

LUCY AIKIN

MEMOIRS OF THE
COURT OF QUEEN
ELIZABETH

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**Memoirs of the Court
of Queen Elizabeth**

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Memoirs of the Court of Queen Elizabeth:

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PREFACE

In the literature of our country, however copious, the eye of the curious student may still detect important deficiencies.

We possess, for example, many and excellent histories, embracing every period of our domestic annals;—biographies, general and particular, which appear to have placed on record the name of every private individual justly entitled to such commemoration;—and numerous and extensive collections of original letters, state-papers and other historical and antiquarian documents;—whilst our comparative penury is remarkable in royal lives, in court histories, and especially in that class which forms the glory of French literature,—memoir.

To supply in some degree this want, as it affects the person and reign of one of the most illustrious of female and of European sovereigns, is the intention of the work now offered with much diffidence to the public.

Its plan comprehends a detailed view of the private life of Elizabeth from the period of her birth; a view of the domestic

history of her reign; memoirs of the principal families of the nobility and biographical anecdotes of the celebrated characters who composed her court; besides notices of the manners, opinions and literature of the reign.

Such persons as may have made it their business or their entertainment to study very much in detail the history of the age of Elizabeth, will doubtless be aware that in the voluminous collections of Strype, in the edited Burleigh, Sidney, and Talbot papers, in the Memoirs of Birch, in various collections of letters, in the chronicles of the times,—so valuable for those vivid pictures of manners which the pen of a contemporary unconsciously traces,—in the Annals of Camden, the Progresses of Nichols, and other large and laborious works which it would be tedious here to enumerate, a vast repertory existed of curious and interesting facts seldom recurred to for the composition of books of lighter literature, and possessing with respect to a great majority of readers the grace of novelty. Of these and similar works of reference, as well as of a variety of others, treating directly or indirectly on the biography, the literature, and the manners of the period, a large collection has been placed under the eyes of the author, partly by the liberality of her publishers, partly by the kindness of friends.

In availing herself of their contents, she has had to encounter in full force the difficulties attendant on such a task; those of weighing and comparing authorities, of reconciling discordant statements, of bringing insulated facts to bear upon each other,

and of forming out of materials irregular in their nature and abundant almost to excess, a compact and well-proportioned structure.

How far her abilities and her diligence may have proved themselves adequate to the undertaking, it remains with a candid public to decide. Respecting the selection of topics it seems necessary however to remark, that it has been the constant endeavour of the writer to preserve to her work the genuine character of *Memoirs*, by avoiding as much as possible all encroachments on the peculiar province of history;—that amusement, of a not illiberal kind, has been consulted at least equally with instruction:—and that on subjects of graver moment, a correct sketch has alone been attempted.

By a still more extensive course of reading and research, an additional store of anecdotes and observations might unquestionably have been amassed; but it is hoped that of those assembled in the following pages, few will be found to rest on dubious or inadequate authority; and that a copious choice of materials, relatively to the intended compass of the work, will appear to have superseded the temptation to useless digression, or to prolix and trivial detail.

The orthography of all extracts from the elder writers has been modernized, and their punctuation rendered more distinct; in other respects reliance may be placed on their entire fidelity.

Volume I

CHAPTER I

1533 TO 1536

Birth of Elizabeth.—Circumstances attending the marriage of her parents.—Public entry of Anne Boleyn into London.—Pageants exhibited.—Baptism of Elizabeth.—Eminent persons present.—Proposal of marriage between Elizabeth and a French prince.—Progress of the reformation.—Henry persecutes both parties.—Death of Catherine of Arragon.—Disgrace of Anne Boleyn.—Her death.—Confesses an obstacle to her marriage.—Particulars on this subject.—Elizabeth declared illegitimate.—Letter of lady Bryan respecting her.—The king marries Jane Seymour.

On the 7th of September 1533, at the royal palace of Greenwich in Kent, was born, under circumstances as peculiar as her after-life proved eventful and illustrious, Elizabeth daughter of king Henry VIII. and his queen Anne Boleyn.

Delays and difficulties equally grievous to the impetuous temper of the man and the despotic habits of the prince, had for

years obstructed Henry in the execution of his favourite project of repudiating, on the plea of their too near alliance, a wife who had ceased to find favor in his sight, and substituting on her throne the youthful beauty who had captivated his imagination. At length his passion and his impatience had arrived at a pitch capable of bearing down every obstacle. With that contempt of decorum which he displayed so remarkably in some former, and many later transactions of his life, he caused his private marriage with Anne Boleyn to precede the sentence of divorce which he had resolved that his clergy should pronounce against Catherine of Arragon; and no sooner had this judicial ceremony taken place, than the new queen was openly exhibited as such in the face of the court and the nation.

An unusual ostentation of magnificence appears to have attended the celebration of these august nuptials. The fondness of the king for pomp and pageantry was at all times excessive, and on this occasion his love and his pride would equally conspire to prompt an extraordinary display. Anne, too, a vain, ambitious, and light-minded woman, was probably greedy of this kind of homage from her princely lover; and the very consciousness of the dubious, inauspicious, or disgraceful circumstances attending their union, might secretly augment the anxiety of the royal pair to dazzle and impose by the magnificence of their public appearance. Only once before, since the Norman conquest, had a king of England stooped from his dignity to elevate a private gentlewoman and a subject to a partnership of his bed and throne;

and the bitter animosities between the queen's relations on one side, and the princes of the blood and great nobles on the other, which had agitated the reign of Edward IV., and contributed to bring destruction on the heads of his helpless orphans, stood as a strong warning against a repetition of the experiment.

The unblemished reputation and amiable character of Henry's "some-time wife," had long procured for her the love and respect of the people; her late misfortunes had engaged their sympathy, and it might be feared that several unfavorable points of comparison would suggest themselves between the high-born and high-minded Catherine and her present rival—once her humble attendant—whose long-known favor with the king, whose open association with him at Calais, whither she had attended him, whose private marriage of uncertain date, and already advanced pregnancy, afforded so much ground for whispered censures.

On the other hand, the personal qualities of the king gave him great power over popular opinion. The manly beauty of his countenance, the strength and agility which in the chivalrous exercises of the time rendered him victorious over all competitors; the splendor with which he surrounded himself; his bounty; the popular frankness of his manners, all conspired to render him, at this period of his life, an object of admiration rather than of dread to his subjects; while the respect entertained for his talents and learning, and for the conscientious scruples respecting his first marriage which he felt or feigned, mingled so much of deference in their feelings towards him, as to check

all hasty censures of his conduct. The protestant party, now considerable by zeal and numbers, foresaw too many happy results to their cause from the circumstances of his present union, to scrutinize with severity the motives which had produced it. The nation at large, justly dreading a disputed succession, with all its long-experienced evils, in the event of Henry's leaving behind him no offspring but a daughter whom he had lately set aside on the ground of illegitimacy, rejoiced in the prospect of a male heir to the crown. The populace of London, captivated, as usual, by the splendors of a coronation, were also delighted with the youth, beauty, and affability of the new queen.

The solemn entry therefore of Anne into the city of London was greeted by the applause of the multitude; and it was probably the genuine voice of public feeling, which, in saluting her queen of England, wished her, how much in vain! a long and prosperous life.

The pageants displayed in the streets of London on this joyful occasion, are described with much minuteness by our chroniclers, and afford ample indications that the barbarism of taste which permitted an incongruous mixture of classical mythology with scriptural allusions, was at its height in the learned reign of our eighth Henry. Helicon and Mount Parnassus appeared on one side; St. Anne, and Mary the wife of Cleophas with her children, were represented on the other. Here the three Graces presented the queen with a golden apple by the hands of their orator Mercury; there the four cardinal Virtues promised,

in set speeches, that they would always be aiding and comforting to her.

On the Sunday after her public entry, a day not at this period regarded as improper for the performance of such a ceremonial, Henry caused his queen to be crowned at Westminster with great solemnity; an honor which he never thought proper to confer on any of her successors.

In the sex of the child born to them a few months afterwards, the hopes of the royal pair must doubtless have sustained a severe disappointment: but of this sentiment nothing was suffered to appear in the treatment of the infant, whom her father was anxious to mark out as his only legitimate offspring and undoubted heir to the crown.

She was destined to bear the auspicious name of Elizabeth, in memory of her grandmother, that heiress of the house of York whose marriage with the earl of Richmond, then Henry VII., had united the roses, and given lasting peace to a country so long rent by civil discord. The unfortunate Mary, now in her sixteenth year, was stripped of the title of princess of Wales, which she had borne from her childhood, that it might adorn a younger sister; one too whose birth her interest, her religion, and her filial affection for an injured mother, alike taught her to regard as base and infamous.

A public and princely christening served still further to attest the importance attached to this new member of the royal family.

By the king's special command, Cranmer archbishop of

Canterbury stood godfather to the princess; and Shakespeare, by a fiction equally poetical and courtly, has represented him as breaking forth on this memorable occasion into an animated vaticination of the glories of the "maiden reign." Happy was it for the peace of mind of the noble personages there assembled, that no prophet was empowered at the same time to declare how few of them should live to share its splendors; how awfully large a proportion of their number should fall, or behold their nearest connexions falling, untimely victims of the jealous tyranny of Henry himself, or of the convulsions and persecutions of the two troubled reigns destined to intervene before those halcyon days which they were taught to anticipate!

For the purpose of illustrating the truth of this remark, and at the same time of introducing to the reader the most distinguished personages of Henry's court, several of whom will afterwards be found exerting different degrees of influence on the character or fortunes of the illustrious subject of this work, it may be worth while to enumerate in regular order the performers in this august ceremonial. The circumstantial Holinshed, to whom we are indebted for their names and offices, will at the same time furnish some of those minute particulars which serve to bring the whole pompous scene before the eye of fancy.

Early in the afternoon, the lord-mayor and corporation of London, who had been summoned to attend, took boat for Greenwich, where they found many lords, knights, and gentlemen assembled. The whole way from the palace to the

friery was strown with green rushes, and the walls were hung with tapestry, as was the Friers' church in which the ceremony was performed.

A silver font with a crimson canopy was placed in the middle of the church; and the child being brought into the hall, the long procession set forward. It began with citizens walking two-and-two, and ended with barons, bishops, and earls. Then came, bearing the gilt basins, Henry earl of Essex, the last of the ancient name of Bouchier who bore the title. He was a splendid nobleman, distinguished in the martial games and gorgeous pageantries which then amused the court: he also boasted of a royal lineage, being sprung from Thomas of Woodstock, youngest son of Edward III.; and perhaps he was apprehensive lest this distinction might hereafter become as fatal to himself as it had lately proved to the unfortunate duke of Buckingham. But he perished a few years after by a fall from his horse; and leaving no male issue, the king, to the disgust of this great family, conferred the title on the low-bred Cromwel, then his favorite minister.

The salt was borne by Henry marquis of Dorset, the unfortunate father of lady Jane Grey; who, after receiving the royal pardon for his share in the criminal plot for setting the crown on the head of his daughter, again took up arms in the rebellion of Wyat, and was brought to expiate this treason on the scaffold.

William Courtney marquis of Exeter followed with the taper

of virgin wax; a nobleman who had the misfortune to be very nearly allied to the English throne; his mother being a daughter of Edward IV. He was at this time in high favor with the king his cousin, who, after setting aside his daughter Mary, had even declared him heir-apparent, to the prejudice of his own sisters: but three years after he fell a victim to the jealousy of the king, on a charge of corresponding with his proscribed kinsman cardinal Pole: his honors and estates were forfeited; and his son, though still a child, was detained in close custody.

The chrism was borne by lady Mary Howard, the beautiful daughter of the duke of Norfolk; who lived not only to behold, but, by the evidence which she gave on his trial, to assist in the most unmerited condemnation of her brother, the gallant and accomplished earl of Surry. The king, by a trait of royal arrogance, selected this lady, descended from our Saxon monarchs and allied to all the first nobility, for the wife of his base-born son created duke of Richmond; but it does not appear that the spirit of the Howards was high enough in this reign to feel the insult as it deserved.

The royal infant, wrapped in a mantle of purple velvet, having a long train furred with ermine, was carried by one of her godmothers, the dowager-duchess of Norfolk. Anne Boleyn was this lady's step-grand-daughter: but in this alliance with royalty she had little cause to exult; still less in the closer one which was afterwards formed for her by the elevation of her own grand-daughter Catherine Howard. On discovery of the ill conduct of

this queen, the aged duchess was overwhelmed with disgrace; she was even declared guilty of misprision of treason, and committed to custody, but was released by the king after the blood of Catherine and her paramours had quenched his fury.

The dowager-marchioness of Dorset was the other godmother at the font:—of the four sons of this lady, three perished on the scaffold; her grand-daughter lady Jane Grey shared the same fate; and the surviving son died a prisoner during the reign of Elizabeth, for the offence of distributing a pamphlet asserting the title of the Suffolk line to the crown.

The marchioness of Exeter was the godmother at the confirmation, who had not only the affliction to see her husband brought to an untimely end, and her only son wasting his youth in captivity, but, being herself attainted of high treason some time afterwards, underwent a long and arbitrary imprisonment.

On either hand of the duchess of Norfolk walked the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the only nobles of that rank then existing in England.

Their names occur in conjunction on every public occasion, and in almost every important transaction, civil and military, of the reign of Henry VIII., but the termination of their respective careers was strongly contrasted. The duke of Suffolk had the extraordinary good fortune never to lose that favor with his master which he had gained as Charles Brandon, the partner of his youthful pleasures. What was a still more extraordinary instance of felicity, his marriage with the king's sister brought to

him neither misfortunes nor perils, and he did not live to witness those which overtook his grand-daughters. He died in peace, lamented by a sovereign who knew his worth.

The duke of Norfolk, on the contrary, was powerful enough by birth and connexions to impress Henry with fears for the tranquillity of his son's reign. The memory of former services was sacrificed to present alarm. Almost with his last breath he ordered his old and faithful servant to the scaffold; but even Henry was no longer absolute on his death-bed. For once he was disobeyed, and Norfolk survived him; but the long years of his succeeding captivity were poorly compensated by a brief and tardy restoration to liberty and honors under Mary.

One of the child's train-bearers was the countess of Kent. This was probably the widow of the second earl of that title and of the name of Grey: she must therefore have been the daughter of the earl of Pembroke, a zealous Yorkist who was slain fighting in the cause of Edward IV. Henry VIII. was doubtless aware that his best hereditary title to the crown was derived from his mother, and during his reign the Yorkist families enjoyed at least an equal share of favor with the Lancastrians, whom his father had almost exclusively countenanced.

Thomas Boleyn earl of Wiltshire, the proud and happy grandfather of the princely infant, supported the train on one side. It is not true that he afterwards, in his capacity of a privy councillor, pronounced sentence of death on his own son and daughter; even Henry was not inhuman enough to exact this of

him; but he lived to witness their cruel and disgraceful end, and died long before the prosperous days of his illustrious grandchild.

On the other side the train was borne by Edward Stanley third earl of Derby. This young nobleman had been a ward of Wolsey, and was carefully educated by that splendid patron of learning in his house and under his own eye. He proved himself a faithful and loyal subject to four successive sovereigns; stood unshaken by the tempests of the most turbulent times; and died full of days in the possession of great riches, high hereditary honors, and universal esteem, in 1574.

A splendid canopy was supported over the infant by four lords, three of them destined to disastrous fates. One was her uncle, the elegant, accomplished, viscount Rochford, whom the impartial suffrage of posterity has fully acquitted of the odious crime for which he suffered by the mandate of a jealous tyrant.

Another was lord Hussey; whom a rash rebellion brought to the scaffold a few years afterwards. The two others were brothers of that illustrious family of Howard, which furnished in this age alone more subjects for tragedy than "Thebes or Pelops' line" of old. Lord William, uncle to Catherine Howard, was arbitrarily adjudged to perpetual imprisonment and forfeiture of goods for concealing her misconduct; but Henry was pleased soon after to remit the sentence: he lived to be eminent in the state under the title of lord Howard of Effingham, and died peacefully in a good old age. Lord Thomas suffered by the ambition so frequent in his house, of matching with the blood royal. He formed a secret

marriage with the lady Margaret Douglas, niece to the king; on discovery of which, he was committed to a close imprisonment, whence he was only released by death.

After the ceremony of baptism had been performed by Stokesly bishop of London, a solemn benediction was pronounced upon the future queen by Cranmer, that learned and distinguished prelate, who may indeed be reproached with some too courtly condescensions to the will of an imperious master, and what is worse, with several cruel acts of religious persecution; but whose virtues were many, whose general character was mild and benevolent, and whose errors and weaknesses were finally expiated by the flames of martyrdom.

In the return from church, the gifts of the sponsors, consisting of cups and bowls, some gilded, and others of massy gold, were carried by four persons of quality: Henry Somerset second earl of Worcester, whose father, notwithstanding his illegitimacy, had been acknowledged as a kinsman by Henry VII., and advanced to the peerage; lord Thomas Howard the younger, a son of the duke of Norfolk who was restored in blood after his father's attainder, and created lord Howard of Bindon; Thomas Ratcliffe lord Fitzwalter, afterwards earl of Sussex; and sir John Dudley, son of the detested associate of Empson, and afterwards the notorious duke of Northumberland, whose crimes received at length their due recompense in that ignominious death to which his guilty and extravagant projects had conducted so many comparatively innocent victims.

We are told, that on the same day and hour which gave birth to the princess Elizabeth, a son was born to this "bold bad man," who received the name of Robert, and was known in after-times as earl of Leicester. It was believed by the superstition of the age, that this coincidence of their nativities produced a secret and invincible sympathy which secured to Dudley, during life, the affections of his sovereign lady. It may without superstition be admitted, that this circumstance, seizing on the romantic imagination of the princess, might produce a first impression, which Leicester's personal advantages, his insinuating manners, and consummate art of feigning, all contributed to render deep and permanent.

The personal history of Elizabeth may truly be said to begin with her birth; for she had scarcely entered her second year when her marriage—that never-accomplished project, which for half a century afterwards inspired so many vain hopes and was the subject of so many fruitless negotiations, was already proposed as an article of a treaty between France and England.

Henry had caused an act of succession to be passed, by which his divorce was confirmed, the authority of the pope disclaimed, and the crown settled on his issue by Anne Boleyn. But, as if half-repenting the boldness of his measures, he opened a negotiation almost immediately with Francis I., for the purpose of obtaining a declaration by that king and his nobility in favor of his present marriage, and the intercession of Francis for the revocation of the papal censures fulminated against him. And in consideration

of these acts of friendship, he offered to engage the hand of Elizabeth to the duke d'Angoulême, third son of the French king. But Francis was unable to prevail upon the new pope to annul the acts of his predecessor; and probably not wishing to connect himself more closely with a prince already regarded as a heretic, he suffered the proposal of marriage to fall to the ground.

The doctrines of Zwingle and of Luther had at this time made considerable progress among Henry's subjects, and the great work of reformation was begun in England. Several smaller monasteries had been suppressed; the pope's supremacy was preached against by public authority; and the parliament, desirous of widening the breach between the king and the pontiff, declared the former, head of the English church. After some hesitation, Henry accepted the office, and wrote a book in defence of his conduct. The queen was attached, possibly by principle, and certainly by interest, to the antipapal party, which alone admitted the validity of the royal divorce, and consequently of her marriage; and she had already engaged her chaplain Dr. Parker, a learned and zealous reformist, to keep a watchful eye over the childhood of her daughter, and early to imbue her mind with the true principles of religious knowledge.

But Henry, whose passions and interests alone, not his theological convictions, had set him in opposition to the old church establishment, to the ceremonies and doctrines of which he was even zealously attached, began to be apprehensive that the whole fabric would be swept away by the strong tide of popular

opinion which was now turned against it, and he hastened to interpose in its defence. He brought to the stake several persons who denied the real presence, as a terror to the reformers; whilst at the same time he showed his resolution to quell the adherents of popery, by causing bishop Fisher and sir Thomas More to be attainted of treason, for refusing such part of the oath of succession as implied the invalidity of the king's first marriage, and thus, in effect, disallowed the authority of the papal dispensation in virtue of which it had been celebrated.

Thus were opened those dismal scenes of religious persecution and political cruelty from which the mind of Elizabeth was to receive its early and indelible impressions.

The year 1536, which proved even more fertile than its predecessor in melancholy incidents and tragical catastrophes, opened with the death of Catherine of Arragon; an event equally welcome, in all probability, both to the sufferer herself, whom tedious years of trouble and mortification must have rendered weary of a world which had no longer a hope to flatter her; and to the ungenerous woman who still beheld her, discarded as she was, with the sentiments of an enemy and a rival. It is impossible 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 was 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 of incest, 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. But the memory of this unhappy princess has been embalmed by the genius of Shakespeare, in the noble drama of which he has made her the touching and majestic heroine; and let not the praise of magnanimity be denied to the daughter of Anne Boleyn, in permitting those wrongs and those sufferings which were the price of her glory, nay of her very existence, to be thus impressively offered to the compassion of her people.

Henry was moved to tears on reading the tender and pious letter addressed to him by the dying hand of Catherine; and he marked by several small but expressive acts, the respect, or rather the compunction, with which the recollection of her could not fail to inspire him. Anne Boleyn paid to the memory of the princess-dowager of Wales—such was the title now given to Catherine—the unmeaning compliment of putting on yellow mourning; the color assigned to queens by the fashion of France: but neither humanity nor discretion restrained her from open demonstrations of the satisfaction afforded her by the melancholy event.

Short was her unfeeling triumph. She brought into the world a few days afterwards, a dead son; and this second disappointment of his hopes completed that disgust to his queen which satiety, and perhaps also a growing passion for another object, was

already beginning to produce in the mind of the king.

It is traditionally related, that at Jane Seymour's first coming to court, the queen, espying a jewel hung round her neck, wished to look at it; and struck with the young lady's reluctance to submit it to her inspection, snatched it from her with violence, when she found it to contain the king's picture, presented by himself to the wearer. From this day she dated her own decline in the affections of her husband, and the ascendancy of her rival. However this might be, it is certain that the king about this time began to regard the conduct of his once idolized Anne Boleyn with an altered eye. That easy gaiety of manner which he had once remarked with delight, as an indication of the innocence of her heart and the artlessness of her disposition, was now beheld by him as a culpable levity which offended his pride and alarmed his jealousy. His impetuous temper, with which "once to suspect was once to be resolved," disdained to investigate proofs or to fathom motives; a pretext alone was wanting to his rising fury, and this he was not long in finding.

On May-day, then observed at court as a high festival, solemn justs were held at Greenwich, before the king and queen, in which viscount Rochford, the queen's brother, was chief challenger, and Henry Norris principal defender. In the midst of the entertainment, the king suddenly rose and quitted the place in anger; but on what particular provocation is not certainly known. Saunders the Jesuit, the great calumniator of Anne Boleyn, says that it was on seeing his consort drop her handkerchief,

which Norris picked up and wiped his face with. The queen immediately retired, and the next day was committed to custody. Her earnest entreaties to be permitted to see the king were disregarded, and she was sent to the Tower on a charge of treason and adultery.

Lord Rochford, Norris, one Smeton a musician, and Brereton and another gentleman of the bed-chamber, were likewise apprehended, and brought to trial on the accusation of criminal intercourse with the queen. They were all convicted; but from the few particulars which have come down to us, it seems to be justly inferred, that the evidence produced against some at least of these unhappy gentlemen, was slight and inconclusive. Lord Rochford is universally believed to have fallen a victim to the atrocious perjuries of his wife, who was very improperly admitted as a witness against him, and whose infamous conduct was afterwards fully brought to light. No absolute criminality appears to have been proved against Weston and Brereton; but Smeton confessed the fact. Norris died much more generously: he protested that he would rather perish a thousand times than accuse an innocent person; that he believed the queen to be perfectly guiltless; he, at least, could accuse her of nothing; and in this declaration he persisted to the last. His expressions, if truly reported, seem to imply that he might have saved himself by criminating the queen: but besides the extreme improbability that the king would have shown or promised any mercy to such a delinquent, we know in fact that the confession of Smeton did not

obtain for him even a reprieve: it is therefore absurd to represent Norris as having died in vindication of the honor of the queen; and the favor afterwards shown to his son by Elizabeth, had probably little connexion with any tenderness for the memory of her mother, a sentiment which she certainly exhibited in no other circumstance.

The trial and condemnation of the queen followed. The process was conducted with that open disregard of the first principles of justice and equity then universal in all cases of high treason: no counsel were assigned her, no witnesses confronted with her, and it does not appear that she was even informed of Smeton's confession: but whether, after all, she died innocent, is a problem which there now exist no means of solving, and which it is somewhat foreign from the purpose of this work to discuss.

One part of this subject, however, on account of the intimate relation which it bears to the history of Elizabeth, and the influence which it may be presumed to have exercised in the formation of her character, must be treated somewhat at large.

The common law of England, by an anomaly truly barbarous, denounced, against females only, who should be found guilty of high treason, the punishment of burning. By menaces of putting into execution this horrible sentence, instead of commuting it for decapitation, Anne Boleyn was induced to acknowledge some legal impediment to her marriage with the king; and on this confession alone, Cranmer, with his usual subserviency, gratified his royal master by pronouncing that union null and void, and its

offspring illegitimate.

