

LXXIV.

ROBERT DE VERE MARQUESS OF DUBLIN,
DUKE OF IRELAND.

THE duke of Ireland has hitherto not been numbered among the knights of the Garter. It seemed, nevertheless, improbable that Richard, having ministered so profusely to the vanity of his favourite, and raised him to equal rank with the members of the royal house, should have withheld a distinction which must have been highly prized at his court. The accounts of the great wardrobe for 1386 and 1387,¹ recently brought to light, leave no doubt of his election; and, by a reference to the state of the Order at those dates, we may fix with sufficient precision the stall which he filled.²

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Robert de Vere ninth earl of Oxford (lineally descended from Aubrey de Vere, a distinguished follower of William the conqueror) was the only issue of Thomas earl of Oxford by Maud de Ufford.³ He succeeded his father in 1371, being then nine years old;⁴ and king Edward immediately granted⁵ the benefit of his marriage to his son-in-law the earl of Bedford, in order that the young earl might in due time receive the hand of that nobleman's daughter, Philippa de Coucy. The care of his education was committed to the bishop of London and sir Roger Beauchamp, with an annual allowance of 100*l.* for his support.⁶ At the feast of St. George at Windsor in 1377⁷ he was knighted; and at the coronation of Richard II. he claimed, and, although a minor, was permitted to perform in person the functions of his hereditary office of great chamberlain.⁸ There is no evidence of his entrance, at the usual age, into the army; unless we may presume, from a passage in Froissart, that he attended Thomas of

¹ See pp 248. 250.

² Appendix, N^o XIII.

³ Page 249, note 2.

⁴ Esc. 45 Edw. 3, No. 45.

⁵ Pat. eod. a^o p. 2, m. 23.

⁶ Pat. 5 Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 49.

⁷ See p. 270, note 3.

⁸ Claus. 1 Ric. 2, m. 45, W. V. in Coll. Armor. fo. 178.

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Woodstock to France in 1380.¹ He is mentioned as present in parliament, for the first time, in 1384.²

In 1385 Oxford was in the king's expedition to Scotland.³ After his return from thence, Richard conferred upon him a dignity until then unknown in England, and the grant of which, not merited by any public services, gave great offence to the peers of his former rank.⁴ On the 1st of December he was created marquess of Dublin for life, with the territory and lordship of Ireland annexed to the honour.⁵ But the soil and its rude possessors, beyond the narrow pale of English rule, remained to be conquered; and, for the maintenance of 500 men-at-arms and 1000 archers during two years, towards the accomplishment of that object, large estates and reversionary interests in England, together with the ransom of Charles de Blois, a prisoner in Gloucester castle, were added to the gift.⁶

It was about this time that the marquess was elected into the Order, as robes were provided for him against St. George's feast in 1386;⁷ and it is presumed that he occupied the thirteenth stall on the Prince's side, as successor to the Soudan de la Trau.⁸

These favours still fell short of his fond master's estimate of his deserts. The patent of the marquessate was, therefore, soon recalled; and on the 13th of October following, the lordship of Ireland was erected into a dukedom; and, with the adjacent islands and all other dependencies, transferred to De Vere, upon his liege homage only.⁹ In 1387 the livery of the Garter was issued to him under his ducal title.¹⁰

¹ "le comte Thomas de Bouginhem, le comte de Stanfort [qu. *Oxford*] qui avoit sa niece epousé, fille au seigneur de Coucy."—*Froiss.* tom. viii. p. 315.

² Rot. Parl. vol. iii. p. 167.

³ Froissart, tom. ix. p. 135.

⁴ Wals. p. 348.

⁵ Pat. 9 Ric. 2, p. 2, m. 28. Rot. Parl. vol. iii. p. 209.

⁶ Pat. 9 Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 6, and p. 2, m. 17. 24.

⁷ See p. 248, and note 8.

⁸ If the Soudan, of whom we

have at present no certain notice after 1384, should have been still a member of the Order in 1386, we may then conclude that the marquess of Dublin succeeded to the stall of Loryng, who died in March 1385-6; and that, upon De Vere's attainder in 1388, the earl of Arundel was chosen in his room. We incline, however, upon a review of the several points, to the opinion expressed in the text.

⁹ Cart. 10 Ric. 2, p. 1, No. 2.

¹⁰ See p. 250.

Intoxicated by such extraordinary elevation, he deemed himself absolved from all moral restraint; and even repudiated his consort Philippa, the grand-daughter of Edward III, in order to take as his wife a Bohemian damsel, called Lancercrona, who had attended the queen into England.¹

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This indignity, offered to the niece of the duke of Gloucester, whose power was daily increasing, probably accelerated his ruin. After a long delay, De Vere commenced his journey to Ireland; and, according to Walsingham, was accompanied by the king into Wales; but the state of parties in and near the metropolis induced him to suspend his embarkation, and finally to abandon the expedition. Richard proceeded with his companions to Nottingham castle, from whence he sent to London for other councillors, to concert, as it is said, the destruction of his uncle and his adherents.² The latter were, on the other hand, engaged in devising the means for putting an end to the misrule of the favourites. A sense of his imminent danger induced the duke of Ireland to raise the royal banner in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Wales; and, having gathered about four or five thousand men, he marched at their head towards the capital. But, on arriving at Radcot in Oxfordshire, he found the bridge over the Isis impassable and himself surrounded by the troops under the orders of the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Derby.³ Alighting from his horse, and hastily putting off his armour, he threw himself into the stream and swam to the opposite bank. In his chariot letters are said to have been found, by which the king commanded him to hasten to London, with such force as he might be enabled to muster, promising him protection against his enemies.⁴

This defeat happened in the evening of the 20th of December 1387; and, in February following, he was impeached in parliament, convicted of treason, condemned, attainted, and outlawed.⁵

Little is known of the unhappy De Vere after his escape to

¹ Wals. p. 358.

