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Frederic Madden

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XXV. *Political Poems of the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., communicated by Sir FREDERIC MADDEN, K.H., in a Letter to JOHN GAGE ROKEWODE, Esq. Director S.A.*

Read 10th March, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,

British Museum, 7 March, 1842.

A SHORT time ago I took an opportunity of laying before the Society of Antiquaries by your hands, a Letter containing much interesting information on the state of parties in the year 1454; and I now beg leave to add, as a supplementary communication, copies of several Political Poems written at various periods of the reigns of Henry the Sixth and Edward the Fourth, all of which, with the exception of the first, have hitherto remained unpublished. Documents of this kind are confessedly not beneath the notice of the historian, since they shew the popular feelings of the time better than any other contemporary record, and often mention minute circumstances worthy of note, which may in vain be sought for elsewhere. In the Transactions of the Society some few specimens of this political versification have already appeared, of the reigns of Edward the Third, Richard the Second, and Edward the Fourth,^a and some others belonging to the reign of Henry the Sixth, may be found in the *Excerpta Historica*.^b Of

^a Vol. XVIII. p. 22. Vol. XXI. p. 89. Vol. XXIX. p. 130.

^b Pp. 159, 279, 360. There are also extant some verses, attributed to Lydgate, composed on the temporary reconciliation of the Yorkist and Lancastrian Lords, in March 1457-8, printed by Sir H. Nicolas, at the end of the *Chronicle of London*, pp. 251, 254, 4to. Lond. 1827, from MSS. Cott, Nero A. vi. Vesp. B. xvi.

the six poems now sent, five were composed by adherents of the house of York, the first of which relates to the murder of the Duke of Suffolk, in 1450 ; the second to the chiefs of the Yorkist faction, probably about May, 1460 ; the third to the battle of Northampton, in July following ; the fourth, to the policy and position of the adverse parties, probably towards the end of the same year ; and the fifth to the battle of Towton, in 1461. The remaining poem was written by a Lancastrian, and presents a curious contrast to the others. It enumerates the principal Lords on the King's side, and, under the metaphor of a ship, describes the position of each in the guidance and government of the state towards the close of the year 1458.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

FREDERIC MADDEN.

To JOHN GAGE ROKEWODE, Esq.
F.R.S. Director S.A.

I.

SARCASTIC VERSES ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK, 1450.

THIS poem has been printed by Ritson, in his *Ancient Songs*, p. 51, 8vo. 1790, but he has fallen into an extraordinary mistake respecting it ; and having erroneously supposed its object to be " a Requiem to the Conspirators against Henry IV." in 1399, has ingeniously contrived to appropriate the greater part of the names mentioned in it to persons who were in their graves when the verses were actually composed ! Had Warton been aware of the fact, it would have afforded him an excellent opportunity of retaliating on Ritson the censures so unsparingly bestowed by the latter on himself. It was again printed by Turner in the *History of England*, vol. iii. p. 74, ed. 8vo. 1830, but with many errors in the reading, and without any attempt at illustration. He speaks of it, however, rightly, as referring to the murder of the Duke of Suffolk and others of his adherents ; and remarks, that it is curious " for giving the names of those friends of the government who were most hated by the people."

The date of this piece can be fixed with sufficient precision, since it must have been composed between the 2nd of May, the date of Suffolk's death, and the 29th June, the day on which the Bishop of Salisbury suffered a similar fate. The Latin sentences put into the mouths of the persons named, are taken from the usual Church Service for the

Dead, but are, in some instances, incorrectly given both by Ritson and Turner. There is considerable humour shewn in the adaptation of the passages, and, no doubt, much of the satire is now lost to us, which must have been perceptible to a contemporary. The MS. from which it is taken is in the Cottonian collection, Vesp. B. xvi. fol. 1^b, written in a contemporary hand.

IN the monethe of Maij, when gresse groweþ grene,
 Flagrant^a in her floures, w^t swete sauour,
 Jac Napes^b wolde ouer the see, a maryner to ben,
 With his cloge^c and his cheyn, to seke more tresour.
 Suyche a payn prikkede hym, he asked a confessour :
 Nicholas^d said, " I am redi, thi confessour to be."
 He was holden so, that he ne passede that hour ;
 For Jac Napes soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Who shalle execute his exequies, w^t a solempnite ?
 Bisshopes and lordes, as grete reson is ;
 Monkes, chanons, prestes, and other clergie,
 Pray for this Dukes soule, þat it might come to blis.
 And let neuer suyche another come after this :
 His interfectours, blessed might thei be,
 And graunte them for ther dede to regne w^t angelis ;
 And for Jac Nape soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Placebo begynneth the bishop of Herforde,^e
Dilexi, for myn auauncement, saithe þe bisshop of Chestre ;^f

^a *Flagrant* for *fragrant*, as we find *flagrantia* for *fragrantia*, in the Middle Age Latinity.

^b A nickname for William De la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, who, after his fall, embarked from Ipswich with the intention of proceeding abroad, but was intercepted by some ships off Dover, and beheaded without ceremony by the shipmen, 2nd May, 1450. An interesting contemporary account of this transaction is given in the *Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 38.

^c A clog argent with a chain or, was the badge of Suffolk. See *Excerpta Hist.* p. 161.

^d The name of the ship which intercepted the Duke was the *Nicholas of the Tower*.

^e Richard Beauchamp, consecrated 9 Feb. 1448-9, and translated to Salisbury, 14 Aug. 1450

^f William Booth, consecrated Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (then usually called

Heu me ! saip Salisbury,^g this gothe to ferre forthe,
Ad Dominum cum tribularer, saip þe abbot of Gloucestre.^h
Dominus custodit, saip the abbot of Rouchestre,ⁱ
Leuavi oculos, saip frere Stanbury,^k *volau*;^l
Si iniquitates, saip þe bisshop of Worcetre;^m
 For Jac Nape soule, *De profundis clamaui*.

Opera manuum tuarum, seiþ the Cardynalⁿ wisely,
 That brought forthe *Confitebor*, for alle this Napes reson ;

Chester) 9 July, 1447, and translated to York in 1452. In the *Excerpta Historica*, p. 357, are some curious satirical verses addressed to him, as one of Suffolk's partisans. He is also named in the petition from the Commons, 29 April, 1451, among the persons whose removal was desired for "mysbehavyng." *Rot. Parl.* v. 216.

^g William Aiscough, Clerk of the Council, consecrated 20 July, 1438. He was one of Suffolk's chief adherents, and murdered by his own parishioners under circumstances of great cruelty whilst saying mass, at Edindon, 29 June, 1450. See Godwin, p. 350. Stowe, p. 392.

^h Reynold or Reginald Butler, who had the royal assent to his election, 29 Oct. 1437, and received the temporalities, the 12 Nov. following. He was promoted to the see of Hereford in Dec. 1450, and translated to Lichfield, 3 April 1453. Whilst Abbot of Gloucester, he rendered himself so obnoxious as a partisan of Suffolk, that he was sent prisoner to Ludlow Castle by the Duke of York, and was included amongst those persons whom the Commons petitioned the King to remove, 29 Apr. 1451.

ⁱ William Wellys, Abbot of York, succeeded to be Prior of St. Andrew's, Rochester, in 1436. The period of his death is uncertain, but his successor died in 1467.

