

of the body and soul of the times in a way that no ordinary history writer, with the necessity on him of compactness, which results in dreary and weary *vagueness*, could succeed in doing.

Here is another extract, from the times of Sir Simon de Montfort, in the reign of Henry III. :—

MATTHEW PARIS.—“The king sent as his alms to the Minorite Friars a waggon load of grey woollen cloths, suitable for their clothing; but the friars, hearing that the king had extorted them from the merchants, like other things which he takes, or rather seizes, and that he had retained the price, when a tallage only had been made, in abhorrence of such a present, returned all the bales on the waggon, saying that it was not lawful to give alms of the plunder of the poor, nor would they accept so abominable a gift.”

Now this short extract shows the relation of the King to the State, of the King to the Church, of the King to Commerce, and tells its story in a way that is not easily to be forgotten. In the next extract we find Simon de Montfort in his relations to the Gascons :—

MATTHEW PARIS.—“At this time Simon, Earl of Leicester, who, for his fidelity and courage, had been asked to become Seneschal of France, but had refused, because no man can properly serve two masters who are opposed to one another, came to his lord the King of England in Gascony, declaring himself ready and willing to serve him in subduing the rebels who were his enemies. Now, the Gascons dreaded the Earl as a thunderbolt; he also brought with him a chosen body of knights, maintained at his own cost, and to be so maintained during the king's pleasure; truly he had a great number of knights and serving men.”

Let us turn to the wars of Edward III. Here is an extract from JEHAN LE BEL :—

“These Scottish men are right hardy, and sore travelling in harness and in wars. For when they will enter into England, within a day and a night they will drive their whole host twenty-four miles. For they are all a-horse-back, without it be the camp-followers who come on foot. The knights and squires are well-horsed, and the common people and others on little hackneys and geldings; and they carry with them no carts or chariots, for the diversities of the mountains that they must pass through in the county of Northumberland. They take with them no purveyance of bread and wine; for their usage and soberness is such in the time of war, that they will pass in the journey a great long time with flesh half sodden, without bread, and drink of the river water without wine; and they neither care for pots nor pans, for they seethe beasts in their own skins. They are sure to find plenty of beasts in the country that they will pass through.”

From another section I extract a passage which gives a striking account of the state of society after a visit of the Black Death :—

KNIGHTON.—“There were small prices for everything on account of the fear of death. For there were very few who cared about riches or anything else. For a man could have a horse, which was before worth 40s., for 6s. 8d., a fat ox for 4s., a cow for 12d., a heifer for 6d., a fat wether for 4d., a sheep for 3d., a lamb for 2d., a big pig for 5d. a stone of wool for 9d. Sheep and cattle went wandering over fields and through crops, and there was no one to go and drive or gather them, so that the number cannot be reckoned which perished in the ditches in