by his barons, 74. His abject submissions to Langton and the prelates who returned with him, 75. The exorbitant claims of restitution by his clergy, 76. The interdict taken off, *ib.* Makes a fruitless expedition to France, 77. His barons confederate for a renewal of their charter of liberties, 79. Their formal demand thereof, 80. Yields the right of investitures to his clergy to attach them to him, *ib.* Appeals to the pope against his barons, 81. Refuses to grant their demands, *ib.* They commence hostilities against him, 82. He signs the great charter of English liberties, 84. Makes farther concessions to them, 89. Twenty-five barons appointed conservators of this charter, 90. Takes secret measures to oppose his barons, and applies to the pope, 91. Receives forces from abroad, with the pope's bull

bull against the great charter, 92. Besieges and takes the castle of Rochester, 93. His cruel treatment of the garrison, and devastation in the open country, *ib.* The barons offer the kingdom to Lewis, son of Philip of France, 94. Is defeated by the French soldiers on the arrival of Lewis, 95. Dies, 97. His character, *ib.* His children, 98. Granted the first charter to the city of London, 99. His cruel extortion of money from a very rich Jew, 226.

John, king of France, son of Philip de Valois, puts the constable d'Eu to death, II. 450. Seizes Charles king of Navarre, and imprisons him, 451. Is defeated and taken prisoner at Poictiers, by prince Edward, 458. Is nobly treated by Edward, 459. Is carried to London, 460. Concludes a dishonourable treaty with Edward, which is disclaimed by the dauphin, 465. Recovers his liberty by the treaty of Bretigni, 469. Ratifies this treaty at Calais, 470. Returns to England and dies, 471.

——, Don, of Austria, is appointed Governor of the Low Countries, on the death of Requesens, V. 219. Is forced to agree to the treaty called the pacification of Ghent, *ib.* Breaks this treaty, and seizes Namur, 220. Projects a marriage with Mary queen of Scots, *ib.* Gains an advantage over the Flemings at Gembloux, 222. Is poisoned, as supposed, by Philip, *ib.*

——— III. duke of Britany, marries his brother's daughter, as his heiress, to Charles de Blois, II. 415.

John of Gaunt. See *Lancaster.*

Jonson, compared with Shakespeare as a dramatic writer, VI. 192.

Jones, colonel, contributes to the defeat of Charles I. at Chester, VII. 61.

———, Inigo, is prosecuted by the parliament for assisting in rebuilding the cathedral of St. Paul, VII. 341.

Joseph, Michael, instigates an insurrection in Cornwal against Henry VII. III. 373. Defeated and executed, 376.

Journals of the house of commons, when they first began to be regularly kept, VI. 44.

Joyce, cornet, seizes king Charles I. at Holdenby, and carries him to the army, VII. 88.

Ireland, an expedition against, undertaken by Henry II. I. 423. State of, at that time, 424. Its distinct sovereignties, 425. Granted to Henry II. by pope Adrian III. 426. See *Dermot*, *Strongbow*, and *Fitz Stephens.* Improper conduct of the English with regard to, 430. Piers Gavaston made lord lieutenant of, by Edward II. II. 331. Is grievously oppressed by the English, 342. Robert Bruce king of Scotland, makes an unsuccessful expedition to, *ib.* Annual expence of to England, in the reign of Henry V. III. 121. Attached to the house of York, 325. Revolts under the pretensions of Lambert Simnel, *ib.* Sir Edward Poynings sent over to reduce the malcontents in that kingdom, 367. His memorable statute, *ib.* Ineffectual attempts upon, by Perkin Warbec, 370. Erected into a kingdom by parliament, IV. 221, *note.* Is invaded by the Spanish general San Josepho, V. 233. The cruelty of lord Grey on reducing the invaders, 234. The imperfect dominion of England over, 395. Cruel treatment of the natives, 396. History of Shan O'Neale, 398. Account of the earl Thomond, 400. Tyrone rebels, 401. Defeat

feat of the English under sir Henry Bagnal, 402. The earl of Essex sent over, 404. His ill success, 406. Treaty between Essex and Tyrone, 408. Essex suddenly goes over to England, 409. The truce broke by Tyrone, 412. Tyrone driven into the morasses by Mountjoy, 413. The English troops there paid with base money, 435. Is invaded by the Spaniards, 436. Tyrone and the Spaniards reduced, 438. Tyrone surrenders to the deputy, 445. The civilization of, undertaken by James I. vi. 58. An explanation of the *Brehon law*, ib. Gavelkind and tanistry, 59. These customs abolished, and the English laws introduced, *ib.* Colonies planted in Ulster, on its falling to the crown by attainders, 60. The plan of civilization confirmed by Charles I. 429. The English protestants there adopt the puritanical opinions, and popular pretensions of the English house of commons, 430. The men raised by Strafford to serve against the Scots reduced, 432. Are withheld from entering the Spanish service, *ib.* A conspiracy formed to expel the English, 433. Massacre of the English in Ulster, 436. The rebellion and cruel treatment of the English extended through the other provinces, 440. The fugitives received in Dublin, 441. The English of the pale join the Irish insurgents, 442. The rebels defeated in several encounters by Scots troops sent to suppress them, 543. The distressed state of the kingdom by these devastations, 544. A cessation concluded with the rebels by the king's order, 546. Glamorgan's treaty with the council of Kilkenny, vii. 67. A new rebellion excited by Rinuccini, the pope's nuncio, 162. The nuncio is driven out of the island, 163. The garrisons reduced for the king by Ormond, 164, Cromwel is chosen lord lieutenant by the council of state, *ib.* His rapid successes there, 165. Is reduced by Ireton, 206. A view of the administration there, under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwel, 268. The native Irish confined to Connaught, 445. Court of claims erected to restore confiscations and arrears to royalists, 446. An intended insurrection suppressed by Ormond, *ib.* The cattle of, prohibited from being imported to England, 448. Succession of lords lieutenants, viii. 161. Ormond sent over again, 162. Violent measures of king James in favour of popery, 252. Tyrconnel made lord lieutenant, *ib.* The corporation charters annulled, and new ones granted, subject to the king's will, 263. The officers of government there filled with catholics, *ib.*

Ireland, father, tried and executed with Grove and Pickering, for the popish plot, viii. 90.

Ireton, son-in-law to Oliver Cromwel, is wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of Naseby, vii. 57. His character, 110. Proposes to Cromwel a meeting to consider of settling the nation, and bringing the king to a trial, *ib.* His speech in parliament against farther treaty with the king, 112. His cruelty on taking Colchester, 128. Is appointed one of the judges to try the king, 136. Is left commander in chief in Ireland by Cromwel, 187. His successes there, 205. Takes Limeric, and dies of the plague, 206. His character, *ib.*

Isabella, daughter of the count of Angouleme, is taken by her father from her husband the count de la Marche, and married to king John, ii. 43. Her children by John, 98. Marries the count de la Marche

on John's death, 164. Her children by him sent to England to visit their brother Henry III. *ib.* Henry's bounty of riches and honours to them, 165. They are banished, 185.

Isabella, daughter of Philip king of France, contracted to prince Edward of England, II. 297. Is married to him when king, 330. Her character, and aversion to Piers Gavaston, *ib.* Is insulted, and some of her retinue killed by lord Badlesmere, 347. Goes to Paris to mediate between her husband and her brother Charles the Fair, 351. Her expedient to this end, *ib.* Becomes acquainted with Roger Mortimer, 352. Her intimacy with him, *ib.* Engages in a conspiracy against the king, *ib.* Affiances her son to the daughter of the count of Holland and Hainault, 354. Lands with an army in Suffolk, *ib.* Is joined by the barons, *ib.* Her declaration, *ib.* The city of London declares for her, 355. She calls a parliament, which deposes Edward, 356. Is confined, on the execution of Mortimer, 379.

———, daughter of Charles VI. of France, married to Richard II. of England, III. 26. Returned to her father, 66.

———, queen of Castile, and wife of Ferdinand king of Aragon, dies, III. 390. Her daughter Joan married to Philip archduke of Austria, *ib.*

Italy, its defenceless state when invaded by Charles VIII. of France, III. 368. View of Italian politics at that period, *ib.* League formed against France, *ib.* The state of, at the accession of Henry VIII. III. 413. The powers of, confederate with the emperor Charles V. against Francis I. king of France, IV. 49. The French driven out of, 54. The confederate states of, become jealous of the emperor, *ib.* They league with France against him, 68. Character of the writers of, on the revival of learning, VI. 191.

Judges, itinerant, why first appointed, II. 124. Their answer to the question propounded to them by Henry VIII. respecting attainders, IV. 198. Patents given them, during good behaviour, by Charles I. VI. 421. Four displaced by James II. preparatory to trying the case of sir Edward Hales, VIII. 247.

Judgement of God, in the Anglo-Saxon law, what, I. 223.

Julius II. pope, his character, III. 415. Joins in a league with the emperor, and the kings of France and Spain, against the Venetians, *ib.* Declares war against the duke of Ferrara, 416. Interdicts the council of Pisa, 418. The Swiss in his interest drive the French out of Milan, and reinstate Maximilian Sforza, 423. Dies, and is succeeded by Leo X. 424. See *Leo X.*

—— III. pope, his joy at the return of England to its obedience to the church of Rome, IV. 400. His commission to cardinal Pole with respect to church-lands, 401.

—— *Agricola.* See *Agricola.*

—— *Cæsar.* See *Cæsar.*

Juries, origin of the appointment of, for judicial decisions, I. 93.

Jurisprudence, revival of the Roman, and its advantages over those modes which preceded its revival, III. 299. Why it did not become the municipal law of England, 300.

Jurors, anciently punished by fine and imprisonment for finding a verdict contrary to the direction of the judges, V. 458.

Jury, a list of the puritanical names of, at the time of the commonwealth, vii. 230, *note*.
Justice of peace, the first institution of that office, ii. 319.
Justiciary, chief, that office when abolished, ii. 320.
Justinian's pandects, the accidental finding of, how far advantageous to the revival of the civil policy, iii. 299.
Jutes, where they settled in Britain, i. 22, *note*.
Juxon, is made bishop of London and high treasurer, vi. 300. Resigns, 395. Attends Charles I. at his execution, vii. 143.

K.

KENDRED, king of Mercia, resigns his crown, and ends his days in penance at Rome, i. 48.
Kenric, the Saxon, defeats the Britons, fighting against his father Cerdic, i. 23.
Kent, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 28.
——, earl of, brother to Edward II. engages with queen Isabella in a conspiracy against his brother, ii. 353. Pursues Edward to Bristol, 355. Is ensnared by the arts of Mortimer, condemned, and executed, 377.
——, maid of. See *Barton*, Elizabeth.
Ket, a tanner, excites and heads an insurrection in Norfolk against inclosures, iv. 331. Is defeated by Dudley earl of Warwick, and executed, *ib*.
Kildare, earl of, made deputy of Ireland under the duke of Richmond, iv. 122. Is called over to answer for his conduct, and dies in prison, *ib*. His son, with five uncles, executed for joining the Irish rebels, *ib*.
Kilkenny, council of, a cessation agreed with, by the earl of Ormond, vi. 546. Glamorgan's treaty with, vii. 67. Concludes a peace with Ormond, and engages to assist the king, 161.
Kilsyth, battle of, between the earl of Montrose and the covenanters, vii. 63.
Kimbolton, lord, takes part with the commons, in their disputes with Charles I. vi. 462. Is impeached by the king, 467.
King of England, a summary view of his power as a feudal prince, ii. 108. Naturally favoured by the common people, 112. Heard causes often personally in their court, 123. All who act under the authority of him for the time being, indemnified from future attainder by statute, iii. 366. Observations on this law, *ib*. Extent of his power at the time of Henry VII. 396.
Kirkaldy of Grange, commander of the castle of Edinburgh, declares for queen Mary, v. 202. Is réduced by the English, and executed by his countrymen, 203.
Kirke, colonel, his savage cruelty after the battle of Sedgmoor, viii. 232.
Kirkpatrick, the crest and motto of that family, whence derived, ii. 316.
Knevet, Sir Thomas, engages the French admiral Primauget off the coast of Britany, and the two admirals blown up, iii, 423.
Knights, formerly distinguished in battle only by the ensigns on their s, ii. 33.

Knights fees, the number of those established by William the conqueror, ii. 236. How the number decreased, *ib.*

Knights of shires, to assist in parliament, when they first began to be appointed, ii. 184. See *Commons*.

Knolles, Sir Robert, invades France from Calais, but is defeated by Du Guesclin, ii. 482.

Knox, John, the Scots reformer, remarks on his account of the murder of cardinal Beaton, iv. 298. *note*. Arrives in Scotland from Geneva, v. 26. Inspires the people with zeal against popery, *ib.* Riot thereupon, *ib.* Becomes chief director of the *Congregation of the Lord*, 30. Instigates the people and preachers to insult queen Mary on her arrival, for her adherence to the catholic religion, 48. His insolent speeches to Mary on her kind overtures to him, 49. Defends the outrages committed in the queen's chapel, 53. Insults lord Darnley on his marriage with Mary, 89.

L.

LABOUR, the price of, attempted in vain to be reduced by parliament, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 496. And commodities, remarks on the comparative prices of, at the time of Henry VII. and now, iii. 402.

Laci, Roger de, constable of Chester, his gallant defence of Chateau Gaillard for John against Philip of France, ii. 51. His generous treatment by Philip when the place was taken, 52.

Lambert, a schoolmaster, controverts the real presence, iv. 190. Is accused, and appeals to Henry VIII. *ib.* Henry enters into a formal disputation with him, 191. Is silenced and sentenced as a heretic, 192. Is burnt with great cruelty, *ib.*

———, is disappointed of the lieutenancy of Ireland, by the intrigues of Oliver Cromwel, vii. 165. Follows Charles II. out of Scotland into England, 195. Battle of Worcester, 196. Cromwel appointed protector by his means, 282. Opposes the motion for giving Cromwel the title of king, 270. Is deprived of his commissions, and retires with a pension, 275. Engages in the cabal of Wallingford-house, 295. Suppresses an insurrection of royalists, and takes sir George Booth prisoner, 302. Forms an association among the officers against the parliament, *ib.* Is cashiered, 303. Expels the parliament, *ib.* Establishes the committee of safety, 304. Marches northward to meet Monk, 311. Is committed to the Tower, 314. Escapes, 326. Is retaken by Ingoldsby, *ib.* Is excepted from the act of indemnity on the restoration, 353. Is tried, 381. Is reprieved, and confined in Guernsey, 384.

Lambeth, a council summoned there by Anselm archbishop of Canterbury, to inquire into the lawfulness of Matilda's marrying Henry I. i. 318.

Lancaster, Edmond earl of, sent by Edward I. to accommodate differences with Philip king of France, ii. 261. Makes an unsuccessful attack upon Guienne, 283. Dies, *ib.*

———, Thomas earl of, his character, opulence, and power, ii. 330. Heads a confederacy of barons against Piers Gavaston, 331. Comes to parliament

parliament with an armed retinue, and demands the banishment of Gavaston, 331. Is made hereditary steward, 332. Forms another confederacy against Gavaston, 334. Raises an army against the king, 335. Puts Gavaston to death, 336. Insists on a renewal of the ordinances after the defeat of Bannockburn, 343. Combines with the barons to ruin the Despensers, 344. Opposes the king with an army, 348. Is defeated by sir Andrew Harcla, and executed, *ib.* His character, 349.

Lancaster, earl of, brother and heir to Thomas earl of, joins the conspiracy of Isabella and Mortimer against Edward II. ii. 353. Edward delivered into his custody, and confined in Kenilworth castle, 356. Is suspected of favouring the king, who is therefore taken out of his hands, 358. Is appointed guardian to the young king, 372.

———, Henry earl of, is engaged in fruitless negotiations for peace between Edward III. and king John of France, at Avignon, ii. 450. Is sent with an army into Normandy, 454. Is created duke of Lancaster, 467. Endeavours an accommodation between Edward and John of France, his prisoner, *ib.*

———, John of Gaunt duke of, son to Edward III. accompanies his brother in his expedition to Castile, ii. 476. Marries the daughter of Henry duke of, 477. Espouses for his second wife the daughter of Peter king of Castile, 478. His army in France harassed and destroyed, 482. The administration of government committed to him by his father, 483. His great authority during the minority of Richard II. iii. 4. Consequence of his pretensions to the crown of Castile, *ib.* His unsuccessful attempts in Britany, 6. His palace at the Savoy burnt by the rabble, 9. Disappointed in hopes of obtaining Castile, 13. Returns home, 24. Obtains a grant of the dutchy of Guienne, 25. Relinquishes it, *ib.* Dies, 37. Succeeded by his son the duke of Hereford, *ib.* See *Hereford*.

———, Henry duke of, his character, iii. 37. Comes over on the embarkation of Richard II. for Ireland, 38. Increase of his army, 39. Seizes Bristol, and executes some of Richard's ministers without trial, *ib.* Obtains possession of the king's person, and assembles a parliament in his name, 40. Procures his deposition, 46. His challenge of the crown, *ib.* Reflections on his ostensible pretensions, 47. Calls a parliament by his own authority, 48. See *Henry* IV.

———, James, his successful captures from the Spaniards, and expedition to Brazil, v. 376. Commands the first fleet fitted out by the East India company, 477.

Land. See *Feudal* system.

Landais, Peter, a corrupt minister of the duke of Britany, bribed by Edward IV. to persuade his master to deliver up Henry earl of Richmond, iii. 286. Enters into a negociation with Richard III. to betray Richmond, 292. Put to death by the nobles of Britany, 335.

Landrecy, besieged by the emperor Charles V. iv. 239. Charles forced to abandon it by the succours of Francis, 240.

Lanfranc, a Milanese monk, made archbishop of Canterbury, i. 258. His character, *ib.* Crowns William Rufus, 286. Dies, 288.

Langhorne, his trial for the popish plot, viii. 111.

Lang-side, battle of, between Mary queen of Scots and Murray the regent, v. 128.

Langton, cardinal, appointed archbishop of Canterbury, by pope Innocent III. in opposition to Reginald and John de Gray, ii. 60. Rejects king John's proposal towards an accommodation, 68. Returns to England, and receives the king's submission, 75. His character, 78. Stimulates the barons to an assertion of their liberties against the oppressions of John, 97. Refuses to publish the pope's bull of excommunication against the barons, 92. Is cited to Rome, and suspended, *ib.*

Lansdown, battle of, between the royalists and parliamentarians, vi. 518.

Lascelles, accuses queen Catharine Howard of incontinency to archbishop Cranmer, iv. 218. Confirms his charge to the lord privy seal, *ib.*

Latimer, bishop, resigns his bishopric on the passing the law of six articles, and is imprisoned, iv. 195. Is again imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary, 376. Is sent under a guard to Oxford, to debate on transubstantiation, 385. Is burnt for heresy, with bishop Ridley, 414.

Laud, bishop of London, his character, vi. 284. Introduces new ceremonies into the church, 285. Is offered a cardinal's hat, 286. Becomes odious to the puritans, 287. His behaviour in the consecration of St. Catharine's church, *ib.* Introduces pictures into churches, 290. Exalts the regal authority, 291. Is made archbishop of Canterbury, 300. His ungrateful prosecution of William bishop of Lincoln, 310. Is attacked by the populace in Lambeth palace, which he is obliged to fortify, 355. Is impeached by the house of commons, 369. Is committed to custody, 370. Is tried, vii. 38. And executed, 39. Retrospect of his conduct and character, 40, 515.

Lauderdale, duke of, dissuades Charles II. from rigorous measures towards Scotland, vii. 364. Persuades the king to admit presbytery there, 366. Obstructs the union of the two kingdoms, intended by the king, 457. Is one of the *cabal* ministry, 458. His character, 459. His being employed, voted a grievance by the house of commons, 512. Is sent down as commissioner to the Scots parliament, viii. 50. Becomes chief minister for Scotland, 51. His violent and arbitrary administration, 52. His private conduct, 54. Brings down Highland clans to ravage the country at free quarter, 58. His death, 204.

Laurentius, successor to Augustine, how he brought back Eadbald to the christian religion, i. 38.

Lautrec, marshal, the French general in Italy, defeated by the Imperialists at Bicocca, iv. 42. Raises the siege of Bayonne, attacked by the emperor Charles V. 52.

Law, the first written code of, in England, i. 37.

——, the study of, anciently confined to the clergy, ii. 123.

——, civil, the early reception and study of, in our universities, iii. 299. Motives for its reception, *ib.* Why it did not obtain to be the municipal law of England, 300.

——, the common, first rise of, i. 95.

——, criminal, among the Anglo-Saxons, a view of, i. 215.

——, feudal, the origin of, traced, ii. 101. Its introduction to England, 108. The feudal government in England delineated, *ib.*

Laws and proclamations, difference of, explained, vi. 52.
League, catholic, formed in France by the duke of Guise against the Hugonots, v. 212. Is revived, 268. Is headed by the duke of Mayenne on the death of Guise, 357. Declines on the conversion of Henry IV. 374.
——— and covenant, solemn, is framed at Edinburgh, at the persuasion of sir Henry Vane, vi. 540. Is received by the English parliament, 541. Is renounced by the Scots parliament, vii. 368. Is burnt in England by the hangman, 371.
Learning, the decline of, from the Augustan age to the ages of monkish barbarism traced, iii. 298. When the lowest point of depression may be dated, *ib.* Gradual recovery of, *ib.* Circumstances which tended to the revival and advancement of, in the fifteenth century, iii. 406. The state of, in queen Elizabeth's reign, v. 491. Remarks on the state of, in Greece, vi. 189. Account of the revival of, in Europe, 190. In England, 191.
Legates à latere, their power and office described, i. 478, *note*.
Legantine court, erected by cardinal Wolsey, iv. 16. Its oppressions checked, 17.
Legitimacy of birth, disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical courts concerning, in the reign of Henry III. ii. 222. Memorable reply of the barons to the prelates on this occasion, 223.
Leicester, is stormed by Charles I. and taken, vii. 56. Is retaken by Fairfax after the battle of Naseby, 59.
———, earl of, his insolent behaviour frustrates the conference between Henry II. of England and Lewis VII. of France, i. 441. Invades Suffolk, 443. Taken prisoner by Richard de Lucy, guardian of the kingdom, *ib.*
———, Robert, earl of, takes the command of Rouén on his return from the crusade, and repulses the attack of Philip of France on that city, ii. 25.
———, Simon de Montford, earl of, his history, ii. 180. Marries the sister of Henry III. widow of William earl of Pembroke, *ib.* His disputes with the king, 181. Joins with the barons against him, *ib.* Enters into a confederacy with them, 182. Is placed at the head of the council of twenty-four, chosen by the parliament at Oxford, to regulate the government, 184. Their regulations *ib.* He procures the banishment of the king's half-brothers, 185. Protests against Henry's cession of Normandy to Lewis IX. 191. Henry refers the differences between them to Margaret queen of France, 195. Confederates with other barons against Henry, 196. He leagues with Lewellyn prince of Wales, who invades the borders, 197. Imprisons the bishop who published the pope's absolution, *ib.* Levies war on the king, *ib.* Takes prince Edward prisoner, 199. Restores him on treaty with the king, 200. His son sent to the assembly of the states of France at Amiens, onthe appeal made to Lewis, 201. Rejects the arbitration of Lewis, and renews the war, *ib.* His message to the king, how answered, 204. Defeats Henry at Lewes, and takes him prisoner, 205. Proposes another appeal to arbitration, 206. His imperious behaviour on this victory, 207. Ruins the trade of the nation, and encourages piracy, 208. Is menaced with excommunication,

munication, which he braves and defeats, 210. Calls a parliament, forms a house of commons, and appoints members to be sent by the boroughs, *ib.* Reflections on this memorable event, 211. Employs this parliament to crush his rivals, 212. His treatment of prince Edward, whom he detained in custody, *ib.* Edward escapes from him, 314. His son Simon defeated by prince Edward, *ib.* Himself defeated and killed at Evesham by Edward, 215. Review of his character and conduct, *ib.* His wife and children banished, 218. His sons assassinate their cousin Henry d'Almaine at Viterbo, *ib.*

Leicester, Thomas earl of, a curious view of his annual expences, ii. 370.

———, lord, Robert Dudley, created earl of, and proposed as a husband by queen Elizabeth to Mary queen of Scots, v. 82. His character, 83. Is suspected of murdering his wife, to make way for his expectations of obtaining Elizabeth, *ib.* Declines the proposal of Mary, *ib.* Is appointed one of the commissioners to inquire into the conduct of Mary, 139. Writes a letter to Mary, recommending the duke of Norfolk to her for a husband, 159. Discovers Norfolk's designs to Elizabeth, 160. Reports that Simier, the duke of Anjou's agent, acquired an ascendancy over Elizabeth by incantations, 239. His marriage discovered to the queen by Simier, 240. Attempts the life of Simier, *ib.* Forms an association of courtiers for the protection of the queen against all violence or conspiracy, 259. Commands the forces sent over to the United Provinces, 273. His transactions there, 275. Returns to England, 277. Advises the poisoning of queen Mary, 290. Returns to Holland, where his conduct is complained of, 328. Is recalled by the queen, 329. Commands a body of forces at Tilbury, to oppose the Spanish invasion, 335. Dies, 360. Instances of his magnificent manner of living, 487.

Leighton, is severely sentenced in the star chamber, for libelling the king and queen, vi. 295. Recovers his liberty, and obtains damages, 378.

Leipsic, battle of, between Gustavus king of Sweden, and the Imperial general Tilly, vi. 281.

Leith, is fortified by the regent of Scotland, v. 31. Is reduced by the English, 36. Is fortified with great zeal by the covenanters, vi. 337.

Lenox, Matthew Stuart earl of, is sent by Francis, with a promise of succours, to cardinal Beaton and the queen dowager of Scotland, iv. 235. Entertains hopes of marrying the queen dowager, 240. Patronizes the protestant interest in Scotland, 241. Applies to England for assistance, *ib.* Is forced by Arran to fly to England, and Marries Henry's niece, 245. Is invited to Scotland with his son lord Darnley, v. 86. Implores justice for the murder of his son, 108. Is cited to make good his charge on Bothwel, *ib.* Protests against the precipitate trial of Bothwel, who is acquitted, 109. Claims the regency, as grandfather to the young king James VI. 124. Appears before the commissioners at Hampton-court, to implore vengeance for the murder of his son, 140. Is chosen lieutenant or governor of Scotland, on the death of Murray, 168. Is made regent by Elizabeth's allowance, 169. Delivers up the earl of Northumberland to Elizabeth, 200. Is seized, and put to death, by queen Mary's party, 202.

Lenox, count d'Aubigny created earl of, v. 232. Causes the earl of Morton to be tried and executed, *ib.* The king taken out of his hands by an association of nobility, 248. Retires to France, where he dies, 249. The kindness of James to his family, *ib.*

Lent, the fast of, established in the kingdom of Kent, i. 39.

Lenthal, is chosen speaker of the long parliament, vi. 365. His answer to the king's personal inquiry after the five members, 470. Goes to Hounslow-heath, with the speaker of the house of lords, to desire protection from the army, vii. 101. Is reinstated, 103. Is chosen speaker in parliament under the protectorate, 240. Resumes his place as speaker, at the restoration of the long parliament, 298. Is prevented from going to parliament by Lambert, who puts an end to it, 303. Continues speaker at its second restoration, 313.

L'Hopital, chancellor of France, his pleas to elude the restitution of Calais to queen Elizabeth, v. 147.

Leo X. pope, his character, iii. 424. Sends a vessel with wine and hams to Henry VIII. and his court, 425. Excommunicates Lewis XII. of France, and all who adhere to the council of Pisa, 426. Takes off the excommunication from Lewis, 441. His motives to the sale of indulgences, iv. 33. Remarks on his conduct on this occasion, *ib.* The produce from the sale of, how applied by him, 34. Bestows the title of *Defender of the Faith* on Henry VIII. 36. Dies, 39.

Leofric, duke of Mercia, his contest with Harold, son of earl Godwin, i. 167.

Leolf, the robber, kills king Edmund at a feast, i. 108.

Leonard's hospital in Yorkshire, tumult occasioned by an ancient privilege enjoyed by, iii. 232.

Leopold, archduke of Austria, arrests Richard I. of England, in his return from Palestine, ii. 23.

Lesley, Norman, son of the earl of Rothes, distinguishes himself at the battle of Ancram, iv. 249.

———, bishop of Ross, is appointed by Mary queen of Scots one of her commissioners in the cause between her and Murray the regent, v. 134. Refuses to reply to Murray's allegations at Hampton-court, 140 He and his associates break up the conference, 143. Elizabeth's reply to them, 144. Complains to the English council of their insincerity toward Mary, 172. Engages in the duke of Norfolk's conspiracy, 196. Is imprisoned, 199.

———, earl of Leven. See *Leven*.

———, David, defeats the earl of Montrose at Philiphaugh in the forest, vii. 64. Commands the Scots army against Oliver Cromwel, 188. Follows Cromwel in his retreat to Dunbar, 189. Is ordered to attack Cromwel, and is defeated, 190.

Levellers, their plan for government after the death of Charles I. vii. 155.

Leven, Lesley earl of, marches with a Scots army to the assistance of the English parliament against Charles I. vi. 542. Joins sir Thomas Fairfax, vii. 8. Assists in the defeat of prince Rupert at Marston-moor, 10. Marches northward, and takes Newcastle by storm, 14. Reduces

Reduces Carlisle, 61. The king puts himself into the hands of the army when before Newark, 73. Surrenders the king to the parliamentary commissioners, 80.

Levison, Sir Richard, commands a fleet in an expedition to the coasts of Spain, v. 443. Attacks the harbour of Cerimbra, and takes a rich carrack there, 444.

Lewellyn, prince of Wales, applies to Henry III. for protection against his rebellious son Griffin, ii. 196. Renews his hostilities on the death of Griffin, *ib.* Is succeeded by Griffin's son Lewellyn, *ib.*

———, son to Griffin, succeeds his grandfather in the principality of Wales, ii. 197. Renews the homage to Henry, *ib.* Confederates with Leicester, and invades England, 197. Is pardoned, but cabals with the barons again, 239. Is summoned by Edward I. to renew his homage, *ib.* Is subdued by Edward on his non-compliance, 241. Is defeated and killed by Mortimer on occasion of new disputes, 242. His brother David tried as a traitor and executed, *ib.*

Lewes, battle of, between Henry III. and his barons, headed by the earl of Leicester, ii. 204. The treaty called the *Mise* of, 206.

Lewis the Gross, king of France, disturbs Normandy, i. 336. Endeavours to restore William son of duke Robert, *ib.* Defeated by Henry I. 337. Was the first establisher of corporations, and with what view, ii. 118.

——— VII. king of France, betroths his sister Constantia to Eustace, eldest son of Stephen king of England, i. 354. Divorces Eleanor heiress of Guienne, 367. Affiances his daughter Margaret to Henry, eldest son of Henry II. of England, 378. Anecdotes of a conference between him and Henry II. in relation to Becket archbishop of Canterbury, 410. Disgusted at his daughter Margaret not being crowned with prince Henry, 413. Exhorts the pope to excommunicate king Henry, 420. Encourages the revolt of prince Henry against his father, 438. Besieges Vernoul, in conjunction with prince Henry, 440. His fraudulent behaviour to king Henry here, *ib.* Has a conference with Henry, 441. Disappointed in another treacherous scheme against Rouen, 447. *Deceives Henry again*, *ib.* Peace concluded between him and Henry, *ib.* Becomes superstitious, and makes a pilgrimage to Becket's shrine, 453.

———, eldest son of Philip of France, married to Blanche of Castile, niece of John king of England, ii. 42. The barons of England offer him the kingdom, 94. Arrives in England with an army, 95. Loses his influence among the English barons by his imprudence, 96. The barons who adhere to him excommunicated by the pope's legate, 149. They desert him, *ib.* The city of Lincoln taken from him by the earl of Pembroke, 150. The French fleet coming to his assistance, defeated by the English, *ib.* Concludes a peace with Pembroke, and goes back to France, 151. Succeeds his father Philip in the kingdom of France, 157.

——— VIII. invades Poictou, and takes Rochelle, ii. 157.

——— IX. of France, his character, ii. 189. His conduct towards the English, 190. Obtains a cession of Normandy from Henry III. *ib.* Henry refers the differences between him and Leicester to his queen Margaret.

Margaret, 195. Another reference made to *his* arbitration, 200. Decides in favour of Henry, 201. Engages prince Edward in a crusade, 219. Dies at Tunis in Africa, 220. His character, *ib.*

Lewis XI. king of France, his character and ambitious views, iii. 231. Protects the earl of Warwick, 237. Leagues with him and queen Margaret, 238. Assists Warwick with a fleet, 240. Buys peace of Edward IV. at a tribute during his life, 251. Interview between them, 255. Farther transactions between them, 256. Ransoms queen Margaret, 258. Reflections on his conduct towards the duke of Burgundy and his daughter, *ib.* Concludes a peace with Maximilian king of the Romans, and marries the dauphin to his daughter Margaret, 334.

—— XII. of France, subdues the dutchy of Milan, iii. 384. Engages Ferdinand of Spain to assist him in seizing Naples, 414. Outwitted by him, *ib.* Joins in a league against the Venetians, 415. His nephew Gaston de Foix defeats the Spanish and papal armies, but is killed, 423. Loses his conquests in Italy, *ib.* Excommunicated by pope Leo X. 427. Sends relief to Terouane, besieged by Henry VIII. 434. Concludes a treaty with Ferdinand, and offers his daughter for one of his grandsons, 441. Empowers the duke de Longueville, prisoner in England, to conclude a treaty with Henry, 443. Stipulates to pay the arrears of the pension due to England, *ib.* Marries Henry's sister, and dies quickly after, 444.

—— XIV. succeeds to the crown of France, an infant, vii. 247. Meets Philip of Spain at the Pyrenees, and espouses his daughter, 305. Joins the Dutch in the war with England, 409. His person and character described, 429. Forms pretensions to the dutchy of Brabant, in right of his queen, 430. His rapid conquests in the Low Countries, 431. His haughty behaviour to the courts of Europe, *ib.* The triple alliance formed against him, 436. His art in bringing Charles II. over to the French interest, 464. His sudden irruption into Lorrain, 466. Declares war against Holland, 479. *Marches a large army to* the Dutch frontiers, 480. His rapid successes in the Low Countries 487. Enters Utrecht, 488. *His demands from the Dutch deputies* sent to implore peace, 491. *Is opposed at last by the prince of* Orange, 449. Enters into a treaty with Charles II. to restore popery in England, viii. 4, *note.* Operations of the prince of Condé and marshal Turenne, 9. Serves as a volunteer under the prince of Condé, 17. Takes Condé by storm, 21. His reception of the earl of Feversham sent with the terms of peace to him, 36. Takes Ghent and Ypres, 40. Treaty at Nimeguen concluded, 45. His prosperous situation by this treaty, 47. His haughty and arbitary treatment of the European powers, 205. Revokes the edict of Nantz, 242. A league formed against him by the prince of Orange, 278. Informs James of the prince of Orange's schemes, 287. Receives James kindly on his abdication, 305. His great regard for literature, 333.

