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HISTORICAL PORTRAITS

OF

THE TUDOR DYNASTY AND THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

BY

S. HUBERT BURKE,

AUTHOR OF "THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE REFORMATION."

"Time unveils all truth."

VOL. I.

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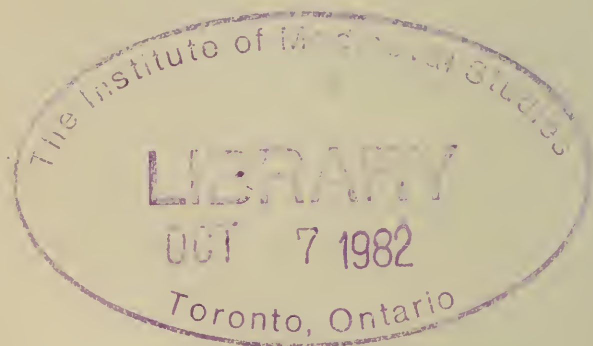
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PREFACE.

To write History truly is an office little less than sacred. To indite justly the records of the bygone is a duty upon which honour and honesty impose the inevitable responsibility of faith and truthfulness. In my long and laborious researches I have met with many ladies and gentlemen connected with literature; but in the course of some erudite and thoughtful observations I was specially moved by the remarks of a learned and accomplished High Church lady, who averred her strong objection to the past and existent mode of imparting historical knowledge. Leaving to the mere chronologist the "history of England," as the many phases of that history, however illustrated and diffuse, have been designated, the writer of the present volumes has assumed the task of bringing before the English reading public the actors and the facts of a most momentous epoch in the history of Britain—the period treated of being the *fons et origo* of our present condition. The lady to whom I refer has written to me:—"Weary little school girls and impatient school boys when asked if they like history, usually reply with a very sincere and unhesitating negative, and we children of a larger growth, who remember our own dreary wading through page after page of dry facts, whose connection with each other it was difficult sometimes to perceive, can easily recollect what a task it was to acquire

sufficient knowledge of the daily lesson to repeat it to the satisfaction of tutor or governess. How eagerly we seized upon anything in the shape of an anecdote, a little oasis of freshness in the barren waste peopled by marionettes of men and women of the past ages, for as to considering them human beings, and taking an interest in their doings, that occurred to very few amongst us, and apparently never at all to the historians whose works we studied. If it had, it would have given the life and colour to the picture which childhood and youth so sadly miss : the little students, with this assistance, would be able to invest the various characters with individuality, and would thus find a wonderful variety of minds and hearts where they otherwise see but two classes—the wise and the foolish, the good and the bad ; no medium ; no light nor shade. Looking back at these outlines of men and women, which were presented to our childhood to study, they seem as silhouettes which should have been oil paintings. To render history interesting, what is required is, to make the portraits so lifelike as to force us to feel that we are in presence of a brother man or a sister woman, and to inspire us with an interest in his or her doings and sayings, each individual becoming a psychological study on a miniature scale."

The greatest difficulty for the impartial searcher into historic truth is, to pierce the mountain of misrepresentation which has hitherto covered so long the real facts as to men and annals. In the course of my inquiries I was naturally desirous to ascertain the truthfulness of the previously accepted writers of different periods of English history, such as Foxe, Buchanan, Speed, Fuller, Lodge, Nichols, Birch, Forbes, Spelman, Brady, Tyrrell, Strype,

Burnet, Rapin, Echard, Oldmixon, Carte, Hume, &c., in whose works I have been astounded at the suppression or absence of important events and characters. So that, in fact, the generations since the eventful epoch of which these volumes treat may be regarded as deprived of any fair or adequate knowledge of the characters and events of a notable turning-point in the history of Great Britain.

Here I must refer, if an advocate for the fruition of my design be required, to the lament of the late Rev. Charles Kingsley, a distinguished Churchman, whose varied and genial productions have rendered his name a household word in every kindly intellectual home of England. The reverend Canon told the people of Bristol, in October, 1871, that "the chief want of England was *a love of fact*—that decline was the fate of every nation which lost the habit of *speaking or acting the truth;* and that he himself *had given up the Chair of Modern History at Cambridge, because History was so overlaid* WITH LIES *as to render it impossible for him to make anything out of her statements.*"

It is needless to observe that Lord Beaconsfield, long before the preceding enunciation of Canon Kingsley, averred his opinion, that "the History of England has yet to be written." Works printed within the last twenty years upon what are termed "Broken Periods of English History," are generally interesting, and great improvements on a foregone system, in which there had seemed no breathing space for tolerance or truth. Still there remains a great want of knowledge of the facts surrounding the men and women who acted in a momentous historical drama.

Some clergymen of the Church of England have appeared as inditers of history—some remarkable for sectarian rancour

and partisan prejudice, whilst another class of clerical writers of the Established Church have been, as historians, models supremely worthy of imitation to all writers, for their truth, candour, and impartiality. Amongst the most distinguished of those clerical authors rank the names of Dr. Maitland, Dean Hooke, Thomas Hugo, J. H. Blunt, and others less noted.

The era that I have chosen to investigate teems with interest to English readers of all parties, and especially to those who study the characteristics of personages who in great measure have fashioned the destiny of the country.

I hope—according to my honest and heartfelt belief—that I have done justice to the characters mentioned in the subsequent pages. They must, however, be judged according to the State records of their actions.

And with this *résumé* of the tone and inspiration with, and in, which these volumes are written, I commend the research of years to my readers, adapting to the result of my humble labours the pathetic saying of a much-maligned English Queen—

"Time unveils all Truth."

S. H. Burke.

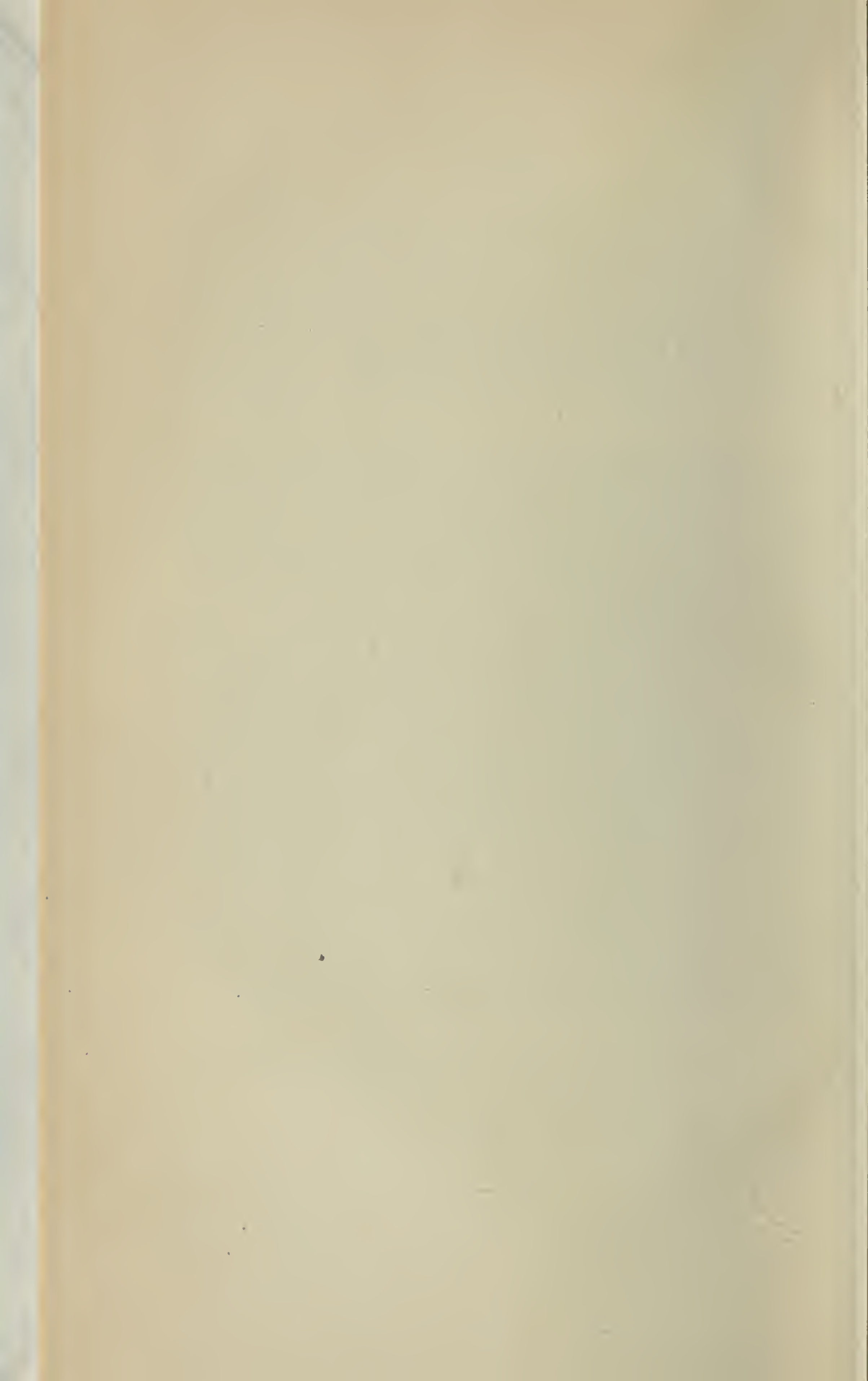
London, *December*, 1878.

INTRODUCTION.

It is a pleasing duty to express my sincere and respectful acknowledgments to the clergy of the English Church who, in the course of this work, afforded me opportunities of consulting rare black-letter tomes, MS. documents, diaries, &c., in their possession.

In such a condition of our country's history any one who brings a stone to the Temple of Truth is not without some desert; and I cheerfully assign their full share of merit to those who have in any way assisted me. To the officials of the literary department of the British Museum I would be more diffuse in my thanks, as they one and all deserve, did not long experience prove that courtesy, kindly attention, and delicate consideration seem to be such unavoidable attributes of the gentlemen who officiate in that important department of an unrivalled institution, as to render the expression of individual gratitude superfluous.

The Author.



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HISTORICAL PORTRAITS

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CHAPTER I.

THE PRINCESS CATALINA.

The contrast between England and Spain at the close of the fifteenth century was remarkable in many points, and especially with regard to the progress of education and social feeling amongst the lower and upper classes of society. Both countries were, however, in a good social condition. But Spain was the land of romance, chivalry, and song. The grandees of old Iberia were mostly educated men. They travelled and were known in Paris, Vienna, Rome, and other continental cities, where they were always attractive and welcome from the splendour of their retinues and the munificence of their dealings.

The Spanish ladies of those times were marvellously educated, some of them speaking and writing five different languages. There were many learned women, contemporaries of Isabel, amongst the foremost of whom were the Marchioness of Monteagudo, and Doña Pecheco, sisters

of the learned historian, Don Diego Hurtado. Doña Lucia de Medrana publicly lectured on the Latin classics in the University of Salamanca; Doña Frances de Leterija, the daughter of another Spanish historian, filled the chair of rhetoric with distinction at Alcala. "Women of learning in Spain," writes Islip, "are everywhere received with honour by the men, and chivalry extends to them all its gracious and amiable attentions." From the days of Alfonso X. history had been held in high esteem in Spain, and was more widely cultivated in Castile than in any other European State. Queen Isabel took advantage of the invention of printing.* Her large grasp of mind at once perceived the advantages which printing might bring to bear upon the diffusion of knowledge. She therefore encouraged its establishment by special privileges, and even paid the expenses of printing works of merit from her private purse, "that knowledge might be further extended."

In 1480 a law was enacted in Spain, permitting foreign books to be imported into the country free of any duty; a "very enlightened idea," writes the American biographer of Isabel, "and which might furnish a useful example to the legislative assemblies of the nineteenth century." In general intellectual progress no period has surpassed the age of Isabel and Ferdinand.

In the early part of the sixteenth century, England, which hitherto occupied only the position of a third-rate

* The first printing press was erected at Valencia in 1474; Barcelona also contests for the honour. The "Little Book" first produced was a few hymns in honour of the Virgin Mother. By order of Queen Isabel printers were exempt from all taxes, and enjoyed many privileges.

Power in Europe, felt a natural pride and ambition at the prospect of a family alliance with the greatest kingdom in the world—wealthy, brave, intelligent, and chivalrous. Both nations were the devoted spiritual subjects of the Papal throne; and the projected marriage of a Castilian Princess with the amiable Prince Arthur was received throughout Britain with universal joy. In Spain, where the Court and nobility approached the question with higher and more delicate sentiment than the "rough Saxon," the scene was different.

The Spanish chronicles relate that during the summer and autumn of 1501 the leading topic of conversation in the great towns and cities of Spain was the Infanta's marriage with Arthur, Prince of Wales. The minstrels assumed the theme, and a spirit of romance was evolved; ballads and sonnets were written and circulated in the old Castilian modes, and the Princess was everywhere received with affection amounting to enthusiasm. In social circles the name of Englishman was regarded as that of a friend and a brother; all the amiable and kindly feelings of the Spanish people were displayed, and every one wished well to the union of Arthur and Catalina.

Had the Spaniards been lovers of feasting—"good eating and drinking," as Bishop Foxe remarked—the letters of King Henry's secretary would have induced them to come on the wedding party to England. Henry was not so strange a miser at this time as he subsequently proved. The secretary wrote to the Spanish Court that "all the friends of the Princess were welcome to England," assuring them that "none would die of hunger; or, if they died, it would rather be of eating too much. The King laid in an

immense stock of every kind of provisions, and the merrie meetings and feastings would prove the hospitalitie and good nature of our own King Harrie, his Queen, and his loving subjects. All will be welcome."

Queen Isabel frequently lectured kings and courtiers upon "economy in social life;" "feasting a number of people cost much money. This money should be put up in strong boxes for another time, when it might be needed more." Isabel writes from Granada, in 1501, to King Henry and his Queen in these words :—

"I am right heartily pleased to hear of the great preparations making in England for the wedding of my beloved daughter. Indeed, it shows the magnificent grandeur of my good brother, the King of England. Demonstrations of joy at the reception of my daughter are naturally agreeable to me. Nevertheless, it would be more in accordance with my feelings, and with the wishes of my lord, the King, that the expenses should be moderate. We do not wish our daughter to be the cause of any loss to England, either in money or in any other respect. On the contrary, we desire that she should be the source of all kinds of happiness, as we hope she will be, with the help of God. We, therefore, beg of our good brother, the King of England, to moderate the expenses. Rejoicings may be held, but we ardently implore him that the substantial part of this festival should be his love; that the Princess should be treated by him and the Queen as their daughter, and by the Prince of Wales as we feel he will treat her.

(Signed) "ISABELLA, THE QUEEN."

The time of departure arrived. The Infanta received her father and mother's blessing, standing before the great altar of the Cathedral of Granada; then followed the benediction of the Church, and the good wishes of the Spanish nation. After travelling from Granada to Corunna, amidst continued ovations, the Princess, full of hope and confidence as to the future, walked on board the royal galley, and the prayers and acclamations of twenty thousand people wished her a safe voyage and a loving husband to greet her arrival on the English shore. The highest dignitaries of the Church, and the most noted nobles of Castile and Arragon were her knight attendants, accompanied by a "bevy of maidens" as lovely and brilliant as ever graced such an occasion. In this order, Catalina bade a long adieu to her happy home—to her sunny land of romance and chivalry. After many weeks of tempestuous weather, the royal galley, accompanied by the Spanish fleet, reached the English coast. The note of preparation had been sounded for some time previous. Each town and city was astir, and the excitement daily increased. Young and old, lad and lass, were anxious to know where or when the Spanish bride would land, and "delight all hearts by her presence." The national longing was soon agreeably satisfied. Early on an October morning in the year of grace 1501 the town of Plymouth was in a state of interesting excitement. In the grey light of morning several Spanish ships, "gaily decked and well-manned," entered the then quiet harbour of England's present great naval fortress. The visitors had been expected for weeks, but were detained by the rough gales previously mentioned. At eight of the clock, amidst "salutes of bombards and falconets, joyous music and the hearty cheers

of multitudinous acclaimants," the Princess Catalina,* who was veiled from "head to foot," landed on English soil. She was accompanied by some thirty young Spanish ladies of rank, and several duennas, whose demeanour and calling seemed a needless novelty in a land of frigid propriety, such as England was in those days. The Princess had also in her train a cardinal, several bishops, confessors, and grandees.

The first place the party sought was a church, to which they repaired to return thanks for their safe arrival. The local priests were promptly in attendance, and Mass was celebrated. Four young Spanish maidens with two duennas "knelt beside the Princess; they carried her prayer-books, and a confessor held a golden cup with holy water, in which the Royal lady occasionally put her fingers, and making the sign of the Cross with great devotion." All this time, according to the Moorish custom, the bride-elect remained veiled; and the veil was not to be removed until Prince Arthur arrived—the ceremony of unveiling being left to be performed by the Prince. This was a source of disappointment to the people of Devonshire, and the surrounding counties, who had travelled all night to catch a glimpse of the Infanta. Report ran highly in favour of the Princess; that versatile and imaginative class known in those days as "story-tellers" drew on their imagination for a glowing picture of "England's Bride;"

* The name of Katharine was unknown in Spain, unless in Latin MSS. Katharine was a favourite name with the old Saxon English, who claimed several sainted women of that appellation. Katharine, in Greek, signifies "pure, innocent, good," &c.; and the word was set down as the derivation of the name. The Infanta Catalina was, from her wedding day, styled "Katharine" in her adopted country.

but the fame of her beauty, her learning, her love of romance, her benevolence, and, above all, her veneration for the "Virgin Mother," won the sympathies of the English women. The story-tellers praised the maids of honour as the loveliest in all Spain. They were described as graceful in the dance—musicians, painters, in fact, as excelling in all accomplishments that could charm the eye and the mind. Travelling from town to town, the story-tellers published their own version—fanciful, of course—of the Spanish beauty. Another class of eulogists were the ballad-singers, even more marvellous in description, yet not professing to be so accurate as the story-tellers. The latter frequented the "inns, road-side sheds, and ale-houses," popular places of resort, where people assembled to hear the gossip from London and other large towns of the kingdom. In the case of the Spanish Infanta, however, the story-tellers and ballad-mongers roused the most lively feeling in her favour.

After two days' rest at a convent in Plymouth, the Princess commenced her journey to the metropolis. Her reception along the route was enthusiastic. "We did not expect such a hospitable reception from those churlish islanders," writes the Archbishop of Santiago to Queen Isabel. And again he says: "The English are as much attached to the Church as we are in Spain, and they abhor all heretics." The Archbishop was astonished at the social comforts enjoyed by the lower classes, and the contentment of the people, so superior to the condition of things in his own country.

Ferdinand and Isabel desired to send a number of young ladies to England with the Princess, whilst the English monarch wished that few might come over, unless

those who had good fortunes; then he would have them married to some of those needy nobles who were his retainers. In Ferdinand and Isabel Henry had his match in these petty piques. The rich doñas were kept at home* till grandees of a position became their suitors. So the substantial fortune-hunting English squires and lords were disappointed.

The first interview between Henry VII. and the attendants of the Princess seemed likely to produce some unpleasant feeling. The commissioners from the King of Spain would not permit the English monarch to greet his daughter-in-law in the old Welsh fashion. Henry consulted his Council quickly, and they were of opinion that no Spanish or Moorish customs could be recognised in England. The Spanish grandees reluctantly yielded, and the King entering the apartment where the Princess stood closely veiled, he threw back her veil lovingly and greeted her as his daughter. He was "gentle and kind with the fair girl, whose honest face, blue eyes, and sunny hair were pleasant in his sight."† Next came the meeting of Queen Elizabeth and the Infanta, which was one of much interest. "Bless your union," were the words of the good Queen. The bridegroom "looked confused; he held down his head, and muttered some words to the effect that he 'loved the dear Princess, and admired her golden hair.' Catalina smiled, and spake in a similar spirit." Arthur could not speak Castilian; his bride knew neither French nor English. They had to converse through an interpreter, an Irish

* Spanish State Papers of Ferdinand and Isabel. (1502.)

† Kennet, vol. i.; Stowe, vol. i.; Hall's Chronicle; Queens of England, vol. ii.; History of Two Queens, vol. i.; State Papers of Henry VII.'s Reign.

Dominican, named Turlough O'Donnellan. The contrast between the bride and bridegroom was at once striking. "A shy-looking, small, sickly boy, with a pale face and sad countenance, of about fifteen years of age," was presented to the tall, blooming young maiden, who, nurtured under sunnier skies, had already attained the ripeness of womanhood. The English courtiers looked upon the bride with admiration.

Prince Arthur made some childish inquiries after "singing birds, cats and dogs:" "were they the same in Spain as in England?"

During this interview the Infanta stood in a "stately form opposite the Prince and his mother. She was most gracious in her manners; but a close observer could perceive that she felt disappointed.* The Duke of Buckingham, who was present, describes the Princess as a most pleasing young maiden, full of health and spirits." Amongst the assembled notables there was one boy upon whose future the destinies of England turned. This was Henry, Duke of York, at that period about ten years old; yet he was taller than his brother Arthur, and "very stout."

The "merry greetings" continued for ten days along the road to London; each town put forth its people to give a welcome, and the monastic houses were profuse in bestowing hospitality. The welcome at several abbeys was magnificent; nearly one thousand men of rank and wealth—lords, bishops, abbots, knights, and squires—were present on horseback to "give a shout of welcome for England's bride," as the Infanta was styled; in fact, every endearing

* Correspondence of Dr. Foxe with Sir John More.

expression found utterance. Each baron was attended by his squire and page. Dr. Deane remarks, "Since the days of our Fourth Edward we saw no such goodly procession in our old countrie."

"Old London" was determined to have a demonstration worthy of the occasion. Monks, nuns, friars, seculars—all came forward to do honour to the Infanta. It was rather novel to see the religious orders joining in the preparations for the "citie honours" to the Princess.* A torch-light procession of the 'Prentice Boys and young lasses sang a ballad of welcome to her under the windows of Catalina's Palace.

The day before the wedding the Princess was "presented to the citizens by a public procession." She was seated on a Spanish mule with gorgeous housings, and conveyed through the gate-ways of the bridge, up Fish Street Hill by Gracechurch Street, the Duke of York on her right, and the Pope's Legate on her left; "all London," to use the phrase, "turned out to give a right hearty welcome to the Royal lady." Near old London Bridge a group of mummers played before her the story of St. Katharine. The King, Queen, and Prince Arthur were seated on a stage at Cornhill to greet the bride as she passed at that point; Tudor livery floated everywhere; in Old Cheape the Lord Mayor presented an address; a grand hymn was sung by three hundred children dressed in white; at every porch the priests in full robes came out with acolytes and choir; from every steeple rang a peal of bells; from every window

* Hall, Polydore Vergil, Dr. Deane, Fisher, and Richard Foxe have drawn quaint pictures of the reception given by the citizens of London to the Infanta on this occasion.

hung an appropriate flag; the house-tops were covered with women and children, who seemed delighted with the scene below; from every conduit ran a stream of wine. "In a word," writes Richard Foxe, "welcome, welcome, beamed on every honest face, like 'a May-day smile.'" The procession was some hours passing; the number of horsemen was large and well-appointed; some eight hundred women of "different ranks of society"—all homely dames, some young, some middle age—were on horseback. "The people," observes Peacock, "were beyond themselves with joy, and wished the Princess good luck." And again Peacock records "that the London 'Prentices and the frisky little lasses were there in holiday attire; noisy and laughing, they pushed forward to see the bride; the burgesses and their wives were in the place set apart for them; and the citie housewives were loud in their good wishes, drinking goblets of wine and ale in token of their love for England's bride." The royal bride was "like a star, draped in gold and silk; she wore a great round hat of Tuscan straw, rich in ribbon ornamentation; her bright golden tresses floated in the sharp November wind, and added a fresh feature to the loveliness of the popular idol."* The train of Spanish maidens presented a picturesque appearance. The Donna Elvira, the first maid of honour, wore a habit, black as night, covered with golden bees. The jewels and diamonds worn by the Spanish ladies were brilliant and costly. These fair dames were seated on mules richly appointed, and led by young boys in crimson dresses. The Infanta came near the close of the procession, preceded by a number of young

* History of Two Queens, vol. i.

English ladies of surpassing beauty, all on horseback. Simon Peacock states "that the Princess and her Spanish friends were affected at the burst of enthusiasm and the loving good feeling displayed by the men and women of London." Everything was done to honour and please the Infanta, and to stimulate her love for the change which was about to take place in a few hours later, when Arthur and Catalina stood before the great altar at Old St. Paul's,* amidst a blaze of lights and incense, to exchange their marriage vows.

The ancient town of London was in motion at an early hour on Sunday morning, November 14, 1501. The marriage of Catalina and Arthur, Prince of Wales, from subsequent events, became the most memorable in the history of Britain. The ceremony was performed by Deane,† Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by a number of bishops —English and Spanish. King Henry and the "good Elizabeth," his Queen, were present. The bride was led to the high altar, and from it, by Henry, Duke of York. The Princess was attended by one hundred and twenty maidens of the highest rank belonging to England and Spain. Lady Cecilie, the sister of Queen Elizabeth, supported the train of Catalina. The bride was attired in white satin.‡ All the great nobles of the land were present, in magnificent costume.

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* The old Cathedral of St. Paul's was two hundred and thirty feet longer than the present building, or about half as long again as York Minster, which is the cathedral of largest area now in England.

† Deane was once an Augustine monk. As a prelate, Dr. Deane was highly esteemed for his humble bearing, his charity and hospitality to all classes.

‡ Grafton's Chronicle.

CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE FESTIVITIES.

THE Church, the Peers, the Parliament, the Burghers—all classes were represented on this occasion. When the marriage ceremony was concluded, London's great bells announced the fact to the multitude. The King, Queen, and nobles gave sumptuous entertainments to the Spanish grandees.* Then the hospitable citizens of London, who were in a good social position, "made merrie" in the old fashion of their Saxon ancestors. The people appeared in "holiday attire;" flags and ornamental poles were placed along the streets; music and dancing at every corner; a vat of ale was provided in every street; the burghers invited their friends to a goblet of old sack wine; tables loaded with "beef, fowl, bread, and dainties" were laid out along the leading thoroughfares; a number of persons were engaged in carving, whilst men bearing wands exclaimed aloud: "Good citizens, come forward and attack the belly cheer, and drink long life to Prince Arthur and his bride." The convent and abbey gates were likewise thrown open for dinner, even the outlaw and the malefactor and the ill-reputed were "free to come and go" on this day. The Queen

* In Leland's "Collectanea" (added to by Hearn) those who are desirous of knowing the fashionable amusements, and style of entertainment in those times, will find some curious particulars.

paid the ransom of twenty poor debtors, and sent them home with some "social comforts" to their families. The King pardoned several persons condemned to death. The church bells rang a merry peal; and a benediction was pronounced at one hundred altars, to which the multitude responded: "Amen, amen!"

The observant Spanish visitors were quite astonished at the hospitality displayed by the English people. The plate used at the wedding banquet cost 20,000*l.* The feasting continued for several days. The humbler classes were not forgotten by the Queen. The poverty and wretchedness which prevailed so fearfully in the reign of Edward VI. and Elizabeth had no existence in the days of Henry VII.

The Princess Catalina was the fourth daughter of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel. The early infancy of the Princess was passed amidst the "storms of battle and siege;" for Queen Isabel of Castile herself, with her young family, lodged in the camp with which her armies for years beleaguered Granada; nor was this residence unattended with danger. Once in a desperate sally of besieged Moors the Queen's tent was set on fire, and the young Infanta and her sisters rescued with great difficulty from the flames. The little Princess accompanied the King and Queen in their triumphal entry into Granada when the Moorish power had fallen before the victorious armies of Ferdinand and Isabel. She was then only four years old. Her education commenced at this early period, and she was said to be able to read and write Latin before she reached ten years of age. It was from Granada—the happy home of her childhood—that the Infanta derived her device of the

pomegranate, so well known to the readers of the Tudor chronicles. That fruit was the production of the beautiful province with which its name is connected, and the armorial bearings of the conquered Moorish kings.*

A few months subsequent to the wedding of Prince Arthur and his bride, they repaired to Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire. Arthur's letters to Queen Isabella are all in praise of his wife. But he speaks like "a sick child of a kind nurse, who was always soothing, or amusing her patient." In less than a fortnight after the marriage Arthur appeared to be sinking into a rapid consumption; the physicians had a hopeless opinion of his case; prayers were offered up in churches and abbeys for his recovery; he was "one day better, and another worse; but still there was hope." Such was the substance of the reports forwarded twice a week from Ludlow Castle to the Royal Family. The King manifested genuine parental grief, and repaired to his oratory when those unwelcome despatches arrived; the good and pious Queen Elizabeth followed her husband to the chapel, bestowing words of comfort, always concluding—"The will of God be done." The Christian resignation of the Royal parents was soon tested. And the national rejoicing suddenly paused at the appearance of the dreadful enemy—the plague, which, like a destroying angel, quickly visited Shropshire. Young and old became its victims; desolation was at every cottage door; the nearest and dearest were parted. The people of Shropshire became terror-stricken; local feuds died out in presence of the common affliction—the clergy were sought out earnestly

* Queens of England, vol. ii.

by their penitents; many of the priests fell victims to their duty, but the post of danger was instantly filled by others. The Soldiers of the Cross were at every bedside, fearless in their holy calling—to bless, to comfort, to prepare their suffering charges for a better world.

CHAPTER III.

DEATH OF ARTHUR, PRINCE OF WALES.

THE plague reached Ludlow Castle, and several of the Prince's attendants were carried away. Arthur's turn soon arrived; but the "dear good boy was always prepared." So write his confessors. His physicians describe his last moments "as most edifying; expressing words of comfort and hope to all around him."* The news of Prince Arthur's death cast a gloom over the remaining days of his father's life. Queen Elizabeth was prostrated with grief, the people of London made manifestation of their sorrow, for the Prince had been kind, gentle, condescending, and benevolent, and frequently pleaded for the extension of Royal mercy, for the captive was ever certain of his sympathies. In the scanty consideration of royalty for the humble in those days, the boy-prince won universal popular regard. He knew nothing of the schemes by which the high-born astute of all ages can become popular; the people loved him for his good actions, which had their origin in an amiable and gentle nature. From the documents and

* Arthur, Prince of Wales, was buried on the right side of the chancel of Worcester Cathedral; King John, of "unconstitutional" memory, was also interred in the same cathedral. In Leland's "Collectanea" are to be found some curious incidents connected with Prince Arthur's funeral, and the terrors excited by the dreadful disease of which the Prince died. For a long time the memory of Arthur was treasured by the people of Shropshire.

chronicles bearing upon his short career, we must arrive at the conclusion that he was always the benefactor and friend of the oppressed and the poor. He was a lover of peace in every gentle form : he felt a pleasure in mending quarrels, and creating a good feeling amongst his courtiers and domestics. He had no ambition to be a King; perhaps the position of a country squire was the highest he desired. To gossip on the roads or the fields, with the English farmer or peasant, was his delight. Like the good Saxon Alfred he wished to know something of the peasant's social condition, "whether he had a fowl in his pot for the holiday dinner, or a cake and milk for his morning meal." So Arthur died, and thus made room for one who subsequently proved to be the incarnation of wickedness and a national scourge.

Katharine's aspirations were far different from those of her husband. However good, pious, and humane she might have been, she had a proud feeling that she was the daughter of historic parents. She was naturally ambitious, and had all the pride and courage of a Castilian Princess. She believed there was no land so sunny, so great, so chivalrous as Spain, yet she was far from being happy in her father's palace. She liked the freedom enjoyed by her sex in England; and if she found men less courtly in manners, they were more warm—apparently so, perhaps—than the proud grandees of her own country. But the Infanta soon conformed to the ways of the land of her adoption. Standing at the death-bed of her husband was to her a sad scene. Bernaldes, a Spanish historian, states that the Princess "had no love for the little sickly English boy. They could not even converse freely together."

Bernaldes was the relative of one of Catalina's confidential ladies, so that he received his information from a source that was likely to be correct. "The Princess could only utter a few words of English, she knew nothing of French." Arthur was not able to speak Spanish—both parties had some acquaintance with Latin, but to converse in that tongue is a very exceptional gift, and the communing of the youthful couple was scanty and unsatisfactory. As the "agonies of death came on," Catalina was removed from the scene by her Spanish ladies. When informed of her husband's death, she shut herself up in her apartments after the Moorish fashion. Her faithful lady attendant, Marie de Salugaya, her chaplain, and physician, were the only society the Infanta possessed at Ludlow Castle. Her grief, however, could not proceed from "love cut short by death." She had no young womanly sentiment for the little sickly boy with whom she could not converse. The case was altogether exceptionally painful to a sensitive young lady, and Arthur, Prince of Wales, was soon forgotten by his five months' wife. These incidents, however, cast no reproach upon a Princess who had left a land then teeming with wealth, romance, and beauty, for a cold, foreign, practical clime, the language of which she did not understand, the customs of which were only rendered tolerable by the evident goodwill of the people—her own sunny land left for a ceremony—a marriage without a sentiment—without a husband—another victim of diplomacy and greed. Far away from kindred and home, the young widow felt lonely and sad. Yet the most lonely moment could not contemplate the darker future and all its terrible surroundings.

CHAPTER IV.

THE YOUNG WIDOW.

Queen Elizabeth, the mother-in-law of Catalina, though overwhelmed with grief for the sudden loss of her first-born and best-beloved child, had a tender sympathy for the young widow. The Queen sent for her, and kept the Princess in her palace at Croydon. While Queen Elizabeth lived her daughter-in-law was treated with kindness. A quarrel subsequently arose between Catalina's father and Henry VII. as to the payment of her dowry. Her father-in-law began to speculate on a new scheme for keeping the entire of her fortune. He proposed a marriage between his surviving son young Henry and the Dowager Princess of Wales. The Spanish Court, after considerable negotiation, agreed to this proposition, on condition that a dispensation might be obtained from the Pope. The Infanta was unhappy; she could not receive her money regularly; her servants were not paid, nor the mercers and other people with whom she had dealings. She wrote to her father that she had no inclination for a second marriage in England. Several of her letters were intercepted by Henry VII. It is evident that the Princess, then a sensible young woman of eighteen, felt an aversion to vow obedience to a boy more than five years younger than herself. The Council was opposed to the projected marriage. Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, was in favour of the

union, provided the Infanta could give certain explanations —which it was alleged she could—as to "canon law liability." These "explanations," it is contended, were forwarded to the Pontiff, "under seal," from the Princess. Dr. Fisher and several other prelates were satisfied with the arrangement. Dr. Warham, then Bishop of London, and some eminent members of Convocation, were strongly opposed to the "dispensing powers" being exercised by the Pope. Warham did not doubt the "explanation" given as to the existence of circumstances which made her marriage null in canon law; but he "feared that, from the necessary mystery that might appear to hang around the case, at some future day, when evidence would be impossible, the legality of the marriage might be questioned." The Countess of Richmond, the King's mother, was satisfied with the "solemn explanations" given by the Princess to herself and the Duchess of Norfolk. By these "explanations" the Infanta expressed no particular desire to be married to the boy Henry; but, on the contrary, wished to go home. Here she was met by fresh complications, and the conference held upon her "matrimonial position" ended by her being betrothed to Henry, Prince of Wales, on the 25th of June, 1504, in the presence of the Bishop of Salisbury.* The actual marriage did not take place till 1509.

The Infanta's situation towards the close of her father-in-law's reign was irksome indeed. While in this condition she writes to her lady friend, Elvira: "I have some-

* Lingard, vol. ii. p. 333; Maione's History of Spain; Sir Harris Nicolas; Wood's Letters of Royal Ladies; Herbert, Bacon; Turner, vol ix.; Queens of England, vol. ii.; History of Two Queens, vol. i.

times doubts," she says, "as to my future happiness. I wish that I had never seen the English shore. There is trouble before me." The Princess now spent much time in the society of young Henry, and the King invited her frequently to Court. Things promised hopefully, when suddenly Henry, Prince of Wales, repudiated the contract entered into on his behalf for a marriage with the Infanta. He stated that he was now (fourteen years old) at an age to judge for himself, and refused to share in the arrangement, and pronounced the "rite entered in his name as null and void," stating, in addition, that he acted on the advice of his confessor.* It is an important fact that King Ferdinand overruled the scruples of Prince Henry, "pointing to the King of Portugal, who had married two sisters in succession, the Pope having granted a dispensation.† This allegation is very doubtful, and I cannot find any satifactory proofs of the "reasons" given for such a dispensation. Another curious incident occurred about the same time: one of the Spanish chaplains of the Infanta who had raised "objections," was ordered home, and placed in prison by Ferdinand.

The dowry due by Spain had been only half paid. The Princess became dismayed; she seemed to find no real friend either in England or Spain. Her situation was exceptionally sad. Used for political purposes one hour, her fortune was an ever-present consideration the next. Her fate lay at the disposal of two unkindly and ungracious misers—Henry VII. of England, and Ferdinand of Castile.

* State Papers (Domestic); Lingard; Turner; History of Two Queens, vol. ii.

† Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers.

Previous to her engagement with young Henry, she had been much at Court; she saw the tall handsome boy on whom her heart at length became fixed. Obedience had disciplined her into acceptance of the sickly Arthur. Invincible attraction, with the might of affection born of an Andalusian nature, laid her heart at the disposition of Henry. Like parted streams which meet again, her virginal attachment for one brother swelled into a full current of love for his stalwart and more manly junior. She loved Henry with the passionate fervour of her country, yet scrupulously concealed her feelings. All seemed now, however, to be overthrown by the unexpected declaration of the Prince. The lovers were separated, and were only to meet as "friends or acquaintances."* She was to be shut up at Croydon Park, in a kind of conventual life, "without the vocation which seeks comfort in religious vows." Her Spanish lady companion, Elvira, ruled her, it is averred, with the nerve of a strong-hearted and self-conscious duenna. The Princess was permitted to fall into debt by her must-be father-in-law—no very honourable trait on his part. The Infanta looked upon the wealthy King Henry as the author of all her troubles; she could never forgive the mercenary manner in which he acted towards her.† Henry's conduct to his daughter-in-law was not alone cruel, but base and unmanly, for she was literally made a prisoner in order to retain her fortune. This incident forms one of the darkest stains upon the character of Henry VII. De Puebla, the Spanish minister, was, if possible, more hostile to the Princess than was the English King, for whilst he betrayed

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* Letters of Don Pedro Ayala. † Bergenroth's State Papers, vol. i.

her interests he slandered her unsullied reputation. Throughout the whole proceeding De Puebla was the secret agent of King Henry, who subsidised him in treason to his Sovereign, and unknightly treachery to his daughter. Every day brought fresh trouble to the young widow. For the Princess to ask her father for money was hopeless. The bond of the forethoughtful Castilian had not been fulfilled. The Infanta's servants were unpaid; the "proud victor of Bosworth," who was possessed of so much wealth, knew the condition of his daughter-in-law, but refused to aid her. "She had no claim upon him," the King's chancellor told her; the retainer of a hitherto unequalled dowry. No marvel that the "blue blood" of the Princess rippled in her veins; no wonder that the daughter of the land of the Cid should feel indignant at this regal paltriness; no wonder her sensitive heart became sad, and that she wrote to her father that "if he did not release her from her intolerable humiliations she would become a nun, and quit the wicked world which was one huge mass of deception and dishonesty." But Ferdinand would not listen to such a proposition. The Princess, who hated dissimulation, was compelled by her position to adopt it.

At the command of her father-in-law* she had to write "a love letter"—a proposal of marriage—from his Highness to her widowed sister, Juana, whom the King suspected of being wealthy in private property. In this letter the most extravagant praise is bestowed upon Henry, "at his own suggestion." The Infanta tells her sister "that the King of England was a Prince *full of the noblest virtues, and possessed*

* The Queen Consort, Elizabeth, was dead at this time. I shall refer to her in a subsequent chapter.

*of immense treasures. If Dona Juana would listen to his (Henry's) addresses she would become the greatest Queen in Christendom. If, on the other hand, she refused the proposals of his English Majesty, she would commit a great sin against her God, her father, and herself."**

The astute and calculating mind of Henry must have suffered from some oblivious failure when he dictated this extravagant address to his daughter-in-law. The fact is, greed of gold was almost an insanity with Henry the Seventh, although he was never parsimonious when appealed to on the score of religion or mercy.

In this indelicate matter respecting the Infanta, the latter acted with commensurate prudence. In her "confidential letters to Spain," she frequently makes remarks, from which it would appear that she perfectly understood the intrigues and the baseness of all parties concerned. Ferdinand was far from approving of, or accepting, the English King as a husband for his daughter Juana; he had already experienced enough of the Tudor alliance. Ferdinand, however, acted in this case with his usual duplicity—holding out hopes which he never intended to gratify. So, after awhile, Henry gave up all hope of becoming the husband of that marvellously romantic Princess Juana, who "carried about in her journeys the body of her late husband." Juana was rich, and Henry, the money-spinner, coveted her gold, but not the heart of the beautiful lunatic, who, outside the generality of contemporary royal marriages, was neither consulted nor controlled. The august Council, however, had no objection to the insanity of Juana, provided she

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers, vol. i., translated from the Simancas; Letters of the Infanta.

had abundance of money, and the King approved of the sentiment; but Ferdinand would have no more of such "arrangements."

The Infanta Catalina's affairs in England were going from bad to worse. Don Fuensalida, who was despatched in 1508 by Ferdinand to inquire into the domestic life of the Infanta, describes Henry VII. "as a man of no honour, and of bad character. He had shown extreme covetousness and little love, not only with regard to the Princess, but also in other respects." This haughty grandee has overdrawn the picture. Henry was an unkingly miser, it is true, and was debased by many of those mean vices which are incidental to an avid love of gold. He had met his share of the world's buffets in his youth, and was far from being tender-hearted, or under the influence of delicate feelings. It was not an age for their display, and after Fuensalida had spoken to the English monarch in his grandiose tone Henry soon refused to see him. With Bishop Foxe and the Council the envoy had some violent scenes. The Infanta herself thought his conduct impolitic. This was not, however, the first occasion on which she had to complain of the intemperate conduct of her Spanish advocates, or as she emphatically expressed it, "*my friends*." Don Pedro de Ayala was the only Spanish envoy who, at this time, combined in his character firmness and integrity; besides, he had influence—if any foreigner had—over the avaricious King. But to increase the misfortune of the Princess, Don Pedro de Ayala's health became impaired at this particular juncture (1508), and he was unable to render her that advice and aid which he had contrived to do from her first arrival in England.

Nor can Isabel of Castile, the mother of the Infanta, escape censure. She knew her daughter was in needy circumstances, yet she never sent her a ducat; but even deprived her of some jewels that were in Spain, and her own private property; yet Isabel, in her letters, frequently speaks of the love she entertained for her "darling child."

Now to commemorate a circumstance which occurred some five years antecedent to the epoch of which I am treating. The fact is to be found in the Spanish State Papers, that Henry actually contemplated a marriage with the Infanta *himself*. The letter on this subject has been lost, but I learn its contents from the answer of Queen Isabel, which is set forth at great length and is dated Alcala, April 11, 1503. The Queen also wrote to De Puebla, expressing her indignation at the very idea of such a proposition. In a communication to her ambassador Queen Isabel states that the King of England must be told that there were two things about which she and her husband were firmly resolved. The first was, that the Princess of Wales should never marry King Henry; and the second that she was immediately to return to Spain. "*If the King of England is so much in want of a second wife,*" adds Isabel, "*he may marry the young Queen Dowager of Naples, who is particularly well calculated to console him in his deep affliction.*"

The young Queen of Naples was very wealthy, and being the niece of Isabel, Ferdinand offered to give her 200,000 ducats if she married the King of England. The widow declined wedding Henry; so all the matrimonial schemes fell through. These extraordinary incidents may reasonably

be considered as the key to the subsequent neglect and unkindness with which the Infanta was treated by her father-in-law.* In this proposal, however, neither Ferdinand nor Isabel desired to go farther than play with the English monarch, and spread before him what was then his besetting lure—*gold.*

The Infanta would have lost all belief in the goodness of human nature, had there not been one exception from the general corruption in courtly circles. The attendants she had brought with her from Spain, and above all her amiable, learned, and most worthy confessor, behaved to her with exemplary devotion. They had not received a single ducat as salary for nearly six years. Instead of the "promised splendour," they had found nothing but poverty and reproach; they were foreigners, and consequently insulted by the populace of London, who were seldom remarkable for courtesy to any one. None of the Princess's household reproached her for the condition to which they were reduced. On the contrary, they vied with one another as to who should serve her best, "as though," said Catalina, "they were every day receiving fresh favours at my hands." She felt the misery to which her servants were reduced more keenly than her own sufferings, and considered herself as more miserable than any woman in England, of whatever condition she might be.† Such was the condition of the Infanta and her faithful servants after seven years' residence in the English capital. Her condition furnished sufficient material for the gossip of every Court in Europe; yet Henry

* Bergenroth's State Papers of England and Spain, vol. i.
† Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers.

did not awake from his delusion till the premature decay of life admonished him that his days were numbered.

A few months subsequent to the betrothment of the young widow (1505)* to Henry, Prince of Wales, Queen Isabel died. Miss Strickland styles her "as the Infanta's admirable mother." † Isabel may have intended to be so; but she will never appear as such in the historical gallery.

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* Up to this period the Infanta could speak no English, although four years in the country. Her earnest desire was to return to Granada.

† Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 477.

CHAPTER V.

FERDINAND AND ISABEL.

Ferdinand and Isabel appeared in public life at an early age. They were married at Valladolid, in October, 1469. Ferdinand was only eighteen years old, and the Princess one year his senior.* Having succeeded to the crown of Castile, in 1474, they came into possession of Arragon five years later. In taste and social qualities Ferdinand and his wife were quite opposed, and their personal bickerings were a constant topic of Court gossip. But their public life was an antithesis of their private: in political matters they seemed thoroughly agreed; and it may be mentioned as a curious fact that the handwriting of both King and Queen was almost identical, so much so that the courtiers were unable to decide as to the writer.

Machado assured Henry VII. that a single toilette of Queen Isabel amounted in value to 200,000 scudos, and that he never saw her twice, on the same day, in the same

* When Isabel was fourteen years of age, a matrimonial alliance was in treaty for her with Edward IV. of England. At that period Isabel was quite in love with King Edward, although she had never seen him; but having received his picture and a love-token, she "retired three times a day to mentally commune with the handsome and gallant Prince." As might have been expected with such a suitor as Edward, Isabel was "crossed in love," and expressed her indignation on many occasions, that a maiden of fourteen, and the Queen of Castile, should be set aside by the King of England for a widow and a subject. Her enmity to the beautiful Elizabeth Woodville was long and bitter. The Castilian chronicles scarcely notice this incident.

costume. Ferdinand also dressed in splendid style. Maister John Style, the English ambassador in 1509, describes his Catholic Majesty as "squinting with the left eye, and lisping in consequence of the loss of a front tooth, but for the rest of his person he was a right hearty Prince, of a vigorous constitution, smiling and pleasant with every one."* A great distinction is sometimes made between the writing of Ferdinand and that of his wife. It is stated by some Spanish authors that if Ferdinand were able to write at all, he expressed himself so badly that he could scarcely make himself intelligible. La Fuente denies these statements.† "It is strange," writes Gustave Bergenroth, "how long such prejudices may exist, in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary. Holographs of Ferdinand are by no means rare in Spain. Many exist at Simancas and other repositories of State Papers. In the archives of the Duc de Frias, in Madrid, are deposited five long letters indited entirely in the handwriting of Ferdinand himself. In one of these missives to his wife the King seems to regret that the Queen does not still keep up her correspondence in the old style of their "first love." Here is a passage which throws some light upon the inner life of Ferdinand and "*his* darling Isabel":—

"Now at least it is clear which of us two loves the best. Judging by what you have ordered should be written to me, I see you can be happy while I lose my sleep, because messenger comes after messenger and brings me no letters from you. The reason why you do not write is not because

* Bergenroth's State Papers.

† La Fuentes' Ecclesiastical History of Spain.

there is no paper to be had, or that you do not know how to write, but because you do not love me, and because you are too proud. You are living at Toledo; I am residing in a small village. Well, Isabel, one day you will return to your old affection. If you do not, your Ferdinand will die, and the guilt will be yours."

The letters of Queen Isabel to her ambassador, De Puebla, throw some light on her system of diplomacy. She writes in the "most friendly and obedient" manner to the Pope, whilst almost on the same day she sends a confidential despatch to her unscrupulous agent in London, to "watch closely the correspondence passing between the Pontiff and her dear brother, the King of England." De Puebla was in the pay of all parties, each believing him to be an honest, religious man; but he was a lawyer, and regulated his conscience after the fashion of a Lombard money dealer. Much of the correspondence between Isabel and her envoy has been lost, yet many of her letters are to be found in the Simancas collection, which showed that she was a far-seeing woman, of much energy of mind, tact, and diplomatic ability, although possessed of no suitable education to uphold her position. There has been much useless controversy as to the extent of her learning.

The proceedings of Ferdinand and Isabel in connexion with the Inquisition in 1478 are of a nature too shocking to relate. Who can defend the barbarities carried out in the name of the God of Mercy and Charity? As usual, the unhappy Jews were the greatest sufferers. The punishments inflicted by the Inquisition were—death by fire—*to be roasted alive;* imprisonment for life in a dungeon; or to be confined in a prison for five or seven years. Those who

were restored to what was then called "liberty," were obliged constantly to wear red crosses outside their clothes, one on the back, and another on the breast, for the remainder of their days. The use of gold, silk, and camlet was forbidden by those proscribed people. The children of those who offended against the Inquisition were declared to forfeit all claims to citizenship as Spanish subjects. The whole country became in a state of awful excitement; the confiscation of property was enormous, and the pretext for it odious. Isabel was no fanatic; nothing can be more repugnant to humanity and truth than an attempt to vindicate her conduct in relation to the Inquisition, whilst her commands—*her own very letters*—are to be found in the archives of Barcelona and Simancas,* counselling torture in every form.

Although there was an attempt made at intimidation, the Pope promptly interposed, and the horrors of the scenes were postponed for a time.

Notwithstanding all that has been written at a later period in Spain, extolling the piety of Isabel, her political correspondence proves that she was very inconsistent.

In fair play the advocates of Isabel have a right to a hearing. Yurita and Blancas defend the policy of Isabel with respect to the Inquisition as "one of prudence and piety." Prescott, her chivalrous Protestant biographer, states that the many deeds of cruelty attributed to Isabel were the "actions of her ministers and fanatical clerics." And again, Mr. Prescott observes, "that among her moral

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers; Prescott's Life of Ferdinand and Isabel.

qualities, the most conspicuous was her magnanimity. She betrayed nothing little or selfish in thought or action. Her schemes were vast, and executed in the same noble spirit in which they were conceived. . . . Where she had once given her confidence to any person she gave her hearty and steady support. Her private life was most perfect. Her heart overflowed with affectionate sensibility to her family. She watched over the declining days of her aged mother, and ministered to her infirmities with all the delicacy of filial tenderness. She fondly and faithfully loved her faithless husband to the last. Isabel abounded in charity; she erected and endowed many extensive hospitals; she made provision for the aged and the destitute; and the humblest creatures in Castile could approach her and relate their misfortunes. 'I am your Queen; tell me what is the cause of your sorrow.' The political features of Isabel's character were stern and uncompromising.* A wealthy criminal on one occasion offered forty thousand doubles in gold for a pardon; but the Queen spurned the offer, although strongly supported by the ministers of State."†

The Marchioness de Moya, who was the lady companion of Isabel for many years, and "closed her eyes in death," bears testimony to her humanity. "The Queen laboured earnestly to put down the shocking bull fights, but the people were obstinate and indignant, and would not permit the Queen to interfere with what they called 'sport.' The Queen laboured in vain; she only attended two bull fights

* Prescott's Life of Ferdinand and Isabel, vol. iii.
† Pulgar, Reyes, Catolicas, part ii. cap. 97.

in the whole course of her life." Isabel is said to have been the first to introduce the benevolent institution of camp hospitals in Europe.

In stature Isabel was above the middle size; her complexion fair; her hair of a bright chesnut colour, inclined to red; and her mild blue eye beamed with intelligence and sensibility. She was exceedingly beautiful; "the handsomest lady," writes a Spanish grandee, "whom I had ever beheld, and the most gracious in her manners." Isabel has been immensely overpraised by her own countrymen, and bitterly slandered by Protestant writers; yet her most chivalrous and enthusiastic biographer was a Protestant of the United States.

To return to the "young widow."

One of the recent biographers of the Infanta observes:—"Stung into self-assertion, the repudiated bride of Durham House assumed the conduct of her own affairs. She was a child no longer; she was in her twentieth year; both her mother and her mother-in-law were dead. She loved Prince Henry, and thought there was no harm in wishing to marry him. The Pope, she understood, had given a dispensation for their marriage. Nothing, she imagined, but a question as to 'certain moneys' had kept her separated from the youth who was her heart's desire. . . . . She was forced to make a last appeal. She told her father-in-law that her life was miserable, her debts were left unpaid; she borrowed money from bankers and others to supply her table with the commonest food; her servants required breakfast, dinner, and other meals; their wages were still left unpaid; had she not been

able to procure a loan she must have starved to death."*

Some relief was afforded. The Infanta next besought her father for money: he had been gambling with her life, and she desired to have a share of the spoil. Ferdinand, however, was mixed up in a series of complicated schemes of politics—so his daughter had to look to herself. The Princess was at this period some twenty years of age, and is described as "very pretty and most pleasing in her manners." She was determined, therefore, to win back the "handsome boy." They seldom met, but when they did, the Infanta could perceive that she was gradually gaining her lost ascendency; she used all her fascinations to please, and, in a short time, the grace and beauty of Catalina triumphed over the heart of Henry, Prince of Wales.

For a time I take leave of the "young widow," as the Infanta was styled by her numerous admirers in London, and refer to the union of the "White and the Red Rose."

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* The History of Two Queens, vol. ii.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE AND THE RED ROSE.

THE mother and grandmothers of Henry VIII. were models of domestic virtue. Elizabeth of York, after many vicissitudes of fortune, was married to Henry Tudor, the hero of Bosworth Field. The marriage was solemnised in Westminster Abbey, Jan. 18, 1486. The ceremony was performed by Cardinal Bouchier, a descendant of the Plantagenet family. " His hand," according to the quaint words of Fuller, " held that sweet posie, wherein the White and Red Roses were first tied together." Andreas states that the royal wedding was celebrated with " all religious and glorious magnificence at the King's Court, and by the people of London with bonfires, cheering, songs, and banquets; young and old were in holiday attire. The people seemed quite enthusiastic in their love for Elizabeth of York. Everywhere she was met with good wishes and prayers." John de Gigli, the Queen's Italian poet laureate, was the author of a very interesting Latin epithalamium on the marriage of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was, at the period of her marriage, in her twenty-first year. She has been described by a contemporary as " beautiful, retiring, and shy; very fond of her husband and children." State ceremonies were secondary considerations with " Elizabeth the Good;" nevertheless, on public occasions, she appeared as a " right royal ladye."

The virtues of "denial and obedience" flourished in her private household. She was bountiful and considerate in her charities; she portioned good and virtuous maidens who were "in reduced circumstances;" she paid the stipend required for novices to enter a convent; she provided young women with warm clothing in winter; she liberated from prison poor debtors—a class very harshly treated in those days; "rogues and thieves who were known to have repented" received a decent burial at the expense of the Queen. She retained the old servants of the House of York; orphan boys and girls were objects of her sympathy and recipients of her bounty. Her tastes were refined; her hospitality, in an age of profuse and indiscriminate treating, was characterised by a generous discernment, yet worthy of a Plantagenet Princess. Her poets and reciters visited her at fixed times; Plantagenet-like, she delighted in dancing and music. There are still extant some elegant Latin letters of the Countess of Richmond to her daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, in which the countess expresses her gratitude to God for "providing the King with so good a wife and so grand a Queen."

In her own private circle Queen Elizabeth practised a careful economy, in order to have money to expend in doing works of benevolence and charity. Her gowns were "mended, turned, and new bodied; they were freshly trimmed at the expense of 4*d.* to the tailor."* Elizabeth also "wore shoes, which only cost twelvepence, with *latten* buckles." But the sums of money she paid to her poor loving subjects who brought her trifling offerings of "early

* Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York.

peas, cherries, chickens, bunches of roses, and posies," were very high in proportion to what she paid for her own shoes.*

At one time the Queen pledged her jewels for 500*l.* to enable her to carry out works of charity. The humblest person in the land could have access to this young and beautiful Queen. When the plague and other violent distempers brought desolation at every poor man's door, Elizabeth became a Sister of Charity, and the numerous orphans found in her a protectress. In her domestic circle the Queen appeared in all the delicate affection of her nature. Erasmus, amongst other notables, has left on record an interesting account of his visit to the royal nursery of Queen Elizabeth at Croydon, accompanied by Sir Thomas More, then a young man. "More played with, and caressed the children. The most remarkable of the royal group was dear little Prince Henry, then about eight years old. The Queen was pleased to see her children gathering in so loving a manner round Maister More; but everywhere he visits the children are delighted to see him, for he has something pleasing to tell them." It is stated that at this time "little Henry" formed an attachment for the future chancellor. One of the nurses remarked that Prince Henry "sobbed and cried when young Maister More departed from the children's hall." Time rolled on, and the beginning of a most eventful chapter of England's history was drawing near. In 1502-3, the Infanta, Katharine, lost her best friend and kinswoman—Queen Elizabeth. The Queen died in childbirth, to the universal regret of the nation. Never

* Sir Harris Nicolas' Memoirs of Elizabeth, Queen of Henry VII.

had a royal lady been so loved by the people of England. Elizabeth gave birth to a daughter—a child who could bring no strength to the unpopular and uncertain house of Tudor. The Queen knew her husband's longing for another son, and when she found herself mother of only a daughter, she is stated to have never raised her head. Prayers had been offered throughout the land for the fruition of the royal wishes, for the continuation of the Tudor line lay solely in young Henry, and the frugal and astute father feared another War of the Roses, and the dissipation of his immense wealth if death should reach his only male offspring. He selfishly permitted his Queen to observe that his disappointment was great, and her gentle and affectionate nature suffered new pangs from the consciousness that throughout her married life she had sought to be a hostage between hitherto contending ambitions, and above all to free the people whom she loved from the horrors of internecine war. It was in this way that the noble heart of the ailing Queen was broken. Nine days she lingered after the birth—even unto her own birthday.

The gates of the venerable abbey, in which her husband constructed his world-known chapel, were thrown open, and amidst the solemn pealing of London's bells, and the heart-throbbings of the multitude, the remains of the royal mother and her infant were laid together in an unfinished shrine, beneath her chosen motto,—

"HUMBLE AND PENITENTIAL."

As "Elizabeth of York," this royal lady has not escaped censure from some writers for an alleged matrimonial scheme with the Duke of Gloucester; that she corresponded with

him on the subject of marriage whilst his wife (Anne of Warwick) was on her death-bed. The letter said to have been written by Elizabeth to her uncle, Gloucester, has been accepted as genuine by Grafton, Fabyan,* Hall, and Sir Thomas More, although circumstantial evidence lead to a contrary opinion. Buck, in his life of Richard the Third, attempts to prove that the Princess was most anxious to marry her uncle. It happened, however, that at the very time the alleged love correspondence was passing between Elizabeth and her hated uncle, she was secretly engaged to Henry, Earl of Richmond. This espousal was with the consent of the Queen Dowager, her relatives, and friends. The character of Buck for truthfulness is well known to bookworms. Dr. Lingard, whose sagacity is not exceeded by that of any other English historian, seems to believe that Richard really intended to marry his niece. Buck's work appeared in the days of Sir William Dugdale, Anthony Wood, and several other eminent antiquaries; yet, strange to say, not a single transcript, much less the original letter, is known to be extant. If Buck saw such a document, it could not have escaped the vigilant research of Wood and Dugdale. Several of the older chroniclers, who impute to Richard the desire of marrying his young kinswoman, agree in stating that the Princess resolutely opposed his wishes.† Besides, the Church would not consent to such a union, and Richard was not inclined to quarrel with the Pope, who styled his brother Edward—"The most Faithful Son of the Church."

* Fabyan was an Alderman of London, and presents the rare instance of one of that class studying literature. He died in 1511. His journal contains many curious anecdotes.

† Grafton's Chronicle.

Sharon Turner, in his zeal to exculpate Richard, suggests that if the letter quoted by Buck be a genuine document, then King Richard was the "seduced, rather than the seducer."* Brereton contends that Richmond was indebted to the Princess Elizabeth alone for his crown; that she raised confederacies in his power, and was unshaken in her fidelity to his cause. Brereton was the bearer of a letter and a ring from the Princess to Richmond when in Brittany.† This romantic story goes on to state that Elizabeth was in the neighbourhood of Bosworth on the day of its memorable battle, and in Leicester on the same evening, when she saw the mangled corpse of her wicked uncle laid in the market place of that town. Shortly after the triumphal entry of Henry the VIIth into London he met for the first time his beautiful and most amiable bride, Elizabeth of York.

Sir Harris Nicolas, the great antiquary of history, has investigated, and disposed of, the imputations thrown upon the Princess Elizabeth, in his usual powerful style.‡

I may conclude in the words of one who was frequently admitted to the presence of the royal lady: "She exhibited from her very cradle towards God an admirable fear and service; towards her parents a wonderful obedience; towards her brothers and sisters an almost incredible love; towards the poor and the ministers of Christ a reverence and singular affection."§ Such was the mother of the "Eighth Henry of England."

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* Sharon Turner's History of England, vol. 4 p. 24.

† Humphrey Brereton was a squire attached to the princely retinue of Lord Stanley, closely connected by marriage with Richmond.

‡ See Sir Harris Nicolas' "Memoir" in the Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VII.'s consort.

§ Bernard Andreas, the Poet Laureate and Biographer of Henry VII. Cottonian MS.

Queen Elizabeth had four sisters, who resided at her court—namely, Lady Cecily of York, Lady Anne of York, Lady Katharine of York, and Lady Bridget of York. Those princesses were younger than the Queen. Three of them were subsequently married; but not destined to meet with a happy change. They were all fair, amiable, and excellent—the worthy daughters of the good Elizabeth Woodville.* The youngest, Lady Bridget, became a nun. She took the veil at the Convent of Dartford. This royal lady died in 1517, in her thirty-seventh year. When the day of national shame arrived, the Convent of Dartford, which then contained the remains of his sainted aunt, was not spared by King Henry. Amongst the plunder of the monastic inquisitors were the *ring, crucifix, prayer-books, and many other little memorials of Sister Mary,* the humblest of that stainless community—the daughter of the Fourth Edward, the sister-in-law of Henry VII., and the aunt of Henry VIII. At Dartford, like other convents, the vaults containing the coffins of the deceased sisters were visited by those mysterious attendants of the "inquisitors" in search of jewellery and other orna-

* The Dowager Queen (Elizabeth Woodville) left in her "last testament" a most pathetic and loving farewell to her four daughters. The diary of her early youth is still extant, and shows that she was amiable, romantic, and most loveable in her nature. Elizabeth Woodville was a Queen "of many sorrows." Some grand sentiments are attributed to her in relation to her husband, Edward IV. It is a curious incident in the life of Elizabeth Woodville that she had been in early life maid of honour to the brave and unfortunate Queen Margaret. I may add that three maids of honour were raised to a throne in England—Elizabeth Woodville, Anne Boleyn, and Jane Seymour; the two latter differing immensely from the former in every noble and womanly quality that could command respect, sympathy, and love. The portrait of Elizabeth Woodville is to be seen in the college she founded at Cambridge. The picture represents her as very beautiful.

ments, so that the remains of Henry's own aunt was treated no better than the rest.*

At the commencement of Henry's reign the European sovereigns and statesmen thought but little of him. He was generally considered as a "successful adventurer," and it was doubted if he could long maintain his position. Yet by incessant labour and prudence for a period of fifteen years, he inspired the continental Princes with so much confidence, that the cautious and far-seeing Ferdinand and Isabel confided to his guardianship their daughter. He was also chosen as one of the umpires to decide upon the disputes between Ferdinand on the one part, and Philip and Maximilian on the other.† There was a concurrent opinion as to his prudence and wisdom. Still, a jealous feeling prevailed against him on the Continent, and he had few friends: a man of deep reflection, and possessed of some good qualities; but his suspicious mind marred his best intentions. Every action of his seemed the result of calm deliberation. No decision was left to passion or accident. He constantly kept notes and memorials in his own hands. There is extant a grotesque tale that the King's monkey tore his secret note-book to pieces, when by chance he had left it about. He kept a menagerie, but had odd ideas regarding its government. On one occasion he had four English mastiffs hanged as traitors, because they overcame one of his lions, with whom they were matched to fight. These canine executions were

* Thorndale's Memorials; Father Crispani gives another version of the above, but both agree in the main facts. Crispani was personally acquainted with the Princess Bridget.

† Bergenroth's State Papers.

meant as significant hints to the discontented nobility.* He suspected every person of rank as plotting against him, and many undoubtedly desired his overthrow. The hanging of Perkin Warbeck was a needless act of cruelty on the part of Henry.† The execution of the unfortunate young Earl of Warwick, the "blameless, half-witted boy," whose only crime was the accident of his birth, was nothing short of a deliberate murder. Popular feeling, as far as it dared to manifest itself, was strongly against the King in the case of Lord Warwick.‡ The English people had an affectionate regard for the chivalrous line of the Plantagenets, and they considered the death of Warwick as an act of revenge on the part of a monarch who had himself no legitimate claim.§ About this time (November, 1499) a dreadful plague broke out in London, by which thousands were swept away. The people "on the highway boldly stated that the scourge was sent by heaven for the murder of Warwick." The King felt alarmed at this state of feeling, and it is stated that he made "a private pilgrimage" to the

* Grafton's Chronicle, Echard, vol. i.; Rapin, vol. ii.

† De Puebla, the Spanish Envoy, acted with most unnational conduct to Perkin Warbeck, assuring him of his friendship, inviting him to private interviews, and then informing the Council of the result. De Puebla, writing to Queen Isabel, says: "Perkin Warbeck, or the Duke of York, as the people style him, is now in a strong prisón, called the Tower, where sun nor moon can never reach him—a cell underground, where the King's enemies have to suffer. Don Pedro de Ayala was also implicated in the intrigues concerning Warbeck. Don Pedro alleged the adventurer to be no other person than the Duke of York.

‡ Lord Bacon's Life of Henry VII.; Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. ii.

§ The Earl of Warwick was beheaded on Tower Hill, amidst the "lamentations of a vast multitude of people." A ballad was written on the occasion by one of the Godstow nuns, entitled "Warwick's Farewell."

shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. But, somewhat like his elder contemporary, Louis XI. of France, he seemed more impelled by fear than virtue in his religious observances. History supplies many instances of those endeavours in high places to discount futurity whilst expending the present. Henry had no real friend, whilst every one paid the homage of loyalty and love to his kind and gentle wife. In a conversation with the Castilian monarch (Philip) at Windsor, in alluding to hospitality and friendship, Henry said—"Walls and seas are as nothing, where hearts are open and true." He was far, however, from admitting this axiom as his rule of conduct. Here is an anecdote, related by Bacon, of his proceedings with the Earl of Oxford, which manifests his exacting and ungracious disposition. Of all the English peers the King had most confidence in the Earl of Oxford, who rendered vast services to the House of Tudor. On one occasion Henry visited Lord Oxford at Henningham, in Kent, and was entertained with great magnificence. When the monarch was about to depart he saw a great number of men, dressed in rich liveries, and ranged on both sides to form a guard of honour to the royal visitor. Lord Oxford had forgotten that it was forbidden by a stringent sumptuary Act of Parliament to give liveries to any but very menial servants. Henry, avariciously sensitive of legal requirements, at once resolved on an act of ungenerous justice. Turning to the Earl of Oxford, he said—"My Lord of Oxford, I have heard much of your magnificence, and your warm-hearted hospitality; but I now find that they exceed all report. These handsome gentlemen and yeomen I see on both sides of me are your menial servants, are they not?" Lord Oxford, not perceiving the motive of the

royal querist, smiled, and at once gave a candid explanation. He stated that he did not keep one-third of that number of servants; but he induced some seventy of his retainers and tenants to come there for the purpose of honouring the King, and with his own money he purchased the rich liveries they then wore. All, he added, had been done to please his King. Henry changed colour several times, and then, in his usual quiet manner, addressed the Earl—"By my faith, I thank you for your good cheer; but at the same time I cannot suffer to have my laws broken before my face by you, my Lord. My Attorney-General must have some serious talk with you." The King muttered some more words that were inaudible, smiled as usual, and took his departure. The nature of the occasion, and the feeling which prompted the infraction of an arbitrary statute, had little consideration with a monarch who felt a pleasure in exacting fines, which penalties, however, were levied more from the love of gain than from a tyrannical disposition, for the King's motto was "Peace with all men." The Earl of Oxford was shortly after informed by the King's Serjeant that he was fined fifteen hundred marks for his violation of the law—an expensive souvenir of his royal guest's appreciation of hospitality and the feelings of a gentleman.

Edward Hall states that Oxford made a very grand display on the occasion of Prince Arthur's marriage, and "run himself extremely in debt by the nature of his loyalty to the Tudor family.* Hall gives as an instance of the

* Bacon's Life of Henry VII., Hall's Chronicle, Grafton, Rapin, Echard, and Miss Strickland's Queens of England present different views of the character of Henry, agreeing, however, as to general facts.

King's generosity that he "lent merchants large sums of money, without interest, in order to encourage trade in London." Those merchants must have been especial favourites, and their guarantee as faultless as the return was hopeful. Yet the "fair-haired" Henry Tudor had some merits as a statesman and a King. In private life his character appears at times amiable and gentle. Notwithstanding the statements of some contemporaries and later writers, such as Polydore Vergil, Edward Hall, and Francis Bacon, Henry was generally a kind and affectionate husband. The researches of Miss Strickland are most favourable to his memory. The nearer the private lives of Henry and Elizabeth are examined the more proofs are exhibited of domestic happiness than usually falls to the lot of royalty. Many pleasing incidents are recorded.

"Henry," writes Mr. Hepworth Dixon, was as fond of money as Fernando. Poor and embarrassed in his early youth, he set a value on gold beyond its natural worth. He, too, could feed a hunger of the age with coin. He liked to count his pieces, weigh his plate, and note the value of his gold cups and rings. He learned to prize the cup beyond the wine . . . . . Fernando looked no higher than his personal gain; a gain that he could see and touch; while Henry though he looked to have his groat in either meal or malt, could take some part of his return in things unseen. . . . . Henry was sometimes poetic on art, and his wealth was lavished with an eye for beauty rather than for pomp and show. He loved to build a house, to plant a field, to dress a garden neatly, or to decorate a church with everything lovely. Returning from the Council Chamber, he was fond of having a chat with monk or priest, as he

sauntered along. His favourite monks were mostly artists of a high order. Abbot Islip copied missals for the Queen, with bordering entwined through "painted ferns and happy marriages of leaves and flowers." Sir Reginald Bray was drawing plans for the King's new chapel in the Abbey; priests who were poets enjoyed the King's pension, and his friendship. André held the office of Royal Laureate and historiographer; and the learned Carmeliano, who had now become a denizen, was the King's Latin Secretary.* At home and abroad Henry was liberal in performing good offices for the poor and the unfortunate. He set apart a portion of his income to be styled "the ransom money of the Cross," which was spent annually in ransoming Christian captives from various Moslem ports, particularly young maidens, who were bought and sold for the slave market.

Ferdinand was fond of war for war's own pleasure, or as a Spanish general bluntly said, for treasure. Henry Tudor was not willing to draw the sword until some just cause or the national honour compelled him to do so. No cause less pressing than danger to his own crown and life could induce Henry to face the miseries of actual war. Sancho de Londöno summed up Henry's character in these words:—"He is a man of peace." To our seventh Harry the name of a peacemaker seemed to be a "nobler heritage than that of either Pope or Emperor." Yet no one could doubt his valour at a fitting time, or his devotion to the See of Rome. He was the last English King who expressed a desire to become a Crusader. A crusade to the Holy Land was his

* History of Two Queens, vol. i.

darling object, he told the learned Islip that he was "long thinking of such a mission." He consulted such prelates as Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, and William Warham, then Bishop of London. Foxe would do anything to promote the interests of the Church, yet he saw the difficulty of one European Power taking up the question. Warham had a more statesmanlike view of the matter. He considered that "extensive reforms were required at home, and they ought to proceed in that direction before they went to the Holy Land."* The King's "long-cherished" idea was postponed.† Ayala, in a conversation with the Spanish King, assured his master that "King Henry had little, if any, of the Englishman in his feelings; but he understood the character of the people well." Henry was spare and sallow, with rather a Spanish face; Ferdinand, who was sleek and rosy, had a face like a well-fed Briton—jolly and pleasant-looking—at least till the politician overcame the man." "In the higher grades of character," observes Mr. Dixon, "no two men could be more opposite than Henry and Ferdinand. Beside Ferdinand, Henry was a child of Nature—a child of grace and goodness." In another chapter I shall return to the history of Ferdinand.

Henry Tudor seems to have long cherished a remembrance of Dr. Fisher's celebrated sermon at Old St. Paul's, when, in the Royal presence, he asked in his broadest Yorkshire accent, "What is Charity?" Two years before his death, and while the vigour of his mind and body were

* Warham and Fisher's Correspondence concerning the Holy Land.
† MSS. Memorials of Abbot Islip.

unimpaired, the King sent missioners of mercy into gaol and compter to release those debtors who were confined for sums ranging from 2*s*. to 40*s*. The only proviso was, that the recipients should be of reputable character, but persons strikingly, yet simply, described as "unlucky people"—beings mostly of little wordly judgment, "who stumbled in the fight of life," and were then seized by the Shylocks of the day, and cast into a dungeon to be worried by rats, or made skeletons by prison food, as the penalty of poverty. But in those times there were benevolent people who ransomed debtors, and the King was the first of that class.* He set a crowd of captives free. Some time before his death he signed a general pardon for a number of criminals —an unusual action for an English King. He nearly emptied the gaols in every county of the kingdom—a fact which made a marked impression on the lower classes, and the traditions of the times state that "some of the pardoned highwaymen became honest and good subjects."

In his will Henry gave instructions for an inquiry to be made into the conduct of the tax-gatherers, who had plundered the people for years "in the name of the King"; and those who were aggrieved were to receive restitution. A few weeks before his death he made an impressive statement to his *then* apparently promising son: "My boy,"

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* The "three first" of our English Georges were famous for releasing poor debtors at Christmas, and giving pecuniary aid to those who were not released. George I. expended 3600*l*. on poor debtors the first Christmas he was in England. George III. had a peculiar sympathy for those who were immured for debt in Dublin, where he repeatedly sent money for their relief. On the occasion of the jubilee for George III. having completed the fiftieth year of his reign, his Majesty sent 1000*l*. to relieve the poorer class of debtors in Dublin.

said he, "be a Soldier of the Cross, oppose the enemies of God, sustain the Church and her afflicted Chief, and struggle to liberate the tomb of Christ." And, again, in emphatic words, he added, "Be true to the Pope."* At a subsequent period the son discussed the merits of the question to which he was pledged to his dying father, but went no farther. Indeed, it is doubtful if the "will" of the seventh Henry was fairly carried out—even for a time. The "corporeal works of mercy" were uppermost in the King's mind, and he made provision for them. He bequeathed ten thousand marks to sustain his great hospital of the Savoy, and two thousand marks in land were also set apart for the same purpose. To tend the sick, to feed the hungry, to succour the houseless mother and her orphans, to clothe the naked, to protect female chastity from the designs of the licentious, to lodge the poor, the weak, and the infirm of years, and to bury the dead, were good works that were always uppermost in the mind of Henry, and in this direction he desired by his last testament that a large portion of his wealth should be disposed of. "Not waiting for the last sad hours of life, when virtue mostly comes too late," he gave himself time for grace, and two years before his death commenced the "good work."† The country was prosperous, the King was at peace with foreign States, and desired to cultivate a good feeling with all his subjects; to "make restitution and seek forgiveness" was his earnest desire for the last two years of his life. This Prince of cold and steadfast feeling, who had closed the reign of civil

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* Life of Henry VII., Bishop Fisher's Letter to the Countess of Richmond, "concerning the King's love for the Church."

† Lord Bacon's Life of Henry VI .; Dixon's History of Two Queens, vol. ii.

warfare; who had united the "White and the Red Roses;" who had sought to reconcile Ireland to the English connection, but failed;* who had raised the condition of the masses from a servile dependence upon the lords of the soil; who caused religion to be honoured and reverenced, and by his own example endeavoured to lead the people to paths of virtue, was now approaching his end. He had great and holy aspirations; he wished to live awhile longer in order to carry out his views. Again, he thought of his grand scheme of a pilgrim army to the Holy Land. He seemed in his later years impressed with a feeling which he deemed to admonish his following the chivalrous example of Richard Plantagenet and the Knights of the Cross; but his health was now broken, his spirits sinking; and there was too, no Peter the Hermit to awake the memory of other days amongst the masses whom commerce, trade, and agriculture had wedded to less romantic pursuits, and cooled the adventurous ardour which had fired their crusading ancestors. Seeing, however, the impossibility of achieving his pious aspirations, the King ceased to speak on the subject. His last illness was borne with edifying resignation, and after many hours of agony he expired. When the sad and solemn honours offered to the dead were discharged, the remains of the victor of Bosworth Field were carried in public procession to the magnificent chapel which

* According to the Irish State Papers of 1509, the power of the English in that country was not much regarded under the first of the Tudors. The old system of governing by clans had revived, and was in full force throughout a large portion of the land; and although it was not conducive to prosperity or civilization, the natives preferred it, with that jealous feeling with which they always looked on the "suggestions of the stranger." Perhaps they were right.

he had erected, to use his own words, "to the honour and the glory of God," and laid beside the coffin of that most lovable of wives, and best of Queens—the royal lady who had shared the honours and the glory of his reign—of her whom, notwithstanding long-current statements to the reverse, he had loved in life, and mourned in death. Such was the father of our Eighth Henry. One dark cloud rests above the memory of the Seventh Henry—his treatment of the Infanta, which, when taken in connection with his domestic life, appears almost incredible; but the confidential letters, and other documents so long concealed in the archives of Simancas, Barcelona, and London, *now* remove all doubts, and place before posterity the motives and actions of all concerned in the unhappy Spanish marriage, which, in its ultimate results, was fraught with so many calamities.

A few months subsequent to the death of Henry VII. the last of the long-delayed dowry of the Infanta was paid by Ferdinand to his "good brother of England." The Spanish historians, Yurita and Muriana, throw some light upon the inner life of the Infanta during her residence at Croydon and Durham House. According to those writers, the Princess acted with firmness and prudence under the most perplexing difficulties. The statements put forward by several English historians as to the Infanta's domestic relations, and her marriage settlements, are most incorrect.

Don Pedro de Ayala, who was personally acquainted with Henry for a number of years, states that the King possessed many of the qualifications which constitute greatness, but his love of money stifled an otherwise noble nature. A high authority affirms that in all the virtues which exalt the man, in temperance, moderation, self-

control, and political sagacity, the Seventh Henry was immensely superior to his successor."*

Notwithstanding his parsimony, the Court of Henry was as expensive as that of Edward the Fourth; but what was boisterous hilarity under the gallant Edward became "stiff form and ceremony" at the Court of Henry; yet Henry of Richmond could be very agreeable with his guests, and, "laying aside the King" for an hour or so, he delighted to converse on the old rural customs and pastimes of England. Anecdotes of the chase were always agreeable to King Henry, who was an expert horseman.

Henry was a far better politician than his predecessor, Richard the Third, who imagined he could win over or corrupt the middle and lower classes by profuse liberality, in bestowing upon them other people's property. In the Record Office is deposited a list of the grants of land made by Richard the Third to his political retainers. This record of Richard's weakness and dishonesty fills 108 folio pages. Richard Plantagenet acted the part of King Lear, and, like him, was forsaken. The contrast between Henry VII. and Richard was remarkable. The former valued the peace of Europe far more than any conquest; he abhorred shedding blood, bowed with reverence to the religious institutions of Christendom, and was a leal son of the see of St. Peter. Richard affected respect for religion, but it is needless to record that, where his worldly interests were concerned, he never felt compunction either as to the plunder of the people or the shedding of blood. His chivalry, as represented by some writers, I cannot

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. iv.

discover, and his abilities have likewise been much overrated. To the unprejudiced mind his talents were a power of adaptation rendered facile by hypocrisy—his chivalry, the brute courage of a ferocious combatant—at his best a ruthless and relentless soldier. Henry might have been an arbitrary and despotic monarch if he had found ministers willing to undertake the responsibility of accounting for his actions. But he was happily controlled on many occasions by such churchmen as Richard Foxe, William Warham, and John Fisher. In the days of the Plantagenets—and the Tudors especially—measures of State depended to so great an extent on the personal views of the monarchs that it is impossible to understand their history without being acquainted with the State Papers of the times—documents which were never intended to be seen by any one but the King and his confidential minister. For instance, the State Papers deposited in London, Simancas, and Barcelona, concerning Henry VII.'s secret policy and negotiations differ very much from the statements published by English historians. In the absence of State Papers it is impossible to do justice to the memory of either a monarch or his minister, especially in those times of arbitrary rule, where, in too many instances, the minister became the mere creature of the monarch, and was held responsible for the actions of the former in the eyes of the people, who, in their slavish loyalty, could not believe the King to do wrong. The people of England were the special slaves of the Tudor dynasty, which, for insolence, dishonesty, and despotic rule, had no analogy on the long roll of England's monarchs.

Ferdinand's diplomatic agents in London were, with few

exceptions, men of disrepute. Gambling, the pristine mania of too great a portion of the Spanish race, was introduced by the grandees who accompanied the Infanta to circles of rank in England, and with fatal consequences to many. The noted De Puebla was a lawyer who had many occupations in London, by no means reputable, and having besides the character of being a merciless usurer, as well as personally a miser. These bad qualities, it has been stated, recommended him to the notice of King Henry, who, however, may have possessed no knowledge of his demerits. De Puebla figures prominently in all the secret intrigues—foreign or domestic—of Henry's reign. Don Pedro de Ayala ranked high among the diplomatic body of those times. A striking contrast existed between Don Pedro and De Puebla; yet the influence of the Don over De Puebla was immense. "In the presence of Don Pedro," remarked De Puebla, "I am unable to transact any business, and become stupefied, or in a strange condition of mind. No one likes me; Don Pedro is loved by all." "And why?"

De Puebla had a belief that the Scotch were a very innocent people, and might be easily duped; but when he visited the "hardy islanders," he discovered that he was very much mistaken; and declared that they were "extremely cunning, and knew how to take care of their bit of money far better than any people he had ever known." Such was the opinion of a very excellent judge of human nature.

In a letter to Queen Isabel, De Puebla describes "the English character as very changeable;" "but when they solemnly pledge themselves to any particular course of action, they keep their word and are reliable."*

* De Puebla's Despatches to Queen Isabel.

The Infanta always considered De Puebla as her enemy. In one letter the Princess describes him as "a heartless intriguing rogue." In another despatch to her father she continues to complain. "I entreat your Highness to do me the great favour of withdrawing this doctor (De Puebla); he does not honestly consider and guard the interests of his princely master and noble country. He feels no interest in any one except the English King and himself. He lends out money at the same rate as a Barcelona Jew. He is very unkind to me. What course am I to adopt?*

Spanish merchants had no faith in De Puebla; they styled him the agent of King Henry's exchequer. He "fleeced," such was the term used, "every commercial man from Spain who had recourse to him for advice." On one occasion the King asked some of his courtiers how it was that De Puebla came so regularly to the Palace at dinner hour. They replied, "to enjoy your Highness's 'belly cheer' without paying for it." When the royal servants saw De Puebla coming towards the palace gates, they exclaimed—"Here comes the Spanish doctor a-begging for a dinner." At other times, this contemptible representative of Ferdinand and Isabel, visited the monasteries to procure dinner; when he paid for a meal it was never more than 2*d.*, and he "supplicated" for a goblet of wine. One of the Privy Council assured a Spanish prior that it would fill many pages to recount his strange and discreditable actions. In fact the diplomatic profession was disgraced by him. Still he was firmly rooted to his office. His salary was left unpaid for years, and he made up for it by bribes, extor-

* Spanish Correspondence (MS.); Wood's Royal Letters.

tions, and usury. Ferdinand and Isabel despised him; he was merely regarded by his royal master as an instrument to be flung away when no longer able to carry out "dishonourable schemes." Isabel censured him to the King and the Council of England, whilst at the same time she wrote letters "full of sympathy to the decrepid little man." The Queen at other times threatened him; then again, her Highness assures him that if he attended to all her secret despatches, she would confer upon him the honours he aspired to. At the same period the Queen was plotting his destruction. King Henry offered him a bishopric, provided arrangements were made for his appointment by the Court of Rome. As a matter of course, the Church rejected him. Next the King proposed a wealthy marriage for him, but as it was necessary to procure the consent of Queen Isabel, this match fell through, her Highness exclaiming—"It is monstrous to hear of an old cripple looking for a young wife." From the palace down to the humblest habitation in London, Dr. De Puebla was a topic for conversation and mirth. Abbot Islip describes him as the "most notorious of *the* notorious characters of London." De Puebla remained in his official position down to the death of his infatuated friend, Henry VII., whom he only survived a few weeks, leaving his relatives to quarrel over the ill-gotten treasure of a miser and a heartless usurer.

Dr. De Puebla had one redeeming quality in the eyes of Ferdinand: he cordially detested France, and the policy of its rulers.*

* Bergenroth's Simancas, and the Domestic State Papers of Henry VII.'s reign.

Miguel Penez Almazan was the contemporary of Don Pedro De Ayala. He was the confidential secretary of Ferdinand, and the most able man then connected with the Government of Spain. The State Papers drawn up by this minister are written with elegance, vigour, and grace. He stood high in the estimation of Ferdinand and Isabel, who raised him to the rank of a Spanish grandee; and right well did he bear himself in that chivalrous station—faithful to his religion, his country, and his King.

The maxim laid down by Ferdinand for his ambassadors was to deceive the English King. "Tell my good brother of England anything but what I intend to do. Be sure to say how much I love and regard him."* In Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, the French and Spanish ambassadors found a far-seeing, astute man whom it was very difficult to deceive.

Popular opinion in London at this epoch was in favour of Don Pedro de Ayala. He was a man of agreeable manners, genial, and light-hearted. He made friends wherever he went, and dispensed hospitality to his English friends on a large scale. The King entertained a high opinion of his abilities and business habits. He did much to conciliate parties and remove the prejudices that prevailed against foreigners. When the Infanta's journey to England was arranged, Henry VII. asked as a special favour from King Ferdinand that Don Pedro might remain in this country, for there was no one so well calculated as he to make the Princess Catalina feel less a stranger in her new home than would

* The Despatches of the Spanish Embassy; Bergenroth's State Papers.

this most worthy Spanish gentleman.* Don Pedro had been once ambassador to the King of Scots, who entertained an extraordinary friendship for him, and sought his advice upon all public questions of importance. Don Pedro describes James the Fourth as very devout. "He never ate meat on Wednesday, Friday, or Saturday. He would not for any consideration mount horseback on Sunday, not even to go to Mass." Before transacting any business he heard two Masses. In the smallest matters, and even when indulging in a joke, he always spoke the truth. He was very proud of his veracity, and often reprehended the custom which had then become usual to many kings, of swearing to their treaties. The "royal word, he said, ought to be a sufficient guarantee of good faith. Although kindly and humane in disposition, he was a severe judge. He sat in public to dispense justice, and did so with great solemnity."

