







GEO.ADDL MSS. 32

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The first origin of Parliaments is difficult to trace, Authors differing extremely about the time, when either Lords, or Commons, had a beginning.

Ina the West-Saxon is said to have publish'd his Laws, by the Consent of his Aldermen, Wisemen and Clergy in 720.

Athelstan did the same in 930. and his Successor Ethelred in 1000. But whether these Aldermen &c. were Lords, or Commons, or both does not appear.

Edgar summon'd a Council of all the Nobility in 970. As did Canute at Oxford in 1030.

These are the best proofs we have of any Councils, or Parliaments, before the conquest.

King John's Magna Charta, was made by the King, Barons, and Freemen of the Realm; which would seem to include the Commons.

Dolidore Virgil, Speer, Rawleigh, and Bacon, seem to think the Commons first came to Parliament in Henry I. Heylin in Henry II. many with more reason in Henry III. in whose Reign we have the first summons extant to any Knight or Burges.

As to the origin of Peers, all Honours derive from the Crown. Edward the Black Prince, was the first Duke in England; Robert de Vere Earl of Oxford, was the first Marquis in the 8th of Richard II. Hugh Lupus, was the first Earl, by the title of Chester, in the Reign of William the Conqueror. Lord Beaumont was the first Viscount, in the 10th of Edward VI. and Beauchamp of Holt, was the first Baron, in the 11th of Richard II.

In the antient Records, Barons included all the Nobility.

A Baron however holding lands of the Crown, was no Lord of Parliament, till call'd by the King's Writ, and in the Reign of Edward I. it was confin'd to those who were summon'd to Parliament.

Henry I. being jealous of his Brother Robert, call'd the Nobility together in 1106. when he made a Speech, the first on Record that came from the Throne.

He summon'd another convention of all the States of the Realm at London in 1107. and another at Salisbury in 1116.

Stephen held a convention at Oxford in 1136. where he sign'd a Charter, by which he confirm'd the

Rights and Immunities of the Church.

He assembled in 1152. a Great Council for the Coronation of his son.

Henry II. summoned a General Assembly at Wallingford in 1158. where he confirmed the Great Charter of the Realm.

He met a much greater at Clarendon in 1164. when the famous articles called the Constitutions of Clarendon were made which ^{come} nearer to a Parliament than anything we have as yet met with.

Another Convention in 1171. at which Malcolm King of Scotland did homage.

One at Westminster in the 1st year of Richard I. in 1189. ^{These the following Parliament were taken up with the} ~~the following~~ ^{the King's charter} Parliament at Nottingham in 1194.

a Convention was held at Lincoln in the 1st year of John. The Magna Charta was granted in form by him in Runnymede between Windsor and Staines in 1215.

Henry III.

There were several Councils and Assemblies of the Clergy, and Nobility during the turbulent Reign of King Henry III. the most remarkable of which were as follows.

That King called a great Meeting of the Nobility and Clergy at Westminster in 1225. When he demanded an aid of a fifteenth of all

movables

Henry III.

movables for the recovery of his foreign dominions; which they refus'd to comply with, till he had confirm'd their Charters of Liberty, upon which he issued out a Charter to every County and two to those in which there were Forests, confirming those granted by John.

He likewise disforested all forests made after the accession of Henry II, at this assembly the Barons gave the King the Wards and Marriages of their Heirs; which was even then call'd inquitum malis.

Henry met another Assembly at Oxford in 1227. where he declar'd also to the Clergy, that he would support them in their rights, provided they took out new Charters.

All this violence was attributed to Hubert de Burgh, who had got the King's chief favour, and was Chief Justice of the Realm.

The King call'd another assembly at Lambeth in 1232. at which the fortieth part of all movables of the Clergy and Laity, was granted him, for to pay the Earl of Britain the debt he ow'd him.

Hubert de Burgh was accus'd by the Nobility of extortion &c. the King seem'd willing to give him up, but on his delivering all his wealth to him, he restor'd him his Lands, and confin'd him for some time in Prison.

Henry III.

Peter Bishop of Winchester (a foreigner) succeeded him in the King's favour; he invited the Poitevins and Britons over, to the number of 2,000. The Wards were given up to them; by this the Nobility were ignobly match'd.

The King summon'd another Assembly at Oxford in 1233. but the Barons acquainted him, that they would not come till he sent his favorite away; which if he did not do, they would drive him and his evil Counsellor out of the Kingdom, and chuse a new King.

A general Council met at Westminster in 1234. when the King dismiss'd his favorite, and banish'd the foreigners from his Court.

A select Council was held at Merton in 1235. at which those Statutes, which bear that name were made, which have ever since been part of the Statute Law.

The King call'd an Assembly at London in 1237. where he ask'd for an aid, which was refus'd him. He confirm'd the Magna Charta, and by that means obtain'd the thirtieth part of all movables.

As it was this King's custom to depend to the lowest and most abject methods, of getting money; and to squander it among his favorites when got. he was forc'd to have often recourse to his Nobility,

which

Henry III. which prov'd the great foundation of liberty, money not being able to be rais'd by the King, without their consent, which before this Reign was done in an arbitrary manner.

He summon'd a meeting at Westminster, where he himself beg'd they would grant him an aid. He obtain'd 20. out of every knights fee who held of him in Capite.

From this time to the year 1258. the King call'd general Councils, demanding supplies that were constantly refus'd.

That year the Nobility met at London and afterwards adjourn'd to Beaford, when the King promis'd that 12. persons chosen by him, and 12. by the Barons, should meet, and reform the State, to the keeping of whose regulations, both he, and his son, swore. The Barons on their side promis'd an aid to him; these 24. were accordingly chosen, and came to the following resolutions.

- I. That the King should confirm the Magna Charta.
- II. That a proper Judiciary should be constituted.
- III. That they should chuse yearly for ever, all Judges, Chancellors, Ministers &c.
- IV. That they or their Friends should have the custody of the Kings Castles.
- V. That there should be 3. Parliaments in a year, at which the Counsellors should be present whether summon'd or not, and to which the

Henry III. Community should depute 12. Wisemen to represent them.
 Many other provisions were made for softning
 the rigour of the feudal tenure, Custody of Ward. &c.
 this done they consider'd of the aid to be granted
 to the King; but it ended in nothing, for having
 serv'd their own turn, they sought to distress the
 King more, by driving his Half-Brothers from him.

Thus ended this mad Parliament, and
 with Justice call'd it so, for till now we have
 found the King constantly breaking his word
 and trampling on the Liberties of the People;
 but here the Barons being uppermost, tyranniz'd
 in their turn, and extorted things from the King
 that scarcely left him a Crown. and that done,
 neglected the interest of the People, and shamefully
 broke their word in refusing him the promis'd
 aid; this turn'd the people against them
 and gave the King afterwards a handle to
 break every Law, and to put many of them to
 death.

Whilst the Feast of Saint Edward was kept at
 Westminster in 1259. there came a deputation
 from all the Bachelors to Prince Edward, and
 to others of the Council, acquainting them, that
 the King had perform'd all the promises he
 had made; but that the Barons had done

nothing

Henry III. nothing for the publick good, and only thought of their private interest. The Barons finding that if they did not do right of their own accord, they should be forc'd to it; publish'd the body of Laws, call'd *Provisiones Baronicum*.

The King of the Romans came over to the assistance of the King his Brother; on his arrival he was join'd by Prince Edward, and some of the Barons. Simon Mountfort Earl of Leicester, headed the rebellious Barons; upon this a great profusion of blood was spilt; but by the mediation of the Queen matters were somewhat accommodated, but it did not last long; for the King despairing of getting money, obtain'd an absolution from the Pope, of all the Oaths he had taken at Oxford.

He soon after summon'd a Parliament at the same place, where he propos'd that all should be releas'd from the oaths they had taken there, at the former Meeting; but the Nobility not agreeing to it, things look'd very bad; but both sides concurr'd in choosing the King of France as mediator. He annull'd the Barons provisions, which they not agreeing to; the War began a fresh; the King was unfortunate in the beginning and soon after was taken Prisoner with his Brother, and many of the Barons at Lewes in 1264.

Henry III.

Upon this Mountfort summon'd the Commons to Parliament in the King's name.

This is the first time it can with certainty be said, that the Commons of England were call'd to Parliament.

Prince Edward found means of escaping out of Mountfort's hands, and of getting an army together, with which he routed the Barons near Evesham in 1265.

The Barons having grasp'd at too much lost all they had so long been struggling for. The King call'd a Parliament at Winchester in the same year, at which he seiz'd upon the liberties of the City of London, and also got the lands of the Rebels into his own hands.

He held a Parliament at Mendworth in 1266. where it was agreed that six persons chosen, should choose six more, those twelve were according to their judgement to settle what was most for the security of the Nation; they enacted, that all who began the war and provok'd it, and either join'd with the Rebels, or had offer'd them any assistance, should forfeit five years rent, which if they paid they were to have their lands again; if they only paid part, they were to receive but a part again.

All obligations or instruments made by the King

Henry III.

or his son concerning the Oxford Provisions were declar'd void; yet the Magna-Charta, and the Charter of Forests were to remain in full force.

The King summon'd a Parliament at Saint Edmundsbury in 1264. where the Clergy were forc'd to pay the tenths of all Ecclesiastical Preferments for 3. years.

He call'd another Parliament at Marlborough in 1269. where the Statutes that bear that name were made.

Henry died in 1272. after having had a vexatious Reign. It is very difficult to give a true Character of this Prince. In some parts of his reign, he acted very arbitrarily, in others the Barons were as stubborn as he had been; upon the whole he was a very profuse, idle man, and never to be depended on.

Edward I.

In the Reign of Edward I. Parliaments were first recogniz'd by the King.

As soon as Henry III. was dead, a Great Assembly conven'd themselves at London, in the same manner as Mountfort had summon'd them, and committed the Regency of the Kingdom to the Archbishop of York, and to the Carls of Cornwall and Gloucester, the King being in the Holy Land.

Edward on his return, call'd a Parliament, the first by Royal Authority, at Westminster in 1275.

when Lewellin Prince of Wales was summon'd to Parliament to do Homage, but excus'd himself.

It was chiefly employ'd in making Good Law, which were call'd the Statutes of Westminster the first.

Another Parliament met the same year at that place, when Statutes were made for restraining the excessive usury of the Jews, and a fifteenth was granted the King upon the Laity, and Clergy, by the Common Consent of all.

The next year the King summon'd the Nobility at Westminster on the Affairs of Lewellin; upon which War was declar'd against him.

the

Edward I.

The King order'd the money, which had been granted him the year before, to be levied, and directed that the Charters of Liberties and Forests, should be exactly observ'd. The same year the Statute of Bigamy was enacted.

At a Parliament at Winchester, in the same year, he confirm'd the Charters of Liberties and Forests, and order'd it should be proclaim'd throughout the whole Kingdom; and that they should be strictly kept.

The Statutes of Gloucester are said to have been made in 1278. but no Historian mentions them.

A Parliament was held at Westminster in 1279. when an Act of the greatest use to the Publick was made, namely the Statute of Mortmain, by which no Man could either give, sell, or exchange any Lands with any Religious body, without Licence from the King. The Jurisdiction of Ecclesiastical Judges was confin'd within narrower limits, and the King demanded the half of their goods both Spiritual and Temporal for a year.

Edward conquer'd Wales by Lewellin's being slain, and his Brother David being made Prisoner, and afterwards put to death.

The King summon'd a Parliament at Botherham in 1282.

Edward I. for the better sewing of Wales; it was resolv'd that it should be united to the Crown of England, to which it has ever since remain'd.

At that meeting the laity granted a thirtieth and the Clergy a twentieth.

A Parliament was summon'd at Acton-Burnell in Shropshire, where the Statute so call'd was made.

Another Parliament met in the same year at Westminster, when the Statutes call'd Westminster the Second were made, and the Statute entitl'd *Circumspecte a gatis*.

The King went to France for three years; during his absence a Parliament was held at London in 1200. at which the Lord Treasurer Kirby demanded an aid in the King's name, for the Charges in France. But they refus'd to grant any thing unless the King was present. He return'd in 1209. and call'd a Parliament to reform several Abuses which had crept in whilst he was absent.

All the Judges except two, were fin'd for extortion, and from that time the Judges were oblig'd to take an oath against receiving any thing from the parties except a breakfast. During the setting of the Parliament an Act

pass'd

Edward I. pass'd, for banishing the Jews; and also for
confiscating their immovable goods.

They at the same time granted a fifteenth;
and also made the Statute entitl'd Westminster
the third.

The King held a Parliament at Westminster in 1294.
where he acquainted them of the Loss of Guienne;
it was unanimously agreed that it should be
recover'd by the force of arms.

He call'd another at Westminster in 1295.
when he lay'd before them the secret alliance
between Scotland and France, upon which
they granted him the eleventh part of their
goods, the tenth of the Clergy, and seventh
of the Merchants.

He summon'd one at Saint Edmundsbury in 1296.
at which the Citizens and Burgeses were
tax'd, but the Clergy refus'd to give the King
any subsidy without the leave of the Pope.

Edward call'd a Parliament at Salisbury
in 1297. to which the Clergy were excluded.
the King insisted upon the attendance of
the Nobility with him into France, which
created a great dispute between him and them,

Edward I. He at last went without them.

The Regents met a Parliament in the same year at London in the name of Prince Edward.

The Lords would make no reconciliation, till the King consented to confirm the Magna Charta, and the Charter of Forests, with some additional Articles; and till he promis'd he would neither exact nor receive any aid or vexatious tax, without the advice and consent of his Great Men; and that all the Laity and Clergy should have their Laws, and Liberties as free as ever they enjoy'd them, and that any Statute or custom to the contrary should be void.

