

A Belated Plantagenet

By
Charles Edward Cheney



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FINIS TERRÆ—the end of the earth—was the fitting name given by the ancient Romans to the northwestern extremity of France. For where the savage cliffs of Brittany thrust themselves out into the Atlantic, the continent of Europe reaches its furthest venture toward the setting sun. Beyond that towering mass of granite rock it must have seemed to the advancing legions, that for them, as for Alexander at the Indian Ocean, "there were no more worlds to conquer." Even to this day the promontory bears the name of "*Finistere*."¹

How early, or by what race of hardy rovers of the sea, there was discovered,

¹ "C'est la limite extrême, la pointe, la proue de l'ancien monde." Michelet, *Histoire de France*, Paris, 1861, p. 10. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Article Brest. *Encyclop. Americana*, art. Brest.

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hidden within the heart of that forbidding headland, one of the noblest harbors of the world, neither history nor tradition tells. But far back in the Middle Ages it was a common proverb, "He is not Duke of Brittany who is not lord of Brest." Such estimate was based not upon the numbers, the wealth, or the warlike prowess of the citizens of Brest, but solely upon the peerless position of that town for defence against enemies in a period when war seemed the normal condition of mankind. The ancient city, like its modern successor, was built upon the bank of a river of no great importance, just where the narrow stream debouches into an estuary or roadstead stretching from east to west a distance of fourteen miles. With from eight to fifteen fathoms below their keels at low tide, five hundred ships of war can find space for their manoeuvres on the broad bosom of the bay.¹ Along the southern side of this expanse there curves like a gigantic sickle, a long barrier of rock, so parting the Bay of Brest from the open sea that at only one point is it possible for vessels to find entrance. That gateway, less than a mile in breadth, and known as "Le Goulet" (the gullet), was even in mediæval days sentineled by forts on either side, while, as if Nature came to the aid of military engineering, a reef of sunken rocks

¹Encyc. Americana, Art. Brest.

risers almost to the surface in the middle of the contracted channel. Access from the ocean to the land-locked haven was in medieval days, as now, safe only when a native pilot, skilled by a life-long experience in threading the intricate passages, should hold the tiller.¹ Michelet has vividly pictured the perils of that "strait and narrow way," when he calls it "the cemetery" of stranded ships and drowned mariners.

It was the fifteenth day of April, 1513.² As the sun rose, and lifted the veil of morning mist from the face of the sea, the lookout on the gray tower of Crozon beheld a startling sight. Before the southerly wind forty-two ships of war were steadily converging upon the entrance to the Bay of Brest.³ The scared sentry did not need to be told by the lines of the vessels, the cut of their canvas, or the colors at the mast-head, the source of this array of naval power. The inherent hate between the Celt and the Saxon, which for centuries had made the English Channel the scene of bloody conflicts, had recently burst forth afresh. Henry Eighth of England and Louis

¹ France Historic and Romantic, Philadelphia, 1906, pp. 30, 32. Michelet, Histoire de France, Paris, 1861, Vol. II, pp. 10, 11.

² Calendar State Papers. Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 538. Hall's Chronicle, p. 538.

³ Hall's Chronicle, p. 538.

Twelfth of France were brothers-in-law;¹ but the ties of royal intermarriages were as easily snapped asunder then, as when, in the Twentieth Century, England and Germany, with the blood of their monarchs intermingled by a long succession of matrimonial alliances, stand ready to fly at each other's throats. For many weeks an English fleet had been hovering on the coast of Brittany, in a vain effort to lure the wary admiral of France to issue from his safe retreat.² It was a splendid array of naval force which the French king had assembled to defend his rock-bound stronghold. Quaintly the old chronicler, Hall, pictures its warlike strength:

"Now you must understand that all the great navie which the French king had prepared, lay in the haven of Brest, so well furnished in all things that it was a wonder to see."³

But Henry Tudor, for his part, had left nothing undone to make his armament a terror to his foes on the other side of the Channel. The flag-ship flung to the breeze the banner of the Lord High Admiral of

¹ Collier's History of England, p. 254. Guizot's History of France, Vol. III, pp. 167-169.

² It is a curious fact that Captain Mahan, in his work on *Sea Power in History*, states that it has always been the custom of the French navy to await attack, and of the British navy to act upon the aggressive.

³ Hall's Chronicle, pp. 535, 536.

England. Among the great captains whose achievements have gilded with glory the naval service of Britain, few, if any, have outshone in splendor the fame of Sir Edward Howard.¹ True, his sun was fated to an early setting. Only ten days subsequent to the morning when his fleet came sailing up to the entrance to the Bay of Brest, his reckless courage put him at the head of a dozen seamen as they boarded a huge French galley. When his own vessel sheered off, Howard was left alone upon the deck of the hostile ship, except for one brave comrade. Surrounded by a hundred enemies, he fought with desperate valor, and, rather than be captured, leaped over the bulwarks, and perished in the sea.² Worthy of so heroic a leader were those who under him directed the movements of more than two score gallant ships in the attempt upon the most strongly fortified seaport of France. Says Hall:

"The Lord Admiral was chief, and with him Sir Walter Devereux, Lord Ferreis, William Fitzwilliam, and diverse other noble and valiant capitaines."³

But, as the English squadron swept on before a favoring wind, it was not the flag-

¹ Campbell's Lives of the British Admirals, Vol. I, p. 282.

² Campbell's Lives of British Admirals, Vol. I, p. 284. Calendar State Papers, Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 558.

³ Hall's Chronicle, p. 535.

ship of the Lord Admiral that led the advance. That honor had been given to a diminutive vessel—"The Nicholas of Hampton."¹ Her lesser bulk and lighter draught fitted her for the perilous duty of a scout to test the treacherous passage of Le Goulet before the larger craft should make the venture. There is extant to-day, in the handwriting of Wolsey, a record which runs: "Master Arthure is named as captain of the Nicholas of Hampton, carrying fifty-five men."²

Who was "Master Arthure," to whom was given to take his own life and that of his brave little crew into such desperate hazard? To answer that query is the purpose of this essay.

The naval architects of that day were only just beginning to discard the clumsy models of an earlier time, and we may well picture to ourselves the Nicholas of Hampton, as, not altogether unlike a Spanish caravel, she lifted high above the waters her tall figure-head, and equally lofty stern, while her mariners and fighting men crowded the deep waist between.³ As we watch her progress

¹Hall's Chronicle, pp. 535, 536. The Nicholas of Hampton was of two hundred tons burden, Chronicle of Calais, p. 67.

²Calendar State Papers, Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 551.