——, Dr., a Welsh physician employed to negotiate a marriage between the princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV. and Henry earl of Richmond, iii. 288.

Leyden, is besieged by the Spaniards, v. 217.

Liberty, civil, the revival of arts favourable to, iii. 302. Instance shewing the barons to have been sensible of this, *ib. note.* A regular plan formed by the commons at the commencement of the reign of Charles I. for the establishment of, vi. 204.

Lidington, Maitland of, is sent by the protestant association in Scotland called the *Congregation of the Lord*, to request assistance of queen Elizabeth, v. 32. Is again sent to thank her, and request farther aid, 39. Is made secretary of state by queen Mary, 47. Is sent to London with Mary's compliments to Elizabeth, and to require a declaration of her succession to the English crown, 57. Enters into a confederacy of Scots nobles, to protect prince James, and punish the murderers of his father, 118. Assists at the conferences concerning Mary, before the English and Scots commissioners, 135. Encourages the duke of Norfolk in the hopes of espousing Mary, 138. Takes part with Kirkaldy of Grange in favour of Mary, and is supposed to have killed himself on the suppression of the party by Elizabeth, 203.

Lilburne, his cruel prosecution in the star-chamber, and resolution in suffering, vi. 312. Recovers his liberty, and obtains damages, 378. Is imprisoned by the parliament for his seditious writings, vii. 167. Is acquitted on trial by the new statute of treasons, 202. Is again tried and acquitted, during the protectorate, 238.

Lilla, an officer of king Edwin's army, his extraordinary fidelity to him, i. 42.

Lillibullero, on what occasion this song was made, viii. 300.

Limeric is beseiged and taken by Ireton, vii. 206.

Lincoln, the city of, taken from Lewis by the earl of Pembroke, ii. 150. Is taken for the long parliament by the earl of Manchester, vii. 10.

———, John earl of, his family and character, iii. 327. Retires to the court of the dutchess of Burgundy, 328. Commands Simnel's army, and is killed at the battle of Stoke, 330.

Lincolnshire, insurrection headed there by sir Robert Welles, in the reign of Edward IV. iii. 235. The insurgents defeated by the king, 236.

Lindesey, earl of, is sent to the relief of Rochelle, but is unable to pass the mole, vi. 266. Signs a protestation against the liturgy, 329. Commands under the king at the battle of Edge-hill, 506. Is mortally wounded, and taken prisoner, 507.

Lisle, Dudley lord, commands the fleet of Henry VIII. in an invasion of Scotland, iv. 244.

——, lady, the cruel prosecution of, viii. 234.

Literature, the state of, in queen Elizabeth's reign, v. 491.

Liturgy, one framed by a committee of bishops and divines, iv. 320. In what respects it differed from the old mass book, 321. Is revised, 348. Is authorised by parliament, 354. Is suppressed by the restoration of the mass of queen Mary, 386. Is restored by queen Elizabeth, v. 13. Is abolished by the assembly of divines at Westminster, vii. 32. Is again admitted at the restoration, 362.

Loans, arbitrarily exacted by queen Elizabeth from her subjects, v. 460. a general one required by Charles I. vi. 222. Persons confined for refusal, 227. Other oppressions exercised against them, 230.

Lochlevin-castle, Mary queen of Scots confined there, v. 120. She makes her escape from thence, 127.

Lockhart is made governor of Dunkirk by Oliver Cromwel, vii. 279. His scruples when applied to by Monk to join in restoring the king, 323.

Lollards, the followers of Wickliffe the reformer, their tenets, iii. 52. Favoured by the duke of Lancaster, 53. One burnt for heresy, 65. Another, 81. Prosecution of lord Cobham as their head, 89. His transactions and execution, 90. The points of reformation aimed at by them, 91. The doctrines of Martin Luther embraced by them, iv. 35. See *Heresy* and *Reformation*.

London, a flourishing Roman colony there, destroyed, and the inhabitants massacred by the Britons, i. 8. Burnt by the Danes, 71. Rebuilt by Alfred, 85. Submits to William duke of Normandy, 234. The liberties of, confirmed, but the inhabitants disarmed by him, 238. A synod summoned there, 267. Another, 343. Charter granted to, by king Henry I. 347. The citizens summoned to a council to recognize the pretensions of the empress Matilda, 363. Computation of the number of its inhabitants at this time, 364. Revolts against Matilda, 365. Massacre of Jews there at the coronation of Richard I. ii. 4. Its first charter of incorporation, when granted, 99. Tumults excited there in favour of the barons, by Fitz-Richard the mayor, 198—202. The citizens rise in favour of queen Isabella, and murder the bishop of Exeter, 355. They put Baldoc the chancellor in Newgate, and kill him by bad usage, 356. Great destruction there by the plague, 448. John king of France brought prisoner to, 460. Its charter seized by Richard II. iii. 26. The chapter-lands of that see seized by Henry VIII. iv. 222. An insurrection of apprentices and others there, to oppose the encouraging foreign artificers, 274. Queen Mary's title acknowledged by the magistrates of, in opposition to lady Jane Grey, 372. Twenty thousand die there of the plague brought from Havre de Grace, v. 80. The royal exchange built by sir Thomas Gresham, 483. The number of foreigners in, at this time, *ib.* Great plague there in James's reign, vi. 14. The number of its inhabitants at this time, *ib.* Is the centre of all the commerce of the kingdom, 23. The continued concourse of the gentry there discouraged by James I. 169. He renews the edicts against increasing buildings in, *ib.* Brick-buildings in, by whom introduced, 179. Another plague in, 206. Refuses a loan to the king, 224. Ship-money levied on it by Charles, *ib.* Refuses another loan to the king, 356. Petitions for a parliament, 359. The treaty with the Scots at Rippon, adjourned to, 361. Petitions for a total alteration of church-government, 384. The king comes to the common-council, 470. The city petition parliament, as also the porters and apprentices, 475. Takes part with the parliament against the king, 495. Its trained bands join the earl of Essex, 509. Sends four regiments of militia to Essex, 531. Its militia ordered out by the parliament to defend it against the army, vii. 95. Petitions the parliament against the change of its militia, which the populace oblige it to grant, 101. The common-council refuse an assessment to the long parliament on its restoration, and declare for a free parliament,

ment, 318. Lends money to Charles II. for the Dutch war, 400. Great plague of, 408. Is burnt, 415. Good effects of this calamity, 416. Disputes between the citizens and sir Robert Clayton, lord-mayor, about the election of sheriffs, viii. 127. Disputes between the citizens and sir John Moor on the same occasion, 176. A writ of *quo warranto* issued against the city, 178. Conditions on which the charter was restored, 181. The mayor, aldermen, and a deputation of the common council, summoned to the convention parliament, 308.

London-bridge, when first finished of stone, ii. 99.

Longchamp, bishop of Ely. See *Ely*.

Longbeard. See *Fitz-Osbert*.

Longueville, duke of, defeated and taken prisoner by Henry VIII. at the battle of Spurs, iii. 435. Negotiates a peace between Henry and Lewis, 442.

duchess-dowager of. See *Guise, Mary of*.

Lopez, Roderigo, physician to queen Elizabeth, is executed for receiving a bribe from the Spanish ministry to poison her, v. 373.

Lords, house of, their proceedings in settling the plan of government during the minority of Richard II. iii. 3. Their proceedings against the king's ministry at the instigation of the duke of Gloucester, 20. The irregularity of their judicial proceedings, 23. The duke of Gloucester's accusation against the duke of Norfolk, 34. Duel between them prevented by the king, 36. Tumults among, at the accession of Henry IV. 62. Debate on the pretensions of Richard duke of York, 206. Acknowledge his right of succession and present administration, 207. Condemn the duke of Clarence, brother to Edward IV. 262. Their charge against cardinal Wolsey, iv. 94. Frame the bill of six articles, for abolishing diversity of opinions in religion, 194. Henry complains to them of the diversity of religions, 205. Their flattery to Cromwel earl of Essex, *ib.* Condemn Cromwell without trial, 208. Petition the king to lay his marriage with Anne of Cleves before the convocation, 209. The lord Mountjoy protests against the bill establishing a council to judge offences against the king's proclamations, 238. Pass a bill of attainder against the duke of Norfolk, 263. Lord Seymour attainted, 319. Pass a severe law against treason, which is altered by the commons, 355. Frame a poor-bill, which is rejected by the commons, 356. Are impatient to have the succession of the crown settled, v. 101. Check the commons, by the queen's order, from debating on matters of religious reformation, 178. Are refused a conference desired with the commons, 228. The commons dispute with them concerning punctilios, 386. Send a bill to the commons for entailing the crown-lands on the king and his successors, which is refused, vi. 26. The number of lords in the house in the reign of James I. 155. Impeachment of the earl of Bristol and duke of Buckingham, 215. Procure the earl of Arundel's liberty, 219. Remarks on their conduct during the disputes between the king and the commons, 250. Pass the petition of right, 253. Are dissolved, 276. Their interposition with the commons in the long parliament requested by the king, 348. A committee of, joined to one of the lower house, appointed

appointed to sit during the recess of parliament, 423. A committee of, with one of the commons, appointed to attend the king to Scotland, *ib.* The commons declare an intention of setting their authority aside, unless they concur with them, 462. The bishops' votes in, taken away, 477. The majority of the peers retire to the king at York, 490. For those transactions wherein the remainder concur with the commons, see *Parliament.* Are obliged to pass the self-denying ordinance, vii. 27. Choose lord Hunsdon speaker, on Manchester's going to the army, 102. Reject the vote of the commons for bringing the king to a trial, 134. The house of, voted useless, dangerous, and to be abolished, 151. A house of, summoned by the protector, which the ancient peers refuse to attend, 277. Their jurisdiction refused to be acknowledged by the commons, *ib.* The peers resume their seats in the parliament following the final dissolution of the long one, 328. Charles II. proclaimed, *ib.* The bishops restored to their seats, 372. Refuse to commit Clarendon to custody on the impeachment of the commons, 426. Vote Clarendon's letter to them a libel, 427. Their disputes with the commons on Skinner's case, 454. Differences with the commons on their altering a money-bill, 468. Endeavour to introduce a new test act, enforcing passive obedience, viii. 12. Great disputes between, and the commons, on the case of Fag and Shirley, 14. Are prevailed on by the duke of York to admit an exception in his favour in the new test act, 84. Refuse to commit Danby on his impeachment by the commons, 88. Pass the bill of attainder against Danby, 98. Resume the business of the popish plot, 99. The right of the bishops to vote in Danby's case denied by the commons, 110. Reject the exclusion-bill, 139. Free the popish lords impeached by the commons, 226. Take the speech of James II. into consideration, at the motion of Compton bishop of London, 241. Assume the administration of government on the king's flight, 302. Desire the prince of Orange to assume the government, and summon a convention, 308. Their debates on the question of a new king or a regency, 313. Their conferences with the commons, 314.

Lords of articles in the Scots parliament, an account of their institution, vi. 426. Are abolished, *ib.*

Lorn, lord, son of the earl of Argyle, obtains the gift of his father's forfeiture, vii. 368. Is condemned on the statute of leasing making, 438. Is pardoned by the king, *ib.* Retrospect of his life, viii. 167. Is created earl of Argyle, *ib.* See *Argyle.*

Lorrain, cardinal of. See *Guise.* Advises his niece, Mary queen of Scots, to rigour against the Protestant leaders who had taken arms against her, v. 93. Concerts a massacre of the French Hugonots, *ib.* See *Hugonots.* Founds a seminary at Rheims for the education of English Catholics, 237.

Lothaire, elder brother of Egbert king of Kent, dispossesses his nephew Edric, i. 39. Defeated and killed by him, *ib.*

Loudon, lord, is committed to the Tower for signing a letter sent by the Scots malcontents to the king of France, vi. 345. Is made an earl, 428. Is sent with other commissioners by the Scots to Oxford, to mediate between

between the king and parliament, 538. Returns dissatisfied, 539. Does public penance for countenancing the royalists, vii. 127.

Loudon-hill, the covenanters repulse an attack on a conventicle there, viii. 115.

Lovel, viscount, heads an insurrection in the north against Henry VII. iii. 321. Flies to Flanders, 322. Joins Lambert Simnel, 328. Supposed to be killed at the battle at Stoke, 330.

Louviers, peace concluded there between Philip of France and Richard I. of England, ii. 32.

Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis I. of France, her character, iv. 50. makes overtures of marriage to Charles duke of Bourbon, which he rejects, *ib.* Deprives Bourbon of his possessions by a law-suit, *ib.* Concludes an alliance with England, on the captivity of Francis, 59. A large present exacted of her, covertly, by Wolsey, on the treaty with Henry, 71.

Low Countries, state of, at the time of Henry VII. iii. 334. See *Netherlands* and *United Provinces*.

Lucy, Richard de, left guardian of the kingdom by Henry II. during his absence in France, i. 442. Repulses the irruptions of the Scots, *ib.* Suppresses an invasion of Flemings under the earl of Leicester, and takes him prisoner, 443.

Ludlow, lieutenant general, obtains command of the army in Ireland on the death of Ireton, vii. 206. Engages in the cabal of Wallingford-house, 295.

Ludovico, duke of Milan, invites the French to an invasion of Naples, iii. 368. Joins the Emperor and other princes in a league against France, *ib.* Milan subdued by the French, 384.

Lupicaire, a Brabançon, commands at Falaise for John king of England, ii. 53. Surrenders the place to Philip, and enlists with him against John, 54.

Lusignan, Guy de, how he become king of Jerusalem, ii. 14. Loses his kingdom, and applies to Richard I. of England at Cyprus, to establish his title, in opposition to Conrade marquis of Montserrat, *ib.* Made king of Cyprus by Richard, on quitting his pretensions to Jerusalem, 19.

Luther, Martin, his character, and the motives of opposing the sale of indulgences, iv. 35. Is patronised by the elector of Saxony, *ib.* The progress of his opinions in Germany, *ib.* His doctrines embraced by the Lollards in England, 36. Is wrote against by Henry VIII. *ib.* His sharp reply to Henry's book, *ib.* The quick progress of his doctrines, owing to the art of printing, 37. Terms the pope antichrist, 38. Several of his disciples take shelter in England, 347.

Luxembourgh, mareschal, defeats the prince of Orange at St. Omers, viii. 27. Is attacked at St. Dennis by the prince of Orange, the day after the peace of Nimeguen, 46.

Luxury, laws against, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 498.

Lyons, a general council called there by pope Innocent IV. to excommunicate the emperor Frederic II. ii. 170. Complaints transmitted to it by Henry III. and his nobility, *ib.* Council of, removed thither from Pisa,

Pisa, iii. 417. Interdicted by the pope, 418. Renounced by Lewis XII. of France, 442.

M.

MACBETH, a Scots nobleman, murders Duncan king of Scotland, and usurps the crown, i. 168. Is defeated and killed by Siward duke of Northumberland, *ib.*

Maccail, a Scots covenanter, expires under torture in extacy, vii. 445.

Macgill, Sir James, is by the Scots parliament appointed a commissioner to treat with Elizabeth concerning Mary, v. 171. Is dismissed by Elizabeth without concluding on any thing, 172.

Mackrel, Dr., prior of Barlings, heads an insurrection against Henry VIII. iv. 170. Is deserted by his adherents, taken and executed, 171.

Madrid, treaty of, between the emperor Charles V. and his prisoner Francis I. of France, iv. 66.

Maegbota, in the ancient German law, what, i. 216.

Magdalene, sister to pope Leo X. the produce of indulgences in Saxony assigned to her, iv. 34. Farms the sale out to Arcemboldi, a Genoese, *ib.* See *Arcemboldi*.

———— college, Oxford, its contest with James II. viii. 264. The president and fellows expelled, 265. Gifford, doctor to the Sorbonne, appointed by mandate, 273.

Magna Charta. See *Charter of Liberties*.

Mahomet, the prophet of the East, a general review of the transactions of him and his followers, i. 293.

Maine, the province of, agreed to be ceded to the duke of Anjou, on the marriage of his niece Margaret with Henry VI. iii. 170. Surrendered and alienated from the English government, 174.

Mainfroy, natural son of the emperor Frederick II. his contest with the pope for the crown of Sicily, ii. 171. A crusade published against him, 173.

Major-Generals, established by Cromwel all over England, vii. 244. Their authority reduced, 269.

Maitland of Lidington. See *Lidington*.

Malherbe's ode to Mary de Medicis, written in 1614, a stanza of, vi. 569.

Malta, knights of, refuse to surrender up their revenue to Henry VIII. iv. 205. Their order dissolved by parliament, *ib.*

Manbote, in the ancient German law, what, i. 217, *note*.

Manchester, earl of, is, by the parliament, appointed general of an association of several counties against Charles I. vi. 531. Defeats the royalists at Horn-castle, 535. Takes Lincoln, and joins Fairfax in the siege of York, vii. 10. Assists in defeating the king at Marston-moor, 12. As also at Newbury, 17. Disputes between him and Cromwel, 22. Goes as speaker of the house of lords, with Lenthal of the commons, to Hounslow-heath, to desire protection of the army, 101. Is appointed lord chamberlain by Charles II. 350.

Manners, a review of, in the thirteenth century, ii. 140. State of, in the reign of Edward II. 367. During that of queen Elizabeth, v. 484. A review of, during the reign of James I. vi. 167. A review of,

of, during the time of the commonwealth, vii. 330. Great alteration in, produced by the restoration, viii. 331.

Mansel, chaplain to Henry III. his enormous possession of pluralities, ii. 169.

Mansfield, count, commands an army in the service of Frederick, elector palatine, vi. 123. Is dismissed, and engages in the service of the United Provinces, 124. Is engaged by James, and assisted with men to recover the Palatinate, 151. His men reduced by sickness, 152.

Manufactures, state of, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 483. State of, in the reign of James I. vi. 181. Great increase of, after the restoration, viii. 328.

Manwayring, is impeached by the commons for his sermon on the regal prerogative in levying taxes, vi. 255. Is promoted to the see of St. Asaph, *ib.*

Mar, earl of, chosen regent of Scotland, on the death of Lenox, v. 202. Is obliged to conclude a truce with the queen's party, *ib.* Dies of melancholy, at the distracted state of the country, *ib.*

—— forms an association, who seize the young king James, 248.

March, earl of. See *Mortimer*.

Marche, count de la, his wife Isabella taken from him by the count of Angouleme, her father, and married to John king of England, ii. 43. Excites commotions against John in the French provinces, *ib.* Is taken prisoner by John, 46. Marries Isabella on John's death, 164.

Margaret of Anjou, her character, iii. 170. Married to Henry VI. of England, *ib.* Joins the cardinal of Winchester's faction against the duke of Gloucester, *ib.* Suspected of having some hand in Gloucester's murder, 173. Delivered of a son, 198. Raises an army in the north of England, and defeats and kills the duke of York, 209. Her army under the earl of Pembroke defeated by Edward duke of York, at Mortimer's cross, 210. Defeats the earl of Warwic at St. Albans, *ib.* Regains possession of the king, *ib.* Retires before the army of Edward duke of York, 211. Consequences of the licentiousness of her troops, 217. Her army routed at Touton, 218. Retires with Henry to Scotland, 219. Endeavours to engage the Scots in her interest, 220. Solicits assistance in France, 223. Defeated at Hexham, 224. Her extraordinary adventure with robbers in a forest, 225. Goes to her father's court, and retires, *ib.* Enters into a league with the earl of Warwic, 238. Marries her son Edward to the lady Anne, daughter to the earl of Warwic, *ib.* Returns to England on the restoration of her husband, but arrives not till after Warwic's defeat, 244. Ransomed by Lewis of France, 258. Her character, *ib.*

——— *of Norway*, by what title she succeeded to the crown of Scotland, ii. 246. Guardians appointed during her infancy, *ib.* Treaty of marriage between her and prince Edward of England, *ib.* Dies on her passage to Scotland, 247.

———, daughter to Henry VII. married to James IV. of Scotland, iii. 386. Marries Douglas earl of Angus, on the death of James IV. iv. 5. Is divorced, and marries another nobleman, 123.

Marignan, battle of, between Francis I. of France, and the Swiss, iv. 9.

Markham,

Markham, Sir George, his oppressive treatment by the court of star-chamber, vi. 305.
Marlebridge, laws enacted by the parliament summoned there by Henry III. after the baron's wars, ii. 223.
Marre, Donald earl of, appointed regent on the death of the earl of Murray, ii. 383. Is defeated and killed by Edward Baliol, 384.
Marriage with kindred, an examination of the question concerning, with reference to that of Henry VIII. with Catharine of Arragon, iv. 101.
Marshal's court abolished by the long parliament, vi. 422.
Marston-moor, battle of, between prince Rupert and Sir Thomas Fairfax, vii. 11.
Martial law, the arbitrary indiscriminate exertion of, previous to and during the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 454.
Martin II. pope, summons a council at Placentia, to consult about rescuing the holy land from the Turks, i. 294. Calls another council at Clermont, 295.
——— V. pope, elected by the council of Constance, iii. 118. Writes Henry VI. a severe letter against the statute of provisors, 214.
Martyr, Peter, desires leave to withdraw from England at the accession of queen Mary, iv. 377. Is generously assisted by bishop Gardiner, 378. Indignities used to his wife's body, *ib.*
Martyrs. See *Heresy*.
Mary of Anjou, queen to Charles VII. of France, recovers her husband from his dejection on the siege of Orleans, iii. 141.
——, princess, sister to Henry VIII. married to Lewis XII. of France, who dies quickly after, iii. 443. Marries the duke of Suffolk, 445.
——, princess, daughter of Henry VIII. betrothed, an infant, to the dauphin of France, iv. 14. Is after betrothed to the emperor Charles, 26. Is contracted by treaty with the duke of Orleans, 71. The states of Castile oppose her marriage with the emperor, 76. The bishop of Tarbe, ambassador from France, objects to her marriage with the duke of Orleans, *ib.* Is excluded from the succession by parliament, 118. Is taken into favour on her compliance with the acknowledgement of her father's supremacy, 162. Is illegitimated by parliament, 163. Is restored to her right of succession by parliament, 242. Adheres to the mass during the steps to reformation in her brother's reign, and, by the emperor's means, obtains a temporary connivance, 325. Her chaplains imprisoned, 346. Is remonstrated with by the council, *ib.* Continues obstinate in the catholic faith, *ib.* A discussion of her title to the succession, 366. Her narrow escape from falling into the hands of Northumberland on her brother's death, 368. Her measures to secure possession of the crown, *ib.* The lady Jane Grey is proclaimed at London, *ib.* The nobility and people flock to her, 370. The lady Jane deserted, and her title universally acknowledged, 371, 372. Causes the lady Jane and her party to be apprehended, 372. Releases the duke of Norfolk and other prisoners from the Tower, 374. Affects popularity, *ib.* Her bigotry, 375. Imprisons the protestant bishops, 376. Cause of her prosecuting Cranmer for treason, *ib.* The mass celebrated before the parliament, 379. All Edward's statutes on religion repealed, *ib.*
Deliberates

Deliberates on the choice of three husbands proposed to her, 380. Cause of her first declared animosity to her sister Elizabeth, *ib.* Declares her intention of reconcilement to Rome, 381. Invites over cardinal Pole in quality of legate, *ib.* The emperor Charles V. proposes his son Philip to her for a husband, 383. Dissolves the parliament for opposing the Spanish match, 385. Substance of the marriage articles, 386. Remarks of the people on this alliance, 387. Insurrections on occasion of it, 388. Treats her sister Elizabeth harshly, 390. Orders the execution of lady Jane and her husband, 392. Her cruel conduct with respect to Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, 394. Disarms the people, *ib.* Her fond anxiety for the arrival of Philip, 397. Is married to him, 398. Is unable to get her husband declared presumptive heir to the crown, or to get him crowned, 401. Imagines herself pregnant, 402. Dissolves the parliament, 403. Resolves to exert the laws against heresy with rigour, 411. See *Heresy.* An express commission issued, more effectually to extirpate heresy, 416. A proclamation against heretical books, 419. Sends a solemn embassy to pope Paul IV. 420. Resolves to comply with the pope's demand of full restitution of all church property, 421. Is dejected at her husband's neglect, and going to Flanders, 422. Her oppressive extortions from her subjects, 423. Is opposed by Pole and others in her design of engaging the kingdom in Philip's quarrel with France, 432. Philip returns to press her to that measure, *ib.* How this was effected, *ib.* Raises money arbitrarily for this war, 433. Calais taken by the duke of Guise, 435. Obtains grants from parliament, 441. All sales or grants of crown lands by her, for seven years to come, confirmed by parliament, *ib.* Thanks her sister for referring the king of Sweden's proposals of marriage to her consideration, 442. Prepares a great fleet for a descent on Britany, which fails, 443. Her health declines, and the cause of her illness, 445. Dies, *ib.* An estimate of her character, *ib.*

Mary, daughter of James V. of Scotland, born, iv. 230. Becomes queen by the death of her father, *ib.* Is contracted to prince Edward of England, 233. Is sent to France, and betrothed to the dauphin, 312. Is married to the dauphin, 440. Assumes the title and arms of England on the accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 19. Treaty of Edinburgh, and settlement of the administration by this treaty during her absence, 36. Refuses her assent to the parliamentary reformation of religion, 39. Refuses to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh, 40. Her husband Francis II. dies, 42. Refuses the desire of the English ambassador, of ratifying the treaty of Edinburgh, or to renounce her pretensions to the crown of England, 43. Is ill treated by the queen-mother of France, and resolves to return to Scotland, *ib.* Her resentment on being refused a passage through England, *ib.* Arrives in Scotland, 45. Shews great regret on leaving France, *ib.* Her character and accomplishments, 47. Bestows her confidence on the leaders of the reformed party, *ib.* Loses her popularity by her adherence to the catholic religion, 48. Is exposed to insults from this cause, *ib.* Endeavours to gain the favour of John Knox, the reformer, who contrives to insult her, 49. Her life rendered unhappy through his insolent conduct, 50. Her future errors deducible

in part from this cause, 52. Is petitioned by the church on account of a riot at a bawdy-house, *ib.* Outrages committed on her chapel, 53. Makes an ill-judged claim to Elizabeth, of being declared her successor, 56. Elizabeth's reply to her, *ib.* An apparent reconciliation takes place between them, 81. Elizabeth evades an interview with her, *ib.* Divers matches concerted for her by her uncles, 82. The earl of Leicester proposed to her by Elizabeth, *ib.* Is piqued at Elizabeth's duplicity in this offer, 84. Sends Sir James Melvil to London to accommodate their differences, *ib.* The Lord Darnley proposed to her as a husband, 85. Is advised by Elizabeth to invite him, and his father the earl of Lenox, to Scotland, 86. Elizabeth inconsistently against the match, 87. Reflections on her situation in being of a different religion from her people, *ib.* Is exhorted by the general assembly to renounce the Romish religion, 88. Is married to lord Darnley, 89. A confederacy formed against her at Stirling, 90. Drives the rebels into Argyleshire, 91. Forces them to retire into England, *ib.* Elizabeth's deceitful conduct on this occasion, *ib.* Pardons the leaders of the conspiracy, 92. Is advised to rigour by her uncle the cardinal of Lorraine, 93. Summons a parliament to attaint the rebel lords, 94. A character of her husband Darnley, *ib.* Incurs his resentment on her neglect of him, on discovery of his weakness and vices, 95. Her attachment to David Rizzio, *ib.* Rizzio assassinated in her presence by Darnley's order, 97. Is detained prisoner in her palace, 98. Is reconciled to the banished lords, *ib.* Her art in procuring her liberty, 99. Collects an army, and drives the conspirators into England, *ib.* Grants them liberty to return home at the intercession of Bothwel, *ib.* Makes Darnley disavow all concern in Rizzio's murder, and then leaves him in disdain, *ib.* Is brought to bed of a son, 100. Sends Sir James Melvil to Elizabeth with the news, *ib.* Melvil's account of Elizabeth's behaviour on this intelligence, *ib.* Her intimacy with Bothwel, 105. An apparent reconciliation between her and Darnley, 106. Darnley blown up with gunpowder in a lone house, 107. Is suspected to have concerted this murder with Bothwel, *ib.* Is petitioned by the earl of Lenox for justice against Bothwel, and others, whom he charged with the murder, 108. Calls a parliament, and establishes the protestant religion, 109. Bothwel recommended to her for a husband by the nobility, 110. Is seized by Bothwel, to afford her the plea of violence, 111. Grants him a pardon for all crimes, *ib.* Acknowledges herself free, and orders the banns to be published for her marriage with Bothwel, now made duke of Orkney, 113. Craig, the minister, who is ordered to publish the banns, firmly remonstrates against it, *ib.* Is married to Bothwel, 115. Is exhorted against it both by her French relations and Elizabeth, *ib.* The people murmur at these gross proceedings, *ib.* A confederacy of nobility formed against her, who take arms, 118. Is reduced to put herself into the hands of the confederates, 119. Is conducted to Edinburgh amidst the reproaches and insults of the people, *ib.* Is sent to the castle of Lochleven, 120. An embassy sent by Elizabeth, in her favour, 121. Four different schemes framed for the treatment of her, by her subjects, 123. Pretensions to the regency, 124. Is forced to resign the crown,

and concur in a settlement of the administration during her son's minority, 124. Escapes from Lochleven castle, 127. An association formed, and an army raised, in her favour, *ib.* Receives offers of assistance from Elizabeth, *ib.* Is defeated by Murray at Langside, 128. Retires to England, craving protection from Elizabeth, *ib.* Is required by Elizabeth to clear herself from the murder of her husband, 131. Sends lord Herries to declare her readiness to submit her cause to Elizabeth, 132. Appoints commissioners on her part, 134. The conferences opened at York, *ib.* The secret reason of the weak allegations made against her by Murray, 137. Elizabeth transfers the conferences to Hampton-court, and adds other commissioners, 139. Murray accuses her more explicitly, and her commissioners refuse to answer, 141. Her letters and sonnets to Bothwel produced, 142. Is directly charged with the murder by Hubert, Bothwel's servant, at his execution, *ib.* The result of the conference laid before the English privy-council, 144. Elizabeth's reply to her commissioners, *ib.* Is removed from Bolton to Tutbury, under the custody of the earl of Shrewsbury, 146. Refuses to make any concessions, *ib.* A marriage with the duke of Norfolk proposed to her, 156. Receives a letter from the earl of Leicester, recommending this match, 159. Returns a favourable answer, *ib.* Is removed to Coventry, and more strictly guarded, 162. Writes to Murray, but receives no answer, 166. Her party strengthened by the death of Murray, 168. Receives terms for a treaty from Elizabeth, which she agrees to, 170. Elizabeth evades this treaty, and convinces her of her insincerity, 172. Enters into the duke of Norfolk's conspiracy, 197. Elizabeth remonstrates with her on her conduct, 200. Her party in Scotland suppressed by the influence of Elizabeth, 203. Her confinement rendered stricter by the apprehensions of Elizabeth, 222. Writes a pathetic letter to Elizabeth, 250. Her proposal of accommodation, 253. Counterfeit letters writ in her name by the English ministry, to discover her partisans, 257. Is committed to the custody of Sir Amias Paulet, and Sir Drue Drury, 258. Desires leave to subscribe Leicester's association for the queen's protection, *ib.* Enters into Babington's conspiracy, 288. Is conveyed to Fotheringay-castle, 291. Her papers seized, *ib.* Her answer to the information of her approaching trial, 292. Is prevailed on to submit to trial, 294. Is proved to have conspired against her son James, 295. The commissioners adjourn to the star-chamber, London, and sentence her to death, 299. Her last letter to Elizabeth, 303. Her behaviour on being ordered to prepare for execution, 311. Is executed, 319. Her character, *ib.* Proofs of the authenticity of her letters to Bothwel, 496. The countess of Shrewsbury's scandalous reports of queen Elizabeth communicated by her to the queen, 506. Her resentment against her son for deserting her cause, 509. Inquiry into the evidences of her engagement in Babington's conspiracy, 510.

Mary, lady, daughter of James duke of York, is married to the prince of Orange, VIII. 34. Concurs in the settlement of the crown of England on the prince, her husband, 318.

Mass-book reviewed and altered by Henry VIII. iv. 225. Private masses abolished

abolished by act of parliament, 307. The mass revived by queen Mary, 376. Is finally abolished by Queen Elizabeth, v. 12.

Massey, governor of Gloucester, for the parliament, his character, vi. 525. Is besieged by the king. *ib.* His vigorous defence, 530. Is relieved by the earl of Essex, 531.

Masters, Richard, vicar of Aldington, in Kent, concerts the imposture of *the holy maid of Kent*, iv. 135. Confesses the artifice, and is punished, 137.

Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, married to king Henry I. of England, i. 318.

———, daughter of king Henry I. betrothed to the emperor Henry V. of Germany, i. 340. Married afterwards to Geoffrey, son of Fulk, count of Anjou, *ib.* Brought to bed of Henry, 344. Receives the oath of fealty from the English and Norman nobility, *ib.* Lands in England to assert her pretensions against Stephen, 359. Stephen taken prisoner, 361. Receives homage of the barons, *ib.* Gains over Henry bishop of Winchester, 362. Cultivates the favour of the clergy, *ib.* Her character, 364. Besieged in Winchester, 365. Flies and exchanges Stephen for her brother Robert, *ib.*

Matrimony, ordered to be solemnized by the civil magistrate, vii. 229.

Matthews, Toby, case of his expulsion from parliament, stated, vi. 550.

Maurice, bishop of London, crowns Henry I. i. 313.

———, elector of Saxony, the grounds of his quarrel with the emperor Charles V. iv. 382. Raises an army of protestants against him, *ib.* Reduces Charles to grant a peace favourable to the protestants, 383.

———, prince, son of the elector palatine, comes to England with his brother Rupert, and offers his assistance to Charles I. vi. 505. See *Rupert*. Is sent by the king with a reinforcement of cavalry into the west, 518. Is shipwrecked, vii. 205.

———, prince of Orange. See *Orange*.

Mautravers and Gournay, the keepers of the deposed king Edward II. murder him cruelly by Mortimer's orders, ii. 359. Their fates, *ib.*

Maximilian, king of the Romans, his pretensions to the government of the Low Countries, how founded, iii. 334. Marries Anne dutchess of Britany, 346. Who is afterwards forced into a marriage with the king of France, 349. Makes peace with France, and obtains a restitution of his daughter's dowry, 355. His conduct as emperor, 415. Joins pope Julius II. in the league of Cambray against the Venetians, *ib.* Calls a council at Piza, in conjunction with Lewis, in opposition to the pope, 418. Detached from the French interest by pope Leo X. 424. Concludes an alliance with Henry VIII. and Ferdinand against France, 426. Serves under Henry, and receives pay from him in his French expedition, 433. Detaches himself from Henry, and allies with Spain and France, 441. His ineffectual invasion of Milan, and treaty with France and Venice, iv. 11. His death, and the competition for the imperial dignity, 18.