When this was prepar'd the Young Prince confirm'd it; it was sent by the King's Secretary to Flanders. The King took but three days to consider it, and then wisely consented to it; upon which the Parliament granted a ninth penny on the Laity; the Clergy in the Province of Canterbury, gave a tenth, and those of York, a fifth to carry on the War with Scotland. This was the foundation of the first aids of Parliament.

The

Edward I.

The King on his return beat the Scotch at Falkirk. After this he made Peace with France by the mediation of the Pope; he was press'd by Parliament to confirm in person the additional Articles, which he at first illud'd; but afterwards did it, with adding these words, saving always the rights of the Crown; which so offended the Lords that they broke up in anger, and the people to whom the Articles were read pour'd out blessings on the King till they heard the last words, and then chang'd them into curses, so that Edward was forc'd in the last session of this Parliament, to grant the whole as the People desir'd.

He call'd another at Westminster in 1300. when he again publickly confirm'd the Magna-Charter with the Articles, which appeas'd the minds of some of the Lords, who would have rais'd the forces to have compell'd him, if he had not voluntarily done it.

He summon'd one at Lincoln in 1301. where he demanded a fifteenth of their temporal Estates.

The Nobility and Commons requir'd that the Charters of liberties and Forests should

Edward I. remain for ever in force; the king finding he should have no supply without it, agreed to it; and a sentence of excommunication was ordained by the Archbishops and other Bishops against those who should at any time violate either of these laws; the king declar'd that if they had any thing else to ask he would grant it; upon which they gave him a fifteenth.

The Council of Nobility continuing to set after the Commons had rose, made many demands, as that the Chancellor Chief Justice, and Treasurer should be chosen by the Community; the king return'd a resolute answer to it; that he wonder'd they did not ask for the Crown, that they would think it hard not to be allow'd to put in, and turn out what servants they pleas'd and yet grudge'd him that Liberty; that he would not be their King on those terms; this answer appear'd so reasonable that they dissist'd; and the King and Barons were perfectly reconcil'd.

The

Edward. The Pope writ to the King, and claim'd the Crown of Scotland as a fief of the Holy See. The King communicated this Letter to the Parliament. The Barons in a Body Wrote to the Pope, and deny'd his claim, and also affirm'd that ^{of the} no King of England ever submitted their rights to any Ecclesiastical Court.

The Pope soon after absolv'd the King from all the oaths he had taken concerning the Charters, which late his conscience at ease.

Pierce Gaveston was banish'd by the advice of the Parliament as a Corrupter of Prince Edward; the King made his son swear he would never recall him.

Edward died in 1307.

He was a Prince of great sense and spirit, and knew the way to gain the hearts of the People, by giving them ample concessions of liberty; but tho' he encreas'd the Dominions of the Crown by the Conquest of Wales, yet he hurt the Nation with his fondness for foreign Wars, and the worst part of his Character appears in his breaking his

Edward I. word so scandalously to the Parliament, and in making use of the Pope's absolution to get rid of the most solemn Oath.

Edward II. The first action of Edward II. on his coming to the throne, was to recall Gaveston, which was a very bad omen for the Nation, and taught them what they ought to expect of him.

He call'd a Parliament at Northampton in 1300. where it was settl'd that the base Coins us'd in his Father's Reign should not be refus'd on pain of death. The Laity granted him a fifteenth of their goods and the Clergy a twentieth.

The Parliament met of itself at Ware in the same year, knowing that force was the only method of getting Gaveston from the King; they went from thence to Northampton; but the King summon'd them to meet at London, because he had no force to oppose them.

Different Articles were alledg'd against

Gaveston

Edward II. Gaveston; the King in hopes of disuniting the Barons, wanted some Bishops and Carls to be arbitrators in this affair; but they refus'd so odious a part, and said they would do nothing without the general consent of the Barons.

Gaveston was banish'd by the Parliament; but great difficulty was found in persuading the King to agree to it. Upon which he was made Governor of Ireland.

The Parliament address'd the King that the State, and his Household were so ill manag'd, that they thought it proper for him to let the Kingdom, and his domestick affairs be Govern'd by certain Lords appointed by them; this weak Prince consented to it, whose Father would have made the Parliament smart for such an offer.

The Committee being appointed took an Oath that they would make such ordinances as should be for the Honour of God, for that of the Holy-Church; for that of the King, and for the profit of the People.

The King held a Parliament at York, but several Lords refus'd to come because

Edward II.

Gaveston was there.
 The King said his favorite had been banish'd
 contrary to the laws of the Kingdom, and
 contrary to His Coronation Oath. The Lords
 said, that neither the laws of the Realm, nor
 the late Ordinances were observ'd.

Upon this the King publish'd a declaration,
 that all the laws of his Ancestors, and also the
 late Ordinances should be duly observ'd, which
 were not detremental to Him and his Crown.

The discontented Lords came to London,
 which made the King send to the Lord Mayor,
 Aldermen, and Common Council, to secure
 the City, that no danger might happen to him
 or it.

The Earls, Barons, and Bishops, excus'd themselves
 from treating about the Ordinances in the
 absence of the King, but they said they should
 be ready to treat of them in His presence,
 whenever he should please.

They soon after rais'd an army, and openly
 declar'd that they would by force drive Gaveston
 from the King; they besieg'd him at Scarborough,

and

Edward II. and took him Prisoner; but when they had him in their power, they never thought of the promises they had made him, but instantly struck off his head.

The Lords upon this sent a haughty message to the King, demanding that their ordinances should be confirm'd, which if he did not readily do, they would compell him.

A Treaty was begun between the King and his Barons by the mediation of some Bishops; it was agreed that those concern'd in the death of Gaveston should come and make submission on their knees to the King in Westminster Hall.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1313, when the King renew'd his complaints against the Barons, for the injuries he had receiv'd, and for the death of Gaveston; the Barons said that He ought rather to thank them for having destroy'd a common Enemy; they also declar'd that they would no longer trust to his vain promises, nor be any longer kept from their securities.

The Queen, some of the Bishops, and the

Edward II. Earl of Gloucester, got the King and Barons to agree, when it look'd as if there would be an open Rupture; upon this the Barons made a formal Submission to the King in Westminster-Hall.

On this reconciliation they granted a fifteenth of all their movables.

A Parliament was held at Westminster in 1314. at which the twentieth part of their Goods or movables was granted to the King; but Staffordshire, and Shropshire refus'd to pay it, pretending that the Magna-Charter, the Charter of Forests, and the Perambulation of Forests had not been duly observ'd.

A Parliament met at Lincoln in 1315, where the Bishop of Norwich declar'd in the name of the King, that he would observe all the ordinances that had been made, and also the Perambulation of the Forests, which was settle in his Father's Reign, saving to the King his reasons against them. They granted him an aid for carrying on the War with Scotland, namely of every Village, a footman arm'd with sword & bow. at the expence of the said Village, who were to be kept by them till they came to the place of rendezvous,

and

Edward II. and for 60. days after and no longer except the King's service should require it. Upon this the King promis'd to give Letters Patent that this grant should be no precedent, nor be an example for the future.

A Parliament was summon'd at York in 1319. when the King was desir'd to agree that two Bishops, an Earl, or Baron, one Baron or Banneret of the family of the Earl of Lancaster in his name, and for him, should remain by turns with him, and that all affairs should be deliberated with them, and that any indenture that should be made without their advice should be void; the King agreed to it.

He with the Consent of the Earls, Barons, Prelates and Community, granted a pardon to the Earl of Lancaster, and his followers, for the breach of the peace, and for all manner of Treaspases, and Felonies; and therefore order'd the Chancellor to pass Charters under the Great Seal for this purpose; the King also Commanded that the Ordinances should be observ'd as they had pass'd the Great Seal.

Edward II.

The Clergy refused to give the King any supply without the leave of the Pope; but they agreed to the King sending a Messenger for that purpose at his own expence; by which means they were allow'd to grant a tenth for one year.

The Barons with Lancaster at their Head demanded that the two Despensers should be banish'd, who had succeeded Gaveston in the King's favour; but he would not hear of it, because they were abroad, and therefore could not answer what was charg'd against them; the Barons upon this march'd to London, where the King call'd a Parliament for to settle the differences at Westminster in 1321.

The discontented Lords instead of coming to Westminster, remain'd in London, and held Councils. they drew up a Sentence against the two Despensers, which they brought to Westminster, and by force got pass'd into a Law; they then banish'd and disinherited them, and order'd that they should quit the Kingdom; which if they did not do by a certain day they were to be dealt with as Enemies of the King

and

Edward II. and Kingdom.

The Queen in a Progress to Canterbury intended to lodge at Leeds Castle of which Bartholomew Badlesmore was Governor, he was one of the Barons in the Confederacy. when the Queen arriv'd there, the Officers under him refus'd Her admittance because she had not an order sign'd by the Governor, the Queen on Her return complain'd of it to the King; who rais'd troops attack'd the Castle and took it, and hung the Deputy Governor with some of the Garrison. The Barons were greatly incens'd at this; a Civil War broke out, in which the Earl of Lancaster and several Barons were taken Prisoners, and were beheaded.

A Parliament was held at York, at which the two Despensers were restor'd to their former dignities, and the sentence which had been made against them was revok'd. It was also declar'd that the foregoing ordinances were an invasion upon the Prerogative Royal.

The King order'd the Ordinances made by the Barons to be examin'd by learn'd men, and such as were thought necessary to be establish'd, he commanded should

Edward II be call'd Statutes.

The Laity granted a great subsidy, and the Clergy in the Province of Canterbury gave five pence of every mark; and those of York four pence.

The King summon'd a Parliament at London in 1328. to settle several publick affairs, but in particular what answer was to be sent to the King of France, about going to do Homage.

The King demanded a supply to pay the ransom of the Earl of Richmond, who was a Prisoner of the Scotch; they refus'd it, and said that no such tax ought to be paid, except for the ransom of the King, Queen, and their Eldest Son.

In this Parliament the Lands of the Knights Templars were granted to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem; a Statute at large was made for that purpose.

The King's domestick affairs began to go very ill, for the Queen got his leave to go to France, and to take her son with her. The King grew impatient for her to return; she said it was her fear for the Younger Despenser which hinder'd her from coming back. But she return'd soon after with her son and 2,000 men, she landed at Warwick where she was join'd by the disaffected Lords. The two

Despensers

Edward III. Despensers were taken and executed without a trial; the King was also taken at Kenelworth Castle.

A Parliament met soon after at Westminster in 1327. where the question was put whether Edward the Father or Edward the Son should reign, it was agreed that the Son should have the Government of the Kingdom and be crown'd.

A Committee was appointed to go and demand the Crown of the King, which he accordingly resign'd.

The Parliament renounc'd their homage and fealty and chose Edward his Son for their King, who was but fourteen.

Edward III. was barbarously stiftl'd at Berkley Castle in Gloucester Shire.

This Prince during his whole Reign appears to have been a very weak man. if he had not been so, he could never have acted as he did, with such an example as his father before him.

We have opportunity here of making the remarks we did in Henry III. time. Edward was undoubtedly a weak Prince, and given up to insolent and ambitious favorites. but then he was cruelly treated by his own Wife, and met with constant Rebellion from his Barons, who headed by the Earl

Edward II.

of Lancaster forc'd him to terms, that annihilated
 Monarchy; wherefore when he got the better
 they fell a just sacrifice to their own Ambitions,
 tho some of them afterwards bepos'd him, and
 murder'd him, by the treachery of his Wife.

Edward III.

As Edward III. was but fourteen, he had twelve
 Guardians appointed him by Parliament, tho in
 reallity Mortimer the Queen's favorite govern'd
 the whole.

A few days after his Coronation, petitions
 were presented to him and ^{the} Parliament, by
 those who had been concern'd in the quarrel
 of the Earl of Lancaster, begging that their lands
 might be restor'd them; which was granted,
 with the arrears of Rent, except that part
 which had been taken for the King's ^{use} and the
 quarrel itself was voted just.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1328.
 at which the Priviledges of the City of ^{London} were
 confirm'd, and several new honours given

to

Edward III. to the Mayor and Aldermen.

Another was held at Northampton in the same year, when a treaty was made with the Scotch, by which the claim of superiority over that Kingdom was given up.

The two Despensers and others who had been executed without trials, were attainted of Treason, for to screen those who had acted so unjustifiably by a Parliamentary sanction; especially Mortimer.

A Parliament was summoned at Salisbury in the same year, the Earl of Lancaster, Lord Wake, and others, refus'd to come there; the Earl said, that he had been appointed chief Councellor, and Guardian of the King's person; but that Lord Mortimer had taken the regal power into his own hands, and would not permit him to be near the King; that tho' it had been order'd that no Person should appear to Parliament, with arm'd men, yet Lord Mortimer did; & therefore he did not think his person safe if he attended; but tho' he was at first join'd by some Lords, yet they deserting him, he was forc'd to ask the Queen, and Mortimer's pardon.

Edward III.

A Parliament met at Winchester in 1329, where the Earl of Kent, Uncle of the King was adjudg'd by common consent guilty of Treason, and was executed; suppos'd to be drawn into a sham Plot by Mortimer, who did not long pass unpanish'd.

The King call'd a Parliament at Nottingham in 1350. when the Earl of Mortimer was apprehended and sent to the Tower; and the Parliament being adjourn'd to Westminster, the King complain'd there, of the Conduct of the Queen his Mother, and of Mortimer, and with the consent of Parliament took the reins of Government into his own hands. Then Mortimer was impeach'd and executed with some of his confederates.

