

cover of a mist, near the Scottish camp; and, regardless of the great numbers of the enemy, he began the attack with his small but determined body of cavalry. William was living in such supine security, that he took the English, at first, for a body of his own ravagers, who were returning to the camp: but the sight of their banners convincing him of his mistake, he entered on the action with no greater body than a hundred horse, in confidence that the numerous army which surrounded him would soon hasten to its relief. He was dismounted on the first shock, and taken prisoner; while his troops, hearing of this disaster, fled on all sides with the utmost precipitation.

The dispersed ravagers made the best of their way to their own country; and discord arising among them, they proceeded even to mutual hostilities, and suffered more from each other's sword than from that of the enemy.

This great and important victory proved at last decisive in favour of Henry, and entirely broke the spirit of the English rebels. The Bishop of Durham, who was preparing to revolt, made his submissions; Hugh Bigod, though he had received a strong reinforcement of Flemings, was obliged to surrender all his castles, and throw himself on the king's mercy; no better resource was left to the Earl of Ferrars and Roger de Mowbray; the inferior rebels imitating the example, all England was restored to tranquillity in a few weeks; and as the king appeared to lie under the immediate protection of Heaven, it was deemed impious any longer to resist him. The clergy exalted anew the merits and powerful intercession of Becket; and Henry, instead of opposing this superstition, plumed himself on the new friendship of the saint, and propagated an opinion which was so favourable to his interests.<sup>1</sup>

Prince Henry, who was ready to embark at Gravelines, with the Earl of Flanders and a great army, hearing that his partisans in England were suppressed, abandoned all thoughts of the enterprise, and joined the camp of Lewis, who, during the absence of the king, had made an irruption into Normandy, and had laid siege to Rouen.<sup>k</sup> The place was defended with great vigour by the inhabitants;<sup>l</sup> and Lewis, despairing of success by open force, tried to gain the town by a stratagem, which, in that superstitious age, was deemed not very honourable. He proclaimed in his own camp a cessation of arms, on pretence of celebrating the festival of St. Laurence; and when the citizens, supposing themselves in safety, were so imprudent as to remit their guard, he purposed to take advantage of their security. Happily, some priests had, from mere curiosity, mounted a steeple, where the alarm-bell hung; and, observing the French camp in motion, they immediately rang the bell, and gave warning to the inhabitants, who ran to their several stations. The French, who, on hearing the alarm, hurried to the assault, had already mounted the walls in several places; but being repulsed by the enraged citizens, were obliged to retreat with considerable loss.<sup>m</sup> Next day, Henry, who had hastened to the defence of his Norman dominions, passed over the bridge in triumph; and entered Rouen in sight of the French army. The city was now in absolute safety; and the king, in order to brave the French monarch, commanded the gates, which had been walled up, to be opened; and he prepared to push his advantages against the enemy. Lewis saved himself from this perilous situation by a new piece of deceit, not so justifiable. He proposed a conference for adjusting the terms of a general peace, which he knew would be greedily embraced by Henry; and while the King of England trusted to the execution of his promise, he made a retreat with his army into France.

There was, however, a necessity on both sides for an accommodation. Henry could no longer bear to see his three sons in the hands of his enemy; and Lewis dreaded, lest this great monarch, victorious in all quarters, crowned

with glory, and absolute master of his dominions, might take revenge for the many dangers and disquietudes which the arms, and still more the intrigues, of France, had, in his disputes both with Becket and his sons, found means to raise him. After making a cessation of arms, a conference was agreed on near Tours; where Henry granted his sons much less advantageous terms than he had formerly offered, and he received their submissions. The most material of his concessions were <sup>The king's accommodation with his sons.</sup> some pensions which he stipulated to pay them, and some castles which he granted them for the place of their residence; together with an indemnity for all their adherents, who were restored to their estates and honours.<sup>n</sup>

Of all those who had embraced the cause of the young princes, William, King of Scotland was the only considerable loser by that invidious and unjust enterprise. Henry delivered from confinement, without exacting any ransom, about nine hundred knights whom he had taken prisoners; but it cost William the ancient independency of his crown as the price of his liberty. He stipulated to do homage to Henry for Scotland and all his other possessions; he engaged that all the barons and nobility of his kingdom should also do homage; that the bishops should take an oath of fealty; that both should swear to adhere to the King of England against their native prince, if the latter should break his engagements; and that the fortresses of Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwic, Roxborough, and Jedborough, should be <sup>A. D. 1175. 10th Aug.</sup> delivered into Henry's hands, till the performance of articles.<sup>o</sup> This severe and humiliating treaty was executed in its full rigour. William, being released, brought up all his barons, prelates, and abbots; and they did homage to Henry in the cathedral of York, and acknowledged him and his successors for their superior lord.<sup>p</sup> The English monarch stretched still further the rigour of the conditions which he exacted. He engaged the king and states of Scotland to make a perpetual cession of the fortresses of Berwic and Roxborough, and to allow the castle of Edinburgh to remain in his hands for a limited time. This was the first great ascendant which England obtained over Scotland; and indeed the first important transaction which had passed between the kingdoms. Few princes have been so fortunate as to gain considerable advantages over their weaker neighbours with less violence and injustice than was practised by Henry against the King of Scots, whom he had taken prisoner in battle, and who had wantonly engaged in a war, in which all the neighbours of that prince, and even his own family, were, without provocation, combined against him.<sup>q</sup>

Henry having thus, contrary to expectation, extricated himself with honour from a <sup>King's equitable administration.</sup> situation in which his throne was exposed to great danger, was employed for several years in the administration of justice, in the execution of the laws, and in guarding against those inconveniences, which either the past convulsions of his state, or the political institutions of that age, unavoidably occasioned. The provisions which he made show such largeness of thought as qualified him for being a legislator; and they were commonly calculated as well for the future as the present happiness of his kingdom.

He enacted severe penalties against robbery, murder, false coining, arson; and <sup>A. D. 1176.</sup> ordained that these crimes should be punished by the amputation of the right hand and right foot.<sup>r</sup> The pecuniary commutation for crimes, which has a false appearance of lenity, had been gradually disused; and seems to have been entirely abolished by the rigour of these statutes. The superstitious trial by water ordeal, though condemned by the church,<sup>s</sup> still subsisted; but Henry ordained, that any man accused of murder, or any heinous felony, by the oath of the legal knights of the county, should,

i Hoveden, p. 539. k Brompton, p. 1096. l Diceto, p. 578. m Brompton, p. 1096. Neubrig, p. 411. Heming, p. 503. n Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. Bened. Abb. p. 88. Hoveden, p. 540. Diceto, p. 583. Brompton, p. 1098. Heming, p. 505. Chron. Dunst. p. 36. o M. Paris, p. 91. Chron. Dunst. p. 36. Hoveden, p. 545. M. West. p. 251. Diceto, p. 584. Brompton, p. 1103. Rymer, vol. i. p. 39. Liber Niger Scaccarii, p. 36. p Bened. Abb. p. 113.

q Some Scotch historians pretend that William paid, besides 100,000 pounds of ransom, which is quite incredible. The ransom of Richard I. who, besides England, possessed so many rich territories in France, was only 150,000 marks, and yet was levied with great difficulty. Indeed, two thirds of it only could be paid before his deliverance. r Bened. Abb. p. 132. Hoveden, p. 549. s Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 204.

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