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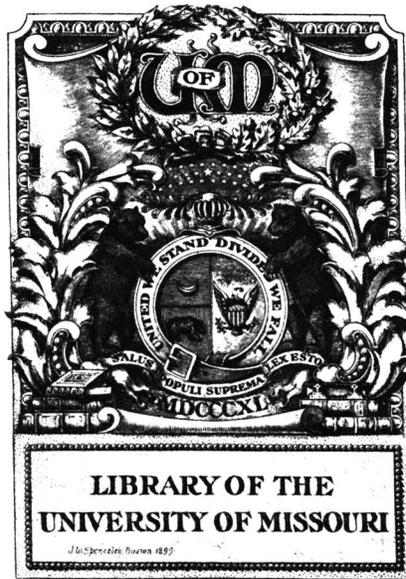
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THE ORIGIN OF THE NEW MONARCHY:

A STUDY OF EDWARD IV'S REIGN.

by

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
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Approved :-

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INTRODUCTION.

The period of English history during which the Lancastrian administration broke down and was superceded by the Yorkist dynasty is usually regarded as one of the darkest and most confused of all history. The Hundred Years War with France had just been brought to disasterous conclusion (1) from the English viewpoint. The return of large bodies of lawless troops from France tended to make life and property insecure. The corruption of the clergy and the long civil strife known as the War of the Roses contribute to produce a feeling of contempt and disgust which incline us to look elsewhere for positive contributions to progress. Nevertheless, when the smoke of battle has cleared away, we find that the great stream of national life has been little affected by the wars. The great burden of the Wars of the Roses fell on the feudal classes and was all but sufficient to crush them (2). An explanation and interpretation of this period must be sought for in the character of the Lancastrian and Yorkist governments and in the forces making for change.

The first Lancastrian king, Henry IV, . 1399-1413, was a parliamentary king. Both he and his successor, Henry V., recognized their dependence on parliament (3) Both of these kings were strong and more

- 1) By the Truce of Tours in 1444 England gave up Maine, but retained a foothold about Bordeaux and in the Duchy of Normandy. The incapacity of the English government was shown by the rapidity with which Normandy was lost.
- 2) Dicey, Privy Council, 78.
- 3) Plummer, Fortescue, on the Governance of England, 306-307.

or less popular. Their chief weakness was the lack of an hereditary title to the throne and their poverty. (1).The accession of Henry VI. was followed by a long period of regency, 1422-1437, during which the great nobles quarreled among themselves for preponderance in the council. From 1437 to 1450 the king conducted a personal rule and the struggle among the barons was for influence with the king. The contest at first was between Gloucester and Beaufort, later it was between the Duke of York and his party on one side and Somerset, Suffolk, and Queen Margaret on the other. The period following Cades' Rebellion, 1450-1461, was a period of civil strife between these two factions (2) at the close of which the Yorkist party triumphed and the Lancastrians were driven out of England.

During the Lancastrian era, many social and economic changes had taken place in England which called for political adjustment. The English Parliament was largely an aristocratic landholding body and was not representative of the nation. England was no longer a strictly agricultural country. An industrial and commercial class had arisen which demanded protection of its interests. " The mediaeval system was breaking down, partly thru the degeneration of the Church, partly thru the poverty of the government, partly thru the inordinate power of the great men each with his host of retainers who made him, and whom in his turn he made, strong to defy the law." (3)

Bad as this situation appears at first glance, it afforded the Lancastrian dynasty an opportunity to free itself from the parliamentary domination if it would only ally itself with the progressive tendencies of the age and win the support of the political classes.

1) Plummer, Intro. to Fortescue, On the Governance of England, 5.

2) Ibid. 8-9.

3) Thompson, Wars of the Roses, 1450-85. 10.

This attempt was made after 1437 when Henry VI. attained his majority. But under the influence of Margaret of Anjou, Henry appointed ministers who were neither acceptable to parliament nor to the political classes. (1) Since Henry VI. was a weak king both physically and mentally, and since, at this time, appointments seem to have been made for life, the Council appears to have gained a greater prominence than at any other period of its history. However, as this is to be treated at greater length in a later chapter, we will pass it over for the present.

This attempt on the part of Henry VI. or more correctly, Queen Margaret, to maintain a Council which did not have the confidence of either parliament or the nation, was one of the fatal mistakes of their reign. The more progressive sections of the baronage combined with the industrial or burger classes, and under the leadership of Richard, Duke of York, a prince of the blood, and the Earl of Warwick, demanded the removal of the unpopular ministers and a share in the administration (2). The sentiment of the nation is clearly revealed when Henry has a lapse of sanity. As soon as the king is pronounced incapable of ruling, the Duke of York is made the Protector of the Realm, and immediately upon the recovery of the king, the royal favorite is restored to power (3). The conservatism and the unpopularity of the Lancastrian administration coupled with the general disorder and bad government of the period is to some extent a justification of the dynastic revolution which follows.

- 1) Plummer, Governance of England, 9.
- 2) Ibid, 10.
- 3) Stubbs, C.H. 111: 170.

It is the purpose of this thesis to show that the so-called "New Monarchy", commonly ascribed to the Tudor period, had its beginnings when Edward IV.---- strong in hereditary rights, successful in battle, and relying for support not only on many of the great barons but also on the growing commercial classes and towns as well,---- restored the majesty of the Crown, and in a large measure reduced the country to order.

The preparation for the New Monarchy is to be found in the conciliar development of the later Lancastrian period. Lancastrian parliamentarianism had failed largely because of the unpopular and unrepresentative character of parliament. The nation looked to the Crown to restore order and promote the general welfare of the people. Henry VI. was not equal to the task, and therefore failed----- not because he was a bad king, but because the times demanded a strong man of action more than a man of saintly character.

Edward IV was anything but a saint. Placed on the throne by a successful baronial faction, he had no sooner made his position secure than he began to reduce to submission to the crown those who had been most influential in raising him to the throne. At first glance, the first period of his reign, 1461-1471, seems little more than a continuation of the Wars of the Roses. The dynastic rivalry continued and the confusion of the period was increased by disaffection within the ranks of the Yorkists themselves. However even in this period we see some indications of Edward's policy and some beginnings of the "New Monarchy". Edward overcame Lancastrian opposition and freed himself from the domination of the Yorkist nobility who desired to wield the same power over the Crown in his administration that Suffolk and Somerset had under King Henry. An appeal was made for Lan-

castrian support thru Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. A new nobility depending directly on the king was created by the promotion of the Queen's relations. Laws against livery and maintenance were aimed to break up the large bands of uniformed retainers of the barons, really standing armies, and thus reduce the danger from private war to a minimum. In his foreign relations, Edward showed equal freedom and independence of baronial control. Scorning an alliance with England's ancient enemy, France, Edward made a treaty with Flanders, thereby winning the support of the commercial classes, especially the citizens of London (1), and cemented it by a marriage between his sister Margaret of York and the Count of Charolois, heir of the Duke of Burgundy. Edward initiated the policy, later much practiced by the Tudors, of promoting trade in every possible way, by favorable treaties, by legislation, and even by engaging in trade himself.

In the second part of his reign, 1471-83, after the death of Warwick, the 'King-maker', Edward, Prince of Wales, and Henry VI., Edward was left free to carry on his personal absolutism and establish a dynasty. The period may be characterized generally as one of peace and prosperity. Only in the last two years, when the wily diplomat Louis XI. succeeded in alienating Burgundy and Scotland (2) did the foreign policy of Edward seem to break down. At home, Edward took pains to make himself a popular king (3) especially with the merchants and citizens of London. He called few parliaments, and the ones that did meet were characterized by their subserviency to the

1) Mowat, Wars of the Roses, 240.

2) English Historical Review, Xll. 521-523.

3) Vergil, Polydore. 117.

king. Both the Council and the Courts became instruments of the new absolutism. In financial affairs, Edward was a careful administrator, and asked for few grants from parliament. In fact he showed his independence of parliament by resorting to a system of popular subscriptions or 'benevolences' later much used by the Tudors (1). Tho reared in the bloody period of the Wars of the Roses, and wonderfully gifted in military leadership (2), Edward was a patron of the new learning and no mean scholar himself (3). On the whole he may be taken as a type of benevolent despot, in sympathy with his people and careful of their interests. He pursued a policy of expediency which a monarch in that age who expected to maintain the dignity of the Crown would have been compelled to follow. Accordingly. this study aims to show that the policy of the Tudors was merely a continuation and further development of the principles of absolutism initiated by Edward IV., and that the year 1485 was not the beginning of the new absolutism, but is merely an artificial and convenient division point adopted by historians because the change in dynasties from Yorkist to Tudor was supposed to have been accompanied by a change in policy.