The Lords declar'd that tho they this time tried some that were not Peers, yet they would not have this be a precedent for the future.

Sir John Maltavers was sentenc'd to be hang'd for the Murder of the Earl of Kent; and a proclamation was issued for seeking him.

Several sentences were pass'd against others for the death of the said Earl; and the Queen

Mother

Edward III. Mother was kept Prisoner during the rest of her life ~~in~~ Castle Rising.

The King summon'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1351. to consider about a peace with France; which the Parliament advis'd.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1353. when it was order'd that no man should appear in a coat of Metal, or use any offensive or defensive Weapon in London, Westminster, and the Suburbs of the same, on pain of forfeiting all his Estate.

It was also order'd that no plays of men, women or Children should be acted during the sitting of Parliament.

The King of France invited Edward over with him, into the whole Land.

Justices of the Peace were at this time appointed.

The King acquainted Parliament, that He had sent to the French King, to treat as they had advis'd; and that that King desir'd Him to come over in person; He therefore wish'd to have their advice. They consented to His going.

This is the first time we find the Commons separated from the Lords, and make a distinct House, tho

Edward III. they had no Speaker.

Soon after the Commons got leave to return home, but the Lords and Counsellors were kept sitting by the King.

Another Parliament met at Westminster in 1332. when the King was address'd by the Lords and Commons not to go to France.

They granted a supply of a fifteenth of all the Personal Estates of Bishops, Lords, and Knights, and a tenth of the Cities and Boroughs.

They desir'd the King to live upon his own Revenues, and not to grieve his Subjects with illegal taxes.

The King held a Parliament at York the same year when He declar'd War against David King of Scotland, this occasion'd a Revolution there, by which Baliol was crown'd King.

Edward met another at the same place, on his return from Scotland in 1334. at which the Magna Charta and the Charter of Forests were order'd to be duly observ'd.

Another Parliament met at Westminster in

the

Edward III. the same year, when the King acquainted them with his intention of going to the Holy Land; but never put it in execution. He soon revolted again; on the arrival of this news, the Parliament granted a fifteenth from the Lords, and Knights of Shires, and a tenth from the Clergy, Citizens, and Burgeses.

One was summon'd at Nottingham in 1336. where he obtain'd an aid of a twentieth part from the Nobility, and Gentry; a tenth from the Citizens, and Burgeses; and a sixth from the Clergy, forty Shillings a sack for all Wool exported, was paid by the English Merchants, and three pound by the Foreigners.

A Parliament was the next year call'd at Westminster, when Acts were made for the Encouragement of the Woolen Trade; foreign Cloaths were prohibited; and no one under a hundred pound a year was suffer'd to wear foreign Silks, or furs; all Flemish Weavers were invited to come and settle in the Country.

The same year the King held a Parliament at Westminster; at which the Laitie granted a tenth penny from the Community, and a fifteenth from the Citizens and Burgeses;

Edward III. the Clergy of Canterbury gave a tenth of their temporalities for three years to the King.

Edward order'd the Estates of the Lombard Merchants on account of their Henry to be seiz'd, and all their Jewels, ready Money &c. to be carried to the Constable of the Tower, & to be kept there for his use.

Upon the King's going to Flanders, a Parliament was summon'd by Prince Edward, Duke of Cornwall, Guardian of the Realm, at Northampton in 1330. when it was ordain'd that every Town, of the value of twenty Shillings, should pay a twentieth part of their goods; those who held of him in capite & did not go abroad with him, were tax'd either a hundred or two hundred pounds, according to their Estates: The King had also all the Wool granted him at a low price. These were the greatest taxes ever given & shew how fond the Nation was of the King, and of the French War he was engag'd in.

Another Parliament met the next year, when farther grants were made for the same purpose.

The Prince going over to his Father, Commissioners were appointed in his place, who

call'd

Edward III. call'd another Parliament at Westminster in 1340. when Grants were made for carrying on the War.

The King returning from France held a Parliament in March, (by which it appears that in those days, Parliaments might meet in less than forty days of one another) where more Supplies were granted.

The Parliament on his taking the title of King of France, beseech'd him not to make England a Province of it. Upon this he declar'd England should continue independent.

Certain Persons were appointed to examine the Accounts of Sir William Poole, Sir John Charnel, and others, who had receiv'd the money granted by Parliament for carrying on the War with France.

Further grants were given for the War by a Parliament which met the same year at Westminster.

The King return'd privately to find out the misapplication of the Supplies. Upon his coming to London, finding the Tower unguarded, he sent the Constable to his own Prison, and also the Mayor of London, the Keeper of the Great Seal, the Lord Chief Justice of the Kings Bench, and some others, because they had been concern'd in raising, or receiving the East Subsidy.

Edward III.

The Lords petition'd the king that Magna Charta might be kept duly in all its Articles; He agreed to it.

The Commons presented several petitions to the king, which were chiefly granted.

A Statute was made by which the Great Officers were openly to swear, to observe the foregoing Laws.

The king by the advice of his Council only, without a Parliament, revoke'd the aforesaid Statute, which was a greater stretch of the Prerogative than had been known since the Three Estates of the realm were settl'd.

The king issued out a Writ to the Archbishops of Canterbury, giving reasons why he had revoke'd the late Statute. He also sent Writs to the Sheriffs ordering them to publish the Revocation of the Statute in their several Counties.

This was esteem'd a violent stretch of the Prerogative, by all the Barons; for tho they were willing to revoke the Statute; yet to shew they did not think the king had any power to do it, they pass'd an Act in the next Parliament held at Westminster in 1343 to

repeal

Edward III. repeal the Statute, without taking any notice of the King's former revocation.

The King in his Parliament consulted his people about the true offer of by France.

They gave it as their opinion that it was greatly to his honour, & that if a peace could be made it would be much to the advantage of the Nation, & thought Messengers ought to be sent to Rome to lay it before the Pope (as mediator not as judge), his demands for Peace, according to the form of the Peace; and the Commons declared that if it could not be obtain'd, they would assist him, and maintain his quarrel with all their power.

So after they complain'd of the encroachments made by the Pope's Power.

At this time the famous Act was made, by which it was forbid to bring any Bull from Rome; the Clergy intended to protest against it till they receiv'd the King's absolute commands not to attempt such presumption; the Temporal Lords and the Commons wrote to the Pope, that several abuses in the Church might be remedied, the Spiritual Lords refus'd to agree to it.

Edward III.

The Pope upon this wrote to the King, who in his answer, defended the Church of England against Papal encroachments in so able a manner, that neither the Pope nor Cardinals knew how to reply.

The next Parliament met at Westminster in 1344. on account of the truce between the King and Philip being broke, the second day of their assembling, all the Lords were call'd over before the King, that he might see who were absent. They granted a tenth for three years from the Clergy, two fifteenths from the Commons, and two tenths from the Cities and Boroughs.

The Commons soon after granted him another fifteenth. The Lay Lords were not tad'd, by reason of their consenting to pass the Seas with the King.

The King held a Parliament at Westminster in 1346. which some call only a great Council, because it is not on Record that the Commons were there, when he resolv'd to take the Lands of the Cardinals in the French fashion, and of all other foreign Clergy into his own hands.

It was also agreed there, that all Justices in the Kingdom should renounce taking any sort

of

Edward III. of Gracities either from Spiritual or Temporal Lords, or others, which had been as yet the custom.

The King went to France, and took the Prince of Wales with him, and left Prince Lionel Regent, with a certain number of his Council to assist him.

The Regent call'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1347. when a Subsidy was granted of two fifteenths in two years; but if the War should end in less than the two years, the second was not to be paid.

Several petitions were after this presented to the Regent, mostly relating to Church affairs; with some others that shew'd the Parliament was not over fond of the King's French War.

It was enacted in this Parliament, that whoever brought Bulls or other Letters from the Pope to any Bishop without first shewing them to the Lord Chancellor, or Warden of the Cinque Ports, should forfeit all he had.

On the King's arrival a Parliament was summon'd at Westminster in 1348. the reasons he gave for it were, first concerning the War, and secondly how the Peace might be more lasting in the Nation. The Commons said with regard to the first, that they could give Him no advice upon it, but that they would agree to whatever

Edward III. the Lords and Council should recommend; as to the second they gave it as their opinion that two of the first men in every County, two Knights, and two learned in the law should have Commissions from Chancery to hear and determine matters concerning peace.

The King call'd another soon after; at which he acquainted them, that he had receiv'd no answer from the Pope concerning his taking upon him the part of Mediator; that the French were preparing a strong army to invade the realm; that there was no trusting to the truce; that the War had been undertaken by the consent and advice of Parliament.

The Commons sent a representation to the King, to shew how unable they were to pay any farther subsidies; and also say'd that they would pay none unless their Grievances were redress'd. They complain'd that the Foresters were guilty of extortion; and added that they beg'd the Magna Charta should be observ'd; the King agreed to it, and that those who complain'd in right of their persons, should have Writs out of Chancery to redress them.

Edward III.

It is remarkable how sensible the Commons have always been, of any infringement of their Great Charters of Liberty and Forests, and how ready even this Great King was to satisfy them.

A Parliament was held at Westminster in 1351. where a Statute was made Entitl'd de Servientibus, on account of the excessive wages of Labourers.

Another declaring what should be deem'd Treason, which has ever since been the Strong Barrier between the King and People.

The next Parliament was call'd at Westminster in 1352. which was open'd by a Speech from Sir William Threshall, whereby it appear'd they were Summon'd to declare the King's Right to the Crown of France; they granted the King a Supply and gave him at the same time a list of their Grievances, to which they beg'd he would give a speedy and good reply. He agreed to their request, and thank'd them for the many and great aids he had receiv'd from them.

The King met another at Westminster in 1355. when he desir'd that the subsidy upon Wool should be continu'd for a longer time; they consented to it.

Edward III.

Several Excellent Laws were made at that time.

Edward Summon'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1354. to establish the Staple in the Kingdom, to treat of Peace with France, and to receive petitions, and redress Grievances.

He acquainted them by his Chamberlain, that there were hopes a peace with France could be obtain'd, but that he would not conclude it, till he knew their Sentiments. The Commons answer'd that what was agreeable to the King and his Council would be so to them. But being ask'd whether they would agree to a perpetual Peace, they answer'd in the affirmative. Then follow'd several Petitions of the Commons to the King, some of which were granted and some refus'd.

Another met at Westminster in 1355. when he complain'd of the behaviour of the French in breaking the truce; a supply was granted.

The Kings of France, and Scotland were taken Prisoners.

He call'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1361. at which he communicated to them the Articles of Peace concluded between them and John of France, they were much pleas'd; on which Peace was declar'd.

Another

Edward III.

Another at Westminster in 1362. when several excellent laws were made; the Staple was remov'd from London to Calais & all pleadings at law were order'd to be in English, which had from the Conquest been always in French. a general Act of Grace was pass'd; and the Magna Charta was reconfirm'd.

The King met a Parliament at Westminster in 1365. at which he complain'd of the daily encroachments of the Pope. Upon which a Statute was made against his Provisions.

A Parliament was summord at Westminster in 1366. where he acquainted them with the intention the Pope had of citing him to do homage for his Crown, that he therefore desir'd them to advise him how he should act in such a case; the Parliament was quite incens'd at this, and said that no King of England could bring himself and his Realm under such subjection; if it was done it was without the consent of Parliament, and contrary to his Coronation Oath; that if the Pope should pretend to this they would resist him to the utmost of their Power. This spirited behaviour of the Parliament prevented the Pope

Edward III. from making this claim, and also the Peter pence was forbid to be paid.

Another was call'd at Westminster in 1368. at which he acquainted the Parliament, that the King of Scotland offer'd Peace, on condition of being discharg'd from Homage, which proposal the Parliament Rejected. The King thank'd them by the Archbishop for the many subsidies they had given, and mention'd the necessity of a supply to pay his debts. Whereupon they granted an aid.

He met in 1369. when he tol'd them how the King of France had acted contrary to the Peace; and therefore desir'd the Bishops advice whether he might not take on him the title of King of France. they said he might. On this he renew'd the War. the Parliament granted a subsidy to carry it on. Then he went to the House, and thank'd them for the aid, and promis'd that all who would go with him to France should enjoy forever all they should conquer. Except what belong'd to the Crown. or

Church

Edward III. Church.

The King call'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1371. where He ask'd for another supply to carry on his conquests in France. A tax was given of two and twenty shillings and three pence, on every Parish. A committee of Lords and Commons gave the King a hundred and ten shillings out of every Parish including the two and twenty shillings and three pence.

The Commons petition'd the King that none of the State Offices might be held by the Clergy, He answer'd He should do in that what seem'd best to Him, by the advice of His Council, but He soon after comply'd, for the seals were taken from the Bishop of Winchester.

He summon'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1372. at which a supply was granted.

another in 1373. in His writs to the Sheriffs He order'd that the most expert in feats of arms, and such as had the greatest skill in shipping, and Trading should be chosen. They granted the King an aid of two fifteenths to be levied in two years, and if the War ended the first year, the second was to remain unpaid.

Edward III. at the same time a proviso was made that during the two years, no other charge or imposition should be laid, that the whole of it should be spent in carrying on the War, and that none return'd to Parliament should be collectors of this Tax.

The King met another at Westminster in 1376. when the Chancellor declar'd that they met to advise about the Government of the Kingdom, for the defence of it by sea and Land, and for the Maintenance of the War with France. They then gave another supply.

The Commons represented to the King, and Lords, that it would be proper that the King's Council should be augmented with ten or twelve, which should consist of some Lords, Bishops, and others, and that nothing of importance should be done without the advice and consent of six or four of them. He consented to it, provided the Chancellor, Treasurer, and Privy Seal might execute their offices.

all the King's Officers were to swear to receive no gift, fees, or rewards except their salaries, duties, and Travelling Charges.

