

## MEMOIRS OF SIR JAMES TYRELL.

*(Communicated by the Rev. W. H. SEWELL, Vicar of Yaxley.)*

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In Suffolk at Gipping, which is a hamlet about two miles to the east of Haughley Road Railway Station, there is a remarkably interesting Chapel, the building of which local tradition assigns to Sir James Tyrell in expiation of the crime it is supposed he committed in murdering the Princes in the Tower.

But little is really known with accuracy of the life of Sir James Tyrell. An inscription is however to be seen on the Chapel, in which his name is found together with that of his wife : which fact lends its support to the tradition that Sir James built the Chapel ; but in no way justifies the prevailing idea that it was built in expiation of a crime, still less that that crime was the murder of the Princes.

What then are the facts of Sir James Tyrell's life ? How comes it that his name, the name of a great Captain, was ever connected with so foul a deed ? When and with whom did the common story of the murders arise ? And to what extent is the story itself to be believed ?

No printed History of England with which I am acquainted assists us very much in answering any of the above queries. It is a problem the solution of which would take the general historian too far perhaps from his course to discover. He would scarcely pause in his narrative to collect what information is to be met with in chronicles and continuations printed or unprinted, respecting any one personage beneath the dignity of a Sovereign. Such an inquiry however respecting a subject of the realm, an eminent person in his time, seems properly undertaken in a separate essay. Hence the present contribution, which, attempting to clear the character of a Suffolk

gentleman, is here offered through a Society that extends its researches only as far as the county of Suffolk.

In endeavouring to bring together the facts that bear upon this tangled paragraph of English History, I shall beg to draw attention to the references to the Tyrell family contained in contemporary documents, as far as I have been able to examine them. I shall then quote the earliest version known of the common story of the Murder or Murders, and afterwards relate the history of its appearance in print. I shall next inquire into the authorship of More's *History of King Richard III.*, and show that its correctness has been denied by well-informed writers nearly from the time of its first publication. I shall have to show that as a whole it partakes more of the character of a romance than of a history; and that with regard to the common story implicating Sir James Tyrell, it is utterly improbable, and contains obvious mis-statements. I shall conclude by demonstrating the certain and only cause of Sir James Tyrell's fall, referring to his trial and that of his son; and not omit to investigate the allegation of a confession of the murder, asserted to have been made by Sir James himself between his condemnation and his execution.

An inscription is to be seen above a doorway in Sir James Tyrell's † Chapel at Gipping, Suffolk, to the following effect:--

R tray for S JAMES  
Tyrell & Dame  
Anne his Wyf

† I spell *Tyrell* in accordance with Sir James's autograph; and as the name is spelt by his descendants.

\* That this interlaced and endless knot, which is several times repeated on the walls of Gipping Chapel, was origin-

ally the badge of Three Long Bows borne by Tyrell, and was suggested by the assonance between *Tyrell* and the French *Tirailler* and *Tiraillleur*, is urged with much probability by Mr. H. W. King, in the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeol. Soc.* III., 198.

It has served to keep alive even if it did not originate the following local tradition respecting that brave Knight of injured memory.

In the year 1483 or thereabouts, after Sir James Tyrell had murdered the two young Princes in the Tower (so the story goes) he suffered the qualms of a troubled conscience, and had no peace of mind in the world. He had become an outcast among men on account of his heinous crime, and consequently left the uncongenial society of the Court and came and settled in the beautiful woodland retreat of Gipping. And here in expiation of the murderous deed, he built this highly ornamented Chapel, dedicating it to Almighty God in honour of St. Nicholas, and desired all persons evermore to pray for him and his wife, as the inscription reads.

Now, in order to test the truth of this tradition, recourse must be had to the facts of history. For the inscription of itself proves nothing one way or the other; except the probability that Sir James and his wife were living at the time when the words were cut in the stone.

The details of the history of that stirring and excited period are not easy to come at. It is necessary therefore to narrow our range as much as possible, and confine our attention chiefly to the Court and to one family, that of the Tyrells, in order to ascertain, if possible, the successive events in which they were engaged. My first object therefore will be to explain the position which the Tyrell family then held, which will best be done by recounting in the order of time some of the main events in the active life of that brave soldier Sir James Tyrell.

#### OF THE FAMILY OF SIR JAMES TYRELL, KNIGHT BANNERET.

James Tyrell, whose father was William Tyrell of Gipping, in Suffolk, Esquire, and Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1446, was the eldest of two, or possibly of five sons; and grew up to be a man of "goodly personage," being endowed with great strength, quick wit, and many excellent gifts of nature.

We hear of him first in 1473, when Sir John Paston writes\*: "The Countess of Warwick is now out of Beau-lieu Sanctuary, and Sir James Tyrell conveyeth her northward, men say by the King's assent; whereunto some men say the Duke of Clarence is not agreed." He is next mentioned in May, 1474, when, being an Esquire, he was amongst the challengers at the tournament held on the occasion of Edward the Fourth's second son Richard being created Duke of York †

On the 24th of July, 1482, in Scotland, he was made a Knight Banneret ‡ for personal prowess in two battles, by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, then chief in command. On the 14th of November, 1482, he was appointed § with Sir William Parr and Sir James Harrington to exercise as Vice-Constable the High Office of Lord Constable of England.

On the 9th of April, 1483, his brother Thomas || was appointed among the esquires to bear the body of King Edward IV. to the Abbey for a funeral service, previous to interment at Windsor. Then followed the short reign of the ill-fated Edward V.; whose last three public acts are dated 17th of June, 1483; ¶ his uncle and successor Richard dating the commencement of his reign from the 26th of June. \* \*

On the 6th of July, 1483, Sir James Tyrell was present among Dukes, Earls, Lords, and Knights, at Richard III.'s First Coronation at Westminster, † † on which occasion his

\* Paston Letters, Vol. III., pp. 92-3, edited by Mr. James Gairdner, to whose kindness I am indebted for the quotation.

† Bentley, *Excerpta Historica*, p. 242.

‡ Harl: MS. 293, fo. 208.

§ See the appointment in full, Rymer xii. 169, which in Pat. Roll, 326b. M. Prima Patent de A° 22 R. Edw. IV., is thus briefly given:—Rex constituit Dominos Willielmum Parre, Jacobum Harrington et Jacobum Tyrell milites, ac unum eorum altero absente hac vice Vice-constabularium Ac Joñnem Wallington

ac alios clericos commissarios suos generales in officio Constabular' Angliæ.

|| Letters and Papers illustrative of the reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII.: edited by Mr. James Gairdner. Vol. I., 5.

¶ Patent Roll of Edward V. See Nichols's "Grants from the Crown." (Camden Society).

\*\* "Memoranda Rolls," quoted by Sir H. Nicolas in *Chronol: of Hist:* 326.

† † Bentley, *Excerpta Historica*, p. 384.

younger brother, Thomas, occupied (perhaps as Deputy) the office of Master of the King's Horse.\* The 23rd of July, 1483, King Richard left Windsor, attended by Henry Stafford Duke of Buckingham, his one great supporter amidst all the confusion and violence of the previous weeks and months; and on the same day reached Reading.† In July the King was at Oxford;‡ and at his manor of Woodstock.

In August, 1483, he reached Gloucester§ where the Duke of Buckingham making for Brecknock took his leave of the King, "constantly disposed and affected in all outward appearance."|| On the 4th of August the King reached Tewkesbury,¶ the scene of his greatest military exploit on the 4th of May, 1471, when he was not 19 years of age. Thence to Worcester.

On the 8th of August, 1483, the King entered Warwick Castle, where he was joined by the Lady Anne Neville, his Queen, who came direct from Windsor. Here he kept his Court a week, several Bishops being present, Dukes and Ambassadors.\* \*

On the 15th of August he was at Coventry; †† on the 17th at Leicester, ‡‡ where having probably heard rumours of unexpected danger he forthwith orders 2000 Welsh bills to be made for him in all haste possible.

On the 19th of August, 1483, King Richard reaches Nottingham, where on the 22nd he answered a letter from the Duke of Burgundy.§§ On his way North the King passed (perhaps on the 26th day) in August through Doncaster; || then through Pontefract, ¶¶ where he was

\* Wardrobe Account of R. III., in *Antiquarian Repertory*, II., 243.

† Harl : 433, fo. 108b.

‡ Wood's *Hist. & Antiq: Oxfd*: I., 233.

§ Davies, York Records, p. 160 n. quoting Rous 216, Fosbroke's Gloucester 201.

|| K. Rich. III. *Life*, in anno, by Sir G. Buck.

¶ MSS: Harl : 433, fo. 110.

\*\* Lingard, p. 579.

†† Harl : 433, fo. 109b.

‡‡ Harl : 433, fo. 110b.

§§ Sharon Turner, 443, quoting Harl : 112, i.e., Harl. : 433, fo. 112.

|| Davies, York Records, 160 n., quoting Hunter's Deanery of Doncaster, I., 16 n.

¶¶ Harl : 433, fo. 237.

joined by his only legitimate son, Edward, born in 1473.

On the 29th of August, 1483, King Richard and his Queen enter York City in great state. And on the 31st of August, "in order to the solemnity of his second Coronation" the King sent from York to Piers Curteis (presumably in London) Keeper of his Wardrobe, for doublets, gowns, banners, &c., &c.\*

There were precedents for the iteration of Coronation in France as well as in England. Pepin, King of France, who died in 768, was crowned twice; Charlemagne, who died in 814, five times; Charles the Bold, who died 877, four times.† And in England William the Conqueror was crowned at Winchester the second time in the year 1069; Stephen on his usurpation was crowned in 1135; King Henry II. was crowned for the third time in the year 1159, at Worcester; King Richard I. was crowned in 1194, after his return from his German prison; and King Henry III. the first time in 1216, at Gloucester, and the second time in 1220, at Westminster.

In accordance with these precedents, on the 8th of September, 1483, the King and Queen were re-crowned in the Minster by Rotheram, the Lord Primate of England;‡ his only legitimate son, Edward, aged ten, being then created by his father Prince of Wales; at which ceremony Sir James Tyrell held the honourable office of Master of the (seven) Henchmen or Pages.§

Scarcely, however, had Richard been confirmed in his usurped dignity, and less than a month had passed in banquets and pageants, which have always been highly popular in England, and which the King himself dearly loved—when the suspicious rumours that had reached him at Leicester on the 17th of August, began to prove themselves well-founded; and he who had been his greatest friend became his open enemy. The Duke of Buckingham, who at Gloucester took leave of the King as a friend and loyal subject, now raised the standard of rebellion.

\* J. Strype; note in Buck, p. 527.

‡ Croyland Contin: 567 (ed. Gale).

† Maskell Monum: Ritual. III., xix.

§ Wardrobe Account ut. supra.

Richard's recently and wrongfully acquired crown was in the utmost danger; large numbers of persons, as it was truly stated, had espoused the side of Buckingham, probably in the hope of releasing the Princes from the Tower; that is to say, Edward V., the true King, and his brother, the Duke of York, of whom the Croyland Continuator writes as at this time still living. \*

Richard was not the man to let his opportunity slip; and looking round his adherents, he at once decided to appoint Sir James Tyrell to an important command. The King was assured of his loyalty; and who would be so likely to execute with success an arduous enterprise as a man that had ably filled some of the highest offices in the State? and whom could Richard better trust in his own cause than the very man he had himself dignified with the title of Knight Banneret for personal bravery in the field?

Accordingly, on the 2nd day of October, 1483, a commission was given to Sir James Tyrell (other officers being joined with him) to enter into the castles of the Duke of Buckingham and other traitors,† and in the same month‡ he was appointed Commissioner in seizing *lands* as well as castles of Richard's opponents. What in the course of a few weeks, to use the words of Dr. Lingard, could have changed the Duke of Buckingham from a zealous friend to a determined enemy to the new King, it is vain to conjecture. Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, whose wife was the sister of Elizabeth, engaged to restore the crown to the young Prince whom he had conspicuously assisted to dethrone. Richard at once staked everything, life itself, on his crown; and writes on the 12th of October, 1483, to John Russell, Chancellor of England and Lord Bishop of Lincoln, commanding him § to bring or at least send the Great Seal to be affixed to the warrant for the apprehension of the Duke of Buckingham.

The Duke, it will be remembered, had taken his leave of

\* Ingulph's Chronicle (ed. Bohn), p. 490.

† Harl: 433, fo. 121b 122b.

‡ Harl: 433, fo. 121.

§ Autograph Letter of K. Richard III., reprinted in Ellis's Original Letters.

King Richard in the month of August at Gloucester, and thence made his way for Brecknock. He subsequently came "to Webblie," where he tarried one week and held consultation "with the gentlemen of the countrey."\* The Duke thereupon committed his son and heir to the keeping of Sir Richard Delabere, Knight, and his wife Dame Elizabeth, until he should send for him by a concerted token. Proclamation was soon afterwards made in Herefordshire, among other counties, and large sums of money were offered, for the apprehension of the Duke, his sons, and Sir William Knevet. "And then was theare great serche made wheare this saide companye was become."† The Duke himself was concealed on an estate belonging to his servant Ralph ‡ Banastre, Esqre., at Milford, near Baschurch in Shropshire, where he was discovered (says the Croyland Continuator) by the unusual quantity of victuals brought to so obscure a place. There seems no better ground than the above statement for the tradition that Banastre betrayed the Duke.