The politico-historical background for this study is to be found in the Wars of the Roses which may be said to have begun in the summer of 1450, when Richard Duke of York returned unexpectedly from what his friends considered semi-banishment to Ireland (4). The way was prepared

- 1) Rogers, Thorold, Work and Wages, 316-317.
- 2) Green, History of the English People, 11:27
- 3) Creasy, Sir Edmund, History of England, IV. 487.
- 4) Thompson, E, Wars of the Roses, VII.

for him by the unpopular marriage of King Henry VI. to Margaret of Anjou in 1445, one condition of which was the cession of Maine to France (1). The sudden and mysterious death of Humphry, Duke of Gloucester two years later removed the heir-presumptive to the throne and resulted in a contest between the Beauforts who had been legitimated by the Pope (2) and Richard, Duke of York, the representative of Mortimer. The Beauforts were influential at court and in 1487^(sic) Edward Beaufort, soon to be created Duke of Somerset, received an appointment to the government of Normandy over York who had already ably fulfilled the duties of that position for five years, and now had to be content with the Lieutenancy of Ireland (3). In 1448 Maine was surrendered to France, which within the next year, conquered Normandy also. The king's ministers got the blame for these losses and in 1450 the Duke of Suffolk was impeached, sentenced to banishment and murdered at sea while on his way to France (4) Shortly after this came the rising of the Kentishmen under the leadership of Jack Cade (5). This movement was designed to remedy some of the most glaring abuses of the Lancastrian administration (6) but probably had some connection with the dynastic question. It is a notable fact that the leader was connected with the house of Mortimer (7), and that one of the complaints of the rebels was the exclusion of the Duke of York from the king's presence.

- 1) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, 11., 62.
- 2) Ibid. 11. 133.
- 3) Ibid. 11. 83.
- 4) English Chronicles, 69.
- 5) Ibid, 64.
- 6) Ibid. 65.
- 7) Ibid. 64.

At this time, the question of the succession must have been uppermost in the minds of both parties. The king had been married five years and the Queen had borne no child(1). If he should die childless, who would succeed to the throne, the Beauforts whom Henry IV. had himself excluded, or Richard, Duke of York? The recognition of Richard Duke of York as heir-presumptive would have satisfied the nation, but the influence of the Beauforts at court was too strong for this, and the king doubtless feared that in this position, York would endanger the Crown (2). In fact, the government had already shown its suspicion of him, and at the same time, its own weakness by trying to have him arrested upon his return from Ireland (3).

In 1453, the King became so ill that it was necessary to consider the question of a regency. At the same time the birth of a Prince, Christened Edward, to Queen Margaret only complicated matters, for it made it necessary for York to resort to force if he would gain the Crown. Parliament met December 12th. Somerset was impeached and sent to the Tower. On the 13th. the Duke of York was empowered to open parliament and on the 27th. of March he was made Protector and Defender of the Realm with limited powers. The Protector carried on a strong government in the name of King Henry, and among other things, he attempted to suppress the feuds between the Percies and the Nevilles, Lord Bonville and the Earl of Devon (4). The king recovered his faculties December 30, 1454, York was removed from the Protectorship, Somerset was pardoned and restored to office.

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- 1) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, ll. 133.
 - 2) Ibid. ll. 134.
 - 3) Vickers, England in the later Middle Ages, 436.
 - 4) Ibid., 437.

Both parties now realized that a crisis was approaching and began to arm. The king summoned a Grand Council to meet at Leicester, ostensibly to provide for his safety, but really to undertake measures against the Duke of York. Richard appealed to arms and defeated the royal troops at the first battle of St. Albans (1) in which the Dukes of Somerset and Northumberland and Lord Clifford lost their lives. Immediately after the battle, York, Warwick and Salisbury sought the king and tendered their allegiance after which they escorted him to London with every show of respect. Nevertheless the character of the struggle had changed. Blood had been shed. Any compromise or pardon now would be only a temporary expedient.

For two years after the battle of St. Albans, England was in a state of armed peace. The King seemed inclined to accept York as chief minister and made him Constable of England while Warwick became Captain of Calais. The Queen, however, regarded York as the greatest enemy of their dynasty (2) and thru her intrigues and machinations eventually forced him into greater opposition to the Crown. The parliament which met in July was pro-Yorkist in sympathy. It vindicated the Duke of York and all those who had taken part in the recent action at St. Albans, and confirmed Warwick's appointment as Captain of Calais. The king's malady returned in 1456, and York was again made Protector. The significant thing about this appointment was the enthusiasm of the commons for the Duke of York (3). In February the King relieved York of the Protectorship and left him without official appointment. In March 1458 the King was able to effect

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- 1) English Chronicle, 71-72.
 - 2) Mowat, Wars of the Roses, 80.
 - 3) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, 188.

a great reconciliation of the Lords at St. Paul's in London. For a year and a half a conflict was avoided, then came the battle at Bloreheath (1), Sept. 23, 1459, followed by the exile and attainder (2) of the Yorkists, and the practical dismemberment of the Kingdom. Henry remained in England, Warwick fled to Calais, while York went to Ireland where he was strong. Clearly the enemies of the administration were beyond the reach of the King's power and were in a favorable position from which to strike when the right moment came.

The Yorkists did not remain long in exile. In July 1460, Warwick, the Earl of March, son and heir of Richard Duke of York, and the Earl of Salisbury returned from Calais (3), and defeated the royal forces at Northampton. The King was taken a prisoner to London, tho accorded every honor. The Queen and Prince fled into Wales and gathered a party of Lancastrians. Later in the year she went to Scotland to appeal for aid. (4) The Duke of York was still in Ireland but Warwick had established himself and party in England and secured the appointment of a Yorkist ministry. The Yorkists had gained all they claimed. A pro-Yorkist parliament met at Westminster October 10. Three days later the Duke of York came to Westminster and placed his claims to the crown before the House of Lords (5). This

1) English Chronicle, 80.

2) Ibid, 83.

3) Ibid. 94.

4) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, ll. 241-243.

5) "In strict hereditary succession, traced thru a female line, Richard Duke of York stood nearer the patriarch Edward III. than did Henry IV. For Henry VI. was descended directly thru Philippa, only daughter of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, second son of Edward III. The crown of England was not entailed upon heirs male, but could undoubtedly pass thru a female". Mowat, Wars of the Roses, 133-134.

action on the part of York was apposed by Warwick (1) for reasons which will be presented in a later chapter. The matter was settled by a compromise by which King Henry was to rule during the remainder of his life after which the crown was to go to Richard Duke of York and his heirs (2). The claims of Margaret's son, the Prince of Wales were ignored completely. The Duke of York was to be made Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester (3).

Events moved rapidly from now on. While York was making his legal position secure, his enemies were gathering forces. He advanced to meet them and was defeated and killed at the battle of Wakefield together with his son Rutland and the Earl of Salisbury (4). The Lancastrians had scored a success but the claims of Richard of York did not end with the life of the Duke. His eldest son, Edward Earl of March, was in Wales gathering troops when he heard of the disaster of Wakefield. He hastened with all his forces to unite with Warwick in the Midlands. At Mortimer's Cross he defeated a large force under Jasper Tudor and the Earl of Wiltshire slaying about three thousand (5). However, before Edward could unite with Warwick, the latter sustained a tremendous defeat at the second battle of St. Albans (6). The Lancastrians were reinforced by a northern force under Margaret, but were afraid to follow up their victory by leading this army of plunderers to London (7).

Edward joined Warwick and the two hastened to London where they

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- 1) Vickers, England in the later Middle Ages, 459.
 - 2) English Chronicle, 100-106.
 - 3) Ibid., 106.
 - 4) Ibid., 107.
 - 5) Ibid., 110.
 - 6) Ibid., 108.
 - 7) Whethamstede, 1:394.

were sure they had many supporters. They were well received by the citizens (1) and a few days later the Earl of March was proclaimed King Edward IV. Strangely enough the Earl of Warwick, who had opposed Richard's attempts at the crown, was the main instrument in securing it for his son. Not tarrying long in London, Edward followed his enemies into the north and won an overwhelming victory at Towton (2). The Lancastrians were crushed for the time being, and the Yorkist party had won.