In a letter dated July, 1498, from Don Pedro de Ayala to Queen Isabel, that accomplished diplomatist presents his royal mistress with a picture of King James, fashioned thus :—

"The King of Scotland is of middle height, his features are handsome; he never cuts his hair or his beard, and it becomes him well. He expressed himself gracefully in Latin, French, German, Flemish, Italian, and Spanish. His pronunciation of Spanish was clearer than that of other foreigners. In addition to his own, and the above-named languages, he speaks that of the 'Savages' (Highlanders) who live on the distant mountains and islands. The books which King James reads most are the Bible, and books of

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers.

devotion and prayer. He also studies the old Latin and French chronicles." *

"The Scotch," writes Don Pedro, "were often considered in Spain to be handsomer than the English. The women of qualitie were free in their manners, very beautiful, and courteous to strangers; and though appearances are against them a little, they are as virtuous as the women of any other clime that I am acquainted with, or heard anything of. They dress better than the English women, and the national head-gear is especially becoming. . . . The Scotch ladies reign absolute mistresses in their houses, and the men in all domestic matters yield a chivalrous obedience to them. French education is very prevalent amongst the upper classes. . . . The hospitality to foreigners is unbounded, and the ladies are remarkable for the attention they pay to their guests. . . . Don Pedro continues:—

"The people live well, having plenty of beef, mutton, and fowl, and abundance of fish. The humbler classes, the women especially, are all of a religious turn of mind. Pretty, modest, retiring, and excellent wives, they are very good-natured to travellers or poor pilgrims, many of whom visit the ancient shrines of Scotland. Altogether, I found the Scotch to be a very agreeable, and I must add, an amiable people."

Such was Scotland towards the close of the fifteenth century—a period described by modern writers as one of barbarism, ignorance, immorality, and superstition.

Don Pedro de Ayala was an independent Spanish gentleman, and seems to have been the most honourable man con-

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers.

nected with the diplomatic missions of Spain. He was not in priest's orders, as alleged by some writers. His early history was a sad and romantic story in connection with the Donna Violante de Casagnino, who was killed by a wolf. The lady in question, who was very beautiful, was the authoress of a most pathetic sonnet, "My Only Sister."

The grandmother of Henry VIII. was a remarkable woman. Margaret, Countess of Richmond, was the most commanding figure in the Court of Henry VII.* Tall, stern, and proud, yet humble and condescending to the poor or the unfortunate, she moved about the palaces like a controller; every one who had a grievance went to the King's mother with their tale, because they were well aware that the cold-hearted Prince paid much attention to any petition presented by his parent. The Lady Margaret was an eminent scholar, and the patroness and friend of scholars. To her Dr. Fisher owed his first promotion in the Church; and that eminent and holy prelate was her principal chaplain and confessor for years. She was also the friend of Caxton; Pynson, another printer, "arranged in type" several little religious books which the good Countess translated from the French. One of the chief labours of her life was to ameliorate the condition of the peasant class; she visited the humblest home, and saw what might be the requirements of its inmates; she admonished bad husbands, and reclaimed many by her kindly sayings. Learning, piety, and charity, were the life-long objects of her solicitude. She endowed

* This most excellent lady was daughter and heiress of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset—a very illustrious extraction. She was married three times, Lord Stanley being her third husband.

professorships at Cambridge and Oxford. At the former the Margaret Professorship was called after the Countess. Her name was long cherished on the Isis and the Cam. Is there any remembrance of her benevolence nowadays at those schools of learning? I fear not.

The Countess of Richmond was a widow and a mother at fourteen years of age, with "a pretty blue-eyed boy of five months old, whom she had to rear and protect amidst the horrors of a civil war."* As a daughter, a wife, a mother, a citizen, the Countess of Richmond discharged her duties conscientiously, and won the esteem and love of all classes in the State. She lived to see her grandson Henry, and Katharine of Arragon, crowned at Westminster Abbey. Her grandson entertained, or affected to entertain, a feeling of respect and veneration for her memory. Her great worth, however, can best be understood from the funeral oration pronounced over her remains by Bishop Fisher. In every town and village—in the far-off corners of England and Wales—the people regretted their noble benefactress. The church and abbey bells tolled for six days. Every church and chapel was draped in mourning, and the Mass for the dead was attended by multitudes of people.†

A Spanish friar, the Prior of Santa Cruz, states that the Countess of Richmond was "an oppressor of her daughter-in-law, Queen Elizabeth." The Prior further begs of Ferdinand and Isabel to "write a letter occasionally for charity's

* Edward Hall's Chronicle; Bacon's Life of Henry VII.; Sir Harris Nicolas' Royal Fragments; Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. ii.; History of Two Queens.

† Amongst the Harleian MSS. are also some interesting papers on the domestic life of this good lady.

sake to the poor English Queen."* It is true that the Countess of Richmond was a cold, stern woman in her own family circle, and she ruled the palace of her son; and might have been unfit to be a companion for her young and lively daughter-in-law. Madame Cabrera does not believe the Prior's gossip, for she was connected with the English Court at the time of which he speaks, and bears testimony to the good feeling which always existed between the Countess and her daughter-in-law, Queen Elizabeth.

Here I take leave of the "White and the Red Rose."

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers, vol. iv.

CHAPTER VII.

ACCESSION OF HENRY VIII.

The young King was not of age for two months after his father's death. The Countess of Richmond was appointed to the office of Regent during the brief minority of her grandson. This good and wise lady had chosen a council composed of discreet and experienced men, some of whom were in the councils of her late son. William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, was again chosen Lord Chancellor; two other clerics held high offices; but the greatest man connected with the new Government was Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, popularly known as the "great earl." He was beyond sixty years of age, and rendered vast service in the former reign. He might be styled "the personal friend" of the Tudor family, "sincere and true to the death."* No English noble, knight, or squire of that period was so well known and esteemed at every Court in Europe as the Earl of Surrey. He was brave, chivalrous, prudent, wise, and honourable. The friendship he entertained for the late King and Queen was extended to the youthful Henry and his bride-elect. Lord Surrey had sixteen children—ten sons and six daughters—nearly all of whom married into rich and noble families. His daughter Elizabeth, a young lady of exquisite loveliness,

* This nobleman received his title from Richard III. His father was killed at Bosworth Field.

became the mother of a future Queen of England who bequeathed a legacy of misfortune to the land. Of the opposition party—for there was always an opposing element in the State, whilst strictly loyal and conservative—were the Staffords, the Courtneys, the Poles, the Percys, the Radclyffes, the Talbots, the Greys, and many other heads of baronial houses. Edward, the third Duke of Buckingham, Master of Thornbury, was the devoted friend of Katharine of Arragon, whose future appeared doubtful at this critical juncture. But whilst the King's council were debating upon the question of the royal marriage, and what steps should be taken to "confirm or annul" the betrothal of Henry and the Infanta, the news was suddenly announced to them that the King and the Princess had gone early on a June morning to the chapel of the Observant Fathers at Greenwich, and "had a private marriage," and were "determined, with God's assistance, to abide by that contract to the death."* There was no entry in any book, or record of the marriage; nor was any notable of the Court or Government present. It is supposed that Father Forrest performed the marriage ceremony. If he did, then he brought the secret with him to the stake where he was subsequently roasted alive. It is worthy of remark that, amongst the records of the Observant Fathers of Greenwich, still extant, there is not one line entered respecting the marriage. Henry never denied the marriage, but he gave no explanation as to who was present. Katharine seemed to have been as silent on the subject as her husband. M. Passi, a French writer, states that the marriage

* Monday, June 11, 1509.

was performed by Father Peto; but there is evidence to prove that Peto was not at Greenwich at that time. Judging from the life-long friendship Katharine entertained for Forrest, and the intensified hatred of Henry for him during the divorce controversy, lead me to believe that he performed the marriage ceremony between the young King and the Infanta. It is stated by a Portuguese cleric, named Casanigo, that the marriage was performed by Father Diego, the Queen's Spanish confessor, and that Forrest was present. Forrest, however, never revealed the secret as to whether he was a witness or otherwise. M. Passi alleges that there were two ladies present—the one a Spaniard, the other an English countess; perhaps the Countess of Surrey, who was Katharine's first personal friend in England. One of her Spanish ladies became the wife of Lord Willoughby, and settled in England. This lady continued to be Katharine's friend to the last moment of her existence.

There was a precedent for such a marriage in the secret union of Edward the Fourth and Elizabeth Woodville, who were married "on a bright May morning" in a little private chapel near Grafton. There were only three persons present; and the marriage was kept a secret from the world for six weeks. Lingard makes no mention of the clandestine marriage of Henry and Katharine, but states that, "with the unanimous assent of the council, the young King and the Princess were publicly married by Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury."* It is certain, however, that the archbishop and the council were dissatisfied with the

* Lingard, vol. iv. p. 345.

King's conduct; but the fact of the private marriage having taken place left them no alternative, and they accordingly agreed to a public ceremony. The particulars concerning the unfortunate marriage in Greenwich chapel still remains a mystery, for some members of the Camden Society to investigate.

Although the venerable Countess of Richmond was a party to the dispensation obtained from Pope Julian, and agreed to the betrothal of her grandson to the Infanta, yet she was shocked at the conduct of the royal couple, and highly censured the Observant Fathers for this clandestine marriage being performed in their chapel. The friars protested their ignorance of what occurred; and Archbishop Warham almost prophesied the future. The government were indignant at the King's want of courtesy towards them, and the "disrespect he offered to the kingly office by a clandestine marriage." Judging by his movements at the time, the young King did not seem to care what his council thought, and he showed an evident disposition to do as he pleased. For some time, however, his bride had an immense influence over him. Several days elapsed before the marriage was made public. Grand and costly preparations preceded the coronation of the King and Queen, which was ushered in by a triumphal procession to the city. The royal treasury was filled with wealth—gold, silver, and jewels. There appeared to be a "bright future" before the King and Queen, but Archbishop Warham held a different opinion. Everywhere Henry and Katharine went a multitude of people assembled to give expression to their admiration and loyalty.

At this time Henry was most condescending in his intercourse with the people, speaking to them in a kindly,

frank manner. "Here is the Queen—how do you all like her?" were his words to a crowd of country folk at Blackheath. "And," he continued, "oh! we love one another immensely." Katharine forgot the sad sojourn at Ludlow, and her embarrassments at Durham House, and, in a moment of enthusiasm, confessed to her faithful friend, Lady Willoughby, that she "loved for the first time." Her love for her handsome young husband was mingled with a devotion that excited the admiration of the courtiers. The bride and bridegroom resided for some time at Greenwich; "one day paddling on the bright waters with maidens and minstrels, the next masquerading with knights and ladyes faire through the summer woods."

A few weeks subsequent to the marriage of Henry and Katharine, the young King wrote to his father-in-law (Ferdinand),* stating that he was amusing himself in jousting, hunting, birding, and other innocent pastimes; and, again, visiting different parts of the kingdom, but never on that account neglecting the affairs of State. Luis Caroz entertained a different opinion. He stated that the "new King" attended most assiduously to his amusements, but neglected his duties as a King. Nor does that seem to have been the private opinion of this observant Spanish minister. The Bishops of Winchester and Durham had frequently complained that their Sovereign was entirely absorbed by his amusements. They suggested to Caroz that King Ferdinand should remind Henry of his duties as a monarch. King Henry at this period looked in a

* July 17, 1509; printed in the Bergenroth State Papers (England and Spain), vol. ii.

different way on public business. He only saw the bright and easy side attached to his high position. Ceremonies of State audiences given to foreign ambassadors, and living in a splendid style, seemed to him all that a King had to do. That he did not neglect these lighter duties we have sufficient evidence from the Spanish correspondence. He did even more; he was tolerably well informed with respect to the outlines of public affairs. Dr. de Puebla, the most devoted Spanish admirer of Henry VII., took occasion to denounce the corruption of the English Privy Council; this venality steadily increased in the reign of Henry VIII. Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, and Warham, the Chancellor, were considered the only men who were above betraying the secrets of the Council to foreign or hostile Powers. On one occasion the King advised the Spanish to ambassador speak on State secrets to no one but the Bishop of Winchester. The phrase with which Henry coupled his advice shows that he could not vouch for the honesty of even this his most faithful servant. "His name is Foxe," the young King added, "and people think that *a fox* he is."* A despatch of Badoer, the Venetian ambassador, contains an account of a mission to Henry VIII. in the August of 1509, which is highly illustrative of the King's proud, imperious temper, and of the jealousy with which from the first he regarded his French rivals. "He takes fire at a phrase in the oration of the ambassador Antoine Duprat, Abbé de Fécamp, which implies that Henry himself had, in the first instance, expressed a desire to continue amicable relations." He fiercely asks which of

* Bergenroth's State Papers (England and Spain), vol. ii.

his servants has dared to compromise him by such language; demands the immediate payment of what he calls his tribute, and treats the envoy during the remainder of his visit with marked disrespect.* The "Tudor Lamb" was just eighteen years and two months old at this period.

During the reign of Henry VII. Katharine had undergone humiliation and hardship; she was neglected by her father-in-law, forgotten by her parents, slighted by the nobles, and treated with injustice by the Council. Had Katharine not loved her young husband, success alone would have been a great satisfaction to her feelings; but there is no doubt that she loved Henry with an enthusiasm and a devotion seldom to be found amongst royal lovers; and it is certain that she was beloved by him *at that time.* In writing to her father, Katharine says: "I thank God for having such a husband as I have." King Ferdinand and Henry seemed never to be tired of expressions of paternal affection on the one side, and filial obedience on the other. Ferdinand knew full well how to speak with great warmth on matrimonial love. "A good marriage," he writes to his daughter, "is not only a good thing in itself, but the source of all other kinds of happiness. God shows His favour to good husbands and wives."†

The people of England and Spain participated in the general rejoicing for the marriage. Henry wrote to his father-in-law to assure the Spanish people that all Englishmen, women, and even children, "dearly loved his Spanish bride."‡ These scenes were not destined to be of long duration.

* Rawdon Brown's Venetian State Papers, vol. i.

† Bergenroth's State Papers of England and Spain, vol. ii.

‡ Bergenroth's State Papers, vol. ii.

The picturesque pages of Mr. Hepworth Dixon on this epoch are very pleasant reading. The following is his lively picture of the "Royal Honeymoon" at Greenwich :—

"A young and jovial Court was now formed, in which the morning sport was followed by the evening. A joust, a masque, a feast, a Maying, varied the delights of every week. The married lovers went a-nutting in the woods. They clomb the hill; they ran into the glade; they dangled in their wherries on the sparkling stream; they ran about in search of sights. One night the young King put on the dress of his own yeomen of the guard, and with a halbert on his shoulder, marched to the King's Head, in Cheape; and on St. Peter's Eve he brought his Consort to that famous inn, to see the city watch go past. One day they held a wrestling-match; another day they cast the lance and drew the bow —two sports in which the King excelled. They dressed a company of gentlemen in green, and played the merry game of Robin Hood. The young King was tipsy with his joy, and his pretty Spanish bride poured her warm and earnest love on him like sunshine on her own Southern plains. 'My love for Katharine is so great,' wrote Henry, 'that if I were not married to her, I would not exchange her for any other woman in the world.' And thus, beside the sparkling river and beneath the leafy woods, these married lovers spent the second portion of their honeymoon.

"All eyes were bent on them in hope. The King and Queen had taken every heart by storm. By their romantic union they had broken through a formal rule, and everybody who has not to answer for the breach is glad when Princes break through formal rules. They had removed a weight from every back. . . . . A reign of peace was opening out, and trade seemed likely to increase. All parties and pretenders vanished. York and Lancaster were ceasing to be factious names. . . . . Prince Arthur's widow was King Henry's bride. No priest, no lawyer challenged her to prove her right. If any one was in the wrong it was the Pontiff, and the people were too Catholic in feeling to imagine that a Pope could be to blame. Looking on the youthful monarch and his Queen,

Englishmen threw the past, with all its fears, behind them, and, in ignorance of coming tempests, hailed the morrow as a portal of the golden age."*

The reader must remember that Archbishop Warham in the reign of Henry VII. strongly protested against the projected marriage, and his objections were endorsed by some of the most eminent English casuists of the time. Yet all went well for twenty years.

The citizens of London were determined upon making a marvellous display at the coronation procession. Cornhill may be said to have been enveloped in cloth of gold, and the streets were lined at each side by children dressed in holiday attire; the windows were filled with the wives and daughters of the wealthy burghers, displaying the riches of the merchant princes in the gorgeousness of their wardrobes; the roofs of the houses were occupied by musicians and singers. From Cornhill and Old Change, young maidens, habited in snowy white, and bearing in their hands palms of blanched wax, were ranged along the route extending towards Westminster. These damsels were formed in ranks by friars wearing their various coloured habits and collars, who, from silver censers, emitted a cloud of incense upon the Queen's procession as it glided along in slow and solemn pace. Anthems and hymns were sung by young virgins along the line, and, when they ceased at intervals, the refrain was taken up by the outside populace, whose cheers stirred all the echoes of the old city, and were repeated with a will by the onlookers from window and housetop. Beyond all pageants previously devised for

* History of Two Queens, vol. ii. pp. 327-8.

royalty, the scenes at the coronation procession of Queen Katharine excited sentiments "the most ideal." Lord Herbert and other historians give a fervid description of the intellectual gifts and personal charms of Katharine at the time of her marriage with Henry. The Queen and her ladies were objects of general admiration. She was attired as a bride in white embroidered satin; her hair, which was very beautiful, hung at length down her back almost to her feet; she wore on her head a coronal set with precious stones. Immediately before the royal chariot rode twenty-four trumpeters dressed in crimson velvet coats. At the Exchange one hundred of the "fairest virgins," attired in white, flung flowers beneath the bride's feet, and music, accompanied by the acclamations of a multitude of happy people, was to be heard at every point along the procession. The Queen was seated in a litter of white cloth of gold, borne by four white horses with magnificent appointments. Then followed the young maidens of the nobility and other notables drawn in richly-ornamented vehicles styled "whirlicotes."

The day closed with a general feasting in every circle, and, as usual, the convents and abbeys gave an extra quantity of good cheer to the poor.

The popularity of Henry's first government, his undisputed title to the throne, his extensive authority, his large treasures, the general prosperity and comfort of the people, who were contented, moral, and religious, made the administration of the country easy of management; the condition of foreign affairs was no less happy and desirable; the alliance and friendship of the young English King being courted by the European Powers, added to the general good

feeling. One of the first public actions of Henry on attaining power was the release of the prisoners named in his father's will. The case of Richard Empson and Edward Dudley for frauds on the public treasury, and cruelty to the people in the manner of collecting taxes, was specially excepted by the King's Council. Empson and Dudley were tried by a jury, and condemned to death, with, it is said, the approval of the country. Several historians have expressed sympathy with those men, stating that their "fate was one that deserved mercy." Sir Richard Empson was the son of a sieve-maker in Northamptonshire, and by his own abilities and astute conduct attracted the King's attention. He quickly won the favour of Henry VII.; he was created a knight, and soon after Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.* Edward Dudley was of an old family; he was also a man of considerable ability. Henry VII. had him sworn a member of the Privy Council when only twenty-four years of age. He was subsequently chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, where he displayed his talent in preserving order, and "looking after the King's interests." He was insolent and overbearing as a minister; and many persons made complaints to the Court, but their petitions never reached the King. The public discontent increased, until at last those unpopular officials were committed to the Fleet, amidst the rejoicing of the populace. Some Puritan writers claim Empson and Dudley as Reformers—Reformers long before that party had an existence in England! It is most unjust to link sectarian feeling with the proceedings of this period. Whilst a prisoner in the Tower,

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* Polydore Vergil's Chronicle.

between the time of his condemnation and that of his execution, Dudley wrote a small book, entitled "The Tree of the Commonwealth," which John Stowe describes as a "notable book." This work was dedicated to Henry VIII., but no one would dare present it; so the young King never heard of the book, and Dudley was hurried to the scaffold.* Edward Dudley was father of the noted Duke of Northumberland, of Edward and Mary's reign, and grandfather of the Earl of Leicester. Three generations of the Dudley family perished on the scaffold.

It is true that in those times many of the outlaws and murderers were ferocious creatures; but in proportion to the population, they were very few at the commencement of Henry's reign. The mode of punishing criminals introduced about this time (1510) was shocking. Of all the statutes then in existence, that of "denying the rites of religion to outlaws or great criminals," when sent to the scaffold, was the most barbarous and unchristian.†

In the second year of Henry's reign John Islip, the Abbot of Westminster, died. All ecclesiastical historians—excepting, of course, the Puritan or Hot-Gospel men—affirm that Islip was a divine of singular worth. He repaired and adorned several parts of the monastery, and aided Henry VII. in constructing his magnificent chapel. The genius of Islip took a turn in many opposite directions. Architects, musicians, and learned men from foreign parts were his guests. His hospitality was on a large scale. For many years he entertained on Christmas Day some two

* Stowe's Chronicle; Holinshed.

† Statutes of the Realm, 1510.

hundred poor children at dinner. This feast was an object of delight to the King and Queen Elizabeth. Henry VIII. affected grief for the loss of his father's venerable confessor; but the grief was of short duration.

At the death of Henry VII. England was only considered a third-rate Power in Europe, but his youthful successor made a quick change in the posture of affairs. In the pride of youth and manly beauty Henry towered in stature above all his contemporaries. He was distinguished by his commanding figure and the superior graces of his person, and in an age remarkable for feats of strength, and when bodily skill was held in the highest estimation, no one outdid him in the tournament. Man and horse fell before him, and lance after lance at the jousts held in tourney in honour of the Lady Margaret* and the Emperor Maximilian. He was an adept also in the great national weapon, for he drew the best bow of his age; and in the mastery of it was a match for the tallest archers of his guard. Taylour, then clerk of the Parliament, relates in his diary how he saw the King diverting himself with these archers in a garden, and as much surpassing them in their own weapon as he exceeded them in all the graces of his person. He spoke French, Italian, and Spanish. Of his proficiency in Latin, a specimen has been preserved among the letters of Erasmus. All suspicion is removed by the positive assertion of Erasmus that he had seen the original, and corrections in the Prince's own hand. He spoke French fluently, especially when he explained to Suffolk what the Lady Margaret of Savoy meant, when he rudely drew the ring

* The Countess of Richmond.

from her finger, and she called him a *larou.* Great was his skill in the practice and theory of music, and he was accustomed, according to Giustiniani's secretary, to hear the best composers of his own country, when the musicians of Italy were scarcely less eminent than its painters. He and his ambassador for ten days at Richmond "enjoyed hearing the King to play and sing, and seeing him dance and run at the ring by day, in all which exercises he acquitted himself in a manner that no other man could possibly perform."*

In a few years Henry's despotism touched almost every social custom: the dress of ladies of rank was sometimes minutely set down; the colours to be worn, dimensions, &c. The ladies' dresses were most showy, and the velvets, silks, and other materials of beautiful texture and highest cost. In the "expense-book" of Anna Boleyn, black silk is booked at eight shillings per yard, and Genoa velvet nine shillings—an enormous sum in those days. The cloth of gold, or tissue, was another gorgeous costume. This dress was reserved by the King for dukes and marquises; if of a purple colour, for the royal family, or some distinguished and notable prelate, such as an archbishop or cardinal. Silks and velvets were only to be worn by Commoners of a very exalted rank—for instance, such men as Sir Thomas More. No member of the House of Commons was permitted to wear embroidery. In fact, embroidery was forbidden to be worn by any gentleman under the rank of an earl. But for fantastic, showy, and expensive costume, the reign of the handsome Edward the Fourth was perhaps the most remarkable.

* Brewer's State Papers (Foreign and Domestic), 1515.

The expenses of the Court in the days of Henry VIII. were about 19,898*l.* per annum, said to be equal to 250,000*l.* of our present money. The Duke of Buckingham, the richest peer in the early part of Henry's reign, had 6,600*l.* a year; and the Archbishop of Canterbury about the same sum. The bishops of those times kept a number of retainers, and gave large entertainments to every class from the peer to the peasant. The income qualifying a county squire to be a magistrate was 30*l.* 12*s.* per annum. The salary of a parish priest was 8*l.* 12*s.**

In the early part of Henry's reign the adventurous runaway "'prentices" of London formed volunteer corps in the garrison of Calais, where they remained for years the terror of the surrounding country. French writers describe them as "wild beasts;" they were possessed of immense strength and courage;† they boasted of being able to kill six Frenchmen each, in a "tussle" with the Norman peasants.

Here I may offer a few observations on the military character of England and other European nations about the commencement of Henry's reign. King Ferdinand stated that the English soldiers who had come to Spain were strong, stout-hearted, stood firm in battle, and never thought of taking flight. A long time having elapsed during which England had had no wars, her troops "did not know how to behave in a campaign." The captains quarrelling with one another were unable to enforce rigid discipline amongst their men. The rank and file showed a marked dislike to perform such labours as were inevitably entailed on soldiers.

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* Statistics of Britain in 1512.

† Hall's Chronicle, p. 646.

They were intemperate and idle.* The arms which the English used were not in keeping with the progress which the art of war had made. The number of pikemen in the English army was too small. Pikemen were at that period employed in all European armies to give greater consistency to the infantry, and to enable them to resist the attacks of cavalry. Provided that the English troops were well armed, practised in the evolutions of regular warfare, well drilled and disciplined, King Ferdinand observed that the English would excel those of any other nation, and make their country honoured; prove a great security to England, and be an effective instrument of conquest.

As for the quarrelsome disposition of the captains, Ferdinand seems to have despaired of the possibility of mending it. They lost generally more time in disputes than the execution of the measure in view required. At all events, English troops were declared to be incapable of acting in concert with those of other nations.

English cavalry was also an insignificant arm. England depended for its supply on Flanders and Germany. Even horses were by no means abundant; and those which could be obtained were small, weak, and unfit to be made use of in a campaign.

French troops, and especially infantry, had not a high reputation at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the art of war, however, they were believed to be superior to the English. Spanish infantry were good, and rapidly progressing to that perfection which they attained ten or twelve years subsequent under the command of men like

* Bergenroth's State Papers, upon England and Spain, vol. ii.

the Marquis de Pescara and Antonio de Leyva. They were distinguished not only on the field of battle, but were also patient in enduring all kinds of hardship and privation. The French, notwithstanding their natural valour, were often very unfortunate in the field, especially when confronted by an English foe. At the battle of Creci the French King had nearly fifteen thousand Italian "mercenaries" amongst his troops. The English army on this occasion were sustained throughout the day by a large body of Germans, who, in the hour of victory, disgraced the military character by a wanton and barbarous butchery of defenceless and disarmed men.* The sense of military honour was then, perhaps, in no other army so strong as in that of Spain.

Whilst high mental culture is generally attributed to the Italians during the period under review, they were almost unanimously declared to have been effeminate and scarcely able to bear arms. That was a mistake. The Italians had good infantry, their sharpshooters were equalled only by the best Spanish arquebusiers; their light cavalry was excellent, and even the men-at-arms of Naples occupied an honourable position when compared with the men-at-arms of other nations. Irregular or badly disciplined Italian troops were absolutely worthless.

The two countries which far excelled all other nations with respect to military efficiency were Germany and Switzerland. German and Swiss troops differed in many particulars from one another. The Swiss, for instance,

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* The most interesting account of this battle, cr carnage, is to be found in Sir John Froissart's Chronicle, pp. 126-130.

were of little use in storming or defending fortified places, whilst the German lansquenets were as useful in a pitched battle as in the siege of a fortress. An Italian, Spanish, French, or English army was considered inefficient in a regular war against an army which contained a considerable number of Swiss or German troops, unless Swiss or German contingents were added to it. These auxiliaries were thought to be indispensable when a difficult retreat was to be covered; a camp to be pitched close to the front of the enemy, or a sudden attack to be repulsed. The German veterans generally broke through the ranks of the troops of other nations. Both the German and the Swiss were "mercenaries." It is difficult to decide which of the two were more at the disposal of purchasers; and both were guilty of scandalous actions, equally unworthy of the character of soldiers; but then they were "mercenaries." As for the German troops, a Spanish memoir, probably drawn up by a *consejo de guerra,* complains that such was their "beastliness and arrogance, that they were a firebrand and a source of incessant disorder, unless they were commanded by a generous and courageous captain from their own country, selected by the Emperor." Another complaint against the German lansquenets was perhaps of a more serious nature. During the great wars of Italy, pestilence was generally raging in that country. All the other troops, and especially the Italians and the Spaniards, could easily be prevailed upon carefully to avoid communication with the infected places. The Germans, on the contrary, would, in spite of all remonstrances of their officers, enter a village or a farmhouse which they knew to be infected, with no other object than *to steal a few chickens,*

and thus perhaps introduce the plague or some other horrible disease into their own ranks.

The military strength of the different governments of Europe was not in proportion to the excellence of their forces in the field. As the best soldiers were "mercenaries," they sold themselves to the highest bidder without respect to nationality. When we read of Italian, Spanish, French, and English armies, we must not suppose that they consisted of the above nations only. The difference in the warlike qualities of the nations of Europe had no other practical consequence than that the Germans and the Swiss earned large sums of money by the trade of a soldier, whilst the English and French did not.

The best arms were those which were made in Milan and Brescia, and those which were exported to foreign countries by way of Flanders; also the arms from Lolingen.

The English soldiers in the early part of the sixteenth century were loud in their demand for food at the appointed hour: beef, bread, and beer were the first thing to be considered; and then when the fighting came on, they were like the giant soldiers of a certain Celtic prince, "the first in the field and the last out of it." However, the English soldiers of the sixteenth century knew little of military science; they closed with an enemy like an infuriated bear, and perhaps extended the same amount of forbearance to the vanquished foe. The military records of the battle of Creci affirm that Edward the Third employed his "Welsh mercenaries" in the barbarous and cowardly action of cutting the throats of the wounded enemy. The German and Swiss could not be guilty of a more revolting and un-

soldierlike crime. The foreign mercenaries employed in the days of Henry VIII. and his son Edward, brought odium upon the military character. Every year they seemed to become more ferocious, blood-thirsty, and dishonest. Humanity has reason to rejoice that in the "regular armies" of Christendom there are *now* no subsidized "foreign legions," whose trade is war and rapine; and that the slaughter of the wounded on the battle-field, and the outrage of women, slaying of old and young, with the accompanying horrors, have now been relegated to the only power connected with Europe which denies the divine mission of the Founder of Christianity, and contemns the maxims of His merciful creed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOLEYN FAMILY.

The Boleyn family were amongst the Normans whom the Plantagenets introduced to better their fortunes by settling upon the fertile plains of Britain. The De Bouleyns were of a notable and ancient stock, who always adhered to the Monarchy and the Latin Church. The family settled in Norfolk, and were known in the days of Edward I. for their thrifty and sensible mode of life. One of the race adopted commerce, and realised a fortune as a "citie merchant;" another became Lord Mayor of London, and the family soon intermarried with landholders of position. Godfrey de Boleyn, having accumulated wealth, was honoured with knighthood; and being munificent and charitable, became popular in London. He bequeathed one thousand pounds for the "relief of the poor householders of the citie of London." The Boleyns were a provident race in those times; had always a taste for "letters," as the crude education of the period was designated; made rich matches in England, and even intermarried with the "English of the Pale beyond the sea;" and thus the "Fighting Butlers" of Kilkenny became connected with the Boleyns. The great marriage, however, of this aspiring family was that of Sir Thomas Boleyn with the young and beautiful Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Surrey.

Sir Thomas Boleyn passed some seven years in the uninterrupted happiness of his married life. Lady Elizabeth was a pattern for wives and mothers; she was beloved by her own family, and her numerous retainers were devoted in loyalty to her. She was from childhood imbued with a deep sense of religion. In her oratory she was to be seen three times a day, prostrated before the altar. At this time Sir Thomas Boleyn is represented by his maiden sister to have been "a zealous and a good Catholic." "Whilst he was negotiating some matters on the Continent with the Archduchess Marguerite, the wife of Sir Thomas Boleyn fell sick, and her father, the Earl of Surrey, carried her to Howard House, at Lambeth, where she expired on the 14th of December, 1512, leaving three children to the charge of a great-grandfather, a grandmother, and several maiden aunts, and two uncles who were priests."

Lady Elizabeth Boleyn was buried in the Lady Chapel of St. Mary's Church, Lambeth, where a monument was erected over her grave.* An old tradition passed through Lambeth describing Lord Wiltshire (newly created) and his pensive-looking little girl visiting the grave of his loved wife, and kneeling there in prayer; one hundred Masses were celebrated by various clerics for "the health of her soul." Lord Cobham states that he saw Sir Thomas Boleyn and his little daughter Nan, frequently visiting the grave of Lady Elizabeth, in the dark gloomy days of December.

In the sunny month of May, 1513, a bright-eyed, blooming girl, with a face fraught with frank intelligence, might be seen in the gardens, or seated under the shade of the

* Howard Memorials, by Mr. Howard, of Corby, quoted by Miss Strickland.

hazel-trees, at Hever Castle, sometimes accompanied by her sister and brother; the elder girl delighted in reading "poetry and romantic tales of the days of antiquity;" she cherished the growth of flowers, and loved to cultivate her garden. A painstaking French governess never lost sight of the little group; they also possessed an humbler, but often more pleasing advantage, in another woman, an old domestic, who watched over them with the tenderness of a parent. This faithful servant often told the children of the beauty of their "young mother then in heaven," of her marriage and her death. The children whom she thus informed were Anna Boleyn, her sister Mary, and their brother George. "The little orphans," as their aunt called them, were very fond of this Mary Orcharde. She was "little Nan's nurse," and through life had a certain amount of influence over her foster-child. A handsome intelligent boy, the son of a neighbouring knight, became the playmate of the young Boleyns, and he too had a little sister who also joined the party. Thomas Wyatt and his sister Margaret made their first acquaintance with Anna in those pleasant scenes amidst the plantations and gardens of Hever, and the young poet and the future Queen, as children, felt incipient love—that half infantine affection which pure and intellectual young spirits sometimes form. The acquaintance was partially broken off when Wyatt was sent to Cambridge University. Anna Boleyn, "the sensible little woman," as Archbishop Warham styled her, was the elder of the whole group to whom I have alluded. Sir Thomas Boleyn had a high opinion of his daughter's talents, and she was devotedly attached to her ambitious father. To bring his daughter up at either the English or French Court was his desire. At this time Queen Katharine was a

fine comely woman, in the very prime of life, full of pleasantry, graceful, and queenly. She did not fear or dream of having a rival. "Little Nan" was then busy with her school-books, and in the hours of recreation, perchance, wandering along the "daisied fields" with her brother and sister, and towards evening listening with childlike earnestness to the fairy tales narrated by her old Norfolk nurse, Mary Orcharde. The confessor and spiritual instructor attended the children three days in every week, "when Anna," writes Margaret Lee, "was examined on historical incidents associated with Christianity." "I wish I had as much knowledge as this little girl," was the observation of a Buckinghamshire squire when he heard the family chaplain examine Anna upon sacred and profane history. In this innocent manner the young Boleyns passed some years. Their education and religious instruction seemed an object of the deepest solicitude to their father. The young mind expands; Nan takes to letter-writing, and despatches by a trusty messenger the following missive to her admiring father, then in attendance upon the King:—

"My good Papa,—I understand that you wish me to appear at Court as befits your daughter, and you tell me that her Highness the Queen will take the pains to see and speak to me. Glad am I to learn this news. Oh, dear papa, addressing a person so wise and good as you will make me more than ever wish to write and speak good French; the more so as you will be so pleased with me. Allow me to assure you that I shall do my best to satisfy your hopes. If this note is badly written please excuse me. It is all my own; the spelling out of my own head, while the other notes were written by dear mamma.* Blanche Simonetti tells me I am left to myself, that no one may know what I write to you. Pray therefore do

* Sir Thomas Boleyn married a second wife. The date and other circumstances are unknown. I shall return to this incident again.

not let your superior knowledge stand in my way. As for myself, be sure I am not so ungrateful as to think you might have left this thing undone. Be sure it will not lessen the great love I have for you; nor need you fear but that I shall *lead the holy life which you desire for me.* My love for my dear papa is like a rock, it wont change from the place where it has a true foundation.

"Dearest papa, craving your blessing, your kindness, your affection, I now put an end to this my lucubration.

"Written at Hever Castle, by your very humble and obedient daughter,

"ANNA DE BOULAINE."*

Within a year from the writing of this letter Anna Boleyn was presented at Court; but only noticed as any other amongst the junior ladies, whom the King styled "chets." There is much controversy as to Anna's age at this period; some contend that she was twelve, others will have it fourteen, and even sixteen. Judging from circumstances in connexion with her history, I should say she was about twelve years and six months old at the time indicated. Anna's name next appears amongst the English ladies who accompanied the Princess Mary, the King's sister, to France. Here again names and dates are questioned. It is contended that Mary, *not* Anna Boleyn, was chosen by the Princess. There can be no doubt that Anna was a maid-of-honour to the Princess Mary, and lived in France for some years. In a little book concerning the "travelling of the Princess Mary from England to France," the name of Anna Boleyn occurs. I have modernised the following quotations:—"The royal party were delayed for weeks by the severity of the weather. At last they put to

* The above letter is transcribed from Sir Henry Ellis's Royal Letters, second series; the original, in the old French, is to be seen in the Parker MSS. Col., Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

sea at four o'clock in the morning; the tempest again rose, and the ship in which the Princess and her ladies travelled struck against a rock near Boulogne. They had just time to get into a boat, and were tossed on the sea for some hours. The Princess Mary was much affrighted, and like little Nan de Boulein had a crucifix in her hand, and was absorbed in prayer. When the party arrived safe on the French shore they went to a church to return thanks for their safe delivery." Rostal, a French contemporary, states that Anna Boleyn was about fifteen years of age at this period, "but tall for her time, and given to devotion and honour to the Virgin Mother. She was a distant dame, and always kept about her young mistress, who had a love for all her maidens."

Much has been written against the reputation of Mary Boleyn. Lingard positively contends that Henry had formed a dishonourable attachment for Mary Boleyn. Reginald Pole also joins in the condemnation of this lady. Sander and others of a proximate date make similar statements. Burnet, however, expresses his disbelief of the allegation. Lord Campbell looks upon Mary Boleyn as a woman of bad repute; and J. H. Blunt holds the same opinion. Miss Strickland, however, makes out a good case for the accused lady. If the scandal concerning her was well-founded, then according to canon law a marriage between her sister Anna and the King would have been null and void. Cranmer, in pronouncing the divorce between the King and Queen Anna, did so on the ground of a "previous contract existing between Anna and Lord Percy," which contract Lord Percy solemnly denied.

Mary Boleyn was not a woman of strong mind or fixed principles; she was possessed of much of her sister's vanity,

but little of the family ambition. Becoming a widow whilst her sister occupied a throne, Mary quietly married some obscure person, and was outlawed by her family.

I must now enter upon an investigation of the shocking narrative put forward by Sander against the stainless character of Lady Elizabeth Boleyn. This writer, whose reputation for truth is on a par with that of John Foxe, alleges that Lady Elizabeth Boleyn made a confession to her husband that she had "criminal intercourse with King Henry; and that the monarch was the father of her daughter Anna." The allegations of Sander have been added to by Campion, Throckmorton, Allen, and other violent partisans on the Catholic side. Truth, however, must not be concealed, for it triumphs in the long run. Justice should be measured out to all parties with an even and a firm hand. Dr. Lingard gave much consideration to this shocking story, and pronounced the statement to have no foundation in fact. The question, he contends, "is abundantly disproved by Racine."* Dates, however, form the most important key to *facts*. Anna Boleyn was born about the close of 1501; Camden contends that it was 1507; Lord Herbert states expressly that Anna was twenty years old when she returned from France in 1521; so that she must have been born about 1501. The researches of Miss Strickland arrive at the same conclusion. Mr. Hepworth Dixon approaches this subject with a chivalrous indignation, and states that the "whole edifice of slander rests on a false date." He argues the question with the ability and enthusiasm which characterise his mode of defence.

* Lingard, vol. iv. p. 476.

"It was not," writes Miss Strickland, "till long after the grave had closed over Lady Boleyn that the malignant spirit of party attempted to fling an absurd scandal on her memory, by pretending that Anna Boleyn was the offspring of her amours with the King during the absence of Sir Thomas Boleyn on an embassy to France. But, independently of the fact that Sir Thomas Boleyn was *not* ambassador to France till many years *after* the birth of all his children, Henry VIII. was a boy under the care of his tutors at the period of Anna's birth, even if that event took place in the year 1507, the date given by Sander."* The reader is already aware that Henry, Duke of York, who appeared at the wedding of the Infanta and Prince Arthur, in November, 1501, was at that period in his tenth year. Is it not then quite manifest that Sander has put forward an untrue statement, in order to add intensity to sectarian feeling—a sentiment that should be avoided in historical relations?

Sander has impeached the character of Anna Boleyn whilst connected with the French Court. At the time Anna left the convent at Brie† her character was without "spot or stain; the tongue of slander did not touch her." Such were the words of one of her loved schoolfellows, who was in after years an abbess.

Protestant and Catholic writers agree in stating that Queen Claude was a truly amiable and religious woman.‡

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* Queens of England, vol. ii.

† A convent frequented by English ladies to finish their education.

‡ Queen Claude was the daughter of Louis XII. by Anne of Bretagne. Claude was a homely little woman, plain in face as she was good in heart; pious, charitable, and benevolent, without worldly pride or ostentation.

Here is Miss Strickland's picture of Queen Claude's Court —very unlike that of her slanderers: "Queen Claude was always surrounded by a number of young ladies, who walked in procession with her to Mass, and formed part of her State whenever she appeared in public. In private life she directed their labours at the loom or in embroidery frame, and endeavoured by every means in her power to give a virtuous and devotional bias to their thoughts and conversation. *The society of gentlemen was prohibited to these maidens.*."* With this good Queen and her ladies Anna spent some six years: she was much regarded by her royal mistress, and beloved by those fair maidens with whom she was associated.

About this time Francis the First incidentally alludes to Anna in a letter to his ambassador in London:—"Mademoiselle de Bouleine is a credit to her father; she is discreet and modest; and it is hinted amongst the Court ladies that she desires above all things *to be a nun.* This I should regret."

The young English ladies fondly called Anna "Sister Nan." When at last a "command came from Hever Castle for her return, all the little maidens, the stately dames of quality, and the various domestics fell a-weeping." This was the time and the place where Sander and other untruthful writers describe Anna Boleyn as "leading an impure life."

* Brantôme; Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 571.

CHAPTER IX.

WOLSEY AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

Leo the Tenth did not wish to elevate Dr. Wolsey to the rank of a Cardinal. Polydore Vergil and Hadrian were the secret enemies of Wolsey, and as both were in the Imperialist interest, they influenced the Pontiff for a time. There is still preserved in the Vatican a letter from King Henry, seeking the long-desired honour for his favourite minister. In this missive to the Pontiff the English sovereign begs of him to pay the same attention to whatever Wolsey says as if it proceeded from his own lips; he expresses his "extreme anxiety and fervent desire for the day when he shall see Thomas Wolsey advanced to the rank of Cardinal—a dignity he fully deserves for his genius, learning, and many admirable qualities."

The courtly Leo hesitated to offend either Maximilian or the French monarch, who required similar honours for their own favourites. At length the Pope wrote to Henry, stating that he could no longer refuse the request of so "faithful a son of the Church," as Henry was then acknowledged to be.

When the English monarch received intelligence of Wolsey's promotion to be a prince of the Church he was delighted, and writing to the Pope, he stated: "Nothing in all my life has given me greater pleasure than the brief announcing Thomas Wolsey's elevation to the College of

Cardinals. I shall ever regard the distinction your Holiness has conferred upon my most worthy subject as a favour conferred upon myself."* It is generally supposed, and has often been asserted by historians, that Wolsey had been long "bribing and intriguing," in order to pave the way to the rank to which he aspired; but a diligent search of the State Papers bearing on the case prove that he did not seek the honour so coveted by others, and that it was mainly at the request of Henry, although the Pontiff was aware of Wolsey's claims to the distinction. The installation took place at Westminster Abbey, with all the magnificence of the Roman ritual.† Peers and commoners flocked thither to pay him homage; abbots, bishops, monks, friars, and seculars were present on the occasion; and the proceedings of the day concluded with a sumptuous banquet at the newly-made Cardinal's palace, at which King Henry and Queen Katharine were present, surrounded by the flower of the English nobility. There were, the chroniclers say, abbots, bishops, knights, esquires, and titled dames, all seated at the festive board. Nor were the crowd without forgotten; they were also regaled with a profuseness so pleasing to the multitude.

"Modern philosophy," observes Dr. Brewer, "despises Lord Mayor's gilt-coaches and Cardinals' hats, but the philosophy of that age was different. Men delighted in such shows without stopping to reason about them. Even men who cannot eschew honours, and do not care for them,

* Brewer's State Papers.

† Dean Collet preached an eloquent sermon on the occasion. Archbishop Warham and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, were the chief officiating prelates.

may in time not only accept but esteem them. Indeed, monarchs borrow honour from the repute of their trusted servants; and at this period of Henry's life, the King and his great subject might feel gratified with a concession in whose attainment mutual esteem seemed so largely to participate. It is not much in the heart of man of a lofty nature, to be insensible of honours on occasions like this. Wolsey soon loved the dignity; at first for his own and the King's sake, and then for its authority—perhaps for its splendour. Since the days of Archbishop Morton, no Cardinal had been resident in England, for Bainbridge lived in Italy;* and the new Cardinal of York, recognising the loftiness of his dignity, was resolved to invest his office with a magnificence rarely witnessed, even on the Continent. The King seconded his favourite's plans for a large retinue and superb liveries. Both monarch and minister were men of refined and elegant taste; and the people unmistakably felt well pleased in their insular pride at gazing on the pageants issuing in stately splendour from Greenwich and old Whitehall. Even in that age of gorgeous ceremonial, "before cold Puritan sentimentalism had insisted on the unrighteousness of lawn sleeves," when records were filled with elaborate recitals of cloth of gold,

* Soon after the accession of Henry VIII. the Council deemed it prudent to have a representative in Rome to look after the affairs of the English Church. Bainbridge, who then filled the see of York, was selected for this high office. In his new position Dr. Bainbridge contrived to please both the English King and the Roman Pontiff. In 1511 he received a Cardinal's hat. He never returned to England. Bainbridge died in 1514, from poison administered by a domestic. There are several versions of this story extant, all more or less tinged by a sectarian feeling. Cardinal Bainbridge bequeathed twenty thousand golden ducats towards the building of St. Peter's at Rome.

silks, and beautiful tapestries—even then, amidst jewelled mitres and copes, a Cardinal in his scarlet robes formed a conspicuous object. But Wolsey was in no manner swayed by the vulgar vanity of appearing grand, in that light in which the ignorant or the superficial behold the surroundings of a great man. Magnificent in all his notions and in all his doings—in the selection of plate, dress, tapestry, pictures, buildings; the furniture of a chapel, a church, or a palace; the arranging of gardens, of flowers, of fountains; the setting of a ring, or the arrangement of some exquisite jewel; the forms and etiquette of a congress; a procession in heraldic order; or a sumptuous banquet—there was the same regal and classic taste prevailing; the same powerful grasp of little things and of great affairs; a mind, a soul as "capacious as the sea, and as minute as the sand upon the shore, when minuteness was required," he could do nothing petty, nothing mean.*

Such was the character of the great English Prince-Bishop. He went far to civilise the British nobles; to elevate the taste of the commercial classes, and accustom the people to distinguish between the barbaric profusion of the past and the treasures of beauty which science and art, working with the same materials, now opened to their awakening discernment. On no occasion did the universality of Wolsey's genius for organisation display itself more signally than at the meeting of the French and English monarchs on the "Field of the Cloth of Gold."†

* Brewer's State Papers.

† Henry's retinue amounted to 3997 persons, and 2110 horses; the Queen's to 1200, and 778 horses; Wolsey's attendants were numerous, and the appointments classic and grand. Budæun, an eminent Greek scholar and traveller, who was a spectator of the royal meetings, describes the astonishment he felt on viewing such scenes of unparalleled magnificence.

There Wolsey was studied by all—and to all seemed inexhaustible in the graces of his bearing and the aptitude of his arrangements.

Of the personal appearance and disposition of Wolsey about this time (1519), perhaps the despatches of Sebastian Giustiniani are the most correct: "He is now about forty-six years of age, very handsome, learned, extremely eloquent, of vast ability, and indefatigable in carrying out his projects; he alone transacts the same business as that which occupies all the magisteries and councils of Venice, both civil and criminal; and all State affairs are managed by him likewise, let their nature be what it may; he is pensive, and has the reputation of being extremely just; he is the Councillor who rules both the King and the entire realm; his enemies accounted him haughty and imperious, yet much more humility and moderation than Wolsey possessed could scarcely have escaped the imputation. Such a sight as this Cardinal presented was not common to the eyes of Christendom. The great nobles could obtain no audience of him until after four or five applications; foreign ambassadors not even then." "He is omnipotent," says Erasmus, writing to Cardinal Grunoni. "All the power of the State is centred in him," is the observation of Giustiniani; "he is, in fact, *ipse rex*." The people declared he was moved by "witchcraft, or something that no man could discover." "Yet," says Dr. Brewer, "undisputed as was the supremacy of this great minister, it was surely no more than might have been expected. In genius, in penetration, in aptitude for business, and indefatigable labour, he had no equal. All despatches addressed to ambassadors abroad or at home passed through his hands;

the entire political correspondence of the times was submitted to his perusal and waited for his decision. Before a single measure was submitted to the Privy Council it was first shaped by Wolsey's hands; he managed it, unaided and alone, when it had passed their approval." Foxe (Bishop of Winchester), the only minister of any experience, seldom attended; "the Duke of Suffolk dared not offer him opposition," writes a distinguished Spanish grandee. The Duke of Norfolk, who had endeavoured, and once had partly succeeded in thwarting the Cardinal's authority, had been defeated and yielded; he was too haughty to conceal a temper not less imperious than Wolsey's, and wanted the flexibility and courtesy of manner required in a successful courtier. Wolsey was "hated by the nobles, knights, and esquires;" he incurred the enmity of the lawyers for sustaining the part of the poor client; by the monopolists and commercial people, for checking their dishonest deeds; he was respected and loved by his clergy, for the kindness and equity with which he governed the diocese of York and his other ecclesiastical preferments. His enemies were numerous at home and abroad, but Polydore Vergil was the most malignant and persistent in falsehood. He was deputy-collector of the Pope's annates for Cardinal Hadrian in England, and Wolsey having discovered his misappropriation of Papal moneys, and intriguing with foreign factions, imprisoned him in the Tower. Hence the cause of his enmity.* Polydore's imprisonment and subsequent conduct are worthy of consideration. He remained for nine months in prison, though repeated applications came from the Pope in his favour. In his captivity he addressed the most

* Brewer's State Papers.

abject letters to Wolsey for mercy. He told the Cardinal "he had heard with rapture of his elevation to the Cardinal's high estate, and whenever his Eminence would allow him an opportunity to present himself, he would gaze and bow in adoration, and his spirit should rejoice in him as in God his Saviour!" In another letter Polydore prayed that his "punishment might be wholly remitted, and Wolsey's gifts be perfected in him, even as he himself was perfect." In a few months subsequent (1516) Polydore Vergil was liberated by the Cardinal; he then retired to Hertford, and commenced the inditing of a series of attacks on the reputation of Wolsey. He affected "to sneer at his birth; charged him with ingratitude and unkindness to his friends; described his buildings as those of a person possessed of no refined taste; imputed base or sordid motives to him as a judge; ridiculed his Cardinal's hat and his gorgeous liveries; represented him as an ambitious priest, successful only because he was unscrupulous; distinguished merely for his underhand intrigues in banishing Dr. Foxe and Archbishop Warham from the Council Chamber; he was neither a scholar nor a gentleman, but a respectable sort of hedge priest; a blusterer in Chancery, whose administration of justice was a shadow; a vulgar upstart, intoxicated with dignities undeserved; a *parvenu*, whose brain was turned by his gilded chair, the gold fringes of his cushion and tablecloth; his Cardinal's hat, which was carried before him by some tall fellow in his livery, and placed conspicuously on the high altar in the Chapel Royal when Mass was sung, was another proof of his vanity and hypocrisy."* In this strain Vergil writes

* Brewer's State Papers.

of the man whom but a few months before he declared to be endowed with every virtue that could adorn the State or the Church. In a subsequent chapter the reader will see more as to the general merits of this unamiable foreigner. Many statements have been chronicled of the "low birth and presumption of the butcher's dog." Lampoons and caricatures were circulated by Wolsey's contemporaries, describing him as the son of a "petty butcher." But these stories had no foundation in fact; his father, Robert Wolcey, was what would be styled nowadays a "grazier;" he fed on his own land some two hundred head of cattle, which were purchased by the butchers of the neighbouring towns. In one year a number of his cows died of distemper, which for a time embarrassed the family. The Wolceys were never rich, but the family was always respectable and loyal to the Plantagenets and their successors. There is an entry of an "offering" extant, which was made at St. Laurence's Church, Ipswich, to "pray for the sowls of Robert Wolcey and his wife Joan, the father and mother of the Dean of Lincoln;" which shows that the family were far above the rank of a butcher —a class who were considered "lowly and mean" in those days. Besides, his father made a will, in which there is no mention of the occupation of a butcher. Polydore Vergil reiterates the assertion of Skelton and others as to the "saucy son of the greasy butcher;" yet, in a letter to Cardinal Hadrian, Polydore states that he "heard from an old inhabitant of Suffolk that the Cardinal's father was a poor gentleman who sold cattle to butchers."

Anthony Wood, an excellent authority, indignantly denies that Wolsey was "a butcher's son." He states

that the family, however, reduced in circumstances, "made a shift to maintain at Oxford young Wolsey, where he became a Batchelor of Arts at fifteen years of age (1485), having made a wonderful progress in logic and phylosophy." Featherstone, a learned monk, who resided in Ipswich about 1480, speaks of a reduced squire named Wolci, who fattened cattle for butchers on his grass near the town. Weston, a London merchant, in his "Rambles about Ipswich," speaks of the "fat cattle he saw feeding on the lands of Maister Wolci." Weston visited Ipswich in the summer of 1483.

Thomas Wolsey was an accomplished Latin scholar; and though he had a distaste for theology, Polydore Vergil admits that he "did not lack abilities as a theologian." Skelton was, if possible, more gross in his remarks than Polydore. He describes the Cardinal as a "mastiff cur," "a butcher's dog," "a man with a greasy genealogy cast out of a butcher's stall." And again Maister Skelton says—

> "He ruleth all the roast,
> With bragging and with boast."

Another accusation against him was that of "eating meat in Lent and other prohibited times;" on which the lampoon ran—

> "In Lent, for a repast,
> He eateth capons stewed,
> Pheasant and partridge mewed."

Skelton's impeachment had its origin in the fact that Wolsey had a cold, weak stomach, and his physicians were of opinion that it was absolutely necessary he should daily "partake of fowl cooked in divers ways, and no fish."*

* Carlo Logario, on the Cardinal's diet.

Nevertheless, he did not adopt their instructions until he had obtained permission from Leo X. The impeachments multiplied, but all were mean and petty. I cannot accept the evidence of Skelton; he was a lying, vindictive man. On his deathbed he made a public confession that his life was most immoral. He was the friend of Simon Fish, which is quite sufficient to form an estimate of his merits.

Giustiniani alleges that two brothers of Wolsey were presented to lucrative livings in the Church under "discreditable circumstances;" but the research of Dr. Brewer throws a different light on the subject. "I have," he says, "found no notice of either brother, or any other member of Wolsey's family, with one exception, receiving livings. There is a petition to the Cardinal from one John Fayrechild, son of Elizabeth Wolsey, the Cardinal's sister, desiring some small place as comptroller of the works at Tournai; but the applicant's name does not occur again in connection with any office."

"Proud and haughty," as Wolsey has been described, there were some persons who took the liberty of admonishing him, amongst whom was Dr. Fisher. Jerningham, too, writes to him, "complimenting his Eminence on his taste for music;" and in the same letter he tells him he was "too fond of strong drinks." This accusation was once made by Archbishop Warham, and contradicted by Fisher, and also by Cavendish, who was in daily intercourse with the Cardinal. Another charge was, that he "loved the society of young gentlemen, and entered into their boisterous amusements, and sang and danced with them," and "did not reverently mix with old people." He must, however, have felt a greater pleasure in the society of those young

gentlemen, whose minds were cultivated and stored with learning under his own instruction, than in that of "drunken, dicing lords," the "austere monks of churlish manners," or the dull canon who rarely wandered beyond the boundary of his parish. Few men holding such high and almost irresponsible offices had so many enemies; fewer still, possessed of so much power, did so little to merit the hostility of the people at large.

Foreigners, especially Italians, complained that Wolsey was "hard of access; that he displayed his resentment too openly; that he adopted too imperious a style for a subject; that he identified himself too much with his own political measures, and proportioned his anger and gratitude accordingly." * These statements are, in some instances, exaggerated; indeed, the tales of Polydore Vergil have been embellished by others.

Little can be said of Wolsey's merits as a priest till the period of his political fall; but as a statesman he transcended all the ministers of his age. His conduct towards Queen Katharine, however, presents his character in a lamentable light. It has been contended that he did no more than Gardyner, Bonner, Tunstal, Edward Foxe, and other political clerics, to promote the King's views; but it must be remembered that these men were, in the early stages of the divorce litigation, merely the agents of Wolsey; besides, the majority of the bishops and chapters were favourable to the King's views, more perhaps from fear than conviction. There seems, however, to be mystery and inconsistency in the conduct of Wolsey regarding the divorce. It is impossible to defend his conduct in this case. A letter

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. i.

from the Cardinal to Pope Clement is still extant, describing Anna Boleyn in glowing terms—her "goodness, her virtue, and her attachment to the olden creed."* There is reason to believe that Anna saw this letter before her kinsman, Sir Francis Bryan, presented it to the Pontiff. The Pope was not deceived; he had his agents in England—nay, in the King's palace. The Roman policy was that of "delay."

It is stated that when the King revealed to Wolsey his intention of marrying Anna Boleyn, the Cardinal uttered a shriek, and fell at his royal master's feet. The monarch was alarmed, and raising him up, spoke in kindly terms, and recurred to their early friendship. The question was again submitted to him by the King, but the Cardinal would not agree. He "knelt before his Highness for hours, appealing to his pride and honour as a monarch, not to enter upon this marriage; but found his great powers of persuasion fruitless."† Then, like a courtier, he affected a wish to promote the King's union with Anna Boleyn; still he urged delay, alleging etiquette and other matters as an excuse.

This statement does not agree with the scene between the Cardinal and Lord Percy, in which Wolsey's conduct appears in a very suspicious light. In a subsequent chapter I shall recur to the Cardinal's interview with Percy.

Guicciardini states that the Cardinal of York had more than once sought to convert Pope Clement's "embarrassments into an enlargement of his own political and eccle-

* State Papers (Foreign).

† Cavendish; Logario's Narratives of Wolsey.

siastical power;" and Le Grand, another good authority, makes similar statements, whieh are borne out by the Cardinal's own confidential correspondence. One of his last letters to Sir Gregorie Cassalis (July, 1529), if it means anything, or was not written to please the King, is decidedly in favour of the divorce. He threatens the Pontiff with the military power of England if he does not "settle the question within the King's own realm." "Nor shall it," he added, "ever be seen that the King's cause shall be ventilated or decided in any place out of his own realm; but that if his Highness should come at any time to the Court of Rome, he would do the same with such *a main and army royal as should be formidable* to the Pope and all Italy."* In this despatch Wolsey wrote as the proud English statesman, not as the Roman Cardinal. When in the zenith of his power, he evinced scant respect for the spiritual head of his Church. At one time he undertook to "mould" Leo the Tenth entirely to the wishes of King Henry and his allies. "Blind men," he observed, "need a guide;" and he made no doubt of his ability to lead the Pope.† Boastful as was this sarcasm concerning the *dilettante* and princely Pontiff, it was not altogether without reason. Nevertheless, after a long diplomatic contest, carried on between Pope and Cardinal in a mode not qualified to edify those who looked to them for less terrestrial practices, circumstances seem to have obliterated all traces of victory or defeat. Fighting with political foils, the fortune of the contest was various; and at length

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* State Papers (Foreign), vol. vii. p. 193; Cavendish, Lingard, vol. v.; Gardyner's Despatches.

† Brewer's State Papers.

Pope and Cardinal appear to have concurred in a drawn battle.

At a later period, Clement's secretary writes to Campeggio, expressing the confidence which his Holiness had in the devotion of Wolsey to the interests of the Church. If Wolsey held no political office under his Sovereign, the Pontiff might have placed more confidence in him as a Churchman; but both, however, were politicians of a high and intellectual school. One cannot help reflecting how much the spiritual interests of the Church were neglected, and the virtue, truth, and honour of her ecclesiastics injured by intermingling in the turmoil and deceit of politics.

The Bishop of Bayonne relates that Wolsey contemplated a marriage between King Henry and Madame René, a daughter of Louis XII.—"only eighteen years of age, amiable and handsome."* This scheme ended in a failure, the particulars of which have never been accurately recorded. It is certain that Wolsey proposed the widow of the Duc d'Alençon as a suitable wife for his royal master; but when the question was privately made known to the Princess, she indignantly refused to listen to the proposal, adding, that "a marriage between her and the King of England could not be solemnised without shame to herself, and wretchedness and death to Queen Katharine, whose character as a wife and a Queen no one had ever questioned."† There is evidence enough to prove that for some years the Cardinal was in favour of the divorce of Katharine,

* Le Grand, App. pp. 158–166.

† Le Grand, Lingard, vol. iv.

if the consent of the Court of Rome were given to it. He had no objection to coerce the Pontiff, or make representations to create alarm ; he viewed the question for a time as a politician ; but seeing the revolutionary sentiments of some of those who advocated the divorce, he suddenly hesitated to place himself in absolute antagonism to the head of his Church. This incident is a proof—if one were necessary—that he had no direct sympathies with the few Reformers who were at that time fighting their battle under the cowardly disguise and unjust banner of the divorce question. From obvious reasons, however, historians differ on this delicate matter. Lord Herbert affirms that one of the articles of impeachment against Wolsey was, "that by connivance he encouraged the growth of heresy, and protected and acquitted some notorious delinquents against the Church." The same writer observes, that "no one believed one-third of the charges preferred against the Cardinal of York ;" and Hume contends that the disciples of the Reformation met with little severity during the administration of Wolsey. The shrewd Cavendish, who "noted every scene, and listened with all his ears" to what occurred between Kingston and the Cardinal, in his last farewell address, states that Wolsey "sent a solemn warning to the King, to have a vigilant eye to the proceedings of that new and pernicious sect, called Lutherans ; that they may not increase in his dominions through his own negligence."

After a long pause, the Cardinal, looking steadfastly at Kingston, said : "When I am dead, the King, and many others too, will remember my words." Mr. Froude has his own peculiar views of the question at issue. He states that "the Reformers did not love the Cardinal of York,

and they had no reason to love him." In another passage Mr. Froude remarks: "Before a year had passed, the Protestants would gladly have accepted again the hated Cardinal, to escape the philosophic mercies of Sir Thomas More." And again, Mr. Froude says: "The number of English Protestants at this time it is difficult to conjecture." A very candid acknowledgment. The learned gentleman's statements rest upon the authority of MSS. in the Rolls House, which is in some respects correct, although at variance with State Papers bearing on those times. The organisation of disaffected and communistic men under the title of "Christian Brothers," was as near to the Protestant Church as the factious and seditious Lollards of the days of Henry IV., whose claims to Protestant principles Dean Hook has investigated and disposed of.* Mr. Froude makes another admission as to the condition of affairs in 1528. "No rival theology," he writes, "had as yet shaped itself into formularies."† Yet our brilliant historian deplores the *persecution of Protestantism at this very time!* Another instance of this delusion as to historical facts occurs in Lord Campbell's account of Sir Thomas More's trial. After lamenting the verdict pronounced by a London jury—a jury chosen by Lord Crumwell's agents—the noble author says: "But it is possible that being all *zealous Protestants,* who looked with detestation on our intercourse with the Pope, and considering that the King's supremacy could not be honestly doubted, they concluded that by convicting a Papist they should be doing

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* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi.

† Froude's History of England, vol. ii. p. 71.

good service to religion and the State; and that, misled by the sophistry and eloquence of the presiding judge (Audley), they believed that they returned an honest verdict."* England, however, was just as little Protestant when More went to the scaffold as at the time of Wolsey's fall. Dr. Brewer, who must be considered a high authority on the subject in dispute, states that Lutheranism appears to have been almost unknown in England when Wolsey was at the pinnacle of his power. How the Cardinal could have encouraged, as Lord Herbert and Hume say, or persecuted, as alleged by Mr. Froude—men whose religion he acknowledges not to have been fashioned till the next reign—I leave to be digested by the reader. In fact, twenty years after Wolsey's death (1549-50), "eleven-twelfths of the English nation still retained a strong attachment to the creed of their fathers."† This statement is not only borne out by the record of the time, but is also confirmed by the private letters of the leading Reformers themselves. Here is a confidential note written by a member of King Edward's Council, on the 7th of July, 1549, to the Protector Somerset:—"The use of the old religion" (says Sir William Paget) "*is forbidden by law, and the use of the new one* is not yet fixed in the stomachs of eleven or (of) twelve parts of the realm, no matter what countenance men *make outwardly, to please those whom they see the power resteth in.*"‡ This State Paper, which even John Strype quotes, is a pretty strong proof that More's jury were

* Lord Campbell's Chancellors of England, vol. i. p. 575.

† State Papers of Edward VI.'s Reign.

‡ Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 100.

swayed far more by their instant fears than by their possible Protestantism.

I cannot omit noticing, however briefly, a few of Wolsey's contemporaries. Another clerical diplomatist enters upon the scene in the person of the Reverend Richard Pace. Dr. Pace was one of the remarkable men connected with the government of Henry VIII., and was long employed in foreign diplomacy. Historians make little mention of his name, and he is seldom noticed, except to be described as "a knave or a fool." He was very far from being either. He was faithful, honourable, and patriotic, as an English diplomatic agent; yet several historians question his integrity, and show little knowledge of the inner man. Bergenroth,* a very reputable authority, states that Pace was friendly to the Emperor Maximilian, and subsequently became the secret agent of the intriguing and restless Charles V. These statements rest upon a memorandum, found at Corunna, of the Emperor's Council, in which it was proposed to offer Wolsey "a sop in the mouth," and, "if he accepts it, a pension to Dr. Richard Pace."

There is no evidence, however, produced by Bergenroth to show that these offers were ever made, still less that they were accepted. A distinguished commentator upon the correspondence and secret foreign papers of those times, presents an ably written memoir of the diplomacy, tact, and rare ability with which Pace and Wolsey maintained the interests and the honour of England on the Continent.† Notwithstanding the friendship which existed between the

* Bergenroth's State Papers of England and Spain, vol. ii.

† Dr. Brewer's State Papers, vols. i., ii., iii., part ii.

Cardinal of York and Dr. Pace, a failure in some diplomatic affair brought upon the latter from the strong hand of Wolsey a consignment to the Tower for two years—a proof that no skill, no previous accord, condoned mistakes made in certain kingdoms.

During the meeting of Henry, Francis, and their Queens at the "Cloth of Gold," Pace, as the Dean of St. Paul's, preached before the allies the Latin sermon, in the Royal Chapel. In his discourse he congratulated France and England on the meeting of their Sovereigns, and made an eloquent oration on the blessings of peace. The religious ceremony on this occasion was grand and imposing. Two Cardinals, two Legates, four Archbishops, and ten Bishops, were in attendance on Wolsey who sang the High Mass. The "air was perfumed with incense and flowers," and the altars of the Church were hung with cloth of gold tissue, embroidered with pearls; cloth of gold covered the walls and desks, basins and censers, cruets, and other vessels of the same materials lent a lustre to its service. On the grand altar, shaded by a magnificent canopy of large proportions, stood twenty-four enormous candlesticks, and other ornaments of solid gold. Twelve golden images of the Apostles, as large as children of four years old, astonished the sight of the English visitors. The copes and vestments of the officiating prelates were cloth of tissue powdered with red roses, brought from the looms of Florence, and woven in one piece, thickly studded with gold, precious stones, and jewellery. The "seats and other appointments" were of corresponding taste and splendour.*

* Dr. Brewer's State Papers.

A proud contemplation to the English onlooker to behold Wolsey, as the Cardinal of York, standing at the great altar of this regal chapel, pronouncing the benediction, surrounded by four Archbishops, two Legates, ten inferior prelates, two Kings and their Queens, with the nobles and fair dames of England and France kneeling in the royal presence; then, as they rose, the sudden burst of enchanting music, the roar of artillery, and the acclamations of the multitude without.*

To return to Dr. Pace. He was born in Hampshire in 1482; received his early education at Padua, and subsequently graduated at Oxford; next, he held the office of Latin secretary to Cardinal Bainbridge, and resided in Rome for some time; when, recalled by his Sovereign, he entered on the diplomatic service. In this department of government he was eminently successful; he was appointed Dean of Exeter, and also of St. Paul's.

Both in matters of Church and State his administrative powers were considerable; he was a man of stern principles, courtly and elegant in his address, unostentatious, benevolent, affable, and condescending. He was an uncompromising enemy of the "new learning," and wrote a book on the "lawfulness of Queen Katharine's marriage." Knowing what would be the consequences of such a publication, he resigned his livings in Church and State, and retired

* On this memorable occasion there knelt behind the French Queen a sweet-featured maiden, then in the early spring of life, whose mind seemed engrossed with pious influences; wrapped in devotion, she appeared all unconscious of her beautiful presence, her speaking eyes turned heavenwards, and her rich black hair reaching in silken ringlets to her girdle. This, the fairest amongst the galaxy of beauty present, was Nan de Bolein—the beloved of Queen Claude—little dreaming then of her wayward fate.

to Stepney, where he passed the remainder of his days "amidst books and flowers." He died in 1532, enjoying to his death the esteem and friendship of such men as Erasmus, More, and Pole.*

Next in importance to Pace stood Sir Robert Wingfield, who had been a long time Ambassador at the Court of the Emperor Maximilian. He was more remarkable for fidelity to his country and for his own personal integrity than for diplomatic subtlety. He was no match for the wily German monarch, who was able to read the mind of the envoy, and improve the knowledge to his own advantage.

Sir Robert Wingfield belonged to a class of statesmen then rapidly disappearing before a younger, more versatile, and expert generation, of whom Wolsey might be considered the chief. He speaks of himself as living in the days of Henry VI.—of his long experience as a negociator—of the white hairs "which he had gotten in the cold snowy mountains of Germany, which have the power to make all hares and partridges that abide amongst them, where my beard (which I have promised to bear to our Lady of Walsingham, an' God give me life) is wax so white, that whilst I shall wear it I need none other means to cause women rejoice little in my company." He had the quaintness and precision of a man of a then old school, and both are visible in his conversation, his letters, and his handwriting, with a tinge of pedantry not unbecoming a man of his years, and displaying itself in the use of Latinized English and classical references. He was a little proud of himself, but more proud of the Wingfields, as he was

* Dr. Brewer's State Papers, vols. i. ii. iii. Part ii.

bound to be; was easily hurt, but bore no malice. "If there was any creature in the world that he hated, it was a Frenchman. He devoutly believed that the French had been at the bottom of all the evils that had happened in Christendom during the last four hundred years. . . . . He was, in short, the most guileless, upright, humane, and valiant of all bachelor knights, as he called himself; stiff and formal, somewhat conceited and pedantical, but full of a wise, gracious, hearty, and forgiving humanity, which was not the worse because it had a leaven of his peculiar failings. I know not whether it was more to his credit or Maximilian's that he had been so long in the Court of the latter, and yet persisted in believing that the Emperor was the best, the wisest, the most profound, the most honest and patriotic of mortal men. 'Seeing is believing;' but no seeing would have converted Wingfield. Had he beheld the Emperor in the very act of the most flagrant turpitude, he would have set it down to the score of a subtle and inscrutable policy designed to cover some act of sublime virtue, which in the end would ensure the peace and the happiness of Christendom. If the Emperor 'ran away from the battle-field,' if he falsified his word, if he shuffled and prevaricated, Sir Robert Wingfield imputed it all to that mysterious wisdom which must needs reside in the heart of an Emperor. Maximilian, though no genius himself, found little difficulty in managing such a man. To Wingfield he was universally respectful; listened to his tedious speeches without betraying signs of impatience, and treated him occasionally with profuse courtesy. He professed to make Sir Robert Wingfield the depository of his secrets; to unbosom to him those deeper feelings and

designs he could trust to no others, not even to his most intimate councillors. To the proud and susceptible Englishman he spoke of his King in 'the most hearty and affectuous manner;' raised his bonnet when he received or referred to his despatches; had tears in his eyes when he thought what a virtuous, loving, and noble son he had in Wingfield's master. The King's remembrances, he said, were as comfortable to him 'as the figure of the crucifix which is brought by the Curé to his parishioner that lieth in extremis.'"*

The study of the diplomatic correspondence of Wolsey's time enables Dr. Brewer to form an opinion of the mode in which the Cardinal managed his agents abroad. "An inferior man," he writes, "would have dismissed Wingfield from his post; would have made a fuss, and superseded him. Not so he: to the credit of this period of Henry's reign a freedom of opinion and dissent was allowed in official men which disappeared shortly afterwards. Omnipotent as Wolsey was, and impatient of contradiction, he seldom used his power to remove one inferior from his post because that inferior thought fit sometimes to disagree with him. If an ambassador failed in the expectations that had been formed of him it was deemed more discreet to send an inferior agent, as occasion might arise, to supplement his deficiencies." Such a policy was not without advantage. The long experience of a man of inferior talents compensated for brighter natural powers; the credit gained at foreign Courts by the permanency of his appointment gave respect and influence to the agent. So far from

* Brewer's State Papers.

employing his authority in recalling the representatives at foreign Courts, Wolsey with general kindness refused their applications for dismissal, especially when they demanded it in a momentary fit of ill-temper, or were fretted into impatience by a reprimand, which he sometimes administered with considerable severity.

When Sir Robert Wingfield returned from the diplomatic service he was appointed to the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, which position he held up to his death in 1525, and was succeeded by Sir Thomas More.

Pace and Wingfield died before the revolution in religion took place in England; but they did not omit to condemn the doctrines of Luther and Melancthon then exciting Germany.

There was a striking contrast between Wolsey and his royal master's early contemporaries. Age had not yet exhausted the ambition of Louis XII., or diminished the activity of his intellect, but it had made ravages on his person. Long before his death (at the age of fifty-three) he is spoken of as an infirm old man, the victim of disease. His treasures had been exhausted in ruinous wars; he had neither the inclination nor the means to indulge in pomp and splendour like the English King.

The "bankrupt Emperor" Maximilian, the "Man of Few Pence," as he was styled in derision in other Courts, had even less means than Louis for rivalling the profuse splendour of the English Court. All his ingenuity was directed to the means of raising money, but as his acquisitions were squandered as soon as obtained, he still continued needy. In the pursuit of funds there was no meanness to which he would not stoop. He did not

scruple to "make lying assertions to ambassadors, and violate his solemn promises." "He was," says Brewer, "the most barefaced and importunate of beggars; he felt no delicacy in appropriating to his own use the moneys entrusted to him for other purposes, yet he set up a claim for fastidiousness and modesty."*

Maximilian had little influence, and few personal friends at the European Courts. "It is a pity," writes the noted Dr. de Puebla, "that Maximilian not only does not pay the English a single penny of what he owes them, but treats them with disdain, and won't give them due respect as a nation." It would be unfair to judge of "eccentric Max." from such a source as De Puebla. In a preceding chapter the reader has seen quite sufficient of this Spanish envoy. He was a despicable creature, and a vile cheat; yet he had the presumption to moralise and preach to others as to their conduct.

In the English camp, at Tournai, Maximilian once took pay and served as a soldier. Tayleur, the clerk of the Parliament, made an entry in his diary as to having seen him during his eccentric movements. "The Emperor Maximilian," observes Tayleur, "is of middle height, with open and manly countenance, and pale complexion. He has a snubby nose, and a grey beard; is affable and frugal, and an enemy to pomp."† De Rassal, who was personally acquainted with Maximilian, states that the Emperor delighted in speaking to the peasant classes, asking them many questions as to their social condition. De Rassal was a chess

* Brewer's Foreign State Papers.

† Maximilian died in January, 1519, in the sixtieth year of his age. Sixty was considered an "old age" for a King in those times.

player, who related accounts of that ancient game. He resided in Flanders, and visited Maximilian and Louis XII. every year "for a stoutly contested game at chess." The chess player and story teller resided a fortnight with each. Louis assured Carlo Logario "that the society of Rassal drove away his pains, and made him feel young again." De Rassal's anecdotes of Maximilian would be a rich treat if preserved.

When some six and twenty years of age, Maximilian was styled "the lover with the golden locks," and few Princes ever met with so many "sharp refusals" in his love adventures. "I am poor and must look for a Princess with a few provinces, or a bag of gold and some diamonds," were his words to Madame de Luval.

I have already noticed the relations existing between the King of Spain and the Tudor family. Although Ferdinand was far from being a great monarch, he was a Prince of more than ordinary merit. When he stated that he had made Spain greater than it had ever been during the previous seven hundred years he made no idle boast, but proclaimed a fact. He has been censured for not "moulding his son-in-law (Henry) into some form of goodness." Such an accusation was, in relation to Ferdinand, as unjust as it was impossible for him to accomplish. When men like Foxe, Warham, Wolsey, and More, who were acquainted with the young English King almost from childhood, were unable to control the turbulent, self-willed Henry, it was not likely that Ferdinand, living at such a distance from him, could exercise any salutary influence over his son-in-law. Besides, Ferdinand felt no interest in the welfare of Henry but that of the politician; he desired to use the

English monarch as an instrument to promote his own views. England had no reason to esteem the Spanish King; Ferdinand never spoke a word, nor wrote a line, where politics were concerned, without some concealed motive. In this respect he was probably not worse than his adversaries. He was suspicious, mean, niggardly and proud. In religion, superstitious, and worse still, a hypocrite. His moral character will bear no examination. As I have remarked in a preceding chapter, Ferdinand looked on English statesmen and Princes as "persons who conspired to rob him." His ungenerous conduct—to speak in the mildest terms—at home helped to estrange the Spanish courtiers, and the ablest of his grandees. Political parties must have been in a state of apathy, and perhaps ignorance, when they tolerated Ferdinand. He was not, however, ranged amongst the "bad or despotic," for with all his faults he was condescending to the humbler classes, and would on *Fridays* "speak to them freely, if in his way." Ferdinand, if he had received a good education and early training, would have been a clever statesman; he was a man of considerable ability, and possessed of much administrative talent, and was sometimes far-seeing. In private transactions he frequently compromised the dignity of the King and the honour of the gentleman. Ferdinand died in January, 1516, having outlived Henry VII. of England some seven years.* In Spain, Henry was detested; in England, Ferdinand was little esteemed. Both Princes rendered substantial service to their subjects; but neither was popular, and consequently both were soon forgotten.

* Henry was scarcely fifty-two at the period of his death, and, according to the State records, "completely worn out in mind and body."

In Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers are to be seen some curious accounts of the relations which existed between Ferdinand and his English son-in-law, Henry. This information is not to be found in histories, nor even in recently printed documents upon Spain. In fact, Simancas' State Papers concerning England are not a quarter explored as yet.

We have been assured by several English writers that the laity of Spain were in utter ignorance of the Holy Scriptures in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabel; the facts were otherwise. Spanish history proves that the Scriptures had been written and printed at that time in the Peninsula. Prescott, an American Protestant writer, whose fervid text has illustrated the lives of Ferdinand and Isabel, is another witness to this fact; he adds to other testimony that "under Cardinal Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo, theological studies were pursued with ardour, the Scriptures copiously illustrated, and sacred eloquence cultivated with success. Towards the close of Isabel's reign was produced, under the auspices of Cardinal Ximenes, the famous Polyglot version of the Holy Scriptures. This version has been described by a distinguished Protestant writer as "the most stupendous literary enterprise of the age." So much for the "historical" statements put forward by writers of the same stamp as Foxe, Speed, and Burnet.

Pope Alexander the VIth was a Spaniard by birth, and Ferdinand called him his "subject;" although the Spanish monarch could not exercise the right of a King over the Pontiff, he spoke of him in a very patronising tone—"My worthy Alexander." The Pope did not forget when raised to the Papal chair that he was a Spaniard, and conferred

many favours, and, "under certain circumstances, extended the power of ambitious Ferdinand and his wife," who were always seeking honours from the Court of Rome.*

The reader has seen in a preceding chapter the character of James the Fourth of Scotland, as drawn by a distinguished Spanish diplomatist, who was personally acquainted with the King for some years. James studied Greek and Latin under Erasmus and other learned men; his correspondence with Polydore Vergil shows that the King of Scots was a man of refined taste and ability, but he was vain and vacillating. His weakness was a love of popularity; he was good-natured and warm-hearted, and his accessibility to the humbler classes of his subjects rendered him deservedly beloved. His quarrel with the King of England was forced upon him by many circumstances, but which prudence might have avoided. He was intensely obstinate. The battle which ended so disastrously for King James was fought by him against the remonstrances of the oldest and the most experienced of his generals. The Earl of Angus implored him to retreat, or seek a better position for a battle. "Angus," said the self-willed James, "if you are afraid, you may go home." The old baron, bursting into tears, turned mournfully away, observing that his former life might have spared him such a rebuke from the lips of his Sovereign. "My age," said he, "renders my body of no service, and my counsel is despised; but I leave my two sons and the vassals of Douglas in the field, may the result be glorious, and Angus's foreboding unfounded."† The last day of King James's existence was worthy of a

* Bergenroth's Spanish State Papers.

† Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv. p. 77.

soldier and a King. At Brankstone Field, in the neighbourhood of Flodden, King James met with a signal defeat.* The Scots fought with all that heroic valour for which their old land was renowned; but they had to encounter the legions of England, led to the charge by such generals as the Earl of Surrey, supported by the Stanleys, the Constables, and the Dacres.† The Scots descended the hill on foot, in good order, numbering some forty-five thousand men; after the German fashion they moved forward in perfect silence; the great majority of them were armed with a sharp spear five yards in length, and targets which they held before them. When the spears failed they fought with sharp swords, making little noise but terrible execution. The Scottish army were repulsed; they came to the charge again and again; the fates, however, decided against them; they were crushed but not vanquished. The battle was a fearful carnage. Lord Thomas Howard, in his despatch to King Henry, says: "As I expect no quarter, I shall give none." King James is reported to have said that, "under any circumstances, he would never condescend to seek quarter from his ungenerous enemy." "Your King leads you to glory or to death," are the words attributed to King James when advancing to the last charge. He fell mortally wounded; a brave man fighting to the end, and "winning, as he prayed to win, a soldier's death."

When James's body was found, his neck was opened in

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* The battle was fought on Friday, September 9th, 1513.

† The English army numbered about thirty thousand; the half of them were German and Swiss mercenaries—all excellent soldiers, but mean, vindictive thieves, who stripped and robbed the dying and the dead.

the middle with a wide wound; his left hand, almost cut off in two places, "did scarce hang to his arm," and the archers had shot him in many parts of the body.*

"The remains of fifteen gallant lords lay stiff beside the corpse of their royal master; fifteen chiefs of ancient clans were among the dead; and ten thousand† of the brave Scots "lay here and there on the bloody field." As the dismal night approached, the scene became ghastly: every blow seemed to have proved fatal, and to add to the mournful effect, observes Ramsey, "the winds chanted, as it were, a midnight dirge over the pale and silent dead.

The news of the disastrous battle soon reached the most distant parts of Scotland, and the death of the King, whom the people passionately regarded, was received with wild lamentations. The wail of private grief, from the laird's mansion to the humble cottage, was loud and universal. In Edinburgh were to be heard the heartrending shrieks of women, young and old, who ran distracted through the streets bewailing the husbands, the sons, the brothers, or the kindred who had fallen in the fatal fight; clasping their infants to their bosoms, they trembled in anticipation of the coming horrors and desolation of their country. The young widowed Queen with the infant King in her arms was an object of general sympathy to every patriotic Scot. Queen Margaret was married at fourteen, and became a widow at twenty-four. Her talents were of a high order,

* Godwin's Annals, p. 22; Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv.

† The accounts of the losses at this battle are very conflicting. Some state that the English lost 5000 men, and the Scotch 10,000 or more. This statement, judging by recent research, is not correct. The English lost no person of note.

but there were some traits in her disposition which must remind the reader of the fact that she was the sister of Henry Tudor.

I shall have occasion to refer again to the history of Queen Margaret.

Charles the Fifth and Francis the First had not yet ascended their respective thrones, and the people of England had reason, at this juncture at least, to regard their King as peerless amongst his crowned compeers, and to feel proud likewise of his distinguished minister. This period was then accounted amongst the happiest theretofore experienced in this kingdom.

CHAPTER X.

LA REINE BLANCHE.

I cannot pass over the name of Mary Tudor, styled by our Gallic neighbours "La Reine Blanche," who was in early life associated with Anna Boleyn, but whose career was so different. Mary Tudor was the younger sister of Henry VIII.; "the beauty of the House of Tudor;" and generally allowed to be the fairest Princess in Europe. She was graced by all the religious sentiments and benevolence of her mother, so truly styled "Elizabeth the Good." A friendship of many years existed between Katharine of Arragon and her sister-in-law, Mary. Both were devotedly attached to the interests of the Church; Mary was a liberal patroness of the English convents up to the close of her life. Her marriage with a French monarch was not of her own selection. Louis XII. has been represented as "a feeble widower of sixty years old."* Mary, however ambitious of a crown, did not like the choice made for her. Few girls of sixteen would willingly espouse a regal valetudinarian of sixty. But her brother Henry was determined for political reasons that his sister should marry Louis. Henry significantly remarked, that the "next time" Mary bestowed her hand she should have her own choice—a promise she did not forget. Henry was well aware at the time that

* The French State Papers represent Louis as fifty-three at this period, but looking much older.

Mary was much attached to his handsome favourite, Charles Brandon.* Upon the departure of the Princess from Dover, she was accompanied by the King and Queen to the royal galley, where they "parted with tears and lamentations," on a windy morning in October, 1514. The ship met with disasters at sea; on the second morning of the voyage the vessel struck on a sand bank near Boulogne. Edward Hall's account of the landing differs from the black-letter book already quoted. He says:—"The forlorn young bride had to be lowered into an open boat, completely helpless from sea sickness. The breakers were dashing high, and wetted the long golden hair of the Princess, which streamed most disconsolately over her lovely face. The boat could not approach the beach, and the surf was high on the shallows, so that there was no little danger in landing; but Sir Christopher Garvasse, who was a man of enormous stature (7½ feet), strided through the breakers, which only reached a little above his waist, bearing the insensible Princess in his arms." In this fashion the bride of France landed at Boulogne. Her reception was everything that might be desired at the hands of a hospitable and warm-hearted people. The Princess Mary was accompanied by a retinue, amongst whom were six chaplains, fourteen knights, esquires, and lords; also thirty-four ladies, including "young Nan de Boleine."

On Monday (October 9th), the day of the patron saint of France (St. Denis), Mary Tudor was married at the Cathedral of Abbeville to Louis the Twelfth. A Cardinal and four

* Letters and Diary of Mary Tudor in the Cottonian Collection; Brewer's State Papers (Foreign); Lord Herbert; Miss Strickland's Tudor Princesses.

bishops officiated at the marriage. This was the first time since the Norman Conquest that an English Princess became Queen of France. In a few days subsequent Mary's coronation took place at the Cathedral of St. Denis, amidst a scene of great magnificence.

To use what might be styled a modern phrase, the "honeymoon" did not last long. The day after her coronation the bride wrote to her brother Henry, complaining of the "harsh and unfeeling conduct of her husband, who dismissed the greater number of her English attendants." Henry refused to interfere. A lively scene occurred between King Louis and the young English ladies, who cried effusively at parting from their Royal mistress; they looked upon the King as "something approaching to a monster" for interfering with the number of maids chosen by the Queen; they addressed the monarch in warm language. The equable Louis was "bowing and smiling at the English beauties in their fury." "So much for marrying an old man," said the lovely Lady Magdaleine Dacre; "no old husbands for us," was the exclamation of some dozen English ladies. "I will never marry any man; I will be a nun," were the words of little Nan de Bouleine. The Queen endeavoured to pacify her maidens. So "lovely Mary," as Queen Katharine wrote of her, then dried her tears, and with "Hope's picture of a future time," submitted to the command of her whimsical old husband. Amongst the four English ladies whom King Louis permitted to remain with his Queen was Mademoiselle Nan de Bouleine; perhaps she was selected out of policy, being the granddaughter of the Duke of Norfolk, and niece of the Earl of Surrey, both of whom accompanied the Princess Mary to France. The document in which the four ladies'

names are set down as maids-of-honour, is preserved in the Cottonian Library, and is signed by Louis XII. They were all ladies of rank; two of them being the great-grand-daughters of Elizabeth de Woodevylle; and another of the fair dames, already noted, belonged to the proud and chivalrous House of Dacre. They were called in Paris the "English beauties," as they rode out clad in glittering robes, mounted on white palfreys, dressed, on some occasions, in crimson velvet—a costume peculiarly becoming to the hazel eyes and brunette complexion of Nan de Bouleine.* These scenes were, however, suddenly brought to a close.