Mayenne, duke of, becomes head of the catholic league, on the assassination of his brother the duke of Guise, v. 357.

Mazarine, cardinal, succeeds Richlieu in the French ministry, in the infancy of Louis XIV. vii. 247. Temporises with Cromwel, 249. His

compliment to Cromwel, 280. Concludes the treaty of the Pyrenees with Spain, 305. Refuses to see Charles II. of England, 306.
Meal-tub plot, viii. 124.
Meaux besieged and taken by Henry V. iii. 115.
Medicis, Catharine de, her influence in the court of France lessened by the enormous authority usurped by the duke of Guise, and his brothers, v. 40. Is appointed regent on the death of Francis II. during the minority of Charles IX. 42. Her ill usage of Mary queen of Scots makes Mary think of returning to Scotland, 43. Remarks on her plan of internal administration, 68. Is forced to embrace the Guise party against the prince of Condé, 69. Consents to an accommodation with the protestants, 78. Comes to an agreement with Elizabeth, 80. Concerts, with Philip of Spain and the cardinal of Lorraine, a massacre of the French protestants, 93. See *Hugonots*. Massacre of Paris, 205.
Medina Sidonia, duke of, is appointed to the command of the Spanish Invincible Armada, v. 339. His instructions, 340. Disobeys his orders, in sailing to attack the English fleet, 341. Is worsted, and sails to Calais, 343. Is attacked and disconcerted by the English admiral, *ib.* Sails northward on his return, and his fleet destroyed by a storm, 344.
Melvil, James, assassinates cardinal Beaton, iv. 298. His behaviour applauded in Knox's history, *ib. note.*
———, Sir James, is sent ambassador, from Mary queen of Scotland, to queen Elizabeth, v. 84. His instructions for negotiation, *ib.* His account of his conversation with Elizabeth concerning his mistress, *ib.* His character of Elizabeth on his return, 85. Is sent again to Elizabeth, to notify the birth of prince James, 100. His account of Elizabeth's behaviour on this occasion, *ib.*
–, Robert, is sent by the protestant association in Scotland, called the *Congregation of the Lord*, to request assistance from queen Elizabeth, v. 32. Proposes to Mary a marriage with the duke of Norfolk, 156.
Members for Counties, the first steps towards sending them to parliament, ii. 184. See *Commons*.
Merchants grant impositions on merchandize to Edward I. in their private capacity, ii. 277, *note.*
Merchant adventurers, the society of, when first formed, ii. 324.
Mercia, the Saxon kingdom of, its extent, and by whom founded, i. 47. Its history continued, *ib.*
Merton, a synod called there, to establish ecclesiastical privileges, ii. 192 The resolutions of, annulled by the pope, *ib.*
Metz ineffectually attacked by the emperor Charles V. iv. 382.
Michelson, the Scots prophetess, some account of, vi. 337.
Middlesex, earl of, treasurer, his character, vi. 144. Is impeached by the means of Buckingham, *ib.* His fine remitted, 145.
Middleton, earl, is sent commissioner, on the restoration, to call a parliament in Scotland, vii. 365. His arbitrary conduct, 439. His commission given to lord Rothes, 442.
Milan, duchy of, subdued by the French, iii. 384. Maximilian Sforza reinstated in that dutchy, 424. Is attacked by Francis I. of France, iv. 9. Surrendered

Surrendered to Francis by Sforza for a pension, 10. The French driven out, 42. Is invaded again under the admiral Bonnivet, 53. The city blockaded, *ib.* Bonnivet obliged to retire by the desertion of his Swiss troops, 54. Is conquered by the Imperialists under the duke of Bourbon, 69. The investiture again granted to Francis Sforza, 98. The emperor renounces all claim to, 248.

Mildmay, Sir Walter, asserts the royal prerogative in high terms to the house of commons, v. 228, 229.

Military-service, the origin and nature of, explained, ii. 102. Changed into pecuniary supplies, 247.

Militia, the first establishment of, by Alfred, i. 85. Regulated by king Henry II. 450. Feudal, the inconveniences attending their service, to the kings who summoned their attendance, ii. 265. How their personal service became changed into pecuniary supplies, *ib.* The consequences of this alteration, 270. Law of queen Mary for the regulation of, iv. 448. State of, during the reign of queen Elizabeth, v, 482. State of, in the reign of James I. vi. 178. A bill framed by the commons, and passed, taking it into their own hands, 479. King Charles's reply when pressed to pass it, 482. Is carried into execution without his concurrence, 485. Establishment of, by parliament, on the restoration, vii. 391. State of, between the restoration and revolution, 321.

Mill, Walter, is burnt for heresy, at St. Andrews, v. 24. The extraordinary zeal of the people in his favour, *ib.*

Millenarians, or fifth-monarchy men, are for abolishing all government, after the death of Charles I. vii. 155.

Milton, John, his opinion of the monkish histories of Britain, i. 28. His character as a writer, vii. 343. His Paradise Lost, how rescued from oblivion, 344. Remarks on the fate of the author, *ib.* His death, 345.

Mind, human, history of, iii. 297.

Mitchell, a Scots fanatic, fires a pistol at the archbishop of St. Andrews, viii. 54. His extraordinary treatment and execution, 55.

Mise of Lewes, the treaty so termed, ii. 206.

Mona. See *Anglesea.*

Monarchies, hereditary and elective, a comparative view of, under the feudal system, ii. 112.

Monasteries, subjected entirely to the king's regulations, by the parliament of Henry VIII. iv. 117. Reflections on their tendency, 147. Commissioners appointed to visit them, 148. Great abuses charged upon them, 149. Several surrender their revenues, *ib.* All nuns and friars who required dismission, set at liberty, *ib.* The lesser suppressed by parliament, 150. Discontents among the people excited by the dispersed monks, 169. The greater monasteries suppressed, 177. Reports of their scandalous abuses published to bring the memory of them into contempt, 178. Their reliques exposed, particularly the blood of Christ, 180. And rood of Grace, *ib.* The number of them suppressed, and the amount of their revenues, 182. The hospitality exercised by them, 184. The surrender of, confirmed by parliament, 199. The abbots of Colchester, Reading, and

and Glastenbury, executed for treason, 199. A curious passage from Coke's Institutes, relating to the suppression of, 456.

Money, the value of, among our Saxon ancestors, i. 226. Reflections on, 228. The interest it bore in the reign of Richard I. ii. 36, *note*. Remarks on the highest interest it bore in the thirteenth century, 226. A view of the state of, in the reign of Henry V. iii. 121. The rate of, in the time of Henry VII. 389, *note*. The interest of, when first fixed by law, iv. 278. The interest of, how limited in England and France at the time of queen Elizabeth, v. 483.

Moneyage, an explanation of the tax levied by the Anglo-Norman kings under that name, ii. 127. When abolished, *ib*.

Monk, general commands for the parliament in Dundalk in Ireland, where his garrison mutinies against him, and delivers the place up to Ormond, vii. 164. Is left by Cromwel to complete the reduction of Scotland, 195. Reduces Stirling-castle, and sends the records of Scotland to London, 207. Takes Dundee, and puts the inhabitants to the sword, *ib*. Reduces the kingdom to obedience to the commonwealth, *ib*. Commands at sea under Blake, in an engagement with the Dutch, 215. Defeats the Dutch fleet under Tromp, who is killed, 234. His family and history, 307. His behaviour to his brother, who came to engage him in the royal cause, 311. Marches into England, 312. Advances without orders, 315. His message to the parliament, from St. Alban's, 316. Arrives in Westminster, *ib*. His reply to the thanks of parliament, *ib*. Executes the orders of the parliament in apprehending the refractory citizens, 318. Orders the parliament to dissolve and call a new one; and unites with the citizens, 319. Communicates his intentions to Sir John Granville, 322. Advises Charles II. to leave Spain for Holland, 323. Secures the commanders in Ireland in the king's interest, 325. The king proclaimed, 328. Receives the king at Dover, 329. Is created duke of Albemarle, 350. *See Albemarle*.

Monks, British, great slaughter of, by Adelfrid king of Northumberland, i. 41. Saxon characterised, 110. Their address in working miracles, 127. See *Monasteries*.

Monkish historians, characters of, i. 28.

Monmouth, James duke of, his birth and character, viii. 95. His illegitimacy declared by the king in council, 96. Defeats the Scots covenanters at Bothwel-bridge, 115. Is deprived of his command, and sent abroad, by the influence of the duke of York, 122. Comes over without leave, 125. Presents a petition against calling the parliament at Oxford, 150. Engages in a conspiracy against the king, 183. Absconds upon the discovery of it, 188. Is pardoned, 202. Is banished, 203. Invades England on the accession of James II. 227. Is attainted by parliament, *ib*. Instances of his misconduct, 228. Is defeated at Sedgmore, 229. Is executed, 230.

Monopolies, enormous grants of, by queen Elizabeth, v. 439. The pernicious tendency of these grants, 459. Debates in the house of commons concerning, 528. Chief part of the national trade engrossed by exclusive companies and patents in the reign of James I. vi. 23. An act

passed against, 143. Are revived by Charles I. 296. The patents for, called in and annulled by James I. vi. 23.

Monothelites, their heresy condemned in a synod at Hatfield, i. 64.

Monson, Sir William, commands under admiral sir Richard Levison, in an expedition to the coast of Spain, v. 443.

Montacute, brother of the earl of Warwick, defeats the Lancastrians at Hexham, iii. 224. Gains a battle with the insurgents in Yorkshire, 233. Created a Marquis, 235. Leagues with his brother Warwick against king Edward, 239. Encourages his men to change sides, and drives Edward from his own camp, 241.

Montagu, Edward, a member of the house of commons, the arbitrary speech of Henry VIII. to him, iv. 451, *note*.

Montague, Sir Edward, chief justice of the common pleas, is ordered by Edward VI. with other judges, to prepare a deed for the succession of lady Jane Grey, iv. 362. Is abused by Dudley duke of Northumberland, for refusing, 363. His expedient for the security of himself and the other parties, 364.

———, is sent with a squadron to the Baltic, to mediate between Sweden and Denmark, vii. 304. Quits his station to assist sir George Booth and the royalists in their intended rising, which fails, 321. Obtains, with Monk, the joint command of the fleet, *ib.* Carries the fleet to Holland, to bring Charles II. over, 329. Is created earl of Sandwich, 350. See *Sandwich*.

———, ambassador at Paris, secretly negotiates with France, and treacherously receives a large bribe from Barillon, the minister of that court, viii. 43, *note*. Returns without leave, and produces Danby's letter to the house of commons, 86.

Montargis, besieged by the earl of Warwick, iii. 137. Raised by the count of Dunois, *ib.*

Montcontour, battle of, between the duke of Anjou and the admiral Coligni, v. 188.

Monteagle, lord, receives intimation of the gunpowder plot, vi. 34. Communicates it to lord Salisbury, *ib.*

Montecuculi, the Imperial general, joins the prince of Orange, and obliges Lewis XIV. to abandon his conquest in the Low Countries, vii. 510.

Montford, Simon de, appointed a general of the crusade published by pope Innocent III. against the Albigenses, ii. 67. For his son, see *Leicester*.

Montmorency, constable, commands the French army, against the Spanish under Philibert duke of Savoy, iv. 434. Is defeated, and taken prisoner at the battle of St. Quintin, *ib.* His sentiments of the marriage of the dauphin with the queen of Scotland, v. 32. Joins the duke of Guise against the prince of Condé, 68. Takes Rouen from the protestants, 71. Is taken prisoner by the protestants at the battle of Dreux, 72. Is released by treaty, 78. Besieges Havre-de-Grace, 79. Takes it by capitulation, 80. Is killed at the battle of St. Dennis, 186.

Montreville, the French ambassador, prevails with Charles I. to seek protection in the Scots army, vii. 72.

Montrose, earl of, his first introduction to Charles I. vii. 43. Is imprisoned in Scotland for his attachment to the king, 44. Procures duke Hamilton's disgrace with the king, 46. Negotiates for Irish troops, to make

makes a diversion in Scotland, 47. Defeats lord Elcho, *ib.* Defeats lord Burley, 48. Routs Argyle's forces, and is joined by great numbers of them, 49. Takes and plunders Dundee, 50. Defeats Urrey and Baillie, *ib.* Defeats the covenanters at Kilsyth, 63. Is conquered by David Lesley, 64. Retires abroad, 76. Raises levies to assist Charles II. 177. Lands in Scotland, is defeated and taken prisoner, 178. His cruel treatment, 179. Is executed, 181.

Morcar and Edwin rebel against the injustice of Tosti duke of Northumberland, i. 176. Morcar justifies their cause, and is made duke, *ib.* Head the English against the Normans, after the battle of Hastings, 232. Submit to William the Conqueror, 236. Attend him to Normandy, 239. Excite a rebellion in the North, 245. Reduced, 246. Their deaths, 261.

More, Sir Thomas, remarks on his account of Jane Shore, iii. 274, *note*. When speaker of the house of commons, joins the persuasions of cardinal Wolsey to obtain the grants to Henry VIII. iv. 47. The great seal taken from Wolsey, and committed to him, 92. Resigns the great seal on the prospect of alterations in religion, 109. Refuses to subscribe the oath regulating the succession of the crown, enjoined by parliament, 119. Is attainted by parliament, 121. His cruel persecution of James Bainham, for heresy, 132. Is tried and executed for denying the king's supremacy, 139.

——, Roger, an Irish gentleman, forms a conspiracy to expel the English from Ireland, vi. 433. His design of seizing the castle of Dublin discovered, 436. Is shocked at the barbarities of O'Neale, abandons the cause, and retires to Flanders, 439.

Morrice, attorney of the court of wards, makes a motion in the house of commons against abuses of ecclesiastical power, v. 365. Is divested of his employments, and imprisoned, 366.

———, a gentleman of Devonshire, is the only friend with whom general Monk consulted concerning the restoration of Charles II. vii. 322. Is made secretary of state by the king, 351.

Mortimer, Roger, his history, ii. 351. His first acquaintance with Isabella queen to Edward II. *ib.* His intimacy with her, *ib.* Joins Isabella in a conspiracy against the king, *ib.* Invades England with her, 354. Procures the death of the earl of Arundel, and the chancellor Baldock, 356. Takes the king out of Leicester's custody and delivers him to the lord Berkeley, Mautravers, and Gournay, 358. Orders the two latter to murder him, 359. Attends Edward III. in his army to oppose the Scots, and checks his ardour to engage them, 375. Arrogates to himself all authority in government, *ib.* Concludes a treaty with Robert Bruce, 376. His measures to disappoint any combinations against him, *ib.* Contrives the destruction of the earl of Kent, 377. Is seized by the king, 379. Tried and executed, *ib.*

———, Roger earl of March, declared successor by Richard II. iii. 28. Killed in Ireland, 38. His sons kept prisoners in Windsor-castle, by Henry IV. 62.

Mortimer's Cross, battle of, between Jasper Tudor earl of Pembroke, and Edward duke of York, iii. 210.

Mortmain, the first statute of, when passed, ii. 322. The probable motives

tives of Edward I. in this law, 322. How eluded in the time of Richard II. iii. 56.

Morton, John, his character, iii. 319. Becomes confidant of Henry VII. *ib.* Made archbishop of Canterbury, 320. Created a cardinal, 374.

———, earl of, chancellor of Scotland, becomes jealous of David Rizzio, v. 96. Advises Darnley to get him cut off, 97. Takes the coronation oath in the name of the young king James VI. 125. Is appointed commissioner in the cause of Mary, 134. How he became possessed of a casket of Mary's letters, 142. Is appointed by the Scots parliament a commissioner to manage a treaty with Elizabeth concerning Mary, 171. Is dismissed by Elizabeth without concluding on any thing, 172. Is chosen regent on the death of the earl of Mar, 202. Resigns the regency into the hands of the young king, and retires, 231. Returns and resumes an influence over government, *ib.* Is tried and condemned for being an accomplice in Darnley's murder, by the influence of the earl of Lenox, 232. His execution hastened in opposition to the interposition of Elizabeth, 233.

Mountford, count de, half brother to John III. duke of Britany, acknowledges Charles de Blois as successor to that dutchy, ii. 416. Endeavours to acquire possession of the dutchy, *ib.* Engages Edward III. of England to patronise his pretensions, *ib.* Goes to Paris to plead his cause, 417. Is taken and confined in the tower of the Louvre, *ib.* See the next article.

———, Jane countess of, her vigorous efforts to support her husband's interest in Britany, ii. 417. Is besieged by Charles de Blois at Hennebone, 418. Her vigorous defence, 419. Is relieved by an English fleet, 420. Goes to England to solicit farther succours, *ib.* Edward goes over to Britany in person, 421. A truce concluded for three years, *ib.* Takes Charles de Blois prisoner, 438. Her son obtains possession of Britany, and is acknowledged by France, 473.

Mountjoy, lord, protests against the bill establishing a council to judge offences against the king's proclamations, the only protest against any public bill during the reign of Henry VIII. iv. 238.

———, lord, is sent lord deputy to Ireland, on the precipitate return of the earl of Essex, v. 413. Drives Tyrone and his party into the woods and morasses, *ib.* His successes against the rebels, 435. Reduces the Spaniards, and defeats Tyrone, 438. Tyrone surrenders himself up to him, 445.

Mowbray, John de, ejected from his inheritance of the barony of Gower, by Edward II. at the instance of Hugh le Despenser, ii. 345.

———, Robert, earl of Northumberland, excites a conspiracy against William Rufus, i. 292. Dies in confinement, *ib.*

Munster, bishop of, invades the Dutch territories at the instigation of Charles II. but makes peace with the states, vii. 407.

Murden, his account of the military force of England, at the time of the Spanish armada, v. 481.

Murder, a list of the legal compositions for, among our Saxon ancestors, i. 219.

Murray, earl of, appointed by Robert Bruce joint commander of the Scots army with lord Douglas, invading England on the death of Edward II. ii. 372. His reply to the defiance of Edward III. 374. Retires home, *ib.* Is appointed guardian to David Bruce, 381. Dies, 383.

———, lord James, created earl of, and enjoys the chief authority under Mary queen of Scotland, v. 47. Becomes discontented at the marriage of Mary with lord Darnley, 90. Joins a confederacy of malcontents at Stirling, *ib.* Is ill-used by Elizabeth on the occasion, 91. Obtains a restoration to favour, 92. Is invited back to Scotland by Darnley, 98. Is reconciled to Mary, *ib.* Obtains leave to retire into France, 119. Is appointed regent, on the first resignation of Mary, 124. Arrives, and treats Mary harshly, 125. Summons a parliament, which condemns Mary to imprisonment, *ib.* Demolishes the fortress of Dunbar, *ib.* Raises forces on Mary's escape from Lochleven-castle, 128. Defeats her at Langside, *ib.* Is required by Elizabeth to justify his conduct toward Mary, 132. Promises to come with other commissioners to submit his cause to Elizabeth, *ib.* Is appointed a commissioner by the kingdom for this purpose, 134. The secret reasons of the weakness of his allegations against Mary, 137. Lays his full evidences privately before the English commissioners, and requests Elizabeth's protection, 138. Proposes queries to Elizabeth, *ib.* The conferences transferred to Hampton-court, 139. Accuses Mary more explicity, 140. Her commissioners refuse to reply, 141. Produces Mary's letters to Bothwel, with the confession of Hubert, 142. Is dismissed by Elizabeth, with a present for his charges, 145. Proposes to the duke of Norfolk a marriage with Mary, 156. His political motives in this proposal, 157. Discovers Norfolk's design to Mary, 160. Is assassinated, 167. His character, *ib.* Vindicated from the accusations of queen Mary and her advocates, 502.

Muscovy, a profitable trade established with, iv. 447. An embassy arrives from, to queen Mary, *ib.* And exclusive trade with, granted to the English, v. 477. This privilege withdrawn, 478.

N.

NAJARA, battle of, between Edward the Black Prince and Henry de Transtamare, ii. 477.

Names, Christian, strange modification of, at the time of the commonwealth, vii. 230.

Nantz, the edict of, revoked by Lewis XIV. viii. 242.

Naples, conquered by the joint force of France and Spain, iii. 414. Seized by the latter, *ib.*

Naseby, battle of, between Charles I. and the generals Fairfax and Cromwel, vii. 57.

Navarre, situation of that kingdom, iii. 420. Crafty invasion of, by Ferdinand of Spain, 421.

———, Anthony, king of, is excluded from all office and favour at the court of France, by the influence of the Guise family, v. 40. Declares in

in favour of the protestants, 41. Is made lieutenant-general of the kingdom, on the accession of Charles IX. 42. Joins the duke of Guise against the protestants, 68. Is mortally wounded at the siege of Rouen, 71. For his son, see *Henry* prince of.

Navarre, Henry prince of, is placed by Coligni at the head of the protestants after the defeat of Jarnac, v. 186. Is married to Margaret, sister to Charles, 205. His mother poisoned by order of the court, *ib.* Is obliged by Charles to renounce the protestant religion at the price of his life, during the massacre of Paris, 206. Flies from the court, and places himself again at the head of the Hugonots, 211. Defeats the king at Coutras, 355. Obtains the crown of France on the death of Henry III. 357. See *Henry* IV.

Navigation act, one of this nature rejected by Henry VI. iii. 215. Is passed by the commonwealth parliament, vii. 211. Is suspended by Charles II 477.

Navy, English, state of, in the time of queen Mary, iv. 446. The improvement of, by queen Elizabeth, v. 480. Harrison's account of her navy, 533. A view of the state of, during the reign of James I. vi. 180. The number of seamen then employed in the merchant's service, 181. Account of the state of, from the restoration to the revolution, viii. 327.

Naylor, James, a quaker, his extravagances, vii. 336. Is restored to his senses by punishment, 337.

Nazan Leod, the British chief, defeated by Cedric the Saxon, i. 24.

Neile, bishop of Lincoln, occasions disputes between the two houses of parliament, by reflecting on the commons, vi. 73. Anecdote of him, 75.

Nero, emperor, sends Suetonius Paulinus over to Britain, i. 7. Recalls him, 9.

Netherlands, the foreign commerce of England at the time of Henry VIII. confined to those countries, iv. 273. The arbitrary and severe behaviour of the emperor Charles V. toward the protestants there, v. 191. The dutchess of Parma left governess of, by Philip, 122. The Flemish exiles become masters of the Brill, 214. Revolt of Holland and Zealand, 215. See *Orange.* Duke of Alva recalled, 216. The treaty called the pacification of Ghent, 219. A treaty concluded with Elizabeth, 220. The duke of Anjou comes over to their assistance, 242. Anjou expelled for an attempt on their liberties, 247. See *United Provinces.* Spanish, rapid conquests of Lewis XIV. in, vii. 431. Settlement of, by the triple league, and treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 435. Dutch, over-run by Lewis XIV. 487.

Nevill, Sir John, executed for an insurrection in Yorkshire, iv. 213.

Neville, Hugh de, a fine paid to the king by his wife, for leave to pass a night with him while in prison, ii. 133.

———, the power, connexions, and branches of that family, iii. 181. Honours bestowed on, by Edward IV.

Neville's Cross, battle of, between queen Philippa and David king of Scotland, ii. 439.

Neustria, a province in France, granted to Rollo the Dane, i. 138. See *Normandy.*

Newark, is besieged by the parliamentary forces, but relieved by prince Rupert, vii. 9. Surrenders to the Scots army by the king's order, 74.

Newburn, lord Conway routed there, by the Scots covenanters, vi. 357.

Newbury, battle of, between Charles I. and the earl of Essex, vi. 532. Second battle of, vii. 17.

Newcastle, the first charter granted to the inhabitants of, to dig coal, ii. 230. Is taken by storm, by the earl of Leven, the Scots general vii. 14.

———, earl of, commands for the king in the north of England, and takes possession of York, vi. 513. Is created marquis, 534. Is repulsed in an attack upon Hull, 535. Is besieged in York by the parliamentary army, vii. 11. Leaves the kingdom in disgust after the battle of Marston-moor, 14.

New England, the colony of, how peopled, vii. 341.

New Forest, how and when made, i. 278. Remarkable accidents happening to the family of William the Conqueror in, 308.

Newfoundland, first discovery of, iii. 405.

New York, is taken from the Dutch by sir Robert Holmes, vii. 399. Is ceded to the English by the treaty of Breda, 422.

Newton, the mathematician and philosopher, his character, viii. 334. His death, *ib.*

Nicholas, Sir Edward, is made secretary of state by Charles II. on his restoration, vii. 351. Is displaced by the influence of the dutchess of Cleveland, 392.

Nimeguen, congress there, under the mediation of Charles II. viii. 21. Peace concluded there, 46. The treaty ratified, *ib.*

Nobility, Saxon and Norman, wherein they differed, i. 211. The titles of, sold to supply James I. with money, vi. 71.

Non-addresses, the vote of, passed by the long parliament, vii. 113. Is repealed, 121.

Non-conformists, their ministers ejected out of their livings, vii. 384. Five-mile act, 408. Act against conventicles, 456. Declaration of indulgence, 476. The declaration recalled, 504. A bill for their relief passed, 506. See *Puritans*.

Norfolk, an insurrection there against inclosures, headed by Ket, a tanner, iv. 331. The insurgents defeated by Dudley earl of Warwick, *ib.*

———, duke of, challenges his accuser the duke of Hereford, iii. 35. The duel prevented by Richard II. 36. Banished for life, *ib.*

———, Bigod, Roger, earl of, is appointed agent for Henry III. to the council of Lyons, ii. 170. Objects to king John's right of subjecting England to the supremacy of Rome, *ib.* His address to Henry III. on the parliament assembling in armour, 183. Is gained over to the royal party by prince Edward, 200. Refuses to serve in the expedition to Gascony, and quarrels with the king, 289. Refuses to attend the king to Flanders, *ib.* A new mareschal appointed in his place for that service, 290. He and the earl of Hereford present a remonstrance to him on his departure, *ib.* Demands of parliament a confirmation of the charters, and indemnity for himself, which are granted, 291. Obtains full confirmation of them from the king on his return, 292.

Norfolk, earl of, brother to Edward II. engages with queen Isabella in a conspiracy against him, ii. 353.

———, duke of, resigns his office of treasurer, and retires from court, iv. 4.

———, duke of, opposes the progress of the reformation, iv. 129. From what motives he became an enemy to his niece queen Anne Boleyn, 158. Presides as high steward on her trial, 159. Is commissioned to suppress Aske's insurrection, termed the Pilgrimage of Grace, 172. His prudent measures to distress the insurgents, 173. Prevails on them to disperse, 174. Routs another insurrection, and puts their officers to death, 175. Proposes the framing of the bill of six articles to the house of lords, 194. The repartee of one of his chaplains to him, concerning the celibacy of priests, 195, *note*. Procures a commission to commit Cromwel to the Tower, 207. Influences the king to a cruel persecutionof heretics, on his niece Catharine Howard becoming queen, 212. Is appointed to command in the war against Scotland, 228. Attends Henry in his invasion of France, 246. Is checked by the king in a scheme of ruining Cranmer, 255. A review of his services and honours, 261. Is, with his son the earl of Surrey, committed to the Tower, 262. Surrey executed, 263. Is attainted by the parliament, *ib*. Ordered for execution, but saved by the king's death, 264. Is released from confinement by queen Mary, 374. His attainder reversed by parliament, 380. Advises Mary to the Spanish alliance, 383. Is sent to suppress Wiat's insurrection at Kent, but is forced to retire by a desertion of his troops, 389.

———, the young duke of, is appointed lieutenant of the northern counties by queen Elizabeth, v. 35. Is appointed one of the commissioners in the cause between Mary queen of Scots and Murray the regent, 134. Entertains hopes of marrying Mary, 138. Transmits Murray's queries to Elizabeth, *ib*. His character, 155. A marriage with Mary proposed to him by Murray, 156. Obtains the countenance of several of the nobility to this scheme, 158. Secures the concurrence of France and Spain, 159. Receives intimations from the queen of her knowledge of his negotiations, 160. Endeavours to discredit the reports raised against him to the queen, 161. Is committed to the Tower, and his friends taken into custody, 162. Is released on promise of thinking no farther of Mary, 165. Renews his correspondence with Mary, 196. Enters into a conspiracy with the duke of Alva, against Elizabeth, 197. His scheme discovered by lord Burleigh, 198. Is tried, 199. Executed, 200.

Norham, castle of, conference there between Edward I. and the Scots parliament, to determine the right of the crown of Scotland, ii. 253.

Normans, origin of the name, i. 67. Their first invasions of France, *ib*. And England. See *William*. Their character, 181. 316.

Norman barons, conspire against William the Conqueror, i. 263. Suppressed, 265. Instance of their voting in English councils, 399.

Normandy, settled by Rollo the Dane, i. 138. History of his successors, 139. Character of the Normans, 182. 314. William, duke of, obtains the crown of England, 234. See *William* the Conqueror; and *Robert*. Invaded by Philip of France, on the news of Richard I. being

being imprisoned in Germany on his return from the crusade, ii. 24. Philip repulsed at Rouen by the earl of Leicester, 25. John invested with the dutchy of, on his brother Richard's death, 41. Laid under an interdict on account of the bishop of Beauvais's captivity, who is surrendered, 42. Two Brabançons left governors of it, by John, on his leaving it, 53. Recovered by Philip, 54. The barons of, how differently circumstance from those of other countries during their connexions with England, 77. The states of, how composed, 119. Formally ceded to Lewis IX. by Henry III. of England, 190. Is suddenly invaded by Edward III. 426. Caen seized and plundered, 428. Calais taken, 442. Is invaded by four French armies, iii. 176. Finally reduced to the government of France, 178.

Norris, Sir John, joins sir Francis Drake in his expedition to Portugal, v. 348. Commands the English forces sent to reduce Britany for Henry IV. 374. Is sent to reduce insurrections in Ireland, *ib.* Is deceived by the treacherous negotiations of Tyrone, and dies of vexation, 402.

North-west passage, three attempts for the discovery of, made by sir Martin Frobisher, v. 477. Davis's Straits discovered, *ib.* Attempts for the discovery of, made in the reign of James I. vi. 183.

Northampton, a council called there by king Henry II. in which Thomas à Becket is condemned, i. 397. Battle of, between Henry VI. and the earl of Warwick, iii. 205.

Northumberland, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 40.

————, earl of, defeats earl Douglas at Homeldon, iii. 68. Rebels against Henry IV. and leagues with the Welch and Scots, 69. His son defeated and killed by the king, 71. His submission accepted, 72. Retires to Scotland, and is killed in an irruption into England, 74.

———, Dudley earl of Warwic, made duke of, iv. 350. Determines to ruin Somerset, 351. Causes Somerset, his dutchess, and friends, to be arrested, *ib.* Trial and execution of Somerset, 352. Endeavours to get Tonstal bishop of Durham attainted, but is disappointed by the commons, 357. His measures in the recalling a new parliament, 358. His representations to induce the king to alter the succession, 360. Places his own emissaries about the king, 362. Abuses the chief justice, sir Edward Montague, for refusing to draw the deed of settlement for lady Jane Gray, 363. Procures the patent to be passed, 364. Endeavours to get the two princesses Mary and Elizabeth into his power, 367. Proclaims the lady Jane Gray, 369. Is disconcerted at the bad aspect of affairs, 370. Takes the command of the army, 371. Is deserted by his army, and proclaims queen Mary, 372. Is apprehended, *ib.* Is tried and executed, 373.

———, earl of, offers to release Mary queen of Scots from her confinement in England, v. 161. Enters into a negotiation with the duke d'Alva, and raises an insurrection with the earl of Westmorland in the North, 163. Is taken by Murray, and confined in the castle of Lochleven, 164. Is delivered up and executed, 200.

———, earl of, is sent by Charles I. to command his army against the Scots, vi. 357. Retires from Newcastle on the rout of lord Conway at

at Newburn, 357. The command by his illness devolves on Stafford, 352. Joins the parliament against the king, 496. Retires to his seat, 530.

Northumberland, extract of some curious particulars from a household book of an old earl of that family, iii. 460.

Norway, maid of. See *Margaret.*

Norwich, bishop of, leads out a crusade against the Clementines, iii. 58.

———, John lord, is besieged by the duke of Normandy in Angouleme, ii. 424. His stratagem to save the garrison, 425.

Nottingham, countess of, discovers on her death-bed, to queen Elizabeth, her treachery to the earl of Essex, v. 446.

———, earl of, and lord high admiral, is sent to Spain to ratify the peace with, vi. 28. Sentiments of the Spaniards at the sight of his train, *ib.*

Nova Belgia, taken from the Dutch by Sir Robert Holmes, vii. 399. See *New York.*

Nowel, chaplain to queen Elizabeth, openly reproved by her for speaking irreverently of the sign of the cross, v. 153, *note.*

Noyen, treaty of, between Francis I. of France and Charles king of Spain, afterwards emperor, iv. 12.

O.

OATES, Titus, his account of a popish plot, viii. 65. His birth and character, 69. Is examined before the council, *ib.* Inconsistencies of his narrative pointed out, 73. Obtains a pension, 77. His evidence against lord Stafford, 130. Is heavily fined for calling the duke of York a popish traitor, 200. Is convicted and sentenced for perjury, 225.

Oath, ex officio, arbitrary administration of, by the court of ecclesiastical commission, v. 263.

Odo, bishop of Baieux, uterine brother to William the Conqueror, left joint administrator of the kingdom with William Fitzosborn during his brother's absence in Normandy, i. 239. Aspires to the popedom, 278. Seized by William and confined during his reign, 279. Engages in a conspiracy against William Rufus, 287.

Offa, king of Mercia, his descent, i. 48. Succeeds Ethelbald, *ib.* His wars, *ib.* His treacherous murder of Ethelbert king of the East Angles, *ib.* His pious deeds of expiation, 49. Imposes the tax of Peter's pence, *ib.* Endows a rich monastery at St. Albans, *ib.* Enters into an alliance with Charlemagne, 50. Makes a rampart against the Welsh, *ib. note.*

Okey, colonel, one of the king's judges, is seized in Holland, brought home and executed, vii. 380. His character, *ib.*

Olave the Dane, his character, i. 134. Confirmed by English bishops, and canonized by the church of Rome, *ib.*

Old man of the mountains. See *Assassins.*

Oldcastle, Sir John. See *Cobham.*

O'Neale, Hugh. See *Tyrone.*

———, Owen, enters into a conspiracy with Rinuccini, the pope's legate, against the lord lieutenant Ormond, vii. 162. Enters into a correspondence

correspondence with the parliamentary generals, 164. Is reduced by Cromwel, 170.

O'Neale, Sir Phelim, engages in Roger More's conspiracy to expel the English from Ireland, vi. 433. His cruel massacre of the English in Ulster, 437. Forges a commission from the king for his insurrection, 443. Is taken and executed by Ireton, vii. 206.

