

CHAPTER V

THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER

1399-1485

1. HENRY IV. 1399-1413

94. Opposition to Henry—During the first nine years of Henry's reign, his energies were directed almost entirely towards keeping the crown which he had so easily obtained. The first attempt to dethrone him was made within two months of his accession by some nobles who favoured Richard and wished to restore him. The revolt was quickly suppressed and the nobles executed. Richard died soon after this, and his body was shown to the people, that all might know that he was dead. Then the Welsh who had never given up hopes of gaining their independence, rose in rebellion under Owen Glendower, a descendant of the native princes of Wales, and defied the whole power of Henry. Three times Glendower defeated armies led against him in person by the king, and in 1402 was crowned Prince of Wales.

In the midst of Henry's troubles with the Welsh, a war with France broke out, and the Scots, true to their ancient alliance, made several incursions into England. The most powerful baron in the north and one of the strongest supporters of Henry, was the Earl of Northumberland, whose family bore the name of Percy. As it was the duty of the Percies to guard England against Scottish invasion, they kept a large number of "retainers" or hired soldiers. At the battle of Homildon Hill, the Percies totally defeated the Scots, and captured many of the Scottish nobles. The king demanded that these captives, instead of being ransomed, should be handed over to him. The Percies were indignant, and when Henry refused to