³Chatterton's Sailing Ships, London, 1909, pp. 180-183. Old Sea Wings, by R. C. Leslie, London, 1890, p. 124.

over the ruffled sea, there appears on the towering poop the figure of her commander. Erect, alert, with his splendid stature emphasized by the elevation on which he stands, and with his yellow hair refusing to be confined by his helmet, he seems a reproduction of one of the old Vikings whose strenuous blood runs in his veins. In the very prime of life, with fair complexion bronzed by exposure to the harsh sea winds, and with eyes as blue as the sky above him,—such is the portrait which the chroniclers have drawn.¹

With every stitch of canvas spread, the Nicholas of Hampton leads the English fleet toward the open portal of Le Goulet. With tiller hard-a-port she rounds the barbed hook of Crozon. She is already inside the channel, which is the only pathway into the great bay. From her deck her gallant captain can discern the walls and spires of Brest! Suddenly, a momentary grinding of the keel on unseen but jagged rocks! Then a shock, as if the earth were in an instant checked in its revolution! Then, a crash,

¹No description of the personal appearance of "Master Arthure" is obtainable. But the portraiture of the text is based upon the hypothesis that he resembled King Edward IV. That Edward was singularly handsome is well known. Sir Thomas Moore, *Historie of Richard III.*, p. 3. Harding's *Chronicle*, Rivington, London, 1812, page 467. Cassell's *Illustrated Hist. of England*, Vol. I, p. 609. Also Philippe de Comines (quoted in *Pict. Hist. of England*, Vol. II, p. 112).

as the foremast snaps like a pipe-stem, and falls with all its entanglement of stays and canvas across the crushed bulwarks! With her back broken, her prow fast on the sunken reef, and her after-deck hanging half submerged, the Nicholas of Hampton lies a helpless wreck, every moment threatening to part asunder.¹

Now, as if at some magician's summons, thousands of men-at-arms start up upon the shore. From every bush and from every boulder of the stony bank, and from behind the battlements of the frowning fortifications, a host of defenders swarm. The stranded ship offers a broad target, parted from her foes only by the narrow channel she had missed.² From the ramparts comes the roar of the "bombards"—the mediæval ancestors of our modern cannon, but often hurling balls of stone instead of explosive shells.³

Hundreds of matchlocks send their missiles rattling on the ship's oaken sides. The long-bow and the cloth-yard arrow had not yet been wholly superseded, and out of the smoke with which the flaming gunpowder began to wrap the shore, issued the hissing flight of the "gray goose shafts" falling like

¹ Hall's Chronicle (5th year of Henry VIII.), p. 535.

² Hall's Chronicle, p. 535.

³ Ashdown, British and Foreign Arms and Armour, London, 1909, p. 362.

hail upon the decks.¹ The French marksmen were notoriously of inferior skill in aiming their artillery and handling their bows, than the sailors and soldiers of England.² Certain it is that on the Nicholas of Hampton few lives paid the penalty of the pilot's blunder. Yet never were men in greater peril. Precisely how their rescue was effected, the historians have left unexplained, except that it seemed "a mervail." Two days after the luckless adventure, the Lord High Admiral addressed the following letter to Henry VIII.:

"Sir; I have taken Master Arthure's folks, and bestowed them in the arme. And sir, I have given him liberte to go home. For sir, when he was in extreme danger, he called upon our Lady of Walsingham for helpe and comfort, and made a vow that, an it pleased God and her to relieve him out of the peril, he would never eat flesh nor fish tyl he had seen her. Sir, I assure you he was in mervailous great danger, for it was mervail that the shippe being with all her sailes striking full-but a rok with her stam, that she brake not in pieces at the first stroke. His absence will be a great loss. I recommend him highly to the King, and hope he will give him comfortable words for his bravery."³

A flash of lightning may reveal to us a scene of intensest interest, but only to leave us in deeper darkness than before. So does history sometimes tantalize her votaries.

¹ The Crossbow, Longmans, London, 1903, p. 34.

² Ibid., p. 32. Arms and Armour (Boutell), London, 1874, pp. 132, 133.

³ Calendar State Papers, Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 538.

We have just caught a passing glimpse of a brave man in his hour of direst peril. Natural curiosity prompts inquiry into his previous career. But the earlier life of "Master Arthur," as Sir Edward Howard styled him, is wrapped in a mystery as impenetrable as that which for centuries baffled the geographers seeking the sources of the Nile. The thread which must guide the investigator, through the labyrinth of contradiction among the chroniclers, is as slender as that which Ariadne gave to Theseus.

There is no certainty as to the precise year, toward the close of the fifteenth century, in which one Elizabeth Lucy gave to the world her first-born, and probably her only child. Who that young mother was, of lofty lineage, or of base extraction; whether a wife with the marriage-ring upon her hand which witnessed a union hallowed by the Church, or only some maiden deceived and flung away like a plucked and withered rose — are all questions which have found such widely variant replies, that after five hundred years a positive answer is beyond attainment.¹ As, however, we let down the

¹There is grave reason for the belief of some historians that the mother of Arthur Plantagenet was *Lady Elizabeth Lucy* — a title suggestive of a noble origin; and that Edward IV. had married her previous to his union with Lady Elizabeth Grey. (See the *Continuation of Hardyng's Chronicle*, pp. 505 and 506.) Also Hall's *Chronicle*, p. 254. In *Notes and Queries*, April 22, 1862, is the statement: "King Ed-

grappling-irons of research into this troubled sea of confused testimony and baseless conjecture, there comes to the surface one fact certain and indubitable. That the father of this child was Edward IV., King of England, is beyond all controversy. Every historian mentions the lad in giving the list of Edward's offspring.¹ That unprincipled and sensual despot was not likely to be stricken with shame because of the "bend sinister" which must ever appear upon the escutcheon of this scion of the royal house of England. Comparatively little dishonor was attached to illegitimate birth in that period of history. Before the career of Edward IV. came to an end there is ample evidence that the king not only acknowledged Arthur's paternity, but signalized it by bestowing upon him a surname which had distinguished the English kings of the House of Anjou from

ward IV. had a son by Lady Elizabeth Lucy, named Arthur Plantagenet, and there is some ground for suspecting that she was the lawful wife of the King." On the other hand, *The Complete Peerage*, London, 1893, declares the mother's name unknown, and that by some she was supposed to be the notorious Jane Shore, by others one Elizabeth Waite. *Complete Peerage*, pp. 117, 118.

¹Harding's *Chronicle*, p. 467. Bayley's *Hist. of the Tower of London*, p. 74. Jesse's *Historical Memoirs*, Vol. 16, p. 163. Holinshead's *Chronicle*, Vol. III, p. 686. Polydore Virgil, *Life of Edward IV.*, p. 172. *Chronicle of the White Rose*, by Giles, London, 1845, p. 152. Habington's *Life of Edward IV.*, London, 1706, Vol. I, p. 479.

the days of Henry II., but only in a loose and indefinite way. That which had hitherto been a mere *sobriquet* of the Angevine monarchs, now for the first time became a distinctive surname, when Edward IV. called his natural son "Arthur *Plantagenet*." Thenceforward there was assigned to this youth a distinctive crest—two stalks of the broom (*planta genista*) with their blossoms of yellow gold.¹

It is not uncommon, in regions where the limestone formation is honeycombed with caves, for a brook suddenly to disappear. No trace of the stream can be discovered upon the surface, until, perhaps many miles from the point where it vanished, it bursts forth again a river in power and volume.

