

printing anterior to the fifth century. The silver letters of the 'Codex argenteus,' the volume containing the version of the Gospels, made by Ufila, Bishop of the Masogoths, were produced by types employed to fix the leaf upon the purple parchment, nearly in the manner now practised by book-binders. From this stage of printing, for printing it was, though tedious and operose to our present mode, the transition appears most easy. Yet the discovery was not made; and in Europe there was a barrier which could not be passed. Not so in China, where block-printing came into active operation within that period, which, to us, is the darkest age. There the practice and effects of the art must have been witnessed by the acute and ingenious Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. This individual was gifted with no ordinary power of observation; and it might have been expected that the increasing desire for learning which prevailed in his own country, would have induced him to bring back so useful and so profitable a contrivance. Roger Bacon, who had received much information concerning China, describes the process, not in obscure and mysterious terms, but with the utmost plainness and precision of language. Yet he failed to teach the lesson which he had learnt, nor was the disclosure made till the appointed time.—*History of England: Family Library. No. XXI.*

EDGAR'S TRIUMPH ON THE DEE.—Edgar the Pacific, as he was called, gave a greater extent and majesty to the Anglo-Saxon dominion, than any Bretwalda had hitherto obtained. Peace it was believed, had been prophesied to him by Dunstan, and peace certainly prevailed. A combat with the Britons, faintly indicated, is the only sign of war which can be traced in the annals of his reign. Yet such obedience was rendered to Edgar as no sovereign of Britain had ever claimed before. Circumnavigating the island with a fleet whose numbers it is said amounted to five thousand vessels, he led his mighty force to the city of Chester, where the vassals of the Anglo-Saxon crown have assembled pursuant to his behest. And who are these who come before the throne of Edgar, the Basileus or Emperor of Albion?—Kenneth king of the Scots; Malcolm, the son of Kenneth, King of the Cambrians; Macrus the Dane, king of Mona, and of the Southern Isles, or Hebrides. These are followed by the Kings of the Britons, Dyfnwall, Siferth, and Edwall;—the train continues to approach, and the kings of Galloway and 'Westmere' stand amidst their compeers. Kenneth kneels before Edgar; he joins hands in the humble attitude which, in the present day, is considered as denoting supplication or prayer; and by repeating the declaration,—"I become your man," he acknowledges his subjection to the Anglo-Saxon Sovereign. The oath of fealty must now be taken by Kenneth—"Lord, I will be faithful and true to thee. All whom thou dost love, will I love. All that thou dost shun, will I shun; never wittingly or willingly will I do aught that is hurtful to thee." And further, declaring that he submitted to Edgar, and "chose his will," he affirmed that he would "co-operate with him by sea and land," or, in other words, that he would render such military service as the Basileus should need or require. All the other kings successively perform the same homage, take the same oath, and confess the same obligation. A banquet is held, and the day concludes with loud festivity. On the following morning, Edgar, the Basileus, and his homagers enter the royal barge, moored in the Dee, which flows by the Palace walls. Edgar grasps the helm: each of the royal vassals plies at his oar; and, with Edgar as steersman, they reach the monastery of St. John's. Mass is sung: after divine service has been celebrated, the barge rows down the Dee to the palace; and Edgar, when he enters his hall, addresses his nobles, and exclaims that his successors may hereafter well call themselves kings, since he will bequeath to them such honour and glory: The triumph of Edgar belonged to himself alone; it was never repeated; but the oaths of fidelity thus taken by the vassals, and their military obligations, constitute two of the elements of *feudality*, an institution of a very complex nature, and of which the origin must be sought in the union of Teutonic custom and Roman law.—*History of England: Family Library.*

DARING ATTACK AND GALLANT REPULSE.—As the regiments passed the bridge, they planted themselves in loose order on the side of the mountain. The artillery drew up on the summit, and the cavalry were disposed in parties on the roads to the right, because two miles higher up the stream there were fords, and beyond them the bridge of Castello Rom, and it was to be apprehended that, while the sixth corps was in front, the reserves, and a division of the eighth corps, then on the Agueda, might pass at those places and get between the division and Celerico. The river was, however, rising fast from the rains, and it was impossible to retreat farther. The French skirmishers, swarming on the right bank, opened a biting fire, which was returned at bitterly; the artillery on both sides played across the ravine, the sounds were repeated by numberless echoes, and the smoke, rising slowly, resolved itself in an immense arch, spanning the whole chasm, and sparkling with the whirling fuzes of the flying shells. The enemy gathered fast and thickly; his columns were discovered forming behind the high rocks, and a dragoon was seen to try the depth of the stream above, but two shots from the fifty-second killed both horse and man, and the carcasses floating between the hostile bands, showed that the river was impassable. The monotonous tones of a French drum were then heard, and in another instant the head of a noble column was at the long narrow bridge. A drummer and an officer in a splendid uniform leaped forward together, and the whole rushed on with loud cries. The depth of the ravine at first deceived the soldiers' aim, and two-thirds of the passage was won ere an English shot had brought down an enemy, yet a few paces onwards the line of death was traced, and the whole of the leading French section fell as one man! Still the gallant column pressed forward, but no foot could pass that terrible line; the killed and wounded rolled together, until the heap rose nearly even with the parapet, and the living mass behind melted away rather than gave back. The shouts of the British rose loudly, but they were confidently answered, and, in half an hour a second column, more numerous than the first, again crowded the bridge. This time, however, the range was better judged, and ere half the distance was won, the multitude was again torn, shattered, dispersed and slain; ten or twelve men only succeeded in crossing, and took shelter under the rocks at the brink of the river. The skirmishing was renewed, and a French surgeon coming down to the very foot of the bridge, waved his handkerchief and commenced dressing the wounded under the hottest fire; nor was his appeal unheeded: every musket turned from him, although his still undaunted countrymen were preparing for a third attempt. The impossibility of forcing the passage was, however, become too apparent, and this last effort, made with feeble numbers and less energy, failed almost as soon as it commenced.—*Col. Napier's History of the War in the Peninsula: Vol. III., just published.*