What this impediment, real or pretended, might be, we only learn from a public declaration made immediately afterwards by the earl of Northumberland, stating, that whereas it had been pretended, that a precontract had subsisted between himself and the late queen, he has declared upon oath before the lords of the council, and taken the sacrament upon it, that no such contract had ever passed between them. In explanation of this protest, the noble historian of Henry VIII.¹ furnishes us with the following particulars. That the earl of Northumberland, when lord Percy, had made proposals of marriage to Anne Boleyn, which she had accepted, being yet a stranger to the passion of the king; that Henry, unable to bear the idea of losing her, but averse as yet to a declaration of his sentiments, employed Wolsey to dissuade the father of lord Percy from giving his consent to their union, in which he succeeded; the earl of Northumberland probably becoming aware how deeply the personal feelings of the king were concerned: that lord Percy, however, refused to give up the lady, alleging in the first instance that he had gone too far to recede with honor; but was afterwards compelled by his father to form another matrimonial connexion. It should appear by this statement, that some engagement had in fact subsisted between Northumberland and Anne; but there is no necessity for supposing it to have been a contract of that solemn nature which, according to the law as it then stood, would have rendered null

¹ Lord Herbert of Chirbury.

the subsequent marriage of either party. The protestation of the earl was confirmed by the most solemn sanctions; which there is no ground for supposing him capable of violating, especially as on this occasion, so far from gaining any advantage by it, he was likely to give high offence to the king. If then, as appears most probable, the confession by which Anne Boleyn disinherited and illegitimatised her daughter was false; a perjury so wicked and cowardly must brand her memory with everlasting infamy:—even should the contrary have been the fact, the transaction does her little honor; in either case it affords ample justification to that daughter in leaving, as she did, her remains without a monument and her conduct without an apology.

The precarious and equivocal condition to which the little Elizabeth was reduced by the divorce and death of her mother, will be best illustrated by the following extracts of a letter addressed soon after the event, by lady Bryan her governess, to lord Cromwel. It may at the same time amuse the modern reader to remark the minute details on which, in that day, the first minister of state was expected to bestow his personal attention.

"...My lord, when your lordship was last here, it pleased you to say, that I should not mistrust the king's grace, nor your lordship. Which word was more comfort to me than I can write, as God knoweth. And now it boldeneth me to show you my poor mind. My lord, when my lady Mary's grace was born, it pleased the king's grace to [appoint] me lady mistress, and made me a baroness. And so I have been to the children his grace have had

since.

"Now, so it is, my lady Elizabeth is put from that degree she was afore; and what degree she is at now, I know not but by hearsay. Therefore I know not how to order her, nor myself, nor none of hers that I have the rule of; that is, her women and her grooms. Beseeching you to be good lord to my lady and to all hers; and that she may have some rayment. For she hath neither gown, nor kirtle, nor petticoat, nor no manner of linen, nor foresmocks, nor kerchiefs, nor sleeves, nor rails, nor body-stitchets, nor mufflers, nor biggins. All these, her grace's *mostake*², I have driven off as long as I can, that, by my troth, I cannot drive it no lenger. Beseeching you, my lord, that you will see that her grace may have that is needful for her, as my trust is ye will do—that I may know from you by writing how I shall order myself; and what is the king's grace's pleasure and yours, that I shall do in every thing.

"My lord, Mr. Shelton saith he is the master of this house: what fashion that shall be, I cannot tell; for I have not seen it before.—I trust your lordship will see the house honourably ordered, howsoever it hath been ordered aforetime.

"My lord, Mr. Shelton would have my lady Elizabeth to dine and sup every day at the board of estate. Alas! my lord, it is not meet for a child of her age to keep such rule yet. I promise you, my lord, I dare not take it upon me to keep her in health and she

² This is a word which I am utterly unable to explain; but it is thus printed in Strype's "Memorials," whence the letter is copied.

keep that rule. For there she shall see divers meats and fruits, and wine: which would be hard for me to restrain her grace from it. Ye know, my lord, there is no place of correction there. And she is yet too young to correct greatly. I know well, and she be there, I shall nother bring her up to the king's grace's honour, nor hers, nor to her health, nor my poor honesty. Wherefore I show your lordship this my desire. Beseeching you, my lord, that my lady may have a mess of meat to her own lodging, with a good dish or two, that is meet for her grace to eat of.

"God knoweth my lady hath great pain with her great teeth, and they come very slowly forth: and causeth me to suffer her grace to have her will, more than I would. I trust to God and her teeth were well graft, to have her grace after another fashion than she is yet: so as I trust the king's grace shall have great comfort in her grace. For she is as toward a child, and as gentle of conditions, as ever I knew any in my life. Jesu preserve her grace! As for a day or two at a hey time, or whensomever it shall please the king's grace to have her set abroad, I trust so to endeavour me, that she shall so do, as shall be to the king's honour and hers; and then after to take her ease again.

"Good my lord, have my lady's grace, and us that be her poor servants in your remembrance.

"From Hunsdon." (No date of time.)

On the day immediately following the death of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn, the king was publicly united in marriage to Jane Seymour; and an act of parliament soon after passed by which

the lady Elizabeth was declared incapable of succeeding to the crown, which was now settled on the offspring of Henry by his present queen.

CHAPTER II

1536 TO 1542

Vague notions of hereditary succession to the English throne.—Henry's jealousy of the royal family.—Imprisonment of lord T. Howard and lady M. Douglas.—After-fortunes of this lady.—Princess Mary reconciled with her father.—Dissolution of monasteries proceeds.—Insurrections in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.—Remarkable trait of the power of the nobles.—Rebellion of T. Fitzgerald.—Romantic adventures of Gerald Fitzgerald.—Birth of prince Edward.—Death of the queen.—Rise of the two Seymours.—Henry's views in their advancement.—His enmity to cardinal Pole.—Causes of it.—Geffrey Pole discloses a plot.—Trial and death of lord Montacute, the marquis of Exeter, sir Edward Nevil, and sir N. Carew.—Particulars of these persons.—Attainder of the marchioness of Exeter and countess of Salisbury.—Application of these circumstances to the history of Elizabeth.—Decline of the protestant party.—Its causes.—Cromwel proposes the king's marriage with Anne of Cleves.—Accomplishments of this lady.—Royal marriage.—Cromwel made earl of Essex.—Anger of the Bouchier family.—Justs at Westminster.—The king determines to dissolve his marriage.—Permits the fall of Cromwel.—

Is divorced.—Behaviour of the queen.—Marriage of the king to Catherine Howard.—Ascendency of the papists.—Execution of the countess of Salisbury—of lord Leonard Grey.—Discovery of the queen's ill-conduct.—Attainders passed against her and several others.

Nothing could be more opposite to the strict principles of hereditary succession than the ideas entertained, even by the first lawyers of the time of Henry VIII., concerning the manner in which a title to the crown was to be established and recognised.

When Rich, the king's solicitor, was sent by his master to argue with sir Thomas More on the lawfulness of acknowledging the royal supremacy; he inquired in the course of his argument, whether sir Thomas would not own for king any person whatever,—himself for example,—who should have been declared so by parliament? He answered, that he would. Rich then demanded, why he refused to acknowledge a head of the church so appointed? "Because," replied More, "a parliament can make a king and depose him, and that every parliament-man may give his consent thereunto, but a subject cannot be bound so in case of supremacy³." Bold as such doctrine respecting the power of parliaments would now be thought, it could not well be controverted at a time when examples were still recent of kings of the line of York or Lancaster alternately elevated or degraded by a vote of the two houses, and when the father of the reigning sovereign had occupied the throne in virtue of such a nomination

³ See Herbert's Henry VIII.

more than by right of birth.

But the obvious inconveniences and dangers attending the exercise of this power of choice, had induced the parliaments of Henry VIII. to join with him in various acts for the regulation of the succession. It was probably with the concurrence of this body, that in 1532 he had declared his cousin, the marquis of Exeter, heir to the crown; yet this very act, by which the king excluded not only his daughter Mary, but his two sisters and their children, every one of whom had a prior right according to the rules at present received, must have caused the sovereignty to be regarded rather as elective in the royal family than properly hereditary—a fatal idea, which converted every member of that family possessed of wealth, talents, or popularity, into a formidable rival, if not to the sovereign on the throne, at least to his next heir, if a woman or a minor, and which may be regarded as the immediate occasion of those cruel proscriptions which stained with kindred blood the closing years of the reign of Henry, and have stamped upon him to all posterity the odious character of a tyrant.

The first sufferer by the suspicions of the king was lord Thomas Howard, half-brother to the duke of Norfolk, who was attainted of high treason in the parliament of 1536, for having secretly entered into a contract of marriage with lady Margaret Douglas, the king's niece, through which alliance he was accused of aiming at the crown. For this offence he was confined in the Tower till his death; but on what evidence of traitorous designs,

or by what law, except the arbitrary mandate of the monarch confirmed by a subservient parliament, it would be difficult to say. That his marriage was forbidden by no law, is evident from the passing of an act immediately afterwards, making it penal to marry any female standing in the first degree of relationship to the king, without his knowledge and consent.

The lady Margaret was daughter to Henry's eldest sister, the queen-dowager of Scotland, by her second husband the earl of Angus. She was born in England, whither her mother had been compelled to fly for refuge by the turbulent state of her son's kingdom, and the ill success of her own and her husband's struggles for the acquisition of political power. In the English court the lady Margaret had likewise been educated, and had formed connexions of friendship; whilst her brother James V. laboured under the antipathy with which the English then regarded those northern neighbours, with whom they were involved in almost perpetual hostilities. It might easily therefore have happened, in case of the king's death without male heirs, that in spite of the power recently bestowed on him by parliament of disposing of the crown by will, which it is very uncertain how he would have employed, a connexion with the potent house of Howard might have given the title of lady Margaret a preference over that of any other competitor. Henry was struck with this danger, however distant and contingent: he caused his niece, as well as her spouse, to be imprisoned; and though he restored her to liberty in a few months, and the death of Howard, not

long afterwards, set her free from this ill-starred engagement, she ventured not to form another, till the king himself, at the end of several years, gave her in marriage to the earl of Lenox; by whom she became the mother of lord Darnley, and through him the progenitrix of a line of princes destined to unite another crown to the ancient inheritance of the Plantagenets and the Tudors.

The princess Mary, after the removal of Anne Boleyn, who had exercised towards her the utmost insolence and harshness, ventured upon some overtures towards a reconciliation with her father; but he would accept them on no other conditions than her adopting his religious creed, acknowledging his supremacy, denying the authority of the pope, and confessing the unlawfulness of her mother's marriage. It was long before motives of expediency, and the persuasion of friends, could wring from Mary a reluctant assent to these cruel articles: her compliance was rewarded by the return of her father's affection, but not immediately by her reinstatement in the order of succession. She saw the child of Anne Boleyn still a distinguished object of the king's paternal tenderness; the new queen was likely to give another heir to the crown; and whatever hopes she, with the catholic party in general, had founded on the disgrace of his late spouse, became frustrated by succeeding events.

The death of Catherine of Arragon seemed to have removed the principal obstacles to an agreement between the king and the pope; and the holy father now deigned to make some advances towards a son whom he hoped to find disposed to penitence:

but they were absolutely rejected by Henry, who had ceased to dread his spiritual thunders. The parliament and the convocation showed themselves prepared to adopt, without hesitation, the numerous changes suggested by the king in the ancient ritual; and Cromwel, with influence not apparently diminished by the fall of the late patroness of the protestant party, presided in the latter assembly with the title of vicegerent, and with powers unlimited.

The suppression of monasteries was now carried on with increasing rigor, and thousands of their unfortunate inhabitants were mercilessly turned out to beg or starve. These, dispersing themselves over the country, in which their former hospitalities had rendered them generally popular, worked strongly on the passions of the many, already discontented at the imposition of new taxes, which served to convince them that the king and his courtiers would be the only gainers by the plunder of the church; and formidable insurrections were in some counties the result. In Lincolnshire the commotions were speedily suppressed by the interposition of the earl of Shrewsbury and other loyal noblemen; but it was necessary to send into Yorkshire a considerable army under the duke of Norfolk. Through the dexterous management of this leader, who was judged to favor the cause of the revolvers as much as his duty to his sovereign and a regard to his own safety would permit, little blood was shed in the field; but much flowed afterwards on the scaffold, where the lords Darcy and Hussey, sir Thomas Percy, brother to the earl of Northumberland, and several private gentlemen, suffered as traitors.

The suppression of these risings strengthened, as usual, the hands of government, but at the expense of converting into an object of dread, a monarch who in the earlier and brighter period of his reign had been regarded with sentiments of admiration and love.

In lord Herbert's narrative of this insurrection, we meet with a passage too remarkable to be omitted. "But the king, who was informed from divers parts, but chiefly from Yorkshire, that the people began there also to take arms, and knowing of what great consequence it might be if the great persons in those parts, though the rumour were false, should be said to join with him, had commanded George earl of Shrewsbury, Thomas Manners earl of Rutland, and George Hastings earl of Huntingdon, to make a proclamation to the Lincolnshire-men, summoning and commanding them on their allegiance and peril of their lives to return; which, as it much disheartened them, so many stole away," &c.

In this potency of the hereditary aristocracy of the country, and comparative feebleness, on some occasions at least, of the authority of the most despotic sovereign whom England had yet seen on the throne, we discern at once the excuse which Henry would make to himself for his severities against the nobility, and the motive of that extreme popularity of manners by which Elizabeth aimed at attaching to herself the affections of the middling and lower orders of her subjects.

Soon after these events, Henry confirmed the new impressions

which his subjects had received of his character, by an act of extraordinary, but not unprovoked, severity, which involved in destruction one of the most ancient and powerful houses among the peerage of Ireland, that of Fitzgerald earl of Kildare. The nobleman who now bore this title had married for his second wife lady Elizabeth Grey, daughter of the first marquis of Dorset, and first-cousin to the king by his mother; he had been favored at court, and was at this time lord deputy of Ireland. But the country being in a very disturbed state, and the deputy accused of many acts of violence, he had obeyed with great reluctance a summons to answer for his conduct before the king in council, leaving his eldest son to exercise his office during his absence. On his arrival, he was committed to the Tower, and his son, alarmed by the false report of his having lost his head, broke out immediately into a furious rebellion. After a temporary success, Thomas Fitzgerald was reduced to great difficulties: at the same time a promise of pardon was held out to him; and confiding in it he surrendered himself to lord Leonard Grey, brother to the countess his step-mother. His five uncles, also implicated in the guilt of rebellion, were seized by surprise, or deceived into submission. The whole six were then conveyed to England in the same ship; and all, in spite of the entreaties and remonstrances of lord Leonard Grey, who considered his own honor as pledged for the safety of their lives, were hanged at Tyburn.

The aged earl had died in the Tower on receiving news of his son's rash enterprise; and a posthumous attainder being

issued against him, his lands and goods were forfeited. The king however, in pity to the widow, and as a slight atonement for so cruel an injustice, permitted one of her daughters to retain some poor remains of the family plate and valuables; and another of them, coming to England, appears to have received her education at Hunsdon palace with the princesses Mary and Elizabeth her relations. Here she was seen by Henry earl of Surry, whose chaste and elegant muse has handed her down to posterity as the lovely Geraldine, the object of his fervent but fruitless devotion. She was married first to sir Anthony Brown, and afterwards became the wife of the earl of Lincoln, surviving by many years her noble and unfortunate admirer.

The countess of Kildare, and the younger of her two sons, likewise remained in England obscure and unmolested; but the merciless rancour of Henry against the house of Fitzgerald still pursued its destitute and unoffending heir, who was struggling through a series of adventures the most perilous and the most romantic.

This boy, named Gerald, then about twelve years old, had been left by his father at a house in Kildare, under the care and tuition of Leverous a priest who was his foster-brother. The child was lying ill of the small-pox, when the news arrived that his brother and uncles had been sent prisoners to England: but his affectionate guardian, justly apprehensive of greater danger to his young charge, wrapped him up as carefully as he could, and conveyed him away with all speed to the house of one of his

sisters, where he remained till he was quite recovered. Thence his tutor removed him successively into the territories of two or three different Irish chieftains, who sheltered him for about three quarters of a year, after which he carried him to his aunt the lady Elenor, at that time widow of a chief named Maccarty Reagh.

This lady had long been sought in marriage by O'Donnel lord of Tyrconnel, to whose suit she had been unpropitious: but wrought upon by the hope of being able to afford effectual protection to her unfortunate nephew, she now consented to an immediate union; and taking Gerald along with her to her new home in the county of Donegal, she there hospitably entertained him for about a year. But the jealous spirit of the implacable king seemed to know no rest while this devoted youth still breathed the air of liberty, and he caused a great reward to be offered for his apprehension, which the base-minded O'Donnel immediately sought to appropriate by delivering him up. Fortunately the lady Elenor discovered his intentions in time, and instantly causing her nephew to disguise his person, and storing him, like a bountiful aunt, with "sevenscore portugueses," she put him under the charge of Leverous and an old servant of his father's, and shipped him on board a vessel bound for St. Malo's.

Having thus secured his escape, she loftily expostulated with her husband on his villainy in plotting to betray her kinsman, whom she had stipulated that he should protect to the utmost of his power; and she bid him know, that as the danger of the youth had alone induced her to form any connection with him, so

the assurance of his safety should cause her to sequester herself for ever from the society of so base and mercenary a wretch: and hereupon, collecting all that belonged to her, she quitted O'Donnel and returned to her own country.

Gerald, in the mean time, arrived without accident in Bretagne, and was favorably received by the governor of that province, when the king of France, being informed of his situation, gave him a place about the dauphin. Sir John Wallop however, the English ambassador, soon demanded him, in virtue of a treaty between the two countries for the delivering up of offenders and proscribed persons; and while the king demurred to the requisition, Gerald consulted his safety by making a speedy retreat into Flanders. Thither his steps were dogged by an Irish servant of the ambassador's; but the governor of Valenciennes protected him by imprisoning this man, till the youth himself generously begged his release; and he reached the emperor's court at Brussels, without further molestation. But here also the English ambassador demanded him; the emperor however excused himself from giving up a fugitive whose youth sufficiently attested his innocence, and sent him privately to the bishop of Liege, with a pension of a hundred crowns a month. The bishop entertained him very honorably, placing him in a monastery, and watching carefully over the safety of his person, till, at the end of half a year, his mother's kinsman, cardinal Pole, sent for him into Italy.

Before he would admit the young Irishman to his presence,

the cardinal required him to learn Italian; and allowing him an annuity, placed him first with the bishop of Verona, then with a cardinal, and afterwards with the duke of Mantua. At the end of a year and a half he invited him to Rome, and soon becoming attached to him, took him into his house, and for three years had him instructed under his own eye in all the accomplishments of a finished gentleman. At the end of this time, when Gerald had nearly attained the age of nineteen, his generous patron gave him the choice either of pursuing his studies or of travelling to seek his adventures. The youth preferred the latter; and repairing to Naples, he fell in with some knights of Rhodes, whom he accompanied to Malta, and thence to Tripoli, a place at that time possessed by the order, whence they carried on fierce war against the "Turks and miscreants," spoiling and sacking their villages and towns, and taking many prisoners whom they sold to the Christians for slaves. In these proceedings, the young adventurer took a strenuous and valiant part, much to his profit; for in less than a year he returned to Rome laden with a rich booty. "Proud was the cardinal to hear of his prosperous exploits," and increased his pension to three hundred pounds a year. Shortly after, he entered into the service of Cosmo duke of Florence, and remained three years his master of the horse.

The tidings of Henry's death at length put an end to his exile, and he hastened to London in the company of some foreign ambassadors, and still attended by his faithful guardian Leverous. Appearing at king Edward's court in a mask, or ball, he had

the good fortune to make a deep impression on the heart of a young lady, daughter to sir Anthony Brown, whom he married; and through the intercession of her friends was restored to a part of his inheritance by the young monarch, who also knighted him. In the next reign, the interest of cardinal Pole procured his reinstatement in all the titles and honors of his ancestors. He was a faithful and affectionate subject to queen Elizabeth, in whose reign he turned protestant; was by her greatly favored, and finally died in peace in 1585.⁴

That ill-directed restlessness which formed so striking a feature in the character of Henry VIII. had already prompted him to interfere, as we have seen, on more than one occasion, with the order of succession; and the dangerous consequences of these capricious acts with respect to the several branches of the royal family have already been observed. To the people at large also, his instability on so momentous a point was harassing and alarming, and they became as much at a loss to conjecture what successor, as what religion, he would at last bequeath them.

Under such circumstances, great indeed must have been the joy in the court and in the nation on the occurrence of an event calculated to end all doubts and remove all difficulties—the birth of a prince of Wales.

This auspicious infant seemed to strangle in his cradle the

⁴ See Chron. of Ireland in Holinshed, *pass.* Collins's Peerage, by sir E. Brydges, article *Viscount Leinster*. Catherine was so unguarded in her own conduct, that the lord-admiral professed himself jealous of the servant who carried up coals to her apartment.

serpents of civil discord. Every lip hastened to proffer him its homage; every heart united, or seemed at least to unite, in the general burst of thankfulness and congratulation.

The zealous papists formed the party most to be suspected of insincerity in their professions of satisfaction; but the princess Mary set them an excellent example of graceful submission to what was inevitable, by soliciting the office of godmother. Her sister was happily too young to be infected with court-jealousies, or to behold in a brother an unwelcome intruder, who came to snatch from her the inheritance of a crown: between Elizabeth and Edward an attachment truly fraternal sprung up with the first dawnings of reason; and notwithstanding the fatal blow given to her interests by the act of settlement extorted from his dying hand, this princess never ceased to cherish his memory, and to mention him in terms of affectionate regret.

The conjugal felicities of Henry were destined to be of short duration, and before he could receive the felicitations of his subjects on the birth of his son, the mother was snatched away by death. The queen died deeply regretted, not only by her husband, but by the whole court, whom she had attached by the uncommon sweetness of her disposition. To the princess Mary her behaviour had been the reverse of that by which her predecessor had disgraced herself; and the little Elizabeth had received from her marks of a maternal tenderness. Jane Seymour was accounted a favourer of the protestant cause; but as she was apparently free from the ambition of interfering in state affairs, her death had

no further political influence than what resulted from the king's marriage thus becoming once more an object of speculation and court intrigue. It did not even give a check to the advancement of her two brothers, destined to act and to suffer so conspicuously in the fierce contentions of the ensuing minority; for the king seemed to regard it as a point of policy to elevate those maternal relations of his son, on whose care he relied to watch over the safety of his person in case of his own demise, to a dignity and importance which the proudest nobles of the land might view with respect or fear. Sir Edward Seymour, who had been created lord Beauchamp the year before, was now made earl of Hertford; and high places at court and commands in the army attested the favor of his royal brother-in-law. Thomas Seymour, afterwards lord high-admiral, attained during this reign no higher dignity than that of knighthood; but considerable pecuniary grants were bestowed upon him; and whilst he saw his wealth increase, he was secretly extending his influence, and feeding his aspiring spirit with fond anticipations of future greatness.

All now seemed tranquil: but a discerning eye might already have beheld fresh tempests gathering in the changeful atmosphere of the English court. The jealousies of the king, become too habitual to be discarded, had in fact only received a new direction from the birth of his son: his mind was perpetually haunted with the dread of leaving him, a defenceless minor, in the hands of contending parties in religion, and of a formidable and factious nobility; and for the sake of obviating the distant

and contingent evils which he apprehended from this source, he showed himself ready to pour forth whole rivers of the best blood of England.

The person beyond all comparison most dreaded and detested by Henry at this juncture was his cousin Reginald Pole, for whom when a youth he had conceived a warm affection, whose studies he had encouraged by the gift of a deanery and the hope of further church-preferment, and of whose ingratitude he always believed himself entitled to complain. It was the long-contested point of the lawfulness of Henry's marriage with his brother's widow, which set the kinsmen at variance. Pole had from the first refused to concur with the university of Paris, in which he was then residing, in its condemnation of this union: afterwards, alarmed probably at the king's importunities on the subject, he had obtained the permission then necessary for leaving England, to which he had returned, and travelled into Italy. Here he formed friendships with the most eminent defenders of the papal authority, now incensed to the highest degree against Henry, on account of his having declared himself head of the English church; and both his convictions and his passions becoming still more strongly engaged on the side which he had already espoused, he published a work on the unity of the church, in which the conduct of his sovereign and benefactor became the topic of his vehement invective.

The offended king, probably with treacherous intentions, invited Pole to come to England, and explain to him in person

certain difficult passages of his book: but his kinsman was too wary to trust himself in such hands; and his refusal to obey this summons, which implied a final renunciation of his country and all his early prospects, was immediately rewarded by the pope, through the emperor's concurrence, with a cardinal's hat and the appointment of legate to Flanders. But alarmed, as well as enraged, at seeing the man whom he regarded as his bitterest personal enemy placed in a situation so convenient for carrying on intrigues with the disaffected papists in England, Henry addressed so strong a remonstrance to the governess of the Netherlands, as caused her to send the cardinal out of the country before he had begun to exercise the functions of his legantine office.