Unfortunately, the materials for Edward IV.'s reign, and for a study of the New Monarchy are scanty and often untrustworthy. It is a period when little interest is shown in history writing. The good day of the Chronicler is past, and as yet the new or Renaissance type of historian has not appeared. Nevertheless, in spite of the disorders of the period which make history writing a difficult and dangerous pursuit, a few valuable sources and records, both native and foreign, have come down to us. The native English sources fall naturally into two groups,----- those favoring the house of Lancaster and those favoring the house of York. Most of the contemporary sources favor the house of York. Of these the ones that the writer has used most extensively in this study are:--- The Second Continuation of the History of Croyland; The Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire of 1470; The Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV. in England and the Finall Recouerye of his Kingdoms from Henry VI. A.D. 1471.

The name of the author of the Second Continuation of the History of Croyland is not known, but it is believed that he was a doctor of

- 1) Whethamstede, 1:394.
English Chronicle, 110.
- 2) Vergil, Polydore, 110-111.

canon law and one Edward IV.'s councilors (1). Altho connected with the house of York, and not writing until after the battle of Bosworth, the author gives a fairly impartial and reliable account. The Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire, of 1470, is an invaluable source for the period of a few weeks during which the Yorkist barons are in open revolt against Edward IV. and attempt to make the Duke of Clarence king. The writer seems to have had access to first hand information, if indeed he was not a participant in the events which he narrates. The History of the Arrivall of Edward IV. in England and the Finall Recouerye of his Kingdoms from Henry VI., 1471, has, perhaps, the highest claim to authority of any of the Yorkist Chronicles (2). It was written on the spot by some one possessed of the full means of knowledge. The author says himself that he was an eyewitness of many of the exploits he narrates, and the fact that Edward IV. adopted this account as an accurate representation of his achievements adds to its value.

Chief among the Lancastrian sources is Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia*, which covers the whole period and is tinged with sympathy for the Lancastrians. Vergil was an Italian of the Renaissance school in the employ of the Tudor sovereigns. The sources for his work are unknown. The narrative is excellent and the account is fuller than that of the chroniclers (3). Warkworth's Chronicle is a valuable source for the first thirteen years of Edward IV.'s reign tho it is too biased in favor of the Lancastrians.

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- 1) John Bruce, *The Arrivall of Edward IV. in England*, intro. 3.
 - 2) *Ibid.* Intro. 5.
 - 3) *Ibid.* IV.

The best contemporary foreign source is the Memoirs of Philip de Commines. Commines was a Burgundian of note and was familiar with the life and happenings at the Burgundian, French, and English courts. He took part in important embassies and was acquainted with many important personages of the time. He gives a good account of the English relations with the continent, the preparations of Edward on the continent for his return to England and of the battle of Tewkesbury.

There are other important and oft quoted chroniclers writing in a later period, but most of them, such as Hall, Stow, Rastell, etc., base their works on the authorities already cited (1). In addition to the chroniclers, the Paston Letters furnish a wealth of material for the study of domestic manners and social conditions of the era. Their value and importance can scarcely be overestimated.

The materials for a constitutional study of the period are even more scanty than for its political and social aspects. Apparently the records for the Council for the years 1460-1540 have been lost. Baldwin has discussed at length the question as to whether there was a loss of records or a period of diminished activity of the Council, and therefore I will not enter into it here (2). Many records remain of the judicial proceedings of the reign, but taken as a whole, the materials for this reign are decidedly meagre and unsatisfactory as compared with the preceding and following periods.

This poverty of material which the unfortunate, does not detract from the importance of the period as one of transition and innovation, should not deter the student of history from attempting

- 1) John Bruce, The Arrivall etc., V.
2) Baldwin, J.F., The King's Council, 419-420.

an interpretation of the importance of the reign of Edward IV.

CHAPTER 1.

THE PERIOD FROM 1461-1471: EDWARD IV. FRAMES HIMSELF FROM BARONIAL CONTROL.

The great victory of Towton which practically ended the Wars of the Roses and placed the young Earl of March on the throne was really the victory of one baronial faction over another. The Yorkist party stood for a more broadly national and efficient government than that of Henry and his favorites. As long as there was hope of reform under the Lancastrians, the Yorkists were not in favor of a change of dynasty. This fact is shown by the action of the Earl of Warwick and other Yorkist barons when Richard, Duke of York, laid his claim to the Crown before parliament (1). However the Lancastrian success at Wakefield, resulting in the death of the two great Yorkist leaders, Richard duke of York, and the Earl of Salisbury, followed by the crushing defeat of Warwick himself at the second battle of St. Albans practically left the Yorkists no alternative but to make Edward earl of March king if they would save their necks. The acceptance of Edward was much more agreeable to them than his popular and capable father because his youth and inexperience would enable the barons to carry on the government in his name.

Edward IV. entered upon his reign under very favorable auspices.

1) Vickers, England in the Middle Ages, 459.

On the eve of a great military victory, he brought the prospect of peace (1) and the nation looked expectantly toward him as the restorer of order. Young, handsome, and enthusiastic, he had no foreign connections and was unembarassed by previous attachments (2). Much emphasis was placed on his hereditary title to the throne and his reign was regarded as a strictly legitimate restoration. Fond of amusements and luxury, Edward seemed inclined at first to devote himself entirely to pleasure while his great and powerful subject, the Earl of Warwick ruled the Kingdom for him.

Warwick was equal to the task. Possessed of rich estates, scattered all over England, and backed by the powerful family of the Nevilles, Warwick had sought an outlet for his rare ability and energy in the service of his country. He had already demonstrated his ability while Captain of Calais; now he addressed himself to the difficult task of stamping out the Lancastrian opposition, especially in Northumberland and along the Scottish border where the enemy was still strong (3). He was aided in this by his two brothers, one of whom, George Neville, had been raised to the See of York and to the office of Chancellor, and the other, Lord Montague had received the rich Earldom of Northumberland, a part of the forfeited estates of the Percies (4). Warwick himself was Captain of Calais, admiral of the Channel Fleet, and Warden of the Western Marches. The reduction of the North required three years during which the Nevilles were supreme at Court. The battle of Hexham followed shortly by the capture of

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- 1) Stubbs, C.H. 111. 193.
 - 2) Ibid. 111. 193.
 - 3) Warkworth, Chronicle, 29
Oman, Warwick, Chap. 12.
 - 4) Vergil, (Polydore). 113.

King Henry (1) brought the war to a close and was really the beginning of the conflict between the young king and his great subject (2).

Warwick now took his place in the king's council and tried to secure two favorite measures which he thought necessary to the pacification of the country and to the strengthening of the Yorkist dynasty abroad. The first of these proposals had to do with English relations with France, the second with Edward's marriage. Warwick aimed by a French alliance to cut off the Lancastrian support from that direction. Louis XI, then king of France, was having trouble with his great vassals, and was quite willing to enlist English support especially against the Duke of Burgundy. The second of these proposals was that Edward marry a French princess in order to cement the alliance.

Altho much may be said in favor of the plans of Warwick, they did not meet with the king's approval, for, as subsequent events show, the latter had determined to free himself from the grip of the Nevilles for the victory at Hexham had relieved him of the need of their support. Edward permitted the Council to discuss the projected French alliance and marriage (3). Warwick prepared to head an embassy to France to negotiate with the French King when Edward suddenly announced that he was already wed to Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of Sir John Grey, a Lancastrian partisan (4). Warwick had no doubt hoped to increase his influence with the king by providing him with a wife (5),

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- 1) Vergil, (Polydore), 115.
 - 2) Green, History of England, 11. 26-27.
 - 3) Ibid. 32.
 - 4) Vergil, (Polydore). 116-117.
 - 5) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 464-465.

just as Suffolk had done in the previous reign. Now he found all his schemes frustrated and his own power in the Council undermined (1) because it was apparent that he no longer possessed the confidence of his sovereign (2). It also placed him in an awkward relationship to France and put an end to the embassy until he should learn Edward's will on the question of the peace (3).

This announcement of Edward's marriage was not only a declaration of independence on the part of Edward but was a blow at the old aristocracy as well. The Queen was of humble birth and of Lancastrian affiliation. Edward began at once to elevate her family by a series of marriages between the Woodvilles and the heirs of old aristocratic families (4), thus surrounding himself with a new nobility dependent upon the Crown to balance the Nevilles. Each new marriage widened the breach with Warwick because "the King's confidence was given to his new kinsmen and Warwick saw himself checked even at the council-table by the influence of the Woodvilles." (5) He retaliated by proposing a marriage between his eldest daughter and George Duke of Clarence, the eldest brother of the King. Edward forbade the marriage (6).

