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HISTORICAL TALES

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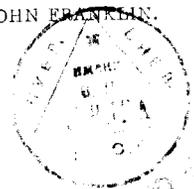
LANCASTRIAN TIMES.

BY

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P R E F A C E.

THE Tales in the accompanying volume have been written with the view to give an insight into a very important period of our national history, in a more entertaining and attractive form than the bare recital of historical facts ordinarily presents. Each Tale is founded upon some historical event, to which the writer has endeavoured to give life and interest by the introduction of fictitious characters and incidents, in keeping with the event itself, and the general spirit of the times.

The period of history embraced by these Tales, itself abounds in the materials of romance, and it is also of much importance in its social and political aspect. It is essentially a transition period. In it the old feudal system was being broken up. At home and abroad—in politics and religion—are to be marked the fore-

shadowings of great changes. The rebellions consequent upon the usurpation of Henry IV., though first

“ Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way,”

prepared the nation for a more liberal constitution than it had hitherto enjoyed ; and when, in the person of Lord Cobham, the first noble blood was shed in the cause of truth, from the ashes of the Martyred Baron were kindled the bright flames of religious light and liberty in England. In France, again, the ambition of our King Henry V., coupled with the weakness of his father-in-law Charles VI., effected, through the intercourse of the two nations, a mighty revolution in the social habits of the French people ; and although that intercourse was for a time to be traced only in the dark characters of bloodshed and distress, it most undoubtedly furthered the cause of enlightenment, when the French were prepared once again to assert their independence of English control. The history of England, indeed, is so much mixed up with that of France during the reigns of the three kings of the House of Lancaster, that these Tales will be found to illustrate the history as well as the manners and customs of both countries.

How far the writer has succeeded in his attempt to

convey historical information by means of Tales of Fiction, founded upon or connected with important historical facts, must be left for others to decide. One thing, at any rate, is certain, that although they are comparatively few who can seek amusement from history in its details, there are readers, whose name is “ Legion,” who may easily be attracted to history when it presents itself through the medium of romance.

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