From this time, to maintain any intercourse or correspondence with Pole was treated by the king as either in itself an act of treason, or at least as conclusive evidence of traitorous intentions. He believed that the darkest designs were in agitation against his own government and his son's succession; and the circumstance of the cardinal's still declining to take any but deacon's orders, notwithstanding his high dignity in the church, suggested to him the suspicion that his kinsman aimed at the crown itself, through a marriage with the princess Mary, of whose legitimacy he had shown himself so strenuous a champion. What foundation there might be for such an idea it is difficult to determine.

There is an author who relates that the lady Mary was educated with the cardinal under his mother, and hints that an early

attachment had thus been formed between them⁵: A statement manifestly inaccurate, since Pole was sixteen years older than the princess; though it is not improbable that Mary, during some period of her youth, might be placed under the care of the countess of Salisbury, and permitted to associate with her son on easy and affectionate terms. It is well known that after Mary's accession, Charles V. impeded the journey of Pole into England till her marriage with his son Philip had been actually solemnized; but this was probably rather from a persuasion of the inexpediency of the cardinal's sooner opening his legantine commission in England, than from any fear of his supplanting in Mary's affections his younger rival, though some have ascribed to the emperor the latter motive.

When however it is recollected, that in consequence of Henry's having caused a posthumous judgement of treason to be pronounced against the papal martyr Becket, his shrine to be destroyed, his bones burned, and his ashes scattered, the pope had at length, in 1538, fulminated against him the long-suspended sentence of excommunication, and made a donation of his kingdom to the king of Scots, and thus impressed the sanction of religion on any rebellious attempts of his Roman-catholic subjects,—it would be too much to pronounce the apprehensions of the monarch to have been altogether chimerical. But his suspicion appears, as usual, to have gone beyond the truth, and his anger to have availed itself of slight

⁵ See Lloyd's Worthies, article *Pole*.

pretexts to ruin where he feared and hated.

Such was the state of his mind when the treachery or weakness of Geffrey Pole furnished him with intelligence of a traitorous correspondence carried on with his brother the cardinal by several persons of distinction attached to the papal interest, and in which he had himself been a sharer. On his information, the marquis of Exeter, viscount Montacute, sir Edward Nevil, and sir Nicholas Carew, were apprehended, tried and found guilty of high treason. Public opinion was at this time nothing; and notwithstanding the rank, consequence and popularity of the men whose lives were sacrificed on this occasion; notwithstanding that secret consciousness of his own ill-will towards them, which ought to have rendered Henry more than usually cautious in his proceedings,—not even an attempt was made to render their guilt clear and notorious to the nation at large; and posterity scarcely even knows of what designs they were accused; to overt acts it is quite certain that they had not proceeded.

Henry lord Montacute was obnoxious on more than one account: he was the brother of cardinal Pole; and as eldest son of Margaret, sole surviving child of the duke of Clarence and heiress to her brother the earl of Warwick, he might be regarded as succeeding to those claims on the crown which under Henry VII. had proved fatal to the last-mentioned unfortunate and ill-treated nobleman. During the early part of this reign, however, he, in common with other members of the family of Pole, had

received marks of the friendship of Henry. In 1514, his mother was authorized to assume the title of countess of Salisbury, and he that of viscount Montacute, notwithstanding the attainder formerly passed against the great house of Nevil, from whom these honors were derived. In 1521 lord Montacute had been indicted for concealing the treasons, real or pretended, of the duke of Buckingham; but immediately on his acquittal he was restored to the good graces of his sovereign, and, two years after, attended him on an expedition to France.

It is probable that lord Montacute was popular; he was at least a partisan of the old religion, and heir to the vast possessions which his mother derived from the king-making earl of Warwick her maternal grandfather; sufficient motives with Henry for now wishing his removal. If the plot in which he was charged by his perfidious brother with participating, had in view the elevation of the cardinal to a matrimonial crown by his union with the princess Mary, which seems to have been insinuated, lord Montacute must at least stand acquitted of all design of asserting his own title; yet it may justly be suspected that his character of representative of the house of Clarence, was by Henry placed foremost in the catalogue of his offences.

A similar remark applies still more forcibly to the marquis of Exeter. Son of Catherine, youngest daughter of Edward IV., and so lately declared his heir by Henry himself, it is scarcely credible that any inducement could have drawn this nobleman into a plot for disturbing the succession in favour of a claim worse founded

than his own; and that the blood which he inherited was the true object of Henry's apprehensions from him, evidently appeared to all the world by his causing the son of the unhappy marquis, a child at this period, to be detained a state prisoner in the Tower during the remainder of his reign.

Sir Edward Nevil was brother to lord Abergavenny and to the wife of lord Montacute—a connection likely to bring him into suspicion, and perhaps to involve him in real guilt; but it must not be forgotten that he was a lineal descendant of the house of Lancaster by Joan daughter of John of Gaunt. The only person not of royal extraction who suffered on this occasion was sir Nicholas Carew, master of the horse, and lately a distinguished favourite of the king; of whom it is traditionally related, that though accused as an accomplice in the designs of the other noble delinquents, the real offence for which he died, was the having retorted, with more spirit than prudence, some opprobrious language with which his royal master had insulted him as they were playing at bowls together⁶. The family of Carew was however allied in blood to that of Courtney, of which the marquis of Exeter was the head.

But the attempt to extirpate all who under any future circumstances might be supposed capable of advancing claims formidable to the house of Tudor, must have appeared to Henry himself a task almost as hopeless as cruel. Sons and daughters of the Plantagenet princes had in every generation

⁶ See Fuller's Worthies in Surry.

freely intermarried with the ancient nobles of the land; and as fast as those were cut off whose connection with the royal blood was nearest and most recent, the pedigrees of families pointed out others, and others still, whose relationship grew into nearness by the removal of such as had stood before them, and presented to the affrighted eyes of their persecutor, a hydra with still renewed and multiplying heads.

Not content with these inflictions,—sufficiently severe it might be thought to intimidate the papal faction,—Henry gratified still further his stern disposition by the attainder of the marchioness of Exeter and the aged countess of Salisbury. The marchioness he soon after released; but the countess was still detained prisoner under a sentence of death, which a parliament, atrocious in its subserviency, had passed upon her without form of trial, but which the king did not think proper at present to carry into execution, either because he chose to keep her as a kind of hostage for the good behaviour of her son the cardinal, or because, tyrant as he had become, he had not yet been able to divest himself of all reverence or pity for the hoary head of a female, a kinswoman, and the last who was born to the name of Plantagenet.

It is melancholy, it is even disgusting, to dwell upon these acts of legalized atrocity, but let it be allowed that it is important and instructive. They form unhappily a leading feature of the administration of Henry VIII. during the latter years of his reign; they exhibit in the most striking point of view the sentiments and

practices of the age; and may assist us to form a juster estimate of the character and conduct of Elizabeth, whose infant mind was formed to the contemplation of these domestic tragedies, and whose fame has often suffered by inconsiderate comparisons which have placed her in parallel with the enlightened and humanized sovereigns of more modern days, rather than with the stern and arbitrary Tudors, her barbarous predecessors.

It is remarkable that the protestant party at the court of Henry, so far from gaining strength and influence by the severities exercised against the adherents of cardinal Pole and the ancient religion, was evidently in a declining state. The feeble efforts of its two leaders Cromwel and Cranmer, of whom the first was deficient in zeal, the last in courage, now experienced irresistible counteraction from the influence of Gardiner, whose uncommon talents for business, joined to his extreme obsequiousness, had rendered him at once necessary and acceptable to his royal master. The law of the Six Articles, which forbade under the highest penalties the denial of several doctrines of the Romish church peculiarly obnoxious to the reformers, was probably drawn up by this minister. It was enacted in the parliament of 1539: a vast number of persons were soon after imprisoned for transgressing it; and Cranmer himself was compelled, by the clause which ordained the celibacy of the clergy, to send away his wife.

Under these circumstances Cromwel began to look on all sides for support; and recollecting with regret the powerful

influence exerted by Anne Boleyn in favor of the good cause, and even the gentler and more private aid lent to it by the late queen, he planned a new marriage for his sovereign, with a lady educated in the very bosom of the protestant communion. Political considerations favored the design; since a treaty lately concluded between the emperor and the king of France rendered it highly expedient that Henry, by way of counterpoise, should strengthen his alliance with the Smalcaldic league. In short, Cromwel prevailed. Holbein, whom the king had appointed his painter on the recommendation of sir Thomas More, and still retained in that capacity, was sent over to take the portrait of Anne sister of the duke of Cleves; and rashly trusting in the fidelity of the likeness, Henry soon after solicited her hand in marriage.

"The lady Anne," says a historian, "understood no language but Dutch, so that all communication of speech between her and our king was intercluded. Yet our ambassador, Nicholas Wotton doctor of law, employed in the business, hath it, that she could both read and write in her own language, and sew very well; only for music, he said, it was not the manner of the country to learn it⁷." It must be confessed that for a princess this list of accomplishments appears somewhat scanty; and Henry, unfortunately for the lady Anne, was a great admirer of learning, wit and talents, in the female sex, and a passionate lover of music, which he well understood. What was still worse, he piqued

⁷ Herbert.

himself extremely on his taste in beauty, and was much more solicitous respecting the personal charms of his consorts than is usual with sovereigns;

and when, on the arrival of his destined bride in England, he hastened to Rochester to gratify his impatience by snatching a private view of her, he found that in this capital article he had been grievously imposed upon. The uncourteous comparison by which he expressed his dislike of her large and clumsy person is well known. Bitterly did he lament to Cromwel the hard fortune which had allotted him so unlovely a partner, and he returned to London very melancholy. But the evil appeared to be now past remedy; it was contrary to all policy to affront the German princes by sending back their countrywoman after matters had gone so far, and Henry magnanimously resolved to sacrifice his own feelings, once in his life, for the good of his country. Accordingly, he received the princess with great magnificence and with every outward demonstration of satisfaction, and was married to her at Greenwich in January 1540.

Two or three months afterwards, the king, notwithstanding his secret dissatisfaction, rewarded Cromwel for his pains in concluding this union by conferring on him the vacant title of earl of Essex;—a fatal gift, which exasperated to rage the mingled jealousy and disdain which this low-born and aspiring minister had already provoked from the ancient nobility, by intruding himself into the order of the garter, and which served to heap upon his devoted head fresh coals of wrath against

the day of retribution which was fast approaching. The act of transferring this title to a new family, could in fact be no otherwise regarded by the great house of Bouchier, which had long enjoyed it, than either as a marked indignity to itself, or as a fresh result of the general Tudor system of depressing and discountenancing the blood of the Plantagenets, from which the Bouchiers, through a daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, were descended. The late earl had left a married daughter, to whom, according to the customary courtesy of English sovereigns in similar circumstances, the title ought to have been continued; and as this lady had no children, the earl of Bath, as head of the house, felt himself also aggrieved by the alienation of family honors which he hoped to have seen continued to himself and his posterity.

In honor, probably, of the recent marriage of the king, unusually splendid justs were opened at Westminster on May-day; in which the challengers were headed by sir John Dudley, and the defenders by the earl of Surry. This entertainment was continued for several successive days, during which the challengers, according to the costly fashion of ancient hospitality, kept open house at their common charge, and feasted the king and queen, the members of both houses, and the lord-mayor and aldermen with their wives.

But scenes of pomp and festivity had no power to divert the thoughts of the king from his domestic grievance,—a wife whom he regarded with disgust: on the contrary, it is probable

that this season of courtly revelry encreased his disquiet, by giving him opportunities of beholding under the most attractive circumstances the charms of a youthful beauty whom he was soon seized with the most violent desire of placing beside him on the throne which he judged her worthy to adorn.

No considerations of rectitude or of policy could longer restrain the impetuous monarch from casting off the yoke of a detested marriage: and as a first step towards emancipation, he determined to permit the ruin of its original adviser, that unpopular minister, but vigorous and serviceable instrument of arbitrary power, whom he had hitherto defended with pertinacity against all attacks.

No sooner was the decline of his favor perceived, and what so quickly perceived at courts? than the ill-fated Cromwel found himself assailed on every side. His active agency in the suppression of monasteries had brought upon him, with the imputation of sacrilege, the hatred of all the papists;—a certain coldness, or timidity, which he had manifested in the cause of religious reformation in other respects, and particularly the enactment of the Six Articles during his administration, had rendered him an object of suspicion or dislike to the protestants;—in his new and undefined office of royal vicegerent for the exercise of the supremacy, he had offended the whole body of the clergy;—and he had just filled up the measure of his offences against the nobility by procuring a grant of the place of lord high-steward, long hereditary in the great house of the Veres earls of

Oxford. The only voice raised in his favor was that of Cranmer, who interceded with Henry in his behalf in a letter eloquent, touching, and even courageous, times and persons considered. Gardiner and the duke of Norfolk urged on his accusation; the parliament, with its accustomed subserviency, proceeded against him by attainder; and having voted him guilty of heresy and treason, left it in the choice of the king to bring him either to the block or the stake for whichever he pleased of these offences; neither of which was proved by evidence, or even supported by reasonable probabilities. But against this violation in his person of the chartered rights of Englishmen, however flagrant, the unfortunate earl of Essex had forfeited all right to appeal, since it was himself who had first advised the same arbitrary mode of proceeding in the cases of the marchioness of Exeter, of the countess of Salisbury, and of several persons of inferior rank connected with them; on whom capital punishment had already been inflicted.

With many private virtues, Essex, like his great master Wolsey, and like the disgraced ministers of despotic princes in general, perished unpitied; and the king and the faction of Gardiner and of the Howards seemed equally to rejoice in the free course opened by his removal to their further projects. The parliament was immediately ordered to find valid a certain frivolous pretext of a prior contract, on which its master was pleased to demand a divorce from Ann of Cleves; and the marriage was unanimously declared null, without any

opportunity afforded to the queen of bringing evidence in its support.

The fortitude, or rather phlegm, with which her unmerited degradation was supported by the lady Anne, has in it something at once extraordinary and amusing. There is indeed a tradition that she fainted on first receiving the information that her marriage was likely to be set aside; but the shock once over, she gave to the divorce, without hesitation or visible reluctance, that assent which was required of her. Taking in good part the pension of three thousand pounds per annum, and the title of his *sister* which her ex-husband was graciously pleased to offer her, she wrote to her brother the elector to entreat him still to live in amity with the king of England, against whom she had no ground of complaint; and she continued, till the day of her death, to make his country her abode. Through the whole affair she gave no indication of wounded pride; unless her refusal to return in the character of a discarded and rejected damsel, to the home which she had so lately quitted in all the pomp and triumph of a royal bride, is to be regarded as such. But even for this part of her conduct a different motive is with great plausibility assigned by a writer, who supposes her to have been swayed by the prudent consideration, that the regular payment of her pension would better be secured by her remaining under the eyes and within the protection of the English nation.

A very few weeks after this apparently formidable business had been thus readily and amicably arranged, Catherine Howard

niece to the duke of Norfolk, and first cousin to Anne Boleyn, was declared queen. This lady, beautiful, insinuating, and more fondly beloved by the king than any of her predecessors, was a catholic, and almost all the members of the council who now possessed office or influence were attached, more or less openly, to the same communion. In consequence, the penalties of the Six Articles were enforced with great cruelty against the reformers; but this did not exempt from punishment such as, offending on the other side, ventured to deny the royal supremacy; the only difference was, that the former class of culprits were burned as heretics, the latter hanged as traitors.

The king soon after seized the occasion of a trifling insurrection in Yorkshire, of which sir John Nevil was the leader, to complete his vengeance against cardinal Pole, by bringing to a cruel and ignominious end the days of his venerable and sorrow-stricken mother, who had been unfortunate enough thus long to survive the ruin of her family. The strange and shocking scene exhibited on the scaffold by the desperation of this illustrious and injured lady, is detailed by all our historians: it seems almost incredible that the surrounding crowd were not urged by an unanimous impulse of horror and compassion to rush in and rescue from the murderous hands of the executioner the last miserable representative of such a line of princes. But the eyes of Henry's subjects were habituated to these scenes of blood; and they were viewed by some with indifference, and by the rest with emotions of terror which effectually repressed the generous

movements of a just and manly indignation.

In public causes, to be accused and to suffer death were now the same thing; and another eminent victim of the policy of the English Tiberius displayed in a novel and truly portentous manner his utter despair of the justice of the country and the mercy of his sovereign.

Lord Leonard Grey, late deputy of Ireland, was accused of favouring the escape of that persecuted child his nephew Gerald Fitzgerald, of corresponding with cardinal Pole, and of various other offences called treasonable. Being brought before a jury of knights, "he saved them," says lord Herbert, "the labour of condemning him, and without more ado confessed all. Which, whether this lord, who was of great courage, did out of desperation or guilt, some circumstances make doubtful; and the rather, that the articles being so many, he neither denied nor extenuated any of them, though his continual fighting with the king's enemies, where occasion was, pleaded much on his part. Howsoever, he had his head cut off⁸."

The queen and her party were daily gaining upon the mind of the king; and Cranmer himself, notwithstanding the high esteem entertained for him by Henry, had begun to be endangered by their machinations, when an unexpected discovery put into his hands the means of baffling all their designs, and producing a

⁸ Many years after, the earl of Kildare solemnly assured the author of the "Chronicles of Ireland" in Holinshed, that lord Leonard Grey had no concern whatever in his escape.

total revolution in the face of the court.

It was towards the close of the year 1541 that private information was conveyed to the primate of such disorders in the conduct of the queen before her marriage as could not fail to plunge her in infamy and ruin. Cranmer, if not exceedingly grieved, was at least greatly perplexed by the incident:—at first sight there appeared to be equal danger in concealing or discovering circumstances of a nature so delicate, and the archbishop was timid by nature, and cautious from the experience of a court. At length, all things well weighed, he judiciously preferred the hazard of making the communication at once, without reserve, and directly, to the person most interested; and, forming into a narrative facts which his tongue dared not utter to the face of a prince whose anger was deadly, he presented it to him and entreated him to peruse it in secret.

Love and pride conspired to persuade the king that his Catherine was incapable of having imposed upon him thus grossly, and he at once pronounced the whole story a malicious fabrication; but the strict inquiry which he caused to be instituted for the purpose of punishing its authors, not only established the truth of the accusations already brought, but served also to throw the strongest suspicions on the conjugal fidelity of the queen.

The agonies of Henry on this occasion were such as in any other husband would have merited the deepest compassion: with him they were quickly succeeded by the most violent rage; and his cry for vengeance was, as usual, echoed with alacrity by a

loyal and sympathizing parliament. Party animosity profited by the occasion and gave additional impulse to their proceedings. After convicting by attainder the queen and her paramours, who were soon after put to death, the two houses proceeded also to attain her uncle, aunt, grandmother, and about ten other persons, male and female, accused of being accessory or privy to her disorders before marriage, and of not revealing them to the king when they became acquainted with his intention of making her his consort; an offence declared to be misprision of treason by an ex post facto law. But this was an excess of barbarity of which Henry himself was ashamed: the infamous lady Rochford was the only confidant who suffered capitally; the rest were released after imprisonments of longer or shorter duration; yet a reserve of bitterness appears to have remained stored up in the heart of the king against the whole race of Howard, which the enemies of that illustrious house well knew how to cherish and augment against a future day.

CHAPTER III

1542 TO 1547

Rout of Solway and death of James V. of Scotland.—Birth of queen Mary.—Henry projects to marry her to his son.—Offers the hand of Elizabeth to the earl of Arran.—Earl of Lenox marries lady M. Douglas.—Marriage of the king to Catherine Parr.—Her person and acquirements.—Influence of her conduct on Elizabeth.—Henry joins the emperor against Francis I.—His campaign in France.—Princess Mary replaced in order of succession, and Elizabeth also.—Proposals for a marriage between Elizabeth and Philip of Spain.—The duke of Norfolk and earl of Hertford heads of the catholic and protestant parties. Circumstances which give a preponderance to the latter.—Disgrace of the duke.—Trial of the earl of Surry.—His death and character.—Sentence against the duke of Norfolk.—Death of Henry.

In the month of December 1542, shortly after the rout of Solway, in which the English made prisoners the flower of the Scottish nobility, the same messenger brought to Henry VIII. the tidings that the grief and shame of this defeat had broken the heart of king James V., and that his queen had brought into the world a daughter, who had received the name of Mary, and

was now queen of Scotland. Without stopping to deplore the melancholy fate of a nephew whom he had himself brought to destruction, Henry instantly formed the project of uniting the whole island under one crown, by the marriage of this infant sovereign with the prince his son. All the Scottish prisoners of rank then in London were immediately offered the liberty of returning to their own country on the condition, to which they acceded with apparent alacrity, of promoting this union with all their interest; and so confident was the English monarch in the success of his measures, that previously to their departure, several of them were carried to the palace of Enfield, where young Edward then resided, that they might tender homage to the future husband of their queen.

The regency of Scotland at this critical juncture was claimed by the earl of Arran, who was generally regarded as next heir to the crown, though his legitimacy had been disputed; and to this nobleman,—but whether for himself or his son seems doubtful,—Henry, as a further means of securing the important object which he had at heart, offered the hand of his daughter Elizabeth. So early were the concerns and interests blended, of two princesses whose celebrated rivalry was destined to endure until the life of one of them had become its sacrifice! So remarkably, too, in this first transaction was contrasted the high preeminence from which the Scottish princess was destined to hurl herself by her own misconduct, with the abasement and comparative insignificance out of which her genius and her good

fortune were to be employed in elevating the future sovereign of England.

Born in the purple of her hereditary kingdom, the monarchs of France and England made it an object of eager contention which of them should succeed in encircling with a second diadem the baby brows of Mary; while the hand of Elizabeth was tossed as a trivial boon to a Scottish earl of equivocal birth, despicable abilities, and feeble character. So little too was even this person flattered by the honor, or aware of the advantages, of such a connection, that he soon after renounced it by quitting the English for the French party. Elizabeth in consequence remained unbetrothed, and her father soon afterwards secured to himself a more strenuous ally in the earl of Lenox, also of the blood-royal of Scotland, by bestowing upon this nobleman the hand, not of his daughter, but of his niece the lady Margaret Douglas.

Undeterred by his late severe disappointment Henry was bent on entering once more into the marriage state, and his choice now fell on Catherine Parr, sprung from a knightly family possessed of large estates in Westmoreland, and widow of lord Latimer, a member of the great house of Nevil.

A portrait of this lady still in existence, exhibits, with fine and regular features, a character of intelligence and arch simplicity extremely captivating. She was indeed a woman of uncommon talent and address; and her mental accomplishments, besides the honor which they reflect on herself, inspire us with respect for the enlightened liberality of an age in which such acquirements

could be placed within the ambition and attainment of a private gentlewoman, born in a remote county, remarkable even in much later times for a primitive simplicity of manners and domestic habits. Catherine was both learned herself, and, after her elevation a zealous patroness of learning and of protestantism, to which she was become a convert. Nicholas Udal master of Eton was employed by her to translate Erasmus's paraphrase of the four gospels; and there is extant a Latin letter of hers to the princess Mary, whose conversion from popery she seems to have had much at heart, in which she entreats her to permit this work to appear under her auspices. She also printed some prayers and meditations, and there was found among her papers, after her death, a piece entitled "The lamentations of a sinner bewailing her blind life," in which she deplores the years that she had passed in popish observances, and which was afterwards published by secretary Cecil.

It is a striking proof of the address of this queen, that she conciliated the affection of all the three children of the king, letters from each of whom have been preserved addressed to her after the death of their father.

Elizabeth in particular maintained with her a very intimate and frequent intercourse; which ended however in a manner reflecting little credit on either party, as will be more fully explained in its proper place.

The adroitness with which Catherine extricated herself from the snare in which her own religious zeal, the moroseness of

the king, and the enmity of Gardiner had conspired to entangle her, has often been celebrated. May it not be conjectured, that such an example, given by one of whom she entertained a high opinion, might exert no inconsiderable influence on the opening mind of Elizabeth, whose conduct in the many similar dilemmas to which it was her lot to be reduced, partook so much of the same character of politic and cautious equivocation?

Henry discovered by experiment that it would prove a much more difficult matter than he had apprehended to accomplish, either by force or persuasion, the marriage of young Edward with the queen of Scots; and learning that it was principally to the intrigues of Francis I., against whom he had other causes also of complaint, that he was likely to owe the disappointment of this favourite scheme, he determined on revenge. With this design he turned his eyes on the emperor; and finding Charles perfectly well disposed to forget all ancient animosities in sympathy with his newly-conceived indignation against the French king, he entered with him into a strict alliance. War was soon declared against France by the new confederates; and after a campaign in which little was effected, it was agreed that Charles and Henry, uniting their efforts, should assail that kingdom with a force which it was judged incapable of resisting, and without stopping at inferior objects, march straight to Paris. Accordingly, in July 1544, preceded by a fine army, and attended by the flower of his nobility splendidly equipped, Henry took his departure for Calais in a ship the sails of which were made of cloth of gold.