⁴ Wals. p. 363.

² Ibid. p. 359.

⁵ Rot. Parl. vol. iii. p. 229, *et*

³ Ibid. p. 362, 363; and Rot. *seq.*
Parl. vol. iii. p. 235.

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the Continent; where he is said to have passed his concluding years in distress and penury.¹ He died at Louvain in 1392, in consequence of hurts received from a wild boar whilst hunting,² having scarcely completed the thirtieth year of his age. When the king had again recovered the ascendancy, he caused the body of his favourite (which had been embalmed) to be brought to England, and deposited with the remains of his ancestors at Colne Priory in Essex. In November 1395 Richard, attended by the dowager countess of Oxford, the archbishop of Canterbury, and other prelates, but by few nobles who were not of his household, assisted at the pompous solemnity. The corpse, richly attired, lay in a coffin of cypress; and the uncovered face was touched and long gazed on by the king, who manifested by strong expressions of feeling the great affection which he had borne to the deceased.³

The duke having died without issue, his uncle sir Aubrey de Vere was, in 1392-3, restored to all lands of the family which had been entailed before the attainder, together with the title and dignity of earl of Oxford, to hold to him and his heirs male.⁴ But the office of great chamberlain, the restitution of which he had prayed,⁵ was granted to the king's brother, John Holand earl of Huntingdon. From that period until the reign of Henry VII, the office was continually disposed of by the crown, and not exercised during that interval by any of the house of de Vere.

Philippa duchess of Ireland retained that title, notwith-

¹ —“ In mentis angustia rerum-que penuria.”—*Wals.* p. 386.

² Leland's Coll. ed. 1770, vol. i. p. 186, and *Wals.* ut supra.

³ The chroniclers are corroborated by the two following entries on the issue roll of the exchequer for Michaelmas 1395.—“ 14th Dec. Thome Percy senescallo hosp. Regis In denar. p^r man. Nichⁱ Rostelyn in p^r soluc. C li quas dñs R. p^r custubus & expen. ipsius faciend. circa exequias Robti nup. ducis Hibernie p^r lram de pr. sig. inter

mandat. de hoc term^o.—ccxxiiij^{li}. vi. s. viij^d.”—“ Thome Percy militi senescallo hosp. R. In denar. sibi liber. p^r man. Nichⁱ Rostelin de Scacc'o in p^r solu^m lviiij^{li}. vs. 1d. ob. quos dictus Rex sibi liberare mand. p^o exequiis Robti nup. ducis Hib. in com. Essex ultimo celebrat. ultra alias sum'as p^r ipsum Thomam p^r prius p^rceptas ex causa p^rdicta—de breve, &c.—*Exit. Pell. Mich.* 19 Ric. 2.

⁴ Rot. Parl. vol. iii. p. 303.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 326.

standing the attainder, and was so described in several acts of the legislature. She died in 1411-12.

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ARMS.

Quarterly, first and fourth, Azure, three crowns Or, a bordure Argent;¹ second and third Vere, quarterly Gules and Or, in the first quarter a mullet Argent.

LXXV.

RICHARD FITZALAN SIXTH EARL OF
ARUNDEL.

ACCORDING to the Windsor tables, this earl occupied the tenth stall on the Prince's side, after the death of the Founder sir Nele Loryng.² He was the son of Richard fifth earl of Arundel (of the surname of Fitzalan) by Eleanor Plantagenet, daughter of Henry earl of Lancaster, and brother of Thomas, called Thomas Arundel, the celebrated archbishop of Canterbury. Born in or about 1348,³ he was first armed in 1369, when he bore a part in the ravaging expedition through the Pays de Caux,⁴ by which John of Gant revenged his ineffective detention in the valley of Tournehem. Upon the accession of Richard II, the earl was appointed admiral of the western and southern divisions of the fleet;⁵ and, in 1378, attended the duke of Lancaster on his cruise of observation along the

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¹ Pat. 9 Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 1.

² Although we have assumed, upon the authority of the tables, that the earl of Arundel was the successor of Loryng, who died in March 1385-6, it may be questioned whether the duke of Ireland had not intermediately filled the stall of that Founder. Both Ireland and Arundel were degraded in consequence of their respective attainders; but the Lancaster party would have erased the name of

the former, and retained that of Arundel, who is only mentioned in one of the recovered wardrobe accounts, viz. of 1388 (when Ireland had been attainted); and he may have been elected to the stall which the duke had occupied.

³ Scrope and Grosvenor roll, p. 219.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Rot. Franc. 1 Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 9, p. 2, m. 21.