^k John Stanbury was Confessor to Henry VI. and the first Provost of Eton College, founded by that monarch. He was made Bishop of Bangor, 4 May, 1448, and translated to Hereford, 7 Feb. 1452-3. He was ever a staunch friend of Henry, and, at the battle of Northampton, induced the Lancastrian soldiers by his exhortations to make the greater resistance, for which he was taken prisoner, and confined a long time in Warwick Castle. He died in 1474. Godwin, p. 492.

^l There seems to be here some error, as there is no such word in the Service for the Dead. Perhaps we should substitute a repetition of the word *levavi*.

^m John Carpenter, appointed by papal bull, 20 Dec. 1443. He resigned in 1476.

ⁿ John Kempe, Cardinal, and Archbishop of York, made Chancellor for the second time, 31 Jan. 1449-50.

Audiui vocem, songe Allemightty God an hye,
 And perfore syng we, *Magnificat anima mea Dominum*.
 Vnto this *Dirige* most we gon and come,
 This pascalle tyme, ° to say veryli,
 Thre psalmes and thre lessouns, þt alle is and somme :
 For Jac Nape soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Executors of this office, *Dirige* for to synge,
 Shalle begyn the bisshop of Synt Asse ;^p
Verba mea auribus, saip abbot of Redynge,^q
 Alle your ioye and hope is come to alasse !
Conuertere, Domine, yet graunte vs grace,
 Saip abbot of Synt Albans, ^r ful sorily ;
 The abbot of þe Toure hille, ^s w^t his fat face,
 Quakeþ and tremuleþ, for *Domine, ne in furore*.

Maister Water Liard ^t shal syng *Ne quando*,
 The abbot of Westmynstre, ^u *Domine, Deus meus, in te speraui* ;
Requiem eternam graunte them alle to come to,
 perto a *Pater noster*, saip the bisshop of Synt Dauy. ^x

° Easter day in 1450 fell on 5th April. It was during the octaves that the Parliament was held at Leicester, in which Suffolk and his adherents were indicted for treason.

p Thomas ——— succeeded 27 Jan. 1449-50, and died about 1461.

q John Thorne, elected Abbot 7 Jan. 1445-6, and received the temporalities, 18 Jan. The period of his death is not known.

r John Stoke, previously prior of Wallingford, was elected Abbot of St. Alban's 28 Nov. 1440, on the resignation of Whethamstede. He caused a monument to be erected to the memory of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and died in 1451. See *Monasticon*, ii. 202.

s This individual I am unable to identify, owing to the want of a list of the Abbots of St. Mary de Graces, or Newminster, which is the monastery alluded to. In the reign of Henry VIII. a Victualling Office was erected on the site.

t Walter Liard or Lylert, was Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, from which he was removed to the see of Norwich, 24 Jan. 1445-6, and died 17 May 1472.

u Edmund Kyrtyn, who succeeded Abbot Harwedon between the 27 May and 20 Aug. 1440. He resigned 23 Oct. 1462, on account of his age and infirmities.

x John De la Bere, consecrated 13 Nov. 1447. He is supposed to have died in 1460. *Le Neve*, p. 513.

For thes soules, þat wise were and mightty,
Suffolke, Moleyns,^y and Roos,^z thes thre ;
And in especial for Jac Napes, þat euer was wyly ;
For his soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Rise vp, Say,^a rede *Parce mihi, Domine,*
Nichil enim sunt dies mei, þou shalt synge ;
þe bisshop of Carlyle^b [shal] synge *Credo* ful sore ;
To suyche fals traitours come foule endynge.
The baron of Dudley^c with grete mornyng,
Redethe, *Tedet animam meam vite mee ;*

^y Adam Moleyns, Keeper of the Privy Seal, and Bishop of Chichester, who succeeded to that see 3 Dec. 1445. From his being one of the members of the Suffolk administration, he was murdered by some shipmen at Portsmouth, 9 January, 1449-50. Suffolk, in his reply to the bill of impeachment against him, declared that the surrender of the French provinces of Mans and Anjou, was peculiarly attributable to Moleyns. This is sufficient to account for his unpopularity. In William of Wyrcestre the detail of his death is given with more particulars than elsewhere. "Circa Epiphaniam Domini," he writes, Magister Adam Moleyns, Episcopus Cicestrensis, apud Portesmothe in hospitali ibidem [the Hospital of God's House, founded by Peter de Rupibus, Bishop of Winchester], portando ac solvendo soldariis aliisque nautis regios denarios, clamando eum proditorem regis et regni, unumque venditorum Normanniæ, miserabiliter interfectus est." *Annales*, p. 467, ap. Hearne, *Lib. Nig. Scaccarii*, 8vo. 1771.

^z The person here alluded to is, apparently, Sir Robert Roos, banneret, fourth son of William Lord Roos, of Hamlake. In Feb. 1442-3 he was associated with Suffolk, Moleyns, and others, to negotiate the peace between England and France, and the marriage between the King and Margaret of Anjou. He died 30 Dec. 1448. See a memoir of him in Sir H. Nicolas's *Journal of Beckington's Embassy*, 8vo. 1828, p. lxvii.

^a James Fiennes, Lord Say, Lord Treasurer, killed by the rebels under Jack Cade, 4 July, 1450. As these verses appear to have been written before his death, they are singularly prophetic of his fate.

^b Nicholas Close, appointed 14 March, 1449-50, and translated to Lichfield, 30 Aug. 1452.

^c John Sutton, Baron Dudley, summoned to Parliament from 15 Feb. 1440 to 15 Nov. 1482. He is included among those for whose dismissal from the King's person the Commons petitioned in 1451.

Who but Danyel ^d *Qui Lasarum* ^e shal synge,
For Jac Nape soule, *Placebo* and *Dirige* ?

John Say ^f redethe, *Manus tue fecerunt me* ;
Libera me, syngethe Trevilian, ^g warre the rere !
That thei do no more so, *Requiescant in pace* ;
Thus prayes alle Englund, ferre and nere.
Where is Somerset ? ^h whi, aperes he not here,
To synge *Dies ire et miserie* ?
God graunte Englonde, alle in fere,
For thes traitours to synge *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

Meny mo þer be behynde, þe sothe forto telle,
þ^t shal messes oppon thes do synge ;
I pray som man do rynge the belle,
þat þese forsaiden may come to þe sacrynge.
And þat in brief tyme, w^tout more tarienge,
þat þis messe may be ended in suyche degre ;
And þat alle Englund ioyfulle may synge,
þe commendacion, with *Placebo* and *Dirige*.

^d Thomas Danyel, Esquire of the King's body. See what has been said of him previously, p. 314.

^e The commencement of the verse, *Qui Lazarum resuscitasti a monumento fetidum*.

^f John Say was a member of the King's Council in 1454 and 1458. As one of Suffolk's partisans he had been named in the petition of the Commons, before referred to.

^g John Trevilian, Esquire of the King's body. See a previous notice of him, p. 314.

^h Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset. At the time this poem was composed he was in France, as chief commander, and after the loss of Normandy, and the fall of Suffolk, was chosen as the principal adviser of the Crown. He came to England in November, 1450, and was killed in the first battle of St. Alban's, 22 May, 1455.