He arrived in safety, and enjoyed the satisfaction of dazzling with his magnificence the count de Buren whom the emperor sent with a body of horse to meet him; quarrelled soon after with that potentate, who found it his interest to make a separate peace; took the towns of Montreuil and Boulogne, neither of them of any value to him, and returned.

So foolish and expensive a sally of passion, however characteristic of the disposition of this monarch, would not merit commemoration in this place, but for the important influence which it unexpectedly exerted on the fortune and expectations of Elizabeth through the following train of circumstances.

The emperor, whose long enmity with Henry had taken its rise from what he justly regarded as the injuries of Catherine of Arragon his aunt, in whose person the whole royal family of Spain had been insulted, had required of him as a preliminary to their treaty a formal acknowledgement of the legitimacy of his daughter Mary. This Henry could not, with any regard to consistency, grant; but desirous to accede as far as he conveniently could to the wishes of his new ally, he consented to stipulate, that without any explanation on this point, his eldest daughter should by act of parliament be reinstated in the order of succession. At the same time, glad to relent in behalf of his favorite child, and unwilling perhaps to give the catholic party the triumph of asserting that he had virtually declared his first marriage more lawful than his second, he caused a similar privilege to be extended to Elizabeth, who was thus happily

restored to her original station and prospects, before she had attained sufficient maturity of age to suffer by the cruel and mortifying degradation to which she had been for several years subjected.

Henceforth, though the act which declared null the marriage of the king with Anne Boleyn remained for ever unrepealed, her daughter appears to have been universally recognised on the footing of a princess of England; and so completely were the old disputes concerning the divorce of Catherine consigned to oblivion, that in 1546, when France, Spain and England had concluded a treaty of peace, proposals passed between the courts of London and Madrid for the marriage of Elizabeth with Philip prince of Spain; that very Philip afterwards her brother-in-law and in adversity her friend and protector, then a second time her suitor, and afterwards again to the end of his days the most formidable and implacable of her enemies. On which side, or on what assigned objections, this treaty of marriage was relinquished, we do not learn; but as the demonstrations of friendship between Charles and Henry after their French campaign were full of insincerity, it may perhaps be doubted whether either party was ever bent in earnest on the completion of this extraordinary union.

The popish and protestant factions which now divided the English court, had for several years acknowledged as their respective leaders the duke of Norfolk and the earl of Hertford. To the latter of these, the painful impression left on Henry's mind

by the excesses of Catherine Howard, the religious sentiments embraced by the present queen, the king's increasing jealousy of the ancient nobility of the country, and above all the visible decline of his health, which brought into immediate prospect the accession of young Edward under the tutelage of his uncle, had now conspired to give a decided preponderancy. The aged duke, sagacious, politic, and deeply versed in all the secrets and the arts of courts, saw in a coalition with the Seymours the only expedient for averting the ruin of his house; and he proposed to bestow his daughter the duchess of Richmond in marriage on sir Thomas Seymour, while he exerted all his authority with his son to prevail upon him to address one of the daughters of the earl of Hertford. But Surry's scorn of the new nobility of the house of Seymour, and his animosity against the person of its chief, was not to be overcome by any plea of expedience or threatening of danger. He could not forget that it was at the instance of the earl of Hertford that he, with some other nobles and gentlemen, had suffered the disgrace of imprisonment for eating flesh in Lent; that when a trifling defeat which he had sustained near Boulogne had caused him to be removed from the government of that town, it was the earl of Hertford who ultimately profited by his misfortune, in succeeding to the command of the army. Other grounds of offence the haughty Surry had also conceived against him; and choosing rather to fall, than cling for support to an enemy at once despised and hated, he braved the utmost displeasure of his father, by an absolute refusal to lend himself

to such a scheme of alliance. Of this circumstance his enemies availed themselves to instil into the mind of the king a suspicion that the earl of Surry aspired to the hand of the princess Mary; they also commented with industrious malice on his bearing the arms of Edward the Confessor, to which he was clearly entitled in right of his mother, a daughter of the duke of Buckingham, but which his more cautious father had ceased to quarter after the attainder of that unfortunate nobleman.

The sick mind of Henry received with eagerness all these suggestions, and the ruin of the earl was determined⁹. An indictment of high treason was preferred against him: his proposal of disproving the charge, according to a mode then legal, by fighting his principal accuser in his shirt, was overruled; his spirited, strong and eloquent defence was disregarded—a jury devoted to the crown brought in a verdict of guilty; and in January 1547, at the early age of seven-and-twenty, he underwent the

⁹ One extraordinary, and indeed unaccountable, circumstance in the life of the earl of Surry may here be noticed:—that while his father urged him to connect himself in marriage with one lady, while the king was jealous of his designs upon a second, and while he himself, as may be collected from his poem "To a lady who refused to dance with him," made proposals of marriage to a third, he had a wife living. To this lady, who was a sister of the earl of Oxford, he was united at the age of fifteen, she had borne him five children; and it is pretty plain that they were never divorced, for we find her, several years after his death, still bearing the title of countess of Surry, and the guardian of his orphans. Had the example of Henry instructed his courtiers to find pretexts for the dissolution of the matrimonial tie whenever interest or inclination might prompt, and did our courts of law lend themselves to this abuse? A preacher of Edward the sixth's time brings such an accusation against the morals of the age, but I find no particular examples of it in the histories of noble families.

fatal sentence of the law.

No one during the whole sanguinary tyranny of Henry VIII. fell more guiltless, or more generally deplored by all whom personal animosity or the spirit of party had not hardened against sentiments of compassion, or blinded to the perception of merit. But much of Surry has survived the cruelty of his fate. His beautiful songs and sonnets, which served as a model to the most popular poets of the age of Elizabeth, still excite the admiration of every student attached to the early literature of our country. Amongst other frivolous charges brought against him on his trial, it was mentioned that he kept an Italian jester, thought to be a spy, and that he loved to converse with foreigners and conform his behaviour to them. For his personal safety, therefore, it was perhaps unfortunate that a portion of his youth had been passed in a visit to Italy, then the focus of literature and fount of inspiration; but for his surviving fame, and for the progress of English poetry, the circumstance was eminently propitious; since it is from the return of this noble traveller that we are to date not only the introduction into our language of the Petrarchan sonnet, and with it of a tenderness and refinement of sentiment unknown to the barbarism of our preceding versifiers; but what is much more, that of heroic blank verse; a noble measure, of which the earliest example exists in Surry's spirited and faithful version of one book of the *Æneid*.

The exalted rank, the splendid talents, the lofty spirit of this lamented nobleman seemed to destine him to a station second to

none among the public characters of his time; and if, instead of being cut off by the hand of violence in the morning of life, he had been permitted to attain a length of days at all approaching to the fourscore years of his father, it is probable that the votary of letters would have been lost to us in the statesman or the soldier. Queen Mary, who sought by her favor and confidence to revive the almost extinguished energies of his father, and called forth into premature distinction the aspiring boyhood of his son, would have intrusted to his vigorous years the highest offices and most weighty affairs of state. Perhaps even the suspicions of her father might have been verified by the event, and her own royal hand might itself have become the reward of his virtues and attachment.

Elizabeth, whose maternal ancestry closely connected her with the house of Howard, might have sought and found, in her kinsman the earl of Surry, a counsellor and friend deserving of all her confidence and esteem; and it is possible that he, with safety and effect, might have placed himself as a mediator between the queen and that formidable catholic party of which his misguided son, fatally for himself, aspired to be regarded as the leader, and was in fact only the instrument. But the career of ambition, ere he had well entered it, was closed upon him for ever; and it is as an accomplished knight, a polished lover, and above all as a poet, that the name of Surry now lives in the annals of his country.

Of the five children who survived to feel the want of his paternal guidance, one daughter, married to the earl of

Westmorland, was honorably distinguished by talents, erudition, and the patronage of letters; but of the two sons, the elder was that unfortunate duke of Norfolk who paid on the scaffold the forfeit of an inconsiderate and guilty enterprise; and the younger, created earl of Northampton by James I., lived to disgrace his birth and fine talents by every kind of baseness, and died just in time to escape punishment as an accomplice in Overbury's murder.

The duke of Norfolk had been declared guilty of high treason on grounds equally frivolous with his son; but the opportune death of Henry VIII. on the day that his cruel and unmerited sentence was to have been carried into execution, saved his life, when his humble submissions and pathetic supplications for mercy had failed to touch the callous heart of the expiring despot. The jealousies however, religious and political, of the council of regency, on which the administration devolved, prompted them to refuse liberty to the illustrious prisoner after their weakness or their clemency had granted him his life. During the whole reign of Edward VI. the duke was detained under close custody in the Tower; his estates were confiscated, his blood attainted, and for this period the great name of Howard disappears from the page of English history.

CHAPTER IV

1547 TO 1549

Testamentary provisions of Henry VIII.—Exclusion of the Scottish line.—Discontent of the earl of Arundel.—His character and intrigues.—Hertford declared protector—becomes duke of Somerset.—Other titles conferred.—Thomas Seymour made lord-admiral—marries the queen dowager.—His discontent and intrigues.—His behaviour to Elizabeth.—Death of the queen.—Seymour aspires to the hand of Elizabeth—conspires against his brother—is attainted—put to death.—Particulars of his intercourse with Elizabeth.—Examinations which she underwent on this subject.—Traits of her early character.—Verses on admiral Seymour.—The learning of Elizabeth.—Extracts from Ascham's Letters respecting her, Jane Grey, and other learned ladies.—Two of her letters to Edward VI.

The death of Henry VIII., which took place on January 28th 1547, opened a new and busy scene, and affected in several important points the situation of Elizabeth.

The testament by which the parliament had empowered the king to regulate the government of the country during his son's minority, and even to settle the order of succession itself, with as

full authority as the distribution of his private property, was the first object of attention; and its provisions were found strongly characteristic of the temper and maxims of its author. He confirmed the act of parliament by which his two daughters had been rendered capable of inheriting the crown, and appointed to each of them a pension of three thousand pounds, with a marriage-portion of ten thousand pounds, but annexed the condition of their marrying with the consent of such of his executors as should be living. After them, he placed in order of succession Frances marchioness of Dorset, and Eleanor countess of Cumberland, daughters of his younger sister the queen-dowager of France by Charles Brandon duke of Suffolk; and failing the descendants of these ladies he bequeathed the crown to the next heir. By this disposition he either totally excluded, or at least removed from their rightful place, his eldest and still surviving sister the queen-dowager of Scotland, and all her issue;—a most absurd and dangerous indulgence of his feelings of enmity against the Scottish line, which might eventually have involved the nation in all the horrors of a civil war, and from which in fact the whole calamitous destinies of the house of Suffolk, which the progress of this work will record, and in some measure also the long misfortunes of the queen of Scots herself, will be found to draw their origin. Sixteen executors named in the will were to exercise in common the royal functions till young Edward should attain the age of eighteen; and to these, twelve others were added as a council of regency, invested however

with no other privilege than that of giving their opinions when called upon. The selection of the executors and counsellors was in perfect unison with the policy of the Tudors. The great officers of state formed of necessity a considerable portion of the former body, and four of these, lord Wriothesley the chancellor, the earl of Hertford lord-chamberlain, lord St. John master of the household, and lord Russel privy-seal, were decorated with the peerage; but with the exception of sir John Dudley, who had lately acquired by marriage the rank of viscount Lisle, these were the only titled men of the sixteen. Thus it appeared, that not a single individual amongst the hereditary nobility of the country enjoyed in a sufficient degree the favor and confidence of the monarch, to be associated in a charge which he had not hesitated to confer on persons of no higher importance than the principal gentlemen of the bed-chamber, the treasurer of Calais, and the dean of Canterbury.

Even the council reckoned among its members only two peers: one of them the brother of the queen-dowager, on whom, since the fall of Cromwel, the title of earl of Essex had at length been conferred in right of his wife, the heiress of the Bouchiers: the other, the earl of Arundel, premier earl of England and last of the ancient name of Fitzalan; a distinguished nobleman, whom vast wealth, elegant tastes acquired in foreign travel, and a spirit of magnificence, combined to render one of the principal ornaments of the court, while his political talents and experience of affairs qualified him to assume a leading station

in the cabinet. The loyalty and prudence of the Fitzalans must have been conspicuous for ages, since no attainder, during so long a period of greatness, had stained the honor of the race; and the moderation or subserviency of the present earl had been shown by his perfect acquiescence in all the measures of Henry, notwithstanding his private preference of the ancient faith: to crown his merits, his blood appears to have been unmingled with that of the Plantagenets. Notwithstanding all this, the king had thought fit to name him only a counsellor, not an executor. Arundel deeply felt the injury; and impatience of the insignificance to which he was thus consigned, joined to his disapprobation of the measures of the regency with respect to religion, threw him into intrigues which contributed not a little to the turbulence of this disastrous period.

It was doubtless the intention of Henry, that the religion of the country, at least during the minority of his son, should be left vibrating on the same nice balance between protestantism and popery on which it had cost him so much pains to fix it; and with a view to this object he had originally composed the regency with a pretty equal distribution of power between the adherents of the two communions. But the suspicion, or disgust, which afterwards caused him to erase the name of Gardiner from the list, destroyed the equipoise, and rendered the scale of reformation decidedly preponderant. In vain did Wriothesley, a man of vigorous talents and aspiring mind, struggle with Hertford for the highest place in the administration; in vain did Tunstal bishop of Durham,—

no bigot, but a firm papist,—check with all the authority that he could venture to exert, the bold career of innovation on which he beheld Cranmer full of eagerness to enter; in vain did the catholics invoke to their aid the active interference of Dudley; he suffered them to imagine that his heart was with them, and that he watched an opportunity to interpose with effect in their behalf, whilst, in fact, he was only waiting till the fall of one of the Seymours by the hand of the other should enable him to crush the survivor, and rise to uncontrolled authority on the ruins of both.

The first attempt of the protestant party in the regency showed their intentions; its success proved their strength, and silenced for the present all opposition. It was proposed, and carried by a majority of the executors, that the earl of Hertford should be declared protector of the realm, and governor of the king's person; and the new dictator soon after procured the ratification of this appointment, which overturned some of the most important clauses of the late king's will, by causing a patent to be drawn and sanctioned by the two houses which invested him, during the minority, with all the prerogatives ever assumed by the most arbitrary of the English sovereigns, and many more than were ever recognised by the constitution.

As if in compensation for any disrespect shown to the memory of the deceased monarch by these proceedings, the executors next declared their intention of fulfilling certain promises made by him in his last illness, and which death alone had prevented

him from carrying into effect. On this plea, they bestowed upon themselves and their adherents various titles of honor, and a number of valuable church preferments, now first conferred upon laymen, the protector himself unblushingly assuming the title of duke of Somerset, and taking possession of benefices and impropriations to a vast amount. Viscount Lisle was created earl of Warwick, and Wriothesley became earl of Southampton;—an empty dignity, which afforded him little consolation for seeing himself soon after, on pretence of some irregular proceedings in his office, stripped of the post of chancellor, deprived of his place amongst the other executors of the king, who now formed a privy council to the protector, and consigned to obscurity and insignificance for the short remnant of his days. Sir Thomas Seymour ought to have been consoled by the share allotted him in this splendid distribution, for the mortification of having been named a counsellor only, and not an executor. He was made lord Seymour of Sudley, and soon after, lord high-admiral—preferments greatly exceeding any expectations which his birth or his services to the state could properly authorize. But he measured his claims by his nearness to the king; he compared these inferior dignities with the state and power usurped by his brother, and his arrogant spirit disdained as a meanness the thought of resting satisfied or appeased. Circumstances soon arose which converted this general feeling of discontent in the mind of Thomas Seymour into a more rancorous spirit of envy and hostility against his brother, and gradually involved him

in a succession of dark intrigues, which, on account of the embarrassments and dangers in which they eventually implicated the princess Elizabeth, it will now become necessary to unravel. The younger Seymour, still in the prime of life, was endowed in a striking degree with those graces of person and manner which serve to captivate the female heart, and his ambition had sought in consequence to avail itself of a splendid marriage.

It is said that the princess Mary herself was at first the object of his hopes or wishes: but if this were really the case, she must speedily have quelled his presumption by the lofty sternness of her repulse; for it is impossible to discover in the history of his life at what particular period he could have been occupied with such a design.

Immediately after the death of Henry, he found means to revive with such energy in the bosom of the queen-dowager, an attachment which she had entertained for him before her marriage with the king, that she consented to become his wife with a precipitation highly indecorous and reprehensible. The connexion proved unfortunate on both sides, and its first effect was to embroil him with his brother.

The protector, of a temper still weaker than his not very vigorous understanding, had long allowed himself to be governed both in great and small concerns by his wife, a woman of little principle and of a disposition in the highest degree violent, imperious, and insolent. Nothing could be more insupportable to the spirit of this lady, who prided herself on her descent from

Thomas of Woodstock, and now saw her husband governing the kingdom with all the prerogatives and almost all the splendor of royalty, than to find herself compelled to yield precedency to the wife of his younger brother; and unable to submit patiently to a mortification from which, after all, there was no escape, she could not forbear engaging in continual disputes on the subject with the queen-dowager. Their husbands soon were drawn in to take part in this senseless quarrel, and a serious difference ensued between them. The protector and council soon after refused to the lord-admiral certain grants of land and valuable jewels which he claimed as bequests to his wife from the late king, and the, perhaps, real injury, thus added to the slights of which he before complained, gave fresh exasperation to the pride and turbulence of his character.

Taking advantage of the protector's absence on that campaign in Scotland which ended with the victory of Pinkey, he formed partisans among the discontented nobles, won from his brother the affections of the young king, and believing every thing ripe for an attack on his usurped authority, he designed to bring forward in the ensuing parliament a proposal for separating, according to ancient precedent, the office of guardian of the king's person from that of protector of the realm, and for conferring upon himself the former. But he discovered too late that he had greatly miscalculated his forces; his proposal was not even permitted to come to a hearing. Having rendered himself further obnoxious to the vengeance of the administration by

menaces thrown out in the rage of disappointment, he saw himself reduced, in order to escape a committal to the Tower, to make submissions to his brother. An apparent reconciliation took place; and the admiral was compelled to change, but not to relinquish, his schemes of ambition.

The princess Elizabeth had been consigned on the death of her father to the protection and superintendence of the queen-dowager, with whom, at one or other of her jointure-houses of Chelsea or Hanworth, she usually made her abode. By this means it happened, that after the queen's remarriage she found herself domesticated under the roof of the lord-admiral; and in this situation she had soon the misfortune to become an object of his marked attention.

What were, at this particular period, Seymour's designs upon the princess, is uncertain; but it afterwards appeared from the testimony of eye-witnesses, that neither respect for her exalted rank, nor a sense of the high responsibility attached to the character of a guardian, with which circumstances invested him, had proved sufficient to restrain him from freedoms of behaviour towards her, which no reasonable allowance for the comparative grossness of the age can reduce within the limits of propriety or decorum. We learn that, on some occasions at least, she endeavoured to repel his presumption by such expedients as her youthful inexperience suggested; but her governess and attendants, gained over or intimidated, were guilty of a treacherous or cowardly neglect of duty, and the queen

herself appears to have been very deficient in delicacy and caution till circumstances arose which suddenly excited her jealousy¹⁰. A violent scene then took place between the royal step-mother and step-daughter, which ended, fortunately for the peace and honor of Elizabeth, in an immediate and final separation.

There is no ground whatever to credit the popular rumor that the queen, who died in childbed soon after this affair, was poisoned by the admiral; but there is sufficient proof that he was a harsh and jealous husband; and he did not probably at this juncture regard as unpropitious on the whole, an event which enabled him to aspire to the hand of Elizabeth, though other and more intricate designs were at the same time hatching in his busy brain, to which his state of a widower seemed at first to oppose some serious obstacles.

Lady Jane Grey, eldest daughter of the marchioness of Dorset, who had been placed immediately after the two princesses in order of succession, had also resided in the house of the lord-admiral during the lifetime of the queen-dowager, and he was anxious still to retain in his hands a pledge of such importance. To the applications of the marquis and marchioness for her return, he pleaded that the young lady would be as secure under

¹⁰ It seems that on one occasion the queen held the hands of the princess while the lord-admiral amused himself with cutting her gown to shreds; and that, on another, she introduced him into the chamber of Elizabeth before she had left her bed, when a violent romping scene took place, which was afterwards repeated without the presence of the queen.

the superintendence of his mother, whom he had invited to reside in his house, as formerly under that of the queen, and that a mark of the esteem of friends whom he so highly valued, would in this season of his affliction be doubly precious to him.

He caused a secret agent to insinuate to the weak marquis, that if the lady Jane remained under his roof, it might eventually be in his power to marry her to the young king; and finally, as the most satisfactory proof of the sincerity of his professions of regard, he advanced to this illustrious peer the sum of five hundred pounds in ready money, requiring no other security for its repayment than the person of his fair guest, or hostage. Such eloquence proved irresistible: lady Jane was suffered to remain under this very singular and improper protection, and report for some time vibrated between the sister and the cousin of the king as the real object of the admiral's matrimonial projects. But in his own mind there appears to have been no hesitation between them. The residence of lady Jane in his house was no otherwise of importance to him, than as it contributed to insure to him the support of her father, and as it enabled him to counteract a favorite scheme of the protector's, or rather of his duchess's, for marrying her to their eldest son. With Elizabeth, on the contrary, he certainly aimed at the closest of all connexions, and he was intent on improving by every means the impression which his dangerous powers of insinuation had already made on her inexperienced heart.

Mrs. Ashley, her governess, he had long since secured

in his interests; his next step was to gain one Parry, her cofferer, and through these agents he proposed to open a direct correspondence with herself. His designs prospered for some time according to his desires; and though it seems never to have been exactly known, except to the parties themselves, what degree of secret intelligence Elizabeth maintained with her suitor; it cannot be doubted that she betrayed towards him sentiments sufficiently favorable to render the difficulty of obtaining that consent of the royal executors which the law required, the principal obstacle, in his own opinion, to the accomplishment of his wishes. It was one, however, which appeared absolutely insuperable so long as his brother continued to preside over the administration with authority not to be resisted; and despair of gaining his object by fair and peaceful means, soon suggested to the admiral further measures of a dark and dangerous character.

By the whole order of nobility the protector, who affected the love of the commons, was envied and hated; but his brother, on the contrary, had cultivated their friendship with assiduity and success; and he now took opportunities of emphatically recommending it to his principal adherents, the marquis of Northampton (late earl of Essex), the marquis of Dorset, the earl of Rutland, and others, to go into their counties and "make all the strength" there which they could. He boasted of the command of men which he derived from his office of high-admiral; provided a large quantity of arms for his followers; and gained over the

master of Bristol mint to take measures for supplying him, on any sudden emergency, with a large sum of money. He likewise opened a secret correspondence with the young king, and endeavoured by many accusations, true or false, to render odious the government of his brother. But happily those turbulent dispositions and inordinate desires which prompt men to form plots dangerous to the peace and welfare of a community, are rarely found to co-exist with the sagacity and prudence necessary to conduct them to a successful issue; and to this remark the admiral was not destined to afford an exception. Though he ought to have been perfectly aware that his late attempt had rendered him an object of the strongest suspicion to his brother, and that he was surrounded by his spies, such was the violence and presumption of his temper, that he could not restrain himself from throwing out vaunts and menaces which served to put his enemies on the track of the most important discoveries; and in the midst of vain schemes and flattering anticipations, he was surprised on the sudden by a warrant for his committal to the Tower. His principal agents were also seized, and compelled to give evidence before the council. Still the protector seemed reluctant to proceed to extremities against his brother; but his own impetuous temper and the ill offices of the earl of Warwick conspired to urge on his fate.

Far from submitting himself as before to the indulgence of the protector, and seeking to disarm his indignation by promises and entreaties, Seymour now stood, as it were, at bay, and boldly

demanded a fair and equal trial,—the birthright of Englishmen. But this was a boon which it was esteemed on several accounts inexpedient, if not dangerous, to grant. No overt act of treason could be proved against him: circumstances might come out which would compromise the young king himself, whom a strong dislike of the restraint in which he was held by his elder uncle had thrown pretty decidedly into the party of the younger.

The name of the lady Elizabeth was implicated in the transaction further than it was delicate to declare. An acquittal, which the far-extended influence of the lord-admiral over all classes of men rendered by no means impossible, would probably be the ruin of the protector;—and in the end it was decided to proceed against him by the arbitrary and odious method of attainder.

Several of those peers, on whose support he had placed the firmest reliance, rose voluntarily in their places, and betrayed the designs which he had confided to them. The depositions before the council were declared sufficient ground for his condemnation; and in spite of the opposition of some spirited and upright members of the house of commons, a sentence was pronounced, in obedience to which, in March 1549, he was conducted to the scaffold.