The Commons protested against the conduct of the Ministry, and promis'd the King to support him if speedy Justice was done on them.

They then propos'd three points to be enquir'd into

Edward III. 1.º That the Staple of Wool had been remov'd from Calais, to the Detriment of the Nation, and of that town by the advice of those persons.

2.º That some of the same persons had consented that those who got the King money should have more for interest from them than they had bargain'd for

3.º That the same had agreed that others should bargain with the King's Creditors, for the tenth, and fifteenth and hundredth Penny, and had got the King to pay the whole sum, to the deceit of them and his Creditors.

Upon this Robert deon a Merchant of London, and one of the Farmers of the King's Subsidy, and his confederate Lord Latimer, were disfranchis'd, and render'd incapable of bearing any Office under the King, they were banish'd to the Coast and their Lands and Chattels were seiz'd and given up to the King.

The Commons beg'd that the Justices of the Peace might be nam'd in every County by the Lords, and Knights who liv'd there; and that they should be sworn before the King's Council, and not be remov'd without the Consent of Parliament, and that wages might be allow'd

Edward III.

them, the King answer'd they should ^{be nam'd} by himself and his continual Council; and as to wages, that he would consider of it.

They complain'd of the great influence His Mistress Alice Pierce had over Him in publick Affairs, and beg'd she might be remov'd; but this had no effect; for as soon as the Parliament was dissolv'd she was restor'd to the King's favour.

His eldest son Edward the Black Prince died about this time, and his son Richard was declar'd heir Apparent.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1377 when a Poll-Tax of four pence on every Person both Male and Female above fourteen, except Beggars, was granted the King.

After this the Commons beg'd the King to name two Lords, and two Barons to be His Treasurers for that subsidy, and for some others, and that they should be sworn before them, that whatever they receiv'd should be wholly employ'd on the War, and not otherwise and that the Lord High Treasurer should no ways meddle with it; but on reconsidering

it

Edward III. it they found what a great expence additional Salaries would be, and therefore desir'd the King to let the Lord Treasurer have the management in the Customary way.

The Commons desir'd the King that Lord Latimer, and others who had been unjustly put out of their Offices, and lost their Estates, should have them, and their rank restor'd, which was agreed. They also petition'd Him not to lay any taxes without the full consent of Parliament. He answer'd that he also did not like it, except in cases of great necessity.

The King died in the same year, after a long Reign, during which, the People paid greater Subsidies than had been known before in England, and yet so well did he know his interest, that he always appear'd ready to support their Liberties and redress their Grievances, and they assist'd Him cheerfully in all his demands, and even in his Foreign Conquests, which were otherwise by no means agreeable to them. We may therefore infer from this long Reign, that this People will never refuse any thing to a Sovereign

Edward III. who they know will be the Defender of their Liberties, and the Assertor of their just rights; and that the way for a Prince to govern in this Country with absolute sway, is to make Liberty the great basis of His Administration.

Richard II. Richard II. was but Eleven when He succeeded His Grandfather; a Parliament met immediately, when the Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir Robert Scrope acquainted the Lords and Commons that the King had summon'd them, to ask their advice how the Nation's Enemies could be resisted, with the greatest ease to the People, and to the Honour and Profit of the Kingdom. The Commons then petition'd that some Lords and Bishops might consult with them on these weighty matters; that it might be finish'd with the greatest dispatch; the King consented to it. Sir Peter de la Mare was chosen Speaker of the Commons; the first that is on record

He

Richard II.

He propos'd several amendments in the Government
 1^o That Nine Parliament men should be added to the
 Council, on account of the King's Youth, who might
 be best able to keep off the impending dangers,
 and be managers of the subsidy to be given
 for the War.

2^o That proper Men should be plac'd about the
 King to take care that His Household be kept by
 the Revenues of the Crown, and not by the
 Subsidies granted for carrying on the War.

3^o That all the Laws should be observ'd, and
 that it should not be in the power of any about
 the King to alter them; that they however did
 not mean to infringe on the regalities, or
 dignity, of the King; the Lords, and Bishops
 answer'd, that they would among themselves consult
 about it, and in the mean time commanded
 the Commons to retire.

A Council was accordingly appointed during
 the King's minority; the Lords did not choose
 to take notice of their second request,
 thinking it hard upon the King, tho' but eleven
 to place any about Him, that should not be
 agreeable to Him; and as to the other part
 of their request they would do it, if it was not

Richard II.

contrary to the King's Honour, and State, after they had consulted the Great Officers of the King's Household, They agreed to the third Petition, and then gave a Subsidy of two fifteenths without Cities and Boroughs, and of two tenths within; and desired that those two, as well as the tenths granted by the Clergy, might be kept in the hands of Particular Treasurers, who should give an account of their receipts and disbursements.

Alice Pierce, who had been the late King's Mistress, was banish'd, and her Estate confiscated, for having obtain'd a Pardon for Richard Lyon in Edward's Reign, who had imberl'd the Publick money, but with this proviso that this Law should not be drawn into Example against any one else, or in any other case, the Commons petition'd that all the Evil Counsellors of the late King, should be remov'd from the King's Council; and that no Officers of the King should keep any quarrels or suits by maintenance, or meddle in anything but their Office.

The King agreed to the first request, and

enforc'd

Richard II. enforced the second still stronger, for he absolutely order'd, that none of his servants should uphold any quarrel by maintenance on pain of losing their Offices, and of being fin'd and imprison'd during His pleasure.

The Commons Petition'd that during the King's Minority the first Officers of the Kingdom might be plac'd by Parliament, and that if any should be vacant during their recess they should be nam'd for the time by the King's Council; this was in part agreed to, for the Lords in Parliament were to name some of the first Officers, and the others were to be nam'd by the King, with the consent of His Council.

The City of London beg'd that in case any Article in any Charter granted by Him and His Progenitors to them, should be doubtfull, and could be taken in different ways, that the sense they put to it should be allow'd; It was answer'd that the interpretation of the King's Charters belong'd to Him; but that if any

Richard II. doubt should advise about them, He with the advice of his Council, would explain them according to reason and truth.

The Commons Petition'd, that a Parliament might be held once a year in any convenient place, to redress delays in suits, and to end Causes where the Judges were of different Opinions.

It was said in answer that the Statutes made for that purpose should be observ'd, and that the King would choose where the Parliaments should be held.

He summon'd a new Parliament in 1378 at Westminster; when the Chancellor said that the King desir'd the Liberties of the Church might be kept, that he had elected several Lords and others to be of his Standing Council; that they had consulted with the Lords, about the danger of the Realm, and as it would require great Sums to support it, they did not chuse entirely to determine without the advice of Parliament; yet they

had

Richard II. had agreed to prepare a Navy and an Army, and had lent the King money for that purpose; he ended with saying that the Treasurers were ready to produce their accounts. Upon this the Parliament granted the usual subsidy on Wool and a Toll-tax.

A Parliament met at Gloucester in 1279, the King not being able to continue the War, without their assistance.

Sir John Peckering being chosen Speaker of the Commons, rehear'd the Articles given them in charge, and heartily thank'd the King for the Liberties and Franchises granted to the Holy Church, and for His promise of keeping the Good Laws and Customs of His Kingdome, and for punishing those who should disobey them; that as to the aid requir'd, he could not have great occasion for it, there being certainly plenty of it left in the Treasury. The King's Council answer'd, that the Coronation had been a very great expence, and that the taxes were paid but slowly; so that if they would grant the King a great sum for a considerable Expedition against the Enemy, they hop'd they should have enough money to maintain

Richard II. the war without them.

The Commons beg'd the King to excuse their not giving a Subsidy; they pleaded poverty, and affirm'd that the reason of their having granted him so great an aid the year before, was from the hopes of being discharg'd of all Tullage for a long time. It was said in answer that the King's revenues were so small, that this Honour could not be maintain'd if it was not for the Custom on Wool and some others.

They then desir'd to know, how the Great sums granted for the War had been spent, and who the King intended for the Great Offices of the Kingdom the next year, and for his Counsellors and Governours; to this Sir Richard Scroppe answer'd that tho' the King had never as yet given in, or out of Parliament, accounts of the Subsidies, yet he would of his own accord do it, not as right, nor oblig'd to do it but only by reason of their request, and that he had for that purpose order'd the Treasurer of the Subsidy to give a clear account of it in writing.

The King commanded, and the Lords desir'd the

Commons

Richard II. Commons to consider the great dangers that surrounded the Nation; and how the War might be carried on, and they wish'd they would give an answer as soon as possible, for the sake of the Country, and for their own good, being forc'd to pay their expences during the sitting of Parliament; they were further told, that if they found fault with any part of the Government, or with any of the laws, that they should petition about it, and should find redress; they upon this beg'd the King, that they might have a copy of the Enrolment of the Subsidy of the fifteenths and tenths, which the King granted at his pleasure, and not on their Request.

They also petition'd that some Lords and Bishops might come to them and treat about their charge, but the Lords refus'd it, saying that it should go on the old way, so that a few Lords and Commons were to meet, and whatever they agreed on, was to be reported to the two Houses.

at last the Lords and Commons seeing the great danger the Nation was in gave a Subsidy. Then the Parliament was dissolv'd.

Richard II.

Writs were soon after issued out for a Parliament at Westminster in 1379; to correct several abuses, and to obtain a farther Aid, because the Poll-tax had not answer'd to what had been expected.

Sir John Gildersburg was chosen Speaker who in the name of the Commons beg'd that the Lords and Bishops who had been of the Standing Council might be discharg'd; because the King was of the Age His Grandfather had been, when Crown'd. They also beg'd that the five Great Officers might not be remov'd till the next Parliament, and that certain Persons might be empower'd to examine the State of the King's Household, and the expences, and receipts in all the Offices, the last Petition was agreed to.

The Parliament granted a fifteenth and a half without the Cities and Burghs, and a tenth and a half within them, because the King and Country, were surrounded with Enemies, but at the same time desir'd this Subsidy, and what remain'd of the one given by the last Parliament, should be applied for the Expedition to Brittany, and no where else; and because the Subsidy

DN

Richard II. on Wool and other Staple Merchandises was to cease at Michaelmas, they therefore gave it for another year; they then desired the King that there might be no other Parliament for a year to charge the Poor Commons.

The King and Parliament resolved to enlarge the Powers of the Justices of the Peace; the Clergy protested against it, but the King said the protestations should have no effect upon him, and that he would do as he pleased.

A Parliament met at Northampton in 1380. when the Archbishop of Canterbury demanded a supply for carrying on the Wars; the Commons asked what would be thought necessary, and were answered a hundred and sixty thousand pound. This they thought unreasonable; and desired the Lords and Bishops to treat about it; hoping they would allow no more than what was absolutely necessary, because of the Poverty of the Commons; at last they granted a Poll-tax of three Groats from every person Male or Female above sixteen, except Beggars, the wealthy to make up for the indigent, so as no one paid above sixty Groats

Richard II. including Himself and His Wife, the whole of this tax was to be employ'd on the expedition to Brittainy. It was also settl'd that no members of Parliament were to be receivers of this tax, which shews how publick Spiritd they were, and how well they knew that this restriction was necessary, to prevent this tax from being partially gather'd. This tax produc'd the Rebellion of Wat Tyler and Jack Straw which was soon quash'd.

Another Parliament was summon'd the next year at Westminster, to redress several abuses, which the Laws were not strong enough to take notice of.

Sir Hugh Segrave Treasurer of England spoke to the Commons by the Kings Command, and acquainted them of the horrid Rebellion which had been, and how the King had been forc'd to make many promises, and to grant many Charters Charters to their Chiefs, which he knew to be contrary to Law, and therefore wish'd they would provide some remedy, either to confirm or revoke them. He ended with saying that the King was greatly in debt, and had occasion for

money

Richard III money, to keep his Court, and maintain the War.

Sir Richard Walsgrave was chosen Speaker, but on his desiring to be excus'd, the King insisted on his Allegiance, that he should accept it, on which he made the usual protestation. This is the first time we have met with any Speaker pleading to be excus'd.

The Commons beg'd of the King, that they might consult with certain Lords and Bishops, as they were to be on matters that highly concern'd the State, the King answer'd that they should give in a list of those whom they wanted to talk with, that the King might consider about it; they did as they were order'd, and their request was granted.

The Commons also petition'd that each order of Men should singly treat about their charge, and that their advice should be reported to them. It was answer'd that the King had order'd the Lords, and other Wisemen to consult diligently upon this affair, but that it had of Old been the Usage that the Commons should first give their advice to what the King had ask'd, and therefore he would have it remain so.

Richard II.

Then the Commons complain'd of several abuses in the Government, and also of the management of the King's Court, and of his excessive number of servants.

The King by the advice of his Council permitted certain Lay, and Spiritual Lords, and others to examine into the Government of his Court, and to find out sufficient Remedies.

The Committee being appointed for that purpose, receiv'd several petitions from the Commons, but the answers are not put to them.

The King demanded a supply, but the Commons answer'd, that they did not dare to grant him any tallage, and beg'd that they might adjourn till after Christmas, which was agreed to. They then desir'd to know whether the King intended to pardon those who had been in the late Rebellion; He answer'd that it was not customary for Parliament to have a general Pardon, and that such a favour when they would grant nothing. He farther said that we would not do any thing with regard to the Pardons, till they should do their part; and

that

Richard II. That it was only customary to grant Pardons the last day of the Session, when their Petitions were answered.