———, Shan, his history and character, v. 398.

Opdam, the Dutch admiral, is killed in an engagement with the duke of York, vii. 403.

Orange, prince of, taken prisoner by the French on the defeat of the duke of Britany, iii. 342. Gained over, and released, to persuade the young dutchess to a marriage with the French king, 348.

———, William prince of, is condemned as a rebel, and his possessions confiscated by the duke of Alva, v. 215. Unites the towns of Holland and Zealand into a league against the Spanish government, 216. Sends an embassy to implore the assistance of Elizabeth, 217. Concludes the treaty called the pacification of Ghent, 219. Concludes a treaty with queen Elizabeth, 220. Is assassinated by Gerard, 267.

Maurice prince of, succeeds the earl of Leicester in the government of the United Provinces, v. 329. Battle of Tournholt, 376. Renews the war with Spain on the expiration of the truce, vi. 147.

———, William prince of, is married to the princess Mary of England, vi. 424.

William prince of, is educated by John de Wit, vii. 482. His character, *ib.* Is appointed general and admiral of the United Provinces, 483. Is made Stadtholder, 494. Unites the Dutch to oppose the conquests of Lewis XIV. 498. Is joined by the Imperial general Montecuculi, and obliges the French to abandon the Low Countries, 510. His obstinate battle with the prince of Condé at Seneffe, viii. 9. Is unable to prevent the loss of Bouchaine, 21. Is defeated by the French at St. Omers, 27. Comes over to England to marry the princess Mary, 33. The marriage concluded, 34. Concerts with Charles the plan of peace, 35. Attacks the French army the day after signing the peace at Nimeguen, 46. Remarks on his conduct with respect to English affairs, 277. Forms a league against Lewis XIV. 278. Refuses to concur in the designs of James II. 279. His reply to the king's solicitations by Fagel, 280. His instructions to Dykvelt, his envoy to England, 281. Applications made to him by the English, 282. Is formally invited over to England by the principal men, 283. The motives which induced him to listen to the overtures of the English, 284. His preparations to oppose king James, 285. His declaration published, 292. Embarks, 293. Lands at Torbay, 294. Declines treating with the commissioners, and marches for London, 299. Orders the king, on his return after his first flight, not to approach London, 303. Is desired by the peers to assume the government, and to summon a convention, 308. Summons the convention, *ib.* Summons a convention at Edinburgh, 309. Receives an offer of the crown of Scotland, 310. His conduct during the meeting of the convention-parliament, 317. His declaration to a meeting of peers, *ib.* The crown settled on him and the princess, 319.

Ordainers, a council of, formed in the reign of Edward II. by parliament, to govern the nation, ii. 333. Ordinances framed by, *ib.* Aim particularly at Piers Gavaston, and banish him, 334.

Ordeal, in the Anglo-Saxon law, the several species of, i. 224.

Ordinance, the self-denying one, passed by the long parliament, vii. 27.

Orkney, earl Bothwel made duke of, v. 113. The banns ordered to be published between him and queen Mary, *ib.* Is married to her by the bishop of Orkney, 115. Endeavours to get prince James into his power, 118. Raises an army to oppose a confederacy of nobles formed against him, *ib.* Flies to the Orkneys, and subsists by piracy, 119. Escapes to Denmark, where he dies miserably in prison, 120.

———, bishop of, marries Mary queen of Scots to Bothwel, v. 115. Is appointed one of the commissioners in her cause, on the part of the king and kingdom, 134.

Orleans, city of, besieged by the earl of Salisbury, iii. 138. Succeeded by the earl of Suffolk on his death, 139. Cannon first successfully applied at this siege, *ib.* Battle of Herrings, 140. The duke of Burgundy recalls his troops from the siege, *ib.* Distress of the town and garrison, 141. Joan d'Arc enters it with a convoy, 146. A second convoy enters unmolested, *ib.* The English repulsed from several of their posts, 148. Amazement of the besiegers, *ib.* The siege raised, 149. See *Joan d'Arc* Is besieged by the duke of Guise, 78. Guise assassinated there, *ib.*

———, Lewis duke of, disputes the administration of affairs with the duke of Burgundy, on the insanity of Charles VI. iii. 93. Reconciliation between them, *ib.* Assassinated by the duke of Burgundy, *ib.* For his natural son, see *Dunois*.

———, duke of, taken prisoner at the battle of Azincour, iii. 102. Obtains a neutrality for his demesnes, 140. Ransoms himself, 168.

———, Lewis duke of, disputes the administration of France during the minority of Charles VIII. with the princess Anne of Beaujeu, iii. 336. Obliged to fly to the court of Britany, *ib.* Commands the duke of Britany's forces against the invasion of France, *ib.* Taken prisoner by the French, 342. Released, to promote the king of France's suit to the dutchess of Britany, 349. Succeeds to the crown of France, 384. See *Lewis* XII.

Ormesby, left justiciary of Scotland on the return of earl Warrane to England, ii. 298. The Scots irritated at his oppressions, *ib.* Flies to England, on the appearance of William Wallace, 299.

Ormond, earl of, reduces the Spanish general San Josepho in Kerry, v. 233.

———, earl of, his successes against the Irish rebels, vi. 544. Engages the justices and council to adhere to the king against the parliament, *ib.* Concludes a cessation with the rebels by the king's order, 546. Sends over troops to assist the king, 547. Glamorgan treats with the Irish rebels without his knowledge, vii. 67. Resigns Dublin, and all other places, by the king's order, to the parliamentary forces, 76. Concludes a peace with the council of Kilkenny, and engages it to assist the king, 161. Narrowly escapes from

from a conspiracy formed against him, 162. Retires to France, 163. Returns back, *ib.* Reduces the parliamentary garrisons, 165. Besieges Dublin, 169. Is defeated by a sally from the city, *ib.* Again leaves the island, 171. Comes to England to concert a conspiracy against the protector, 280. Is forced to fly, 281. Is made steward of the household, and created a duke, 351. Is made lord lieutenant of Ireland, where he suppresses an intended insurrection, 447. Remonstrates against the English act prohibiting the importation of Irish cattle, *ib.* Is seized by Blood, but rescued, 470. Is again sent lord lieutenant of Ireland, viii. 162. His administration vindicated, by his son Ossory, against lord Shaftesbury, 163. Is recalled by king James, 251.

Osric, king of Deiri, and Eanfrid, king of Bernicia, apostatise to paganism, and both perish in battle, i. 44.

Ostend, short account of the siege of, by the Spaniards, v. 444, *note.*

Ossory, lord, son of the duke of Ormond, his bold speech to the duke of Buckingham, vii. 470. Commands in the fleet under prince Rupert, 507. Justifies his father's administration in Ireland against lord Shaftesbury, viii. 163.

Oswald, king of Northumberland, recovers the dismembered parts of his kingdom, and restores the Christian religion, i. 44. Gives the Britons a final defeat, *ib.* Slain by Penda, king of Mercia, 45. History of his successors, *ib.*

Otterburne, battle of, iii. 25.

Otway, the poet, his unhappy fate, viii. 338.

Overbury, Sir Thomas, assists young Carre, the king's favourite, with good advice, vi. 66. His imprudence in the affair of lady Essex, 68. Is committed to the Tower by the deceitful contrivance of Rochester, 69. Is poisoned, by order of Somerset and his lady, 70. His remarks on the English navy, 181.

Outlaws, whether eligible to parliament, vi. 17.

Oxford University, by whom first founded, i. 96. The parliament, afterwards called the *mad* parliament, assembles there, ii. 183. The provisions of, enacted, 184. See *Barons.* Lectures on civil law, when first read there, iii. 299. When first erected into a bishopric iv. 183. The parliament removed thither by Charles I. on account of the plague at London, vi. 206. This parliament dissolved on the plague appearing there, 212. Negotiations there for a peace between the king and parliament, 510. The king endeavours to form a parliament there, in opposition to that at London, vii. 3.

———, earl of, invites Henry VII. to an entertainment, iii. 399. Fined by the king for his retainers, 400.

P.

PACK, alderman, makes a motion in parliament for giving Cromwel the title of king, vii. 270.

Paget, secretary, remonstrates to lord Seymour the impropriety of caballing against his brother, the protector, iv. 314. Informs the protector of his practices, and advises him to return from Scotland, to guard

guard against them, 314. Adheres to Somerset in his distress, 337. Advises Mary to the Spanish alliance, 383.

Palatinate of the Rhine. See *Frederic.* The English undertake the recovery of it, vi. 151. The attempt fails, *ib.* Treaty of Westphalia, vii. 246.

Palestine, state of, at the arrival of the crusaders, Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, ii. 14.

Palmer, Mrs. See *Cleveland.*

———, Sir Thomas, is employed by Northumberland as a spy upon Somerset, iv. 351. His accusation against Somerset, *ib.* Is apprehended for joining the party of the lady Jane Gray, 372. Is executed, 373.

Pandolf, legate from pope Innocent III. to Philip, in his expedition against king John of England, his private instructions, ii 70. Proposes an interview with John, *ib.* Procures his submission to the pope, 71. Receives the resignation of his kingdom, and homage from him, *ib.* Excommunicates the earl of Albemarle and his adherents, 153.

Papacy, the seat of, how fixed in Italy, iii. 57.

Papal authority, the popular sentiments of, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 493. Renounced by Henry VIII. iv. 119. See *Reformation.*

Par, Catharine, married to Henry VIII. iv. 239. Is made regent during Henry's absence in France, 246. Her narrow escape from impeachment for heresy, 258. Her prudent evasion of this danger, 259. Marries lord Seymour soon after Henry's death, 314. Dies in child-bed, 315.

Paris, massacre of the Hugonots in that city, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, v. 205. See *France.*

Parker, archbishop, his character, v. 262.

———, bishop of Oxford, is violently appointed president of Magdalen-hall by James II. viii. 266.

Parliament, English, a view of, in its feudal form, ii. 114. By what titles the clergy obtained seats in, *ib.* The importance of the barons in, 115. The commons not originally a part of, 116. Composed wholly of military tenants, *ib.* When usually assembled, 121. That summoned at Oxford in the minority of Henry III. grants, in his name, a renewal and confirmation of the great charter, 155. Refuses supplies to Henry, 165. 172. The spirited remonstrances of, to the king, on his demand of a supply, 177. Grants a supply on a solemn confirmation of the great charter, 179. Assembles, dressed in armour, 183. That termed the *mad* one, meets at Oxford, *ib.* A supreme council of twenty-four chosen by, to regulate the government, *ib.* The first efforts toward sending representatives of counties to, 184. Regular sessions of, appointed by the council of barons, *ib.* A committee appointed by the council of twenty-four, of equal authority with, to act in the intervals of the sessions, 187. One called by Henry, which authorises him to resume the government, in consequence of the pope's absolution, 194. One summoned by Leicester after the battle of Lewes, which appoints a council of nine to administer government, 208. Again summoned by Leicester, and the house of commons regularly formed, 210. Approves of the ordinances of the reforming barons, after the civil wars were

ended, 223. Other laws enacted in the reign of Henry III. *ib.* The first summoned by Edward I. reforms the administration of justice, 235. The barons prohibited coming to, except summoned by writ, 269. Grants supplies to Edward for a French war, 284. Is awed into a confirmation of the two charters, by the earls of Norfolk and Hereford, while the king is in Flanders, 292. A summary view of the supplies granted to Edward I. 323. The banishment of Piers Gavaston demanded by Thomas earl of Lancaster, 331. Procures the government to be vested in a council of twelve, 333. Passes a sentence of forfeiture and perpetual exile against the Despensers, 346. Deposes Edward II. 357. A council of regency formed by, to act during the minority of Edward III. 371. Ratifies Mortimer's treaty with Robert Bruce, 376. Condemns Mortimer to death, 379. Assists the king in his endeavours to restore Edward Baliol in Scotland, and its advice to him, 386. Grant supplies to assist the pretensions of Edward to the crown of France, 396. Is summoned by prince Edward during his father's absence in Flanders, but no supplies obtained, 400. Remarks on the present power of, *ib.* Its conditional grants to the king, 401. Resolutions of, on his resuming title as king of France, 402. Frames an act for redress of grievances before the making the required grants, 412. Is prevailed on to repeal this act, 414. Advises the king to break the truce with Philip, and makes grants for the renewal of the war, 423. The consideration it arrived to, in the reign of Edward III. 487. Its frequent endeavours to abolish purveyance in this reign, 489. Attempts in vain to reduce the price of labour, 496. Settlement of government established by, during the minority of Richard II. iii. 3. Is dissolved, and the increase of its authority shewn, 4. Imposes a poll-tax, and the alarming consequences of it, 6. Its peremptory deputation to the king, 15. Its undue compact with the duke of Gloucester and his party, 19. Proceedings against the ministry, 20 The irregularity of their conduct, 23. Influence of the king over, and their compliance with his measures, 449. Adjourned to Shrewsbury, 33. Grants Richard the duties on wool and leather for life, with other subsidies, *ib.* Before their dissolution, vest the parliamentary authority in a committee of twelve lords and six commoners, 34. Names of the commissioners, *ib. note.* Heads of the accusation presented to, against king Richard, 41. Deposes him, 46. Act against heresy, 55. Repealed, *ib.* The repeal suppressed by the influence of the clergy, *ib.* Confusions in, at the accession of Henry IV. 62. Opposes his attempt to exclude females from the succession, 80. Advises the king to seize the temporalities of the church, *ib.* Renews the same advice to Henry V. 92. Grants to Henry, after the battle of Azincour, 103. 113. Causes which contributed to increase its influence in government, 123. Appoints a new arrangement of administration during the minority of Henry VI. *ib.* Refuses supplies to the duke of Bedford, regent of France, 153. One called at St. Edmund's Bury, 172. Makes the duke of York protector during pleasure, 199. Resumes all the grants to the crown since the time of Henry V. 201. That of Coventry, remarks on, 214. The title of Edward IV. recognized by, 221. Attainders reversed, *ib.* Act of forfeiture and attainder passed against Henry

Henry VI. and his queen, and their party, 222. Summoned, at the restoration of Henry VI. 243. New system of attainders and reversals, *ib.* Summoned by Edward on his restoration, 251. Their grants to the king toward a French war, 253. Reflections on the inconsistency of their proceedings, 263. One summoned by Richard III. recognizes his authority, creates his son prince of Wales, and makes grants, 290. Attainders reversed on the coming in of Henry VII. 316. Expedient for qualifying the king's prior attainder, *ib.* Entail of the crown, how managed, 316. Attainders of the York party, 318. Grants a supply for the assistance of the duke of Britany, 343. Grants supplies to the king for a war with France, 353. Passes a law to indemnify all who act under the authority of the king for the time being, 366. Grants Henry another subsidy, 372. Its obsequiousness to his oppressive measures, 389. Chuses Dudley, the minister of his extortions, speaker, *ib.* Star-chamber authority confirmed by, 397. The king's suit for murder limited within a year and a day, 398. Benefit of clergy abridged, *ib.* Statutes against retainers, and for other salutary purposes, 399. Law permitting the entailment of estates to be broke, 400. Review of other laws passed by Henry VII. 401. The first of Henry VIII. attaints Empson and Dudley, the ministers of the extortions of Henry VII. 412. Redresses some abuses in the late reign, *ib. note.* Grants supplies for a war with France, 419. Imposes a proportional poll-tax, 424. Grants of, to Henry, by the influence of cardinal Wolsey, and of Sir Thomas More, iv. 47. Passes an act against levying annates, 107. Continues to abridge the papal authority, in the regulation of monasteries, and election of bishops, 117 The succession of the crown regulated, 118. Declares the king supreme head of the church, 120. Attaints sir Thomas More, and bishop Fisher, 121. Unites England and Wales, *ib.* Passes an act of attainder against the accomplices of *the Holy Maid of Kent*, 137. The lesser monasteries suppressed by, 150. Farther progress made in the union between England and Wales, 151. The gross flattery of the speaker of the commons to the king, 163. Reason assigned for annulling the king's marriage with Anne Boleyn, *ib.* The princess Mary and Elibeth illegitimated, and the succession settled on the king's issue by Jane Seymour, *ib.* All authority of the bishop of Rome renounced, 164. Passes the bill of six articles, for abolishing diversity of opinions in religion, 194. Enacts that royal proclamation shall have the force of laws, 196. Yet passes a statute declaring that the king's proclamations shall not infringe the laws or customs of the realm, *ib.* Confirms the surrender of the monasteries, 199. Dissolves the order of St. John of Jerusalem, or knights of Malta, 206. Grants with reluctance, supplies to Henry, 206. Instance of its servile compliance with Henry's caprices, 209. Condemns Dr. Barnes for heresy, 212. Attaints queen Catharine Howard and her associates, 219. Passes an act to secure the virtue of Henry's future wives, 221. Ireland erected into a kingdom by, 459. Ratifies the future decisions of the commissioners appointed by the king to establish a religion, 222. Prohibits the reading of the bible to the lower classes of the people, 224. Grants supplies for a French war, 237. Enacts that offences against the king's proclamations shall be judged by a council of nine, *ib.* Enforces obedience to

to the *Erudition of a Christian Man*, published by Henry VIII. 238. Restores the princesses Mary and Elizabeth to their right of succession, 242. The style of the king's regal title settled, *ib.* The king's debts contracted by a general loan remitted, 243. Another oath of the king's supremacy imposed, *ib.* The law of the six articles mitigated, *ib.* Grants another subsidy, 251. Bestows on the king all the university and hospital revenues, *ib.* The abject flattery bestowed on the king, 252. Henry's speech to, on proroguing it, *ib.* Attainder of the duke of Norfolk, 263. A recapitulation of the statutes passed by Henry VIII. 269. Remarks on the statute granting him the duties of tonnage and poundage, 272. One summoned by the duke of Somerset, protector, 306. The wholesome laws passed this session, *ib.* Lord Seymour condemned, 319. Celibacy recommended to the clergy, but their marriage permitted, 321. Heavy taxes laid on money and trade, *ib. note.* Deprives the protector of all his offices, and fines him, 340. Passes a severe act against rioters, *ib.* Interest for money declared illegal, 354. The new liturgy authorised, *ib.* Acts passed, against treason, and making provision for the poor, *ib.* The Latin mass celebrated in, at the accession of queen Mary, 379. The species of treason limited, *ib.* The queen's legitimacy established, *ib.* All Edward's statutes of religion repealed, *ib.* The duke of Norfolk's attainder reversed, 380. Is dissolved, for opposing the Spanish alliance, 385. A large sum sent over by the emperor Charles V. to bribe the new one, 394. Gardiner's speech at the opening of, 395. The caution of, with respect to the pretensions of Philip, *ib.* Is dissolved, 397. A new one summoned, which reverses the attainder of cardinal Pole, 399. Implores forgiveness of the pope for their defection from the church of Rome, 400. Its caution to prevent the resumption of church lands, *ib.* Revives the sanguinary laws against heretics, 401. Tenths and first fruits restored to the church, 422. Subsidies granted by a new one, 441. All sales or grants of crown-lands by the queen for seven years to come, confirmed, *ib.* Law for regulating the militia, 448. The first law for repair of the highways by a general parish-duty, 449. The joy discovered at the accession of queen Elizabeth, v. 2. A new one called by whom the title of the queen is recognized, 9. The newly erected monasteries suppressed, 10. All statutes of Edward VI. concerning religion, restored, 11. The nomination of bishops given to the crown, *ib.* The mass abolished, and liturgy restored, 12. The queen's royal power over all her dominions strongly asserted, and the assertion of the papal authority subjected to the penalties of treason, 76. Laws against prophesying and witchcraft, 77. Supplies granted to the queen, *ib.* Elizabeth's speech at the dissolution of, 103. A new one summoned, after an interval of five years, 173. Is prohibited, by the queen's order, from meddling with any matters of state, *ib.* Reflections on her haughty treatment of, and her declared notions of the proper objects of its attention, 181. Laws passed this session of, 183. A spirited speech of Peter Wentworth, a commoner, in favour of liberty of speech in, 225. Petitions the queen for church reformation, instead of proceeding on the bill introduced for that purpose, 228. Supplies granted by, to the queen, 235. Laws against

against popery, 236. Confirms the association for the protection of the queen, 258. Appoints a regency, in case of her violent death, 259. A severe law against Jesuits and popish priests, *ib.* Elizabeth's speech, on the application made by the commons for farther religious reformation, 264. Ratifies the sentence against Mary queen of Scots, and petitions for her execution, 301. Grants supplies to the queen, on the defeat of the Spanish armada, 345. Passes a severe law against recusants, 366. Votes supplies, 367. The queen's speech to, *ib.* Its legislative power checked by Elizabeth, 463. Tyrannical statutes passed by, 466. One summoned by James I. vi. 14. Appoints commissioners, at the king's desire, to treat of an union between the two kingdoms, 25. Becomes jealous of the regal prerogative in ecclesiastical affairs, 53. Buckingham lays before it an insincere account of the treaty for the Spanish match, which the king and prince vouch, 141. The king's speech relative to a war with Spain, 142. An act against monopolies, 143. One summoned by Charles I. on his accession, 199. Its ill humour, owing to disgust against Buckingham, 201. Other contributing causes, 202. Is adjourned to Oxford on account of the plague, 206. The king lays his necessities before it, *ib.* Refuses supplies, 207. Dissolved on the plague appearing at Oxford, 211. A second called by Charles, 212. A third summoned, 239. The king's threatening address to it, 240. The petition of right passed, 253; which is followed by a grant of supplies, 256. Is dissolved, 276. Is summoned after eleven years' interval, 345. The king's pleas to procure supplies, 346. Is abruptly dissolved, 353. Meeting of the long, 367. An act for triennial parliaments passed, 394. Attainder of Strafford, 414. Act against adjourning and proroguing the parliament without his own consent, 416. The star-chamber, and high commission court, abolished, 420. Other arbitrary courts suppressed, 422. Adjourns, and appoints a committee of both houses to sit during the recess, 423. Appoints a committee to attend the king to Scotland, *ib.* Makes a present, with acknowledgements, to the Scottish army, which are now disbanded, 425. A day of thanksgiving appointed for the national pacification, *ib.* Applies to the earl of Essex for a guard, 429. Votes the king's interfering in a bill depending in, to be a breach of privilege, 458. Reflections on the uncertainty of parliamentary privileges, 459. Petitions or addresses received from divers bodies of the common people, promising to protect its privileges, 475. Is petitioned by a body of women, 476. The bishops' votes taken away, 477. Threatens the queen with an impeachment, *ib.* Passes the militia bill, 479. Raises an army, and appoints the earl of Essex general, 490. Obtains loans of the people, *ib.* Sends conditions of agreement to the king, 492. Stops all remittances of revenue to the king, 496. Their fleet intercepts supplies from the queen to the king, *ib.* Its haughty reception of the king's overtures, 500. Votes an address for a treaty after the battle of Edgehill, 518. Its demands in the negotiation at Oxford, 519. For the operations of its forces against the king, see *Essex, Waller, Fairfax, Cromwel,* &c. The military operations conducted by a committee of both houses, 526. The secret measures and despotic authority of this committee, *ib.* Applies to Scotland for

for assistance, 536. Sends commissioners to engage the Scots to confederate with them, 540. Receives and enforces subscription to the solemn league and covenant, 541. Remits money to Scotland, to raise an army, 542. Measures taken to suppress the Irish rebellion, 543. A committee of, sent to Ireland, is excluded the council by the influence of Ormond, 544. Lays an excise on beer, wine, and other commodities, VII. 4. Publishes an ordinance for retrenching a meal a week, toward the public service, *ib.* Is wrote to by the king, but rejects his offers of treaty, 6. The independents form a party in, 21. Differences between Manchester and Cromwel, 22. Passes the self-denying ordinance, 27. Receives proposals from the king for a treaty, 30. Sends commissioners to Uxbridge, 31. Summons an assembly of divines at Westminster, for regulating religion, 32. Demands of the commissioners at Uxbridge, as to religion, *ib.* Demands as to the militia, 35. Demands with regard to Ireland, 36. Other demands made to the king, 37. Return of the commissioners, *ib.* Execution of Laud, 38. Publishes the king's letters taken at Naseby, 58. Refuses a treaty with the king, 66. Issues orders for securing him, if he came to London, *ib.* Reproaches the king with Glamorgan's transactions in Ireland, 68. Establishes the presbyterian discipline, 69. But refuses to admit the divine right of it, 70. Restrains the power of excommunication, *ib.* Is informed by the Scots of the king's arrival in their army, 73. Sends fresh proposals to the king, 76. Treats with the Scots for delivering up the king, 78. He is delivered to the commissioners sent for him, 80. Proposes a reduction of the army, 83 The army begins to mutiny against its authority, 85. Sends proposals for their going to Ireland, 86. Votes to disband all who refuse that service, 88. Discovers Cromwel's schemes, and prepares an accusation against him, 90. Its oppressive acts render it odious to the people, 91. A review of its civil administration, 92. Orders out the London militia to defend it against the army, 95. Enters into a negotiation with the army, 96. Appoints Fairfax general in chief of all the forces, 100. Is obliged to vote according to the instructions of the army, *ib.* Is forced by the populace to reverse a vote for the change of the London militia, 101. Their speakers apply to the army for protection, *ib.* New speakers chosen, and defence prepared for, 102. The old speakers reinstated by the army, 103. Negotiates again with the king, 111. Votes against any farther negotiation with the king, 113. Declares the Scots enemies, 120. Endeavours to regain its liberty during the absence of the army, and sends to treat with the king, 121. The points debated between them, 122. Disavows any concurrence in the seizure of the king by the army, 130. Is surrounded by the army, 131. Proceeds to a conclusion of the treaty with the king, *ib.* The presbyterian members excluded, and confined by colonel Pride, *ib.* The remaining members reverse the former proceedings, 132. See *Commons*. Its proceedings after the battle of Worcester, 201. Erects a high court of justice to try offences against the commonwealth, 202. See *Commonwealth*. Frames the navigation act, 211. Grants letters of reprisal against the United Provinces, *ib.* Refuses to admit the apology of the Dutch for Trompe's conduct, and commences

mences war with the States, 213. See *Blake, Ayscue,* &c. The army remonstrates for a new one, 217. Is violently dissolved by Cromwel, 219. Reflections on its proceedings, 220. A new one summoned by Cromwel, 227. Character of it, 228. Regulations in government and religion proposed by, *ib.* Orders marriage to be solemnized by the civil magistrate, 229. Resigns its authority to Cromwel, 231. One summoned by the protector, 238. The equitable plan of election, *ib.* Is reproved by the protector for disputing his authority, 241. Is forced to recognise his authority, and is then dissolved, *ib.* A new one chosen by the protector, 268. Votes a renunciation of the royal family, 269. A motion made by Jephson for bestowing the crown on Cromwel, *ib.* The same motion made in form by alderman Pack, *ib.* This motion agreed to, and a committee appointed to persuade the protector's acceptance, 270. Confirms his protectoral authority, on his refusal of the title of king, 275. Is again assembled in two houses, as formerly, 277. Is dissolved, 278. One called by Richard Cromwel, 294. Votes against the council of officers, 296. Is dissolved by their influence, 297. The long one restored by the council of officers, 298. Discovers a design formed for restoring the king, which is suppressed, 302. Cashiers Lambert, and vests the command of the army in commission, 303. Is expelled by Lambert, *ib.* Is again restored, 313. Reduces the army to obedience, 314. Is desired by Monk to send the regiments out of London, 316. Monk arrives, and is thanked, *ib.* His reply, *ib.* Its authority disputed by the people, particularly by London, 317. Orders Monk to march into the city to seize the refractory citizens, 318. Is ordered by Monk to fix a time for dissolution, and for calling a new one, 319. The secluded members take their seats, and after some necessary votes, issue writs for a new one, 320. The new one meets, and sir Harbottle Grimstone chosen speaker, 327. See *Commons.* The house of lords re-assembles, 328. See *Lords.* Charles II. proclaimed, *ib.* A committee appointed to invite the king over, *ib.* Act of indemnity passed, 353. Settlement of the revenue, 354. Its caution in disbanding the army, 355. Is dissolved, 358. The new one passes an act for the security of the king's person and government, 371. Resigns all military authority to the king, 373. Corporation act passed, 374. An act of uniformity passed, *ib.* Grants the king four subsidies, being the last grant of that nature. 391. Militia regulated, *ib.* Repeals the triennial act, 395. Grants supplies for the Dutch war, 401. 408. Five-mile act, 408. Regulates the building of London, 416. Votes a supply to the king, 417. An act of incapacity and banishment passed against Clarendon, 427. Prohibits the importation of Irish cattle, 447. Supplies granted, 456. Act against conventicles passed, *ib.* Coventry act, 469. Meets after two year prorogation, 500. Speeches of the king and the chancellor Shaftesbury to, *ib.* 501. Test act passed, 505. Is prorogued on the discontent of the commons, 512. Its legality disputed, after a twelvemonth's recess, viii. 26. Exhorts the king to guard against the growing power of France, 27. Addresses the king to form an alliance with the States against France, 31. Is adjourned, *ib.* Takes the popish plot into consideration, 78. A new test-act passed, 83.

83. Is dissolved, 88. Character of this long one, 89. A new one summoned, 93. Habeas Corpus act passed, 107. Is prorogued, and afterwards dissolved, to stop proceedings against Danby, 110. The king's speech to the new one, 128. The persecuting statute, 35 Eliz. repealed, and dissenters eased, 145. The king evades giving his assent to this bill, 148. Is dissolved, and a new one summoned, 149. Meets at Oxford, 150. Is suddenly dissolved, 154. One called by James II. 220. His speech to, on the settlement of a revenue on him, *ib.* Arguments urged for and against the grant of a revenue during life, 221. The grant during life voted, 224. An act of attainder passed against the duke of Monmouth, 226. The convention summoned by the prince of Orange, 308. Settles the crown on the prince and princess of Orange, 319.

Parliament of Scotland, recognizes the title of the maid of Norway to the crown, ii. 246. Refers the pretensions of Baliol and Bruce to the award of Edward I. of England, 249. Is summoned by the queen dowager in an abbey near Haddington, and determines to send the young queen Mary to France, iv. 311. Summoned by the *Congregation of the Lord*, in which the catholic religion is suppressed, and the presbyterian discipline established, v. 38. The queen in France refuses to ratify the proceedings of, 39. Is summoned by Mary to attaint the banished lords, 94. How this scheme failed, *ib.* The protestant religion established, with the queen's sanction, 110, *note.* Is summoned by the regent Murray, condemns Mary to prison for the murder of her husband, and ratifies the settlement of the crown on her son James VI. 125. Appoints commissioners to negotiate a treaty with Elizabeth, 171. Prohibits the clergy from meddling with the affairs of government, 256. A law proposed to it by James, for the external government of the church to be vested in him and the bishops, vi. 89. The bill dropped by the opposition of the clergy, 90. One held by Charles I. 300. Its proceedings toward ratifying the acts of the assembly, stopped by prorogation, 344. Abolishes the lords of articles, 436. The creation of peerages limited, 427. Triennial parliaments established, *ib.* Its consent made necessary in the appointment of officers of state, 428. Its cool behaviour on being informed by the king of the Irish massacre, 444. Sends commissioners to treat with the English parliament, *ib.* Opposes the delivering up the king to the English parliament, vii. 80. One summoned by Charles II. after the defeat at Dunbar, 192. One called on the restoration, which annuls all laws passed since the year 1633, 365. The covenant annulled, 368. Proceedings of, 439. Act of indemnity, *ib.* Act against conventicles, 442. One summoned before Lauderdale as commissioner, viii. 50. Severe law against conventicles, 51. Enacts a contradictory test act, 167. Its abject servility to James II. on his accession, 237. Rejects the king's application for indulgence to catholics, 258. The convention summoned by the prince of Orange offers the crown to him and the princess, 309.

Parma, dutchess of, is left by Philip II. of Spain governess of the Low Countries, v. 192.

Parma, prince of, succeeds Don John of Austria in the command of the Low Countries, v. 222. Reduces several provinces to obedience to Spain, 268. His successes against the earl of Leicester, 275. Prepares to join the armada in the invasion of England, 333. Refuses to join the fleet on its ill success, 344. Marches to assist the catholic league in France, 358.

Parry, William, is instigated by the Jesuits to take away the life of queen Elizabeth, v. 265. His deliberate prosecution of his purpose 266. Is discovered and executed, 267.

Pascal II. pope of Rome, his disputes with king Henry I. about investitures, i. 326. His insolent answers to Henry, 327. 329. His shameful breach of treaty with the emperor Henry V. 331. Threatens Henry with excommunication, 332. Compromise between, 333.

Passive obedience, the antiquity of that doctrine in England, vi. 569. The principle of, endeavoured to be enforced by the house of lords, viii. 12. Arguments urged concerning, *ib.*

Pasturage, laws enacted by Henry VII. to restrain the throwing lands into, iv. 277. The inducements to this practice, and evils resulting from it, 327.

Patents for monopolies, debates in the house of commons concerning, in queen Elizabeth's reign, v. 528. See *Monopolies*.

Pavia, battle of, between the Imperialists and Francis I. of France, iv. 57.

Paul III. pope, hopes at his succession to effect a reconciliation with Henry VIII. iv. 140. Excommunicates Henry, 141. 184. The rage expressed against Henry on his suppressing the religious houses, 184. A council summoned at Mantua, the authority of which Henry declares against, 188. Appoints Beaton, primate of Scotland, a cardinal, 231.

—— IV. pope, his character, iv. 420. Is offended at queen Mary's assuming the title of queen of Ireland, *ib.* Insists on full restitution of all church possessions, *ib.* His conduct compared with that of the emperor Charles V. 427. Cites archbishop Cranmer to stand trial for heresy at Rome, 429. His haughty behaviour on the English ambassador's notification of the accession of Elizabeth, v. 4.

Paulinus, archbishop of York, converts Edwin king of Northumberland to christianity, i. 43. Converts Coifi the Saxon high priest, *ib.*

Peada, son of Penda, king of Mercia, receives christianity into his kingdom, i. 47.

Pecquigni, treaty of peace there, between Edward IV. of England and Lewis XI. of France, iii. 255.

Peers, when first created by patent, iii. 58. A great council of, summoned by Charles I. at York, vi. 359. House of. See *Lords*.

Pembroke, earl of, his ineffectual endeavours to save Chateau Gaillard from being taken by Philip of France, ii. 52.

———, earl of, is mareschal of England, at the death of king John, ii. 145. Procures young Henry III. to be crowned at Gloucester, *ib.* Is chosen protector of the kingdom, *ib.* Endeavours to conciliate the affections of the barons to the young king, 148. Takes the city of

of Lincoln from the French, 150. The barons conclude a peace with him, 151. His prudent care to restore the form of goverment, 152. Dies, *ib.*

Pembroke, Aymer de Valence earl of, joins in the confederacy of Thomas earl of Lancaster, against Piers Gavaston, ii. 335. Takes Gavaston prisoner in Scarborough castle, 336.