The timely removal of this bad and dangerous man, however illegal and unwarrantable the means by which it was accomplished, deserves to be regarded as the first of those signal escapes with which the life of Elizabeth so remarkably

abounds. Her attachment for Seymour, certainly the earliest, was perhaps also the strongest, impression of the tender kind which her heart was destined to receive; and though there may be a probability that in this, as in subsequent instances, where her inclinations seemed most to favor the wishes of her suitors, her characteristic caution would have interfered to withhold her from an irrevocable engagement, it might not much longer have been in her power to recede with honor, or even, if the designs of Seymour had prospered, with safety.

The original pieces relative to this affair have fortunately been preserved, and furnish some very remarkable traits of the early character of Elizabeth, and of the behaviour of those about her.

The confessions of Mrs. Ashley and of Parry before the privy-council, contain all that is known of the conduct of the admiral towards their lady during the lifetime of the queen. They seem to cast upon Mrs. Ashley the double imputation of having suffered such behaviour to pass before her eyes as she ought not to have endured for a moment, and of having needlessly disclosed to Parry particulars respecting it which reflected the utmost disgrace both on herself, the admiral, and her pupil. Yet we know that Elizabeth, so far from resenting any thing that Mrs. Ashley had either done or confessed, continued to love and favor her in the highest degree, and after her accession promoted her husband to a considerable office:—a circumstance which affords ground for suspicion that some important secrets were in her possession respecting later transactions between the princess and

Seymour which she had faithfully kept. It should also be observed in palliation of the liberties which she accused the admiral of allowing to himself, and the princess of enduring, that the period of Elizabeth's life to which these particulars relate was only her fourteenth year.

We are told that she refused permission to the admiral to visit her after he became a widower, on account of the general report that she was likely to become his wife; and not the slightest trace was at this time found of any correspondence between them, though Harrington afterwards underwent an imprisonment for having delivered to her a letter from the admiral. Yet it is stated that the partiality of the young princess betrayed itself by many involuntary tokens to those around her, who were thus encouraged to entertain her with accounts of the admiral's attachment, and to inquire whether, if the consent of the council could be obtained, she would consent to admit his addresses. The admiral is represented to have proceeded with caution equal to her own. Anxious to ascertain her sentiments, earnestly desirous to accomplish so splendid an union, but fully sensible of the inutility as well as danger of a clandestine connexion, he may be thought rather to have regarded her hand as the recompense which awaited the success of all his other plans of ambition, than as the means of obtaining that success; and it seemed to have been only by distant hints through the agents whom he trusted, that he had ventured as yet to intimate to her his views and wishes; but it is probable that much of the truth was by these

agents suppressed.

The protector, rather, as it seems, with the desire of criminating his brother than of clearing the princess, sent sir Robert Tyrwhitt to her residence at Hatfield, empowered to examine her on the whole matter; and his letters to his employer inform us of many particulars. When, by the base expedient of a counterfeit letter, he had brought her to believe that both Mrs. Ashley and Parry were committed to the Tower, "her grace was," as he expresses it, "marvellously abashed, and did weep very tenderly a long time, demanding whether they had confessed any thing or not." Soon after, sending for him, she related several circumstances which she said she had forgotten to mention when the master of the household and master Denny came from the protector to examine her. "After all this," adds he, "I did require her to consider her honor, and the peril that might ensue, for she was but a subject; and I further declared what a woman Mrs. Ashley was, with a long circumstance, saying that if she would open all things herself, that all the evil and shame should be ascribed to them, and her youth considered both with the king's majesty, your grace, and the whole council. But in no way she will not confess any practice by Mrs. Ashley or the cofferer concerning my lord-admiral; and yet I do see it in her face that she is guilty, and do perceive as yet that she will abide the storms or she accuse Mrs. Ashley.

"Upon sudden news that my lord great-master and master Denny was arrived at the gate, the cofferer went hastily to his

chamber, and said to my lady his wife, 'I would I had never been born, for I am undone,' and wrung his hands, and cast away his chain from his neck, and his rings from his fingers. This is confessed by his own servant, and there is divers witnesses of the same."

The following day Tyrwhitt writes, that all he has yet gotten from the princess was by gentle persuasion, whereby he began to grow with her in credit, "for I do assure your grace she hath a good wit, and nothing is gotten off her but by great policy."

A few days after, he expresses to the protector his opinion that there had been some secret promise between the princess, Mrs. Ashley, and the cofferer, never to confess till death; "and if it be so," he observes, "it will never be gotten of her but either by the king's majesty or else by your grace." On another occasion he confirms this idea by stating that he had tried her with false intelligence of Parry's having confessed, on which she called him "false wretch," and said that it was a great matter for him to make such a promise and break it. He notices the exact agreement between the princess and the other two in all their statements, but represents it as a proof that "they had set the knot before." It appears on the whole, that sir Robert with all his pains was not able to elicit a single fact of decisive importance; but probably there was somewhat more in the matter than we find acknowledged in a letter from Elizabeth herself to the protector. She here states, that she did indeed send her cofferer to speak with the lord-admiral, but on no other

business than to recommend to him one of her chaplains, and to request him to use his interest that she might have Durham Place for her town house; that Parry on his return informed her, that the admiral said she could not have Durham Place, which was wanted for a mint, but offered her his own house for the time of her being in London; and that Parry then inquired of her, whether, if the council would consent to her marrying the admiral, she would herself be willing? That she refused to answer this question, requiring to know who bade him ask it. He said, No one; but from the admiral's inquiries what she spent in her house, and whether she had gotten her patents for certain lands signed, and other questions of a similar nature, he thought "that he was given that way rather than otherwise." She explicitly denies that her governess ever advised her to marry the admiral without the consent of the council; but relates with great apparent ingenuousness, the hints which Mrs. Ashley had thrown out of his attachment to her, and the artful attempts which she had made to discover how her pupil stood affected towards such a connexion.

The letter concludes with the following wise and spirited assertion of herself. "Master Tyrwhitt and others have told me, that there goeth rumours abroad which be greatly both against my honor and honesty, (which above all things I esteem) which be these; that I am in the Tower, and with child by my lord admiral. My lord, these are shameful slanders, for the which, besides the desire I have to see the king's majesty, I shall most humbly desire your lordship that I may come to the court after

your first determination, that I may show myself there as I am."

That the cofferer had repeated his visits to the admiral oftener than was at first acknowledged either by his lady or himself, a confession afterwards addressed by Elizabeth to the protector seems to show; but even with this confession Tyrwhitt declares himself unsatisfied.

Parry, in that part of his confession where he relates what passed between himself and the lord-admiral when he waited upon him by his lady's command, takes notice of the earnest manner in which the admiral had urged her endeavouring to procure, by way of exchange, certain crown lands which had been the queen's, and seem to have been adjacent to his own, from which, he says, he inferred, that he wanted to have both them and his lady for himself. He adds, that the admiral said he wished the princess to go to the duchess of Somerset, and by her means make suit to the protector for the lands, and for a town house, and "to entertain her grace for her furtherance." That when he repeated this to her, Elizabeth would not at first believe that he had said such words, or could wish her so to do; but on his declaring that it was true, "she seemed to be angry that she should be driven to make such suits, and said, 'In faith I will not come there, nor begin to flatter now.'"

Her spirit broke out, according to Tyrwhitt, with still greater vehemence, on the removal of Mrs. Ashley, whom lady Tyrwhitt succeeded in her office:—the following is the account which he gives of her behaviour.

"Pleaseth it your grace to be advertised, that after my wife's repair hither, she declared to the lady Elizabeth's grace, that she was called before your grace and the council and had a rebuke, that she had not taken upon her the office to see her well governed, in the lieu of Mrs. Ashley. Her answer was, that Mrs. Ashley was her mistress, and that she had not so demeaned herself that the council should now need to put any mo mistresses unto her. Whereunto my wife answered, seeing she did allow Mrs. Ashley to be her mistress, she need not to be ashamed to have any honest woman to be in that place. She took the matter so heavily that she wept all that night and lowered all the next day, till she received your letter; and then she sent for me and asked me whether she was best to write to you again or not: I said, if she would make answer that she would follow the effect of your letter, I thought it well done that she should write; but in the end of the matter I perceived that she was very loth to have a governor; and to avoid the same, said the world would note her to be a great offender, having so hastily a governor appointed her. And all is no more, she fully hopes to recover her old mistress again. The love she yet beareth her is to be wondered at. I told her, if she would consider her honor and the sequel thereof, she would, considering her years, make suit to your grace to have one, rather than to make delay to be without one one hour. She cannot digest such advice in no way; but if I should say my phantasy, it were more meet she should have two than one. She would in any wise write to your grace, wherein I offered her my advice,

which she would in no wise follow, but write her own phantasy. She beginneth now a little to droop, by reason she heareth that my lord-admiral's houses be dispersed. And my wife telleth me now, that she cannot hear him discommended but she is ready to make answer therein; and so she hath not been accustomed to do, unless Mrs. Ashley were touched, whereunto she was very ready to make answer vehemently." &c.¹¹

Parry had probably the same merit of fidelity as Mrs. Ashley; for though Tyrwhitt says he was found faulty in his accounts, he was not only continued at this time by his mistress in his office of cofferer, but raised afterwards to that of comptroller of the royal household, which he held till his death.

A gentleman of the name of Harrington, then in the admiral's service, who was much examined respecting his master's intercourse with the princess, and revealed nothing, was subsequently taken by her into her own household and highly favored; and so certain did this gentleman, who was a man of parts, account himself of her tenderness for the memory of a lover snatched from her by the hand of violence alone, that he ventured, several years after her accession to the throne, to present her with a portrait of him, under which was inscribed the following sonnet.

"Of person rare, strong limbs and manly shape,

¹¹ For the original documents relative to this affair see Burleigh Papers by Haynes, *passim*.

By nature framed to serve on sea or land;
In friendship firm in good state or ill hap,
In peace head-wise, in war, skill great, bold hand.
On horse or foot, in peril or in play,
None could excel, though many did essay.
A subject true to king, a servant great,
Friend to God's truth, and foe to Rome's deceit.
Sumptuous abroad for honor of the land,
Temp'rate at home, yet kept great state with stay,
And noble house that fed more mouths with meat
Than some advanced on higher steps to stand;
Yet against nature, reason, and just laws,
His blood was spilt, guiltless, without just cause."

The fall of Seymour, and the disgrace and danger in which she had herself been involved, afforded to Elizabeth a severe but useful lesson; and the almost total silence of history respecting her during the remainder of her brother's reign affords satisfactory indication of the extreme caution with which she now conducted herself.

This silence, however, is agreeably supplied by documents of a more private nature, which inform us of her studies, her acquirements, the disposition of her time, and the bent of her youthful mind.

The Latin letters of her learned preceptor Roger Ascham abound with anecdotes of a pupil in whose proficiency he justly gloried; and the particulars interspersed respecting other females

of high rank, also distinguished by the cultivation of classical literature, enhance the interest of the picture, by affording objects of comparison to the principal figure, and illustrating the taste, almost the rage, for learning which pervaded the court of Edward VI.

Writing in 1550 to his friend John Sturmius, the worthy and erudite rector of the protestant university of Strasburgh, Ascham has the following passages.

"Never was the nobility of England more lettered than at present. Our illustrious king Edward in talent, industry, perseverance, and erudition, surpasses both his own years and the belief of men.... I doubt not that France will also yield the just praise of learning to the duke of Suffolk¹² and the rest of that band of noble youths educated with the king in Greek and Latin literature, who depart for that country on this very day.

"Numberless honorable ladies of the present time surpass the daughters of sir Thomas More in every kind of learning. But amongst them all, my illustrious mistress the lady Elizabeth shines like a star, excelling them more by the splendor of her virtues and her learning, than by the glory of her royal birth. In the variety of her commendable qualities, I am less perplexed to find matter for the highest panegyric than to circumscribe that panegyric within just bounds. Yet I shall mention nothing respecting her but what has come under my own observation.

¹² This was the second duke of the name of Brandon, who died young of the sweating sickness.

"For two years she pursued the study of Greek and Latin under my tuition; but the foundations of her knowledge in both languages were laid by the diligent instruction of William Grindal, my late beloved friend and seven years my pupil in classical learning at Cambridge. From this university he was summoned by John Cheke to court, where he soon after received the appointment of tutor to this lady. After some years, when through her native genius, aided by the efforts of so excellent a master, she had made a great progress in learning, and Grindal, by his merit and the favor of his mistress, might have aspired to high dignities, he was snatched away by a sudden illness, leaving a greater miss of himself in the court, than I remember any other to have done these many years.

"I was appointed to succeed him in his office; and the work which he had so happily begun, without my assistance indeed, but not without some counsels of mine, I diligently labored to complete. Now, however, released from the throng of a court, and restored to the felicity of my former learned leisure, I enjoy, through the bounty of the king, an honorable appointment in this university.

"The lady Elizabeth has accomplished her sixteenth year; and so much solidity of understanding, such courtesy united with dignity, have never been observed at so early an age. She has the most ardent love of true religion and of the best kind of literature. The constitution of her mind is exempt from female weakness, and she is endued with a masculine power of application.

No apprehension can be quicker than her's, no memory more retentive. French and Italian she speaks like English; Latin, with fluency, propriety, and judgement; she also spoke Greek with me, frequently, willingly, and moderately well. Nothing can be more elegant than her handwriting, whether in the Greek or Roman character. In music she is very skilful, but does not greatly delight. With respect to personal decoration, she greatly prefers a simple elegance to show and splendor, so despising 'the outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold,' that in the whole manner of her life she rather resembles Hippolyta than Phædra.

"She read with me almost the whole of Cicero, and a great part of Livy: from these two authors, indeed, her knowledge of the Latin language has been almost exclusively derived. The beginning of the day was always devoted by her to the New Testament in Greek, after which she read select orations of Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles, which I judged best adapted to supply her tongue with the purest diction, her mind with the most excellent precepts, and her exalted station with a defence against the utmost power of fortune. For her religious instruction, she drew first from the fountains of Scripture, and afterwards from St. Cyprian, the 'Common places' of Melancthon, and similar works which convey pure doctrine in elegant language. In every kind of writing she easily detected any ill-adapted or far-fetched expression. She could not bear those feeble imitators of Erasmus who bind the Latin language in the

fetters of miserable proverbs; on the other hand, she approved a style chaste in its propriety, and beautiful by perspicuity, and she greatly admired metaphors, when not too violent, and antitheses when just, and happily opposed. By a diligent attention to these particulars, her ears became so practised and so nice, that there was nothing in Greek, Latin, or English, prose or verse, which, according to its merits or defects, she did not either reject with disgust, or receive with the highest delight.... Had I more leisure, I would speak to you at greater length of the king, of the lady Elizabeth, and of the daughters of the duke of Somerset, whose minds have also been formed by the best literary instruction. But there are two English ladies whom I cannot omit to mention; nor would I have you, my Sturmius, omit them, if you meditate any celebration of your English friends, than which nothing could be more agreeable to me. One is Jane Grey¹³, the other is Mildred Cecil, who understands and speaks Greek like English, so that it may be doubted whether she is most happy in the possession of this surpassing degree of knowledge, or in having had for her preceptor and father sir Anthony Coke, whose singular erudition caused him to be joined with John Cheke in the office of tutor to the king, or finally, in having become the wife of William Cecil, lately appointed secretary of state; a young man indeed, but mature in wisdom, and so deeply skilled both in letters and in affairs, and endued with such moderation in the exercise of

¹³ This lady is commemorated at greater length in another place, and therefore a clause is here omitted.

public offices, that to him would be awarded by the consenting voice of Englishmen the four-fold praise attributed to Pericles by his rival Thucydides—"To know all that is fitting, to be able to apply what he knows, to be a lover of his country, and superior to money."

The learned, excellent, and unfortunate Jane Grey is repeatedly mentioned by this writer with warm and merited eulogium. He relates to Sturmius, that in the month of August 1550, taking his journey from Yorkshire to the court, he had deviated from his course to visit the family of the marquis of Dorset at his seat of Broadgate in Leicestershire. Lady Jane was alone at his arrival, the rest of the family being on a hunting party; and gaining admission to her apartment, he found her reading by herself the *Phædo* of Plato in the original, which she understood so perfectly as to excite in him extreme wonder; for she was at this time under fifteen years of age. She also possessed the power of speaking and writing Greek, and she willingly promised to address to him a letter in this language. In his English work 'The Schoolmaster,' referring again to this interview with Jane Grey, Ascham adds the following curious and affecting particulars. Having asked her how at her age she could have attained to such perfection both in philosophy and Greek, "I will tell you," said she, "and tell you a truth, which perchance you will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me is, that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether

I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go; eat, drink, be merry or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing any thing else, I must do it, as it were, in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly, as God made the world, or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea presently sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs and other ways which I will not name, for the honor I bear them, so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell, till time come that I must go to Mr. Elmer, who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing while I am with him. And when I am called from him I fall on weeping, because whatsoever else I do but learning, is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, that in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles unto me."

The epistles from which the extracts in the preceding pages are with some abridgement translated, and which are said to be the first collection of private letters ever published by any Englishman, were all written during the year 1550, when Ascham, on some disgust, had quitted the court and returned to his situation of Greek reader at Cambridge; and perhaps the eulogiums here bestowed, in epistles which his correspondent lost no time in committing to the press, were not composed without the secret hope of their procuring for him a restoration to that court life which it seems difficult even for the learned

to quit without a sigh. It would be unjust, however, to regard Ascham in the light of a flatterer; for his praises are in most points corroborated by the evidence of history, or by other concurring testimonies. His observations, for instance, on the modest simplicity of Elizabeth's dress and appearance at this early period of her life, which might be received with some incredulity by the reader to whom instances are familiar of her inordinate love of dress at a much more advanced age, and when the cares of a sovereign ought to have left no room for a vanity so puerile, receive strong confirmation from another and very respectable authority.

Dr. Elmer or Aylmer, who was tutor to lady Jane Grey and her sisters, and became afterwards, during Elizabeth's reign, bishop of London, thus draws her character when young, in a work entitled "A Harbour for faithful Subjects." "The king left her rich cloaths and jewels; and I know it to be true, that in seven years after her father's death, she never in all that time looked upon that rich attire and precious jewels but once, and that against her will. And that there never came gold or stone upon her head, till her sister forced her to lay off her former soberness, and bear her company in her glittering gayness. And then she so wore it, as every man might see that her body carried that which her heart misliked. I am sure that her maidenly apparel which she used in king Edward's time, made the noblemen's daughters and wives to be ashamed to be dressed and painted like peacocks; being more moved with her most virtuous example than with all that

ever Paul or Peter wrote touching that matter. Yea, this I know, that a great man's daughter (lady Jane Grey) receiving from lady Mary before she was queen good apparel of tinsel, cloth of gold and velvet, laid on with parchment lace of gold, when she saw it, said, 'What shall I do with it?' 'Mary,' said a gentlewoman, 'wear it.' 'Nay,' quoth she, 'that were a shame, to follow my lady Mary against God's word, and leave my lady Elizabeth which followeth God's word.' And when all the ladies at the coming of the Scots queen dowager, Mary of Guise, (she who visited England in Edward's time,) went with their hair frownsed, curled, and doublecurled, she altered nothing but kept her old maidenly shamefacedness." This extract may be regarded as particularly curious, as an exemplification of the rigid turn of sentiment which prevailed at the court of young Edward, and of the degree in which Elizabeth conformed herself to it. There is a print from a portrait of her when young, in which the hair is without a single ornament and the whole dress remarkably simple.

But to return to Ascham.—The qualifications of this learned man as a writer of classical Latin recommended him to queen Mary, notwithstanding his known attachment to the protestant faith, in the capacity of Latin secretary; and it was in the year 1555, while holding this station, that he resumed his lessons to his illustrious pupil.

"The lady Elizabeth and I," writes he to Sturmius, "are reading together in Greek the Orations of Æschines and Demosthenes. She reads before me, and at first sight she so learnedly

comprehends not only the idiom of the language and the meaning of the orator, but the whole grounds of contention, the decrees of the people, and the customs and manners of the Athenians, as you would greatly wonder to hear."

Under the reign of Elizabeth, Ascham retained his post of Latin secretary, and was admitted to considerable intimacy by his royal mistress. Addressing Sturmius he says, "I received your last letters on the 15th of January 1560. Two passages in them, one relative to the Scotch affairs, the other on the marriage of the queen, induced me to give them to herself to read. She remarked and graciously acknowledged in both of them your respectful observance of her. Your judgement in the affairs of Scotland, as they then stood, she highly approved, and she loves you for your solicitude respecting us and our concerns. The part respecting her marriage she read over thrice, as I well remember, and with somewhat of a gentle smile; but still preserving a modest and bashful silence.

"Concerning that point indeed, my Sturmius, I have nothing certain to write to you, nor does any one truly know what to judge. I told you rightly, in one of my former letters, that in the whole ordinance of her life she resembled not Phædra but Hippolyta; for by nature, and not by the counsels of others, she is thus averse and abstinent from marriage. When I know any thing for certain, I will write it to you as soon as possible; in the mean time I have no hopes to give you respecting the king of Sweden."

In the same letter, after enlarging, somewhat too rhetorically

perhaps, on the praises of the queen and her government, Ascham recurs to his favorite theme,—her learning; and roundly asserts, that there were not four men in England, distinguished either in the church or the state, who understood more Greek than her majesty: and as an instance of her proficiency in other tongues, he mentions that he was once present at court when she gave answers at the same time to three ambassadors, the Imperial, the French, and the Swedish, in Italian, in French, and in Latin; and all this, fluently, without confusion, and to the purpose.

A short epistle from queen Elizabeth to Sturmius, which is inserted in this collection, appears to refer to that of Sturmius which Ascham answers above. She addresses him as her beloved friend, expresses in the handsomest terms her sense of the attachment towards herself and her country evinced by so eminent a cultivator of genuine learning and true religion, and promises that her acknowledgements shall not be confined to words alone; but for a further explanation of her intentions she refers him to the bearer; consequently we have no data for estimating the actual pecuniary value of these warm expressions of royal favor and friendship. But we have good proof, unfortunately, that no munificent act of Elizabeth's ever interposed to rescue her zealous and admiring preceptor from the embarrassments into which he was plunged, probably indeed by his own imprudent habits, but certainly by no faults which ought to have deprived him of his just claims on the purse of a mistress

whom, he had served with so much ability, and with such distinguished advantage to herself. The other learned females of this age whom Ascham has complimented by addressing them in Latin epistles, are, Anne countess of Pembroke, sister of queen Catherine Parr; a young lady of the name of Vaughan; Jane Grey; and Mrs. Clark, a grand-daughter of sir Thomas More, by his favorite daughter Mrs. Roper. In his letter to this last lady, written during the reign of Mary, after congratulating her on her cultivation, amid the luxury and dissipation of a court, of studies worthy the descendant of a man whose high qualities had ennobled England in the estimation of foreign nations, he proceeds to mention, that he is the person whom, several years ago, her excellent mother had requested to undertake the instruction of all her children in Greek and Latin literature. At that time, he says, no offer could tempt him to quit his learned retirement at Cambridge, and he was reluctantly compelled to decline the proposal; but being now once more established at court, he freely offers to a lady whose accomplishments he so much admires, any assistance in her laudable pursuits which it may be in his power to afford.

A few more scattered notices may be collected relative to this period of the life of Elizabeth. Her talents, her vivacity, her proficiency in those classical studies to which he was himself addicted, and especially the attachment which she manifested to the reformed religion, endeared her exceedingly to the young king her brother, who was wont to call her,—perhaps with

reference to the sobriety of dress and manners by which she was then distinguished,—his sweet sister Temperance. On her part his affection was met by every demonstration of sisterly tenderness, joined to those delicate attentions and respectful observances which his rank required.

It was probably about 1550 that she addressed to him the following letter on his having desired her picture, which affords perhaps the most favorable specimen extant of her youthful style.

"Like as the rich man that daily gathereth riches to riches, and to one bag of money layeth a great sort till it come to infinite: so methinks your majesty, not being sufficed with so many benefits and gentleness shewed to me afore this time, doth now increase them in asking and desiring where you may bid and command; requiring a thing not worthy the desiring for itself, but made worthy for your highness' request. My picture I mean: in which, if the inward good mind toward your grace might as well be declared, as the outward face and countenance shall be seen, I would not have tarried the commandment but prevented it, nor have been the last to grant but the first to offer it. For the face I grant I might well blush to offer, but the mind I shall never be ashamed to present. But though from the grace of the picture the colors may fade by time, may give by weather, may be spited by chance; yet the other, nor time with her swift wings shall overtake, nor the misty clouds with their lowering may darken, nor chance with her slippery foot may overthrow.

"Of this also yet the proof could not be great, because the

occasions have been so small; notwithstanding, as a dog hath a day, so may I perchance have time to declare it in deeds, which now I do write them but in words. And further, I shall humbly beseech your majesty, that when you shall look on my picture, you will witsafe to think, that as you have but the outward shadow of the body afore you, so my inward mind wisheth that the body itself were oftener in your presence. Howbeit because both my so being I think could do your majesty little pleasure, though myself great good; and again, because I see not as yet the time agreeing thereunto, I shall learn to follow this saying of Horace, '*Feras, non culpes, quod vitari non potest.*' And thus I will (troubling your majesty I fear) end with my most humble thanks; beseeching God long to preserve you to his honor, to your comfort, to the realms profit, and to my joy.