Among the Cotton Rolls is one marked II. 23, containing various pieces in prose and verse, directed against the Lancastrians, as also several metrical prophecies, etc. collected by a zealous Yorkist, about the year 1451. Among them is a copy of the articles of impeachment exhibited by the Commons against the Duke in Feb. 1449-50, as printed in the Rolls of Parliament, v. 177, after which follow the annexed lines, evidently aimed against the same party :

For feer or for fauour of ony fals mañ,
Loose not the loue of alle þe commynalte ;
Be ware, and sey, by Seint Juliañ,
Duke, Jwge, Barone, Archebisshope, and he be,
He wolle repent it with in þ^s monthes thre.

Let folke accused excuse theym selff, and þey cañ,
Reseyue no good, let soche bribry be ;
Support not theyme this wo by-gañ,
And take fro þeym þer wages and þer fee,
And let theyme [weare ?] suche clothis as þey spañ,
Or by God and Seint Anne !

Som must go hens, hit may noñ othere weys be,
And els is lost alle þ^s lond and we ;
Hong vp suche meñ to oure souerayne lorde,
That euer counselde hym w^t fals men to be acorde.

Anno Milleno Domini centum quaterno,

L. simplex pleno, caveat omnis homo.

In the same Roll occur the curious political and satyrical verses printed in the *Excerpta Historica* ; and interspersed are the following historical scraps, relating to this period, and now first printed :

He is wise that is wode, he is riche þat hase no goode,
He is blynde þat may se, he is riche þat shalle neuer i-the,
He is fledde þat is not ferde, and he abideth þ^t maketh alle your berde.

The Duke of Suffolke hathe marryede his nese, his suster dowghter, to þe Capdawe, etc. And yaf hym w^t here þe reuenewez þat come fro Bordeaux, that is to wete, vi.^{xx} towne [tun] wyne yerly, v^c.^{li} etc. in mony, þe whiche my lorde of Gloucestre hadde of yifte of þe kynge, durynge his life, etc.

M^d. the kynge is xxvj^c M^l.ⁱⁱ in det, and he may dispende but xxxiiij M^l. of the whiche the kynge hathe no more in honde but v M^l.^{li} and his expense commythe yerly xxxij M^l.

At Tonnebrigge, fast by Sevenoke, þer was Stafford slayne, þursday next before Myssomer.

At Crayford [*sic*] myle fro Dertforde.

Primo die mensis Marcii anno r. r. Henrici Sexti xxx^o [1452], ther was my lorde of Yorkes ordynaunce iij^{mill'} gownneres, and hymself in þe middelle warde, w^t viij^{mill'}, my lorde of Devynshere by þe southe side, w^t vi^{mil'}, and lorde Cobbame w^t vi^{mil'} at the water side, and vij shippers, w^t þer stuffe. And sith þat tyme, and sithe, was poyntment made, and takene at Dertforde, by embassetours, my lorde þe B. of Wynchester, my lorde B. of Ely, my lorde þe Erle of Salusbury, my lorde of Warrewik, my lorde Bewchame, and my lorde of Sydeley, etc. whiche poyntment was, etc. And soone after was Chatturley, yemañ of the Crowne, maymede, not withstondyng he was takyne at Derby w^t money makynge, and ladde to Londone. Theñ after, the kynges yemañ of his chambure, namyde Fazakerley, w^t letteris was sent to Ludlow, to my lorde of Yorke, chargynge to do forthe a certeyne of his mayny, Artherñ, Squiere, Sharpe, Squiere, etc. the whiche Fazakerley hylde in avowtry Sharpus wiff, the whiche Sharpe slowe Fazacurly; and a bakere of Ludlow roos and þe commyns, etc.; the whiche bakere is at Kyllingworthe castelle, etc. After þis my lorde of Shrousbury, etc. rode in to Kent, and set vp vi. peyre of galowes, and dede execucione vpone John Wylkyns, takene and broght to þe towne as for Capteyne, and w^t othere mony mo, of the whiche xxviij. were hangede and be-hedede, the whiche hedes were sent to Londone, and Londone said þer shulde no mo hedes be set vpone there; and þat tyme Etone was robbyde, and þe kyng beynge at Wyncore oñ Lowe Sonday, etc.

II.

VERSES ON THE STATE BY A LANCASTRIAN, 1458.

From MS. Trin. Coll. Dubl. E. 5. 10. a miscellaneous volume in prose and verse, compiled in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV.; partly written on vellum, partly on paper, 4to.

Fol. 30. *De Navi vel Puppe, Anno Domini Mⁱ cccc^o lvij^o. litera dominical^g g.*

STERE welle the good shype, God be ouer gyde!
 Ouer shyp is launched from the grounde,
 Blessed be God, bothe faire and sounde;
 Ouer maryners han the shypmen founde,
^aBy þere taklynge wille a-byde.

^a Opposite to this line in the MS. is the following marginal note:—Nota, ut poeta satirus dat versus, fungar vice cotis, acutum reddere ferrum; in prologo Pollicronicon hoc.

This noble shyp, made of good tree,
Ouer souerayne lord kynge Henry ;
God gyde hym from aduersyte,
Where þ^t he go or ryde.

The shyp was charged w^t a mast,
Crased it was, it my[ght] not last ;^b
Now hathe he one þ^t wol not brest,
The old is leyde on syde.
Thys fayre mast, [th]is myghty yeard,
Of whom fals shrewes be a-fere[d],
Hys name of ryght is Prince Edward,^c
Long myght he w^t vs a-byde !

The ship hathe closed hym a lyght,
To kepe her course in way of ryght,
A fyre cressant,^d þ^t bernethe bryght,
W^t fawte was neuer spyed.
Thys good lyght, þ^t is so clere,
Calle Y the Duke of Exceter,^e
Whos name yn troupe shyned clere,
Hys worshypp spryngethe wyde.

Thys shyp hathe a sterne fulle good,
Hem to gyde in ebbe and flood,
A-geyne þer waves bope wild and wode,
That rynnethe on euery syde.
The sterne that on þe shype is sette,
Ys þe Duke Somerset,^f

^b This may refer to the administration under Suffolk, which was dissolved in 1450.

^c Edward, only son of Henry VI. born 13 Oct. 1454.

^d The Duke of Exeter is designated by the same badge in some verses in the *Excerpta Hist.* p. 161.

^e Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter. See previously, p. 312.

^f Henry Beaufort, son of the Duke who fell at St. Alban's. He was beheaded in May, 1464, after the battle of Hexham.

For ragged rokkes he wolle not lette,
To sterre in ebbe and eke in tyde.

Ther is a sayle-yearde fulle good and sure,
To þ^e shyp a grete tresour,
For alle stormes it wolle endure,
It is trusty atte nede.
Now þe sayle-yearde Y wolle reherse,
The Erle of Penbroke,^g curtys and ferce.
A-cros þ^e mast he hyethe travers,
The good shyp for to lede.

The mast hathe a welle good stay,
W^t shrowthes sure, Y dare wel say,
In humble wyse hym to obey,
Yf he to þem hathe nede.
The Duke of Bokyngham ^h thys stay is he :
Thys shrowdes be sure in thare degre.
Devenshyre,ⁱ and Grey,^k and Becheham ^l the free,
And Scales ^m w^t them in tyde.