The Duke having been secured by the Sheriff of Shropshire, Thomas Mytton, Esqre., of Shrewsbury, and brought to Shrewsbury, was delivered by the King's writ to two Knights and other gentlemen; as we learn from the following two entries § in the Roll of Bailiff's accounts of the town of Shrewsbury, a° 1483:—

"In denar' solut' p div's cust' & expens' fact' circa custod' duc' de Bukynhām qn capt' fuit & ductus ad villam, vi.s. iiii.d. ac pro regardo."

"Et in denar' solut' p vino dat' duobz milit' dñi Reg' & aliis gen'os' p pceptu' dñi Reg' apud deliberacōem dc'i ducis a villa, xvi.s. vi.d."

That is:—

"Money paid for diverse costs and expenses incurred touching the

\* Stafford MSS., tome II.

Christian name; and the sheriff Mytton *John* instead of Thomas, his true name.

† Stafford MSS., tome II.

§ As given in Owen and Blakeway's *Hist: of Shrewsbury*, sub anno.

‡ Hall, among other errors, misnames Banastre *Humphry* instead of Ralph, his



custody of the Duke of Buckingham when he was taken and brought to the town 6s. 4d. and for reward."

"Money paid for wine given to two Knights of our lord the King and to other gentlemen by command of our lord the King, at the delivery of the said Duke by the town, 16s. 6d."

It would be interesting to ascertain the names of both the Knights selected by King Richard for so important a service. One of them, however, may I think certainly be discovered. I have no doubt at all that one Knight was Sir James Tyrell; for the following reasons.

As early as the 2nd day of October, 1483, Sir James had received a commission (as has been stated) to enter the Castles of the Duke of Buckingham, and other traitors, and also to seize lands of King Richard's opponents. In the previous year, 1482, he had received Knighthood at the hands of Richard when Duke, and we know him to have been largely trusted by Richard since he had become King. It is therefore highly *probable* that the King would select him as a loyal Captain to receive the Traitor.

Next we are able to glean a few particulars from a Memorial of a Herefordshire lady to Edward Duke of Buckingham, setting forth her services in rescuing his Grace from death at the time of his father's apprehension. It is "a copy of an old role of papers found out in the threasury at Thornbery Castle among the evidences there, mensis Julij anno xpi 1575," and is printed by Owen and Blakeway in their *History of Shrewsbury*, 4to., 1825; Vol. I., 240, from tome II., p. 241 of the Stafford MSS. now in the possession of the Right Honble. the Lord Bagot of Blithfield, near Rugeley, who with great courtesy has verified for me the extracts I have made from the Memorial. In this document, after mentioning the proclamation, the rewards offered, and the great search made for the Duke, the lady goes on to say:—

"And so all the gent' of Harreffordeshyre weare sent for by pryvie Seale to King Richard to Salisburie; and by that tyme Duke Henrie of Buckingham was brought by Sir James TYLER the thirde dai wheare he was pittifull murdered by the saide Kinge."

Tyler is here a *lapsus pennæ* for Tyrel, as Miss Halsted

has conjectured.\* For Tyler is not known to be the name of any family of rank or gentle blood at the period. And the transposition of the syllable *rel* to *ler* is not unlikely to have been made by a scribe in copying.†

The Herefordshire lady proceeds as follows :—

"In the mean tyme [Dame Elizabeth Delabeare] shaved the saide Lord Stafforde's Heade and put upon hym a meaden's raiment and so conveyed him owte of Kynnardsley to Newchurch. And then came *Xtopher Wellsborne from Sir James TYLER* to Kynnardsley, and said his father commanded to have the said Lord Stafford delivered."

Now as Tyler is not known to be the name of any family of rank at the period, it is scarcely possible that there was such a person as Sir James *Tyler*. But Wellsborne *is* a known name; and will be introduced further on in this paper, as a "gentleman servant" to Sir James *Tyrell*.‡

I think I may therefore safely conclude that Sir James *Tyrell* was certainly the Knight who on 31st of October, 1483, in accordance with the King's writ, received the Duke of Buckingham at Shrewsbury from Sheriff Mytton. "On the third dai," *i.e.*, on the 2nd of November, All Souls'-day, Sir James brought the Traitor to the King at Salisbury, where notwithstanding the fact that it was Sunday, he was beheaded by the King's orders without legal process,§ in the presence, we may suppose, of the able soldier Sir James Tyrell, who thus confirmed the Crown to King Richard far more effectually than the splendid coronations at Westminster and York had previously done.

Doubtless it was with profound emotion that shortly afterwards the youthful Princes living in the Tower heard the news that their great kinsman who had done so much to dethrone the elder brother, had on his, the true King's, thirteenth birthday suffered a traitor's death at Salisbury.

As a consequence of the Duke's execution a commission was issued at Salisbury *8th of Nov.*, 1483, for seizing the possessions || in Devon and Cornwall in controversy between

\* *King Richard III.*, Vol. II., p. 271 n.

† MS. Cott: Vitell: A. xvi., p. 202.

‡ For the foregoing remarks and for the reference to Miss Halsted's note which I had overlooked, I am indebted to the kindness of the late Mr. J. G. Nichols.

§ Croyland Contin: (Riley, p. 492).

|| Harl. 433, fo. 122b.

the King's "full trusty Knight for his body Sir Jamys Tirelle and Sir Thomas Arundelle Knt. his rebelle and traitour;" this Sir *Thomas* being probably brother of Sir *John* Arundell of Lanherne, Cornwall, whose daughter Anne was already in January, 1484, the wife of Sir James Tirelle.\*

From this time Richard's high opinion of the ability of Sir James Tyrell may be demonstrated; for the King's gratitude knew scarce any limits: offices of the greatest importance and lucrative appointments were showered upon one who proved himself faithful among the faithless.

Accordingly in *December*, 1483, Sir James was appointed to the office of Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall; † and as soon as Parliament had met an Act ‡ was passed, 23rd of January, 1484, § in favour of Anne, wife of Sir James Tyrell, daughter and heiress of John and Elizabeth Arundel, by which certain manors the jointure of her mother were settled on her and her heirs, with remainder in default to the heirs of her husband.

In the next month, February, or March, 1484, Sir James Tyrell was made Guardian of minors || and their lands. And in order to recoup him in the expenses he had incurred in stamping out the Buckingham rebellion, warrants were issued from London on the 6th of *March*, 1484, to pay Sir James Tyrell, for soldiers ¶ and for money spent in the King's service. Probably in this same month of March Sir James was made Steward of divers Lordships in Wales and the Marches.\*\* In April, 1484, there was entrusted to Sir James Tyrell and Richard Golds †† the wardship of Robert Arundelle-Treryse; and in May letters were written constituting ‡‡ Sir James (with others) assessors of lands in Corn-

\* Roll Parl. VI., 255.

|| Harl: 433. fo. 58b.

† Harl: 433, fo. 40.

¶ Harl: 433, fo. 164.

‡ Roll. Parl. VI., 255b.

\*\* Harl: 433, fos. 54, 67b, 74b.

§ The day of the month is obtained from the Act 1 Hen. VII., repealing this Act.

†† Harl: 433, fo. 58b.

‡‡ Harl: 433, fo. 27.

wall ; Thomas Tyrell, Esqre., probably his brother, being rewarded in the same month with an annuity of £40 to be received \* out of the revenues of the Lordship of Wethersfield, co. Essex. In the following month of June, 1484, Sir James Tyrell and Sir Thomas Cornewaille were appointed † to the Stewardship of Bealt, in South Wales.

During August, 1484, Sir James was enriched with several offices ; becoming Sheriff of Wenlok ‡ and Steward of several Lordships in Wales. That is to say, on the 9th of August, 1484, he was made Steward of the Welsh Lordships of § Lanemtherry, Lanthasant, Newport Wenloke, and Kevoeth Meredith, and of the Marches for life. And on the same day the Stewardship of the Duchy of Cornwall, which since the previous December he had held at the King's pleasure, was now granted to him also for life. ||

At this period, long after the supposed time of the murder of the Princes in the Tower, no man in England was less suspected ; and no man was more highly honoured than the brave soldier Sir James Tyrell. In September, 1484, he was present ¶ amongst noblemen and others at the grand reception of the Scotch Ambassadors at Nottingham.

King Richard was now doing his best to govern England, and well he did it ; but he still had France to conquer. And as no home danger appeared above the surface he decided to spare Sir James Tyrell for France. Accordingly on the 13th of January, 1485, Sir James was made Supervisor of the Castle and Town of Guisnes in Picardy, in the absence of Lord Mountjoy. \* \* A special commission was given him from Windsor ; and a warrant was thence also issued to the inhabitants † † of the Castle and country of Guisnes to obey Sir James.

\* Harl: 433, fo. 25.

|| Pat. 9 Aug., 2 R. III.

† Harl: 433, fo. 67b.

¶ Gairdner, I., 65.

‡ Harl: 433, fo. 75.

\* \* Harl: 433, fos. 93b, 201.

§ Pat. 9 Aug. 2 R. III., p 1.

† † Harl: 433, fo. 201.

The politic Richard was not a King to permit his subjects to suffer loss in serving him; he therefore took steps that Sir James, 20th of January, 1485, should receive for him (the King) money amounting to £3000, which was paid at Calais; \* and further issued from London a commission, at the same time, to Sir James and William Bonde-man to receive wool to the amount of £3000 and to sell the same for the King's use. † And four days afterwards, 24th January, 1485, the King commands ‡ the officers of the Shires of Glamorgan and Morgannoke to accept Sir James as their Governor notwithstanding the King sends him to Guisnes.

Richard's short and busy reign was now drawing to a close; Henry Tudor was actively preparing to challenge Richard's Crown. Whether Richard had time to recall Sir James Tyrell from Picardy does not at present appear; certainly, if out of sight he was not out of Richard's mind; for in June, 1485, he made him Constable of the Castle of Dundagelle (Tintagel) in the Duchy of Cornwall. § And when the final crash came on Saturday, 22nd August, 1485, and King Richard III., in the 33rd year of his age, was defeated in the battle of Bosworth Field, and slain by Henry Tudor Earl of Richmond, who was crowned as Henry VII. with the very crown which Richard had worn in riding from Leicester, || Sir James Tyrell would appear to be serving the Crown in France, and was perhaps unaware of what important changes were taking place at home. But one whom he well knew, Sir Thomas Arundell, was at hand; and we cannot wonder that he supported Henry VII. in the field of battle. ¶

It was scarcely to be supposed that one of the chief of Richard's great Captains would be allowed by Richard's enemy to retain his command or the vast estates with which at others' expense he had been so greatly enriched. Hence

\* Harl: 433, fo. 202b.

§ Harl: 433, fo. 104b.

† Harl: 433, fo. 202b.

|| Croyl: Contin:

‡ Harl: 433, fo. 205.

¶ Croyl: Contin:

we find that in the ensuing Session of Parliament there was made a general revision of the property \* possessed by Sir James Tyrell.

On 30th October, 1485, Henry the Seventh was crowned at Westminster. On the 18th of January, 1486, the Union of the Roses was accomplished in the unhappy marriage of the King, Henry VII., with Elizabeth of York, eldest child of Edward IV., and the true heir to the Throne if the Princes were dead.

In the next month Parliament was sitting; and on or before the 19th February the Act (1 Rich. III.) in favour of James and Anne Tyrell was repealed † and lands restored to Sir Thomas Arundell. And it seems, at the same time, another Act in favour of Sir James was also repealed, and lands in the Buckenham, Norfolk, were restored to Sir William Knyvet. ‡ Certain it is that on the 19th of February, 1486, handsome compensation was made to Sir James.

The enmity of partizanship had to be appeased; but as Sir James at the time of the battle of Bosworth had fortunately for himself been away from England, and as it was highly desirable to conciliate\* so able, energetic, and successful a Captain, a man in the prime of life, he now has a grant "for life of the offices of Sheriff of Co. Glamorgan & Morgannok, Steward of Crown lands in the same County, Chancellor of the same County, Constable of Caerdiff Castles and Chief Forester of all Forests in same County, with the right of appointing coroners clerks of the exchequer and Chancery etc. etc." § Punishment of this sort for belonging to the wrong side will certainly be allowed to be not unhandsome.

Henry's enemies as yet were not all defeated. King Richard had indeed been killed on Bosworth battle field; but Richard's heir was still alive. This was the Duke of

\* *Vide* Materials for Hist. of K. Henry VII., edited by Rev. W. Campbell, Vol. I., pp. 36, 41, 95, 270, 460 (pardon granted him).

† Roll. Parl. VI., 270.

‡ Roll. Parl. VI., 298.