(From Hatfield this 15th day of May.)

Your majesty's most humble sister and servant

Elizabeth."

An exact memorialist¹⁴ has preserved an instance of the high consideration now enjoyed by Elizabeth in the following passage, which is further curious as an instance of the state which she already assumed in her public appearances. "March 17th (1551). The lady Elizabeth, the king's sister, rode through London unto St. James's, the king's palace, with a great company of lords, knights, and gentlemen; and after her a great company of ladies

¹⁴ Strype.

and gentlemen on horseback, about two hundred. On the 19th she came from St. James's through the park to the court; the way from the park gate unto the court spread with fine sand. She was attended with a very honorable confluence of noble and worshipful persons of both sexes, and received with much ceremony at the court gate."

The ensuing letter, however, seems to intimate that there were those about the young king who envied her these tokens of favor and credit, and were sometimes but too successful in estranging her from the royal presence, and perhaps in exciting prejudices against her:—It is unfortunately without date of year.

"The princess Elizabeth to king Edward VI.

"Like as a shipman in stormy weather plucks down the sails tarrying for better wind, so did I, most noble king, in my unfortunate chance a Thursday pluck down the high sails of my joy and comfort; and do trust one day, that as troublesome waves have repulsed me backward, so a gentle wind will bring me forward to my haven. Two chief occasions moved me much and grieved me greatly: the one, for that I doubted your majesty's health; the other, because for all my long tarrying, I went without that I came for. Of the first I am relieved in a part, both that I understood of your health, and also that your majesty's lodging is far from my lord marques' chamber: of my other grief I am not eased; but the best is, that whatsoever other folks will suspect, I intend not to fear your grace's good will, which as I know that I never deserved to faint, so I trust will still stick by me.

For if your grace's advice that I should return, (whose will is a commandment) had not been, I would not have made the half of my way the end of my journey.

"And thus as one desirous to hear of your majesty's health, though unfortunate to see it, I shall pray God to preserve you. (From Hatfield this present Saturday.)

"Your majesty's humble sister to commandment,

"Elizabeth."

CHAPTER V

1549 TO 1553

Decline of the protector's authority.—He is imprisoned—accused of misdemeanors—loses his office—is liberated—reconciled with Dudley, who succeeds to his authority.—Dudley pushes on the reformation.—The celebration of mass prohibited.—Princess Mary persecuted.—The emperor attempts to get her out of the kingdom, but without success—interferes openly in her behalf.—Effect of persecution on the mind of Mary.—Marriage proposed for Elizabeth with the prince of Denmark.—She declines it.—King betrothed to a princess of France.—Sweating sickness.—Death of the duke of Suffolk.—Dudley procures that title for the marquis of Dorset, and the dukedom of Northumberland for himself.—Particulars of the last earl of Northumberland.—Trial, conviction, and death of the duke of Somerset.—Christmas festivities of the young king.—Account of George Ferrers master of the king's pastimes, and his works.—Views of Northumberland.—Decline of the king's health.—Scheme of Northumberland for lady Jane Grey's succession.—Three marriages contrived by him for this purpose.—He procures a settlement of the crown on the lady Jane.—Subserviency of the council.—Death of Edward concealed by Northumberland.—

The princesses narrowly escape falling into his hands.
—Courageous conduct of Elizabeth.—Northumberland
deserted by the council and the army.—Jane Grey
imprisoned.—Northumberland arrested.—Mary mounts
the throne.

It was to little purpose that the protector had stained his hands with the blood of his brother, for the exemption thus purchased from one kind of fear or danger, was attended by a degree of public odium which could not fail to render feeble and tottering an authority based, like his, on plain and open usurpation.

Other causes conspired to undermine his credit and prepare his overthrow. The hatred of the great nobles, which he augmented by a somewhat too ostentatious patronage of the lower classes against the rich and powerful, continually pursued and watched the opportunity to ruin him. Financial difficulties pressed upon him, occasioned in great measure by the wars with France and Scotland which he had carried on, in pursuance of Henry's design of compelling the Scotch to marry their young queen to his son. An object which had finally been frustrated, notwithstanding the vigilance of the English fleet, by the safe arrival of Mary in France, and her solemn betrothment to the dauphin. The great and glorious work of religious reformation, though followed by Somerset, under the guidance of Cranmer, with a moderation and prudence which reflect the highest honor on both, could not be brought to perfection without exciting the rancorous hostility of thousands, whom various motives

and interests attached to the cause of ancient superstition; and the abolition, by authority, of the mass, and the destruction of images and crucifixes, had given birth to serious disturbances in different parts of the country. The want and oppression under which the lower orders groaned,—and which they attributed partly to the suppression of the monasteries to which they had been accustomed to resort for the supply of their necessities, partly to a general inclosure bill extremely cruel and arbitrary in its provisions,—excited commotions still more violent and alarming. In order to suppress the insurrection in Norfolk, headed by Kett, it had at length been found necessary to send thither a large body of troops under the earl of Warwick, who had acquired a very formidable degree of celebrity by the courage and conduct which he exhibited in bringing this difficult enterprise to a successful termination.

A party was now formed in the council, of which Warwick, Southampton, Arundel, and St. John, were the chiefs; and strong resolutions were entered into against the assumed authority of the protector. This unfortunate man, whom an inconsiderate ambition, fostered by circumstances favorable to its success, had pushed forward into a station equally above his talents and his birth, was now found destitute of all the resources of courage and genius which might yet have retrieved his authority and his credit. He suffered himself to be surprised into acts indicative of weakness and dismay, which soon robbed him of his remaining partisans, and gave to his enemies all the advantage which they

desired.

His committal to the Tower on several charges, of which his assumption of the whole authority of the state was the principal, soon followed. A short time after he was deprived of his high office, which was nominally vested in six members of the council, but really in the earl of Warwick, whose private ambition seems to have been the main-spring of the whole intrigue, and who thus became, almost without a struggle, undisputed master of the king and kingdom.

That poorness of spirit which had sunk the duke of Somerset into insignificance, saved him at present from further mischief. In the beginning of the ensuing year, 1550, having on his knees confessed himself guilty of all the matters laid to his charge, without reservation or exception, and humbly submitted himself to the king's mercy, he was condemned in a heavy fine, on remission of which by the king he was liberated. Soon after, by the special favor of his royal nephew, he was readmitted into the council; and a reconciliation was mediated for him with Warwick, cemented by a marriage between one of his daughters and the son and heir of this aspiring leader.

The catholic party, which had flattered itself that the earl of Warwick, from gratitude for the support which some of its leaders had afforded him, and perhaps also from principle, no less than from opposition to the duke of Somerset, would be led to embrace its defence, was now destined to deplore its disappointment.

Determined to rule alone, he soon shook off his able but too aspiring colleague, the earl of Southampton, and disgraced, by the imposition of a fine for some alleged embezzlement of public money, the earl of Arundel, also a known assertor of the ancient faith, finally, having observed how closely the principles of protestantism, which Edward had derived from instructors equally learned and zealous, had interwoven themselves with the whole texture and fabric of his mind, he resolved to merit the lasting attachment of the royal minor by assisting him to complete the overthrow of popery in England.

A confession of faith was now drawn up by commissioners appointed for the purpose, and various alterations were made in the Liturgy, which had already been translated into the vulgar tongue for church use. Tests were imposed, which Gardiner, Bonner, and several others of the bishops felt themselves called upon by conscience, or a regard to their own reputation, to decline subscribing, even at the price of deprivation; and prodigious devastations were made by the courtiers on the property of the church. To perform or assist at the performance of the mass was also rendered highly penal. But no dread of legal animadversion was capable of deterring the lady Mary from the observance of this essential rite of her religion; and finding herself and her household exposed to serious inconveniences on account of their infraction of the new statute, she applied for protection to her potent kinsman the emperor Charles V., who is said to have undertaken her rescue by means which could

scarcely have failed to involve him in a war with England. By his orders, or connivance, certain ships were prepared in the ports of Flanders, manned and armed for an attempt to carry off the princess either by stealth or open force, and land her at Antwerp. In furtherance of the design, several of her gentlemen had already taken their departure for that city, and Flemish light vessels were observed to keep watch on the English coast. But by these appearances the apprehensions of the council were awakened, and a sudden journey of the princess from Hunsdon in Hertfordshire towards Norfolk, for which she was unable to assign a satisfactory reason, served as strong confirmation of their suspicions.

A violent alarm was immediately sounded through the nation, of foreign invasion designed to co-operate with seditions at home; bodies of troops were dispatched to protect different points of the coast; and several ships of war were equipped for sea; while a communication on the subject was made by the council to the nobility throughout the kingdom, in terms calculated to awaken indignation against the persecuted princess, and all who were suspected, justly or unjustly, of regarding her cause with favor. A few extracts from this paper will exhibit the fierce and jealous spirit of that administration of which Dudley formed the soul.

"So it is, that the lady Mary, not many days past, removed from Newhall in Essex to her house of Hunsdon in Hertfordshire, the cause whereof, although we knew not, yet did we rather

think it likely that her grace would have come to have seen his majesty; but now upon Tuesday last, she hath suddenly, without knowledge given either to us here or to the country there, and without any cause in the world by us to her given, taken her journey from Hunsdon towards Norfolk" &c. "This her doing we be sorry for, both for the evil opinion the king's majesty our master may conceive thereby of her, and for that by the same doth appear manifestly the malicious rancour of such as provoke her thus to breed and stir up, as much as in her and them lieth, occasion of disorder and unquiet in the realm" &c. "It is not unknown to us but some near about the said lady Mary have very lately in the night seasons had privy conferences with the emperor's ambassador here being, which councils can no wise tend to the weal of the king's majesty our master or his realm, nor to the nobility of this realm. And whatsoever the lady Mary shall upon instigation of these forward practices further do, like to these her strange beginnings, we doubt not but your lordship will provide that her proceedings shall not move any disobedience or disorder—The effect whereof if her counsellors should procure, as it must be to her grace, and to all other good Englishmen therein seduced, damnable, so shall it be most hurtful to the good subjects of the country" &c.¹⁵

Thus did the fears, the policy, or the party-spirit, of the members of the council lead them to magnify the peril of the nation from the enterprises of a young and defenceless female,

¹⁵ Burleigh Papers by Haynes.

whose best friend was a foreign prince, whose person was completely within their power, and who, at this period of her life "more sinned against than sinning," was not even suspected of any other design than that of withdrawing herself from a country in which she was no longer allowed to worship God according to her conscience. Some slight tumults in Essex and Kent, in which she was not even charged with any participation, were speedily suppressed; and after some conference with the chancellor and secretary Petre, Mary obeyed a summons to attend them to the court, where she was now to be detained for greater security.

On her arrival she received a reprimand from the council for her obstinacy respecting the mass, with an injunction to instruct herself, by reading, in the grounds of protestant belief. To this she replied, with the inflexible resolution of her character, that as to protestant books, she thanked God that she never had read any, and never intended so to do; that for her religion she was ready to lay down her life, and only feared that she might not be found worthy to become its martyr. One of her chaplains was soon after thrown into prison; and further severities seemed to await her, when a message from the emperor, menacing the country with war in case she should be debarred from the free exercise of her religion, taught the council the expediency of relaxing a little the sternness of their intolerance. But the scruples of the zealous young king on this head could not be brought to yield to reasons of state, till he had "advised with the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of London and Rochester, who gave

their opinion that to give license to sin was sin, but to connive at sin might be allowed in case it were neither long, nor without hope of reformation¹⁶."

By this prudent and humane but somewhat jesuitical decision this perplexing affair was set at rest for the present; and during the small remainder of her brother's reign, a negative kind of persecution, consisting in disfavor, obloquy, and neglect, was all, apparently, that the lady Mary was called upon to undergo. But she had already endured enough to sour her temper, to aggravate with feelings of personal animosity her systematic abhorrence of what she deemed impious heresy, and to bind to her heart by fresh and stronger ties that cherished faith, in defence of which she was proudly conscious of having struggled and suffered with a lofty and unyielding intrepidity.

In order to counterbalance the threatened hostility of Spain, and impose an additional check on the catholic party at home, it was now judged expedient for the king to strengthen himself by an alliance with Christian III. king of Denmark; an able and enlightened prince, who in the early part of his reign had opposed with vigor the aggressions of the emperor Charles V. on the independence of the north of Europe, and more recently had acquired the respect of the whole protestant body by establishing the reformation in his dominions. An agent was accordingly dispatched with a secret commission to sound the inclinations of the court of Copenhagen towards a marriage between the prince-

¹⁶ Hayward's Life of Edward VI.

royal and the lady Elizabeth.

That this negotiation proved fruitless, was apparently owing to the reluctance to the connexion manifested by Elizabeth; of whom it is observable, that she never could be prevailed upon to afford the smallest encouragement to the addresses of any foreign prince whilst she herself was still a subject; well aware that to accept of an alliance which would carry her out of the kingdom, was to hazard the loss of her succession to the English crown, a splendid reversion never absent from her aspiring thoughts.

Disappointed in this design, Edward lost no time in pledging his own hand to the infant daughter of Henry II. of France, which contract he did not live to complete.

The splendid French embassy which arrived in England during the year 1550 to make arrangements respecting the dower of the princess, and to confer on her intended spouse the order of St. Michael, was received with high honors, but found the court-festivities damped by a visitation of that strange and terrific malady the sweating sickness.

This pestilence, first brought into the island by the foreign mercenaries who composed the army of the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., now made its appearance for the fourth and last time in our annals. It seized principally, it is said, on males, on such as were in the prime of their age, and rather on the higher than the lower classes: within the space of twenty-four hours the fate of the sufferer was decided for life or death. Its ravages were prodigious; and the general consternation

was augmented by a superstitious idea which went forth, that Englishmen alone, were the destined victims of this mysterious minister of fate, which tracked their steps, with the malice and sagacity of an evil spirit, into every distant country of the earth whither they might have wandered, whilst it left unassailed all foreigners in their own.

Two of the king's servants died of this disease, and he in consequence removed to Hampton Court in haste and with very few attendants. The duke of Suffolk and his brother, students at Cambridge, were seized with it at the same time, sleeping in the same bed, and expired within two hours of each other. They were the children of Charles Brandon by his last wife, who was in her own right baroness Willoughby of Eresby. This lady had already made herself conspicuous by that earnest profession of the protestant faith for which, in the reign of Mary, she underwent many perils and a long exile. She was a munificent patroness of the learned and zealous divines of her own persuasion, whether natives or foreigners; and the untimely loss of these illustrious youths, who seem to have inherited both her religious principles and her love of letters, was publicly bewailed by the principal members of the university.

But by the earl of Warwick the melancholy event was rendered doubly conducive to the purposes of his ambition. In the first place it enabled him to bind to his interests the marquis of Dorset married to the half-sister of the young duke of Suffolk, by procuring a renewal of the ducal title in his behalf, and next

authorized him by a kind of precedent to claim for himself the same exalted dignity.

The circumstances attending Dudley's elevation to the ducal rank are worthy of particular notice, as connected with a melancholy part of the story of that old and illustrious family of the Percies, celebrated through so many ages of English history.

The last of this house who had borne the title of earl of Northumberland was that ardent and favored suitor of Anne Boleyn, who was compelled by his father to renounce his pretensions to her hand in deference to the wishes of a royal competitor.

The disappointment and the injury impressed themselves in indelible characters on the heart of Percy: in common with the object of his attachment, he retained against Wolsey, whom he believed to have been actively instrumental in fostering the king's passion, a deep resentment, which is said to have rendered peculiarly acceptable to him the duty afterwards imposed upon him, of arresting that celebrated minister in order to his being brought to his trial. For the lady to whom a barbarous exertion of parental authority had compelled him to give his hand, while his whole heart was devoted to another, he also conceived an aversion rather to be lamented than wondered at.

Unfortunately, she brought him no living offspring; and after a few years he separated himself from her to indulge his melancholy alone and without molestation. In this manner he spun out a suffering existence, oppressed with sickness of mind

and body, disengaged from public life, and neglectful of his own embarrassed affairs, till the fatal catastrophe of his brother, brought to the scaffold in 1537 for his share in the popish rebellion under Aske. By this event, and the attainder of sir Thomas Percy's children which followed, the earl saw himself deprived of the only consolation which remained to him,—that of transmitting to the posterity of a brother whom he loved, the titles and estates derived to him through a long and splendid ancestry. As a last resource, he bequeathed all his land to the king, in the hope, which was not finally frustrated, that a return of royal favor might one day restore them to the representatives of the Percies.

This done, he yielded his weary spirit on the last day of the same month which had seen the fatal catastrophe of his misguided brother.

From this time the title had remained dormant, till the earl of Warwick, untouched by commiseration or respect for the misfortunes of so great a house, cut off for the present all chance of its restoration, by causing the young monarch whom he governed to confer upon himself the whole of the Percy estates, with the new dignity of duke of Northumberland; an honor undeserved and ill-acquired, which no son of his was ever permitted to inherit.

But the soaring ambition of Dudley regarded even these splendid acquisitions of wealth and dignity only as steps to that summit of power and dominion which he was resolved by all

means and at all hazards to attain; and his next measure was to procure the removal of the only man capable in any degree of obstructing his further progress. This was the late protector, by whom some relics of authority were still retained.

At the instigation of Northumberland, a law was passed making it felony to conspire against the life of a privy-counsellor; and by various insidious modes of provocation, he was soon enabled to bring within the danger of this new act an enemy who was rash, little sagacious, by no means scrupulous, and surrounded with violent or treacherous advisers. On October 16th 1551, Somerset and several of his relations and dependants, and on the following day his haughty duchess with certain of her favorites, were committed to the Tower, charged with treason and felony. The duke, being put upon his trial, so clearly disproved most of the accusations brought against him that the peers acquitted him of treason; but the evidence of his having entertained designs against the lives of the duke of Northumberland, the marquis of Northampton, and the earl of Pembroke, appeared so conclusive to his judges,—among whom these three noblemen themselves did not blush to take their seats,—that he was found guilty of the felony.

After his condemnation, Somerset acknowledged with contrition that he had once mentioned to certain persons an intention of assassinating these lords; but he protested that he had never taken any measures for carrying this wicked purpose into execution. However this might be, no act of violence had been

committed, and it was hoped by many and expected by more, that the royal mercy might yet be extended to preserve his life: but Northumberland spared no efforts to incense the king against his unhappy uncle; he also contrived by a course of amusements and festivities to divert him from serious thought; and on January 21st 1552, to the great regret of the common people and the dismay of the protestant party, the duke of Somerset underwent the fatal stroke on Tower-hill.

During the whole interval between the condemnation and death of his uncle, the king, as we are informed, had been entertained by the nobles of his court with "stately masques, brave challenges at tilt and at barriers, and whatsoever exercises or disports they could conjecture to be pleasing to him. Then also he first began to *keep hall*¹⁷, and the Christmas-time was passed over with banquetings, plays, and much variety of mirth¹⁸."

We learn that it was an ancient custom, not only with the kings of England but with noblemen and "great housekeepers who used liberal feasting in that season," to appoint for the twelve days of the Christmas festival a lord of misrule, whose office it was to provide diversions for their numerous guests. Of what nature these entertainments might be we are not exactly informed; they probably comprised some rude attempts at dramatic representation: but the taste of an age rapidly advancing in literature and general refinement, evidently began to disdain

¹⁷ To keep hall, was to keep "open household with frank resort to court."

¹⁸ Hayward's Life of Edward VI.

the flat and coarse buffooneries which had formed the solace of its barbarous predecessors; and it was determined that devices of superior elegance and ingenuity should distinguish the festivities of the new court of Edward.

Accordingly, George Ferrers, a gentleman regularly educated at Oxford, and a member of the society of Lincoln's inn, was chosen to preside over the "merry disports;" "who," says Holinshed, "being of better credit and estimation than commonly his predecessors had been before, received all his commissions and warrants by the name of master of the king's pastimes. Which gentleman so well supplied his office, both in show of sundry sights and devices of rare inventions, and in act of divers interludes and matters of pastime played by persons, as not only satisfied the common sort, but also were very well liked and allowed by the council, and other of skill in the like pastimes; but best of all by the young king himself, as appeared by his princely liberality in rewarding that service."

"On Monday the fourth day of January," pursues our chronicler, whose circumstantial detail is sometimes picturesque and amusing, "the said lord of merry disports came by water to London, and landing at the Tower wharf entered the Tower, then rode through Tower-street, where he was received by Vause, lord of misrule to John Mainard, one of the sheriffs of London, and so conducted through the city with a great company of young lords and gentlemen to the house of sir George Burne lord-mayor, where he with the chief of his company dined, and after had a

great banquet, and at his departure the lord-mayor gave him a standing cup with a cover of silver and gilt, of the value of ten pounds, for a reward, and also set a hogshead of wine and a barrel of beer at his gate, for his train that followed him. The residue of his gentlemen and servants dined at other aldermen's houses and with the sheriffs, and then departed to the Tower wharf again, and so to the court by water, to the great commendation of the mayor and aldermen, and highly accepted, of the king and council."

From this time Ferrers became "a composer almost by profession of occasional interludes for the diversion of the court¹⁹." None of these productions of his have come down to posterity; but their author is still known to the student of early English poetry, as one of the contributors to an extensive work entitled "The Mirror for Magistrates," which will be mentioned hereafter in speaking of the works of Thomas Sackville lord Buckhurst. The legends combined in this collection, which came from the pen of Ferrers, are not distinguished by any high flights of poetic fancy, nor by a versification extremely correct or melodious. Their merit is that of narrating after the chronicles, facts in English history, in a style clear, natural, and energetic, with an intermixture of political reflections conceived in a spirit of wisdom and moderation, highly honorable to the author, and well adapted to counteract the turbulent spirit of an age in which the ambition of the high and the discontent of the low were

¹⁹ See Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. iii. p. 213 et seq.

alike apt to break forth into outrages destructive of the public tranquillity.

Happy would it have been for England in more ages than one, had the sentiment of the following humble stanza been indelibly inscribed on the hearts of children.

"Some haply here will move a further doubt,
And as for York's part allege an elder right:
O brainless heads that so run in and out!
When length of time a state hath firmly pight,
And good accord hath put all strife to flight,
Were it not better such titles still to sleep
Than all a realm about the trial weep?"

This estimable writer had been a member of parliament in the time of Henry VIII., and was imprisoned by that despot in 1542, very probably without any just cause. He about the same time translated into English the great charter of Englishmen which had become a dead letter through the tyranny of the Tudors; and he rendered the same public service respecting several important statutes which existed only in Latin or Norman French; proofs of a free and courageous spirit extremely rare in that servile age!

Ferrers lived far into the reign of Elizabeth, finishing his career at Flamstead in his native county of Herts in 1579.

From the pleasing contemplation of a life devoted to those honorable arts by which society is cultivated, enlightened and adorned, we must now return to tread with Northumberland

the maze of dark and crooked politics. By many a bold and many a crafty step this adept in his art had wound his way to the highest rank of nobility attainable by a subject, and to a station of eminence and command scarcely compatible with that character. But no sooner had he reached it, than a sudden cloud lowered over the splendid prospect stretched around him, and threatened to snatch it for ever from his sight. The youthful monarch in whom, or over whom, he reigned, was seized with a lingering disease which soon put on appearances indicative of a fatal termination. Under Mary, the next heir, safety with insignificance was the utmost that could be hoped by the man who had taken a principal and conspicuous part in every act of harshness towards herself, and every demonstration of hostility towards the faith which she cherished, and against whom, when he should be no longer protected by the power which he wielded, so many lawless and rapacious acts were ready to rise up in judgement.

One scheme alone suggested itself for the preservation of his authority: it was dangerous, almost desperate; but loss of power was more dreaded by Dudley than any degree of hazard to others or himself; and he resolved at all adventures to make the attempt.

By means of the new honors which he had caused to be conferred on the marquis of Dorset, now duke of Suffolk, he engaged this weak and inconsiderate man to give his eldest daughter, the lady Jane Grey, in marriage to his fourth son Guildford Dudley. At the same time he procured an union

between her sister, the lady Catherine, and the eldest son of his able but mean-spirited and time-serving associate, the earl of Pembroke; and a third between his own daughter Catherine and lord Hastings, son of the earl of Huntingdon by the eldest daughter and co-heir of Henry Pole lord Montacute; in whom the claims of the line of Clarence now vested.

These nuptials were all celebrated on one day, and with an ostentation of magnificence and festivity which the people exclaimed against as highly indecorous in the present dangerous state of the king's health. But it was not on *their* good will that Northumberland founded his hopes, and their clamors were braved or disregarded.