———, earl of, is taken prisoner with his whole army at sea, by Henry. king of Castile, ii. 482.

———, Jasper Tudor earl of, defeated by Edward duke of York at Mortimer's cross, iii. 210.

———, Sir William Herbert, created earl of, iv. 350. Deserts Northumberland, and declares for queen Mary, 371. Is confined to his house for engaging in the duke of Norfolk's designs, v. 162.

Penn, admiral, commands the protector's fleet sent to the West Indies, vii. 254. Makes an attempt on St. Domingo, 255. Takes Jamaica, and is sent to the Tower, *ib.*

Penda, king of Mercia, his character, i. 47. His enterprises, *ib.* Killed, *ib.*

Pennington, commander of some ships sent in the service of France, refuses to sail against Rochelle, and returns, vi. 208. Is ordered back to Dieppe, where his men desert the service, *ib.*

Pennsylvania, when settled, viii. 328.

Penruddoc, and other royalists, excite an insurrection against Cromwel at Salisbury, vii. 243.

Penry, a Brownist, his cruel prosecution for writing against the hierarchy, v. 467.

People, their situation under the feudal government in England, ii. 111.

Perigord, cardinal, endeavours an accommodation between prince Edward of England and John king of France, at Poictiers, ii. 455.

Perjury, the frequency of, under the old Anglo-Saxon law, remarked, and the causes traced, i. 222.

Perkin Warbec. See *Warbec.*

Perth, Knox, the reformer, arrives from Geneva, and preaches there, v. 26. Riot of reformers there, against the catholic worship, *ib.* The queen regent received there by accommodation with the *Congregation of the Lord,* 29. Is besieged and taken by the *Congregation,* 30. A synod of presbyterian ministers there, routed by a mob of women, vii. 529.

Pescara, marquis of, the Imperial general, invades Provençe, and besieges Marseilles, iv. 55.

Peter the Hermit, undertakes to rescue the holy land from the Turks, and applies to pope Martin II. i. 294. Leads a vast multitude on this enterprise, 297.

—— of Pomfret, a hermit, his cruel treatment by king John, for a prophecy concerning him, ii. 73.

—— of Savoy, uncle to queen Eleanor, invested with the honour of Richmond, and the wardship of earl Warrenne, ii. 163.

——, king of Castile. See *Castile.*

—— des Roches. See *Winchester.*

Peter's Pence, occasion of imposing that tax, i. 49. The payment of, suspended by Henry II. 406.
Peters, Hugh, chaplain to Oliver Cromwel, a frequent text of his, vii 111, *note*. Is tried and executed, 358.
——, father, a Jesuit, and confessor to king James II. is made a privy counsellor, viii. 252.
Peterborough, when first erected into a bishopric, iv. 183. Dean of, his behaviour to Mary queen of Scots at her execution, v. 316.
Petition of right, this famous bill taken under consideration by the house of commons, vi. 246. Is passed by the commons, 256. Passed by the lords, 253. The king's evasive manner of passing it, *ib.* Receives the king's full assent, 256. The petition at large, 572.
Petitioners and Abhorrers, an account of the origin of those party distinctions, viii. 126.
Peyto, a friar, insolently reproaches Henry VIII. from his pulpit, iv. 134. Is in turn abused by Dr. Corren, *ib.* Is reproved by the council, *ib.*
Philip, king of France, assumes the government on his father Lewis VIIth's illness, i. 454. Henry II. of England mediates a peace between him and his family, 453. Engages in a crusade, 458. Stimulates young Richard to revolt against his father, 459. His army, with that of Richard I. intended for the crusade, rendezvous at Vezelay, ii. 7. Reiterates his promises of friendship with Richard, 8. Takes the road to Genoa, and embarks his army, *ib.* Is obliged to winter at Messina, *ib.* His character and that of Richard compared, *ib.* His disputes with Richard at Messina, 10. Their differences accommodated, 11. Arrives in Palestine, and assists at the siege of Acre, 13. Espouses the pretensions of Conrade marquis of Montferrat, to the kingdom of Jerusalem, in opposition to Guy de Lusignan, 15. Returns to Europe, *ib.* Is prevented from invading Normandy, but seduces prince John from his allegiance, 17. Makes the death of Conrade the pretence of his enmity to Richard, 19. His hostile measures on hearing of the captivity of Richard, 24. Invades Normandy, *ib.* Besieges Rouen, but is repulsed by the earl of Leicester, 25. His laconic letter to prince John, 30. Is routed, and his records taken by Richard, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Richard, 31. Concludes a peace at Louviers, which is soon broke, 32. Makes a truce with Richard for five years, 33. Takes Arthur duke of Britany under his protection, 40. Concludes a peace with John, 42. The Norman barons appeal to him against John, 45. His disputes with John, *ib.* Marries his daughter to Arthur duke of Britany, *ib.* His successes against John, 46. Is appealed to by the Britons on the murder of Arthur by John, 49. Summons John to appear before him, and, on his non-appearance, sentences him to the forfeiture of all his royalties in France, *ib.* Takes various places from John, and, by his address, raises the siege of Alençon, *ib.* 50. Besieges and takes Chateau Gaillard, on the frontiers of Normandy, 51. Takes Falaise, and the governor Lupicaire inlists with him against John, 53. Acquires the possession of Normandy, 54. With the other provinces, *ib.* Accepts the offer of the kingdom of England made by pope Innocent III. 69. Prepares an armament to acquire possession

session of it, *ib.* His rage on the treaty between John and Pandolf the pope's legate, 73. His fleet destroyed by the earl of Salisbury, 74. His reflections on the offer of the kingdom of England by the barons to his son Lewis, 95. Demands hostages of the barons for their fidelity, *ib.* Sends forces over with Lewis, *ib.* His conduct respecting this enterprise of his son, 131. Dies, and is succeeded by his son Lewis, 157.

Philip, king of France, cites Edward I. as duke of Guienne before him to answer for some differences at sea, II. 262. Gains the province of Guienne, by artifice from the English, *ib.* Defeats their attempts to recover it, 264. Forms an alliance with John Baliol king of Scotland, 265. Edward forms alliances against him, 284. His successes in Flanders, 296. Concludes a truce with England, and submits his differences to pope Boniface, *ib.* Bestows his sister on Edward, and his daughter on prince Edward, 297.

——— the Fair, of France, his cruel treatment of the knights templars, II. 362.

de Valois, how he became entitled to the crown of France, II. 391. Receives homage for Guienne from Edward III. of England, 392. Prepares to oppose the hostile pretensions of Edward to his crown, 398. His fleet destroyed by Edward, 403. Relieves Tournay, besieged by Edward, 404. His reply to Edward's defiance, 405. Concludes a truce with Edward, by the mediation of Jane countess of Hainault, 407. Espouses the pretensions of Charles de Blois to the dutchy of Britany, 416. Confines the count de Mountfort in the tower of the Louvre, 417. Concludes a truce with the countess and Edward, 421. His surprise and movements on Edward's invasion of Normandy, 427. His precipitate behaviour in following Edward to Crecy, 433. His memorable defeat there, 434. The great number slain at the battle, 436. Concludes a truce with Edward, 443. His death and character, 449.

———, son of the emperor Charles V. is proposed by his father as a husband to Mary queen of England, IV. 383. Substance of the marriage articles, 387. Reflections of the English on this match, *ib.* Caution and reserves of the parliament with respect to his pretensions 396. Arrives in England, and is married, 398. Disgusts the English by his haughtiness and reserve, *ib.* Is denied the ceremony of coronation, 401. His attempts to acquire popularity, 402. His motives for protecting the lady Elizabeth, *ib.* His artifice to elude the charge of promoting the cruelties exercised against the English reformers, 416. Leaves England, and retires to Flanders, 422. His father makes a formal resignation of all his hereditary dominions to him, 425. Ungratefully neglects paying his father's pension, 426. Endeavours to engage England in his quarrel with France, 429. Comes over to England to press the queen to that measure, 432. Raises an army under Phillibert duke of Savoy, 434. Battle of St. Quintin, *ib.* Takes the town, *ib.* Joins the army under the duke of Savoy, but declines engaging Guise, 444. Enters into negotiations for peace, *ib.* Death of queen Mary, 445. Receives a kind embassy from Elizabeth, V. 3. Makes proposals of marriage to her, *ib.* She refuses his proposal of adhering to the Spanish alliance

alliance against France, 17. Peace of Cateau Cambresis with France, 18. Exerts his good offices at the court of Rome to prevent the excommunication of Elizabeth, 19. His character delineated, 64. Vows to spend his life in the extirpation of heresy, 65. His cruel persecution of Constantine Ponce, his father's confessor, *ib.* Issues rigorous orders for the prosecution of heretics, 66. Commencement of his open enmity to Elizabeth, 67. Forms an alliance with the duke of Guise for the suppressing of heresy, 70. Concerts a massacre of the French Hugonots with Catharine de Medicis and the cardinal of Lorraine, 93. Leaves the dutchess of Parma, governess of the Low Countries, 192. The Flemish protestants revolt, *ib.* Determines to overthrow the Flemish privileges, 193. Remonstrates to Elizabeth against her giving countenance to the Flemish exiles, 214. Revolt of Holland and Zealand, 215. The revolted Hollanders associate under the prince of Orange, 216. Recals the duke of Alva at his own request, *ib.* Elizabeth aims to accommodate matters, 219. Sends Don John of Austria governor of the Low Countries, *ib.* The pacification of Ghent concluded, *ib.* Invades Ireland, 233. Remonstrates against the depredations of Drake, 235. Founds a seminary at Douay for the education of English Catholics, 236. His power and naval strength, 272. Projects an invasion of England, 330. Fits out the invincible armada, 333. His instructions to its commander the duke of Medina Sidonia, 340. His behaviour on the destruction of the armada, 345. Excites disturbances in Scotland, 371. Makes peace with France, 388. Dies, 393. His character, vi. 6.

Philip III. of Spain, character of him, and his minister the duke of Lerma, vi. 6. Concludes a peace with James I. 27. Acknowledges the independency of the United Provinces, and concludes a truce with them for twelve years, 44.

——— IV. of Spain, the honorable reception he gave prince Charles vi. 133. His conduct on understanding Buckingham's scheme to prevent the marriage, 139.

———, archduke of Austria, and son of Maximilian, is educated in the Low Countries, iii. 334. His friendly interview with Henry VII. at Calais, 384. Marries Joan, daughter of Ferdinand king of Arragon, and Isabella queen of Castile, 390. Forced by a storm on the coast of England, pays Henry a visit at Windsor, 391. Obliged by Henry to surrender the earl of Suffolk, whom he had protected, 393. Arrives in Spain, and dies, 394. His son Charles affianced to the princess Mary, Henry's daughter, *ib.*

Philippa, daughter of the count of Holland and Hainault, is affianced to prince Edward, son of Edward II. ii. 354. Raises an army to repress the Scots in Edward's absence, and takes their king David prisoner, 439, 440. Goes over to Edward's camp at Calais, *ib.* Intercedes with Edward for the deputies of Calais at its surrender, 443.

Philips, sir Robert, his speech in the third parliament of Charles I. vi. 242.

Phillibert, duke of Savoy, commands the Spanish army against France. iv. 434. Besieges St. Quintin, *ib.* Defeats the constable Montmorency,

mortchey, and takes him prisoner, *ib.* Philip arrives at his camp, declines any action with the duke of Guise, 444.

Philpot, a reformer, archdeacon of Winchester, instance of his zeal against Arianism, iv. 413. Is burnt himself for heresy, *ib.*

Picts and Scots harass the Britons, i. 12, 13.

Piercy, surnamed Hotspur, taken prisoner by the Scots at the battle of Otterburne, iii. 26. See *Northumberland.*

———, Thomas, created earl of Worcester, iii. 33. Rebels against Henry IV. 69. Taken prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury, and executed, 71.

———, of the house of Northumberland, engage with Catesby in the famous gunpowder plot, for blowing up king and parliament, vi. 31. Hires a vault under the parliament-house, and conveys thirty-six barrels of gunpowder into it, 33. Flies on the discovery of the scheme, 36. Is killed, *ib.*

Pilgrimage of Grace, an insurrection raised against Henry VIII. in the north of England under that name, iv. 171.

Pilkington, sheriff of London, prosecuted by the duke of York for scandalous expressions, viii. 178.

Pinkey, battle of, between the duke of Somerset and the earl of Arran, iv. 303.

Pisa, a council summoned there in opposition to pope Julius II. which removes to Milan, and after to Lyons, iii. 417. Interdicted by the pope, 418.

Pistor, his speech in the house of commons, on kneeling and making the sign of the cross, v. 174, 175.

Pius V. pope, excommunicates queen Elizabeth, v. 172.

Plague, a great one in the time of Edward III. ii. 448. Is brought into England by the earl of Warwick from Havre de Grace, v. 80. One at London, vi. 14. Another, 206. At Oxford, 211. On board the fleet, 212. Great one at London, vii. 408.

Plot, gunpowder, history of, vi. 31. Popish, a history of, viii. 63. 99. See *Oates*, *Coleman*, and *Bedloe*. Meal-tub, 124. Rye-house, 186.

Poictiers, battle of, between Edward son of Edward III. and John king of France, ii. 456. Is besieged by the admiral Coligni, v. 187. Is defended by the young duke of Guise, *ib.*

Pole, Arthur, and his brothers, nephews of the cardinal, are convicted of a conspiracy against queen Elizabeth, but pardoned, v. 63.

——, Edmund de la. See *Suffolk.*

——, Sir Geoffrey de la, enters into a conspiracy with some English noblemen, and his brother the cardinal, iv. 187. Discovers the conspiracy and is pardoned for it, *ib.*

——, Michael de la, chancellor of England, and earl of Suffolk, some anecdotes of, iii. 15. Impeached by the commons, *ib.* Reflections on his case, 16. Deprived of his office, 17.

——, Reginald de la, his descent, iv. 185. Is made dean of Exeter, *ib.* Declines any concern in the divorce of Henry VIII. from queen Catharine, *ib.* Inveighs against the conduct of Henry in religious alterations, 186. Is invited to England by Henry, *ib.* Is created a cardinal, and sent legate into Flanders, *ib.* Is suspected of aspiring to the crown; *ib.*

Enters into a conspiracy with some English noblemen, who are discovered and executed, 197. His relations prosecuted by the king, 198. His mother attainted by parliament, *ib.* And executed, 214. Is proposed as a husband to queen Mary, 380. Why it did not take effect, 381. Is invited to England in quality of legate, *ib.* Is stopped in his journey by the emperor, and why, 384. His attainder reversed, and his blood restored by parliament, 399. Arrives in England, and invites the parliament to reconcile themselves to the see of Rome, *ib.* Gives the parliament and kingdom absolution, 400. Debates with bishop Gardiner on the expediency of punishing heretics, 405. Is made archbishop of Canterbury on the burning of Cranmer, 431. His politic behaviour, *ib.* Opposes the queen's design of engaging the kingdom in Philip's quarrel with France, 482. His death and character, 446.

Polerone, in the East Indies, taken by the Dutch from the English, is agreed to be restored by treaty, vii. 236. The English again expelled, 419. Is resigned to the Dutch, 422.

Poll money, first levied by parliament, and the alarming consequences of it, iii. 6. A proportional tax imposed by parliament to assist Henry VIII. in his war with France, 424.

Poltrot assassinates the duke of Guise, at the siege of Orleans, v. 78.

Ponce, Constantine, confessor to the emperor Charles V. is cruelly treated by Philip of Spain for heresy, v. 65.

Poor, an act passed, for raising charitable contributions for them, iv. 356. The first legal establishment for the subsistence of, when made, v. 483.

Popedom, its situation at the time of the Norman invasion, i. 185. See *Papacy* and *Reformation*.

Popular government, the first beginnings of, in England, ii. 272.

Population, observations on the properest means of promoting, iii. 403.

Porters of London, petition the long parliament, vi. 475.

Porto Rico, an attempt against, by Francis Drake, v. 378.

Portsmouth, duchess of, mistress to king Charles II. how introduced to him, vii. 465.

Portugal, the kingdom of, revolts from the crown of Spain, vii. 251. The princess Catharine of, married to Charles II. of England, 378.

Post-master, instance of that office at the time of queen Elizabeth, v. 484.

Post-house, at what sum farmed, in the protectorate of Oliver Cromwel, vii. 340.

Post-office is established by parliament, vii. 358.

Poultry, the established prices of, at the beginning of the reign of Charles I. vi. 177.

Poynings, Sir Edward, sent over to Ireland by Henry VII. to reduce the malcontents there, iii. 367. Passes the memorable statute which bears his name, *ib.* Disappoints Perkin Warbec in his designs upon that kingdom, 370. Made comptroller by Henry VIII. and chosen of his privy council, 409.

Prague, battle of, between the duke of Bavaria and Frederic palatine, vi. 104.

Preaching, the abuse of, restrained, and twelve homilies published to read to the people, iv. 291. Farther restrictions of, to prevent the people being distracted by opposite doctrines, 309.

Prejeant, a French admiral, kills sir Edward Howard in an engagement in Conquet harbour, iii. 431. Invades the coast of Sussex, and loses an eye, *ib.*

Prelates, obnoxious ones, how treated by the court of Rome in the time of Richard II. iii. 56. Their unfitness for being intrusted with the great offices under the crown, in the papal times of England, 403. Causes which favoured their promotion to them, 404.

Prerogative, regal, the notions entertained of, in the time of Elizabeth, v. 440. Inquiry into the ancient prerogatives of the crown, 453. Apology for the arbitrary exertions of, by James I. vi. 49. The commons manifest an intention of limiting it, 51. A review of the various articles of, claimed until the time of Charles I. 160.

Presbytery, is established in Scotland by parliament, and the catholic religion suppressed, v. 38. Cruel insults shewn to queen Mary for her adherence to the catholic religion, 48. The causes of the morose severity of the presbyterian clergy traced, 55. The meaning of that term explained, vi. 333, *note*. Distinctions between presbyterians and independents, vii. 19. Is established in England, 69. Is suppressed on the restoration of Charles II. 362. And by the act of uniformity, 374. The presbyterian clergy ejected, 385.

Press, liberty of the, its commencement, viii. 332.

Preston, battle of, between Cromwel and the Scots under Hamilton and Langdale, vii. 127.

Pride, colonel, violently excludes and confines the presbyterian members of the long parliament, vii. 131. Procures a petition to be signed by the officers, against the office of king, on the offer of that title to Cromwel, 274.

Priests and Jesuits, a severe law against them, v. 259.

Primauget, a French admiral, engages sir Thomas Knevet, off the coast of Britany, and is blown up with him, iii. 423.

Prime minister, reflections on the nature of this office hitherto unknown in Europe, ii. 343.

Primogeniture, the advantages of adhering to, in the succession of princes, ii. 39. Not understood in the earlier ages of the English history, *ib.*

Printing, the art of, by whom first introduced into England, iii. 268. *note*.

———, the invention of, one of the causes of the quick progress of the reformation, iv. 37. Restrictions laid on the press by Elizabeth and James I. vi. 165.

Proclamations, royal, declared by parliament to have the force of laws, iv. 196. Reflections on this statute, *ib.* Offences against them, by whom to be judged, 237. This law repealed, 307. Those of queen Elizabeth enforced more rigorously than laws, by the star-chamber, v. 463. King James's plea for the utility and necessity of issuing them, vi. 52. Differ from laws, *ib.*

Prophesying, among the puritans, explained, vi. 14. King James's sentiments concerning, *ib.*

Protectorate, the supreme government altered to this form, and Oliver Cromwel chosen, vii. 232. The outlines of this form of government explained, *ib.* Peace made with the Dutch, 236. The nation divided into twelve military jurisdictions, under so many major generals, 244. See *Cromwel, Oliver*, and *Richard.*

Protestants, how the German Reformers acquired that name, iv. 99. See *Reformation.*

Provisions, reflections on legal restrictions laid on the prices of ii. 365. The prices of, in the reign of Edward II. *ib.*

Provisors, the statute of, when first enacted, ii. 492. Enacted anew, iii. 56.

Prynne, the principles advanced in his *Histrio-mastyx*, vi. 297. His severe sentence for it in the star-chamber, 299. A repetition of his cruel usage for another offence, 307. His sentences reversed by the commons, 377.

Puffendorf, the Swedish agent at Paris, informs de Wit of the schemes of the English ministry, vii. 463.

Puns recommended to orators by Aristotle, vi. 190.

Puritans, an account of their obstinate scruples at the infancy of the reformation, v. 150. Are depressed by queen Elizabeth, but countenanced by her ministers, 155, 223. The court of ecclesiastical commission instituted for the suppression of, 262. A severe law passed against recusants, 366. Petition king James for relief against the severities exercised against them, vi. 11. Conference at Hampton-court, 10. 13. Their pretensions, 163. Their influence in promoting the dissatisfaction of the first parliament of Charles I. with him and Buckingham, 203. The species of, pointed out, 274. Transport themselves to America, until stopped by the king, 310. Under countenance of the parliament, begin to attack the professed religion, 385. See *Nonconformists.*

Purveyance, the hardships of, i. 342. Frequently endeavoured to be abolished by parliament in the time of Edward III. ii. 489. The nature of that prerogative of the crown explained, v. 346. Parliamentary attempts to regulate it, checked by queen Elizabeth, 347. Was made use of by her to victual her navy, 461. Lord Bacon's speech against, v. 519. The commons attempt to free the nation from the burthen of, vi. 24. An ineffectual treaty for the relinquishment of, 54.

Puzas, Hugh de, bishop of Durham. See *Durham.*

Pym, the subject of his speech at the opening of the fourth parliament of Charles I. vi. 347. His speech against the earl of Strafford, in the long parliament, 367. His conduct on Strafford's trial, 407. Is appointed chairman of the committee of the lower house, sitting during the recess, 423. Is impeached by the king, 467. His death, and the regard paid to him by the parliament, vii. 6.

Pyrennees, treaty of, between France and Spain, vii. 306.

Q.

QUAKERS, the origin of that sect, vii. 332. Whence they derived their name, 334. Their riotous zeal occasions their persecution, *ib.* Their singularities, 335. Their address to James II. on his accession, viii. 216, *note.*

Queen dowager of France takes refuge in the court of Charles I. vi. 390. Is insulted on account of her religion, *ib.* Is requested to depart by the commons, 391.

Queens of England; see each under their respective names.

Quo warranto, a writ of, issued against the city of London, viii. 178. The pleadings in behalf of the city, 179. Conditions on which the charter was restored, 181.

R.

RAINS, extraordinary, in the time of Richard III. which defeat the purposes of the duke of Buckingham against him, iii. 289.

Rainsborow, admiral, is put ashore by his fleet, which declares for the king, vii. 119.

Raleigh, Walter, goes over to France a volunteer in the service of the Hugonots, v. 188. His first expedition to Guiana, 377. Publishes a lying account of that country, *ib.* Goes under lord Effingham in the expedition against Cadiz, 379. Attends Essex in another expedition, and takes Fayal, 383. Falls sick while Essex is in disgrace, on the apprehension of his coming into favour again, 411. His letter to Cecil, on the queen's displeasure, 526. Is dimissed from his employment, vi. 5. Enters into a conspiracy against James, 8. Is sentenced to death, but reprieved, 9. Is grossly abused on trial by Sir Edward Coke, 10. Writes his History of the World, during his long confinement in the Tower, 93. Spreads reports of a gold mine in Guiana, *ib.* Is released, and obtains permission for his expedition there, 94. His son killed by the Spaniards on landing, 96. Is disappointed in the mine, and plunders St. Thomas's, *ib.* Is carried back prisoner by his men, 97. Is executed, 99. A character of his History of the World, 195. His conduct at Guiana inquired into, 384.

Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk, reason of his conspiring against William the Conqueror, i. 263. Peace concluded between them, 267.

Randolf, the English ambassador in Scotland, his character of the Scots reformers, v. 54. Is sent by Elizabeth to interpose in favour of the earl of Morton, 232. Forms a party in opposition to the earl of Lenox, *ib.*

Ravaillac assassinates Henry IV. of France, vi. 56.

Ravenna, battle of, between the French under Gaston de Foix, and the Spanish and papal armies, iii. 423.

Read, an alderman of London, enrolled by Henry VIII. as a foot soldier, for refusing a benevolence to him, iv. 244.

Reading, a council summoned there to oppose the tyranny of Longchamp, bishop of Ely, ii. 17. Is besieged and taken by the earl of Essex, vi. 511. A garrison established in, by the king, 533.
Real presence, why the clergy were so much attached to the doctrine of, in the infancy of the reformation, iv. 322. The point of, debated in convocation, 385. The debate adjourned to Oxford, *ib.* Instance of queen Elizabeth's attachment to that doctrine, v. 153, *note*.
Recognition, act of, passed in the most ample terms, by the parliament in favour of James I. v. 553.
Records, judical, how preserved among the Saxons, i. 214.
Recusants, a severe law enacted against them, v. 366.
Redwald, king of the East-Angles, protects young Edwin against Adelfrid, king of Northumberland, i. 41. Defeats and kills Adelfrid, 42. Conspired against, and killed, 43.
Reformation, the first commencement of, in Germany, by Martin Luther, iv. 35. His doctrines spread among the Lollards in England, 36. Henry VIII. writes against Luther, and receives the title of *Defender of the Faith* from the pope, *ib.* Luther answers Henry closely, *ib.* To what causes the quick progress of, may be ascribed, 37. The pope declared to be Antichrist, and set at defiance by the reformers, 38. How the reformers favoured the civil power in their tenets, *ib.* The first steps toward, in England, 95. Progress of, 107. How far forwarded by the appeal to private judgment, 126. Tindal makes a translation of the scriptures, 130. A translation prepared by order of convocation, 154. All authority of the bishop of Rome renounced, 164. Articles of faith prepared by the convocation, 166. How far protestant principles were favoured in these articles, stated, 167. Suppression of religious houses, 150. 178. The law of six articles passed, 194. The bible granted to every family, 200. Hospitals, colleges, and other foundations, dissolved, and their revenues seized by the king, 221. The chapter lands of Canterbury, York, and London, extorted from those sees, 222. The Litany, and part of the public service, allowed to be celebrated in English, 254. The accession of Edward VI. favourable to, 287. The twelve homilies published, to be read to the people, 291. Laws passed favourable to, 307. The cup restored to the laity, and private masses abolished, *ib.* Penalties on denying the king's supremacy, *ib.* A new communion-service framed, 309. Liturgy framed by a committee of bishops and divines, 320. Gardiner and other bishops, deprived of their bishoprics, 345. The general antipathy, at this time, to popery, 347. The liturgy revised, 348. Articles of religion framed, *ib.* The liturgy authorised by parliament, 354. The catholic religion restored by queen Mary, 376. All Edward's statutes relating to religion repealed, 379. The reformers persecuted, 411. See *Heresy*. Cecil's arguments to induce queen Elizabeth to restore it, v. 5. The queen's prudent caution in performing it, 7. The newly erected monasteries suppressed, 10. The queen declared governess of the church, *ib.* All Edward's statutes concerning religion confirmed, 11. A solemn disputation, 12. The mass abolished, *ib.* The English liturgy restored, 14. The bishops degraded for non-compliance, *ib.*

Progress of, in Scotland, 22. Rise of the association called the *Congregation of the Lord*, *ib.* Riot of protestants at Edinburgh, on the festival of St. Giles, 24. Riots of Knox's congregation at Perth, 27. See *Congregation of the Lord*. The catholic religion suppressed in Scotland, and the presbyterian discipline established, 38. Struggles in favour of, in France, 40. Cruel insolence of the Scots reformers to their queen Mary, 48. Civil wars of France, 68. See *Condé*; *Medicis*, Catharine de; *Hugonots*, &c. Is established in Scotland by parliament, with the queen's sanction, 110. A character of the plan of, established in England, 149. Reflections on the conduct of reformers, 189. Cruel severity of the emperor Charles V. toward the Flemish protestants, 191. The Flemish protestants revolt, 192. Massacre of the Hugonots at Paris, 206. The catholic league formed in France against the Hugonots, 212. A review of Elizabeth's conduct in religious matters, 222. Severe laws passed against popery, 235. Popery finally suppressed by the strict law against Jesuits and popish priests, 259.

Regicides, trial and execution of, vii. 356. 380.

Reginald, sub-prior of Christ-church, Canterbury, his clandestine election to that see on the death of Hubert, ii. 57. Is sent privately to Rome for confirmation, *ib.* His imprudent conduct, *ib.*

Rehearsal, a character of this satirical play, vii. 333.

Religious establishments, the foundation of, iv. 31.

——— *houses*, the number of, suppressed by Henry VIII. iv. 182. The amount of their revenues, *ib.* See *Monasteries*.

Reliques, the artifices of, exposed on the dissolution of monasteries, iv. 180.

Remonstrance, an account of that framed and passed by the commons in the long parliament, vi. 449. Reasoning of the people on both sides with regard to it, 451. Is answered by the king, 457.

Renaud, a Frenchman, takes the earl of Suffolk prisoner, and is knighted by him, iii. 149.

Representatives to parliament, the first steps towards choosing them for counties, ii. 184. See *Commons*.

Requesens, commendator of Castile, succeeds the duke of Alva in the command of the Low Countries, v. 217. His character *ib.* Undertakes the siege of Leyden, *ib.* Dies, and his troops mutiny, which ruins the Spanish affairs in the Low countries, 219.

Retainers, the term explained, iii. 399. Frequent laws passed against, by Henry VII. *ib.* Story told of Henry relating to, *ib.* The practice of, how destroyed, *ib.* 400.

Revenue of the Anglo-Norman kings of England, in what it consisted, ii. 125. Crown lands, *ib.* Talliages, 126. Scutage, 127. Danegelt, and moneyage, *ib.* Escheats, 128. Wardships, 129. Fines, amerciaments, and oblates, 130. State of, ordinary and extraordinary, at the time of Henry V. iii. 120. Amount of, in queen Mary's time, iv. 433. State of, in the reign of James I. vi. 171. State of, in the protectorate of Richard Cromwel, vii. 339. State of, between the restoration and revolution, viii. 324.

Revenues, ecclesiastical, the alienation of, prohibited, v. 12.

Revolution in 1688, compared with the deposition of Richard II. iii. 46.

Reynolds excites an insurrection in Northamptonshire, to destroy inclosures, vi. 44.

Ribaumont, Eustace de, his encounter with Henry III. at Calais, ii. 444. Yields himself prisoner, and is generously treated, and set at liberty by him, 445.

Rhé, isle of, attacked by the duke of Buckingham, vi. 236.

Rheims, Charles VII. attended by Joan D'Arc, marches in there, and is crowned, iii. 151.

Rhodes, the knights of, choose Henry VII. of England, protector of their order, iii. 385.

Richard, second son of Henry II. invested by his father with the duchy of Guienne, and county of Poictou, i. 434. Instigated by his mother Eleanor to revolt against his father, 436. Is reconciled to his father, 447. Refuses homage to his elder brother for his duchy, 454. The difference compromised by their father, *ib.* Becomes intitled to the succession by his brother Henry's death, 455. Refuses his father's assignment of Guienne to his brother John, *ib.* Resigns it to his mother Eleanor, *ib.* Is encouraged to rebel again, by Philip of France, 458. Excommunicated by Albano, the pope's legate, 460. Peace concluded with his father, and he is contracted to Alice, sister of Philip of France, 462. His remorse on seeing his father's body, 463. His accession, ii. 1.

——— I. discountenances his former evil advisers, and caresses his father's ministers, ii. 2. Releases his mother, and makes her regent until his arrival in England, *ib.* Prepares for a crusade to the Holy Land, 3. Jews prohibited by an edict from appearing at his coronation, *ib.* A massacre of, on that occasion, *ib.* His expedient to raise money for the crusade, 5. Sells the vassalage of Scotland, *ib.* His reply to Fulk, curate of Neuilly, 6. In whose hands he placed the administration, during his absence on the crusade, *ib.* Meets Philip of France, with his army, at Vazelay, 7. Renews his engagements of friendship with Philip, 8. Embarks his army at Marseilles, *ib.* Is obliged to winter at Messina, *ib.* His character, and that of Philip compared, 9. The occasion of his attacking the Sicilians, and taking Messina, 10. His disputes with Philip, *ib.* Sets aside his contract with Alice, and proposes to mary Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, king of Navarre, 12. Is attended on his crusade by his bride, and his sister Joan, queen dowager of Sicily, *ib.* Some of his vessels wrecked and pillaged on the coast of Cyprus, *ib.* Conquers and imprisons Isaac, prince of Cyprus, 13. Espouses Berengaria there, *ib.* Arrives in Palestine, and assists at the siege of Acre, *ib.* Engages to support the pretensions of Guy de Lusignan to the kingdom of Jerusalem, in opposition to Conrade, marquis of Montserrat, 14. Troubles in England during his absence, 15. Confers the kingdom of Cyprus on Lusignan, on condition of his quitting his pretensions to Jerusalem, 19. Defeats Saladin, 20. Is obliged to abandon the intention of besieging Jerusalem, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Saladin, for three years, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours, 21. His cruel treatment of his prisoners, 22. Is arrested on his return, by Leopold, archduke of Austria, 23. Is delivered up to the emperor Henry VI. who imprisons him in irons, *ib.*

Is carried to and accused before the diet at Worms, 26. His spirited reply, *ib.* Ransoms himself, 28. His ransom, how levied, according to the feudal system, *ib.* Obtains his liberty, and escapes a second arrest by the emperor, 29. Is again crowned at Winchester, *ib.* Goes over to Normandy, to revenge himself on Philip's perfidy, *ib.* Defeats Philip at Fretteval, 30. Concludes a truce with him, 31. His brother John submits to him, *ib.* Makes peace with him at Louviers, which is quickly broken, 32. Takes the bishop of Beauvais prisoner, and sends his coat of mail to the pope, *ib.* Concludes a truce with Philip for five years, 33. Is wounded in besieging Vidomar, count of Limoges, *ib.* The gallant reply of Gourdon the archer, who shot him, 34. His sensibility of the retort, *ib.* Dies, *ib.* His character, *ib.* Reflections on his reign, 35. Miscellaneous affairs, 36.