§ Gairdner II., 368, referring to Pat. Rolls, p. 4, m. 6; Dr. Milles (*Archæologia*) refers to Escheat. Rolls, p. 4; and Mr. Spedding to Cal. Pat. Rolls, I., 236.

Suffolk's eldest son, John Earl of Lincoln, whom Richard, after the death in April, 1484, of his only legitimate son, had declared heir to his crown.

The Earl of Lincoln was now asserting his rights, and on the 20th of June, 1487, \* was killed at Stoke in arms against King Henry VII., who after the battle knighted † Thomas Tyrell Esquire. Nearly two years passed after his marriage before it pleased the tyrannical and jealous Henry that his wife Elizabeth, the true heir to the throne, should be crowned.

On the occasion of her coronation at Westminster, 25th Nov., 1487, both the Tyrells were present; Sir Thomas in his newly-received honour of Knight Bachelor; and Sir James Tyrell, Knight Banneret. ‡ It is thus plain that Sir James had already won the esteem and confidence of the suspicious King; and very soon after he was in a position even to ask a favour. In 3 Henry VII., probably on or before the 26th of February, 1488, a saving Act to Sir James was passed, § remedying perhaps to some extent the hard measures of the former Act (1 Henry VII.) And it would certainly appear that on that day, 26th of February, 1488, a commission was granted to certain persons there named reciting that "in consideration of the services of Sir James Tyrell, a *Knight of the King's body*, it had been granted to him to be recompensed of the issues of the county of Guisnes in the marches of Calais *in such wise as he holdeth him content; amounting to the value of all the profits of his lands &c.* in Wales at the beginning of this reign," which lands were transferred to the charge of the commissioners. || This appears to be the first great shower of honour and emolument poured upon Sir James Tyrell in this reign. He is now Knight of the Body to a King for the second time; and according to his own estimate his new revenue from Guisnes is in value equal to the

\* Fisher's *Compan. and Key to Hist: Engl:* p. 134.

§ Roll, Parl. VI., 407b.

† Leland, *Collec. Tom.* 4, p. 214 (231).

|| Cal. Pat. Rolls, II., 89, quoted by Spedding *in loco*.

‡ Leland, *Coll.*, IV., 214, 231.

enormous revenue he must have enjoyed at the beginning of Henry's reign, that is to say at the end of Richard's.

We hear no more of Sir James Tyrell until the summer of the next year, when as "Captain of Guisnes" he was present 13th June, 1489, at the battle of Dixmude in Flanders, in which the lord Morley was slain.\* In the year 1492 he was appointed to receive the French Envoys at the Peace.†

At this point something like a break occurs in the continuity of records in which Sir James Tyrell is mentioned.

It will therefore be convenient at this stage of our inquiry to consider an alleged crime which if truly alleged would for ever and irretrievably damage the character of Sir James in the judgment of all honest men. The atrocious deed is assigned by the author of the common story of the murder of the Princes in the Tower to a period some nine years previous to the year in Sir James's life, 1492, which this essay has now reached; that is to say, to the time of King Richard's Progress through the Kingdom to York, a circuit lasting from 23rd July to 8th September, 1483.

#### THE COMMON STORY OF THE MURDERS.

The following is the earliest printed account in *English* which implicates Sir James Tyrell in the crime of the murders of the Princes in the Tower‡. It is carefully copied from the prose Continuation which R. Grafton appended to John Hardyng's metrical Chronicle—as edited in the year 1812 by Sir Henry Ellis:—

I shall reherse to you [writes the Continuator, Grafton] the dolorous ende of these two babes, not after euery way that I haue heard, but after that waye that I haue so heard by suche menne and suche meanes as me thynketh it to be heard [hard] but it should be true.

Kyng Rychard after his coronacion takynge his waye to Gloucestre, to visyte in his newe honoure the toun, of which he bare the name of olde, deused as he roade to fulfyll that thyng which he before had

\* See the Chronicles of Hall and Holinshed and the Chronicle of Calais, p. 2. Camden Soc. 1846.

† Gairdner, II., 291.

‡ "In Grafton's Continuation of Hardyng's Chronicle, the lives of King Edward the Fifth and King Richard the Third usually ascribed to Sir Thomas More, made their first appearance." Sir H. Ellis, Hardyng, Pref. xix.



intended. And forasmuche as his mynde gaue [*i.e.* misgave] hym that, his nephewes luyng, men would not recon that he coulde have right to the realme, he thought therefore without delaye to ryd them, as though the Kylling of his Kynsmen might ende his cause, and make hym Kyndely Kyng. Wherupon he sent Iohn Grene, whome he specially trusted, to syr Roberte Brakenburye, constable of the Towre, with a lettre and credence also, that thesame syr Robert in any wise should put the two chyl dren to death. This Iohn Grene dyd his errand to syr Robert Brakenbury Knelyng before our ladye in the towre, who playnely answered that he would neuer put them to death to dye therefore. With the whiche aunswer Grene returned, recounting thesame to Kyng Rycharde at Warwike yet on his iourneye, wherewith he toke suche displeasure and thought, y<sup>e</sup> thesame night he sayed to a secrete page of his "Ah, whome shall a manne truste? they that I haue broughte vp my selfe, they that I went [*i.e.* weened] would haue moste surely serued me, euen those fayle me, and at my comaundement wyll doo nothing for me." "Syr," quoth the page, "there lyeth one in y<sup>e</sup> palet chaumbre without, that I dare well saye, to dooe youre grace pleasure, the thing were ryght heard that he would refuse," meaning this by James Tirell, whiche was a manne of goodly personage, and for the gyftes of nature, worthie to have serued a muche better prince, if he had well serued God; and by grace obteyned to have asmuche treweth and good wyll, as he had strengthe and [good\*] wyll.

The man had an hyghe hearte and sore longed vpwarde, not risyng yet so faste as he had hoped, beyng hyndred and kepte vnder by syr Rycharde Ratcliffe and sir Willyam Catesbye, which longing for no more parteners of the princes fauoure, namely not for him, whose pride they knew woulde beare no pere, kept hym by secrete driftes out of all secrete truste, which thing this page had well marked and known; wherfore this occasion offred, of verry speciall frendshippe set his tyme to set hym forward, and by suche wyse to dooe hym good, that all the enemies that he had (excepte the deuell) could neuer haue dooen hym so muche hurte and shame, for vpon the pages woordes Kyng Rycharde aroose, for this communicacyon had he sytting on a drafte [*i.e.*, a commode], a conueniente carpet for suche a counsaile, and came oute into the palette chaumbre, where he dyd fynde in bedde the sayd James Tyrell and syr Thomas Tyrell, of persone like and brethren of blood, but nothyng of Kynne in condicions. Then sayde y<sup>e</sup> Kyng merely [*i.e.*, merrily] to them "What syrs, be you in bed so sone?" and called vp Iames Tyrell, and brake to hym secretly his mynde in this myscheuous matter, in y<sup>e</sup> which he foude hym nothyng straunge. Wherfore on the morowe he sent hym to Brakenburye with a lettre by the which he was commaunded to delyuer to the sayde Iames all the Keyes of the towre for a night, to thende that he might there accomplyshe the Kynges pleasure in suche thynges as he there had geuen hym in commaundement. After which lettre delyuered and the Keyes receaued, Iames

\* Hall.

† Spied ed. alt.

appointed the nexte nyghte ensuyng to destroye theim, deuysyng before & preparyng the meanes.

The prince, assone as the protectoure took vpō hym to bee Kyng, and left the name of protectoure, was thereof aduertised and shewed, that he should not reygne, but his vnclē should haue the crowne, at whiche woordes the prynce sore abashed beganne to sighe and sayed, "Alas, I would myne vnclē would lette me haue my lyffe, althoughe I lese [*i.e.*, lose] my Kyngdome." Then he that tolde hym the tale, vsed him with good woordes, and put hym in the beste comforte that he coulede; but forthwith he and his brother were both shut vp, and all other remoued from them, one called blacke Wyll, and Wylliam Slaughter only excepte, whiche were sette to serue them, and iiii. other to see them sure. After whiche tyme, the prince neuer tyed his poyntes nor any thyng rought of hym selfe, but with that young babe his brother lynged in thought and heuynesse, till this trayterous death deliuered them of that wretchednesse.

For Iames Tirrell deuised that thei should be murthered in their beddes, and no bloode shed, to thexecucio wherof he apointed Myles Forest, one of the foure that before keppe theim, a feloe fleshe bred in murther before tyme; and to him he ioyned one Ihon Dighton his awne horskeper, a bygge broade square and strong knaue. Then all the other

The murder-  
ynge of Kyng  
Edward his  
chyl dren.

beyng remoued from them, this Myles Forest & Ihon Dighton, aboute mydnight, the children beyng in their beddes, came into the chaumbre, and sodenly lapped them vpemongest the clothes & so bewrapped them and entangled them, keepyng downe by force the fetherbed and pyllowes heard [*i.e.* hard] vnto their mouthes, y<sup>t</sup> within a while thei smored and styfled them, and their brethes faylyng thei gaue vp to God their innocent soules into y<sup>e</sup> ioyes of heauen, leauyng to the tourmētours their bodyes dedde in the bed, whiche after y<sup>e</sup> wretches perceaued, first by y<sup>e</sup> strugglyng, with y<sup>e</sup> panges of deathe & after long lyng still to be throughly dedde, thei laied the bodyes out vpon y<sup>e</sup> bed, and fetched Iames Tirrell to se them, whiche when he sawe them perfightly ded, he caused the murtherers to burie them at the stayre foote metely depe in the grounde vnder a greate heape of stones.

Thē rode Iames Tirrell in great hast to Kyng Rychard, and shewed hym all the maner of y<sup>e</sup> murther, who gaue hym greate thankes, and, as mēne saye, there made hym Knight, but he alowed not their buriall in so vyle a corner, sayyng y<sup>t</sup> he would haue them buryed in a better place, because thei were a Kynges soonnes.

Lo the honourable courage of a Kyng, for he would recompence a detestable murther with a solempne obsequy. Whereupō a priest of sir Robert Brakenburys tooke them vp and buried them in suche a place secretly, as by the occasion of his death (whiche was verie shortly after) onely knewe it, the very truthe could neuer yet bee very well & perfightly knowen. For some saie that Kyng Rychard caused y<sup>e</sup> priest to take them vp & close them in lead & put them in a coffine full of holes hoked at y<sup>e</sup> endes with ii. hokes of yron, & so to caste them into

a place called y<sup>e</sup> Blacke depes at y<sup>e</sup> Thamys mouth, so y<sup>t</sup> thei shuld neuer rise vp nor bee seen again. This was y<sup>e</sup> very truth vnknowē, by reason that y<sup>e</sup> said preste dyed so shortly, and disclosed it neuer to eny persone y<sup>t</sup> would vtter it. And for a truthe, when sir Iames Tirrell was in the towre for treason committed to Kyng Hēry the seuenth, bothe he and Dighton were examined together of this poynte: and bothe thei confessed the murther to be dooen in thesame maner as you haue hearde, whether y<sup>e</sup> bodies were remoued thei bothe affirmed thei neuer knewe. And thus as I have learned of them y<sup>t</sup> mucche knewe and litle cause had to lye, wer these ii. noble princes, these innocēt tēdre childrē, borne of y<sup>e</sup> moste royall [*ed. alt.* noble] blood & brought vp i great welth, likely lōge to live, etc. etc. etc.

As the paragraphs above quoted must always continue to occupy the very foremost place in the great controversy which has for centuries been carried on with regard to the murders of the Princes, it will not, I trust, be deemed superfluous to consider

#### THE HISTORY OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE COMMON STORY IN PRINT.

Is there any trace in print of the Common Story, before it appeared in the fully-developed form above given? Undoubtedly there is; but only, as far as I am aware, in the questionable history of Polydore Vergil. This person, an Italian, after obtaining several preferments in England was promoted in 1508 to the Archdeaconry of Wells.

About this time, as Sir Henry Ellis has observed,\* King Henry VII. encouraged Polydore to write a History of England. And as the History was written and published, it is important to inquire what were the author's qualifications for so exceedingly difficult a task? Some insight into his character is to be obtained from a few letters of the time which have been calendered by Mr. Brewer.

Andreas Ammonius, writing on 11th April, 1515,† to Wolsey, states that he has seen a letter, dated 10th February, from Polydore Vergil *abusing* Wolsey. In the next month, as we learn from a letter dated 22nd May, 1515,‡ Polydore was thrown into prison for attempting to

\* Preface to an Early Translation of Polydore Vergil's *History of England*. Ed. Sir H. Ellis.

† Brewer. Letters and Papers Henry VIII., Vol. II., No. 312.