The fashion of English "dinner-hours," introduced at the French Court by Queen Mary, did not suit the homely and retiring King Louis. One of his biographers remarks: "Our King loved to observe the good old French custom of dining at *eight of the clock in the morning;* and going to bed at *six in the evening;* but *now* it suited his young Queen that he should dine at noon, and not go to bed till midnight." It was stated by the King's physicians that this change in his mode of life would cause his death.

Louis lavished jewels and diamonds of enormous value upon his young wife; but she never forgave his interference with the retention of her ladies. Mary observed all the proprieties of her high position without reproach—a difficult task in those times. Louis XII. died suddenly on the New Year's Day of 1515, leaving his Queen a widow after a marriage of eighty-two days. The girl-queen, according to custom, retired from all society for thirty days.

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* Madame Pasqualija's story of La Reine Blanche and her English Maids of Honour.

The foreign political arrangements of Wolsey fell to the ground at the death of Louis XII. By the marriage of Mary Tudor with Louis, the policy of the Treaty of Cambrai had recoiled upon its authors. The main object of that policy had been to shut out England from all interference in Continental politics; to render France, in fact, the dictator of Europe; and what in those days was scarcely less important for this purpose, to leave the Roman Pontiff entirely dependent on the will of his "Christian Majesty." But by the marriage alliance, Wolsey had contrived, under the semblance of an equal partition of authority, to make England in reality predominant. Such it was felt to be by King Louis, and more so by his energetic successor, Francis I. Louis was no match in political intrigue for the English Monarch, or the vigour and genius of Wolsey, then in the prime of life.*

Louis XII. was a brave and a humane Prince. He was a General of some ability, and signalised himself at the battle of Aignadel (May 14th, 1509). He was meditating another expedition into Italy for the recovery of the Dukedom of Milan, when death put an end to his scheme. Bayard states that he was "much attached to his young wife, in whose arms he expired." It is certain that the young wife had no regard for him. The memory of Louis was long revered by the French nation. "We never had such good times," writes De Gelais, "under any other prince as during the reign of our most loved King, Louis XII."

Louis considerably diminished the oppressive taxation, and never created new ones. He loved his subjects, and his

* Brewer's State Papers (Foreign), vol. ii.

most passionate desire was to make them happy, for which he wished to be called their "father." In the beginning of his reign he was ridiculed for his saving propensity, upon which he remarked: "I had much rather my thoughtless subjects should laugh at my parsimony, than weep at their own oppression."

The contrast between Louis XII. and Francis I. was remarkable. Francis was the patron and friend of literature at the time of the revival of letters; he collected what escaped the destroying hand of the Turks and other barbarians, and shared with Leo X. the glory and the honour of making the arts and sciences flourish in Europe. He drew into France learned men from every quarter of Europe —scholars, historians, painters, musicians, architects, eminent physicians, theologians, and men expert in sciences. Erasmus, Budens, and De Petti concur in stating that Francis always desired to "encourage and bring to Paris the learned and the scientific men of other lands." Anne of Brittany had begun to draw ladies to Court, but her husband, Louis XII., cared little for the society of ladies—educated or otherwise; and it was not till the accession of Francis that women made a brilliant appearance at Court. Francis also invited to his palaces the most distinguished cardinals and prelates; after a time the French Court became the most polished in Europe. Rome, Florence, and Paris were the three great centres of learning and the polite arts during the reign of Francis I. In the hour of adversity, when the prisoner of Charles V., Francis used these memorable words, "Everything is lost except my honour."

There is, however, another and a more serious view to be taken of the "responsibilities" of Francis as a King,

and of the English as the invaders of his country. The condition of many parts of France at this time (1515-16) was one of wretchedness. To destroy property, and to leave thousands of women and children homeless, seemed to have been the tactics pursued by Henry's Generals in France, as English deputies had before and long subsequently acted in Ireland. Barns, cornfields, churches, hospitals, numerous villages, and castles were indiscriminately given to the flames by the Earl of Surrey and his soldiers.* "Wars carried on in this spirit," writes Dr. Brewer, "could have no other effect than that of brutalising equally the invader and the invaded." The extravagance of King Francis, the methods employed by him for maintaining a numerous army, his private profligacy, his oppressive exactions, his insensibility to the calamities thus inflicted, had alienated from him, in a great degree, the patient and enduring loyalty of a brave and virtuous people. Churches, plate, and jewels consecrated to the service of religion, all were seized upon by the unscrupulous and sacrilegious Francis. The golden images of the Apostles were melted down; thousands of gold and silver chalices were sent to the furnace. The various articles marked out for taxation also showed that the King and his ministers had little sympathy for the social requirements of the people. A notable cleric of Paris states that "the people looked like spectres from want and pestilence; they cried out to the Church to succour them; but the Church was likewise suffering from the heavy exac-

* In Brewer's State Papers, vol. iii., appears a despatch from the Earl of Surrey to his royal master, describing in a business-like fashion the destruction he caused to the French people in his triumphant march through their country.

tions of the Crown." It would appear that the unfortunate habitants had to contend with even a worse enemy than the policy of Francis had created. "The spoliations of their own Kings," remarks Dr. Brewer, "faded into nothing when compared with the sullen barbarity of the English troops, who spared neither churches nor houses—rich nor poor."* So the unoffending people suffered unto the bitter end.

I must repeat that the "English armies," above alluded to, were to a large extent composed of German and Italian "mercenaries"—a class of soldiers to whom I have referred in a preceding chapter. In all equity and fairplay, the English King and his Government should have been accountable for the actions of the ferocious free-lances who were then a disgrace to Europe.

And now for the love story of the young widow of France, Queen Mary.

In Brewer's State Papers are to be found some interesting accounts of the interview between Francis I. and the Duke of Suffolk. "My Lord of Suffolk," said Francis, "it is bruited in this my realm that you are come to marry with the young Queen, your master's sister." Suffolk felt alarmed, and denied that he came on such a mission. The King replied that, "if Suffolk would not be plain with him he must be plain with the Duke." Francis proceeded to inform Suffolk that the "Princess herself had broken the matter to him, and he, for his part, had promised her on the faith and honour of a King, that he would do his utmost to help her." He then detailed certain secrets which had passed between the lovers, calling up an unwonted

* Brewer's State Papers (Foreign), vol. iii. Part I.

crimson into Suffolk's face, "the which," said Suffolk, "I knew no man alive could tell; and it was clear that the young Queen opened her mind to the French King." Francis perceiving the embarrassed condition of Suffolk, became apparently gracious and kindly. "Be not disturbed," said the gallant monarch, "for you have found a friend; do not think wrong of the Queen; I shall never fail to act for you, and to advance this love you have for one another, as I would for mine own self." Suffolk at this moment was almost indignant with his ladye-love for having disclosed their romantic secret to the French King; but the young Queen was compelled to do so in order to check, if possible, the attentions of Francis, whose conduct became ungenerous and unmanly, especially in her forlorn and youthful state, away from country and kindred. About the same time the Princess wrote to her brother Henry, detailing the annoyances she endured, and was compelled to disclose to Francis her affection for Suffolk, in order to be relieved of the annoyance of his suit, which was not to her honour; and, in conclusion, she urged King Henry for leave to return to England, that she might not be exposed to a repetition of insults.*

The conduct of Henry at this juncture was almost inexplicable in exposing his sister to the importunities of the licentious Francis, unless we conceive it to be in part accounted for by two projects of the English monarch's own, which were bound up with Suffolk's special mission; one to obtain possession of the jewels presented to his sister Mary by her late husband; the other, to make profit out of

* Brewer's State Papers, 1515.

the desire of Francis to recover Tournai. Henry, in his grasping mood, even demanded the reimbursement of the expenses of his sister's passage to France, and the cost of her bridal dress. The Princess was indignant at the mean conduct of her brother in relation to these matters. In all the more generous and better feelings of human nature the contrast between King Henry and his sister Mary was immense.

The Princess Mary's marriage with Louis had been the topic of conversation in every Court of Europe, for the hand of the fair Queen, La Reine Blanche, was eagerly sought for her own sake by princes and nobles. The Duke of Lorraine, the Duke of Bavaria, the Prince of Portugal, and even the Emperor Maximilian, entertained designs upon the hand of the lovely young widow. Although Maximilian assured his daughter, the Princess Margaret, that he would never marry again for "beauty or money, were he to die for it, and could perhaps resist beauty, the charms of money were too potent for his soul." "After dinner one day, Maximilian kept his eyes fixed upon Mary's portrait for a full half-hour or more, and then summoned his secretary, who had seen the Princess, and asked him if it was very like her." The secretary told him "there could not be a better likeness." "The Emperor," writes Louis Maraton to the Princess Margaret, "has commissioned me to ask you, without letting it be known that he had taken any interest in the matter, to write to the King of England to get the lady into his own hands, urging his Majesty of England that if she be married in France and were to die without heirs, his kingdom would be exposed to great hazards." But the Emperor's application arrived too late. Maraton

states that Maximilian was always unlucky in his love adventures.* It was money the needy Emperor required most at this time, and not a young wife.

At this period Francis I. was in his twenty-second year. He is described as "corpulent in stomach and slender in legs." Pasqualija, who saw him in Paris, gives an account of a conversation he had with Henry VIII. on the personal appearance and manners of his cousin of France. "His Majesty came to me and said: 'Is the King of France as tall as I am?' I told him there was little difference. 'Is he as stout?' I told him he was not. 'What sort of legs has he?' I replied, 'Spare.' 'Then,' said King Hal, 'I have the longest and strongest legs in all England; I will give one hundred marks to any Frenchman who will produce as good legs.'" It is not related that any favourite entered the lists to win the wager. The mother of Francis, Louise of Savoy, had great influence with her son; and she deserved it, for never did mother more regard a son. The Duke of Suffolk, writing to Henry VIII., says: "I never saw a woman like to her, both for wit, honour, and good-nature. She is always doing good for those who need it, and is a protector of the lonely and and desolate of her own sex." A high commendation from such a man as Suffolk.

Francis I. made a public entry into Paris about two months subsequent to the death of Louis XII. Galtimore, writing to Margaret of Savoy, draws an interesting picture of the public procession, and the "magnificent sight presented to the inhabitants, the like of which was

* Brewer's Foreign State Papers.

never before witnessed in Paris." The Duke of Suffolk, as the representative of the English King, was present, and the Dowager Queen (Mary of England) saw the grand pageant from a window, seated beside Nan de Bouleine, who was right merrie at the lively scene. "The people were half mad with joy." La Reine Blanche looked unhappy, and seemed as if forgotten; yet a few months back she was the popular idol of France.

When the young Queen saw the contest that was likely to take place for her hand, she became alarmed. She reminded her brother of his promise, that "in her next marriage her own feelings alone were to be consulted." Henry, however, soon forgot his promises, when he saw a chance of promoting some State affairs by sacrificing his sister's happiness. Mary's courage was well tried on this occasion. She was, however, a warm-hearted, constant, noble-minded woman. She sent a message to Suffolk to meet her immediately in the royal library.* Two ladies, the senior of her attendants, were present. Suffolk entered with hesitation, for he dreaded King Henry's resentment. The Queen was determined to take all the censure or blame upon herself. She informed her lover of the position of affairs. "We must," said Mary, "either marry *now*, or lose all chance of our future happiness." The Queen made a delicate allusion to the former associations that existed between them, their correspondence and love-tokens.

The courageous Suffolk shed tears; he remained silent. Mary became impatient; advancing towards him she said,

* In Miss Strickland's Lives of the Tudor Princesses is chronicled an interesting account of the first interview between Suffolk and the Dowager Queen in Paris.

"Have more courage." Then laying her hand on his shoulder, and with one of those sweet endearing smiles that were native to the woman, addressed her lover in these homely words: "Charles Brandon, if you will marry me, my heart, my affections, are still yours, and can never be conferred on any other man; but our marriage must take place within *four days or never.** Danger threatens us at every point. I shall be true to the death."

The scenes which occurred have been related by Anna Boleyn to Margaret Wyatt, by Father Palsgrave, and Lady Dacre; but I prefer the interesting picture drawn by Mr. Hepworth Dixon.

"The light in Suffolk's brain was dimmer than the taper in the Gothic room in which he stood. He loved, he feared, he paused. 'Decide,' said Mary. Then the man gave way. Ten persons were invited to the Hôtel de Cluny, King Francis being one of them, when a nameless priest† entered the tiny chapel, said his office, and made Suffolk and Mary Tudor man and wife."

When Henry discovered the clandestine marriage he gave vent to indignation in his usual mode. He denounced Suffolk as a perjurer; he had "made him take a solemn oath that in visiting the French Court he (Suffolk) would merely present himself as the diplomatic agent of the English King," and "make no lover's tricks" with the

* Mary wrote to her brother, stating that she would enter a convent sooner than be compelled to marry any man against her own feelings.

† Father Palsgrave was the priest who performed the marriage. Nan de Bouleine was present, and it was one of the last occasions on which she attended the Princess. Neither Palsgrave nor Brewer mentions the presence of the French monarch, and it is very unlikely that he was a witness o the ceremony, being a concealed lover of Mary himself.

young Queen. In one of Wolsey's letters he states that King Henry "was strongly inclined to dissolve his sister's marriage by cutting off her lover's head."* The wrath of Henry was ultimately appeased by receiving a large portion of the jewels and diamonds which Mary received from King Louis, which were valued at 200,000*l*.

The letter written by Queen Mary to her brother Henry, "seeking forgiveness for the 'clandestine marriage,'" was evidently copied from an original, dictated perhaps by Wolsey, or, more likely, by Father Palsgrave, who was acquainted with the Princess's secret. The composition and style is too guarded for a girl of seventeen or eighteen years of age; besides, the tone is far too humble for the high-spirited Mary Tudor, who believed that she had a perfect right to dispose of her own hand as she pleased. Whoever wrote the "original" thoroughly understood the inner feelings of Henry, and appealed to them with much delicacy and earnestness. Mary had little experience in letter-writing at this period, and as to Suffolk, he was incapable of dictating an epistle to the critical and pedantic Henry; yet a letter bearing his signature was despatched to King Henry, "seeking forgiveness for becoming his brother-in-law without the royal consent." This letter was composed by Father Ambrose.

At this moment of danger Wolsey came to the front, and by his dominant influence with Henry released the lovers from the impending ruin which threatened them. How far Suffolk evinced his gratitude will appear in subsequent chapters.

* State Papers; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.; Miss Strickland's Tudor Princesses.

On the return of Mary and Suffolk to England, the King commanded that a public marriage should take place at the Grey Friars Church, Greenwich, which was the occasion of a grand demonstration, the King giving away the bride. Queen Katharine and the ladies of her Court played a prominent part in the ceremonies of the day. A German writer states that Anna Boleyn was present, and attracted the notice of the King. Such is not the fact. At the period of the young Queen's marriage to Suffolk "little Nan de Bouleine" was in the convent at Brie, and did not return to England for nearly seven years subsequently.

Dr. Brewer contends that Anna Boleyn "never belonged to the household retinue of the Princess; that her name has been confounded with that of her sister Mary." I must respectfully dissent from this statement, although it has been made by so eminent an authority. I have, however, already referred to a document in the Cottonian Library where the name of Nan de Bouleine occurs as one of the four maids-of-honour retained; it is signed by Louis XII. himself, which makes the matter conclusive.*

Father Palsgrave, who was many years resident in France, was Mary's principal French preceptor. Upon the return of the Princess to England he was one of her chaplains. He subsequently became a celebrated professor of the French language in London, and several of the young nobility were numbered amongst his pupils. He is said to have been the first Englishman who attempted to

* In the second volume of this work I hope to be able to resume the history of La Reine Blanche, under the title of the "Queen Duchess."

"compile and arrange" a French Grammar. He was much esteemed by Henry VIII.* Radclyffe states that Anna Boleyn was amongst his pupils. He died about 1541. Father Palsgrave has been claimed by the Reformers as "a convert to their cause;" but there are some letters of his extant which prove that he was opposed to the Reformation, and on one occasion called Cranmer a hypocrite and a knave. Thorndale describes Palsgrave as "an eminent chess-player and an admirable story-teller—a class of men then much esteemed in England."

* Anthony Wood, Dr. Pitts, Dodd, and Thorndale.

CHAPTER XI.

FALL OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

The Duke of Buckingham represented the ancient family of Stafford. He was the hereditary High Constable of England, claiming descent on one side from Edward III., and was very wealthy. He was ambitious, and soon attracted Wolsey's notice; he scorned to pay court to the Cardinal, whom he much disliked. He thus excited the jealousy of the Minister, and the resentment of his King. He was suddenly arrested, and charged with conspiracy against the Crown. Buckingham was innocent of any treasonable plots. His trial disclosed no crime of treason; yet he was found guilty. The conduct of Wolsey to this nobleman remains a lasting reproach to his character.

The Duke of Buckingham was the steadfast adherent of Queen Katharine. He was the rival and enemy of the House of Howard, whose hostility to the Queen was so strongly manifest. He was related to King Henry, not only on the Tudor, but the Woodevylle line. A man so near the royal family, and possessed of such wealth, might be considered either a useful friend or a dangerous foe. The Duke was, nevertheless, a loyal man, although beheaded for treason. Queen Katharine was attached to this noble family, who sustained her cause for years;* and the Staf-

* Lingard, vol. v.; History of Two Queens, vol. iii.

fords of the House of Buckingham were installed in all the confidential offices which were at the disposal of Katharine.

Buckingham was tried by a "select number" of peers, whom Wolsey had named. The most ridiculous charges were brought against him. Several times he exclaimed: "That is all false, it is most untrue—the papers are all forgeries." The peers began to whisper. "Speak out, my lords," said Buckingham; "it is the King's will that I should die. I am content to die, though not for the crimes alleged, all of which are manifestly false."* Buckingham and his friends felt that the whole trial was merely a form—a scandalous sham; and every man of the seventeen peers who formed the jury knew in heart and soul that there was no evidence to sustain the accusations. The King demanded the life, and still more desired the princely possessions, of this munificent noble. So, obediently, the peers satisfied his wish. The President of the Court put the question individually, commencing with the Duke of Suffolk. "I say that he is guilty," answered Suffolk, laying his hand against his heart. So said every peer in turn. The Duke of Norfolk pronounced sentence of death, and asked the doomed noble what he had to say in his defence.

The Duke of Buckingham replied with a firm voice:—"My Lord of Norfolk, you have said to me as a traitor should be said unto; but I was never none. Still, my lords, I nothing malign you for that you have done unto me. May the Eternal God forgive you my death, as I do; I shall never sue to the King's Highness for my life. . . . I desire the forgiveness of all good men and women; and

* Hall's Chronicle; Stowe; State Trials.

most freely forgive my enemies. My life is now drawing to a close, and in perhaps a few hours I may be permitted to take a last, and a long farewell, of those whom I have loved and honoured in life."*

Great interest was exerted to save Buckingham's life; but his enemies were powerful and implacable. Anna Boleyn's father, and all his connexions, had been forward in this deadly contest with Buckingham. The battle had commenced when Anna Boleyn was only eight years old, and in the outset it had gone in favour of the Duke. Buckingham had snatched from the Boleyn family the coronet of Wiltshire. Buckingham, and the men of his opinions, had prevented Anna's father from rising in the public service, and acquiring a position due to wealth, talents, and high connexions.† There could be little doubt as to the result of the trial when Lord Rochford (the newly created peer), Lord Cobham, and the Duke of Norfolk were chief amongst the peers who formed the jury.

The noble prisoner was conducted back to the Tower in the usual barbarous manner, two headsmen bearing their murderous weapons before him. Vast crowds of people lined the way from Westminster Hall to the Temple, from whence the Duke was conveyed in a barge to his final destiny. Sir Thomas Lovell desired him to sit on the velvet cushions arranged for him in the barge. Buckingham replied in a broken-hearted accent: "Nay, nay, Sir Thomas, when I went to Westminster Hall to answer the divers charges against me, I was *the* Duke of Buckingham; but now I am

* Year Book, Hilary Term, 13 Henry VII.; Rolls,' MSS.; State Trials; Stowe, Hall, H. Salt, Lingard, Hallam.

† History of Two Queens, vol. ii.

but Edward Bohun, the most caitiff of the world. The will of God be done."*

A vast concourse of people attended the execution of the Duke of Buckingham at Tower Hill. He addressed the populace at some length, assuring them that he was a loyal and a true subject to the King. He regretted the careless life he led for some time; he was in heart and soul attached to the old Latin Church. "I have," said he, "this morning received 'my good Lord' (the Holy Eucharist) at the Mass offered up for my poor soul. I ask the prayers of all present—young and old. And now I say, good people, farewell to you all."†

Dr. Brewer's research amongst State Papers leads to the conclusion that Wolsey "was not so 'hungry' for Buckingham's destruction as some persons following on Polydore Vergil's track might imagine." Holinshed and Herbert adopt the false statements of Polydore Vergil.

The repute of the Duke of Buckingham has been long enveloped in the mists of popular prejudice. He has been misrepresented in words and actions, both by tradition and history. His immense wealth excited the envy of the King and the spendthrift knights and squires. His retainers were numerous, his liveries gorgeous; on some occasions he was attended by two hundred servants, trumpeters, &c. He had two services of gold plate; and his banquets outshone those of the Cardinal of York. He was well known in Paris from the splendour of his "appointments" and numerous suite. He is described as the "proudest man in

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* State Trials; Hall's Chronicle; Stowe.

† Hall; Stowe; State Papers; Scaffold Speeches of Great Men.

England;" yet it is recorded that the "poorest vassal could approach him, and make known his grievance. It is alleged that he was "harsh and cruel" to his tenants: the contrary was the fact. Few rich men thought less of money. In one of Polydore Vergil's letters he is described as "a mean miser, who grumbled at the expenses attendant on the Cloth of Gold." Yet still it happened that Buckingham outrivalled the Cardinal of York in his magnificent "train and appointments" at the memorable meeting of the English and French monarchs. So in this, like many other cases, Polydore is a false witness. Buckingham was no admirer of Wolsey, yet never used unseemly language in speaking of the Cardinal. Shakespeare's portrait of the Duke of Buckingham is a mere counterfeit, like many others of his historical characters.

As I have already remarked, the Duke of Buckingham was the most powerful and earnest friend Queen Katharine possessed in England. He disappeared from the scene just at the time the conspirators against the Queen commenced their organisation.

The office of High Constable, which Buckingham inherited from the Bohuns, Earls of Hereford, was forfeited in his person, and was never after revived. Edward Stafford was the family name by which the Duke of Buckingham was popularly known. It is stated, however, in a work entitled, "The History of Remarkable Trials," that he took the surname of Bohun before that of Stafford, he being descended from the Bohuns. A train of misfortune seemed to have pursued Buckingham's family. His father was beheaded by Richard III.; his grandfather fell at the battle of St. Albans; his great-grandfather was slain in a fight

near Northampton; and another near relative perished sword in hand on the field of Shrewsbury.

When Charles V. heard of the execution of Buckingham, he said, in allusion to Wolsey's alleged origin and Buckingham's titles, "Then has the butcher's dog pulled down the fairest buck in all Christendom."*

* Goodwin and Speed.

CHAPTER XII.

ANNA BOLEYN RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

In 1522, Anna Boleyn, then in her twenty-first year, returned to England from the French Court, to the regret of the good Queen Claude. Anna was long remembered in the Court of Blois, where she spent the happiest days of her life. Perhaps no young lady of her time or rank was better read. She was perfect in the French tongue of that period—the present beautiful and plastic language of versatile genius—and could converse in Italian and Spanish. "The Lady Anna," says a French writer, "was the fairest and the most bewitching of all the lovely dames at the French Court in my time. She possessed a great talent for poetry, and when she sang, like a second Orpheus, she would have made bears and wolves attentive. She likewise danced the English dances, leaping and gliding with infinite grace and agility. She invented many new figures and steps, which are yet known by her name, or of those of the gallant partners with whom she danced them. She was well skilled in all games fashionable at Courts. Besides singing like a siren, accompanying herself on the lute, she harped better than King David, and handled cleverly both lute and rebec. She dressed with marvellous taste, and devised new *modes*, which were followed by the fairest ladies of the French

Court, but none wore them with her gracefulness, in which she rivalled Venus."*

Mr. Hepworth Dixon states that the "best of Anna's gifts were those of Nature, not of Art; the wine and harvest of her Celtic blood. She was a poetess no less than a musician. . . . The pulse of life beat strongly in her veins. No pain surprised the gladness in her eyes. Her spirits never flagged; her brightness never faded; her invention never failed. The soul of every circle into which she came, she made, without an effort of her own, a friend of every generous woman, and a knight of every noble man. That yearning for a holy life which she had felt at Hever, and had set before her fancy as the prize of filial love, had painted her animal spirits with an ideal grace. Her eyes were always lit with fire; her lips were always curved with mirth. An air of mischief hovered on her brain; yet under the bewitching Irish manner lay a deep sense of things unseen; now playful, now sedate, she could be everything in turn. If Queen Claude and the Princess Renée loved her for the beauty of her ways, Marguerite de Valois found in her a kindred thinker. Neither Queen Katharine nor the ladies of her circle could resist the charm of Anna; in her society the day was never dull, and in the sparkle of her talk the old of heart felt young and fresh again."

Those courtiers who first saw Anna on her arrival from France were enraptured with one whom De Silvana, the Portuguese painter, called "ugly, but strikingly remarkable."

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* The above passage, which is quoted by Miss Strickland, is attributed to Chateaubriand; but Lingard questions its accuracy, and believes it was written by another person.

It is stated that the blood of the noisy, bustling House of Ormonde ran in her veins. From her Irish descent she inherited—

> "The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes."

And, like the Irish Isolt of the great poet, Anna Boleyn was remarkable for the exquisite turn of her neck, and her glossy throat. In 1527, another admirer of Nan's describes her as small and lively, a sparkling brunette, with fascinating eyes and long black hair, which, contrary to the sombre fashion of those days, she wore coquettishly floating loosely down her back, interlaced with jewels. The beauty of her eyes and her hair struck all beholders alike; and enchanted poets, painters, and minstrels. "Nan de Bouleine has no equal in all England," was the oft-repeated remark of the rustics in the neighbourhood of Hever Castle; and much reason the people had to love her, for her benevolence was unbounded, and far beyond her limited income.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IRISH COUSIN.

Amongst Anna's first suitors was her Irish cousin, James Butler, a young gentleman sadly inferior in education and good-breeding to his learned and accomplished kinswoman. It is affirmed that Anna had only seen her "tall Irish cousin, with large blue eyes," twice at Hever; that he was educated in Spain, and on his way home came to London; and at the suggestion of the Cardinal of York, and Lord Wiltshire, was presented to his "Cousin Nan" as a suitor, but he failed to make any impression; "artful Nan stating that she desired to become a nun." "This was a plan often adopted by Anna," writes Margaret Lee, "to drive suitors or lovers from her presence." But there were other reasons. The Irish cousin lacked one element of attraction—the very thought is an unamiable one—he was comparatively poor; and his fair Cousin Nan was thoroughly possessed of the fortune-hunting instinct of the Boleyn family. The fortune-hunting disposition of the lords and knights of Henry's reign cast shame upon the chivalry of previous times; yet there was "a grain of improvement" in this respect, to what had been in the reign of Edward IV., when the young and handsome brother of Lord Rivers married the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk for her large jointure. The bridegroom was twenty-four, and the "sprightly bride" eighty-one. The chivalry of Henry's reign had a parsi-

monious and a petty side; it was a vulgar inheritance bequeathed to society from the Wars of the Roses; and in the hands of the "new proprietors" sentiment became money. In the reign of Elizabeth several titled dames descended in the social scale, marrying their menials; and some ancient and wealthy widows becoming the wives of boys scarcely twenty years of age. In those times the "boy-men" were the successful fortune-hunters.

Wolsey, however, had a forethoughtful political interest in this Butler match. He wished to make up somewhat like a peace between the lawless "Lords of the Pale,"* wherewith to strengthen the English interest against the native Irish, for whom in his despatches he expresses all the hatred and contempt which a proud man feels for those who will not submit to subjugation. His Irish policy was that of his predecessors, "divide and conquer." The Butler party in the Pale were influential in the English interest, not because they loved England, but hated the Fitzgeralds.

It was reported in Dublin and Kilkenny, that Lord James Butler was about to marry "a great French beauty, named Nan de Bouleine;" that she had Irish blood in her veins; had uncles priests; was the companion of Queens, and the friend of the poor; that the Pope sent his blessing to her; that she loved the *Irish of the Pale,* and would soon be with them." This gossip was quickly circulated in every form of romance which a lively imaginative people,

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* The Pale was the portion of Ireland then under the rule or misrule of the descendants of the Norman invaders of Ireland—of whom the Fitzgeralds and the Butlers were for generations the most potent magnates for good or evil. The Fitzgeralds were—the Desmond branch, afterwards so cruelly treated by Elizabeth—the most liked by the native Irish.

like the Irish, could devise. The English "story-tellers," already alluded to, made their rounds of the Pale; ballads were in requisition upon the "Lovelie Ladye Nan." The minstrels took up the inspiration, and everything promised fair.* Anna's grandmother, Lady Margaret Boleyn, was well known in Kilkenny; she was a great horsewoman, and often joined in the chase for several hours. She was a declared sustainer of the Papal authority, and collected "Peter's Pence" amongst her unruly retainers. Such a woman was sure of popularity in Dublin, Kilkenny, or even amongst the Irish natives, who were always most earnest in their support of the Pope. "'Mairgread Gerirt,' as Lady Butler," writes Mr. Dixon, "lives in Irish history; she was a large, handsome woman, with a spirit still more daring and imperious than her husband. Her speech was loud, her eye was fierce; and woe to the poor kerne that crossed her path. She was so swift that people fancied her a creature of the air, who forced the winds and waves to do her will. In the long lines of Irish heroines, no woman ranks with 'Mairgread Gerirt.'"†

Wolsey anticipated success in this scheme of marriage utilised; but Anna Boleyn was not so facile a subject for the statesman's wiles. Threats were used, yet her father's influence failed on this occasion, and "rumour ran abroad" that she had a lover in the neighbourhood of Hever. "Who can it be?" was the remark of an old maiden aunt, who

* In the quaint despatches of several Lord Deputies from Dublin, there are allusions to the "arrival of the newsmongers" from London. This system continued for centuries. During the Viceroyalty of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, in 1686, that nobleman, in a despatch to Lord Sunderland, complains of the "lying, mischief-making story-tellers, who had just arrived from London."

† History of Two Queens, vol. iii.

was known to be a spy upon the movements of Anna, whose life was made miserable about this time.

Some writers "are convinced" that Thomas Wyatt was the only man for whom Anna Boleyn had "a very particular attachment." Dr. Nott—a good authority on the question—states that he has laboured in vain to discover any document that could lead to such a conclusion. Tradition, it is true, has handed down many romantic fragments concerning Anna and her friend. Mrs. Thompson, and other writers, "feel certain that Anna loved Wyatt." That she admired and loved Wyatt's society is beyond doubt. And what woman of Anna's high mental culture could resist the charms of this accomplished poet's company? He had no rival at the English Court. Anna Boleyn, however, cannot be judged by the present standard of educated women's minds or feelings. Mr. Hepworth Dixon contends that the friendship between both parties was purely platonic. He says that "every line that was written (or spoken) by Wyatt to his 'Laura' was such as a minstrel might have addressed to a female saint." The young courtiers were jealous of the favour shown by Anna Boleyn to the poor poet, whom they hated for his genius; but Anna despised their resentments, and smiled upon the minstrel, whom popular report declared to be her "true love."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BORDER CHIEF.

Suddenly a change occurred. A new suitor appeared, and one whose importance set the pretensions of the Irish cousin far aside. Henry, Lord Percy, brought to Anna Boleyn an offering of his honest affection. He had seen her many times in the Queen's ante-room amongst the Court ladies; then he had "a gossip in the royal gardens, where," says Margaret Lee, "he confessed his most honourable love and devotion to the accomplished maid-of-honour." Anna had, it seems in this case, unconsciously made a conquest; but how many did she not knowingly make, and spurn? She delighted in "sentimental flirtation;" but never indulged in those "romping matches" with young courtiers, for which the ladies of those times were noted. Anna kept the gentlemen of the Court at a distance, and was consequently no favourite. "A Lord Mayor's granddaughter" was the sneering remark of the landed lords. The "Lord Mayor's granddaughter," however, had the blood of the princely Howards in her veins, and she had evidently won the affections of the heir to the powerful House of Northumberland, to the annoyance of many Court ladies of ancient family. "An air of romance clung about this Border Chief," writes Mr. Dixon, "in whom his warlike ancestor, Hotspur, seemed to live again. A man five-and-thirty years of age, handsome and tall, he looked the soldier

from 'his bonnet to his spur.' Percy knew little of the Court, or the manners of those who frequented it. He was a country gentleman, but one of great power in the North. His retainers and servants were numerous. He was without a rival at field sports; a brave soldier, and a staunch supporter of the Church and the Monarchy, which his ancestors always maintained. He was warm-hearted, and, perhaps, a little weak-minded; yet more inclined to retaliate than to forgive. He pressed his suit with a kind of rustic warmth; he did not like delays, and sometimes may have consulted the 'Border Witches.' Percy's manly bearing, high station, and wealth, attracted the attention of Queen Katharine's maids-of-honour. They envied their friend; still Anna seemed to be indifferent to Percy's advances." Lingard states that Percy proposed a clandestine marriage to Anna, and that she seemed to be seriously inclined to agree to such a plan. An examination of the facts, however, show that the Cardinal's "experts" made it impossible to accomplish a clandestine marriage. What was Wolsey's policy in this matter? Was he, as I fear, swayed by the choice which he then made, and which he afterwards deplored, between the King Eternal and his temporal prince? Much must be left to supposition, because we cannot fathom intentions; but, in this case, taking the surroundings, Wolsey's action in Anna's cause, after the *fiasco* of the "Lord of the Pale," reflects upon him sad discredit.

In one of William Cavendish's gossipping letters to Dr. Francis, he states that he was "quietly listening and looking into the Queen's ante-room, where the maids-of-honour sat till called to the Royal presence, and he saw Percy there in

talk with Nan Boleyn ; and he did kiss her hand twice like a knight and a true lover. The Lady Nan seemed affected at parting from him, and in a low dulcet voice she said, 'Harry, when shall I see you again ?' I did not hear what he answered," continued Cavendish, "but poor Harry Percy seemed at that time quite in love with *his* Nan. And no wonder, for she had no equal among all the maidens of the Court. But my Lord Cardinal, for reasons best known to himself, separated the lovers for ever."

Carlo Logario, the Cardinal's Spanish physician, makes a similar statement. Perhaps he was another eavesdropper : still some interest can attach to what may be fairly regarded as unselfish reminiscences. Logario, however, knew more of the love story of Anna and Percy than he ever revealed. Upon the fall of Wolsey Carlo Logario became attached to the household staff of Lord Percy.

Miss Strickland seems inclined to think that Anna entertained a secret love for Wyatt all through, and after Percy's projected suit had been set aside by Wolsey, she might have privately married the poet; but he was then engaged to Elizabeth Brooks, for whom, as he subsequently informed his fair cousin Mildred, he "did not care, as he loved in secret another dame of qualittie, whose name he dare not mention." The reader may conjecture the name of the lady in question—Anna Boleyn.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIRST TUDOR DIVORCE.

HENRY'S sister Margaret, Queen of Scotland, established a precedent for him in the odious system of divorce. Upon the death of her husband, James IV., Margaret violated almost every "bequest he made in his will for religious or other purposes." Like her brother at a subsequent period, Margaret desired to take all Church preferments into her own hands, and made some scandalous clerical appointments. She married a subject—a youth scarcely eighteen years of age, one of the ambitious House of Douglas. She was immoral and dishonest, and effected a divorce (1525) from her husband through the corruption of the Ecclesiastical Courts of Scotland. Scarcely was the judgment pronounced in her favour when she married her paramour, Henry Stuart.* This action of the Queen was illegal according to canon law; but Margaret Tudor "would do as she pleased." She was the first of the Tudor family who sought to dissolve the marriage bonds. She *divorced herself* from two husbands, had "several favourites," robbed the public purse of what l'ttle a Scottish treasury could have possessed, and she became a scandal to the queenly office. Margaret Tudor manifested, for a woman, a notable share of the avarice, deception, and vindictiveness which characterised her brother in his dealings with the world.

* Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv. p. 179.

Upon the visit of Queen Margaret to London, after an absence of many years, she received an enthusiastic reception from burghers and people. King Henry "was most brotherly in his attentions;" his motives, however, were political, for he cared little for any member of his own family, and merely wished to get a footing in Scotland through the agency of his unprincipled sister. In this scheme he was disappointed, but not for want of Margaret's aid.

Edward Hall numbers amongst the events of Henry's reign the visit of Queen Margaret to London: "The Queen of Scotland made her entry into London town May 3, 1516, riding behind Sir Thomas Parr on a white palfrey. She was richly dressed, and gladly seen by a great company of lords and ladyes." The English nobles who were sent to escort her from the "Borders" entertained no high opinion of her sense of good-breeding as a lady. Her manners were gross, and she frequently indulged in violent fits of passion and indecent language.*

Queen Margaret having little education, more easily tolerated the rude manners of the Scottish nobility of her time. The women of Scotland did not change much from what they had been in the days of Don Pedro de Ayala, and consequently were far superior to their Queen. Under the Puritanism of a proximate subsequent period, the men were, if possible, worse, for they adopted the name of religion to mask their crimes, thus adding hypocrisy to the calendar of their normal atrocities. Queen Margaret had ceased for many years to be under the control of those

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* Brewer's State Papers.

pious and amiable feelings which her early training from a good mother had imparted. In the words of her biographer, she had "scarcely any religion, and was guided entirely by her instincts, which were not of an elevated character."* When this fallen Queen had reached her fortieth year she was suddenly stricken by a fatal illness; and being assured that she had not many days to live, cried out for a confessor. Her request was immediately complied with, and after "five days of agony and penitential tears," Margaret, the Dowager Queen, expired. An old Scottish tradition states that her "last hours were most edifying; she desired above all things to see her son, James V., in order to beg his forgiveness for the shame and scandal she caused to the Royal Family." It is stated she dictated a letter to her brother Henry with a similar request, and besought him to have Masses celebrated for her soul's health. Her son, who did not arrive till his mother was dead, honoured her with a public funeral; and the Scottish clans, forgetting her errors, attended to pay a last tribute to her whom they once worshipped as "beautiful Murgo." Her daughter, by the Earl of Angus, was subsequently known as Lady Margaret Douglas, and then as the Countess of Lennox, and the mother of the ill-fated Darnley, the husband of Mary, Queen of Scots. This lady's history was one of adversity and sorrow, having been a prisoner in the Tower under Henry VIII., and again suffered persecution at the hands of her English cousin, Queen Elizabeth.

In the British Museum is deposited a large and curious

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* Miss Strickland's Queens of Scotland, vol. i.; Fraser Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv.

collection of Queen Margaret's letters to her brother, who does not seem to have been satisfied with her conduct. He sent a stern and stinging rebuke to Margaret concerning her divorce, and advised her to live honestly with her husband; and further lectured her upon the "stories bruited against her honour." The bearer of this confidential advice was one of the Observant Fathers from Greenwich, subsequently the victim of Henry's vengeance. In another communication to his confidential agent in Scotland Henry says: "The behaviour of my sister sounds openly to her extreme reproach. . . . . She is more like an unnatural and transformed person than a noble princess, or a woman with a sense of wisdom and honour."*

There is a concurrence of opinion amongst the biographers of Queen Margaret to the effect that she was a violent and mischievous woman, and her individual character was such as could not long command either affection or respect.

It has been remarked that the Stuarts brought "ill-luck and a curse" in their train; but it may be more correct to state that the political troubles of the Royal House of Stuart, and their people, are traceable to the Tudor connection. The misdeeds and disasters attributed to Queen Margaret's personal conduct gave rise to the civil wars, which subsequently proved so fatal to her Stuart offspring, and all those brave and chivalrous families who espoused their cause in Scotland, England, or their still more devoted sister, Ireland, treated with such flagrant ingratitude by that wretched dynasty.

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* State Papers (Scotland), vol. iv.

CHAPTER XVI.

WOLSEY DECLARES AGAINST THE LOVE MATCH.

Nan responded to the feelings of Harry Percy. Her manner, however, was occasionally cold and restrained.* Dr. Gardyner describes Percy as a man of few words when in the company of dames of qualitie; but if making merrie with the Border squires, he did not lack of talk on the chase or rural sports. He thought more of horses and dogs than he did of books. He was proud of the name of Percy, yet he sometimes forgot his personal respect, and descended to the company of very inferior folks. He was, unfortunately, fond of strong liquors, which gave him an old appearance. Although warm-hearted and sensitive, as an enemy he was unforgiving, vindictive, and treacherous. The Cardinal called him a "boy," sometimes a "fool," but Percy was a settled man some years beyond thirty; he cried like a boy about "*his* Nan," still he was no fool. Percy was unhappy in all his domestic relations, and lived on bad terms with his father for years. The wife whom he subsequently wedded disliked him, and he returned her hate with interest.

Few had better opportunities of knowing Percy than

* History of Two Queens; State Papers of Henry VIII.; Letters of Margaret Lee, Cavendish, and Logario. Brewer contends that the courtship between Anna and Percy occurred at a later date than that stated by Cavendish; dates in this case, especially, must lead to the most important conclusions.

Stephen Gardyner, who was an old acquaintance of his father, and at one period the Latin secretary of Wolsey.

There are several versions of the interview between Cardinal Wolsey and Lord Percy, all more or less derived from Cavendish or Dr. Gardyner; but I think the following contains the facts :—

"I marvel not a little, my Lord Percy," said Wolsey, "of thy folly and want of discreet tongue. Why shouldst thou tangle thyself with a vain foolish '*chett*' (a young girl) like Nan Boleyn? Do you not consider the high state that God hath called thee unto in this world? . . . . I have sent for your father, the right noble and brave Earl of Northumberland, a truly loyal man and good Catholic; and when he comes this silly match will be broken off—yes, it will—or your noble father will disinherit you for your wicked disobedience. Mark my words."

The Cardinal laying his hand on Percy's shoulder, in a low tone continued :—

"Thomas Boleyn's daughter *cannot be your wife.*" And, after a long pause: "*She is intended for another man.* You must, my lord, *learn to forget all about this foolish Nan. Remember what I say.*"

Percy stood like a statue.

"You are affected, I fear," said the Cardinal. "Have more manly courage, friend."

"I am every inch a man, with the blood of the Percys in my veins," exclaimed the Border Chief. "I will not, I cannot forget my ladye-love. Sorry I am indeed that I should give the King's Highness any displeasure. But this is a matter wholly concerning myself, my private life, my future happiness. I consider that I am now at years of

good discretion, and capable of knowing what ladye was suited to be my future wyfe. . . . By her mother's side the ladye I love is of the great and illustrious House of Surrey and Norfolk, and at her father's side she is descended from the Butlers of Ormonde. Why then, my Lord Cardinal, are there any words of disagreement, or any objection in my seeking to *have* a wyfe who is my equal in blood, and so full of learning and wit, that I should feel proud of her as my wyfe?"

Notwithstanding his high rank and ancient lineage Percy possessed little ambition; he manifested, however, a gentler gleam of aspiration than obtained often amongst the descendants of Hotspur; he desired to marry a woman of learning and genius, and in selecting Anna Boleyn he displayed a delicate discrimination, most unusual in the great barons of the time.

Percy with unusual courage advocated his cause. He reminded the Cardinal of the part he had taken in the case of the Princess Mary and the Duke of Suffolk, and of another incident in which Wolsey himself was a principal some years before he received Holy Orders. But the Cardinal of York had no sympathy with his love-story, unless he could turn it to some political purpose. Before the interview ended, Wolsey again warned Percy as to the danger of his position.

"I command thee," said his Eminence, "in the King's name, that *thou never again presume to resort to the company of Nan Boleyn. If you have any fear of the King's high indignation you will remember this warning.*"

Dr. Logario states that the Cardinal instantly retired, leaving Percy the "picture of confusion and despair."

It is evident that the Cardinal was at this time engaged in an intrigue for some very influential person in the State. Time, however, revealed the secret.

The House of Northumberland then stood at the head of the English nobility, and ranked with the Howards in wealth, and with the Courtneys in antiquity. The Earl of Northumberland had five hundred servants and retainers; his servitors wore the richest liveries; he had five principal mansions; his hospitality was profuse—all classes were entertained in his halls. The name of "good old Harry Percy" was a household word "along the Borders," and in the neighbouring counties; minstrels, poets, artists, and scholars, and many from distant climes—monks, nuns, pilgrims—all spoke in terms of praise of "Harry Percy the Border Chief," the redoubted owner of Alnwick Castle.* The Earl of Northumberland belonged to Queen Katharine's adherents, at this time fast declining. He upheld the High Church party; he was the friend of Fisher, Foxe, Warham, and More; was thoroughly conservative, and opposed to innovations in Church or State. Like his late kinsman, the wealthy and ill-fated Duke of Buckingham, he was a marked man, and at one time sent to the Fleet by Wolsey. From a feeling of prudence, therefore, Lord Northumberland did not wish his son to persevere in the Boleyn suit, and sought out the daughter of Lord Shrewsbury as an eligible match.

The Shrewsbury family were wealthy, and Lady Mary Talbot unnoticed by the King—a happy circumstance for herself. The match was arranged by the two earls, and

* The London residence of the Northumberland family was then at what is *now* called the East-End.

the Cardinal and his Royal master both approved of the proceeding. Percy became the husband of Lady Mary Talbot. Commanded to do so, he obeyed with unexpected submission; but his future life was a series of sad incidents.

The blighting of Percy's hopes was another of Wolsey's heartless experiments, but the Cardinal seemed unconscious that such triumphs were only adding to the list of his bitterest enemies. It is alleged that Anna Boleyn had made a vow that if she ever found the means of revenge upon the Cardinal of York, she would repay him in his own hard coin for all the sorrow he had caused to her in relation to Percy.* If Anna Boleyn made such a vow, she was of the nature to keep it. Her subsequent conduct is a proof. Yet, after all, it may fairly be questioned if her affection for Percy was either fervent or durable. True, she felt an attachment for him, but her ambition controlled all the promptings of her heart. To an intellectual man Anna Boleyn's society was enchanting, her manner most winning, her soft voice full of harmony, and her conversational powers on learned topics, as well as on poetry, music, painting, and botany, were marvellous. Indeed the contrast between her and Lord Percy was wide and marked.

Sir Henry Ellis, in his collection of letters, gives one particular document without a signature, which is supposed to have been written by Percy to a squire named Maltory, to whom Lord Percy reveals the story of his engagement to Anna Boleyn. Here are the concluding words:—

* History of Two Queens, vol. iii. p. 317.

"Commend me unto Mistress Nan. Bid her remember *her promise,* which none can loose but the Almighty God, to whom I shall daily during my life with my prayers commend."*

If Percy wrote the letter in question it must have been but a few days before his compulsory marriage with Lady Mary Talbot. I shall have occasion to return to this subject before the close of Anna Boleyn's career.

Lord Cobham states that Mary Boleyn showed him the following lines, written in a prayer-book by Anna Boleyn about the time of her elevation to the rank of Marchioness of Pembroke :—

"Oh, wicked ambition, what sorrow and danger you are likely to bring to me! I was once happy; titles or honours *can never win a true heart;* it is all deception, that vile feeling which our Holy Mother the Church so justly condemns. *Alas! alas! poor Harry; I shall often think of you in years to come.*"*

Tradition traces the prayer-book in question down to Sir Philip Sydney, in the reign of Elizabeth. The Wyatt family related many traditions of Anna. Margaret Lee states that Anna Boleyn's stepmother assured her that "her ill-fated daughter had a true love for Percy when she said, 'Oh, mamma, *it is very hard to learn to un-love;* very hard indeed. Mamma, you were *once young yourself; you understand my feelings, do you not?*'"

Part of the above passage appears in a little book published at Antwerp in 1640, entitled, "The Story of Anna Boleyn and Harry Percy."

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* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. ii. p. 131.

† The above has been modernised.

Thomas Wyatt shows that Anna was in a most unhappy state of mind about the period of her coronation: "She wrung her hands and cried bitterly one night; and after a long pause Anna said, 'I feel that I have done a great wrong to her who is *now* called the Dowager Princess of Wales. Where will all my grandeur end? On the *scaffold, I fear*. Yes, that thought haunts me day and night. Oh, Wyatt, will you swear before the Host, that when the hour of sorrow comes you will not desert me?'" The poet took the oath, and like a true knight was her friend to the death. A biographer of Anna's is of opinion that she doubted the sincerity of Percy. Mrs. Thompson produces a scene in which her heroine says: "Love, true love, is contented if it be *but returned*. The real pang is to part when regret is *not mutual*." The state of the case was this: Percy dared not marry Anna Boleyn without bringing the Royal vengeance upon his family. His name, or that of his father, would have been soon connected with some "manufactured plot," and perhaps father and son would have perished upon the scaffold, like the Duke of Buckingham a few years preceding. To oppose King Henry in his matrimonial schemes was ruin or death. It is possible Percy feared more for his family than himself.

Margaret Lee, who describes the early meetings of Anna and Percy in the royal gardens, in a letter of "after years," states that Percy frequently visited Hever Castle when Anna resided at home; and Lady Wiltshire encouraged his visits. "They walked," writes Lady Lee, "in the gardens and fields daily. Percy thought she had no equal among ladyes of qualitie, and he said truly. He called her his 'darling Nan.' My Lord Cardinal styled her *that* foolish

Nan. However, he was mistaken; she was not in the least foolish, but rather ambitious. Although Percy had little learning and less wit, he knew how to respect a woman of book-learning. If Anna loved my Lord Percy as much as he regarded her, she never gave the same tokens of it; but then she was very distant. She was more pleased with the society of my dear brother Thomas (Wyatt) than with the heir to the great and wealthy House of Northumberland." And no wonder.

Although Percy had been "a spoiled child and a neglected youth," he had some talent and some worth, and did many good actions, of which the world knew little. It is said "there is a history in all men's lives." The story of unhappy Percy's inner life was not unworthy of attention or pity; but in its after results it provided the student of history with some material for inquiry into the most important and contradictory annals connected with England's progress as a nation.

Percy was commanded to return the letters he received from Anna Boleyn during their courtship.

> "I return to you," he says, "by the King's command, these letters—this pledge of love.* I never would have parted with them else. Think not unkind of me.
>
> "PERCY."

The above letter is given by Mrs. Thompson. A different version is furnished by a Flemish writer:—

> "Pardon my intrusion. I am told by a messenger of the King's Highness that he desires I should return to you all letters or love-tokens. Oh! Nan, I should never part with them but under the

* A trinket containing some of her own jet-black hair.

circumstances. I shall *long remember you*; think not unkindly of me. I commend you to the favour of the Virgin Mother. God forgive those people who have separated us. Nan! farewell, farewell for ever, my darling Nan!

"This is wrote with mine own hand.

"HARRY PERCY."

The letter bears no date, and was printed in the original style. A book, published in Venice about 1564, entitled the "Story of Anna Boleyn and Lord Percy," contained several letters purporting to have passed between the ill-fated lovers. This book is only traditionally known. Wharton states that it was bruited, when he was a young man, that Queen Elizabeth caused "several continental books upon her mother's history to be purchased up and destroyed;" and it was further related that she consigned this delicate task to Sir Francis Walsingham, and his foreign agents. It is certain that Elizabeth always felt annoyed at any allusion to her mother, whom she styled "*that woman*."

The bride which fate finally assigned to Percy was cold and haughty. Afflicted by a violent temper, deficient in the education and training essential to her high position, bred in a small exclusive circle, Lady Mary Talbot came to Court full of lofty conceits, believing herself to be "a Princess, or some one above the other nobles," as Wyatt relates. Between Lady Mary and Anna Boleyn there existed an unfriendly feeling. Anna envied her because she became the wife of her own "first love;" knowing at the same time that Percy was compelled to marry Mary Talbot, in order that the heroine of Hever Castle might become the bride of one who had not yet publicly appeared upon the scene.

Long before her marriage Lady Talbot was the rival—the unsuccessful rival—of Anna Boleyn in the ball-room, at the Galliards and the Brawl.* The dancing of Anna excited much admiration; and next to her fame in dancing feats was her sister-in-law, Lady Rochford. Lady Mary Talbot had few friends amongst the Court ladies; all those who knew of Percy's story pitied him. He never came to Court unless "specially commanded," which was seldom. Could the King have had any respect for his feelings? Doubtful enough; for on one occasion he asked Percy, in a bantering tone, "How far he loved his tall, handsome wife?" Henry's manners, as well as his mind, became gross about this period of his life; his jokes and oaths were alike indecent and profane. The presence of ladies or clerics seldom restrained the sudden bursts of passion in which he indulged. Percy's loyalty was plastic to the utmost servility; and though the King did him grievous wrong in blighting for ever his domestic happiness, still Harry Percy would not listen to a disrespectful word from any man against the licentious tyrant whom he called "the Lord's Anointed."

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* The "Brawl" consisted, as described by Mrs. Thompson and others, in a perpetual shaking, and the excellence of the dancer was to be estimated by his capacity of agitating the limbs of his partner. After "agitating their frames" for some time in the "Brawl" the dancers ceased; each lady was conducted to her seat, and the lords, knights, and squires, removing their vizors, saluted their fair partners in the "most lovable fashion of chivalry." Many years subsequently Queen Elizabeth and her dancing favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton, were "the observed of all observers" in this noisy dance.

CHAPTER XVII.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

At the time of Percy's marriage with Lady Mary Talbot,* Anna Boleyn was in retirement at Hever, and occasionally in waiting on Queen Katharine. Margaret Lee states that Anna was sadly affected at the news of the marriage; for days she walked in the garden alone. She spoke with great bitterness of the Cardinal. After a few weeks she turned her mind to domestic affairs. At the old manor-house her time was occupied between her books and the instruction of poor children. She was regular in her attendance at the chapel, morning and evening, accompanied by her stepmother, who had the reputation of being a pious woman. The young Wyatts, of Allington, continued to be her visitors and friends. The friendship existing between the two families was remarkable.

While Sir Thomas Boleyn was in Spain (1523) negotiating for King Henry with the Emperor Charles, his royal master raised him to the peerage as Baron Rochford. At a subsequent period he was elevated to the rank of Earl of Wiltshire. Lord Wiltshire's second wife has been cruelly slandered by several writers, under the supposition that she

* Percy and his bride were quickly separated; they resided together but a short period. It was stated at the time that they were divorced, in consequence of some canon law bearing against the marriage. There is no proof of this rumour.

was Lady Elizabeth Howard, to whom I have already alluded. It is strange that many well-informed writers should fall into this error. This "second wife" of Lord Wiltshire "was very pretty, and not more than sixteen years of age," writes Empson, "when privately married to Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was many years older than his wife." It is stated by Cobham, "that Boleyn educated his peasant wife himself." Others allege that Lady Boleyn was the daughter of a London merchant, and "neither young nor handsome." Whatever might have been her antecedents she proved to be a good mother to Anna, and scrupulously particular in training and imparting religious instruction to her step-children. Anna Boleyn was a most devoted daughter to her second mother.

It has been also affirmed that Lady Wiltshire was a "masculine, coarse-minded woman, and that many of Anna's misfortunes were of her creation." But she had with a section of her traducers one redeeming quality—"she was a Lutheran—in private." These allegations had their origin with Simon Fish and Lord Clinton, and were subsequently "re-dressed" by other literary adventurers. Lady Wiltshire was always a Catholic, and seldom mixed in the divorce controversy. She did not like Dr. Cranmer, and when aware that he had a wife, she refused to be present at Mass, if celebrated by the Archbishop.

It is curious that Mrs. Thompson, who relates many important incidents connected with the inner life of the Boleyn family, should consider Lady Wiltshire as *the* Elizabeth Howard whom Sir Thomas Boleyn married early in life. Mrs. Thompson describes Lady Wiltshire as a haughty woman, intriguing and ambitious; but her moral

character is not impeached. The Thomas Traditions, the Camden Society Papers, and the Howard Memorials, all prove that Sir Thomas Boleyn was married a second time.

Lady Wiltshire outlived her husband and step-children many years. Plastow, a Flemish painter, states that he visited her when she resided in a cottage near London. She was then a very old woman, yet possessed of all her faculties. He reports that the venerable lady spoke in glowing terms of Anna Boleyn. Plastow adds: "It is bruited that the good Queen Elizabeth has never visited or inquired after her step-grandmother."

To return to Anna Boleyn. "Owing to family persecution," as Wyatt states, "Anna Boleyn quitted the retirement of Hever Castle. She protested against being compelled to accept the match negotiated on her behalf. Her uncle, Wolsey, and the King were determined that Dublin or Kilkenny should be the place of her future destiny; but the strong-minded maid was not to be won or conquered. The Archduchess Marguerite, who was then at Mechlin, invited Anna to become one of her maids-of-honour. This royal lady was a zealous Catholic, and a highly gifted woman—in fact, the heroine of Hever could not obtain a better guardian than the Princess. The King and his Council would not permit her to leave England—so she got away in the "guise of a children's maid to a French lady." Such was the narrative furnished by Anna herself, in subsequent years, to Margaret Lee. The most happy period of her life she describes as that spent at the little Flemish Court. The Princess, who was very much attached to Anna, wished her to remain. "I will be a friend and

a sister to you all the days of my life," said she; "oh, remain with me—I shall be sad and lonely without you."* Anna Boleyn was well disposed to remain with her kind friend, but her ambitious father demanded her return to Hever Castle. Her latest biographer states that she seemed disposed to remain with the Archduchess, where she would see no more of gallant Percy's handsome face, or hear of her Irish cousin's "ardent professions of love."† Her visit was prolonged, and she seemed happy; but her wayward fate brought her again to Hever Castle, then a changed place; Harry Percy was no longer a companion of her walks, and the delightful poet friend was also absent.

Although immensely admired at the French and Flemish Courts, Anna Boleyn is not known to have formed any attachment. If she ever loved, the object was either Wyatt or Percy. But ambition—restless, dissatisfied, indefinable—substituted preconceived sentiments. Margaret Lee stated her opinion that Anna was "never really happy, for a kind of discontent always lingered around her, yet she delighted every one." Perhaps the want of some kindred spirit caused this waywardness, whilst her talents and genius, and the superior cultivation of her mind, stood forth without a rival amongst the Court ladies of England or France.

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* Blanche Lorraine's Memoir of the Archduchess Marguerite, printed at Paris in 1540.

† History of Two Queens, vol. iii.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE "ROYAL SCRUPLES."

ALL the disasters of Henry's reign had their origin in his invented scruples and desire to divorce his lawful wife. Why did not those scruples affect him earlier? Why cause all sense of morality to consider them predetermined injustice? The inner history of this case shows that Henry Tudor was playing the hypocrite throughout. Many indubitable circumstances occurred to prove that he was *not* moved by anything like conscientious motives. "It is extraordinary," observes Dr. Brewer, "how Henry's scruples of conscience coincided so nicely with his inclinations." He had been leading the life of a concealed libertine for many years previous to the alleged "scruples." In fact, one year after his marriage with the Infanta (1510), he had "a love scandal" with the sister of the Duke of Buckingham.* About the same time a young Scotch lady, named Graham, became another of the royal victims, and under very painful circumstances. Andrew Lipomana writes from Rome in 1514, that "it was hinted in certain circles in that city that the English King intended to repudiate his wife when he got an opportunity of doing so." Lipomana may be considered as a correct authority; indeed, his statement is borne out by no less a personage than Bishop Foxe. About

* Bergenroth's State Papers.

the same time (1514), Luis Cavoz, a Spanish ambassador, who was well acquainted with Henry, compared him "to a colt which had broken loose. If he were not soon bridled, it would afterwards be found impossible to control him."* And again, in 1515, when some six years married, Henry was known to the courtiers as "a confirmed profligate wearing the mask of goodness." In this year, Balthazar, the French ambassador, writes to his royal master of the course then pursued by the young English King. "King Henry's life as a married man is very irregular; he cares for nothing but the society of ——, hunting, revelling, &c."† This was long before the beautiful and fascinating Elizabeth Blunt appeared upon the scene to captivate the monarch. Arabella Parker, "the wife of a citie merchant," became the successor of Elizabeth Blunt, and was set aside in a few months for a Swedish beauty, who subsequently died of the sweating sickness. The dames of "lower rank" are described by Lord Clinton and Francis Bryan as "numerous."

Amongst the Privy Council records of Henry's reign occur the names of "certain houses in Westminster, where no man visited but the King *himself*." English historians, from Hall and Polydore Vergil down to Froude, eulogise Henry for his "delicate sense of morality."

The "royal scruples" never had any existence; they presented no phase of life but that of hypocrisy. The unrighteous interference with Lord Percy's projected marriage with the ill-fated daughter of Lord Wiltshire was another

* Despatches of the Spanish Envoy to King Ferdinand.
† Brewer's State Papers (Foreign), 1515.

evidence of the evil purposes of the King, and the extent to which the Cardinal of York had gone to gratify his Royal master; yet Wolsey never contemplated raising Anna Boleyn to the position of a Queen. At the period of Percy's courtship with Anna Boleyn she seemed perfectly unconscious of the King's sentiments with regard to her; but it is very doubtful if her father was not at that time aware of Henry's future arrangements. The significant words of the Cardinal, "*she is intended for another,*" prove that some "arrangement" was then in preparation. The reader is aware that subsequent to the dismissal of Percy's love-suit by Wolsey, Anna Boleyn remained in "strict retirement" at Hever Castle, and then, as if fearing some new proposals being made for her, Anna suddenly proceeded to the Court of the Archduchess Marguerite, where she remained for some time happy, and "more inclined to become a nun than a bride, especially when her own feelings were not to be consulted." So writes her devoted friend, Margaret Lee. Another incident occurred at Hever, which also hurried her departure. The King made a "private visit" to the Castle; and this, at the time when Percy and Wyatt were both married—married *by compulsion.* Anna felt bitter resentment against the monarch for the part he had taken in secret to promote these marriages, or at least one of them. She at once felt that he was actuated by no honourable motives. At the time of Henry's visit, Anna feigned illness, and did not leave her chamber till the departure of the King.*

After an absence of nearly four years, Anna returned to

* Miss Benger's Life of Anna Boleyn.

England by command of her father, who was apparently the instrument of Henry's intrigues. Anna resumed the office of maid of honour to the reluctant Queen, "who spake little to mademoiselle." Anna Boleyn made weekly visits to Hever; "an illustrious personage" went thither likewise, and was specially invited by Lord Wiltshire, who now openly sympathised with the "royal scruples." At the approach of this new phase in her destiny Anna Boleyn made little resistance; she feared her father, stepmother, and aunts, who "were constantly praising the King;" those relatives were sordid, time-serving, and ambitious, without a particle of that honour which directs a laudable ambition. "Anna passed many sleepless nights," writes her cousin Howard. The same lady observes:— "The only subject discussed in the family circle for weeks was the King's 'intended proposal.'" At last Anna gave way, her courage vanished before her father's persistence; still, in the words of Margaret Lee, "she had a dreadful presentiment that she was about to do an act of injustice to another that might lead to awful consequences." She had intervals of feeling which brought their own warnings. That religion to which she was so long devoted—her conscience, her honour, the memory of her early training at Hever with its infantine innocence; the recollections of the convent life at Brie; of Queen Claude; of the Princess Renée; of the Archduchess Marguerite and her maidens; or amongst the "home figures" of Wyatt, Percy, Margaret Lee, or Mildred Wyatt—all no doubt presented their respective tableaux; but the struggle was brief; a cold unscrupulous ambition quickly possessed her spirit; she desired, as it would appear, to forget the Past, she made

her election, and left her contemporaries and posterity to pronounce their verdict as to her motives. It may be argued in Anna Boleyn's favour at this juncture—or even at a later period—that several divines and prelates possessing high reputation, the majority of the Convocation of Canterbury and York, besides many of the most noted amongst the laity, were of opinion, or affected to be so, that Katharine's marriage with Henry was *not* valid according to canon law. Supposing such could have been established as a fact, it could not improve Anna's position in the sight of the world; in fact, a woman of a delicate or noble mind would spurn a marriage with Henry under such unprecedented circumstances. But Anna Boleyn, by her conduct during the divorce litigation, demonstrated beyond question that she was neither grateful, delicate-minded, nor wise. It is impossible, however, that even sectarian feeling—an idea that should not enter into this discussion—can approve of Anna Boleyn's conduct to Queen Katharine.

Mr. Froude justly censures Anna Boleyn's conduct about this period. "No lady of true delicacy," he observes, "would have accepted such a position. Feeling for Queen Katharine ought to have forbidden it, if she was *careless of respect for herself.*" And again the learned gentleman remarks: "Anna was indifferent to the obligations of gratitude, and sometimes careless of the truth."* A severe judgment from the worshipper of Henry Tudor.

Lingard is of opinion that the King's passion for Anna Boleyn must have begun at the latest in the summer of

* Froude's History of England, vol. i. p. 164.

1526, probably much earlier; at all events, before the time assigned to the origin of the "royal scruples" respecting his marriage with Katharine.* There is much difference of opinion amongst historians concerning the dates of the various movements made in this national scandal. If the dates were critically ascertained, then we could better judge of the motives of the chief actors.

The courtship at Hever Castle has been turned into a kind of romance, a discreditable manner of writing history. King Henry is described as sounding his bugle near a hedge of roses, and, in a few minutes, the "enchanting maid suddenly appears at the corner of a walk, when the 'amiable monarch' was at once struck with her wondrous beauty." According to the real facts of the case, Henry was acquainted with Anna Boleyn from the time of her twelfth year. He was never "struck with her wondrous beauty," for, in truth, "the smart little girl," and subsequent young woman, had no claims to exterior attractions. This scene at the "hedge of roses," and the "sounding of the royal bugle," which has appeared in many forms, is merely a "gilded picture" from the archives of Puritan romance—perhaps it might be uncharitable to apply a harsher epithet. If virtue be necessary to true happiness—which some writers may deny—the felicity of the ill-matched lovers was aught but genuine. The Puritan writers who have with a bad taste, unborn of their professed morality, sanctified Anna Boleyn, should contemplate the artful maiden in the pretty gardens of Hever Castle listening to the love addresses from Queen

* Lingard's History of England, vol. iv. p. 479.

Katharine's husband. Do not the love epistles* of the King to Anna also form somewhat strong evidence against her sense of propriety? At first, in a memorable letter, she indignantly rejected his proposal.† The letter in question is apparently candid; but anon the reader will see more of the latent sentiments of the writer.

I pass over the many scandals in circulation concerning Anna Boleyn during the litigation of this odious divorce question, and approach the means adopted to accomplish

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* The original letters, however strange their receptacle, are amongst the MSS. records of the Vatican. They were locked in Anna's cabinet, and it is supposed that after her execution some of her ladies sent them to Rome, perhaps Margaret Lee. Dr. Burnet, when at Rome, hearing of the existence of these letters, at once pronounced them to be forgeries, but subsequently was convinced that they were genuine. He observes, "I was too well acquainted with King Henry's handwriting to doubt their authenticity." They are written in the imperfect French of the period, and without date, but are supposed to have been written about 1527-8. In the "Men and Women of the English Reformation," I have printed the letters in question. They are also to be found in Sharon Turner's very interesting history of England, vol. x.; and some passages are likewise quoted by Miss Strickland in her Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 587. The original letters above referred to are at the present moment numbered 3731, amongst the MSS. of the Vatican Library.

† Anna Boleyn gives the following reply to one of the King's first missives:— "I beseech your Highness to desist in writing to me. . . . . Take this as my answer. *I will rather lose my life than my virtue, which will be the greatest and best part of the dowry I shall bring my husband.*" Henry writes again, asking permission that "he should at least *continue to hope.*" Anna in a brief and indignant note protests against the further advances of her royal lover:—"*Your wife I cannot be, because you have a Queen already. Your mistress I will not be.*" Miss Strickland observes that there "is a difficulty in reading and understanding Anna's letters, on account of an evident want of sincerity." If Anna Boleyn was sincere in the above protests, then the inference may fairly be drawn that her father subsequently used coercion, for she was immensely influenced by him, and there was no evil deed that he was not capable of suggesting and carrying out. At this very period Lord Wiltshire was generally considered a well-meaning, honourable, and religious man. The sequel proved that he was "wearing the mask of deception for years."

that unjust determination. Le Grand has explained the schemes by which theological opinions favourable to the divorce were procured in the University of Paris and other French colleges. Du Maulins states that he had examined the account laid before Francis I., from which it was quite evident that the votes given in favour of the King of England's divorce "had been purchased with English gold;" and further, "the real opinion of the University was against the divorce of Katharine."* It is more than probable if Francis were asked his opinion as a man, the wild but honour-esteeming king would have pronounced the action of his cousin Henry "as a thorough mechancété"—a word in which the hero of Pavia concentrated his idea of lack of honour, virtue, truth, and genuine manliness.

Recent research proves that whilst professing friendship for Henry, Francis I. practised deception towards his English brother—at one time advising a marriage with Anna Boleyn "without the judgment of the Court of Rome," and at the same time secretly corresponding with the Pope, "urging him to be firm, and listen to no more overtures concerning the divorce." In other matters Francis was equally deceptive. In some of Dr. Gardyner's secret despatches to Lord Crumwell are to be found an account of the "devices" by which the French King and his ministers desired to place the English monarch in domestic troubles. England, however, was ably represented at the French Court, for a time at least, by Dr. Gardyner; but the cause Gardyner advocated brands his name, as a cleric, with well-deserved censure. In a few years later Francis I.

* Malin, Nat. ad Cornit, Dec., p. 602.

did not conceal the contempt he entertained for the "matrimonial speculations" of the English King.* In fact, every Court in Europe felt outraged at the indecent conduct of Henry. Yet, to their shame and dishonour be it recorded, the first nobles and prelates in England stood forward as the advocates of the course pursued by Henry Tudor.

The University of Bologna sent a favourable reply to King Henry's questions concerning the divorce of Katharine; but, upon investigation, it appears to have been the opinion of three Carmelite friars, drawn up at the suggestion of Pallavicino, an agent of Dr. Cranmer's at Ferrara. The opinions of other theologians was purchased for one hundred thousand gold crowns. It is important to find Burnet admitting this fact. Every day, however, the question became more complicated. William Cavendish, Dean Phillips, and Dr. Francis, allege that the "royal scruples" were partly suggested by Anna Boleyn. These statements have nothing but idle gossip for their origin, and very improbable. The indictment against Anna is quite sufficient to tarnish her reputation, without adding to it the gossip of William Cavendish and the credulous Phillips.

It is related by several well-informed authorities that "some time before the King's scruples were made public," certain German Reformers suggested that Henry might have "two, or more, wives." It is probable that this advice was tendered by the Anabaptists of Münster. Dean Hook affirms that Luther and Melancthon, in the early stages of the divorce litigation, "advised the King *not* to put away

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* Le Grand's Despatches, vol. iii. p. 136.

Queen Katharine, but to make Anna Boleyn his *second wife*."* This is just as Luther ordered it in the case of the Duke of Hesse. There is also a letter of Luther on record, wherein he denounces Henry "for marrying his brother's widow." Melancthon, at one time, sympathised with Queen Katharine. English gold, however, had a marvellous influence amongst certain sections of the German Reforming theologians.

In Germany, the divorce agents were Cranmer, Giovanni de Casala, Andreas, and others of less notable names. If in Germany subscriptions to the divorce could not be obtained, it was not for the want of agents or of bribes.† The opinion of the Cardinal Santa Quati was sought. He was offered two thousand gold crowns "in testimonium acceptæ gratitudinis," but he could not be prevailed on to accept one penny.‡ Charles V. charged Wolsey with being the originator of the divorce question.§ Cavendish, on the other hand, states that the Cardinal denied the charge in the King's presence, and Reginald Pole affirms that Henry's scruples as to his marriage with Katharine were raised by "certain divines whom Anna Boleyn sent to the King for that purpose." The names of the prelates alluded to by Cardinal Pole are, sad to say, those of Edward Foxe, Bishop of Hertford, and the Abbot of Tewkesbury, subsequently Bishop of Gloucester. Those were in truth corrupt, dishonest men, though they never joined the Reformers. Yet Pole's statement is incorrect, as far as Anna Boleyn was concerned.

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* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. ix. p. 300. † Lingard, vol. i.

‡ Strype, i. Appendix. § Le Grand, iii. 46.

Henry's agents in Rome spared no money or exertions to obtain their object. They used violent menaces to the Pope; they found their way to his sick bed, and spoke of the "danger to his soul should he die without doing justice to the King of England;" they "accused him of ingratitude to his best friend, and of indifference to the prosperity of the Church."* The Pontiff reiterated his former statements. Still, with the hesitancy and weakness which characterised his council throughout these proceedings, he held out hopes of the question being settled to the satisfaction of Henry. Amongst the diplomatists who appeared before Clement on the divorce question, Lord Wiltshire, the father of Anna Boleyn, was the most insolent, and, considering the position in which he stood, the most indecent and shameless of all.† On one occasion the Pontiff told Lord Wiltshire that, "as the father of Lady Anna, he should have had the delicacy not to appear there as one of the King's advocates." Sir Gregori Casalis, another of Henry's agents at Rome, alleged that Clement offered to compromise the case "by allowing the King two wives." Lord Herbert, a good authority on many matters, contradicts this statement, and describes Casalis as a man of no integrity. It is certain that whilst acting as Henry's envoy in Rome, Casalis was in secret correspondence with Charles V., and also in his pay. This fact is made clear in the State Papers of the Emperor Charles. Of all the lay or clerical advocates of Henry at Rome, Dr. Cranmer is described as being the most respectful to the Pontiff, whose regard he won, Clement

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* Gardyner's Despatches to Wolsey; Brewer's State Papers.

† Griffin; Bayley.

believing him to be a "prudent politician, as well as a zealous and pious Churchman." Wolsey, writing to Gardyner in Rome, thanks him for the courage with which he behaved in this great and mighty cause.* Wolsey seems to have approved of the proceedings of Gardyner, Foxe, Bonner, and other ecclesiastical advocates of Henry in Rome. On one occasion Gardyner became very personal in his language to the Pope, who made no reply, but sighed, sobbed, and cried. The Pontiff, aged and weakened by long-standing ill-health, was not equal to his adversaries. Middle-aged, vigorous, astute, and persevering men, they over-powered him with complicated canon law arguments. He confessed his present inability to deal with the subject, and thus gave Gardyner and the other commissioners a fresh triumph.† He made promises of considering "such and such points," but all such perquisitions ended in the renewed conviction that he could not justly, as the Pope, comply with Henry's wishes.‡

During the litigation of the divorce question (April, 1532), an unreflecting member of the Commons, named Henry Temse, gave notice that he would propose a motion to the House, to the effect that his Highness the King should take back to wife the goodly Queen Katharine, and thereby stop all further proceedings of the scandalous divorce question. This motion aroused the passion of the King, but upon the advice of his ministers he dissembled. He sent

* Harl. MSS.

† Sir Gregori Casalis' Despatches; State Papers (Foreign) of Henry's reign.

‡ The letters and despatches of Gardyner and Bonner from Rome on the divorce question are numerous, and place both those divines in a painful light. The conduct of Bonner was especially unworthy of his position.

for Sir Thomas Audley, the Speaker of the Commons, and with the dissimulation which characterized his conduct at this period, when he considered deceit his best weapon, he attempted to explain to him the scruples with which his conscience had so long been agitated.* The King soon showed, when he had once passed the threshold of faithfulness to his first vows, how very little scruple or conscience had to do with his actions. On other occasions he made statements to his confessor that "his conscience was troubled, and he was much grieved by his marriage with his brother's widow."† In fact the "confessor" was the creature of Wolsey, and for a time aided and abetted the scheme to promote the divorce. The cleric in question subsequently informed Sir Thomas More that he had never encouraged or suggested the King's scruples, and he deeply regretted the part he took against the Queen. But the man must be judged by his actions, and his letters still extant.

In November, 1528, Henry submitted his case to a council of judges and nobles. Hall,‡ who was present, says his Highness addressed his most worthy councillors in these words of "royal wisdom:" "If it be adjudged that the Queen is my lawful wife, nothing will be more pleasant or more acceptable to me, both for the clearing of my conscience, and also for the good qualities and conditions I

* Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.; Hall (folio), p. 205.

† The confessor was Bishop Longland. There are some letters of this prelate in the Record Office concerning his "Royal Master's Scruples." They are, however, unworthy of any consideration as an explanation of his conduct.

‡ Edward Hall was a Judge of the Sheriff's Court. His quaint chronicle presents an interesting account of the dress, manners, customs, and social mode of life in those days. He did not long survive the "wise King," as he styled Henry, having died in 1547.

know to be in her; for I assure you all, that besides her noble parentage, she is a woman of gentleness and humility; yea, of all good qualities appertaining to nobility she is without comparison. So that if I were to marry again I would choose her above all other women; but if it is determined in judgment that our marriage is against God's law, then shall I sorrow for parting from so good a lady and so loving a companion. These be the sores that vex my mind, these be the pangs that trouble my conscience, for the declaration of which I have assembled you together; and now, my lords, you may depart."

In Anna Boleyn's dealings with Cardinal Wolsey she evinced the most marked duplicity. During the divorce controversy she "humbly thanked the Cardinal for the trouble he took in seeking to bring to pass the greatest weal that was possible to come to any creature living, and in especial reminding him how wretched and unworthy she was in comparison to his Eminence." . . . "I assure you, my Lord Cardinal, after this matter is brought to bear, you shall find me as your *bound* (in the meantime) to owe you my service, and then look what thing in this world I can manage to do your pleasure in, you shall find me the gladdest woman in the world to do it."* At the moment Anna wrote this letter she was conspiring for the overthrow of the Cardinal, who, in turn, practised deception with her, as may be gathered from his subsequent movements, and the bitterness with which he gave expression to the following sentence:

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* The original of this letter is in the British Museum; also many documents bearing upon the early courtship of Lord Percy and Anna.

"*Nan Boleine shall not be our Queen!*"* Wolsey's deceitful encouragement of Anna defeated all his schemes for throwing into oblivion the pursuit of the divorce; Circe redoubled her arts, and enmeshed the King so inextricably in her wiles, that, at her instance, his ardour for the divorce was intensified, and the downfall of Wolsey determined.

A distinguished Protestant jurist is of opinion that, "according to the then existing canon law of Christendom—a law which was undisputed—the Pope could not legitimately pronounce a divorce in the case of Katharine of Arragon."† Many of the most learned lawyers and theologians at home and abroad held similar views on the subject. German theologians were far from agreeing to the proposition placed before them by Dr. Cranmer. Several eminent divines of that country declared that even if the marriage of Katharine and Arthur had been valid, they were inclined to hold the nuptials with Henry to be legal. Hume contends that, "even judging of the divorce question by Scripture—to which the appeal was every moment made—the arguments for the King's cause appear but lame and imperfect." ‡ Mr. Froude, as a matter of course, defends Cranmer's decree, by stating that "he had at least as much power to grant a divorce as the Pope himself." If all Christendom did not entertain a very different opinion from the recent one put forward by Mr. Froude, Henry Tudor need hardly have appealed to the Vatican for a canon law judgment.

* Carlo Logario states that the Cardinal paced his chamber several times whilst repeating the above words, which he uttered with great scorn against "*that Nan.*"

† Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.

‡ Hume's History of England, vol. iii. (folio) p. 167.

Many curious incidents occurred during the divorce litigation illustrative of the characters of the various actors. Henry himself, it is alleged, questioned Anna Boleyn as to the pre-contract between her and Lord Percy :—"Is it so, Nan?" said he; "what sayest thou to it?" "To what?" replied Anna. "Mother of God, they say thou hadst promised to marry Harry Percy." The narrative goes on to state, although the King frowned and looked excited, Anna, who had always a ready answer, had now to summon all the witching charms of her manner to explain the history of her first love. "May it please your Highness, I knew no otherwise but that it was lawful for me to make such promises. I must confess I made him (Percy) some such pledges; but then, no good subject makes any promise but with the proviso that if his Soverign commands otherwise, it shall be lawful for him to obey." If Anna Boleyn could have argued in such a fashion, Henry was the very man who knew how to estimate it at its proper value. But the proud daughter of Lord Wiltshire was quite incapable of giving such a base and servile explanation. During her career she dared to tell the tyrant that which no other woman, save Lady Rochford, could do with impunity. The above narrative is related by Bayley. He gives no authority for it, and it is possibly one of Sander's coinage which has been imported into various histories upon the Reformation epoch.

Burnet contends that the King used "no menaces with the Oxford professors to send forward a favourable opinion upon the divorce question." At the very time Burnet made this deliberate assertion there were to be seen in the archives of the University three letters in the *handwriting*

of Henry Tudor himself, to certain Oxford divines, demanding in a very threatening tone a decision in his favour. Dr. Burnet boasted frequently that he was well acquainted with Henry's writing, yet he did not in his many searches amongst the MSS. at Oxford discover those three letters. Honest Henry Wharton thought otherwise. Mr. Hallam passes this incident over as an oversight. But the reader must remember that the learned Wharton was a contemporary, for some time at least, of Burnet, and had the advantage of a personal knowledge of the latter, which must add additional weight to Wharton's evidence. Hallam, who carefully examined the three letters in question, observes :—"*Considering the notions of the writer, a tenth part of what he said would be enough to terrify his readers* (*the professors*)."* Although the bishops visited the University to advocate the King's cause, men of high principle still remaining were firm ; the timid wavered, and gave an assent ; and those who could be purchased were quickly tempted ; gold from the royal treasury was liberally supplied to the relatives of some ; and in many cases the professors received the "golden angels" themselves. Yet there were a few honest men remaining, and their lot was a hard one ; for they were marked out for persecution ; and when the supremacy agitation commenced, they were the first to feel the royal vengeance. A reign of terrorism prevailed in Oxford and Cambridge, and it became impossible to know what were the opinions of those seats of learning. The Government spies were to be found in every nook of the

* Hallam's Constitutional History, vol. i. p. 61 ; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv.; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry ; Anthony Wood, Dodd, vol. i.

Universities. I select one of Henry's agents in Oxford, who won for himself a lamentable notoriety. Father Wakfeld was a professor of Hebrew in the University. He is described as having been a man of considerable learning. He entered the field of discussion as the advocate of Queen Katharine; and in a paper of immense theological research, he contended that Katharine was the King's lawful wife; he accepted the Queen's solemn declaration to the Pontiff, that the alleged "canon law impediments to her marriage with Henry *did not exist.*" He was also Queen Katharine's "friend," according to one of his own letters. Like Cranmer, Wakfeld had an interview with the King, and the result was that he became one of Henry's "spiritual advisers." He soon reversed his former judgment, which had been in the Queen's favour. "The arguments newly advanced in the King's cause changed his mind on the whole matter." In order to gain Henry's confidence, he told him that he "could bring forward arguments in favour of his Highness *on grounds unknown to any other man in the realm.*" Such an expounder of canon law was hailed with rapture by the King, who, with the seeming candour of a penitent, unfolded his "scruples and the sad condition of his soul." Father Wakfeld had thereafter many interviews with his royal master. For some time few were aware of the professor's change of sentiment; and the Queen still believed him to be an honest advocate. Perhaps the confiding lady even rewarded him for his supposed advocacy, and that he, acting on the system of the noted lawyer, Simon Fish, held a "brief from both sides." Wakfeld was quite capable of such perfidy, but finally the most potent client obtained all his services. He raised an assassin's hand against Katharine;

for whilst Gardyner, Foxe, and Bonner were outspoken, he laboured in "handling Scripture, and disentangling obsolete statutes and misrepresenting the writings of theologians," in doing anything or everything to promote the King's flagitious purposes. In one of his letters, Wakfeld admits that he was engaged in an unholy cause—in one that the moral feeling of the country detested and abhorred. "If the people of England," he says, "knew that I was writing against Queen Katharine, *they would stone me to death.*"* What cause could be good that was ever sustained by such agencies? At a later period Archbishop Cranmer was the patron of Wakfeld. The only defence I can find recorded of this man is, "that by his action he tended to promote the Reformation," though no record exists of the new learning having had the questionable advantage of his openly espousing it. He died in 1537.

When Anna, as the Marchioness of Pembroke, visited the French Court with Henry, she met with a reception which no proud, high-minded woman could endure, yet she had to submit to it. The English King was received at Boulogne with all courtly honours by Francis I.; but the Royal family were absent, so the Marchioness of Pembroke and her ladies in attendance met with no ladies to welcome them. "No woman of any rank," observes a French courtier, "appeared at the feasts given by our King to the English monarch and his Nan." Miss Strickland feels indignant at the conduct of Anna at Boulogne on this occasion, and observes: "Francis I. was not accompanied either

* Wood's History of University of Oxford; Dodd, vol. i.; Lingard, vol. iv.; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv.

by his Queen,* his sister, or indeed by any ladies—a mortifying circumstance to Anna Boleyn, since nothing could afford a more decided proof of the unquestionable light in which she was regarded at this time by her former friends at the Court of France."† There were no French ladies at the "mask dance"—none but the maids of honour who accompanied the Marchioness of Pembroke. When the masks were removed, the French King discovered that he had danced with an old favourite of his first Queen, the good and gentle Claude. Nearly twelve years had passed away since the gallant Francis saw "little Nan de Bouleine" kneeling beside his Queen every morning at Mass. If Anna Boleyn were possessed of any reflection, this meeting must have conjured up some of the purest and happiest incidents connected with her early and hopeful youth.

The private amusements of Henry and Anna Boleyn were generally dice and cards. The King's losses at gaming with his courtiers were enormous; and in those tourneys Anna seemed a cautious and fortunate player.

Twenty young ladies of rank had so far forgotten their sense of delicacy and honour as to accompany the Marchioness of Pembroke on this visit to France, where both English and French inhabitants gave a cold reception to Henry and his "bride elect." Michael Pisani states that Francis I. had in his heart a supreme contempt for Henry and the Marchioness. "The absence of the Queen and the King's sister presented a significant hint to the English monarch as to what the Royal family of France thought of the divorce proceedings."

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* Eleanor of Austria became the second wife of King Francis.

† Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 629.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DIVORCE LITIGATION.

The advent of Campeggio was the occasion of the last national reception given to a Papal Legate in England; for, although Cardinal Pole was royally received by Philip and Mary, he found a divided nation, and the glories of his outward reception were confined to the demonstrations at Southampton, Winchester, and London. The progress of Cardinal Campeggio was a continued ovation from his first step on English ground.