ORIGINAL.

THE strong vicissitudes which have in so many instances affected Kings and Rulers, have sometimes been the consequences and the punishment of their own tyranny. Of this we have, in our own nation, both proof and example, in the events that followed the Curfew law of the Plantagenets; the penal statutes of the Tudors, and the *Jus Divinum* of the Stuarts. We know that an implied, or imperceptible compact between the governor and the governed, arises from the very nature of their political connexion, and that the provisions of the compact, impose upon each party relative duties, which neither can evade with honour, or violate without guilt. Thus the ruler, no matter by what title distinguished, is bound to govern with justice and mercy, and according to law; while on the other hand, those over whom he presides, are to submit to his just authority, and secure the stability of his government, by their attachment to his person, respect for the laws, and zeal for the national prosperity. In a government thus constituted, every man is subject to the law, and no one is without the pale of its protection, except the delinquent who evades its punishment. Thus, in every free state, the king is

little more than the chief subject in his empire, distinguished from the rest by the prominence of his situation, and the extent of his responsibility. Upon this simple arrangement has been erected, the greatest and most permanent political edifice of modern times.

The end and object of every government, should be the happiness and prosperity of all under its dominion; nor, is there perhaps, any form so happily adapted to promote and insure these desirable ends, as a limited monarchy; and this may be the very reason why Great Britain, at a period of such universal agitation, now enjoys domestic tranquility.

The day of despotism is drawing to a close; the feudal age has passed away; men will be serfs no longer;—no longer will they endure the iron sway of sceptered castles, or tamely submit to the haughty dictation of empty heads and malicious hearts. None are now so fawningly passive, or so exceedingly credulous, as to believe that kings have a *divine right* to govern wrong, or in other words, that they have a reviving commission from heaven, and that they may fill up the blank as they please, and commit what enormities they choose. No, the horrid blasphemy, alike worthy of the tyrants that first uttered it, and the cowards who first subscribed it, has long since melted away before the fervent and enlightening rays of christian knowledge. The saving and elevating precepts of the gospel, clothed in the purified form of christian renovation, are making their beneficent tour of the world; and profusely scattering the lights and blessings of their ministry all around them. The schoolmaster follows in the luminous wake of the missionary, and brandishing his primer through benighted nations, is driving ignorance after bigotry, until both hide their diminished heads in the congenial atmosphere of Spain and Portugal.

If we look around us, we behold half the world in arms. Christendom is no longer a band of brothers. Civil war has unsheathed the sword, and unlocked the temple of Janus. Thrones are crumbling beneath the weight of their own intolerance; kings have become wanderers, and crowns are the footballs of the people. Monarchies have dwindled into republics—and provinces have burst their chains—bloodshed is familiar—revolution but a bye word—and the crashing echo of a sanguinary conflict between expiring despotism and exasperated misery, reverberates from the Wolga to the Shannon—and from the swamps of Belgium to the summit of the Andes.

This is what we now see, and almost every succeeding day we hear of some fresh concussion, shaking still more violently the reeling edifice of the political world. Whence sprung these astounding events?—What has inspired the nations thus to rise en masse against their unprincipled rulers?—We answer—EDUCATION. That it is, which has awakened a dormant physical strength, and roused the slumbering energies of the mind. While ignorant, we willingly crouch at the footstool of power, nor even think of remonstrance though ground down by oppression. But no sooner have the pellucid rays of knowledge lit up the mind's recesses, than a flood of redeeming light streams upon the astonished and enraptured soul;—then does it begin to know something of its own dignity: then does it feel the galling ignominy of its fetters, and first conceive a wish to break them.

Rational liberty is the birth right of man—it is indeed the inalienable and incommunicable inheritance he holds from God, nor can any power on earth legally deprive him of it. Slavery, then, no matter under what guise or shape, was never contemplated by the Almighty; and by a parity of reasoning, despotism is maintained in opposition to the revealed will of God, and in violation of the first principle of the law of nature.

A form of government so directly inimical to the wants and interest of mankind, never sprung from any prompt combination of circumstances, or chance-medley arrangement, but is the natural result of a series of unresisted encroachments upon some original constitution.

Hence all despotic and tyrannic governments are founded in cruelty and aggression, and as their subjects enjoy no freedom, they owe no allegiance. Therefore, should the gallant and intrepid men whose swords are now nobly employed against bigotry and oppression,