The shyp hathe a welle good sayle,
Of fyne canvas, þ^t wolle not fayle,
W^t bonet ⁿ iii. for to travayle,
That mekelle beth of pryde.

^g Jasper Tudor, half-brother of Henry VI. created Earl of Pembroke in 1452.

^h Humphrey Stafford, killed at the battle of Northampton, 1460.

ⁱ Thomas Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, who succeeded his father, of the same name, in 1458. He stoutly adhered to Henry VI. and had a yearly sum of 100 marks granted him out of the forfeited estates of the Duke of York. He was beheaded by the Yorkists in 1461.

^k Edmund, Lord Grey of Ruthyn. He deserted at the battle of Northampton to the opposite party, and was created Earl of Kent by Edward IV. in 1465.

^l John, Lord Beauchamp of Powyk, created in 1447. He was made Lord Treasurer, 22 June, 1450.

^m Thomas, Lord Scales. Killed by the Yorkists in 1460, in attempting to escape from the Tower of London.

ⁿ In nautical language, a "bonnet" is an addition made to the lower part of a sail, in mo-

This good sayle, Y vndurstond,
The Erle of Northumb[er]land,^o
Ros,^p Clyfford,^q and Egremond,^r
The troupe is not to hyde.

Ther is a toppe, þ^e mast on hygħt,
The shyp to defende, in alle hys rygħt,
W^t his foomen when he schalle fygħt,
They dare hym not a-byde.
The Erle of Schrovesbury^s þ^e toppes name,
He kepethe þ^e shype from harme and blame,
The Erle of Wylchyre^t one of þ^e same
That kepethe þ^e shyp from drede.

Thys good shype hathe ankers thre,
Of bether mettel þer may non be,
To strenthe þ^e shyp be londe and se,
When he wolle stop hys tyde.
The fu[r]st anker, hole and sounde,
He is named þ^e lord Beamond,^u

derate weather. In Capt. Nathaniel Butler's "Dialogicall discourse concerninge Marine Affaires, 1634," MS. Sloane, 758, p. 109, the word is thus explained: "The Bonnett is an addition onely of a piece of a sayle, made fitt to bee put unto another, soe that when seamen saye, that the shippe hath her course, and Bonnett abroad, theire meaninge is, that she hath the peice of sayle added unto her course, called the Bonnett, which before shee had not, nor ordinarily hathe."

^o Henry Percy, who in the lifetime of his father was summoned to Parliament as Baron Poynings. He succeeded to the earldom in 1455, and was slain at the battle of Towton, 1461.

^p Thomas de Roos, Baron Roos of Hamlake. He was attainted in 1461.

^q John, Lord Clifford, the murderer of the young Earl of Rutland at Wakefield. He was killed in 1461.

^r Thomas Percy, Earl of Egremont, created in 1449. He was killed in 1460, at Northampton.

^s John Talbot, made Lord Treasurer in 1456, and killed also at Northampton, 1460.

^t James Butler, created in 1449, and held the office of Lord Treasurer twice, in 1455 and 1458; beheaded in 1461.

^u John, Viscount Beaumont, created in 1440. Killed at Northampton, 1460.

Wellys,^x and Ryveres, y troupe yn þem found,
In worshyp þey hem gyde.

Now help Saynt George, oure Lady knyght,
And be oure lode-sterre^z day and nyght,
To strengthe oure Kynge, and England ryght,
And felle oure fomenus pryde.
Now is oure shype dressed in hys kynde,
W^t hys taklynge be-for and be-hynde,
Whos[o] loue it not, God make hym blynde !
In peynes to a-byde.

III.

VERSES ON THE YORKIST LORDS.

FROM MS. Trin. Coll. Dubl. D. 4, 18, the second portion of which consists of various pieces in prose and verse, chiefly written in the latter years of the reign of Henry VI. on paper, 4to. There is some difficulty in fixing the date of this poem, but in all probability it was in May, 1460, previous to the landing of the Earls of March, Salisbury, and Warwick, in Kent. Many other poems were doubtless composed about this time, and Stowe has preserved the commencement of "a long ballet made in favour of the Duke of Yorke and the sayde Erles," which was fastened on the gates of Canterbury at their arrival. It began thus:

"In the day of fast and spirituall affliction,
The celestiaall influence of bodies transitorie."

Yerly be þe morowe, in a somer tyde,
I sawe in a strete, in London as I went,
A gentyl woman sitting in Chepesyde,
Syt wirkyng vpon a vestment.

^x Leo, Lord Welles, slain in 1461, at Towton.

^y Richard Widville, created Baron Rivers in 1448, and father-in-law of Edward IV. by whom he was made Earl Rivers and Lord Treasurer. He was beheaded in 1469 by the peasantry.

^z The MS. reads erroneously, *lordes-sterre*.

She set xij. letteris in order on a rowe,
þ^t I might right wele vnderstande,
þorought þe grace of God it shal be knowe,
þese xij. letters shal saue alle Englande.

A litel while if þat ye wol dwelle,
And yeue audience alle vnto me,
What letters þei were, I shal you telle,
þei were drawn out of þe a. b. c.

There was an V^a and thre arres to-gydre in a sute,
W^t letters oper, of whiche I shal reherse,
ʒ. E. R. E. writen affter b[e] rute,
M. S. R. and F. now haue I þeyme expresse.

Styl as I stode, w^t in a litel sesone,
I construed þese letters þens or I went,
And as I conseyued, be my semple resone,
I shal telle you what þt woman ment.

The arris for thre Richard, þ^t be of noble fames,
þ^t for þe rizt of Englund haue sufferd moche wo,
York, Salesbury, and Warwik, þese be þ^e lordes names,
þat alle Englund is be-holden to.

ʒ for ʒorke, þ^t is manly and myȝtfulle,
þ^t be grace of God and gret reuelacion,
Reynyng w^t rules resonable and right fulle,
þe which for oure sakes haþe sufferd vexacion.^b

E for Edward,^c whos fame þe erþe shal sprede,
Be-cause of his wisdom named prudence,
Shal saue alle Englund by his manly-hede,
Wherefore we owe to do hym reuerence.

^a So in the MS., but we should probably read "a W."

^b Richard, Duke of York, was at this time in Ireland, to which he had been obliged to retreat after the failure at Ludlow in the October preceding.

^c Edward, Earl of March, eldest son of the Duke of York; subsequently Edward IV.

M for Marche, trewe in euery tryalle,
 Drawen by discrecion þat worthy and wise is,
 Conseived in wedlok, and comyn of blode ryalle,
 Joynnyng vnto vertu, excludyng alle vises.

S for Salesbury,^d w^t out any questione,
 Rialle in his reynyng, and wise in euery case,
 He bryngethe many maters to goode conclusion,
 Called for his wisdom *pater familias*.

W for Warwik,^e goode w^t sheld and oþer defence,
 þe boldest vnder baner, in batelle to a-byde,
 For þe right of Englonð he doþe his diligence :
 Boþe be londe and watyr God be his gyde !

F for þe Feturlok,^f þ^t is of gret substaunce,
 þat haþe mevid many maters þorow his mediacion,
 In Englonð and in Wales, in Scotlonð,^g and in Fraunce,
 He rideþ and rulethe withe ryalle reputacion.

R for þe Rose,^h þ^t fresshe is in euery stede,
 Boþe þe rote and þe stalke ben gret of honoure,
 Fro Norway to Normandi þeire power wol sprede,
 From Rylandⁱ to Estland men ioý of þat flowre.

