

rent proportions, our antient historiansⁿ inform us, that a new standard of longitudinal measure was ascertained by king Henry the first; who commanded that the *ulna* or antient ell, which answers to the modern yard, should be made of the exact length of his own arm. And, one standard of measures of length being gained, all others are easily derived from thence; those of greater length by multiplying, those of less by subdividing, that original standard. Thus, by the statute called *compositio ulnarum et perticarum*, five yards and an half make a perch; and the yard is subdivided into three feet, and each foot into twelve inches; which inches will be each of the length of three grains of barley. Superficial measures are derived by squaring those of length; and measures of capacity by cubing them. The standard of weights was originally taken from corns of wheat, whence the lowest denomination of weights we have is still called a grain; thirty two of which are directed, by the statute called *compositio mensurarum*, to compose a penny weight, whereof twenty make an ounce, twelve ounces a pound, and so upwards. And upon these principles the first standards were made; which, being originally so fixed by the crown, their subsequent regulations have been generally made by the king in parliament. Thus, under king Richard I, in his parliament holden at Westminster, *A.D.* 1197, it was ordained that there shall be only one weight and one measure throughout the kingdom, and that the custody of the assise or standard of weights and measures shall be committed to certain persons in every city and borough^o; from whence the antient office of the king's aulnager seems to have been derived, whose duty it was, for a certain fee, to measure all cloths made for sale, till the office was abolished by the statute 11 & 12 W. III. c. 20. In king John's time this ordinance of king Richard was frequently dispensed with for money^p; which occasioned a provision to be made for enforcing it, in the great charters of king John and his son^q. These original standards were called *pondus regis*^r, and

ⁿ William of Malmsh. *in vita Hen. I.*
Spelm. *Hen. I. apud Wilkins.* 299.

^o Hoved. Matth. Paris.

^p Hoved. *A.D.* 1201.

^q 9 Hen. III. c. 25.

^r *Plac.* 35 Edw. I. *apud Cowel's Interpr.*
tit. pondus regis.