‡ Vol. II., No. 491.

weaken the allegiance then existing between King Henry VIII. and the Pope. In the same year, Wolsey wrote on 6th October to Hadrian, Cardinal Bishop of Bath, saying that he had received his letter in favour of his kinsman Polydore; that he personally will forgive his offence; but that the King is still much displeased with him.\*

Shortly afterwards Wolsey received from Rome a Cardinal's Hat; and Polydore adroitly seized the opportunity of paying him the most fulsome and profane flattery, with a view to his own release from prison. It was in 1515 that Polydore wrote to Wolsey in this fashion:—

“Lying in the shadow of death he has heard of Wolsey's elevation to the Cardinal's throne. When it is allowed him he will gaze and bow in adoration before him, and then ‘My spirit will rejoice in thee my God and Saviour.’ He prays as he has been forgiven lately for a fault, that the punishment may be also remitted that Wolsey's gifts ‘may be perfect even as he himself is perfect.’”

And he subscribes himself “*Humilis creatura Polydorus.*” And lest the above profaneness should be excused on the plea of an extravagant use of metaphor, he adds the subjoined address:—*Reverendissimo domino DEO meo, domino Cardinali Eboracensi dignissimo.*†

After so abject an apology from this “*humilis creatura*” to the person he had roundly abused a very little time before, the reader will not be surprised to find Silvester, Bishop of Worcester, on 19th January, 1516, discounting the high terms in which Polydore had repeated the Cardinal's good opinion of the Bishop. For Polydore, as he informs Wolsey, is “deceitful and malicious.”‡ Polydore's flattery had, however, been successful. For on 18th January, 1516, Cardinal Hadrian writes to thank Wolsey for procuring the liberation of Polydore from prison, and for other favours.§

A few years later it appears, from a letter dated 3rd June, 1523, that Polydore had been accused of envying the great

\* Brewer, Letters and Papers Henry VIII., Vol. II., No. 993.

† Silvester to Wolsey. Brewer, Vol. II. 1417.

‡ Vol. II. 970.

§ Vol. II., No. 1415.

fame of his contemporary Erasmus. Some ten years later he published his *History of England* in 26 Books, in Latin, to which he afterwards added a 27th. The first edition of his work, which was dedicated "Londini mense Augusto, 1533," to the King, is in the British Museum, a unique folio, I believe, and bears the following title:—

POLYDORI VERGILII VRBINATIS

ANGLICÆ HISTORIÆ LIBRI XXVI.

::::

BASILIÆ APVD IO BEBELIVM

ANNO M.D. XXXIIII.

Here indeed in the pages of this "deceitful and malicious" person is to be found an account of the murder of the Princes which implicates the honour of Sir James Tyrell.

Polydore was the first to place this malicious fabrication in the printer's hands, and also, I believe, the first even to commit it to paper. His so-called History is the first witness against Sir James; and More's so-called History is the second. But their testimony does not agree. For whereas More's History states that King Richard first ordered the commission of the crime *before he came to Gloucester, i.e., in the month of July*, Polydore asserts that the King ordered it *dum hic morabatur*, while he was staying at Gloucester, *i.e., in the month of August*—an important discrepancy.

Again, More's History represents Sir James Tyrell as not at all unwilling, in the hope of promotion, to undertake the atrocious deed; Polydore, on the contrary, represents Tyrell as a most unwilling agent:—*Ille imperata facere compulsus dolenter Londinum proficiscitur*, p. 540.

Which writer is to be deemed worthy of confidence? The "deceitful and malicious" Polydore, or More? The great historical romance which passed under the name of More's History is entitled to a fuller examination and shall receive it. But is it just to accept the condemnation of an English gentleman who had long been honoured as a brave and honest soldier, on the judgment of an envious foreigner, an abject individual, whose character was by those who

knew him deemed "deceitful and malicious," and whose writings were thus characterised by an author of the time:—

"Vergilii duo sunt : alter Maro : tu Polydore  
Alter : tu mendax, ille poeta fuit." \*

The complete version *in English* of the common story of the murders was first given to the world by the printer Richard Grafton, who was as careless in editing works † as he was injudicious in publishing them. For in the year 1537 he suffered a six weeks' imprisonment in the Fleet for unwarrantably publishing other important matters. Unfortunately for the truth of history the works of two deceased authors fell into his hands. One of them was the metrical Chronicle of John Hardyng, who died about the year 1465, and whose work extends to the commencement of the reign of Edward IV. This work Grafton printed and published in 1543, adding in prose a Continuation of his own, extending to the time of publication. And as Sir Henry Ellis, in the preface, has observed—"It is singular that there should be two editions of *Hardyng's Chronicle* both printed by Grafton *in the month of January*, 1543, differing in almost every page, and one, in Grafton's own portion of the work, containing (in the reign of Henry VIII.) no less than 29 pages more than the other." The other work was Edward Hall's Chronicle, which, after Hall's death in 1547, fell also into Grafton's hands ; and which with his own additions he printed and published in the next year, 1548.

Now into both these works of deceased authors Richard Grafton foisted the History of Richard III. containing the common story of the murder. Both of these versions contain substantially the same account of the Princes. Yet in the earlier print, namely, in his Continuation to Hardyng, in 1543, Grafton did not venture to attribute the History to Sir Thomas More, who had been dead since 1535 ; merely stating in the Title-page that his addition had been gathered "out of diverse and soundrie autours."

\* John Owen. Epigrams. ed. 1622.

† Ellis. Hardyng, p. xiii.

Idem Anglicè redditum :—

Two different Vergils both have writ, as every scholar knows,

Maro the truest poetry, Polydore untrue prose.

Five years later (in 1548) he was less judicious, for in Hall's *Chronicles* which Grafton then edited and published, he made the following bold assertions :

At the beginning of *The Pitifull Life of Kyng Edward the V.*, we find (p. 342, Ellis) in the margin—

"This Kynges tyme wyth some parte of King Richard y<sup>e</sup> iij as shall apere by a note made at that place was writte by syr Thomas More."

And again in *The Tragical Doynges of King Richard the Third*, at the end of the common story, this second note is placed in the margin :—

"From the beginnyng of King Edward the fifte hetherto is of sir Thomas Mores pening."

Thus Grafton screened his own rash assertions and interpolations with the name of poor Hall, who died in the prime of life, in the 48th year of his age, in the year previous, 1547, and whose credit and literary reputation Grafton in his preface to Hall's *Chronicles* takes care to destroy. It would be difficult for a publisher in those days to damage the character of an author more effectually than Grafton does in the following words :—

"But this is to be noted that the Authour thereof [*i.e.* Hall], who though not to all mē, yet to many very well knowē, was a man in the later tyme of his lyfe NOT SO PAYNFULL AND STUDIOUS as before he had been."

If this accusation be true, it is difficult to imagine an author either "paynfull" or "studious" in the 28th or 38th or any other year of his age, who "in the later tyme of his life" *i.e.*, before he was 48, had ceased to deserve that character. I am unable at present to accept the accusation against Hall himself as justly made; and consider it to have been carefully designed by the incompetent Grafton to cover his own unfounded statements or rash conjectures. For Grafton "wrote the greatest part of Hall's Chronicle," as Sir Henry Ellis has observed.\* It was Grafton, therefore, who first printed the so-called *History in English of Richard III*; and who wished it to be supposed that that *History* was penned by Sir Thomas More. *Hic fons et origo*

\* Ellis. Hardyng xvi.

*mali*. From this source only is it that for hundreds of years the noble character of More has been dragged through the mire, and the reputation of Sir James Tyrell has most wantonly been aspersed.

The next appearance of the common story in print was in the earliest edition of More's English Works, edited by William Rastell, and published in London by J. Cawod and others in the year 1557. It is one folio volume bound in two, printed in black letter. And it does not seem difficult to account for its appearance in this work. For when it is remembered that More received, mainly perhaps at Archbishop Morton's Palace, a most learned education; was constantly practising himself in both English and Latin composition—a habit which he continued to the time of his prison-life; and was, no doubt, often transcribing or translating, with occasional dates, some of the themes or exercises given him as model-copies, by a master mind; it can be no matter of surprise if some such transcript in his own handwriting should have been preserved and kept with his original papers; and still less surprise if it should have deceived an inexperienced editor into admitting it as a genuine composition.

This I believe to have been actually the case; for prefixed to William Rastell's edition of *The History of Richard III.* is found the following note:—

“The history of King Richard the thirde (unfinished) written by Master Thomas More than one of the undersheriffs of London; about the yeare of our Lorde \* 1513. Which worke hath bene before this tyme printed, in hardynges Cronicle, and in Hallys Cronicle: but very much corrupte in many places, sometye havynge lesse, and sometime having more, and altered in wordes and whole sentences; muche varyng fro the copie of his own hand by which thys is printed.”

Now with regard to the above *date*, were there not internal evidence demonstrating that the History was written long before More was appointed undersheriff (in September, 1510), it would have appeared an excellent conjecture to suppose the production written in 1513; for

\* More was undersheriff of London from 3rd September, 1510, to the 23rd July, 1519. Foss. Judges.



in that year Sir James Tyrell's friend, the imprisoned Edmund de la Pole, according to the direction of the dying Henry VII., was beheaded on 30th April by that truly dutiful son Henry VIII. Yet against this we must set the fact that Sir James Tyrell's own son Thomas was knighted by the King in France on the following Christmas-day.

It must carefully be borne in mind that this first edition of More's Works in English was a posthumous one. Sir Thomas More was beheaded on 6th July, 1535; and this edition was not published for more than twenty years afterwards, namely in 1557. Yet in spite of his own statement, above quoted, the editor himself seems to have felt some reasonable doubt and hesitation with regard to the treatise. For even W. Rastell could not find an important part of the English History in More's handwriting; but had, so he states, to translate it from the Latin; as we learn from this marginal note:—

“ This that is here betwene thys mrak † and this mrak \* was not written by M. More in this history writte by him in englishe, but is traslated out of this history which he wrote in laten.”

p. 22. A. and again at

p. 66. H—67 A.

Now with regard to this first English edition of More's Works, which gives substantially the same version with Grafton, of the common story, implicating Sir James Tyrell, it should be observed that the credibility of the common story had already been implicitly condemned, as the sequel will show, by a very competent person, More's own brother-in-law, John Rastell, who in *his* Chronicle most carefully avoids all injurious mention of Sir James Tyrell, and who might have proved, had his life been spared, a more discriminating and scholarly editor than his son William Rastell, the person who saw More's collected English Works for the first time through the press.

The *English* History of Richard III. was, therefore, an “unfinished” production, a noble fragment no doubt; but yet a fragment. And it is remarkable that this so-called History *in Latin* is in that language also a mere fragment; and could not be found in its entirety by the editor of the

Latin works ; as the next section of this paper will show.

I have now to direct the reader's attention to the *Editio Princeps* of More's Latin Works ; of the existence of which volume (in the British Museum) I was informed by the kindness of Mr. James Gairdner of the Record Office, Editor of Letters temp. Rich. III. and of Memorials of Henry VII.—a gentleman to whom I am indebted for several valued suggestions bearing upon the many questions involved in this paper. The title of the volume itself is the following :—

“ Thomæ Mori, omnia quæ hucusque ad manus nostras pervenerunt Latina opera.

ap. Bogardum. Lovanii. 1566. fo.”

Now this finely-printed and I believe carefully-edited volume from Louvain contains the Latin *History of Richard III.*, and prefixed thereto is a very striking apology. Therein the editor while recording the popular account of the History having been written about the year 1513 by Sir Thomas More, enters his *caveat* against its being accepted as sterling history. It was a carelessly-written theme, in style not to be compared with More's known Latin works, but evidently dashed off in a few sittings, for his own amusement, “*proprie exercitationis gratiâ*,” being nothing better, in regard of authenticity, than a young man's Latin exercise. What more would a friendly editor be likely to say against the work he was editing ? except that whereas it was asserted to be written in 1513 it “now for the first time” in 1566 was brought to light in its Latin dress ? (“*nunc primum Latine in lucem editum est.*”)

Now it has to be stated that the Latin History of Richard III. contained in this *Editio Princeps* DOES NOT CONTAIN the common story of the murder ! It finishes with an account of King Richard's publicly pardoning one Fogg who had been his deadly enemy ; ending thus :—

[not in Grafton, 1543.]

[not in Hall, 1548.]

in *W. Rastell's* ed<sup>n</sup> 1557 :—

“When he had begonne to reygne  
the — daye of June, after this

Louvain ed. 1566.

“Cum post ludicram illam electionem regnare cepisset coronatus

mockishe eleccion, than was he crowned the — day of the same moneth. And that solemnitie was furnished for the most part with the self-same prouision that was appointed for the coronacion of his nephew.

Now fell there mischieues thicke”  
— and so on till the common story of the murder is told.

est, eaque celebritas magnâ parte illo ipso apparatu peracta qui nepoti ejus coronando fuerat destinatus.”

\* \* \*  
Historia Regis Richardi Tertii.  
Finis.

At fol. 56b.

With these facts before us it has to be remarked that the common story of the murder was either known to the Louvain editor, or it was not.

If it was unknown to one who made it his business to acquaint himself with all More's works, the supposition is a weighty argument against More's being the author of the common story.

If on the other hand, it was both known and deliberately rejected by a man of research at that time, the alternative supposition is just as weighty an argument against the truth of the common story itself.

