

Edward and the Black Prince, over the foreign foes of their country, were, indeed, marvellous.

By the victories of Sluys, Crecy and Poitiers, they established that naval and military renown, which the lapse of five centuries has not dimmed. Nor were their successes confined to the Continent. At home, Queen Philippa, at the battle of Neville's Cross, amply avenged the day at Bannockburn. Two captive kings graced the monarch's triumph. Then, for the first time, was the march of an English army heard in Castile, and at Najara, the Black Prince, against tremendous odds (and I must say, in a most unrighteous cause), proved to the Spaniards the martial prowess of England. The number of his foes only enhanced the brilliancy of the Prince's victory. By exploits such as these, were Englishmen taught to consider themselves the greatest of earth's nations. Their thoughts and energies were turned to

the arts of war. The martial spirit was burning high within them. No thought, then, had they for the peaceful pursuits of literature. But an inexhaustible store of material was being garnered up ready for the first writer who would stretch forth his hand to seize it. All that was required was a period of peace to waken the literary intellect of the land. The comparative quiet of Richard II's reign afforded this.

Then it was that Chaucer and his contemporaries produced the imperishable works of their genius. It was an age peculiarly adapted for literary production. The brilliant series of Edward III's victories was now at an end. The Wars of the Roses had not yet begun. The stern muse of the Scald and the sweet minstrelsy of the Troubadour, which had long stirred the restless spirit of the Northmen, or had captivated the knightly warriors of the South were now passing away.



Counsel.

IF thou shouldst bid thy friend farewell,
But for one night though that farewell should be,
Press thou his hand in thine; how canst thou tell
How far from thee

Fate, or caprice, may lead his feet
Ere that to-morrow come? Men have been known