The mystery which at a later period enveloped "The Man in the Iron Mask" is hardly more difficult of solution than the fact that from his earliest youth to the day when Arthur Plantagenet, in the prime of life, leads the van of the English navy in its attempt to enter the Bay of Brest, there is not the faintest trace of his existence. His birth, his undoubted royal paternity, and the recognition of it in the name he bore, are all matters of unquestionable history, witnessed by contemporary writers.

¹ Anstis's Register of the Order of the Garter, quoted in Archæological Tracts, by John Gough Nichols, London, Society of Archæologists, pp. 41-46

But when we turn from the brief annals of his childhood to search the volumes where the experiences of thirty or even forty years of youth and manhood should be recorded, only blank pages reward our examination.¹

On the ninth day of April, 1483, death brought to its close the dissolute life of Edward of York. The world knows but too well the ghastly record of the next two years. If the testimony of the majority of historians may be believed, when the news spread that Richard of Gloucester had perished on Bosworth Field, a nation breathed a sigh of relief that the earth was rid of a monster whose undoubted genius made his crimes unparalleled since the days of King John. Out of the deluge of blood on battlefield and scaffold, by which the Wars of the Roses had almost blotted from existence the great historic families of the realm, a new dynasty rose to sovereignty over distracted and desolated England. For a quarter of a century Henry Tudor sat upon the throne. Cunning, callous of conscience, and avaricious to a degree that made him indifferent to the insults of the foreigner, lest war should deplete his hoarded treasures, his reign was protracted beyond that of the majority of his predecessors. Yet, strange to say, though

¹Peerage of England (Cockayne), Arthur Plantagenet. Dugdale's Baronage of England, 1676, Arthur Plantagenet, Lord L'Isle.

Arthur Plantagenet was the confessed half-brother of Henry's wife, Elizabeth of York, in all that long reign not a solitary reference can be found in history to one whose royal origin has never been disputed. The state papers of England have been examined with microscopic scrutiny, and the vast treasures of the library of the British Museum have been subjected to long and careful search; but the name of Arthur Plantagenet finds no mention whatsoever during more than an entire generation. There is a species of the aloe-plant, which, after years in which no bud or flower appears, suddenly unfolds into a glory of blossoming. So suddenly, with the accession of Henry VIII. to sovereign power, do the name and personality of Arthur Plantagenet burst into conspicuity.

Among the earliest official acts of Henry VIII. was an order, dated a little more than a month after the new monarch came to the throne, creating Arthur Plantagenet an esquire of the royal body guard.¹ Repeated entries in the state papers show the rapid promotion of this kinsman of King Henry in both the civil and the military services. In two years from the time when he emerges from complete obscurity, he is given the rank of "a spear of honor," commissioned as a magistrate of Hampshire, and advanced to

¹Calendar State Papers, Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 484.

the more dignified office of high sheriff of that county.¹

In our day a finger-print serves to identify the author of a crime. When, in 1511, Arthur Plantagenet was married to Elizabeth, widow of Edmund Dudley,² it was no crime, unless a *mariage de convenance* be such. But it needs no detective shrewdness to recognize in that alliance the finger-print of Henry VIII. A man of reputable family, but not of distinguished origin, Edmund Dudley might have taken his seat on the wool-sack of the Lord High Chancellor, if natural ability and legal acumen deserved such honor. But like Bunyan's "Man with the Muck-rake," he chose to devote his great talent to cater to the insatiable avarice of his master, Henry VII. Dudley discovered in one Sir Richard Empson a congenial and fitting associate. These partners the greedy monarch vested with large and wholly illegal powers in managing the finances of the Crown. So great was this authority, that when a man of wealth had incurred the ban of outlawry, it was only a question of the price which could be wrung from him, in order to secure through Dudley and Empson, pardon from the King, and restoration to his rank and titles. In the law courts,

¹Ibid., pp. 335, 593, 725.

²Dictionary of National Biography, Article, Plantagenet, Arthur.

when the prosecutor was the Crown, and a jury had dared to render a verdict for the defendant, its members were terrorized by these agents of the covetous monarch, till enormous fines paid the penalty of the exercise of honest judgment. While Dudley and his coadjutor directed Henry Seventh's financial operations, the King amassed no less than four millions and a half pounds sterling—a colossal treasure for that period. It goes without saying that the indignation of the people of England against these extortioners was intense. Its smouldering fires were suppressed by terror during the lifetime of the royal miser. But, at the very threshold of the reign of Henry VIII., the popular wrath flamed forth too furiously to be quenched. Though indebted for the vast riches he had inherited from his father, to the craft and cruelty of Dudley and Empson, the young King dared not attempt to stem the tidal wave which swept them to righteous retribution. Tried for high treason, they perished together, on Tower Hill, on the eighteenth of August, 1510, and their enormous estates escheated to the Crown.¹

Dudley's wife was of nobler origin than the husband she survived. Daughter of Edward Grey of Groby, Viscount Lisle, Lady Dudley inherited the lofty traditions of an

¹ Dictionary of National Biography, art. Dudley, Edmund.

ancient and honorable line, and was in her own right Viscountess Lisle. As another step in the rapid advance which King Henry planned and effected in Sir Arthur Plantagenet's career (for he had been already knighted), the marriage of the young courtier to Lady Lisle was celebrated, with pomp and ceremony, less than a year after Dudley had expiated his crimes on the scaffold.¹ In the state papers of England may be found the record of the king's marriage-gift to the newly-wedded pair. It consists of a patent conveying to "Sir Arthur Plantagenet and his wife Elizabeth, late wife of Edmund Dudley, one third of the manors of Fysshewyke and Eccleston in the dukedom of Lancaster," together with large landed estates in Sussex and Wiltshire. The description of the property significantly—if to modern ears grewsofely—closes, "All forfeited by Edmund Dudley."²

But the favor of Henry did not end with a distinguished marriage and a splendid estate for his relative. Not far from Calais, between Guines and Ardres, in a plain which in the Sixteenth Century was divided in ownership between France and England, was enacted in June, 1520, the most gorgeous

¹Ibid., art. Plant., Arthur. Complete Peerage, art. Plantagenet, pp. 117, 118.