His next measure was to prevail upon the dying king to dispose of the crown by will in favor of the lady Jane. The animosity against his sister Mary, to which their equal bigotry in opposite modes of faith had given birth in the mind of Edward, would naturally induce him to lend a willing ear to such specious arguments as might be produced in justification of her exclusion: but that he could be brought with equal facility to disinherit also Elizabeth, a sister whom he loved, a princess judged in all respects worthy of a crown, and one with whose religious profession he had every reason to be perfectly satisfied, appears an indication of a character equally cold and feeble. Much allowance, however, may be made for the extreme youth of Edward; the weakness of his sinking frame; his affection for the pious and amiable Jane, his near relation and the frequent

companion of his childhood; and above all, for the importunities, the artifices, of the practised intriguers by whom his dying couch was surrounded.

The partisans of Northumberland did not fail to urge, that if one of the princesses were set aside on account of the nullification of her mother's marriage, the same ground of exclusion was valid against the other. If, on the contrary, the testamentary dispositions of the late king were to be adhered to, the lady Mary must necessarily precede her sister, and the cause of religious reformation was lost, perhaps for ever.

With regard to the other claimants who might still be interposed between Jane and the English throne, it was pretended that the Scottish branch of the royal family was put out of the question by that clause of Henry's will which placed the Suffolk line next in order to his own immediate descendants; as if an instrument which was set aside as to several of its most important provisions was necessarily to be held binding in all the rest. Even admitting this, the duchess of Suffolk herself stood before her daughter in order of succession; but a renunciation obtained from this lady by the authority of Northumberland, not only of her own title but of that of any future son who might be born to her, was supposed to obviate this objection.

The right of the king, even if he had attained the age of majority, to dispose of the crown by will without the concurrence of parliament, was absolutely denied by the first law authorities: but the power and violence of Northumberland overruled all

objections, and in the end the new settlement received the signature of all the privy council, and the whole bench of judges, with the exception of justice Hales, and perhaps of Cecil, then secretary of state, who afterwards affirmed that he put his name to this instrument only as a witness to the signature of the king. Cranmer resisted for some time, but was at length won to compliance by the tears and entreaties of Edward.

Notwithstanding this general concurrence, it is probable that very few of the council either expected or desired that this act should be sanctioned by the acquiescence of the nation: they signed it merely as a protection from the present effects of the anger of Northumberland, whom most of them hated as well as feared; each privately hoping that he should find opportunity to disavow the act of the body in time to obtain the forgiveness of Mary, should her cause be found finally to prevail. The selfish meanness and political profligacy of such a conduct it is needless to stigmatize; but this was not the age of public virtue in England.

A just detestation of the character of Northumberland had rendered very prevalent an idea, that the constitution of the king was undermined by slow poisons of his administering; and it was significantly remarked, that his health had begun to decline from the period of lord Robert Dudley's being placed about him as gentleman of the bed-chamber. Nothing, however, could be more destitute both of truth and probability than such a suspicion. Besides the satisfactory evidence that Edward's disease was a pulmonary consumption, such as no poison could

produce, it has been well remarked, that if Northumberland were a sound politician, there could be no man in England more sincerely desirous, for his own sake, of the continuance of the life and reign of this young prince. By a change he had every thing to lose, and nothing to gain. Several circumstances tend also to show that the fatal event, hastened by the treatment of a female empiric to whom the royal patient had been very improperly confided, came upon Northumberland at last somewhat by surprise, and compelled him to act with a precipitation injurious to his designs. Several preparatory steps were yet wanting; in particular the important one of securing the persons of the two princesses: but this omission it seemed still possible to supply; and he ordered the death of the king to be carefully concealed, while he wrote letters in his name requiring the immediate attendance of his sisters on his person. With Mary the stratagem had nearly succeeded: she had reached Hoddesdon on her journey to London, when secret intelligence of the truth, conveyed to her by the earl of Arundel, caused her to change her course. It was probably a similar intimation from some friendly hand, Cecil's perhaps, which caused Elizabeth to disobey the summons, and remain tranquil at one of her houses in Hertfordshire.

Here she was soon after waited upon by messengers from Northumberland, who apprized her of the accession of the lady Jane, and proposed to her to resign her own title in consideration of a sum of money, and certain lands which should be assigned her. But Elizabeth wisely and courageously replied, that her elder

sister was first to be agreed with, during whose lifetime she, for her part, could claim no right at all. And determined to make common cause with Mary against their common enemies, she equipped with all speed a body of a thousand horse, at the head of which she went forth to meet her sister on her approach to London.

The event quickly proved that she had taken the right part. Though the council manifested their present subserviency to Northumberland by proclaiming queen Jane in the metropolis, and by issuing in her name a summons to Mary to lay aside her pretensions to the crown, this leader was too well practised in the arts of courts, to be the dupe of their hollow professions of attachment to a cause unsupported, as he soon perceived, by the favor of the people.

The march of Northumberland at the head of a small body of troops to resist the forces levied by Mary in Norfolk and Suffolk, was the signal for the defection of a great majority of the council. They broke from the kind of honorable custody in the Tower in which, from a well-founded distrust of their intentions, Northumberland had hitherto held them; and ordering Mary to be proclaimed in London, they caused the hapless Jane, after a nominal reign of ten days, to be detained as a prisoner in that fortress which she had entered as a sovereign.

Not a hand was raised, not a drop of blood was shed, in defence of this pageant raised by the ambition of Dudley. Deserted by his partisans, his soldiers and himself, the guilty

wretch sought, as a last feeble resource, to make a merit of being the first man to throw up his cap in the market-place of Cambridge, and cry "God save queen Mary!" But on the following day the earl of Arundel, whom he had disgraced, and who hated him, though a little before he had professed that he could wish to spend his blood at his feet, came and arrested him in her majesty's name, and Mary, proceeding to London, seated herself without opposition on the throne of her ancestors.

CHAPTER VI

1553 AND 1554

Mary affects attachment to Elizabeth.—Short duration of her kindness.—Earl of Devonshire liberated from the Tower.—His character.—He rejects the love of Mary—shows partiality to Elizabeth.—Anger of Mary.—Elizabeth retires from court.—Queen's proposed marriage unpopular.—Character of sir T. Wyatt.—His rebellion.—Earl of Devonshire remanded to the Tower.—Elizabeth summoned to court—is detained by illness.—Wyat taken—is said to accuse Elizabeth.—She is brought prisoner to the court—examined by the council—dismissed—brought again to court—re-examined—committed to the Tower.—Particulars of her behaviour.—Influence of Mary's government on various eminent characters.—Reinstatement of the duke of Norfolk in honor and office.—His retirement and death.—Liberation from the Tower of Tonsal.—His character and after fortunes.—Of Gardiner and Bonner.—Their views and characters.—Of the duchess of Somerset and the marchioness of Exeter.—Imprisonment of the Dudleys—of several protestant bishops—of judge Hales.—His sufferings and death.—Characters and fortunes of sir John Cheke, sir Anthony

Cook, Dr. Cox, and other protestant exiles.

The conduct of Elizabeth during the late alarming crisis, earned for her from Mary, during the first days of her reign, some demonstration of sisterly affection. She caused her to bear her company in her public entry into London; kindly detained her for a time near her own person; and seemed to have consigned for ever to an equitable oblivion all the mortifications and heartburnings of which the child of Anne Boleyn had been the innocent occasion to her in times past, and under circumstances which could never more return.

In the splendid procession which attended her majesty from the Tower to Whitehall previously to her coronation on October 1st 1553, the royal chariot, sumptuously covered with cloth of tissue and drawn by six horses with trappings of the same material, was immediately followed by another, likewise drawn by six horses and covered with cloth of silver, in which sat the princess Elizabeth and the lady Anne of Cleves, who took place in this ceremony as the adopted sister of Henry VIII.

But notwithstanding these fair appearances, the rancorous feelings of Mary's heart with respect to her sister were only repressed or disguised, not eradicated; and it was not long before a new subject of jealousy caused them to revive in all their pristine energy.

Amongst the state prisoners committed to the Tower by Henry VIII., whose liberation his executors had resisted during the whole reign of Edward, but whom it was Mary's first act of

royalty to release and reinstate in their offices or honors, was Edward Courtney, son of the unfortunate marquis of Exeter. From the age of fourteen to that of six-and-twenty, this victim of tyranny had been doomed to expiate in a captivity which threatened to be perpetual, the involuntary offence of inheriting through an attainted father the blood of the fourth Edward. To the surprise and admiration of the court, he now issued forth a comely and accomplished gentleman; deeply versed in the literature of the age; skilled in music, and still more so in the art of painting, which had formed the chief solace of his long seclusion; and graced with that polished elegance of manners, the result, in most who possess it, of early intercourse with the world and an assiduous imitation of the best examples, but to a few of her favorites the free gift of nature herself. To all his prepossessing qualities was superadded that deep romantic kind of interest with which sufferings, long, unmerited, and extraordinary, never fail to invest a youthful sufferer.

What wonder that Courtney speedily became the favorite of the nation!—what wonder that even the severe bosom of Mary herself was touched with tenderness! With the eager zeal of the sentiment just awakened in her heart, she hastened to restore to her too amiable kinsman the title of earl of Devonshire, long hereditary in the illustrious house of Courtney, to which she added the whole of those patrimonial estates which the forfeiture of his father had vested in the crown. She went further; she lent a propitious ear to the whispered suggestion of her people, still

secretly partial to the house of York, that an English prince of the blood was most worthy to share the throne of an English queen. It is even affirmed that hints were designedly thrown out to the young man himself of the impression which he had made upon her heart. But Courtney generously disdained, as it appears, to barter his affections for a crown. The youth, the talents, the graces of Elizabeth had inspired him with a preference which he was either unwilling or unable to conceal; Mary was left to vent her disappointment in resentment against the ill-fated object of her preference, and in every demonstration of a malignant jealousy towards her innocent and unprotected rival.

By the first act of a parliament summoned immediately after the coronation, Mary's birth had been pronounced legitimate, the marriage of her father and mother valid, and their divorce null and void. A stigma was thus unavoidably cast on the offspring of Henry's second marriage; and no sooner had Elizabeth incurred the displeasure of her sister, than she was made to feel how far the consequences of this new declaration of the legislature might be made to extend. Notwithstanding the unrevoked succession act which rendered her next heir to the crown, she was forbidden to take place of the countess of Lenox, or the duchess of Suffolk, in the presence-chamber, and her friends were discountenanced or affronted obviously on her account. Her merit, her accomplishments, her insinuating manners, which attracted to her the admiration and attendance of the young nobility, and the favor of the nation, were so many crimes in

the eyes of a sovereign who already began to feel her own unpopularity; and Elizabeth, who was not of a spirit to endure public and unmerited slights with tameness, found it at once the most dignified and the safest course, to seek, before the end of the year, the peaceful retirement of her house of Ashridge in Buckinghamshire. It was however made a condition of the leave of absence from court which she was obliged to solicit, that she should take with her sir Thomas Pope and sir John Gage, who were placed about her as inspectors and superintendants of her conduct, under the name of officers of her household.

The marriage of Mary to Philip of Spain was now openly talked of. It was generally and justly unpopular: the protestant party, whom the measures of the queen had already filled with apprehensions, saw, in her desire of connecting herself yet more closely with the most bigoted royal family of Europe, a confirmation of their worst forebodings; and the tyranny of the Tudors had not yet so entirely crushed the spirit of Englishmen as to render them tamely acquiescent in the prospect of their country's becoming a province to Spain, subject to the sway of that detested people whose rapacity, and violence, and unexampled cruelty, had filled both hemispheres with groans and execrations.

The house of commons petitioned the queen against marrying a foreign prince: she replied by dissolving them in anger; and all hope of putting a stop to the connexion by legal means being thus precluded, measures of a more dangerous character began to be

resorted to.

Sir Thomas Wyatt of Allingham Castle in Kent, son of the poet, wit, and courtier of that name, had hitherto been distinguished by a zealous loyalty; and he is said to have been also a catholic. Though allied in blood to the Dudleys, not only had he refused to Northumberland his concurrence in the nomination of Jane Grey, but, without waiting a moment to see which party would prevail, he had proclaimed queen Mary in the market-place at Maidstone, for which instance of attachment he had received her thanks²⁰. But Wyatt had been employed during several years of his life in embassies to Spain; and the intimate acquaintance which he had thus acquired of the principles and practices of its court, filled him with such horror of their introduction into his native country, that, preferring patriotism to loyalty where their claims appeared incompatible, he incited his neighbours and friends to insurrection.

In the same cause sir Peter Carew, and sir Gawen his uncle, endeavoured to raise the West, but with small success; and the attempts made by the duke of Suffolk, lately pardoned and liberated, to arm his tenantry and retainers in Warwickshire and Leicestershire, proved still more futile. Notwithstanding however this want of co-operation, Wyatt's rebellion wore for some time a very formidable appearance. The London trained-bands sent out to oppose him, went over to him in a body under Bret, their captain; the guards, almost the only regular troops in the

²⁰ See Carte's History of England.

kingdom, were chiefly protestants, and therefore little trusted by the queen; and it was known that the inhabitants of the metropolis, for which he was in full march, were in their hearts inclined to his cause.

It was pretty well ascertained that the earl of Devonshire had received an invitation to join the western insurgents; and though he appeared to have rejected the proposal, he was arbitrarily remanded to his ancient abode in the Tower.

Elizabeth was naturally regarded under all these circumstances of alarm with extreme jealousy and suspicion. It was well known that her present compliance with the religion of the court was merely prudential; that she was the only hope of the protestant party, a party equally formidable by zeal and by numbers, and which it was resolved to crush; it was more than suspected, that though Wyatt himself still professed an inviolable fidelity to the person of the reigning sovereign, and strenuously declared the Spanish match to be the sole grievance against which he had taken arms, many of his partisans had been led by their religious zeal to entertain the further view of dethroning the queen, in favor of her sister, whom they desired to marry to the earl of Devonshire. It was not proved that the princess herself had given any encouragement to these designs; but sir James Croft, an adherent of Wyatt's, had lately visited Ashridge, and held conferences with some of her attendants; and it had since been rumored that she was projecting a removal to her manor of Donnington castle in Berkshire, on the south side

of the Thames, where nothing but a day's march through an open country would be interposed between her residence and the station of the Kentish rebels.

Policy seemed now to dictate the precaution of securing her person; and the queen addressed to her accordingly the following letter.

"Right dear and entirely beloved sister,

"We greet you well: And whereas certain evil-disposed persons, minding more the satisfaction of their own malicious and seditious minds than their duty of allegiance towards us, have of late foully spread divers lewd and untrue rumours; and by that means and other devilish practises do travail to induce our good and loving subjects to an unnatural rebellion against God, us, and the tranquillity of our realm: We, tendering the surety of your person, which might chance to be in some peril if any sudden tumult should arise where you now be, or about Donnington, whither, as we understand, you are minded shortly to remove, do therefore think expedient you should put yourself in good readiness, with all convenient speed, to make your repair hither to us. Which we pray you fail not to do: Assuring you, that as you may most safely remain here, so shall you be most heartily welcome to us. And of your mind herein we pray you to return answer by this messenger.

"Given under our signet at our manor of St. James's the 26th of January in the 1st year of our reign.

"Your loving sister,

"Mary, the queen."

This summons found Elizabeth confined to her bed by sickness; and her officers sent a formal statement of the fact to the privy-council, praying that the delay of her appearance at court might not, under such circumstances, be misconstrued either with respect to her or to themselves. Monsieur de Noailles, the French ambassador, in some papers of his, calls this "a favorable illness" to Elizabeth, "since," adds he, "it seems likely to save Mary from the crime of putting her sister to death by violence." And true it is, that by detaining her in the country till the insurrection was effectually suppressed, it preserved her from any sudden act of cruelty which the violence of the alarm might have prompted: but other and perhaps greater dangers still awaited her.

A few days after the date of the foregoing letter, Wyat entered Westminster, but with a force very inadequate to his undertaking: he was repulsed in an attack on the palace; and afterwards, finding the gates of London closed against him and seeing his followers slain, taken, or flying in all directions, he voluntarily surrendered himself to one of the queen's officers and was conveyed to the Tower. It was immediately given out, that he had made a full discovery of his accomplices, and named amongst them the princess and the earl of Devonshire; and on this pretext, for it was probably no more, three gentlemen were sent, attended by a troop horse, with peremptory orders to bring Elizabeth back

with them to London.

They reached her abode at ten o'clock at night, and bursting into her sick chamber, in spite of the remonstrances of her ladies, abruptly informed her of their errand. Affrighted at the summons, she declared however her entire willingness to wait upon the queen her sister, to whom she warmly protested her loyal attachment; but she appealed to their own observation for the reality of her sickness, and her utter inability to quit her chamber. The gentlemen pleaded, on the other side, the urgency of their commission, and said that they had brought the queen's litter for her conveyance. Two physicians were then called in, who gave it as their opinion that she might be removed without danger to her life; and on the morrow her journey commenced.

The departure of Elizabeth from Ashridge was attended by the tears and passionate lamentations of her afflicted household, who naturally anticipated from such beginnings the worst that could befall her. So extreme was her sickness, aggravated doubtless by terror and dejection, that even these stern conductors found themselves obliged to allow her no less than four nights' rest in a journey of only twenty-nine miles.

Between Highgate and London her spirits were cheered by the appearance of a number of gentlemen who rode out to meet her, as a public testimony of their sympathy and attachment; and as she proceeded, the general feeling was further manifested by crowds of people lining the waysides, who flocked anxiously about her litter, weeping and bewailing her aloud. A manuscript

chronicle of the time describes her passage on this occasion through Smithfield and Fleet-street, in a litter open on both sides, with a hundred "velvet coats" after her, and a hundred others "in coats of fine red guarded with velvet;" and with this train she passed through the queen's garden to the court.

This open countenancing of the princess by a formidable party in the capital itself, seems to have disconcerted the plans of Mary and her advisers; and they contented themselves for the present with detaining her in a kind of honorable custody at Whitehall. Here she underwent a strict examination by the privy-council respecting Wyatt's insurrection, and the rising in the West under Carew; but she steadfastly protested her innocence and ignorance of all such designs; and nothing coming out against her, in about a fortnight she was dismissed, and suffered to return to her own house. Her troubles, however, were as yet only beginning. Sir William St. Low, one of her officers, was apprehended as an adherent of Wyatt's; and this leader himself, who had been respited for the purpose of working on his love of life, and leading him to betray his confederates, was still reported to accuse the princess. An idle story was officiously circulated, of his having conveyed to her in a bracelet the whole scheme of his plot; and on March 15th she was again taken into custody and brought to Hampton-court.

Soon after her arrival, it was finally announced to her by a deputation of the council, not without strong expressions of concern from several of the members, that her majesty

had determined on her committal to the Tower till the matter could be further investigated. Bishop Gardiner, now a principal counsellor, and two others, came soon after, and, dismissing the princess's attendants, supplied their place with some of the queen's, and set a guard round the palace for that night. The next day, the earl of Sussex and another lord were sent to announce to her that a barge was in readiness for her immediate conveyance to the Tower. She entreated first to be permitted to write to the queen; and the earl of Sussex assenting, in spite of the angry opposition of his companion, whose name is concealed by the tenderness of his contemporaries, and undertaking to be himself the bearer of her letter, she took the opportunity to repeat her protestations of innocence and loyalty, concluding, with an extraordinary vehemence of asseveration, in these words: "As for that traitor Wyat, he might peradventure write me a letter; but on my faith I never received any from him. And as for the copy of my letter to the French king, I pray God confound me eternally, if ever I sent him word, message, token, or letter, by any means." With respect to the last clause of this disavowal, it may be fit to observe, that there is indeed no proof that Elizabeth ever returned any answer to the letters or messages of the French king; but that it seems a well-authenticated fact, that during some period of her adversity Henry II. made her the offer of an asylum in France. The circumstance of the dauphin's being betrothed to the queen of Scots, who claimed to precede Elizabeth in the order of succession, renders the motive of this invitation

somewhat suspicious; at all events, it was one which she was never tempted to accept.

Her letter did not obtain for the princess what she sought,—an interview with her sister; and the next day, being Palm Sunday, strict orders were issued for all people to attend the churches and carry their palms; and in the mean time she was privately removed to the Tower, attended by the earl of Sussex and the other lord, three of her own ladies, three of the queen's, and some of her officers. Several characteristic traits of her behaviour have been preserved. On reaching her melancholy place of destination, she long refused to land at Traitor's gate; and when the uncourteous nobleman declared "that she should not choose," offering her however, at the same time, his cloak to protect her from the rain, she retained enough of her high spirit to put it from her "with a good dash." As she set her foot on the ill-omened stairs, she said, "Here landeth as true a subject, being a prisoner, as ever landed at these stairs; and before thee, O God! I speak it, having no other friends but thee alone."

On seeing a number of warders and other attendants drawn out in order, she asked, "What meaneth this?" Some one answered that it was customary on receiving a prisoner. "If it be," said she, "I beseech you that for my cause they may be dismissed." Immediately the poor men kneeled down and prayed God to preserve her; for which action they all lost their places the next day.

Going a little further, she sat down on a stone to rest herself;

and the lieutenant urging her to rise and come in out of the cold and wet, she answered, "Better sitting here than in a worse place, for God knoweth whither you bring me." On hearing these words her gentleman-usher wept, for which she reproved him; telling him he ought rather to be her comforter, especially since she knew her own truth to be such, that no man should have cause to weep for her. Then rising, she entered the prison, and its gloomy doors were locked and bolted on her. Shocked and dismayed, but still resisting the weakness of unavailing lamentation, she called for her book, and devoutly prayed that she might build her house upon the rock.

Meanwhile her conductors retired to concert measures for keeping her securely; and her firm friend, the earl of Sussex, did not neglect the occasion of reminding all whom it might concern, that the king their master's daughter was to be treated in no other manner than they might be able to justify, whatever should happen hereafter; and that they were to take heed to do nothing but what their commission would bear out. To this the others cordially assented; and having performed their office, the two lords departed.

Having now conducted the heroine of the protestant party to the dismal abode which she was destined for a time to occupy, it will be proper to revert to the period of Mary's accession.

Little more than eight months had yet elapsed from the death of Edward; but this short interval had sufficed to change the whole face of the English court; to alter the most important

relations of the country with foreign states; and to restore in great measure the ancient religion, which it had been the grand object of the former reign finally and totally to overthrow. It is the business of the historian to record the series of public measures by which this calamitous revolution was accomplished, the humbler but not uninteresting task, of tracing its effects on the fortunes of eminent individuals, belongs to the compiler of memoirs, and forms an appropriate accompaniment to the relation of the perils, sufferings and obloquy, through which the heiress of the English crown passed on safely to the accomplishment of her high destinies.

The liberation of the state-prisoners confined in the Tower,—an act of grace usual on the accession of a prince,—was one which the causes of detention of the greater part of them rendered it peculiarly gratifying to Mary to perform. The enemies of Henry's or of Edward's government she regarded with reason as her friends and partisans, and the adherents, open or concealed, of that church establishment which was to be forced back on the reluctant consciences of the nation.

The most illustrious of the captives was that aged duke of Norfolk whom the tyrant Henry had condemned to die without a crime, and who had been suffered to languish in confinement during the whole reign of Edward; chiefly, it is probable, because the forfeiture of his vast estates afforded a welcome supply to the exhausted treasury of the young king; though the extensive influence of this nobleman, and the attachment for the old

religion which he was believed to cherish, had served as plausible pretexts for his detention. His high birth, his hereditary authority, his religious predilections, were so many titles of merit in the eyes of the new queen, who was also desirous of profiting by his abilities and long experience in all affairs civil and military. Without waiting for the concurrence of parliament, she declared by her own authority his attainder irregular and null, restored to him such of his lands as remained vested in the crown, and proceeded to reinstate him in offices and honors. On August 10th he took his seat at the council-board of the eighth English monarch whose reign he had survived to witness; on the same day he was solemnly reinvested with the garter, of which he had been deprived on his attainder; and a few days after, he sat as lord-high-steward on the trial of that very duke of Northumberland to whom, not long before, his friends and adherents had been unsuccessful suitors for his own liberation.

There is extant a remarkable order of council, dated August 27th of this year, "for a letter to be written to the countess of Surry to send up to Mountjoy Place in London her youngest son, and the rest of her children, by the earl of Surry, where they shall be received by the duke of Norfolk their grandfather²¹." It may be conjectured that these young people were thus authoritatively consigned to the guardianship of the duke, for the purpose of correcting the protestant predilections in which they had been educated; and the circumstance seems also to indicate, what

²¹ See Burleigh Papers by Haynes.

indeed might be well imagined, that little harmony or intercourse subsisted between this nobleman and a daughter-in-law whom he had formerly sought to deprive of her husband in order to form for him a new and more advantageous connexion.

The eldest son of the earl of Surry, now in the seventeenth year of his age, was honored with the title of his father; and he began his distinguished though unfortunate career by performing, as deputy to the duke of Norfolk, the office of earl-marshal at the queen's coronation. On the first alarm of Wyatt's rebellion, the veteran duke was summoned to march out against him; but his measures, which otherwise promised success, were completely foiled by the desertion of the London bands to the insurgents; and the last military expedition of his life was destined to conclude with a hasty and ignominious flight. He soon after withdrew entirely from the fatigues of public life, and after all the vicissitudes of court and camp, palace and prison, with which the lapse of eighty eventful years had rendered him acquainted, calmly breathed his last at his own castle of Framlingham in September 1554.