They then continued the subsidy of Wool and other Merchandises till Candlemas; upon which the King order'd a declaration to be made of His Pardon. At the next meeting they prolong'd it till the Feast of Saint John the Baptist; and from thence for four years more.

After the dissolution of this Parliament, the Seals were taken from Sir Richard Broke, which was the first unpopular Act that gave the people a dislike to the King's Government.

Another Parliament was summon'd in 1382 at Westminster, when it was declar'd that they met to provide means for the better defence of the Nation against its Enemies. They granted a tenth, and a fifteenth, for the carrying on of the War with France.

The Clergy got a Statute of Heresy pass'd without the consent of the Commons, upon which the latter petition'd that it should be repeal'd, which was granted.

Richard II.

A Parliament was call'd at Westminster in 1383. When the Commons petition'd the King to appoint certain Lords so to settle His Household, that He might live on the Revenues of the Crown, and that the Subsidy on Wool might be wholly employ'd in the support of the War. He answer'd He would consult some Lords and others about it.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1384. to adjust the King in a treaty of Peace, then on the anvil, with Scotland, and also for other business. They granted two fifteenths, on condition that the Clergy would give what was proper, which they accordingly did, considering the great expence the King was at, on account of Wars on all sides of Him.

At a Parliament soon after at Salisbury, where the King acquainted them, with a treaty of Peace which had been propos'd between Him and France, which at a proper time He would communicate to them, tho He might have concluded it without asking their advice. They then gave Him a tenth of a fifteenth, but if the War did continue, He was to have the rest of the fifteenth. The Commons being afterwards much press'd by

the

Richard II. the King to declare which they chose Peace or War, said Peace.

The same year another Parliament met at Westminster, when a farther supply of two fifteenths was granted, the one to be paid at Lady day, and the other at Midsummer, on condition that the Half fifteenth should be given up, and in case the King did not go against His Enemies, or that a Peace or Truce should be made, the latter of the two fifteenths was not to be paid.

Another in 1385. when a tenth and a half, and a fifteenth and a Half, was granted.

The Commons petition'd the King, to let the State of His Household be examin'd into, by some of His principal Officers every year, and that the antient Statutes concerning the Household might be kept. To the first part the King answer'd, that he would order it when he pleas'd, as to the second *le Roy le voet*.

The Commons desir'd to know who were to be the King's Chief Officers, and Governors of the State of the Kingdom. He answer'd that he had a sufficient number at that time, and would change them when he chose it.

Richard II.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1386, when the two Houses join'd in an Address to the King, for the removal of the Chancellor, and Treasurer; He was greatly provok'd at this, and forbid them to mention such things for the future; and at the same time commanded them to proceed in the business for which they had met; and rashly add'd that he would not for them remove the lowest scullion in His kitchen. They answer'd to this, that they neither could nor would proceed in any Parliamentary business, or dispatch any Article of it, till he should come, and appear in person, and remove the Chancellor from his Office. Upon this the King order'd forty Knights of the most substantial Commons, to come and declare to Him the Opinions of the rest. They sent the Duke of Gloucester, and the Bishop of Ely to Him at Eltham with a Remonstrance, which began with wishing Him success over His Enemies, and the strongest bonds of peace, and love betwixt Him

and

Richard II. and His Subjects: that it was settl'd by the
 antient Constitution, that the King should assemble
 a Parliament once a year, which is the highest
 Court of the Realm, where poor and Rich might
 equally to receive Justice; that all publick
 Grievances, and Errors ought there to be redress'd,
 that the State, and Government of the Kingdom
 was there to be prudently treated of, and the
 necessary burthens of the King, and Kingdom
 ought there to be consider'd, that they might
 be supply'd with the greatest ease; that they
 ought to have satisfaction how their goods and
 fortunes were to be spent, as they were to support
 the publick charges; it was farther say'd, that by
 their antient Constitution if the King absented
 himself from his Parliament for forty days not
 regarding the veaction of his People, nor their grievous
 expences, they had the Priviledge of returning
 home. He answer'd to this, that he plainly saw
 his people, and the Commons intended to resist, that
 nothing seem'd more advisable to him, than the
 calling the King of France to his assistance,
 to whom he would rather submit, than buckle to his

Richard II. Subjects. They reply'd that this was the worst step he could take; for that it would end in his certain ruin; they then beg'd Him to remember how his Grandfather, and Father had always strove to conquer France, and how they had receiv'd immense treasures from the Nation to carry it on; that the whole Nation was brought into a state of Poverty by the number of taxes which had been granted; all which had happen'd by the ill management of the Ministers, which if not soon redress'd, the Nation would be subverted. They farther added that they entreated Him to remove those from his presence that gave Him such foolish advice; for that by an antient Constitution ^{it was} settl'd, that if a King should alienate Himself from his people, and refuse to govern by the Laws and Statutes of the Realm; it was lawfull by their free consent to Depose Him, and to place some other of the Royal race on the throne.

The King upon this promis'd to come in three days to Parliament, and with mature

advice

Richard III

advice would willingly acquiesce in their petitions; accordingly great alterations were made in the Ministry. The Earl of Suffolk who had been Chancellor, but lately turn'd out, was impeach'd, and afterwards sent close Prisoner to Windsor Castle; after being there some time the King releas'd him.

Eleven Lords were appointed to regulate the affairs of the Kingdom.

The King took an Oath that he would not revoke any Article of their power, but confirm them. He also sett'd that any six of them with His three Chief Officers should make a Quorum.

It was further agreed that if any one should advise the King to revoke their power, tho' he did not do it, yet they were to forfeit all their Lands, and Goods; and if they attempted it a second time, they should be drawn and hang'd. But not thinking the Authority of Parliament strong enough, they got the King to grant Letters Patents, on which Statutes were afterwards made to render it as irrevocable as possible.

Richard II. After these concessions the Parliament granted half a tenth, and half a fifteenth.

The day the Parliament was dissolv'd, the King repented of the concessions he had made, for he came to Parliament, and declar'd with his own mouth, that he would not any prejudice should come to him, or his Crown, from any thing that had been done that Parliament, but that the Prerogative should be preserv'd.

Soon after the King propos'd to the Judges several questions manifestly tending to destroy Liberty, and overturn his former concessions; to all which the Judges answer'd as they thought most likely to gain the King's favour.

On this the Lords assembl'd near Hackney and sent a deputation to the King, to acquaint him, that they had taken arms for his Welfare, that they demand'd those Traitors might be brought to Justice, who had so ill advis'd him, and made an example to succeeding Ministers.

He was forc'd to agree that all the Grievances should be refer'd to the decision of the next Parliament, which met at Westminster in 1388. where the Lords, and Bishops claim'd as their

right,

Richard II. right, that any thing to be mov'd concerning the Peers, either in that, or any subsequent Parliament, should be judg'd by course of Parliament, and not by the Common or Civil Law of the Kingdom, us'd in Lower Courts.

An aid of a half tenth, and of a half fifteenth was granted, but they desir'd they should not be dissolv'd on this, but might continue, setting as if the grant had not been made; the King consented to it. They also gave a subsidy on Wool, on condition that the five Lords accusers of the late Ministry, should receive twenty thousand pound for the great service they had done their Country.

The Commons desir'd, that no one might meddle with the business of the Kingdom, or the King's Council, without being appointed by Parliament, except by order of the continual Council; and that they might turn out, or place in, whoever they pleas'd. The King agreed to the first, but said as to the second, that if any Lords whether of His Council, or no, would inform Him of any insufficient, or dishonest man about Him, and would prove it, he should remove him and put a fitter in His Room.

Richard II.

all the Lords, Bishops, and Commons, took an Oath to support the Lords Appellants.

The Parliament was adjourn'd for a few days on account of Easter; but when they return'd to business, the five Lords Appellants produc'd their Articles of impeachment against the Archbishop of York, the Duke of Ireland, and the Earl of Suffolk, which having been read, the Bishop, Duke, and Earl were summon'd to come and answer the Appellants; but on their not appearing, the Lords Appellants beg'd it might be recorded, the King, and Lords, being convinc'd, they did not appear because they knew of the Appeal, agreed to it. They then desir'd, that they might be convicted of the Treasons contain'd in the Articles, the King commanded the Articles to be severally examin'd; during which time the King order'd the Judges and others eminent in the Law to advise the Lords how they ought to proceed in the Appeal, who declar'd the Lords procedure contrary to the Common and Civil Law.

But

Richard II. But it was enacted by Parliament, that Crimes of that Nature committed by Peers and others, could be tried no where but in Parliament, nor by any Law, or Court, except that of Parliament, and that Peers had a right to be judges in such cases. After which the Archbishop of Canterbury and his Suffragan Bishops, with the Abbots, Priors, and other Prelates withdrew, but first enter'd their protestation; for the saving of their Right of Peerage, and voting in Parliament, tho' they could not then remain there, because certain things were in agitation, which they could not by the Cannons attend. They were permitted by the Lords to enter it in the Rolls of Parliament.

The Bishops of Durham and Carlisle also made a protest.

When the Parliament met again the Lords Appellants beg'd that the last default of the Archbishop, Duke, and Earl might be recorded; Then the Accus'd were summon'd a third time, and on their not appearing, were declar'd guilty, and culpable in those Articles which were as yet not declar'd treason. Then the Lords Appellants pray'd that they

Richard II. should be convicted of the High Treason contain'd in the Appeal; whereupon the Lords with the assent of the King, declar'd, that they were guilty of High Treason; that they should be draw, and hang'd as Traitors, and Enemies of the King, and Country; and that their Heirs were disinherited, and their Lands and Tenements forfeited to the King; and that the Temporalities of the Archbishop should be taken into the King's hands. Soon after Sir Robert Tresilian, and Sir Nicholas Brembre were hang'd; and several others were afterwards executed.

The Parliament came to a Resolution to save the King's Honour, that these Treasons being acted during His Minority, they could no ways prejudice Him.

The Bishop of Chichester, and the Judges were banish'd to Ireland.

On a Petition of the Commons, the Ordinance and Commission made the last year were confirm'd, and the Duke of Gloucester, and other Lords having taken Arms was deem'd to have been done for the Honour of God, the Safety of the King, and Support of the whole Realm.

An Act of Grace was also made, at the desire of

the

Richard II. the Commons, by which all were pardon except those particularly mention'd.

A third Petition was deliver'd by them, that all Appeals, pursuits, and the like, made and given in this Parliament, should be approv'd, tho the Bishops were absent; and another by which the Attainted who were then alive, should never be restor'd to the Law by pardon, or any other means, except the one that was made in that Parliament; and that any one, that should attempt to have any such thing done, should be judg'd and Executed as a Traitor. The King answer'd to these petitions, that He with the assent of the Lords and Commons granted their Petitions in all points.

Then the Commons beg'd Him, that for the better securing of Peace and Quiet, in all parts of the Nation, He would be pleas'd to renew His Coronation Oath, and that the Bishops might renew their Fealty, and the Lords their Homage, notwithstanding what they had done before, which was agreed to; and accordingly after the King had renew'd his Coronation Oath, the Bishops swore fealty to Him, and the Lords did Homage, then the Bishops, Lords, and Commons took an oath to support all the laws that

Richard II. had been made in that Parliament. All the Principal persons in the Kingdom, were requir'd to take the same oath, and the Breakers of it were excommunicated.

This Parliament having set with a short adjournment near five months, which is longer than any Parliament we have as yet met with, parted seemingly in good humour; the Lords, and Commons thank'd the King for the great Justice He had done; and He by the Chancellor thank'd them for their liberal Grants.

He call'd another the same year at Cambridge, when they gave a half tenth, and a half fifteenth, for to carry on the War against Scotland.

Several Statutes were made, which were very necessary for the People, and others were renew'd which had been made in the Reign of Edward III.

The King on coming of age thank'd the Council for the pains they had taken, and acquainted them that He intended to take the Government into His own Hands, and to remove such Officers and Ministers, as He should think fit and appoint others in their room. He accordingly turn'd out the Chancellor, and some others, and plac'd men in their Room, who were not so capable, which soon after brought things into confusion.

Richard II.

He summon'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1389, at which the Chancellor by His command declar'd, that He was of full age, and that He intended to do Justice to all; that both Laity, and Clergy should enjoy all their Liberties. He further mention'd the Kingdom's being environ'd with Enemies on all sides; that it was their business to consult how peace could be obtain'd, or how defence was to be made; and also how an aid was to be had, to sustain the expences without which nothing could be done.

The two Archbishops, and the rest of the Clergy declar'd, that they never would agree to any Statute contrary to the Authority of the Pope; which protestation at their request was enter'd upon the Roll.

The Statute of Provisors was review'd, and a subsidy of forty Shillings on every sack of Wool, of which ten Shillings were to be paid for the present wants of the King, and the other thirty were to be plac'd in the hands of Commissioners appointed by Parliament, not to be paid unless the necessity of the War requir'd it, was granted.

Another Parliament met at Westminster in 1390. when it was said that they met on account of the truce with France, and to grant the King an aid for carrying on the war with Scotland, for there was no

Richard II. hopes of a truce from thence. Upon this they granted a half tenth and a half fifteenth.

There was a Statute made to strengthen the Act of Mortmain, and to hinder the Clergy from using the many quirkes they had invented to evade that Law.

The Parliament beg'd the King, that His Prerogative and that of the Crown might always be preserv'd inviolable, that if anything had been done to the contrary it might be redress'd; and that he might be as free as ever any of His Ancestors had been.