²Calendar State Papers, Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 299.

farce, with the most superb staging and splendid players, that Europe had ever witnessed. Francis the First and Henry the Eighth were in most characteristics in total contrast each to the other. But at one point — the love of display — there was a resemblance such as sometimes exists between twin brothers. On the Field of the Cloth of Gold that passion was indulged by these rival sovereigns till the world looked on in bewildered amazement.¹

It may well be believed that Henry's desire to outshine the French king in magnificence would lead him to choose as his attendants, at such a ceremonial, only the most honored of England's nobility. But chief in the glittering retinue which flaunted the wealth and ancestral rank of England, in the face of Francis and his court, Sir Arthur Plantagenet appears conspicuous.²

As far back as the days of Xerxes of Persia one courtier was singled out from the tyrant's satellites by the distinguishing title, "The man whom the king delighteth to honor." The name might well have been

¹Guizot's History of France, Black's Translation, Boston, 1886, Vol. III, pp. 243-247. Brewer's Hist. of Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 347, etc. Chron. of Calais (Camden Society), pp. 19-30. Account of the Ancient Corps of Gentlemen at Arms, by James Bunce Curling, London, 1850, pp. 22-24.

²Dictionary of National Biography, Article, Plantagenet. Chronicle of Calais (Camden Society), p. 21.

applied to this favorite of King Henry, whose very being a few years before appears to have been unknown. For a loftier dignity was awaiting him. Quaint old Holinshead records:

"During the time of this Parliament, the seven and twentieth day of April, 1523, was Sir Arthur Plantagenet, bastarde sonne to King Edward the Fourth, at Bridewell created Viscount Lisle, in right of his wife, which was wife to Edmund Dudley beheaded."¹

Coincident with this attainment to an ancient title of nobility, we find that, together with Sir Nicholas Vaux, Sir William Sandys, and Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir Arthur Plantagenet was summoned as a peer to the upper house of parliament.² As if nothing should be left undone to bring this hitherto inconspicuous sharer of the blood royal into "that fierce light which beats upon the throne," Henry invested the recently created Lord Lisle with the insignia of a Knight of the Order of the Garter, and only a year later appointed him Vice Admiral of the royal navy.³

¹ Holinshead, Vol. III, p. 686. Complete Peerage (Lond., 1893, pp. 117, 118). Also, Chron. of Calais, p. 32.

² Brewer's Hist. of Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 477. Chron. of Calais, p. 33.

³ Complete Peerage (Lond., 1893), p. 118. Anstis's Register of the Knights of the Garter, p. 366. Dictionary of Nat. Biography, Art., Plantagenet.

The relations between Francis I. and Henry VIII., with their curious alternations of peace and war, can only be defined as a political intermittent fever. In one of the periods when the two monarchs were indulging in irenics, and the dove of seeming amity hovered over the two nations, Henry conceived the plan of conferring upon Francis the order, which, from the day when Edward III. stooped to pick up the garter of the Countess of Salisbury, the rulers of England had given only with the most sparing hand. But, at the head of the embassy authorized to bestow the badge of honor, and to receive the oath of Francis as a true and loyal Knight of the Garter, was Lord Lisle.¹ The English envoy's account of the ceremony forms an instructive picture of the manners of the great in that period, and also reveals the astonishment and disapprobation with which Lord Lisle observed the familiarity, permitted by Francis without rebuke, in the conduct of the French nobles toward his Majesty. He says:

"About and behind the king were all the great lords temporal—some leaning on the pommels of his chair. Lautrec and the Grand Master stood on either side; the admiral and others behind, within a space of two yards between the wall and the back of the king's chair. The archbishops and bishops sat on low stools behind the ambassadors. And when the

¹ Complete Peerage (London, 1893), p. 118. Brewer's Hist. Henry VIII., p. 154.

French Chancellor replied, he never rose from his chair, nor uncovered his head, nor raised his cap as we in England, whether he named his king and master or any other prince."¹

Again, in 1532, after another period of renewed strife had given way to brief peace, like the sunshine of an April day, Henry himself crossed the Channel for a ceremonious meeting with Francis at Calais. But the personal attendants of the sovereign were the Lord and Lady Lisle.²

The mountain climber, who finds himself at the summit of a lofty elevation, naturally looks back upon the winding pathway he has pursued. If Sir Arthur Plantagenet was disposed to indulge in retrospect, the height of greatness which he had now attained might well have overwhelmed him with astonishment. For here was one whose childhood and youth were so hidden from the world, that no historian of the great house of York cared to mention his name, except to tell the story of his birth and royal paternity. As we are aware, the first three decades of a man's life generally dominate his three score years and ten. They mould his character, determine his career, and fix his destiny. But history wholly ignores the formative period of this man's

¹Brewer's Hist. of Henry VIII., Vol. II, p.155.

²Dict. of Nat. Biography, Art., Plantagenet. Chron. of Calais, p. 41.

life. Where he dwelt, who guided his steps in childhood, what was his educational training, and why his existence was so shrouded in mystery, are questions which, at the first glance, seem insoluble; and they become the more difficult of explanation when we consider that the star which, from its rising on the horizon, became invisible, blazes out in splendor at its zenith.

Not yet, however, have we followed Arthur Plantagenet to the culminating point in his marvellously swift ascent. It was two centuries since Edward the Third, claiming all France as his inheritance, because his mother was a French princess, had captured the stronghold of Calais after an heroic defence, which lasted for eleven months. An English colony supplanted to a large degree the French inhabitants, and thenceforward Calais became almost as much an English town as if it had been on the other side of the Channel.¹ Separated from the white cliffs of Dover by a strait so narrow that at its mid-point both coasts are visible, girt round by massive walls, and defended by a frowning castle, the city of Calais was a key in the grasp of the English to give them access to the fair land which every generation of Englishmen coveted. When the fierce Francis, Duke of Guise,

¹Chron. of Calais, Preface xxiii, with quotation from Froissart.

some years later than the time with which we are dealing, captured Calais, Queen Mary realized that she had lost the richest jewel of her crown, and her mortification and anguish found expression in the memorable declaration that if, after death, her breast were to be opened, the name of Calais would be found engraved upon her heart.¹ Thus valued by every English sovereign, and the whole English nation, it need not be a matter for wonder that few higher honors — if any — were in the gift of Henry VIII. than that of Governor, or Lord Deputy of Calais. In effect, that official was the vicegerent of the English monarch on the soil of France. Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle, reached the loftiest summit of his ambition, when, on the 25th of April, 1533, King Henry commissioned him Lord Deputy of Calais.²

From the hour that the new governor entered upon his great responsibilities, there is no longer any lack of material enabling his biographer to form an estimate of his character, and to trace the current of his life. In the public Record Office of Great Britain are no less than nineteen ponderous bound volumes of manuscript, known as "The Lisle Papers." Some of the most

¹ Greene's History of the English People, Vol. II, p. 258.

² Dictionary of National Biography, Article, Plantagenet. Chron. of Calais, p. 44. Complete Peerage, p. 118.

valuable of these, throwing light upon the great historical events of that epoch, and revealing in a unique way the domestic life of the English nobility, have been rescued from their manuscript form by a Mrs. Anne Everett Wood, and printed under the title, "Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies."¹

The human mind is so constituted that, when it comes face to face with an apparently inexplicable natural phenomenon, it is always led to form some theory to account for the puzzle which perplexes it. Such efforts, though often mere conjectures, have been the root of every triumph in scientific progress. We have reached a point in this narrative where it seems indispensable that we find some philosophy to dissipate the fog-cloud shrouding the first half of the life of Arthur Plantagenet. There are two problems demanding solution. First, why are there no traces of his career for more than a generation? And, second, what explains his sudden and almost startling prominence after the accession of Henry VIII.?

