

## XXXVII.

## JOHN PLANTAGENET (OF GANT) DUKE OF LANCASTER, KING OF CASTILE AND LEON.

JOHN  
DUKE  
OF  
LAN-  
CASTER.

THIS prince, the fourth son of the royal Founder and queen Philippa, was born at Gant or Ghent, in Flanders, in 1340; in his infancy, created earl of Richmond;<sup>1</sup> and, by that title, admitted into the Order of the Garter upon the death of Thomas Holand earl of Kent, one of the original knights.<sup>2</sup> In 1359 he married Blanch, the younger of the two daughters and coheirs of Henry duke of Lancaster;<sup>3</sup> and upon the death of his father-in-law, one of the first Founders, in 1361, he was advanced to that dukedom.<sup>4</sup> He held also, in right of his wife,<sup>5</sup> the earldoms of Derby, Lincoln, and Leicester, and the high office of steward of England.<sup>6</sup>

Blanch dying in 1369, the ambition of the duke, who had taken an active part in the war carried on by the Black Prince for the restoration of Peter, king of Castile and Leon, induced him to direct his views towards Constance, the elder of the two daughters of that monarch, then lately slain by his natural brother Henry of Transtamare, his successor by the title of Henry II; and, in 1372,<sup>7</sup> the duke married this princess, and assumed the regal style of those kingdoms. These titular honours were ascribed to him in the writs of summons to parliament from that year until 1386; when, by an arrangement with John I, the son and successor of Henry, Catherine, the only daughter of the duke of Lancaster by Constance, was

<sup>1</sup> Chart. 16 Ed. 3, [1342,] No. 2, m. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Robes of the Order were directed to be provided for the earl of Richmond against the feast of St. George, 1361.—*Comp. Neubury, Cust. Mag. Gard. m. 7.*

<sup>3</sup> Jousts were held in Smithfield to celebrate this event, and the Black Prince presented to sir Bartholomew de Burghershe a shield

for the occasion, "*cornée de nouvel.*" *Treas<sup>r</sup> acco<sup>t</sup>.* 33 Ed. 3, *penes J. Philpot, arm. fo. 182<sup>b</sup>.*

<sup>4</sup> Chart. 36 Ed. 3, No. 9.

<sup>5</sup> After the decease of her elder sister, Maud duchess of Bavaria, without issue.—*Esc.* 35 Ed. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Pat. 38 Ed. 3, p. 1. He exercised this office at the coronation of Richard II.

<sup>7</sup> Leland, pp. 186. 691.

betrothed to Henry prince of Asturias, his heir-apparent, and the crown settled upon the issue of that alliance.

Although John of Gant had been engaged in warlike enterprises from his earliest years, yet his martial achievements did not increase the lustre of British glory, or secure for himself the character of a great commander. In three several expeditions into France, in 1369, 1370,<sup>1</sup> and 1373, he gained no laurels; and the peculiar misfortunes which attended the last, when a considerable number of his followers perished amongst the mountains of Auvergne, rendered him very unpopular on his return to England in July 1374. All Guienne and Gascony, with the exception of the towns of Bordeaux and Bayonne, had fallen from their allegiance; and a suspension of hostilities was negotiated at Bruges, by the duke and others, with the duke of Anjou, before the expiration of that year.

After the death of the Black Prince, in 1376, the duke of Lancaster acquired a marked ascendancy in the councils of the infirm monarch; and his administration of public affairs is said to have been stained by several acts of violence.

On the 16th June 1386, "at the palace of John of Gant, king of Castile and Leon, in the convent of the Friars Carmelites, at Plymouth" (where he was then sojourning previously to his embarkation for Spain), he gave his remarkable testimony in favour of the right of sir Richard Scrope to the arms borne by him in the celebrated controversy between Scrope and sir Robert Grosvenor.<sup>2</sup>

John continued to govern the kingdom during the minority of his nephew Richard, by whom, in 1389, he was created duke of Aquitaine; and, his power increasing, he preferred in open parliament a claim to the succession for his son Henry of Bolingbroke, as son to Blanch, great-grand-daughter of

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<sup>1</sup> In the reg<sup>r</sup> of John duke of Lancaster tpe. Ed. III, remaining in that office, there is the entry of an instrument dated Bordeaux, 21 July 1371, declaring the relinquishment, by the duke, of the lieutenancy of Aquitaine, with the consent of the chamber of parliament at Bordeaux, into the charge

of John de Greyly, captal de Buch, the constable, and Tho. de Felton, the seneschal; the conditions of his appointment thereto by his brother Edward prince of Wales not having been fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> Scrope and Grosvenor Roll, p. 49.

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Edmond earl of Lancaster, who, he pretended, had been elder brother to king Edward I, but set aside on account of his deformity. The weakness of this pretension, which, if established, would have been fatal to the reigning monarch, was opposed without difficulty by Roger Mortimer earl of March, who, as son and heir of Philippa, the daughter and heir of his elder brother Lionel duke of Clarence, had, by the laws of the empire, an indisputably prior right, and was accordingly declared the presumptive heir to the crown.

The duchess Constance dying in 1394, John espoused, in 1396, Catherine Swynford,<sup>1</sup> daughter of sir Paine Roet, Guienne king of arms, and widow of sir Hugh Swynford,<sup>2</sup> a knight of Lincolnshire. This lady had been of the household of the duchess Blanch, and charged with the education of the ladies Philippa and Elizabeth during their minority.