This inquiry into the appearance of the common story in print would not be complete without an account of its *non-appearance* in England, in the writings then published or in MS. of any single English author that preceded Grafton. Several men before Grafton chronicled the deeds of their time from 1480—1536, some fully, some meagrely, one or two accurately. They are these:—

The learned *Doctor* of the Canon Law who wrote his *Continuation* in *Croyland Abbey* during the last ten days of April, 1486 ;

The Warwickshire Antiquary *John Ross* or *Rouse*, who died 1491 ;

The freespoken *Philip de Commines*, who died 1509 ;

The accurate author of a still unprinted MS. in the British Museum "*Vitell. A. XVI.*" who died after 1510 ;

*John Fabyan*, Sheriff of London, who died 1512 ;

*Richard Arnold*, who compiled the Customs of London, and died 1521 ;

*Andrew Bernerd*, the blind poet, called *Master Bernard*, who died after 1522, and who wrote in Latin in his capacity of Royal Historiographer,

a life, in the British Museum, "Domitian, A. XVIII" of King Henry VII. ; printed by Mr. James Gairdner in his *Memorials of K. Henry VII.* Rolls Series, 1858.

And *John Rastell*, who wrote a *Chronicle of the Pastyme of the People*, and died 1536.

Now all these authors (for I purposely exclude the Italian Polydore) refer to the deaths of the young Princes. And of them Ross, Commynes, the Author of Vitell. A. xvi., Fabyan, Master Bernard, and Rastell charge King Richard with the crime. But *not one of them* connects the name of Sir James Tyrell with the scandalous story.

I do not wish to lay too great stress on a negative argument like the foregoing. But before proceeding I should like to point out the bearing it has on the assertion of Sir James Tyrell's guilt in consequence of the charge being a contemporary one. "The fact that the accusation was written in that age proves surely" (as a valued correspondent remarks) "that it was conceivable in that age which was Tyrell's own." Not quite Sir James's own. The Captain was beheaded in 1502; and it was not till long after that event that Polydore's book was published, viz., in 1534. The age to be sure was an unscrupulous one. The cruelties perpetrated during the Wars of the Roses were yet fresh in the minds of many. And one of the most talked-of events was the fact of the absolute disappearance of the two Princes after being lodged in the Tower. Continuator, Chronicler, Annalist, Diarist, one writer after another discoursed, at the time, of the Princes' disappearance. By whose instrumentality could the youths have been made away with? Let the question be referred to a jury. And let the jurymen be the authors I have last named. The allegation against Sir James was either known to them or it was not. If it was not known to as many as eight contemporary authors who have left behind them their investigations into circumstances of the murder, I record that supposition in the Sir James's favour. And if the allegation was known to them, and they in fact successively rejected it *nem. con.*, I surely may record this alternative supposition still more emphatically in his favour.

Our common story of Sir James's guilt so far from being commonly believed by the men of the time, was deemed by them impossible. To all those authors, seven Englishmen, one Frenchman, it seemed inconceivable that an Englishman like Sir James Tyrell, an eminent servant of the State, held both at home and abroad in high repute, associated in trust with Bishops and Archbishops, could have degraded himself to execute so dastardly a deed. To them any such report against a Suffolk gentleman was simply incredible.

Only two men, one a hungry foreigner amongst us, the Italian Polydore, of known untruthfulness; the other an anonymous pamphleteer, of great abilities, but of still greater imaginativeness, dared to point a moral and adorn a tale by the invention or adoption of so flagitious a personality against a brave soldier that was dead.

While the common people were singing the pitiful ballad of "the Babes in the Wood," killed by their cruel uncle, is it for one moment to be supposed that these chroniclers and historians of that time were *ignorant* of the common story of the murder? Why, then, in recording so many damaging facts relating to the foremost men of their age, did they all, writing independently of each other, alike omit the common story, if one after the other had not adjudged it undeserving of record, because utterly unworthy of credit?

It seems especially desirable to point out that one of these eight, More's own brother-in-law, John Rastell, who published his Chronicle in 1529, and died in 1536, does not support the charge against Sir James. Rastell says a good deal about the murder; gives the popular rumours on the subject; but he does not implicate Sir James Tyrell in the atrocity. He leaves it to less informed and later writers to mistake fiction for fact, and to circulate romance for history. And such writers were the deceitful and malicious Polydore Vergil, the unscrupulous Richard Grafton, William Rastell the careless editor of the first and posthumous edition of More's English Works, and their too faithful followers and copyists "unto this last."

The admirers of Sir Thomas More will not think it superfluous in the next place to discuss the question

#### OF THE AUTHORSHIP OF MORE'S HISTORY OF RICHARD III.

The first complete edition in English of More's Works was published just as Queen Elizabeth was about to ascend the Throne. And it has already been stated in this paper that from her Majesty's reign to the present the gravest doubts have been expressed by competent critics whether Sir Thomas is justly credited with the composition of this work.

Sir John Harrington the poet, in the *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, published 1596, says \*

"Lastly the best, and best written part of al our Chronicles, in al men's opinions, is that of Richard the Thirde, written as I have heard BY MOORTON, but as most suppose, by that worthy and uncorrupt Magistrate, sir Thomas More."

The prevalent opinion is easily accounted for ; but Sir John himself first attributed the History to Moorton, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died A.D. 1500.

The next witness is Sir George Buck the antiquary, who died 1662, and who in his History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, says that

"doctor MORTON wrote a booke in Latine against King Richard, which came afterward to the hands of Mr. Moore, sometime his servant."

And adds :

"This booke was lately in the hands of Mr. Roper of Eltham as sir Thomas Hoby, who saw it, told me." †

This Mr. Roper of Eltham, Kent, was the husband of More's eldest and accomplished daughter Margaret.

It will suffice next to refer to Horace Walpole, who did so much a century ago, in his celebrated Historic Doubts, to shake people's confidence in mere idle tales, and who ‡ endorses Sir George Buck's opinion that some other

\* Sign D. 4, quoted by Sir H. Ellis.      quoted by Sir H. Ellis. Hardyng, Preface, xx.  
Hardyng. Preface, xx.

† Buck's Hist: Rich: III., page 75,      ‡ Hist: Doubts. Dubl. ed., p. 22.

than More was the true author, and modern investigation has confirmed this view. Internal evidence betrays clear traces in the History of another hand than More's. Sir Henry Ellis in his edition of Hardyng (p. xx.) observes :

"I am inclined to think the *English* copy was the work of Morton ; for as Grafton has printed it, one sentence bears internal evidence of an earlier pen than that of Sir Thomas More. The writer, in detailing the circumstances of King Edward IV.'s last sickness says \* it 'CONTINUED LONGER THEN FALSE AND FANTASTICALL TALES HAUE VNTREUELY AND FALSELY SURMISED, AS I MY SELFE THAT WROTE THIS PAMPHLET TRULY KNEWE.' Now at the time of King Edward IV.'s death in 1483 Sir Thomas More could have been scarcely three years old."

Still more recently Mr. James Gairdner, of the Record Office, has discussed the authorship of the History, in its Latin and in its English forms, respectively, in an elaborate paper in *Notes and Queries*, 2nd Series, I., 105. He has, however, subsequently found reason to recant the opinion there expressed : as may be seen in his *Letters and Papers*, Vol. II., Pref. XVIII.-XXI.

Thus then, Sir John Harrington in 1596, Sir George Buck before 1662, Sir Horace Walpole in the last, and Sir Henry Ellis in the present century (each of them being an excellent authority on this particular question)—all agree in the one point I am urging. All attribute the "History" to *some other writer* than More ; one who must have been a less scrupulous and a less trustworthy person than he. The circumstances therefore under which the production was given to the credulous world in English, and was withheld in its entirety from the more learned world acquainted with Latin ; the judgment of the ablest critics, and the internal evidence supplied by the theme itself, are, it is presumed, sufficient grounds for refusing altogether to impute this remarkable Fragment any longer to Sir Thomas More, and for denominating the author pseudo-More.

\* See p. 470 of Hardyng's *Chronicles*, reprint, 1812 ; and p. 343 of Hall's *Chronicles*, reprint, 1809.

The next stage in this discussion must be an inquiry into

THE UNTRUSTWORTHINESS OF PSEUDO-MORE'S HISTORY  
CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE.

The authorship of a treatise is comparatively of little moment so long as the statements made in it are to be trusted. But pseudo-More's History contains several demonstrable errors, the most glaring of which must now be pointed out as specimens; reserving those errors that relate to Sir James Tyrell or to the common story of the murder for mention in the succeeding section of this paper.

From the Address which on 25th June, 1483, was presented to Richard Duke of Gloucester, and which was afterwards embodied in the Act of Settlement (1 Richard III.), and may still be seen,\* we learn that the real ground on which Richard based his pretensions to the Crown was that at the time of Edward IV.'s "pretensed marriage with Elizabeth Grey" the King "was and stood married and troth plight to one Dame Eleanor Butteler, daughter of the old Earl of Shrewsbury," whence "it followeth evidently" that the said King Edward and Elizabeth "lived together sinfully & damnably in adultery." . . . "Also it . . . followeth that all th' issue & children of the said King Edward been bastards, and unable to inherit or claim anything by inheritance by the law and custom of England."

Now pseudo-More is altogether silent about Lady Eleanor. He says that a precontract with Elizabeth Lucy, one of Edward's mistresses, was alleged; and having given this false version of the story, he has little difficulty in overthrowing the credibility of the allegation by the testimony of Elizabeth Lucy herself, who, he says, acknowledged that it was untrue. Now mis-statements like these, as Mr. Gairdner observes, surely prove the author either to have been very careless or very uncandid.

If pseudo-More's facts cannot be trusted, neither can his figures. He incorrectly states that Lord Hastings was executed in the Tower on "the same" day as Ryvers; that

\* Roll, Parl. VI., 240, 241.



on the 9th June Richard openly took on him to be King; whereas there are extant Public Grants of Edward V. as late as 17th June. That on 5th July Richard created Edward his son Prince of Wales; whereas the creation took place on 8th September at York, not in London. And he even places\* the greatest and last event of Richard's reign, the Battle of Bosworth-field in the *wrong* year, 1486, instead of 22nd August, 1485. The above errors may suffice to show that the so-called History is not trustworthy, and that we must not depend upon any one of its assertions unless it may be confirmed by independent testimony.

One cannot indeed but admire the elegance of composition† so often displayed in this Fiction founded upon Fact, but I hereby record my conviction that it would be as reasonable for a student of history to quote as sober truth any of Daniel Defoe's Works—his *History of the Plague*, his *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *Robinson Crusoe*, etc., etc., all of which “being fictions were written as and intended to be taken as real and genuine books”—as it can be for us to rely upon the untrue and calumnious History of Edward V. and Richard III. for any events which took place during those reigns. Whether the original author be Cardinal Moreton, Archbishop of Canterbury, or some Great Unknown (Sir Thomas More he will soon, I trust, be generally acknowledged not to be) I must altogether refuse credit to his unsupported assertions. *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.*

Since, therefore, I am compelled to deny the trustworthiness of the entire composition, considering it as an early and brilliant specimen of an Historical Romance, I have to state that I more especially object to that portion of it termed the common story of the murder being accepted as true. It is this part of the “History” that implicates the name of Sir James Tyrell.

\*. Edition of 1641, page 450; or the 1809 reprint of Hall's Chronicles, page 419; or the 1812 reprint of Hardyng Chronicles, page 547.

† I would instance particularly the finely-imagined speech put into the mouth of Richard before the battle of Bosworth; indeed most of the speeches are fine, and all, I believe, are imaginary.

It may indeed be objected *in limine* that I have undertaken a hopeless task; that the common story has held its ground too long to be ever dislodged from its place in our annals. It has, I admit, held its position too long, 300 years too long; and yet, after 300 years, it is not too late, surely, for Truth and Falsehood to grapple, as Milton desired. For 800 years the forged Decretals of Isidore Mercator were accepted by all the world as genuine; but now their spuriousness is acknowledged even by writers of the Roman obedience. The common story of the murders has come to us floating down the river of time as a disowned waif of the miserable Wars of the Roses. Its existence, I submit, is not to be held any proof of its truth. PROOFS HAVE NOW TO BE GIVEN WHICH WILL WARRANT THE SPECIAL CONDEMNATION OF THE COMMON STORY ITSELF AS BOTH IMPROBABLE AND INACCURATE.

I refuse first of all to believe it because it is given avowedly as mere hearsay. The author writes not of his own knowledge, but from particulars communicated to him by certain unnamed informants; and when a brave man's reputation is at stake, proofs should be forthcoming, not mere gossip, which no record whatever has corroborated.

I have also to object to a certain colouring given to the phraseology, which is precisely such as a playwright would employ in composing a tragedy. For instance the writer speaks of the two Princes in 1483 as "these two babes," "that young babe his brother." Now as Edward V. was born on the 2nd November, 1470, being in September, 1483, nearly 13 years of age; and as Richard Duke of York was born on the 17th August, 1472, being in September, 1483, more than 11 years of age—it seems hardly an appropriate use of language to call these unfortunate Princes at that time "two babes."