At the same time, Edward began systematically to reduce the Yorkist nobility to subserviency to the Crown by removing some of the

- 1) Gairdner, Paston Letters, Intro. XL.VI-XL.VII.
- 2) Vide note 14, Kirk's Charles the Bold, for a good discussion of Warwick's attitude toward Edward's marriage.
- 3) Green, Op. cit. ll. 33.
- 4) Vide Vickers, op. cit. 461-465, for a good account of ^{his} marriages.
- 5) Green, Op. cit. ll. 34.
- 6) Stubbs. Op. cit. 202.
Vergil, (Polydore), 120.

most powerful barons from office (1). Warwick's brother, the bishop of Exeter was deprived of the Chancellorship, being succeeded by the bishop of Bath, and Lord Montague, another brother of Warwick was deprived of the rich estates of the Percies in order that they might be restored to their rightful heir, and given the empty title of Marquis instead. Edward's first parliament also passed laws regulating livery and maintenance (2), a measure designed to lessen the danger from private war and the chances that large bands of feudal retainers might be used against the king.

Meanwhile affairs abroad had been going well for Edward. In 1464 the Scots abandoned the cause of Lancaster and made a fifteen year truce with Edward (3). In July 1465, Henry was captured, after which the realm became more peaceful (4). By a truce with Louis XI. in 1465 Edward secured the expulsion of the Lancastrians from France (5). Warwick was still true to a French alliance, but he was opposed by the Woodvilles who advocated a more popular alliance with Burgundy. The Count of Charolois had up to this time adhered strongly to the Lancastrian cause in opposition to his father but now the death of his wife together with the activities of Louis caused him to seek an English alliance by a marriage with Edward's sister, Margaret of York (6). The conclusion of this alliance in 1467, while Warwick was in France trying to negotiate a treaty with Louis XI., together with the sudden dismissal of Warwick's brother from the Chancellorship all indicated that war had been declared on the great family of

1) Warkworth, Op. cit. 2-3.

2) Smith, G. Barnett. History of English Parliament, 1. 279-280.

3) Stubbs, C.H. 111. 201.

4) Vergil (Polydore). 115-116.

5) Stubbs, C.H. 111. 200.

6) Kirk, Charles the Bold, 11. chap. 1.

the Nevilles (1). Warwick realized the situation, for no sooner had he acquainted the king with the results of the embassy, than he retired to his estates and began to strengthen himself among his retainers. (2) He called a conference with his brothers, and his address to them as given in one of the sources clearly shows that Warwick had repented of his change of allegiance from King Henry to King Edward (3)

1) Oman, Warwick, 171-172.

2) Vickers, Op. cit. 467.

3) "Yt is no lightnes of mynde, from the which I am farre of, my well beloovyd brothers, that moveth me herein, but a settlyd judgement which I may now easily make of King Henry and Edward; for he ys a most holy man looving his fryndes intirely well, and thankfull for any benyfyt who hath a soone, Edward by name, born to great renowne bountyfulnes, and lyberalytie, of whom every man may well look for large recompense, whose care and travaile is to releive his father in his calamytie. This on thother syde ys a man ready to offer injury, unthankfull geaven wholly to folow sensualie and already shooning all honest exercyse; who resolutely maketh more honorable account of new upstart gentlemen than of ancyent howses of nobyltie; wherfor ether must the nobyltie destroy him, or els he wyll destroy them. But we especially who ar fyrst touchyd with displeasure must not put upp the matter; for I beleve yow as not ignorant how that, after he was once settlyd in the royal seat, he began at first secretly and then openly to envy thonor of owre howse, and, one way or other, dayly to dymynshe the same, as thowth he had exaltyd us unto that honor and not we him to that royall powre and authoritye; and therfor, as concerning our late ambassage to France, we were not accountyd upon, to thintent that thonorable renowme which we have gotten emongst all the nobyltie of this land, partly by our owne travaill, might be utterly dymynshed, defasyd, and in no reputation." Vergil, (Polydore), 119-120.

against the whole nobility and not merely the Nevilles, tho the latter, as the most powerful were struck first. The popularity of Edward's Burgundian policy placed Warwick in the minority, for nearly the whole Yorkist party and especially the merchants (1) and citizens of London were strongly in favor of a close alliance with Burgundy because it made trade with the wealthy cities of Flanders easy and profitable (2).

It is significant that at this time Warwick was already regarded as a partisan of Lancaster (3). As early as 1467, he had been charged with intrigue with the Lancastrians but was able to clear himself (4). It is very probable that the estrangement of Warwick from Edward gave the Lancastrians new inspiration for we find them gathering strength in the north and renewing the war in 1469 (5). Warwick was strong in the country parts and Edward's popularity had suffered somewhat because of his advancement of the Queen's family and his policy of strong kingship. Nevertheless the former realized that he alone was no match for the king. This and the fact that Warwick was not yet ready to go over to the Lancastrians is proved by the action of Warwick in giving his daughter to the Duke of Clarence without the knowledge and consent of the king (6) and by his later attempt to make Clarence King. (7). Warwick had but two alternatives One was to retire from public life and devote his energies wholly to

7) Vide the "Confession of Sir Robert Welles, notes to the Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire", 21-23. Camden Miscellany, 1.

- 1) Green, Op. cit. 11. 37.
- 2) Mowat, Op cit. 240.
- 3) Green, Op. cit. 11. 37.
- 4) Stubbs, C.H. 11. 203.
- 5) Ibid, 111. 205.
- 6) Vergil, (Polydore), 120.

the management of his vast estates, the other was to dethrone the man whom he had raised to the highest position in the land and whom he no longer considered worthy of that honor, and replace him by someone who would rule more in accord with the baronial interests (1). To a man of Warwick's ability and age the acceptance of the first alternative was next to impossible. If he chose the latter, as eventually he did, he would have to choose a candidate who was popular with the political classes and yet weak enough to submit to baronial dictation. The Duke of Clarence seemed to be the most available material for this role, and was not unwilling to go against his brother. Only after the attempt to replace Edward by another and weaker Yorkist king failed, and Warwick was forced to flee the kingdom did he return to his Lancastrian allegiance.

The year 1469 was an unquiet time in England. The Rebellion of Robert of Redesdale was an attempt to employ against Edward the same weapons used in the Kentish rising of 1450 under Jack Cade (2). The leader, Robin of Redesdale, a knight of the house Conyers, traversed the country as agitator and collected forces (3). Early in July, 1467, 60,000 commons rose under this leader and published a manifesto in the form of an address to the king (4). The document contained a long list of grievances, chiefly those of which Warwick and Clarence complained. It was circulated among the Lords, and Clarence and the Nevilles supported the demands for reform (5).

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- 1) Oman. Warwick, 176-177.
 - 2) Stubbs. C.H. 11. 203.
 - 3) Ibid. 111. 205.
 - 4) Warkworth. Chronicle, 47-51.
 - 5) Stubbs. C.H. 111. 206.
 - 6)

Edward was taken by surprise. Robin of Redesdale defeated a Yorkist force at Edgecote in July, 1469, and beheaded the leaders. Edward himself became a prisoner of Archbishop Neville. The relative strength of the king and the Nevilles is shown by the fact that the Yorkist nobles demanded the king's release, London called for it, and the Duke of Burgundy threatened to break off trade relations with Flanders if he were not freed (1). Edward however made terms with the Nevilles (2) and issued a general pardon at Christmas in which they were included.

This effort of the commons subsided quickly. However, the reconciliation of the Lords was to sudden to last. In March, 1470, a rebellion started in Lincolnshire under the leadership of Sir Robert Welles. Edward, by a sudden display of his military genius, crushed the revolt and took the leader captive. After the battle he found unmistakable proof that Warwick and Clarence were implicated in the revolt. Before his execution, Sir Robert Welles confessed that the real object of the rising was to make the Duke of Clarence king.(3). Edward now thoroughly aroused, issued a proclamation against his brother and Warwick, March 23, who having failed to obtain support in Lancashire, fled to France (4).

The flight of his adversaries left Edward in apparent security in his kingdom, but according to one of the sources, his difficulties were really increased, "for thabsence of therle causyd all men to

1) green, Op. cit. ll. 39.

2) Paston Letters, ll.389.

Gairdner, Notes, Ibid. XLIX.

3) Camden Miscellany, l., notes to Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire, 21-23.