This perfect unanimity appear'd to settl'd, and yet the next year he seiz'd on the Liberties of the City of London, and sent the Mayor Prisoner to Windsor Castle, and the rest of His Brethren, with the Sheriff, to other Prisons, tho' he releas'd them soon afterwards, yet made them pay a fine of ten thousand pounds, and by that lost their affection.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1392. to consider how the price of Wool could be rais'd, which was then very cheap; how the Wars were to be carried on after the expiration of the truce, and lastly with regard to the Statute of Provisors, that the Pope might no longer be depriv'd of what was his Right.

The

Richard II.

The Commons agreed that the king might alter the Statute of Provisors, with the advice of his Lords, till the meeting of the next Parliament; so that the Statute might not be repeal'd in any Article, nor any one be disturb'd in his lawfull possessions. To this extraordinary grant they made a protest, that as their agreeing to this was a novelty, they beg'd it might be no example.

They then granted a half tenth, and a half fifteenth, with a whole tenth, and fifteenth, on condition, that if the king did not go to France or Scotland, or that peace was made, it should then be employ'd on the defence of the Realm; the last day of the setting of Parliament, they desir'd the King to enjoy the prerogative as largely as any king had ever done, notwithstanding any Statute to the contrary, and particularly that made at Gloucester in the reign of Edward II. which he repeal'd.

Another Parliament was summon'd at Winchester in 1393. when a half fifteenth, and a half tenth was granted, for the debts of the king, and continued the same dispensing power as the last had done.

The whole Parliament agreed that the king, his Heirs, and Successors of England might lawfully make their last Wills, and that execution should be made of the same.

Richard II.

at the last day of setting, the Archbishop of Canterbury protested against the power of the Pope.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1394, for supporting the War.

The Duke of York, being Guardian of the Kingdom, during the King's stay in Ireland, call'd another Parliament at Westminster in 1395. to which the Duke of Gloucester came from Ireland, and declar'd the King's great necessity for money, upon which they granted a tenth, and a fifteenth, but protested that they were not forc'd to do it, but merely out of their affection for the King.

Another was held at the same place in 1397, when the Commons brought in a Bill for the continuance of the Rites, for the avoiding of the extravagant expences of the King's Household, and for several things of less importance.

The King highly resented the bringing in of this Bill, and commanded the Lords to charge the speaker to tell him the name of the Person, who had brought it into the House; upon this the Commons ask'd pardon, the King order'd the Chancellor to acquaint them, that he excus'd them.

They tried the Member who had brought in the Bill, and sentenc'd him to die, but the King at

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Richard II. the King at the request of the Bishops pardon'd him.

What the Parliament had nine years before done against the Prerogative, was now revers'd, and the Judges who had been banis'd to Ireland were allow'd to return.

A Great Council of Peers met at Nottingham, when a Bill of appeal of Treasons was brought against the Duke of Gloucester, and the Carls of Arundel and Warwick; the accus'd had a Day appointed when they were to answer in the next Parliament to what was alleg'd against them.

At which meeting the Chancellor made a speech by which he commended absolute Monarchies, here all the proceedings of the Commission of the eleventh of this Reign, were revers'd, and the pardons granted to the Duke of Gloucester, and to the Carls of Arundel and Warwick at the same time, were made void.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was impeach'd by the Commons, and some time after banish'd the Realm, and his lands and tenements were forfeited to the King.

The Duke of Gloucester, the Carls of Arundel and Warwick, and Thomas Mortimer were impeach'd. The Case of Arundel was brought from the Tower

Richard II. to Westminster, was convicted, and soon after executed.

The Duke of Gloucester was order'd to be brought over but dying in the king's prison at Calais, was nevertheless declar'd guilty of Treason. The Earl of Warwick was also convicted and banish'd, and Mortimer escap'd.

The Bishops as well as the Lords and Commons took an Oath to support the resolutions of that Parliament; the same met at Shrewsbury in 1398. when they held the answers made by the former Judges in the Eleventh of the King's Reign, to be good and sufficient, and all the proceedings of the Parliament in the same year were declar'd void.

Sentence was given against Mortimer tho' he did not appear.

The Speaker beg'd the King in the name of the Commons, that the greatest security might be given for the proceedings of this Parliament, as different ones had often revers'd what had been done formerly. The Lords said that they had sworn to keep all the Laws that had been made, which they intended to keep as much as they could. They then granted a tenth and a half, and a fifteenth and a half; and the duty on Wool for the King's life.

Then

Richard II.

Then an Act of Grace was pass'd.
 The Commons entreated the King, that as there were many petitions, and other things to be mov'd before him, which the shortness of the time could not well permit, they therefore beg'd that a certain number of Lords and others might be appointed to answer the Petitions and other things. He agreed to it, and appointed twelve Lords and six Commoners for that purpose.

The Dukes of Norfolk and Hereford, having long quarrel'd were at last to have ended it in fighting before the King at Coventry, but He thinking it would be better to banish them, did so with the consent of the committee of Parliament.

The King and Committee agreed that any man that should offer to repeal or reverse any of the Statutes made by them, should be executed as Traitor; after this they committed several arbitrary and violent proceedings, which ended in his Ruin, and is mostly laid to his charge; tho' undoubtedly this venal Parliament was full as guilty.

On the King's going to Ireland the Duke of Hereford

Richard II. When Duke of Lancaster landed, and claim'd the Crown, the King refus'd, but finding himself deserted, sent for the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Earl of Northumberland, at Conway Castle in Wales, and nearly offer'd to give up his Crown, on condition his life might be secur'd, and that he might have an honorable provision, for himself and eight persons whom he should name.

Henry IV.

Henry IV may be reckon'd King, from the time that Richard was sent to the Tower. The Parliament being met, (which was summon'd by Henry in the name of Richard) a Committee was sent to the Tower, to demand the Crown of him; which he resign'd, and at the same time absolv'd all his Subjects, of their Oaths of Allegiance to him, and desir'd that Henry Duke of Lancaster might be his Successor, then the Articles were drawn out against him, upon which sentence was pass'd that he should be depos'd, which was publickly declar'd. The Duke of Lancaster then stood up and

said

Henry II.

laid his claim to the crown, as being descended
in Right line from Henry III. Upon which the
Parliament agreed that he should be King, and
plac'd him on the Throne; the Archbishop of
Canterbury then made a Speech on the Occasion,
after which, the new King thank'd them for their
favorable opinion of him. That publick business
might not be stop'd he appointed several Officers,
and Justices, and a proclamation was issued out,
that the Parliament should meet the Monday
after the Feast of St. Michael, and that the
King would be crown'd the next Monday. He made
a protestation for the shortning the day assign'd
for the meeting of the Parliament; that he did
not intend that thereby any prejudice should
come to the State of the Kingdom, or that it
should be look'd on as an Example for the
future; but that it was done for the profit
of the Realm; for to save the labour, and
expence of people, and that the Grievances
might be the sooner remedied.

Henry IV.

Certain persons were sent to Richard, to acquaint him that the Parliament admitted his demission, and that they came to resign the homage, and fealty which they had formerly made to him; Upon which he made a speech, and deliver'd up the Crown; Then Henry was crown'd.

The Parliament gave fifty Shillings on every sack of Wool from Denizens, and four pounds from Aliens, and also a tenth, and fifteenth for four years. They then pass'd an act of indemnity for the King's adherents when Duke of Lancaster; and repeal'd all the proceedings of the twenty first of Richard II. at Shrewsbury; and confirm'd that Parliament which was held the eleventh of that Reign, except the effect of the pardon granted by the twenty first of the same King.

It was enact'd that nothing for the future, should be esteem'd treason except what was call'd so by the twenty fifth of Edward III. and that all the blank Charters which the City of London, and seventeen Counties had been forc'd to seal, and deliver up to Richard should be declar'd void.

Henry, son to the King was created Prince of Wales

by

Henry IV.

by the desire of Parliament, and declar'd successor
to his Father.

The next day the Arch bishop of Canterbury mov'd in
the Upper House, that the Lords should not disclose any
thing that should be put to them; they all promis'd it.
upon which the Earl of Northumberland ask'd what
they would advise to be done with Richard, in order
to his being safely kept, for the King would have his life
sav'd. They said that he ought to be secretly guarded,
in a place not much frequented, that he should have
none of his Familiars about him, and that it should
be done in the most secret manner.

It is very remarkable that the Bishop of Carlisle
was the only man that openly defended the depos'd
King when all these things were settl'd; nothing
but his Gown'd being held sacred would have
hinder'd him from dying the death of a Traitor.
He made a speech to the Lords wherein he appear'd
too much a friend of Absolute Monarchy; he
pretend'd that Richard was yet King, but that if he
could have been Remov'd, the son of the Duke of
Clarence ought to have succeeded, and not Henry.
He was charg'd of High Treason for this speech.

Henry IV.

The Dukedom of Lancaster with all its liberties was granted to the Prince of Wales, for him and his Heirs descended from the Crown; upon which the King deliver'd a Charter made thereof in Parliament to his son.

The King receiv'd several Petitions from the Commons, most of which he granted.

An enquiry was soon after made into the Murder of the Duke of Gloucester.

Richard's Queen was join'd against Henry by the King of France Her Father; whereupon the King call'd a Council of Lords, and Bishops, not choosing to summon a Parliament, nor to lay any tax for carrying on the War; the Lords rais'd Soldiers at their own expence.

The Scots broke the truce, and made several inroads with great devastations.

Richard was put to death in the beginning of 1401. as the unhappy occasion of these disasters.

A Parliament was summon'd at Westminster the same year, when it was said that it had been call'd that the Holy Church, and other corporations and persons should enjoy their liberties, and that Justice should be truly administer'd; and it was further said, what great charges the King had been at, how he wastely sent the Queen into France with all such Jewels, and Riches as Richard had with Her in Marriage.

a

Henry IV.

A subsidy of a tenth, and fifteenth was granted, as well as two shillings on every tun of Wine, and eight pence in the pound on Merchandise.

An Act was made for putting Hereticks to death; one against the Provisions from Rome; another to hinder the Coin from being carried out of the Kingdom, and a fourth that the Chirographer of the Common Pleas, the Clerk of the Crown &c. should take no greater fees than were prescribed, and limited by the Statutes.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1403. to preserve the Rights of the Church, and of all Corporations.

The Chancellor acquainted the King that the Commons beg'd to have certain Lords sent to them; the King agreed to it, but said that it was done out of favour not duty.

Then the usual supply was given.

Another Parliament at Westminster in 1404. when some of the King's officers were removed on the address of Parliament; and several regulations were made in the King's Household. The Sheriff of Rutland was fined for making a false return of a Knight for that Shire.

The Record of a subsidy burnt by the same Parliament that made it, because it was new, and pernicious to the Country.

Another at Coventry in 1405. which granted two tenths, and fifteenths, and the subsidy on Wool, on condition

Henry IV.

that it should be only employ'd for carrying on the Wars, and the defence of the realm.

The Commons by their Speaker advis'd the King to supply his wants, by seizing the revenues of the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury made a very strong speech upon this; and said he thought the greatest crime a Prince could commit, was the seizing the Patrimony of the Church.

The King said that his fears were ill grounded, for he made a firm Resolution to support the Church. Then the Archbishop told the Commons that their demand was wholly built on Irreligion and Avarice.

The Commons made several Petitions to the King which he favourably answer'd.

A Parliament was summon'd at Westminster in 1406, when a subsidy of a tenth and fifteenth was immediately granted.

The Commons desir'd that if they wanted to amend any of their Bills, they might send for them from the Lords, it was agreed to.

A Committee of both Houses was appointed to treat about the safeguard of the sea, and came to the following Resolutions.

1. That the Merchants should provide a sufficient number of Ships for two thousand fighting men, and a thousand Mariners for a year and a half, and that they

should

- Henry IV. should be allow'd a certain tax on all Merchandises, and that they were to have Privy Seals when necessary for levying the sums.
- II. That they should enjoy all the Prizes they took, giving a proper consideration to King's Captain, whenever one was appointed.
 - III. That they should have a month Notice when the King would send his fleet against the Enemy.
 - IV. That they should have reasonable warning when peace, or a truce was to be made.
 - V. That they should name two persons, the one for the North, and the other for the South, who by commission should have the same power as Admirals had on the same occasions.

Lastly the Merchants demanded four thousand pound for the Present; the King answer'd he had it not.

An Act pass'd by which the Crown was entail'd on the King and his Heirs Male lawfully begotten.

The Commons requir'd that persons should be appointed to audit the accounts of Lord Furnival, and Sir John Pelham; they also demanded that three parts of the Subsidy granted the Merchants for keeping the sea should be paid them, and that the fourth should be employ'd for the defence of the Nation.

Henry IV.

The Act of settlement was made null, and another made by which the Crown went in general tail. The Lords sign'd the Articles of it, and Sir John Tibetot gave his assent to them in his own, and in the Commons names.

The Commons came to the King and Lords, and desir'd that the Lords of the King's Council should swear to keep certain Articles, they had made. Upon this the King made the Counsellors take it, and also all the Officers of His Household, and all the Courts of Justice.

A Parliament at Gloucester in 1407. when a tenth, and a fifteenth was granted, and the same subsidy on Staples and other Merchandises as in the last Parliament for two years. Upon this the King promis'd that he would demand no other Subsidy on His Subjects for two years, and desir'd that it might pass into an Act, and that every Member should have a Copy of it.

An Order was made to prevent the Lords from communicating the Private Debates of the Commons to the King.

Another Parliament met at in 1410. when the King agreed that certain of the most ^{learn'd} Bishops, and wot the Lords should be assign'd to the King's Council, and that they and the Judges should swear to give good ^{counsel}.

Several

Henry V.

Several Acts were pass'd for securing the Kingdom.
Then the Commons renew'd their project of reducing the
Revenues of the Clergy. But the King answer'd, that he forbade
them to meddle any more with the Church's concerns.