On the 23rd of July, 1528, Cardinal Campeggio, as the Papal Legate, landed at Deal, where he was received by Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, Lord Cobham, and "other nobles, knights, and esquires," who escorted him to Sandwich. On the following day he made his public entry into Canterbury, where the corporation, clergy, the archbishop of the diocese (Warham), Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and three lord abbots, in full pontificals, received him at the gates of the cathedral. The people expressed great reverence for the Legate, especially the women, who brought forth their children along the route from Deal to London to receive the Apostolic benediction. Stopping two days in Canterbury, he proceeded on his road to Rochester, accompanied by a guard of honour numbering five hundred horsemen. In Rochester he was entertained at a banquet given by Bishop Fisher. From

Rochester he was escorted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the head of one thousand horsemen in armour, all wearing gold chains. On the fourth day of the procession the Cardinal reached Blackheath, where he was received by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey, Lord Darcy, and the Bishops of Durham and Ely. Twenty-four trumpeters, on horseback, dressed in buff jackets and velvet caps, rode before the Bishop of Rochester and his clergy. At this point of the procession a lively scene took place, some two thousand matrons and their daughters entered an appearance, and were most vehement in their acclamations for Queen Katharine. "No Nan Boleyn for us," was the indignant shout of the virtuous English matrons and their fair daughters. "No —— for a Queen," was on every lip. The "divorce agents" who were present felt disconcerted at the conduct of the women, and the Earl of Surrey waived his hand in disapproval of these manifestations, which were met with renewed cries of "No Nan for us." About this time the women of the middle and lower classes took a lively interest in Queen Katharine's cause. They spoke with contempt and scorn of the granddaughter of a London alderman aspiring to the position of a Queen by such base unwomanly means. "She was no better than themselves, and they would not respect her as a Queen." "They found no fault with the real Queen, and she should not be set aside for bold-faced Nan." At a later period the people of Yorkshire were fierce in their denunciations of Anna Boleyn. Here is a specimen:—"Who the —— is Nan Boleyn? down with her." "She was false to her young lover." The witch of Burnley says: "Wicked Nan will end her days at the

Tower." "May the Virgin Mother protect our own good Queen Kate." "Down with old Hal and treacherous Nan." "No Nan Boleyn for a Queen."*

It is recorded by Sanuto that in 1531 a violent feeling prevailed amongst Englishwomen against Anna Boleyn. He affirms upon the word of the French ambassador, and his secretaries, that in the November of 1531 a vast crowd of women, numbering between seven or eight thousand, had sallied from London with the intention of killing Nan de Bouleine, "l'amata del Ré d'Inghilterra," who was supping in a summer-house on the river, "the King not being with her." Nan de Bouleine being warned of her danger in time escaped across the river in a wherry. This contemporary authority adds—"In the May of 1532, a preacher who was advocating the divorce of Queen Katharine at Old St. Paul's was stopped by a woman who told him that he lied, and that this *example in a King would be the destruction of the holy tie of matrimony,* 'che contiene l'uomo nel civil et Christiano viver.'" For her outspoken boldness this unflinching advocate of Queen Katharine was immediately arrested, but nothing has been recorded of her fate.† It is probable that she died in one of those dungeons to which so many women were consigned for speaking in favour of the Queen's rights as a wife.

Dean Hook eulogises the conduct of the women of England on the occasion of the divorce of Queen

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* Letter of Lord Cobham to the Marquis of Dorset on the "Bearing of the women in various parts concerning the proposed Divorce;" Hall's Commentary; Letters of Roger Asham.

† In the Venetian despatches are to be found some marvellous narratives as to the feeling evinced by the women of England in favour of Queen Katharine.

Katharine. "The matrons of England," he observes, "rose up in chaste indignation at King Henry's treatment of his wife—an indignation imparted to their children, and handed on from generation to generation, until it has covered with everlasting infamy the name of a once popular King."* Despite all the evidence on record of popular hostility, Mr. Froude contends that "*the nation was thoroughly united on the divorce question.*" A popular writer of the last century stated that "the people wished well to Anna Boleyn because she was a Lutheran." The old story over again. Speed and Burnet "re-dressed."

In a meadow, two miles from London, a tent of cloth of gold had been erected for a kingly reception, and the presentation of notable persons to the Legate. After an hour's delay the procession was reformed for London, where "excitement, enthusiasm, and curiosity had now become as boundless as they might have been in the days of Edward IV.† The nobility rode in advance; then came Cardinal Campeggio in magnificent clerical costume glittering with jewels and precious stones; his retinue was numerous—his liveries superb. The procession is described as two miles long—an extraordinary concourse of people in those days. From St. George's Church to London Bridge the road was lined on both sides by monks and clerics, dressed in their various quaint habits, with copes of cloth of gold, gold and silver crosses, &c. As the Legate passed they threw up clouds of incense, and sang hymns. At the foot of London Bridge two Bishops received the Cardinal, the people shouted with

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 477.
† Carlos Logario on the Divorce proceedings.

joy, whilst the roar of artillery from the Tower and the river forts rent the air, to use Wolsey's own words, "as if the very heavens would fall." "Hundreds of church and abbey bells," writes Thorndale, "poured forth their clangour, with the 'deeper bass' of Old St. Paul's." In Gracechurch Street the London City Companies joined the procession; at Cheapside the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London offered their congratulations to the illustrious visitor. Sir Thomas More delivered a Latin oration of great eloquence. When the procession reached St. Paul's another grand spectacle was presented. The Bishops of London and Lincoln, surrounded by two hundred ecclesiastics, conducted the Legate to the high altar. Incense, delicious music, the ringing of silver bells inside the Cathedral—outside the thunder of artillery, and the prolonged shouts of the multitude—closed the proceedings of the day.*

The reception given to Cardinal Campeggio was magnificent beyond precedent. There had been nothing like it seen in England, at least within the memory of any one then living. It had been arranged and prepared, and the whole expense defrayed, by Wolsey. But there was one presence wanting to complete the splendour of the ceremony—that was his own. Archbishops, bishops, abbots, dukes, earls, knights, esquires, and all the notable men of the State were there, but the Lord Cardinal of York and the King's Highness were absent.

Five days later another imposing ceremony took place on the presentation of the Legate to the King. All parties seemed pleased; the King and his advisers expressing their

* Hall's Chronicle; Stowe's Annals; Brewer's State Papers.

willingness to abide by the decision of the Court of Rome. Wolsey was then at the pinnacle of his power; the King esteemed him as a great and equitable minister. All promised fair; but there were some who could—reading the mutations in the King's temper—"pierce the dark cloud which was gathering in the distance." In fact, the Cardinal of York was standing on a mine whose explosive elements were the fierce desires and the prodigality of the monarch.

The King's Council made extensive preparations for the divorce trial, and all the leading lawyers of England were engaged for the Crown. As the time set down for the trial approached, popular excitement became immense.

And here I must make a digression, in order to review the political position of Clement VII. and the Emperor Charles V., who professed so much devotion for the interest of his aunt, Queen Katharine, but whose real desire was to embarrass the Roman Pontiff, and evince his hate and scorn for the English King. The "reverence" of Charles V. for religion was at times so interwoven with superstition and political interest, that it would be difficult to ascertain when he was sincere. Floating between hope and fear, Clement sometimes courted the friendship, and at other times provoked the hostility, of imperious Charles. The correspondence of the Pontiff and the Emperor was embittered by mutual reproaches; and the charges of ingratitude and breach of faith were repelled by the Pontiff with complaints of insatiate rapacity and ambition. The Pope had little

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* State Papers of Rome and Venice.

to expect from Charles, whose display of piety was gross hypocrisy. The "sacking" of Rome under Charles V. exceeded anything that the imagination can depict. The Eternal City suffered far more from the ravages of an army consisting of so-called Christians than it ever had from the assaults of pagan barbarians.

Whilst the English Court (1st May, 1527) were spending the season in pleasure and amusements, Charles V. prepared to renew the war in Italy. The policy of Charles was that "war was to be fed by war." He allowed "free quarter" to a brutal and demoralised soldiery, long accustomed to violence and rapine; his army was composed of Spaniards and Germans, the former of whom were mainly recruited from Moriscoes or Hispano-Moors, and the latter from the robber free-lances of Germany. . . . In the great cities, as in Milan, the common soldiers washed their feet in rose-water, drank the choicest wines; plundered the churches, and laid under contribution all who were not fortunate enough to escape. At Florence "they robbed the temples of religion, slew the priests; committed shocking abuses of the sacred vessels; the crucifix on the high altar was cut in pieces and thrown in a fire kindled for the destruction of valuable pictures. The fate of the nuns was too horrible to relate." . . . In Borgo Donnino similar scenes occurred. In Milan the principal inhabitants were put to the torture—a terrible description of rack—to procure their hidden treasures. The Swabians and Spaniards committed horrible atrocities in the neighbourhood of Milan; they burned houses and furniture to the value of two hundred millions of ducats, with all the churches, and images. Here they murdered a number of priests and monks; some

sixty nuns, who concealed themselves in a church, were consumed in the flames. Whenever those monsters discovered the *Host in any church they threw it into the river, and melted down the sacred vessels.* These dreadful scenes were enacted by the hired mercenaries of Charles V. All authorities agree that the sacking of Rome, on this occasion, stands forth without a parallel in the annals of civilisation. The Pope incurred the enmity of Charles, and it was not in the nature of the latter to forgive or to forget. No quarter was given, no sex or age was spared. Altars and churches were little regarded by the Spaniards, or by the Germans who acted as brutally as Goths and Vandals. In the horrors of the siege, men, women, and children cast themselves down from the roofs of their houses rather than fall into the hands of the ruthless invaders; others were pushed out of windows at the point of the lance. Many people were *branded with fire or their teeth torn out; "others had molten lead poured down their throats."* In one instance, the ring could not be taken from the finger of a Cardinal quickly enough, when a German officer drew his sword and cut off the member. Placing the bloody finger in his pocket, he exclaimed, "*that's the way to do the business.*" The armies of Attila or of Genseric could have done no worse in their "hours of free quarter" than those of Imperial Charles, who professed to be the "hereditary champion and worldly guardian of St. Peter's barque."

The supply of provisions was cut off; the inhabitants were reduced to feed on roots and herbs; this food was soon exhausted. Thousands of dead bodies were left unburied: disease raged everwhere; the contagion spread from the populace to the soldiers; and the plague, less discrimi-

nating than the sword, mowed down alike the conqueror and the vanquished.*

An Imperial officer, high in the confidence of the Emperor Charles, despatched to his master a terrible picture of the conduct of the German Lutherans on this occasion. "The Lance-Knights of Germany were first intent on plunder; then a desecration of churches and all that related to religion." . . . . The treatment of women by the Germans displayed all the brutality of inhuman licence.

The Cardinal Como draws a picture of what occurred, and as he was an eye-witness, his statement is of importance:—"All the churches and monasteries, both of friars and nuns, were sacked, many friars were beheaded, even those who were standing at the altar; a number of old nuns were beaten with sticks; many young nuns received a worse fate. . . . . All the vestments, chalices—of silver and gold—were taken from the churches. The tabernacles in which were contained the *Corpus Domini* were broken, and the Host itself was thrown, now on the ground, now into the fire, now trampled under foot. . . . . The head of St. John the Baptist at San Silvestro was outraged, and the silver urn in which it was deposited carried away. An old nun found the head in a garden, where a German soldier flung it. All the Spaniards and Germans (people of quality) in Rome were plundered and made prisoners by their own countrymen." . . . . During the siege nearly six hundred nuns perished by a terrible death. In one house twenty nuns—nearly all old women—died of starvation; they

* The above has been very briefly summarized from Dr. Brewer's Foreign State Papers; translated from the Italian. Il Saccadi Roma, 493.

were locked up for protection, and in the horrors that followed were forgotten.

What did the people of Italy do to save their time-honoured capital at this crisis? The Venetian State Papers at St. Mark's, and Dr. Brewer's translations from the records of the siege, furnish an answer to the question here raised. Italian servants betrayed their masters; Italian residents pointed out to the enemies of their country the most costly palaces, the secret retreats of the rich, the noble, and the defenceless; Italian ingenuity suggested the more refined methods of cruelty, the more scandalous violations of oaths and promises. No sight of blood, though the blood was Roman, no misery, no despair, moved them to pity, still less to interfere and mitigate the sufferings of the unhappy citizens. Not one instance is recorded of Italian citizens administering aid or comfort to the dying and the wounded, who perished forgotten and neglected alike by friends and foes.

"Rhodes and Hungary delivered to the Turk; Rome trampled down by communistic heretics; the free-lance Lutherans defiling the Sanctuary, and the infidel defying the Vicar of Jesús Christ." Such were the scenés enacted during the summer of 1527. The ambition and dishonesty of the Emperor Charles were the main causes of this state of affairs.

Up to a certain period King Henry was far more earnest and friendly to the Papal Chair than Charles, who selfishly speculated on the temporal weakness of the Pontiff, who was no match for either monarch in the crooked ways of policy. Charles had a large European influence, and was one of the most remarkable characters in history. His whole reign was stormy; France, the Moors, and the Protestant Princes

of Germany gave him full employment. Yet, being equally rich in resources, and sagacious in the use of them; gifted with a cool judgment, and always master of himself, he steadily pursued his plans, and was generally able to overcome the greatest obstacles.*

It is necessary again to impress upon the reader the fact that Charles was a master of dissimulation, and his biographers have doubtless felt it to be a difficult task to fathom his real intentions. His correspondence with De Praet, respecting the posture of affairs after the battle of Pavia, shows the duplicity of his disposition; and in his treatment of King Francis, when a prisoner, Charles gave no proofs of the generosity or magnanimity of a conqueror. It is, indeed, doubtful if he ever felt or formed a friendship for any one beyond his own family, especially his wife, whose memory he honoured with unostentatious effusion, yet still not more than she deserved, for Isabel was a woman of the highest and noblest qualities. The palace under her rule became a school of industry. Like Queen Claude of France, Isabel and her maidens walked together every morning to an early Mass; during the day the Queen worked with, and instructed in, tapestry the young ladies of the Court, and taught them what in those days was considered the elegant labour of the loom.

Isabel sent many pieces of tapestry, worked by her own hands, to adorn the altars of Jerusalem. Her virtues were

* Charles V. succeeded his grandfather Ferdinand to the throne of Spain in 1516, and became Emperor of Germany on the death of Maximilian in 1519. In 1555 Charles abdicated the Imperial throne in favour of his son Philip, and retired to an abbey to seek that peace which the world denied to him as a monarch. He died three years subsequently. What a strange change to come over the proudest and most restless monarch in Europe!

long remembered, and her effigy was struck on a medal, with a device of the Three Graces, and on the reverse side the motto, "*Has habet et superat.*"* Perhaps the memory of the good Isabel made Charles sometimes hesitate in his despotic actions. A widower at forty, he never married again. In all the principal apartments of the Royal palaces were to be seen pictures of Isabel, representing her from childhood to within one year of her death. "To look at these pictures in after life were the only real moments of happiness I possessed," were the words of Charles† to Madame Cabrera. So much for the memory of a good Christian and a noble wife.

And now to return to Clement VII. and the dire difficulties of his position. Silvia de Todi and Fusconi, who wrote from a long personal knowledge of Pope Clement, represent him in a different light from that in which he is shown in the pages of Burnet, Rancke, and Froude. Cellini describes him as a man of "warm temper, yet quiet, benevolent—a learned scholar, possessed of elegant taste, wit, and humour; sometimes sad, sometimes pleasant." "He loved to wander alone amidst his books and flower-gardens," writes a contemporary. Mr. Froude's picture is inexplicable to a just reader of history. He says:—"Clement wore his falsehood with so easy a grace that it assumed the character of truth. He was false, deceitful, treacherous."‡ Mr. Froude, as usual, gives

* Florey, Memorias de las Reynas Catolicius.

† Charles was sometimes represented as a Spaniard; but Flanders was his birthplace. His early attachments and all his sympathies were with the people of the Netherlands. He spoke the language of that country far more fluently than the Castilian.

‡ Froude's History of England, vol. ii, p. 234.

no authority for this sweeping accusation. In referring to another volume of Mr. Froude's history, I find a different picture of the same Pontiff traced in opposite colours:—"Clement was *an indifferent master of the tricks of dissimulation to which he was reduced, and his weakness entitles him to pity, if not to respect.*"* If the incongruity of these sketches do not neutralise the value of both, in the absence of the writer's indication as to which we are to believe the plain duty of the historical student is to consult less inconsistent and more reliable authorities than James Anthony Froude.

To return to the Legate and his mission.

Campeggio's instructions were to protract the inquiry, and many unlooked-for circumstances promoted his views in this respect. The sweating sickness, for instance, broke out, spreading in all circles; Anna Boleyn and her brother George, and many of the King's Court, were seized with the disease; Anna, when about three hours ill, cried out for a confessor; a number of the courtiers were struck down. The confessors were on their holy mission without fear, bringing words of hope and consolation to the palace and the lowly cottage. The King, who had a dreadful horror of death, threw aside the divorce question for many weeks; he locked himself up from all communication with courtiers or domestics; he actually joined Queen Katharine in prayer; went to confession, and received Holy Communion every Sunday; sent "kindly messages to Wolsey," and sought the "forgiveness of some persons whom he had injured." How many did he not injure? Anna Boleyn was sent home to her father; "she was not required any

* Froude's History of England, vol. i. pp. 238-9.

longer ;" Sir Thomas Boleyn, like his Sovereign, had always a dread of a sudden death. On this occasion he was in great fear. Anna Boleyn promised her father that if she recovered she would make a pilgrimage to the shrine of "Our Lady of Walsingham." Promises of an "amended life" were made by all classes. The King was the most remarkable amongst the penitential groups. He "ate and drank" at the same table with his much-injured Queen ; he "frequently spoke of her excellence as a wife, her queenly dignity, and his own unworthiness."* A pregnant consideration presents itself here. We see the change wrought in Henry by the apprehension of death. If he really believed his union with Queen Katharine to be sinful, as alleged in his argument for divorce, would he have returned to cohabitation when in fear of proximate death ? If the church believed his marriage wrong, Henry would have been refused the Sacraments whilst living with the Queen. The courtiers and people were astonished at the apparent miracle which had been wrought in the King. "It was," says that observant writer, Logario, "remarked, and noted amongst all classes, how much the King was changed." Such men as Sir Thomas More did not believe in the King's conversion. When, however, the sweating sickness had subsided, Henry *was himself again.* The Queen was ordered to retire to her former residence, and Anna Boleyn recalled. She was now forgetful of her vow to visit the shrine, and had made, it would appear, a pledge to fascinate the King, and regain her former ascendancy. Her hopes were soon realised.

Du Bellai, the French ambassador, announces the return

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* Hall's Annals ; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII. ; Lingard's History of England, vol. iv.

of Anna to the royal presence in these words: "Mademoiselle de Bouleine has returned to the Court, and I believe the King to be so infatuated with her, that God alone could abate his madness." In one of Du Bellai's later despatches, he attributes the fall of Wolsey to be "the work of Anna's malice."

Capucius, the envoy of Charles V., confirms this statement. Judging by the State Papers of the period, Anna's conduct was "overbearing and insolent to the courtiers."

Lingard states that the conduct of Cardinal Campeggio proved him to be a match for all the arts of Wolsey, Gardyner, and the King. In the Legate's private interview with Katharine, he advised her to enter a convent. The Queen was justly indignant at such a proposition. She "contended that she had been a lawful and a faithful wife for twenty years; and there was no power on earth that could dissolve her marriage." Campeggio, accompanied by Wolsey and three prelates, visited the Queen a few days subsequently, but, to use the words of one of the Court prelates, her Highness was "still very obstinate." Every day the web became more entangled; evidence, documents, and theological opinions were multiplied, but little faith could be placed in any of them. Seven months were occupied with these proceedings, and the matter seemed as far as ever from being adjusted. The long-expected trial at last took place, in the Parliament Chamber, Blackfriars.* The character of the witnesses appealed to, the mode of

* June, 1529. A number of nobles, bishops, abbots, and judges were present. Anna Boleyn, who was magnificently attired, had the bad taste to appear at this trial, accompanied by her father. The matrons of London were most indignant at her conduct on this occasion.

proceeding, and the evidence—mysterious and unconnected as it was—would have been rejected at once by a commonplace jury of the present day. The King and Queen appeared in Court, the latter protesting against the form of the trial, and those who were to be her judges. Henry sat in State at the right hand of Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio; the Queen on the left. Dr. Gardyner was the chief counsel for the King, accompanied by several clerics, who, like himself, subsequently received bishoprics from the King for the part they played in the divorce litigation. That honest and unbending prelate, Dr. Fisher, was the Queen's principal advocate. At the conclusion of Dr. Gardyner's long and able speech in favour of the King's "serious conscientious scruples," the Queen rose. All eyes were fixed upon the injured wife. She advanced towards her husband's chair, and throwing herself upon her knees, addressed him in a most eloquent Latin speech; and then concluded her address by an appeal to the good feeling and equity of the Court: "*If there be any offence which can be alleged against me, I consent to depart in infamy; if not, then I pray you, in the name of the Holy Trinity, and the High Court of Heaven, to do me justice.*"*

* In Dodd's Church History the reader will find the addresses of both Katharine and Henry at full length, and somewhat modernized in language. The Latin speech of Gardyner has not been preserved in a correct form. Logario states that all the speeches were in Latin, whilst Polydore Vergil's account is different. Campeggio could not speak English, and I question if he knew French. Fisher and Gardyner must have addressed the court in Latin, or else the Legate could not discover the arguments put forward at both sides. Dean Phillips alleges that there was no man in England who could make such an oration in pure Latin as Polydore Vergil; but Polydore had nothing to do with the trial. Gardyner was, perhaps, the greatest linguist of all concerned in this discreditable exhibition. It was no fair trial, for even the forms of equity were laid aside.

The Queen retired amidst the applause of the spectators. The King could perceive that she had made an impression, and he at once attempted a plausible explanation. "The Queen," he said, "has always been a dutiful and good wife, and that his present suit did not proceed from any dislike of her, but from the tenderness of his own conscience; that his scruples had not been suggested, but on the contrary, discouraged by the Cardinal of York; and that they were confirmed by the Bishop of Tarbes; that he had consulted his confessors and several other bishops, who advised him to apply to the Pontiff, and that in consequence the present Court had been appointed, in the decision of which, be it what might, he would cheerfully acquiesce."* When Henry made this apparently honest declaration, he had the most implicit confidence in the secret tactics of his agents. Whatever he might at that time be deficient in devising, those about him were marvellous in suggestion.

The Queen, protesting against further proceedings, would not appear in Court, "nor by attorney," and was pronounced contumacious. Several sittings were held, but the action was all "on one side." The question to be decided, as so often alleged, was one affecting "the King's conscience," and his advocates, although men of considerable ability, and well informed upon canon law, failed to establish their client's case. The trial was still protracted, amidst the general indignation of the country. Proclamations filled with Tudor despotism were issued warning the people against offering any opinions against the "King's motives," which

* Cavendish, Hall, Herbert, and Burnet. Cavendish was present at the trial, and it is possible Edward Hall was there as a Judge.

were, said Dr. Gardyner, "most conscientious and virtuous."*
No one, however, outside the circle of Henry's Court agents for a moment doubted what were the monarch's "motives."

On the 23rd of July the King's counsel demanded judgment immediately, but Cardinal Campeggio would not be dictated to by the Court party. He informed the Crown lawyers, almost in Henry's presence, that the judgment must be deferred until the whole of the proceedings had been laid before the Pontiff; that he had come there to do justice, and no consideration should divert him from his duty. He was too old, weak, and sickly to seek the favour, or fear the resentment of any man living. The defendant had challenged him and his learned brother Wolsey as judges, because they were the subjects of her opponent. To avoid any error, they had therefore determined to consult the Apostolic See, and for that purpose did then adjourn the Court until October.†

The Duke of Suffolk, evidently at the suggestion of the King, striking the table, exclaimed in a vehement tone, that the old saw was now verified:—"Never did Cardinal bring good to England." Campeggio looked with withering scorn at Suffolk; in a a few minutes Wolsey rose; a breathless silence ensued; all eyes were now turned on the Cardinal of York, when, in a deep and solemn voice, he addressed Suffolk: "My Lord of Suffolk," said he, "of all men living you have the least reason to dispraise Cardinals; for if I, a poor Cardinal, had not been, you would not at this present moment have had a head upon your shoulders, wherewith to

* Carlos Logario's Narrative of the Divorce Trial.
† State Papers (Domestic) of Henry VIII.'s Reign.

make such a brag in disrepute of us who have meant you no harm, and have given you no cause of offence. If you, my Lord, were the King's ambassador in foreign parts, would you venture to decide on important matters without first consulting your Sovereign? We are also commis-misioners, and cannot proceed to judgment without the know-ledge of him from whom our authority proceeds. Therefore, do we neither more nor less than our commission alloweth; and if any man will be offended with us, he is an unwise man. Pacify yourself, then, my Lord of Suffolk, and speak not reproachfully of your best friend. You know what friendship I have shown you; but this is the first time I ever revealed it, either to my own praise or your dishonour."*

Cavendish, who was present, relates that the Duke of Suffolk was struck speechless, and by his silence acknow-ledged the justice of Wolsey's rebuke for his ingratitude. There is now in the archives of the British Museum a letter in the handwriting of the Princess Mary—the beloved Mary, as she was styled—declaring that her husband owed his life to the friendly offices of Wolsey. At the time of Suffolk's denunciation of the Cardinal of York, the letter in question was in Wolsey's possession. The Cardinal was not the only man to whom the Duke of Suffolk proved ungrateful.

Cavendish furnishes a rambling statement as to one of the private interviews between Katharine and Wolsey relative to the "trial of the divorce question; and how the Cardinal came upon the Queen and her maidens as they were at work in her chamber, her Highness having a skein of white thread about her neck." He further alleges that

* Cavendish, Hall, Herbert, Brewer's State Papers.

Wolsey addressed her in Latin and she "besought him to speak English, for although she knew Latin she preferred speaking in English." This statement is the mere gossip of pages. Katharine spoke very indifferent English, and the Court language was French and Latin. She was an admirable Latin scholar, as Erasmus has stated, and her celebrated speech at Blackfriars was in that language. Dr. Francis, who was present on this occasion, states that many of Cavendish's "facts" were based upon listening at key-holes. In this case Cavendish almost admits that he was an "eaves-dropper," for he writes:—"We, in the other chamber, might sometimes hear the Queen speak very loud, but what it was we could not understand."*

A word as to Cardinal Campeggio. The Cardinal first visited England in 1519, as a Legate. He was a man of extensive learning, and bore a high reputation; yet the vilest slanders have been cast upon his moral character by Dr. Burnet, but they are so notoriously false that I shall not further allude to them.

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* Cavendish's Memoirs of Wolsey.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FALL OF WOLSEY.

In 1529 the enemies of Wolsey had nearly completed their organisation. Those who wished for a redistribution of property were aware of his high conservative tendencies in Church and State. The Suffolks, the Howards, the Pagets, the Clintons, the Seymours, the Russells, the Herberts, the Ratclyffs, the Hobys, the Manners, the Cobhams, the Dudleys, the Grays, the Kingstons, the Dennys, and the crowd of spendthrift and unprincipled squires who were ready to join in any movement to obtain a confiscation of the monastic property, beheld the great barrier to their proceedings in the person of Thomas Wolsey. The combination above-mentioned was composed of strange materials, for they personally hated one another; jealous prelates and abbots, disappointed placemen, ignorant nobles, treacherous courtiers, and even suspended priests, were the most persistent in bringing about the fall of the great Minister. They were jealous of his genius and the results of his brilliant statesmanship; they envied him the greatness to which he had been elevated in the estimation of princes and diplomatists; yet not one amongst them possessed his administrative talent.

The Boleyns performed a subordinate part at this time, but were energetic in fabricating slanders of the Cardinal, and conveying them to the King, who still hesitated.

Le Grand, who has closely investigated the plots against Wolsey, considers Anna Boleyn to have been "the instigator of all." This statement is corroborated by others who were "eye-witnesses."* The general topic of conversation "amongst the nobles and the squires was the confiscation of Church property; and many creditors' claims were postponed until the much-desired object was achieved."† It was feared that the King would never consent to such measures whilst Wolsey was his councillor,‡ and in this opinion they were partly correct. "These noble lords imagine," writes the French Ambassador, "that the Lord Cardinal of York once dead or ruined, they will incontinently plunder the Church and strip it of its property." Yet those enemies of Wolsey were opposed to the Reformation, and cast ridicule upon its German founders; they still adhered to the olden religion, and their hostility to the Pope was more of a political character, or to please the King, whom the Pontiff disobliged. They quarrelled and abused monks and seculars as they did before; nevertheless they responded to the Vesper bell; they heard the Latin Mass as their fathers had of yore; they raised no question against the dogmas of the Latin Church; they dined at the abbeys, and "made merrie in the bishop's hospitable hall;" but, at the same time, they hungered for the well-cultivated manors, the inviting gardens, the orchards, the shady groves, the mur-

* At first, as I have already remarked, Anna was acting under her father's advice; and it is possible that many things have been attributed to her which have no foundation in fact.

† Thorndale's Chronicle.

‡ Le Grand's Despatches.

muring streams, the cattle, the gold and silver of the abbeys and convents, and they were determined to possess them by any means, even misrepresentation, perjury, fraud, or violence. Their religious sentiments were, as already stated, unchanged, and no casuistry can set aside that fact; but an absorbing desire of possessing their neighbours' goods led to the revolution in property, which ultimately resulted in the Reformation movement, as the surest mode of retaining the lands which had just been taken from the lawful owners. The Rev. J. H. Blunt, in his work upon the Reformation, puts the question as to the "motives" of the Reformers with direct and simple force:—"Few," he writes, "*cared for Reformation—many cared for destruction.*" This is the result of the long researches of a learned and truthful Protestant divine: he has furnished the world with the "motives" of those who imposed the "new learning" upon England.

The first turning point in Wolsey's fortunes occurred in the departure of Campeggio. The King took leave of the Legate at Grafton, where Wolsey was also present; and it was then rumoured that the Cardinal had lost the royal confidence. Those reports came from the Brandons, the Grays, the Howards, and the Boleyns—all implacable enemies to Wolsey. But so marked was the ill-feeling exhibited towards him by those nobles that Henry relented, and to the surprise of the courtiers spoke in a friendly tone to his old favourite. "But he was not invited to the royal table on that day (Sept. 19); he dined with the courtiers whom he despised." In the evening he had another interview with the King in his closet, which lasted three hours; and having bid him a friendly "good night," Henry re-

quested his attendance at nine of the clock on the following morning. This long conference alarmed the enemies of Wolsey, and that night there were several private communications made to Anna Boleyn to "use all her influence with the King against his Minister; she was reminded, amongst other things, of the deception practised by Wolsey in her case; wishing "to make her a mistress, but not a Queen."* It did not require much incentive to excite the enemity of Anna, for she was ever eager to disgrace or destroy those who crossed the path of her ambition. In the morning the Cardinal waited on King Henry, but to his surprise the monarch was on horseback, and "going out to ride with Lady Anna." After the "exchange of kindly salutations," Henry departed. The King and his Minister never met again. In a few days (October 9) the Attorney General filed two bills against Wolsey in the King's Bench, charging him with having, as Legate, offended against the Statute of the 16th of Richard II. known as the Statute of *Præmunire.* Even the lawyers of the time considered the prosecution as "arbitrary, despotic, and illegal;" and many of them were in doubt as to whether the Legatine Court could be brought within the operation of the law: the Cardinal had on former occasions obtained the King's licence, and was, therefore, authorised to hold the court. Wolsey offered no opposition; made no defence; resigned the great seal; placed the whole of his personal property, estimated at 500,000 crowns, at the King's disposal. "All I possess," said he, "I have received from the King's

* Brewer's State Papers. In Dixon's Two Queens occurs a scene where Anna Boleyn in a most malignant manner blackens Wolsey's character to the King. There are several letters extant corroborating these statements.

Highness; and I now return all with pleasure to my benefactor." But "the benefactor," or his prompters were not satisfied; a demand was made "for everything he possessed." He now surrendered all; "keeping not even a blanket or a shirt." He was "commanded to retire to Esher; a country house attached to the See of Winchester." His fallen condition did not yet satisfy the malice of his enemies. From the "courtiers down to the turbulent *canaille*, all classes attended in vast numbers to see his departure from London, to hoot and insult the fallen Minister;"* but as Wolsey had the forethought to take a different route from the one expected, his feelings were spared humiliation, and the fickleness of human favour another shameful display of its traditional worthlessness. The Bishop of Bayonne, who visited Wolsey before his departure from the metropolis, draws a melancholy picture of his forlorn condition. "I have," he says, "been to visit the Cardinal in his distress, and have witnessed the most striking change of his fortune. He explained to me his hard case in the worst rhetoric that was ever heard. Both his tongue and his heart failed him. He recommended himself to the pity of the King and Madame (Francis I. and his mother) with sighs and tears; and at last left me without having said anything near so moving as his appearance. The face is dwindled to one half its natural size. In truth his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen as they are, cannot help pitying him. Still they will carry things to extremities. As for his Legation, the seals, &c., he thinks no more of them. He is willing to give up any thing, even the shirt from his back,

* Brewer's State Papers.

and to live in a hermitage, if the King would desist from his displeasure."* Henry, strange to say, at this time sent him "secret messages, assuring him of his friendship." The Cardinal had the weakness to believe in those professions, but he was soon convinced of the motives which prompted them. Henry did not wish Wolsey to die until he had at least attempted to prove that he deserved death. Herbert, Henry's panegyrist, does not believe the charges preferred against the Cardinal, and Cavendish and Le Grand are of the same opinion. The articles of impeachment were forty-four, and were signed by fourteen peers, amongst whom were the dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk. These articles were carried in the Lords; but the King instructed Crumwell, then in the Commons, to have them rejected. The Cardinal's health was now giving way, and he was attacked with fever (about Christmas). Hearing of his illness, Henry exclaimed in the presence of his courtiers, "God forbid that he should die! I would not lose him for twenty thousand pounds." He ordered three of his own physicians to go immediately to Esher to attend him; he also sent a special messenger to assure Wolsey of his "love and esteem for him." He next induced Anna Boleyn to send a tablet of gold as a memorial of reconciliation and good feeling.†

The "religious orders," writes Ganganelli, "have not been gifted with infallibility, nor with indefectibility." Some of them were very much less guilty of the crimes ascribed to them by their enemies than possessors of the virtues attributed to them by their friends. When Wolsey

* Le Grand, iii. 37.

† State Papers, Cavendish and Le Grand.

fell, the mainstay and upholder of the Papal power was gone; and the priesthood whom he had elevated to the highest positions in the State, and whose secular privileges he maintained with a high hand, were now about to share in his change of fortune. They envied him for his greatness, and disliked him because he told them of their errors; they had not the foresight nor the wisdom to hearken to his advice; they did not "set their house in order, to meet the coming storm," but became in some instances reckless and defiant; and again high-placed ecclesiastics appeared as "forethoughtful sycophants," begging for mercy before they were impeached; indulging in the delusion that they could, with gold, conciliate Thomas Crumwell and his commissioners, who accepted their offerings and still pursued the givers. Lingard remarks that "instead of uniting in their common defence, they seem to have awaited their fate with the apathy of despair." At a later period they lost all fitting courage. "The clergy and monks," observes the Rev. J. H. Blunt, "fell into an utter panic; and the great body of the latter, especially, were ready to lie down like an unarmed peasantry before a troop of Cossacks." The terror-stricken nuns, who were cruelly treated, may be excused for adopting such a course. Although there were hundreds —perhaps thousands—amongst the monks and friars who would cheerfully ascend the scaffold, there were few who had the vigour to speak at the "right time or in the right place;" and when the hour of trial came, there were not many Forrests, Petos, or Elstons to confront their enemies. The bolder course was the safest. If the religious orders had appealed to the love and reverence of the people whom their predecessors had treated like faithful guardians for

centuries, the country would have pronounced in their favour. They were a powerful body in the State; and, judging from documents before me, there can be no doubt that the masses would have successfully taken up their defence. But the religious orders were divided by dissension and jealousy; and the rivalry of precedent and mode of discipline caused long and bitter disputes. They were far from being united in love, although accordant in faith; and the result was the triumph of Lord Crumwell.

To return to Wolsey. A reconciliation with the King seemed probable. He was allowed to exchange Esher for Richmond, where he spent much time with the Fathers of the Charterhouse. Here he "discoursed with great earnestness on the necessity there existed for frequent preaching and instruction to the people." Those "heretics," said he, "are smart, intelligent men, and they may possibly find their way into England. We should be prepared for them."* His enemies, however, resumed their work; they would not have him "come so near the Court." He was ordered to retire two hundred miles from London; but the King, further considering his case, wrote letters to "various squires and nobles, recommending them to visit the Cardinal, and be civil unto him, and ask him to make merry at their homes."†

Wolsey's altered mien, his generosity and urbanity, won the esteem of the people of the northern districts; he did not appear at their banquets, or make merry as they expected; he gave himself up almost wholly to spiritual matters, and on every Sunday and holiday he rode to some

* Carlo Fernando Logario. † Brewer's State Papers.

village church, where he celebrated Mass; he frequently preached twice a day to the peasantry; he heard the confessions of outcasts and outlaws; he enjoined the priests to preach sermons on holidays as well as Sundays, and to explain to their flocks the history of the Latin Church. He made minute inquiry as to the good or bad feeling that might have prevailed in rural districts; went to the humble cottage—the lowliest homestead—on this mission of charity, and reconciled those who had been long at enmity with one another. The bad became reformed through his admonitions; the unfaithful and unkind husband appeared altered in his domestic relations, and confessed that the "Cardinal had taught him to be what he should be to his family." Wolsey's labours at this time were unceasing, and he seemed bent to excel Bishop Fisher as a priest: he sent provisions and words of comfort to widows and orphans, and preached especially to "young maidens to preserve their virtue and chastity; that all beauty faded and perished when virtue fled;"* he recommended early marriages to those who had sufficient means. He seemed now to have felt, and wished to realize, the character of a minister of Christ; and in the few months he spent in the North he accomplished more for the practice of religion than perhaps he had ever done from the period of his ordination to that of his fall as a statesman. "In his domestic intercourse," writes Oldgate, "he became wonderfully changed; the proud Cardinal had vanished from the scene." His hospitality about this time was large and kindly, but no splendour or extravagance; every squire in the district was welcome to his dining-hall

* Carlo Logario.

"whenever they chose to visit him; apartments were also set aside with right merrie cheer for the yeoman, and even the peasant;" a considerable number of women and children received food daily. He conversed in brief words and friendly tone with almost every one who approached his house and grounds—and they were hundreds—inquiring as to their mode of life, their families, &c.; he employed three hundred mechanics and labourers in repairing the churches of the diocese, and the houses of the clergy, to whom he was most kind. The more he was known, the more he was loved; those to whom in the days of his prosperity he had been an object of hatred, now spoke well of him.* Perhaps the truest account of his conduct is to be found in Thomas Crumwell's letters, which present him in an amiable light, "performing so many good offices for the people with so little means." The King heard those accounts with satisfaction, and sent him money, which was not expended on "luxuries," as has been alleged, "but in assisting the needy." A Puritan writer presents an interesting picture of Wolsey's retirement at Cawood when "relieved from the burden of the State." "None was better beloved than he, after he had been there a while. He gave bishops a good example how they might win men's hearts. There were few holy-days but he would ride five or six miles from his house; now to this parish church, now to that; and thence cause one of his priests to make a goodly sermon unto the people. He sat among them for a while; and then celebrated Mass before all the parish. . . . He brought his dinner with him, and invited many of the people of the

* Grove's Life and Times of Cardinal Wolsey, vol. iv.; Strype's Memorials, vol. i.; Carlo Logario's Narrative.

parish to partake of the same. He inquired if there was any grudge or ill-feeling between neighbours; and 'if there were, after the dinner was over, he sent for the parties to meet him at the church, where he made them all friends again.'" In the absence of the clergy, the Cardinal walked on foot to attend the death-bed of persons in fever and other infectious diseases.*

Everything promised fair for Wolsey's restoration to power, or at least to the King's friendship. But the troubled waters seemed destined to return. The enmity of the "Night Crow" was not extinguished; it only slumbered for a more fatal moment. Capucius contends that "Anna Boleyn and her father were about this time plotting every hour for the degradation or destruction of the Cardinal." Capucius adds that "Lady Anna persuaded the King to prepare a dungeon in the Tower for the reception of Wolsey as a traitor."† Stephen Gardyner, then Secretary of State, was a member of the Council which offered so many insults to the fallen minister, who had formerly been his kind benefactor. Never was any great man so abandoned by friends as Wolsey had been at the time of his fall.

In his zeal for religion the Cardinal entered into correspondence with the Pope; Cavendish states that his letters to the Pontiff were "intended to promote a reconciliation between the King and the Head of the Church;" but those who projected the monastic confiscations represented the matter in a different light to Henry, who suddenly issued a mandate for the apprehension of Wolsey. He was arrested

* Carlo Logario's Narrative.

† Despatches of Capucius to Charles V.

at Cawood on the 4th of November (1530). He betrayed no appearance of having offended. The "King's Highness," said he, "has not a more loyal subject in his realm than I am. There is not living on earth a man who can look me in the face and charge me with untruth or dishonourable dealings. I seek no favour but to be at once confronted with my accusers.* Little is known of the real charges preferred against Wolsey; but judging from the general character and motives of those who made them, most probably every accusation was plausibly set forth. Lord Herbert gives no credit to the treasonable charges preferred against him; and the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk "hesitated to believe that he was guilty." Those noblemen, be it remembered, were both enemies of Wolsey, and, at the time, powerful and implacable. The policy of the Boleyn party was to arouse the suspicious of the King, and in this course they succeeded.†

The Cardinal's interview with Sir Henry Norris, who brought him a ring as a token of the King's "returning friendship," presented a distressing scene; his hopes revived for a moment, but only to disappear. "Gentle Norris," said he, "if I were lord of a realm, the one-half of it would be an insufficient reward to give you for your pains and words of comfort. But, alas! I have nothing left me but the clothes on my back; therefore take this small reward," giving him a little chain of gold with a cross. "When I was in prosperity I would not have parted with it for a thousand pounds; wear it for my sake, and remember me when I am gone." He made a present of his "Court fool" (Patch) to the King. "I trust his Highness will accept

* State Papers, Cavendish. † Cavendish and Logario.

him well, for surely for a nobleman's pleasure he is worth a thousand pounds." The fool left his good master with great reluctance, for "it took six yeomen to carry him away."* The King treated Patch with kindness, often speaking to him of the Cardinal with reverence and seeming affection. The fool's real name was Williams. In the reign of Edward VI. he became a Baptist preacher!

To few men is accorded the stoicism of confronting good and evil fortune with a mind unmoved. The histories of Greece and Rome, in the days of their heroes, present a few such noble examples; and amongst Christian martyrs have been found most edifying instances. But the temperament of the Cardinal was not so loftily unyielding. When he became aware of his altered condition, and the exaltation of his enemies, he "cried like a child, and sobbed with the accents of a deserted woman." Such is the description of Father Longland, who told him "to take comfort, and remember he was a priest of God, and could now labour to save souls for the King of kings; that he should cast away his vanity and pride, and become a missioner in the vineyard of the Lord Jesus; that his pride brought him to his present changed fortune." There was a time when no man, not even a Carthusian Father, might have addressed the Cardinal of York in the words of Longland; but incurable misfortune is a strong aid to conviction, and the inevitable a potent support to philosophy. So Wolsey accepted the situation, and sought peace in the performance of duties whose importance he had never, even in the very zenith of his power, seemed willing to ignore.

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* Cavendish, Logario, and Herbert.

The fallen statesman ordered inventories to be made of all his plate, furniture, jewellery, tapestry, books, &c., and the same to be presented to the King, with his mansions, parks, groves, and gardens. "From my good King I have received all I possess, and to his Highness I now give back all that his liberality and goodness conferred on me." The King's retainers, in taking possession of the Cardinal's property, outraged propriety and humanity. They "did not," says a spectator, "leave him a blanket to keep out the cold at night, nor a dish or plate to eat his food on."* The cost of Wolsey's different establishments was upwards of 30,000*l.* per annum, an enormous sum at the commencement of the sixteenth century. He had eight hundred servants in various stations, and employed some two thousand five hundred artisans and labourers, all of whom were treated in a liberal and kindly manner.† Sharon Turner's enmity relaxes for a moment when he contemplates the fallen minister's conduct while residing at Southwell. "It was," he says, "gratifying to the inhabitants of the country to have their prelate among them. His house was soon frequented by a great resort of the most worshipful gentlemen in the district. He entertained them with the best cheer he could devise, and his gentle and familiar behaviour caused him to be greatly beloved and esteemed throughout the whole country. He felt the value of those softening qualities and manners which peculiarly constitute the moral beauty of virtue. Others are more sublime and distinguishing; but the kind and courteous voice, the

* The original catalogue of the Cardinal's effects, now in the Britis Museum, occupies forty folio pages. It is a curious collection.

† Carlo Fernando Logario's Narrative.

benign amenity, the benevolent feelings, and the unassuming conduct, never fail to awake our sweetest and most endearing sympathies, to connect heart with heart, and soul with soul, in bonds of mutual gratification and genial regard, and to attest that interior loveliness of character which attracts the esteem of intellect and sensibility, with a social magnetism that every age and rank feel and welcome."*

Wolsey's endowments at Oxford and Ipswich attest his love of learning. He gave some 3000*l.* a year in gratuities to men of learning at home and abroad. "Whoever," says Erasmus, "was distinguished by any art or science paid court to the Cardinal, and none paid court in vain."

Giustiniani, who was no friend or admirer of Wolsey, has left his opinion on record of the Cardinal's merits as a Judge. "He is," observes that accomplished diplomatist, "pensive, and has the reputation of being extremely just; he favours the people exceedingly, especially the poor, hearing their wants and seeking to despatch them instantly. He also makes the lawyers plead gratis for all paupers." "In matters of judicature," writes Fuller, "he behaved himself commendably. No widows' sighs, nor orphans' tears, appear in our chronicles as caused by the Cardinal of York." Some English writers, amongst them the author of "The Chancellors," allege that Wolsey "neglected his duties as Chancellor; that his decisions were whimsical, arbitrary, and in ignorance of law;" and that "he had no pity for the poor suitor." A distinguished legal commentator on the English judges makes the opposite statement,

* Sharon Turner, vol. x. p. 293-4.

and points out the sectarian feeling that breathes throughout Lord Campbell's "Chancellors." That able and discriminating prelate, Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, who was long acquainted with the Cardinal, declares that he had never known so painstaking a Judge; that he was "always on the side of the poor man when opposed by the rich or unscrupulous;" and that "when he decided against the claims of a poor man, or of a widow or orphans, he invariably gave them assistance in money or employment."* Who can question the testimony of Sir Thomas More, who, like Dr. Fox, speaks of Wolsey from personal knowledge? "No Chancellor of England," writes this virtuous Judge, "ever acted with greater impartiality, deeper penetration of judgment, or a more enlarged knowledge of law and of equity." It seems strange that Lord Campbell, who reverences and extols the character of More, should have passed over that good man's evidence as to the merits of his predecessor in the Great Seal.

The Rev. J. H. Blunt observes:—"Ambition leaves an odious mark upon history only when it has been accompanied by wrong and bloodshed; but not a single public act of this great man can be proved to have been unjust, while the gentleness and humanity of his government are conspicuous almost beyond belief when a sifting contrast comes to be drawn between it and that of his contemporaries or successors."† Dr. Brewer traces the slanders on Wolsey's reputation to Polydore Vergil. "My only surprise," he says, "is that every historian in succession

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* Thorndale's Anecdotes of Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford.

† Rev. J. H. Blunt's Reformation of the Church of England.

should have accepted Polydore Vergil's statements as a true picture of the Cardinal of York. Each has added a little to the original story or caricature. Edward Hall took his portrait from Polydore; Foxe from Hall; Burnet and Strype from Foxe; Hume from his countryman, Burnet, and so on to the end of the series." I should not desire to seek a higher authority on the question raised than Dr. Brewer. Although Hume quotes Polydore Vergil, he has still the candour to inform his readers that "Polydore's narratives of Wolsey are very suspicious." The statements of Polydore Vergil are the more discreditable from the fact that he was the best informed man of his time on European politics, and in his knowledge of statesmen and kings; but it must be added that he was unscrupulous in defaming the character of any one who refused him a favour, or thwarted his intriguing policy.

It seems to be the fate of most public men to be misrepresented to posterity. Many allegations have been made as to the envy and jealousy of Wolsey towards some of his eminent contemporaries. The fact is, the Cardinal might have said with Petrarch, "Of all vices envy is the last of which I could be guilty." No great soul has ever envied in another the possession of genius or virtue.

The moral character of Wolsey has been traduced by several historians, yet those charges have never been established, but in the first instance emanated from personal enmity, and were afterwards adopted and enlarged upon by prejudiced and sectarian writers.

I now approach the closing scenes in the great minister's career. The Cardinal's health had been declining for some time; he was labouring under dropsy, a weakness of

the limbs, and a general prostration; but the vigour of his mind was still unimpaired. He was not, however, in a condition to travel with expedition in the cold damp days of November. Upwards of three thousand persons assembled at Cawood to see him a prisoner—not, as in London, to exult, but to "pity and to bless him for all the good offices he rendered them." His spirits were quite fallen, yet he seemed soothed by the good nature of the people—the men, the women, and the children. "They cried with a loud voice," says Cavendish, "God save your Grace! the foul evil take them that hath taken you from us; and we pray Heaven that a very vengeance may light upon them all! Thus they ran crying after him through the town of Cawood, they loved him so well." Such is the description of the scene by an eye-witness. When Wolsey reached Sheffield Park he manifested with a change for the worse. On the following morning, at an early hour, Cavendish "found him seated on a chest with his beads in hands." The news of Kingston's arrival from London made him tremble: he had a foreboding of the message on which the Constable of the Tower came. He was excited, cried, and sobbed, then in a mournful accent exclaimed, "Well, as God willeth, so be it. I am ready to accept such ordinances as God hath provided for me." Shortly after a distressing scene occurred on the entrance of Kingston and the Earl of Northumberland—once known as Lord Percy—the personal enemy of the fallen Churchman. The conduct of Lord Northumberland on this occasion indicated the bitterness of his hostility.*

* In Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography, vol. i. p. 638, the scene between Wolsey and Northumberland is printed; see Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII., p. 342; likewise Lloyd's State Worthies.

It was bruited that Lord Northumberland was sent at the suggestion of the Marchioness of Pembroke to arrest the Cardinal, in order to add to his anguish of mind. If she did so, it is a mere question whether Anna or her old lover displayed the greater amount of unforgivingness. What a strange meeting!

Some minutes elapsed before either party spoke; however, all the courage and dignity of the Cardinal returned, and, as far as Kingston was concerned, no jailer could perform his unwelcome office with more delicacy, and presented a striking contrast with that of Lord Northumberland.

"Maister Kingston," said Wolsey, "my disease is such that I cannot live; I have a flux with a continual fever, and if ye see no alteration in me soon, there is no remedy but death." The Court party became impatient at the time consumed in conveying the object of their hatred to London, and as soon as he was able to get on horseback the Cardinal was compelled to proceed. Along the road the yeomen and peasantry came forth to meet him, expressing in their own quaint style an honest sympathy. The harsh cold days did not prevent the wives and daughters from appearing on the highways to "wave their hands and give looks of sorrow." To all the Cardinal said, "May God preserve ye in His holy religion, my good people." He did not proceed far until his strength began rapidly to decline. Arriving at the Abbey of Leicester, on Saturday evening, he was met at the gate by the Abbot and the brotherhood, when he exclaimed, "Father Abbot, I am come to lay my bones amongst you."* He was immediately carried to bed, from which he never

* Cavendish's Memoirs of Wolsey.

rose again. On Sunday he seemed to be fast sinking, but rallied for a time. His beads were constantly in his hands; he prayed with great fervour, making the sign of the cross many times. It was discovered by an attendant that he "wore a hair shirt, which he evidently wished to conceal."* He described himself as "a most lowly creature, and a wretched sinner; that his vanity and pride were now justly punished." He spoke frequently of his firm belief and adherence to the Catholic Church; and warned his attendants against the "new heresy."

The last days were now approaching. Sunday and Monday passed in suffering and resignation. On the latter day the Cardinal told his attendants that he would live "till eight of the clock on the following morning," which proved prophetic. At six on Tuesday morning (November 29, 1530), he made a declaration of his religious belief in the presence of the Lord Abbot and twelve of the monks. Then, with becoming solemnity, he received the last rites of the Church. In one hour later his memorable address to Sir William Kingston was delivered with unusual emotion. At its conclusion he remained silent for some time. His voice now faltered, but his eyes still retained their intelligent brightness; John Longland, a Carthusian confessor, stood beside the death-couch, whilst Mass proceeded at the great altar in the church; and just as the bell of the abbey tolled for the raising of the Host, the Cardinal of York closed his eyes upon all the fleeting honours and transitory

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* Logario states that the Cardinal wore no hair shirt at the time of his death. Some time previous he punished himself in this fashion; but at the suggestion of his physician he laid it aside.

splendours of State, as well as upon the deceit and wickedness of human ambition.

And now *in memoriam.* When the interests and the honour of England were concerned, this remarkable man was energetic and fearless; yet he waged no war of blood or plunder. His wars were the contests of diplomacy; his triumphs the victories of intellectual supremacy. As a politician of the period in which he lived he played his part with a certain degree of frankness and honesty seldom to be found in diplomatists of any time. In his fall, however, he evinced more magnanimity than at the zenith of his greatness. It is at length time that truth should be vindicated; that the ignorant or malignant narratives so often presented to posterity as biographies of Thomas Wolsey should be controverted, and the real character elicited of a man who, in ideas as well as actions, was the grandest minister that Europe had produced up to those times. Those who are not well acquainted with the Home and Foreign State Papers of the reign of Henry VIII. can form no accurate opinion of the greatness of the Cardinal of York as a minister of the Crown.

In forty-eight hours subsequent to the moment of dissolution, the remains of the once illustrious Cardinal of York were placed in a deal coffin, and consigned to an obscure grave, unwept and unlamented, except by the few tried friends who, for the glory and honour of human nature amidst so much of baseness, greed, ingratitude, and cruelty, remained loving and faithful to the last.*

Those students of history who have had the privilege of

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* Brewer's Foreign and Domestic State Papers, vol. iv.

examining the voluminous Home and Foreign State Papers bearing upon Wolsey's career as a minister of the Crown, must look upon the closing scene of his life with a mournful emotion. Sharon Turner observes that our "moral taste" must regret that one who had, for nearly twenty years, been acting so grand a part in the sight of all Europe, did not fall like the setting sun, with a majesty correspondent to the character he had been representing. Far better, mayhap, to the idea of "moral sentiment," that the illustrious Cardinal recurred, in the decline of his earthly magnificence, to the overruling Arbiter of all Greatness.

The death of Wolsey made room for the promotion of two of the King's agents in the divorce litigation. Edward Lee was appointed to the See of York, and Stephen Gardyner, the personal friend of the Boleyn family, to that of Winchester.

An interesting question has been raised several times by students of history as to whether Wolsey ever used the memorable words attributed to him by William Cavendish: "Had I but served my God," &c. The saying is traceable to an earlier date than that of Wolsey. "If," said De Berghes to Lady Margaret, "I and Renner had served God as we have served the King, we might have hoped for a place in Paradise."* "Similar words," says the Rev J. H. Blunt, "are attributed to the wealthy Duke of Buckingham, at the scaffold, in 1521. 'If he had offended no more unto God Almighty than he had done to the King's Highness, he should die as true a man as ever was in the

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. iii. p. 21.

world.' "* Buckingham was not a man of fine sentiment, or much education. As to Wolsey, when misfortune struck him down, he was still too proud to descend in his last speech to take his text from De Berghes, or from the Duke of Buckingham, whom he had despised and ruined. It is very possible that Maister Cavendish, who delighted in sensational gossip, gave a flourish of sentiment in this instance, as he has in other matters concerning the Cardinal of York. Cavendish could not induce the Governor of the Tower to corroborate his statement, because Sir William Kingston was quite deaf; his evidence is therefore unsupported; besides, Dr. Logario is silent upon this subject.

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* J. H. Blunt's Reformation of the Church of England.

CHAPTER XXI.

A FORTUNATE FAMILY.

Upon the death of Wolsey William Cavendish entered the service of the King, and was subsequently knighted. He was a courtier who studied his royal master's views with an apparent devotion, and his religious sentiments were those of the Court. His policy was to please all parties—if possible. He received a portion of the monastic lands, and acknowledged the King as Head of the Church. He was the personal friend of men like Polydore Vergil, Bonner, Gardyner, and Cranmer. He attended Lord Crumwell's banquets; his society was much courted; "he was," says Thomas Wyatt, "a delightful story-teller;" he knew much of the schemes by which Percy and Anna Boleyn were separated. Perhaps no man knew more. On this subject he was silent; but in after years he stated to Wyatt that he was certain Anna "was very fond of Percy." Of Percy he thought much; "Percy," he relates to Lord Cobham, "lost all courage and heart when he was told by my Lord Cardinal that Nan could never become his wife."

Cavendish's memoirs of his patron Wolsey has been praised for accuracy and impartiality; but a diligent search amongst contemporary records, diaries, letters, and other documents, will prove that his biography—if such it can be called—of Wolsey, is far from being accurate. He kept a diary, in which he entered all the gossip gathered in the

dining halls of the notables whom he visited. He admits that he was an "eavesdropper;" that he was "listening in corners" to Anna Boleyn and others railing against people they professed to esteem. He relates narratives of Wolsey of an unpleasant nature when Dean of Lincoln; but Cavendish was not connected with his munificent master at that period, and his information was evidently derived from questionable sources, and is unworthy of much consideration. When gentleman usher to the Cardinal, he had some opportunity of judging of the inner life of Wolsey. Cavendish was never made a political confidant by his master. Logario, the Spanish physician, to whom I have frequently alluded, was more in Wolsey's confidence than any other man about his Court; yet Logario states that he never alluded in any conversation with him to the Boleyns or Queen Katharine. At a subsequent period Cavendish was well acquainted with all the intrigues of Henry's Court, and the plots laid for the destruction of Anna Boleyn. He was silent, and kept aloof from the intrigues of the Court. He held office under Edward and Mary, and enjoyed the patronage of their respective Governments. William Cavendish was born in Suffolk about 1505, and died early in the reign of Elizabeth. In after years his son became Earl of Devonshire. Wealth and honours showered upon this family for generations. One grandson became Duke of Newcastle; another a favourite with the Stuart family, and showed his gratitude by aiding Charles I. with 10,000*l*. to carry on his expedition against the Scots. He subsequently went into exile with Charles II., and reappeared at the Restoration. Another descendant became Duke of Devonshire; the junior branches of the family accumulated great

fortunes. Henry Cavendish gave himself up to scientific study for some years. A relative left him a large fortune; he then became a miser, and was "a flint-hearted man," as a contemporary styled him. He bequeathed 2,000,000*l.* to his kinsmen. So the family went on accumulating wealth and honours.

Wolsey foretold that wealth and honours would, in time, fall to the lot of William Cavendish's descendants.

Sir William Cavendish's "Life of Wolsey" was published in the reign of Queen Mary. Several of his statements were challenged at the time by persons who had been acquainted with the chief actors of Henry's reign; nevertheless, Cavendish was still considered a good authority for many matters in connexion with the Cardinal of York and his Royal master. The MS. documents of Brian Tulle, the confidential secretary of the Cardinal, could explain many passages in the life of Wolsey which might place his character in a better light before posterity. "Tulle's secret records of his master and himself were accidentally destroyed," so writes his friend Carlo Logario. Dr. Brewer, who has won his laurels amongst the State Papers, does not give implicit reliance to all the allegations—sometimes marvellously put forward—by Cavendish. The original chronicle produced by this noted courtier has undergone revisions and amendments, many of which were necessary, but the question arises how far "facts" have been improved or extended by our modern compilers.

CHAPTER XXII.

DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP WARHAM.

The death of Archbishop Warham (1532) tended to promote the divorce question by the appointment of Dr. Cranmer to the See of Canterbury. Archbishop Warham, as the reader is aware, originally objected to the marriage of King Henry and Katharine on canonical grounds, but the Countess of Richmond, the young King's grandmother, aided by the Council, and the "solemn declaration" of Katharine to the Pontiff, set the legality of the matter at rest for at least eighteen years. The author of the "English Chancellors" comments on the results of the marriage of Katharine and Henry:—"Had Chancellor Warham's opinion prevailed, England might have remained a Roman Catholic country; but the Countess of Richmond took part with the majority of the Council, and young Henry, not much inclined to this arrangement of convenience, thought he was bound to fulfil the promise given in his father's lifetime, and the marriage took place which produced our boasted Reformation."*

Warham filled the office of Chancellor under Henry VII. and his son, and had been for many years the confidential adviser of the Tudor family. As a politician he upheld unequivocal subservience to the Crown; yet he admonished

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i. p. 427.

"both King, Lords, and Commons" on the duties they had each to perform; that they should "be speakers of truth, not flatterers; firm, not wavering; and neither covetous nor ambitious." He told the "people to obey the law, to honour the King, and to practise their religion." To the soldier he said: "You must walk in the ways of God, and in Him alone place your trust; defend your country and your King; obey your superiors; be content with your pay; have no plunder, nor do anything that is cruel to an enemy."* What would our linesman of the present day say to the Archbishop of Canterbury thus lecturing him on his duties to Church and State? When Warham retired from the Chancellorship, to be succeeded by Wolsey, he seldom appeared in public life again; his time was devoted to his duties as a prelate. He preached many sermons against Luther, and when the divorce question was first raised, he sent an ably written letter to the King on the subject; but his advice was now seldom asked by the Sovereign.† "He was an honest and faithful minister to my father," said Henry; "he placed the crown on my head; he has his own eccentric views on every matter; he is now getting very old and feeble, but he is still sincere and just." Such was the opinion Henry expressed of Warham to Longland, his confessor. He was known to be opposed to the supremacy of the Church claimed by Henry, but still countenanced the spiritual fantasies of the Maid of Kent; and although many of those who professed to believe in her idle prophecies suffered on the scaffold, he

* Campbell's Chancellors, vol. i.

† This letter is said to be deposited at the Vatican.

was left unnoticed by the King. He was, however, at this time fast approaching the end of his days; his zeal for religion and the wants of the "poor and the unfortunate" became untiring. He invited political and personal enemies to his house and "sent them away as friends, telling each to cultivate charity and kindly feeling, and to remember the widow and the orphan." A few days before his death, Archbishop Warham asked his steward "what money he had in the world," and was answered "thirty pounds;" to which he exclaimed, "*Satis viatici in cœlum.*" His property was scarcely sufficient to pay his current debts and the expense of his funeral. The prosecution of Empson and Dudley, the noted financial malefactors of the preceding reign, is the only charge of severity ever made against Warham as a minister of the Crown. This prosecution, however, was instituted by the King's Council and sustained by both Houses of Parliament.

Warham has left a high reputation as a judge; he strictly watched over the administration of justice in all the minor courts, and "received the petitions of the poor suitors with his own hands." It was said by some of his learned contemporaries, that in his own Court no Chancellor had ever evinced greater impartiality or deeper penetration of judgment, and that none of his predecessors who were ecclesiastics had equalled him in a knowledge of law and equity.

On his deathbed the Archbishop issued this protest against the proceedings of the King and his advisers:—

"In the name of God, Amen. We, William, by Divine Providence, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, Legate of the Apostolic See, hereby publicly and

expressly do protest for ourselves, and for our holy Metropolitan Church of Canterbury, that to any statute passed, or hereafter to be passed in this present Parliament, begun on the 3rd day of November, 1529, and continued until this present time, in so far as such statute or statutes be in derogation of the Pope of Rome, or the Apostolic See, or be to the hurt, prejudice, or limitation of the powers of the said Church, or shall tend to the subverting, or enervating, derogatory from, or dimishing the laws, customs, privileges of the Metropolitan Church of Canterbury; we neither will, nor intend, nor with clear conscience are we able to consent to the same; but by these writings we do dissent from, refuse, and contradict them."

"I have," said the Archbishop, "performed my duty to the King, to the realm, and to the Church of Christ; and now, full of hope, I am ready to appear before the Supreme Judge to account for my stewardship."*

The following picture of Warham has been drawn by the discerning pencil of Erasmus. It does nearly as much honour to the client as to the patron, who so generously favoured the brilliant foreign scholar. Warham was a beautiful exemplification of the truth, that a life of virtue may also be one of cheerful activity. Intolerant only of vice, Warham treated all men with consideration, and, whilst self-mortified from conscientious motives, never obtruded austerity on others. Thus writes Erasmus:—

"I have the most tender recollection of a man worthy to be held in perpetual honour, William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of all England. He was a theologian in reality, as

* Thorndale on the Last Days of Archbishop Warham.

well as in title, and profoundly versed both in the civil and canon law. He early gained reputation by his skilful conduct of foreign embassies entrusted to him; and on account of his consummate prudence he was much beloved by Henry VII. Thus he rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest ecclesiastical dignity in the realm. Bearing this burden, itself very weighty, one heavier still was imposed upon him. He was forced to accept the office of Chancellor, which, among the English, is attended with regal splendour and power. As often as he goes into public, a crown and a sceptre are carried before him. He is the eye, the mouth-piece, and the right hand of the Sovereign, and the supreme judge of the whole English nation. For many years he executed the duties of this office so admirably that you would have supposed he was born with a genius for it, and that he devoted to it the whole of his time and thoughts. But all the while he was so constantly watchful and attentive with respect to religion, and all that concerned his ecclesiastical functions, that you would have thought he had no secular cares. He found leisure for the strict performance of his private devotions; to celebrate Mass almost daily; to hear prayers read several times a day; to decide causes in his Court; to receive foreign ministers; to attend the King's Council; to adjust disputes which arose amongst Churchmen; to give dinners to his friends, whom he often entertained in parties of two hundred; and along with all this, for reading every learned publication which appeared. He proved himself sufficient for such a multiplicity of avocations by wasting no portion of his time or his spirits, in field sports, or in gaming, or in idle pursuits. His only relaxation was pleasant reading, or discoursing with men of learning. Although he had bishops, dukes, and earls at his table, his dinners seldom lasted much above an hour. He appeared in splendid robes becoming his high station; yet his tastes were exceedingly simple. He scarcely suffered wine to touch his lips; and when beyond seventy years of age his usual drink was small beer, which he took very sparingly; but while he himself abstained from almost everything at table, still so cheerful was his countenance and so festive his talk, that he enlivened and charmed all who were present. He was the same agreeable and rational companion at all hours. He made it a

rule to abstain from supper; but if his friends were assembled at that meal, he would sit down along with them and promote their conviviality without partaking of any food himself. The hour generally devoted to supper he was accustomed to fill up with prayer or reading, or perhaps telling witty stories, of which he had a large store; or freely exchanging jests with his friends; but never with ill nature or any breach of decorum. He spurned indecency and slander as one would a serpent. So this illustrious man made the day, the shortness of which many allege as a pretext for their idleness, long enough for all the various public and private duties he had to perform."

Like Bishop Fisher, Dr. Warham frequently expressed his fears as to the great injury the Church would ultimately suffer from its connexion with the State.

Anthony Wood states that Archbishop Warham often told his nephew (Dean of Canterbury), that if after his death a man named Thomas should succeed him in the See of Canterbury, he should in nowise serve him, or seek his favour or acquaintance; "for there shall be one of that name shortly to enjoy this See, that shall by his vicious living and wicked devices, destroy, waste, and dishonour the whole Church as it has been so long in England."

It is stated on the authority of a "catalogue book of expenses," that Archbishop Warham expended the sum of 30,000*l.* in repairing and beautifying the different See houses connected with the Archdiocese of Canterbury.

Towards the close of Archbishop Warham's life he did much to effect a reform in the Ecclesiastical Courts under his own jurisdiction. He reduced fees very considerably, and set aside many of the claims so long put forward by the clergy of "certain manors to fees and other local taxes." He was very rigid as to the moral character of his clergy,

and required a close attention to the sick and dying. He warned the Seculars as to the "coming storm;" but a long career of prosperity had enforced a false feeling of security; they could not read the ominous signs of the times.*

Warham was foremost in doing honour to Erasmus when he visited this country. England was the land the great scholar most esteemed; and here he received a reception from Churchmen and laymen who showed how high they then appreciated learning, and the possessor of cultivated genius. In the King's palace, and in the baron's castle, the erudite foreigner was honoured and entertained; bishops, abbots, and heads of colleges, patronised him. Wolsey, Warham, Richard Pace, Edward Fox, Richard Foxe (Bishop of Winchester), Fisher, Longland, Collet, More, and all the chief Churchmen, lawyers, and statesmen of England, "held learned discourse with him;" the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge threw open their doors to him. The great houses of Mountjoy, Derby, Dorset, Northumberland, and Talbot sought his services as tutor to their children, and Bishop Fisher desired to become his pupil. The King of Scots sought his services; the French nobles offered him wealth and honours; but Erasmus felt more at home amongst his English friends than in any other country. The story circulated so long that this great scholar joined the "new learning" is the fallacy of a past generation. That he was an advocate of "Reform" is doubtless true; but one of a

* For particulars concerning the Ecclesiastical Courts, see Lynwood, p. 170; *ibid.* 181; Register of Archbishop Mepham; also Archbishop Stratford; Statute of Edward III., i. c. 4; More and Warham's Correspondence on the corrupt state of the Ecclesiastical Courts; Correspondence of Erasmus on the same subject; Wilkins, Collier, Joyce; Archbishops of Canterbury, vols. vi. and vii.

very different type from that contemplated by Thomas Cranmer and his coadjutors. When at school at Daventry, a learned scholar of that place said that the "time would come when that small boy would prove the wonder and envy of all Germany." At the same seminary he met his future patron, Adrian VI., and many others who became eminent Churchmen. One speciality was remarked of him, that he had a marvellous memory. "I had no vocation for the Church," says Erasmus, "but when I took Orders I could not violate my vows, nor do anything that could be discreditable to the clerical character." Notwithstanding this, and many other professions, Burnet and his Puritan contemporaries claim Erasmus as "one of the standard-bearers of the Reformation." The life and writings of this great cynic afford the clearest proof that he had no sympathy with the "new learning," whose preachers were so frequently the object of his withering sarcasm and contempt. The inhabitants of Rotterdam, the place of his birth, have honoured his memory in many forms—by medals, statues, and paintings.

Archbishop Warham, from his scholarly instincts, readily gave to Erasmus, on his arrival in this country, the honour of his estimation and the kindliness and generosity of his patronage.

The reception given to the great Dutch scholar in England is a proof of how much the Universities, and Churchmen of all ranks, appreciated learning at that critical juncture.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER PRONOUNCES THE DIVORCE.

The appointment of Dr. Cranmer to the See of Canterbury, and that of Dr. Lee to the Archdiocese of York, was a step towards the final adjudication in the divorce question. Those prelates were known to be retained by the Crown, but unfortunately they were aided by other bishops of a higher clerical reputation. The dishonest conduct of the bishops and the Convocation enabled the King to throw off the mask. A new scene was now to be opened, in which something like falsehood and blasphemy were to give a legal and virtuous appearance to one of the most discreditable proceedings in which a husband and wife could appear as litigants before a public tribunal. The moment Archbishop Cranmer was enthroned at Canterbury he commenced the work of corrupting the clergy.* He made himself certain of the support of a large majority of the secular priests. The Convocation of York, under the influence of Archbishop Lee, agreed with those of Canterbury that "it was a lawful and just action to divorce Queen Katharine." Thirty-six abbots and friars

* The appointment of Cranmer to the See of Canterbury, at this particular crisis in the divorce litigation, is a rare instance of an Archbishop being nominated *exclusively* by the Sovereign. The object for which Henry appointed Cranmer is manifest to posterity, and the appointment must be characterised as an infamous transaction.

voted for the divorce. In fact, not more than twenty of the clerical body connected with Convocation sustained the rights of the injured Queen. Gardyner and Bonner were energetic in their services to the King on this occasion; and they both seemed to feel a pleasure in adding insult to injury. The regular clergy, as a body, denounced the conduct of the abbots "as unjust and wicked;" they were accordingly marked out for the royal vengeance.*

The love correspondence and the litigation of the divorce question, which was protracted for nearly six years, was brought to a close by Dr. Cranmer. An unpleasant incident interposed to place the Archbishop's judgment in a curious light. A marriage of a clandestine nature took place some months previous between the King and the newly-created Marchioness of Pembroke, better known as Anna Boleyn.

Cranmer and his contemporaries are at variance as to when the marriage took place. Judging from the clandestine nature of the ceremony, it is probable the date was fixed to suit "circumstances." The marriage was not performed by Cranmer, who merely stated that he had "heard of such a ceremony taking place, but was unacquainted with the period of its celebration." The ceremony is said to have been performed by a priest named Lee, who was rewarded with the bishopric of Lichfield for his disregard of canon law. Mr. Hepworth Dixon, in his

* Wilkins, iii.; Collier's Ecclesiastical History; Dod's Church History, vol. i.; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 467. All the ecclesiastical records of the times prove that the bishops, their clergy, and many of the abbots, were concerned in the conspiracy to remove Queen Katharine from her lawful position as a wife. The hour of retribution quickly followed; but, unfortunately, all that were innocent and good amongst the clerical body suffered for the deeds of their venal brethren.

desire to give the appearance of propriety to this discreditable transaction, assures his readers that "Roland Lee was a respectable priest, a man of learning, and a friend to the Reformation movement." Roland Lee, however, has no claim to the attributes put forward in his favour by Mr. Dixon. As far as assertion can sustain a bad cause, Gilbert Burnet defends the clandestine marriage. He contends that the impeachment of Anna's character had its origin with her "bitter enemy, Sander." I could not do Anna Boleyn the injustice to take Sander's evidence against her, for he has been proved to be a false witness. Burnet, however, must have known well that, some six-and-thirty years before Sander had written one line on the subject accusations were made and put forth in a very probable form, and on high authority,* against Anna's conduct, Lord Herbert, who wishes to remove some of the unpleasant features connected with the matter, states that Cranmer, the Duke of Norfolk, and Anna's father were witnesses to the clandestine marriage.† If the Archbishop was present, why was the ceremony performed by an inferior priest? Was the Archbishop of Canterbury ashamed of being a party to a clandestine royal marriage "before light in the morning?" Or did the marriage take place *before* or *after* Dr. Cranmer had pronounced the decree of divorce between Henry and Katharine? These are questions that have not yet been answered from any trustworthy source; so that the date and the exact circumstances under which the marriage took place remain still a mystery.

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* Le Grand, ii. 110; Stowe, p. 543.

† Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII., p. 340.

The historians that have dwelt most on this subject must have felt the weakness of the claim this marriage had to legality when they had recourse to such arguments as Sharon Turner has used. He states that "it is not quite clear whether the King had a *private divorce* from Katharine *before* he wedded Anna." Mr. Turner cites several authorities to sustain this view; but none of his witnesses are able to testify by whom the private divorce was granted. Cranmer could not have done so as a prelate in January or February, for he was not consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury until the 30th of March; but, supposing he was Archbishop in February, and privately granted the divorce, on what authority could he pronounce such a judgment? He was *then* the spiritual representative of the Roman Pontiff in England, and as such could not grant a decree. In another passage Mr. Turner contends that the "Pope was the only authority on earth that princes and subjects had to resort to for the determination of such questions." Several eminent Protestant jurists have expressed a similar opinion as to the state of the law at that period. Then of what effect could be a "private divorce" pronounced by some person unnamed? In fact, Mr. Turner's argument is an acknowledgment that the marriage took place *before* the decree of divorce was pronounced.

On Saturday, the 10th of May, 1533, Archbishop Cranmer opened his Court at Dunstable, for the final adjudication of Queen Katharine's case. On this occasion Cranmer was assisted by Bonner and Gardyner. They sat thirteen days in deliberation with a staff of ecclesiastical and civil lawyers, to give an air of legality to the business. Queen Katharine

still protesting against their proceedings, made no appearance. On the 23rd of the same month, Cranmer, as Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of *all* England, and still styling himself Legate of the Apostolic See, gave judgment that "the Ladye Katharine of Arragon was *not* the lawful wife of our good and blessed King, the said Henry, Sovereign Lord by the Grace of God, of this realm of England." And "I do declare and affirm," says Dr. Cranmer, "and *do call on the whole Court of Heaven, and the Holy Trinity, to bear witness, and to attest the truth of these proceedings, that the said Ladye Katharine of Arragon never had been, nor could never be, the wife of the said King Henry.*"*

Bonner and Gardyner were present, as ecclesiastical judges, and they expressed their full concurrence in the judgment pronounced by their Primate; although they were well awart that the Court of Rome would never sanction this mockery of a judicial proceeding.

Archdeacon Bedyll, one of the King's agents in this divorce question, writes to Lord Crumwell, from the scene of action at Dunstable, in these words: "My Lord of Canterbury handleth himself very well, and very uprightly, *without any evident cause of suspicion to be noted in him.*"†

This confidential note shows the underhand part that Archbishop Cranmer was playing for his Royal master at Dunstable. The Archdeacon was, as a matter of course, another of the conspirators against Queen Katharine's rights. A distinguished Anglican clergyman, in commenting on the judicial proceedings at Dunstable, has no faith in

* State Papers; Gardyner's Despatches to Lord Crumwell; Lord Herbert; Thorndale; Hall's Chronicle.

† State Papers, vol. i. p. 395; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 476.

the integrity of the Archbishop. "In looking," he writes, "at the steps which were then taken by Dr. Cranmer, it is impossible to exonerate him from collusion with the King." And again: "There seems to have been a thorough understanding between Henry and Cranmer as to the character of the 'process' which the Archbishop was thus to smuggle through its rapid stages."* To return to the "clandestine ceremony." Assuming for a moment that Cranmer's judgment was *legal,* no marriage could be valid until he pronounced his decree at Dunstable Abbey. His judgment was given on the 23rd, and on the 31st the Marchioness of Pembroke was presented to the people of London as "the new Queen;" she could not be lawfully styled as Henry's wife if she were not married at some time between the 23rd and 31st. Now, there is no record, nor even the slightest clue to a marriage between Henry Tudor and Anna Boleyn at the time above indicated. Therefore the "clandestine rite" was gone through *before* and not *after* Archbishop Cranmer's decree at Dunstable.† David Hume, who like other historians of note approaches the subject with evident reluctance, contends that the Archbishop's judgment "*ought naturally to have preceded the marriage*;" and then Hume makes the strange acknowledgment: "By a subsequent decree Dr. Cranmer ratified the marriage of Henry Tudor and Anna Boleyn."‡ That is, the Lord Archbishop of

* Rev. J. H. Blunt's Reformation of the Church of England, p. 187.

† During the last three hundred years many eminent scholars have made searches amongst ecclesiastical and other records, in order to throw some light on this clandestine marriage; but all have failed in being able to establish a favourable verdict.

‡ Hume's History of England (folio, 1st edition), vol. iii. p. 173.

Canterbury, ratified a marriage which is supposed to have taken place *four months before it could have been legal.*

Amongst the records of Lambeth Palace are to be seen the "ratification" of this mysterious marriage. The "ratification" was given by Cranmer himself, just four days *after* the divorce at Dunstable. The ceremony occupied but a few minutes. Mr. Froude looks on this proceeding in an unfavourable light. The "circumstances," he observes, "under which the new Queen was presented to the people was a *scandal*."* No fault, of course, is found with the King or the Primate. Mr. Froude, and those who venerate Dr. Cranmer for the part taken by him in the formation of the Book of Common Prayer and the general Liturgy of the Church of England, have been energetic in defending his conduct on the divorce of Queen Katharine. They have ransacked records and history for some precedent in the Catholic Church, without effect. Sharon Turner goes back to Archbishop Odo, in the case of Edwy and Elgiva, to produce a parallel, but he fails in establishing any analogy between the two cases. None whatever.

The following account of the divorce has been quoted by Lingard, Tytler, Miss Benger, and Mrs. Thompson: "The proceedings at Dunstable terminated on the 23rd of May, when Archbishop Cranmer pronounced *not* a divorce, but a sentence that the King's marriage with Katharine had been, and was, a nullity, and invalid, having been contracted against the Divine Law. Five days *after* Archbishop Cranmer gave at Lambeth Palace a judicial confirmation to Henry's union with Anna Boleyn."

* Froude's History of England, vol. i.

The writer does not state on what grounds "a judicial confirmation" was made in this case.

"I conceive," writes Dr. Lingard, "that immediately *after* the judgment pronounced by Cranmer, Henry and Anna were married again; otherwise Dr. Lee, Archbishop of York, and Dr. Tunstal, Bishop of Durham, must have asserted a falsehood* when they told Queen Katharine that *after* his Highness was discharged of the marriage made with her, he contracted a *new marriage* with his dearest wife, Queen Anna."† Lingard continues: "It is plain from all that precedes and follows this passage, that they mean *after* the divorce publicly pronounced by Archbishop Cranmer. Of a private divorce preceding the marriage in January, neither they, nor any others amongst their contemporaries, had any notion. But a second marriage after the judgment of the Court was necessary, otherwise the issue of Anna could not have been legitimate. Henry had been fully impressed by the fact of the irregularity of marrying Anna *before* the divorce from Katharine."

Henry justified his conduct by declaring that he had examined the cause in *the court of his own conscience, which was enlightened and directed by the Spirit of God, who possesseth and directeth the hearts of Princes; and as he was convinced that he was at liberty to exercise and enjoy the benefit of God for the procreation of children in the lawful use of matrimony, no man ought to inveigh at this his doing.*"‡

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* Judging from the conduct of Lee and Tunstal towards Queen Katharine, they were capable of fabricating any statement to promote the King's schemes. Those prelates, like the other members of the King's Council, must be judged by their actions.

† State Papers of Henry's Reign, vol. i. p. 419.

‡ Burnet, vol. iii.; Domestic State Papers, vol. i.; Lingard, vol. v.

Dean Hook's opinions are opposed to Cranmer's judgment in every form. The Dean is quite satisfied that "nothing existed between Arthur and Katharine but a marriage contract; and, in such a case, a Papal dispensation was admissible."* This was the great point at issue: the question raised, and contended for, by Katharine at her trial, and which her perjured husband never denied.

Dr. Brewer says: "Marriage was a sacrament. From the earliest days of Christianity all questions connected with marriage, as an ecclesiastical rite, had been finally settled by ecclesiastical authority. To abandon the right of such determination now, to give it over into other hands, to let it be settled by any Court not acting by the Pontiff's express consent, or independent of his sanction—in fact, by any national Court whose decision should be final, and from which there should be no appeal—what was this except to set up some special Court above that of Christendom? *what else, but to concede the principle of the Reformation?*" A remarkable statement from such a high authority.

The mode of action adopted by Cranmer in finally preparing the judgment at Dunstable has not been noticed with that critical nicety which the dark intrigues of the chief actor requires.† There is a paper preserved amongst the Cotton MSS., which has been strangely passed over by historians. The paper in question is the most damaging evidence ever produced against Dr. Cranmer. A writer in

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 196.

† In the second volume of this work I shall go into the general history of Cranmer's transactions with and for King Henry.

the *Christian Remembrancer* for July, 1859, argues the illegality of Cranmer's divorce with considerable ability, and adds another striking indictment to the dark catalogue of the Archbishop's offences. I shall have occasion to recur to this subject in the second volume of my work, where the reader will find a lengthened review of Dr. Cranmer's proceedings in Henry's reign.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TRIUMPH OF ANNA BOLEYN.

WHILST the judicial proceeding was being enacted in the village of Dunstable, preparations were making in London for the coronation of the new Queen. On the 19th of May, four days before the judgment, Anna Boleyn proceeded by river from Greenwich to the Tower. The Thames was studded with boats of all sizes, bearing the most fantastic decorations; the Lord Mayor, the Corporation, the nobles, the knights, and the esquires, were seated in their stately barges, with golden banners waving in the gentle May-Day breeze; the motley crowds of sightseers lined the shore and every available spot. Anna Boleyn was seated in a gilded barge, preceded at a short distance by the Lord Mayor. Just before the barge went a "foyst or wafter," full of ordnance, in which was a dragon continually moving and casting wild fire; round the foyst stood some terrible monsters in appearance, and wild men casting up fire of various colours, and producing a strange noise. The cannon at the Tower kept up a brisk roar; the ships in the river were decorated, and had fireworks on board; trumpeters were placed in the respective barges, who every five minutes sent forth a flourish, which was received with acclamations. In this order of "Venetian procession," Queen Anna reached the archway of the Tower, where the King, surrounded by a magnificent retinue of courtiers, received her

on the stairs—to use the words of Lord Cobham, "as if she were some great enchantress from a fairy land, whose loveliness had charmed and devoured all hearts."

One question presented itself at this eventful moment to the steady and mature judgment of the critical or virtuous citizens: "*Where, or when, was the new Queen married?*"

On the day preceding her coronation Queen Anna paid the accustomed visit to the City.* The display of wealth and magnificence made on this occasion by the merchants excited the jealousy of the foreigners then in London. The chronicles of the times have furnished quaint descriptions of the popular display, and the loyalty of the people to the King. The houses in Cornhill and Gracechurch Street were decorated in front with scarlet and crimson, in arras and tapestry; Cheapside was draped in cloth of gold, tissue, and velvet. The Sheriffs of London and the Corporation rode on horseback in rich trappings; the windows were filled with youth and beauty; the footpaths were railed off the line of procession, to enable the people, the 'prentices, and the guilds to behold the Queen. Amongst the diplomatic body then in London, those only of France and Venice took part in the procession. First came twelve French knights in surcoats of blue velvet, with sleeves of yellow silk, their horses trapped in blue, with white crosses powdered on the hangings. The French Ambassador rode beside the Archbishop of Canterbury, who seemed more gratified with the scene before him than did the Church dignitaries who were in his train. His reception from the populace was chilling—unpopular as he ever was with the

* Saturday, 31st of May, 1533.

masses. The Lord Mayor of London (Sir Stephen Peacock), the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk,* the Knights of the Garter, and several nobles, knights, and esquires, were in the procession; the bishops and abbots, with mitres glittering with diamonds, and gorgeous robes, were an object of attraction; the barons were attired in crimson velvet, riding two-and-two; trumpeters preceded each order of nobility. After the cavalcade came a number of musicians. Then "high-born and courtly dames and maidens," seated in chariots led by grooms in crimson velvet, embroidered with gold, and a select number of knights-attendant on the faire ladyes. First came the chariot in which was seated the grandmother of Anna Boleyn, the venerable Duchess of Norfolk, as proud and haughty as she had been forty years previous. The Duchess was dressed in crimson velvet, with a long mantle furred with ermine, her silver hair gathered up under a coif, from which hung down a veil of black taffeta. Her Grace looked on the scene before her like one who had been well acquainted with Court pageants, and knew how to estimate the acclamations of the populace at what they were worth. In the spring of life the Duchess of Norfolk was attached to the Court of Edward IV.; was the early friend of Elizabeth Woodevylle, and her daughter; of unfortunate Anne of Warwick; had known Richard III., and danced with him. She was married in the reign of Henry VII., and was acquainted in her time with all the great and notable persons of four reigns. Little did she imagine on the day of this procession that she would live

* Mary, Duchess of Suffolk, the former patroness and friend of Anna Boleyn, was on her death-bed this day.

to see the judicial murders and slaughter which so soon followed, even amongst her own family. In the same chariot with the Duchess of Norfolk sat Cecilia, Dowager Marchioness of Dorset, whose delicate features and affable manner formed her a contrast to the proud Duchess. This lady was the widow of Elizabeth Woodevylle's son, by her first marriage. The handsome and lively stepmother of Anna Boleyn, the Countess of Wiltshire, and her daughter-in-law, once known as Jane Parker, were objects of interest. These ladies were dressed in white velvet, blazing with jewels; the appearance of Lady Rochfort excited the universal admiration of the people. Her whole bearing was that of a bright dazzling woman of beauty, which was well suited to win the hearts of an excited multitude, who went to behold something of a tournament procession. The haughty deportment and ill-concealed boldness of Lady Rochfort passed for dignity with the uureflecting and superficial judges of human nature, who sometimes mistake the blaze for heat. The ill-fated Katherine Howard was also in the Royal train. The lady-attendants upon the Queen came in the next chariot, dressed in white velvet richly spangled, and with uncovered heads and loose tresses.

The most noticeable in this lovely group was Jane Seymour, then in the spring of life. Thomas Wyatt, who was present, describes her on this bright May-Day as "the most lovely of all the Court ladies; a glorious creature, with sweet and beaming eyes, whose looks and smiles resembled those of an angel." How mistaken.

A discharge of cannon from the Tower and a renewed flourish of trumpets announced "the observed of all observers"—Queen Anna. Her Highness was seated in

a white chariot, drawn by four palfreys with housings of white damask and tails which swept the ground; a golden canopy borne above the vehicle "making music with its sweet silver bells." "The Queen," says a contemporary, "smiled like an angel. She was dressed in white tissue robes, her rich black hair flowing loosely over her shoulders, her temples circled with a coronet of gold and diamonds. She looked the loveliest of beings at this exciting moment."

The giddy and unreflecting crowds revelled in a wild enthusiasm; the past seemed to have been forgotten. Was there no recollection of Campeggio's procession, and the "virtuous indignation" for the wrongs of the royal Castilian lady who was at that moment in a distant village of England, broken-hearted and weary of life? Honour, chivalry, virtue—every noble and holy principle—seemed forgotten on that memorable 31st of May.