4) Warkworth, Chronicle. 9; notes, 53-56.

long dayly more and more to se him agane, as men who thought themselves bereft of the soone of this world; so famous was the name of this man amongst the common^etie as that they had nothing with more highe commendation" (1). Realizing the danger of the situation, Edward sent a messenger with all possible speed to Charles of Burgundy to urge him to prevail upon Louis XI. not to aid Warwick and Clarenec(2). Charles not only did what Edward requested, but threatened Louis XI. if he should assist them. Louis replied that there was no provision in the league between Burgundy and France that would prevent him from aiding his friends (3). Edward was much disappointed upon hearing this news, but took every precaution against invasion.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Warwick, accompanied by Clarence appeared before Calais and were refused admittance by Lord Wenlock (4), one of Warwick's servants who thot it to his own interests to adhere to Edward for the present. Upon the advice of Wenlock, Warwick landed in Normandy (5). Louis sent noblemen out to meet him and to assure him of his friendship and aid (6). Warwick was very popular in France for he had visited that country several times previously and his policy of promoting cordial relations between the two sister monarchies (7) had been heartily approved by the French. No doubt however Louis had more ulterior motives in his cordial relations and recept-

- 1) Vergil, (Polydore), 129.
- 2) Ibid. 130
- 3) Ibid.
- 4) Commines, Memoirs, 184.
- 5) Ibid. 187.
- 6) Vergil, (Polydore), 129.
- 7) Ingulf's Chronicle, 459
Vergil, (Polydore), 119.

ion of Warwick than those of mere friendship and gratitude. The foreign policy of Edward had been detrimental to French interests. The close alliance between England and Burgundy had caused the Duke to be more and more independent of royal control, thus interfering directly with Louis' plan for strengthening the monarchy and holding the nobles in check (1). Furthermore the English king had declared his intentions to parliament of making war on France for the purpose of regaining his inheritance across the channel (2). Plainly it was to Louis' advantage to weaken Edward's position in every possible way, and the arrival of Warwick and Clarence furnished him with the tools to accomplish this (3).

Warwick had at this time apparently lost all control over the Yorkist party and even of his own brothers, the Earl of Northumberland, and the Archbishop of York, who were among the most trusted (4) friends of Edward. Just when his fortunes seemed darkest. Louis XI. came forward with a plan of reconciliation between Warwick and Queen Margaret and the restoration of King Henry. The thought of such a reconciliation must have been very distasteful to both parties but the argument of expediency was strong and the diplomacy of Louis overcame all objections, To Warwick, whose ambition it was to be the power behind the throne, the restoration of the mild and gentle Henry

1) Kirk, Charles the Bold, l. ch. IV.

Note: Louis faced practically the same problem with reference to the baronage in France that Edward had to deal with in England. In both cases, the nobles had to be reduced to submission to the crown, before a strong monarchy could develop.

2) Stubbs, C.H. III. 204.

3) Commynes. Memoirs, 188.

4) Green, Op. cit. II.40.

was much to preferred to the strong personal absolutism of Edward of Edward which meant ruin to the baronial class. Margaret's prejudices were stron, but finally, in spite of obstacles, an agree- was reached by the skillful management of Louis (1), " Whereby Anne dowgter to therle of Warwick, whom he had brought over with him, was affyancyd to prince Edward; after that, the earl and duke promysed by othe not to surcease the warres before kingdom of England should be restoryd to King Henry or Edward his soone; fynally, the quene and prince swore to make therle and duke protectors of the common- welth so long to contyneu that office til the prince showld be mate and fytt by himself to undertake that charge; and all these things they promysyd in most relgyouse and most devout manner to kepe invio- late"(2).

This alliance had little to recommend it to the parties concern- ed aside from its convenience. Margaret probably never trusted Warwick as is shown by her delay in returning to England after Henry had been restored to power (3). Warwick's only security lay in the promised marriage between his daughter and the young prince Edward. The Duke of Clarence probably only acquiesced openly to this scheme for we have good authority for believing that even at this time Clarence was in secret communication with Edward (4), and would take the first op- portunity to desert to his brother.

Meanwhile Louis was anxious to get rid of Warwick as quickly as quickly as possible because his presence at court was straining rela-

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- 1) Commines, Memoirs, 187.
 - 2) vergil Polydore. 131.
 - 3) Green, Op. cit. 11. 45.
 - 4) Commines, Op. cit. 189.

tions between Burgundy and France and might lead to a joint attack from Burgundy and England (1). He fitted out all the ships he could get and ordered the English fugitives to be equipped (2). King Rene' Margaret's father helped as much as he could (3). The Earl's navy lay at the mouth of the Seine, where he received letters from his friends in England assuring him that the whole country was ready to rise in his favor and urging him to make haste. (4).

At the same time, the Duke of Burgundy, who was stronger on sea than was Warwick and King Louis together (5) was policing the channel in order to intercept Warwick's passage to England. He had also warned Edward of the great preparations of the French king against him but he seems not to have heeded (6). Unfortunately for Edward, a great storm scattered the Duke's fleet after which the weather became fair and the Earl secured a safe passage (7), arriving at Dartmouth from which he had fled to France six months previously (8).

As soon as he arrived in England Warwick issued a proclamation in the name of Henry VI., ordering that "all men who might for age should arm themselves agaynsy Edward duke of York, who presently who presently, contrary to right and law usurpyd the kingdom" (9). Great numbers flocked to the Earl's standard (10) amongst them his two brothers and the Marquis of Montegue (11) whom Edward had trusted implicitly.

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- 1) Green, Op. cit. ll. 43.
 - 2) Vergil, (Polydore), 131.
 - 3) Ibid.
 - 4) Ibid. 132.
 - 5) Ibid. 187.
 - 6) Commynes, Op. cit. 187.
 - 7) Ibid. 189-190.
 - 8) Vergil, (Polydore), 132.
 - 9) Ibid.
 - 10) Commynes, Op. cit. 190.
Warkworth, Op. cit. 10.
 - 11) Ibid.

When Edward, who had gone to the north of England to put down a revolt, learned the real situation and realized how impossible it would be to raise an army and defend himself, he decided that it would be most expedient to flee the kingdom, temporarily until a favorable chance came to regain his kingdom. Accordingly, he hastened to the town of Lynn and sailed for Flanders, accompanied by his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Lord Hastings, Lord Day and many other knights and squires (1). One authority says that Lord Hastings, Edward's chamberlain, advised his lieutenants and other officers to go over to Warwick for the present, but urged them to retain their old affection and allegiance to Edward and himself (2). Queen Elizabeth, Edward's wife took to sanctuary where she gave birth to a son, the illfated Edward V. (3). The downfall of Edward was due more to his carelessness and lack of preparation than to his actual weakness and unpopularity. He had placed too much trust in Warwick's brothers and in the promises of Clarence (4). Obviously his flight was merely for the purpose of gaining time and collecting his resources.

Unopposed, the Earl of Warwick advanced to London, where he was well received (5). King Henry was taken from the tower and restored to the throne again in 1471. A parliament was called to meet at Westminster in December, in which Edward IV. was proclaimed a traitor and all his possessions were confiscated. A similar sentence was pronounced on all who had taken his part, and it was further provided that all captives who were of his faction should be punished. All

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- 1) Warwick, Chronicle, ll. vergil, (Polydore), 133.
 - 2) Commynes, Op. cit. 191.
 - 3) Vergil, (Polydore), 133.
 - 4) Green, Op. cit. ll. 42.
 - 5) Vergil, (Polydore), 133.

the decrees enacted by Edward were abrogated. Finally the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence were made joint protectors of the realm (1). Warwick's brother, the Marquis of Montague, who had taken Edward's part during Warwick's exile was pardoned (2). This revolution was brought about peaceably and with scarcely any bloodshed. It seemed as if the work of Towton had been undone and all of the efforts of Edward to free the crown from the domination of the aristocracy and place it on a firmer foundation had failed. This state of affairs however was of short duration as we shall presently see.

Edward did not despair of the recovery of his crown, He placed his brother-in-law, the Duke of Normandy in a very embarrassing position because the latter, on account of war at home, scarcely knew which side to favor (3). The Duke finally announced publicly that he did not intend to help Edward, but secretly sent him 50,000 florins (4), ordered three ships to be fitted out for him at La Vere in Holland, and hired for him secretly fourteen Easterling ships which were to transport him to England and serve him for fifteen days afterwards (5).

After a somewhat difficult passage, Edward landed at Ravenspur, 1471, (6). He sent out scouts to ascertain how the people were disposed toward him and found that they would welcome him as Duke of York, but that they were not inclined to throw off their allegiance to Hen-

1) Vergil, (Polydore) 134.

2) Ibid.

3) Commines, Op. Cit. 199.

4) A sum equal to 200,000 pounds sterling.

5) Commines, Op. cit. 199.

6) Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV, 2.

ry (1). Upon hearing this Edward devised a little piece of strategy. He had proclamations made announcing that he had returned to claim his inheritance of the Dukedom of York (2). The Yorkist leader and his following then marched straight to the city of York where he was received as the Duke of York, but made to take an oath of allegiance to King Henry and Prince Edward. Not pausing anywhere long, Edward took his way southward, avoiding the castle of Pomfret where the Marquis of Montague was stationed with a large force (3). For some reason the Marquis let him slip by and this blunder was largely the salvation of Edward. At Wakefield, parties began to desert to Edward, tho not in great numbers. At Nottingham, Sir William Parr, and Sir James Harrington came to meet him with six thousand men (4). At Leicester, three thousand more men equipped for war came to him. Edward now arrived at Coventry where Warwick was stationed. The latter refused to come out and fight and so Edward pushed on to Warwick where he was received as king (5). Hearing of the approach of the Duke of Clarence, Edward marched out to meet him in full battle array. The two brothers greeted each other warmly and then united their forces (6). Clarence tried to bring about a reconciliation between Edward and Warwick, but in vain. (7).

- 1) Historie of the Arrivall of Edward 1V. 3.
- 2) Ibid. 4.
- 3) Ibid. 6.
- 4) Ibid, 8.
- 5) Ibid. 9.
- 6) Ibid. 11.
- 7) Ibid. 12.

As Warwick had received large reinforcements and still declined to give battle, Edward decided to advance on London without delay. Warwick sent letters to the Archbishop of York entreating him to do his uttermost to hold the city for two or three days until he could come to his assistance. (1). The citizens were inclined to favor Edward because they feared a seige and further, they realized, that Edward was capable of ruling the kingdon after his own directions and of protecting them from injury (2). The Archbishop, knowing the sentiments of the people, and of the futility of making any resistance, sent secretly to Edward, desiring to be admitted to his grace (3).

The Earl of Warwick followed the movements of the Yorkists very closely, for he hoped to be able to save the city of London for King Henry. Edward, fearing an attack on this city, marched out about ten miles and met Warwick at Barnet. A battle ensued in which Warwick, the Marquis of Montaque, the Duke of Exeter and many other prominent barons were killed. The whole program of Warwick and the aristocracy which aimed to maintain a baronial oligarchy at the expense of the crown and the political classes had failed. The day when one nobleman could exercise sufficient power to make and unmake kings was over. The whole feudal order must soon give way before the changing economic and social conditions which brought the towns and commercial classes into prominence and make strong kingship possible.

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- 1) Arrivall of Edward IV. in England. 15.
 - 2) Vergil, (Polydore) 142.
 - 3) Histoire of the Arrivall of Edward IV. 16.

However, Edward's victory was not yet complete. Margaret and her son, whose long delay in France(1) probably proved disastrous to the Lancastrian cause had landed in western England, Upon hearing of the disaster of Barnet, she was at first inclined to return to France, but the Duke of Somerset and other Lancastrian nobles prevailed on her to make one more attempt to regain the throne, assuring her that they had many sympathizers in Wales and in northern England (2). They looked upon the overthrow of Warwick as the removal of an obstacle to their success (3), and thot that it would not be a difficult matter to crush to overconfident and careless victor at Barnet. In the latter they were mistaken, By a series of rapid marches Edward was able to intercept their passage into Wales. A decisive battle was fought at Tewkesbury in which Prince Edward was slain (4) together with most of the Lancastrian nobles, and Queen Margaret and the Duke of Somerset taken prisoners after the battle. The former was executed and the former taken to London, and afterwards ransomed by her father (5).

Edward had regained his kingdom, altho there yet remained several troubled regions (6), but these disturbances were soon over.

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- 1) Warkwarth, Chronicle. 17.
 - 2) Vergil, Polydore. 148-149.
 - 3) Green, .Op. Cit. ll. 45.
 - 4) Warkwarth. Chronicle. 18.
 - 5) Ramsay. Op. cit. ll. 413.
 - 6) Note: There was a rising in the north which was promptly put down by Henry Percy, the restored Earl of Northumberland. While Edward was at Tewkesbury, an illegitimate son of the Earl of Kent, the Bastard of Fauconburg besieged London, but the citizens were able to repel the attack and by the time Edward returned, the trouble was over. Mowat, Op. cit. 229-230.

The changed position of Edward IV. after the battle of Tewkesbury is well expressed by a recent historian of the Wars of the Roses. " The Lancastrian line was extinct (1), the house of Neville was laid low, King Edward had learned much from his exile. Instead of the careless soldier depicted by Commines (2), he was now the prudent monarch of the new school that was rising in Western Europe on the ruins of feudalism to embody the independence of the national states. Edward IV. like Louis XI., belonged to that 'New Monarchy', whose raison d'etre and whose philosophy of life had been laid down forever by Machiavelli in the "Prince" (3)

- 1) The death of Prince Edward , son of Margaret, and of Henry, ended the direct Lancastrian line.
- 2) Commines, Op. cit.192.
- 3) Mowat, Op. cit. 266.

CHAPTER 11.

THE PERIOD FROM 1471 TO 1483: EDWARD IV. ESTABLISHES THE "NEW MONARCHY."

After 1471, Edward's command of the kingdom was never seriously questioned. Up to this time, the dynastic rivalry together with the difficulty of holding the barons in check, had given him little opportunity to develop a constructive policy. From now on his reign was more peaceful. In 1472, the Earl of Oxford, a Lancastrian who had fled to France after the battle of Tewkesbury, made a descent on the southern coast but was soon compelled to surrender (1). Archbishop Neville, who had been pardoned after the battle of Barnet, was suspected of correspondence with the exiled Lancastrians, and thrown into prison where he remained until the end of his life (2). The quarrel between the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester over the partition of the Warwick inheritance (3), together with their rivalry with the Woodvilles was the source of considerable trouble at court, but Edward did his best to maintain order.

1) Vickers, Op. cit. 479.

2) Stubbs, C.H. 111. 212.

3) Gloucester wanted to marry Anne Beauchamp, daughter of the Earl of Warwick and widow of Edward, Prince of Wales. The marriage was bitterly opposed by Clarence, who hoped to secure the whole Warwick estate, but the marriage was concluded, and, in 1474, the inheritance was divided between the two dukes. The countess of Warwick did not receive anything. Vickers, Op. cit. 478. Also, Ramsay, op. cit. 399.

In his foreign relations, Edward adopted a policy of peace with the object of furthering English commerce and giving the nation an opportunity of recovering from the wars. In this he anticipated the policy of the early Tudors. We have already noted how he brought about a close alliance between Burgundy and Flanders, a relationship which greatly benefited English trade, particularly the wool industry and was very popular with the political classes. After his restoration to the throne, Edward was naturally anxious to maintain this alliance and also to avenge himself on the French king, Louis XI. for the aid he had given Warwick and the Lancastrians. However, a temporary truce was made with Louis (1). In preparation for a future expedition against France, Edward did everything in his power to establish friendly relations with the other states, particularly Castile, Portugal, Brittany and Burgundy (2). To the latter he was deeply indebted for the assistance given him in recovering his Crown. Cordial relations were established with the Hansa league and the difficulties between the Hansa and English merchants were adjusted. All the earlier privileges of the league were confirmed and it was granted new depots as London, Lynn and Boston (3). Difficulties with Scotland regarding the infringement of the truce was adjusted satisfactorily to both countries (4) and as a result, peace was maintained on the northern border until near the close of Edward's reign (5). All these

1) Ramsay, op.cit.11.404.

2) Vickers, op. cit. 483.

3) Ibid. 484.

4) The king's youngest daughter, Cecille, was betrothed to James, son of James III. of Scotland.

5) Ingulf, Chronicle, 471.

arrangements popularized and strengthened the administration and assured freedom from outside interference in the proposed attack on France.

The French war was popular in England (1), and both in 1472 and 1474 parliament made liberal grants for that purpose. In July, 1474, an offensive and defensive alliance had been made with Charles, duke of Burgundy, against Louis XI. All during 1474 and the early part of 1475, Edward made great preparations for the expedition. He landed a magnificent army in France in 1475, but altho the plan of campaign was admirable, the whole scheme was doomed to failure from a military standpoint because of the inability of the Dukes of Brittany and Burgundy to cooperate (2). The latter especially had exhausted his military strength in the unfortunate siege of Nuess (3).

Deserted by his allies, Edward was not much inclined to carry on the war alone. Louis XI. quickly sized up the situation, and by admirable diplomacy, managed to open up negotiations for peace (4). A peace was made to the great disappointment of the duke of Burgundy, which was not very glorious for English arms, but better for English interests as a whole. Edward IV. as well as Henry VII. must have realized that English interests were insular, that her friendship was equally valuable to France, Spain and Flanders, and that the old Plantagenet claim to the crown of France was an unattainable, even

1) Vickers, op. cit., 484.