The King demanded a power of levying every year
a tenth from the Clergy, and a fiftieth from the
Laiety, without a meeting of Parliament. but it
was refus'd him. The Commons so highly resented
this, that they would have even refus'd the supply
for his necessary occasions, if he had not forc'd them,
by prolonging the Session till he got what he wish'd.

The Speaker in the name of the Commons
requir'd the certain knowledge of the Counsellors
names, upon this two of them were chang'd,
they then granted such a subsidy as they had
the Ninth of his Reign; of which they gave twenty
thousand marks for him to dispose of at his pleasure.

A Parliament was call'd at Westminster in 1411.
when Sir Thomas Chaucer was chosen Speaker for the
third time, but desir'd to be excus'd, which was
refus'd him. He then beg'd that he might make
the usual protestation; it was granted that he
might speak as others had done before him, but
that the King would have no novelty introduc'd,
and would enjoy his prerogative. Upon this the

Henry IV.

Speaker desir'd a respite for three days to give his answer in writing, which was that he desir'd no other Protestation than what former Speakers had made; and that if he should say any thing that should displease the King, he beg'd it might be imputed to his own ignorance, and not to the Commons; the King agreed to this.

They gave the same subsidy, with tonnage and poundage, as the two former Parliaments had; they also granted that all persons possess'd of twenty pounds a year should pay six shillings, and eight pence; except Lands purchas'd by Mortmain before the twentieth of Edward I. and Lands bought in Frank Almoigne since the said twentieth.

This is the first Land tax we have on record.

An act was made for regulating the Coin, and one for prohibiting Gallies - Half pence. Another against Riots, and lastly an Act of Grace from which only Owen Glendour, and Thomas Trumpington were excepted.

Henry died soon after, and shew'd plainly that tho' he depos'd Richard for breaching the Prerogative, he himself attempted to govern in a arbitrary manner; as appears from his desire to levy money without consent of Parliament; by his haughty manner of answering the speaker, and by his corrupting the Sheriffs to make false returns; to prevent this evil severe fines were laid upon such returning Officers in the seventh of his Reign, and amended afterwards.

Upton

Henry V.

Upon Henry V. coming to the Throne, a Parliament which was to have assembled in a few ^{days} met; when both Houses address'd Him, and offer'd to swear allegiance to Him before He was crown'd, or had taken the customary Oath to govern by the laws; He thank'd them for their good affections to Him, and said, He would be crown'd on no other condition, than to make use of all His authority to promote the happiness of His people; and He pray'd God, that if He thought He should not prove a Good King, He would please to take Him instantly out of the world, rather than place Him on the Throne, to be a publick Calamity to His people.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1413. where the Commons came to the King, and Lords, with their speaker, and declar'd they hop'd He would provide for the due execution of the Laws, which His Father had always promis'd, but never done; the Speaker was order'd to put it in writing, that the King might the better consider it.

The King paid His Father's debts.
They granted the same Subsidy on Wools, Tonnage, and Poundage for four years as they had given to His Father in the 15th year of His Reign.
The Act against Provisors from Rome was confirm'd.

Henry V.

Several acts were ^{made} for the benefit of the Nation.

A Parliament was summoned at Leicester in 1414, when the Commons made another attempt against the Revenues of the Clergy, who were much frighten'd least the Commons should prevail; they therefore thought nothing but a War could preserve them; upon which the Archbishop of Canterbury made a speech in Parliament in favor of a War with France; which soon after was declar'd.

A Parliament was held at Westminster in the same year, they voted a supply of two tenths, and fifteenths.

It was also enacted that the King, by his Council should have power to make alterations concerning the coin, which should continue till the next Parliament.

An Act was made to regulate Juries.

Another Parliament at Westminster in 1415, when all the Bretons were order'd to go away except the Naturaliz'd.

The Clipping, Washing, and Filing money was made Treason.

Another at Westminster in 1416, where two tenths, and fifteenths were granted, on the gentry; and the Clergy tax'd themselves two tenths.

The subsidies not answering what the King wanted he pawn'd his Crown'd, and Jewels, for the carrying on the War.

An Act of a General Pardon, as well as several others was pass'd.

The Duke of Bedford being Regent in the absence

of

Henry V.

of the king, call'd a Parliament at Westminster in 1417.
when a tenth and fifteenth was granted.

Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, was tried and
executed for being a Heretic.

The Regent summon'd another Parliament at Westminster
in 1419. when another tenth, and fifteenth, and a half
of both, was given, and also a loan.

It was enacted that the lords of the Council might
give orders concerning the coin, and also that all
necessaries for the King's Army should be sent them,
and that Wools should be carried to Normandy altho'
any Statute of the Staple to the contrary.

The lands of the Sirenes of the Queen Dowager were
order'd to be seized, and paid to the King, because
she confessed her of conspiring the death of
the King.

Henry return'd from France, and met a Parliament
at Westminster in 1421.

They granted him a fifteenth to finish the War.

The Convocation gave him a tenth on condition that
his Purveyors should not meddle with y.^e goods of the
Clergy.

A Statute was made that no Gold should be receiv'd
but by the King's Weights appointed for that purpose,
and that the Gold of undue weight should be sent
to the mint and fresh coin'd, the King making up
the deficiencies at his own expence.

The King being in France, the Duke of Bedford

Henry V.

held a Parliament at Westminster in the same year, when the usual subsidy was granted, and several acts were made relating to the coin.

A Convocation at York gave a tenth to the king.

Henry V. died soon after at Vincennes in France; this was a glorious reign; Henry conquer'd France, but had he and his successors kept it, Britain had been now a Gallick Province, and notwithstanding the glory acquir'd by the king, and Nation from that success, tis certain this conquest was by no means an equivalent for the vast sums expended in it, and the quantity of blood spilt, and this; the Parsons notwithstanding their aversion to France seem'd to be sensible of.

Henry VI.

As soon as Henry VI. was proclaim'd king, a commission was directed to his Uncle the Duke of Gloucester empowering him to open the Parliament which was to meet in 1422. at Westminster.

The D. of Bedford, one of the king's Uncles was made Protector by the king's Letters patent confirm'd by Parliament; but as he was abroad, it was order'd that the D. of Gloucester should act as such in his absence, but he protested that it should be no prejudice to his Brother.

The

Henry VI.

The Parliament appointed the D. of Exeter, and the Bishop of Winchester Governours of the King's Person, and Education, who were his Uncles.

The same Subsidy was granted for two years on Staple-Wares, Tonnage, and Poundage as formerly.

They then sett'd the Government during his Minority. Several Good Laws were made.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1424 when an order was made that the Master of the Mint should keep the exchange allow'd by the last Parliament during the King's Pleasure, and it was enacted that a coinage should be at York during the King's Pleasure, and that all persons should bring their Gold to be new coin'd, that was not of full weight.

A Subsidy on Tonnage, and Poundage, as the last was granted.

It was also order'd that Foreign Merchants should only pay 4 s. and 4 d. duty on every sack of Wool notwithstanding the Grant made in the last King's Reign.

Another Parliament in 1425. when the former Subsidy on Wool was given for three years more, and the Tonnage, and Poundage for a year, on condition that foreign Merchants should be strictly look'd to for their duties.

Several acts were made, much to the benefit of the Nation.

A Parliament met at Leicester in 1426. when orders

Henry VI

were given, that no warlike Weapons should be brought there, upon this they came with Batts and Clubs which made it be call'd the Parliament of Batts.

Disputes between the D. of Gloucester, and Bishop of Winchester came to such a height, that the Parliament interfeard, and they were order'd to bring articles of Accustation against each other.

When the D. had presented his Articles against the Bishop, and that the latter had made his answer it was refer'd to a committee, who acquitted the Bishop; they were enjoind to be firm friends for the future, upon which they shook Hands, and parted with outward signs of friendship.

The subsidy on Wool, Tonnage, and poundage, was continued for two years more.

The Pope wrote a menacing letter to the Parliament to repeal the Statute of Provisors, upon this the two Archbishops, and some of the Suffragant Bishops went to the Commons; where the Archbishop of Canterbury made a speech in favour of the Popes demand; but it had no weight with them.

Another Parliament at Westminster in 1428. when a subsidy of 3s. on every tun of Wine imported, and 12d. in the pound for all merchandises, besides a Poll-Tax, not on every Parish worth 10 marks a year; but on 10 of the Chief Pariskioners of every Parish, who were to pay 6s. and 8d. a head, and in every one that was worth 10£ a year, the same number were to pay a mark.

Several

Henry VI.

Several other Acts were pass'd.
In the next Parliament, in 1429, the King was crown'd,
tho' but 9 years old, and the Protectorship dissolv'd.
A tenth and a fifteenth was granted.

Certain Regulations were made for the King's Council
before the Parliament was dissolv'd, and an Act
that Bishops, and inferior Clergy coming to attend
Parliament, should have the privilege of protecting
their servants as if they were Peers; also one with
regard to Weights and Measures; and another that
no Man should vote for Knights of Shires except they
had a Freehold of 40^s per an. and were residents
in the County; which Statute is in force to this day.

The next Parliament met at Westminster in 1431.
When they gave a tenth, and a fifteenth, and a
third of both, and also the Tonnage and Poundage
for two Years.

The Commons granted 20^s on every Layman that
held a Knight's fee; and also a Land Tax, by which
those who had 20^s per an. were to pay 20^s and so
according to Rate.

A Parliament in 1432. when they granted, a tenth,
and a fifteenth, and the Subsidy on Wool, Tonnage,
and Poundage for a year.

The Commons brought a Petition to the King, to beg
he would give up the Land Tax, which ^{he} consented to.

A Parliament met in 1433. but did not last long
because the Plague broke out.

Henry VI.

Least the King should be streighten'd for money, the Parliament order'd that the Lord Treasurer, should keep 2,000 L . in his hands for the service of the Household.

The Lords, and Bishops, swore to observe the ordinance by which it was establish'd that no Nobleman or other Person, should retain in his service any Offender against the law, or maintain any title or quarrel; After this the Commons, and then the Whole Nation swore to the observance of this. The Commons thank'd the D. of Bedford for his conduct in France, and desir'd the King to insist upon his staying with him, which the D. agreed to; He then ask'd a *cessum* than had been customary to be given for attendance, which was granted him as a salary.

They gave a tenth, and a fifteenth, and Tonnage, and Poundage, and a subsidy on Wool for three years. A vote of credit for 100,000 Marks was given the King.

Several laws were made in that Parliament which were greatly for the good of the Country.

The next Parliament was summon'd in 1455. at Westminster, when an unusual subsidy was granted, viz, that every person holding any Frank Tenant in Land &c. above the Yearly Value of 5 L . should pay 6 d . for every L . on his oath; a tenth and fifteenth was granted on the duty, of which 4000 L . was deducted for the relief of decay'd Towns, and Villages, and also a subsidy on Wool, with Tonnage and Poundage.

Some

Henry VI.

Some publick Acts were made, chiefly to regulate abuses in others, or to explain them better.

Another Parliament at Westminster in 1436. where a tenth and fifteenth was given, and also the Subsidy on Wool for three years.

Authority was given to the King's Council to make assurances to the King's Creditors for the sum of 100,000 £.

A General Pardon was granted.

No Parliament was summon'd till in 1439. when the usual supply was given.

The Lord Treasurer and others got a Power of making security for 100,000 £. as in the former Parliament. then the Parliament was prorog'd to Reading, where several Acts were pass'd, and Petitions made by the Commons.

An Act, by which the fourth part of the tenth and fifteenth should be paid by the Ad. Treasurer of the King's Household, to make ready Payment for the ^{King's} Carveyance; and the revenues of the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster, were appropriated to that use.

A Parliament met in 1442. but nothing of consequence was done till in that of 1445. when they granted a Subsidy of a tenth, and fifteenth, and a half of both, reserving only 5000 £. out of it for poor Towns, which had been waste'd; and also a Subsidy on Wool with Fonnage, and Poundage of Denizens, and double plies for four years.

Henry VI.

The Statute was repeal'd by which peace could not be made with the then Reigning King of France, without the Assent of Parliament, and that no person should hereafter be impeach'd for having given counsel to bring about peace with France; this was follow'd by a Peace with France.

The D. of Gloucester's Enemies tried to draw him into a snare but he came off very Honorably.

A Parliament at St. Edmundsbury in 1447. when power was given to the King's Council for 100,000 l. The King gave some grants to his new colleges of Eaton and Cambridge.

It was enacted by the King that Eleanor late Wife of the D. of Gloucester should be bar'd from claiming any dower of any of the Hereditaments &c. of the said Duke.

When the Parliament met after their adjournment y^e D. of Gloucester was arrested, and privately murder'd.

A Parliament was summon'd at Westminster in 1449. when the usual subsidy was granted for five years. The King's Council got Authority to borrow 100,000 l. as well on the King's Revenues, as Jewels.

They then granted a tenth and fifteenth, and a Poll tax.

The Clergy tried to get the Act of premunire repeal'd but could not.

A Parliament call'd at Leicester in 1450, but they refus'd to meet any where but at Westminster; Upon

Thus

Henry VI. This it was summon'd there; but then prorog'd to London; from thence to Westminster again; and soon after to Leicester. Where a subsidy was granted, that every person having the clear value of 20^s in Frank tenement, was to pay 6^d and 50 from 20^s to 20^l; from 20^l. to 200^l 1^s in that; from 200^l. and upwards 2^s in the ^l. as well daity as Clergy.

The D. of Suffolk was committed to the Tower at the Speaker's request; because he said the Duke had sold the Nation to France, and had put the Castle of Wallingford into a state of defence, for his own security; upon which he was banish'd for five years, but was murder'd in his passage, by a Captain who had laid in wait for him.

