

crown, but that Henry the son of Maud should succeed him; as he afterwards accordingly did.

HENRY, the second of that name, was (next after his mother Matilda) the undoubted heir of William the conqueror; but he had also another connexion in blood, which endeared him still farther to the English. He was lineally descended from Edmund Ironside, the last of the Saxon race of hereditary kings. For Edward the outlaw, the son of Edmund Ironside, had (besides Edgar Atheling, who died without issue) a daughter Margaret, who was married to Malcolm king of Scotland; and in her the Saxon hereditary right resided. By Malcolm she had several children, and among the rest Matilda the wife of Henry I, who by him had the empress Maud, the mother of Henry II. Upon which account the Saxon line is in our histories frequently said to have been restored in his person: though in reality that right subsisted in the *sons* of Malcolm by queen Margaret; king Henry's best title being as heir to the conqueror.

FROM Henry II the crown descended to his eldest son Richard I, who dying childless, the right vested in his nephew Arthur, the son of Geoffrey his next brother: but John, the youngest son of king Henry, seized the throne; claiming, as appears from his charters, the crown by hereditary rightⁱ: that is to say, he was next of kin to the deceased king, being his surviving brother; whereas Arthur was removed one degree farther, being his brother's son, though by right of representation he stood in the place of his father Geoffrey. And however flimsy this title, and those of William Rufus and Stephen of Blois, may appear at this distance to us, after the law of descents hath now been settled for so many centuries, they were sufficient to puzzle the understandings of our brave, but unlettered, ancestors. Nor indeed can we wonder at the number of partizans, who espoused the pretensions of king John in particular; since even in the reign

ⁱ "*Regni Angliae; quod nobis jure competit haereditario.*" Spelm. *Hist. R. Joh.* apud Wilkins. 354.