3) Philip de Commines, a contemporary, criticises Charles very much for his shortsightedness in carrying on this siege, when his real enemy was his syzerain, Louis XI. Commines, Memoirs, l. 251-254.

4) Commines, op. cit., 251-268.

2) Ramsay, op. cit., 409.

an undesirable ideal. Altho in the treaty of Pecquigny, Edward was styled King of France, it was apparent that this was mere form. Edward agreed to accept money payment of 75,000 crowns down and an annual tribute of 50,000 crowns, agreeing at the same time to a seven year truce, and to a marriage between his daughter Elizabeth and the Dauphine when the two arrived at their proper ages. (1). The two kings had a conference at Pecquigny, amid great splendor (2), after which Edward returned to Calais and thence to England. Altho this peace was unpopular with some of Edward's followers, particularly with his younger brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, it secured two things that were necessary to the establishment of Edward's personal monarchy, a well-filled treasury, which made him independent of parliamentary grants, and security from French attacks.

In spite, however, of the large grants that he drew from France, Edward soon found himself greatly in need of money to maintain the court and keep order thruout the kingdom. Not deeming it expedient to call on Parliament for more money so soon after the liberal grants that it had made for the French expedition, he resortes to new devices. "Thruout all the parts of the kingdom, he appointed inspectors of the customs, men of remarkable schrewdness, but too hard, according to the general report, upon the merchants. The king himself, also, having procured merchants ships, put on board of them the finest wools, choths, tin and other productions, and like a private individu-

1) Vickers, op, cit., 484.

2) Commynes, op, cit., l. 273-277.

al living by trade, exchanged merchandize by means of his factors, among both Italians and Greeks¹⁾(1).

Edward IV. is also credited with having devised the famous benevolences or free gifts. Such gifts had commonly been made to kings in earlier times, but Edward is said to have systematized the custom. One authority says: "The appeal to wealthy persons may have been disagreeable, but it is very likely that the gift or loan carried with it countervailing advantages of a solid kind, analogous to patents of monopolies which were so freely granted a century or more afterwards. Nor do I set much store by the statute of Richard III. in which these benevolences are declared illegal, or on the language, which, according to the Rolls of Parliament, was employed to Richard by those who urged him to accept the crown. The terms of the address are general, and need not apply to benevolences at all, but to a mere criticism of the last reign and its administration; and we should remember that Richard's partizans were chiefly in the city of London where, if the benevolences were compensated by a monopoly, the mass of the traders would resent that favor; and if it were not, but was merely a disguised tax on the rich, the wealthier citizens would be dissatisfied under the exaction. This seems to be the more reasonable because the practice of exacting these gifts or loans was resumed by Henry VII. on the plea that a usurper's statutes had no authority, tho it is quite likely that Henry had every motive to conciliate his subjects, and after all, passed a very uneasy and anxious reign." (2)

1) Inghlf, Chronicle, 474.
Rogers, Thorold, Work and Wages. 316-317.

Toward the end of Edward's reign, these abuses increased. He obtained more money by the sale of the revenues of vacant prelaties which, according to the Magna Charta, cannot be sold (1). He had bills of attainder reversed against Lancastrian noblemen in return for a gift. In 1476, the king called a parliament, and resumes possession of nearly all the royal estates that had been granted since the beginning of the reign, and applied the whole thereof to the expenses of the Crown (2). On the whole, Edward asked for few taxes, if we can rely on the Rolls of Parliament. The records show only four grants of fifteenths and tenths beside the 13,000 archers which were granted for the French expedition (3). While no doubt, Edward's arbitrary methods of raising money were unpopular with the people whom they affected, yet they must have been popular with the masses who had been taxed heavily before, and they are an indication of his personal strength, and independence of parliamentary control.

Meanwhile, the main danger to Edward lay within his own family. The Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester had never become reconciled to each other. In 1476, Clarence's wife died, and his sister, the Duchess of Burgundy tried to arrange a marriage for him with her step-daughter, Mary, the heiress of Charles the Bold (4). Edward opposed this union, because it would have made his brother too strong. It is quite evident and probable, that Clarence still had hopes of gaining the throne, for, by the alliance between Warwick and Margaret, he stood next after Edward, Prince of Wales, and his issue. Clarence resented his brother's interference and used his own influence to se-

3) Rogers, op. cit. 316-317.

1) Ingulf, Chronicle, 474

2) Ibid. 474, 477.

4) Vickers, op. cit. 479.

cure the trial and death of an unfortunate servant of his household whom he accused of poisoning his wife. The trial brought forth other complications, and resulted in the trial and death of two men on the charge of trying to procure the death of the king and his son by sorcery at the instigation of the duke of Clarence (1).

Clarence regarded these actions as a personal affront and lodged a complaint with the Privy Council against what he considered judicial murder (2). Edward, unable longer to brook interference from Clarence had him arrested, summoned a parliament, which met in January, 1478, and laid a long indictment before it, recounting all Clarence's past trecheries. Clarence was sentenced to death. The death of the Duke of Clarence strengthened the absolutism of the king in that it removed the last great idol toward whom the eyes of the people had turned in times past. " They regarded as idols of this description, the Earl of Warwick, the Duke of Clarence, and any other great person there might happen to be in the kingdom who had withdrawn himself frpm the favor of the king" (3). One recent writer asserts that "to contemporaries it appeared that by Clarence's death, Edward had set the coping-stone on absolute despotism" (4).

Little of interest took place in domestic affairs from now to the close of the reign. This was not true however for foreign affairs. In 1476, Charles, Duke of Burgundy was killed in a battle, and his daughter succeeded to his vast estates (5). This gave Louis an oppor-

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- 1) Vickers, op. cit. 479-480.
 - 2) Ibid. 480.
 - 3) Ingulf, Chronicle, 480.
 - 4) Vickers, op. cit. 480.
 - 5) English Historical Review, Xll. 521.

tunity to seize Burgundian territory. He failed however to force a bridegroom on Mary, for she chose Maximilian, King of the Romans, and son of Emperor Frederick III, a match which Edward encouraged, (1). In 1479 negotiations were opened with England and France for an extension of the truce for 100 years after the death of the prince who died first (2). In 1480, Edward made a compact with Maximilian, that if Louis would not submit his differences with them, he would take their part. The sudden death of Mary, 1482, from a fall from her horse, gave Louis his opportunity. He hastily smoothed matters over for a new treaty with Edward, prolonged the truce but for one year after the death of the prince who died first. Then Louis negotiated the treaty of Arras with Maximilian for the marriage of the Dauphine with his daughter Margaret, in violation of the former pledge to marry him to Edward's daughter, Elizabeth. The Anglo-Burgundian alliance was gone; the French tribute must cease; and Commines believed that Edward, who died the April following, died of the treaty of Arras (3).

At the same time, the French encouraged the Scots to break a treaty of peace of thirty years which they had made with the English, in spite of the fact that Edward had been paying a yearly sum of one thousand marks by way of dowry for Cecily, one of his daughters, who had been promised in marriage by a formal embassy to the eldest son of the king of the Scots (4). Consequently, Edward declared war on the Scots and gave the entire command of the expedition to the Duke of Gloucester (5), who after a six weeks campaign, recaptured Berwick (6).

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- 1) Vickers, op. cit. 485.
 - 2) Eng. His. Review, XII. 521-523.
 - 3) Ibid.
 - 4) Ingulf, Chronicle, 480-481.
 - 5) Ibid.
 - 6) Vickers, op. cit. 486.

On April 9, 1483, Edward died, The Kingdom was at peace and everything pointed to a quiet and uneventful succession of his twelve year old son, Edward V. The throne was surrounded by a body of trusted and experienced servants, and there had been no evidences of political discontent since Clarence's death in 1478. (1) The nation was again faced with the question of a regency. The Woodville party and the party led by the Duke of Gloucester both contested bitterly for the control of the young king. Finally, the Duke of Gloucester was made Protector and later usurped the throne. It would seem that Edward's work and all his attempts at founding a dynasty had been overthrown by his own family. A general discussion of his government and its significance for the future has been reserved for a later chapter.

1) Ramsay, op. cit. II. 473-477.

CHAPTER III.

THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF EDWARD'S GOVERNMENT.

The thing that strikes us preeminently about Edward's government is that he was a national king and not a feudal king. The Lancastrians had prided themselves on their parliamentary title and placed great emphasis on the constitutional forms, but their parliament was unrepresentative and aristocratic and the "Constitution in its growth had outgrown the capacity of the nation"(1). The last years of their reign were flagrantly unconstitutional, and the weakness and disorder of the last years of their rule caused the nation to endorse the stronger if less constitutional Yorkist administration which appealed to all classes of the nation for support.