In Fenchurch Street the Queen was met by a vast body of children, dressed in fantastic costumes, who gave her a welcome. Many quaint exhibitions were presented to her notice. Lutes, harps, ballads, and singing were all in the Queen's praise. In Leadenhall Street appeared "a little mountain," which was hung with red and white roses. A gold ring was placed on the summit, on which, as Queen Anna approached, a white falcon was made to "descend as out of the sky," and then came down an angel with sweet melody, and set a close crown of gold upon the falcon's head. And in the same pageant "sat St. Anne, with her issue beneath her," and Mary Cleophas with her four children, one of whom made an oration to the Queen on the merits of St. Anne. "This was a very interesting scene," writes Thorndale. The Corporation of London

were profuse in hospitality to the crowds; tables were laid along the streets, covered with meats, bread, and ale; the conduits ran wine all day long; the 'prentices and common people, who knew little of the merits of the rival Queens, made merrie; but the women of the middle and lower classes evinced more reserve, for they had good reason to remember the humane Queen Katharine, to whom the humblest of her sex could approach.

The public welcome to the new Queen was very grand; but there was "something absent here and there." The church bells rang forth merrie peals; but the great body of the clergy, the monks, and the nuns, were absent. The bishops were there, it would appear, to make "a final wreck of their own character;" and in the sight of whatever honesty or virtue remained in the land, the prelates, with the grand exception of John Fisher, must have appeared unpopular. Sir Thomas More and Dr. Fisher were, as might have been expected, absent from the coronation procession. The wives and daughters of the venal nobles, knights, and esquires assembled in large numbers to offer their welcome and homage to the rising sun; and, as it has been well styled, to a Queen Consort who was about to be crowned in St. Edward's chair under circumstances the most unprecedented in the history of England's Sovereignty.

The King was not present at this pageant, having declared that his "darling was to be the undisputed object of homage and love for that day."*

On the following day (Whit-Sunday, June 1st), the

* The above order of procession has been summarised from the quaint chronicles and State Papers of the period.

Queen was crowned in Westminster Abbey, with all the solemnity and splendour usual to those times. The bishops, the abbots, the monks, the secular and regular clergy were there, but it was evident that the whole affair was compulsory.* At eight of the clock, the Queen, amidst a flourish of trumpets, entered the Abbey, the Duchess of Norfolk holding her train; and, in episcopal vesture, Bonner and Gardyner, as Bishops of London and Winchester, were "on either side of her Highness, bearing up the lappets of her robe." She was arrayed in a dress of purple velvet, with a wreath of diamonds circling her brows, her hair falling loosely on her shoulders. She looked more thoughtful than the day previous, and several times raised a crucifix to her lips, and seemed absorbed in meditation. At "a certain stage of the ceremonies her Highness was led to the high altar, where Dr. Cranmer, as Archbishop of Canterbury, in magnificent vestments, celebrated the Mass of the Holy Ghost." Thomas Cranmer knew how to appear solemn and grand, and even saintly, on such occasions. The Queen received Holy Communion from the Archbishop. He subsequently anointed her as Queen of England. The Mass concluded, her "Highness prostrated herself on her face, and divers silver bells were rung; the monks and abbots repeated a solemn prayer, and the Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced the benediction." The discharge of cannon, and the flourish of trumpets from without, announced to the multitude that the rival of the virtuous Spanish Princess, who had been a wife and a Queen for twenty years without reproach, had now been crowned in St. Edward's chair.

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* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.; Queens of England, vol. ii.

When Henry thought proper to make jubilee to celebrate the realisation of his whims, however questionable, he was supported, as I have already remarked, by the nobles and many of the time-serving bishops and seculars; but the regular clergy were the virtuous exceptions on those occasions, and were therefore marked out by the Court party for extinction at the first suitable opportunity. The monks and friars who were present at Anna's coronation were only there at the command of Dr. Cranmer; Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More refused to countenance the honours done to Queen Anna. Crumwell informed them that "they deeply offended the King by their absence." "I have only done my duty," says Fisher. "My opinions are unchanged; and I still consider the Lady Katharine as our Queen; and in decency, therefore, I should not be present." Such were More's words to Lord Crumwell.

A Flemish noble, who was then in England, states that "all parties made themselves anxious to serve their new Queen, who had a smile and a kind word for all who approached her."

The foreign visitor relates that the "happy days" did not last long. In the words of Anna's confidential lady friend, "the King and Queen did not live happily together; neither party had confidence in the fidelity of the other, and bitter words were used by the King to her whom he had so recently styled 'his darling and angel;' the Queen sometimes dined and sat alone for hours; her conscience was uneasy; she was far from being happy." Elizabeth Brooks, another personal friend, heard the Queen repeat the words—"The Tower, the Tower, how many brave and innocent people died there!" At the mention of the Tower she was

always in a tremulous state, and had an evident dread of some future troubles.

Mr. Froude does not like the bearing of the new Queen in her novel circumstances. In his reference to this occasion, he depicts the "present" nature of Anna Boleyn—a nature ignoring the *past* and future in the ecstasy of the *instant.* "She was conducted," writes Mr. Froude, "to the high altar and anointed Queen of England; she received from the hands of Cranmer, fresh come in haste from Dunstable with the last word of his sentence against Katharine scarcely silent upon his lip, the golden sceptre and St. Edward's crown. Did any tinge of remorse, any pang of painful recollection, pierce at that moment the incense of glory which she was inhaling? Did any vision flit across her of a sad mourning figure which once had stood where she was standing, *now* desolate, neglected, sinking into the twilight of a life cut short by sorrow? Who can tell? At such a time that figure would have weighed heavily upon a noble mind, and a wise mind would have been taught by the thought of it, that, although life be fleeting as a dream, it is long enough to experience strange vicissitudes of fortune. But Anna Boleyn was not noble, and was not wise—too probably she felt nothing but the delicious, all-absorbing, all-intoxicating *present,* and, if that plain suffering face presented itself to her memory at all, we may fear it was rather as a foil to her own surpassing loveliness."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RUPTURE WITH THE COURT OF ROME.

Archbishop Cranmer's judgment brought to an issue the long-expected rupture with the Court of Rome.* In a few months the College of Cardinals decided that "no fraud was practised on Pope Julian; that the solemn affirmation made to the Pontiff by the Ladye Katharine of Arragon that no canon law impediments" stood in the way of her second marriage, was accepted as truthful; and that no evidence was produced to contradict the solemn declaration of the said Ladye Katharine, Princess of Spain, and for many years since Queen of England." Out of two-and-twenty cardinals, nineteen decided for the validity of the marriage between Henry and Katharine, and three were in favour of "further delay." The Pontiff did not expect this decisive majority, and was compelled to pronounce judgment in thirty-one days.† This was one of the last public actions of Pope Clement, who died in a few months subsequently. The unpleasant task of excommunicating the King of England and Archbishop Cranmer was performed by the new Pope, Paul, who desired to follow the cautious and conciliatory policy of his predecessor; but the time for conci-

* Several curious matters in connexion with the divorce of Katharine have lately come to light from the valuable collection of historical documents published by M. Theimer, from the archives of the Vatican, and which fully confirm all that has been gathered at different times from the Simancas MSS.

† Le Grand, vol. i.; Lingard, vol. v. pp. 18, 19.

liation had passed away. When the news reached England that the Pope had excommunicated the King, the excitement was immense. The eyes of all Europe were fixed on the English monarch. Henry paused for awhile, as if he felt himself standing on the verge of an awful precipice. A bitter struggle took place between the recollection of early associations and human pride; but the presence of such prelates as Cranmer, Gardyner, and Tunstal gave renewed courage to the Royal theologian. The bishops, with two exceptions, were on the side of the Crown. The Bishop of Durham (Dr. Tunstal) "denied the right of the Pope to interfere in the internal affairs of the English Church." The bishops declared they would remove the interdict. The secular clergy and Convocation took the same view of the question. The religious orders were firmly attached to the Pope as the head of the Christian Church. The conflict in England was coming to a climax. Bishop Fisher now stood in the front rank of the few faithful shepherds that remained. No Court smiles, no royal favours, no frowns, no threats, from the King or Lord Crumwell could move him from the path of duty. He was true to the monarchy and true to the Church. The oath of supremacy was again tendered to the clergy; the vast majority of the seculars accepted the oath with some "mental reservation;" others rejected it, and were at once "marked men"—such was the term used by an English lawyer of the time. The monks and friars bravely protested against the King's spiritual headship. Many of the abbots followed the bad example of the bishops, and subscribed to the new oath tendered to them by the King's Council. We are assured, on the authority of Bishop Godwin, Thorndale, and Collier, that only three of

the abbots had "courage enough to maintain the Christian principles, and run the last extremity." These heroic clerics were the Abbots of Colchester, Reading, and Glastonbury. They died nobly in vindication of their principles. Godwin describes them "as men whom neither bribery, the presence of the scaffold, or death in any form, could induce to abandon their religion." Every day the excitement became greater. At last the die was cast; the sword was drawn; the King and the Parliament of England, aided by the bishops and a very large body of the clergy, broke off the spiritual allegiance which the country had given to Rome for nearly one thousand years. Let the reader, however, bear in mind that at this time none of the principles of the Reformation were introduced into England, for the contending parties seemed to be equally hostile to the doctrines of Luther. Hume admits that the Church in England was decidedly adverse to the Reformation at this time (1536–7).*

In 1536 the Convocation were again doing the work of the Reformers, whom they so often condemned. They issued a manifesto, which shows the servile spirit by which they were governed. The Convocation stated "that they intended not to do or speak anything which might be *unpleasant to the King, whom they acknowledge their Supreme Head, and whose commands they were resolved to obey; renouncing the Pope's usurped authority with all his laws and inventions, now extinguished and abolished;* and addicting themselves to Almighty God, and His laws, and unto the King, and the laws made within this realm."†

At the last moment Bishop Tunstal took some exceptions

* Hume's History of England, vol. iii. p. 211.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 119.

to the Supremacy Act. "If the clause," he said, "meant nothing more than that the King was head *in temporals,* why, he asked, did it not say so? If the law meant that he was 'head in spirituals,' it was contrary to the well-known doctrines of the Catholic Church; and he called on the Convocation to witness his dissent from it, and to order the entry of his protest amongst the acts of the Convocation."* The King's prodigality first induced him to seize upon the monastic property; then his hostility to the Pope caused him to aspire to the spiritual headship, and in both schemes he was aided by dishonest and time-serving clerics and laics, without whose assistance Henry could never have entered upon his career of wickedness.

In the year 1534 a large number of clerics, holding high positions, abandoned fealty to the Church, and subscribed a document declaring that the Pope *had no spiritual jurisdiction in England.* The Bishop of Chichester, in opening the conference in the case of Lambert (1538), spoke in a very exulting tone of the King "having thrown off the usurpations of the Bishop of Rome."† The great majority—nearly all—of the bishops signed this remarkable declaration on the part of the English Church.‡

Here is a statement, the outcome of unparalleled research amongst State Papers, foreign and domestic, of an eminent divine of the "present established Church of

* Wilkins, vol. iii. p. 745; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v.

† Godwin's Annals; Thorndale's Memorials; Hume's History of England (folio), vol. iii. p. 229.

‡ A copy of this "clerical protest against the Pope" is to be seen in the Cotton. Lib.; and it is supposed that the "Originals" are somewhere in the dusty archives of the Exchequer.

England." Dr. Brewer writes: "The Papacy was not only the highest, but it was the oldest monarchy of Europe. Compared with it all other royal and imperial offices of power and majesty were of a recent development: no small consideration at a time when aristocracy and long descent were so highly valued. . . . . It was fenced round with traditions mounting up to Heaven. It had been the great and chosen instrument of God for propagating and preserving the law, the faith, and the love of Christ among ignorant and unsophisticated nations—a prophet among babes, an apostle among barbarians. It had been the chief, at one time the sole, depository of wisdom, art, law, literature, and science to uninstructed and admiring men. Whether St. Peter founded or not a primacy at Rome might be a question of interest and importance to the disputants of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries: it was of no importance whatever to men *before* the Reformation. Circumstances quite independent of St. Peter—deeds which the Middle Ages could understand; services of the highest nature rendered to mankind, the silent and even the obtrusive attestation of spiritual truths, of spiritual order and authority rising above the confusion and the janglings of this world—these and similar influences were the true causes of the primacy of St. Peter. For these, kings and emperors felt themselves constrained to bow down before the representative of a heavenly authority, and grovel for reconciliation and forgiveness at his footstool. To be at amity with the Pope, to be dignified with some distinction as his champion or assistant in the Faith, was an honour coveted beyond all others. It was the more highly esteemed because it was extended to a very few. To be

one of so select a circle was to hold a higher rank in the comity of nations. To stand aloof, to be excluded, was to forfeit a distinction which kings and their subjects coveted and appreciated. Looking at the whole career of Henry Tudor, considering his education, the potency of long custom, his own character, his subtle influence pervading the very atmosphere of the time, it would be unnatural to suppose that he now intended to break entirely with Rome, and stand alone in his defiance of the Pope's authority. It is unlikely that he would have braved the good opinion of Christendom had he not been betrayed into a position from which escape was impossible." The learned Professor hesitates to state by whom Henry VIII. had been "betrayed." All the memorials and proofs of the time indicate Thomas Cranmer as that "betrayer."

Dr. Brewer's long study of the State Papers of Henry's reign makes him a valuable witness in replying to an assertion of Mr. Froude, almost unexampled for its ignorance of the social history of the time, concerning the lower type of working people purchasing and reading "with enthusiam" Tyndale's Bible. Mr. Froude has been unnecessarily, yet very justly, contradicted by several writers upon this subject; but in this case I prefer the simple statement of a learned gentleman who has spent a large portion of his life amongst the State Records of the reign of Henry VIII., and whose high sense of integrity and honour is beyond all suspicion.

"To imagine," observes the Rev. Dr. Brewer, "that ploughmen and shepherds in the country read the New Testament in English by stealth under hedges, or that smiths and carpenters in town pored over its pages in the

corners of their workshops, is to mistake the character and acquirements of the age. So far as the doctrine and the study of the Bible are concerned, the Reformation belongs to a later period. It did not commence with the lower classes or the laity, but with a certain class of the clergy and the Universities.* . . . . There is no reason to suppose that the nation, as a body, was discontented with the older religion. Facts point to the opposite conclusion. Had it been so, Mary, whose attachment to the faith of her mother was well known, would never have been permitted to mount the throne, or have found her ascent to it comparatively easy, seeing that the Reformers under Edward VI. had been permitted to have their own way unchecked, and to displace from honour and influence all who opposed their religious principles."

Far down into the reign of Elizabeth—according to the testimony of Sir W. Cecil at the time of the Spanish Armada—the olden faith still numbered three-fourths of the population of England. The experiment would have been hazardous to the promoters of the "new learning" at any time, if, from the death of Henry VIII. down to the Spanish Armada, a *plebiscite* could have been impartially taken of the religious feelings of the people. The people's attachment to the olden faith, and the difficulty everywhere experienced by the Government and the bishops in weaning the clergy and their flocks from their pristine convictions, formed sufficient proof of its cherished and widespread stability. And, considering the temper of the English people, it is by no means pro-

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. iv. (Introduction).

bable that immorality could have existed among the ancient clergy to the degree which the exaggeration of prejudiced preachers, reckless historians, and atrabilious satirists would lead the unread masses to suppose. The existence of such an evil condition of morals is not verified by authentic documents, or by any impartial and broad estimate of the character and conduct of the nation *before* the Reformation. There is nothing more difficult than for contemporaries to form from their own limited experience a just estimate of the morality of the times in which they live; and if the complaints of preachers and moralists are to be accepted as authoritative on this head, there would be no difficulty in producing abundant evidence from the Reformers themselves, that the crimes and abuses of their own age, under Edward VI. and Elizabeth, were far greater than in the ages preceding.

How changed, how fallen from his grand position, had become Henry Tudor in the year of grace 1533! "No knight-errant who had struck down a magician or a powerful giant regarded his feat with more satisfaction than did Henry regard his championship as the Head of the Latin Church."* That championship, the more valuable because the emanation of natural and unbiased conviction, had won for him the gratitude of the illustrious Leo X., who then filled the chair of St. Peter, and the admiration of Christendom. Still far more, it gained for him the title of "Defender of the Faith"—a title which he had not the grace to surrender even when he had forfeited the privileges of all faith, and ignored the last attributes of a Christian.

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. iv.

The subsequent movements of the "Pilgrims of Grace," and later insurrections, prove that the overwhelming body of the English nation still adhered to the old Latin creed introduced in the far bygone by the missionaries from Rome. The horrors of the putrid dungeon, the lash, the reeking scaffold, and the hideous gibbet, did not affright the honest and true hearts of Devonshire and other counties, until under Somerset's Government the inhabitants were decimated; the fertile fields of the West laid desolate, the towns and villages pillaged and fired by ruthless German mercenaries; whilst the trees groaned with pendent bodies, and over the wasted country roamed the widows and orphans of those who perished in that dismal commotion.*

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* State Papers of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.'s reign. "State of the Realm;" "Condytion of People in the Countrie Parts;" Hall's Chronicle; Burnet, Lord Herbert, Rapin, Carte, Turner, Lingard, Blunt, Hook, and Froude.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BIRTH OF ELIZABETH.

If the result of Henry's second nuptials did not "meet his humour," it unquestionably created as marvellous effects as the birth of monarch has ever wrought in the annals of these realms. Hall, a contemporary, announces the advent of the royal infant in these terms: "On the 7th day of September, being Sunday, between three and four of the clock in the afternoon, the Queen was delivered of a faire ladye, on which day the Duke of Norfolk came home to the christening." May it have been in satiric keeping with the caprice of Henry, that the historic "Chamber of the Virgins" had been used for the Queen's lying-in? Anna Boleyn had long and fondly hoped for an heir to suit Henry's wishes; but, with the apt readiness of maternal and conjugal science, she made the best of a mutual disappointment. "They may now," said she, "with reason call this room the 'Chamber of Virgins,' for a virgin is now born in it on the vigil of that auspicious day on which the Church commemorates the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary." Strange as it may seem, the supremely Protestant Haywood, referring to the fortuitous circumstance of date, honoured the olden accepted Catholic sentiment so far as to intimate that as Elizabeth was born under the especial patronage of the Blessed Virgin, from the hour of her birth she "for that cause devoted herself to a maiden life."

"The Lady Elizabeth," he says, "was born on the eve of the Virgin's Nativity, and died on the eve of the Virgin's Annunciation. Even that she is now in heaven with all those blessed virgins that have oil in their lamps."

The ceremonies attendant on the christening of Elizabeth were most imposing, the decorations resplendent, the rejoicings wide-spread. The officiating prelate was Cuthbert Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, who was also one of the godfathers. The chronicles of the day ran riot in their fervour of description; but the pens of loyalty the most abject may be excused by the unwonted splendour of those festivities. The eye, however, inevitably reverts from that moment of grandeur to the scenes of later years, and scans the fate of those who took part in that marvellous jubilation.

Archbishop Cranmer upon this occasion pronounced a solemn benediction upon Queen Anna and the infant Princess. The new Queen, perhaps, felt that epoch as the happiest of her life; but those who knew the all-pervading caprice of the then proud father, had already foreseen the day of rue and downfall.*

Meanwhile, in her rural retreat, delivered over to the memories of a royal state, to which she had but imparted the halo of her queenly attributes, rested Queen Katharine, to whom the husband of her youth and love now thought proper to pay the cruel compliment of informing her of the passing events of his great breach of marital faith.

I may here remark that the multiplicity of characters who enacted parts at this time compels great brevity with reference to the least noted; and so the reader learns that

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* Queens of England, vol. ii.

the "Maid of Kent" was executed in 1534. The charges against this lady were of a peculiar phase of treason. She was occasionally labouring under delusions, and was not accountable for her actions. At Tyburn she confessed that "wild hallucinations had taken possession of her mind. She was only a simple woman, whose ignorance might be an apology for her conduct. Just before death, she said: "I now cry God and the King's Highness most heartily for mercy, and desire you all good people to pray to the Almighty to have mercy on me, and on all those who are to suffer with me." At the conclusion of her address, little Elizabeth Barton—for such was her name—was handed over to the headsman, and met death bravely.* Then followed five friars, who accepted the prophecy of Elizabeth Barton respecting the "future fate of the King." The priests ascended the scaffold singing hymns. Within forty minutes they had all ceased to exist; and then commenced the barbarous process of quartering. Many of the most notable in the land believed in the prophecy of the "Maid of Kent," Bishop Fisher, Lady Salisbury, and even the Princess Mary being amongst the number.

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* Hall's Chronicle, p. 814; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.; Godwin, pp. 53, 54; Confession of Elizabeth Barton, MS. in the Record Office; Lingard, vol. v. p. 27; Froude, vol. ii. p. 164; Queens of England, vol. ii.; Records of Executions in Henry's reign.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CARTHUSIAN FATHERS.

I NOW approach the history of those Christian martyrs known as the Carthusian Fathers. A recent essayist, designated as of "Broad Church views," has described the monasteries in the provinces as "comparatively virtuous," whilst the members of those near London were "lazy and profligate." This allegation does not correspond even with the prepared returns of Dr. London and Maister Layton to Lord Crumwell. It may as well be seen what are the mature opinions on the character of one of the most important monastic houses in London, given by Mr. Froude —that of the Carthusians: "In general the house was perhaps the best ordered in England. The hospitality was well sustained, the charities were profuse, and whatever we may think of the intellect which could busy itself with fancies seemingly *so childish,* the monks *were true to their vows,* and true to their duty as far as they comprehended what duty meant. Among many good, the prior John Haughton was the best. He was of an old English family, and had been educated at Cambridge, where he must have been the contemporary of Latimer. At the age of twenty-eight he took the vows of a monk, and had been twenty years a Carthusian at the opening of the troubles of the Reformation. He is described as small in stature, in figure graceful, in countenance dignified. In manner he was most modest;

in eloquence most sweet; in chastity without a stain. We may readily imagine his appearance, with that feminine austerity of expression which has been well said belongs so peculiarly to the features of the mediæval ecclesiastics. Such was the society of the monks of the Charter House, who, in an era too late for their continuance, and guilty of being unable to read the signs of the times, were summoned to wage an unequal battle with the world."*

Men immured in monasteries, and only bending their mind to the purposes of good, may not fairly be found fault with for not being able to read the "signs of the times" out of doors, as traced by the felon hands of licentious monarchs and their wicked instruments. In reading Mr. Froude's pages one is almost led to the belief that it is the work of many hands, so inconsistent with itself is that history. The Carthusians had made themselves specially obnoxious to Henry and Anna Boleyn in the divorce controversy, by justly espousing the cause of Queen Katharine. They incurred, of course, the enmity of Anna's family and those who acted with them; and both the concealed and avowed Reformers, who could ill brook the high reputation which the Carthusians held, rejoiced at the fact that they "crossed the King in his inclination." Such men as London and Layton† were glad that the outspoken honesty of the Carthusians had placed them within the range of danger; Lord Crumwell and his followers coveted their property; Cranmer, Poynet, Bale, and Coverdale were deadly enemies, whilst their malice was carefully concealed.

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* Froude, vol. ii. p. 346.

† The principal members of the Monastic Commission. Of these men the reader will find a detailed revelation towards the close of this volume.

Cranmer could not understand their high sense of principle; Coverdale's aversion arose from an envy of their blameless character; and Poynet, in his revels with Dr. London, scoffed at their humility and questioned their chastity—a virtue which the grossness of his nature could but little comprehend. Such was a portion of the elements united in 1535 for the immolation of the Carthusian Fathers of the Charter House. More and Fisher lay in the Tower, awaiting their doom. The oath of Supremacy was now about to be tendered to the clergy, and a large number of the seculars, and many of the regulars, being terror-stricken, accepted it. The Bishop of Durham declaimed from the pulpit against the Pope's spiritual authority;* and Dr. Kyte, Bishop of Carlisle, used unbecoming language as to the Pontiff. This prelate was a particular favourite of the King.† Every day the clergy and laity acted more subserviently towards the Crown. "The King's ministers had all taken the oath;" and "why," said Sir Thomas Audley, "should the good Fathers of the Charter House refuse to do as all honest men did?"‡ The Royal Commissioners appeared at the Charter House to give notice to the Prior and his brethren that the oath of Supremacy should be taken by "*every loyal subject* and pious Christian."§ It was a nice thing to ascertain, or define, what was a "pious Christian,"

* Several of Dr. Tunstal's Sermons against the Pope are still extant. Upon the accession of Queen Mary, and especially of her sister, Tunstal recanted the opinions he had expressed against the Papal See in the reign of Henry. His private character has never been impeached.

† In the History of Two Queens, vol. iv., Dr. Kyte appears in a very unpleasant light in relation to "his friend," King Henry.

‡ Sir Thomas Audley's Letter to the Prior.

§ State Papers of Henry's reign (Domestic).

according to the teaching of such men as Audley and Crumwell. The Prior of the Charter House replied to the Commissioners most respectfully. He said "he knew nothing of the matters mentioned: he was unacquainted with the world without; his office was to minister to God, and to save poor souls from Satan." His explanation was rejected, and he was committed to the Tower for one month. At the suggestion of Dr. Bonner, the Prior agreed to take the oath with "certain reservations." He was discharged from custody on these conditions. Returning to the Charter House he assembled his brethren, and told them the promise he had made to Lord Crumwell. He was dissatisfied with what he did: it looked like deceit; he wished to save the Carthusians from being dispersed; but above all he hoped to preserve the principles and vows by which they were so long bound together. They apprehended the future, but none of them could imagine that the hour of catastrophe was so near. The Commissioners came again, with the Lord Mayor of London, to tender the oath. It was rejected; imprisonment and torture were menaced; and, as it was known that Lord Crumwell was "terrible in his wrath," the community gave way.

Maurice Chauncy, one of the few who subsequently escaped his brethren's doom, describes what occurred. "We all swore," he says, "as we were required, making one condition, that we submitted only so far as it was lawful for us so to do. Thus, like Jonah, we were delivered from the belly of this monster, this *immanis ceta,* and began again to rejoice like him under the shadow of the gourd of our own houses. But it is better to trust in the Lord than in princes, in whom is no salvation; God had pre-

pared a worm* that smote our gourd and made it to perish."

In a short time the Carthusians received notice that their acceptance of the oath in the "form and feeling" they adopted it, was an evasion of a legal obligation. As the friends of Queen Katharine they would now bear the full weight of Anna Boleyn's resentment; her influence was all-powerful at the period, and she exercised it for the disgrace or the destruction of those who had crossed the path of her ambition. The Carthusian Fathers, therefore, were placed under the ban of treason, and their enemies became doubly vigilant. Every day brought them fresh troubles, and the Prior considered their case hopeless. One morning, having summoned all the monks before him, he addressed them as follows:—

"'Brothers, very sorry am I, and my heart is heavy, especially for you, my younger friends, of whom I see so many around me. Here you are living in your innocence. The yoke will not be laid on your necks, nor the rod of persecution, but if you are taken hence, and mingle among the Gentiles, you may learn the works of them, and having begun in the spirit you may be consumed in the flesh. And there may be others among us whose hearts are still infirm. If these mix again with the world, I fear how it may be with them; and what shall I say, and what shall I do, if I cannot save those whom God has trusted to my charge?'"

"Then all who were present burst into tears, and cried with one voice, 'Let us die together in our integrity, and heaven and earth shall witness for us how unjustly we are cut off.'"

"The Prior answered sadly: 'Would, indeed, that it might be so; that so dying we might live, as living we die; but they will not do to us so great a kindness, nor to themselves so great an

* By the phrase "worm" is meant the Supremacy Act, with high treason as its penalty.

injury. Many of you are of noble blood, and what I think they will do is this. *Me* and the elder brethren they will kill, and they will dismiss you that are young into a world which is not for you. If, therefore, it depend on me alone—if my oath will suffice for the House, I will throw myself for your sakes on the mercy of God. I will make myself anathema; and, to preserve you from these dangers, I will consent to the King's will. If, however, they have determined otherwise—if they choose to have the consent of us all—the will of God be done. If one death will not avail, we will all die—die together for God's truth and eternal glory.'"

Maurice Chauncy continues his narrative: "So then, bidding us prepare for the worst, that the Lord when He knocketh might find us ready, he desired us to choose each our confessor, and to confess our sins one to another, giving us power to grant each other absolution."

Mr. Froude remarks upon this scene: "Thus, with an unobtrusive nobleness, did these poor men prepare themselves for their end. I will not regret their cause; yet there is no cause for which any man can more nobly suffer than to witness that it is better for him to die than to speak words which he does not mean. Nor in this, their hour of trial, were they left without higher comfort."*

The Carthusians received a further respite until the fate of other clerics was decided. Lord Crumwell's vengeance could no longer be delayed. Webster, Lawrence, and Hampton, the friars of the Carthusian Houses, had been summoned before the Council; they were "still obstinate and wicked in their opinions," and were committed to the Fleet; Reynolds, a learned monk of Sion, was also arrested. These four clerics, men of learning and great personal worth,

* Froude, vol. ii. p. 351.

were brought on the 26th of April (1535) before the Privy Council, of which Lord Crumwell was the leading spirit. The Oath of Supremacy was again tendered to them, but they respectfully declined taking it. Three days later they were placed at the bar before a special commission, and indicted for high treason. They pleaded not guilty, contending that the statute itself was unlawful. What they "had spoken in the Tower and before the Privy Council" was adduced in evidence against them. One of the judges asked Haughton, the Prior, "not to show so little wisdom as to maintain his own opinion against the consent of the King." Haughton replied, that "he had originally resolved to imitate the example of his Divine Master before Herod, and be silent." "But," he continued, "since you urge me, that I may satisfy my own conscience and the consciences of those who are present, I will say that if our opinion of the Supremacy Act might go by the suffrage of men, it should have more witnesses than yours. You can produce, on your side, but the Parliament of a single kingdom; I, on mine, have the whole Christian world except this kingdom. Nor have you all even of your own people. The lesser part is with you. The majority, who seem to be with you do but dissemble to gain favour with the King, or for fear they should lose their honours and their dignities."

Lord Crumwell inquired of whom the Prior was speaking? Haughton replied: "Of all the good men in the realm; and when his Highness the King knoweth the real truth, I know he will be beyond measure offended with those of his bishops and priests who have given this advice."

"Why," remarked another of the judges, "have you, Maister Prior, contrary to the King's authority within the

realm, persuaded so many persons as you have done to disobey the King and the Parliament?"

"I have declared my opinion," replied Haughton, "to no man living but to those who came to me in confession, which, in discharge of my conscience, I would not refuse. But if I did not declare it then, I will declare it now, because I am thereto obliged to God."*

Haughton and his companions at the bar would not seek mercy at the cost of what they felt to be a great religious principle.

About this time Crumwell had recourse to the most detestable schemes to procure evidence against ecclesiastics as to their opinions on the Supremacy question; but the most infamous of all the plans he devised was that of sending persons of abandoned character to confession to "certain priests," and "there and then" asking the confessor's opinion on the Supremacy law; declaring that they had conscientious scruples against it. These persons elicited the secret opinion of the confessor, and a few hours subsequently placed a statement, based upon information obtained by their sacrilege, in the hands of Lord Crumwell. This device led to the arrest and imprisonment of many priests, of whose special records there is now no accurate statement; but amongst the State Papers are to be seen the declarations said to be "confessions" made by informers in Crumwell's interest. Priests who were timid, or perhaps dishonest, or of a worldly disposition, took the Supremacy Oath publicly, and in "confession and otherwise" gave an opposite opinion. This was unhappily the case with many

* Strype's Memorials, vol. i. p. 305; State Trials of Henry's reign.

of the secular clergy, who afterwards joined the "new learning" party. Such conduct, however, is not to be wondered at, for the terror of Lord Crumwell's fearful vengeance seemed to have affrighted all classes of society, lay and clerical. A priest in a "doubtful state of conscience," had, in 1534, an interview with Archbishop Cranmer on the Supremacy statute. "I told," he says, "the Archbishop I would pray for the Pope as the Chief and Papal Head of Christ's Church. And his Grace of Canterbury told me it was the King's pleasure that I should not do so. I said unto him I would do it; and though I did it not openly, yet would I do it secretly. And then the Archbishop said I might pray for him secretly, but in any wise do it not openly."*

Mr. Froude doubts the accuracy of the above statement. He thinks it is "coloured;" and adds—"It is characteristic of the mild, tender-hearted man who desired to glide round difficulties, rather than scale and conquer them."†

But was not this advice of the "tender-hearted" Archbishop something like misprision of treason on the part of his conscience to his God?

To return to the Carthusian Fathers. The Fathers were again consigned to the Tower, and on the following day their case was submitted to a jury, for the accused were indulged with the semblance of legality—a grim and cruel farce. Five of them were charged with high treason; the evidence was of the usual character. Feron and Hale threw themselves on the mercy of the Court. The jury

* Rolls House MSS. "concerning a Popish priest."

† Note on vol. ii. in Froude's History of England, p. 319.

hesitated for some time, but, it is said, on receiving a visit from Crumwell they agreed to return a verdict of guilty against four of the prisoners.*

Feron was acquitted. Father Hale and the Carthusians "were not permitted to die together." Haughton replied to the judge that his sentence was merely the judgment of the world. They all appeared happy, and rejoiced, they said, that they had an opportunity of dying for the Catholic faith. Five days subsequently Haughton and the other Fathers were executed at Tyburn in their "habits." A chronicler of the times says: "Such a scene as hanging priests in their 'habits' was never before known to Englishmen." Haughton had the privilege of first ascending the scaffold, when he addressed the populace as follows:—

"My good people, I call to witness Almighty God, and all true Christians, and I beseech you all here present to bear witness for me at the Day of Judgment that, being here to die, I declare that it is from no obstinate rebellious pretext that I do not obey the King, but because I fear to offend the Majesty of God. Our Holy Mother the Church has decreed otherwise than the King and his Parliament have decreed; and, therefore, rather than disobey the Church I am ready to suffer. Pray for me, and have mercy on my brethren, of whom I have been the unworthy Prior."

Kneeling down, he repeated aloud the fifty-first Psalm,

* It has been stated that, in this particular case, Crumwell did not "visit the jury." It is easier to deny than to prove; but the weight of allegation at least, and the unwonted hesitation of the jury, go far in evidence of the "visitation." It is an undoubted fact, that Crumwell, in the beginning, treated with juries, and even menaced them with death: but as he gained experience, he adopted the readiest mode of having juries chosen who could "make a quick return without any compunctious hesitation." The example has not since been lost, and the practice extended to Ireland, where, during long years, juries were compelled to find verdicts at the command of the Viceroys.

then making the sign of the cross with great devotion, he informed the executioners that he was ready for them. The remainder of the proceedings were brief. He was "thrown off" amidst a thrill of horror. His brethren followed on the same death-road, reciting a hymn, undaunted and firm in appearance. They died in a manner worthy of the martyrs of antiquity. "The faces of these men," writes Mr. Froude, "did not grow pale, their voices did not choke; they declared themselves liege subjects of the King, and obedient children of Holy Church, giving thanks that they were held worthy to suffer for the truth." All died without a murmur. The stern work was ended with quartering the bodies, and the arm of Haughton was hung up as a dismal sign over the archway of the Charter House, to awe the remaining brethren into submission. But the spirit of the old martyrs was in those young friars. One of them, like the Theban sister, bore away the honoured relic and buried it, and all of them resolved to persist in their opposition.

After that sad and deadly sign, "another warning" was sent to the Charter House, but of no avail. In six weeks three more of the Fathers went through the form of a trial. Hall alleges that they "behaved sulky and insolent to Crumwell." Their unbending virtue would seem so to Hall. As a body they were educated, well-bred men, and, in the words of Haughton, "many of them of noble families." Hall, whose servile adulation of Henry was conspicuous even in that reign of slaves and terrorism, consulted his own stupendous notions of obedience to kingly caprice in describing facts, which, to judge from other statements made by him, would have been more justly presented if

left to his unbiased judgment and natural sense of justice. But the more accurate description of the scene was that they became indifferent to the deceptive formalities of the trial, and proclaimed their adhesion to all the tenets of the olden creed, denouncing the King as a "spiritual impostor." These words sealed their doom, but they cared not; they rejoiced in having an opportunity of dying for "God's eternal truth." The jury, prompt at their task, pronounced them guilty of high treason, and in a few days they were hanged, drawn, and quartered. Some few of the brethren fled to France, and others to Ireland; but the greater number remained in the Priory to await their doom. Lord Crumwell was well aware of the stainless reputation of this community; indeed, they were so far above reproach that Dr. London and his spies did not attempt to impeach them. Some persons who were in Crumwell's service promised to procure evidence of "laziness and immorality" against six of the Fathers. Crumwell replied that he "would not hear the accusation, that it was false—wilfully so."* Cranmer, at the eleventh hour, relented as to the Carthusians, and sent his secretary to remonstrate with them; but it did not suit his sense of justice to go further—perhaps he dared not do so.

Crumwell and the King again hesitated. Did they fear public opinion? Not likely. Two secular priests—mere creatures of Crumwell—were sent to take charge of what remained of the Charter House community; and Chauncy states that those priests "starved and ill-treated himself and his companions." Their friends and relatives were

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* Cobham's Account of the Trials of the Carthusians, 1538.

sent to them "to advise and remonstrate on their conduct;" they were "coaxed and threatened" alternately, but with no effect. Four of them were brought to Westminster Abbey to hear one of the Court prelates preaching a sermon against the Pope. They "still continued obstinate." A number of them were then dispersed amongst other communities, with pliant Secular priests as guardians.* The Seculars could not change the Carthusians. The supposed worldly aspirations of the young, and the talent and ambition of maturer age, were in turn tempted by seductive promises of a future career, but with no effect; gold could not purchase even the semblance of an agreement to the King's views of religion; nor the scaffold, with its reeking horrors of strangling, decapitation, and quartering, brought no fear—none whatever. In the words of Mr. Froude, "nothing answered." Two of the brotherhood who escaped joined the Pilgrims of Grace; a reward was offered for their heads—they were taken prisoners, and without further ceremony hanged in chains near the city of York. They died bravely, exciting the pity and admiration of the people.

The whole of the Charter House Fathers were now cut off from their house and property. Crumwell laid his hands upon all they possessed; even family memorials, which many of them wished to preserve, were carried away; shame, decency, every element of honest or delicate feeling, were ignored on this occasion, and the indignation of the people was intense. The Carthusians were honoured and loved by persons of all opinions. The tragic history of the Charter House, however, does not end here. The

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* Thorndale's Memorials; Letters of Father Latchett on the Carthusians.

ten remaining Fathers were sent to the then hideous dungeons of Newgate, where nine of them died from a prison fever, produced by bad air, bad food, and disease. The survivor of the ten was hanged, drawn, and quartered. Maurice Chauncy, whose chronicle relates their sad story, escaped to France. His narrative is borne out by many of the records and State Papers of the time; and its truth is reluctantly admitted by hostile historians.

An official, named Bedyll, announced to Lord Crumwell the death of the nine Carthusians in Newgate in these words: "By the hand of God, my very good Lord, after my most hearty commendations, it shall please your lordship to understand that the monks of the Charter House, here in London, who were committed to Newgate for their traitorous behaviour long time continued against the King's Grace, be almost now despatched by *the hand of the Almighty God himself*, as may appear to you by this bill enclosed; whereof considering their behaviour and the whole matter, I am not sorry, but would that all such as love not the King's Highness, and his worldly honour, were in a like case." *

Did Maister Bedyll believe in what he wrote? The conduct of Bedyll, whilst attached to Dr. London's "roving commission" amongst the convents, was atrocious. He was quickly superseded by his friend Lord Crumwell, for his conduct at Shaftesbury convent, to a lady of the ancient house of Fortescue—a name long honoured in Devonshire.

Very few of the monastic establishments of England suffered a more signal injustice than the Charter House; but the benevolent community were spared the witnessing of its results. The Royal Commissioners did their work

* State Papers, and despatches to Lord Crumwell.

thoroughly; and whilst seizing the property which the Carthusian Fathers held in trust for the poor, they cleared off the trustees by the gibbet, the rack, and the dungeon. Such was one hideous phase of an epoch, when the passions of a cruel monarch, abetted by unscrupulously wicked and servile subordinates, overruled all the ordinances of law, order, and justice.*

Andrew Borde, who sometimes in Latin calls himself *Perforatus*, was a native of Sussex. He was educated at Oxford, and subsequently joined the Carthusian order at the Charter House. When the majority of the Carthusian Fathers perished on the scaffold, or in the King's dungeons, Father Borde, like Chauncy, escaped by a mere accident. He travelled in France, Spain, Italy, and other parts of the Continent. He settled down at Montpellier, where he applied himself to the study of medicine, and became "a regular doctor, with a licence to practise at the same profession." On his return to England he was "incorporated at Oxford, and also in the College of Physicians of London;" and became an eminent practitioner. Anthony Wood has chronicled a favourable character of this learned and eccentric cleric. "For a considerable time," writes Wood, "he had no fixed abode; for a few months he remained with his relatives in Pensey, who were persons of rank and wealth, and no doubt furnished him with money. He

* The above narrative is in part extracted from Maurice Chauncy's account of the sufferings of his brethren. It was written in Latin, and printed in France, about 1550, with the lives of More and Fisher, in a work entitled, "Historia Martyrum Angliæ;" by Ritus Dulken, Prior of Mount St. Michael, near Metz. In after years this work was printed in English, and "dressed up" for the London book market by Burnet, Speed, Strype, and many later writers.

was most cordially received in respectable society on account of his agreeable manners and conversational powers; his knowledge as a scholar was very extensive. He took up his residence at Winchester—a place long known as the haunt of learned men, and witty women, with charming manners. Notwithstanding his rambling life and secular occupations, he constantly practised the essential duties of the Catholic religion. Three days a week he drank nothing but water, and partook of bread as food; he wore a hair shirt at certain penitential times; every night his shroud was hung up at the foot of his bed, to place him in remembrance of his last end, and the great hereafter that was sure to follow. He was not only a strict observer of his vows of chastity, but wrote warnings against those priests and monks who had openly broken their pledges concerning celibacy and chastity." This course of action created for him a bitter enemy in the person of Dr. Poynet, the new Bishop of Winchester, who would not countenance any priest until he was *first wifed.* Borde's position in Winchester was that of a layman, more than a cleric. John Bale was also numbered amongst his enemies. Bale made the vilest charges against this good man. It is likely, however, that few paid attention to the accusations of a being like Bale. The "priest-doctor's" life was made miserable. At last he was arrested, brought to London, and confined in the Fleet, where he died in 1549.* Father Borde was the most eminent medical practitioner in Hampshire, or the surrounding counties. He was beloved by the people of Winchester. There was much humour

* Anthony Wood, Oxon.; Thorndale's Memorials; Pomeroy.

both in his writings and conversation. He was the author of several interesting works, now almost unknown. In 1542, Father Borde published a book upon "Fashions," and "Old Coins." Carlo Logario states that Borde had written a book upon his travels, and the strange folks with whom he became acquainted; but the manuscript was accidentally consumed by fire in Winchester. Logario speaks in kindly terms of the goodness of Father Borde.

I cannot close the tragic story of the martyrs of the Charter House without recurring again to Maurice Chauncy. He was a native of Ireland, born within a few miles of the picturesque bay of Carlingford. It is stated in an old book I once met with, that Chauncy was a native of Suffolk. Mr. Froude "does not believe he was an Englishman;" "he suspects he was born in Ireland." I have adopted the statement of a Dominican friend, who felt a particular delight in the history of the Carthusians. It may be asked—"What would induce Irish priests or nuns to visit England in those days? In the course of my research, ranging over five-and-twenty years, I find that in the reign of Henry VII., and long antecedent to that period, many priests and nuns from Ireland joined the English abbeys and convents; and the nuns who made the bravest resistance to Lord Crumwell were Irish ladies, who courted martyrdom on several occasions. Dean Leyton in a letter to Crumwell states "that if the nuns were all *Irishwomen it would be impossible to put them down.*"* Two of Chauncy's sisters were nuns in the convent of Shaftesbury, and made a courageous resistance to Dr. Leyton and his

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* Thorndale heard something similar from Leyton's own lips.

inquisitors. Father Chauncy continued a zealous advocate of the doctrines of the Latin Church to the close of his long life. In his history of the Carthusians of the Charter House, he laments not having stopped and awaited the martyrdom of his brethren. He excited the particular hatred of Lord Crumwell and his Royal master. Thomas Wyatt was informed by his patron Crumwell that the King charged him specially to "hang Chauncy the moment he was caught." It seems Father Chauncy, after the fashion of Peto, denounced the King and Queen at Paul's Cross; and passed a fervid eulogium upon Queen Katharine, which was in itself considered an insult to Queen Anna. Dodd describes Maurice Chauncy as "a man of primitive zeal, and much esteemed by the English residents on the Continent." Archibald Graham, a Scotch Puritan, states that he would do a kind office for a Protestant as soon as for one of his own creed, provided the person was worthy of being aided." Jacob Alloar, a Prussian Lutheran cleric, speaks in the highest terms of "the kind and Christian feeling which marked the intercourse of Maurice Chauncy with those of opposing creeds." The high-minded Anthony Wood pays an honest tribute to the memory of this last survivor of the Charter House slaughter. "It is not denied," writes Wood, "by any intelligent and moderate Protestant, but that the name of Maurice Chauncy is worthy of being kept in everlasting remembrance." Upon the accession of Queen Mary, Chauncy's community—few in number—returned to England for a short period. In 1575 Chauncy again visited London in the guise of a Flemish physician, when he discovered that nearly all his former friends were either dead or immured in dungeons.

Dr. Chauncy, the kinsman of the expatriated Carthusian, states that he accompanied him in a walk round Westminster Abbey, and amidst the ruins of the Carthusian houses. On approaching those sacred wrecks, "he was seized with a melancholy; clasping his hands and casting his eyes downwards, he spake not a word for some time. He then hastened from the spot, shedding many big tears." He next visited the grave of Bishop Fisher at Barking. Kneeling beside the last resting-place of the martyred prelate, he begged to be alone. Here he remained in meditation for awhile. On the following day he left for Antwerp. "I never saw my good uncle again," adds the narrator. I have been indebted for an account of Maurice Chauncy's visit to London to an Irish gentlemen long resident at Bruges, who possessed some MSS.—documents once the property of Father Chauncy's nephew, who followed the profession of a surgeon in London, but subsequently became involved in some of the plots, or alleged plots, against Queen Elizabeth, and escaped to the Continent. He died at Antwerp at a good old age, rich and happy, with three learned sons devoted to the service of the Latin Church, and his daughter a distinguished Abbess of a Spanish convent. Father Chauncy ended his eventful life at Bruges, in July, 1581.* He must have been beyond eighty years of age at the time of his death.

* MS. Records of the Carthusians; Diary of Douai College; Athen. Oxon.; Dodd, vol. i. p. 527.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

The last survivor of Henry VII.'s Council, and the prelate whom his mother recommended as a learned, wise, and virtuous man, to become the preceptor of her grandson, was the next person marked out for Royal vengeance.

John Fisher was born in the reign of Henry VI., in the town of Beverley, where his family had been located for centuries. He studied in Cambridge under Father Melton, a learned and pious divine. In 1491 he was ordained priest, at which period (says Bayley) "the almond-tree began to bud; all the arts and sciences were but his tools, but this his occupation." In Cambridge his learning, humility, and piety won for him the esteem and love of "fellows, masters, and students;" and there he remained until the University's highest honours were conferred, or rather imposed upon him. The "good Margaret, Countess of Richmond," aided by the solicitations of her son (Henry VII.), induced him to become confessor and almoner to that benevolent lady. In this office Father Fisher gained the deserved respect of the Countess and the Royal Family, who were "for years governed by his wisdom and discretion." He constantly recommended to his wealthy penitent the practice of charity in some amiable form—such as the relief of persons of education who met with trials in life; to succour orphans, especially females; to redeem captives; to

promote the marriage of poor and virtuous maidens, giving to each of them a small dowry; to induce men to marry those women whom they had dishonoured; to repair bridges, that the poorer people might go to market; to look after the widow and the orphan; to reconcile village quarrels; to induce husbands and wives to love one another, and set a good example to their children.* These were the maxims which John Fisher inculcated upon his Royal penitent—injunctions which her grandson obeyed in the hopeful morning of his life.

Cambridge in those days was in obscurity when compared to Oxford. The rise and progress of Cambridge are, perhaps, to be attributed, in part at least, to the residence thereat of Erasmus, and the munificence of his patron, Dr. Fisher. Dean Hook writes in fervent terms of the learning and the virtues which characterised the good Bishop of Rochester. I cannot omit the following passage: "To Dr. Fisher's transcendent virtues and noble qualities, justice, through the party spirit of Puritanism, has never been done. Fisher appointed Erasmus to the chair of the Margaret Professor; and so great was his zeal in the cultivation of Greek literature that in his old age he desired to place himself under Erasmus as a student of that language. With the generous assistance of the King's grandmother, he did more than any other man in England to promote the cause of learning; and so wise and judicious were his measures that students in both the great Universities are at the present hour receiving food and raiment from funds which his Royal

* Phillips to Collet, "on the good works of Maister Fisher;" Henry Deane, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the "goodly life of Dr. Fisher."

mistress placed at his disposal. Such was the man whom Puritans generally loved to defame, because he would not fall down with the costly sacrifice of an upright conscience before King Henry."*

In 1504, Dr. Fisher was appointed to the See of Rochester by Henry VII., which appointment was confirmed by Pope Julius II. He was at that time in his forty-fifth year. A contemporary has remarked that "few priests or bishops ever went so much among the people, or preached so many sermons to them, as good Maister Fisher." The cause of his promotion, it was alleged, arose from the interest he possessed at Court; but this allegation was contradicted by the King, who declared that the "pure devotion, perfect sanctity, and great learning which he had observed in the man, was the cause which had induced him to recommend the name of Maister Fisher to the Pope."† The numerous friends of the new prelate had much difficulty in inducing him to accept the mitre; but when consecrated, he brought all the energy of his vigorous mind and honest heart to promote the interests of religion. "The humblest and frailest had access to him, receiving relief, words of comfort, and hope." Nearly two hundred persons were fed daily at his expense; and the men of learning and science from foreign lands received a hospitable reception at his palace. The cause of his want of appreciation amongst ungracious Puritans may be found in the fact, that when Luther's writings

* Dean Hook's "Archbishop of Canterbury," vol. vi. p. 429.

† The King's letter (in Latin) to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Farland states that King Henry could not write a letter in Latin, and that it was composed by his Italian Latin Secretary. Very likely, but of little importance to posterity.

were imported into England he denounced them in "vigorous language, and stood forth boldly for the maintenance of the olden creed in all its integrity," which won for him the secret hatred of worldly ecclesiastics and evil laity, of whom there were many in those days; but neither the efforts of the venal laity, nor the subservient spiritual Convocation, could influence his opinion as to what he styled the "coming storm."

A later synod having been convoked to "take into consideration certain Church reforms," Dr. Fisher addressed the Cardinal of York and the assembled prelates in these words:—

"May it not seem displeasing to your Eminence, and the rest of these grave and reverend Fathers of the Church, that I speak a few words, which I hope may not be out of season. I had thought that when so many learned men, as substitutes for the clergy, had been drawn into this body, that some good matters should have been propounded for the benefit and good of the Church, that the scandals that lie so heavy upon her men, and the disease which takes such hold on these advantages, might have been hereby at once removed, and also remedied. Who hath made any the least proposition against the ambition of those men whose pride is so offensive, while their profession is humility? or against the incontinency of such as have vowed chastity? How are the goods of the Church wasted? The lands, the tithes, and other oblations of the devout ancestors of the people, wasted in superfluous riotous expenses? How can we expect our flocks to fly the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, when we that are bishops set our minds on nothing more than that which we forbid? If we should

teach according to our duty, how absurdly would our doctrines sound in the ears of those who should hear us? And if we teach one thing, and do another, who believeth our report? which would seem to them no otherwise than as if we should throw down with one hand what we build with the other? We preach humility, sobriety, contempt of the world, and the people perceive in the same men that preach this doctrine, pride and haughtiness of mind, excess in apparel, and a resignation of ourselves to all worldly pomps and vanities. And what is this otherwise than to set the people in a stand, whether they shall follow the sight of their own eyes, or the belief of what they hear? Excuse me, reverend Fathers, seeing herein I blame no man more than I do myself, *for sundry times, when I have settled myself to the care of my flock, to visit my diocese, to govern my Church, to answer the enemies of Christ, suddenly there hath come a message to me from the Court, that I must attend such a triumph, or receive such an ambassador. What have we to do with princes' Courts?* If we are in love with Majesty, is there one of greater excellence than Him whom we serve? If we are in love with stately buildings, are their roofs higher than our Cathedrals? If with apparel, is there a greater ornament than that of the priesthood? Or is there better company than a communion with the saints? Truly, most reverend Fathers, what this vanity in temporal things may work in you, I know not; but sure I am that, in myself, I find it to be a great impediment to devotion; wherefore, I think it necessary, that we, who are the heads should begin to give example to the inferior clergy as to those particulars whereby we may all be the better comformable to the image of God in this trade of life which we now lead;

neither can there be likelihood of perpetuity or safety to the clergy as we remain at present."*

Dr. Fisher concluded by giving a solemn warning as to the assumption of "spiritual headship" by the King. "Beware," said he, "that you leap not out of Peter's ship to be drowned in the waves of all heresies, sects, schisms, and divisions. 'Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God,' was not said to Kings, *but to bishops.* We cannot grant this unto the King, without renouncing our unity with the See of Rome. In doing this we should forsake the first four General Councils. We should thereby renounce all canonical and ecclesiastical laws of the Church of Christ. We renounce thereby the unity of the Christian world. The first General Council acknowledged the authority of Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, by sending their decrees to be ratified by him. The Council of Constantinople did acknowledge Pope Damasus to be their chief, by admitting him to give sentence against the heretics Macedonius and Sabellius. The Council of Ephesus admitted Pope Celestine to be their chief judge, by admitting his condemnation on the heretic Nestorius. The Council of Chalcedon admitted Pope Leo to be their chief head; and all General Councils of the world admitted the Pope of Rome to be the supreme head of the Church. And now, Fathers, shall we acknowledge another head?—or one head to be in England, and another in Rome? By this argument, Herod must have been the head of the Church of the Jews; Nero must have been the head of the Church of Christ. The King's Highness is

* Bayley's Life of Fisher (Black Letter).

not susceptible of this donation. Ozias, for meddling with the priest's office, was thrust out of the Temple, and smitten with leprosy. King David, when bringing home the ark of God, did he so much as touch the ark or execute the least priestly function? All good Christian emperors have ever refused ecclesiastical authority. At the first General Council of Nice, certain bills were previously brought unto Constantine to be confirmed by his authority; but he ordered them to be burnt, saying, 'God hath ordained you priests, and given you power to judge over us.' Valentine, the good Emperor, was required by the bishops to be present with them to reform the heresy of the Arians. He answered: 'As I am one of the lay people, it is not lawful for me to define such controversies; but let the priests, to whom God hath given charge thereof, assemble when they will in due order.' Theodosius, writing to the Council of Ephesus, saith 'it is not lawful for him that is not of the holy order of bishops to intermeddle with ecclesiastical matters.' And now, venerable Fathers, shall we cause *our* King to be head of the Church, when all good Kings have abhorred the very last thought thereof, and so many wicked Kings have been plagued for so doing? Truly, my lords, I think they are his best friends who dissuade him from it; and he would be the worst enemy to himself if he should obtain it. Lastly, if this thing be, farewell to all unity of Christendom. For, as that holy and blessed martyr, St. Cyprian, saith, all unity depends upon that Holy See as upon the authority of St. Peter's successors; for, saith the same holy Father, all heresies, sects, and schisms have no other rise but this, that men will not be obedient to the chief bishop. And now for us to shake off our communion

with that Church, either we must grant the Church of Rome to be the Church of God, or else a malignant Church. If you answer she is of God, and a Church where Christ is truly taught, and His sacraments right administered, how can we forsake, how can we fly from such a Church? Certainly we ought to be with, and not to separate ourselves from, such a one. If we answer that the Church of Rome is not of God, but a malignant Church, then it will follow that we, the inhabitants of this land, have not as yet received the true faith of Christ; seeing that we have not received any other Gospel, any other doctrine, any other sacraments, than what we have received from her, as most evidently appears by all the ecclesiastical histories. Wherefore, if she be a malignant Church, we have been deceived all this while. And if to renounce the common Father of Christendom and all the General Councils, be to forsake the unity of the Christian world, then the granting of the supremacy of the Church unto the King is a renouncing of this unity, a tearing of the seamless coat of Christ in sunder, a dividing of the mystical body of Christ, His spouse, limb from limb, and tail to tail, like Samson's foxes, to set the field of Christ's holy Church all on fire. And this it is which we are about. Wherefore let it be said unto you in time, and not too late,—*Look you to that.*"

Bayley says of this synod: "After Dr. Fisher uttered these and many other such words to this effect, with such gravity as well became him, they all seemed to be astonished, by their silence; and the Lord Cardinal's state did not seem to become him." The address to the synod was evidently levelled at the Cardinal of York and one or two wealthy bishops who were profuse in their style of living.

"*Rich priests or rich bishops I look upon as bad men.* As the shepherds of Jesus Christ they cannot indulge themselves in slothful ease, living on many dainty dishes, and drinking exciting wines, whilst the sheep and poor little lambs are wandering about cold and hungry. The shepherd must be stirring with the lark, watching and seeking out the stray sheep, and bringing them back to the one true fold again. A priest must submit to every privation and hardship; he must have no family cares; he must use all his judgment and temper to bring back the fallen; he must execute this holy office by gentle remonstrance; by never-ceasing prayer to the Lord Jesus and the Court of Heaven, and by good example, which has at all times had a powerful effect on sinners."

Such were the words of Bishop Fisher to the Dean of Rochester, a few months before he was committed to the Tower. A man of these views could not have been very acceptable to the men who favoured and compassed the "new learning," or were careless in the practice of the Latin creed.

In Dean Collet's sermon before the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, preached by the special desire of Archbishop Warham, there is a powerful appeal made to the prelates and clergy to become "less worldly in their occupations; to preach sermons; to distribute alms; to give good example to the people, and to study no other calling but the salvation of souls."* Some Catholics have denounced Collet as a "heretic," and Anglican writers assert

* A very correct English translation of this discourse appears in Knight's "Life of Collet," pp. 181–191.

that he was "a hidden Protestant." He was neither; but rather an austere man, who wished to see Churchmen living according to the discipline of primitive Christianity. This was not altogether possible; still some approach might have been made to primitive practices, and ordaining no man who was not possessed of a "calling for the sacred office;" or, in the words of Bishop Fisher, who were not "well tested and purged of worldly motives, by refraining from secular occupations and the amusements of the laity." Collet was, therefore, in no favour with the seculars, or those bishops and abbots who were seeking at Court advantages for themselves or their families. He "called out in Convocation and in Synod for a more strict discipline of the clergy;" for "constant preaching; for visiting and instructing the poor, and reclaiming sinners." He had a high opinion of the Carthusian Fathers. He never dissented from any Catholic doctrine, but the reformation at which he aimed was that of "morals and discipline."

Ambrose Asham (a Franciscan) represents Collet "as a vain, proud, restless man, who thought himself the most unblemished shepherd." One of the arguments advanced for the Protestantism of Collet is that he "did not make a Popish will, having left no moneys for Masses for his soul; which shows that he did not believe in Purgatory." All his sermons proved the contrary; and the fact of his frequent visits to the Carthusians confirms his thorough Catholicity.

In 1529 the statutes for regulating the clergy met with vigorous opposition from a few of the peers. Fisher spoke, in indignant terms, of the irreligion and dishonesty of the Commons. On the measure for "breaking off spiritual

intercourse" with Rome, Bishop Fisher, in a speech of great power and vigour denounced the proposition. "*Is his Holy Mother,*" he said, "*the Church, about to be brought like a bondsmaid into thraldom? Want of faith is the true cause of the misfortunes impending over the State.*"* The Duke of Norfolk replied in a speech wherein he used some harsh language towards the aged prelate. The peer told the Bishop that the greatest clerks were not always the wisest men; to which Fisher replied that he "did not remember any fools in his time that had proved great clerks." The Commons, at the instigation of their Speaker, Audley, expressed great indignation at the Bishop's observations, and sent a deputation, headed by Audley himself, to the King, to complain of "how grievously they felt themselves injured by being charged with lack of faith, as if they had been infidels or heretics." The deputation were conveniently carrying out the King's policy: his Highness gave them a flattering reception, blandly sympathised with their "wounded feelings," and sent for Dr. Fisher to rebuke him for his "bad discourse." The venerable Bishop appeared before the King with undaunted mien, but loyal and respectful bearing. He said, "that having a seat and a voice in Parliament, he spoke his mind freely in defence of the Church which he saw daily injured and oppressed by the lordly and territorial classes, whose office it was not to judge of her manners, much less to reform them."† The King seemed astonished at this bold reply, but knowing the high integrity of his ancient preceptor, he perhaps secretly admitted his judicious views of Church government. He dis-

* Bayley's Life of Dr. Fisher. † Ibid.

missed the Bishop with these words: "My good lord of Rochester, use more conciliatory language in future. Harsh words never mend a quarrel."*

Reginald Pole, who was personally acquainted with Dr. Fisher, describes his virtues in glowing terms. In "Pro Ecclesiasticæ Unitatis Defensione," he says, as to his Highness the King, "that if an ambassador had to be sent from earth to Heaven, there could not among all the bishops and clergy be found so fit a man as John Fisher; for what other man have you at present, nor for many years past, who can be compared with him in sanctity, in learning, in zeal, and careful diligence in the office and various duties of a bishop? Above all other nations we may justly rejoice in having such a man; and if all the parts of Christendom were searched, there could not be found one man that in all things did accomplish the parts and the degrees of a bishop equal to John Fisher." Sir Thomas More also bears testimony to Fisher's disinterested zeal in the cause which he sustained with his words and example.

Dr. Fisher preached a series of sermons against Luther—one of them at St. Paul's Cross, which was attended "by Cardinal Wolsey, ten bishops, and five hundred ecclesiastics, and an immense concourse of people." He also delivered public lectures on the same subject at Westminster Abbey, and in many of the metropolitan churches. He was most energetic in his opposition to the men of the "new learning;" but that opposition was confined to moral means alone; he never persecuted himself, nor recommended others to do so; yet he has been stigmatised as the "bloudie

* Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.

bishop." His opposition to the divorce of Katharine of Arragon evoked the enmity of the King and of Dr. Cranmer; and before the new form of oath was tendered to him as a spiritual peer, Cranmer and the King were aware that he would not accept it. The honour and integrity of the man were not doubted by any of his enemies; and the King himself declared to Rich that he "looked upon John Fisher as the most able man in his kingdom; that his conscientious character and general honesty could not be doubted; that he esteemed and loved him all his life, and would raise him to the highest position in his councils, if he only agreed to take the oath of Supremacy."* Papal and anti-Papal notables were sent to remonstrate with him on his "obstinate perseverance against the command of the King." Audley, Crumwell, Suffolk, and Cranmer argued the question with him on several occasions; and then came Gardyner, Tunstal, and Bonner, impressing "loyalty, and menacing the terrors of the law." To all Fisher was alike indifferent, declaring that he could not take the oath proposed, "without a violation of a higher and more sacred obligation to his Eternal Creator."

Dr. Fisher in Convocation denounced the seizure of the smaller monasteries, and in an expressive allegory indicated the motives, and predicted the result. He told the bishops and abbots that if they gave permission to the Crown to destroy the smaller monasteries, it might possibly lead to the destruction of the larger ones. "An axe," he remarked, "which wanted a handle, came upon a certain time into the wood, making his moan to the great trees, that he wanted

* State Papers.

a handle to work withal, and for that cause he was constrained to sit idle; therefore he made his request to them, that they would be pleased to grant him one of their small saplings within the wood, to make him a handle. But now becoming a complete axe, he so fell to work within the same wood, that, in process of time, there were neither great nor small trees to be found in the place where the wood lately stood. Now, my lords, if you grant the King these smaller monasteries, you do but make him a handle whereby, at his own pleasure, he may cut down all the cedars within your Lebanon."*

The agents of the King in Convocation denounced Fisher's allegory as "seditious and presumptuous language." But it proved true.

The advice of Crumwell and Cranmer was now acted upon, and the King, laying aside all hesitation, confirmed his dire career of blood and despotism, by summoning before the Council his aged preceptor. Before leaving Rochester, the Bishop bade farewell to his palace, his servants and retainers, and set out for London, accompanied by a vast crowd of people. One of his quaint biographers describes the scene:—

"Passing through the city of Rocher there were a multitude of people gathered together, both citizens and countrymen, and women too, and many scores of children, to whom the goodly Bishop gave his blessing, riding by them all the while bareheaded; and the people were all crying and sobbing, for they knew that he would never return to them amore, and others in the crowd cursed those that were persecuting their good old Bishop, who was so long amongst

* Bayley's Life of Bishop Fisher, p. 108.

them like a father. And as the people thronged round he had a good word for every man, woman, and child; and would have them to pray for his enemies. And then raising his voice very loud he said warning words to them, to stand by the old religion of England; and the people all held up their hands, and the women and young maidens were sore affected at the sight, and prayed God to send him back safe; but, alas! he never came that road again. And in this way and manner the holy Bishop did ride on his horse, and reached London City about the night of the same day."

Upon his arrival at Lambeth Palace, Dr. Fisher went through a series of captious examinations before Archbishop Cranmer, Lord Audley, and Crumwell; but he could not be prevailed upon to accept the new oath of Supremacy. After each discussion he received so many days "for further consideration." But all proved in vain, and he was ultimately committed to the Tower upon Tuesday, the 20th April, 1533. When Fisher was committed to the Tower, Lord Crumwell's agents visited his palace at Rochester, where the usual scene of confiscation and plunder took place. A monk named Jacob Lee, who professed the Reformation principles, was one of the parties who took an inventory of the Bishop's property, and called the attention of the inquisitors to a strong iron box, which was concealed in an apartment for many years, and was supposed to contain some golden treasures. Lee, on breaking open the box, exclaimed,—"Gold, gold, for the Roman Antichrist; down with the Pope." The box contained a hair shirt and two whips, which were used by Fisher at certain times in "punishing his own body." Crumwell expressed regret that the box had been opened.

The gold cup presented to the Bishop by Henry's own mother, as well as the memorials of his grandmother, the good Countess of Richmond, were confiscated. Bishop Fisher's benevolent and interesting will was subsequently cancelled by the King, upon which Bayley observes: "He that made void so many men's wills, had his own made void in every particular." When confined in the Tower, the King again commanded Gardyner, Tunstal, and Bonner to remonstrate with Fisher on the "imprudence of his conduct in questioning the Royal supremacy." Bonner told him that it looked like treason; and Gardyner said that pious men "should be obedient to the powers that be." Tunstal, taking him by the hand, said, "Beloved brother, do not be obstinate; try and please the King, if you can do so without violating your conscience. The King regards you much, and we all love you." His reply was: "My very good friends, and some of you my old acquaintances, I know you wish me no hurt or harm, but a great deal of good; and I do believe that upon the terms you speak of, I might have the King's favour as much as ever. Wherefore, if you can answer me one question, I will perform all your desires." "What's that, my lord?" said several prelates. "It is this: '*What will it gain a man to win the whole world and to lose his own soul?*'" Gardyner and Bonner became silent; indeed, it would not have been prudent for them to express any opinion in the presence of the King's spies. And again Dr. Fisher said: "My lords, it does not grieve me so much to be urged so sorely in a business of this kind, as it doth wound me grievously that I should be urged by you whom it concerns as much as me. Alas! I do but defend your cause, whilst you are pleading against your-

selves. It would, indeed, better become us all to stick together in repelling the violence and injustice which are daily put upon our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, where we have all in common, than to be divided amongst ourselves to help on the mischief. But I see judgment is begun at the house of God; and I see no hope, if we fall, that the rest will stand. You see we are besieged on every side, and the fort is betrayed by those who should defend it; and since we have made no better resistance, we are not the men that shall see an end of these calamities. Wherefore I pray you, my lords, leave me and my cause to the Almighty God, in whom alone there is comfort which no man can deprive me of. You have often told me of the King's heavy displeasure against me; I therefore pray you to remember me to his Highness, and tell him that I had rather exercise the duty that I owe unto him, by praying for him, than in pleasing him in the way and manner you ask me to do."*

Thomas Crumwell, imitating the example of Maister Rich, visited Fisher in the Tower, in order to discover his opinions on the Supremacy and other questions. The Bishop was courteous but unbending at the interview, and Crumwell would have him to believe that he and Cranmer held him in high esteem. After "much preliminary discourse," Crumwell came to the matter of fatal importance to Fisher. "My lord of Rochester," said he, "what would you say if the Pope should send you a Cardinal's hat? Would you accept of it?" Bishop Fisher replied, "Good Maister Crumwell, I know myself to be so far

* Bayley's Life of Fisher (Black Letter).

unworthy of any such dignity, that I think not of it. But if any such thing should happen, assure yourself that I should turn that favour to the best advantage that I could, in assisting the Holy Catholic Church of Christ; and in that respect I would receive it upon my knees." Crumwell reported this conversation to the King in whatever form suited his policy or his malice. Henry became indignant on hearing of Fisher's reply to his minister. "Yea," said he, "is the old man yet so lusty? Well, let the Pope send him a hat when he will. Mother of God, he shall wear it on his shoulders then, for I will leave him never a head to set it on."*

Upon Dr. Fisher's arrest his private property was seized, as had been his public, and his very clothing taken from him; without "any consideration for his extreme age, he was allowed nothing but rags, which scarcely sufficed to cover his body."†

Many of the evil actions perpetrated against Dr. Fisher, whilst in the Tower, have been attributed to Crumwell or Audley; no one imagined that the King was the author of the falsehoods intended to induce his acquiescence. It is now important to know that King Henry himself specially instructed Lord Crumwell to send word to Dr. Fisher that "his friend, Sir Thomas More, had just agreed to take the oath of Supremacy, and was about to be released from the Tower." This falsehood was suggested by Henry to induce the Bishop to abandon his principles; but John Fisher was not the man to

* Bayley's Life of Fisher.

† Fisher's Letter; Fuller's Church History, Book V. p. 203; Hume, vol. iii. p. 192.

be moved by such reports. He was grieved at the statement, and expressed himself surprised to learn that Sir Thomas More proved to be so weak-minded, and thought he would act otherwise. "Perhaps," said Dr. Fisher, "my poor friend was induced to give way through his natural tenderness for his numerous family, who are now starving. But there is no such excuse for me; no, none whatever. I am a minister of the Gospel, and am particularly bound to give good example; and to stand by 'Peter's ship' to the death—let death come in what form it may."* When Henry heard of the failure of his false devices he muttered curses, and spoke of the headsman.

After one year's imprisonment in the Tower, Fisher was placed on his trial (June 17, 1534), before Lord Audley and the High Commissioners, in the Court of King's Bench. Lord Crumwell and the Duke of Suffolk were among the Commissioners. Fisher, who was attired in a black gown, was brought up in the custody of the Lieutenant of the Tower. He was scarcely able to stand at the bar from infirmity, old age, and hard treatment in prison.

The charge preferred against him was, that he had "treacherously attempted to deprive the King's Highness of his title, by maliciously speaking the following words: 'The King, our Sovereign Lord, is not Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England.'" The only witness for the Crown was Maister Rich, the Solicitor-General, who, as the reader is aware, visited the Bishop in the Tower, in a "friendly manner," to "mend the quarrel" between the King and him. Rich turned a confidential communication

* State Papers; Sir Richard Rich to Sir Thomas Audley.

into evidence, and appeared as a witness for the Crown. In the history of judicial proceedings, there is perhaps nothing on record to equal Rich's conduct on this occasion. Dr. Fisher stood alone, without counsel or friend, against the Crown lawyers, judges, and commissioners. He spoke of the manner in which the evidence against him was elicited : "Maister Rich, I cannot but marvel to hear you come and bear witness against me of those words. This man, my lords, came to me from the King, as he said, on a secret message, with commendations from his Grace, declaring what good opinion his Highness the King had of me, and how sorry he was of my trouble, and many more words not now fit to be recited, as I was not only ashamed to hear them, but also knew right well that I could in no way deserve them. At last he broke to me the matter of the King's Supremacy, telling me that his Highness, for better satisfaction of his own conscience, had sent him unto me in this secret manner, to know my full opinion in the matter, for the great affection he had always for me more than any other man. When I had heard this message, I put him in mind of the new Act of Parliament, which, standing in force as it does, might thereby endanger me very much, in case I should utter any thing against its provisions. To that he (Rich) made answer, 'That the King willed him to assure me, upon his honour and on the word of a King, too, that whatever I should say unto him by this his secret messenger, I should abide no peril for it, although my words were ever so directly against the statute, seeing it was only a declaration of my mind secretly as to his own person.' And the same messenger (Rich) gave me his solemn promise that he never would mention my words to

any living soul, save the King's Highness himself. Therefore, my lords, seeing it pleased the King's Highness to send to me thus secretly to know my poor advice and opinion, which I most gladly was, and ever will be, ready to offer to him when so commanded, methinks it very hard to allow the same as sufficient testimony against me to prove me guilty of high treason."*

Dr. Fisher's speech was received with demonstrations of applause. Almost every one present—save the judicial lictors—felt horrified at the conduct of Rich, who rose to reply undismayed or in any way abashed. He said that the prisoner had fairly stated what occurred between them. He excused his conduct by affirming in a solemn manner that he "said or did nothing more than what the King commanded him to do." And then, as counsel, as well as witness for the Crown, he argued that, assuming the statement to be correct, it was no discharge in law against his Highness the King for a direct violation of the statute.

Lord Audley and the other judges were of opinion that this message or promise from the King neither did nor could by rigour of law discharge the prisoner from the crime; but in so declaring his mind and conscience against the Supremacy—yea, though it were at the King's own request or command—he committed treason by the statute, and nothing could save him from death but the King's merciful pardon.

Dr. Fisher then contended that as the statute only made

* Burnet asserts, in variance with recorded facts, that "no Catholic was ever punished for merely denying the Royal supremacy in official examinations." But the communication between Bishop Fisher and Maister Rich was quite "private." Mr. Froude considers his oracle "mistaken in this matter."

it treason "maliciously" to deny the King's Supremacy, he could not be guilty by merely expressing an opinion to the King himself; and that too by his Highness's own order.

Audley replied in a triumphant tone that "malice did not mean spite or ill-will in the vulgar sense, but was an inference of law, for if a man speak against the King's Supremacy by any manner of means, that speaking is to be understood and taken in law as malice."

Bishop Fisher raised another important question—namely, that in high treason accusations the law required two witnesses; whilst the Crown produced only *one* in his case; and that one under the most discreditable circumstances that ever dishonoured a court of justice.* This puzzling point was quickly overruled by Audley, who replied that as this was a case in which the King's Highness was personally concerned the law requiring two witnesses did not, in his opinion, apply! He then addressed the jury for the Crown in a speech which has been described as a "literal perversion of law, equity, and truth." His manner was gross, insolent, and overbearing.

After a brief time of seeming deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of guilty, to which the Bishop replied—"I thank you heartily, Maister Jurymen, for your verdict; and may the Almighty God forgive you and those at whose bidding you have outraged truth and justice!"

Lord Audley "assuming a solemn appearance," said:—"John Fisher, you shall be led to the place from whence

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* Mr. Froude coolly says, "The King's Counsel might have produced other witnesses had they cared to do so." Of course they could; there was any amount of testimony then available, either from fear or avarice.

you came, and from thence again shall be drawn through the city to the place of execution at Tyburn, where your body shall be hanged by the neck; half alive you shall be cut down and thrown to the ground, your bowels to be taken out of your body before you, being still alive, your head to be smitten off, and your body to be divided into four quarters, and afterwards your head and quarters to be set up wheresoever the King shall appoint. And God have mercy upon your soul!"*

Dr. Fisher then addressed the Commissioners, protesting against the injustice of the proceedings against him, and concluded in these words:—"My lords, I am here condemned before you of high treason for denial of the King's Supremacy over the Church of God; but by what order of justice I leave to God, who is the searcher both of the King's conscience and of yours. Nevertheless, I have been found guilty (as it is termed), and must be contented with all that God shall send, to whose will I wholly refer and submit myself. And now I tell you more plainly my mind concerning this matter of the King's Supremacy. I think indeed, and I have always thought, and do now lastly affirm, that his Highness the King cannot justly claim any such supremacy over the Church of God as he now taketh upon him. Neither hath it ever been or heard of any temporal prince before his day aspiring to that dignity. Wherefore, if the King will now adventure himself in proceeding in this strange and extraordinary case, no doubt but he shall deeply incur the grievous displeasure of the Almighty God, to the great damage of his own soul and of

* Bayley's Life of Bishop Fisher, p. 198; State Trials of Henry's reign.

many others, and to the utter ruin of this realm committed to his charge, whereof will ensue some sharp punishment at the hand of God. I pray God his Highness may remember himself in time and hearken to good council, for the preservation of himself and his kingdom and the peace of all Christendom."*

Amidst a great parade of halbert men, executioners, and jail attendants in their various liveries, the condemned prelate was re-conducted to the Tower. The lamentations of the populace, especially the crowds who came from Rochester, much affected him. At the Tower gate he thanked the officials for their attendance. "I thank you," he said, "for the labour and pains you have taken with me this day; I am not able to give you any recompense; for all has been taken from me, and I am as poor as Lazarus. Therefore I pray you to accept of the only thing I can give you—my thanks and good wishes."

Erasmus has left on record a portrait of Dr. Fisher's appearance as he left Westminster Hall, upon receiving sentence of death:—"One would think that he was returning from some festive scene. His countenance was radiant with joy; his step was light and steady; his whole manner bespoke an interior gaiety of heart. One could see that the holy Bishop now felt that his soul was nigh to that harbour of eternal rest, after which he had so long yearned."

The few days of life now allotted to Dr. Fisher were chiefly occupied in prayer. Nevertheless, he was cheerful and pleasant: he asked the cook for his dinner, and the

* State Trials.

former stated that he had "prepared none that day, because he had heard it rumoured that his lordship's head had been chopped off on yonder hill, and therefore he would not want a dinner." "Well," said the Bishop, "my good cook, you see I am still alive, and am very hungry just now; whatever you hear of me, let me no more lack my dinner, but make it ready as thou art wont to do, and if thou seest me dead when thou comest, why then eat it thyself; but if I am alive I mind, by God's grace, to eat never a bit the less."

"In stature," says Bayley, "Dr. Fisher was tall and comely, exceeding the middle sort of men; for he was to the quantity of six feet in height; and being very slender and lean, was nevertheless upright and well formed, straight-backed, big jaws, and strongly sinewed; his hair by nature black, though in his latter days through age and imprisonment turned to white; his eyes large and round, neither full black nor full grey, but of a mixt colour between both, his forehead smooth and large, his nose of a good and even proportion; somewhat wide mouth and big jawed, as one ordained by nature to utter much speech, wherein was, notwithstanding, a certain comeliness; his skin somewhat tawny, mixed with many blue veins; his face, hands, &c., all his body so bare of flesh, as is almost incredible, which came by the great abstinence and penance he used upon himself for many years—even from his youth. In speech he was mild, temperate, and kindly."

Those who approached Dr. Fisher at this juncture, were struck with his heroic fortitude and piety: he expressed something kind and endearing to all—even the executioner. On the morning of his death he asked the Lieutenant of the Tower "to indulge him with a sleep of two hours longer,"

adding, "I have been coughing half the night; I could not sleep, I am very weak; but, remember, my weakness does not proceed from fear. Thank God, I have nothing to fear in meeting death." At seven o'clock he arose, and dressed with more than ordinary care. "This is our wedding day," he observed, "and it behoves us, therefore, to use more cleanliness in preparing for the marriage table." At nine of the clock a procession was formed, headed by the Lieutenant of the Tower; the venerable prelate was so weak that he had to be carried in a chair to the place of execution, to which—as the "King's mercy" had changed the brutal sentence at Tyburn to decapitation on Tower Hill—the distance was short. In one hand the Bishop held the crucifix, in the other a copy of the New Testament. Having reached the scaffold he seemed to have received renewed strength. The executioner made his usual address, "begging forgiveness," &c., to which the Bishop replied, "I forgive you very heartily, and I hope you will see me overcome this storm lustily." When his gown and tippet had been removed, "he stood in his doublet and hose in the sight of the multitude; and "they marvelled to see a long, lean, and slender body, having on it little other substance besides skin and bones, insomuch as most part of the beholders wondered to see a living man so consumed, as he was the image of death itself; and the people thought it mighty cruel for the King to put such a man to death, he being so near his end."*

Notwithstanding the death-like appearance of Dr. Fisher, his mind was still vigorous, and he addressed the populace in a clear and audible tone. Coming to the front of the

* Bayley's Life of Bishop Fisher; State Papers.

scaffold, he said, "Christian people, I am come hither to die for the faith of Christ's holy Catholic Church; and I thank God hitherto my stomach hath served me very well thereunto, so that yet I have not feared death. Wherefore, I desire you all to help and assist me with your prayers, that at the very point and instant of death's stroke, I may in that very moment stand steadfast without failing in any one point of the Catholic faith, free from any fear. And I beseech the Almighty God of His infinite goodness and mercy to save the King and this realm, and that it may please him to hold His hand over it, and send the King's Highness good council." And then, opening the New Testament, his eye rested on these words, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Upon this the Bishop closed the book, saying, "Here is learning enough for me to my life's end."

Having engaged about ten minutes in prayer, he rose from his knees, and looking towards the East said, "The sun shines upon the scene about to be enacted." Then, surveying the vast crowd with compressed lips, he made the sign of the cross with great solemnity, and surrendered himself to the executioners; his eyes were bandaged; an awful silence pervaded the multitude; he laid his head upon the block; a murmur thrilled amongst the on-lookers, and the throbbings of their hearts became painful; two minutes and ten seconds had passed—a signal was given, and at one blow the executioner severed the head of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, from the body. "The populace," writes a spectator, whose words I modernise, "stood

horrified; a hoarse sound of grief and terror arose from the men, followed by the wild shrieks of the women of Rochester, domestics, old retainers, pensioners, and friends. The whole scene was one the like of which England had never seen before." Another writer says, "The people were astonished to see so much blood flowing from so lean a body." Bayley states that the executioner put the head in a bag, intending to place it on London Bridge that night as he was commanded to do; but the Queen wished particularly to see the head "before it was spiked;" that it was "carried to her," and looking at it some time she said, "*Is this the head that so often exclaimed against me; I trust it shall never do me more harm.*" "The Queen," writes Bayley, "*struck it upon the mouth with the back of her hand, and hurt one of her fingers by a tooth that stuck somewhat more out than the rest did, which finger afterwards grew sore, and put her to pain for many days; and when cured, the mark of the tooth remained to be seen on the said finger.*" Henry Griffin, of Rochester, who was present at the execution, states that the headsman carried away the head in a "white bag," but makes no allusion to this shocking narrative respecting Anna Boleyn.

Margaret Lee relates "that on the morning of Fisher's execution, the Queen received Holy Communion (the Lordes Bodye), and expressed herself *troubled in mind for the Bishop.*" If this statement be correct, I do not think it possible that there is any foundation for the appalling story respecting the Bishop's head. At the time Bayley wrote, the Catholic party had an intense feeling of hatred to the memory of Anna Boleyn; the Puritans became her champions, as she was reported to have been "a staunch

Protestant," whilst the Catholics execrated her as a renegade; and, judging of her history from the pages of Sander, they looked upon her as not only a traitor to Catholicity, but by birth something that was abominable and unnatural. Lingard observes that "Catholic writers were eager to condemn, and the Protestant historians to immortalise, the memory of Anna Boleyn."* So much for the introduction of party feeling into the pages of what is supposed to be honest historical relations of other days.

I have already proved the falsehood of Sander's statement respecting Anna's mother, the stainless Elizabeth Howard. It may appear strange to the Protestants of the present day, who have faith in Burnet, and those writers who have adopted his statements, to learn that Anna Boleyn never abandoned the religion of her fathers. She utterly repudiated and ignored Protestantism. She was, however, thoroughly deceived by prelates like Archbishop Cranmer, who, whilst celebrating Mass daily with the most apparent piety, were, at the same moment, engaged in a gigantic conspiracy to overthrow the ancient religion of England. It is difficult to elucidate the truth where deception, fraud, and perjury have become interwoven, and carried to a conclusion with a blasphemous courage that invokes the "Holy Trinity and the High Court of Heaven" to attest the truth and equity of its proceedings.

It is true that King Henry himself accused the Queen of being the cause of Sir Thomas More's death; and the reader is aware that Wolsey had described her as the "night crow" who haunted his path and pursued him to

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* Lingard, vol. v.

the death! Yet these are mere allegations which have never been proved. Neither Protestant nor Catholic seem to have understood the peculiar construction of Anna Boleyn's mind; and the problem is, certainly not clearly solved even now.

Another revolting spectacle was that of the remains of the Bishop being flung on a heap of sand by the headsman, and remaining in that condition guarded by unfeeling halbertmen until night, when an order came from Lord Crumwell that the body was to be immediately buried. Accordingly "two of the watchers took the corpse upon halberts between them, and so carried it to a neighbouring churchyard named Barking, where on the north side of the cemetery, near the wall, they dug a hole with their halberts, and therein, without any reverence, tumbled the body of the good prelate. No Christian rites were performed. Such was the funeral of the Bishop of Rochester."* No priest, no friend, no relative was present. It is impossible to defend the clergy and bishops from a large amount of censure for their conduct at this period. The prelates were silent; there was no remonstrance; no petition; no supplication on behalf of their martyred brother. Dr. Fisher had even to petition Lord Crumwell to grant him the favour of a confessor, and a few pious books to read. Surely the Bishop and clergy of London could have prevented the outrages heaped on the remains of the dead prelate at Barking. Crumwell was not altogether such a monster but they could prevail upon him to give a suitable, or at least a Christian, burial to the King's venerable preceptor, a privy councillor of the realm,

* Bayley's Life of Dr. Fisher.

a bishop, a peer of Parliament, and a man without a shadow of reproach during his long life. The conduct of Gardyner, Bonner, and Tunstal in relation to Fisher adds to the general odium attached to the memory of those prelates. Who can defend their conduct? They simply, and no doubt unconsciously, performed the work of the Reformers, and it followed that retributive justice haunted them to the death.

Three days later Dr. Fisher's head was "spiked" on London Bridge beside the heads of the Carthusian Fathers, who suffered a short time previously in the same cause. Immense crowds of people came daily to look at the bishop's head. Some prayed, and the thoughtless and unreflecting indulged in execrations against the King and Lord Crumwell. The public feeling, however, was one of intense indignation; the King and his Council were severely censured; the bridge itself, and every avenue leading to it, was completely blocked up, and business almost suspended. After fourteen days Lord Crumwell ordered the head to be thrown into the Thames.

On the Continent the excitement was great. Charles the Fifth sent for the English Ambassador, and told him that Bishop Fisher was "such a man for all purposes, that the King of England had not the like of him in his realms; neither was he to be matched throughout Christendom." And then, with much feeling, Imperial Charles added, "Alas! your royal master hath in killing that goodly bishop killed at one blow all the bishops in your England."* Francis the First informed Sir John Wallop, the English ambassador in Paris, that "his royal master must have a very hard heart to put to death his ancient

* Sir Thomas Eliot's Despatches to Lord Crumwell.

preceptor, and so good a bishop." "I should," continued Francis, "feel very proud indeed if such a prelate was a subject of mine."*

The execution of Dr. Fisher was the topic of conversation in every city and university in Europe; and there seemed to have been but one opinion on the subject—namely, that King Henry "was a monster who dishonoured the name of monarch."

"In all things," writes Bayley, "belonging to the care and charge of a true bishop, Dr. Fisher was to all the bishops of England living in his days, the very mirror and lantern of light." "He pressed, as it were," says Fuller, "into the other world, and expired in constancy and greatness." "He was one of the most worthy men of the side he espoused," says Sharon Turner—a marvellous admission from such a quarter. The Rev. J. H. Blunt, another high Anglican authority, observes that "the good bishop's death was worthy of him and of the Master in whose footsteps he was humbly travelling, while he felt for a light whose brightness he did not altogether see on this side of the grave." Mr. Froude defends the deeds of King Henry and his Council as essential to the ultimate success of the Reformation. The learned gentleman favours pantomime over the closing scene. "Many a spectacle of sorrow," he writes, "had been witnessed on that tragic spot, but never one more sad than this. Let us close our lips, and not speak of it."†

* Sir John Wallop's Despatches to Lord Crumwell.