Whatever may have been the year of Arthur Plantagenet's birth, he could have been but a mere child, or at most a youth, when Edward IV. died, in 1483. While in the list of the kings of England, an Edward V. officially appears, it is well to remember

¹The book has become rare, but a copy is to be found in the Newberry Library in Chicago.

that no such monarch ever wore the crown. A child of tender years, his nominal reign was less than one month, while over him and his still younger brother, their grim uncle, Richard of Gloucester, as regent of the realm, extended the shelter and protection which the wolf lovingly bestows upon the lamb. How the reign of Edward V. came to its close, may have been revealed when, not so many years ago, the bones of two children were found buried in the masonry under a stairway in the Tower of London. Can we then wonder that the guardians of the boy Arthur, whoever they may have been, would take warning from the crime which was popularly laid at the door of Gloucester? Richard III., it is true, could have had little reason to fear a scion of his race, the circumstances of whose birth forbade aspirations to the throne. But it does not follow that the mother of the royal child and her kindred would not be terror-stricken lest the suspicion and jealousy of Richard should, like that of Herod in old time, set no bounds to "the massacre of the innocents." It is reasonable to suppose that for the two years which preceded the setting of Richard's sun among bloody clouds, on Bosworth Field, a wise precaution kept Arthur Plantagenet in hiding.

But what of the long and peaceful sway of Henry VII.? He is often pictured as in-

disposed to cruelty, and — so long as money flowed into his coffers — to have been indifferent to the possibilities that plots against him might be secretly contrived by the feeble remnants of the faction of the White Rose. What, then, can credibly account for the fact that, while the twenty-four years of Henry's reign rolled on, and a period is described by the historians in which (to use an ancient figure) "they beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks," no annalist so much as hints at the existence of a son of Edward the Fourth?

The answer probably lies in the well-known fact that, while Henry exhibited little solicitude regarding invasion, or any attempts at foreign interference in the affairs of England, he was nevertheless almost insantly jealous of the Plantagenet race.¹ In proof of the assertion, it should not be forgotten that George, Duke of Clarence, and brother of Edward IV., had left one son who was a favorite of his uncle, King Edward, and upon whom that monarch had conferred the earldom of Warwick. Richard III. at first had treated this nephew with marked consideration, and, having lost his only son, had at one time planned to adopt young Edward, and make him the heir presumptive to the throne. Later, however, the suspicion hav-

¹ Collier's Hist. of England, London, 1868, p. 243.

ing been aroused in Richard's mind that Warwick might prove a dangerous rival, he had him confined in a remote castle in Yorkshire. The first act of Henry VII. was to transfer the luckless prince to the Tower of London.¹ There, shut in from all intercourse with the world outside, the unhappy Warwick was immured, until, after fourteen years, a futile attempt to escape resulted in his death upon the scaffold. Henry VII. thus crushed under his iron heel the last male representative of the Plantagenet line whose royal blood was untainted by any baser infusion.²

No doubt the lesson of terror was not lost upon young Arthur or his guardians. He must have recognized the fact that when his cousin of Warwick was beheaded, in 1499, it was for no other crime than that of being a Plantagenet. Though the queen of Henry VII. was of the house of York, and for political and dynastic reasons her life was secure, it was evident that no other of that hated race might openly live on English soil. It would be interesting to know whether Arthur Plantagenet found refuge in London, as a criminal loses himself in a crowd, or whether in some remote hamlet or farm-

¹ Collier's Hist. of England, London, 1868, Chap. V., pp. 242, 243. Nouvelle Biographie Générale, Paris, 1862, Art. Plantagenet.

² Nouvelle Biographie Générale, Art. Plantagenet.

stead he eluded the keen pursuit of Henry's inquisitors. There is no light upon the question. It must satisfy our curiosity to be assured that in that obscure retreat, wherever it may have been, he must have lived the life of the hunted animal which hears afar the baying of the bloodhounds on its track.

But why did not Henry VIII. follow in the footsteps of his father? If the young king suspected that one of the Plantagenet race still lurked in some corner of the realm, was it not as much to his interest, as it had been to that of his predecessor, to make sure of the banishment or destruction of such a possible rival? We need not search far for an adequate solution of the question. Few monarchs of that troublous time had so little to fear from any competitor who claimed to be of the blood royal, as King Henry VIII. In Nature one does not find a red rose and a white blossoming on the same stem. But precisely such a phenomenon appeared when "bluff King Harry" mounted the throne of England. As his father's heir, through the long succession from old John of Gaunt, there flowed in his veins Lancastrian blood. But commingled with it was that of the Plantagenet strain inherited from his mother, Elizabeth of York. In him were thus united the two ancestral lines of royalty whose bitter antagonism for

more than a hundred years had torn the realm asunder. It made the hearts of English subjects glow with enthusiastic loyalty to know that the factions were at peace, and that henceforward the land, desolated by fire and sword, might hope to bask in the sunshine of prosperity. No sovereign had been welcomed with more universal joy than that which greeted the accession of Henry VIII. Strong in the consciousness of his two fold heirship of kingly power, and still more in the love of his subjects, the young monarch could well afford to dismiss from his mind the fears which had tortured his jealous sire.¹

Whatever may be said of Henry's later days, the first twenty years of his life reveal a kind heart, generous impulses, and something like scholarly tastes.² It is in precisely this period that we find him seeking out the hidden Arthur Plantagenet — not to cut short his life, or to condemn him to perpetual imprisonment, but to lift up his head among the nobility of England, to trust him with high command, to honor him with the distinguishing Order of the Garter, to create him a peer of the realm, to bestow upon him the titles and estates of the house of Lisle, and at last to invest him with a semi-regal authority as the Lord Deputy of Calais.

¹Froude's History of England, Vol. I, pp. 167-169. Collier, p. 252.

²Thomson's Memoirs of the Court of Henry VIII., Vol. I, p. 39.

It may be added that if Henry was something of a pedant, and overestimated his own attainments in the world of letters, he nevertheless displayed more of the characteristics of the scholar than any of his predecessors since Alfred the Great.¹ It is not claimed that Lord Lisle was a profound scholar, or even a man of large literary culture. But the vast accumulations of the Lisle papers are convincing evidence that he wielded a facile pen. Are we not justified in inferring that Henry found in Arthur Plantagenet such congeniality of tastes and pursuits, that a warm friendship sprang up to bind together the sovereign and the subject?