^d Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.

^e Richard Neville, his son, Earl of Warwick. In the same MS. occurs this tristich on his name, composed about the same period :

Warwyk.

W. wisdomē monstrat, et adventus A. bene constat,

R. rightwisnes legi, W. willing prospera regi,

I. iust antiqui, K. kynd est, hic et ubique .

^f The badge of the Duke of York, and used on his seal in 1442 and 1445. See *Sandford*, p. 380, and Willement's *Regal Heraldry*, p. 54.

^g Probably a mistake for *Ireland*.

^h Edward, Earl of March.

ⁱ *Sic*, perhaps for *Ireland*.

E for þe Egle,^k þat gret worship haþe wonne,
þorow spredying of his wynges, þ^t neuer dyd fle,
þer was neuer byrde, þat bred vndre sonne,
More fortunat in felde þan þ^t birde hathe be.

R for þe Ragged Staf,^l þ^t noman may skapen,
From Scotland to Cales þere of men stond in awe,
In al Cristen landes is none so felle a wepen,
To correcte soche caytiffes as do a-gayne þe lawe.

Now haue I declarede þese xij. letters accordyng
To þeire condicions, where þei ryde or gone,
þouȝ þei be disseverid, þe olde from þe yinge,^m
þeire entent and purpos corden alle in oone.

That is, to destroy treson, and make a tryalle,
Of hem þ^t be fauty, and hurten fulle sore,
For þe wyll of Edward,ⁿ kyng most ryalle,
That is þe moste purpos þ^t we labor fore.

^k Richard, Earl of Salisbury. The allusion to his success in the field, must refer to the battles of St. Alban's and Blackheath, the latter of which was fought 23 Sept. 1459. He was beheaded after the disastrous battle of Wakefield, 30 Dec. 1460, which of course will fix the date of this poem anterior to that event.

^l The badge of the Earl of Warwick. When the Lords of the adverse factions came to London at the commencement of 1458, for the purpose of reconciliation, Fabyan writes, "and the xiiijth day of February came the Erle of Warwyke from Calays, with a great bande of men, all arrayed in rede iakettys, with whyte raggyd staues vpon them, and was lodgyd at the Grey Friars." p. 633.

^m This probably refers to the separation of the Yorkist lords, some of whom were in Ireland, and some at Calais. In the same manner writes Stowe, when speaking of their dispersion in 1457, "then were they separated in bodies, but in mindes and hearts knit together in one."

ⁿ There seems some mistake here in applying the title of *king* to Edward, whilst his father survived, since the whole tenor of the verses proves that York and Salisbury were both alive when the poem was written. I can only therefore suppose, that *Edward* is a mistake of the transcriber for *Richard*.

Now pray we to þe prynce moste precious and pure,
 þ^t sytteth w^t his seyntis in blys eternalle,
 Hur entent and purpos may last and endure,
 To the pleasaunce of God, and þe welfare of vs alle.
 Amen.

IV.

POEM ON THE BATTLE OF NORTHAMPTON, 10 JULY, 1460.

FROM MS. Trin. Coll. Dubl. D. 4, 18; a contemporary copy. The Yorkist Lords landed at Dover in June, 1460, and having been joined by the men of Kent, marched on to London, where they arrived 2d July. Leaving the Earl of Salisbury, Lord Cobham, and Sir John Wenlock, to watch Lord Scales, who was in the Tower, Edward, with Warwick, Fauconberg, and Bourchier, advanced to meet the King. The rival armies met near Northampton, and on the 10th July the battle took place, in which, says Fabyan, "after long fighte, the Kinges hoost was sparbled [disparpled] and chasyd, and many of his noblemen slayne; among the which was the Duke of Buchyngham, the Erle of Shroysbury, the Vycount Beaumonde, the Lord Egremonde, with many other knyghtes and esquyers, and the Kyng taken in the felde." This poem must have been written before September, since it speaks of the Duke of York as absent in Ireland. The Duke landed in England about the 8th Sept. and came to London on the 10th October following.

Of alle mennys disposicion naturalle,
 Philisophyrs wryten in euery place,
 That after the bodyes celestialle,
 The erthely body his wirkyn[g] hase;
 Some tyme disposid it is to solace,
 Som tyme the contrary to hevynesse;
 And som tyme, by enspecialle grace,
 Sorow is turned into gladnesse.

And^a ensaumple here of I take witnesse,
 Of certeyne persones þ^t late exiled were,

^a We should probably read *An*.

Whos sorow is turned into ioyfulnesse,
þe Rose,^b þe Fetyrlök,^c þe Egle,^d and þe Bere.^e
Grete games in Inglond sum tyme þer were,
In hauking, huntyng, and fisshing, in euery place,
A-monge lordes w^t shelde and spere,
Prosperite in reme þan reigntyng wase.

Where of God, of his specialle grace,
Heryng þe peple crying for mercye,
Considering þe falsehode in euery place,
Gauē infleweñz of myrþe into bodyes on hye.
The whiche in a Berward^f lightēd preuelye,
Edward, yong of age, disposed in solace ;
In hauking and huntyng to begynne meryly,
To Northampton w^t þe Bere he toke his trace.

Now shal ye here a meruelous case,
Allonly poroughe God oone prouysione ;
þe Berward and þe Bere þei did þe Dogges chace,
And put þeyme to flight, to gret confucione.
þus a-gayne alle naturalle disposicione,
To se a Bere to seke his owne game,
But if it were of Goddis mocione,
þat he shuld do þe Dogges shame.

Talbot ontrewē^g was þe oon Dogges name,
Rauling Bewmond^h anodre, I vnderstonde,
þe thrid also was made ful tame,
He was called bolde Egremonde.ⁱ

^b Edward, Earl of March.

^c Richard, Duke of York.

^d Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.

^e Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

^f Edward, Earl of March, so called from having the Earl of Warwick as his associate.

^g John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury.

^h John, Viscount Beaumont.

ⁱ Thomas Percy, Earl of Egremond.

When þe Bereward come to þe grounde,
 Where he chased the forsaid leese,^k
 A-monge alle oper a Buk^l he founde,
 þe whiche was hye, and fat of greese.

þe coriages Berward put hym ferre in preese,
 To þe Hunt,^m oure Kyng, he hyed hym ful fast;
 The Bere, for alle þe Dogges, wold not seese,
 But hyed hym sone afftre swyfftly in hast.
 The Dogges barked at hem ful fast,
 þe Buk set vp his hornes on hye,
 þe Berward, þei cryed, þei wold downe cast,
 The Bere also, if that he come nye.

The Bereward asked no questione why,
 But on þe Dogges he set fulle rounde;
 þe Bere made the Dogges to cry,
 And w^t his pawme cast þeyme to grounde.
 The game was done in a litel stounde,
 þe Buk was slayne, and borne a-way;
 A-gayne þe Bere þan was none hounde,
 But he might sporte, and take his play.

But þe Hunt he saued from harme þ^t day,
 He þouzt neuer oper in alle his mynde,
 He lowted downe, and at his fote lay,ⁿ
 In token to hym that he was kynde.
 The Bereward also, þe Huntres frende,
 Felle downe on kne, saying w^t obedience,
 "Souereigne lord, thenk vs not vnkynde,
 Nor take ye this in none offence.