A Parliament met at Westminster in 1451. at which 20,000^l. was granted the King out of the customs of London and Southampton by 100^l. payments to relieve his wants; and it was enacted because some Genoese Merchants had given him 4,000^l in Allom, that they might ship any staple ware out of the South of England till they were repaid the sum; and it was order'd that some Merchants of the South should have all the Allom on advanceing 8,000^l.; and that no man should for two years be allow'd to bring, buy, or sell any other Allom, on pain of forfeiting it.

This strange Monopoly shew'd in what want the King and Nation were for money.

Henry VI.

The Commons desir'd the removal of most of the King's servants, that they should be for life banish'd his presence, and that they should not come within 12 miles of the Court, because they were ill spoken of.

The King said he would agree to their going, except some Lords, and others whom he could not spare, but that only for one year to see if any thing could really be laid to their charge.

A Rebellion about this time in Kent, headed by Jack Cade, but was soon quell'd.

Soon after the D. of York met his Friends, and then sent a letter to the King complaining of Grievances in the Government.

The King return'd a mild answer to it, upon which the D. rais'd an army and march'd to Point Heath, and the King encamp'd on Black Heath; who sent to know the D. reasons for taking arms, which was answer'd in the stile of a letter, and an accommodation soon follow'd.

A Parliament met at Reading in 1453, where a tenth & fifteenth, with Tonnage and poundage was granted for the King's life; the subsidy on Wool was given for the same term: then the Parliament was prorog'd to Westminster, when another tenth and fifteenth was order'd for the King, who thank'd them for it.

The D. of York was appointed President in that Parliament by the King's Patent.

The King being sick at Windsor, a committee of Lords was sent to look him, who he intended for successor to

Hemp

Henry VI.

Hemp, who was lately deceas'd, in the See of Canterbury, and who should be Chancellor, and whether certain Lords there nam'd to be of the Privy Council were agreeable to him or not. The Committee reported to the House that after having been three times at Windsor, and having earnestly sollicitated to speak with the King, they had always been tol'd of the King's sickness. The Lords appointed the D. of York Protector and Defender of the Realm, for as long as it should please the King.

The Duke was afterwards by the King's Patent made Protector till Prince Edward should be of age. Soon after, Prince Edward was created Prince of Wales, and Earl of Chester.

A Dowry was sett'd on the Queen of 1000 L. per an. The D. of York rais'd an army and beat the King at St. Albans, and took him Prisoner. upon this a Parliament was summon'd at Westminster in 1455. when a long Charter was made by which the King acquitted the D. of York of any disloyal practices, and declar'd him a faithful subject; and again appointed him Protector; but was soon remov'd.

A general Act of resumption of all Lands, Offices and Fees from the first day of that Reign was pass'd, with several provisions.

The Queen and her party were blam'd for the King's conduct and not him.

Henry VI.

The D. of York became once more Protector, the Earl of Salisbury Chancellor, and the Earl of Warwick Governor of Calais.

The Queen again got the better, but things were growing very bad when her party and the confederate Lords made an agreement; however the quarrel was soon renew'd, and the King got a victory by the D. of York's soldiers throwing down their arms.

He then call'd a Parliament at Coventry in 1460. when the D. of York and others were attainted, and it was enacted that all Patents and Grants of any Offices to any Person that was against the King at St. Albans, Bloreheath and Ludlow should be void, and that all Grants made to the D. of York, and any others in those fields should also be null. But all Grants to Persons who were with the King might stand good.

Some private acts were made, and one greatly in favour of the Prerogative viz. that all Knights who were return'd to this Parliament by the King's letters without other Election, should have their seats, and that no Sheriff for so returning them should incur the penalty of the Statute of an. 23. of this King's Reign.

Not long after the D. of York's party beat the King at Northampton, and took him Prisoner, upon which a Parliament met at Westminster in 1461. where all the Acts made at Coventry were repeal'd.

The

Henry VI.

The D. of York claim'd the Crown, and the Parliament determin'd that the D. of York, and his Heirs should succeed after the death of the King. The Duke and his two sons promis'd and swore to keep the said award provided the King would do the same on his part; which he promis'd. Then the King granted the Duke lands in Wales, and elsewhere to the yearly amount of 10,000 marks, which was confirm'd by Parliament; and an Act pass'd declaring the Duke right Heir to the Crown; and granting him power to ride over the whole Kingdom, to suppress Rebellions; and all Sheriffs and Subjects were order'd to obey him as King. The Duke's party immediately sent him, then in Ireland an account of their success, upon which he came over, and took possession of the King's apartment in the Palace, went to the House of Lords, and plac'd himself on the Throne; and made a speech to them, demanding the Crown as his right. After he had retir'd there ensu'd a long debate about the succession, the Lords at last agreed that the King should enjoy the Crown for life, after that the Duke and his Children were to succeed, upon this the Queen took arms to save the Crown for her son; and the Duke also rais'd an army. They engag'd at Wakefield, where the Duke was slain; but his son Edward prov'd victorious and was proclaim'd King.

Edward IV.

Edward immediately march'd to York, & meeting Margaret at the head of Henry's troops near Towton, entirely defeated her, return'd to London was crown'd & summon'd a Parliament in 1461. in which Henry IV. was declar'd a usurper, his descendants disinherited, & Edward discharg'd from the Contract made betwixt Henry & his Father.

Several Attainders were also made & some restitutions.

The next Parliament assembl'd in 1463. where a subsidy of 37,000. was granted; the King releas'd 6000. of it to the Commons, & the remaining 31,000. was voted as a fifteenth.

In 1464. Edward defeated Margaret at Hegeley-Moor, & Henry at Hecham in Northumberland, who soon after was taken by surprise at Waddington-Hall in Lancashire, brought to London, & confin'd in the Tower.

A new Parliament met in the same year & granted for the King's life a subsidy on Tunnage, Poundage, Wool, Hides &c. they directed the Treasurer of Calais to account yearly with the Exchequer, & permitted him to dispose of all offices in that Town.

In this session several more persons were attain'd, & the King by an Act of Resumption, recover'd all the demesnes of the Crown.

Edward IV.

another Parliament was summon'd at Westminster in 1467. who granted the King all the Hereditaments of the Dukes of York.

In the ensuing year One met at the same place, when a subsidy of two tenths & fifteenths was granted, but 12000. was reserv'd out of it, for the Relief of decay'd Towns & Villages, this Parliament also confirm'd the Queen's Dowry.

The Civil Wars that had never entirely ceas'd now broke out with Fresh violence, & fortune at last frowning upon Edward, forc'd him to abandon the Kingdom; upon which the Earl of Warwick releas'd Henry out of prison & restor'd him to the Throne.

A Parliament was then summon'd in 1470. which declar'd Edward in his turn an Usurper, & the Duke of Gloucester was attain'd, & several of their Adherents; all the Statutes & attainders of Edward were revers'd & lastly the Crown was settl'd on the Duke of Clarence, in failure of King Henry's issue Male; Edward coming back was join'd by his Brother the Duke of Clarence, they march'd to London, beat the Earl of Warwick at Barnet, who fell in the battle; & Margaret at Tewkesbury, & Henry was murder'd in the Tower by the Duke of

Edward IV. Gloucester, Edwards Brother.

a Parliament assembled in 1472. at Westminster, where 14000. Archers were voted, & the Lord: & Bishops gave the tenth part of their Revenues to the King for maintaining them.

During the sitting of Parliament the King created his son Prince of Wales, & several Attainers were reversed.

Another Parliament came together the next year, when a tenth & fifteenth with a reserve of 6000. £ for distressed Towns was granted the King.

By another Act of resumption in the second session of this Parliament, the King obtained all the Hereditaments of the Crown, with the Dukedoms of Lancaster & York.

The same Parliament was summoned again in 1473. when the King gave Grants to the Dukes of Clarence & Gloucester, & a subsidy of a tenth & fifteenth with $5\frac{1}{2}\% 7\frac{1}{2}\%$ was voted for the support of the 14,000. Archers, was granted the King.

After the Dissolution of the Parliament a new & dangerous imposition call'd a Benevolence, was invented to support the War in France, whereby people were

presumed

Edward IV.

were said to be at Liberty to offer what they thought fit to the King; but in reality they were forc'd to pay the sums demanded.

Edward After the Peace with France having exhausted all his Treasures, & not daring to call a new Parliament, took various methods to fill his Coffers, first under the force of a Statute, he took all the revenues of the Crown into his own hands; he plac'd Collectors of the Customs in different parts of the Kingdom, who were very hard of the Merchants; & he traded himself with Italy & Greece; this by Magna Charta he could not sell any vacant Bishopricks, yet he did not restore the Temporalities, till the new Bishops paid for them a fix'd price.

However in 1477. He assembl'd a Parliament when several useful Acts were made, & a dispute arising betwixt the King & the Duke of Clarence, it ended in the latter being executed, by the suppos'd machinations of the Duke of Gloucester.

No Parliament met till 1482. at which a tenth & fifteenth was granted with the reservation of 5000.

Edward IV. for decay'd Towns, & a yearly rent of 11,000. for the expences of the King's Household.

Another Part. was summon'd in the same year, when the King did not demand any supply of them, but the Clergy gave him a thank.

Edward died soon after.

Edward V. Edward succeeded his Father, but by the intrigues of his Uncle the Duke of Gloucester, he did not live to be crown'd for he & his Brother were smother'd in the Tower.

Richard III.

Richard came to the Throne after having spilt much innocent Blood; 'tis unknown how long he had form'd his ambitious designs; but most Authors seem to lay the Duke of Clarence's Death & attainder (which disabl'd his Children from succeeding to the Crown) to Richard's door; as well as the having Edward IV. Children declar'd illegitimate & afterwards murder'd.

When these Acts of cruelty were committed, he was the only remaining Male Heir of the York family; Edward IV. had left a Daughter, whom Richard to secure all things, intended to marry, but was first forc'd to put his Wife out of the way.

The first year of his Reign was chiefly taken up in quelling a great Rebellion which was rais'd by the Duke of Buckingham (who had been his assistant in getting the Throne, & either broke with him on being refus'd the Earldom & Possessions of Hereford, or on his putting the two Young Princes to death) & others to depose him & put the Earl of Richmond the last of the Lancastrian family in his place. But this was soon put an end to, the Duke of Buckingham being taken & beheaded.

Richard III.

at Salisbury.

A Parliament was soon after assembled at Westminster where cotemporary Historians say that to strengthen the King's title to the Crown, they examin'd into matters concerning matrimonial contracts, tho' laymen had nothing to do with those affairs, this shews how extremely they were frighten'd for him; They then declar'd the petition several Lords & Commons had given him, tho' out of Parliament when he was only Duke of Gloucester, as valid as if presented in Parliament; the purport of it had been to declare Edward IV. marriage with the Lady Grey void, & consequently their children illegitimate, & those of the Duke of Clarence incapable of succeeding to the Crown, their Father having been attain'd, & therefore Richard was the undoubted Heir to the Crown; which they settl'd on him & his Heirs, & declar'd his son Heir apparent, who died before his father's reverse of fortune.

The next Act pass'd was for attainting the Earl of Richmond & his adherents.

Several useful Acts were also made at this meeting, such as, to declare that no benevolence should

over

Richard III. ever for the future be laid on the people; another that those arrested for felony might be bail'd & their goods not be seiz'd, till they were arraigned; a third that no man should be impannel'd on juries, that had not either 20^l freehold or 26^l 8^d? Copy hold; & others relating to the quantity of land & Bil Vespe's ought to contain.

Soon after the Earl of Richmond, of the Lancasterian family, landed, & claim'd the Crown, upon which Richard fought against him at Bosworth, but was slain, & the Earl Proclaim'd King at the Head of his Army.

Henry VIII.

Henry saluted King in Bosworth field, might have claimed the Throne by conquest, but that was rather too violent a step, he had pretensions to it of another nature, descended from John of Gaunt source of the Lancastrian family, he could have made that the foundation of his right, there however he felt difficulties, great lameness in his descent, the only true claim therefore he had, was in right of the Princess who he was oblig'd to marry, but this would have acknowledg'd the superiority of the House of York, & therefore of all other. Ideas the most hateful, thus situated, he chose to take the benefit of all three, & put his title principally on the blood of Lancaster, & made use of the other two as collateral supports.

Eight days after his coronation, he summon'd a Parliament, with a view to the four following things, 1^o to secure the succession to himself & his family, 2^o to get the attainders of all his followers revers'd, 3^o to pass Acts of Attainder against all those who had been found in Richard's party, & 4^o to shew the people, as soon as possible, that tho' he made his way to Empire by the sword, yet he intended to govern by the laws.

Henry VII.

Some few Laws were made after this, but merely for preserving forms.

The King did not ask any supply this Parliament, the many confiscated Estates answering that purpose.

He instituted a body Guard of 500 Archers under the Command of a Captain, this was by the people look'd on with a jealous eye, for till then English Kings had only been Guarded by the love of their subjects, & the laws.

Soon after Henry married Elizabeth Edward IV. Daughter, & Heiress of the House of York, so that from that time, the two Roses have been united; notwithstanding this, the King continu'd jealous of the House of York, that he was two years married, before he would let Elizabeth be crown'd, nor would have been prevail'd on then, had not the many Rebellions that broke out one after another, shew'd him his error in neglecting the York party.

In 1488. Another Parliament was summon'd, where the Archbishop of Canterbury Morton, then Chancellor, demand'd their advice in the affair of Bretagne, the King wanting to support that Duke, who was in danger of being

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