The scene shifts. With the new Lord Deputy and his household we find ourselves embarked (to quote a quaint record of the voyage) "in Mr. Lambe, his boat." The crossing of that separating sea, though measured by a distance of less than thirty miles, is even in our day, rarely an agreeable experience. What must it have been when the only vessels employed in the passage were insignificant in tonnage, and when the only motive power was the often baffling and contrary winds which sweep the British Channel? If the crew manning the little craft were few in number, the family and retinue of Lord Lisle may have crowded the boat to

¹ Froude's History of England, Vol. I, pp. 167, 168.

an uncomfortable degree. The first Viscountess, who had been, as will be remembered, the widow of Edmund Dudley, had died somewhere about the year 1524; and, after four years, Lord Lisle had formed a new matrimonial alliance, which was destined to have a profound influence upon his later life.¹ Voluminous letters, preserved in manuscript among the Lisle papers, reveal to us a woman of rare force of character and will, but one whose nature was a medley of contradictory qualities, all dominated by a passionate devotion to her husband. How many of the children who called her mother, and to whom Lord Lisle was ever a tender and loving father, accompanied them to Calais, we are not informed. But no less than five different families made up the roll-call of the household.

Honor Grenville, the second Lady Lisle, was of that splendid family of Devon which later gave to England one of the heroic captains who swept the Spanish Armada from the seas. Married in early life to a Devonshire baronet, Sir John Basset, she took under her maternal wing her husband's step-children by a former wife, beside his own children by that former marriage. Honor bore to Sir John three sons and four daugh-

¹Dictionary of Nat. Biography, Art., Plantagenet. Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies (Mrs. Wood), Vol. II, p. 77.

ters. But when she became the wife of Lord Lisle, he was not only step-father to Sir John Dudley, son of his first spouse, but the father of Ladies Frances, Elizabeth, and Bridget Plantagenet, the offspring of his alliance with the widow of Edmund Dudley. Mrs. Wood, who, in her compilation of "The Letters of of Royal and Illustrious Ladies," unwinds this tangled skein of domestic history, says, perhaps a little cynically, "Fortunately, Lord and Lady Lisle did not add to this heterogeneous assemblage—for they had no children."¹ We can safely hazard the guess that on the voyage which bore the new Lord Deputy from Dover to Calais, "Mr. Lambe, his boat," did not lack for a full passenger-list.²

There is in Nature a law of compensation which renders endurable our days of cloud and tempest, because of the certainty that they will be followed by a period of sunny skies and soft breezes. So, it would make his task who burrows in the historic treasures which the Lisle collection of manuscripts offers to research, a more delightful work, could he discover a similar law governing the career of Arthur Plantagenet. When we remember that for possibly forty years his life was darkened by a total eclipse,

¹ Letters of Illustrious and Royal Ladies (Mrs. Wood), Vol. II, p. 77.

² Chron. of Calais, p. 44.

that, ever apprehensive of arrest and imprisonment, and even of secret assassination, he must have passed his days in disguise and his nights in fear—it would be a cheering reflection to believe that all this early wretchedness was to be rewarded by an afternoon of life full of honor and unclouded by sorrow. Moreover, to our human judgment, such a close of this man's career would seem peculiarly fitting in view of the character which his correspondence brings into fullest light. For, if he inherited the lofty stature, the graceful carriage, and the charm of manner which made Edward IV. irresistibly attractive,¹ he was not the heir of his father's low appetites and revolting selfishness. Pure-minded and clean of life, passionately devoted to his family and his home, his letters are a revelation of an inner nature singularly sweet, gentle, and self-forgetful.² The faded lines of his voluminous correspondence are like a mirror reflecting such a vision of nobility and loyal devotion to his king and country, mingled with tender affection for his wife and children, that, as one reads, he cannot repress the hope that if the morning of that life was wrapt in sombre

¹ "Edward the Fourth, who was the handsomest man in Europe," Froude, Vol I, p. 167.

² Polydore Vergil, *Life of Edward IV.* Camden Society Publications, p. 172. Foxe's Acts and Monuments, Day's edition, reprinted London, 1856, Vol. V, p. 505.

clouds, its westering sun may be bright with prosperity and peace.

The vine clings to its trellis; and its grapes, purpled in the summer sun, are luscious to the taste; but not of the timber which bears such fruit do men make the ribs of the ship which is to bear the hammering of the sea. The gentle and unselfish qualities of human nature never constitute the material of a Napoleon or a Bismarck. And the epoch at which Lord Lisle was vested with high office was a time for men of intellectual muscle and iron nerve. The Lord Deputy of Calais needed the eagle-eyed discernment, the administrative wisdom, and the hand which does not shrink, if necessity demand it, to crush with a grip of steel. But such elements had no place in the mental make-up of Arthur Plantagenet.

If England's last remaining possession on the soil of France had been in a condition of political and religious repose, the outcome of the seven years in which Lord Lisle held Calais for King Henry might have been widely different. But every circumstance was against him. Factions rent asunder the populace of the town. Disloyalty to the British sway was seething under an outward crust of formal obedience to authority.¹ From his hiding-place, now in Rome and now in France, Cardinal Reginald Pole,

¹Chron. of Calais, p. 133.

himself a Plantagenet on the maternal side, was said to be in illicit correspondence with disaffected citizens.¹

But deeper-seated and more potent in its influence was the travail of soul presaging the English Reformation, which began to convulse Calais with "searchings of heart" akin to those across the Channel. At this period Henry VIII. was an ardent advocate of the Church of Rome, except at a single point. He could not brook the thought that an Italian potentate should be the head of Christianity in England. Every doctrine of the Papacy the English king enforced, even to the burning of recusants at the stake; but the island over which he held sway, he counted too small to allow of two ecclesiastical despots. The effect of all this was to split the religious sentiment of the nation into three antagonistic elements. As yet the larger part of Henry's subjects held the Pope in almost idolatrous reverence. Against such were arrayed those who, from policy or principle, upheld their monarch. But underneath all, and in secret or open hostility to both the other factions, was that Puritan element which had never ceased to "leaven the lump" of religious life in England since John Wyclif gave his countrymen the Bible in their own tongue.

Virgil has pictured in immortal verse the

¹ Strype's Ecclesiastical Memorials, Vol. I, p. 309.

converging of the winds from every quarter of the heavens upon the luckless ship which bore his hero over the Libyan Sea.¹ So did the contradiction of opposing parties in politics and religion conspire to wreck the storm-swept craft of which the Lord Deputy of Calais held the tiller. Financial troubles added private anxieties to his official difficulties. Harassing debts, contracted in England, hung about his neck like the fabled Old Man of the Sea.² Henry VIII., true to the thrifty example of his father, practised a rigid economy in the allowance attached to the post of duty which represented the monarch of England in the territory of France.³ Year after year, Lord Lisle pleaded with Thomas Cromwell, who had come to hold in his grasp the power which Wolsey once had wielded, to raise the stipend of the governor of Calais to the pitiful sum—for such responsibility—of four hundred pounds!⁴

In striking contrast to her husband's mild and unaggressive nature was that of Lady Lisle. The Grenville race was ever of the sort that pushes to the front, and

¹ Aeneid. Liber, V. 789, 790.