^k i. e. leash.

^l Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham.

^m Huntsman; the King, Henry VI.

ⁿ Compare the account in Whethamstede, p. 482, and Stowe, p. 409.

We haue desired to come to your presence,
To oure excuse we myght not answeere ;
Alle þinges were hyd from your audience,
Where-fore we fled a-way for fere.”
The Hunt said þo, “ I wol you here,
Ye be right welcom bothe to me ;
Alle way I pray you to stond me nere,
Ye be my frendis, I may wele se.

Stond vp, Berward, welcom be ye,
Gramercy of you[r] gentyl game ;
From you and your Bere I wol neuer fle,
Tellþe me now, what is your name ?”
“ Edward of Marche, I am þe same,
Trewē to God and youre highnesse.”
þe gentyl Bere said, “ W^t outen blame
We haue be put in gret hevynesse.”

The Hunt answerid w^t gret mekenesse,
þe Dogges wrought a-gayne alle kynde ;
þei labored to bryng me in distresse,
I was þeire mayster and specialle frende.
The Buk ran be-fore, þe Dogges be-hynde,
I folowed affter, I wist neuer why ;
In no place game kowde I fynde,
þe Buk and þe Dogges playde by and by.

A gentylle dogge wol naturally
His mayster love, and drede also ;
His kyndly game if he may a-spy,
From hym belyve he wol be goo.
These curre Dogges before dyd not so ;
þe Buk and þey played par asent ;
They lapped a-wey the fatte me fro,
Me to myscheue was þeire entent.

And neuer to me þei wold consent,
 þe whiche called you euer treytours vntrewe ;
 Tyl now þe trewe comynerys of Kent
 Be comyn w^t you, falsehed to destrewe.
 And truþe long exiled now to renewe ;
 Seynt Thomas I þanke, in alle your right,
 þ^t girded you þis day, and shewid to be trewe,
 So fewe men slayne in so gret a fight.^o

It was þe werk of God almight,
 Of mannesse power it might not be ;
 Gramercy, Faucon,^p of þi fayre flight,
 þe bird from þe nest he made to fle.”
 To London now, þat fayre cyte,
 þe Hunt was brought^a ful reuerently ;
 þe Berward, þe Bere, þe Fawcone fre,
 Rode a-bouȝt hym fulle ioyefully.

Thorow þat cyte right opynly
 þe Hunt rode, w^t gret gladnesse ;
 þe pepil reioysed inwardly,
 And þanked God of his goodenesse ;
 That he likeþ with lustynesse
 To endewe þe Hunt, oure noble Kyng,
 And to remeve his heuynesse,
 Whiche to his regalle is no þyng conservyng.

The Egler^r from Londone was neuer remeving,
 But hovid, and wayted vpon his pray ;

^o William of Wyrcestre, after giving the names of the noblemen slain, adds, “ et alii ad numerum ccc. personarum. Etiam submersi sunt in fugiendo plures.” p. 481. But Hall states, that 10,000 persons were slain at this battle. f. clxxvi.

^p William Neville, younger son of Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland. He married the heiress of Thomas, Lord Fauconberg, and was summoned to Parliament in her right, from 1429 to 1461. He was created Earl of Kent in 1461, and died in 1463.

^a The King reached London on the 16th July, and was lodged in the Bishop of London's palace. See Fabyan and Hall.

^r Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.

Alle his delite was euer in fisshing,
þe Fisshe^s were closed in pyttes al way.
Yit at þe last, vpon a day,
þe Fisshe drewe nere vnto þe bayte;
Nede haþe no lawe, þus alle men say,
þe Egle þerto euer layde goode wayte.

To skape a-way it was ful strayte,
þe Egys birdes^t lay so þeyme a-bowte;
Euer beholding þe falce dissayte,
How from þeyme alle þei wold gon oute.
þe Egle lizted, and made hem to loute,
þe Fisshe was feynte, and litelle of might;
3it iiij. there were, boþe gret and stoute,
þe whiche he toke alle at a flight.

Alle þei had scaped vpon a nyght,
Saue þeire Skales^u were plucked a-way;
þan had þe Fisshe lost alle here might,
And litel ioy in watyr to play.
Now God, þ^t madest bothe nyght and day,
Bryng home þe mayster of þis game,
þe Duke of Yorke, for hym we pray,
þ^t noble prynce, Richard be name.

Whom treson ne falshod neuer dyd shame,
But euer obedient to his souereigne;
Falsehod euer more put hym in blame,
And lay a-wayte hym to haue sleigne.

^s Thomas, Lord Scales, together with Lords Vesci, Lovell, and Delaware, the Earl of Kendal, a Gascon, and others, had thrown themselves into the Tower, which they held against the Earl of Salisbury. See Stowe, p. 408.

^t The forces of the Earl of Salisbury.

^u When the Tower was yielded, Lord Scales, with three others, endeavoured to escape, but was killed by some watermen of the Earl of Warwick, and his body left naked at the gate of "the Clyнке." Hall. p. clxxvi. See also Will. Wyrcestre, p. 482, and Stowe, p. 409.

If God be w^t vs, who is vs a-gayne?
 He is so nowē, blessid mot he be;
 Of þis fortune alle men may be fayne,
 þ^t right haþe now his fre entree.

Blessid be God in Trinite,
 Fadir and Son and Holy Goste,
 Whiche kepithe his seruauntes in aduersite,
 And wold not suffre þeyme to be loste;
 As þou art Lord of mightes moste,
 Saue þe Kyng and his ryalte,
 And illumyn him w^t þe Holy Goste,
 His reme to set in perfyт charite. Amen.

V.

POEM ON THE POSITION OF THE YORKISTS AND LANCASTRIANS, AND
 THE POLICY TO BE OBSERVED BY THE FORMER.

FROM MS. Trin. Coll. Dubl. D. 4, 18; a contemporary copy. It is not easy to fix the date of these verses; but I am induced, after much consideration, to think they were written soon after the Duke of York had been recognised heir apparent to the throne, and Lord Protector, 19th Nov. 1460. The writer advises the heads of his party to be on their guard against the Lancastrians, and not to trust to an outward shew of amity. The allusion to the success of the Yorkists, and their being "set high on Fortune's wheel," can only well refer to the period above named, or to the winter of 1455. Supposing the epithet of the *Rose* to refer to Richard, Duke of York, I would place the poem under the latter year; but, as this epithet is uniformly given to his son Edward Earl of March, I can hardly suppose that in 1455, when he had not attained his fifteenth year, he should be spoken of so prominently, as we find he is in the poem before us.

AWAKE, lordes, awake, and take goode hede,
 For som þ^t speke ful fayre, þei wolde your evil spede;
 þou; þei pere in your presence w^t a fayre face,
 And her tunge chaunged, þe hert is as it was.