† The authorities cited throughout this narrative are all, with one exception distinguished Protestant writers. Bayley, the quaint biographer of Dr. Fisher, was a Catholic clergyman. His real name was Richard Hall, of Cambridge. He died a Canon of St. Ouen's; in 1604.

Again I cannot help repeating the valuable testimony given on pp. 302-3 by Dean Hook, in reference to this venerable evangelist of the good old Christian Church, and the noble and kindly memories of its upholders:—"To Bishop Fisher's transcendent virtues and noble qualities justice, through the party spirit of Puritanism, has never been done. He it was who appointed Erasmus to the chair of the Margaret Professor in Cambridge, and so great was his zeal in the cultivation of Greek literature, that, in his old age he desired to place himself under Erasmus as a student of that language. With the generous assistance of the Lady Margaret * he did more than any other man in England to promote the cause of learning; and so wise and so judicious were his measures, that students in both the great universities are, at the present hour, receiving food and raiment from funds which his royal mistress placed at his disposal. Such was the man whom Puritans generally loved to defame because he would not fall down with the costly sacrifice of an upright conscience before King Henry VIII."†

The author of "Two Queens" is more favourable to Dr. Fisher than Mr. Froude.

"A Yorkshire boy, born in the town of Beverley, though he went to Cambridge early, had not lost his northern grit and twang. His tones were rough; his phrases curt. What other men hardly dared to hint, Fisher would throw into the simplest words. He called a lie, a lie; a knave, a knave; not caring who might take offence. This roughness of his

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* The reader is aware that "Lady Margaret" was the Countess of Richmond, King Henry's grandmother.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 429.

speech combined with his repute for piety and learning, took the world by storm. A thorough scholar, armed at every point, he feared no combat, and his nature was unyielding as a rock. But with this love of combat, he combined a childlike veneration for the See of Rome. . . . . Margaret, Countess of Richmond, had named him first of her professors. Henry, her son, had made him Bishop of Rochester. After Henry's death, the aged Countess had placed him near her grandson, by appointing him one of her executors. His rough and ready talk amused the King. His High Church views delighted Queen Katharine. He enjoyed such large favour at the Court, that had he been more worldly and aspiring, he might well have thought the Primacy within his reach. But John Fisher was a priest, and nothing could induce him to become a privy councillor, and secretary of state."* "He was," continues Mr. Hepworth Dixon, "the cloth of his profession."

Dr. Fisher's warm sympathy for the poor and unfortunate was the most remarkable feature in his character. He had fixed days for visiting the hospitals and prisons of his diocese; and on such occasions he distributed alms in proportion to the necessities of the poor. He had always some kind words for prisoners, or outcasts, and by his sermons to them "turned many wicked people from the error of their ways." He visited the humblest cottage and gave spiritual comfort to the sick and dying. In his palace he dispensed a liberal hospitality. Men of learning from all nations were at times his guests. No sectarian feeling

* History of Two Queens, vol. iii. p. 12.

was exercised against the learned Jew or Mahomedan, or any other Eastern thinker. Poor students were welcome to his board. The Irish monks were his special favourites, "they are in earnest in their Christian feeling," was his remark to the learned John Leland. French and Spanish friars of learning were also amongst his guests. Three hundred people were fed daily at his different houses. He loved the people of Rochester, amongst whom he had lived for nearly forty years. He seldom went to Court, which annoyed the King. Erasmus has drawn a genial picture of his fine social qualities, and the fashion in which Christmas was held in Rochester during the many years he ruled that diocese.

In the early part of Henry's reign, he looked up to Dr. Fisher as a father. He once told the French ambassador that he felt assured that no monarch in Christendom could boast of having in his dominions a prelate so wise and so holy as the Bishop of Rochester. The great dignitaries of the Latin Church throughout Europe held Dr. Fisher in the highest esteem. The Council of Lateran having been convoked, Dr. Fisher was chosen to be the representative of the University of Cambridge; but just as he was about to depart on his honoured mission the arbitrary King "commanded him to remain in his diocese." The Bishop obeyed the summons of his former pupil, and remained with the people whom he regarded with a father's love.

In Dr. Fisher Queen Katharine had a truly noble advocate. King Henry never forgave him for the speech he made in the Queen's behalf. He boldly told the monarch to his face that "the marriage could not be *dissolved by any power, divine or human.*" "In the maintenance of this

opinion," continued Dr. Fisher, "*I am willing to lay down my life.*"* What a contrast with the conduct of Wolsey and Gardyner on this occasion. Fisher's speech in favour of Queen Katharine decided his fate.

Dr. Fisher was not what the world would call a "great personage," but he was that which no sectarian prejudice, no sentiment that acknowledges virtue can deny—a good and holy Christian, and a just man. He had very few equals in the long roll of English prelates; he used no weapons to enforce his convictions but those supplied from the armoury of prayer and kindly counsel. His execution was the first deadly sin in the terrible calendar of judicial murders in England; and although the Carthusians had been favoured with the semblance of a trial, Bishop Fisher's case was the first which proved that the highest officials and attributes of the law were merely the preliminary instruments of legal assassination.

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* Brewer's State Papers (Domestic), 1529.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

An illustrious name comes next on the list of English martyrs—Thomas More. As the King's policy gradually became known, the conscientious Chancellor considered he could no longer hold office ; and though possessed of but a limited patrimony, he had no hesitation in surrendering large emoluments, and the splendour of his position. He therefore resigned the Great Seal to the evident disappointment of the King, and was succeeded by Sir Thomas Audley. The Royal Supremacy was the question upon which the King and his Council were determined to test the opinions of More. The new policy of the Crown was delicately touched upon by Audley, but cautiously evaded by the ex-Chancellor, who foresaw what would soon follow ; nevertheless, he had no hesitation or wavering as to the course he should pursue when his conscience was at stake.

It is a pleasing task to trace the early history of such a man as More. At ten years of age the precocious son of Sir John More became a page to Cardinal Morton, in whose palace he received his early education. He is described at this period as a "very graceful, witty, and intelligent child." While amongst the Cardinal's household, he was often engaged in dramatic performances, and read Latin fluently at ten years of age. His quickness and readiness of reply,

and the originality of his genius, made him an object of general admiration. "Whoever lives to see it," observed Cardinal Morton, "will find this most intelligent boy a very rare man." The "little page" was much attached to the Cardinal, who spoke to him on every subject of interest to a young pupil. At eighteen years of age More entered Oxford, where he studied for some years. At this University, it is stated, he won the esteem of "young and old." He studied with the greatest amount of industry, and "his piety," says a contemporary, "made the lukewarm believers ashamed." He wished very much to become a Franciscan monk, but his father desired that he should be a lawyer. With reluctance he obeyed his father's command. He quitted his Greek and Latin studies at Oxford, and the company of his learned tutor, Groceyn, and became a law student at Lincoln's Inn. When a law student he frequently went to hear the eloquent sermons of his old confessor, Dean Collett; he also visited the Carthusian Fathers once a week. His public lectures on history and other learned subjects attracted the attention of the educated classes; even the King attended his discourses. As a lawyer he sprang forward at once in his profession. The general opinion of the public was to the "effect that Maister More would never betray his clients." Lawyers and attorneys in those times were considered as "very doubtful in regard to honour and honesty." While employed in the study and practice of the law, More had not deserted the literary path in which he had first delighted. He improved himself in all the learning then attainable; he associated with the most eminent and intellectual men of his time; he kept up a constant correspondence with Erasmus. He even

found leisure for literary composition. The "History of Richard the Third" is published among his works; but some eminent college men have raised doubts as to whether he was really the author of this work, which is attributed to Cardinal Morton; that it was written in Latin, and translated into English by More. It is certain that the Cardinal employed young More in translating Latin manuscripts; and it is equally true that the future Chancellor would not put forward as a work of his own that which was only a translation. "Utopia," upon which More's fame as an author principally rests, is the history of an imaginary commonwealth, in which he advances and advocates some doctrines in philosophy and religion greatly in advance of the age, with so much force and liberality, that it seems surprising that the work escaped the censures of Henry's despotic Council. It was written in Latin, and published about 1516.*

Maister More first appeared as a popular speaker in the Commons of 1504, when Henry VII. demanded a subsidy for the marriage portion of the Princess Margaret, then about to marry the King of Scots. More objected to the sum demanded; the House adopted his amendment, and the King had the mortification to find himself defeated. Maister Taylor, one of the King's Privy Chamber, went immediately from the House and told his Sovereign Lord "that a beardless boy had disappointed him of all his expectations." † "Whereupon," observes Roper, "the King conceived great indignation against More, and could not

* Foss's Judges of England, vol ii.

† Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More.

feel satisfied until he had in some way revenged it." More almost retired from public life after this event, for he received a warning from the Bishop of Winchester to the effect that he had "highly insulted the King and the Royal Family." He was only twenty-four years of age at this period. He went to the Continent for a time; then returned, and gave himself up to classical study down to the death of Henry, when he resumed his labours as a lawyer.*

In 1509 Maister More was introduced to the King by Wolsey, "as a very rising lawyer." His professional income at this time was about £450 a year—equal to a very large sum at the present day. The King wished him to give up the law for politics, and take office under the Crown, but he could not see his way to such a policy. He was about this time engaged in a suit in which the Pope was the plaintiff, and the King of England the defendant. The merits of the case were these:—A ship belonging to the Pontiff having been seized at Southampton as forfeited to the Crown for a breach of the law of nations, the Pope's Nuncio at the Court of London instituted proceedings to obtain restitution, and retained More as an advocate, "at which time there could none of our law be found so meet to be of counsel." The hearing was in the Star Chamber before the Chancellor and other judges. To plead against the Crown in the Star Chamber, and before such judges, was a delicate matter; and some persons of legal knowledge looked upon More's pleading as hopeless, if not dangerous. Maister More displayed much firmness, and his arguments were considered by the Court conclusive; the Lord Chancellor pronounced judgment in favour of

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.

More's client. This case brought More prominently before the public. The King was present at the trial; and, instead of indulging in anger against Maister More, he joined the general acclaim by offering his praise to the Pope's counsel for the ability with which he argued the case. Shortly after More visited the King at Greenwich, which was the commencement of his intimacy. He was made Master of the Requests, knighted, and sworn a Privy Councillor.* About this time (1514) Sir Thomas More took up his residence at Chelsea, where he was visited by the learned and the witty of England and the Continent. The King was frequently his guest; also Bishop Fisher, Dr. Foxe, of the See of Winchester, Erasmus, and other notable men. The next step in promotion was the chair of the House of Commons. The Commons felt delight and honour in nominating him, and the King assured them that they had made a choice of which he highly approved. Whilst Speaker he upheld the dignity of the House and its privileges—a very difficult task in those days. According to Erasmus, Wolsey "rather feared than loved More." The Cardinal wished him to fill the office of a foreign minister; he did not wish him to be much about Court; but More had a desire to reside in the vicinity of London, where many of his dearest friends were located. Wolsey had no friendly feeling for him—far from it.

When the Great Seal was delivered to More by the King, he was inducted into his seat in the Court of Chancery "after a noble exhortation by the Duke of Norfolk, as well to the Chancellor as to the people, and an answer

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More; Lord Campbell's English Chancellors.

of the Chancellor." No previous example of any introductory address on such an occasion occurs; and the object of the Duke of Norfolk's speech seems to have been to justify the King's selection of a layman instead of an ecclesiastic, by enlarging on the wisdom, integrity, and genius of Sir Thomas More, and the extraordinary abilities he had shown as a lawyer. More's answer was modest and becoming, with a graceful and feeling allusion to the fall of his distinguished predecessor.*

It has been stated, upon the authority of John Foxe, that Sir Thomas More was "a cruel persecutor of the Reformers, and caused even little boys to be flogged because they *adopted Protestant principles.*" Speed, Burnet, and Hume have all "improved" Foxe's relation. More's house at Chelsea has been represented as an "inquisition jail," and the amiable Chancellor "acting the part of a grand inquisitor;" that there was "a large tree in his garden where the Reformers and other faithful soldiers of Christ underwent cruel whipping, and that, too, under the especial superintendence of Sir Thomas More himself." Some of the leading Reformers, however, describe Sir Thomas More as a man of unquestionable truth, kindness, and honour. Here is More's own version of the narrative originally furnished by Maister Foxe :—

"Divers of them," says More, "have said that of such as were in my house when I was Chancellor, I used to examine them with torments, causing them to be bound to a tree in my garden, and there piteously beaten. Except their safe keeping, I never else did cause any such thing to be done unto any of the heretics in all my

* English Chancellors, by Lord Campbell, vol. i.; Foss's Judges of England, vol. v.

life, except only twain; one was a child and a servant of mine in my own house, whom his father, before he came to me, had mixed up in such matters, and set his boy to attend upon George Jay. This Jay did teach the child his own grievous heresy against the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, which heresy this child, in my house, began to teach another child. And upon that point I caused a servant of mine to strip him like a child before my household, for amendment of himself and example to others. Another was one who, after he had fallen into these frantic heresies, soon fell into plain open frenzy; albeit that he had been in Bedlam, and afterwards by beating and correcting gathered his remembrance. Being, therefore, let at liberty, his old perversions fell again into his head. Being informed of his relapse, I caused him to be taken by the constables, and bounden to a tree in the streets, before the whole town, and then striped him till he waxed weary. Verily, God be thanked, I hear no harm of him now. And of all who ever came into my hand for heresy, so help me God, else had never any of them a stripe or stroke given them, so much as a fillip in the forehead."*

Alarmed at the progress of the Reformation, and shocked by the conduct of many of its most zealous apostles in Germany, More became determined to discourage what was then styled the "new learning" by every legitimate means. He "never strained or rigorously enforced the law against the Reformers." "It is," observes Erasmus, "a sufficient proof of his clemency that, while he was Lord Chancellor of England, no man was put to death for these pestilent dogmas, while so many at the same period suffered for them in France, Germany, and the Netherlands." He was present many times at the examination of persons charged with heresy, and concurred with the Council in sending them to prison; but he could adopt no other course, unless he

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More.

violated the existing law on the subject, which was one of the King's favourite statutes. It was not till he had resigned the Great Seal, and was succeeded by the pliant Audley, that heresy was made high treason, and the scaffold reeked with innocent blood.* Yet Audley was afterwards the earnest supporter of the Reformation wherever or whenever it suited his interests. As the colleague of Crumwell and Cranmer, he carried out the schemes devised by a capricious King against the lives and the property of the English people.

From his own great rectitude, honesty, and piety, Sir Thomas More entertained a horror for every kind of vice. He sometimes punished depraved criminals severely; but where he could perceive any feeling of repentance, he acted in an opposite spirit; never approving of the sanguinary criminal code then in existence, he was consequently on the side of clemency. "He was," writes Lord Campbell, "three centuries in advance of his age." A passage in his "Utopia" is illustrative of his real opinions on the cruelty and injustice to which the people were subjected by the existing statutes of England. He represents his observant traveller, who had visited Utopia, and describes its institutions, as saying, "There happened to be at table an English lawyer, who took occasion to run out in high commendation of the severe execution of thieves in his country, where might be seen twenty at a time dangling from one gibbet. Nevertheless, he observed, it puzzled him to understand, since so few escaped, there were yet so many thieves left

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the English Chancellors, vol. i. p. 548; Foss's Judges of England, vol. v.

who were still found robbing in all places. Upon this I said with boldness there was no reason to wonder at the matter, since this way of punishing thieves was neither just in itself nor for the public good; for, as the severity was too great, so the remedy was not effectual; simple theft was not so great a crime that it ought to cost a man his life, and no punishment would restrain men from robbing who could find no other way of livelihood."

When More was committed to the Tower, the Constable apologised to him for the "poor cheer the place furnished for prisoners;" to which More replied, "Good Maister, assure yourself I do not mistake the cheer, but whenever I do, then spare not to thrust me out of your doors." For one month he was not permitted to see his wife or daughter, on whom he impressed the solemn obligation of not repining for him; declaring that he had violated no law, and could never acknowledge the King as "Christ's Vicar on earth." The Duke of Norfolk, Crumwell, and other members of the Council, were sent to "remonstrate with him; and, after them, Cranmer, who proposed to argue the merits of the Supremacy statute with him. The Archbishop, however, failed to convince, and only demonstrated by his manner that he was a personal enemy. Almost every day commissioners or spies visited More; but, being an astute lawyer, he did not commit himself by any unguarded expressions."*

On one occasion, when his noble daughter, Margaret Roper, came to visit him, the Carthusian Abbot of Sion, and three of his brethren of the Charter House, were "marched

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More.

by his window, on their way to execution for not accepting the Supremacy oath," when More suddenly exclaimed, "Lo! dost thou not see, Meg, that these blessed fathers be now so cheerfully going to their death as bridegrooms to their marriage?" He then hinted to her that a like destiny awaited himself. His daughter wished him to "yield to the King in some way." He wrote to her a letter of rebuke, and concluded with an assurance that "none of the troubles that might happen unto him touched him so near, or bore so grievously on him, as that his dearly beloved child, whose judgment he so much valued, should labour to persuade him to do what would be contrary to his conscience." The good daughter's reply was worthy of her parent. She submits reverently to his "faithful and delectable letter as the truthful messenger of his virtuous soul," and rejoiced at "the philosophic grandeur of his mind under such trials." She concluded in these words: "Your own most loving obedient daughter and bedeswoman, Margaret Roper, who desireth above all earthly things to bear John Wood's stede, to do you some service."* When Mrs. More visited her husband she "scolded him severely for his foolery in being there at all." The poor lady was sadly distressed at this time. In mental powers she was vastly inferior to her illustrious husband. She was a "plain housewife," destitute of ambition, and "devoid of all heroic qualities." A woman of the world on a small scale, her family was her universe. She cared nothing for the respective claims of the injured lady of Arragon or

* John Wood was an old and faithful servant, whom Crumwell permitted to accompany his master to the Tower.

her fascinating rival; she had heard of the greatness of Wolsey and other prelates and statesmen; yet she knew not in what their greatness consisted; she looked upon Cranmer as a "schoolmaster" who had winning ways; she thought Fisher was too honest for the times; and Gardyner and Bonner were sensible men because they pleased the King. She had enjoyed a cheerful and a happy home—a gentle husband, and loving children. No wonder that her mind became embittered, and that she appeared rude and ungracious in manner. Here is the scene at the Tower between the "rude housewife," as she has been described, and her learned and witty husband. "Ah, Maister More, I marvel that you who have hitherto always been taken for a wise man will now so play the fool as to lie here in this close filthy prison, and be content to be shut up thus with mice and rats as your companions, when you might be abroad at your liberty, with the favour both of the King and his Council. . . . I muse what in God's name you mean here thus fondly to tarry?" Having heard his wife's discourse to an end, Sir Thomas More in his usual good humour, said, "I pray thee, good Mistress Alice, tell me one thing." "What is it?" said she. "Is not this house as near to heaven as my own?" The "housewife" still maintained her views, and the husband was unable to convince her that it was better to remain in the Tower than to dishonour himself by accepting liberty at the sacrifice of what he considered the highest and holiest principles. But when the dark hour came, "Mrs. Alice" proved herself to be a true woman and wife. She was compelled by necessity to sell her wearing apparel to provide food for her husband, but recently the Chancellor of

a great kingdom, then wasting away his life in a damp dungeon in the Tower amidst mice and rats. "Mrs. Alice" was, however, cheered in her labour of love by her amiable children; and they all now looked on their poverty, under such circumstances, as a necessary offering at the shrine of truth and virtue.*

More's first wife died six years after his marriage, leaving him four children—one son and three daughters. It was chiefly to provide for the care of his family that he entered on a second marriage. Alice Middleton, his second wife, was a widow seven years his senior. More's grandson says she was a woman who could not "hearten" any man. "She possessed neither wealth, beauty, nor good temper; and to add to these deficiencies, she was a mere commonplace housewife, but nevertheless a good kind of matron." Strange companion for such a man; yet the good Chancellor agreed well with her.

The most disgraceful of the many schemes used to adduce evidence against Sir Thomas More was that of sending Maister Rich to visit him in the Tower. Rich was created Solicitor-General, from the fact that, at the English bar—low as it was in morality and honour at that period—there was, perhaps, not another man who would stoop to the same infamy to promote the policy of the King and his Council. Fortified by an order of the Council, Maister Rich, accompanied by Sir Richard Southwell and Mr. Palmer, went to the Tower for the ostensible purpose of depriving More of the few books with which he had hitherto been permitted to soothe his hours of solitude. While they were

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More; Campbell's English Chancellors.

packing up the books, Rich, under the pretence of "old friendship," fell into conversation with More; and in a familiar and confidential tone, after a compliment to his wisdom and learning, put a case to him. "Admit," said Rich, "that there were an Act of Parliament made, that all the realm should take me for a King, would not you, Sir Thomas, take me for King?" "Yes, sir," said More, "that I would." Rich became much elated, and put the case further. "Suppose that there was an Act of Parliament that all the realm should take me for Pope, would you not then take me for Pope?" "For answer," said Sir Thomas, "to your first case—the Parliament may well meddle with the state of temporal Princes, but to make answer to your other case—suppose the Parliament should make a law that God should not be God, would you then Maister Rich, say so?" "No, sir," said Rich, "that I would not; for no Parliament could make such a law." Sir Thomas More now suspecting that some dark plot was at the bottom of this discourse, made no further observation on the questions raised. On his departure Rich took leave of his "old friend," as he styled him, in an apparently kind manner, "assuring him of the regard he entertained for him, and hoping that all would end well."*

On the 7th of May, 1534, Sir Thomas More was arraigned in the Court of King's Bench, but the trial was postponed till the 1st of July, "to enable the Crown to procure further evidence." When the trial was finally arranged, Sir Thomas More was compelled to walk from the Tower to Westminster clothed as a malefactor, before the

* English Chancellors; Rossin's Life of Sir Thomas More.

gaze of a multitude of people. His hair had become grey since he last appeared in public; his face, which, though still cheerful, was pale and emaciated; his bent posture, and his feeble steps which he was obliged to support with a staff, showed the rigour of his confinement, and excited the fervent sympathy of the people, instead of impressing them, as was intended, with a dread of the King's vengeance. His presence in the King's Bench as a prisoner for high treason awoke the bright memories of his past career, when in that court arrayed in the robes of the Lord Chancellor of England, he had knelt at the feet of his venerable father, then the Lord Chief Justice, to ask his blessing before he entered his own court to adjudicate as Chancellor. Very many of the spectators at the trial had witnessed those scenes between the father and the son; and a bitter feeling of sorrow and of indignation was perceptible in every face. The King's Council being well aware that they were engaged in an unpopular prosecution, and that public opinion was against them, Crumwell made preparations to crush any movement of the populace. "I know," said he, "how to make the swinish multitude become tame." His ill-favoured and fearless presence struck terror in the people's hearts.* "After the lapse of three centuries," says Lord Campbell, "during which statesmen, prelates, and kings have been unjustly brought to trial in this same court—considering the splendour of More's talents, the greatness of his acquirements, and the innocence of his life, we must still regard

* "Hang them up! hang them up!" so frequently uttered in a ferocious tone by Henry, was first suggested by Crumwell, as a means of striking terror into the populace. Perhaps it was Crumwell who originated the term for the people, which has been so often misused.

his murder as the blackest crime that has ever been perpetrated in England under the forms of law."* Sir Christopher Hale as Attorney-General conducted the trial, aided by Maister Rich, the Solicitor-General. When the frivolous indictment was read, Lord Chancellor Audley, addressing the prisoner, said—"You see, prisoner, how grievously you have offended the King's Highness, yet he is so good and so merciful, that if you will lay aside your obstinacy and change your opinions, we hope you may obtain pardon." Sir Thomas More replied, "Most noble lords, I have great cause to thank you for this your courtesy; but I beseech the Almighty God that I may continue in the mind I am in until my death." The charges against him were substantially reduced to one—namely, "Attempting to deprive the King of his title and dignity." This accusation was unsupported by evidence. His alleged treasonable letters to Bishop Fisher were not proved, on the ground that they had been destroyed. Judging from the legal position of the case at this juncture, it was Sir Thomas Audley's duty to direct the jury to return a verdict of "not guilty." He, however, called upon the prisoner for his defence. "A deep silence now prevailed—all present held their breath—every eye was fixed upon the victim." Sir Thomas More was beginning by expressing his apprehension "lest his memory and wit being damaged with his health of body through long confinement, he should not be able properly to meet all the matters alleged against him." When he found that he was unable to support himself by his staff, his judges evinced a touch of

* English Chancellors, vol. i.

humanity by ordering him a chair. When he was seated, after a few preliminary observations he considered the charges against him in their order. "As to the King's marriage," he said, "I confess that I always told his Highness my opinion thereon as my conscience pointed out to me, which I neither would nor ought to have concealed. I do not consider it to be high treason to give my opinion on the subject where the King sought that opinion from me as his councillor. I should have basely flattered him if I had not uttered the whole truth unto his Highness. As to the letters to Bishop Fisher, the King himself stated the contents of them, and showed that they were free from blame."* On the charge that he had declined to declare his opinion when interrogated respecting the Supremacy, he answered, "that he could not transgress any law or incur any crime of treason by holding his peace, God alone being judge of our secret thoughts." The Attoney-General interposed, with much rudeness of manner, saying, "Maister More, although we had not one word or deed to assert against you, yet have we not your silence, when asked whether you acknowledge the King to be the Supreme Head of Christ's Church on earth, which is an evident sign of a malicious mind in you?" More, however, reminded the Crown lawyers of the maxim among canonists and citizens, "*Qui tacet consentire videtur.*" As to the last charge, Sir Thomas More argued that the only proof was his saying that "the statute of Supremacy was a two edged sword," which was interpreted as his reason for declining to answer, and could not be construed into a positive denial

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More.

of the King's supremacy. He concluded his defence by solemnly declaring that he had "never spoken a word against the Supremacy Act to any living man."*

The jury were of opinion that there was no evidence before them to convict the prisoner of high treason. They hesitated, and seemed for a few minutes to disregard the unmistakable looks and gestures of the judges and the Attorney-General. But the suspense was soon removed by the appearance of a new witness in the person of the Solicitor-General. Maister Rich, "having been duly sworn," made a statement as to the "*confidential conversation*" which he had had with the prisoner in the Tower on the removal of the books, when Rich raised a question, as the reader is aware, touching the Supremacy law, and asking More's opinion of the statute.

Every honourable man in court—apart from the judges and prosecutors—felt horrified at the conduct of the Solicitor-General, and the Chief Commissioners who permitted it. The suppressed murmur, however, subsided when Sir Thomas More rose, throwing aside his staff, and, with renewed vigour of mind and body, commenced his reply to the allegations of Rich :—"My lords, if I were a man that did not regard an oath, I would not at this time stand here in the way I do before you. If the oath which you have taken, Maister Rich, be true, then I pray I never see God in the face ; which I would not say were it otherwise to gain the whole world." Having related the conversation with Rich, he continued, "In good faith, Maister Rich, I am more sad for your perjury than for my own peril.

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. ii.

Know you that neither I, nor any man else to my knowledge, ever took you to be a man of such credit as either I or any other would vouchsafe to communicate with you on any matter of importance. As you well know, I have been acquainted with your manner of life and conversation for a long time, even from your youth upwards; for we dwelt in the same parish many years, and you were always considered very light in your tongue, a great dicer, a gamester, and not of any commendable or virtuous name in the Temple or elsewhere." Then, addressing Audley and the judges, he said, "Can it, therefore, seem likely to your lordships that in a case of such magnitude I should so unadvisedly overshoot myself as to trust Maister Rich—a man always reputed to be possessed of little truth or honesty?" Sir Thomas More continued his address for some time, and argued his case with all his wonted ability and with the energy of conscious rectitude. He made a deep impression on the spectators, and even Crumwell's carefully selected jury were again bewildered at the turn the trial took. At this juncture Rich felt alarmed, and produced Southwell and Palmer, who accompanied him to the Tower, in order that they might corroborate his statements; but these gentlemen declined giving any evidence, declaring that they did not listen to the "confidential conversation" which passed between Rich and More. If Maister Rich presented a bold and shameless front at this moment, the Chancellor was his superior in the strength of unblushing audacity—at once regardless of the honour of the ermine and the truth and equity that should characterise the office of a judge. Sir Thomas Audley, as the Lord Chancellor of England, charged the jury. After complimenting the Crown lawyers

on the "ability and impartiality" with which they had conducted the case, he proceeded to dwell on the enormity of the offences charged against the prisoner; the danger to the King's Highness and the tranquillity of the kingdom by the course followed by the prisoner. He defended the conduct of Maister Rich, stating that he gave his evidence with delicacy and reluctance, and from the most loyal and the most pure motives; that his testimony stood uncontradicted if not corroborated, as the denial of the prisoner could not of course be taken into account; that as the words related by Maister Rich undoubtedly expressed the real sentiments of the prisoner, and were only abiding a necessary inference, there was every probability that it was spoken. If the jury, therefore, believed what Maister Rich related to them, then the case for the King's Highness was established against the prisoner."

The jury retired, and returned into court in twenty minutes, declaring "Sir Thomas More guilty of high treason against his Highness the King.

Sir Thomas Audley could not repress his too apparent pleasure at the verdict so recorded, and immediately proceeded to pronounce sentence of death, but was interrupted by Sir Thomas More. "My lords," said he, "when I was a judge it was the custom to ask the prisoner before sentence whether he could give any reason why judgment should not proceed against him." Sir Thomas Audley became excited, and admitted he had made a mistake. The question was then put. Sir Thomas More, in his reply, denied the power of Parliament to pass the statute transferring the Headship of the Church from the Pope of Rome to the King of England. He took exception to the framing

of the indictment, and the manner in which the trial was conducted. But the judges were unanimous in their approval of the verdict, and Chancellor Audley pronounced sentence of death, "ordering that, after the head was cut off, the body should be made four quarters of, and set over four gates of the City, and the head to be placed upon London Bridge."

Sir Thomas More again addressed the court, and now more freely expressed his opinions on the Supremacy Act. He said that, after having "studied the question for seven years, he could not discover by what possible means, or argument, or law, a layman could become the Head of the Church. It appeared to him quite impossible." Sir Thomas Audley asked him if he was wiser than all the learned men of Europe. More replied, "That, with very few exceptions, the learned men of Christendom were just of his way of thinking on this great question." Sir John Fitz-James inquired if the prisoner had any more to add? After a pause, Sir Thomas More proceeded:—"As the Blessed Apostle, St. Paul, was present and consenting to the death of the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, keeping their clothes that stoned him to death, and yet they be now twain holy saints in Heaven, and there shall continue friends for ever; so I verily trust, and shall therefore heartily pray, that, though your lordships have been on earth my judges to condemnation, yet that we may hereafter meet in Heaven merrily together to our everlasting salvation. And now, my lords, I heartily say, 'May God preserve you all, especially my Sovereign Lord the King, and grant him faithful councillors.'"

When Sir Thomas More resumed his seat, a profound

silence ensued, and after a few minutes he rose again, and looking earnestly round the court, bowed to the judges, commissioners, and bar. He then took his departure for the Tower, with the headsman walking before him. Near the gates of the old fortress a painful incident occurred. His beloved daughter, Margaret Roper, rushed through the crowd, and, pushing aside the halbert-men, threw herself upon her father's neck, and kissed him repeatedly, not able to speak, not able to cry. "And," writes a spectator, "this scene made the hearts of the very halbert-men full of grief; anon, she did speak, and the tears rolled down her face, when she said, 'Oh, my father! oh, my father! are you going to leave us? Are they so wicked as to take your life?' The father replied that his daughter should submit to the will of God, and pray for his enemies. She again clasped him in her arms, exclaiming, 'Dear loved father, your blessing again!'" "After this farewell, he felt that the bitterness of death was over, and he awaited the execution of his sentence with cheerfulness."*

The Court party now used every effort to induce Sir Thomas More to make a recantation of his opinions on the Supremacy law; but he "continued obstinate." The warrant was then issued for his execution. Having been informed that the "King was pleased to remit the severe parts of the sentence, and that he be *merely* beheaded," he expressed a hope that none of his friends might experience the like mercy from his Highness the King.

The day before his execution he wrote with a piece of coal (pen and ink being prohibited) a parting letter to his

* Condensed from Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.; also Foss's English Judges, vol. v.

daughter, Margaret Roper, containing farewell blessings to all his children, and even to his domestics. Adverting to their last interview, he says: "I never liked your manner towards me better than when you kissed me last, for I am most pleased when your daughterly love and dear charity have no leisure to look to worldly courtesy."

At an early hour on the morning of Tuesday, July 6th, 1535, the illustrious prisoner received intelligence from Sir Thomas Pope, that it was the "King's command that he should die before nine o'clock that morning." He was further requested to "make no speech to the people." Sir Thomas More expressed his thanks for the "good tidings," and said he should obey the King's command. He begged one favour—namely, that his daughter Margaret might be present at his funeral, to which Pope replied, "The King is willing that your wife, children, and near friends may be present at your funeral."* In two hours after this interview with Sir Thomas Pope, the procession to the scaffold was formed. In his hand More carried a red cross, and his looks were raised towards heaven. As he passed along, the wife of a wine merchant pressed through the crowd, and offered him a goblet of wine. He gently refused, saying, "Christ at the time of His passion drank no wine, but vinegar and gall." He was next addressed by Mrs. Rachel Chylde, who rudely demanded some law papers she had given him to examine into her case when he was Chancellor. He replied, "Good Mistress Rachel, in an hour hence his Highness the King will rid me of the care I have had of thy papers." Another woman charged him with having

* Roper's Life of Sir Thomas More.

given an unjust judgment against her. "I mind you well," he answered, with much firmness; "and were I again to give sentence in your cause, I would not alter a word." A mob was retained by the Boleyn party to deride and insult him as he passed along to the scaffold. The conduct of the lower classes on this occasion was, according to Griffin, "brutal and disgraceful;" yet there were many edifying exceptions: "wives, children, and maidens," stood forth upon the highway waving the cross and other emblems of religion. A citizen of Winchester threw himself at his feet, and asked his prayers. "Go," said Sir Thomas, "and pray for me awhile, and when that while is gone, I hope to be able to pray for you in heaven." Having reached the platform a murmur issued from the vast crowd, who were of the better class at this fatal place, awaiting the "last farewell." The sight of the late Lord Chancellor in such a position struck almost all present with horror, for there was an earnest popular opinion of his exalted virtues, his rectitude, and amiability. Having knelt in prayer for a short time, he rose, and, addressing the chief headsman in an air of pleasantry, handed him an angel in gold, and said, "Pluck up thy spirit, man, and be not afraid to do thy office; my neck is very short; take heed, therefore, that thou strike not awry for saving thy honesty." When he had laid his head on the block, he desired the executioner "to wait till he had removed his beard, for *that* had never offended his Highness the King."

A signal was given, and at one blow the head was severed from the body, and held up to the gaze of the horror-stricken people. In the course of the day the head was spiked on a pole, and placed on London Bridge. The noble

daughter subsequently received it, and preserved it as a precious relic during her life, and in her dying hour ordered it to be laid with her in the same grave.

When the news of Sir Thomas More's execution reached the King he was playing at "tables" with Queen Anna: he was apparently startled, and turning his eyes upon her, he is reported to have said, "Thou art the cause of this great and good man's death," and immediately retired to his private room, and permitted no one to approach him.* The next day Henry was in a different mood. If he felt any real sorrow or remorse at the recollection of the times when he put his arm round Sir Thomas More's neck in the garden at Chelsea, or was instructed by him on the motion of the heavenly bodies from the house-top, or was amused by his jests and innocent stories at the dinner-table or supper, the feeling was transitory indeed, for he not only placed the head of his "beloved friend" where it must have been conspicuous to his own eye, as he passed almost daily from Greenwich to old Whitehall, but gave further evidence of his unforgiving vengeance by expelling the widow and orphans from their residence at Chelsea. The King "did not leave Dame More," writes a contemporary, "a seat to sit upon, nor a blanket to cover her, and the family were reduced to actual destitution; and the King's vengeance threatened anyone who might aid the More family with either food or money." Popular feeling was thoroughly debased. The rabble applauded every action of the King which might hand over another victim to the

* Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.; Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.

headsman. The middle and upper classes only studied their own interests and personal safety. The clerical party, who, in former reigns, were ranged on the side of the oppressed, were now silent spectators of the direst and most heartless tyranny. The bishops were also silent. The invincible courage of Fisher was not to be found in their ranks.

The correspondence of Erasmus diffused a feeling of execration throughout Europe against Henry and his Council, and English ambassadors abroad were "looked upon as the agents of an inhuman monster." Amongst Lutherans, as well as "Papal and anti-Papal Catholics," there was an unanimous denunciation of the murder of the "great, learned, and most worthy Englishman."* Charles V. sent for Sir Thomas Smythe, the English ambassador at his Court, and addressed him as follows:—"Sir Thomas Smythe, we understand that your royal master, the King of England, has put to death his wise and most trustworthy Councillor, Sir Thomas More." Sir Thomas Smythe looked abashed, and pretended ignorance of what occurred. "Well," continued the Emperor, "it is true; and this we will say, that if he had been ours, we should sooner have lost the best city in our dominions than so worthy a Councillor."†

It seems to have been the delight of Erasmus to introduce men of learning and wit to More. Amongst the learned and witty who visited the happy home at Chelsea were Stephen Gardyner, Edward Fox, and other notable Churchmen. Cresacre, the great-grandson of More, has chronicled

* "Reports from the English Ambassadors abroad, as to public opinion concerning Maister More's execution."

† Memoirs of Charles V.; Despatches of Sir Thomas Smythe.

anecdotes of his rich humour. "He never laughed at his own witticisms, which flowed from him naturally and without an effort, but that he spoke them so gravely few could say whether he were in jest or earnest; yet, though he never left his mirth, his heart was ever humble and mortified, and all the while he exercised acts of self-denial which worldly men would have wondered at." Although More had corresponded with Erasmus, he had not yet seen the great scholar, who, with the desire to give a surprise customary at the time, called upon the Chancellor without announcing himself. Sir Thomas More was so delighted with the conversation and learning of his visitor, that he exclaimed, "You are either Erasmus or some being of the other world."

Collet informed Erasmus that in More's youth he was the greatest genius he knew of in England. Another contemporary states that he had many personal peculiarities. "He had a habit of walking with his right shoulder higher than his left, from no known motive but a desire to be singular." Cranmer's opinion of him was of course hostile. He thought Sir Thomas More "somewhat too conceited, and desirous of esteem; that he would never vary from what he had once expressed, whether wrong or right, because he thought a change of opinion would lessen his reputation." Lord Crumwell had a great admiration of More. When More refused to take the Supremacy oath, it was reported that Crumwell "wished his only son had lost his head rather than that Sir Thomas More should have refused the oath."* One of More's most endearing qualities was his warm friendship to those whom he selected for his intimacy; he

* Froude's History of England, vol. ii.

was formed by nature for social attachments. Reginald Pole declared in after life that he was prouder of the friendship of More and Fisher than that of all the great princes of Europe together. Cranvild states that he "would not exchange the acquaintance and sweet conversation and friendship of More for the wealth of Crœsus." On another occasion, the witty Chancellor told Cranvild that his "love and courtesy shook away sorrow from him." "And," he added, "I know no other remedy for the shortness of my friend's letters but to read them again and again." "I know," says Erasmus, "my dear Sir Thomas, that your delight is to be rich in faithful friends, and that in this you reckon to consist your greatest earthly happiness. For the delight which other men take in dice, chess, cards, music, and hunting, is less than what you find in intercourse with a learned and congenial companion. And so, though I know you are well stored with this kind of riches, yet because I know a covetous man can never have enough, and that this manner of dealing of mine has before now changed luckily both to you and to me, I deliver to your keeping one friend more, whom I would have you accept with your whole heart. As soon as you know him, I look to be thanked by you both, as I was by Cranvild, who now so possesses your love that I am well-nigh envious of him."

In writing to Peter Giles of Antwerp, More describes his various occupations :—

"Whilst in pleading, in hearing, or deciding causes, or composing disputes as an arbitrator, in waiting on some men about business, and on others out of respect, the greater part of the day is spent on other men's affairs, the remainder of it must be given to my family at home, so that I can reserve no part of it to myself, that is, to

study. I must gossip with my wife, and chat with my children, and find something to say to my servants; for all these things I reckon a part of my business, unless I were to become a stranger in my own house; for with whomsoever either nature or choice has engaged a man in any relation of life he must endeavour to make himself as acceptable as he can. In such occupations, days, months, and years slip along; and what time, think you, is left for writing?—without saying anything of what is wasted in sleep and meals, which consume nearly half of our lives."

The discipline established in the family of More forms the subject of an essay from Erasmus:—

"With what gentleness does my friend regulate his household, where misunderstandings and quarrels are altogether unknown. Indeed, he is looked up to as a general healer of all differences, and was never known to part from any on terms of unkindness. His house seems to enjoy the peculiar happiness that all who dwell under its roof go forth into the world bettered in their morals, as well as improved in their own condition, and no spot was ever known to fall on the reputation of any of its fortunate inhabitants. Here you might imagine yourself in the academy of Plato. But, indeed, I should do injustice to his house by comparing it with the school of that philosopher, where nothing but abstract questions, and occasionally moral virtues, were the subjects of discussion; it would be truer to call it a school of religion, and an arena for the exercise of all the Christian virtues. All its inmates apply themselves to liberal studies, though piety is their first care. No wrangling or angry word is ever heard within the walls. No one is idle; every one does his duty with alacrity, and regularity and good order are prescribed by the mere force of courtesy and kindness. Every one performs his allotted task, and yet all are as cheerful as if mirth were their only employment. Surely such a household deserves to be called a school of the Christian religion."

Sir Thomas More was not fond of money. He felt a pleasure in giving rather than in receiving. Nothing pleased him so much as the power to do a good office for those who

were in need. When at Chelsea he "rambled about the lanes and by-ways alone, giving alms to the poor villagers whom he sought out in this way, with a liberality whose extent was known to God alone." The south chancel of Chelsea Church was rebuilt by his munificence, and furnished with a service of altar plate; the gift was accompanied with one of those remarks almost prophetic—"Good men," he remarked, "give these things, and bad people take them away." Of a selfish husbanding of his means he appeared incapable. There is scarcely an instance on record, perhaps, except the following, of his taking any pains to recover money which he had lent, and then he made it the occasion of a joke. Having lent fifty crowns to an attorney, who showed no disposition to repay it, he ventured to give a hint on the subject; but the borrower commenced to moralise on the contempt of riches and the sinfulness of hoarding up money. He told More that whether lawyers or citizens we should not set our heart on money; that our time in this world was brief, and that it behoved us to remember the maxim, "*Memento morieris*" "There you have it exactly," answered More, "follow up your maxim, my friend. *Memento Mori aeris*" ("Remember More's money!")

This illustrious man had an aversion to the profession of the law. He admitted no lawyers into his "Utopia," and gives them but a questionable character. "I consider them," he says, "as a people whose business it is to disguise matters, and to wrest the law at their pleasure."

A portrait of Sir Thomas More, by Holbein, was to be seen in 1867 in the Louvre, at Paris, which was supposed to be the one of which Baldinucci relates an anecdote.

"The King of England," he says, "had a portrait of his Chancellor (More), which he placed in a large room with the pictures of other learned men. On the day of the Chancellor's death on the scaffold, the King was angry with his Queen, and told her she was the cause of his death. Queen Anna went to the apartment where the picture was, and looking at it, she was suddenly seized with remorse and horror; she fancied that its gaze was fixed on her reproachfully; she flung the picture out of the window, exclaiming, 'O mercy! the man seems to be still alive; he is looking at me, he is looking at me!'" It is further alleged that the picture fell into the hands of some one passing at the moment, who sent it to the Pope. Another tradition connected with this picture states that it was amongst the rare collections carried by Bonaparte to the Louvre, and that, at the period when the works of art were restored to the Vatican, Prince Talleyrand contrived to have this picture retained.

The hair-shirt which More wore in "penitential seasons" was left by Margaret Roper, at her death, to her cousin Margaret Clements, a nun in the Augustinian Convent at Louvain. At the time of the French Revolution this community removed to Spetisbury, in Dorsetshire, where the interesting relic is still preserved entire, with the exception of one of the sleeves, which had been presented by the Augustinian nuns to the convent of St. Dominic, at Stone, in Staffordshire. The shirt is made of hog's bristles twisted into a kind of net. Margaret Roper was buried in St. Dunstan's Church, Canterbury. For one hundred years subsequent to her death the leaden box containing her father's head was to be seen resting on her coffin. In 1835,

the Roper vault was examined, and a small niche closed with an iron grating was found in the wall above, into which the box containing the head of Sir Thomas More was removed; and I understand it still remains in the same spot.*

One of More's early biographers observes, "With alacrity and spiritual joy he received the fatal axe, which no sooner had severed the head from the body but his soul was carried by angels into everlasting glory, where a crown of martyrdom was placed upon him which can never fade or decay."

"The innocent mirth," says Addison, "which had been so conspicuous in his life did not forsake him to the last. His death was of a piece with his life; there was nothing in it new, forced, or affected. He did not look upon the severing of his head from his body as a circumstance which ought to produce any change in the disposition of his mind, and as he died in a fixed and settled hope of immortality, he thought any unusual degree of sorrow and concern improper."

The author of the "English Chancellors" remarks that "More's character, both in public and private life, comes as near to perfection as our nature will permit. . . . *With all my Protestant zeal, I must feel a higher reverence for Sir Thomas More than for Lord Crumwell or Archbishop Cranmer.* I am indeed reluctant to take leave of him, not only from his agreeable qualities and extraordinary merit, but from my abhorrence of the mean, sordid, and unprincipled Chancellors who succeeded, and made the latter

* Anecdotes of Distinguished English Catholics.

half of Henry's reign the most disgraceful period in our annals."*

Sharon Turner's commentary on More is unjust, ungenerous, and untrue. He can find no genius, no talent, or goodness in the man, and wonders why the world has lamented him so much. The cause for this distorted assertion of opinion may be found in the fact that Mr. Sharon Turner is an unreasoning worshipper of Henry VIII. Mr. Froude, although also the adorer of the same amiable monarch, affirms that the execution of the "philosophic Chancellor was sounded out into the far corners of the earth, and was the world's wonder, as well for the circumstances under which it was perpetrated as for the preternatural composure with which it was borne. . . . Something of his calmness may have been due to his natural temperament; something to an unaffected weariness of a world which, in his eyes, was plunging into the ruin of the latter days. But those fair hues of sunny cheerfulness caught their colours from the simplicity of his faith; and never was there a grander Christian victory over death than in that last scene lighted with its lambent humour."

I cannot better conclude this memoir of Sir Thomas More, than by placing before the reader the eloquent and earnest prayer said to have been found written in his Latin diary, and which may be regarded as a reflex of his inner life, and of his ever-present devotion to the Creator.

"Illumine, good Lord, my heart; glorious God, give me from henceforth Thy grace so to set and fix firmly mine

* Ellis's Royal Letters, first series, vol. i.; Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i. p. 588; Foss's English Judges, vol. v.; and in Baga de Secretis are to be seen several interesting matters in relation to the last days of More.

heart upon Thee, that I may say with St. Paul, the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world: take from me all vain-glorious minds, and all appetites of mine own praise. Give me, good Lord, an humble, lowly, quiet, peaceable, patient, charitable, kind, tender, and pitiful mind, and in all my works, and words and thoughts, to have a taste of Thy Holy Spirit. Give me a full faith, a firm hope, a fervent charity, and a love to Thee incomparably above the love to myself. May I love nothing to Thy displeasure, but everything in order to Thee. Give me a longing to be with Thee; not for avoiding the calamities of this wicked world, nor so much the pains of purgatory, nor of hell; nor so much for the attaining of the choice of heaven in respect of mine own commodity, as even for a very love to Thee."

CHAPTER XXX.

DEATH OF KATHARINE OF ARRAGON.

The first week in January, 1536, Henry VIII. received the news of Queen Katharine's death. Henry was, it is stated, seriously affected at the intelligence, and more especially on reading a letter written by "brave Kate," as he once styled his wife, the day before her death. As he read the following lines Henry seemed immensely excited, sobbed, and cried, and wished to be alone:—

"My most dear Lord, King, and Husband,—

"The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but out of the love I bear you advise you of your soul's health, which you ought to prefer before all considerations of the world or flesh whatsoever; for which you have cast me into many calamities, and yourself into many troubles. *But I forgive you all, and pray God to do so likewise.*

"For the rest, I commend unto you Mary, our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her, as I have heretofore desired. I must entreat you also to respect my maids, and give them in marriage (which is not much, they being but three), and to all my other servants a year's pay besides their due, lest otherwise they should be unprovided for. Lastly, I make this vow that mine eyes desire you above all things. Oh! Henry, my long-beloved husband—farewell!

"Kimbolton Abbey the 6th day of January, 1536."

This was the turning-point in the brilliant but brief career of Anna Boleyn. Anna had not the courage to

honour, nor the generosity to lament, her rival; neither had she the artful sense to apprehend the workings of Henry's compunction. Even Burnet censures her conduct at this critical period of her history. "She expressed," he observes, "*her joy at the death of Katharine beyond what decency or humanity could permit.*"* Anna's first act of indiscretion was to put on yellow mourning for the "Dowager Princess of Wales," as Katharine had been called, and made demonstrations little akin to merely a questionable sorrow. She intruded upon the King's retirement in her fantastic dress, when with "a Tudor yell, he told her to be off." No one can contemplate the life, the character, and the lot of Queen Katharine without deep feelings of sympathy—without sentiments of grief and anger. As a wife she was above reproach: the basest of her foes dared not impugn her conjugal modesty, nor could her husband say aught against her loyalty and truth. As a mother and a queen she was tender and dignified; she was ever as amiable and meritorious as a parent as she was sadly grand in her right-royal bearing before that conclave of guilty courtiers who divorced her from her temporal throne, to enshrine her in the hearts of posterity.

In one of Katharine's last interviews with the Royal Commissioners she spoke in bold terms of the wrongs that were inflicted on her. "I would rather," she says, "be a poor beggar's wife, and be sure of heaven, than Queen of all the world, and stand in doubt thereof, by reason of my own consent. I stick not for vain glory, but because I know myself to be the King's true wife, and while you call

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* Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. i., p. 192.

me the King's subject, I was his subject while he took me for his wife. But if he take me not for his wife, I came not into his realm as merchandise, nor to be married to any merchant; nor do I continue in the same, but as the King's true and lawful wife." The Queen in strong language denounced Archbishop Cranmer and those who acted with him in the divorce judgment.*

Queen Katharine expired in the presence of her faithful friend, Lady Willoughby, who came from Spain with her, on the occasion of her marriage with Prince Arthur. Eustachio Capucius, the ambassador of the Emperor Charles, and Lady Salisbury, were also present.

Harpsfield draws a glowing picture of the respect and love of the "country people" for the Queen.† He describes the last days of Katherine as those of a forgiving, good woman. "At the time of the Queen's sorest trials," says Harpsfield, "one of her ladies-in-waiting became excited one day, and began to curse Anna Boleyn. The royal lady was displeased. 'Hold your peace; curse not; curse not her, but rather pray for her; for even now is the time fast coming when you shall have reason to pity

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* State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry; Queens of England, vol. ii.

† Father Harpsfield wrote a history of the divorce trial of Katharine, and the means by which it was effected. This work is almost unknown to posterity; but I am happy to learn that the Camden Society have resolved on bringing it to light, and have solicited the Rev. W. Pocock to undertake the office of editor of the work. The many State Papers now available will, in conjunction with Nicholas Harpsfield's narrative, throw a flood of light upon the conspiracy carried out by Cranmer, Gardyner, Bonner, and Tunstal, against the Queen. Harpsfield held the office of Archdeacon of Canterbury at one time. He wrote a history of England, to which the martyred Father Campion subsequently made an addition.

her and lament her case.'" Such were the words of the dying Queen as to her rival. "At Bugden," writes Harpsfield, "Queen Katharine spent her solitary life in much prayer, great alms, and abstinence; and when she was not this way occupied, then was she and her gentlewomen working with their own hands something wrought in needlework, costly and artificially, which she intended to be offered for the honour and the glory of God in several churches. There was in the house at Bugden a chamber with a window that had a prospect into the chapel, out of which she might hear the celebration of Mass. In this chamber the Queen enclosed herself, sequestered from all other company, a great part of the night and day, and upon her knees used to pray at the same window, leaning upon the stones. . . . The said stones, where her head had reclined, were wet, as if a shower of rain had fallen upon them; *the stones were imbrued with her tears,* when she prayed for strength to subdue the agonies of wronged affections."

"The grand abilities of Katharine of Arragon," observes Miss Strickland, "the unstained integrity of word and action, united with intrepid firmness, commanded even from her enemies that deep respect which her sweetness, benevolence, and other saintly virtues would not have obtained, unsupported by those high queenly qualities. Sustained by her own innate grandeur of soul, her piety, and lofty rectitude, she passed through all her bitter trials without calumny succeeding in fixing a spot on her name. Among many eulogists, one mighty genius, who was nearly her contemporary, has done her the noblest justice. In fact, Shakspeare alone has properly appreciated and vividly portrayed the

great talents, as well as the moral worth, of the right royal Katharine of Arragon."*

"It is impossible," writes another Protestant biographer of Katharine, "to contemplate the life and character of this royal lady, without feelings of the deepest commiseration. As a wife, the bitter humiliations which she was doomed to undergo were entirely unmerited; for not only was her modesty unquestioned, but her whole conduct towards the King afforded a perfect model of conjugal love and duty. As a queen and a mother, her firmness, her dignity, and her tenderness, deserved a far other recompense than to see herself degraded, on the infamous plea set forth, from the rank of royalty, and her daughter, so long heiress to the English throne, branded with illegitimacy, and cast out alike from the inheritance and the affections of her father."†

The story respecting Queen Katharine and Anna Boleyn "quarrelling over a game of cards" is pure invention. When I recur to the domestic pastime of Katharine, I find that card-playing seems never to have been amongst her amusements. These anecdotes have evidently originated with Cavendish or Dr. Kyte, who was much about the Court at the time of the alleged disputes. The State Papers show that Anna Boleyn spent but a short time at Court; "was frequently invited, and declined the invitation."

The description of Katharine's person, from the pen of Ludovico Falieri, may not be uninteresting here. The Venetian diplomatist says:—"My Ladye Katharine, the Queen of England, is low of stature, inclining to corpulency;

* Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 561.
† Aikin's Court of Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 15.

a woman of great repute, upright, and full of goodness and devotion; she speaks Spanish, Flemish, French, and English; she is beloved by these hardy islanders far more than any queen they have had for a long time. She is forty-five years old, thirty of which have passed since her first husband's death."

The foreign ambassadors who were resident in London in Katharine's time, are unanimous in describing her love and admiration for her husband as unbounded. "No wife could be more loveable," writes De Pleine; another ambassador says "her queenly virtue stood high." Katharine once informed a Russian diplomatist that she "attributed the victory of Flodden Field and the prosperity of England to the goodness and piety of her husband." Very few amongst the admirers of Katharine will be inclined to endorse this her early opinion of the arch hypocrite, Henry Tudor, in whom the elements of wickedness were artfully concealed for many years.

From Wolsey to Norfolk, from Gardyner to Cranmer, the laity and clerics who participated in the divorce of Queen Katharine seem to have had no "after-life" regret or remorse for their conduct. Wolsey's sad fate is before the reader. Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, is described as having died of the plague in "a state of horror;" the Bishop of Worcester exclaimed "it was an evil doing; the Pope was wiser than his English bishops: we were selfish men." Cuthbert Tunstal, when Bishop of London, denounced the Pope at Paul's Cross, and upheld the divorce and supremacy assumptions of Henry. He had the temerity to tell Queen Katharine that she was "*a mere pretender, and had no right to the title of Queen.*" And again, "*You must now acknow-*

ledge Queen Anna as the King's LAWFUL WIFE."* "NEVER, NEVER," was the reply of the indignant and virtuous Queen. The Court prelate met his reward from the daughter of Anna Boleyn some twenty-five years subsequently.† Retributive justice was slow but sure in this case.

The history of Queen Katharine's wrongs is one of the saddest on the roll of English Queens.

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* Dr. Tunstal's Correspondence with the King. There are several versions of this scene between Katharine and Tunstal, all agreeing in substance. The cruel language of Archbishop Lee to the Queen outraged all propriety. Yet Dr. Lee has been represented as a very "worthy prelate."

† In the second and third volumes of this work the reader will see more of the fate of those who promoted the divorce of Queen Katharine.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE OBSERVANT FATHERS OF GREENWICH.

The Observant Fathers of Greenwich had many claims upon the kindness and protection of King Henry. They had been fostered and aided in good works by his father and mother. His aunts, of the House of York, were constant in their visits to Greenwich Chapel, where, before the great altar, the Countess of Richmond knelt, and where the Seventh Henry and his Queen had often received Holy Communion; in whose vicinity the Eighth Henry was born, and baptized at the font in the edifice—where, too, Henry Duke of York, in the presence of his father, mother, grandmother, and aunts, made his first communion. Time brought many other events. For instance, in the bloom of a hopeful youth, this same Henry Tudor, then a King, on an early morning in June, besought one of the Observant Fathers to join him in wedlock to the "bride of his first love." Twenty years had scarcely passed since that interesting scene, yet all kindly remembrance seemed erased on the King's part. Thorndale states that the Order was not only broken up as a community, but its members had been "hunted down," owing to a decree that "no religious house should give them meat, drink, or shelter." The Observant Order had many members. Two hundred of their number were quickly imprisoned; and forty died from "putrid or prison fever;" and the others, who were

in *extreme old age, died from cold and hunger.* Emissaries were sent forth on the highways to denounce them as "lazy and profligate." Unmeet and harsh treatment this for such generous benefactors of the needy and sick. Yet such was the course adopted in almost every case. Stow's narrative of the circumstances which led to the King's suppression of the Observants is an interesting document, disclosing much observation on the "manners and passions of the times." "The first that openly resisted or reprehended the King's Highness touching his marriage with Anna Boleyn was Friar Peto, a simple, devout, and fearless member of the Order of Observants. This goodly man, preaching at Greenwich upon the two and twentieth chapter of the First Book of Kings—viz., the last part of the story of Ahab, saying, "And even where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, even there shall the dogs lick thy blood also, O King," and therewithal spake of the lying prophets, which abashed the King,' &c.; 'and I am,' quoth he, 'that Micaiah whom thou wilt hate, because I must tell thee truly that thy marriage *is unlawful;* and I know I shall eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of sorrow, yet because our Lord hath put it into my mouth I must speak it.' And when he (Peto) had strongly inveighed against the King's second marriage, to dissuade him from it, he further saith, 'There are many other preachers, yea, too many, who preach and persuade thee otherwise, feeding thy folly and frail affections upon the hope of their own worldly promotion; and by that means they destroy thy soul, thy honour, and posterity, to obtain fat benefices, to become rich abbots, and get episcopal jurisdiction, and other ecclesiastical dignities. There, I say, are the four hundred

prophets, who, in the spirit of lying, seek to deceive thee; but take good heed lest you, being seduced, find Ahab's punishment, which was to have his blood 'licked up of the dogs,' saying it was the greatest miscarriage of princes to be daily abused by flatterers, &c. The King, being thus reproved, endured it patiently, and did no violence to Peto; but the next Sunday, being the eighth of May, Dr. Curwin preached in the same place, who most strongly reproached Father Peto and his preaching, and called him dog, slanderer, base beggarly friar, closeman, rebel, and traitor; saying that no subject should speak so audaciously to princes. And having spoke much to that effect, and in commendation of the King's marriage, thereby to establish his seed in his seat for ever, &c.; and then Dr. Curwin supposing he had utterly suppressed Father Peto and his partakers, he lifted up his voice and said, 'I speak to thee, Peto, which maketh thyself Micaiah that thou mayest speak evil of kings, but now thou art not to be found, being fled for fear of shame, as being unable to answer my arguments.' But whilst he thus speaketh there was one Elstow, a fellow friar to Peto, standing in the rood loft, who, with a bold voice, said to Dr. Curwin, 'Good Sir, you know that Father Peto, as he was commanded, is now gone to a provincial council, holden at Canterbury, and not fled for fear of you, for to-morrow he will return again. In the meantime, I am here as another Micaiah, and will lay down my life to prove all those things true which he hath brought out of the Holy Scripture, and to this combat *I challenge thee, before God and all equal judges.* Even unto thee, Curwin, I say, which are one of the four hundred prophets into whom the spirit of lying has entered, and seek out of adultery to

establish succession, betraying the King unto endless perdition, more for thy own vain glory and hope of promotion than for the discharge of thy dogged conscience and the King's salvation.'

"On this Father Elstow waxed hot, and spake very earnestly, so as they could not make him cease his speech, until the King himself bade him hold his peace, and gave order that he and Peto should be convented (cited) before the Council, which was done the next day. And when the lords had rebuked them there, the Earl of Essex (Thomas Crumwell) told them that they deserved to be put into a sack and cast into the Thames. Whereupon Elstow, smiling, said, 'Threaten these things to rich and dainty folk, who are clothed in purple, fare deliciously, and have their chiefest hope in this world, for we esteem them not, but are joyful that for the discharge of our duties we are driven hence, *and, with thanks to God, we know the way to heaven to be as ready by water as by land, and therefore we care not which way we go.*'"

"Those friars and all the rest of their order were banished shortly after, and then none durst openly oppose themselves against the King's affections."*

Curwin was made Dean of Hereford for his pliant action as to the King's conduct. When Cuthbert Tunstal preached against the Pope's Spiritual Supremacy in England, he was answered by several powerful sermons from the Observant Fathers. They constituted missions throughout the country, and enjoined the people "not to leap out of Peter's ship," and to beware of the false prophets who were ministering

* Stow's Chronicle, p. 562; Holinshed and Thorndale.

to the King's vanity.* In Yorkshire thousands of people came forth to greet the Observant Fathers. They were fearless in denouncing all encroachments upon the Church, for which they earned the enmity of the Court party, concurrently with the reverence and affection of the people. But, as even amongst the Apostles there was a faithless one, Richard Gyht, one of the Observant Brotherhood of Greenwich, was the spy of Anna Boleyn upon the actions of the community, giving her constant intelligence as to the opinions "expressed by the Fathers upon the merits of the rival Queens." Gyht was rewarded by Anna with a rich Church living.† Anna Boleyn being able to procure church livings for her spies and agents is another amongst the many proofs of the injury inflicted in those days upon religion by its connection with the State.‡

Many misrepresentations have been made by Puritan writers as to the character of the Observants. The Observant Fathers were long known to, and much regarded by, Henry VII. He gave them a small piece of land near Greenwich Palace, and some money to set them forward on their works of goodness and mercy, all which works were performed for "the honour of God." There were two young friars in this community who were the special favourites of Henry VII.—namely, John Forrest and William Peto, both remarkable for their "calm and pious

* Adam Goodchylde's Account of the Sufferings of the Observant Fathers.

† Ellis's Original Royal Letters, Third Series.

‡ In the Carew State Papers are to be found some of the troubles caused to Crumwell and Archbishop Browne by the zeal of the Observant Fathers, who made common cause with the Irish Catholics against the King's assumption of spiritual supremacy, and "all other approaches to the Reformation."

courage and their high sense of equity." The intercourse between these friars and the Royal Family was courteous, respectful, edifying, kindly. According to the rules of the community, they were vowed to live in poverty and obedience; they supplied a meat dinner for visitors or for the poor, whilst they themselves partook of vegetables, bread, and water; they were to "attend the insane, the outcast, and the leper: they were the unpaid nurses of the sick, the unsought teachers of the poor; they went into woods and forests to seek outlaws and desperate characters; and converted many of the "sorrow-laden creatures," as Archbishop Deane styled those who retreated to a forest home for an existence. The Observant Fathers were celebrated for the cultivation of herbs; they studied medicine, chemistry, and surgery; they were admirable gardeners, and made most wholesome vegetable soup for the sick poor. "I saw the young King and his bride," says Thorndale, "sit down in a homely way and partake of soup with Father Peto." The Observants' community tilled the land; they planted fruit trees for the poor beside the cottage homes; and, in the words of a distinguished Protestant writer, "they did work which no one else would look after," and took no payment for their labour. They were bound by their vows to follow armies on the march, to shrive (confess) the dying, and to decently cover the dead in the grave."* In fact, most of the heroic deeds of the present day are imitations of the examples of the "good fathers" of old; and the "Geneva Cross" of recent battle-fields is a welcome

* Thorndale's Memorials; Plastow, the Dutch traveller; Hepworth Dixon's Two Queens, vol. ii.

repetition by conscious and unconscious believers of the present day in those unselfish men who derived their faith and fearless devotion direct from the Cross of the Divine Founder of Christianity. Queen Katharine was a Sister of the Observant Order; and the brotherhood were much indebted to both King and Queen. At Greenwich the Observants had five houses, which were dedicated to the Virgin Mother, to St. Francis, St. Joseph, and other saints of blessed memory. Henry VII. left five hundred marks to keep those houses in repair. As soon as Katharine became Queen she expended much money on this community. Whilst at Greenwich she repaired every morning to the neatly-decorated chapel. There she knelt and prayed before the high altar, at which not many years before the lovely and hopeful Castilian maid pledged her bridal vows to Henry Tudor. Father Forrest and his community were Katharine's devoted English friends. They had witnessed the sunshine which surrounded her for many years; later, when the sudden change came they participated in the darkness of her fortunes, and, as the thunderstorm burst around the royal lady, these poor honest-minded men shrank never from the way of duty. They took their part in the path of danger, and were not only not afraid to vindicate the wrongs, but to the cold mind of philosophy seemed officiously to anathematise the wrong, and denounce the wronger, *never afraid to speak "God's truth."* When divested of her queenly titles, the Observant Fathers still adhered to Katharine. But the end soon came; the Queen sank into the grave a broken-hearted heir to the reverence of posterity. Father Forrest perished by a barbarous immolation, and the rest of the community were ruthlessly

driven from the dismantled home of their edifying and beneficent duties. And I must add, that the people of the south of Ireland extended their hospitality and sympathy to a few of the Observant Fathers who landed at Kinsale, half-naked, half-starved, hunted like the hungry mountain wolf in their own once happy land, where they had rendered so much service to religion and humanity.

Such was the end of Henry the Seventh's benevolent and pious endowment for the "cure of souls and the honour and the glory of God."

CHAPTER XXXII.

FALL OF ANNA BOLEYN.

In the autumn of 1535 the Queen underwent a marvellous change; her courtiers were astonished; her manners became reserved; she curtailed her hours of pleasure; the chase was almost laid aside; every morning she attended the celebration of Mass, and visited her private chapel several times daily, where she knelt before the altar alone. Margaret Lee affirms that on those occasions the Queen sobbed and cried heartily. Her health was in a delicate condition for some time. She was honoured with little of her royal husband's society. Her leisure was occupied in needlework with her ladies, and hearing "tales of distress." On two days in the week she granted interviews to poor women, heard their "sad stories and bettered their condition." This was just following in the track of Queen Katharine. Wyatt relates that the matchless tapestry at Hampton Court Palace was, for the most part, wrought by the skilful hands of Queen Anna and her ladies; "but far more precious," he says, "in the sight of God were those works which she caused her maidens and those about her daily to execute in shirts and other garments for the use of the poor; and not contented with that, her eye of charity, her hand of bounty passed through the whole land."* This picture is drawn by

* Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. ii.

the friend of her youth—an enthusiastic admirer ; but it is borne out by trustworthy evidence. To the credit of Anna it is also recorded that she directed a certain sum from her privy purse to be distributed to every village in England for the relief of its distressed inhabitants. With greater wisdom she planned the institution of a variety of manufactures, with a view of giving more permanent assistance to those who were destitute of a livelihood, and without employment, in consequence of the ruin of the religious houses. During the last nine months of her life the Queen distributed nearly 10,000*l.*—a very large sum in those days—in alms ; she also caused many "promising youths" to be educated for the Church—for that Church to which she had always adhered. But whilst performing so many good offices, Anna Boleyn continued to incite the King to persecute Queen Katharine by depriving her of the solace of her daughter's society, and exacting from the Princess Mary a submission from which nature and religion alike revolted. The proofs of the Queen's conduct to her step-daughter are quite conclusive. In a letter to Lady Shelton, her Highness speaks in a contemptuous tone of the Princess Mary. "She can neither do good or ill to me."* On another occasion, Queen Katharine was styled "*that old woman.*" Those who desired to obtain the patronage or win the favour of Anna, were persons who unscrupulously defamed the dethroned Queen. At best Anna Boleyn was only the Queen of a party. The old nobility and the independent gentry despised the woman who had been created a Queen by the perfidious aid of Archbishop Cranmer. All that was good

* Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. ii.

and virtuous in the land continued to honour Katharine of Arragon.

As I have already stated, the triumph of Anna Boleyn over the royal lady of Arragon was but brief. Her confinement of a dead son sealed her fate.* It is quite evident, however, that Jane Seymour, and her brother Edward, were for some time, by various schemes, undermining the Queen's reputation. No being is so ready to find fault as the man possessed by a foregone conclusion. Henry employed the interval of his wife's illness to provide for her displacement. The Queen was no longer "darling Nan." Judging by her own conduct to Queen Katharine, Anna Boleyn suspected her ladies of playing false, yet she had sometimes reason to doubt the sincerity and honour of those "fair dames of qualitie." Here is a scene between Anna and one of her concealed rivals :—" A lovely girl, whose auburn hair and clear fair skin were contrasted with a dress of ruby-coloured damask, denoting her rank as a knight's daughter—and right to wear that costly material—stood near the King, looking so innocent and childish that no one could suspect her of doing anything dishonourable or treacherous. The King placed a ring on her finger; she accepted the gift in a playful manner, and immediately bounded to the Queen who was ill in another apartment;

* According to the secret despatches of Palamedes Gontier, a gentleman connected with the French embassy, the King and the Queen lived on the "worst terms, for the last twelve months of her existence." For weeks she dare not enter his presence, and his language to her was violent and often indecent. Her life was sad in the extreme; and she sometimes expressed fears as to what might be her fate." Gontier knew Anna's domestic troubles well; she often sought the advice of that good and venerable French gentleman, who was the friend of her old confessor, Stephen Gardyner, then in France.

and kneeling before her royal mistress, asked permission to kiss her hand. Anna's face became crimson with passion; she almost spurned her maid of honour, and in an excited tone said, "Leave the room; go, go, at once!"* The innocent-looking maid of honour was Jane Seymour, then carrying on an intrigue with Henry. The "discreet and modest" Jane Seymour was artfully approaching the object of her ambition—the perilous position of a Queen Consort. One day the queen noticed a jewel of great richness hung round Jane's neck, and wished to look at it. Struck with the young lady's reluctance to submit it to her inspection, the Queen snatched it from her with violence, and found it to contain her faithless husband's miniature. "Anna screamed and fainted away." From that moment she dated her decline in the King's affections, and foresaw the ascendancy of her rival. There are several versions of this story. It is certain, however, that Henry began to regard the conduct of his once worshipped Anna with an altered feeling about the close of 1535. The easy gaiety of manner which he had formerly remarked with delight, as an indication of the innocence of her heart, and the artlessness of her disposition, was now regarded as a culpable levity, offensive to his pride and excitive of his jealousy. His impetuous temper scorned to investigate proofs or to fathom motives; a pretext alone was wanting to his rage, and this he found quite soon. May-day in those times was wont to be observed at Court as a high festival. Joust and tournament were held at Greenwich, before the King and Queen, in which Lord Rochford was the chief challenger, and Sir Henry Norris

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* This scene was witnessed by Lady Lee.

principal defender. The scene was very brilliant; but in the midst of the entertainment the King rose and suddenly quitted the field in an affected anger. No cause was assigned. Subsequent circumstances, however, proved that the scheme was arranged several days previously. As husband and wife, Henry Tudor and Anna never met again in this world.

The greatest partizans of Anna must admit that she was guilty of "indiscretions." When Queen, she permitted herself to be addressed by courtiers, and even by menials, with a freedom of expression that detracted much from her sustainment of the Queenly position. She was throughout deficient in moral strength, manifested much vacillation of mind, and too often displayed an absence of truth. The slave of vanity, regardless of those high principles which are the guiding star of a true-souled woman, the height to which she had been exalted could not fail to have been perilous even with a far more forbearing master.

The Wyatts, the Brooks, and other personal friends of Anna Boleyn believed her to be far too clever a woman to leave herself in the power of the men who became her accusers. She thoroughly understood them. The conspiracy against her was arranged by people who had the most opposite interests at stake. Of course the King was the unseen assassin; Crumwell and the Seymours arranged the drama. The servants were bribed; the spy system entered the Queen's bedroom, and even the ladies of the Court could be purchased; and those who spurned the bribe retired from the scene trembling with fear and horror, afraid to tell the Queen what they had heard, whilst the apparently unconscious Anna moved forward till the May-day

arrived. Had she any presentiment on that morning of the future? Did that teasing monitor Conscience conjure up the by-gone? Margaret Lee states that the Queen did not seem happy on May morning; there was evidently some terror hanging around her, although, as usual, artfully concealed.

The plot gradually unfolds, and the principal actors are to be seen in the distance. The conspiracy is so complicated that I shall have to return to the same characters frequently, as their actions lead to such apparently opposite conclusions, and involve so many contradictions. The policy of the King himself was to conceal from posterity the *motives* which led to the impeachment of the Queen, whilst his agents were looking to their own immediate interests, which were in danger as long as Anna exercised the influence of a royal wife.

When the Queen left Greenwich Park on this memorable May-day, she was not without misgivings. Having reached the Palace of Placentia she quickly sought the King; but he was not there. She could, however, perceive that a cold and formal kind of respect was now tendered to her: the homage, the enthusiasm, the love of yesterday had fled. Who ever trusted in the friendship of courtiers but to be deceived? There were a few noble exceptions, however, amongst whom are named Margaret Lee and Mildred Wyatt. Looking around her like a scared fawn, the poor victim of a pre-arranged conspiracy remarked to her faithful friend, Margaret Lee, "Oh, Meg, they have watched me so this last few hours." The night was one of terror to Anna. In the morning she walked awhile alone in those gardens to which, in a short time, she was to bid farewell.

Still she had faith in her husband's supposed love. Whilst standing under an apple-tree, where the air was balmy, and soothed for a moment by the morning hymn of the wild songsters of Nature, two of the young maidens attendant approached her weeping. "How be it?" exclaimed the Queen. "The Duke of Norfolk, Lord Crumwell, Lord Chancellor Audley, and the Lieutenant of the Tower demand your presence immediately," was the answer of one of the ladies. "I shall attend the summons," was the reply, and she hastily entered the Council Chamber.

A solemn silence prevailed for some minutes. The Duke of Norfolk spoke first; then Chancellor Audley; Lord Crumwell silently regarded the Queen, his face assuming an ill-omened smile, which she returned with a look of scorn. In the words of a spectator, "the Lords Commissioners behaved with the utmost rudeness."

The unhappy Queen could not understand the nature of the intrusion; she seemed petrified to a statue, every tinge of colour faded from that fair face so long an object of admiration—there she stood, her hands clasped together as in supplication, her eyes fixed and dim, her brow like marble. Her attitude was full of imploring sadness; it seemed as if the prayer for mercy had been uttered, though the lips had moved not. So still she stood that not a movement disturbed the white jewel which hung around her whiter neck; so still, that she seemed entranced, or as one ready to sink into the arms of death. Gradually, as if awakening from a dream, the Queen saw and felt what was around her.

The Constable of the Tower, a man unaccustomed either to respect or delicacy in the presence of ladies, next ad-

dressed the Queen:—"Madame, I arrest you for high treason, at the command of my Sovereign Lord the King."

"Impossible," exclaimed the Queen. "But I must see my child Elizabeth ere I go with ye."*

The Commissioners refused her request. With a wild hysterical shriek she fell back in the arms of her maidens. Faithful and compassionate, they tried to soothe her; but the words—"My child, my child, may I not see my child?" broke in tones of anguish from the Queen. Once more she appealed to the Commissioners, and sinking on her knees besought them to permit her to see the infant Princess. "No, you shall not," was the stern reply of Lord Crumwell. After a few minutes the captive recovered herself, and then, addressing the Lieutenant of the Tower, she said:—"Sir William Kingston, I am ready to depart." She walked towards the door with queenly dignity—here her maidens collected around her. An affecting scene ensued. Three of the ladies, by permission of the Duke of Norfolk, accompanied her to the Tower. The passage from Placentia to the fatal fortress was soon accomplished. The name of Traitors' Gate startled her. She threw herself on the ground upon her knees, exclaiming, "Oh Lord, help me! as I am guiltless of the crimes of which I am accused." Anna was next led into the enclosure to which "Bloody Gate" formed the ominous entrance, and was conducted to a room or cell. Her knees tottered, and sinking down on the rugged stones, there she knelt in prayer. Such was the opening scene of Anna Boleyn's captivity in the Tower.

A few days before, the Queen had troops of friends and

* State Papers concerning Anna Boleyn's arrest.

worshippers; the Duke of Suffolk and Archbishop Cranmer, who would eagerly kiss the hem of her garment, had now deserted her; nay, even her father and stepmother had openly joined in the condemnation, pronounced by perjured lips. For the first three days in the Tower, Dame Ursula, an old maiden sister of Lord Wiltshire, was the principal spy left in the Queen's apartment, to watch her every movement. This vicious woman was in the interest of Lady Rochford and the King. Her conduct to the fallen Anna was cruel and heartless—unlike what a woman's should be in such a case. That night Lady Rochford, Audley, Crumwell, and the Duke of Suffolk, had a long private interview with the King at the Palace of Westminster. There is no record of Archbishop Cranmer having been there: but in a diary (still extant) of Crumwell's, he speaks of having seen Ralph Morrice, the Archbishop of Canterbury's secretary, on this occasion in secret conversation with Lady Jane Rochford, before she had her private interview with the King. Of course there is no record of what occurred at this meeting, which "went far into the night." There can be no doubt that this council was held to make final preparation for the destruction of Anna Boleyn.

Archbishop Cranmer professed to be in utter ignorance of the Queen's arrest. Dean Hook rather significantly observes that it was strange that no notice of this proceeding had been given to the chief member of the Privy Council.* "With Cranmer at my shoulder I could accomplish anything," was the exclamation of Henry on many occasions. Yet it is alleged that the "afflicted

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 499.

Primate," to use the words of Burnet, knew nothing of the arrest, although it was all arranged *ten days* previously. Dean Hook again remarks upon Chancellor Audley's visit to Lambeth, to let Cranmer know what occurred. "The King was evidently determined," writes the Dean, "upon a divorce in some fashion. Would the Archbishop act obsequiously in this case, as he had done in that of Queen Katharine? This was the question. Would the Archbishop of Canterbury commit himself as a partizan on the side of the King? The Chancellor saw *at a glance that Cranmer would not hesitate to do what the King might demand of him. That point gained, the next was not worthy of a thought.*" In another passage on the very same page, Dean Hook expresses his opinion in a more decided form, when he says:—"The Chancellor was quite satisfied, when he saw that the judge before whom the case (a new divorce) would be tried *would give the judgment required.*"*

Let me add that Chancellor Audley was an excellent interpreter of human nature in all its varied phases, and at a glance he was able to know how far he could prevail upon a man—even an archbishop—to become one of his judicial creatures.

These observations are merely a supplement of Dean Hook's opinion of Cranmer when he says, "In *every base action* Henry found an instrument in his Archbishop of Canterbury."† Mr. Dixon states that the Archbishop had every reason to suppose his judgment of divorce would be followed by an order for the Queen's release; but Cranmer

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 500.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 448.

was fully aware of the reverse; so that this statement is but a poor attempt to vindicate his conduct in relation to the Queen. It is well authenticated that the unfortunate lady frequently stated in the Tower that Dr. Cranmer "was all-powerful in his influence with the King." How did he use that influence in the case of his Royal mistress? The sequel to the tragic story is the best reply to his advocate.

In the days of her prosperity Queen Anna was constantly making enemies for herself. Notwithstanding the angelic picture Mr. Hepworth Dixon and other writers have drawn of her, she was intensely vindictive; she never forgave. Her ambition was seldom restrained by even common-place prudence. She continually pointed out the alleged blunders and extravagance of Wolsey to the King; but Henry did not like this kind of interference, and sharply told her that she was "misinformed, for he knew to the contrary."* More, Fisher, and the Carthusians, were the victims of her resentment, because they all repudiated her claims to be styled Queen. In Thomas Crumwell, however, she made a determined and an unforgiving enemy; her conduct in his case was honest and just, but not prudent. She threatened to inform the King that, under the disguise of the "Gospel and religion," Lord Crumwell, and those who acted with him, were thinking of their own interests rather than those of the King; that Crumwell amassed a large fortune; that he put everything up for sale; that he was accustomed to take bribes, to confer Church livings on persons of bad character. Lord Crumwell received 100*l.* from Dean Layton, the noted monastic inquisitor, as a "fee" for his

* Brewer's State Papers.

promotion to the Chancellorship of Sarum,* that abbots, bishops, and priests, paid Crumwell tribute. The proofs of these charges are now most conclusive. Crumwell felt that one of the two must fall. His daring and unscrupulous mind soon procured material on which to build a plot against the Queen. That plot had no sectarian foundation, as stated by Mr. Dixon. It was a combination of men possessed of no honest intentions; a combination of flagitious elements—of persons who, by their professions and actions, blasphemed the name of God—men who cared little as to whose life was sacrificed, provided they accumulated fortunes in a long-organised confiscation. Thomas Crumwell was just the man to conduct such an adventure to a successful issue.

Many other circumstances conspire to prove that Crumwell had a strong interest in making away with the Queen. For instance—his connections; his son was married to Jane Seymour's sister, and a close intimacy existed between the two families. There can be no doubt that Crumwell and his spies were aware, for six months at least, of the King's attentions to Jane Seymour. Lady Rochford, Wyatt, and Anna herself, could perceive what might be the result. Crumwell had a double game to play on this occasion;—first, his spirit of revenge against the Queen for having "crossed him in his peculations;" and next, the promotion of his ambitious schemes by a royal alliance for the Seymours. About this time Edward Seymour was "lavish in his attentions upon Lord Crumwell;" and Cranmer actually became openly devoted to the man whom he feared and hated. So wrote Lord Cobham to his son-in-law, Wyatt.

* Thorndale; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi.; J. H. Blunt's Reformation, vol. i.; also, The Monastic Houses of England.

During the secret meetings of the King's Council, who were arranging the projected arrest and impeachment of the Queen, Archbishop Cranmer was suddenly summoned to take his place in the Star Chamber as a Privy Councillor.* It is not difficult to understand the motive which prompted this proceeding on the part of Lord Crumwell and his royal master. Let it be remembered that those whom Crumwell hated, those who noticed his frauds upon the public treasury, were doomed. At such a crisis as this Cranmer's fears of Crumwell's resentment might possibly have overcome his honest convictions. In this state of terror, the Archbishop was no exception. It certainly looks strange that, at such a critical moment, the Archbishop should have been called upon to take part in the secret proceedings of the infamous Star Chamber.†

So much had Anna mistaken her friends, that she told Sir William Kingston, "would I had *my bishops*, for they would all go to the King for me."* The Queen's old and steady friend, Dr. Gardyner, was at this time Ambassador at the French Court; so that Cranmer and his party had "a clear field for action." Gardyner was a friend of the Boleyn family; and there are several letters of Anna's to him still extant. She addresses him—"Dear Maister Stephen." One of her letters reached Gardyner when in Rome on the divorce business.‡ At the time of the trial of Anna the bishops were on the stronger side, from fear or interest; they followed the example of the Primate.

Writing from the Tower to her husband, Anna says:—

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 500.
† Singer's Cavendish, p. 224; Ellis's Royal Letters.
‡ Gardyner's Despatches; Brewer's State Papers.

"Try me, good King, but let me have a lawful trial; and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges. Yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shame; then shall you see either mine innocence cleared before God, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared. . . . But if you have already determined to destroy me by death, and an infamous slander, then I humbly pray that the Almighty God will pardon you for your great sin against me; and *that at the judgment seat where you and I must shortly appear, my innocence shall be openly known, and sufficiently cleared.*

"From my doleful prison in the Tower, this the 6th day of May, 1536.

"(Signed)

"ANNA."

Some doubts had been thrown upon the authenticity of this letter from the Tower; but Sir Henry Ellis has proved it to be a genuine document.* Miss Strickland looks upon it as the honest statement of an innocent and injured woman. It also meets with the approval of such critical historians as Sharon Turner. Another class of writers, in their anxiety to link the name of Anna with Matthew Parker and the Reformation, put forward the silly assertion that the "letter from the Tower was the composition" of Dr. Parker. The style of the note in question is certainly that of the royal captive. Margaret Lee was present when it was written, and suggested some alterations. It was re-*written,* and the copy of the letter remained in the possession of Lady Lee.

I shall have occasion to recur again to Parker, in refer-

* Ellis's Royal Letters, 1st Series, p. 53.

ence to the delusion of his having visited the Queen at the Tower.

The conduct of the King from the arrest and execution of Anna was shocking for its heartless levity. A "great and curious change came on the court. The King was merry, if not mad. He told the peers and ladies of his household to enjoy their lives. He ran about from house to house. He danced, he diced, he romped with everyone. Taking his verses in his hands, he read them everywhere, and put his critics in the Tower to shame. He sat up late at night, and came home from his revels in the early hours of morning, attended by his torch-bearers, pipers, and singing men, dressed in fantastic crimson costumes, boisterous and noisy, startling good folks from their rest; and making others think of midnight ghosts or dancing witches."

"The King is in the highest spirits since the Lady Anna's arrest," wrote Champneys. "He is gadding from place to place, supping with various dames of qualitie, and staying out till after midnight. . . . He supped at the Bishop of Carlyle's* house last night. The Bishop said he was wild with merriment; he showed him a ballad he had

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* The history of Dr. Kyte, "Bishop of Carlyle," is very little known to writers upon Henry's reign. He was first brought forward by Wolsey, and is described by Dodd as one of the Cardinal's "creatures." He was more of a social than a political character, and frequently entertained the King and his convivial companions. Carlo Logario states that Dr. Kyte was concerned in the plot against Lord Percy, and whilst acting as his friend, betrayed his love secrets to Wolsey. Kyte was ranged amongst the bitter enemies of the Queen at the time of her fall. Anna could never forgive him for his heartless conduct towards Percy and herself. The reader can form an idea of Dr. Kyte's merits from the fact that he was patronised by Lord Crumwell, the Duke of Suffolk, and King Henry.

written upon the ——, once fondly called 'darling Nan.' The Bishop was grieved at his language." Dr. Kyte grieved at Henry's language! Nevertheless he was one of the King's agents in the conspiracy.

"The ladies who were left to watch and report every word about the Queen were her mortal enemies." Dame Cousins had orders to induce her to "gossip about the incidents of the past, and to write down every word she spoke." Two other women constantly watched the Queen, "sleeping or waking;" and the Constable of the Tower slept upon a pallet outside the bedroom door; whilst a few steps further on ranged a number of armed men. Every approach was guarded. About this time the King informed his profligate companions that he was married to Lady Anna by sorcery; that a woman wedded to him by a hundred devils could not be a lawful wife."* "Lords Suffolk and Clinton," writes Cobham, "were shocked at the unfeeling conduct of the King." The levity of the monarch must have been very unpleasant when it shocked the worthies named.

These reports come from the gossip of the courtiers, and from people who were eye-witnesses of the King's conduct. The Bishop of Carlisle and his domestics saw much of Henry's movements. According to Mr. Hepworth Dixon, the Princess Mary was engaged in a conspiracy—or something like one—against the Queen, and in league with Jane Seymour; and then it is insinuated that Jane Seymour was "a staunch Reformer;" and at another time, she was "a friend to the Reformers." If

* Dixon's Two Queens, vol. iv.; Letters of Lady Rochford; Despatches of Champneys; State Papers.

Jane Seymour was so attached to the Reformers the Princess Mary would have had little action with her. But the facts of the case are the opposite.*

If Mr. Froude becomes erratic over the "Boleyn tragedy," Mr. Dixon wanders still farther, and presents a novel view of the actors and their motives; but every historical fact bears completely against the latter writer's assumptions.