² Dictionary of National Biography, Art., Plantagenet.

³ Wood, Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies, Vol. III, pp. 31-36.

⁴ Lisle papers, quoted in Wood's Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies, Vol. III, p. 36.

counts it a fierce joy to face an enemy. Honor Grenville was no exception to the family trait. It sometimes happens that a wife in whose blood there is a trace of the Amazon may more than compensate for a husband who shrinks from self-assertion. But Lady Lisle's undaunted spirit served to aggravate the troubles in which her gentler lord was inextricably entangled. A large estate, known as Painswick, which had been assigned to her as her jointure, the easy-going Viscount had, in some now-forgotten way, promised to Cromwell, the Lord Privy Seal. When the greedy favorite of Henry held Lord Lisle to his word, the wrath of the impoverished lady flamed forth in letters which could not fail to kindle the resentment of her powerful adversary at court.¹ On the occasion of the Lord Deputy's necessary visits to London, her letters are a singular mixture of tenderness, such as might characterize the correspondence of two lovers, with urgent appeals to stand firmly for his rights. One sample may be sufficient to represent the spirit of these epistles.

"Good Sweetheart: This shall signify unto you that I have had not a little study to devise how to accomplish your pleasure and commandment. I send you partridges by Nicholas Eyre, and now eftsoons I do send you a pasty of partridges and a crane baken. I trust your sables, before the receipt hereof, be come

¹Wood, *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies*, Vol. III, pp. 35, 36.

to your hands—being very sorry that they came not
erst." . . . "My lord, it grieveth me that you did not
ride unto the King's Majesty immediately after your
coming to London, as you said you would do. I think
if you had so done, his Grace would have accepted
your coming very well. But now I fear lest you shall
be circumvented by fair language and words."¹

Public affairs in Calais were drifting like
a rudderless vessel toward a lee-shore, when
a new tempest hastened the inevitable ship-
wreck. While Henry VIII. had revolted
against the authority of a foreign prelate
over the English Church, he nevertheless
loathed with vindictive abhorrence the class
of religionists known popularly as "Gospel-
ers." Possibly he may have had the intu-
ition to recognize how closely political and
religious freedom are interwoven, and to
fear, in the spread of Puritan principles un-
checked, some such result as a century later
brought Charles Stuart to the block. Yet,
despite the crowding of prisons with men
and women suspected of heretical infection,
and the death by fire and faggot of open con-
fessors of the new faith, it persisted in find-
ing its way into the cottages of the poor and
even the palaces of the great.²

One day there appeared in the market-
place of Calais a man of Lady Lisle's native
county of Devon. George Bucker—or, as

¹ Wood, *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies*,
Vol. III, pp. 131, 132.

² Strype's *Eccles. Memorials*, Vol. I, pp. 286-288.

he is sometimes named, Adam Damplic—
had been educated to the priesthood, and
had for some time held the office of chap-
lain to Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, whose
bitter abhorrence of the reform movement
found ready response in the heart of his
subordinate. But a visit to Rome had dis-
sipated the illusions of his earlier days.
Shocked by the profligacy of the priest-
hood and the corruption of the Papal court,
Bucker had turned to a study of the New
Testament, and, in the light shed by this
hitherto unknown book, a new religious ex-
perience flooded the channels of his being.¹
Conscious that he walked upon the crust
of a volcano, and risked at every step the
martyrdom which a few years later bore
witness to his faithfulness "unto death,"
Bucker could not resist the call to carry the
message of his new-found peace and joy to
his own countrymen. But, on his way to
England, he found Calais ripe for the Ref-
ormation doctrine. There can be no doubt
that his fervid preaching stirred the ancient
city as the wind stirs the leaves of the for-
est.² In the public places of the town, and
in churches opened to his ministry, every-
where a mighty throng hung upon his utter-

¹Foxe's Acts and Monuments, Day's edition, Lon-
don, 1856, Vol. V, p. 499.

²Ibid., Vol. V, pp. 439, 499, 513, 515. Chron. of
Calais, pp. 185, 186.

ance. It was one of the counts in Lord Lisle's indictment that during the year in which he had sanctioned the preaching of George Bucker and others of the same belief, mass, matins, and evensong were forsaken, and that of the seventeen hundred parishioners of St. Mary's Church, not a dozen continued to worship there.¹

It is unlikely that the Lord Deputy boldly acknowledged himself a convert to the teachings of the new evangelists. His was a timid and sensitive nature. But there is ground for believing that he accepted a gospel which must have been to his weary and perplexed soul like an oasis in the desert.² He certainly allowed Bucker and his associates the use of some of the most capacious churches of Calais, and that against the protests of the parish priests.³ We know that Lady Lisle, though never as favorable to the new religion as her husband, searched far and near for a Bible in the English tongue, and at last, with great difficulty, discovered one in Paris. We have, too, the record of monies which the Lord Deputy contributed to Bucker's work.⁴

¹ Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 139.

² Foxe, Vol. V, p. 439, classes Lord Lisle "Protestant." Foxe's Acts and Monuments, Vol. V, pp. 513, 514, 515, Day's edition, London, 1856.

³ Foxe, Acts and Monuments, Vol. V, p. 499.

⁴ Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 140.

The enemies of Lord Lisle had been undermining the public administration of affairs at Calais, and storing explosives underneath it, from the hour that his commission had been signed. But it seems probable that his own hand unconsciously supplied the fatal spark, when he yielded to the persuasive eloquence of a humble Gospeller.

The 16th of March, 1540, saw a solemn conclave assembled in Calais, vested with unusual powers. The Lord Privy Seal, Thomas Cromwell, had named certain commissioners, among whom were the Earl of Sussex, the Lord St. John, Sir John Gage, and others of nearly equal note at the court of King Henry.¹ They were commanded to investigate the conditions prevailing under the government of the Lord Deputy, and to make report—it is well to observe—not to the King, but to Cromwell. Their findings, preserved in the state papers, are what might have been expected. In substance their verdict was that Calais had been carelessly guarded. Two hundred of its garrison were mere boys. Strangers had been permitted to have access to the town, and even to walk on the walls, and spy out the weakness of its defences.² To these accusations, which were in all probability well-founded, the Lisle

¹ Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 139. Chron. of Calais, p. 187.

² Ibid., Chron. of Calais, p. 187.

letters afford a clear and adequate reply. Through seven years, almost innumerable appeals had been sent to London by Lord Lisle, piteously pleading for appropriations to repair the walls, which were falling into ruins when the Lord Deputy entered upon his office.¹ These letters may or may not have reached the eyes of the King. More likely they were thrust contemptuously away by "the power behind the throne"—the Lord Privy Seal. In any case, they were either ignored or were met by frivolous excuses. No wonder that there were breaches in the ancient fortifications; and that the Governor of Calais, denied the means to enlist a force of men-at-arms, vainly tried to meet the deficiency with such young recruits as he could muster. More serious charges, however, were alleged. The Lord Deputy, it was hinted, had held correspondence with his cousin, Cardinal Pole, and with the Pope. To substantiate these, not a shadow of proof was found. Last of all—and perhaps the most damning count in the indictment—he had allowed the preaching of such sectaries as George Buckler, and had supported that Gospeler in his mission to Calais. Of his guilt under this accusation there could be no question.²

¹ An example of these may be found in *Chronicle of Calais*, p. 181.