þei seyne in þeire assemble, it is a wondre thyng,
 To se þe Rose^a in wyntre so fresshe for to spryng;
 And many barked atte Bere,^b þ^t now be ful styлле,
 3it þei wol hym wyrye, if þei might haue her wyлле.
 But of your fewe fomen no thing þat ye drede,
 For þe comyns ben youres, euer at youre nede;
 3it a seege wold be set, þe falte to take and holde,
 For oon scabbed shepe, may enfecte al a folde.
 Trust not to moche in the fauour of youre foos,
 For þei be double in wirking, as þe worlde gos;
 Promysing feithfully obeisaunce to kepe,
 But perfite loue in þeire hertis is leyde for to slepe,
 And pou3 þei were þe Rose, or þe Ragged Staffe,^c
 þei roughit neuer how sone, in feiþe, þ^t 3e starffe.
 For fyre and water to-gider in kyndeling [to] be brought,
 It passeþ mannes power, be God þat me bought!
 Nor two fases in a hode^d is neuer to tryst,
 Beþ wele war be-fore, and þenk of *had I wylst*.^e
 For þei hopen and tristen to here of a day,
 To se þe Rose and þe Lione^f brought to a bay;
 W^t þe Egel^g and þe Bere, þ^t worþi be in fight,
 From þ^t infortune preserue you God almight!
 And lat not youre sauegardes be to liberalle,
 To your foos þ^t be turnyng euer as a balle;

^a Edward, Earl of March, whose cognisance of the white rose was derived from the castle of Clifford, and said to have been first used by Edmund of Langley, fifth son of Edward III.

^b Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

^c The badge of the Earl of Warwick.

^d A proverb as early as the fourteenth century, and which has descended to our own time.

^e A common proverbial expression in the fifteenth century. See MS. Harl. 5396, fol. 18^b, 19, 21^b.

^f John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, whose cognisance was a lion rampant, argent, for the barony of Segrave. See *Excerpta Historica*, p. 161, *Collectanea Topographica*, vol. iii. p. 66, and *Retrospective Review*, vol. ii. p. 515.

^g Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, beheaded after the battle of Wakefield, 30 Dec. 1460.

And siþe fortune haþe set you hye on hir whele,
 And in youre comyns love, loveþ ye hem as wele.
 For many þat were þe Chayne^h on hir sleve.
 Wole ful fayne youre lyves be-reve ;
 And som þat were þe Ragged Bottis,^h
 Had lever were þe Stafford Knottis ;ⁱ
 But what þei mene no man it wottes,
 þerfore I counsel, eschewe þeire lottis.
 To telle you more it is no nede,
 By counsel goode, 3it take goode hede,
 For a Cristmas gestenyng, as clerkis rede,
 At on-set stevyn,^k is quyt in dede.
 Wherefore I counsel you sempely as I can,
 Of youre disposicion telliþ not euery man ;
 Muche is in my mynde, no more is in my penne,
 For þis shuld I be shent, might som men it kenne.
 But pray we al to God þt died on a spere,
 To saue þe Rose, þe Lyon, þe Egle, and þe Bere ;
 Wt al oþer lordes, trewe to youre assent,
 Her sheld be euer God omnipotent.

Amen.

^h Other allusions to the badges of the Earl of Warwick, the chained bear and the ragged-staff.

ⁱ The cognisance of the house of Stafford, the head of which was the Duke of Buckingham. See *Excerpta Hist.* p. 162.

^k This proverb I recollect elsewhere, but cannot find the passage. *Gestenyng* means feast, as in *Lazamon*, vol. ii. p. 172, and in the romance of *Kyng Alisaundre*, vv. 1161, 1779. *On-set stevyn* is a phrase signifying a time not previously appointed, and is used by Chaucer, *Cant. Tales*, v. 1526, and in the ballad of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, ap. Percy, vol. i. p. 87, ed. 1767.

VI.

VERSES ON THE BATTLE OF TOWTON, 29 MARCH, 1461.

From MS. Trin. Coll. Dubl. D. 4, 18. The fullest account handed down to us by historians of this conflict, is contained in the Fragment printed by Hearne at the end of Sprott's Chronicle, 8vo. 1719. p. 286, in which it is thus related:—"The viage determined by the new elect King, Edward the iiith. of the name, to folowe his ennemyes, King Harry the Sixte and his Queene, northward; first, on the morow [5th March], John, Duke of Norfolke, went in to his countrey with all diligence, to prepaire for the warre, on the party of King Edward. And on the Saturday next folowing, the Erle of Warwick, with a grete band of men, departid oute of London northwarde; where as on the Wednesday next folowing, the Kinges footemen [were assembled] in a grete numbrey, of the which the moost parte were Wallshmen and Kentishmen. Then the Friday enswing, the King Edward isswid out of the cite in goodely ordre, at Busshoppisgate, then being the xiith day of Marche, and helde on his journayis, folowing thois othir; and when the fore prickers cam to Ferry-brigghe, there was a grete skarmusshe, where as John Ratcliff, then Lorde Fitzwatir, was slayne; and theruppon they ever avauced theime self til thay cam to Towton, viii. myles owte of Yorke, upon a Friday, at niȝt, abyding the residw of there company, the which were assemblid in goode ordre on the Saturday, then being Palmesondayis evin; and aboute iiij. of the klokke att niȝt the ii. batailes joynid, and fauȝt all niȝt, till on the morow att affir none, when aboute the noone, the forsaide John, Duke of Northfolke, with a fressh band of goode men of warre, cam in to the ayde of the new electe King E. This feelde was sore fouȝten. For there were slayne on bothe partyes xxxiiij^m. men, and all the season it snaw. There were slayne therlis of Northumberland and Westmerland, with othir, and Sir Andrew Troloppe; and takin, therlis of Devynshyre and Wiltshyre, and behedid there. And the deposid King Harry, his Queene, with Harry, Duke of Somersett, and othir, in grete hast fledde in to Scotland."

These verses are rendered particularly curious by the enumeration given in them of the badges and banners displayed by the Yorkist Lords, and by the towns which sent troops to assist Edward the Fourth. From the scantiness of information, however, existing on this subject, it has not been found possible to illustrate these allusions so satisfactorily or fully as could have been wished.

Now is the Rose of Rone^a growen to a gret honoure,
Therefore syng we euerychone, I-blessid be that floure!

^a Edward, Earl of March, was born at Rouen, 29 April, 1441.

I warne you euerychone, for [ye] shuld vnderstonde,
 There sprange a Rose in Rone, and sprad into Englonde;
 He þat moued oure mone, þoroughe þe grace of Goddes sonde,
 That Rose stonte alone þe chef flour of this londe.
 I-blessid be the tyme, that euer God sprad that floure!

Blessid be þt Rose ryalle, that is so fresshe of hewe,
 Almighty Jhesu blesse that soule, þt þe sede sewe,
 And blessid be þe gardeyne, þer the Rose grewe;
 Cristes blessing haue þei alle, þt to þt Rose be trewe!
 And blessid be þe tyme, þt euer God sprad þt floure!

Be-twix Cristmas and Candelmas, a litel before þe Lent,
 Alle þe lordes of þe northe^b þei wrouzt by oon assent;
 For to stroy þe sowthe cuntre þei did alle hur entent,
 Had not the Rose of Rone be, al Englonde had be shent.
 I-blessid be þe tyme, þt euer God sprad þt floure!

Upon a Shrof Tuesday,^c on a grene leede,^d
 Be-twix Sandricche^e and Saynt Albons many man gan blede;
 On an Aswedynsday we levid in mykel drede,
 Than cam þe Rose of Rone downe, to halp vs at oure nede.
 Blessid be þe tyme, þat euer God sprad þt floure!