"The men of the 'new learning' (he says) stood aghast. They knew their prop was gone. They felt for Anna the passion and the reverence which a Carthusian and a Minorite felt for Katherine." . . . . In another passage Mr. Dixon says:—"Champneys was master of the plot. . . . . Audley and Crumwell had been raking in the Queen's ante-room for evidence."† Mr. Dixon produces the statement of a contemporary and a friend of Cranmer—Alexander Alesse, who depicts the state of excitement in which the populace were on hearing of the Queen's arrest. Here is a passage that requires explanation from those who quote Alesse as an authority. "It was easy to foresee," he writes, "that the Queen's death would bring about *a change of religion in the Court.*" Now, Mr. Dixon and his Scottish authority leads the reader to infer that the religion of the Court at that time was *not* the *Latin Catholic.* And again:— "Kneeling before a crucifix, Anna spent *her last few hours on earth.* The agony was sharp, and, filled with hope— for in her darkest hour she had been led to think her contract with another man had saved her from a cruel pang." This description is little compatible with the expressed

* Champney's Despatches; Brewer's State Papers.

† History of Two Queens, vol. iv.

opinion of one who had just stated that the Reformers were in such "fright at the misfortunes of their patroness." A few lines down, in the same page, Mr. Dixon observes :—"In conversing with her ladies, the Queen had mentioned Antwerp as the town to which she might retire if her life was saved. Antwerp was the city of her soul; a *refuge of Reformers*; a stronghold of the printing-press; a magazine of *English Bibles*. She would seek that haven on the Scheldt. . . . . Norfolk and Crumwell wished to have a private execution. They had tried her in the Tower, and they were determined to kill her in that Tower. . . . . Every believer in the 'new learning' considered her innocent." And Mr. Dixon might add—if it suited the policy of his work—that the people of the "old learning" did not believe Anna guilty of the charges made against her. The author next indulges in a flourish of sentiment. "If men were capable of being roused, what sight could stir them into frenzy like that of their *young Queen* being hacked to death, in order that another woman might enjoy her crown?" This chivalrous indignation is a little out of place. A woman of six-and-thirty cannot be well styled a *young* Queen. Mr. Dixon occasionally becomes enraptured with the beauty of his heroine, but in vol. iii. p. 193, he says :—"No critic, not even her tutor, would have called the girl at Hever pretty." I should imagine that an artist, and not a tutor, would be the better judge. Mr. Dixon presents Audley and Crumwell as the inexorable enemies of the Queen;—no doubt they were. And then he infers that a conspiracy was got up by those men, and others, in the Papal interest to destroy the Queen, who was the patroness of the Reformers. "No one," writes Mr. Dixon,

"could say how far a man like Audley, moved by strong party rage, would fling his nets." Was not Lord Audley the implacable, unflinching enemy of the Papal party? Look at his conduct in the case of Sir Thomas More, Bishop Fisher, and the Carthusians. Who were his colleagues? Such men as Rich and Fitzjames. If a Protestant party did exist at that time, there can be no doubt that Audley and Crumwell were its chief supporters. They were both the enemies of the temporal interests, at least, of the olden Church. Burnet describes Crumwell as a Lutheran; and he was everything that Mr. Froude could desire. The "Hot-gospel" writers, from Foxe and Speed, down to Oldmixon, all claim Thomas Crumwell as the "heaven-born" of the Reformers. The author of the "English Chancellors," and several other writers, have placed on record the character of Audley, as one of the basest and most unprincipled men connected with Henry's Court. Archbishop Cranmer, who, Mr. Dixon informs his readers, "was the friend of the Queen," was also the confidential adviser of Lord Crumwell —that "man whom the Reformers loved"—and both held the same religious opinions, if any. The political and religious ties existing between Cranmer and Crumwell are well known. Strype says that Cranmer "*required direction from Lord Crumwell in everything he did.*"* This admission on the part of a partizan biographer places the relations between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Crumwell in a very clear light. The Duke of Suffolk, the King's brother-in-law, was another of Anna Boleyn's enemies. Suffolk was the attached friend of Cranmer, and is set down as a

* Strype's Cranmer, vol. i. p. 79.

promoter of the Reformation; and Sir Francis Bryan is noted amongst the Reformers who were "suddenly committed to the Tower as *the* friends of the Queen." Bryan was the companion of the King's "pleasures," and not likely to belong to any party but what his royal master desired. Lord Clinton was of the same school. If the Queen was secretly a Reformer—a Lutheran say some—it was very ungracious, if not base and "irreligious," on the part of men like Crumwell, Audley, Suffolk, and Clinton, to conspire against her life. But in the sequel Mr. Dixon, with oblivious candour, presents Anna Boleyn as a Latin Catholic, receiving all the sacraments of the Latin Church. Mr. Dixon is fully aware that the Reformers had no places of worship, no liturgy, no formation—for a period of eleven years *after* the death of Anna Boleyn. During that period Cranmer and his friend Latimer were annually engaged in trying and condemning "heretics" to the stake—which signified Protestants of some mode of belief. Dean Hook states that Cranmer was not a Protestant at this period. It would, however, be a nice question to determine what he was then or at any other time. Alexander Alesse professed to be a Latin Catholic at the period of the Queen's fall. In after years he came under the censure of the Six Acts, having married whilst in holy orders. I am afraid Mr. Dixon has placed too much reliance upon the statements of Alesse. Cranmer was very friendly to him; he was an inveterate gossipper, and made public many matters that his patron possibly did not desire. Beyond doubt, Alesse was well acquainted with the Archbishop's private opinions on most important public affairs.

Under the heading of "Gospel Light," by which Mr. Dixon meant to convey something anti-Papal, the following

passage occurs :—" The Queen set a high example to her maids, not only by attending *Mass* and *going* to *confession, but by calling* in her chaplains and desiring them to admonish and *exhort* as they found need."* Mr. Dixon next refers to Latimer, Shaxton, and Parker—the latter a newly ordained priest—holding the office of chaplain. It is necessary to allude to the fact, that Shaxton was suspended for immorality ; and as for Latimer, he has been described as " a strange composition of good and evil." Surely the Queen, who went to *Mass daily,* and to *confession* so frequently, and caused her ladies to do the same, was not likely to approach an altar where such men were the officiating priests. To do so would necessarily detract from the Queen's merits. If Mr. Dixon wishes to present his heroine as a Catholic, what does he wish the reader to deduce from the above statement ? Latimer and his brethren were the chief lights of Protestantism in the next reign ; and as they necessarily must have been hypocrites, if they are truly described by Mr. Dixon, Queen Anna's Catholicity could gain neither sanctity nor credit from the dispensation of their offices.

Mr. Froude vindicates Henry, and places him in the front rank of all that is equitable and just.

" As in the choice of the commission, as in the conduct of the trial, as in every detail through which the cause was passed, the King had shown but one desire—to do all which the most strict equity prescribed." And again, the learned gentleman observes:—"Twenty-seven peers of ' unblemished honour'—the noblest blood in the realm—were charged with investigating the Queen's character, and each of them

* History of Two Queens, vol. iv. p. 186.

severally stated on their *oath and their honours* that she was guilty." Never, perhaps, was there a greater mistake. Those nobles were either poor, embarrassed, or greedy of patronage; all of them were notoriously servile to the Crown. This character applies with equal justice to nearly all the peerage of Henry's reign.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his "Two Queens," differs widely from Mr. Froude with regard to the trial of the Queen, and the merits of the men who were her judges. "The King and his Peers," he says, "had come to an arrangement, and the trial of the Queen was no other than a sham."* Very true indeed.

Anon the reader will be able to judge of the "unblemished honour" of those nobles. There is still preserved a long list of the abominable charges made against the Queen. Amongst other allegations she was accused of having poisoned Katharine of Arragon, and conspired to murder the King. There is, however, no record extant of the "proofs." No witnesses were brought face to face with the accused; a long indictment was read in court, and the Attorney-General stated that the charges therein made *were proved.* The Queen was allowed no counsel. The whole scene was a mockery of English law and equity—even as then understood. The next scene in the drama was to place the defenceless woman at the bar, and the twenty-seven "unblemished lords" having heard the Attorney-General's statement, at once pronounced her guilty of the crimes set forth in the indictment. The Duke of Norfolk, in a very feeling address, passed sentence of death—to "be

* History of Two Queens, vol. iv. p. 311.

consumed by fire at a stake." This law was passed specially by Henry for the punishment of women who might commit treason.

When the Duke of Norfolk concluded his address, the Queen rose from her chair. She was much excited at first, then recovering her self-possession, she was about to address the court, when her father's glance rested upon her. She gave a faint cry and fell back in the chair. A murmur ran through the justice-hall. Order was quickly restored, by Lord Crumwell. The Queen, who summoned all her courage and dignity to the scene, now stood forward, and lifting her beautiful hazel eyes to heaven, and appealing to the Eternal Judge, she said—"O, Father! Creator! Thou who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Thou knowest that I have not deserved this sentence of death pronounced against me."

Here the spectators became dreadfully excited, and some ladies fainted; one of the peers fell back dangerously ill; but Lord Wiltshire was in no way moved by the position of his daughter. Order having been restored, the Queen continued her address for nearly two hours, and concluded in these words:—

"My Lords, I will not say that your sentence is iniquitous; nor will I presume to say that my opinion ought to be preferred to your judgment. . . . . I call the Eternal God to witness that I am entirely innocent of all these charges, and for these things I cannot ask pardon of the Almighty. I have always been a faithful and loyal wife to the King;* I have not, perhaps, at all times shown him

* Early on the morning of Anna Boleyn's trial, the King wrote a note to

that absolute humility and reverence which his graciousness and generosity deserved, and the honour he has done me required. I confess freely that I have had fancies and suspicions of him, which I had not strength and discretion enough to conceal. God knows, and God is my witness, that I never failed towards him in any other way; and I shall confess no other at the hour of death. Bring before me those who accuse me. They must doubt their evidence who dare not produce it to the light of heaven. I am innocent of the charges made against me. *I call upon the Holy Trinity and the whole Court of Heaven to witness the truth of my words.* My Lords, let me have an open trial; a fair trial; then I shall have nothing to fear; let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges.* Do not, my Lords, imagine that I say this in order to prolong my life. God has taught me how to die, and He will fortify my faith. But do not, I beseech you, think I am so rapt in spirit as not to lay the honour of my chastity to heart, of which I should make small account in my extremity if I had not cherished it my whole life long, as much as any Queen on earth. I know that these, my last words, will serve no other purpose; but they will serve to justify my honour and my chastity. As for my brother, and those others who are unjustly condemned to loss of life and honour, I would most willingly suffer many deaths to deliver them. But

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his "new darling," Jane Seymour, who was residing near his own residence, that all would soon be over; and by three of the clock in the afternoon he should be able to send her word of the "woman's" condemnation. The missive of Mr. Froude's hero to Jane Seymour is still extant. How interesting to the biographer!

* The Queen here alluded to Lords Suffolk, Crumwell, Clinton, and Audley.

since I see that the King will have their lives, I willingly accept their doom; and shall accompany them in their deaths; but with assurance, that I shall pass with them into eternal life."*

When the final sentence was pronounced by the Chief Commissioner, Anna Boleyn—for such she was then called—stood for some moments absorbed; her hands upraised, her head thrown back, "and at this moment," writes a spectator, "she was the figure of a wronged woman." Then, in a slow, solemn tone the Queen again uttered these words, "Oh, Father of Heaven, Thou that art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Thou knowest if I have deserved this death." Bowing to the court and the excited spectators, Anna Boleyn retired. From this moment her character rose to sublimity, and her Christian fortitude became more marked.

The peers, as if to please the King, "specially recommended that Anna Boleyn should be sent to the stake." Another recommendation was to the effect that she might "suffer whatever death his Highness was pleased to order." The law for sending women to the stake for high treason was on the statute book from Henry's reign down to 1791. Lady Bulmer was the only woman who was sent to the flames for high treason; several women, however, suffered

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* Crispin, Lord of Milherne; Meterin's History of the Low Countries, vol. i. p. 20; Sir James Macintosh, Tytler, and Miss Strickland, adopt the above version of the Queen's speech. The foreign noble referred to was present at the trial. I must, however, call the reader's attention to the fact that Burnet, Lingard, and Froude, question the accuracy of the speech attributed to Anna Boleyn. The Despatches of the French Ambassador leave no doubt as to the accuracy of Anna's address to the Court; only a fragment of it has reached posterity.

at the stake for their religious opinions in the days of the Tudor dynasty. The crimes alleged against Catherine Howard and Lady Rochford came within the range of this infamous law, but the *mercy* of humane Henry handed them over to an expert headsman. The next woman who came to die for treason was the Countess of Salisbury. In her case the "axe," and not the "stake," represented the tyrant's will.* Mr. Hallam remarks :—"Few have hesitated to admit Anna Boleyn's innocence of the charges brought against her. But her discretion was by no means sufficient to preserve her steps on that dizzy height which she had ascended with more eager ambition than feminine delicacy would approve."† Lingard represents Anna Boleyn as an "innocent and injured woman at this period."

The spectators at the trial of the Queen were shocked at the fashion in which the proceedings were conducted. The Lord Mayor of London, who was present, subsequently stated that he could see nothing in the process of law but that of a determined plan to take away the life of an innocent woman. The opinion of London's chief magistrate was that of the intelligent portion of the citizens. As to the "upper classes," they either affected to adopt the King's views, or were silent. Perhaps the commercial community stood more independent of the Crown at this time than any other class. Henry often required loans of money from his merchants, and in return was very complimentary to them, seldom interfering with their privileges,

* Statutes of the Realm ; Hallam's Constitutional Hist. vol. i. p. 32.
† Hallam's Constitutional Hist. vol. i. ; Lingard, vol. v.

provided they did not "chatter too loud," a significant saying of the monarch. Wyatt states that the general opinion of the people of London and other places was that Anna had "cleared herself in a wise and noble speech, and that her conduct throughout the day was that of an innocent woman." As Thomas Wyatt caught a glance of the Queen during the trial, he remarked, "She now looks like Nan of Hever, my playmate and early friend." The account given in the Harleian MSS. is to the effect—"That, having an excellent quick wit, and being a ready speaker, she did so answer all objections that her acquittal was expected." But the "unblemished lords" understood what the King required them to do. Camden, always a correct authority as to public feeling at the time, mentions that "the people who were present at the trial had no doubt of the Queen's innocence; but she was nearly circumvented and worried out of life by the judges." "There is," says Sharon Turner, "a combination of feeling, natural eloquence, and good sense in her speech, which need no panegyrist, and must, with her beautiful person, have made a deep impression upon all present."

Some curious incidents occurred during the trial of the Queen. The people present looked with horror towards Lord Wiltshire. He sat like a statue, and never spoke until the Lords Commissioners retired to "consider" the king's commands. Of how he acted then there is no record. Another figure present, if known to the public, would have been an object of sympathy. A careworn, sottish, elderly man, who looked frequently from a corner of the court towards the prisoner at the bar, suddenly became ill, and was removed in a state of great excitement. The man in

question was the Earl of Northumberland, once known as Harry Percy, the early lover of Anna Boleyn.* In a distant nook sat Thomas Wyatt, his handsome intelligent face pale and thoughtful, his eye fixed upon the calm and dignified being who had every moment to defend herself against "fresh accusations." Margaret Lee, Wyatt's sister, and another lady, were "at a small window peeping into the hall, sobbing heartily."

Wyatt and Percy were early friends, and often met at Hever Castle. The contrast between the two men was remarkable. Wyatt relates a conversation he had with Percy concerning Anna Boleyn on the very day he was married to Lady Mary Talbot. "He told me," says the poet, "that he had an honest love for Anna Boleyn, but he did not think she was sincere as regarded him. 'Tell her,' said Percy, had I thought she had been true to me, the Cardinal and the King should have torn this heart from me ere I had wedded another. But what matter it now? No one shall know of my feelings in the business. All rest here' (pointing to his heart)." This story having been related by Percy's secret rival, makes it more credible; it is, however, borne out by others connected with the family history. For more than a century after the death of Anna Boleyn and Harry Percy romantic stories were current in the neighbourhood of Alnwick and Hever, in which the people placed implicit credence. A tradition of Hever states that a person disguised as a pilgrim stood in a corner of the village church at the celebration of Percy's marriage, and when he passed along a hedge, on his way from the

* Baga de Secretis; Carlo Logario.

chapel, the pilgrim threw a casket in his way, and instantly retired to the wood on the other side of the road. The bridegroom, who believed in omens, picked it up and found it contained a ring with a lock of dark hair; the initials "A. B." were on the ring. The pilgrim was supposed to be Anna Boleyn. It is certain that Anna felt delight in romantic scenes and stories, but she cannot well have participated in the one alleged, as she was not in England when Percy was married. In 1548 Mary Graham, a "Border Poetess," wrote a very feeling sonnet, entitled "Percy's Farewell to Nan of Hever." Another "Border ladye" wrote a story upon "Brave Harry Percy and False Nan," which was subsequently printed at Madrid, with some additions by Don Francisco de Barbarine, about 1550.

In the early part of Elizabeth's reign three histories of Anna Boleyn were published—one in Paris, another in Germany, and the third at Venice. I have already alluded to the latter work. Two of these books differed widely, and were evidently written for party purposes. The German writer represents Anna "as a most God-fearing Lutheran, brought to the scaffold by the plots of the Papists. At the scaffold the Queen kissed Tyndale's Bible, and told the people to banish Popery out of the land." And again, "I die a true follower of Martin Luther." The French memoir attributed the most shocking crimes to Anna. It charged her with having poisoned Katharine of Arragon; having violated her vows as a nun in France when twenty years of age; "the patron of immoral clerics in England; a woman of no generosity, pity, or humanity." Mere assertions, as devoid of truth as the German fabrications. Many works have been published in England during the

last 260 years on the career of Anna Boleyn, which are from beginning to end "pure and unadulterated lies." Some Catholic writers seem to have had as great a desire to misrepresent Anna Boleyn as those Protestant historians who claim her as the "standard-bearer of the Reformation" in England. Both parties have displayed bad taste and little regard for truth.

To return to the "judicial inquiry." The circumstances which occurred subsequent to the Queen's trial prove how far the King acted in the spirit of equity ascribed to him. The Queen's statement to the Archbishop of Canterbury of an "early indiscretion," may now be considered just as questionable as that of being "not only formally, but really and completely married to Lord Percy nine years previous." But it happens that Percy was also examined before Archbishop Cranmer and Lord Crumwell, on oath. His evidence was solemn and remarkable. "I do swear," said he, "before the Blessed and Most Adorable Sacrament, that damnation may befall me hereafter, if ever there was any contract or promise of marriage between Anna Boleyn and me." And on another occasion he made a similar declaration *after* receiving Holy Communion. In the face of this declaration Archbishop Cranmer declared the marriage between Henry and Anna to be null and void on the ground of her *previous* engagement to Lord Percy. Cranmer's own register places him in the wrong.*

Archbishop Cranmer's letter to the King on the Queen's arrest, whilst speaking of her former goodness, delicately insinuates a doubt as to her *present* innocence. "I am

* Lambeth MS.; State Papers; History of Two Queens, vol. iv.

exceedingly sorry," writes the Archbishop, "that such faults *can be proved* against the Queen as I heard of in this relation."* This was just the kind of suggestive sympathy and advice Henry desired from his spiritual councillor, who, judging by his conduct in the divorce of Katharine, and other matters, in all probability knew his master's arrangements for another wife. Let it not be forgotten that, *five days before* the arrest of the Queen, the future proceedings were agreed upon as to her trial. A special commission—another mockery of law—had been issued on the 25th of April to various noblemen and judges for the investigation of the charges to be preferred against the Queen. The Commissioners having been duly sworn, they adjourned their proceedings to the 10th of May, to send bills up to the grand jury against the Queen.† Is it not quite clear that these preparations were known to many persons of some distinction and more or less connected with the Court? Although Cranmer's name is not in any way connected with the Commission issued for the trial of the King's wife, five days before she was either *impeached or arrested,* it is utterly impossible to believe that the Archbishop was not fully aware of everything that was being concerted for the ruin of his patroness. Again, let the reader bear in mind that Dr. Cranmer was a Privy Councillor, and one of the most trusted of that body; he was also the King's confidential adviser. Henry wrote in a "free and easy" style to his Primate, and consulted him on matters which he revealed to no other man living. It is evident that a dark and murderous plot

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* Cranmer's Records; Burnet, p. 2001.
† Birch MS. in British Museum, No. 4293.

was concerted for the destruction of the Queen. The King was, undoubtedly, at the head of that conspiracy; the Seymour intrigue is one of the proofs in that direction. Crumwell was the man who arranged and carried out the whole scheme. Could Crumwell have acted without Cranmer's knowledge? They were on close terms of intimacy for years, and on all important public questions they were known to agree. What are the probabilities of the case?

Sharon Turner, with evident reluctance, considers Cranmer's letter to the King on this occasion "open to some criticism." "Could the Archbishop," remarks Mr. Turner, "forget his own obligations to the Queen, or his previous estimation of her general merits?"* A most puerile remark in such a case.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon approaches Lord Wiltshire's position at this period with much delicacy. "Lord Wiltshire received a royal order to attend as one of the Peers who were to hear and determine the fate of his daughter. *He obeyed in silence.* Those who had meant to crush him were deceived. Anna's father was a masculine version of herself. For many years he had been thinking of his end, and length of days seemed less to him than to almost any other man on earth. Erasmus had not written for him in vain his noble treatise on the Preparation for Death. If death were now come by either sudden stroke or lingering pain, Lord Wiltshire and his children were prepared to die."†

Mr. Hepworth Dixon's enthusiasm goes too far when he writes in this fashion of a man who forced his daughter

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* Sharon Turner, vol. x. p. 437.

† History of Two Queens, vol. iv. p. 309.

from the home of virtue and honour at Brie Convent, to receive the addresses of another woman's husband. Lord Wiltshire's degradation did not end with the immolation of his daughter. A lower depth of shame and infamy awaited him, before the grave closed over the quondam diplomatic agent and clever envoy of Henry Tudor.

Mr. Froude contends that "Lord Wiltshire was absent from the trials of his son and daughter, but was present at the trial of the other prisoners."* Lord Wiltshire being a peer of the realm could take no part in the investigation of the charges against Norris, Weston, Brereton, and Smeaton. In another passage Mr. Froude states that a petty jury was returned at Westminster for the trial of the above-named prisoners. . . . "The four prisoners were brought to the bar." Mr. Froude does not explain what part Lord Wiltshire could take as a peer in the trial by a petty jury. He forgets to inform his readers that the mode in which the trial was conducted was almost without a precedent in English history.† Mr. Froude feels displeased at posterity attributing "wicked or unworthy motives" to his amiable hero, Henry Tudor. Let the reader, however, closely consider the antecedents of the monarch, and the relation in which he stood to Jane Seymour at the very period of Anna's impeachment and judicial murder, and the marriage which took place in a few hours subsequent, then say what were the King's motives.

Again Mr. Froude remarks of the Queen's trial—

"We can form no estimate of the evidence, for we do not know what it was. We cannot especially accuse the

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* Froude, vol. ii. p. 487. † Lingard, vol. v.

form of the trial, for it was the form which was always observed."* There appears, however, to have been but one precedent "for the form" of trial,—namely that of the Duke of Buckingham, whose judicial murder covers with infamy all those connected with it. Simon Featherstone, an experienced lawyer in Henry's reign, has recorded his conviction that, illegal and arbitrary as had been the proceedings against the Duke of Buckingham, they were marked by a special degree of equity when compared with those which attended the case of Queen Anna, wherein, at every phase, the vengeful intention of the King was to be distinctly recognised. Featherstone regards the Seymour family as the nucleus of the conspiracy against the Queen. It was their interest to be so, and interest in those times was action.

* Froude, vol. ii. p. 491.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LORD ROCHFORD AND HIS COMPANIONS.

Lord Rochford was charged with crimes amounting to high treason, in connection with his sister's case, and like the Queen, he was allowed no counsel to plead his cause. No witnesses were called, but it was understood that *his wife was the chief accuser.* He was confronted with no witness; not one word was proved. Yet, judging from Mr. Froude's reasoning, he was tried *"according to law, and legally condemned."* Some of the jurors expressed their horror at a man's life being forfeited upon the evidence of one witness—and that witness *his own wife;* others referred to the fact that no witnesses appeared in court to prove the case in the presence of the prisoner "as was right in law." The Attorney-general replied that such was not necessary; the Crown prosecutors were satisfied with the statements they received, and the Commissioners and Judges should perform their duty to the King. "Is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" exclaimed Sir Thomas Audley. A silence ensued for some minutes; the question was again put, when, with a shout, the Lords Commissioners pronounced the words, "Guilty, Guilty." The petty jury also returned a verdict of Guilty. "Stand forward, George Boleyn, once known as Viscount Rochford," was uttered by the hoarse voice of a Crown official. Sentence of death, with all the barbarous concomitants applied to treason, was at once pronounced.

"Since I am to die," said Lord Rochford, "I will only say that I am innocent.'" He requested that his debts might be discharged before his property was confiscated to the Crown. This was a request that Lord Crumwell and his Royal Master seldom, if ever, granted to the condemned. The prisoner was immediately removed to his room, where he was subsequently visited by the Judges, and interrogated. He calmly listened to the various charges, renewed again and again. At length he said, "Do not, my lords, imagine that I fear to die. My sister has to share my misery. On my conscience, I declare before God to you that we both die innocent; and again I call the Almighty God to witness the truth of what I say. You, my lords, to-day are high and mighty; but for many years past you have seen me such as you are now. Your turn may come. If you judge me truly and honestly, you will say that I am free from guilt. . . . I have always treated the Queen as a sister, and as a lady. To be found guilty, and to be *proved guilty*, by an honest jury, is a very different thing."

One of the "unblemished lords" who was standing in the room said that the remarks of the prisoner were audacious and un-Christian. Another peer—I believe Lord Clinton—observed that the "wicked saying deserved death." The Commissioners next visited the Queen's cell, and cross-examined her in a manner the most gross and unfeeling. In her answers she was dignified and queenly. "My lords," she said, "I am broken down in health, and overwhelmed with misery and sorrow. I am desolate and friendless. Why strive to add more bitterness to my grief? All I can say is that, on my salvation, I have committed

no crime nor offence in any form against the King's Highness."

Sir Francis Weston is represented as gentle, kind-tempered to a degree, somewhat romantic; extravagant and vain in the splendour of his dress; he was brave and single-hearted, honourable, generous, the beloved and sole object of a widowed mother, and an only sister. Sir Henry Norris was blunt and rough, but brave and handsome; expert in all manly exercises, and possessing a vein of pleasantry, and an uncultured but ready wit, peculiarly acceptable among the formalities of a Court like Henry's.

All the accused were speedily condemned. The prisoners asked no other favour than a little time, in order to "confess their sins, and receive the Sacraments of the Church, and die in peace with God." That favour was denied. Sir William Kingston specially waited on Lord Crumwell concerning the request. The King at length permitted them to have a confessor. It was late at night when an old Franciscan friar, Father Barlow, entered Rochford's cell. The good father had been the schoolfellow of George Boleyn's uncle, and had known him from childhood. The meeting and parting were affecting. It is stated on contemporary authorities that Lord Rochford sent messages to the King begging for mercy; and it is even alleged that he entreated (in a long letter) his wicked wife to intercede for him with his Highness. This statement is scarcely probable; but Cavendish, who was about the Court at the time, affirms that Rochford "petitioned most humbly to save his life after he was condemned." If Rochford's life were spared, why not his sister's? Lady Rochford never troubled herself about any message of mercy. She inclined

the other way. Henry, however, had made up his mind to slay the brother and sister; and in such cases he always fulfilled his intention.

Lord Rochford was a poet of some merit, and also well versed in music. He was the author of a lyric popularly known as "Farewell, my Lute," which it is said he sang on the night before his execution. A doubtful story. He was very differently employed on that last night of his existence. Here are the words:—

"Farewell, my lute, this is the last
Labour that thou and I shall taste,
For ended is that we begun;
Now is the song both sung and past;
My lute be still, for I have done."

Some mournful lines have been attributed to Anna Boleyn, and it is contended that they were written on the night of her condemnation. Many circumstances tend to throw doubt upon the assertion. From the time the Queen received sentence until the next morning she was in a state of dreadful excitement, and quite incapable of such mental exertion.

Father Barlow likewise visited the other prisoners, all of whom he had known in happier days. The unfortunate victims seemed much reconciled to their fate after they had received Holy Communion. The Confessor continued his labours all night, remaining half an hour with each. They were assured by the Constable of the Tower that there was no chance of their lives being spared; the King's constant exclamation being, "Hang them up, hang them up." If the tyrant believed them to be guilty, he could not have manifested a more ardent thirst for their blood. Great exertion was made to save them. The dear little children

of Norris* were thrown in the King's way to beg their father's life; but they pleaded in vain. He dashed them aside with a fearful oath. The relatives of Sir Francis Weston used every interest to procure mercy. The French Ambassador pleaded for him in the name of his Royal Master. Lady Weston flung herself at the King's feet and besought him to have pity on her son. The beautiful young wife likewise appealed to Henry to save her husband. She offered "to give up everything in the world, all the property the family possessed." "Oh, great King, do not take from me my husband, my first and only love; have mercy, have mercy, as you will some day yourself appear before the Eternal Judge." In a gruff voice the tyrant King replied, "No, no, I will not;" and then with a ferocious roar, "Let him hang, let him hang."†

The night preceding the execution of Lord Rochford and his companions the King gave an entertainment at Greenwich Palace. His Highness led Jane Seymour to the dance; "trumpets and tabors resounded from the music loft;" and their notes were not the less merry that she, who was once the brightest when those sounds of revelry were heard, then lay in the Tower awaiting her cruel doom. No seeming consciousness of a proximate tragedy visited the "high-born guests;" no throb of sorrow mingled with the vibrations of the music. The King was "all courtesy, and seemed full of noisy merriment," whilst Jane Seymour was the centre of attraction. Next to her in beauty and magnificent robes, blazing in diamonds, appeared Lady Rochford, whose husband was, through her unnatural instrumentality,

* Sir Henry Norris was one of the witnesses to the clandestine marriage of Henry and Anna Boleyn, and was known to the King from childhood.

† Letters of Carlo Logario to Father Cabrera, of the Spanish Embassy.

to die a few hours later. Shortly before the morning dawn the revellers departed from Greenwich, and many of them must have heard the solemn tones of the great bell of a neighbouring church announcing prayers for those who were at that moment walking in chains to the Tower Hill, to bid a long farewell to a world which had proved to them at their last hour to be one of deception and injustice. Ere the lark had commenced its melodious welcome to the sun, ere the May-dew evaporated in his expanding rays, "ere the gossamer had vanished from the grass, or the elastic heather had been flit over by startled bird, or trodden by wandering lamb," Rochford and his companions reached the scaffold, where some hundred people had loitered from midnight. The incidents were marked and painful. On the way to the scaffold young Lord Surrey, the companion and friend of Rochford, rushed forward to take his farewell. The "leave-taking" of two young and gifted poets was a scene which moved even the thoughtless. In the words of Maister Featherstone, "Men cried and sobbed like children. Maister Kingston turned his head aside, for gaoler though he was, he felt a human sorrow at seeing four fine young men going to a death so preconcerted, and so flagitiously compassed. Sir Francis Weston asked the people to pray for them, to which all replied, 'We will, we will.' Lady Weston was present, and held up a crucifix to her son. A broken-hearted scream was heard from several young dames of high qualitie and noble blood, but the guard did not permit them to approach. It was three of the clock, and the morning looked gloomy for the month of May."*

* The above has been modernized and condensed.

A London alderman, who was present, has left a description of the scene, and noted the sympathies of the people; many inquiring, "Where is all this to end?" The old burgher adds:—"The Ladye Anna was not much liked by the people. The women, in particular, hated her, and swore by the Virgin Mother that she was not a 'true woman.' They loved the memory of good Queen Kate."*

The King had so far commuted the sentence that the "gentlemen" were to suffer by the axe, and not the rope. The good Franciscan father stood by his penitents to the last. They kissed the Cross, embraced each other, and "spoke their last adieux." Lord Rochford exhorted his companions to die nobly in their innocence. They gathered close to him, held him by the hands; all were intensely affected, each asked pardon of the other for any offence he might have committed at any time. Rochford, on behalf of his ill-fated friends and himself, addressed the populace.†

It is stated that Lord Rochford made a second declaration of his innocence, in presence of witnesses, and within a few moments of his final preparation. His last words were:—"Mother of God, intercede for me; Lord Jesus have mercy on my soul." Having made the sign of the Cross with much reverence, his eyes were bandaged, and he was led to the block by the Sheriff's men; he knelt down, the signal was given; the headsman advanced, the "five

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* The middle and lower classes of London could never be induced to style Anna Boleyn Queen. Every circumstance in connection with Anna's private and public history proves that she was merely the Queen of a party—a party who were alike indifferent to religious principles and to national honour.

† State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign; Lingard, vol. v.; Strickland, vol. ii.; History of Two Queens, vol. iv.

minutes' grace" expired; no messenger of mercy arrived. The Sheriff waved his wand for the last time, and after two terrific blows from the executioner's weapon the head of George Viscount Rochford was severed from the body. Thus perished in the bloom of manhood an accomplished scholar, a man of genius, a sweet poet, a musician, and an amiable gentleman.

Walpole remarks that "Rochford rose to a position like Lord Rivers, through his sister Elizabeth Woodevylle, and was innocently sacrificed on her account." There is no case ir point between the alleged crimes of Rivers and those of Rochford. Both men were unlike in abilities and mental culture. Anthony Woodevylle was young, handsome, brave, and learned, but possessed by that sordid feeling which characterized his family, and sometimes won the contempt of the populace. So much for being Court favourites of those times.

To return to Henry's victims. The tragedy was not yet concluded. The other three gentlemen were compelled to stand by at this fearful scene. They did so with brave hearts, each awaiting his own turn with calmness and fortitude. Few words were spoken. Father Barlow accompanied each of them to the front of the platform, where they called on the Almighty to witness their innocence of the crimes with which they were charged; they further declared the Queen to be an innocent and a deeply injured woman; they begged of their friends and relatives to pray for their souls' health, and told the people to remember that they died in the faith of their fathers. Morrice relates something to the same effect. No one doubted their religious sentiments. Everyone present was

affected by the personal appearance and simple address of Sir Francis Weston. "Even the executioner," writes Cobham, "shed tears." This softness of heart in a busy headsman of Henry's reign is exceptionally noteworthy, if true. A Flemish gentleman, Paul Deboch, who was present, states that the blood was flowing copiously about the scaffold, and the headless bodies, "half undressed," remained there for some hours.*

It has been stated by spectators that Anna Boleyn witnessed the execution from a window in the Tower. There is as little foundation for this story as for that of her father and the Duke of Norfolk visiting her at an early hour on the morning of her own death. The unhappy lady was abandoned by all her kindred, and those who guarded her in the Tower were "cruelly exacting in their watching." So says Margaret Lee. Crumwell's brother was present at the Tower on the occasion in question, and has left on record an account of the "brave and Christian manner in which Lord Rochford and his companions died, and that the Queen was *not* allowed to witness the scene."

At five minutes to four of the clock on this sad May morning the slaughter had ended, and the executioners sat down in a businesslike manner to divide their blood-

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* Godwin's Annals. There is no official record of the trial of Lord Rochford and his companions extant; every document was destroyed. The accounts of the proceedings are, in many instances, gathered from foreign sources—letters, diaries, and traditions. Scant as the information to be derived from those sources, it is quite sufficient to show that the King and his Council acted in a most murderous spirit towards those unfortunate gentlemen. It is supposed that there are MSS. in some of the Continental libraries, Venice in particular, that will yet reveal the true history of the plot to murder Anna Boleyn.

stained spoil. The miserable servitor Smeaton, "not being a gentleman," was consigned to the hangman, and despatched by the rope awarded to common malefactors. It is now certain that Smeaton was racked to extort a confession, and he remained firm, but being threatened with a more "severe process," he cried out, "I will tell all."* Then the vain boyish musician of the Queen, who followed her "everywhere like a spoiled child," as Thomas Wyatt would have it, criminated his royal patroness in a vile manner. Grafton states that Admiral FitzWilliam, a "creature of the King, induced Smeaton to sign a confession, and then he would receive an *immediate pardon.* The confession was signed, and Smeaton *was hanged that he might tell no tales to the people of what occurred.*" This was very like Lord Crumwell's mode of action. "Two hours later," writes Pomeroy, "came a message from the King with the words, 'Hang him up at once.'" It is supposed that Smeaton died *without the rites of religion.* Neither Father Barlow nor Devett the Almoner were permitted to see him. "Crumwell and the King," observes Pomeroy, "had good reasons for preventing this wretched man from seeing a clergyman, because they anticipated that at the last moment he would recant the confession they had extorted from his fears of the rack a second time." So Smeaton perished. The chief victim still wore out an existence in the Tower. Anna Boleyn was preparing to meet death upon the scaffold in a few hours later.

Lady Rochford was one of the most heartless and unna-

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* Constantyne's Memorials; Sir James Macintosh's Hist. of England; Thirlwall's Last Hours of Queen Anna; Pomeroy's Chronicle; Logario's Visits to the Tower.

tural characters connected with Henry's Court. She was the daughter of Lord Morley.* At the time of her marriage with George Boleyn she was a young widow. She dressed magnificently, whether as Jane Parker or Lady Rochford. The courtiers feared and hated her. There was something ungracious and insolent in her smile; the white teeth which it fully disclosed adorned a mouth of symmetrical beauty. She was very handsome, tall, somewhat large in person, and commanding in manner, with a pale, almost brunette, complexion, and hair of jet black. Her brow was "wide and full of intellect," her dark eyes seemed to read the very soul of those who addressed her. Weston, Wyatt, and the gentlemen of the Court disliked her; the Queen and her ladies feared her malice; she had a violent temper, and was deceitful and treacherous. During the divorce controversy the ladies of Henry's Court had several sharp discussions upon the projected elevation of Anna Boleyn to the throne, The King interposed and sent three of the "noisy dames" to the Tower for a month; they were then discharged with a reprimand. Strange to say, Lady Rochford was one of the "patriotic three," as a writer of the last century styled them. Lady Rochford held the office of maid of honour to Queen Katharine for several years. At a subsequent period she joined the King's party, and became a royal favourite.

Tradition states that one person listened to the announcement of Lord Rochford's execution with a smile. As the

* Lord Morley was the literary friend of the Princess Mary, and to his honour be it told, did not forsake the Princess at the period of her father's persecution of his "once-beloved daughter." Lady Morley was a true woman, and the devoted friend of Queen Katharine.

sound of the minute-gun reached Greenwich, Jane Rochford stood before her toilet-glass, her magnificent dress and jewels not yet withdrawn after the night's revelry; her cheek was flushed with evil passions, her frame trembling with emotion. She spoke not, but those who were near her marked her countenance and read her fearful glance when the concerted signal announced that her husband was no more.* How pregnant with memories must have been the mind of that unnatural and foresworn wife as she contrasted the pomp of her dress, the heartless revelry in which she had just participated, and the gallant but deserted victim who, in the pride and confidence of love, had led her to the altar, and whom her perjured tongue had, in return, consigned to the scaffold. The dangerous court of a tyrant should be the natural region for apprehensive thought. Did no premonition of her own fate visit the brain of the guilty wife, whose husband through her means now lay headless in the Tower? Are not such offences the result of a dominant wickedness? The crimes of the King begat the wickedness of his surroundings, and men and women were gradually led into the path of unrighteousness, by ambition, by fear, or by example. All in high places have responsibilities graduated by their power. How incalculable, then, is the responsibility of a monarch who owns no guide but his passions and his pride, and with no limit to his ability to gratify them!

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* Mary Langton, a relative of Lady Rochford's, was present, and describes her friend as the most beautiful woman at Henry's Court; and further, that Jane Seymour was sometimes jealous of her. Many years subsequent Dame Langton furnished Lady Fitzwalter with a minute account of Lady Rochford's demeanour on the night in question.

In Dublin, and other parts of the Pale, a shout of exultation was raised for the fate of Sir Thomas Brereton; and also for that of Anna Boleyn, who had long previously lost her Irish popularity, which must have been very brief, and probably contingent on Wolsey's proposed espousal of her with her Irish cousin, James Butler. Some time before the overthrow of Anna, Sir Thomas Brereton was despatched to Ireland to put down an insurgent movement in the vicinity of the Pale. He obeyed the King's command with great barbarity, burning houses and slaying women and children.* Hence the cause of his memory being so execrated in Ireland.

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* Irish State Papers, vol. ii.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE QUEEN'S DEATH-WARRANT.

The reader has seen the levity of the King at the Greenwich ball—"time and circumstances" considered, it seems almost impossible to realize facts, but that they are so thoroughly authenticated. In a few hours later the heartless monarch attended the Council Chamber, and, in the presence of his Chancellor, Sir Thomas Audley, Lord Crumwell, his council, and the secretaries, he signed the death-warrant which consigned the once idolized Anna to the headsman on the following day. Sir Richard Crumwell, a Royal favourite, states that the King evinced no emotion on signing the warrant, but seemed rather in good humour, handing it (the fatal parchment) to the Chancellor saying, with a smile—"*There, I have done my part in vindicating the law.*" What law? The tyrant's capricious will. Crumwell adds:—"The King immediately retired; and the Lords looked one at another, but did not dare to wag their tongues for fear."

It has been stated that the warrant was signed by commission; but such was not the case. The warrant with Henry's well-known signature was amongst the State papers of some twenty years ago, and is, perhaps, there still. There are several cases on record where Henry evinced the most vindictive feeling in signing the death-

warrants of illustrious subjects. In after years his daughter, Elizabeth, followed his example in this mode of action, especially in the case of the Queen of Scots.

Anna's fate was decided without pity or remorse. On the day the King signed the death-warrant he had a private interview with the Lieutenant of the Tower, when "he made final arrangements" for the execution of the Queen on the following day. Henry's instructions were of a minute and business-like character, and he spoke in high spirits. This information is derived from Kingston's confidential note to Lord Crumwell, now to be found amongst the MSS. records of the Grand Inquisitor.

On Thursday Anna was occupied at intervals in prayer and writing letters to persons whom she had injured at different periods. On the same day she sent Lady Kingston "on a second mission" to the Princess Mary, to implore of her, "on bended knees, to pardon the wrongs and insults she had offered to her, when exercising a step-mother's authority."*

In the face of this statement, so well authenticated, Mr. Dixon contends that the Princess Mary was treated very kindly by her step-mother. Miss Aikin, a high Anglican authority, states that Anna Boleyn "exercised towards the Princess Mary a high degree of insolence and harshness."† Nothing, however, could exceed the sorrow of the fallen Queen for her ill-treatment of the Princess Mary.

The day passed, and with the twilight of the May evening the hopes of the Queen had fled. The preparations

* John Speed first published this incident; Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 690; Lingard, vol. v. p. 75.

† Lucy Aikin's Court of Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 29.

for her execution were going on, almost within her hearing. In this last sad night what shadows of the past must have risen before her! She paced the room many times; then retired to her humble oratory, and knelt before a silver crucifix, the gift of her early friend, Claude, Queen of France. Another memorial of the past was the beads which Dr. Gardyner brought her from Rome. Here Anna prayed for some time alone. Again, she would speak to her ladies, and make some loving allusions to Hever Castle; the hazel walk, the grotto, and her old domestics. At times she became intensely excited, exclaiming, "Where is my father?" "Has he deserted me at this dreadful moment?" "Oh, father, why have you joined with my enemies?" "Do you believe me guilty?" "Oh, no, you do not; you cannot." "Where am I?" "Oh, my brain is distracted." "Oh, mother, mother, dear kind mother, where are you? Have you forgotten your own Nan?"* "I have been cruelly handled by the King's Council. All my friends have abandoned me; and even the poor whom I aided have shouted, 'Down with her.' Oh, Mother of God; oh, Jesus, give me strength to meet death as I should." The entrance of Father Thirlwall gave her some comfort. He prayed with her for nearly an hour. The holy water from Westminster Abbey, which she desired, was brought to her this evening by Margaret Lee. Lord Crumwell gave full permission for the free exercise of every religious rite on the part of the Queen. So wrote her confessor.†

* Lady Wiltshire was Anna's stepmother. Her own mother was dead four-and-twenty years at this period.

† Thirlwall's Last Hours of Anna Boleyn; Kingston's Letters to Lord Crumwell; Archælogia, vol. ii.; Lingard, vol. v.

CHAPTER XXXV.

WAS ANNA A LUTHERAN OR A CATHOLIC?

Much misrepresentation has taken place on the question of the Queen's religion. I am therefore compelled, again and again, to return to this matter, so obstinately debated by various writers for the last three hundred years. Cranmer, Latimer, and others of the same "disguised party," it is alleged, visited the Queen on several occasions, and particularly on the last night of her existence they brought her "Gospel comfort;" that "the King sent Dr. Cranmer to her as a confessor;" then again, "Cranmer gave her comfort from the Reformed faith." Did the "Reformed faith" acknowledge "confession or the Real Presence?"

No one but those wholly ignorant of the Latin Church could assert that Henry sent Cranmer to the Queen as a confessor. Sharon Turner contends that Dr. Cranmer visited the Queen on the 16th of May—three days before the execution—*as a confessor*. For this statement he gives a letter said to have been written by Kingston. I do not believe that the letter named is genuine, because it is contradicted by so many circumstances. It is affirmed by other historians—Protestant historians—that the Queen desired to have Father Devett, a "good old priest who was long known to her family." All the "intricate surroundings" of the case at once pronounce that the Archbishop would be the last man living she would have selected for a

confessor on that special occasion. Even Henry would recoil from such a sacrilege; for base and reckless as he was at this juncture, he would not send as a "confessor" to his dying wife a man whom he knew had violated his religious vows. Anna Boleyn likewise was aware of the Archbishop having a wife; and further, that his morals unfitted him for any office of religion. As a Latin Catholic she could not accept his "spiritual labours" on her behalf. However repentance may be shunned or adjourned, a settled hour of death compels the human soul which desires salvation to an iron earnestness. This was, for Anna, no moment for self-deception, or for the acceptation of deceit. What, then, was the nature of Cranmer's visit? His "diplomatic note" to the King may be considered as the key to the alleged interview. Father Thirlwall was in fact the confessor chosen by Anna Boleyn on the occasion; he visited her daily, and to him she made, what is known in the Catholic Church as a "general confession." Father Devett also attended, and the Duke of Norfolk, who is described as a "hard-hearted man," sent specially Father Lavenue, a French theologian, to "instruct the Queen in all the intricate doctrines of the Church." Father Lavenue reports that "her Highness was well informed upon all the doctrines of the Catholic faith in her youth." No doubt she was well instructed in her youth. Her two uncles were priests, and men of an exemplary character; besides, the family had two chaplains. Nothing, however, was more abhorrent to the Boleyn family than the "religious" movement then going forward in Germany.

Matthew Parker has been frequently named as a "Royal Chaplain and confidential friend" of the Queen. Again, I

repeat, that there were many royal chaplains; the office was "honorary" as to most of them; it was a road to promotion through Court intrigue or favour—a very discreditable manner of gaining preferment. Parker was not ordained until 1527, and he received no licence to preach for six years subsequently.* The first pulpit discourses he ever delivered were in favour of the divorce of Katharine; he was recommended to the Court party for this purpose by Dr. Skype, Bishop of Hertford, who was a friend of the Boleyn family. Peto describes Parker's sermons in favour of Anna Boleyn as "lying discourses, filled with shameful flattery of the King and his brazen mistress."† Peto is a high authority. For his pulpit advocacy of the divorce Parker was appointed to a deanery in Norfolk, and "other favours followed." Posterity owes to several historians the statement that Parker's "Reformation sermons aroused the King and Anna Boleyn to the necessity of a reform in the Church." But Parker preached no such sermons in the presence of either King or Queen. He was too astute and too timorous to endanger his liberty or his life in a cause like that. There is no record of his having done so, but there are letters and other documents still to be seen which prove that he was ready to promote the divorce of Katharine by any means the King suggested. Nothing creditable can be related of Parker in Henry's reign. In the case of the Six Acts his conduct was characterised by the circumspect cowardice then prevailing, and by the flexibility of a man who had no regard for truth. For years he was in

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* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. ix.

† Letter of Father Peto to Maurice Chauncy.

the habit of celebrating Mass, almost daily, whilst at the same time he had violated his vows of celibacy. In truth he was a fearful hypocrite. Even his friend, John Bradford, considered him a master of deception, "celebrating Mass with Popish piety, and immediately after calling the Mass a Popish fable."* Who could have faith in the principles of such a "reformer of religion?" Yet several writers of high repute place his name amongst "The Apostles of the Reformation." The reason is obvious. Matthew Parker became Elizabeth's first Archbishop of Canterbury. Amongst the venal and obsequious prelates of Elizabeth's reign none more willingly yielded to her whims or her despotism than did Matthew Parker. The reason I introduce the name of Parker here is in relation to Anna Boleyn, and his "interesting interview with her in the Tower." The reader is aware with what religious sentiments Anna died; therefore, there is the strongest probability that she did not "recommend her child Elizabeth to the spiritual charge of a young priest whose first sermons were preached in favour of the divorce of Katharine of Arragon."† Although Anna Boleyn made no public manifestation of her regret for having done a dreadful wrong to Queen Katharine, nevertheless it is well authenticated that she looked on that incident as the blackest and most deadly crime of her life, leading as it did to so many judicial murders and massacres throughout the land. Therefore, in the hour of her repentance, Anna Boleyn must have looked upon the clerics

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* Letter of Bradford to John Bale; Aikin's Court of Elizabeth, vol. i.

† Three Discourses of Maister Matthew Parker on the Sinful Marriage of the King's Highness with the Ladye Katharine of Arragon.

who promoted the divorce as being far more wicked than herself. She repented with the tears and humility of a Magdalen, but those who gave her evil counsel had no regret—no remorse for the part they had taken. Standing on the threshold of eternity the fallen Queen shrank from the presence and advice of spiritual counsellors like Parker. In fact, the whole narrative of the "interesting interviews at the Tower" is pure fiction. It rests upon the authority of Foxe, Burnet, and men of similar veracity. It is curious that Dean Hook also clings to this assertion so obstinately put forward by unreliable historians. The Dean, in alluding to the "friendly" relations which existed between Dr. Parker and Queen Elizabeth, observes :—

"Parker could never banish from his mind his last interview with the unfortunate Queen Anna, and her solemn appeal to him to be the friend and protector of her infant."*

The closing scene of Anna's life should satisfy Dean Hook that there is no probable proof of the "interview" with Parker. In another chapter of the same volume the Dean says—"Dr. Parker's visits were few and far between." This passage is in reference to his office of chaplain.

Amongst the many admissions of Dean Hook as to the religious sentiments of Anna Boleyn about the period of her fall, he remarks :—"If Queen Anna had expressed a doubt on Transubstantiation or Purgatory, or the Invocation of Saints, or the Celibacy of the Clergy, or Auricular Confession, or the Seven Sacraments, the Royal controversialist

* Archbishops of Canterbury (Life of Parker), vol. ix. p. 480.

would have translated her from the matrimonial couch to the scaffold."* These admissions are valuable, when considered in connection with other evidence.

Speed declares that Anna was "a pillar of the Gospel," meaning, says a Puritan commentator—that she was "a God-fearing Protestant." In another chapter the same author states that the Queen was "accounted a Lutheran;" and her "religion was different from all Papal forms." Speed is silent as to the Queen's preparation for death. Burnet wishes his readers to believe that Anna "received some impressions of the Reformation at the Court of the Duchesse d'Alençon." And again:—"The people generally understood that she was a Lutheran." Now, these allegations are overthrown by well-certified facts.

Rapin dissents from his personal friends, Burnet and Strype, as to the services rendered by Anna Boleyn to the Reformation. He "cannot discover where the Queen promoted Protestantism."† He makes no allusion to the alleged visits of Archbishop Cranmer to the Tower, "bearing Gospel comfort to the Queen." He indulges in none of this Puritan cant. The only allusion Rapin makes to Dr. Cranmer, as connected with Anna Boleyn's affairs at this juncture, is that of her divorce, for which he censures the Archbishop of Canterbury, but, at the same time, con-

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. ix.

† Rapin de Thoyras' History of England, vol. i. This work was first printed in French, and published at Antwerp, next at Berlin, Potsdam and Vienna. The author was a distinguished officer in the army of William the Third. The work was translated into English by the Rev. Nicholas Tindal, and dedicated to Frederick Prince of Wales, father of King George the Third. In the third volume of this work, under the title of "Conflicting Authorities," I shall recur to the merits of Rapin as an author.

siders "he was forced to do this unjust action." A poor defence. Rapin passes over the scene at the Tower; yet he prints a letter of Sir William Kingston's to Lord Crumwell, describing the "preparations" for the execution. This despatch differs from others written by the Constable of the Tower about the same period. Here is a passage;—"'*She*'* sent for me this morning, that I might be with her at such a time as 'she' received *the good* Lord:" signifying the Holy Communion.

Echard, a respectable Protestant historian, is quite satisfied that Anna Boleyn "gave particular encouragement to the Reformation."† He gives no authority for this statement. Of course, either Foxe, Speed, Burnet, Strype, or Oldmixon, were his guides.

Hume is silent as to the religious sentiments of the Queen when condemned. He significantly remarks that "when brought to the scaffold, she softened her tone a little with regard to her protestations of innocence."‡ In another passage he states that "the whole tenour of her conduct forbids us to ascribe to her an abandoned character such as is implied in the King's accusation." Burnet, in remarking upon the incidents connected with the closing scenes of the tragedy, contends that the King made the most effectual apology for Anna by marrying Jane Seymour the day after the judicial murder of his wife.§

* One of the orders issued by Lord Crumwell was, that the title of "Queen or lady" was not to be applied to the "woman in the Tower." So the Constable spoke of his prisoner as "she."

† Echard's History of England, vol. i. p. 284.

‡ Hume's History of England, vol. iii. p. 208.

§ Burnet's Reformation, vol. i. p. 207.

Some curious incidents have been noted in connection with Anna's alleged Lutheranism, when at the height of her power. Ghyt, one of the Observant Fathers, who was retained by the Queen as a spy upon his brethren, having supplicated frequently for a secular appointment in the Church, and having been as often refused, wrote to her Highness, promising to celebrate "fifty Masses annually," for her soul's health; she at once complied with his request, and gave him the desired preferment. This was very unlike the action of one who was a "staunch Lutheran," as Burnet and many others have asserted.

I now arrive at the sequel of the misrepresentations as to Anna Boleyn's religious principles.

Miss Strickland, in an evident tone of regret, avows that Anna Boleyn "*did not die a Protestant.*" "The Queen's particular desire of having the consecrated elements to remain in her little oratory—which in such cases is always for the purposes of adoration—and the fact that she termed the sacrament 'the good Lord,' proves plainly that she *did not die a Protestant.* When she was about to receive the sacrament she sent for Sir William Kingston, the Constable of the Tower, that he might be a witness of her last solemn protestation of her innocence of the crimes for which she was sentenced to die *before she became a partaker of the holy rite.*"* "It is very difficult," adds Miss Strickland, "to imagine any person wantonly provoking the wrath of God by incurring the crime of perjury at such a moment. She had evidently no hope, none whatever, of prolonging her life; she was quite resigned to die."

* Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. ii. p. 692.

Lingard and Froude, though differing widely on many subjects, in substance agree in their account of the Queen's "religious rite." They state she used the words, "I will receive our blessed Lord." Several Protestant historians are silent as to this "ever memorable sacramental interview," as Paul de Lavenue describes it.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon is very minute, yet brief, in his account of this important subject, upon which so many contradictory statements have been made. "The Constable of the Tower," he says, "appeared at the Queen's request to witness a scene which stirred his adamantine heart. *He heard the priest celebrate the Mass; he saw the Queen kneel down before the Host, and when the sacred wafer was placed on her lip he heard her call on the Almighty God to witness for her innocence.*"* These accounts quite agree with Father Thirlwall's "Last Hours of Anna Boleyn." Thirlwall relates that the "Queen knelt on her bare knees for nearly two hours before the Mass commenced, her face bathed in tears; that she was quite exhausted, yet still remained at prayer. Two of her ladies also received Holy Communion, and a little boy some nine years old, a relative of the Constable Kingston, made his first communion kneeling beside the Queen." Father Devett, the Almoner, and Father Lavenue, the French priest, and himself, each celebrated Mass for the Queen at different hours on the morning of the 19th of May. He makes no mention of Cranmer or Latimer having visited the condemned lady.† Mr. Dixon no doubt derives his information from several

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* Hepworth Dixon's Two Queens, vol. iv. 332.

† Father Thirlwall's Last Hours of Anna Boleyn.

sources: but here he quotes Sir William Kingston as the chief witness of the Queen's Catholicity. The above is Kingston's official report to Lord Crumwell: but he wrote more in detail to Dr. Gardyner, who deplored the fate of his early friend; yet Mr. Dixon describes that prelate, then in Paris, as engaged in the Popish plot to murder the Queen. Gardyner entertained the highest opinion of the moral character of the Queen. He had known her family all his lifetime, and was her confessor for some years.*

"There is no name in the annals of female royalty over which the enchantments of poetry and romance have cast such bewitching spells as that of Anna Boleyn. Her wit, her beauty, and the striking vicissitudes of her fate, combined with the peculiar mobility of her character, have invested her with an interest not commonly excited by a woman in whom vanity and ambition were the leading traits." So writes Miss Strickland. Anna Boleyn's powers of deception often baffled her contemporaries and have left her biographers in doubt as to her real opinions upon some of those great questions with which her name has been linked for sectarian or party purposes. It is evident that she deceived the anti-Papal party, and they in turn practised deception to a shameful extent. Anna Boleyn aided in the persecution of the Latin Catholic party, not on account of any doctrine, but because they denounced her claim to the position of a Queen. She warred against the Observant Fathers at Greenwich and the martyred Carthusians, who went to the scaffold singing hymns of joy. Elleston and Peto and their brethren did not

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* Gardyner's interesting letters to his young penitent are still extant; they are, I think, in the archives of some French cathedral at the present time.

accuse Anna Boleyn of sustaining or promoting the German Reformation in England. With them it was a question of morality, not one of doctrine. The hostility of the Queen to Fisher and More had nothing to do with religion. Archbishop Cranmer and the future Reformers promulgated the divorce to meet the King's desires, thus declaring "right to be wrong." Cranmer and his coadjutors deceived both Henry and Anna, and in the persistent deception which they practised after their first success in the deposition of Katharine, was laid the foundation-stone of the Reformation in this realm. Of course, there may be a diversity of opinion as to the issue raised by many commentators upon the causes which led to the English Reformation.

Dr. Brewer, in his review of King Henry's reign, frankly admits that "if the English Monarch attained the divorce he sought from the Court of Rome, *there would have been no Reformation in England*."* The Crown would have opposed it, and the subsequent confiscations were not likely to have taken place. Again, I refer the reader to the words of the Rev. J. H. Blunt:—"Many were for *confiscation*, few for the *reform of religion*." This phase of the history of those troublous times, so long the subject of misrepresentation, may be fitly closed by a vigorous axiom of Dean Hook, that "*The exposure of a lie is the triumph of Truth*."

Mr. Froude, who so ardently admires the Reformers, pursues the alleged patroness of that party with as much invective and fury as if he belonged to King Henry's Council.

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* Brewer's State Papers (Introduction), vol. iv.

He states that Sir William Kingston, the Constable of the Tower, "was too convinced of the Queen's guilt." But the stern Constable's conduct towards his prisoner at once contradicts Mr. Froude's assertion on this point. Here are the words of Sir William Kingston :—"I have seen many men, and women too, upon the scaffold ; but none appeared so resigned, so Christian-like, as she did."* Mr. Dixon represents the Duke of Norfolk as leagued with Lord Crumwell and others to "undo and bring to a shameful death his own niece." These statements have no foundation in fact. Norfolk was a stern old soldier, impregnated by the servile feeling of loyalty which characterised the times. His conduct at the trial of his niece might have been unparalleled but for the part played by the Queen's own father, who was present as one of the Commissioners. The Duke of Suffolk was another of those engaged in this mock trial. He was a bitter enemy of the Queen, not as a Papal Catholic, for the Reformers claim him as a disciple of the "new learning." He was the friend of Audley, Crumwell, Clinton, and Cranmer. It appears strange that the Archbishop, who is represented as the "real friend" of Anna Boleyn, should likewise be the "prophet and guide" of the above and other Reformers just named, who rank amongst Anna's enemies. The Duke of Norfolk could not, and did not, act from any religious feeling in this case. He avowed that it was his interest and pleasure to perform what the King desired, and he accordingly concurred in the predetermined decision against the Queen. For many years, however, Norfolk was known to be unfavourable to Queen

* Sir William Kingston's Despatches from the Tower, May 19, 1536.

Katharine. The Duke of Suffolk and his wife (Henry's sister) were for a time opposed to the divorce, but ultimately yielded to the arguments of Cranmer. The old nobles and gentry were always hostile to Anna Boleyn. If Mr. Dixon's view of the case be considered correct, then two of the most deadly enemies are brought to act together against the Queen—namely, Lord Crumwell and the Duke of Norfolk. By inference, we are asked to believe that the conspiracy against the Queen was in reality a blow struck at the Reformation. Crumwell is pointed at as the leading spirit in the plot; yet it is well authenticated that he was the very man who confiscated the property of the Latin Church, and crimsoned the scaffold with the blood of its clerics. Whatever were Norfolk's faults—and they were many—he never persecuted men for a religious sentiment; but with singular inconsistency he crushed down everyone who opposed the King's supremacy in his claim to Spiritual Headship. He was well known to be an enemy to the clergy; yet he has assigned no reason for his enmity. Hume states that no matter what Norfolk appeared, he was a Latin Catholic at heart, but a man of much worldly ambition and pride. It is true he was not a man of delicate or tender feelings; and, perhaps, he only regarded his niece so far as the shame her impeachment had cast upon his princely family. He was a mixture of loyalty and chivalry, as such sentiments were then understood. The astute Capucius described him as a "bad dissembler," a description which might be taken in those perilous times to have fairly depicted a man who generally desired to be honest, although sometimes compelled to duplicity.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

INCIDENTS OF THE LAST DAY.

THE reader has been already conducted to the scene where early on this May morning the Queen heard three Masses specially celebrated for her, and then received Holy Communion. Shortly after the religious ceremonies were over, her Highness and Margaret Lee partook of breakfast. Mildred Wyatt and Lady Kingston—a good, kind-hearted woman—were of the party. The Queen spoke little, but looked frequently at Margaret Lee, her eyes filled with tears; putting her arm around Margaret Lee's neck, she embraced her again and again. "Oh, Meg, I never knew how much I loved you till now. Will you remember me? I suppose Tom (Wyatt) will write a ballad on his old playmate and friend—unfortunate Nan. Remember me to the young maidens of Hever. Ask them to pray for me at the Mass." Anna Boleyn sobbed and cried at this "first of the leave-takings." She then retired to her oratory. "The Host, surrounded by several lights," was placed on the temporary altar by Father Thirlwall. Here she knelt alone for nearly two hours. No human voice disturbed her communing with the Eternal. At eleven of the clock she again joined her ladies. She appeared happy, and conversed with them for a few minutes, again recurring to Hever, the Hazel Walk, and the grottoes of other days; the "poor orphans whom she fed and taught, and also her

little ponies;" and then, with fresh tears, she named "her old nurse, Mary Orcharde." "I must now turn every minute of earthly time to account," said the Queen. "I must prepare for the last scene." In less than half-an-hour her toilet was completed. She was dressed in a black damask robe, a white cape falling from her neck. She held a Latin prayer-book in her hand, and a gold cross hung from a chain at her right side. Her dress was arranged with taste and simplicity. She looked around the room as if to say farewell. Fathers Thirlwall, Devett, and Lavenue were at hand. The litany for the dying and other prayers were recited, and the Queen answered the responses in a distinct and audible voice.

At the conclusion of the prayers—in which her ladies all fervently joined—a silence ensued for a few minutes, when an authoritative knock at the door announced the arrival of Sir William Kingston and his guard. The hour had come! Kingston bowed most respectfully to the doomed lady and her friends. Her courage seemed for a moment to fail, and in a faint voice said, "Well, I am ready, Maister Kingston." Then turning to her ladies, who all burst into tears, in the softest and sweetest accents she observed, "Ah, dear loved friends, be firm; pray for *me*, pray for *me now*." It was arranged that Margaret Lee should walk beside her, ascend the scaffold with her, and perform the last sad office of removing her dress. The other ladies were to remain at the foot of the scaffold till the judicial murder was completed. The procession moved along to the little green. A file of soldiers armed with musquetoons (afterwards called musketeers) went first, then the officials of the Tower, Kingston walking gravely and solemnly; immediately after appeared

two masked executioners, then came the Queen. "She seldom looked so interesting," says Cobham; the great powers of her mind gave vigour to the body. When she heard "sobbing" along the route, she several times exclaimed, "The will of God be done; pray for me, good people." Father Thirlwall was on her right, Margaret Lee on her left, the other priests followed, reading the service for the dead; then came the faithful Mildred Wyatt and four other ladies. About two hundred people were admitted to the scene, besides the numerous officials of the Tower. The Lord Mayor of London and several aldermen and merchants of the City were ranged on one side, together with a few distinguished gentlemen from Paris, Venice, Rome, and Lisbon. Thomas Wyatt and the old retainers of Hever were concealed in a distant window. Amongst this group was the aged nurse of Anna Boleyn, Mary Orcharde. On a raised platform to the right of the scaffold were seated the King's Commissioners. Here was to be noticed the well-known face of Lord Crumwell, and there were likewise present Chancellor Audley, the Duke of Suffolk, the young Duke of Richmond, and Maister Rich. The Duke of Norfolk was *not* present, as so frequently stated. When the procession reached the scaffold, a startling scene took place. A burst of female shrieks issued from some distant part of the buildings; the soldiers, the warders, the jailer, every one was affected but Lord Crumwell and his colleagues. At the foot of the scaffold the Queen parted with her attendants, to each of whom she had given a cross and a prayer-book that morning, and said some words of comfort, even at this dread moment. With a firm step she mounted the scaffold. Kingston stood apart, for in the

words of Mr. Dixon, *"there was something not of earth about this woman on the verge of death."* Having received permission from Sir William Kingston to address the spectators, she came to the front of the scaffold, and surveying the crowd for a few moments, the Queen commenced her speech, which was heard with breathless silence. "Good people," said she, "I am come here to die. And according to law and by law I am adjudged to death—therefore I will speak nothing against it. I am come hither to accuse no man, nor to speak anything of that whereof I am accused and condemned to die. But I pray God save the King and send him long to reign over you, for a gentler and more merciful prince there never was, and to me he was ever a good husband. *If any person will meddle with my cause, then I require him to do me justice, and tell the world the true story of Anna Boleyn, sometime Queen of England.* With these words, good people, I take leave of you all, and bid farewell to this world. One poor request I now ask you all is, to pray for me at this awful moment, when I am about to appear before the Eternal Judge." Then clasping her hands, and looking heavenwards she said, "Mother of Jesus, intercede for me. Lord Jesus, have mercy on my soul."*

All eyes were turned to the Queen as she stood preparing

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* Thirlwall's Last Hours of Anna Boleyn. The speech given by Father Thirlwall differs slightly from the addresses generally attributed to the Queen. Morrice, Archbishop Cranmer's secretary, would appear to have been at the execution, for in a letter to Lord Wiltshire he sets down several incidents which occurred during the procession to the scaffold, and draws an interesting picture of the devout manner in which the Queen died. He particularly notes "the decent behaviour of the people, who, at the suggestion of the Lord Mayor, knelt down to offer up prayers for the Queen's soul."

for the final scene. The Lord Mayor, and many others, expected that at the "last moment" a King's messenger would arrive bearing a white wand with the words "Mercy, mercy." What hopes the Queen might have possessed were quickly dispelled when her eye met the stern glance of Lord Crumwell. Her ermine cloak and head-dress were removed by Margaret Lee; Mildred Wyatt assisted; some other ladies approached at this juncture, having implored the Constable to "let them forward." Nothing could exceed the kindly conduct of Sir William Kingston. The Lord Mayor remarked that "the tears of the devoted women softened and unmanned the Constable of the Tower." When the Queen's dress was re-arranged, she knelt down to pray; Father Thirlwall was again rendering her spiritual aid. The French executioner, wearing a sable dress, and masked, stood along with his English assistants at the back of the scaffold, awaiting a signal from the Constable and the High Sheriff. The Queen rose from her knees; all was ready. She stood a moment, and took a last farewell gaze around her. She kissed the faithful and heroic Margaret Lee; then addressing a few words to Father Thirlwall, who held a crucifix to her lips, she said in a loud voice, "I am ready." Margaret Lee bandaged her eyes. Both were silent. Poor Anna was led to the block by the Sheriff and the Constable of the Tower. The Sheriff became much affected, and burst into tears.

The tall French executioner and his assistants instantly advanced. A profound silence was observed by the spectators, the majority of whom were kneeling. The moment the Queen laid her head upon the block she exclaimed aloud, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on my soul." Whilst the

words were on her lips the fatal blow was given, and the head of Anna Boleyn severed from the body. A wild shriek of affright burst from the lady attendants and other women present; a murmur of heartfelt sympathy arose from the people; a malign smile seemed to pass over the features of the young Duke of Richmond,* and a look of triumph from Thomas Crumwell closed the scene.

Champuys wrote a minute account to Charles V. on the day of the execution, in which he bears testimony as to Anna Boleyn's religious sentiments. The following passage occurs in his despatch:—"The lady who has the particular charge of the unfortunate woman (Anna) has sent me word that *before* and *after* receiving the Holy Sacrament, the Queen declared, *on the eternal salvation of her soul, that she had never sinned against her husband, the King.*" Champuys himself believed Anna innocent of all the charges preferred against her. In another despatch, this observant envoy hints at the names of those who were engaged in the plot against Anna. He does not believe that the Queen was the victim of any sectarian movement. The leading Reformers were the parties who combined against her in secret; *their interests were not promoted by her.* Here lies part of the conspiracy. She was too outspoken as to Crumwell's "peculations and black mail."

Champuys refers to Jane Seymour in an unmistakable manner. "As to Jane Seymour, when he (the King) desires a divorce from her he will find many witnesses of repute to tell her secret story." A writer well informed upon the

* The Duke of Richmond was the illegitimate son of the King. He was about eighteen years of age at this period, and promised to be "a character" worthy of his father. He died some months after Queen Anna's execution.

transactions of this period states that it is quite certain that Jane Seymour had intrigues with the King of some standing.* Champuys' secret despatches are corroborated by several circumstances. If Jane Seymour had lived some three years longer it is possible that she also would have ended her career on the scaffold.

A writer in "Excerpta Historica," discussing the probable accuracy of the accounts extant as to Anna Boleyn's execution, refers to a letter translated some years back by the late Lord Strangford from the original, which is to be seen in the library of the monastery of Alcobaça, in Portugal. The letter in question is that of a Portuguese gentleman who was present at the execution of Anna Boleyn, and it differs from the statements published by Hall and Burnet. Edward Hall, being a contemporary, was in all probability present, yet his version of the "last scene" omits several passages given by Father Thirlwall. The advice so fervently offered by the Queen to her ladies is thus disposed of by Thirlwall:—"The Queen having concluded her speech to the people, then received permission from the Constable of the Tower to say a few words of advice and comfort to her goodly gentlewomen, who gathered round her, holding her hands in a most affectionate manner." The Portuguese traveller gives the following picture of the last interview between Anna Boleyn and her faithful ladies: "Then with her own hands, the Queen took her coifs from her head, and delivered them to one of her ladies, and putting on a little cap of linen to cover her hair withal, she said "Alas, poor head, in a very brief space thou wilt

* J. H. Blunt's Reformation of the Church of England, vol. i. p. 197.

roll in the dust on this scaffold, and as in life thou didst not merit to wear the crown of a queen, so in death thou deserveth not a better doom than this. And ye, my damsels, who whilst I lived ever showed yourselves so diligent in my service, and who are now to be present at my last hour and mortal agony, as in good fortune ye were faithful to me, so even at this my miserable death ye do not forsake me. And as I cannot reward you for your true service to me, I pray you take comfort for my loss; howbeit, *forget me not;* and be always faithful to the King's Grace, and to her whom, with happier fortune, ye may honour as your queen and mistress. Esteem your honour far beyond your life. In your prayers to the Lord Jesus, forget not to pray for my soul."

Miss Strickland notices with indignation the presence of the King's brother-in-law and his natural son at the execution. "The Duke of Suffolk and the young Duke of Richmond were both present in defiance of all decency and humanity. They came there to disturb the unfortunate lady's last moments with their unfriendly espionage, and to feast their eyes upon her blood." Sir Henry Spelman has recorded that Anna's eyes and lips were observed to move when her head was held up by the executioner to the gaze of the horror-stricken crowd. It is further related that, before those beautiful eyes sank in the dimness of death they seemed for an instant mournfully to regard her bleeding body as it fell on the scaffold. This statement was first made by a French doctor who was present, and describes the body "moving about in a convulsed form for some minutes;" and that the "great flow of blood caused several

of the women near the scaffold to faint away with horror."

At the end of Father Thirlwall's "Last Hours of Anna Boleyn," the above narrative was inserted. Thirlwall's little black-letter book was privately printed at Antwerp in 1547, the year of Henry's death.

HENRY'S DEMEANOUR AT THE DEATH.

It is stated by several unimpeachable authorities that the King remained in the neighbourhood of London on the day of the execution, and "at the firing of a gun as a signal," he cried out, "Ha, ha! the deed is done! uncouple the hounds, and let us away to the chase." Mr. Hepworth Dixon presents another version of the monarch's "whereabouts and his bearing" on the day of the Queen's execution. "Not far away from the death-scene a group was waiting for the Queen's last moment. Under a greenwood tree, rising on a high level, overlooking the Thames, and within earshot of the Tower guns, a few sportsmen were enjoying dinner. Horses, ready for the chase, were picketed about, and dogs were held by men in uniforms of green and white. The merriest of that merry group was King Henry himself. It was a sort of bridal feast. . . . The King knew the time at which the sword would set him free, for he had fixed that hour when ordering out his dogs. As the time approached, he listened for the boom of guns, and when the signal struck his ear, he rose and shouted gaily, "*Ah, it is done; it is done! Uncouple the hounds; let us follow the sport.*"* Henry was dressed in white on this occasion. Cobham assured Margaret Lee that

* History of Two Queens, vol. iv. p. 342.

Richard Crumwell, the convivial companion of royalty —"mine own Dick"—wrote a letter to his brother stating that the "King danced and was right merrie when he heard the signal shot." "About dusk," on that memorable 19th of May, King Henry reached Wolf Hall, where the bride elect, the "discreet and amiable Jane Seymour," and a numerous company, received him. What a meeting! On the following morning—not twenty-four hours as stated —*but twenty hours after his wife's murder, the "royal ruffian" married Jane Seymour.**

The name of Anna Boleyn seems still to enlist the interest of some, perhaps the sympathy of others. But there is a great moral lesson to be derived from her story. How feverish was her existence, how joyless were her pleasures, how unsatisfactory her greatness, how awful her doom! When her life-dream was over, early sentiments returned, and she became truly repentant for the many dreadful results of her daring ambition. To the philosophic and unprejudiced mind her death must seem the brightest phase of her existence; whilst Henry Tudor's exit from the earthly scene was but the lingering flicker of a long-consuming lamp which threw a sombre glare upon a heartless, tyrannic, and impenitent profligate.

In July, 1536, Elizabeth, then only three years old, was as completely out of favour with her father as the Princess Mary, after her temporary reconciliation on the death of Anna Boleyn. About this time the Princess Mary wrote from Hunsdon a plaintive letter to the King, imploring his

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* Queens of England, vol. ii.; Brettom's Wiltshire; Speed, Burnet, Sander, Thorndale, and Pomeroy.

merciful consideration for herself and her little sister, who were "meanly lodged and poorly clothed," and watched over incessantly by Queen Jane's friends. The following allusion to Elizabeth shows the kindly feeling that Mary entertained for her, and the courage she must have possessed even to name her to the King. The Princess wrote:—"My sister Elizabeth is in good health; and such a child as I doubt not but your Highness shall have cause to rejoice in time to come."* An old tradition, once known in Hunsdon, was to the effect that "little Elizabeth had *no shoes for three months*, and was in tattered garments like a peasant child."

* Queens of England, vol. ii.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

JANE SEYMOUR.

The next most prominent woman entering upon the scene at this eventful period was Jane Seymour, another reputed Protestant Queen. This lady's real character and sentiments have been incorrectly depicted by most writers. "Jane Seymour was the fairest, the discreetest, the most meritorious of all Henry's wives." So writes Lord Herbert, the biographer of Henry Tudor. This assertion has been generally repeated by several writers in whom posterity have placed implicit confidence. The question may occur to the reader—"In what did Jane Seymour's merits consist?" Customs may vary at different eras, but the laws of moral justice are unalterable. Indeed, it would be difficult to reconcile them with the first actions of this discreet maid of honour, for discretion is the attribute peculiarly selected as her own. It has been shown that Jane Seymour's shameless conduct, in receiving the courtship of Henry, was the commencement of the dire calamities that befel her Queen. The Holy Scripture points out as an especial odium the circumstance of a handmaid taking the place of her mistress. Odious and vile as the case when Anna Boleyn supplanted the right royal Katharine of Arragon, yet a sickening feeling of horror must pervade every right-feeling mind when the proceedings of the "modest and discreet" Jane Seymour are considered. She deliberately received the addresses of

her mistress's husband, knowing him to be such; she passively beheld the mortal anguish of the Queen when that unhappy lady was in a state which peculiarly demanded feminine sympathy; she knew that the discovery of the King's inconstancy had nearly destroyed her; the shock actually destroyed her infant; nay, more, the "delicate-minded and tender-hearted" Jane Seymour saw a series of murderous accusations got up—deliberately arranged—against the Queen, which finally brought her to the scaffold; yet this same discreet young lady gave her hand in marriage to the monster Henry before his wife's corpse was many hours cold. Four-and-twenty hours had not passed since the French sword was reddened with the blood of her royal mistress when Jane Seymour became the bride of Henry Tudor. "Let it be remembered," remarks Miss Strickland, "that a royal marriage could not be celebrated without previous preparation, which must have proceeded simultaneously with the heartrending events of Anna Boleyn's last agonising hours. The wedding-cakes must have been baking, the wedding-clothes preparing, while the life-blood was yet running warm in the veins of the victim whose position as a wife was to be rendered vacant by a violent death. The tragedy is repulsive enough, but it becomes tenfold more abhorrent when the woman who caused it is loaded with panegyrism."*

Jane Seymour was the eldest of the eight children of Sir John Seymour, of Wolf Hall, in Wiltshire. The Seymours were a family of country squires possessed of very limited fortune. They were of Norman origin. Of the early youth of Jane Seymour little is known. She spent her time in

* Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iii.

the country; and had few of the educational advantages of Anna Boleyn. Her education was, however, finished in France; and, at some time not known, she received a household appointment from the Queen of France. The portrait of Jane Seymour in the Louvre represents her as a full-formed maiden of eighteen or nineteen years of age. The picture is placed as companion to another, a superb whole-length of Anna Boleyn, known as that of "Maid of Honour to Queen Claude."* The two portraits are clad in the same costume, though varied in ornament and colour; they are not recognised in Paris as pictures of "English Queens," but as *compagnons suivantes* of an English princess who became Queen of France—Mary, the sister of Henry VIII.† The picture of Anna Boleyn in Paris was painted by Holbein, when in the spring of her beauty and the noonday of her real happiness. There must have been some dozen years between the time Anna Boleyn and Jane Seymour were at the French Court. Jane Seymour, therefore, could not have been connected with the Court of Queen Mary, or Claude, but that of Queen Eleanor.

Nothing of interest occurred in the history of Jane Seymour until Anna Boleyn discovered the attentions of the King to Jane, and the encouragement given to his addresses by her deceptive handmaiden. It is now ascertained that for four or five months an intrigue was carried on between

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* At the Luxembourg Palace, about half a mile from the Louvre, is to be seen Paul Delaroche's "Last Days of Queen Elizabeth." It is a terrific picture of a troubled spirit with whom ambition had played and then rejected. Hope seems to have fled from the scene, and Remorse and Despair are, as it were, holding their last council. If this famous picture were at the Louvre, and placed in the vicinity of those of Anna Boleyn and Jane Seymour, with what an intense emotion the student of history might contemplate the royal group!

† Queens of England, vol. iii.

Henry and Jane Seymour, and the unfortunate Anna does not seem to have gained any clue to the plot which was laid for her destruction. I have already alluded to the conduct of the Seymour family at the period of the Queen's disgrace. Jane Seymour and her brother Edward were fully aware of the plans arranged by Lord Crumwell twenty-eight days before the arrest of the Queen.

While Anna Boleyn was waiting the day of her execution, her husband wrote the following note to Jane Seymour:—

"My dear Friend and Mistress,

"The bearer of these few lines from thy entirely devoted servant will deliver into thy fair hands a token of my true affection for thee, hoping you will keep it for ever in your sincere love for me. Advertising you that there is a ballad made lately of great derision against us, which, if it go abroad and is seen by you, I pray you to pay no manner of regard to it. I am not at present informed who is the setter forth of this malignant writing, but if he is found out he shall be strictly punished for it.

"For the things ye lacked I have minded 'my Lord' to supply them to you as soon as he could buy them. Thus hoping shortly to receive you in these arms, I end for the present.

"Your own loving servant and Sovereign,

"H. R."*

"My Lord" alluded to in the last passage, is undoubtedly the Earl of Wiltshire, steward of the household, and the unnatural father of Anna Boleyn.

"The Catholic historians," writes Miss Strickland, "have mentioned Queen Jane with complacency on account of her friendliness to Henry's ill-treated daughter; the Protestants regard her with veneration as the mother of Edward VI.,

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* Halliwell's Letters of the Kings of England, vol i. p. 353.

and the sister of Somerset, and thus, with little personal merit, accident has made her the subject of unlimited party praise. Her kindness to Mary bears an appearance of moral worth, if the suspicion did not occur that it arose entirely from opposition to Anna Boleyn."*

The day before the death of Anna Boleyn, Jane Seymour returned to her father's residence in Wiltshire, where preparations were making for the marriage to take place the *day after the execution* of Anna.†

Several of the "unblemished nobles" were present at the wedding, and congratulated the King "on all that occurred." Sir John Russell—of infamous memory—told the King that he "was the godliest person present." Russell was so indecorous as to draw a contrast between the "personal appearance of the bride and Anna Boleyn." A great feast was given by Sir John Seymour, and the royal party proceeded after dinner to Mardell, near Winchester, a country seat belonging to the bishops of that see, which the King had some time previously seized. At Mardell, the royal party resided a few days, and then repaired to London, to receive the "congratulations" of the obedient citizens. "Nine days after the execution and marriage," Jane Seymour was presented to the citizens of London as their Queen.

The parliament expressed their "valuable good wishes," and Chancellor Audley made a "long and tedious oration." Lord Audley concluded his speech by proposing that the Peers "offer up prayers for heirs to the crown by this

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* Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iii.

† Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.; Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iii.

marriage." The Archbishop of Canterbury took charge of this ceremony.

The "humble petition of the nobility," asking the King to marry a third time, must have been presented, if at all—during the lifetime of Anna Boleyn, and some months before she was arrested.*

Jane Seymour's public entry into London did not in many points equal in magnificence that of either of her predecessors. It is difficult to imagine that the populace could have received the woman with any feeling but that of horror. The "unblemished Peers," and other courtiers, played the part allotted to them by the King.

The only thing to note in Queen Jane's movements, as a Sovereign Lady, was, that she crossed the frozen river Thames in the severe January of 1536-7, on horseback, accompanied by the King and his whole Court, amidst the acclamations of the noisy populace, who looked upon their King "as the fountain of justice and mercy." In the summer Queen Jane and the Court visited Canterbury, where the religious houses were then nearly despoiled of their former adornment. The King and Queen attended Mass at the Cathedral, when a sermon was preached in eulogy of Henry, wherein he was described as "Defender of the Faith." The Queen was also praised by the Court preacher, who said "she was not like her predecessor; that she abhorred heretics, and to that effect." The preacher's name is not known now, but it is certain he had none of the honesty of Peto or Forrest. On the same day

* Record of Audley's Speeches; Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iii.

the King and Queen were entertained at the monastery of St. Augustine, by Father Goldell, the Prior of Christ Church. Here the King again indulged in his desire to "serve the Church, and put down heretics."

Holbein's picture of Jane Seymour does not agree with the extravagant accounts furnished by different writers of her "exquisite beauty." The great artist represents her as a coarse, apathetic-looking woman, with a large face and small features. Her eyes are blue, with a sinister expression; the mouth very small; the lips thin, and closely compressed; the eye-brows very faintly marked; high cheekbones, and a thickness at the point of the nose quite opposed to an artist's idea of beauty. Her complexion is fine, her features regular, but their expression cold and hard; her figure stiff. In this picture Jane appears to be about thirty-three years old. Holbein's portrait of the Queen was taken about three months before her confinement.

Queen Jane's career was brief. When the time of her confinement arrived, the doctors asked the King, "whether he wished his wife or the infant to be saved," to which his Highness replied in a characteristic speech:—"The child by all means, for *other wives can be easily found.*"* The mother died in fourteen days—another instance of retributive justice. Henry retired to Windsor, and affected great grief for the loss of his wife. But, notwithstanding his "distressed state of mind" Lord Crumwell was instructed to negociate with the Protestant princes of Germany for another wife, "certified to be young and beautiful."

* Queens of England, vol. iii.; Fuller's English Worthies; Saunders, p. 87. This statement of Saunders' is corroborated by several other authorities.

The most blasphemous and slavish compliments were paid to Henry on the birth of a son; but that of Latimer, then simulating and swearing by the profession of profound Catholicity, is the most fearful. He addressed Lord Crumwell in this style :—

"Right honourable lord, we salute in Christ Jesus. And here, my lord, is no less joying and rejoicing in these parts (Worcester) for the birth of our prince, who we prayed for so long, than there was, I trow, by the neighbours at the birth of John the Baptist, as this bearer, Maister Evance, can tell you. God give us grace to yield due thanks to our Lord God, the God of England, or rather an English God, if we consider and ponder well all His proceedings with us from time to time. He hath overcome all our illness with His exceeding goodness, so that we are now more compelled to serve Him, and seek His glory, and promote His word, *if the devil of all devils be not in us.* We have now the stock of vain trusts, the stay of vain expectations; let us all pray for his preservation. And I, for my part, well wish that his Grace (the King) will always have, and even now from the beginning, governors, instructors, and officers of right judgment. But what a great *fewl* (fool) am I! So that devotion showeth at times, but little discretion. And thus *the God of England* be ever with you in all your proceedings."*

So, then, according to this orthodox prelate, the worship of God was to be graduated by auspicious royal events!

There are to be found in the State Papers the addresses of several other Bishops to Henry at this time, which are

* State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

freer from blasphemy, but remarkable for the servility which was the fashion with too many of the clerical party.

The baptism of Edward Prince of Wales, which took place by torchlight at Hampton Court Palace, was performed with all the solemnity of the Latin Church. Many of the notables who took part in it changed sides in the next reign.

Amongst the historical groups present at the baptism there appeared an aged man who carried a taper of wax in his hand, and was an object of contemptuous pity to every eye: that man was the father of the murdered Anna Boleyn, Lord Wiltshire! Two years subsequently (1538), having worn out his character, his reputation, and his honour to the very last thread, he expired, amidst the world's contempt—" unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

Whether Jane Seymour was Protestant or Catholic is a matter of little importance now, only so far as the interests of historical truth may be concerned. At the time Jane came to Court, her father, Sir John Seymour, was well known to be a Latin Catholic; he never changed his faith; his wife was a very rigid member of the olden faith, and outlived him many years. She died in the reign of young Edward, and shortly before her death sent a message of "malediction" to her son Edward, then known as the Protector Somerset, for his conduct in relation to the change of the national religion. I shall return to this subject in the Second Volume.

The brothers of Jane Seymour were Catholic at the time of Anna Boleyn's fall; and it is very possible they would have remained so if there was no change of fortune to be obtained by the confiscation of the monastic property.

With the exception of the Duke of Suffolk, no one received so much of the Church lands as Edward and Thomas Seymour. Sir John Seymour was a man after the fashion of Anna Boleyn's father, which argues little in his favour. He petitioned the King for an office for his daughter. In every worldly relation the Seymours were unprincipled, mean, and base; and every wicked action of the tyrant King met with the concurrence and acceptance of the Boleyns and the Seymours. So much for the two families whom Catholic and Protestant writers claim for their communion.