² Wood's *Letters, etc.*, Vol. III, p. 139. Day's edition of Foxe, Vol. V, p. 499.

The Commissioners, hiding "the hand of iron in the velvet glove," graciously ordered that, since Lord Lisle had long wished for a personal interview with his Majesty, the King, he should forthwith be sent under guard to London.¹ It could not have been difficult, for one of such boundless authority as Cromwell then exercised, to make sure that the man to whom Henry had once been tenderly attached, should never be permitted to come face to face with the King. Arrived at Dover, and hurried to London, Lord Lisle was flung into a dungeon in the Tower.² Meantime, the Commission proceeded to imprison Lady Lisle in the charge of one Francis Hall, described as being "a sad man,"³ while her daughters, Philippa and Mary Basset, were sent to a separate incarceration. With a refinement of cruelty hardly to be paralleled in the annals of England, no one of the great family, so strangely yet so closely bound together in affection, was allowed to know where the others were immured, or even if they still were living.⁴

The household of the Lord Deputy was broken up, the lackeys and women servants

¹Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 139. Chron. of Calais, p. 187.

²Ibid., Bayley, Hist. of the Tower of London, p. 74. Chron. of Calais, p. 187.

³Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 139.

⁴Chron. of Calais, p. 48. Also Wood, Letters, p. 139, Vol. III.

dismissed; and then, at their leisure, the Commissioners seized upon every article which the vice-regal residence contained. The invoice is still extant, and, while affording a curious revelation of domestic life in that period, can hardly fail to awaken in the mind of the modern reader a wondering contempt for the great nobles and statesmen who compiled the list. The spits and dripping-pans of the kitchen, a lump of wax and another of tallow, the petticoats and night-gowns of the Viscountess and her daughters are not only enumerated and set down at a pecuniary valuation, but taken possession of in the name of the Crown.¹

As the modern visitor to the Tower of London penetrates the grim passages of that ancient fortress, his guide points out the cell where Raleigh cut his name in the wall of stone; or with ponderous key opens the grated door behind which Ann Boleyn or Lady Jane Grey awaited the summons to the scaffold. In some such dismal cave-like chamber, where the feeble light struggling through a narrow slit high up in the massive granite only half reveals the damp and chill interior, we can picture Arthur Plantagenet. Sorrow and corroding anxiety have accelerated the natural processes of Time. The once imposing height seems

¹ Calais Correspondence, Vol. I, arts. 38, 39. Wood, Letters, etc., Vol. III, pp. 140, 141.

shrunken. The wrinkled forehead, the colorless cheeks, and the blue eyes dimmed with long deprivation of the light of day bear witness to something more aging in its effect than the mere lapse of years.¹

It is the trite saying of those on whose path the evening shadows have begun to fall, that the weeks and months flit past them with a speed unknown to earlier life. It was doubtless an old man who, in the dawn of the world, wrote, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle."² But the prisoner in solitary confinement must ever be an exception to that general rule. Lord Lisle was an aged man when he passed under the grim archway of the Tower. Buried in that living grave, condemned to see no face and to hear no voice save that of the jailer who brought him his daily food, and tortured by innumerable but vain conjectures as to the fate of his wife and children, each day of horror and each night of waking must have seemed like a century to him.

Two years have dragged their slow length along. A March day is drawing to its close. The fog from the Thames drifts through the loophole in the dungeon-wall, and adds to the cheerlessness which pervades the air within. Old, broken in health, and crushed

¹For Lord Lisle's ill health and partial blindness, see Foxe (Day's edition), Vol. V, pp. 515, 516.

²Book of Job, 7:6.

under the absolute hopelessness which sits upon his breast, Arthur Plantagenet gathers the scant covering of his straw pallet over his shivering frame, and lies with dry eyes wide open in the sleeplessness of suffering. Suddenly, footsteps are heard on the stone floor of the corridor. A rattle of keys comes through the grating of the door, and voices in whispered conference fall faintly on his ear. The rusty bolts of the massive lock creak as they turn, the heavy door swings back with a groan, and, revealed by the dim light of a lantern carried in his hand, the burly form of the jailer appears on the threshold. Following him there enters Sir William Kingston, lieutenant of the Tower. Close behind these two there comes a third visitor. Memories of the bygone days, when Lord Lisle basked in the sunshine of Henry Tudor's favor, must have come back to him as he recognized by the glare of the turnkey's lantern the features of Sir Thomas Wriothesley, the secretary of the king.¹

What mean the gentle tones and kindly greetings that have so long been strangers to the prisoner's ears? Astonished and bewildered, the feeble old man lifts himself slowly to a sitting posture, and courteously gives welcome to the messenger of his

¹ Guide to Lincoln's Inn, by Thomas Lane, London, 1803. Holinshead's Chron. (quoted in a footnote in the Chronicle of Calais, p. 187). Foxe (Day's edition), Vol. V, pp. 515, 516.


sovereign. Taking the hand of Lord Lisle, Wriothesley places on his finger a diamond ring. Then, declaring that the signet is the evidence that he who brings it comes directly from the presence of the King, the secretary delivers the message of the monarch to his "beloved cousin." He tells that His Majesty has discovered that of all of the grave charges for which the Viscount Lisle has suffered punishment undeserved, he is absolutely innocent. Henceforward the vindicated servant can count upon new favors from his master. His estates shall be restored, his family set at liberty and reunited, and a new future shall open its bright path before him. "And," adds Wriothesley, "to-morrow you shall come forth of the Tower unto His Highness' presence-chamber at the White Hall."¹

As the message of King Henry fell from the secretary's lips, the old man bent forward and hung upon every word. But as the full meaning of it unfolded to his mind, the tears trickled down his face, an expression of rapturous joy and peace shone from his eyes, as if the sun had burst through a rift in the clouds. Then, with that look still lingering, his gray head sank back; and that night a greater and a better King than

¹Stow's Chron. Reign of Henry VIII., p. 583. Holinshead, Vol. III, pp. 823, 824. Bayley, Hist. of the Tower, Vol. II, p. 391.

Henry Tudor welcomed His tried servant
to His presence-chamber.¹

¹ Hall's Chronicle (edition of 1809), p. 843. Bayley's
Hist. of the Tower of London, pp. 74, 391. Wood,
Letters, etc., Vol. III, p. 141. J. H. Jesse's Hist.
Memoirs (London, 1871), Vol. II, p. 145.

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