Richard II. his accession, iii. 1. State of parties at that juncture, 2. Form of government settled by parliament during his minority, 3. Council appointed, *ib.* The administration, how conducted, 4. His embarrassments at his accession, 5. War with France, *ib.* Popular insurrections, 6. Has a conference with Watt Tyler, 10. His prudent behaviour at the death of Tyler, *ib.* Reflections on this affair, 11. Heads the army against the Scots, 12. Burns Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee, *ib.* Returns to England prematurely, *ib.* His attachment to Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, 14. Awed by his parliament, 15. Deprived of his regular power by a council of fourteen, appointed by his uncle Glocester, 17. Fails in the endeavour to influence the election of the house of commons, 18. Consults the judges, on the validity of his commission to the council of fourteen, *ib.* Their opinion, *ib.* Violent proceedings against his ministry by the duke of Glocester, 20. His, and his queen, Anne, their ineffectual concern at the execution of sir Simon Burley, 23. Exerts himself, and removes archbishop Fitz-Alan from his office of chancellor, 24. Removes Glocester and Warwick from the council, *ib.* Truce with France, and marriage of Richard to Isabella of France, 26. Seizes the charter of London, and the character of his administration, *ib.* Declares Mortimer successor, 28. Hurries Glocester over to Calais, and awes his faction, 29. Proceedings against his party, 31. Procures Glocester to be murdered at Calais, 32. Creation of peers, 33. Removes the parliament to Shrewsbury, *ib.* Their grants to him, *ib.* Prevents the duel between the dukes of Hereford and Norfolk, and banishes them, 36. Opposes the succession of Hereford to the dukedom of Lancaster, 37. Embarks for Ireland, 38. Leaves the duke of York guardian of the realm, 39. Returns to oppose the invasion of the duke of Lancaster, *ib.* Seized by the earl of Northumberland, and confined in Flint-castle, 40. Heads of accusation preferred against him in parliament, 41. Comparison between this period of history, and the revolution in 1688, 46. Deposed by parliament, *ib.* Murdered in Pomfret-castle, 49. His character, *ib.* Comparison between, and Edward III. 50. Miscellaneous transactions during this reign, 52. Comparison between his situation, and that of Charles VI. of France, 92.

Richard III. the first acts of his administration, iii. 282. Reflections on his seizure of the crown, 283. Appoints the duke of Buckingham constable, *ib.* Procures his execution, for rebellion against him, 289. Obtains a parliamentary sanction of his sovereignty, 290. Supposed to poison his wife Anne, to make room for his marriage with the princess Elizabeth, 291. Marches to oppose the invasion of the earl of Richmond, 294. His suspicions of his own party, *ib.* Battle of Bosworth, 295. Killed, *ib.* His character, 296.

Richemont, Arthur count de, taken prisoner at the battle of Azincour, iii. 102. Released on his parole, 127. Evades his parole on the death of Henry V. *ib.* Obtains the duke of Burgundy's sister by the regent's interest, 128. Engaged in the English interest, *ib.* Attends the congress at Arras, 161.

Richlieu, cardinal, prime minister of France, his character, vi. 232. Rivals the duke of Buckingham in his addresses to the queen of France, 234. Throws a mole across the harbour of Rochelle, to complete the blockade, 263. Supplies the covenanters in Scotland with money, 337. The conclusion of his administration, and death, vii. 247.

Richmond, Henry earl of, carried into Britain by the earl of Pembroke, on the establishment of the York family in Edward IV. iii. 251. His pedigree, 285. Measures taken for his safe custody by Edward, 286. Edward disappointed in a scheme for getting him into his power, 287. Overtures for his marriage with the princess Elizabeth, 291. Makes unsuccessful attempts for a descent on England, 292. His party exhort him to another speedy attempt, *ib.* Lands at Milford-haven, 293. Battle of Bosworth, 295. Richard III. killed, *ib.* See *Henry* VII.

———— duke of, natural son of Henry VIII. made lord-lieutenant of Ireland, iv. 122. Dies, 163, *note.*

Ridley, bishop of London, pleads with Edward VI. in behalf of the princess Mary, iv. 347. Is imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary, 376. Is sent under a strong guard to Oxford, to debate on transubstantiation, 385. Is burnt for heresy, together with bishop Latimer, 414.

Right. See *Petition of Right.*

Rinuccini is, by the pope, sent nuncio to the Irish catholics, vii. 161. Excites the Irish to break the pacification concluded with Ormond, 162. Is driven out of Ireland, 163.

Riots, a severe statute passed against, iv. 340.

Rippon, treaty of, between Charles I. and the Scots covenanters, vi. 358. Is adjourned to London, 361.

Rivers, earl of, uncle to Edward V. entrusted with the care of his person, iii. 268. His character, *ib.* The first who introduced the art of printing into England, *ib. note.* Arrested by the duke of Gloucester, while conducting the young king to London, 270. Murdered in Pomfret castle, 272.

Rizzio, David, some account of his introduction to the court of Mary, queen of Scotland, v. 95. His promotion and character, *ib.* Excites the jealousy of Darnley, the queen's husband, 96. Incurs the hatred of the

the protestants, *ib.* A conspiracy formed against him by the chancellor Morton, 97. Is assassinated in the queen's presence, 98.

Robbery, instance of the general practice of, at the time of Henry III. ii. 227.

Robert III. king of Scotland, his character, iii. 75. His son taken prisoner by Henry IV. of England, *ib.* Dies of grief, *ib.*

——, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, his character, i. 272. 286. Revolts against his father, 273. Extraordinary rencounter between him and his father, 274. Reconciled to him, 275. Returns to England, and repulses the Scots, *ib.* Succeeds to the duchy of Normandy, 286. Mortgages his dominions to his brother, and enters the crusade, 299. His reputation on the crusade, 312. How he lost the kingdom of England, *ib.* Returns, and invades England, 319. Enters into an accommodation with his brother Henry I. 321. Distressed by his remissness, 322.

Rochelle, Pennington ordered to assist in the reduction of, deserts, and sails back to England, vi. 208. A squadron sent by the Dutch against, 209. Buckingham brings a fleet and forces to assist the town, and is ignorantly refused admittance, 235. The blockade effected by throwing a mole across the harbour, 263. Is forced to surrender at discretion, 264.

Rochford, lord, brother to queen Anne Boleyn, is accused by his wife of intimacy with his sister, iv. 155. Is confined by the king's order, 157. Is tried, together with the queen, 159. Is condemned, 160.

——, viscountess of, calumniates queen Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII. iv. 155. Conducts the secret amours of queen Catharine Howard, 220. Is beheaded together with the queen, 221.

——, the castle of, taken from the barons by king John, and the common men of the garrison hanged, ii. 93.

Rochester, earl of, a character of his poems, viii. 336.

Rockingham, a synod summoned there by William Rufus, to depose Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, i. 303.

Rocroy, defeat of the Spaniards there by the price of Condé, vii. 251.

Rodolphi, a Florentine merchant in London, is employed by the pope to negociate with the catholics in England, v. 195. Is engaged by the Spanish ambassador to disturb the government in favour of Mary queen of Scots, 196. The duke of Norfolk enters into his scheme, 197. Goes to Rome to mature his design, *ib.*

Roger, earl of Hereford, cause of his conspiring against William the Conqueror, i. 263. His estate forfeited, and himself confined for life, 266.

——, archbishop of York, crowns prince Henry, when associated with his father Henry II. i. 412. Suspended at Becket's instigation, 413. Complains to the king, and the consequences of this complaint, 415. Circumstances of a quarrel between him and Richard archbishop of Canterbury, 469.

Rogers, prebendary of St. Paul's, burnt for heresy, iv. 412.

Rollo the Dane, his history, i. 136. Makes inroads into France, 137. Settles in Neustria, and marries the daughter of Charles the Simple, 138. His prudent government, 139. See *Normandy*.

Romans, their first arrival in Britain, i. 6. Subdue it all except Caledonia, 10. Abandon it, 12. Refuse assistance to the Britons, 13.

Rome, reflections on the policy of the court of, i. 330. The venal principles of the court of, at the early period of Henry III. his reign, ii. 168. Church of, when at the summit of its power, 229. A character of the decretals of pope Gregory IX. *ib.* Remarks on the new orders instituted by, *ib.* Our literary obligations to the ancient clergy of, iii. 297. The bad principles on which the church of, is founded, iv. 31. Its encroachments on civil authority, *ib.* Favourable however to the restoration of the arts, 33. Consequence of the sale of indulgences by pope Leo X. 35. See *Luther* and *Reformation*. Its authority renounced by the English convocation and parliament, 119. Reflections on this event, 121. See *Reformation*. City of, taken and sacked by the Imperial troops, iv. 69.

Rood of Grace, a miraculous crucifix, the artifice of, exposed at Paul's cross, by Kilsey, bishop of Rochester, iv. 180.

Roper, Sir Anthony, is fined by the star-chamber, for converting arable land to pasture, vi. 303.

Rose, red and white, party distinctions of the houses of Lancaster and York, iii. 217. Remarks on the confused history of the wars between, 234.

Rosewel, a presbyterian preacher, his prosecution for treasonable words, viii. 201.

Rosni, marquis of, minister to Henry IV. of France, comes over to Dover to confer with queen Elizabeth, v. 433. Discovers Elizabeth to have entertained the same views with Henry, of establishing a new system of policy in Europe, 434. Is sent ambassador from Henry IV. of France to king James, on his accession, vi. 6. Proposes to James a league against the house of Austria, 7. Concludes a treaty with James for the support of the United Provinces, *ib.*

Rouen, besieged and taken by Philip of France, ii. 53. The king of Navarre mortally wounded at the siege of, v. 71. Is taken by Montmorency, and the garrison put to the sword, *ib.*

Roundheads, the appellation of, when, and to whom given, vi. 464.

Roundway-down, battle of, between lord Wilmot, and Sir William Waller, vi. 519.

Routiers. See *Brabançons*.

Roxborough, James II. of Scotland killed at the siege of, iii. 220.

Royal Society, the first institution of, viii. 332.

Rufus. See *William Rufus*.

Rump-parliament, the restoration of the long one so termed. See *Parliament*.

Runnemede, the great charter of English liberties signed there by king John, ii. 84. The principal heads of this charter, 85. Remarks upon it, 88. See *Charter*.

Rupert, prince, son of the elector palatine, offers his service to Charles I. and commands a body of horse for him, vi. 505. Defeats a party of Essex's army at Worcester, *ib.* Defeats the left wing of Essex's army at Edge-hill, 507. Surprises Essex, and carries off booty and prisoners, 520. Is sent westward to join the Cornish troops, 522. Takes Bristol,

Bristol, 523. Obliges the parliamentary forces to retire from Newark, vii. 9. Marches to the relief of York, 11. Engages rashly in the battle of Marston-moor, where he is defeated, *ib.* Urges the battle of Naseby, 56. Retires to Bristol, 60. Capitulates; is dismissed by the king, and leaves England, 61. Commands the squadron which deserted to Charles II. and is harrassed by admiral Blake, 204. Takes refuge in France, 205. Commands under the duke of York against the Dutch, 402. Joins Albemarle during his engagement with Tromp and de Ruyter, 412. Obtains the command of the English fleet, 506. Engages the Dutch on their own coast, *ib.* Another action, *ib.* Another at the mouth of the Texel, 508. Is appointed one of the privy-council, viii. 102. His death, 204. Was the inventor of etching, 326.

Russel, lord, suppresses an insurrection in Devonshire, excited to oppose the reformation, iv. 330. Is created earl of Bedford, 339. See *Bedford*.

——, lord, privately favours the French intrigues, but refuses to accept any present from that court, viii. 43, *note*. Is made one of the privy-council to Charles II. 102. Resigns, 123. His character, *ib.* Enters into the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, 182. Is sent to the Tower, 188. Tried, 189. Is condemned, 193. Is executed, 195.

Ruthven, lord, assists with others in assassinating David Rizzio, v. 97.

——, governor of Plymouth for the parliament, is defeated by the royalists on Bradoc Down, vi. 518.

Rutland, earl of, created duke of Albemarle, by Richard II. iii. 33. Degraded, 48. Conspires against Henry IV. and betrays his associates, 63. Summary view of his treacherous behaviour, 64. Killed at the battle of Azincour, being then duke of York, 102.

Ruyter. See *De Ruyter*.

Rye-house-plot, history of, viii. 186.

S.

SA, Don Pantaleon, brother to the Portuguese ambassador, hanged by Cromwel for assassination, vii. 237.

Sadler, Sir Ralph, ambassador from Henry VIII. to the court of Scotland, concludes a treaty of marriage between prince Edward and Mary the infant queen of Scotland, iv. 233. His retinue insulted, at the instigation of cardinal Beaton, 234. His demand of the stipulated hostages, evaded by Arran, the regent, *ib.* Orders the Scots prisoners on parole to return to England, *ib.* Is made counsellor to the regency of Edward VI. 282. Assists in restoring the advantage to the English, at the battle of Pinkey, 304. Is appointed one of the commissioners for determining the cause between Mary queen of of Scots and Murray the regent, v. 134.

Safety, committee of, elected, vii. 304. General Monk's artful behaviour to, 312.

Saladin, king of Egypt, his character, ii. 457. Recovers Palestine from the crusaders, *ib.* Acre taken from him by the Christians, 15. Is defeated by the Christians under Richard I. of England, 20. Concludes a truce with Richard, 21. Review of his conduct in this war, *ib.* Dies, 22. Instance of his philosophy, *ib.*

Salic law of succession to the crown of France, the foundation of traced, ii. 389. Attempted to be introduced into the English government by Henry IV. iii. 79. Revoked at the instance of the house of commons, 80.

Salisbury, an insurrection of royalists there, under the protectorate, who proclaim Charles II. vii. 243.

———, earl of, natural brother to king John, commands the English fleet against Philip of France, and destroys his ships in their harbour, ii. 74.

———, countess of, mistress to Edward III. the dropping of her garter, supposed to be the occasion of instituting the order of the garter, ii. 448.

—, earl of, besieges Orleans, iii. 138. Killed before the town, 139.

———, earl of, instances of generalship in, at the battle of Bloreheath, iii. 204. Taken by queen Margaret at the battle of Wakefield, and beheaded, 209.

———, countess of, mother of cardinal Pole, is attainted and condemned by parliament, but reprieved, iv. 198. Executed, 213.

secretary Cecil created earl of, by James I. vi. 5. Causes which procured his promotion, *ib.* Procures the dismission of his former associates, *ib.* Communicates to the king the hints he received of the gun-powder plot, 34. Is made treasurer, 46. Expostulates with the parliament on the king's necessities, *ib.* Invents the title of baronet, to supply James with money by the sale of it, 71.

Salee is destroyed by an English fleet, vi. 306.

Sanchez, king of Navarre, instance of his confidence in the justice of Henry II. of England, i. 467. His daughter Berengaria married to Richard I. ii. 12.

Sandilands, Sir James, is sent from the parliament to queen Mary in France, to obtain a ratification of their proceedings in reforming religion, v. 39.

Sandwich, earl of, fails in attempting to seize the Dutch East India fleet, in the Danish harbours, vii. 406. Is killed at the battle of Solebay, 485.

Sanquhar, lord, executed for assassination, vi. 61.

Santa Croce, marquis of, is appointed to command the Spanish Armada, v. 333. Dies, 339.

Santa Cruz, a Spanish fleet burnt in the harbour of, by admiral Blake, vii. 257.

Saville, Sir John, a zealous commoner against the court, is promoted and ennobled by king James I. vi. 117.

Savoy, a conference there, between twelve bishops and twelve presbyterian ministers, vii. 369.

——, Philibert duke of. See *Philibert.*

Sautré, William, rector of St. Osythe, the first person burnt in England for heresy, iii. 65.

Saxons, national character of, i. 18. Arrive in Britain under Hengist and Horsa, 19. Subdue Britain, and settle there, 20. Their conquests in Britain, very ruinous to the country, 26. Throw back all the

the British improvements into ancient barbarity, *ib.* After subduing the Britons, war against each other, 27. Difficulty of continuing their history, and why, 28. Brief view of their idolatrous religion, 31. Made but slow improvement in arts in England, 60. Their bigotry and superstition, 61. Their gradual ecclesiastical subjection to the see of Rome, traced, *ib.* Their theological disputes, 63. Reduced to despair by the ravages of the Danes, 79. Admit the Danes to settle with them after defeating them, 83. Their monks characterised, 110. Their affected austerities, 113. Opposed by the secular clergy, 114. Review of the Saxon government in England, 198. The succession of their princes, how regulated, 199. Account of their Wittenagemot, or national council, 201. *Earl* and *Alderman*, synonymous appellations among, *ib. note.* Their government aristocratical, toward the time of the Norman conquest, 204. State of popular liberty among, 208. Several orders of men, among, *ib.* Their courts of justice, 212. State of legislation among, 214. Their criminal law, 215. Their military force, 225. Public revenues, *ib.* Value of money among, 226. Their manners inquired into, 229. Finally subdued by William duke of Normandy, 193. 231. See *Harold* and *William*. Their laws compared with the civil law, iii. 300.

Saxony, Maurice elector of. See *Maurice*.

Scandal and reproach, instances of the severe punishment of, by the court of star-chamber, vi. 303.

Scone, the famous stone there, on which the kings of Scotland were anointed, carried to London by Edward I. ii. 282. Robert Bruce crowned there, 317. Edward Baliol crowned there, 385.

Scotland, and *Scots*, the Scots and Picts invade Britain, i. 13. King Constantine defeated by Athelstan king of England, 104. 105. King Duncan killed by Macbeth, 168. Macbeth killed, and Malcolm restored, *ib.* King William taken prisoner by Henry II. does homage, with all his nobility, for his ransom, 448. The vassalage of, sold by Richard I. to raise money for his crusade, ii. 6. Remarks on the ancient history of, 245. Alexander III. king of, marries the sister of Edward I. *ib.* Dies, 246. Is succeeded by Margaret of Norway, *ib.* Guardians appointed during her infancy, *ib.* A treaty of marriage negociated between her and prince Edward of England, *ib.* She dies on her passage to Scotland, 247. Competitors for the crown of, 248. 255. Their claims referred to the decision of Edward I. of England, 250. An inquiry into the nature of the homage done by the kings of, to those of England, 251. The parliament of, and the competitors for the crown, attend the summons of Edward to Norham, south of the Tweed, 253. Edward asserts his right to dispose of the crown, as liege of the kingdom, *ib.* The fortresses in, delivered up to Edward, 256. The barons and prelates swear fealty to him, 257. Edward decides in favour of John Baliol's right to the crown, 258. Baliol swears fealty to Edward, and is put in possession of the kingdom, *ib.* The Scots, and their new king, provoked at Edward's acts of usurpation over them, 259. Assign a council to carry on the administration, and assemble an army to oppose the forces of Edward, 280. Berwick taken by Edward, and the garrison

garrison put to the sword, 281. The Scots defeated by earl Warrenne, and the castle of Dunbar surrendered to Edward, *ib.* Roxborough taken, *ib.* Edinburgh, and the whole country subdued, 282. Baliol swears fealty to him, *ib.* Baliol carried prisoner to London, and committed to the Tower, 283. Earl Warrenne left governor of, *ib.* The Scots, abandoned by Philip of France, in consequence of his treaty with Edward, 297. Warrenne, returning to England, leaves the administration in the hands of Ormesby and Cressingham, 298. Their oppressions of the Scots, *ib.* The Scots rise against the English, under William Wallace, 299. Gain a victory over Warrenne, 301. Wallace made regent, 302. The regency given to the steward, and Cuming of Badenoch, on Wallace's resignation, 303. The Scots army defeated by Edward at Falkirk, 304. Apply to France for succour, but are refused, 306. Engage Pope Boniface in their interest, 307. John de Segrave left guardian of, by Edward, who is defeated by the Scots, 309. Is again subdued by Edward, 310. Young Robert Bruce arrives in Scotland, and spirits up the nobility to a revolt, 314. Bruce is crowned at Scone, 317. He reduces the English in Scotland, and is acknowledged by the whole country, 337. Bruce defeats Edward at Bannockburn, 340. The independency of, established by this victory, 341. He invades England on the death of Edward II. 372. The nature of the war made by the Scots, and their army, described, 373. Death of Robert Bruce, and accession of his son David, 381. State of, at this period, 383. The earl of Marre appointed regent on the death of Murray, *ib.* Marre defeated and slain by Edward Baliol, 384. He is crowned at Scone, 385. Is routed by Sir Archibald Douglas, and flies to England, *ib.* Douglas defeated by Edward III. of England, and Edward Baliol restored, 388. He is acknowledged no longer than protected by the presence of the English king, *ib.* King David defeated and taken prisoner by queen Philippa, 440. Is ransomed, 461. An express inquiry into the nature of the homage paid by the kings of, to those of England, 501. The Scots obtain assistance from France to invade England, and their conduct in these incursions, iii. 12. Disoblige their allies, who return home, 13. Invade England again, but are worsted, 67. Battle of Homeldon, 68. Prince James taken prisoner by Henry IV. and educated in England, 75. Carried to France by Henry V. 114. The Scots army in France refuse to obey their young king while in captivity, *ib.* James I. restored, 129. Murdered, *ib.* Affairs of, during the reign of Henry VI. and beginning of Edward IV. 219. State of, in the time of Henry VII. 332. James IV. receives and assists Perkin Warbec, 371. Marries Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry, 386. The Scots routed at the battle of Flouden, and James killed, 439. His queen Margaret marries Douglas earl of Angus, iv. 5. The duke of Albany called over to the regency, 6. The state of, as it appeared to Albany on his arrival, *ib.* Confusions in, on Albany's going over to France, 8. Reasons in favour of alliances with France or England contrasted, 43. Extraordinary case of Patrick Hamilton burnt for heresy, 214. Friar Forrest burnt, 215. The reformation spreads in, 216. Henry declares war against, 227. Sir Robert Bowes defeated by

by the lords Hume and Huntley, 228. Battle of Solway, 229. Death of James V. 230. The infant queen Mary, contracted to prince Edward of England, 233. Invaded by Henry VIII. and Edinburgh burnt, 245. The English defeated at Ancram, 249. Is included in the peace of Campe between Henry and Francis, 253. History of Wishart the reformer, 295. Cardinal beaton assassinated, 297. Its misfortunes at this time, owing to a succession of minorities, 299. The duke of Somerset prepares to prosecute the war with, *ib.* His manifesto, 300. The Scots prepare to repel Somerset, 302. Battle of Pinkey, 303. The young queen Mary sent to France, 312. The earl of Arran resigns the regency to the queen dowager, 439. The young queen Mary married to the dauphin, 440. English reformers protected there from the prosecutions of queen Mary, v. 21. Account of the association called *The Congregation of the Lord*, 22. See *Congregation*, and *Guise, Mary of.* Treaty of Edinburgh, 36. Settlement of the administration during the queen's absence by this treaty, *ib.* The catholic religion suppressed, and the presbyterian discipline established by parliament, 38. Queen Mary arrives, on the death of her husband, 45. The queen exposed to insults for her adherence to the catholic religion, 47. The poverty of the reformed clergy there, 54. The ecclesiastical benefices, how assigned by the privy council, 55. Mary married to the lord Darnley, 89. A confederacy formed against Mary at Stirling, which is encouraged by Elizabeth, 90. The rebels driven into England, 91. Murder of Darnley, 107. The protestant religion established by parliament, with the queen's sanction, 110, *note.* Mary married to Bothwel, 115. Reflections of the people on these events, *ib.* Mary imprisoned in Lochlevin castle, 120. Mary forced to resign the crown, and her son James VI. crowned, 124. Arrival of Murray the regent, 125. The settlement of the crown and administration confirmed by parliament, *ib.* Battle of Langside, 128. Mary flies to England, *ib.* Her cause examined before English commissioners, 135. 144. Murray the regent assassinated, 167. The earl of Lenox appointed regent, 168. He is put to death by Mary's party, and the earl of Mar chosen, 202. Morton made regent on the death of Mar, *ib.* Discontents and factions against Morton, 230. Morton tried and executed, 232. A conspiracy of nobles formed, who seize the young king James, 248. James escapes from them, 254. Earl of Arran degraded, 256. A defensive alliance entered into between James and Elizabeth, 270. Queen Mary sentenced to death by English commissioners, 299. And executed, 319. The hostile laws between, and England, abolished, vi. 41. The natural consequences of their king succeeding to the crown of England, 82. View of the state of religion there, 84. James obtains the jurisdiction of bishops to be acknowledged, *ib.* The establishment of episcopal authority and ceremonies opposed, *ib.* The nature of the excommunication pronounced by the ecclesiastical courts in, 86. Behaviour of Black, minister of St. Andrews, 87. Seditious principles of the clergy there, 88. Some of the refractory ministers punished on his accession to the crown of England, *ib.* The general assembly submit to regal and episcopal

copal authority, 89. A court of high commission erected, *ib.* Altercations between James and the clergy, 90. Consequences of the influence of the nobility, and the absence of the king, 320. Discontents of the inferior clergy there, 322. Introduction of the canons and liturgy, 325. A tumult at Edinburgh on occasion of the liturgy, 327. The covenant established, 329. Episcopacy abolished by the general assembly, 334. The covenanters assisted by cardinal Richelieu, 336. The covenanters raise forces, and secure the whole country, *ib.* Their zeal inflamed by Michelson the prophetess, 337. Charles marches with a force to Berwick, 339. A pacification concluded with the covenanters, 341. A letter from the malcontents to the king of France intercepted, 357. Another armament sent against them, *ib.* The Scots army rout lord Conway at Newburn, *ib.* They take possession of Newcastle, 358. Treaty of Rippon, *ib.* Are attacked by Strafford, 360. The army disbanded by the English house of commons, 423. The lords of articles abolished, on the arrival of Charles, 426. Reflections and views of the covenanters, on the breaking out of the civil war in England, 536. Send commissioners to the king at Oxford, to offer a mediation, 538. Summon, by their own authority, a convention of states, 539. The solemn league and covenant framed with the English commissioners, 540. Raise an army to assist the English parliament, 542. The king puts himself into the hands of the Scots army before Newark, VII. 73. Deliver up the king to the parliament for the payment of the arrears of the army, 79. Their commissioners affronted by the independent faction in the long parliament, 113. Their commissioners concert a treaty with the king, for arming in his favour, 116. Parties distinguished there at this time, *ib.* The royalists defeated by Cromwel, 128. Charles II. proclaimed after his father's execution, 159. Commissioners sent to Breda, to propose terms to Charles, 173. Cruel and insulting treatment and execution of Montrose, 179. Treatment of Charles on his landing, 183. Numbers burnt for witchcraft, 186. Battle of Dunbar, 190. Charles crowned at Scone, 192. Charles marches into England, 195. Is routed by Cromwel at Worcester, 196. Stirling-castle reduced by Monk, and the records of the kingdom sent to London, 207. Dundee and other towns taken, *ib.* The kingdom submits to the commonwealth, *ib.* The civil administration of, under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwel, 266. The forts rased and troops disbanded by Charles II. on his restoration, 365. A parliament, *ib.* Prelacy tacitly restored, 366. Sharp made archbishop of St. Andrews, 367. Trial and execution of Argyle and others, *ib.* Lord Lorn condemned, but pardoned by the king, 438. Proceedings of parliament, 439. Arbitrary imposition of fines under the act of indemnity, *ib.* Disorders occasioned by the re-establishment of episcopacy, 440. And by violent measures to suppress conventicles, 442. Insurrection and renewal of the covenant, 443. The insurgents routed by Dalziel, *ib.* Cruel execution of the covenanters 444. The attempts to reconcile the people to episcopacy without effect, VIII. 49. A parliament, 50. Severe law against conventicles, 52. The arbitrary administration

of Lauderdale, 53. Case of Mitchel, 54. Archbishop Sharp murdered, 114. A parliament held by the duke of York, 167. Condemnation of the earl of Argyle, 169. Cruel persecution of the covenanters, 171. Two women drowned for not abjuring the declaration, 174. A declaration of indulgence published by James II. 259. Revolts against James, on the coming over of the prince of Orange, 300. The convention summoned by the prince, makes a tender of the crown to him and his princess, 309..

Scriptures, a translation of, made by Tindal the reformer, iv. 131. See *Bible*.

Scutage, an explanation of that term, and on what occasions levied by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 127. None levied by Edward I. 323.

Sea fights. See under the names of the respective commanders.

Secretaries of State, a list of those during the reign of James I. vi. 155. During that of Charles I. vii. 153.

Sedgmoor, battle of, between the duke of Monmouth and the earl of Feversham, viii. 229.

Sedley, Mrs. her influence over James II. viii. 219.

Segrave, John de, appointed guardian of Scotland by Edward I. ii. 309. Is defeated by the Scots, *ib.*

Self denying ordinance passed by the long parliament, vii. 27.

Seneffe, battle of, between the prince of Orange and the prince of Conde, viii. 9.

Severus, emperor, completes Adrian's rampart, i. 10. This rampart erected of stone, 13.

Seymour, lady Jane, maid of honour to queen Anne Boleyn, attracts the notice of Henry VIII. iv. 156. Is married to the king the next day after Anne Bolèyn's execution, 162. Is brought to bed of a son, (afterward Edward VI.), and dies, 176.

——, Sir Edward, brother to queen Jane, made earl of Hertford, iv. 176. Commands the forces of Henry VIII. in an invasion of Scotland, and burns Edinburgh, 245. Is sent with forces over to Calais, 253. Is appointed one of the regency during the minority of Edward VI. 282. Is chosen protector by the regency, 283. Is created duke of Somerset, 284. See *Somerset*.

——, lord, second son of the protector Somerset, commands a squadron stationed at Dunkirk, to prevent the duke of Parma from joining the Spanish armada, v. 335.

——, Sir Francis, his speech at the opening of the third parliament of Charles I. vi. 241.

——, Sir Thomas, is nominated one of the council to the regency, during the minority of Edward VI. iv. 283. Is created lord Seymour, and high admiral, 285. His character, 314. Marries the queen-dowager, *ib.* Cabals against his brother the protector, during his absence in Scotland, *ib.* Forms a party in parliament against the protector, 315. Is intimidated, and desires a reconciliation with his brother, *ib.* Addresses the lady Elizabeth, after the queen dowager's death, *ib.* Is committed to the Tower, 318. Is examined by the council, *ib.* Is attainted by parliament, 319. Is executed, 320.

Sforza, Francis, obtains the investiture of Milan, iv. 98. See *Milan*.

Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl of, his hint of shutting up the exchequer, carried to the king by sir Thomas Clifford, vii. 475. Is made chancellor, 478. His speech to parliament on the Dutch war, 500. Issues writs for supplying vacant seats in parliament, 502. Deserts the court, and joins the country party, 505. Is dismissed from being chancellor, 512. Is sent to the Tower for disputing the legality of the parliament after a twelvemonth's prorogation, viii. 26. Flatters the duke of Monmouth with the hopes of the succession, 95. Is made president of the council, 102. Is removed by the king, 123. Presents the duke of York as a popish recusant, to the grand jury of Middlesex, 127. Is accused of treason, but acquitted, 166. Instigates the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, 183. Retires to Holland, and dies, 184. His character, *ib.*

Shakspeare, scarcely any mention of civil liberty to be found in his historical plays, v. 469, *note*. A character of his dramatic writings, vi. 191. Compared with Jonson, 192.

Sharp, a Scots presbyterian commissioner, abandons their cause, and is made archbishop of St. Andrews, vii. 367. His cruelty towards the covenanters, 444. Is shot at by Mitchel, viii. 54. Is murdered, 114.

———, Dr. is suspended by the court of high commission, in the reign of James II. for preaching against popery, viii. 255.

Shaw, Dr. procured by the duke of Gloucester to declare his brother Edward illegitimate, in a sermon at St. Paul's, iii. 277. Ill success of this scheme, 278.

Sheep, the number of, restricted by statute, iv. 277. Sir Thomas More's censure of the excessive breeding of, 328.

Sherfield, recorder of Salisbury, is prosecuted in the star-chamber for breaking a painted church window, vi. 290.

Sheriffs, the primitive nature of their office. ii. 270.

Ship-money, first levied in England. i. 142. Imposed on occasion of the Spanish invasion, v. 461. First levied by Charles I. vi 225. Is extended over the whole kingdom, 301. Trial of John Hambden, for refusing to pay it, 315. The sheriffs voted delinquents for assessing it, by the commons, 372. Is declared illegal, 380.

Shipping, state of, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 496. Cause of its decay at that time, *ib.* See *Navy*.

Shirley, Dr. and Fag, a member of the house of commons, great disputes between the two houses, occasioned by, viii. 14.

Shore, Jane, accused by the duke of Gloucester in council, iii. 274. Remarks on the accounts given of her, *ib. note*. Her history, 276.

Shrewsbury, battle of, between Henry IV. and young Piercy, iii. 71.

———, countess of, her scandalous reports of queen Elizabeth, communicated to Elizabeth by Mary queen of Scots, v. 506.

———, earl of, is added to the privy council for the consideration of the case of Mary queen of Scots, v. 144. Mary committed to his custody at Tutbury, 146. She is removed from his care, on account of his indulgence to her, 258. Is appointed to attend on her execution, 311.

———, earl of, renounces the catholic religion, and joins the prince of Orange, viii. 284.

Sicily, transactions of Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, during their wintering there, on their way to the crusade, ii. 9. The pope's contests with the emperor Frederic concerning, 171. Is offered by the pope, to Richard earl of Cornwal, who refuses it, *ib.* Is accepted by Henry III. for his second son Edmond, 172. The heavy debt incurred by Henry, in asserting this grant, *ib.* A crusade published against, by the pope, 173.

Sidney, Algernon, secretly negotiates with France, and receives bribes and presents from that court, viii. 43, *note*. Enters into the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, 185. Review of his life and character, 196. Is tried, *ib.* His defence, 197. Is executed, 198.

———, Sir Henry, lord deputy of Ireland, reduces Shan O'Neale, v. 399. His vigilant administration, *ib.*

———, Sir Philip, writes to queen Elizabeth, to dissuade her from marrying the duke of Anjou, v. 244. Is made governor of Flushing, 273. His death and character, 276.

Sigebert, king of East Anglia, restores Christianity in his kingdom, and said to found the university of Cambridge, i. 46.

———, king of Wessex, deposed for his bad administration, i. 55. His base ingratitude to his protector, *ib.* Revenged upon him, 56.

Sigefert, a Northumbrian pirate, routed by Alfred, i. 89.

Silver. See *Money*.

Simier, is sent over by the duke of Anjou, to prosecute his suit with queen Elizabeth, v. 239. His art in rendering his conversation agreeable to her, 240. Discovers Leicester's marriage to the queen, *ib.* Is taken under the queen's immediate protection, on Leicester's attempting his life, *ib.*

Simnel, Lambert, a baker's son, becomes the instrument of Simon the priest to disturb the government of Henry VII. iii. 323. Opens his pretensions in Ireland, as earl of Warwic, which revolts under him, 325. Crowned at Dublin, as Edward VI. *ib.* Receives forces from the dutchess of Burgundy, 328. Invades England, 329. Defeated at the battle of Stoke, *ib.* Becomes scullion to the king, and is promoted to be his falconer, 330.

Simon, Richard, a priest, concerts the pretensions of Lambert Simnel, against Henry VII. iii. 323. Carries his pupil to Ireland, which revolts, 325. Why only confined on Simnel's overthrow, 330.

Sinclair, Oliver, favourite of James V. appointed to the command of the Scots army, iv. 329. Is defeated by the English at Solway, *ib.*

Sindercome, is condemned for attempting the life of Oliver Cromwel, vii. 282. Poisons himself, 284.

Sirnames, when introduced into England, ii. 140.

Sithric, a Danish nobleman, appointed king of Northumberland, by Athelstan, i. 104. Fate of his sons, *ib.*

Siward, duke of Northumberland, his history, i. 168.