Again, "*Black Wyll and Wylliam Slaughter*" are said to have been two of the Princes' servants. Is there any evidence to show that these murderous names were really names of the actual attendants upon the Princes? "A fellow fleshed or flesh-bred in murder," and other phrases might also be quoted of a highly tragic cast.

## BUT WHAT CAN BE MORE IMPROBABLE THAN THE STORY ITSELF?

Who, as Horace Walpole asks, can believe that if Richard meditated this murder, he took no care to sift Brakenbury before he left London? And who can believe that he would trust John Green, or anybody else, with a letter to Brakenbury directing so atrocious a crime, thus putting it in Green's power (he is supposed to know its contents) to blacken Richard's character? Richard is represented at Warwick as bearing Brakenbury's refusal with the meekness of a Saint; but is it in the nature of so jealous and imperious a King as he was to pardon the refusal of a servant; and not only pardon him, but trust this officer afterwards, and even enrich\* him? And is it likely that Brakenbury, if too honourable to commit this deed, would allow another to do it, maintain his own fealty, and finally die in battle† fighting on Richard's side? And who can imagine that on Brakenbury's non-compliance Richard would have ordered him to cede the government of the Tower to Tyrell for one night only, the purport of which had been so plainly pointed out by the preceding message? Had such weak steps been taken, Walpole acutely inquires,‡ could the murder itself have remained a problem?—*as it did*.

Credit will also be refused to the narrative

## ON THE GROUND OF ITS INACCURACY.

I do not wish to lay too great stress on the formation of a sentence or the tense of a mood; but if the following statement from so careful a writer as the Croyland Doctor, who was actively engaged in the State affairs of his time, be taken in its natural sense, the two Princes were *not* murdered *during* the Royal Progress, as pseudo-More asserts, but were alive in the Tower at the time of the second coronation at York on the 8th Sept., 1483:—

*Interim, et DUM HÆC AGERENTUR [i.e., the Coronation at York]*

\* "Brakenbury received several important grants, some of which were of lands of the late Lord Rivers."—Gairdner's *Richard the Third*, p. 164.

† *Id. Ib.*, p. 155.

‡ *Hor. Walpole's Works*, 4to, 1798.

REMANSERUNT *duo predicti Edwardi Regis filii, sub certa deputata custodia infra Turrin Londiniarum.*

Contin. p. 567, ed. Gale.

That is—

In the meantime, and WHILE THESE THINGS WERE GOING ON, THE TWO SONS OF KING EDWARD BEFORE NAMED REMAINED in the Tower of London in the custody of certain persons appointed for that purpose.

*Ingulph's Chronicle.* Bohn, p. 490.

That is to say, in September, 1483, the two Princes *were living* under known surveillance in the Tower.

This apparently clear statement, made by so accurate a writer as the Croyland Doctor is acknowledged to be, cannot fail to have great weight with the student of this problem. And would not the ascertained knowledge of the Princes being yet alive completely account for the Duke of Buckingham's astonishing and otherwise unaccountable rebellion, which took place after the 8th September and before the 2nd October, 1483, and in fact justify it?

Yet further: is there not good reason to believe that the young Princes were still alive later on, namely, on the 2nd November, when the Duke of Buckingham was beheaded at Salisbury? For the Duke is accused by no chronicler (except by report\*), much less on authority, of having certified to the death of the Princes, or of having implicated their uncle in the murder, although preparing to suffer death upon the scaffold for striving to dethrone him. Could any such charge at that time have been brought against either King Richard or Sir James Tyrell, it certainly would have been made.

Another inaccuracy, which is serious chiefly because it indicates the animus of the writer, is shown in the following sentence, wherein pseudo-More prematurely knights Thomas Tyrell, and with prejudice degrades his brother, Sir James Tyrell, from knighthood:—

Kyng Richard.....came oute into the palette chaumbre, where he dyd fynde in bedde the sayd Iames Tyrell and syr Thomas Tyrell of person like and brethren of blood, but nothyng of kynne in condicions.

in Hardyng, p. 520, ed. Ellis.

in Hall, p. 377, ed. 1809.

\* In pseudo-More's perhaps Imaginary Conversations between the Duke and Morton.

The author is writing of the conditions of the Tyrells in the year 1483. Now the facts of the case with regard to Thomas Tyrell are simply these. That Thomas Tyrell on (9) April, 1483, was one of the "esquires" to bear the body of King Edward IV. into the Abbey;\* on the 6th July following he is not spoken of as a knight;† and in May, 1484, "Thomas Tyrell, Esquire," received a £40 annuity;‡ he is no knight on 9th May, 1485,§ having been knighted by King Henry VII. after the battle of Stoke, which did not take place until the 20th June, 1487,|| being present as Knight Bachelor at the Coronation of Elizabeth, Queen of Henry VII.,¶ on the 25th November in the same year.

It may be as well to state here that there was *another* Thomas Tyrell, who was certainly *son of* Sir James,\*\* but pseudo-More had no right, designedly, and, as it would seem *in invidiam*, to exchange the qualities of Sir James Tyrell and *his brother*, then Thomas Tyrell, Esquire.

I also object to the truthfulness of this narrative on account of the absurd assertions stating that Sir James Tyrell, "the man," as pseudo-More is pleased to style him, had a high heart, and sore longed upward, not rising YET so fast as he had hoped, being hindered and kept under by Sir Richard Ratcliffe and Sir William Catesby.

Why, up to the week (8th—15th August, 1483) when King Richard, at Warwick, is supposed to have given the flagitious commission to Sir James, he had not been crowned, or even in power, one calendar month! And it is preposterous to assert that in those two or three weeks

\* Gairdner, I., 5.

† Wardrobe Account, R. III. in Antiquarian Report, II., 243.

‡ Harl. 433, fo. 25.

§ Harl. 433, fo. 215<sup>b</sup>.

|| Fisher's Compan. and Key to Hist. Engl., p. 134.

¶ Leland Coll., tom. IV., p. 214 (231).

\*\* Thomas Tyrell, Sir James's son was temporarily left by his father in charge of the Castle of Guisnes (Gairdner I., 181); was attainted of treason at the same time as his father (Vitell., A. xvi., p. 202); was imprisoned 9th May, 1502 (Vitell., A. xvi., p. 202); was pardoned 13th April, 1504 (Pat., 13th April, 9 Hen. VII., p. 1., m. 15); was restored to his father's estates 19th April, 1507 (Pat., 19th April, 22 Hen. VII., p. 1., m. 4 (or 27)); and finally was made Knight Banneret 25th Dec., 1513 (Harl., 6063).

Sir James had not risen so fast as he hoped. He must have been a strangely different man from what contemporary documents prove him to have been, if disappointment felt for the *long period* of three weeks sufficed to change his very nature, and in so short a time actually turned a brave soldier into a murderous assassin !

James Tyrell was not then thirsting for title or any particular honour ; most certainly he was not knighted for murdering the Princes, as pseudo-More would lead his readers to suppose. Sir James Tyrell had already been made a Knight Banneret, not for the perpetration of a crime, but for the display of bravery in at least two Royal battles ; and not in Richard's reign, but in the reign of King Edward IV.

Lastly, for space would not allow me to point out all the inaccuracies in this common story, I challenge the assertion which this writer makes with regard to the interment of the bodies of the Princes :—

Richard allowed not, as I have heard, the burying in so vile a corner .....“ at the stayre foot ”.....saying he would have them buried in a better place, because they were a Kinges sonnes.

The more honourable place of their burial appearing to be “ the Black Deepes at the Thames mouth.” But how is either one of these statements consistent with the discovery in the year 1674, made *under* some stairs in the Tower\*, of two skeletons of youths of their age, and males ?†

It is, I know, nearly impossible to prove a negative ; and quite impossible to prove a negative about the secret history of a Court four hundred years ago. But I have now pointed out the grounds on which I refuse credit to one whom I venture to designate as our earliest English Tragedian—I mean the author of the common story of the murders ; a story which, with many *a priori* considerations against it, has been shown to be in its nature improbable, and in its statements inaccurate. And I trust that I have

\* A picture of the exact spot where the bones are said to have been found may be seen in “ Memorials of the Tower of London,” by Lieut.-Gen. Lord de Ros, 1867, p. 46.

† See Sandford's General Hist., Book V., 427-9, quoted by Jesse, Mem. of King Richard III., p. 163.

raised sufficiently strong presumptions against its credibility, and sufficiently numerous proofs of its untrustworthiness to induce every lover of the truth to decline accepting it any longer as an integral part of our English History, and to consign the lying tale to the kindred region of romance. No soul in the Silent World will more surely thrill with joy at such a result than the honest Englishman who wrote: "For deceit and falshod and all maners of lies as nexte vnto fraude they (the Utopians) do maruelouslie deteste and abhorre."\*

WHAT, THEN, WAS THE ORIGIN OR CAUSE OF THE ACCUSATION  
BEING BROUGHT AGAINST SIR JAMES?

In attempting an answer it seems safer to be guided by the knowledge we possess respecting the earliest record found of the accusation.

Polydore Vergil is the first author known to have charged Sir James with the crime. How, then, came he to do so? What ground had he to have ill-will against one of the chief men of the day?

Of Polydore's personal character important particulars have been advanced which the careful reader will duly weigh. It remains to be stated that the Italian filled an office always held in great aversion by English people—he was in fact a tax-collector. His kinsman, Cardinal Adrian, Bishop first of Hereford, then of Bath and Wells, was Treasurer and Collector of the tribute called Peter's pence; and under him, as sub-collector, was Polydore, having, of course, the chief responsibility and onus of the business. This man, then young and active, had been Chamberlain to Pope Alexander VI., who sent him over to England† officially in the twelve or eighteen months preceding the date of Sir James's execution in May, 1502. Polydore, then, had newly entered upon office, and may very possibly have exercised his office in such a manner as to be distasteful to the State authorities, possibly to the King, who may have considered that his tax-gathering

\* Syr Thomas More. *Utopia*, ed. Arber, Bk. II., p. 147.

† Polydore Vergil's "Three Books of Engl. Hist.," ed. Sir H. Ellis. Pref.

zeal should be tempered with discreet moderation. The zeal of a novice is proverbial, especially when placed in office.

As until within a few weeks of his execution there was no one in the kingdom more influential, or more likely than Sir James Tyrell to have been directed to interpose between the Italian Shepherd and the English flock he had come to shear, I offer the conjecture that these two men, respectively representing opposite interests, were in some manner at present unknown brought into collision. Although I think it the more probable that the collision was on some question of money, I do not commit myself to the subject in dispute, but only conjecture the fact of a conflict.

Polydore lived to see Sir James executed; but, true to his character, his enemy's death did not satisfy him: not being one who "bore no malice nor hatred in his heart," he used the occasion when abridging the history of King Richard the Third to insert the name of his enemy, Sir James, whom of course he knew to have been one of the foremost men in that reign, as the manager of the murder of the Princes in a manner (he states) well nigh unheard of, though in what manner he did not himself pretend to know.

There was a general consensus among his contemporaries that King Richard was chargeable with the crime. But no one before the favoured servant of Alexander Borgia ever laid its management at Sir James's door. Richard Grafton, the bookseller, saw the name in Polydore's Latin History, and *did not scruple* to adopt it: and thus the baseless calumny has held its ground till now.

This seems to me, after careful consideration, to be the most probable origin of the defamation of Sir James. But could it be proved that the grasping Polydore, during the short time they were contemporaries, never received any check, it is certain that Sir James was great, powerful, and rich—qualities which afford an ample target for the many shafts of envy, hatred, malice, and covetousness. Some State Paper or letter now uncalendered may yet come to light which will explain why Polydore had personally or



officially become the enemy of the great Captain, and why he charged him half regretfully with the crime.

It remains to be seen what contemporary documents can tell us

CONCERNING THE LAST YEARS OF SIR JAMES TYRELL; THE ACTUAL CAUSE OF HIS FALL; HIS PRETENDED CONFESSION OF THE MURDER; AND HIS UNRIGHTEOUS DEATH.

The last historic event in his life which has been mentioned in the chronicle of events was his appointment in the year 1492 to receive the French envoys at the Peace.

In the same year Perkin Warbeck was first heard of, pretending to be the younger of the two Princes, namely, Richard Duke of York, who (as Perkin gave out) effected an escape from the Tower when his brother Edward V. was murdered. In the next year, 1493, as Mr. Gairdner has shown,\* King Henry VII. knew all about Warbeck, giving now to Sir Gilbert Talbot substantially the same account of the Pretender which the latter gave of himself in his Public Confession† four years afterwards.

In the following year Perkin's pretensions became somewhat less inconsiderable; he took to issuing money. And a Warbeck's groat, dated 1494, may be seen in the British Museum; also another in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

In the months of October and November in this year we again meet with Sir James Tyrell's name, held in honour as before. For he, together with his brother Sir Thomas, was "present with" the noble party at the feast following the Creation of Henry Duke of York.‡

Then comes a gap of a few months in the documents at present brought to light relating to Sir James; until (11 Henry VII., say February) 1496, when he joined with other knights and gentlemen in giving evidence before the Earl of Oxenford to the effect that

\* "Who was Perkin Warbeck?"—*Contemporary Review*: 1869, p. 542.

