

Kings, Lords, and Commons.

BY HISTORICUS.

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We shall now consider the House of Plantagenet who for a period of 245 years occupied the throne of England.

Henry II ruled England from 1154 to 1189. He seemed to have but one aim in life and that was to render monarchy absolute, there was an expression in use amongst men in Stephen's time, "that Christ and His Saints had gone to sleep," and truly their sleep must have been continued throughout Henry's reign. He married a notorious courtesan and divorcee because she had large possessions in France, the incident of the "Fair Rosamond" in the labyrinth of Woodstock shows that our later princes, but carry on the same old game.

Irishmen in particular have reason to execrate the name of Henry. To him they owe the commencement of their long sufferings. One of their chief princes having been called to account for abducting the wife of another prince, by the Over king of Ireland, at once posted off to Henry and obtained countenance in return for his homage. The Pope at this time issued a BULL by virtue of which Henry annexed the Kingdom of Ireland. Nemesis however, followed Henry, his sons all rose in rebellion against him, at his birth-place, Le Mans, he was thoroughly beaten and was driven in headlong flight from the burning city and even as men had cursed him, so in his last hours did he curse his sons whose acts had stretched him upon a bed of death, and so ended the Conqueror of Ireland.

Richard I succeeded his father and for a period of 10 years wore the crown. Although historians of later times have dubbed him LION HEART, yet he was but a mere atrocious blood-shedder, as a set off to the wrongs done to England he engaged in the Crusades and sought to atone for ill doings, by doing greater wrong, the blood and treasure expended in the so called Holy Wars, were worse than wasted in the support of superstition, to raise funds for the expedition, he put up every office in the state for sale and thus created a precedent which has borne bitter fruit, for experience teaches us, that those who buy the right to rule, rule for their own ends. He came to a violent end, shot by an archer, (from the walls of Chalus) whose father and brothers he had killed, he died, and before his death uttered this brief speech, "We came of the Devil, and we shall go to the Devil."

From 1199 to 1216 the crown was held by his brother John, who, if we had to describe in one sentence we should say, was an incomparable scoundrel, and a compound of all the royal vices,—cruelty, lust, avarice, a traitor and a murderer. To make sure of the crown, he murdered his nephew Arthur and threw his body into the Seine, to retain the crown, he became a vassal of the Pope. To his father and brother he became a most shameless traitor, his court was a brothel not worse than those of modern times, but yet this right royal ruffian signed the Magna Charter, the foundation of the liberties that Englishmen yet possess. This concession however, like all others, was given, not from love but fear. How it was wrung from John we may judge when we learn, that he got the Pope to disallow every conces-

sion, and obtaining troops from the Continent, he proceeded with royal pleasure to distress the country. But the great leveller, death was at hand and either glutony or poison emptied the throne.

Henry III succeeded his father, and although a mere boy, yet showed himself a tyrant to the full, the history of the times shows that his court lived at free quarters in all places, the royal retainers were plunderers on every hand and for 56 years the justice promised by his father was disregarded. It is estimated that at least one sixth of the revenue of England was at this time spent upon his foreign favourites, truly our present Battenbergs, Weimars and Leiningens, had their prototypes of old, our modern monarchs can devise no new plan of plunder. In dealing with the Lords, we shall have one notable exception to the general rule, to speak of it:—Simon Earl of Leicester, he however, lived before his time.

Edward I succeeded and from 1272 to 1307 seemed to have but one idea, to impose the Norman yoke on the whole of the British Islands, he inflicted untold misery upon Scotland and Wales, and the bare recital of his treatment of the last of the native princes of Wales, would suffice to justify us in calling him "a tigerish tyrant," he caused the head of Llewellyn to be stuck on the Tower of London, crowned with ivy. David he caused to be hanged, disembowelled and quartered, they committed the unpardonable crime of maintaining Welsh independence, like treatment awaited Wallace, who was drawn to Smithfield, hanged and disembowelled whilst yet alive and then quartered. Let it never be forgot that Wallace who resisted fell Edward's designs upon Scotland, was betrayed by Scottish Nobles for English gold. Truly the Commons have little to thank either Kings or Nobles for.

(To be continued.)

CO-OPERATION.

We are pleased to learn that strong Co-operative Societies have been formed at Wallsend, and Broadmeadows. This is a step in the right direction, and if followed up should work well and bring grand results. All the world is beginning to see that it is a great error, to depend upon others for what we can obtain for ourselves. While working men allow financiers, speculators, and middle-men, to step in between them and the fruits of their toil, they need not indulge in useless complaints if those fruits are diminished. The establishment of co-operative societies for the transaction of business of various kinds is a step in advance, but the principle should be carried farther; working men should study the question and endeavour to master it. We feel confident that if working men only understood their own strength, and were resolved to use it, they might soon be their own employers, their own capitalists, and above all, they might be enabled to enjoy the full reward of their labor.