On the 3rd February 1398-99, John duke of Lancaster died at the bishop of Ely's palace in Holborn.<sup>3</sup> Conformably to his will, dated 3rd February 1397-8, his body was interred before the high altar of St. Paul's cathedral, near the remains of Blanch, his first consort.<sup>4</sup>

By his first consort, Blanch of Lancaster, he had issue,

1. Henry, duke of Hereford and Lancaster, and earl of Derby, afterwards king Henry IV.

2. Philippa, married to John I. king of Portugal. She died in 1415, and was buried in the abbey of Batalha. After

<sup>1</sup> Philippa Roet, her sister, was married to Geoffrey Chaucer. By a warrant (remaining on record in the duchy of Lancaster office), dated Savoy, 13th June, 48 Ed. 3, [1374,] the duke granted to the poet an annuity of 10*l.* for life, to be paid to him at the manor of the Savoy, "for the good service which he and his wife Philippa had performed to the duke, to the duke's mother the queen, and to his wife the queen."—*Receiver's account*, fo. 90.

<sup>2</sup> By another warrant, in the same custody, dated 20th June, 46 Ed. 3, [1372,] the duke, in consideration of the great services which dame Catherine, the widow of sir Hugh de Swynford, knight,

had performed for his late wife the duchess of Lancaster, granted to her the wardship of the lands which the said Hugh held of the duke in chief, as of the honour of Richmond, in the county of Lincoln, to hold until Thomas, son and heir of the said Hugh, shall have attained his majority; saving to the duke the *marriage fees* and advowson of churches, if any there be, which ought to pertain to the duke.—*Receiver's account*, fo. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Wals. p. 553, n<sup>o</sup>. 5.

<sup>4</sup> A splendid monument to their memory was extant in 1666; but, in that year, consumed at the fire of London.—*Dugd. St. Paul's*, p. 90; *Sandford*, p. 254.

seven kings of her issue had governed Portugal, that kingdom was invaded by Philip II. king of Spain, in 1580, and remained united to the crown of Spain until the revolution in favour of the house of Braganza in 1640.

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3. Elizabeth, married, first, John Holand duke of Exeter, and, secondly, sir John Cornwall lord Fanhope, both knights of the Order. She died in 1425-6, and was buried at Burford in Shropshire.<sup>1</sup> Her heir-general, descended from her first marriage, is Barbara baroness Grey de Ruthyn, marchioness of Hastings.

By his second consort, Constance of Castile, John of Gant had an only daughter, Catherine, wife of Henry prince of Asturias, afterwards Henry III. king of Castile and Leon. The descendants of this alliance were on the throne of Spain until king Charles II, who died in 1700.

His issue, before marriage with his third consort, Catherine Swynford, were legitimated by act of parliament, 9th February, 20 Rich. II, 1396-7.<sup>2</sup> They were all surnamed "De Beaufort", having been born at Beaufort castle in France, which had devolved to the house of Lancaster by the marriage of Blanch of Artois with Edmond earl of Lancaster.

1. John de Beaufort, earl of Somerset and marquess of Dorset, K.G.

2. Henry de Beaufort, bishop of Lincoln, afterwards of Winchester, and, at length, cardinal, and chancellor of England.

3. Thomas de Beaufort, duke of Exeter, K.G.

4. Joan de Beaufort, married, first, to sir Robert Ferrers, of Wem and Oversley; and, secondly, to Ralph Nevil earl of Westmorland. Her coheirs-general, descended from Richard Nevil earl of Salisbury, her eldest son by the second marriage, are George-Augustus-Francis, marquess of Hastings; William Lowndes, of Chesham in the county of Buckingham, esq.; and William Selby-Lowndes, of Whaddon Hall in the same county, esq.

<sup>1</sup> Her effigy, with that of her second husband (by whom she had no issue), was formerly represented on stained glass in Amptill church. — *Sandford*, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> See a most interesting paper on this subject in "Excerpta Historica," Lond. 1831, p. 152.

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## ARMS.

Quarterly, Castile and Leon, impaling quarterly France and England, differenced by a label of three points Ermine.

## CREST.

The lion of England on a chapeau d'etat, differenced as the arms.

## BADGES

1. Three ostrich feathers Ermine, the quills and scrolls Or, placed upon a pellet, as a distinction from the cognizance of the Black Prince.
2. An eagle standing upon and essaying to open a padlock. This badge appears upon a seal, impressions of which are remaining in the office of the duchy of Lancaster.

## XXXVIII.

EDMOND PLANTAGENET (OF LANGLEY)  
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EDMOND, called "of Langley" from his birth-place in Hertfordshire, was the fifth son of Edward III, but the fourth who attained the age of maturity. When in his eighteenth year, he accompanied the king, together with his three elder brothers, in the expedition against France which sailed from England on the 28th of October 1359: and, as the army, after traversing the northern provinces, penetrated to the barriers of Paris, the young prince had ample opportunities of becoming familiar with military exercises before the conclusion of the treaty of Bretigny on the 8th of May following; after which the king returned with his sons to England. The negotiations, preparatory to the treaty, which had been carried on from the 8th of July 1360, the day of the arrival of king John at Calais after his release from captivity, until the following October, having been completed, king Edward, attended by his three younger sons, again passed over to