Six articles, law of. See *Articles*.

Skinner, applies to the house of lords for redress against the East India company, and is taken into custody by the commons, vii. 454.

Slaves, or villains, how considered among the Anglo-Saxons, i. 211. Two kinds of, *ib.*

Smalcalde,

Smalcalde, a league of the protestant princes of Germany formed there, iv. 99. Money remitted to the league by Henry VIII. 142.
Smyrna fleet, Dutch, attacked by sir Robert Holmes, vii. 478.
Society, civil, more probity to be found in, than among rude and barbarous nations, i. 222.
Sodalitium, or Saxon bond of compact, described, i. 206.
Soldiers, common, their pay in the time of Edward III. ii. 497, *note*. Whence their chief emoluments arose, *ib*.
Solebay, battle of, between the English and French fleets, and De Ruiter, the Dutch admiral, vii. 485.
Solway, battle of, between the English and Scots, iv. 229.
Solyman, sultan, conquers Hungary, and besieges Vienna, iv. 99.
Somerset, duke of, governor of Normandy, obliged to surrender Rouen, and the rest of the province, to Charles VII. iii. 176. Succeeds the duke of Suffolk in his influence with Henry VI. and his queen, 188, Sent to the Tower, 199. Killed at the first battle of St. Alban's. 200.
———, the earl of Hertford, protector during the minority of Edward VI. created duke of, iv. 284. Procures his authority to be confirmed by patent, 286. Favours the establishment of the reformation, 288. Appoints a visitation of dioceses, 291. Makes preparation for the war with Scotland, 299. Publishes a manifesto, 300. Advances toward Edinburgh, 301. Defeats the Scots at the battle of Pinkey, 303. Leaves Warwic to treat for an accommodation, and returns to England, 306. Calls a parliament, *ib*. Passes laws favourable to the reformation, 307. Suppresses some popish ceremonies, 308. Orders Haddington to be fortified and garrisoned, 310. Is informed of his brother's cabals against him, 314. Commits him to the Tower, and orders a prosecution of him, 318. Signs the warrant for his execution, 320. Appoints a commission to inquire concerning inclosures, 329. Insurrections of the people, *ib*. Endeavours at an alliance with the emperor, but is disappointed, 333. Is opposed in his intention to conclude a peace with France and Scotland, 334. His haughty exertion of his authority excites cabals against him, 335. Becomes obnoxious for courting popular favour, *ib*. Demolishes churches to build a palace with the materials, 336. A conspiracy formed against him at Ely-house, *ib*. Removes the king to Windsor, and prepares for his defence, 337. Is deserted by all but Paget and Cranmer, and despairs, *ib*. Is sent to the Tower, 338. Confesses on his knees before the council, the charges laid against him; is deprived of his offices, and fined, 340. Is re-admitted to the council, *ib*. Marries his daughter to the lord Dudley, son to Warwic, *ib*. The schemes of Northumberland to ruin him, 351. Is arrested together with his dutchess and friends, *ib*. The charges against him, *ib*. Is tried, 352. Executed, 353. His character, and reflections on his fate, *ib*.
———, Carre, viscount Rochester, created earl of, vi. 79. Is instigated by his lady to procure Sir Thomas Overbury to be poisoned, *ib*. Is stung with remorse, and declines in the king's favour, 75. Is convicted of Overbury's death, 77. Is pardoned, and dies in obscurity, 78.

Southampton, Wriothesely, chancellor, and one of the regency, during the minority of Edward VI. created earl of, iv. 284. Puts the great seal in commission, 285. Is deprived of the chancellorship, and removed from the council, 286. Is re-admitted to the council, and cabals with Warwic against the protector, 336. Enters into a plot against him at Ely-house, 337. Retires from the council, and dies of vexation, 339.

————, earl of, attends the earl of Essex to Ireland, who makes him general of horse, v. 404. Is displaced by the queen's orders, 456. Enters into Essex's conspiracy at Drury-house, 423. Is tried with Essex, and condemned, 427. Is spared, but detained in prison, 432.

Spain, state of, at the time of Henry VII. of England, iii. 333. See *Ferdinand of Arragon*. Leagues with the Italian states against France, 368. Obtains possession of the kingdom of Naples, 414. Death of Ferdinand, and accession of his grandson Charles, iv. 12. See *Charles* V. Acquires the final possession of Navarre, 25. The kingdom of, resigned by the emperor Charles V. to his son Philip, 425. See *Philip* II. Charles retires to the monastery of St. Just, in Estremadura, *ib.* Victory of St. Quintin, 434. Peace of Cateau Cambresis, v. 16. Philip vows to spend his life in the extirpation of heresy, 65. His cruel persecution of heretics, *ib.* Its flourishing state and power at this time, 172. The invincible armada fitted out for the conquest of England, 333. This fleet destroyed, 343. Cadiz taken and plundered by the English, 380. The harbour of Cerimbra attacked, and a rich carrack taken there, 444. Peace concluded with England, vi. 27. Acknowledges the independency of the United Provinces, and concludes a truce with them for twelve years, 44. Arrival of prince Charles there, to prosecute his marriage with the Infanta, 133. The match broke off by Buckingham, 137. Acknowledges the republican government of England, vii. 250. The English ambassador murdered there by banished royalists, *ib.* Revolt of Portugal, and other ill successes, 251. Declares war against England, on the seizure of Jamaica, 255. The galleons taken and destroyed at Cadiz, 257. A fleet burnt in Santa Cruz harbour, *ib.* War with France, 431. Its situation at the time of the congress of Nimeguen, and motives of hastening the treaty there, viii. 22. The treaty of Nimeguen concluded, 46. Declares war against France, 206.

Spalato, archbishop of, comes to England, turns protestant, escapes to Italy, and dies in confinement, vi. 197.

Speaker of the House of Commons, first appointment of, iii. 3.

Spenser, his character as a poet, v. 492.

Spenser, See *Despenser*.

Sprague, admiral sir Edward, is killed in the engagement with the Dutch at the mouth of the Texel, vii. 509.

Spurs, battle of, between the troops of Henry VIII. and the duke of Longueville, iii. 435.

St. Alban's, the monastery of, by whom endowed, i. 49. Observations on the petition of the borough of, to parliament, in the reign of Edward II. iii. 508. Battle of, between Henry VI. and Richard duke of York, iii. 200. Between queen Margaret, and the earl of Warwic, 210.

St. Andrews, Wishart the reformer burnt there, by cardinal Beaton, iv. 297. The cardinal assassinated there, *ib.* Is surrendered to the queen dowager of Scotland, 299. Curious resolution of a scholastic debate there, by the sub-prior's servant, 460. Walter Mill burnt there, v. 23. A meeting of bishops and clergy summoned there by king James, vi. 90.

———, prior of, attends the queen regent of Scotland, in her endeavour to suppress the riots of the reformers, v. 27. Joins the association termed the *Congregation of the Lord*, 30.

St. Aubin, battle of, between the duke of Britany and the French, iii. 342.

St. Bartholomew, massacre of the Hugonots at Paris, on the eve of that day, v. 205.

St. Dennis, battle of, between the constable Montmorency, and the prince of Condé, v. 186. Battle of, between the prince of Orange, and mareschal Luxembourg, viii. 46.

St. Disier taken by the emperor Charles V. iv. 247.

St. Edmondsbury, a confederacy of the barons formed there, by cardinal Langton, to assert their privileges against the oppressions of king John, ii. 79.

St. Giles, tutelar saint of Edinburgh, riot of protestants there on the festival of, v. 24.

St. John, his ineffectual negotiations with the States-general of the United Provinces, vii. 209. Excites a quarrel between the Commonwealth and the States, *ib.*

———, of Jerusalem, the knights of, refuse to surrender their revenues to Henry VIII. iv. 205. The order dissolved by parliament, *ib.*

St. Omer's, the prince of Orange defeated there by mareschal Luxembourg, viii. 27.

St. Quintin, battle of, between the constable Montmorency, and the Spanish army, under Philibert duke of Savoy, iv. 434.

Stafford, lord viscount, is tried for the popish plot, viii. 140. Is condemned, 142. Executed, 144.

Standard, battle of, i. 357.

Stanley, lord, suspected by Richard III. of favouring the earl of Richmond, ii. 294. His son retained by Richard as the pledge of his fidelity, *ib.* His ambiguous conduct previous to the battle of Bosworth, *ib.* Declares for Richmond, soon after the commencement of the action, *ib.* Created earl of Derby, 314.

———, William, governor of Deventer, betrays the place, and deserts with his whole garrison to the Spaniards, v. 328.

———, Sir William, presents the earl of Richmond with Richard III.'s crown, found in Bosworth-field, iii. 307. Detected by Sir Robert Clifford in abetting Perkin Warbec, 362. Tried and executed, 363.

Stannary courts suppressed by the long parliament, vi. 422.

Star-chamber, the jurisdiction of, how founded, and when established, iii. 397. The nature of that jurisdiction explained, v. 453. Its antiquity, vi. 159. Its authority not limited by any precise law or statute, 160. Oppressive sentences of this court, 295, 298, 303, 313. Its proceedings condemned by the commons, 373. Its sentence on Prynne

Prynne and others reversed, and satisfaction ordered, 378. Is abolished by parliament, 420.

Stayner, captain, takes and destroys the Spanish galleons at Cadiz, vii. 257.

Stephen, king of England, his pretensions to the crown, how founded, i. 350. Assumes the crown, 352. Grants a charter to his subjects, 353. His title ratified by the pope, *ib.* His subjects swear a conditional allegiance to him, 355. Summoned before a synod, by his brother Henry, bishop of Winchester, 359. Taken prisoner by the empress Matilda's party, 361. Exchanged for earl Robert, Matilda's brother, 365. Disgusts his nobles, by demanding their castles, 366. His party laid under the papal interdiction, but removed by his submissions, *ib.* The archbishop of Canterbury refuses to anoint his son Eustace, 368. Enters into a compromise with Henry, son of the empress Matilda, *ib.* Dies, 369. His character, *ib.*

Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, proclaims Edgar, and encourages the English to resist the Normans, i. 232. Not permitted to officiate at the coronation of king William, 235. Attends him to Normandy, 239. His character, 255. Degraded and imprisoned, 257.

Stil-yard, merchants of, when established into a company, iv. 349. The privileges of, annulled by the council of Edward VI. *ib.*

Stirling, a confederacy of malcontent Scots nobles formed there, against queen Mary, v. 90. The rebels forced to retire into England, 91.

Stoke, battle of, between Henry VII. and the earl of Lincoln, Lambert Simnel's general, iii. 329.

Stowe, his acknowledgment of the advance of trade during the peaceable reign of James I. vi. 570.

Stowel, an abhorrer, resists the order of the house of commons for his commitment, viii. 131.

Strafford, Wentworth earl of, his preferment, and the motive of it, vi. 284. His character, *ib.* Is called from Ireland, and sent lieutenant-general against the Scots, 357. Obtains the chief command by the illness of Northumberland, 359. Advises the king to continue the war, *ib.* Gains an advantage over the Scots, 360. The army discontented, *ib.* His general unpopularity at the meeting of the long parliament, 365. Is promised protection by the king, 367. Is impeached by the house of commons, 369. Is taken into custody, *ib.* A commission appointed for trying him, 396. Is accused by the Irish parliament, 397. Examination of his case and conduct, 399. His defence, 401. Notes of his speech in council, produced against him by Vane and Pym, 407. His defence against this paper, 408. Is attainted by the commons, 409. The populace excited against him, 410. Writes to the king to give him up, 414. His attainder passed, 415. Is executed, 418. His character, *ib.*

Stratford, archbishop of Canterbury, is employed by Edward III. in collecting the new levies, ii. 409. Enters into a combination against the king on his return from Flanders, 410. His letter to the king, 411. Comes to parliament unsummoned, in his pontifical robes, and demands admittance, *ib.* Is at length reconciled to the king, *ib.*

Stratton, battle of, between the earl of Stamford and the royalists, vi. 517.

Straw, Jack, one of the heads of Tyler's insurrection. See *Tyler*.

Strickland, a member of the house of commons, introduces a bill for the amendment of the liturgy, v. 174. Is summoned before the council, and prohibited appearing in the house, 175. Is restored to his seat, 177.

Strigul, earl of. See *Strongbow*.

Strode, his cruel treatment in Cornwal, for bringing a bill into parliament, relating to tin, iv. 271.

———, a member of the house of commons, impeached by Charles I. vi. 467.

Strongbow, Richard, earl of Strigul, engages to assist Dermot, king of Leinster, i. 428. Applies to Henry II. for permission, 429. Marries the daughter of Dermot, and succeeds to his kingdom, *ib.* The Irish not able to withstand him, 430. Receives from Henry the commission of seneschal of Ireland, *ib.*

Strozzi, the French admiral, makes an attempt on Jersey, but is engaged by an English fleet, iv. 333.

Stuart, the causes of the unhappiness of the princes of that house in the government of England pointed out, vi. 580. Reflections on the administration of that family, while on the throne of England, viii. 320.

———, James, of Ochiltree, joins in the designs of the count d'Aubigney, in detaching James VI. of Scotland from the interest of England, v. 231. Is made earl of Arran, 247. See *Arran*.

Subsidies and Fifteenths, the nature, amount, and method of levying these taxes, vi. 173. Are altered into a land tax, 175. The last grant of subsidies, vii. 391.

Suetonius Paulinus, sent by Nero to Britain, i. 7. Subdues Anglesey, the chief seat of the Druids, *ib.* Defeats Boadicea, 8. Recalled, 9.

Suffolk, earl of, succeeds, at the death of the earl of Salisbury, to the command of the siege of Orleans, iii. 139. Disconcerted by Joan d'Arc, 146. Raises the siege, 149. Besieged himself at Jergeau, *ib.* Taken prisoner by one Renaud, whom he knighted, *ib.* Negotiates a truce with Charles VII. of France, 169. Concludes a treaty of marriage between Henry VI. and Margaret of Anjou, 170. Created a duke 171. Defends his conduct in the house of lords, 184. Impeached by the commons, 185. His justification of himself, *ib.* Banished by the king, 187. Murdered, 188.

———, Edmund de la Pole, earl of, flies to Flanders, and why, iii. 391. Is pardoned, but elopes again, 392. Political improvement of this incident by Henry VII. *ib.* His secrets betrayed, by the treachery of Sir Robert Curzon, *ib.* Protected by Philip archduke of Austria, 393. Deluded over to England by Philip, and committed to the Tower, *ib.* Beheaded by Henry VIII. 433. Motives to this action, *ib.*

———, Charles Brandon, duke of, marries Mary queen dowager of France, sister to Henry VIII. privately, iii. 445. Henry reconciled to him, *ib.* Retires disgusted, iv. 4. Is sent by Henry to invade Picardy,

cardy, 51. Penetrates almost to Paris, 52. Is sent by Henry to suppress Dr. Mackrel's insurrection, 171. Dies, 255. The king's character of him, 256.

Suffolk, the marquis of Dorset created duke of, iv. 361. For his daughters, *Jane* and *Catharine*, see *Grey*. Is appointed to command the army, to defend his daughter Jane's pretensions, 370. The command taken by Northumberland, *ib.* Declares for queen Mary, 372. Is apprehended, but released, *ib.* 373. Engages in a conspiracy against Mary, 389. Is taken prisoner, *ib.* Is tried and executed, 393.

———, lord, and lord chamberlain, is ordered to search the vaults under the parliament house, and discovers the powder intended to blow up king and parliament, vi. 35.

———, earl of, his daughter married to the earl of Essex, vi. 67. See *Carre* and *Essex*. Succeeds Salisbury as treasurer, 71.

Suits in forma pauperis, first given to the poor, iii. 398.

Sunday, sports and exercises allowed on, by proclamation of James I. vi. 92. The puritans distinguish themselves by terming it the *Sabbath*. 211. An edict for sports on, renewed by Charles I. 299.

Sunderland, earl of, is made secretary of state, viii. 102. Remarks on his conduct, 175. Is supposed to have entered into a correspondence with the prince of Orange, 294.

Supplies, extraordinary, the amount of those granted to James I. by parliament, vi. 172. See *Revenue*.

Surienne, sir Francis, refuses obedience to Henry VI's order to surrender Maine to the duke of Anjou, iii. 174. Reduced to capitulate by Dunois, *ib.* Retires into Britany, *ib.*

Surrey, earl of, encourages Henry VIII. in his pleasures, iii. 410. Collects an army, and marches to oppose James IV. of Scotland, 438. Defeats James at the battle of Flouden, 439. Created duke of Norfolk, 440. See *Norfolk*.

———, lord Howard, son to the duke of Norfolk, made earl of, iii. 440. Is made admiral of England, and by the emperor Charles V. admiral of the Imperial dominions, iv. 40. Commands the English incursions into France, 41. Commands in the invasion of Scotland, 43. His character, 261. Is made governor of Boulogne, but afterwards displaced, 262. The motives of Henry's aversion to him, *ib.* His accusation and execution, *ib.*

Sussex, history of the Saxon kingdom of, i. 52.

———, earl of, is appointed one of the commissioners to hear the cause between Mary queen of Scots, and Murray the regent, v. 134. Marches against the northern insurgents, 164. Is sent with forces to Scotland, to check the progress of Mary's party, 168. Writes to Scotland, in order to frustrate the treaty entered into by Mary with Elizabeth, 170.

Swart, Martin, sent with forces by the dutchess of Burgundy, to the assistance of Lambert Simnel, iii. 328. Defeated and killed at the battle of Stoke, 330.

Sweating sickness, first appearance of, iii. 314. Appears again, iv. 18. *note*,

Sweyn, king of Denmark, his invasion of England, in conjunction with Olave king of Norway, i. 132. Exacts tribute of Ethelred, and departs,

parts, 133. Subsequent invasions by him, 134. 141. Dies at Gainsborough, 144.

Sweden, accession of Charles X. by the resignation of queen Christina, and his successes in the north, vii. 246. Peace concluded with Denmark, by the mediation of the English and Dutch, 304. Joins in the triple league, 435. Is detached from it by France, 480.

Swiss, league with pope Julius II. against the French, iii. 416. Drive the French out of Milan, and reinstate Maximilian Sforza in that dutchy, 424. Excel other nations in their infantry, 432. Invade Burgundy, 435. Deceived in a treaty by Tremouille the governor, 436. Are defeated by Francis I. of France, at Marignan, iv. 9. A body of, in the service of Francis, desert in disgust, 54.

Synods held in England, i. 64, 128, 267, 271, 302, 303, 318, 334, 343, 358, 362, 391, 397. ii. 17, 57, 192, 285. See *Convocation*.

T.

TAILLIAGES, levied by the Anglo-Norman kings, ii. 126.

Tancred, natural brother to Constantia, queen of Naples and Sicily, dispossesses her of her dominions, ii. 9. His apprehensions on the arrival of the crusaders, Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, who are obliged to winter at Messina, *ib.* His insidious behaviour toward his guests, 11.

Tangier, the fortress of, yielded to Charles II. as part of the dowry with the princess Catharine of Portugal, vii. 378. Is demolished and abandon, viii. 156.

Tanistry, in the Irish customs, explained, vi. 59. Is abolished, *ib.*

Taxes, how imposed in the reign of Edward I. ii. 323. Are arbitrarily increased by Edward III. 491. Never imposed without consent of parliament, by the house of Lancaster, iii. 122. Oppressively raised by Henry VIII. under the name of loans, iv. 46. Exorbitant levies of, in the reign of Edward VI. 322. *note*. A review of those imposed during the time of the commonwealth, vii. 337.

Taylor, parson of Hadley, burnt for heresy, iv. 412.

———, bishop of Lincoln, violently thrust out of the parliament-house for refusing to kneel at the celebration of Mass, iv. 379.

Templars, knights, character of that order, ii. 361. Their cruel treatment by Philip the Fair, of France, 362. The order abolished by pope Clement V. 364.

Temple, sir William, resident at Brussels, is sent to the Hague, to concert an opposition to the French conquests in the Netherlands, vii. 433. His negotiations with De Wit, *ib.* Concludes the triple alliance with the States and Sweden, 435. Is sent plenipotentiary to the treaty at Aix-la-Chapelle, 436. Is visited by De Wit, and the information he brings to him, 463. Is recalled from the Hague, 466. His remonstrance to the king on being appointed ambassador to the States, viii. 7. Is sent to the congress at Nimeguen, 21. His remonstrance to the king, respecting an alliance against France, 37, 38. Concludes an alliance with the States, to oblige

oblige Louis to comply with the treaty of Nimeguen, 42. Advises the king to form a new council, 101. His character as a writer, 337. His death, *ib.*

Tenchebray, battle of, between king Henry I. and duke Robert, i. 324.

Tenures, feudal, the nature and principles of, explained, ii. 103.

Terouane, besieged by Henry VIII. iii. 434. Extraordinary relief brought them, *ib.* Capitulates, 435.

Test act passed, vii. 505. The duke of York set aside by it, 506. A new one passed, with an exception in the duke of York's favour, viii. 83. Is dispensed with by James II. 239. His privilege of dispensing with it confirmed in the case of sir Edward Hales, 244.

Teukesbury, battle of, between Edward IV. and queen Margaret's army, iii. 250.

Texel, engagement between prince Rupert and De Ruiter, at the mouth of, vii. 508.

Thanes, among the Saxons, import of that distinction, i. 208.

Theatres, cause of the licentiousness of, after the restoration, viii. 334. How corrected, 335.

Theft, when first made capital in England, i. 346.

Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, made legate in England, i. 366. Refuses to anoint Eustace as king Stephen's heir, 368. Favoured by Henry II. on this account, 383.

Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, calls a synod at Hatfield against the heresy of the Monothelites, i. 64.

Thoulouse, count de, despoiled of his dominions for protecting the Albigenses, ii. 67.

Thomas à Becket, his history previous to his preferment, i. 383. Appointed chancellor, 384. His magnificent way of life, *ib.* Goes ambassador to France, 385. Instance of the king's familiarity with him, 386. Promoted to Canterbury, *ib.* His assumed sanctity on this occasion, *ib.* His attacks on the earl of Clare and William of Eynsford, 388. Opposes the king in a national synod, 392. Is prevailed on to subscribe the constitutions of Clarendon, 395. His sorrow for his compliance, 396. Sued for some lands, and his behaviour thereupon, 397. Condemned for contempt at the council of Northampton, 398. Consults with his suffragans about a subsequent demand of money made on him by the king, 400. His extraordinary visit to the king, 401. Appeals to the pope, and leaves the kingdom, 403. His reception in France, 404. His representations abroad, 406. Excommunicates Henry's ministers, 407. Obtains a legatine commission, *ib.* Ineffectual treaties of pacification between him and the king, 410. Is reconciled to him, 411. Opposes the coronation of prince Henry when associated with his father, 412. Suspends the archbishop of York, and excommunicates other bishops who assist at the coronation, 413. Murdered at the altar, 417. His character and that of the age he lived in, *ib.* Canonized by pope Alexander, 421. Pilgrimages to his shrine, *ib.* King Henry does penance at it, 444. His murderers how punished, 452. The extraordinary devotion paid to his shrine, iv. 181. The shrine pillaged, and Becket's bones burnt by Henry VIII. 182.

Thomond, earl of, his history, v. 400.
Throgmorton, sir Nicholas, is tried at Guildhall, on account of Suffolk's conspiracy, but acquitted, iv. 393. His jury cruelly treated, 394. His brother sir John convicted, *ib.* Is released from confinement by Philip, 402. Is made ambassador to Paris, and sends over intelligence of the hostile measures of the French court, v. 33. Renews his application to Mary queen of Scots to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh, 42. Mary's spirited declaration to him on being denied a passage through England to Scotland, 43. Is employed by Elizabeth to encourage an insurrection in Scotland against Mary, 90. His prudent management in this affair for his own security, 92. Is sent ambassador to Scotland on the captivity of Mary, 121. The tenor of his commission, *ib.* Is ordered not to assist at the coronation of the young king James VI. 125.
Tibetot, John, earl of Worcester. See *Worcester*.
Tillage. See *Agriculture*.
Time, how measured by king Alfred, i. 95.
Tindal flies to Antwerp, from the power of Henry VIII. iv. 130. Makes a translation of the scriptures, 131. Is artfully supplied with money to perfect it, by Tonstal bishop of London, *ib.*
Tobacco, when first introduced into England, v. 275.
Toleration, not a priestly virtue, iii. 119. The popular arguments for and against, occasioned by the debates between cardinal Pole and bishop Gardiner on that subject, iv. 406. The chief cause and origin of it, vi. 165.
Tomlinson, colonel, the speech of Charles I. to, at his execution, vii. 143.
Tongue, Dr. his character, and his intelligence concerning the popish plot, viii. 63. Is recommended by the house of commons for church-preferment, 132.
Tonnage and poundage granted by parliament to Henry V. for life, iii. 104. Granted in like manner to Richard III. 290. To Henry VII. 318. The duties of, arbitrarily levied by Henry VIII. iv. 272. Remarks on the statute granting these duties to him, *ib.* The long possession of the duties occasions them to be considered by the Princes as their proper right and inheritance, vi. 50. A short history of these grants, 268. Are levied by Charles I. after the expiration of the grant of them, 269. The speaker of the commons forcibly detained until the passing a remonstrance against them, 278. A limited grant of, made by the commons, 394. Are granted to Charles II. for life, vii. 354.
Tonstal, bishop of London, is sent by Henry VIII. to Madrid ambassador to the emperor Charles V. iv. 60. Buys up all Tindal's first incorrect translation of the scriptures, and burns them, 131. His scheme in so doing, *ib.* Is appointed one of the regency during the minority of Edward VI. 282. Is dismissed the council for opposing the reformation, 293. His character, 356. A bill of attainder passed against him by the peers, but rejected by the commons, 357. Is restored to his see of Durham by queen Mary, 375.
Torture arbitrarily inflicted by the officers of state during the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 457.

Tory, the origin of that name, as a party distinction, viii. 126. The views of that party in opposing James II. and their plan for settling the government on his abdication, 310.

Tosti, brother to Harold duke of Northumberland, his subjects rebel against him, i. 176. They justify themselves to Harold, who went to suppress them, *ib.* Superseded by Morcar, *ib.* Retires to Flanders, 177. Prepares to disturb Harold's government, 180. His depredations on the English coasts, 187. Defeated and killed by Harold, 188.

Tournay, in Flanders, is besieged by Edward III. ii. 405. Taken by Henry VIII. iii. 437. Wolsey put in possession of the bishopric, *ib.* Is delivered up to France, iv. 14.

Tournholt, battle of, between prince Maurice and the Spaniards, v. 376.

Tours, truce concluded there between England and Charles VII. of France, iii. 169.

Toulon, battle of, between Edward IV. and the Lancastrians, iii. 218.

Trade, regulation of, among our Saxon ancestors, i. 222. A board of, when erected, viii. 329. See *Commerce*.

Transtamare, Henry count de, engages Charles king of France to invade his brother Peter king of Castile, ii. 475. Becomes possessed of Castile by the flight of his brother, 476. His soldiers desert to prince Edward, 477. Is defeated by Edward, and Peter restored, *ib.* Murders Peter, and regains the kingdom, 478. See *Castile*.

Transubstantiation, the point of, debated in convocation, iv. 385. The debate renewed at Oxford, *ib.*

Traquaire, earl of, goes to London to inform Charles of the tumults in Scotland, in opposition to the canons and liturgy, vi. 328. Prorogues the Scots parliament, 347. Intercepts a letter from the malcontents to the king of France, 345.

Treason, high, the cases of, limited by law, in the reign of Edward III. ii. 487. The vigorous and contrary statutes against, enacted by Henry VIII. and his parliaments, iv. 269. A severe law against passed by the lords, but altered by the commons, 355. The species of, restricted by parliament, 379. Statutes of Elizabeth concerning, v. 183.

Treasurers, an account of those, during the reign of James I. vi. 156. During that of Charles I. vii. 153.

Trent, the council of, assembled, iv. 293. Is transferred to Bologna, 294.

Tresilian, sir Robert, gives his opinion against the validity of Richard II.'s commission to Gloucester's faction, iii. 18. Executed for it, 21.

Treves taken from the French by the Imperialists, viii. 19.

Trials by battle allowed by Henry II. to be evaded by appeal to a jury, i. 450.

Triple alliance formed against Louis XIV. vii. 435.

Trinity college, Cambridge, when, and by whom founded, iv. 279.

Tromp, the Dutch admiral, quarrels with Blake in Dover road, vii. 212. Engages Blake, *ib.* He and De Ruiter defeat Blake, 214. Engages Blake for three days, and is worsted, but secures the merchant ships under his convoy, 215. Engages Blake for two days, and is defeated, 235. Is killed in an engagement with Monk, *ib.*

Tromp, son of the former, sustains an engagement against the duke of York, after the death of Opdam, vii. 403. He and De Ruiter engage the duke of Albemarle, four days, 410. Is defeated at the mouth of the Thames, 412. His commission taken from him, 414.

Troye, treaty at, between Henry V. and Philip duke of Burgundy, iii. 110. Articles of, specified, *ib.* Reflections on this treaty, 111.

Tudor, Sir Owen, marries Catharine, widow of Henry V. iii. 118. Taken prisoner at the battle of Mortimer's Cross, and beheaded, 210. Remarks on the administration of the princes of that house, vi. 561.

Tunis is bombarded by admiral Blake, and the ships in the harbour burnt, vii. 254.

Turenne, marshal, his successes in Alsace, viii. 10. Prevents Montecuculi from passing the Rhine, 17. Is killed, *ib.*

Turkey, commencement of the trade with, by a company established by queen Elizabeth, v. 479.

Turnpikes, the first law for the erecting of, when passed, viii. 329.

Tyler, Wat, and Jack Straw, heads of the insurrection in the reign of Richard II. assemble their adherents on Blackheath, iii. 8. Tyler has a conference with the king in Smithfield, 9. Is killed by Walworth, mayor of London, 10.

Tyrconnel, earl of, his character, and violent oppression of the protestants in Ireland, viii. 251. Is made lord lieutenant, 252. Projects a reversal of the act of Settlement, 260.

Tyrone, earl of, his character, v. 401. Enters into a correspondence with Spain, and heads an insurrection of the native Irish against the English, 402. Defeats the English under sir Henry Bagnal, *ib.* His conference and treaty with the earl of Essex, 408. Breaks the truce on the return of Essex to England, 412. Is driven into the morasses by lord Mountjoy, 413. Joins the Spaniards who invade Ireland, 437. Is defeated by Mountjoy, 438. Surrenders himself to Mountjoy, 445. Is pardoned, *ib.*

Tyrrel, Sir James, murders Edward V. and the duke of York in the Tower, by order of Richard III. iii. 280. Proves the murders by order of Henry VII. on account of Perkin Warbec's imposture, 360. Executed for another crime, 390.

———, Walter, accidently kills William Rufus with an arrow, i. 307. Joins the crusade for penance, *ib.*

Tythes, the large pretensions the Saxon clergy formed under that name i. 73.

Tythings, the subdivision of counties into by Alfred, for the regular administration of justice, i. 92.

V.

VACARIUS reads public lectures in civil law at Oxford, under the protection of Theobald archbishop of Canterbury, iii. 299.

Vagrants are punished by queen Elizabeth by martial law, v. 455.

Valence, bishop of, maternal uncle to queen Eleanor, made chief minister to Henry III. ii. 163.

Valentine forcibly detains the speaker of the house of commons in his chair, until the passing a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, iv. 278. His sentence by the court of king's bench, *ib.*

Van Ghent, the Dutch admiral, is purposely insulted by an English yacht, vii. 473. Is killed by the earl of Sandwich at the battle of Solebay, 485.

Vane, Sir Harry, secretary, his imprudent manner of urging the king's demands in the house of commons, vi. 352. Notes of Strafford's speech in council, found among his papers by his son, and made use of to condemn Strafford, 407. His doubtful depositions concerning this paper, 408.

——, Sir Henry, the younger, how he procured the condemnation of the earl of Strafford, vi. 407. Is sent by the parliament with offers to negotiate a confederacy with the Scots, 540. His character, *ib.* Procures the solemn league and covenant to be framed, *ib.* Becomes a leader of the independents, vii. 21. His speech in parliament preparatory to the self-denying ordinance, 25. Is sent with other commissioners to the Isle of Wight, to treat with the king, 121. His remarks on the king's abilities, 122. Is named one of the council of state after the king's death, 158. Is sent with other commissioners to settle the affairs of Scotland, now reduced by Monk, 208. Encourages discontents against the protector, 242. Is confined by the long parliament on its restoration, 314. His general conduct and behaviour, *ib.* Is excepted from the act of indemnity on the restoration, 353. Is tried, 380. Is executed, 383. His character, *ib.*

Varenne, seneschal of Normandy, sent by Lewis XI. of France, with some forces, to the assistance of Henry VI. of England, iii. 223. Gets possession of Alnwick castle in Northumberland, *ib.*

Vassals under feudal tenure, obliged to ransom their superior lord, if in captivity, ii. 28. The ransom of Richard I. of England, how levied, *ib.*

Vassalage, the origin and nature of explained, ii. 102. Their condition under their respective lords, 110. Military service, why changed into pecuniary supplies, 247.

Vaughan, an outlaw for debt, motives for confirming his election to the house of commons, vi. 17.

Udal, a puritanical clergyman, his cruel persecution for writing against episcopacy, v. 466.

Velvet, the price of, in queen Elizabeth's reign, vi. 176.

Venables commands the forces on board Penn's fleet, sent to the West Indies, viii. 254. Is routed at St. Domingo, 255. Takes Jamaica, and is sent to the Tower, *ib.*

Venner, an account of his insurrection, vii. 363.

Vere, Sir Francis, is made governor of Flushing, v. 375. Commands the English auxiliaries at the battle of Tournholt, 376. Defends Ostend against the Spaniards, v. 444, *note.*

——, Robert de, earl of Oxford, his ascendancy over Richard II. iii. 14. His preferment and licentious conduct, 15. Defeated by the duke of Gloucester, 20.

Verneuil, battle of, between the duke of Bedford and the earl of Buchan, iii. 131.