† Which may be seen printed in Hall.

‡ Gairdner, I., 403-4.

certain estates, &c., were made (away) "as well by the said Countess as by her said feoffees by compulsion, coercion, and imprisonment," &c.\*

In the next Parliament (12 Hen. VII., say January), 1497, Sir James Tyrell, as a man of the highest position, and held in the highest honour, is made a feoffee of lands for the use of the King, his co-feoffees being the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, six Bishops, Winchester, Ely, Durham, &c., and eleven others, noblemen.†

In the next year, 1498, on June 15th, if we may trust Hall,‡ Perkin Warbeck read, I suppose for the first time, his own Confession on a scaffold erected in Chepe; and on the 12th December this year Sir James, still being held in honour by King Henry VII., was sent as Captain of Guisnes and Plenipotentiary on an embassy to the Emperor Maximilian to make peace§—an important fact, showing that Sir James's reputation had not suffered by Henry VII.'s supposed investigation of the murder previous to Warbeck's confessing his imposture. In September of the next year, 1499, in "Private Instructions touching Edmund de la Pole," the Earl of Suffolk is required to come to the King if possible with (his friend) Sir James Tyrell.||

On Saturday, 23rd November, 1499, Perkin Warbeck and John A'water were drawn to Tyburn and executed, after Perkin had read his Confession

"and took it upon his dethe that he was neuer the psone that he was named for, that is to say the second son of Kyng Edward the iiij."¶

In the next year, 1500, the Tyrell family was represented at Court by Sir Thomas, who was amongst the attendants of the King at his meeting with the Archduke Philip.\*\*

On the 8th Jan., 1501, Sir James signed a deed of agreement, which is now amongst the muniments in

\* Roll. Parl. VI., 473.

|| Gairdner I., 130.

† Roll. Parl. VI., 510.

¶ Hall. Chronicles, ed. 1809, p. 491. and Vitell. MS., A. xvi., p. 176b.

‡ Chronicles, ed. 1809, p. 488.

\*\* Gairdner II., 88.

§ Rymer Fœd. xii., 705.

Redgrave Hall, Suffolk.\* The following is a facsimile of the autograph:—



This twelvemonth, 1501, was the year of that disastrous marriage of the Lady Katharine of Aragon. The two Tyrells are found appointed amongst the most honourable personages of the kingdom to receive that rich bride. In September, 1501, Sir James was one of the nine persons in attendance on the Lord Steward† at the reception of Katharine; on the 4th October she landed at Plymouth.

In the month of November Sir Thomas Tyrell' is also named‡ in arrangements for the reception of Katharine. On the 14th November, that is before the penitential season of Advent, she was married in the heart of London, in St. Paul's, to Arthur Prince of Wales, who died a few months after marriage, at Ludlow, 2nd April, 1502§, aged 15 years and 6 months (having been born 20th September, 1486), and was buried at Worcester; leaving Katharine a young widow, aged 19, in the enjoyment of her own large fortune.

In approaching the end of my annals I shall best be able to state the claims of a Pretender to the Crown, already referred to in this paper, by showing the relationship of his family, that of the de la Poles, to King Henry VII., whose best title to the throne is well known to have been his victory on Bosworth field.

The accompanying short pedigree (A) will, I believe, render a further statement needless:—

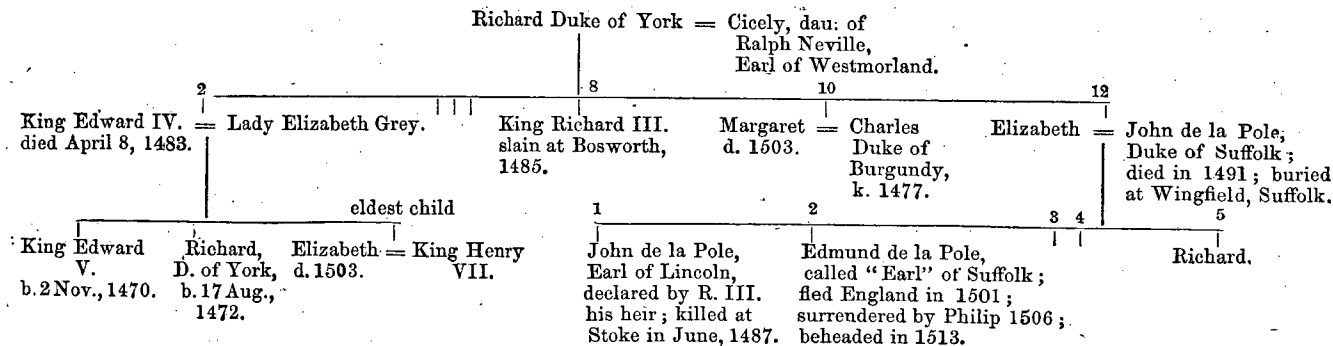
\* The seal used by Sir James represents a bird standing, with a scroll waving in the bird's beak.

† Gairdner. II., 104.

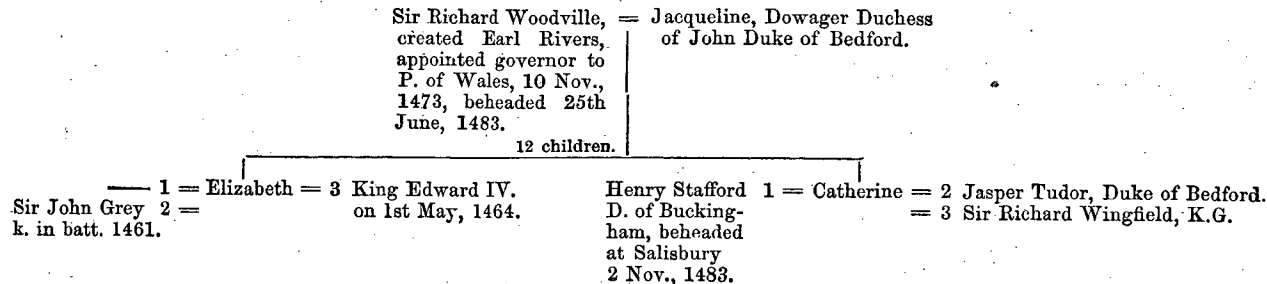
‡ Gairdner. I., 410.

§ Vitell. A. xvi., 201 B.

# (A) THE LATE KING'S FAMILY.



# (B) THE QUEEN'S FAMILY.



The importance of Edmund de la Pole, called "Earl" of Suffolk, although son and heir of the "Duke" of Suffolk, will here be seen at a glance. For since his elder brother, John "Earl of Lincoln," heir to the crown of Richard III., had been slain in the battle of Stoke, 1487, this Edmund de la Pole had become Henry VII.'s rival. He is reputed to have been a man of great courage and vehement passion; and in the early months of 1501 had been arraigned for the slaughter of one of his vassals.

He was pardoned by the King, but soon after fled the kingdom without the Royal licence, and took refuge with his aunt Margaret, wife of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.

This act of disobedience was excused, and in November, 1501, he was present at the Nuptials of Arthur Prince of Wales with Katharine of Aragon.

"It was at this marriage of Arthur Prince of Wales," observes Dr. Lingard,\* "that Edmund, second son to the late Duke of Suffolk, vied with the splendour of his equipage and his attention to the Royal family with the most opulent and favoured of the nobility."

Immediately afterwards, to the astonishment of the public, he for the second time fled the country, now being accompanied by a younger brother, Richard. King Henry thereupon foreboded an insurrection; but seems not at once to have taken any decided steps.

Edmund and his brother Richard naturally made their way through Picardy, where was the great Castle of Guisnes, to their aunt Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, who had been the credulous patroness of successive pretenders to the crown of her nephew by marriage, King Henry VII.

The two refugees, Edmund and his brother Richard, passing through Picardy, found the Castle of Guisnes commanded by Sir James Tyrell, with whom was his son Thomas. For Sir James, after taking part in the marriage ceremonies with his *brother* Sir Thomas, had immediately returned to his post of command at Guisnes.

\* Hist. p. 332.

And so speedy had been the flight of the de la Poles after the same Royal marriage that Sir James could hardly have known the Queen's first cousins to be (if indeed they were) the declared enemies of the Crown.

The de la Poles were certainly country neighbours and old friends of Sir James; for the Tyrell family at Gipping resided about one dozen miles only from the de la Pole family at Wingfield Castle\*—parishes which are both in Suffolk. The generous impulse to exercise hospitality abroad towards fellow-countrymen combined with the obligations of private friendship in waiving any hesitation Sir James may possibly have had in entertaining his visitors. He had resumed the command of Guisnes; and there is no reason to suppose that he had received information that the two de la Poles had become *suspects* of the English Court. He certainly did not apprehend† them; but probably sent them on their journey with supplies. An opportunity was thus given by Sir James's indiscretion, or want of proper information, for the officiousness of some informer possessed of the later intelligence from London with regard to the King's suspicions of the de la Poles; and a man of this character appeared in the person of one Flamank, as we find from some valuable scraps of information printed by Mr. Gairdner.‡

Sir Hugh Conway thought it a dangerous course to break to the King on any matters of succession;§ and when Flamank's information came "to the King's "most noble grace,"|| Henry was found to be "harde of "credens in such matres; and that know ye (he said), "Master Porter, as well as I; for how longe was yt er hys "grace and hys counsell wold belyve ony thyng of untrothe "to be in Sir James Tyrell; and some said I dyd seke to "do hym hurte for malis."¶

\* Roll. Parl. VI., 545.

§ Gairdner. I., 234.

† "All was (says Fabyan) for aydyng of Syr Edmōd de la pool."

|| Gairdner. I., 235.

‡ Vol. I., 235.

¶ Gairdner. I., 235.

By way of precaution, therefore, Sir Robert Curson (as Dr. Lingard observes) was despatched to act the part of a spy under the mask of friendship.

His report seems to have satisfied the King that the Tyrells had had communication with the de la Poles, as was most natural; and probably having received from home no instructions, had suffered them to take their departure for Burgundy, at that time the Cave of English Adulterers. Orders were in consequence given to apprehend all the friends of the de la Pole party at Guisnes, including the Tyrells, father and son, their confidential servant Wellesbourne, Sir John Windham and his son, Matthew Jonys, and Pursevant Cursum.

Full particulars of the apprehension are given us in a letter written by no less a person than Edmonde de la Pole, the Pretender himself, to Thomas Killingworth, and already printed.\* Lord Privy Seal, Thomas Lovel, and "Dan" were engaged in the task, and succeeded in trapping first Sir James on board ship, and afterwards his son, and bringing the captives to London for trial, where next we are told of them.

#### THE LONDON TRIALS.

The first trial by "Oyer determyne" took place on Monday, 2nd May, 1502, at the Guildhall. The Commissioners were the Mayor, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Oxenford, with many other Lords, Judges, and Knights.†

Before them were brought four of the chief captives, namely, Sir James Tyrell, Sir John Wyndham, Wellesbourne, a "gentleman servant" to Sir James, and a shipman or sailor. Their trial was not concluded until the next day, Tuesday, when for certain (unspecified) treason by them committed they were all adjudged to be drawn, hanged, and quartered; and their execution was fixed to take place on the Friday following.

\* By Mr. Gairdner. I., 181.

† All the particulars of the trials are abridged from the unpublished MS. Vitell., A. xvi., 202 et seq.

A short interval of two days only elapsed, namely, Wednesday and Holy Thursday or Ascension Day, before Sir James's execution. But in this interval it is asserted that Sir James while in the Tower confessed the murder of the Princes !

It is essential, therefore, thoroughly to inquire into so serious a statement. For it has been repeated and handed on from author to author through the 17th and 18th Centuries, and I have no doubt it may be found at the present time in most of our School Manuals of English History. Indeed in an important and erudite volume published in May, 1878, entitled *Richard the Third*, Mr. Gairdner thus refers to the confession :—

"More's account.....is mainly founded upon the confession of two of the murderers, p. 152 ;.....the alleged confession of Tyrell and Dighton obtained second-hand, p. 159 ; the common story seems to have been that Richard had put his nephews to the sword, but the confession of Tyrell at once put an end to this surmise, p. 161 ; Tyrell was then, as More says, examined about it in the Tower, having probably made a voluntary confession of guilt to ease his conscience before his execution, p. 162."

The original passage referred to stands thus in the common story towards the end :—

"And for a truthe, when sir Iames Tirrell was in the towre for treason committed to Kyng Hery the seuenth, bothe he and Dighton were examined together of this poynte : and bothe thei confessed the murther to bee dooen in the same maner as you haue hearde."

Pseudo-More forsooth is a most respectable authority for an assertion of this sort : one who is sincerely anxious to have us take his word for what he relates :—

"I shall reherse to you (says he) the dolorous ende of these two babes, not after euery way that I haue heard, but after that way that I haue so heard by such menne and suche meanes as me thynketh it to be heard but *it should be true*."