Lord Campbell in his "English Chancellors" falls into the popular error—if I can use the phrase—as to Jane Seymour. "Death," he observes, "delivered Bishop Gardyner from the apprehensions he entertained of the ascendancy of Jane Seymour."* The inference to be drawn from this passage is, that Jane Seymour was the secret or avowed friend of the Reformers. I contend that Jane Seymour was in no way connected with the Reformers. In fact, she detested them as bitterly as Henry himself. She did not even seek their political support, as had Anna Boleyn. The only hostility Gardyner could have had to Jane Seymour, was doubtless excited by the means through which she reached the Throne. Better informed writers than the author of the "English Chancellors" claim Jane Seymour for the "Protestant fold." The learned Lucy Aikin, writing some sixty-five years ago, considered Jane Seymour as "a warm advocate of the Reformation; but her support was given in a clandestine manner."† There is no document or State

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. ii. p. 44.

† Lucy Aikin's Court of Queen Elizabeth, vol. i.

record known to be in existence which could corroborate this allegation. Miss Aikin, however, was incapable of consciously making a false statement, but in her zeal, perhaps, she adopted without reflection the assertions of such historians as Speed, Burnet, Stripe, and Oldmixon. Sharon Turner—a writer of immense research—quotes an original letter (MSS. Nero, l. 10) upon the "deathbed scene" of Jane Seymour, in which the following passage occurs:—"*The Queen's Confessor had been with her this morning, and hath done all that to his office appertaineth, and is even now preparing to minister to her Highness the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.*" The above is extracted from the bulletin issued by the physicians who attended the Royal patient. In the very next page Mr. Turner describes Jane Seymour to be "*as great a friend to the Reformation as Anna Boleyn.*"* In truth, neither favoured the Reformation as a creed, though the writer intended to imply it. It may, indeed, be said that they were both what might to-day be called "bigoted Catholics." This brevity of vision, if not obliquity on the part of Turner, is remarkable; but not more so than the concurrence of so many writers in such palpable contradictions. It is impossible to regard such anomalies as oversights; and it would hardly be true to designate them as mistakes. Mrs. Thompson, one of Anna Boleyn's more recent biographers, contends that "the Queen (Anna) was desirous of bringing about her such young persons as Jane Seymour, that by her own example they might tend to increase the Reformed faith. The *family of Jane Seymour were of that persuasion!*" And again, Mrs. Thompson,

* Sharon Turner, vol. x. p. 485.

whilst finding fault with Jane Seymour's conduct in relation to her Royal mistress, discovers some "redeeming qualities" in the character of Jane. "Jane Seymour's reasoning powers of native strength were soon developed, and she *bestowed their energy in a direction fortunately for this country, by exercising them upon the great subject of the Protestant faith.*" This averment leaves the marvels of Foxe, Burnet, and Oldmixon in the shade, and even if proved a fact, it is paying a strange compliment to Protestantism to claim for its patroness so worthless a creature as Jane Seymour. Miss Strickland wishes to remove the opinion so long held by Protestants as to the religious profession of Jane Seymour. "All the rites of the Roman Catholic Church were administered to Queen Jane; the official statements are still extant, and prove how greatly mistaken those writers are who considered Jane Seymour a Protestant.* Dean Hook must be accepted as a trustworthy authority. His account of the religious sentiments of Queen Jane, and the English Court of her time, is worthy of consideration. "No theological differences," writes Dean Hook, "of opinion at that time kept religious parties separate. The Court was divided in its sympathies between joy for the birth of Prince Edward and grief for the death of the Queen (Jane). *Twelve hundred Masses were celebrated for the repose of her soul, and a solemn dirge* at St. Paul's. If there was a tendency to Protestantism on the part of the King and of Cranmer—the King who ordered these Masses, and the Archbishop *who officiated at them*—it was not at this time much developed."† Here is a contemporary and

* Queens of England, vol. iii. p. 21.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 70-71.

an official evidence upon the question at issue. Sir Richard Gresham, writing to Lord Crumwell concerning the Queen's obsequies, said—"I have caused *twelve hundred Masses to be offered up for the sowl of our most gracious Queen.* And whereas the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London were lately at St. Paul's, and there gave thanks unto God Almighty for the birth of our prince, I think it right that there should also be a solemn dirge and High Mass, and that the Lord Mayor and Aldermen should *pray and offer up divers prayers for the Queen's sowl.*"*

In subsequent years young King Edward spoke of his mother as a "sainted woman." Did his uncle, Somerset, tell him whether she was "a Protestant or a Catholic saint," or did Archbishop Cranmer furnish him with a list of the number of Masses *he* himself celebrated for her Highness Queen Jane, or the amount of money in "golden angels" the King's treasurer paid the said Archbishop for celebrating Mass for the dead Queen? The solution of this question—so long disputed—might probably be of interest to the Protestant and Catholic admirers of Jane Seymour, if there can now possibly exist any of the latter.

Strong complaints were made that Queen Jane in all possible ways strove to depress and insult the connections and friends of her late mistress, and to exalt the Seymours.† "Of course," observes Miss Strickland, "the power of so doing was the chief inducement for her marriage, with all its abhorrent circumstances." Her brothers, uncles,

* State Papers, vol. i. p. 574.

† See Hearon's Sylloge for a proof of this statement.

sisters, and cousins quickly filled every lucrative office at Court. The "peculations" of the Seymours were enormous.

Jane Seymour, like many persons suddenly raised in the world, laid down very vigorous rules regarding the etiquette of dress at her Court. The maids of honour were expected to wear costly girdles of pearls, and if these were not fully set, they were not to appear in the Queen's presence. The proud dames of noble and ancient lineage scarcely concealed their contempt for the woman, and were merely courteous to her as *the* Queen. Even the King himself did not seem to think much of Jane's mental powers. He speaks of her in "some notes" in this fashion :—" She was but a woman." This phrase is used frequently in relation to his "dear Jane." The opinion was expressed subsequent to the death of Queen Jane.* But to the end of this painful narrative. Jane Seymour took for her motto when Queen, "Bound to obey and to serve." Completely devoid of soul, but of wonderful coolness and caution, she acted on the principle of "self and family." She supported her burden of dignity as Queen with silent placidity. She appeared to have adopted the very opposite policy of her predecessor. She avoided sallies of wit and repartee, which sometimes made enemies for Anna Boleyn. Jane Seymour's actions were utterly passive, and dependent on the King's will. Her husband desired that she should frequently visit her private chapel, and she was to be seen there accordingly. Henry found fault with Anna Boleyn for giving large sums of money to relieve "deserving poverty;" he could find no

* Jane Seymour was never crowned. The ceremony was several times postponed in consequence of the plague raging in the neighbourhood of Westminster.

fault with Jane in this respect, for she was a thorough Seymour, grasping after gold as a Shylock. The King growled at the Reformers. "I am no patron of heretics; they must go to the fire," were the words of his Highness about this time. Queen Jane, who it is alleged privately encouraged the "new learning," treated its professors with coldness, and that description of scorn which is to be expected from a woman of her turn of mind. As a Queen Consort she did no harm, but there is not one noble, gracious, generous, or good action recorded of her. She did not know how to fulfil a grand or queenly office, and divested of fine robes and regal honours, she was merely a handsome woman, of no ability, and of no pretence even to the possession of a heart. Such is the true history of a woman who has been made by many writers the heroine of both parties—Catholic and Protestant.*

Here is an incident which shows that Jane Seymour was soon forgotten by Henry, whose grief has been represented as "intense." Mary of Lorraine, though perseveringly wooed by two Kings, had waited to complete her year of widowhood before she would allow her finger to be encircled by the sponsal ring of a second husband. James the Fifth of Scotland had a formidable rival for this young and beautiful widow in the person of his uncle, Henry VIII. There is no reason to suppose that Mary wavered for an

* It is traditionally reported that when Henry first saw Jane Seymour at Court he remarked that she was "too young and 'chittish,' and ought to remain in the country with her governess for some years to come." Anna Boleyn once observed to Wyatt that "young Jane was as innocent as she was lovely." "Smooth waters run deep," was the poet's reply." Anna Boleyn carefully noted the remark.

instant in her choice between the rival Kings. She was, however, destined to become the wife of the youngest, the handsomest, and the most agreeable of Kings. "Bluff Hal" was so exasperated at the preference shown by Mary of Lorraine for his nephew of Scotland, that when in 1538 requested to grant permission for her to land on the coast of England in the event of her encountering stormy weather on her passage from France to Scotland, Henry most ungraciously refused it.* Mary of Lorraine subsequently became the mother of Marie Stuart, whose sad history I hope to investigate in the third volume of this work.

* Queens of Scotland, vol. ii.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE WYATT FAMILY.

Thomas Wyatt was descended from an ancient family in Yorkshire. In the days of the Crusaders the name was spelt "Wiet." Radcliff Wiet was a standard-bearer to Richard the First during that monarch's expedition to the Holy Land. Sir Henry Wyatt, the father of the poet, was the first of the family who came to reside at Allington Hall, near Maidstone. He was a Privy Councillor to Henry VII., whose favour he gained in consequence of his adherence to the House of Tudor during the reign of Richard the Third, by whom he was imprisoned in the Tower, and it is stated that he was racked on one occasion in the usurper's presence, but nothing could induce him to become an adherent of Richard's cause. He was one of the supporters of the Earl of Richmond at Bosworth Field, and subsequently appeared at the battle of the Spurs.* Having faithfully discharged his duty to King and country, Sir Henry Wyatt died at the age of 78 years, in 1538, leaving issue two sons and a daughter. His son Henry remained a country squire, whilst Thomas was destined to play a more ambitious rôle. Margaret Wyatt became the wife of Sir Anthony Lee. This lady appears in the most amiable

* There were three English knights present, each of whom had a daughter that in after years became Queen of England; Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Queen Anna; Sir John Seymour, the father of Queen Jane; and Sir Thomas Parr, the father of Catherine, the last and sixth wife of King Henry.

light as the friend of Anna Boleyn. Her friendship was noble, generous, and warm, with a reputation above reproach at a time when virtue and honour were little esteemed. Thomas Wyatt, the poet, was born at Allington about 1503. He was two years younger than his friend Anna Boleyn. At Allington the poet had a lion's whelp and an Irish greyhound as his playmates about the "posied fields." On one occasion, when the lion became somewhat strong, he flew at his young master's shoulder, when the greyhound sprang forward in his defence. Having extricated himself from the imminent danger he was in, Wyatt met the next spring of the lion with a thrust of his sword in the throat.

Young Wyatt was entered at Cambridge when only twelve years of age, where he passed some years. Even at this period he evinced a love of romance, and delighted in telling fairy stories to his schoolfellows. He was then a devout youth. One of his first attempts at letter writing was an epistle in bad Latin to his early playmate, Nan, then about to start for Paris, where her studies were continued. Some years later, Thomas Wyatt married Elizabeth Brooks, daughter of Lord Cobham, whom he much neglected. Sir Henry Norris states that Elizabeth Wyatt died of a broken heart. Anna Boleyn admonished Wyatt as to the attention he should bestow on his wife, desiring him to "spend more time at home." The future Queen wrote to the poet in these words:—

"Dear companion of my childhood, friend of my youth, good be ever with thee; may every day be to thee renewed sunshine; may your own hearth be to you a true home—a home of love and joy. Cherish and love your dear young

wife and child. Give up ambition to greedy knaves, and seek happiness where it will not fail to greet thee, in the old home."

Elizabeth Wyatt's married life was brief. She died in thirteen months after her confinement of a son, who was known in Queen Mary's reign as the ill-fated Sir Thomas Wyatt.

About the time of his wife's death Thomas Wyatt retired from Court circles, a self-accusing conscience haunting him. Too late he prized the enduring love which bore neglect and absence so long. Anna Boleyn describes Elizabeth Wyatt as "one of the most lovable and amiable women, and a model wife."

I have already commented upon the platonic attachment said to exist between Anna Boleyn and the poet. The grandson of Wyatt does not credit the love narratives of Anna and his kinsman. "It was the fashion of the times," he says, "to form platonic attachments for intellectual and learned women." The romantic narratives of the poet Surrey, and the "Fayre Geraldyne" have not yet been cleared up, and perhaps never will. Dr. Nott remarks, "We may believe Thomas Wyatt and Anna Boleyn to have mutually regarded each other with the lively tenderness of an innocent but a dangerous friendship. Often did Wyatt make Anna the subject of his most impassioned strains; and often did she listen with complacency to his poetic addresses, which, while they gratified her present love of admiration, promised to confer upon her charms some portion of that poetic immortality which the romantic passion of Petrarch had bestowed on *his* "Laura."

When Anna Boleyn was created Marchioness of Pembroke, Wyatt felt sad at the false position in which she had

placed herself, and invoking the muse he sent her the following sonnet:—

I.

"Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My greatest travail so gladly spent.
Forget not yet.

II.

"Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know; since when
The suit, the service, none can tell.
Forget not yet.

III.

"Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrongs, the scornful ways,
The painful patience and delays.
Forget not yet.

IV.

"Forget not—oh! forget not this,
How long ago hath been and is
The love *that never meant amiss.*
Forget not yet.

V.

"Forget not now thine own approved,
The which so constant hath thee loved—
Whose steadfast faith hath never moved.
Forget not yet."

At the coronation of Anna as Queen at Westminster Abbey Thomas Wyatt officiated for his father as Chief Endever, and poured scented water on the hands of the newly-created Queen. At this time he was in favour with the King, but was subsequently sent to the Tower. The nature of his offence, if any, is not correctly known. He was released in

a few months. The Duke of Suffolk hated him, which may account for his arrest. After the execution of Anna Boleyn he seems to have attained more of Lord Crumwell's confidence, which does not place the poet in a good light. In 1537 he was appointed ambassador to Charles the Fifth. Judging from Crumwell's State Papers, he gave both the King and the Council general satisfaction. He had reason to complain that his "stipend" was not regularly paid; but it must be remembered that Crumwell made a percentage on the moneys of all officials who dare complain; yet Crumwell is represented as his friend. As a politician Wyatt was one of the most time-serving and unprincipled of the King's agents. He has been described as a leading man amongst the Reformers. There is, however, no reliable evidence to that effect. He received a portion of the monastic plunder; and descended into the grave long before the Reformers appeared as a religious body in England. His "last days" prove that he was still in communion with the faith of his fathers. His position at Court was that of Poet Laureate, and sometimes in waiting on the King or Queen. He had many grave faults. When occasion drew forth his power of repartee, few persons could more adroitly disguise truth with compliment, or fling the shafts of sarcasm with a more apparent carelessness than this Court poet.

The most interesting part of Wyatt's history is that least known—namely, his early associations with Anna Boleyn at Hever Castle. No one of his time had a better knowledge of Anna Boleyn than Wyatt and his sister Margaret. A contemporary has described the poet and Anna as "spoiled children, caressed and loved by relatives and friends, fated to be unhappy, and end their days in sorrow." Margaret

Lee "believed that her brother had secretly loved Anna Boleyn for many years, but she could never ascertain how far Anna responded to that feeling." "True love is contented if it be but returned; the real pang is to part when regret is not mutual." These words are attributed to Anna Boleyn. When thirteen years of age Anna "commenced writing notes to young Wyatt, and they engaged in the innocent gossip of intelligent children." At fourteen she writes from France to "Tom," describing the wedding of the Princess Mary and Louis XII., and concludes her letter as follows:—"*Your loving little Nan.*" These words have been described as the key-note to Anna's *first love.*

In 1541, Sir Thomas Wyatt was attacked by fever, and after twenty days of suffering expired in his thirty-ninth year. For some months before his death the once strong mind became prostrated; he was sad and melancholy. "My only comfort," said he to his cousin, "is now in the practice of that religion which I had so long neglected."

Such was the end of the playmate, of the youth, the friend of maturer years, and, as many contemporaries believed, the long-concealed lover of Anna Boleyn.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE PILGRIMS OF GRACE.

The innovations and confiscations of the Crown caused the angry feeling of the Northern population, who had hitherto enjoyed much prosperity; they beheld their old friends of the monastic houses drifting to ruin; the monks and nuns who supplied them with bread, meat, and clothing in seasons of scarcity or adversity, were now reduced to seek a meal from those whom they had formerly fostered and cherished, and the people regarded them so much that they divided their scanty meal; nuns were found dead on the roadside from the effects of cold and hunger, and many of them aged women who had spent their lives in ministering to the wants of the poor: the abbot, the abbess, the friar, or the wise old nun;* who settled village disputes; who reconciled the rude husband and his gentle wife; who impressed upon children the obligations and the duties they owed to God, their parents, and their country; who reminded youthful manhood of the position it should hold and its career: the maidens, the importance of their mission as the future mothers of an honest and virtuous race. The

* Sister Mary, of the Cistercian Convent at Grantham, in Lincolnshire. In Fitzherbert's quaint chronicle, concerning the "wandering monks and nuns," it is recorded that this lady died in 1562, in her ninety-second year, and in a state of destitution.

local friends of the people—their counsellors and benefactors —were now despoiled; and anarchy and insurrection followed. About sixteen hundred monks and friars joined in the cry of discontent; and the nobles and the gentry who complained that they were deprived of the "corrodies"* reserved to them by the charters of the founders, likewise joined the popular movement.

The Archbishop of York, the Lords Darcy, Neville, Lumley, and Latimer, and many knights and gentlemen, joined the insurgents. The people of Lincolnshire were the first to appear in arms; and Charles, Duke of Suffolk, who was sent down to "despatch them at once," thought discretion preferable to temerity, and made proposals for a negotiation; he wished to know what they had to complain of. The complaints were numerous, but might be reduced to a few: the suppression of the monasteries, which had made the poor man poorer than he had ever been before; of the Statute of Uses in relation to the transfer of land; of the introduction to the King's Council of Thomas Crumwell and Maister Rich. They described Crumwell as a low-born man, once a robber in foreign parts, and then a robber in England; and Rich as a dicer and a false-swearer: they protested against the appointment of Cranmer to the see of Canterbury, and Poynet to that of Rochester, stating that the chief object of those men was to suppress the olden religion of England; Cranmer and Poynet seem to have been extremely un-

* This term was applied to a certain fund established at various abbeys and convents for the relief of the descendants of those who endowed the institution, "if reduced to poverty." The descendants of "donors" had also a right to claim "asylum for their old retainers."

popular with the Pilgrims. The King gave a vague promise to the people to redress grievances, and grant a general pardon; but his agents soon caused dissension in the people's ranks, which led to failure. In five other counties the movement became formidable. From the borders of Scotland to the Lune and the Humber, the masses bound themselves by a solemn oath to "stand together for the love which they bore to Almighty God, His faith, the Holy Church, and the maintenance thereof; to the preservation of the King's person and his issue; to the purifying of the nobility; and to expel all 'villein blood,' and evil councillors from the King's presence: not for any private profit, nor to do displeasure to any private person, nor to slay or murder through envy, but for the restitution of the Church, and the suppression of heretics and their opinions."* The men who took part in this enterprise adopted the quaint title, "Pilgrims of Grace." On their banners were painted the image of Christ crucified, and the chalice and Host, the emblems of their belief; and wherever they appeared, the monks and nuns were restored to their former residences. Hull, York, and Pontefract declared in favour of the Pilgrims. Robert Aske, a gentleman of ancient lineage, at the head of thirty thousand men entered Doncaster; here they were soon afterwards confronted by the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Shrewsbury, with some ten thousand disciplined troops, cannon, and all the appliances of war, but a "sudden swell" in the river causing delay, the Pilgrims of Grace became disheartened, they again sought for an armistice, which was granted by the Duke of Norfolk, in order to give

* Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

time to bring up fresh forces, and, in the interval, excite dissension in the Pilgrim camp. In this scheme he succeeded. The King, however, thought proper to send a written answer to the complaints of the Pilgrims of Grace; and gave authority to Norfolk to treat with them, granting a full pardon to all but ten—six named and four unnamed. This exception caused each of the leaders to fear for his own safety: the Pilgrims rejected the terms. Another negotiation was opened, which was participated in by a large number of the clergy, who met at Pontefract. Amongst the fresh demands made on the King were "that heretical books should be suppressed, that heretical bishops and laymen of the same mind should either be punished according to law, or decide the question with the Pilgrims of Grace in a brave fair fight on the field of battle; that the Statute of Uses, and Treason of Wards, with those which abolished the Papal authority, bastardized the Princess Mary, suppressed the monasteries, and gave to the King the tenths and first-fruits of benefices should be repealed; that Lord Crumwell, Chancellor Audley, and Maister Rich should be tried as subverters of the law and maintainers of heresy; that London, Legh, and Leyton, the monastic commissioners to the northern district, should be prosecuted for extortion, peculation, and other abominable acts." The King and his Council rejected the petition with contempt. "I marvel," writes his Highness to the Pilgrims, "that such ignorant churls as you are should presume to talk of theological subjects to *me, who is so noted in learning of that kind;* or that you should complain of my laws, as if, after the experience of eight-and-twenty years, I did not know how to govern this fair kingdom of mine; or that you should oppose the suppression of

the monasteries. Is it not better, therefore, to relieve and aid me, as the Head of the Church, than to support the slothful and wicked monks?" And again he says, "You can no more give judgment with regard to government than a blind man can as to colours. We, with our whole Council, think it strange that *ye, who are but brutes and inexpert folk,* do take upon you to lecture us as to what is right or wrong."*

In another letter King Henry seems to look on the Northern rising as a serious affair, for he tells the people how much he loves them; "that the humblest of his subjects could have access to his Royal person and state their grievances, which were sure to be redressed." Who so bold amongst the "brutes" as to seek redress? *Nulla vestigia retrorsum* with Henry.

Time, so valuable to all popular risings, was vainly lost by the Pilgrims in marching, counter-marching, and bootless diplomacy, whilst it was utilised on the other hand by the Royal General, who, having his army recruited, marched into the heart of the country, spreading terror and devastation far and near. The Duke of Norfolk's activity was met with hesitation, want of generalship, and consequent panic amongst the Pilgrims, whose once grand array seemed to melt like a morning mist. The enterprise met with the fate of all armed remonstrances, where the masses negotiate before they conquer.

The King was not disliked by the Pilgrims, and they did not wish to fight against him, but they entertained a natural enmity to his ministers. In their marchings and counter-

* Despatches in State Papers of Henry VIII.

marchings the Pilgrims aroused a very strong Papal feeling; they gloried in the name of "Latin Catholics." The Cross was everywhere forward as an emblem by which the "holy brotherhood" were known. The children wore the Cross embroidered in various fancy forms on the right shoulder. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of the women of all ranks and ages. "The English women are the noblest Catholics in the world," was the remark of Narsis Lopez, the great Spanish architect, who visited England in those troubled times.

In October the Pilgrims of Grace marched in three divisions from Pomfret. The enthusiasm on this occasion was great. Old men and women, on the "verge of the grave, were carried out to see the Pilgrims on their march, and to give a blessing to the cause for which they drew the sword."* The tall and handsome Sir Thomas Percy, at the head of five thousand men well armed, carried the banner of St. Cuthbert. Maister Aske and Lord Darcy came next, commanding ten thousand men, all well attired and effectively armed; no motley groups were anywhere to be seen. The emblems of the olden creed were as profuse as they might have been amongst the Crusaders. The Pilgrim cavalry excited the admiration of the country, and startled the Government at every point. They numbered twelve thousand men, "well mounted and appointed, and all in rich armour." This splendid body of cavalry had in its ranks the knights, the esquires, and the yeomen of Richmondshire, Durham, and other districts, as brave and fine a body of men as ever rode to battle-field for creed or

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* Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

fatherland. "We were," writes Sir Marmaduke Constable, "thirty thousand men, tall men, well horsed, and well appointed as any men could be." Sir Marmaduke Constable's statement is corroborated by the Government despatches from the scene of action. Such a military display had not been seen in England since the grandfathers of the Pilgrims of Grace fought on Towton Moor, and the "Red Rose of Lancaster faded before the summer sun of York." With very few exceptions, all the great families of the North were in confederacy with the Pilgrims. The Earl of Westmoreland was represented by the chivalrous Lord Neville; Lord Latimer was with them in person;* Lords Darcy, Lumley, Scrope, and Conyers were in the front ranks of the movement; likewise the ancient family of Constable, the Tempests, the Boweses, the Brydges, the Fairfaxes (not yet Puritan), the Strangways, the Danbys, the St. Johns, the Bulmers, the Lascelles, the Nortons, the Moncktons, the Lowthers, the Ingoldsbys—in fact, almost every family known and recorded in Border story was represented amongst the Pilgrims of Grace.† These men were very unlike the King's description of them, "ignorant churls and brutes that should be handed over to the hangman."‡ The Earl of Northumberland, although sympathising with the cause, refused to draw his sword against the King. His loyalty

* It is curious, if not strange, that the widow of that zealous Catholic, Lord Latimer, should at a subsequent period join the Reformers, enter on a secret campaign of proselytism, and become King Henry's last wife. In the second volume of this work, I shall have occasion to recur to the history of this lady.

† It is worthy of remark that the descendants of those great Catholic families are now—indeed long since—with scarcely an exception, Protestant and Puritan.

‡ State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

in this case would appear to have had a show of chivalry towards the kingly office, for in reality he must have hated Henry Tudor, who crossed him in the path of domestic happiness some years antecedent to these transactions, when, as Lord Henry Percy, he was the suitor for the hand and affections of Anna Boleyn. The reader has already seen the part taken by Wolsey and the King against Percy, and the shameful mode of retaliation subsequently adopted by the latter against the fallen Cardinal. But the Pilgrims of Grace could not induce the Earl of Northumberland to join them; he resolutely refused. The Pilgrims became excited, and indignantly cried out to their leaders "to strike off the proud Earl's head, and make Sir Thomas Percy (his brother) the Lord of Alnwick Castle." When lying on his deathbed the Earl of Northumberland received a deputation from the Pilgrims. He assured them of his devotion to the old Latin creed, but he "honoured the monarchy, and could not in conscience appear in arms against it." He was silent as to the King's demerits, only remarking that he was dying, and forgave every one who injured him. In reply to a more prompt message he said, "If the Pilgrims of Grace think I am not a true man, then let them strike off my head. I can die but once, and it will rid me of the pain I am suffering now. I love my country, and shall die in the old religion to which the Percys always clung."* The better feeling of the Pilgrims of Grace prevailed; they retired from before the Castle walls of the Border Chief, and left him to meet death in peace. "My darling Henry never raised his head since the death of that wicked deceit-

* Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

ful woman, Anna Boleyn," were the words uttered by the Countess of Northumberland, who attended her broken-hearted son in his last illness, and closed his eyes in death.* Such was the last scene in the eventful life of another of Anna Boleyn's romantic lovers.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon, who may be considered a hostile writer, furnishes the following account of the connection of the Percy family with the Pilgrims :—" Henry Percy, the sixth Earl of Northumberland, was a man of the highest rank and power then living beyond the Trent. In the antiquity of his line, in the fame of his fathers, in the extent of his possessions, he stood without a rival. The Lord of Alnwick, Wressil, Leckinfield, and other strong places, he kept the state and exercised the power of a prince, having his Privy Council, his lords and grooms of the chamber, his chamberlains, treasurers, purse-bearers, some of which offices were hereditary in noble houses. . . . . He was the King's deputy in the North, Warden of the East March and the Middle March, the fountain of all authority in the Border lands. If any man could be made prince of a new kingdom of the north, Harry Percy was that man. Like his neighbours, Percy had been slow to follow the great changes then going on in London. As yet the names of Catholic and Protestant had not been heard in Yorkshire. Those who were in arms for the King and Holy Church had risen in favour of old ways and old things; in favour of Queen Katharine, of monks, friars, nuns, and religious houses; points on which Percy of Northumberland took much the same view as his tenants and friends. But Harry

* Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

Percy was unthrifty,* a weak and ailing man, who had never got over his love for Anna Boleyn, and who was mourning in his great house at Wressil, on the Derwent, her starless fate, when Maister Aske and a body of riders dashed into the courtyard of Wressil shouting—'A Percy, a Percy.' The King's Warden of the Marches slipped into bed, and sent out word that he was sick. The Pilgrims would not take this answer; they wanted a Percy in their camp—Earl Harry if it might be—so that folks could say they were marching under the King's flag, with law and justice on their side. Aske sent fresh messages into the sick man's room; either the Earl of Northumberland or his brothers, Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram, he said, must join the camp of the Pilgrims of Grace. These gallant young knights were only too quick to obey his call. The elder brother, Harry Percy, made a feeble protest, and after they were gone, he revoked the commissions which they held under him as officers in the Marches. Katharine, their mother, widow of the Earl of Northumberland, detained them with tears, over what she felt would be their doom. She came of a house which had known the Tower and the block too well, her uncle being that Duke of Somerset who was executed by Edward the Fourth; her great grandsire, that Earl of Warwick, who had given his name to the Beauchamp Tower; but Katharine Percy's

* When Thomas Crumwell carried on the trade of a money-lender in London Lord Percy was amongst his victims. In an account-book of Crumwell's still extant, the name of Lord Percy occurs; he borrowed 40*l.* at an enormous interest. To deal with such an extortioner as Crumwell, shows that Percy deserved the title of "unthrifty Harry." His father, according to Cavendish, describes Percy as a proud, unthinking man, who wasted much money.

sons, though they paused for a moment at the warning cries of their noble mother, instantly leapt to horse, and clad in flashing steel, and flaunting plumes, rode forward into the camp, where the Pilgrims of Grace received them with a wild enthusiasm. That shining steel, that dazzling plume were afterwards cited as evidence that they had joined the Pilgrims by deliberate choice, and his fine attire caused one of the brothers to lose his head."*

Adopting this confirmation, Sir Thomas Percy and his brother Ingram, decked with gay plumes and gorgeous armour, were in the ranks of the Northern Pilgrims. Sir Thomas Percy, who was heir to the earldom, was amongst those who perished on the scaffold. The Earldom was subsequently conferred by Queen Mary on Sir Thomas Percy's son, who was known in the reign of Elizabeth as the "Stout Earl." This nobleman, in conjunction with many others took up arms in favour of the Queen of Scots; failure and disaster followed.† He was sentenced to death; and beheaded at York, and his body quartered. In 1585, the next brother who held the title was committed to the Tower on the charge of high treason. It is alleged that he committed suicide; but as he was a man under the influence of religion, the statement is highly improbable. It was believed at the time that Elizabeth's secret agents murdered him. The despatches of La Motte Fenelon, the French ambassador, throw a flood of light on the proceedings of Elizabeth

* In Sir Charles Sharpe's Memorials of the "Northern Rebellion," are to be found some particulars as to the misfortunes of the Percy Family; also vol. iv. of Miss Strickland's Queens of England.

† Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iv. p. 539; Davison's narrative; Sir Harris Nicolas.

as to the "Northern Rebels," which exceeded in barbarity the massacres perpetrated by her father against the Pilgrims of Grace.

"In spite of the explanations given by the Government," writes Mr. Hepworth Dixon, "folks would not believe that Percy, Earl of Northumberland, died by his own hand. Sir Christopher Hatton bore the odium of contriving a midnight murder; for many years the event was spoken of as a political assassination; and that by men who like Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Robert Cecil, knew every mystery of the Court."* Sir Harris Nicolas pronounces the accusation of murder against Hatton to be "scandalous and untrue." But Percy of Northumberland was undoubtedly murdered by some of Lord Burleigh's or the Queen's agents. An inquest on a political prisoner in the reign of Elizabeth was a dismal sham. The true mode by which the unfortunate nobleman was assassinated remains still a mystery. Sir Harris Nicolas thus exonerates Hatton: he observes, "that Sir Christopher Hatton's position rendered him an object of envy cannot be doubted; but he seems to have made more friends and fewer enemies than any other Royal favourite." The biographers of Hatton are at issue as to his merits. Lord Campbell, Sir Harris Nicholas, and Mr. Foss all disagree. Mr. Foss seems indignant at the allegation that Chancellor Hatton "spent his time as the dancing favourite of Elizabeth." Sir Robert Naunton and his contemporaries thought otherwise. Sir Harris Nicolas, however, has no faith in gossipping Naunton, whom he accuses of "petty jealousy." Camden, the secretary and friend of Lord

* Her Majesty's Tower, by Hepworth Dixon.

Burleigh, although on "bad terms" with Hatton, speaks of his "handsome and commanding figure winning the Queen's affections." Hatton's letters to the Queen, which had been little noticed until calendared by Sir Harris Nicolas, some thirty-two years ago, are strange documents, and breathe all the warmth of a passionate lover, rather than the respectful and humble address of a subject. "These documents, and some others in this collection," writes our great antiquary, "will probably raise a strong doubt upon her Majesty's right to her favourite and well known designation."* Elizabeth's answers to those extraordinary missives are supposed to be somewhere in the Record Office. Hatton, however, had many good qualities. "He was," observes one of his distinguished biographers, "the constant resource of the unfortunate, knowing on such occasions no distinction of religion; in whose cause, he nobly said, neither *searing nor cutting was to be used.* He was the frequent intercessor in cases of persecution, and the patron and, better still, the friend of literary men, who repaid his kindness by the only means in their power, thanks—the Exchequer of the Poor—in the dedication of their works. All that is known of Hatton proves that his heart and disposition were amiable, his temper mild, and his judgment less biassed by the prejudices of his age than that of most of his contemporaries."

To return to the Pilgrims. The secular clergy were dis-

* In the Hatton Letter Bag (calendared by Sir H. Nicolas) are printed several of Hatton's letters to the Queen. It is impossible to misunderstand the meaning of those documents. Elizabeth's pet name for Hatton was "Lids" or "Lyddes." His person was tall, handsome, and courtly, and he had an exquisite voice. The Queen loved him passionately—"for awhile."

affected in the provinces; they had reason to complain bitterly of the conduct of the new ecclesiastical inquisitors. George Lumley, a son of the nobleman of that name, stated in his evidence before the Council, that the priests in the north of England had "assisted the Pilgrims of Grace with money and provisions."* Many of the seculars were at first opposed to the movement; but when their "small household property was seized upon by Lord Crumwell's agents, they became exasperated; still they did not join the popular movement.† The next command from Crumwell was to seize the Church plate; the chalice was *torn from the tabernacle* by the hands of such men as Richard Crumwell. A *tin vessel* was supplied to each church or chapel, to be *used as a chalice.*‡ When the government made this sacrilegious confiscation the priests and the people at once coalesced. Popular indignation was at its height; and the people cried out for Lord Crumwell's head, whom they styled the "arch heretic." "Down with the villein," was the shout raised in every town and village.§

Disaster followed disaster with the Pilgrims of Grace. Nearly all their principal leaders were taken prisoners. Lord Darcy, Aske, Constable, Bigod, the Abbots of Fountains and Jervaulx, Sir John Bulmer, Lord Lumley's son, Tempest, and thirteen others of ancient family, were tried in London, and at once condemned to death. Some were executed at Tyburn; others at York and Hull. The King indulged in one of his savage sayings—"*Let there be no*

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* MSS. in the State Paper Office. † Thorndale's Memorials.

‡ Ecclesiastical Returns concerning Church Plate made to Lord Crumwell.

§ Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

delay; hang them up at once." Lady Bulmer, a very beautiful woman, was consigned to the flames at Smithfield by a special Tudor code, which condemned women to the stake, "*with its worst tortures,*" if they committed high treason. Lady Bulmer died like a heroic woman. "*I have,*" said she, "*come here to die for the old religion of England; I have nothing to regret; and I rejoice and thank my God that I am given an opportunity of offering up my life for the true faith of Jesus Christ.*"*

Mr. Hepworth Dixon represents Lady Bulmer as insane; that she was the illegitimate daughter of Stafford Duke of Buckingham, who was beheaded in the early part of Henry's reign. And further, "she was not *the* wife of Sir John Bulmer; her name was Madge Cheyne." And again he observes: "She was a *devout woman, if not an honest wife;* she brought with her into the Pilgrims' camp, not only her high blood and bickering tongue, but Father Stonhouse, her family priest." If the lady whose memory Mr. Hepworth Dixon thus traduces held such a position, no Catholic priest, holding a bishop's licence, could fill the office of chaplain and confessor to her; so Mr. Dixon's allegations fall to pieces like a house of cards. If a wild enthusiasm on the part of the English matrons and their daughters in favour of the Pilgrims can be construed into madness, then there was plenty of insanity in the provinces. Mr. Dixon cannot afford a good word for the Pilgrims, to whom he applies many harsh epithets.

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* Dr. Creci's Scenes at the Stake; a very scarce black letter book; Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

When Lord Darcy was examined before the Privy Council, he turned on Lord Crumwell, "once his professing friend," and now, regardless of his enmity, he said—"Crumwell, it is thou that art the very special and chief causer of all this rebellion (movement) and mischief, and art likewise causer of the apprehension of us that be (the word here has faded away), and dost daily earnest (travel) to bring us to our ends, and to strike off our heads; but I trust, that ere thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblemen's heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet shall there remain one head (and arm) that shall strike off thy head."* In Lord Darcy's petition to the King he says—"I beg to have confession, and at Mass to receive my Adorable Maker (the Holy Eucharist), that I may depart in peace from this vale of misery." In a letter to Henry, he besought the King in pathetic words that his "entire body" (when Royal vengeance was satisfied) might be laid beside the remains of the wife of his early love, once known as the beautiful Anne Neville—the type of all that was generous and good in her sex. Lord Darcy further implored, that his debts might be paid out of his own property. Aske and others petitioned that their families "might not be reduced to poverty and ruin."† How far such requests were attended to by Lord Crumwell it is unnecessary to inquire.

Some of the Pilgrims acted in a half-hearted spirit on

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* This brief address of Lord Darcy is to be seen in a MS. at the Rolls House; and, what is more curious still, it is in Lord Crumwell's own handwriting—thus inditing a premonition of his own fate.

† State Papers of Henry's reign.

their trial, but most of them were firm, and at the scaffold behaved in a manner worthy of men whose fathers were famed in the wars of the Plantagenets; but, with that proud feeling which was often evinced by the old historic families of England, they protested against being stigmatised as rebels; they placed themselves in the position of "defenders of the olden religion of the country," which, they argued, was older than any monarchy in Europe. They were still loyal to his Highness; but their loyalty to the Papal Church could only be extinguished in their blood. The scenes which took place throughout the country attested the truth of their declarations; for no men ever died at the hands of the headsman with greater moral courage, veneration, and love for the creed of their forefathers than did the leaders of the Pilgrims of Grace.

In York, Hull, Carlisle, and Pontefract, some seven hundred persons were hanged, amongst whom were many monks and friars. The scenes of slaughter ended with "hanging upon the trees a score of men in every village the King's generals passed along." The poor unlettered peasantry died like heroes, but "*without benefit of clergy.*" The "old nobles" were friendly to the Pilgrims of Grace, and it is even alleged that the Duke of Norfolk "secretly wished them well." No action of his life, however, supplies credence to such an opinion. If he was a chivalrous courtier, he always chose the strongest side, whereby his interests were best promoted. A despatch of his from Welby Abbey, throws some light on what manner of man the "hero of Flodden Field" really was. He says:—"By any means, *fair or foul, I will crush the rebels* (the Pilgrims);

*I will esteem no promise that I make to them, nor think my honour touched in the violation of the same."**

There was no lack of enthusiasm or bravery on the part of the Northern Pilgrims, and they had a powerful incentive to persevere in the fact that the Royal army were supposed to be disaffected, both officers and men, who abhorred the King's Council, especially Lord Crumwell. Nevertheless, the Pilgrim generals lost their opportunities, perhaps through the incapacity of Lord Darcy. Both parties have accused him of treachery, but he was no traitor; and many circumstances plead in his favour. He belonged to the old class of nobility, who looked upon a king as "the anointed of the Lord." He served under Henry VII., and gave many sumptuous entertainments to that monarch. He had fought against the Moors with King Ferdinand, and he had earned laurels in France also. He had some military reputation. In early life he travelled to the Holy Land; he visited Rome, and paid homage to the spiritual head of his religion. He was strongly opposed to the German Reformation, and when the question of the King's supremacy was raised, he made several speeches in the House of Lords on the subject. He was most outspoken on the question of the Pope's spiritual headship, and did not seem to care whether his sentiments pleased the King or not; but at the same time he did not like to be stigmatised as a rebel. The name sounded odious in his ear. Mr. Froude insinuates treachery and cowardice in his conduct; but it is easy to draw an unfavourable inference from the uncertain accounts that have reached posterity of the real circumstances which led

* State Papers, vol. i. p. 519.

to the overthrow of the movement. It must be likewise remembered that Lord Darcy was nearly eighty-two years old, and weighed down with infirmity and domestic sorrows; nevertheless, he ascended the scaffold bravely, and died like a true Christian man.

From the last terrible despatch of King Henry to the commander of his army may be judged the kind of faith with which monarch and general had conducted the negotiations with an injured people. "The further," writes his Highness, "you wade in the investigation of the behaviour of those monks, the worse you will find them."* In conclusion, the proclamation says:—

"Our kingly pleasure is that, before you close up our Royal banner again, you shall cause such *dreadful execution to be done upon a number of the inhabitants of every town, village, and hamlet that have offended, as shall make a spectacle to others who might wish to offend hereafter against our Royal command.* Finally, as all those troubles have been caused by the monks and canons of those parts, you shall, *without pity, cause all the said monks and all the said canons that in any wise have been faulty to be tied up without further delay or ceremony.*"

In 1513, many years before Crumwell and Cranmer became advisers to the Crown, Henry wrote to Leo X., eulogising the religious orders of England—the Franciscans, Minors, or Grey Friars being special objects of his commendation. He described them as "remarkable for Christian poverty, sincerity, charity, and devotion."†

* State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

† Ellis's Original Royal Letters, vol. i. p. 166.

"Tied up" signified to be hanged from the nearest tree, "without benefit of clergy." The Duke of Norfolk obeyed the Royal command. In two days he hanged seventy-four persons in Westmoreland and Cumberland. A large proportion of them were priests, some forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, and one eighty-six years of age. To this number may be added twelve abbots who were hanged, drawn, and quartered.*

One of the abbots executed was Thomas Maigne, a man of considerable learning and stainless character. At his trial the abbot addressed the jury in an eloquent strain for three hours; but that tribunal having been "carefully selected," Maigne was speedily consigned to the executioner. He died bravely, telling his companions that they were "about to suffer for the faith of Jesus Christ." Lord Hussey went through the form of a trial; he was found guilty and executed.† The mode of dealing with this unfortunate nobleman was marked by treachery and dishonour; yet it is alleged by some writers that Lord Hussey "had all the advantages of a fair trial." The record of what took place is the most conclusive answer that can be made to this assertion.

As I have already remarked, seventy-four persons were "hanged and quartered" in three days at Westmoreland and Cumberland. Several of them were aged priests.‡

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* State Papers; Woodville; Sharon Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. iv.; Froude, vol. iii. In the Hardwicke State Papers, vol. i., some additional light is thrown on the murderous proceedings of the King and his Council in relation to the Pilgrims of Grace.

† Crumwell's State Papers.

‡ Hall; Stowe's Chronicle; MS. State Paper Office.

Here is Mr. Froude's commentary on this dreadful scene:—"The severity was *not excessive, but it was sufficient to produce the desired result. The rebellion was finished. The flame was trampled out.*"*

An old tradition of Cumberland states that a number of poor women and their daughters collected the mutilated remains of the dead and gave them burial in a Christian form. On the following day an Irish Dominican named Ulick de Burgh celebrated Mass for the deceased Pilgrims; he was soon after arrested, and hanged from a tree by Richard Crumwell as an "incendiary offering prayers for rebels who died 'without benefit of clergy.'"†

The Duke of Suffolk acted the part of a perfect monster to the women who were arrested for "cheering on the Pilgrims." "Chuck these women off from the nearest tree," were the words of Suffolk to Colonel Talbot. The King desired that the women who committed "high treason," as he would have it, should be sent to the stake, in the same manner as Lady Bulmer, but his officers pleaded for the "rope" as the most expeditious.

The Pilgrims of Grace met with no quarter; they were decimated by the Royal troops in their broken retreat; and hundreds of them were found dead in the ditches and roadsides from hunger and exhaustion. The women in the rural districts acted in the most heroic manner.

As in all revolutionary movements, the Pilgrims were guilty of some excesses, but not one-tenth of what has been attributed to them. "Whenever they fell into the hands

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* Froude's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 203.

† Woodville's Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.

of the King's adherents they received no mercy—not even to women or children. In a moment of "rage and red-hot passion," the Pilgrims slew one of the principal canons of the Cathedral of Lincoln. He was known to have been a spy for Lord Crumwell, whilst at the same time expressing sympathy with the popular cause. His murder was a shocking affair. Mr. Froude alleges that several priests cried out, "kill him." If Mr. Froude had stated that a number of half-mad women cried out, Kill "Crumwell's Judas," he would have approached nearer to the facts of the case. The learned gentleman considers that Stow and Holinshed "knew nothing of the movement of the Pilgrims; they are no authority." The reason is obvious. The public are invited to accept Mr. Froude's narrative. The wholesale butchery of the peasantry was "according to law;" therefore it should receive no censure. Richard, brother to Lord Crumwell, was invested with the command of some troops, but his real office was that of a spy for the King, to ascertain whether "certain squires were in earnest, true, and loyal." He writes in glowing terms of Sir John Russell. "Russell assured him that his hatred of the Pilgrims was so great that he could eat them without salt."* Another account is to the effect that Sir John Russell said, "Leave the lazy monks to me, and I will soon dangle them from the trees," to which Richard Crumwell replied, "I would rather yoke them to a plough that they might taste of hard work." Richard Crumwell performed many offices for Henry of which there is no record extant. The term "Lollard" was sometimes applied to Richard Crumwell in

* MS. State Paper Office.

relation to his "sacking" convents in search of jewellery for the King. He was a special favourite with Henry, who invested him with knighthood in a most gracious manner. "Formerly," says the delighted monarch, "thou wast my Dick, but hereafter shall be my diamond," and thereat let fall his diamond ring unto him; "in avowance whereof," writes Fuller, "these Crumwells have ever since given for their crest a lion holding a diamond ring in his fore paw."*

The examination of some of the Pilgrims before Lord Crumwell as to the "causes of the discontent" are of considerable importance.

"The discontent," says Aske, "extended to the county families who shared or imitated the prejudices of their feudal leaders; every family had their own peculiar grievances. On the suppression of the abbeys, the peers obtained grants, or expected to obtain them, from the forfeited estates. The county squires saw the desecration of the familiar scenes of their daily life, the violation of the tombs of their ancestors, and the buildings themselves, the beauty of which was the admiration of foreigners who visited England, reduced to ruins. The abbeys were the most picturesque and beautiful places in the realm, and always a source of delight to the people of other nations. The abbots had been the personal friends of the local gentry, the trustees for their children, and the executors of their wills; the monks had been the tutors of their children; the free tables constantly covered with good cheer had made convents and abbeys attractive and popular—especially in remote places, and during severe weather. The immediate

* Fuller's History of English Abbeys, edited by Dr. Brewer, vol. iii.

neighbourhood of a large abbey or convent *was a busy hive of industry; no one hungry; the sick, infirm, and aged cared for with tenderness.*"* Upon this report Mr. Froude remarks—"I am glad to have discovered the most considerable evidence in favour of some at least of the superiors of the religious houses."† George Gisborne, who lived by land, said that the poor people were left without the commons or patches of ground which their families held for centuries; that they were oppressed by a new class of squires, *who doubled the rent.*‡ Other witnesses dwelt upon the losses their children and themselves had suffered by the confiscation of the abbeys.

The grievances spoken of by the Pilgrims of Grace were frequently alluded to by Hugh Latimer in his "rustic speeches," yet those revolutionary proceedings were suggested and carried out by the very class of men with whom Latimer was so intimately connected. These facts are attested by the State Papers and records of the times, and it is impossible to deny their accuracy.

The Pilgrims of Grace were neither traitors nor rebels, but rather conservative and patriotic in all their actions; they are almost unknown to posterity; they have been misrepresented by some recent writers, as they had been cruelly calumniated by others. Since the days of the first Crusade no such enthusiastic movement of Catholics had taken place in England to confront the present and pressing foe of their belief. Youth and old age rushed to the standard of the Pilgrims with self-devoted ardour. Those knights of the

* Examination of Aske; Rolls House MS.; Crumwell's State Papers.
† Froude, vol. iii. p. 89.
‡ Rolls House MSS.

Cross did not war against the King but with his Council, who had overthrown the national religion and raised anarchy, bloodshed, and confiscation in its place. Those nobles, knights, and squires who were condemned to the scaffold met death in a manner worthy of the heroes of antiquity; like the Christian martyrs of yore, they advanced to the headsman singing hymns of praise to the Most High. And, standing on the threshold of eternity, they proclaimed their devotion to the faith of their fathers. Such is the story of the Pilgrims of Grace—another phase of that impetuous tyranny which first made England acquainted with a Christian Diocletian.

CHAPTER XL.

THE KING'S SUPREMACY IN IRELAND.

Whilst a large number of the convocations, bishops, clergy, and laity of England professed to accept the King's Supremacy in spiritual matters, a very different feeling existed amongst the English settlers in Ireland. The native Irish and their chiefs outside the districts known as the "Pale," or English colony, as a matter of course ignored King Henry's rule in everything, whilst those within the English district could not be brought to change their creed. Archbishop Brown's letter from Dublin, in 1538, exhibits the manner in which Lord Crumwell and Dr. Cranmer endeavoured to introduce the Reformation into Ireland, although both at this period professed to be members of the Latin Church; but what Cranmer professed to believe, and what were his real opinions, seldom harmonised.

"Since my coming over here," writes Archbishop Brown, "I have been unable, even in the diocese of Dublin, to induce any, either religious or secular, to preach the Word of God or the King's just title as Supreme Head over the Church. . . . . They that then could, and would very often, even until the right Christians were weary of them, preach after the old sort and fashion, will now not once open their lips in any pulpit for the manifestation of the same, but in corners and such company as them liketh, they can full earnestly utter their opinions. . . . . The Observants are worse than all the others, for I can make them neither swear nor

preach amongst us. This comes from the extreme handling that my Lord Deputy hath used towards me, what by often imprisonment and expelling me from my own house, keeping there no hospitality at all, and so contemptuously villify me, that I take God to record I had, but that hope comforteth me, rather forsake all those to abide so many ignominious reproaches. . . . . For the love ye bear to the sincere doctrine of God's word, and the setting forward of our Prince's title, send to Master Treasurer, the Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, or any two of them, such a straight (strict) commandment over me and all other ecclesiastical persons, as I perceive the King's Highness hath sent of late through England to the sheriffs of every shire. . . . . There is never an archbishop or bishop but myself, made by the King, but he is repelled, even now by provision. Again, for all that ever I could do, might I not make them once, but as I send my own servants to do it, to cancel out of the Canon of the Mass, or other books the name of the Bishop of Rome. . . . . As for lack of dispensations they (we) are compelled to sue to Rome. I think it necessary that we should have dispensations, a vicar-general, and a master of faculties. A pardon hath lately come from Rome much of consonant (similar) to a pardon granted by Julian the Second in the time of the wars between the French King and himself: and that was, that they who should enjoy it were to fast on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, after they heard of the same; and were to receive Communion on the Sunday following. . . . . Now, if such things go unpunished whilst the King's High Commissioners are here (in Dublin) in seeing these men so ready and prompt to admit the Bishop of Rome's letters, and so sturdy and fling (ripe) against our Prince's power, what will men think?

(Signed) "George Brown.

"Dublin, January 8th day, 1538.

"To the Lord Privy Seal of England, Thomas Crumwell."*

The Viceroy's account of Dr. Brown differs widely from

* Carew State Papers (Brewer and Boleyn), 1515-1574, p. 135-6.

the character drawn by that prelate of himself. Brown's conduct was so unbecoming—in fact, so scandalous for a man holding the position of a bishop—that King Henry wrote to him a "severe rebuke." His drunkenness and immorality were notorious, and he took little trouble to conceal it. Even his friend, Dr. Cranmer, "gently" remonstrated at first, and subsequently told him he was "a wicked bad priest, who would bring disgrace upon the Reformation, then in an infant state." The majority of the clergy of the diocese of Dublin refused to preach at all, rather than in favour of the King's Supremacy.* The history of what occurred in Ireland at this time in relation to the Reformation is of a fragmentary description, many of the most important records having been destroyed. Sufficient is known, however, to arrive at the conclusion that both the "English of the Pale, and the native chiefs and tribes," were united in their intensity of hatred to the Reformation movement, which at this time presented itself in the form of the "King's Supremacy."

In some despatches to Lord Crumwell, Dr. Brown complains of the "favours granted" to the Observant Fathers† by the Lord Deputy; Brown here makes some important admissions, for he assures Crumwell that "the English by descent and other settlers, have a decided *distaste to any change from* the principles of the Bishop of Rome." In another communication the Archbishop believes the English of the Pale to be "as obstinate Papists as the wild Irish themselves."

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* Irish State Papers; Lord Leonard Grey's Despatches.

* The above religious order were in connection with the heroic community of Greenwich.

Lord Leonard Grey and the Irish judges were at that period hostile to Dr. Brown; they had heard of the King's claims to be Head of the Church with dismay, but a prelate with *a wife and two mistresses they would not tolerate.* Lord Grey subsequently became the victim of party conspiracy. He was impeached for treason, but there is no record of it extant. He was obnoxious to Archbishop Brown's friends at the English Court, whose efforts to promote the Reformation in Ireland were baffled by Grey and the Irish judges. Let it be remembered that the Reformation assumed many undefined forms at this period, the principal being hostility to the Papal authority, a standard which gathered around it many who had no idea of joining the "new learning," or were actuated by political motives.

Several English historians contend that Grey rendered much service to the English Crown in Ireland. The "Irish difficulty" in those days caused ruin or loss of life to several Viceroys. Lord Grey "never made recompense for the wrongs which he inflicted upon Irishmen," has been often repeated.* It is supposed that Archbishop Brown was one of the principal witnesses against Lord Grey. Grey's ignorance of Ireland, and the mode of managing parties there, led him into many fatal mistakes; he was charged with having been bribed by the Irish chiefs;† that he had assisted the O'Neills to oppress the Maguires, who were friendly to English rule; that he was mean and treacherous, and "did nothing to conciliate the native

* Irish State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

† This accusation was absurd. The Irish chiefs had no means to bribe; they were miserably poor at the time. Lord Grey, however, was not the man to disgrace the Viceregal office by such conduct.

Irish." He was, however, neither mean nor treacherous; but sometimes hasty and rash. The charges brought against him were ninety in number, but were reduced to five. One of the indictments against him was that "he had aided in the escape of that persecuted child, Gerald Fitzgerald; and further in corresponding with Cardinal Pole." Lord Herbert alleges that he made a confession of his crimes, but there is no document extant to throw any light on the subject. Many years subsequent Lord Kildare solemnly affirmed that Grey had no concern whatever in his escape. The facts of the case were, that Henry VIII. vowed vengeance against the Geraldines, and no less than six of that ancient family perished on the scaffold in a few months. Lord Leonard Grey's opposition to the "new learning" made him unpopular with Archbishop Cranmer. The Archbishop's name does not appear in those proceedings, but there are documents extant which prove that he sustained the policy of Dr. Brown in Ireland. Lord Grey was neither prudent nor discreet, as those qualities were then understood; he fell a victim to a combination formed against him by men, who, whilst hating one another, acted with fatal concord when their interests pointed to a sacrifice. I shall however, have occasion to allude to many similar combinations in the course of this work.

The treachery with which Lord Grey has been charged in relation to the ill-fated and chivalrous Geraldines has not been clearly established. He was surrounded in Dublin by officials who had no regard either for the lives or the liberties of the people. He held the office of Lord Deputy of Ireland twice, and was in London at the period of Anna Boleyn's overthrow. The most painful incidents of his life

occurred about this time, for he was ordered by Lord Crumwell to take the command of the household troops, who guarded the fallen Queen, from the Palace of Placentia to the Tower. He dared not refuse; he was, however, overwhelmed with grief at the recollection that the happiest days of his youth were spent in the society of Anna Boleyn at Hever Castle. "Like Thomas Wyatt," observes Barlow, "my good master and noble friend loved Nan de Boleyn in secret for years." A sad end awaited Lord Leonard Grey: he was again impeached for high treason, in May, 1544, and beheaded a few days subsequently. There are no records extant of the exact charges against him, or by whom preferred. It is affirmed by the chronicles of the time that he died like a good Catholic and a brave man. In England he was considered "amiable and harmless," and perhaps the best member of the haughty and profligate house of Dorset. His secretary, Roger Barlow, states that "very early in life he had a disappointment, a sweet romance, the recollection of which in after years made him sad." Barlow adds: "He was passionately fond of Irish music, and gave a kindly greeting to the bards of Ireland whenever they came near unto him." Lord Leonard Grey and his heroic young wife lived in love and harmony, always doing good, seeking to reform the wicked, to console the unhappy, to visit the sick, to shelter the friendless, and to have pity for the unfortunate. Take him for all and all, Leonard Grey deserved a far better fate.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ABBOTS OF GLASTONBURY AND WOBURN.

The story of the last Abbot of Glastonbury is a grim narrative. Richard James Whiting, Abbot of that wonderful and storied pile—grand even now in its extensive ruins—had arrived at the age of eighty-four years when he encountered the fatal anger of King Henry. Whiting was both a lover and patron of learning, was distinguished for his pious, gentle nature, and, as the long-standing repute of the Abbey demanded, he was unboundedly hospitable. Every Wednesday and Friday the poor of the neighbourhood came in crowds to his gate, and on occasions as many as five hundred of the country gentry were entertained by the Abbot's cheer. Three hundred boys, the sons of gentlemen, were educated, fed, and lodged at the Abbey. The education given to those youths was, taking respective opportunities of teacher and pupil, quite equal to that now obtained at Eton or Westminster. A large number of destitute orphans were also maintained by the Abbey, which had borne a high reputation for centuries. But it was now doomed. On a September morning (1539) Lord Crumwell's Commissioners came suddenly to Glastonbury, about ten of the clock. The Abbot was not at home, so they at once proceeded to Sharphorn, another residence of the community, and found the venerable Father in his library at prayers. Neither his age nor high clerical position

could command respect. They spoke, as averred, with grossness and insolence; they questioned him on many matters of which he appeared to have known nothing. They brought him back to the Abbey, and when he went to bed that night, they searched his study for letters and books, and found secreted (they said) an MS. of his own arguments against the divorce of the King and Queen Katharine, which the Commissioners took "to be a great matter;"* also divers pardons, copies of Papal bulls, and the "Counterpart Life of Thomas à Becket" in print. The inquisitors, as the report continues, "could not find any letter that was material."† Dean Layton, however, considered himself amply provided with materials for a charge of high treason. He writes to Crumwell of the Abbot's "crooked and treacherous conduct and bad heart." At this very time Lord Crumwell was well aware of the stainless character and generous feelings of Dr. Whiting. In another letter Dr. Layton (to Lord Crumwell) thus describes the aged Abbot:—"The Abbot of Glastonbury appeareth neither then nor now to have known God nor his King, nor any part of a good Christian man's religion. They be all false, feigned, flattering hypocrites, knaves, as undoubtedly there is more other of that sort."‡ There is on record, in reply to this, abundant evidence of the utter falsehood of Layton's correspondence. Mr. Froude states

* Katharine had been dead some three years at this time.

† In Stephen's Monasticum, p. 425, it is stated as a positive fact that the "King's searchers brought in this little book against the divorce, and concealed it in the library without the Abbot's knowledge." The Rev. J. H. Blunt adds to this the brief but pregnant comment, "Nothing more likely."

‡ State Papers, vol. ii. p. 621.

that the Monastic Inquisitors "did not trouble themselves to speculate on the intentions of the Abbot. His motives were of no moment." Of course not. The writer of official slander on the Abbot was about six-and-twenty years of age, and filled the office, not won by his virtues, of Dean of York, and several pluralities. The Abbot was sent to London "chained in a cart," under a guard composed of drunken ruffians who were familiar with all the barbarous horrors of prisoners' treatment in gaol. The wealth of Glastonbury was the subject of a long report from Layton, and likewise of a curious paper dwelling at some length on the services the monks rendered to the people, and the popularity of the inmates from time immemorial. This document was destroyed by Crumwell, at the suggestion of Dean Layton, who said, "*Do not let the King see this paper,*"* and so another report was "prepared for his Highness." This was a matter of frequent occurrence. An inquirer, with a certain degree of power, and an uncertain amount of conscience, can compass, when left to "his own discretion," a report fully suited to the requirements of his employer, or of himself. And this was the settled system of the inquisitors, who were merely commissioned to approve foregone conclusions of the most cruel and unjust nature. Thorndale, who was well acquainted with the inquisitors and the monks, states that he received this item of intelligence from Pollard, who consulted him frequently as an architect as to the value of some old places that were consigned to destruction. The mode of torture still continued. Layton and Pollard made a fresh communication to Lord

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* Layton's Despatches to Crumwell; Thorndale's Memorials.

Crumwell. "They had discovered fresh treasons committed by the Abbot." . . . . Those treasons ascribed to the venerable Abbot and his community consisted in the endeavour to conceal the sacred vessels of the church from the hands of these inquisitorial marauders. The same "treason" was said to have been committed in many communities.* The fate of the Abbot of Glastonbury and his brethren was arranged by Lord Crumwell three months before the Commissioners proceeded to the Abbey; the secret despatches of Crumwell make his plans pretty clear. "The grand old Abbot," as the Rev. J. H. Blunt styles him, "broken in mind and wasted by sickness and imprisonment, *was carted* from London to Wells to go through the form of a trial by jury, the result having been duly arranged by a 'sorting' of the evidence—Crumwell's own phrase. Never was there a ghastlier outrage upon the forms of justice than trial by jury at that epoch in England." Jurymen at the present day are not in many cases famed for wisdom, and they have even been accused of not being always honest. But in the time I write of, the hapless juror went to his seat with his own life in his hands, as much as, if not more than, the life of the accused. "The noble old Abbot," the Rev. Mr. Blunt states, "could not comprehend the proceedings, being deaf

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* There is a tradition at Durham that the jewels and plate of the Cathedral of that see still remain in some undiscovered place of concealment. So late as the year 1866 a fruitless search was made for the plate. The Earl of Bristol (Bishop of Derry), the most popular English Protestant Bishop that was ever quartered upon a very unconcurring race, gave to the Catholic clergy of his diocese, according to Dr. Stewart's "Antiquities of Armagh," a chestful of vestments, sacred vessels, &c., supposed to have been buried in the reign of Elizabeth, just before the "Flight of the Earls," one of whom lies in Rome, the other in Spain.

and ill," and likewise allowed no counsel. To judge of the "counsel" of that time, it may be said, without question, that the Abbot would have lost nothing by his deafness, even if he could have procured "legal advice." Equity and legal honour in England had for some three years been buried in the headless grave of Sir Thomas More. In the case under investigation, I may briefly state that the Abbot of Glastonbury underwent a judicial mockery in the form of a trial, and was condemned "within three hours," to be hanged and quartered on the following day. He asked permission to take leave of the monks, his domestics, retainers, and many little orphans whom he had "gathered from far and near," all of whom loved their benevolent guardian. His "supplications" merely elicited the laughter of Russell and Layton. A panic spread through the country, and the people evinced a determination to "deliver or avenge" the Abbot. Sir John Russell, however, was prompt and energetic in "subduing commotion," and having "hanged half a dozen men, and lashed a few more at the cart's-end," declared that "law, order, and loyalty were vindicated." The very name of Russell struck terror into the hearts of the people of Somersetshire.

The next stage in the tragic history of Glastonbury was the execution of the Lord Abbot. "At one of the clock Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury, was placed on a hurdle, after the fashion of a murderer, and drawn through the village to the top of Tor-hill, which overlooked the Abbey of Glastonbury." Here the Abbot was again met with insult, uttered in the vilest language by one of the inquisitors, who demanded "a truthful confession and acknowledgment of his crimes." "I have no crimes to

confess," said the aged Abbot. "I have faithfully served the King; *but my duty to God, and the commands of His Church, I shall obey and defend, even though it may cost me my life. I glory in the holy cause for which you are about to shed my blood.*" Then turning to the newly-created Lord Russell, the Abbot said, "*I am now ready to die.*" *

Lord Russell's letter to Crumwell, stating "the good work of the week," is brief, but to the purpose. The date is torn off in the MS., but it is some day in the month of October, 1539. "The Abbot of Glastonbury was arraigned, and the next day put to execution, with two of his monks, *for the robbery of Glastonbury Church.* On the Tor-hill, next unto the town of Glaston, the said Abbot was executed, his body *divided in four parts, whereof one quarter* standeth at Wells, another at Bath, and Ilchester, and Bridgewater, the rest and his head were placed right over the Abbey gate at Glaston." †

Such are the facts as to the end of the last Abbot of Glastonbury, and of the last good that ever emanated to the poor from that noble institution. Russell, the son of a Bristol adventurer, never performed his work by halves, and the people of Somerset and Devon soon sadly verified the statements, which bear undeniable attestation in the handwriting of the chief actors and their agents. The hapless Pilgrims of Grace could not well forget Glastonbury.

An aged prelate, honoured and revered by the country, is sent to the scaffold and butchered for having stolen (as

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* Thorndale, Collier and Stow.

† Supp. Monas.; Camden Society Papers; State Papers of Henry's Reign; Rev. J. H. Blunt's Reformation; Lingard and Froude.

alleged) *his own property;* the altar plate, of which he was the guardian, was claimed as the King's; nay, the jewelled mitre worn by Dr. Whiting was also to be surrendered. And the non-compliance with these demands was followed by judicial murder in its most revolting form. As to the charges of high treason in this case, they were unworthy of any consideration, and could only be brought forward by such lawyers as Audley, Fitzjames, or the more infamous Maister Rich—the worst man of a bad profession.

About this period the Abbot of Tendring and two priors were likewise consigned to the scaffold, and died like Christian martyrs.

I look in vain for any sign of Archbishop Cranmer's intervention, or even mild remonstrance, against these judicial murders, and the sacrilegious rapine that quickly followed. Let the reader remember that Cranmer was at this very time (1539) the most influential man connected with the King's Council, enjoying the friendship of the monarch and his all-potent minister, Lord Crumwell.

Dr. Hobbes, the Abbot of Woburn, took the Oath of Supremacy, but in a few months subsequent "fell into a state of remorse" for having done so. One morning he assembled the community in the great hall and told them of his "sorrow for having acknowledged the King as Christ's Vicar," and there and then renounced all spiritual allegiance to the monarch, calling on his brethren to do the same; but the majority of them by this time had, it is stated, begun to study their own worldly interests. "Some of the monks scoffed at the Abbot; but the old men of the brotherhood still sustained their spiritual father." They reasoned with the young monks, but to no purpose. For

the second and third time the Abbot assembled the monks, but with no better result. "I am," said he, "determined to follow on the same road journeyed by the Bishop of Rochester and Sir Thomas More." These penitent principles of the Abbot were soon betrayed; his arrest quickly followed. He was brought to London in chains, and lodged in the Fleet. In a few days subsequently he was interrogated by Lord Crumwell and Maister Rich, when he "boldly stated" that he acknowledged no man on earth to represent Christ but the Roman Pontiff. "Then you go to the scaffold," said Lord Crumwell. "Don't be an ass, to forfeit your life for the Pope," exclaimed Rich. The Abbot replied, "Maister Rich, hold your tongue; the world knows what manner of person you are. Do not offer your advice to me. I fear not; I am ready to meet death for such a cause." "Then you shall die, and that before long. I will soon clear the country of such vermin as monks," were the words of Lord Crumwell. "Oh, thank God," replied the Abbot.* In six days the Abbot of Woburn was hanged at the outer gate of the Abbey. The body was quartered, in the manner of those miserable times, and distributed as lamentable precedents of a coming "reform." Thorndale states that Sir John Russell was present, and behaved with all the levity of manner which characterised his conduct at executions. The entire community at Woburn were turned adrift, and ten of the obstinate brothers hanged on the nearest trees. After this plenary homicide the plunder of the place commenced; the library, which was rich in MSS.,

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* Crumwell's State Papers; Rolls House MS.; Froude, vol. iii.; Thorndale and Pomeroy.

and some most valuable works of art, were "carted away" and sold for a few shillings. Fuller and Bale have written in an indignant tone respecting the conduct of the Monastic Commissioners at Woburn, as well as at many other places. John Bale, indeed, was an eye-witness of those outrages against civilization, enlightenment, and religion. All that the old historic Abbey contained was cleared out, and the building and its lands handed over to the Russells. Then commenced the poverty, misery, and oppression of the Bedfordshire peasantry, who had been thitherto remarkable for their social comforts.

Amongst the many traditions circulated respecting the last days of Glastonbury is one to the effect, that the Abbot sent one thousand pounds in gold by his steward to Lord Crumwell, "beseeching him to have mercy upon himself and his community," and that the steward turned the treasure to his own account, and fled to Scotland. It was also hinted that Abbot Whiting gave a leather bag full of gold to Layton, as "mercy money." This is likely enough; for the good Abbot might have thought he could stave off the evil day from his numerous dependents by a largesse. But he knew not Layton.

CHAPTER XLII.

DR. GARDYNER.*

STEPHEN GARDYNER, Bishop of Winchester, ranks next to Wolsey and Pace as a statesman. Lord Campbell depicts him as "a man of original genius, of powerful intellect, and of an independent mind. Gardyner was a statesman much in advance of the disjointed and dishonest period in which he lived. His indisputable respect for the constitutional liberties of England, as they were then understood, gained for him the hatred of foreign despots. He was as inaccessible to the allurements of Spain as he was to the menaces of France, and was also proof against the subtleties of oligarchical tyranny in the Republic of Venice." So far Lord Campbell, who, of course, could not imagine that a Catholic bishop, even if the exigencies of the strange times in which he lived drove him into statesmanship, should not have forgotten his higher duties as a minister of religion. As Lord Campbell observes, he never quailed before the menaces or wiles of foreign tyrants, but he lamentably failed, both in religious and social indepen-

* I may here state that no life of Dr. Gardyner has been specially written, and his biography, if such it can be called, occurs incidentally in the history of his time, from which a fair mode of judging of his merits cannot be derived. Like Edward Fox, Bishop of Hertford, he was a far greater man than we have any historical record of.

dence, when confronted by the will, or lured by the persuasions of a domestic despot. Dr. Gardyner was the first who proclaimed the dictum that the Church should *not* be under the direct control of the Pope—he would "adhere to the doctrines of the Papal See, but the King should be Head of the Church." This novel and most incongruous theory of mingled allegiance—which in a manner accorded to the Holy See merely the privilege of giving advice, and to the King the power of adopting or rejecting it just as he pleased, whilst it also suggested the confiscation of the property, along with the teaching right, of the Church—was received by a large portion of the secular clergy with an acquiescence which hesitated, but did not protest; whilst the spendthrift laity of the strong hand were at once acutely conscious how fitting an instrument it could be made for the contemplated onslaught on the possessions of the religious houses—the vicarious bequest of charity, the chief heritage of the poor. In Henry VIII.'s reign Dr. Gardyner did more to undermine and injure the Latin Church in England than any of its avowed enemies. His relation to the divorce of Queen Katharine is a perennial odium upon his name.

Little is known of the origin of Gardyner. Thorndale states that his father was a gentleman connected with the household of Lionel Woodeville, Bishop of Salisbury. It is supposed that Stephen Gardyner was born in 1487, two years after Henry VII. won the Crown at the battle of Bosworth. Of his school days nothing is known until he appeared as a student at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. There he made great proficiency in classical learning, devoting himself to the school of the "Ciceronians," then in high

repute. At the same time he laid the foundation of his future advancement by the special skill he acquired in the civil and canon law. In 1520 he was admitted a doctor in both faculties, and soon after he was made Master of Trinity Hall. The link in his history is frequently broken from the fact of the destruction of so many records bearing on the college and public life of ecclesiastics and other eminent men of the time. The Duke of Norfolk, to whose son Maister Gardyner was Latin tutor, introduced him to Cardinal Wolsey, then in the plenitude of his grandeur as Lord High Chancellor of England. With his usual discernment, Wolsey saw that the "pale-faced student" could be rendered useful in the public service. Gardyner was appointed a member of the Cardinal's private secretariat, in which office he soon convinced his patron of the skill and caution with which he drafted despatches, and offered suggestions on political affairs, daily displaying proofs of his ability for diplomacy. The reader may judge of Wolsey's confidence in him from the manner in which he writes regarding him. He calls him, "Primarium secretissimorum conciliorum Secretarium, mei dimidium, et quo neminem habeo cariorem."

The treaty of alliance with Francis the First in 1525 being entertained, Gardyner was employed to draw up the project, and the King, coming to his house at Moor Park, in Hertfordshire, found him busy at this work. Henry looked at the performance and approved it, but liked still more the secretary's conversation, and, best of all, his fertility in the invention of expedients.* From this time Dr.

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors.

Gardyner was consulted about the most secret affairs of State. In a few months subsequently he was made a Royal chaplain and almoner to the King.

When the divorce of Queen Katharine was contemplated, Dr. Gardyner was considered one of the most useful men for giving advice on the question; his reputation as a jurist and canonist stood high, and, as is alleged, the King placed immense confidence in his "honesty and judgment." These qualities were, unhappily, convertible terms in the case of Gardyner. Misled by ambition, and eager to conform to the King's advancing requirements, he now (1525-8) and for several years afterwards, took a part of which he deeply repented in Queen Mary's reign.

In 1528 Dr. Gardyner wrote to Pope Clement in a rude and uncourteous style :—

"Unless some other resolution be taken than I perceive you intend to make, hereupon shall be gathered a marvellous opinion of your Holiness, of the College of Cardinals, of the authority of this see. The King's Highness and the nobles of the realm (England), who shall be made privy to this shall needs think that your Holiness and these most reverend and learned councillors either will not answer in this cause or cannot answer. If you will not, if you do not choose to point out the way to an erring man, the care of whom is by God committed to you, they will say to you, 'O race of men most ungrateful and of your proper office most oblivious; you who should be simple as doves, are full of all deceit, and craft, and dissembling. If the King's cause be good, we require that you pronounce it good; if it be bad, why will you not say that it is bad, and so hinder a prince to whom all are so much bounden, from longer continuing with it? We ask nothing of you but justice, which the King so loves and values, that whatever sinister things others may say or think of him, he will follow that with all

his heart; that, and nothing else, whether it be for the marriage or against the marriage."*

Gardyner further informed the Pope of the likelihood of dissent in case the Pontiff should not yield to Henry's desire; and then foreshadows that change in England whose work was just then commencing in Germany.

"If the King's Highness and the nobility of England," writes Dr. Gardyner, "being persuaded of your good will to answer if you can do so, *shall be brought to doubt of your ability, they will be forced* to a harder conclusion respecting this see—namely, *that God has taken from it the key of knowledge; and they will begin to give better ear to that opinion* of some persons to which they have as yet refused to listen, that those Papal laws, which neither the Pope himself nor his Council can interpret, deserve only to be committed to the flames." Dr. Gardyner concludes by giving a warning to the Pontiff to "ponder well on the question at issue."†

Gardyner, like Wolsey and Cranmer, had a difficult task to transact the business of the State with the King. When anything went wrong, Henry burst into violent ebullitions of passion. He had two modes of scolding: the written one, which he called "betting," and the oral one, which he styled "squaring." The more strongly worded the former was the sooner did the Royal indignation subside, as if it evaporated by the expression. When the courtiers saw some of these letters they looked upon Gardyner as a

* Dr. Gardyner's Despatches to Cardinal Wolsey; Lemon's State Papers, vols. i. and ii.

† Lemon's State Papers, vols. i. and ii.

ruined man; he, knowing the King's habit, feared nothing from the rebuke. The squaring was almost as harmless, and Gardyner soon learned to bend to the storm. When Lord Wiltshire and Gardyner, on one occasion, had failed to arrange a certain commission to the King's satisfaction, the prelate was attacked with a hurricane of abuse; but at the conclusion of the conference the King took Gardyner into his closet, and told him that the anger, though expressed against him, was as strong against the Earl of Wiltshire, whom he could not address so freely.*

In 1529 Gardyner was intriguing for his royal master in Rome. His letters thence to Cardinal Wolsey reflect little credit on both. Neither Wolsey nor Gardyner could have been deceived by Henry.† Ribadeneyra, a Spanish Jesuit, ascribes to Wolsey the scheme to divorce Queen Katharine, and his motives were to be found in the dislike he had for Charles the Fifth, and for Katharine as his aunt. Pollini, a learned Dominican, makes a similar charge against the Cardinal, but in a narrative more copious in its style and circumstances.‡ Cardinal Pole believes that the question did *not* originate with Wolsey; whilst Le Grand is "quite positive that the mischief originated with the Cardinal of York." Lingard remarks:—"Whether the idea of a divorce arose sponta-

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* Foss's Judges of England, vol. v. and vi.

† The reader will perceive that the opinion expressed in this work of Pope Clement's policy during the divorce litigation is very similar to that stated by Lingard, vol. iv. p. 481; and also by Pallavicinno. And later still, in Brewer's State Papers, the conduct of Clement appears in a very favourable light, and his character has been defended in an equitable spirit by a Protestant writer.

‡ Pollini's Ecclesiastical Hist. of England, pp. 16-20.

neously in Henry's mind, or was suggested by the officiousness of others, may be uncertain; but the Royal wish was no sooner communicated to Wolsey than he offered his aid, and ventured to promise complete success. His views, however, were very different from those of his sovereign. Either unapprised of the King's intentions in favour of Anna Boleyn, or persuading himself that the present amour would terminate like so many others, he looked forward to the political consequences of the divorce, and that he might "perpetuate" the alliance between England and France, had already selected for the successor of Katharine, Réné, the daughter of Louis the Twelfth.* I wish again to remind the reader of the scene between Wolsey and Lord Percy, where the Cardinal tells the Border Chief, "*Thomas Boleyn's daughter cannot be your wife. She is intended for another man.*" Who was the other man? If he contemplated the rank of Queen for the French Princess, what position was Anna Boleyn to occupy? Next to the King, a greater match than the heir to the House of Northumberland was not attainable; and judging from the Cardinal's negotiation for the daughter of the French monarch, he did not intend any honourable settlement for Anna Boleyn. What might have been his ultimate plans it is impossible to imagine. But the interview with Percy, taken in connection with subsequent circumstances, brings the Cardinal in very near collusion with his sovereign.

Dr. Gardyner practised no deception in this divorce question. From the beginning he was a persevering friend of Anna Boleyn, up to the crowning wrong in the judgment

* Lingard, vol. iv.

delivered at Dunstable, and in a few days later holding the lappet of her robe at the coronation.

Some recent writers have described Gardyner as the "chief of the conspiracy that brought Anna Boleyn to the scaffold." I have already shown that these accusations are destitute of foundation—"pure and unadulterated lies," as modern courtesy might not style them, but as they have been forcibly designated. Let the reader not forget that, at the period of Anna Boleyn's fall, Dr. Gardyner was ambassador in France, and, although in that high position, he had lost his influence at Court.

In 1529 Anna Boleyn corresponded with Dr. Gardyner, then at Rome. The "future Queen," as she may be styled, writes:—

"Maister Stephen,—

"I thank you for *my* letter, wherein I perceive the willing and faithful mind you have to do me pleasure, not doubting but as much as it is possible for man's wit to imagine you will do. *I pray God to send you well speed in all your matters* [the divorce litigation], so that you will put me in a study how to render you high service. *I do trust in God you shall not repent it*, and that the end of this journey shall be more pleasant to me than your first; for that was but a rejoicing hope, which, ceasing, the lack of it does put to the more pain, and they that are partakers with me, as you do know. Therefore, I do trust that this hard beginning shall make the better ending.

"Maister Stephen, I send you herewith the 'cramp-rings'* for

* In Burnet's Records is to be seen the Latin formula of the ancient office of the English Queens blessing cramp-rings. It commences with the Psalm "*Deus misereatur nostri*," then follows a Latin prayer invoking the aid of the Holy Spirit. The rings lying in one basin, or more, a prayer was said over them: the rings were of silver, *not* iron, as has been generally supposed. They were to "expel all livid venom of serpents." The rings were blessed with an invocation to the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and

yourself and Maister Gregorie (Cassali), and Maister Petre, and pray you to distribute them, and assure them that I will be glad to do them any pleasure (good) which may be in my power. And thus I make an end, praying God send you good health.

"Written at Greenwich the 4th day of April, year of our Lord 1529.

"By your assured friend,

"ANNA BOLLEIN."*

A few months subsequent to the death of Anna Boleyn, Dr. Gardyner began to perceive the wrong steps he had taken. The web woven by Audley, Rich, Cranmer, and Crumwell, was one that appeared likely to prove fatal for a time to the existence of the olden creed of England, and with that acute discernment for which he was remarkable, he withdrew from his course, and joined the old high Conservative party. From that hour forward he was, perhaps, the most zealous man in England in the maintenance of the Latin Church; yet still, with selfish weakness, indulged the King in his claim to the "Headship of the Church." As the reader has already seen, this policy was, both actively and

signed frequently with the Cross: in the last benediction the request is made "that the rings may restore contracted nerves." A Psalm of benediction follows, and a prayer "against the frauds of devils." The prayers being repeated again, "the Queen's Highness rubbeth the rings between her hands, saying, "*Sanctifice, Domine, annulos istos,*" &c. The rest of the prayer implies that "as her hands rub the rings, the virtue of the holy oil wherewith she was anointed might be infused into their metal, and by the grace of God be efficacious." The ceremony concludes with holy water being poured into the basins, and the Litany repeated. From the allusions to the patriarchs it is likely that this quaint ceremony was of Hebrew origin. Several English Queens performed this ceremony, amongst whom were Elizabeth Woodville, Elizabeth of York, and Mary Tudor, to whom Dr. Gardyner was Chancellor. If he was present when Queen Mary performed the ceremony, it was a moment to awaken the memory of one sad event, at least, in Henry's disastrous reign.

* The above letter is to be seen in the State Paper Office.

passively, acquiesced in by several bishops and abbots, with, no doubt, the alternative of the scaffold or the dungeon. There seemed no English prelate so useful to the King as Dr. Gardyner, because the morality of his private character had always been unchallenged. Having been sent on an embassy to Germany, he was shocked at the riot, bloodshed, blasphemy, and destruction which he there witnessed from the Anabaptists and other Reformers. On his return to England he detailed to the King "all he had seen and heard" concerning the "new learning," which Denny relates "made an impression on his Royal Master, for from that hour forward his Highness's feeling towards the Reformers was of an unmistakable character." Still Henry continued to be attracted by the artifices of Lord Crumwell, who engaged to replenish the royal treasury from the possessions of the Church, but "not to disturb its doctrines." This proposition seemed to please the King, whose worst profusion desired plunder, not perversion. Gardyner, however, could not approve Crumwell's designs, and had several interviews with Henry on the subject, but was outmanœuvred in every way by the cunning and powerful influence of Cranmer. There is one fact in relation to Gardyner which reflects credit on his memory. Whilst many of the so-called "Papal party" were as unscrupulous as the Reformers in appropriating the heritage of the poor, Stephen Gardyner did not receive the smallest portion of the pillage. To use his own words, "he was himself unmercifully plucked by the Reformers."

Amongst the missions in which Gardyner was engaged for Henry was one for the purpose of "explaining to the Duke of Saxe and other foreign princes that Dr. Fisher and

Sir Thomas More were executed for treasonable practices." Dr. Gardyner was instructed by Crumwell to inform those princes that they "*should not believe the false gossip and scandals that the enemies of his Highness the King had propagated on the Continent respecting the demerits of the said traitors, John Fisher and Thomas More, who had justly been slain on the public scaffold as an example to other evil-inclined men.*"* In other words, Dr. Gardyner was enjoined to traduce the characters of the two illustrious victims, so as to diminish, if not efface, the impression of horror caused by the judicial murder perpetrated at Tower Hill. Among the many bad actions of Gardyner, his conduct in this case I have no hesitation in pronouncing the basest of all. In fact, in his diplomatic missions Gardyner was the very creature of his King, into whose hands he seems to have surrendered his soul as well as his services. Henry found in Cranmer, Paget, and Gardyner the most pliant representatives of his will, and the tyrant monarch's keen knowledge of human nature understood those three agents so accurately, that he set aside for each some peculiar or fitting office.

"Bishop Gardyner," says Collier, "was a better statesman than a controversial divine. For though his topics are sometimes good, yet, generally speaking, his reasoning is either foreign or faint. He floats in the dispute, flies off from consistency, and wants either force or discretion."†

"Stephen Gardyner," writes Lord Campbell, "was no

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* Lord Crumwell's instructions to Gardyner are to be found at the Record Office, amongst Crumwell's State Papers—strange documents.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 391.

enthusiast; he was not naturally cruel, nor bigoted in his creed, having several times shown that he could make professions of doctrine bend to political expediency. . . . When some zealous Catholics urged the imprisonment of Peter Martyr, Dr. Gardyner pleaded that he had come over by an invitation from a former Government, and he furnished him with money to return to Germany. As a statesman Gardyner is to be praised for great discernment and vigour. He had even a regard for the liberties as well as independence of his country, and on several memorable occasions gave constitutional advice to the sovereigns whom he served. But whatever good intentions he had, they were all under the control of ambition, and never obstructed his rise."*

In the reign of Henry Dr. Gardyner frequently flattered his sovereign " on his extensive knowledge of theology, and his many amiable virtues." Maister Creci and Denny have handed down in their diaries many items as to the flattery practised by Gardyner upon the King, whenever the latter was his guest. " Since Wolsey disappeared from the scene there was no such elegant clerical courtier in England as Dr. Gardyner." So writes Maister Walter Creci, once the pupil of Thomas Cranmer. This opinion has been endorsed by other contemporaries. I again approach a passage in Gardyner's life which places him in a painful light as a Catholic priest. In " De Vera Obedientia" the Bishop of Winchester states that King Henry acted in the case of the Royal Supremacy "*with the consent of the most excellent and learned bishops, of the nobles, and the whole people of England.*" This statement is most *untrue.* It is, in fact,

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. ii.

directly opposed to what occurred at that calamitous period. *The people* were true to the old Latin creed. Many passages in Gardyner's work prove the accommodating spirit in which it was written. The preface to "De Vera Obedientia" was written by Dr. Bonner, who writes of the Pope in a manner both rude and insulting. He alleges that the Papal traditions were for the most part repugnant to the laws of God. He commends King Henry for his *piety and love of religion*; excuses Gardyner for disentangling himself no sooner; he contends that "Gardyner was not the first that *detected the Pope of misbehaviour*."* Like his kinsman, Lord Crumwell, Bonner had no party, and was detested by everyone who adhered to Queen Katharine. He was the pliant creature of the King for many years.

In the second volume of this work I shall have occasion to enter at some length upon the career of Dr. Bonner. I will only remark *now* that his voluntary evil deeds belonged to the reign of King Henry, and *not* to those of Queen Mary.

To dismiss here the worst phase of Dr. Gardyner's life —*i.e.,* his servility to "the higher powers" of earth—it must be recorded that at Henry's death he appeared in the pulpit to "recount the good actions of the deceased monarch." In this memorable funeral sermon Dr. Gardyner "*lamented the loss that both high and low had sustained in the death of so good and gracious a King.*"†

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 391. The reader will also find in Collier, vol. iv., commencing at p. 389, a summary of the leading points of "De Vera Obedientia"—a work now almost unknown.

† The Bishop of Winchester's "Goodly Sermon on the Life and Death of the great King Henry of Blessed Memory." At page 183, vol. v., of Collier's Ecclesiastical History, is to be found a summary of Dr. Gardyner's work on Holy Water. The few works written by Gardyner are now extremely scarce.

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"Oh, Death, *where* is thy sting?" might not his contemporaries sneeringly exclaim when Stephen Gardyner, Bishop of Winchester, pronounced the panegyric of the English Vitellius? For then the death of Henry opened before the eyes of the time-serving preacher the perspective of the brief and wretched reign of the boy-King, with the rule of the Protector Somerset, and the murderous cabals of antagonist efforts for power. Better the dead lion than the jackals usurping the arena. So may have thought the sadly mendacious eulogist.

In the second volume of this work Dr. Gardyner will be seen, in due course of events, holding his true historic position as Churchman and diplomatist.

END OF VOL. I.

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