Verums, peace of, between Henry IV. of France and Philip II. of Spain, v. 389.
Vezelay, the armies of Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, intended for the crusade, rendezvous there, ii. 7.
Victor IV. pope; see *Alexander* III.
Vidomar, count of Limoges, how he incurred the resentment of Richard I. ii. 33. Is besieged by him, and all his garrison hanged, *ib.* Richard receives his death wound at the assault, *ib.*
Vienne, John de, admiral of France, sent by the regency of Charles VI. to assist the Scots in invading England, iii. 12. Returns home disgusted, 13.
Vigo taken and burnt by Sir Francis Drake, v. 350.
Villains, among the Anglo-Saxons, what, i. 211.
Villenage, the gradual decay of, deduced from the revival of the arts, iii. 302. No remains of, left at the time of queen Elizabeth, 304.
Villiers, George, is introduced to the notice of James I. vi. 76. Is made cup-bearer to him, *ib.* Is made duke of Buckingham, 79. See *Buckingham*.
Virgil, Polydore, cause of his antipathy to cardinal Wolsey, iv. 15.
Virginia, the first settlers planted there by Sir Walter Raleigh, desert it, v. 274. The settlements there resumed and effected, vi. 187.
Ulster, a company formed in London for planting colonies in, on its falling to the crown by attainders, vi. 60. An insurrection of the Irish, and massacre of the English there, 436, 437. See *Ireland*.
Union of England and Scotland attempted by king James I. vi. 25. Commissioners appointed to treat of it, *ib.*
Uniformity, the act of, passed, vii. 374. The penalties of increased, 396.
Universities, their revenues granted to Henry VIII. by parliament, but declined by him, iv. 251.
United Provinces of the Low Countries, commencement of their association against the dominions of Spain, v. 215. Pacification of Ghent, 219. Conclude a treaty with queen Elizabeth, 221. Again implore the protection of Elizabeth, 296. Conditions of her league with them, 271. Are reproved by Elizabeth for the extraordinary honours bestowed on Leicester, commander of the English forces, 273. Are displeased with Leicester, 277. And jealous of the intentions of Elizabeth, 329. The earl of Leicester recalled, *ib.* The government of, conferred on prince Maurice, *ib.* Conclude a new treaty with Elizabeth, 375. Another, 393. A treaty between James I. and Henry IV. for the support of, vi. 7. Their freedom acknowledged by Spain, and a truce of twelve years concluded, 44. Banish Vorstius, an Arminian, to gratify James, 57. Are induced to practise severities against bigots, *ib.* Obtain of James a resignation of the cautionary towns, 80. Acquire their full freedom by this restitution, 82. Renew the war with Spain, and receive forces from England, 150. Cruelties exercised by the Dutch on the English factors at Amboyna, 185. Their herring-busses attacked by the English, and a fine paid for the licence of fishing, 306. Are obliged to remove Charles II. after the murder of Dorislaus, vii. 172.

Decline the proposed coalition with the English commonwealth, 210. Their ships taken by the English, 211. Engagement between Tromp and Blake, 212. Their apology rejected by the English commonwealth, 213. See *Tromp, De Ruiter,* &c. Make peace with Cromwel, 236. Review of their conduct toward the English, 397. Nova Belgia taken from them, 399. Order De Ruiter to attack the English settlements, 400. Their ships seized by the English, 401. War declared against them by the English, 402. Treaty of Breda, 419. Triple alliance, 435. Charles determines to quarrel with them, in virtue of his league with France, 472. Their Smyrna fleet attacked by the English, 478. War declared by England, 479. War declared by France, 480. Their defenceless state at this time, 482. Sea-fight at Solebay, 485. Rapid progress of Lewis XIV. on their territories, 487. General consternation of the States, 489. Send deputies to beg for peace, 490. The prince of Orange made Stadtholder, 494. Sea-fight at Schonvelt, 506. Another at the mouth of the Texel, 508. Ineffectual congress at Cologne, 510. Peace with England, 513. Their motives for hastening the treaty of Nimeguen, viii. 22. Conclude an alliance with Charles to oblige France to peace, 38. Peace of Nimeguen, 46. Join with Germany in a league against Lewis XIV. 278. Concur with the prince of Orange in his intention of assisting the English nation against James II. 285.

Vorstius, a disciple of Arminius, banished from the United Provinces, to gratify king James I. vi. 57.

Vortigern, prince of Dumnonium, his character, i. 15. 19, 20. Deposed, 20.

Vortimer succeeds his father Vortigern, i. 20.

Urban disputes the papacy with Clement, i. 303. His kind reception of archbishop Anselm, 304.

—— III. dies of grief, at the taking of Palestine by Saladin, i. 457.

—— VI. pope, how elected, iii. 57.

Urbanists and Clementines, source of those distinctions, iii. 57.

Urrey, colonel, deserts from the parliament army to prince Rupert, vi. 520. Essex's army surprised, by his intelligence, and Hambden killed, 521. Is defeated by Montrose near Inverness, vii. 51. Is executed in Scotland, 181.

Urswic, almoner to Henry VII. sent by him to mediate between France and Britany, iii. 340. The duke of Britany's answer to his proposals, *ib.* Sent a second time with new proposals, 342.

Usury, how looked on at the commencement of the reign of Richard I. ii. 3. Is worse practised after the expulsion of the Jews by Edward I. than by them before, ii. 288. Ill judged laws against, by Henry VII. iii. 401. Another statute passed against, iv. 354. The meaning of that word limited to the taking exorbitant interest, and condemned by law, v. 488.

Utrecht is taken by Lewis XIV. vii. 488.

Uxbridge, negotiations entered into there for the treaty between Charles I. and the long parliament, vii. 31.

W.

WAGER of law, the source of, i. 222.
Wages of labourers, regulated by a law of Henry VII. iii. 402. Remarks on the rates at that time, compared with the present, *ib.*
Wakefield, battle of, between Margaret and the duke of York, iii. 209. Action there between Sir Thomas Fairfax and Goring, vi. 534.
Wakeman, Sir George, the queen's physician, is accused of an intention to poison the king, viii. 63. Is acquitted, 113.
Walcott, lieutenant-colonel, is tried and executed for the duke of Monmouth's conspiracy, viii. 188.
Waleran de Ties, his disputes with Richard earl of Cornwal, son of king John, concerning the manor in that county, ii. 158.
Wales, the state of, and the restless disposition of its princes, previous to the time of Henry III. ii. 196. Prince Lewellyn applies to Henry for protection against his rebellious son Griffin, *ib.* Griffin delivered up to Henry, by his elder brother David, who does homage to Henry, *ib.* Griffin loses his life in attempting an escape from the Tower of London, 197. His son Lewellyn succeeds, and renews the homage to Henry, *ib.* He confederates with Leicester, and invades England, *ib.* Is reduced by Edward I. for not renewing his homage, 241. Lewellyn defeated and killed by Mortimer, 242. His brother and successor David tried as a traitor, and executed *ib.* The Welsh bards all put to death, 243. The traditional account of its annexation to the crown of England, and giving title to the king's eldest son, *ib.* The motto of the princes of, whence derived, 436. The Welsh remonstrate against the taxes imposed by prince Edward, to defray his expences in Castile, 478. Appeal to Charles king of France, 479. Insurrection there by Owen Glendour, iii. 66. United to the English government by parliament, iv. 121. Farther regulations made to complete the union, 151.
Wallace, William, his character, ii. 299. Becomes a leader of the discontented Scots, *ib.* His first exploits against the English, *ib.* Chases Ormesby, the English justiciary, to England, 300. Is countenanced by Robert Bruce, *ib.* Gains a victory over earl Warrenne, 301. Is made regent of Scotland, 302. Makes an incursion into England, *ib.* Resigns his regency, to avoid giving umbrage to the Scots nobles, 303. Is routed at Falkirk by Edward, 304. His prudent retreat, *ib.* His conference with young Robert Bruce, on the banks of the Carron, 305. Gains Bruce over to the Scots interest, 306. Is betrayed into the hands of Edward, 311. Is executed on Tower-hill, *ib.*
Waller, Edmond, the poet, his anecdote of James I. vi. 75. His character as a writer, and as a member of parliament, 527. Forms a party without doors against the violent councils within, *ib.* Is discovered, and, with two others, condemned by a court-martial, 528. Is pardoned, on paying a fine, 529. His character as a poet, vii. 345. His death, *ib.*

Waller, Sir William, a parliament general, his rapid exploits, vi. 514. Joins the earl of Essex, 515. Is sent into the west, and is defeated by lord Wilmot on Roundway-down, 519. Is routed by the king at Cropredy-bridge, vii. 16.

Wallingford-house, cabal of, against Richard Cromwel, vii. 295.

Walpole, Mr. a particular examination of Perkin Warbec's imposture, in reference to his *Historical Doubts*, iii. 454.

Walsingham, minister to queen Elizabeth, countenances the puritans, v. 155. When ambassador at Paris, is deceived by the plausible conduct of Charles, 204. Is sent ambassador to France, on occasion of the intended marriage between Elizabeth and the duke of Anjou, 242. The strange contrariety of instructions received by him, *ib.* Is averse to the French marriage, 244. Is sent ambassador to Scotland, to discover the real character of James, 255. Sends a favourable account of him, *ib.* His vigilance and artifices to detect conspiracies, 257. Discovers Babington's conspiracy, 287. His schemes to acquire full insight into it, *ib* Seizes the conspirators, 289. Justifies his conduct towards Mary queen of Scots, on her trial, 298. His letter to Thirlstone, the Scots secretary, relating to the execution of Mary queen of Scots, 324. His death and character, 522.

Walter, archbishop of Rouèn, is, with others, appointed by Richard I. counsellor to Longchamp, ii. 16. Is made chief justiciary, 17. Forces prince John to an accommodation, 25. Attends queen Eleanor to Germany to ransom the king, 28.

Waltheof, earl, enters into a conspiracy against William the Conqueror, i. 264. Betrayed by his wife, 265. Confesses it to Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, and after to the king, *ib.* Executed, 266.

Walworth, mayor of London, kills Watt Tyler at the head of his adherents, iii. 10.

Wapentake, what, i. 94.

War, reflections on the state of, and manner of carrying on, in the early times of the English history, iii. 103. 165. Civil, favourable to eloquence, vii. 342.

Warbec, Perkin, his parentage, iii. 356. For what purpose sent for by the dutchess of Burgundy, 357. Secreted in Portugal, *ib* Sent to Ireland, and assumes the character of the duke of York, 358. Invited to Paris by Charles VIII. *ib.* Magnificent reception and appointments, *ib.* Retires to the dutchess of Burgundy, on the peace between England and France, *ib.* His interest gains ground in England, 359. His secrets betrayed by Sir Robert Clifford, 361. His private history published by Henry VII. *ib.* Puts to sea with a band of refugees, and escapes the snares of the Kentish men, 365. Makes an ineffectual attempt upon Ireland, 370. Received by James IV. of Scotland, and married to lady Catharine Gordon, 371. Attends James in an invasion of England, and publishes a manifesto, *ib.* Desired by James to leave Scotland, on his concluding a truce with England, 378. Excluded Flanders, he retires to Ireland, 379.

379. Makes a descent on Cornwal, *ib.* Besieges Exeter, *ib.* Raises the siege, and his followers disperse, 380. His wife taken prisoner, and generously treated, *ib.* Flies to a sanctuary, 381. Persuaded to surrender, *ib.* Conducted to London in mock triumph, *ib.* Makes a confession, which is published, *ib.* Escapes, 382. Taken and put in the stocks, *ib.* Concerts an escape with the earl of Warwic, *ib.* Executed, 383. His imposture established by an express examination of circumstances, 455.

Wardships, a branch of the revenue of the Anglo-Norman kings, the vast advantages made thereby, II. 129. The oppressive nature of the prerogative, V. 461. The commons attempt to free the nation from the burden of, VI. 24. Enter into treaty with the king for the resigning, which fails, 54.

Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, and chancellor, chosen to the privy-council by Henry VIII. III. 409. Resigns his places, and retires, IV. 4. His observation on cardinal Wolsey, 16. Informs Henry of Wolsey's arbitrary conduct, 17. Declares against the king's completing his marriage with Catharine of Arragon, 76. Dies, 112. How imposed on by the story of the *Holy maid of Kent*, 135.

Warrenne, earl, the last baron who submitted to the provisions of Oxford, II. 186. Joins prince Edward in support of the royal cause against the earl of Leicester, and the turbulent barons, 200. Commands the van at the battle of Lewes in conjunction with Edward, 204. Flies beyond sea on the loss of the battle, 205. His reply, when required to shew his title to his estate, 238. Defeats the Scots, and takes the castle of Dunbar, 281. Is left governor of Scotland, 283. Returns to England on account of his health, 298. Collects an army to suppress Wallace, 300. Is defeated by him, 301. Retreats to England, *ib.* Joins the confederacy of the earl of Lancaster against Piers Gavaston, 335.

Warsaw, the battle of, gained by Charles X. of Sweden, VII. 217.

Warwic, Guy earl of, confederates with the earl of Lancaster against Piers Gavaston, II. 335. Seizes Gavaston, who is put to death at Warwic castle, 336.

———, earl of, left by Henry V. guardian of his infant son Henry VI. III. 116. This charge transferred by parliament to the bishop of Winchester, 124. Besieges Montargis, 137. Obliged to raise the siege by the count of Dunois, *ib.* Becomes regent of France, by the resignation of the Duke of York, 167. Dies, *ib.*

–, earl of, distinguished by the appellation of *King-maker*, his character, III. 181. Made governor of Calais, 202. Brings over a body of soldiers from thence to the duke of York, who desert to the king, 204. Lands again, and is received at London, *ib.* Defeats, and takes Henry at Northampton, 205. Defeated by queen Margaret at St. Alban's, 210. His behaviour previous to the battle of Touton, 218. Sent by Edward IV. to Paris, to negotiate a marriage with the queen of France's sister, 228. Returns disgusted with Edward's secret marriage with the lady Elizabeth Gray, *ib.* Makes a party

a party against the king, 230. Gains Edward's brother the duke of Clarence over, by giving him his daughter, *ib.* Confused accounts of their subsequent operations, 234. Raises men, in conjunction with the duke of Clarence, but despairing of success returns to Calais, 236. Refused admittance by the deputy governor, *ib.* Received by the king of France, 237. Enters into a league with queen Margaret, 238. Marries his daughter to her son Edward, *ib.* Gains over his brother Montacute, 239. Lands at Dartmouth, 240. Amazing increase of his army, 241. The king expelled by the treachery of Montacute, *ib.* Reflections on his temporary administration, 248. Defeated and killed at the battle of Barnet, 249.

Warwic, Edward Plantagenet, earl of, imprisoned in the Tower by Henry VII. iii. 312. Carried openly through London, to discountenance the pretensions of Lambert Simnel, 327. Executed, 383.

———, Dudley, viscount Lisle created earl of, iv. 284. Attends the duke of Somerset in his expedition against Scotland, 300. Restores the advantage to the English at the battle of Pinkey, 303. Endeavours to foment the differences between Somerset and the admiral, 317. His history and character, *ib.* Defeats the insurgents in Norfolk, 331. Cabals with Southampton against Somerset, 335. Enters into a conspiracy against him at Ely-house, 336. Procures Somerset to be sent to the Tower, 339. Becomes the chief of the council, and drives Southampton away disgusted, *ib.* Marries his son lord Dudley to the lady Jane Seymour, daughter of Somerset, 340. Gardiner, and other bishops, deprived of their bishoprics, 344. The libraries of Westminster and Oxford purged of Romish books, 345. Is created Duke of Northumberland, 350. See *Northumberland.*

———, earl of, eldest son of Dudley duke of Northumberland, takes the command of Havre-de-Grace, for queen Elizabeth, v. 71, 72. Prepares to defend it by order from the queen, 79. Is besieged, *ib.* The garrison infected with the plague, 80. Capitulates, *ib.*

Watches, pocket, when first introduced into England, v. 484.

Wellcs, Sir Robert, heads an insurrection in Lincolnshire against Edward IV. iii. 235. Defeated and executed by the king, 236.

Wentworth, Peter, his spirited speech in the house of commons, in reply to assertions of the regal prerogative, v. 160. His speech in favour of liberty, 225. Is summoned before a committee of the house in the star-chamber, 227. His firm behaviour before them, *ib.* Is released by the queen's favour, *ib.* Offends the queen again, by resuming the subject of the succession, 364. Is sent to the Tower, *ib.* Proposes queries to the house of commons, for determining the extent of their privileges, 514.

———, Sir Thomas, his speech in the third parliament of Charles I. vi. 244. Is created earl of Strafford, 286. See *Strafford.*

Weregild, among our Saxon ancestors, what, i. 219.

Wessex, the Saxon kingdom in Britain, by whom founded, i. 25 History of, 53.

West, Dr. dean of Windsor, sent by Henry VIII. ambassador to James IV. of Scotland, to accommodate differences, iii. 425. Advises Henry to prepare for a war with James, 427.

West Indies, the effects resulting from the discovery of, to the English crown and people, vi. 47. The effects on the spirit of the people, 48.

Westminster, a synod held there, on the marriage of priests, and wearing long hair, i. 334. Another summoned by Henry bishop of Winchester, against king Stephen, 358. Is erected into a bishopric by Henry VIII. iv. 183. Assembly of divines called there, for the regulation of religion, vii. 32.

Westmoreland, earl of, suppresses the rebellion of the earl of Nottingham, and archbishop of York, and takes them prisoners, iii. 73.

——————, earl of, joins the earl of Northumberland in raising an insurrection in the North, v. 163. Takes shelter in Scotland, 164.

Westphalia, the peace of the Germanic body settled by the treaty of, vii. 246.

Wheat, observations on the price of, in the reign of Henry III. ii. 223, 224.

Whig, the origin of that name as a party distinction, viii. 126. The plan of that party for settling the government, on the abdication of James II. 312.

Whitgift prevails on queen Elizabeth to establish a court of ecclesiastical commission to prosecute the puritans, v. 262.

Whitlocke, his remarks on the case of lord Strafford, vi. 406. His account of the conduct of Charles I. in the negotiation at Oxford, 586. His speech in parliament relative to the self-denying ordinance, vii. 26.

Wiatt, Sir Thomas, engages in a conspiracy against queen Mary, on account of the Spanish match, iv. 388. A body of Norfolk's troops desert to him, 389. Is suppressed, taken, and executed, 390.

Wickham, William of, bishop of Winchester, made chancellor by Richard II. iii. 24.

Wickliffe, John, a secular priest, his character, iii. 52. His doctrines, 53. A bull issued by pope Gregory XI. for taking him into custody, *ib.* Cited before Courtney bishop of London, and protected by the duke of Lancaster, *ib.* A new bull issued against him, but is protected by the people, 54. His address in explaining away his tenets, to avoid conviction of heresy, 55. His opinions spread both at home and in Germany, *ib.* Dies of a palsy, *ib.* See *Lollards*.

Wildred, king of Kent, history of his posterity, i. 39.

Wilfrid, bishop of Lindisferne in Northumbria, by appealing to Rome against the decision of an English synod, confirms the pope's supremacy, i. 62.

Wilkins, bishop, the first promoter of the royal society, viii. 332.

William I. successor to Rollo duke of Normandy, improvement of his country in his time, i. 139.

————, natural son of Robert duke of Normandy, declared his successor by his father, i. 170. Makes good his pretensions at his father's death,

death, 171. Visits Edward the Confessor, who entertains favourable intentions of leaving him the succession, 172. Gets Harold in his possession, and engages him to swear a renunciation of his own pretensions, and to assist William in his, 174. Sends ambassadors to expostulate with Harold on his breach of faith, 180. Projects an invasion, 181. Situation of Europe at that period, 182. His successful levies, 183. His address in raising supplies, 186. Review of his forces, 187. Embarks, 188. Lands in Sussex, 189. Waits for Harold at Hastings, 191. His address to his chieftains, the morning of action, 192. Order of battle, *ib.* Battle of Hastings, 193. Losses in the action, 195. Consequences of the battle, 231. Seizes Dover, 233. Receives the submission of the Londoners, 235.

William the Conqueror, crowned at Westminster-abbey, i. 236. Gratifies his troops out of the treasure of Harold, and the gifts of his new subjects, 237. His kind treatment of Edgar Atheling, 238. Confirms the liberties of London, *ib.* Disarms them, and places all the power in the hands of Normans, 239. Takes the English nobility with him to Normandy, *ib.* Conjectures as to the motives of his journey there, 243. Returns on account of insurrections during his absence, *ib.* Reduces Exeter, 244. Builds a citadel there, *ib.* Reduces Edwin and Morcar in the north, 246. His rigorous government, 247. This the occasion of several insurrections, 249. Reduces them, 250. His cruel policy, and tyrannical government, 251. Introduces the feudal law, 253. Subjects the church to it, 254. Receives Erminfroy, the pope's legate, 256. Degrades and imprisons Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, 257. Promotes Lanfranc to Canterbury, 258. Attempts to suppress the English language, 259. Repels Malcolm king of Scotland, and receives homage from him, 261. Reduces a rebellion in the province of Maine, 262. The Norman barons rebel against him, 263. Suppressed, 265. His resolute answer to the claims of pope Gregory VII. 270. His eldest son Robert rebels against him, 273. Extraordinary remonstrance between them, 274. Is reconciled to him, 275. Causes a survey of all England to be made, *ib.* Account of domesday-book, 276. Computation of his revenue, *ib.* Wastes Hampshire to make the new forest, 278. Imprisons his brother bishop Odo, 279. Makes war against France, *ib.* Occasion of his death and his remorse, 280. Predicts the future grandeur of his son Henry, *ib.* His character, 281. His title of *Conqueror* defended, 282. His family, 284. Inquiry into his supposed revenues, and treasure, 300. His vast grants to his chieftains in England, ii. 113.

William Rufus, his accession to the crown of England, 285. His tyrannical disposition, 286. Quells an insurrection raised against him, 287. His arbitrary administration, 288. Invades Normandy, *ib.* Makes peace with his brother, 289. Assists him to reduce their brother Henry, 290. Invades Normandy again, 291. Obtains a mortgage on it from his brother Robert, 299, 300. Anecdotes shewing

shewing his indifference about religion, 300. Appoints Anselm to the archbishopric of Canterbury, 301. Opposes Urban in his pretensions to the papacy, 303. Confiscates Anselm's temporalties, 304. Embarks for Normandy to rescue Mans, 306. Accidentally killed by Walter Tyrrel, 307. His character, *ib.* A famine caused by the neglect of tillage on account of his oppressive taxes, ii. 128.

William, son of Robert, duke of Normandy, committed by Henry I. to the tutorage of Helie de St. Saen, i. 335. Protected by Fulk count of Anjou, *ib.* Marries his daughter, 340. Put in possession of Flanders, 341. Killed, *ib.*

———, eldest son of king Henry I. contracted with the daughter of Fulk count of Anjou, 336. Recognized his successor, 338. Drowned in his passage from Normandy to England, *ib.* His character, and sentiments regarding the English, 339.

——, king of Scotland, joins the confederacy of prince Henry against his father Henry II. i. 439. Repulsed by Richard de Lucy, guardian of the kingdom, 442. Commits depredations again in the northern provinces, 445. Taken prisoner by Ralph de Granville, *ib.* Does homage to Henry, with all his nobility, for his ransom and crown, 448.

——II. king of Naples and Sicily, how he bequeathed his dominions, ii. 9.

——— de Eynsford, excommunicated by Thomas à Becket, i. 388. Absolved by the king's order, 389.

——— of Poictiers, his character of the English nobility who attended William the conqueror to Normandy, i. 240.

Williams, bishop of Lincoln, his severe prosecution in the star-chamber, by archbishop Laud, vi. 309. Is insulted by the populace when archbishop of York, 464. Calls a meeting of his brethren, and presents a protestation to the king and his peers, *ib.*

Willis, Sir Richard, betrays the designs of the royalists during the protectorate to Oliver Cromwel, vii. 263. Discovers a conspiracy to the protector, 281. Betrays to the long parliament, a design formed to restore Charles II. 301.

Willoughby, lord, governor of Paris, unable to maintain it, retires to the Bastile, iii. 164. Capitulates, *ib.*

——— of Broke, lord, sent by Henry VII. to the assistance of the duchess of Britany, iii. 345. Finds the court in a distracted state, *ib.* Returns home without effecting any thing, 346.

Wiltshire, Sir Thomas Boleyn created earl of, and sent by Henry VIII. to the pope, whose foot he refuses to kiss, iv. 103.

Winchelsea, Robert de, archbishop of Canterbury, procures pope Boniface to publish a bull exempting the clergy from paying taxes to princes without the papal consent, ii. 285. His reply to Edward I. on a demand of supply from the clergy, *ib.* His treatment, on the clergy being excluded from all protection of the laws, 286. The king appoints him and Reginald de Gray, tutors to prince Edward, 290. Joins the confederacy of the earl of Lancaster against Piers Gavaston, 335.

Winchester, a synod summoned there, concerning the celibacy of the clergy, i. 271.

———, Henry bishop of, brother to king Stephen, calls a synod, and cites Stephen before it, i. 358. Encourages the pretensions of the empress Matilda, 359. Declares openly in her favour, 362. His speech at her coronation, 363. Instigates the Londoners against Stephen, *ib.* Besieges Matilda in Winchester, 365. His legatine commission withdrawn, 366. Pronounces sentence against Becket at the council of Northampton, 398.

———, Henry Beaufort bishop of, the legitimate son of John of Gaunt, intrusted by parliament with the tutorage of the young king Henry VI. iii. 124. His character, 135. His disputes with the duke of Gloucester compromised by the duke of Bedford, regent of France, *ib.* Created a cardinal, and sent with men into Bohemia against the Hussites, which he lends to the duke of Bedford, 153. Attends the congress at Arras, 161. His disputes with the duke of Gloucester throw the English affairs into confusion, 163. His arguments in favour of releasing the duke of Orleans, 167. Advises a truce with France, 168. Contrives the ruin of the duke of Gloucester, 171. Dies, 172.

———, Peter des Roches bishop of, is chosen joint protector with Hubert de Burgh chief justiciary, on the death of the earl of Pembroke, ii. 152. His character, and anecdotes of him, 161. Succeeds Hubert de Burgh in his offices and influence over the king, *ib.* The barons combine against him, *ib.* His insolent speech with regard to them, 162. His dismission procured by Edmond the primate, 163.

Windebank, Sir Francis, secretary, flies to France, to avoid impeachment by the long parliament, vi. 371.

Windham, colonel, secretes Charles II. after the battle of Worcester, vii. 199.

Windsor-castle, when built, ii. 490.

Winter, is sent by queen Elizabeth with a fleet to the assistance of the protestant malcontents in Scotland, v. 35.

Winwood, Sir Ralph, secretary of state to James I. discovers to the king that sir Thomas Overbury was poisoned by Somerset and his lady, vi. 77.

Wishart, the Scots reformer, an account of, iv. 295. Is condemned and burnt for heresy, 297. His prophetic denunciation against cardinal Beaton, *ib.* His prophecy, how accomplished, 298.

Witchcraft, and conjuration, a law against, v. 77.

Witches, numbers burnt under that accusation in Scotland, vii. 186. The discovery of, studied as a science, *ib.*

Wittenagemot, the ancient Saxon council of parliament, particulars relating to, and conjectures concerning, i. 201. The commons no part of, 202.

Woden, the Saxon god of war, some account of, i. 30.

Wolfhere, king of Mercia, his history, i. 48.

Wolsey, Thomas, his birth, iii. 427. How introduced to the notice of Henry VII. *ib.* His address in executing a commission from that king

king to Maximilian, *ib.* Introduced to Henry VIII. by Fox bishop of Winchester, 428. Encourages Henry in his pleasures, *ib.* The maxims of government he instils into him, 429. Admitted of the privy council, *ib.* His character, 430. Put in possession of the bishopric of Tournay, 437. Created bishop of Lincoln, 440. Reconciles Henry with the duke of Suffolk, who had married his sister the queen dowager of France, privately, 445. Is promoted to the see of York, iv. 2. Shares the revenues of the Italian non-resident bishops, *ib.* His magnificence *ib.* Is made chancellor, 4. His disgusts against Francis I. of France, 10. His confidence courted by Bonnivet the French ambassador, 13. Is induced to persuade Henry to deliver up Tournay, *ib.* Is believed to have intended the delivery of Calais to the French, 15. Is appointed legate in England, *ib.* His ostentation, *ib.* His arbitrary exertions of power, *ib.* Character of John Allen judge of his legatine court, 17. His power restrained by the king, 18. Is inspired with the hopes of the papacy by the emperor Charles V. when in England, 21. Regulates the ceremonial of the interview between Henry and Francis, to which he had persuaded Henry, 22. The emperor's grants to him at his second interview with Henry at Gravelines, 25. His enormous revenues, *ib.* His negotiations for peace between the emperor and Francis, ineffectual, 26. Goes to Bruges, and concludes an alliance with Henry, the emperor, and the pope, against Francis, *ib.* Procures the condemnation of the duke of Buckingham, 27. Intimidates the convocation into the grant of a moiety of ecclesiastical revenues, 46. His endeavours to procure the required grants from the commons, 47. His arbitrary behaviour to the citizens of London, 451. Obtains of Clement VII. the legatine commission for life, 48. His resentment against the emperor, on missing the papacy, *ib.* Erects two colleges, with other ecclesiastical regulations, 49. Receives a present covertly from Louise regent of France, on the conclusion of her treaty with Henry, 61. Advises the king to exert his prerogative in levying taxes, *ib.* Becomes odious for his bad counsels and oppressive conduct, 63. Builds the palace of Hampton-court, and presents it to the king, 64. Goes over to France, and makes a treaty with Francis, 71. Is appointed by the pope to try the king's marriage, jointly with cardinal Campeggio, 85. The trial opened, 87. Abruptly prorogued by Campeggio, 90. The great seal taken from him, 92. Is ordered to depart from York palace, and his moveables are confiscated by the king, *ib.* His want of fortitude on his disgrace, 93. Is prosecuted in the star-chamber, 94. The peers exhibit a long charge against him, *ib.* Is warmly defended by Thomas Cromwel in the house of commons, *ib.* Is prosecuted on the statute of provisors, *ib.* Is pardoned by the king, 95. Is arrested by the earl of Northumberland for high treason, 104. His dying request to the constable of the Tower, *ib.* His death, and a review of his conduct, 105. Used no severities against the reformers, 131.

Wales, how exterminated from England, i. 126.

Wentworth, lord, applies unsuccessfully to Henry VII. for liberty to raise men

men to assist the duke of Britany, iii. 342. Raises a few privately, *ib.* Routed and slain by the French, *ib.*

Wool, a duty granted to Edward I. on the exportation of, ii. 238. Oppressive extortions practised by him on the traders in, 288. Duties laid on, by parliament, 401. The great trade in, at the time of Edward III. 495. The staple of, where fixed in this reign, 498. The price of during the reign of James I. vi. 176. Laws relating to, in this reign, 181.

Woollen manufacture taxed by parliament, iv. 321, *note.*

——— cloths, state of the English manufacture of, in the reign of James I. vi. 181. The art of dying, when introduced into England, viii. 329.

Women, a body of, petition the long parliament, vi. 475. A mob of, rout a synod at Perth, vii. 529.

Worcester, burnt by order of Hardicanute, i. 157. Charles II. routed there by Cromwel, vii. 196.

———, John Tibetot, earl of, his character, iii. 244. Taken and executed by the Lancastrians, *ib.*

Wotton, Dr. is one of queen Elizabeth's ambassadors at the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, v. 17. Signs the treaty of Edinburgh with Cecil, on the part of Elizabeth, 36. Is sent ambassador again to Scotland, 277. His character, *ib.* Is forced to fly from Scotland on account of his political schemes, 279.

Wounds, the legal composition for, among our Saxon ancestors, i. 220.

Wrecks, law made by Henry II. to secure the property of, i. 467.

Wriotheseley, is made chancellor of England, iv. 257. His cruelty in torturing Ann Ascue for heresy, 258. Persuades Henry to impeach queen Catharine Par for heresy, 259. Comes to convey the queen to the Tower, and is abused by Henry, 260. Is appointed one of the regency, during the minority of Edward VI. 281. Is created earl of Southampton, 284. See *Southampton.*

Writs to parliament, the ancient establishment of summoning barons by, ii. 269.

Writers, English, a review of those during the reign of Charles I. and the succeeding commonwealth, vii. 343.

Wycherley, a character of his dramatic writers, viii. 336.

Y.

YELVERTON, his free speech in the house of commons, on Elizabeth's invasion of their privileges, v. 175.

———, a lawyer, his speech on being chosen speaker of the house of commons, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, v. 523.

Yeomen of the guard, first institution of, iii. 314.

York, city of, its size at the time of the Norman conquest, i. 210. Burnt, 250. The Norman garrison put to the sword, *ib.* A court of justice erected there, by Henry VIII. iv. 175. The chapter lands

lands of that see, seized by Henry VIII. 221. A great council of peers summoned there by Charles I. vi. 359. Is besieged by the parliamentary army, but relieved by prince Rupert, vii. 10. Is obliged to surrender after the battle of Marston-moor, 14.

York and Lancaster, the parties of, how distinguished, iii. 217.

——, New; see *New York*.

——, archbishop of, executed for rebellion by Henry IV. iii. 74.

——, duke of, uncle to Richard II. left guardian of the realm during Richard's absence in Ireland, iii. 39. Raises forces against Henry duke of Lancaster, but espouses his party, *ib.*

——, Richard duke of, son to the earl of Cambridge, appointed successor to the duke of Bedford as regent of France, iii. 163. Finds the English affairs in France in a declining way, 164. Resigns his government to the earl of Warwic, 167. Resumes it on the earl's death, *ib.* Concludes a truce with the duke of Burgundy, *ib.* His pretensions to the crown of England, 180. His character, *ib.* His pretensions how regarded, 182. Driven to the assertion of his claim, 191. Motives which retarded having recourse to arms, 194. Raises an army, demanding a reformation of government, 197. Is followed into Kent by the king, and retires after a parley, *ib.* Created lieutenant of the kingdom, with a power to hold parliaments, 199. Made protector by the parliament during pleasure, *ib.* His moderation, and in what respect hurtful, *ib.* Levies arms against the king, and battle of St. Alban's, 200. A formal reconciliation among the partisans of York and Lancaster, 202. Retreats to Ireland, 204. Returns and opens his pretensions to parliament, 205. His right of succession and present administration, acknowledged, 206. Defeated and killed by queen Margaret at Wakefield, 209. His son the earl of Rutland murdered by lord Clifford, *ib.* For his son Edward, see *Edward duke of York*, infra.

York, Edward duke of, defeats the earl of Pembroke, at Mortimer's Cross, iii. 210. Enters London, and procures a popular election to the crown, 212. See *Edward* IV.

——, James duke of, second son of Charles I. serves in the French and Austrian armies during his brother's exile, vii. 278. A present vote him by parliament on his brother's restoration, 328. Takes co mand of the fleet which carried his brother to England, as high admiral, 329. Seduces the daughter of lord Clarendon, Marries her, *ib.* Becomes a zealous catholic, 389. His m for desiring a Dutch war, 398. Commands a fleet, and defe dam the Dutch admiral, 403. His behaviour in this engageme fied, *ib.* His duchess dies a catholic, and he now openly pro same religion, 472. Is, with the French fleet, attacked by at Solebay, 485. Is set aside by the test-act, 506. Maintai mate correspondence with the king of France, viii. 6. F the lady Mary married to the prince of Orange, 35. O ception from the new test-act, 84. Retires to Brussel exclusion passed against him by the commons, 105. R tires to Scotland, 122. The earl of Shaftesbury pre grand jury of Middlesex as a popish recusant, 127.