The first half of Edward's reign, as we have already indicated, was a period of grave disorder and strife, very similar to that of the later Lancastrian administration, but it was scarcely to be expected that a young and inexperienced king, dominated by a powerful and unruly nobility could remedy all the existing evils at once. The statement of Dr. Stubbs, that "England found no sounder government under Edward IV. than under Henry VI." (2) may be applied to the first half of Edward's reign, but certainly not to the second

1) Stubbs, C.H. III. 286.

2) Ibid. 280.

for Edward held the barons in check with a strong hand, and his rule was comparatively peaceful and orderly (1).

The contrast between the Yorkist and the Lancastrian governments is no where more clearly shown than in the character of their parliaments. Except for the brief personal rule of Henry VI., parliament was supreme under the Lancastrians. Edward IV., claiming the throne under strict hereditary right, would naturally have little respect for an institution that had deprived his ancestors of the throne. Consequently Edward called few parliaments (2), and these were limited in their action to such matters as the granting of money, and commercial legislation. Edward made himself financially independent of parliament as we have seen in the preceding chapter, an act which must have been endorsed by a nation, which, under Henry VI. complained that the king did not live off his own (3).

Other factors tended to reduce parliament to less and less significance. The long period of wars in which the feudal classes had engaged, the French wars, followed by the Wars of the Roses, had killed off many of the nobility and lessened their influence in the state. Parliament had degenerated into a meeting of armed men with hosts of mercenary soldiers or liveried retainers to support them in any quarrel (4). Really it was better for the peace and order of the country not to summon parliament at all.

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- 1) Mowat, op. cit. 265.
 - 2) Ibid. 271.
 - 3) Plummer, op. cit. 39.
 - 4) Ibid. 16-28.

At the same time that the power of the House of Lords was thus diminished, the strength of the Commons was broken by the action of Parliament itself. A statute of Henry VI.'s reign had limited the the county franchise (1) so reducing the importance of county members who, up to this time, had been very active and influential, before the borough members began to realize their own opportunities and power. The internal weakness and inefficiency of parliament gave the Crown its opportunity, and justified it in increasing its power.

In the introduction to this study, we have noted the great development of conciliar government under the Lancastrians, and their failure to emancipate themselves from an aristocratic land-holding parliament because of their inability to win the support of the political classes. The material for the study of the council under the Yorkist kings is very meagre, but what we have leads us to believe that the council was but an instrument of the new absolutism. Edward depended for his support quite largely on the towns and the commercial classes. Consequently we find the barons playing a lesser role in the council under Edward IV. (2), their places being taken by representatives from the political classes who were naturally subservient to the king. A considerable body of knights, squires, doctors, and clerks appear in the council (3). The Council^{also} tends to become a purely official body (4), and is only infrequently attended by the great lords or the king.

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- 1) Green, op. cit. 22-23.
 - 2) Baldwin, The King's Council, 422.
 - 3) Ibid. 423.
 - 4) Ibid. 424.

Under Edward IV. and the Tudors, the Council ceases to be a ruling body, and is everywhere hampered by royal authority. However the king still needed the Council and consulted it more often about matters of form, than about matters of policy (1). Although its activities as a whole seem to have been much reduced, individual members were very active in the King's service (2). "It is probable too that the deliberative functions of the Council were of more weight than the bare statement of documents generally reveal." (3)

The Judicial functions of the Council under Edward IV., for which we have abundant records, seem to have been reduced in the early period of his reign (4). This was a natural result of the complete breakdown of the judicial functions near the end of the reign of Henry VI. Here again we find the royal authority emphasized, for appeals were addressed to the chancellor or to the king, where they were more likely to be heard (5). The great danger from this policy was, that the executive exercised influence over the judiciary (6). However, the times were rough and required rough measures. The ordinary law had been emptied of most of its force under Henry VI. Edward IV. used special tribunals which would not feel the territorial influence of disturbers of the peace (7). The judicial functions of the Council were not completely

- 1) Baldwin, op.cit. 426.
- 2) Ibid. 427.
- 3) Ibid. 428.
- 4) Ibid, 428.
- 5) Ibid. 428.
- 6) Mowat, op. cit. 267.
- 7) Ibid.

suspended, and, toward the end of the reign, when the country became more peaceful, we find it resuming its normal duties (1). The Council still seems to be weak in dealing with questions of livery and maintenance, and the king is still prominent in law cases.

By the end of the reign, we frequently hear of cases heard in star chamber (2), a room where the Council met when exercising their judicial functions. The Star Chamber court, which, according to some authorities, originated with Henry VII., appears to have exercised the original jurisdiction of the King's Council. The judges of that court were the whole council, and the crimes punished by it consisted of many others not enumerated in the Act of 1487 (3). Henry's statute seems to have had little influence on this court other than to assign to it special classes of cases.

On the whole, the main change in the Council during the reign of Edward IV. is in the character of its membership, and the increased influence of the king and the chancellor. The Council has lost the independence that it exercised under Henry VI. and ^{has} not yet assumed the administrative importance that it developed under the Tudors.

The courts show the same subserviency to the crown, under Edward IV., that we have already noted in Parliament and the Council. Edward IV. was a pupil of Sir John Fortescue (4), and made some attempts to enforce the law. This was frequently done in an

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- 1) Baldwin, op.cit. 431.
 - 2) Ibid. 433.
 - 3) Dicey, The Privy Council, 98-99.
 - 4) Smith, op. cit. I. 279-280.

arbitrary manner, without sufficient regard to the principles of justice, especially in the trial of political offenders, and had resulted in the accusation against Edward of making so-called "judicial murders". Instances of this high-handed action are the deaths of Thomas Burdet (1), and the Duke of Clarence (2). These instances are, however, rare, and may be to some extent justified by the exigencies of the times.

Nowhere is the ability and the far-sightedness of Edward IV. better shown than in his recognition of the importance of the commercial and industrial classes who were just rising to power. The Lancastrians had largely ignored this class because their government was dominated by a court and baronial oligarchy whose aim was to maintain the interests of the aristocracy. The Yorkists grasped the significance of the social and economic change that England was undergoing, and furthered the interests of the middle classes in order to win their support for the "New Monarchy". In this they were very successful and were copied by the Tudors.

In his foreign policy, Edward aimed to further the interest of the growing commercial classes, and to maintain peace. He turned aside from the hopeless ideals of the Hundred Years War and dreams of conquest across the channel (3). This gave England a much needed peace which enabled her to develop her own resources. "England, courted on every side, had no further need to enter into expensive foreign wars, she could rise to greatness again, without em-

1) He was tried and executed on the charge of trying to procure the death of the king and his son by magic. Vickers, Op. cit. 480.
2) Campbell, J.L., Chief Justices of England. I-216.
3) Mowat, op. cit. 271.

broiling herself in Europe. This was clearly understood by Edward IV., by Henry VII., by Wolsey, by Elizabeth. They spent little of England's treasure or ^{lives} ~~her~~ men on the fields of Europe; so that the energy of her people took other directions at home in England, and abroad, along the paths of the sea (1)."

In conclusion, this thesis has attempted to show how Edward IV. freed the Crown from the domination of the old aristocratic land-holding nobility and established the "New Monarchy", based on the broad popular support of the political classes. We have seen how he overcame his dynastic rivals, how he freed himself from the domination of the too powerful subject, and made Parliament, the Council, and the Courts instruments of the new absolutism. One modern authority mentions six distinct ways in which Edward IV. was a good type of the "New Monarchy". " He strengthened the administration of the law; he encouraged the rise of a new nobility, personally attached to the Crown; he kept the expenditure and revenue of the government at a low but adequate figure; he summoned few parliaments; he conducted the affairs of England abroad peacefully, with a backing of armed force, but mainly by a clever diplomacy; he encouraged trade and commerce by all the means that were known to the Crown" (2). Along all these lines, Edward IV. was imitated and carefully followed by the Tudors. He must be given the credit of having initiated, and to a certain extent, developed

- 1) Mowat, op. cit. 272.
- 2) Ibid. 267.

the policy which became the basis of the personal rule of the Tudors. In doing this, he was merely following a policy of expediency which any monarch who hoped to maintain the dignity of the Crown in that age must have been compelled to follow. The "New Monarchy" then began not with the overthrow of Richard III., in 1485, and the establishment of the Tudor dynasty on the throne of England, but in 1471, when Edward^{IV.} began his personal absolutism.

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