^b These were, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Exeter, Somerset, Devonshire, Clifford, Roos, and Dacre.

^c The second battle of St. Alban's, in which the Yorkists, under Warwick and Norfolk, were beaten, took place on Shrove Tuesday, 17 Feb. 1460-1.

^d *i. e.* plain.

^e Saundridge, two miles and a half from St. Alban's. Stowe writes, "At the north end of the towne, called Barnard heath, towarde a little towne called Syndridge, in a place called No mans lande, they [the Northern Lordes] hadde a far greater conflict, with fower or five thousand of the Kings armie, which gave the onset so fiercely at the beginning, that the victorie rested doubtfull a certaine time, till at the length, through the withdrawing many of the Kentish menne, with their Captaine, Lovelace, that was the vaward, King Henries part lost the felde." p. 413. He adds, that 1916 persons were slain, of whom, Sir John Gray was the only man of note.

The norþe[r]n men made her bost, whan þei had done þ^t dede,
 “ We wol dwelle in þe southe cuntrey, and take al þ^t we nede ;
 These wifes and hur doughters, oure purpose shal þei spede,”—
 Than seid þe Rose of Rone, “ Nay, þ^t werk shal I for-bede.”
 Blessid be the tyme, þ^t euer God sprad þat floure !

For to saue al Englonð þe Rose did his entent,
 W^t Calays and w^t Londone,^f w^t Essex and w^t Kent ;
 And al þe southe of Englonð, vnto þe watyr of Trent,
 And whan he saw þe tyme best, þe Rose from London went.
 Blessid be the tyme, þ^t euer God sprad þat floure !

The way into þe northe cuntre þe Rose ful fast he sought,
 W^t hym went þe Ragged Staf,^g þ^t many man dere bought ;
 So than did þe White Lyon,^h ful worthely he wrought,
 Almighti Jhesu blesse his soule, þ^t þo armes ought !
 And blessid be þe tyme, þ^t euer God sprad þat floure !

The Fisshe Hokeⁱ cam into þe felde, w^t ful egre mode,
 So did þe Cornysse Chowghe,^k and brouȝt forthe alle hir brode ;
 þer was the Blak Ragged Staf,^l þ^t is boþe trewe and goode,
 þe Brideld Horse, þe Watyr Bouge^m by þe Horse stode.
 Blessid be the tyme, þat euer God spred that floure !

^f lone londone, *MS.* And so again in the last stanza.

^g The Earl of Warwick.

^h The Duke of Norfolk.

ⁱ Lord Fauconberg. So also in the satyrical verses in *Excerpta Hist.* p. 161, it is said of him, “ The Fisshere hath lost his *Hangulhooke.*”

^k Probably John, Lord Scrope, of Bolton, whose cognisance was a Cornish chough. *Retr.* Rev. ii. 515. He was wounded in this battle. *Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 218.

^l Edmund, Lord Grey of Ruthyn, afterwards Earl of Kent. See *MS. Harl.* 6156, f. 55. *Retr.* Rev. ii. 515.

^m Probably Henry, Viscount Bouchier, afterwards Earl of Essex.

The Grehound and þe Hertes Hede,ⁿ þei quyt hem wele þ^t day,
 So did þe Harow of Caunterbury,^o and Clynton^p w^t his Kay;
 þe White Ship of Brystow, he feryd not þ^t fray,
 þe Blak Ram of Couentre, he said not one nay.
 Blessid be þe tyme þ^t euer God spred þ^t floure !

The Fawcon and þe Fetherlok^q was þer that tyde,
 þe Blak Bulle^r also hym self he wold not hyde;
 þe Dolfyn cam fro Walys, iij. Carpis be his syde,
 The prowde Libert of Salesbury, he gapid his gomes wide.
 Blessid be þe tyme, that euer God spred that floure !

The Wolf cam fro Worcetre, ful sore he þouȝt to byte,
 þe Dragon cam fro Glowcestre, he bent his tayle to smyte;
 The Griffon cam fro Leycestre, fleyng in as tyte,
 The George cam fro Notyngham, w^t spere for to fyte.
 Blessid be þe tyme, that euer God spred þat floure !

The Boris Hede fro Wyndesover, w^t tusses sharp and kene,
 þe Estriche Feder^s was in þe felde, þ^t many men myȝt sene;

ⁿ Possibly meant for Thomas, Lord Stanley, afterwards Earl of Derby, although he is not mentioned by our historians, in their account of this battle. See "The most pleasant Song of Lady Bessy," edited by Tho. Heywood, 12°. Lond. 1829, pp. 51, 65.

^o This and most of the heraldic figures which are subsequently noticed, evidently refer to the banners of the towns which assisted Edward.

^p John, Lord Clinton, is here alluded to, who joined the Yorkist party in 1459, for which his lands were seized, but subsequently restored by Edward IV. I do not understand the allusion to "his Kay." His badge was a *mullet*, nor does he appear ever to have been Lord Chamberlain.

^q One of the badges of the House of York. See Mr. J. G. Nichols's remarks in the *Gent. Mag.* Apr. 1842. p. 379.

^r The Black Bull was used by Edward in reference to his descent from the House of Clare. In the Rolls of Parliament, express mention is made of this standard being carried at Towton by Ralph Vestyn den, for which service he received an annuity of £10. Vol. vi. p. 93.

^s The ostrich feather appears on the seals of Richard, Duke of York, and no doubt was

The Wild Rat fro Norhamptone, w^t hur brode nose,
þer was many a fayre pynone, wayting vpon þe Rose.
Blessid be þe tyme, þat euer God spred that floure !

The norþe[r]n party made hem strong w^t spere and w^t shelde,
On Palmesonday, affter þe none, þei met vs in þe felde ;^t
W^t in an owre þei were right fayne to fle, and eke to yelde,
xxvij. thousand^u þe Rose kyld in þe felde.
Blessid be þe tyme, þat euer God spred þ^t floure !

The Rose wan þe victorie, þe feld, and also þe chace,
Now may þe housband in the southe dwelle in his owne place ;
His wif and eke his faire doughitre, and al þe goode he has,
Soche menys haþ the Rose made, by vertu and by grace.
Blessid be the tyme, þat euer God sprad that floure !

The Rose cam to London^x ful ryally rydyng,
ij. erchebisshops of England þei crouned þe Rose kyng ;
Almighiti Jhesu save þe Rose, and geue hym his blessing,
And al þe reme of England ioy of his crownyng,
þ^t we may blesse þe tyme, þ^t euer God sprad þ^t floure !

Amen, pur charite.

used as a royal badge or banner. See Willement's *Heraldic Notices of Canterbury Cathedral*, 4to. 1827. p. 48.

^t In the Bill of Attainder afterwards passed against the Lancastrians, this battle is spoken of as having taken place "in a feld betwene the townes of Shirbourne in Elmet and Tadcastre, called *Saxton feld* and *Towton feld*." Rolls Parl. v. 477.

^u The number of the slain is variously stated, as pointed out by Turner, vol. iii. p. 231. The number above best agrees with the statement given by a writer in the *Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 220, where 28 thousand "nomberd by Harrolds" are said to have perished. No doubt this approaches nearest to the truth.

^x Edward made his triumphal entry into London on 26 June, 1461, and was crowned on Sunday, the 29th following, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, with great pomp.