The reader will please to suppose that the information comes from some dull chronicler who had the good fortune to be behind the scenes, and was as truly desirous to protect the imperilled honour of a brave soldier as to specify the exact spot of the graves of the dead. For he is most



careful truly to inform posterity that with regard to the exact spot of the burial of the two dead Princes—

“by the occasion of his death (whiche was verie shortly after) who onely knew it, *the very truthe* could never yet bee very well & perfectly knowen.”

So again he writes:

“This was *ye very truth* unknowē, by reason that ye said preste dyed so shortly, and disclosed it neuer to eny persone y<sup>t</sup> would utter it. And *for a truthe* when sir James Tirrill was in the Tower”.....

The author doth protest too much methinks:

However, let that be; and let the assertion of Sir James's confession be considered on its merits.

First of all, Sir James Tyrell's treason was in no way connected with the murder of the Princes, but with an entirely different event. And surely, it is not very likely that he would then be examined as to matters wholly irrelevant to the single charge on which he was brought to trial and for which he was so soon about to suffer. If any investigation of the murder was ever held—a doubtful point—it almost certainly took place years previously, before Warbeck's public Confession, or, at the latest, before Warbeck's execution; and all along King Henry VII. had continued to trust his rival's friend, Sir James, and had never withheld the most honourable employment from him, until he was apprehended.

Yet after his apprehension (granting for the sake of argument that he superintended the murder) Sir James Tyrell, on one of those two entire days, when taking the air in the Tower yard might, with his hands or one hand behind him, have remarked, in front of the lion's cage, to some bystander, as he saw the huge master of the den throw down his burly form and *overlay* two young cubs: “Ah! that is how I had the young Princes in yonder Bloody Tower\* put out of the way!” And *Dighton* might have replied, “Aye! you're right, master!”

He *might* have made such an observation; but as we do not know that he did, and as we are not informed that at that or any other time he ever took leave of his senses, it

\* The place which tradition assigns to the murders.

will be needless, I suppose, to consider the above as a probable manner in which the asserted Confession was made. Besides, I doubt whether so great a word-painter even as pseudo-More, with all his evident delight in sensational language, would in that age have described an unguarded admission of guilt such as I have just imagined, so as to say that he or they "confessed" it.

In the passage already quoted pseudo-More seems studiously to employ language as vague as possible. There is therefore all the more necessity to define what certainly has been understood to be covered by the statement that when Sir James and Dighton were "examined together," "both thei confessed the murder to be dooen...as you haue hearde "

*Some sort of confession of the crime has been understood by these words.*

Confession was at that time of two kinds—Public and Private.

We have a contemporary example of a Public Confession in the case of Perkin Warbeck, above referred to. Long-winded document as it is, we see all about its genesis—how it came to be put together, what its statements amount to, the judges, the time, the very street where it had publicly to be made by the Pretender.

But no historian, chronicler, or annalist has ever recorded as a fact that Sir James Tyrell made any Public Confession. When any such document, or reference to such document, is produced or printed, it will be good time to consider the purport of its statements. The hazy theory of a Public Confession by Sir James Tyrell is thus narrowed down to the hypothesis of a Private Confession, made (as we must suppose, if it were "to ease his conscience,") to no other than a priest; and that the priest afterwards divulged the dead man's confession of the murder of the Princes.

I am thus perforce driven to consider a case of private confession—a subject in these days very generally proscribed. Since however as a clergyman I am required to

invite penitents to confession,\* to move the dying to confess,† to refrain from divulging any confession made to me,‡ I am expected to know by my profession something about the matter. What little I know leads me to consider the hinted disclosure of a private confession in the common story one of the most extravagant suggestions of that extravagant romance! Why, the murder, it is supposed, was already perpetrated! It was an *opus factum*, not an *opus faciendum*, with regard to a priest's disclosure of which last various and somewhat conflicting opinions are held by casuists.

We have to consider, then, the hypothesis of the disclosure by the priest of an *opus factum* confessed to him.

Such disclosure could only have been made by the priest in one of two ways, either voluntarily or under external pressure. If, being an unbeneficed man, he of his own accord and voluntarily disclosed a confession made to him, even by a man no longer living, he would *ipso facto* *disqualify* himself from receiving spiritual promotion. And if, being a beneficed man, he divulged any such confession, he would ignominiously suffer Deprivation of all his spiritual emoluments: *i.e.*, he would fall (as it is worded in our Canon) "under pain of irregularity."

On the other hand, if pressure was put upon him by the authorities to compel him to divulge a confession made to him in religious secrecy, it was the rule of the Church (a rule to which at present I am not, and do not indeed expect to be, acquainted with a single exception) that he should gladly prefer duress vile or death itself to breaking his implied word or compromising his professional honour as a clergyman or a gentleman.

Long-standing misconceptions die hard. And one word more must be added with regard to this hypothetical confession. It asserts that *Dighton* joined at the time with Sir James in confessing the murder. Now, we have no

\* Prayer Book: Holy Communion Service.

‡ Church Prayer Book, Canons, A.D. 1603. No. 113.

† Prayer Book: Visitation of the Sick.

evidence that Dighton was ever in the Tower at the same time as Sir James. We know that

a gentil man and a servant of the said Sir James named Wellesbõn was in May, 1502, certainly tried\* and probably imprisoned with him. But Wellesborne is quite another person from Dighton.

The statement, therefore, respecting the Confession in the Tower appears to me to be utterly unworthy of serious consideration. We have seen that Sir James Tyrell was condemned to death on Tuesday, 3rd May, 1502; that there is not the slightest ground for pretending that he made any Confession of a Murder he never committed, in the two days' interval before his death, which took place on the Friday following, as is recorded not only by Fabyan,† but more fully by a contemporary author.‡

All four captives—Sir James Tyrell, Sir John Windham, Wellesbourne, and the shipman—were alike condemned to be drawn, hanged, and quartered on Friday. The execution, however, of Wellesbourne, Sir James's servant, was deferred, in order that he might be brought up as witness against his master's son. The poor shipman was accordingly laid upon a hurdle, and so drawn at the cart's tail from the Tower to Tyborne, and there hanged, headed, and quartered. But the like severe verdict was moderated in the cases of the two renowned Knights.

The method of Sir James's death, as compared with that of the poor sailor, may be said to be almost or quite honourable. It was the "mildest and least painful that could be inflicted on a person convicted of any capital offence." For the two Knights were not degraded from their knighthood, and were not drawn at the cart's tail; but had the honour of being escorted

"to the scaffold upon the Tower Hill, upon their ffete, where they were both beheded."§

Supposing Sir James was not less than 21 years old when he had to "convey the Countess of Warwick

\* Vitell, A. xvi., p. 202.

‡ Vitell, A. xvi., p. 202.

† Chronicle, sub ann.

§ Vitell, A. xvi.

northward" in the year 1473, having by that time been knighted, the year of his birth would be not later than 1452: on the day, therefore, of his execution he would be not less than 50 years of age.

Sir James thus dying convicted of so-called treason, which possibly was not even misprision of treason, his estates were, according to ancient precedent, forfeited by law to the King; as may still possibly be found recorded in the Close or Fine Rolls; but the fact is not, I believe, to be discovered in the Escheator's Accounts.

On the following day, Saturday, 7th May, 1502, Sir John Windham's son (an elder brother, probably, of Thomas Windham) and James Holand, a barber of London, were brought to the Guildhall for trial before the Mayor and other Commissioners, and on Monday, the 9th, were sentenced to be drawn, hanged, and quartered.\*

And on the same two days, but in another court, held in the Whitehall, Westminster, by my Lord of Derby and other Lords, the trials of three other persons were taking place. For here on Saturday, the son of Sir James Tyrell, Matthew Jonys, and Pursevant Cursum were tried; and Wellesbourne, the Tyrells' gentleman servant, was witness. On the Monday Jonys and Cursum were condemned to be sent to Guisnes for execution, and the residue, namely, Sir James's son, and his servant Wellesbourne, were to remain in prison at the King's grace. And in prison, it seems probable that the son, Thomas Tyrell, remained for the next two years.†

The remaining history of the Tyrells may be briefly told. Before the term of two years had expired two Acts of Parliament were passed (19 Hen. VII.) relating to the Tyrells, and probably both nearly at the same time, say February, 1504. By the one Act,‡ a very long one, extending to nine folio columns, Sir James Tyrell is, with

\* Vitell., A. xvi. ut supr.

‡ Roll. Parl. VI., 545.

† Pat. 13th Apr., 19 Hen. VII., p. 1, m. 15.

many others, attainted of treason on account of his connection with "Edmonde de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, late of Wyngfield, in the County of Suffolk, Knight;" and all his lands are and be forfeited to the King.

By the other Act\* passed at the same time, Thomas Tyrell, son to Sir James, with others, pray to have their attainders reversed and their lands restored to them by the King's letters patent; special power being conferred on the King for that purpose.

Soon after, and on 13th April in the same year, 1504, Thomas Tyrell, of London, gentleman, received an especial pardon from the King.† Three years after, on 19th April, 1507,‡ he was restored to his father's estates at Gipping; and his obligations to the Crown for these favours were duly recorded by Henry VII. for the information of his son Henry VIII.§

At the memorable challenge made by Henry VIII. in 1509, Thomas Terrell was among the defenders;|| was prominent again in 1511;¶ and on 25th December, 1513, was knighted by the King under his banner at Touraine;\*\* and attended the Queen at Calais in 1520 as Master of the Horse††—the last notice we have of him. His son John, Sir James Tyrell's grandson, attended the Lady Mary at Kenninghall, Norfolk, on 12th July, 1553; and on the day after her Coronation became Sir John Tyrell of Gipping, being Knighted 2nd Oct., 1553,‡‡ for his services.§§

The grandson of one who was branded with the terrible stigma of a traitor's death was not a person likely to draw attention to his ancestry by drawing attention to *our*

\* Roll. Parl. VI., 526.

¶ Ellis. Letters, 2 Ser. I., 183.

† Pat. 13 Apr., 19 Hen. VII., p. 1, m 15.

\*\* Harl. MS., 6063.

‡ Pat. 19 Apr., 22 Hen. VII., p. 1, m. 4 (or 27).

†† Chronicle of Calais, p. 24.

§ Brewer's Cal., Hen. VIII., I., No. 777.

‡‡ Harl., 6063.

|| Misc. Antiq., Pt. I., p. 30.

§§ Stowe Annal.

common story, even by way of protest. No doubt John Tyrell, Esquire, knew of Hardyng as published in 1543, of Hall in 1548, and of Rastell's More in 1557—works containing two editors' versions of one statement only. But he also knew of *more than two or than thrice two* contemporary authors, who, better informed than others, and writing independently of one another, made no allegation against his grandfather. Having, then, in 1553 been knighted, Sir John in fact left uncontradicted so groundless and improbable a tale, to fillip the minds of ingenuous youth or astound country ploughmen; and perhaps lived to have the satisfaction of seeing the calumny omitted in 1566 in the scholarlike edition of More's Latin Works.

Sir James Tyrell's son Thomas, of whom we hear nothing after 1520, may never have seen the story in print. These persons only did it immediately concern.

Having now laid before the reader every fact relating to Sir James Tyrell which a costly research has brought to my knowledge—need I add?—WITHOUT SUPPRESSING ONE SINGLE REFERENCE TO HIM OF ANY KIND, I draw the following conclusion:—

We have abundant evidence of the greatness, reputation, and personal bravery of Sir James Tyrell. He was one of the foremost, and certainly one of the ablest men of his day. His sword was the keen and active defender of the King in the reigns both of Richard III. and Henry VII.; and thus it was that from both Sovereigns alike he received perhaps unparalleled honours for unrivalled services. Every mention of his name tends to show that he was not the sort of man to perpetrate the mean and dastardly murder of two helpless boys.

Weighty arguments, as the writer believes, have been advanced against the credibility of the common story, which was not published anywhere until nearly half a century after Sir James's death; and which, being entirely unsupported by independent testimony, must alone be held to implicate the great Captain's honour, not a tittle of documentary evidence, in these days of calendering State Papers,

having come to light in any way to confirm that malicious calumny.

*In particular* it has to be remarked that what we know at present as the certain history of those times in no way bears out the romantic tradition of the neighbourhood of Gipping.\* For as Sir James Tyrell was, in my judgment, NOT GUILTY of the imputed murder, he could never on that account have suffered the qualms of a troubled conscience, or have built the chapel in expiation of a murder. Until the immediate close of his life he was an honoured attendant at the grand ceremonials of the Court; and at last he suffered, in perilous times, not because he had not served his country with ability, but—and surely it is a noble failing—because he loved his friend too well.

YAXLEY, SUFFOLK,

*June, 1878.*

\* A full and illustrated account (by the present writer) of Sir James Tyrell's beautiful chapel at Gipping, as well as a short pedigree of the Tyrells of the period,

may be seen in the Journal published by the Royal Archæological Institute, No. 109, March, 1871, p. 23.