Three deprived bishops were released from the Tower, and restored with honor to their sees. These were, Tonsal of Durham, Gardiner of Winchester, and Bonner of London. Tonsal, many of whose younger years had been spent in diplomatic missions, was distinguished in Europe by his erudition, which had gained him the friendship and correspondence of Erasmus; he was also mild, charitable, and

of unblemished morals. Attached by principle to the faith of his forefathers, but loth either to incur personal hazard, or to sacrifice the almost princely emoluments of the see of Durham, he had contented himself with regularly opposing in the house of lords all the ecclesiastical innovations of Edward's reign, and as regularly giving them his concurrence when once established. It was not, therefore, professedly on a religious account that he had suffered deprivation and imprisonment, but on an obscure charge of having participated in some traitorous or rebellious design: a charge brought against him, in the opinion of most, falsely, and through the corrupt procurement of Northumberland, to whose project of erecting the bishopric of Durham into a county palatine for himself, the deprivation of Tonsal, and the abolition of the see by act of parliament, were indispensable preliminaries. This meek and amiable prelate returned to the exercise of his high functions, without a wish of revenging on the protestants, in their adversity, the painful acts of disingenuousness which their late ascendancy had forced upon him. During the whole of Mary's reign, no person is recorded to have suffered for religion within the limits of his diocess. The mercy which he had shown, he afterwards most deservedly experienced. Refusing, on the accession of Elizabeth, to preserve his mitre by a repetition of compliances of which so many recent examples of conscientious suffering in men of both persuasions must have rendered him ashamed, he suffered a second deprivation; but his person was only committed to the honorable custody of archbishop Parker.

By this learned and munificent prelate the acquirements and virtues of Tonsal were duly appreciated and esteemed. He found at Lambeth a retirement suited to his age, his tastes, his favorite pursuits; by the arguments of his friendly host he was brought to renounce several of the grosser corruptions of popery; and dying in the year 1560, an honorable monument was erected by the primate to his memory.

With views and sentiments how opposite did Gardiner and Bonner resume the crosier! A deep-rooted conviction of the truth and vital importance of the religious opinions which he defends, supplies to the persecutor the only apology of which his foolish and atrocious barbarity admits; and to men naturally mild and candid, we feel a consolation in allowing it in all its force;—but by no particle of such indulgence should Bonner or Gardiner be permitted to benefit. It would be credulity, not candor, to yield to either of these bad men the character of sincere, though over zealous, religionists. True it is that they had subjected themselves to the loss of their bishoprics, and to a severe imprisonment, by a refusal to give in their renunciation of certain doctrines of the Romish church; but they had previously gone much further in compliance than conscience would allow to any real catholic; and they appear to have stopped short in this career only because they perceived in the council such a determination to strip them, under one pretext or another, of all their preferments, as manifestly rendered further compliance useless. Both of them had policy enough to restrain them, under

such circumstances, from degrading their characters gratuitously, and depriving themselves of the merit of having suffered for a faith which might soon become again predominant. They received their due reward in the favor of Mary, who recognised them with joy as the fit instruments of all her bloody and tyrannical designs, to which Gardiner supplied the crafty and contriving head, Bonner the vigorous and unsparing arm.

The proud wife of the protector Somerset,—who had been imprisoned, but never brought to trial, as an accomplice in her husband's plots,—was now dismissed to a safe insignificance. The marchioness of Exeter, against whom, in Henry's reign, an attainder had passed too iniquitous for even him to carry into effect, was also rescued from her long captivity, and indemnified for the loss of her property by some valuable grants from the new confiscations of the Dudleys and their adherents.

The only state prisoner to whom the door was not opened on this occasion was Geoffrey Pole, that base betrayer of his brother and his friends by whose evidence lord Montacute and the marquis of Exeter had been brought to an untimely end. It is some satisfaction to know, that the commutation of death for perpetual imprisonment was all the favor which this wretch obtained from Henry; that neither Edward nor Mary broke his bonds; and that, as far as appears, his punishment ended only with his miserable existence.

Not long, however, were these dismal abodes suffered to remain unpeopled. The failure of the criminal enterprise of

Northumberland first filled the Tower with the associates, or victims, of his guilt. Nearly the whole of the Dudley family were its tenants for a longer or shorter time; and it was another remarkable coincidence of their destinies, which Elizabeth in the after days of her power and glory might have pleasure in recalling to her favorite Leicester, that during the whole of her captivity in this fortress he also was included in the number of its melancholy inmates.

The places of Tonsal, Gardiner, and Bonner, were soon after supplied by the more zealous of Edward's bishops, Holgate, Coverdale, Ridley, and Hooper; and it was not long before the vehement Latimer and even the cautious Cranmer were added to their suffering brethren.

The queen made no difficulty of pardoning and receiving into favor those noblemen and others, members of the privy-council, whom a base dread of the resentment of Northumberland had driven into compliance with his measures in favor of Jane Grey; wisely considering, perhaps, that the men who had submitted to be the instruments of his violent and illegal proceedings, would feel little hesitation in lending their concurrence to hers also. On this principle, the marquis of Winchester and the earls of Arundel and Pembroke were employed and distinguished; the last of these experienced courtiers making expiation for his past errors, by causing his son, lord Herbert, to divorce the lady Catherine Grey, to whom it had so lately suited his political views to unite him.

Sir James Hales on the contrary, that conscientious and upright judge, who alone, of all the privy-counsellors and crown-lawyers, had persisted in refusing his signature to the act by which Mary was disinherited of the crown, found himself unrewarded and even discountenanced. The queen well knew, what probably the judge was not inclined to deny, that it was attachment, not to her person, but to the constitution of his country, which had prompted his resistance to that violation of the legal order of succession; and had it even been otherwise, she would have regarded all her obligations to him as effectually cancelled by his zealous adherence to the church establishment of the preceding reign. For daring to urge upon the grand juries whom he addressed in his circuit, the execution of some of Edward's laws in matter of religion, yet unrepealed, judge Hales was soon after thrown into prison. He endured with constancy the sufferings of a long and rigorous confinement, aggravated by the threats and ill-treatment of a cruel jailor. At length some persons in authority were sent to propound to him terms of release. It is suspected that they extorted from him some concessions on the point of religion; for immediately after their departure, retiring to his cell, in a fit of despair he stabbed himself with his knife in different parts of the body, and was only withheld by the sudden entrance of his servant from inflicting a mortal wound. Bishop Gardiner had the barbarity to insult over the agony or distraction of a noble spirit overthrown by persecution; he even converted his solitary act into a general reflection against protestantism,

which he called "the doctrine of desperation." Some time after, Hales obtained his enlargement on payment of an arbitrary fine of six thousand pounds. But he did not with his liberty recover his peace of mind; and after struggling for a few months with an unconquerable melancholy, he sought and found its final cure in the waters of a pond in his garden.

No blood except of principals, was shed by Mary on account of the proclamation of Jane Grey; but she visited with lower degrees of punishment, secretly proportioned to the zeal which they had displayed in the reformation of religion, several of the more eminent partisans of this "meek usurper." The three tutors of king Edward, sir Anthony Cook, sir John Cheke and Dr. Cox, were sufficiently implicated in this affair to warrant their imprisonment for some time on suspicion; and all were eager, on their release, to shelter themselves from the approaching storm by flight.

Cheke, after confiscation of his estate, obtained permission to travel for a given time on the continent. Strasburgh was selected by Cook for his place of exile. The wise moderation of character by which this excellent person was distinguished, seems to have preserved him from taking any part in the angry contentions of protestant with protestant, exile with exile, by which the refugees of Strasburgh and Frankfort scandalized their brethren and afforded matter of triumph to the church of Rome. On the accession of Elizabeth he returned with alacrity to re-occupy and embellish the modest mansion of his forefathers, and "through

the loopholes of retreat" to view with honest exultation the high career of public fortune run by his two illustrious sons-in-law, Nicholas Bacon and William Cecil.

The enlightened views of society taken by sir Anthony led him to extend to his daughters the noblest privileges of the other sex, those which concern the early and systematic acquisition of solid knowledge. Through his admirable instructions their minds were stored with learning, strengthened with principles, and formed to habits of reasoning and observation, which rendered them the worthy partners of great statesmen, who knew and felt their value. The fame, too, of these distinguished females has reflected back additional lustre on the character of a father, who was wont to say to them in the noble confidence of unblemished integrity, "My life is your portion, my example your inheritance."

Dr. Cox was quite another manner of man. Repairing first to Strasburgh, where the English exiles had formed themselves into a congregation using the liturgy of the church of England, he went thence to Frankfort, another city of refuge to his countrymen at this period; where the intolerance of his zeal against such as more inclined to the form of worship instituted by the Genevan reformer, embarked him in a violent quarrel with John Knox, against whom, on pretext of his having libelled the emperor, he found means to kindle the resentment of the magistrates, who compelled him to quit the city. After this disgraceful victory over a brother reformer smarting under the same scourge of persecution with himself, he returned

to Strasburgh, where he more laudably employed himself in establishing a kind of English university.

His zeal for the church of England, his sufferings in the cause, and his services to learning, obtained for him from Elizabeth the bishopric of Ely; but neither party enjoyed from this appointment all the satisfaction which might have been anticipated. The courage, perhaps the self opinion, of Dr. Cox, engaged him on several occasions in opposition to the measures of the queen; and his narrow and persecuting spirit involved him in perpetual disputes and animosities, which rendered the close of a long life turbulent and unhappy, and took from his learning and gray hairs their due reverence. The rapacity of the courtiers, who obtained grant after grant of the lands belonging to his bishopric, was another fruitful source to him of vexation; and he had actually tendered the resignation of his see on very humiliating terms, when death came to his relief in the year 1581, the eighty-second of his age.

If in this and a few other instances, the polemical zeal natural to men who had sacrificed their worldly all for the sake of religion, was observed to degenerate among the refugees into personal quarrels disgraceful to themselves and injurious to their noble cause, it ought on the other hand to be observed, that some of the firmest and most affectionate friendships of the age were formed amongst these companions in adversity; and that by many who attained under Elizabeth the highest preferments and distinctions, the title of fellow-exile never ceased to be regarded

as the most sacred and endearing bond of brotherhood.

Other opportunities will arise of commemorating some of the more eminent of the clergy who renounced their country during the persecutions of Mary; but respecting the laity, it may here be remarked, that with the exception of Catherine duchess-dowager of Suffolk, not a single person of quality was found in this list of conscientious sufferers; though one peer, probably the earl of Bedford, underwent imprisonment on a religious account at home. Of the higher gentry, however, there were considerable numbers who either went and established themselves in the protestant cities of Germany, or passed away the time in travelling.

Sir Francis Knowles, whose lady was niece to Anne Boleyn, took the former part, residing with his eldest son at Frankfort; Walsingham adopted the latter. With the views of a future minister of state, he visited in succession the principal courts of Europe, where he employed his diligence and sagacity in laying the foundations of that intimate knowledge of their policy and resources by which he afterwards rendered his services so important to his queen and country.

CHAPTER VII

1554 AND 1555

Arrival of Wyatt and his associates at the Tower.—Savage treatment of them.—Further instances of Mary's severity.—Duke of Suffolk beheaded.—Death of lady Jane Grey—of Wyatt, who clears Elizabeth of all share in his designs.—Trial of Throgmorton.—Bill for the exclusion of Elizabeth thrown out.—Parliament protects her rights—is dissolved.—Rigorous confinement of Elizabeth in the Tower.—She is removed under guard of Beddingfield—carried to Richmond—offered liberty with the hand of the duke of Savoy—refuses—is carried to Ricot, thence prisoner to Woodstock.—Anecdotes of her behaviour.—Cruelty of Gardiner towards her attendants.—Verses by Harrington.—Marriage of the queen.—Alarms of the protestants.—Arrival of cardinal Pole.—Popery restored.—Persecution begun.—King Philip procures the liberation of state prisoners.—Earl of Devon travels into Italy—dies.—Obligation of Elizabeth to Philip discussed.—She is invited to court—keeps her Christmas there—returns to Woodstock—is brought again to court by Philip's intercession.—Gardiner urges her to make submissions, but in vain.—She is brought to the queen—permitted to reside without guards at one of the royal seats—finally settled at

Hatfield.—Character of sir Thomas Pope.—Notice of the Harringtons.—Philip quits England.—Death of Gardiner.

It is now proper to return to circumstances more closely connected with the situation of Elizabeth at this eventful period of her life.

Two or three weeks before her arrival in the Tower, Wyatt with some of his principal adherents had been carried thither. Towards these unhappy persons, none of those decencies of behaviour were observed which the sex and rank of Elizabeth had commanded from the ministers of her sister's severity; and Holinshed's circumstantial narrative of the circumstances attending their committal, may be cited as an instructive example of the fierce and brutal manners of the age.

"Sir Philip Denny received them at the bulwark, and as Wyatt passed by, he said, 'Go, traitor, there was never such a traitor in England.' To whom sir Thomas Wyatt turned and said, 'I am no traitor; I would thou shouldest well know that thou art more traitor than I; it is not the point of an honest man to call me so.' And so went forth. When he came to the Tower gate, sir Thomas Bridges lieutenant took in through the wicket first Mantell, and said; 'Ah thou traitor! what hast thou and thy company wrought?' But he, holding down his head, said nothing. Then came Thomas Knevet, whom master Chamberlain, gentleman-porter of the Tower, took in. Then came Alexander Bret, (captain of the white coats,) whom sir Thomas Pope took by the bosom, saying, 'O traitor! how couldst thou find in thy heart to work such a villainy

as to take wages, and being trusted over a band of men, to fall to her enemies, returning against her in battle?' Bret answered, 'Yea, I have offended in that case.' Then came Thomas Cobham, whom sir Thomas Poins took in, and said; 'Alas, master Cobham, what wind headed you to work such treason?' And he answered, 'O sir! I was seduced.' Then came sir Thomas Wyat, whom sir Thomas Bridges took by the collar, and said; 'O thou villain! how couldst thou find in thy heart to work such detestable treason to the queen's majesty, who gave thee thy life and living once already, although thou didst before this time bear arms in the field against her?²²... If it were not (saith he) but that the law must pass upon thee, I would stick thee through with my dagger.' To the which Wyat, holding his arms under his sides and looking grievously with a grim look upon the lieutenant, said, 'It is no mastery now;' and so passed on."

Other circumstances attending the suppression of this rebellion mark with equal force the stern and vindictive spirit of Mary's government, and the remaining barbarity of English customs. The inhabitants of London being for the most part protestants and well affected, as the defection of their trained bands had proved, to the cause of Wyat, it was thought expedient to admonish them of the fruits of rebellion by the gibbeting of about sixty of his followers in the most public parts of the city.

²² It is plain that Wyat is here accused of having taken arms for Jane Grey; but most wrongfully, if Carte's account of him is to be credited, which there seems no reason to disbelieve.

Neither were the bodies suffered to be removed till the public entry of king Philip after the royal nuptials; on which festal occasion the streets were cleared of these noisome objects which had disgraced them for nearly half a year.

Some hundreds of the meaner rebels, to whom the queen was pleased to extend her mercy, were ordered to appear before her bound two-and-two together, with halters about their necks; and kneeling before her in this guise, they received her *gracious* pardon of all offences; but no general amnesty was ever granted.

That the rash attempt of the duke of Suffolk should have been visited upon himself by capital punishment, is neither to be wondered at nor censured; but it was a foul act of cruelty to make this the pretext for taking away the lives of a youthful pair entirely innocent of this last design, and forgiven, as it was fondly hoped, for the almost involuntary part which they had taken in a former and more criminal enterprise. But religious bigotry and political jealousy, each perhaps sufficient for the effect, combined in this instance to urge on the relentless temper of Mary; and the lady Jane Grey and Guildford Dudley her husband were ordered to prepare for the execution of the sentence which had remained suspended over them.

Every thinking mind must have been shocked at the vengeance taken on Guildford Dudley,—a youth too insignificant, it might be thought, to call forth the animadversion of the most apprehensive government, and guilty of nothing but having accepted, in obedience to his father's pleasure, the hand of

Jane Grey. But the fate of this distinguished lady herself was calculated to awaken stronger feelings. The fortitude, the piety, the genuine humility and contrition evinced by her in the last scene of an unsullied life, furnished the best evidence of her guiltlessness even of a wish to resume the sceptre which paternal authority had once forced on her reluctant grasp; and few could witness the piteous spectacle of her violent and untimely end, without a thrill of indignant horror, and secret imprecations against the barbarity of her unnatural kinswoman.

The earl of Devonshire was still detained in the Tower on Wyatt's information, as was pretended, and on other indications of guilt, all of which were proved in the end equally fallacious: and at the time of Elizabeth's removal hither this state-prison was thronged with captives of minor importance implicated in the designs of Wyatt. These were assiduously plied on one hand with offers of liberty and reward, and subjected on the other to the most rigorous treatment, the closest interrogatories, and one of them even to the rack, in the hope of eliciting from them some evidence which might reconcile to Mary's conscience, or color to the nation, the death or perpetual imprisonment of a sister whom she feared and hated.

To have brought her to criminate herself would have been better still; and no pains were spared for this purpose. A few days after her committal, Gardiner and other privy-councillors came to examine her respecting the conversation which she had held with sir James Croft touching her removal to Donnington

Castle. She said, after some recollection, that she had indeed such a place, but that she never occupied it in her life, and she did not remember that any one had moved her so to do. Then, "to enforce the matter," they brought forth sir James Croft, and Gardiner demanded what she had to say to that man? She answered that she had little to say to him or to the rest that were in the Tower. "But, my lords," said she, "you do examine every mean prisoner of me, wherein methinks you do me great injury. If they have done evil and offended the queen's majesty, let them answer to it accordingly. I beseech you, my lords, join not me in this sort with any of these offenders. And concerning my going to Donnington Castle, I do remember that master Hobby and mine officers and you sir James Croft had such talk;—but what is that to the purpose, my lords, but that I may go to mine own houses at all times?" The earl of Arundel kneeling down said, "Your grace sayeth true, and certainly we are very sorry that we have troubled you about so vain matter." She then said, "My lords, you do sift me very narrowly; but I am well assured you shall not do more to me than God hath appointed, and so God forgive you all."

Before their departure sir James Croft kneeled down before her, declaring that he was sorry to see the day in which he should be brought as a witness against her grace. But he added, that he had been "marvellously tossed and examined touching her grace;" and ended by protesting his innocence of the crime laid to his charge²³.

²³ Fox's narrative in Holinshed.

Wyat was at length, on April 11th, brought to his death; when he confounded all the hopes and expectations of Elizabeth's enemies, by strenuously and publicly asserting her entire innocence of any participation in his designs.

Sir Nicholas Throgmorton was brought to the bar immediately afterwards. His trial at length, as it has come down to us in Holinshed's Chronicle, is one of the most interesting documents of that nature extant. He was esteemed "a deep conspirator, whose post was thought to be at London as a factor, to give intelligence as well to them in the West, as to Wyatt and the rest in Kent. It was believed that he gave notice to Wyatt to come forward with his power, and that the Londoners would be ready to take his part. And that he sent a post to sir Peter Carew also, to advance with as much speed as might be, and to bring his forces with him.

"He was said moreover to be the man that excited the earl of Devon to go down into the West, and that sir James Croft and he had many times consulted about the whole matter²⁴."

To these political offences, sir Nicholas added religious principles still more heinous in the eyes of Mary. He, with two other gentlemen of his family, had been of the number of those who attended to the stake that noble martyr Anne Askew, burned for heresy in the latter end of Henry's reign; when they were bid to take care of their lives, for they were all marked men. Since the accession of Mary also he had "bemoaned to his friend sir

²⁴ Strype's Ecclesiastical Memorials.

Edward Warner, late lieutenant of the Tower, his own estate and the tyranny of the times, extending upon divers honest persons for religion, and wished it were lawful for all of each religion to live safely according to their conscience. For the law *ex-officio* he said would be intolerable, and the clergy discipline now might rather be resembled to the Turkish tyranny than the teaching of the Christian religion. Which words he was not afraid at his trial openly to acknowledge that he had said to the said Warner²⁵."

The prosecution was conducted with all the iniquity which the corrupt practice of that age admitted. Not only was the prisoner debarred the assistance of counsel on his trial, he was even refused the privilege of calling a single witness in his favor. He defended himself however under all these disadvantages, with surprising skill, boldness and presence of mind; and he retorted with becoming spirit the brutal taunts of the crown lawyers and judges, who disgraced themselves on the occasion by all the excesses of an unprincipled servility. Fortunately for Throgmorton, the additional clauses to the treason laws added under Henry VIII. had been abolished under his successor and were not yet re-enacted. Only the clear and equitable statute of Edward III. remained therefore in force; and the lawyers were reduced to endeavour at such an explanation of it as should comprehend a kind of constructive treason. "If," said they, "it be proved that the prisoner was connected with Wyatt, and of his counsel, the overt acts of Wyatt are to be taken as his, and

²⁵ Strype's Ecclesiastical Memorials.

visited accordingly." But besides that no participation with Wyatt after he had taken up arms, was proved upon Throgmorton, the jury were moved by his solemn protest against so unwarrantable a principle as that the overt acts of one man might be charged as overt acts upon another. They acquitted him therefore with little hesitation, to the inexpressible disappointment and indignation of the queen and her ministers, who then possessed the power of making their displeasure on such an occasion deeply felt. The jury were immediately committed to custody, and eight of them, who refused to confess themselves in fault, were further imprisoned for several months and heavily fined.

The acquitted person himself, in defiance of all law and justice, was remanded to the Tower, and did not regain his liberty till the commencement of the following year, when the intercession of king Philip obtained the liberation of almost all the prisoners there detained.

Throgmorton, like all the others called in question for the late insurrections, was closely questioned respecting Elizabeth and the earl of Devon; "and very fain," we are told, "the privy-councillors employed in this work would have got out of him something against them. For when at Throgmorton's trial, his writing containing his confession was read in open court, he prayed the queen's serjeant that was reading it to read further, 'that hereafter,' said he, 'whatsoever become of me, my words may not be perverted and abused to the hurt of some others, and especially against the great personages of whom I have

been sundry times, as appears by my answers, examined. For I perceive the net was not cast only for little fishes but for great ones²⁶."

This generous concern for the safety of Elizabeth in the midst of his own perils appears not to have been lost upon her; and under the ensuing reign we shall have the satisfaction of seeing the abilities of sir Nicholas displayed in other scenes and under happier auspices.

All manifestations of popular favor towards those whom the court had proscribed and sought to ruin, were at this juncture visited with the extreme of arbitrary severity. Two merchants of London, for words injurious to the queen, but principally for having affirmed that Wyatt at his death had cleared the lady Elizabeth and the earl of Devonshire, were set in the pillory, to which their ears were fastened with large nails.

It was in fact an object of great importance to the catholic party to keep up the opinion, so industriously inculcated, of the princess being implicated in the late disturbances; since it was only on this false pretext that she could be detained close prisoner in the Tower while a fatal stroke was aimed against her rights and interests.

Gardiner, now chancellor and prime minister, the most inveterate of Elizabeth's enemies and the most devoted partisan of the Spanish interest, thinking that all was subdued to the wishes of the court, brought before the new parliament a bill for

²⁶ Strype's Memorials.

declaring the princess illegitimate and incapable of succeeding:—it was indignantly rejected, however, by a great majority; but the failure only admonished him to renew the attack in a more indirect and covert manner. Accordingly, the articles of the marriage treaty between Mary and the prince of Spain, artfully drawn with great seeming advantage to England, had no sooner received the assent of the two houses, than he proposed a law for conferring upon the queen the same power enjoyed by her father; that of naming a successor. But neither could this be obtained from a house of commons attached for the most part to the protestant cause and the person of the rightful heir, and justly apprehensive of the extinction of their few remaining privileges under the yoke of a detested foreign tyrant. Nobody doubted that it was the purpose of the queen, in default of immediate issue of her own, to bequeath the crown to her husband, whose descent from a daughter of John of Gaunt had been already much insisted on by his adherents. The bill was therefore thrown out; and the alarm excited by its introduction had caused the house to pass several spirited resolutions, one of which declared that her majesty should reign as a sole queen without any participation of her authority, while the rest guarded in various points against the anticipated encroachments of Philip, when Mary thought good to put a stop to the further discussion of the subject by a prorogation of parliament.

After these manifold disappointments, the court party was compelled to give up, with whatever reluctance, its deep-

laid plots against the unoffending princess. Her own prudence had protected her life; and the independent spirit of a house of commons conscious of speaking the sense of the nation guarantied her succession. One only resource remained to Gardiner and his faction:—they judged that a long-continued absence, while it gradually loosened her hold upon the affections of the people, would afford many facilities for injuring or supplanting her; and it was determined soon to provide for her a kind of honorable banishment.

The confinement of the princess in the Tower had purposely been rendered as irksome and comfortless as possible. It was not till after a month's close imprisonment, by which her health had suffered severely, that she obtained, after many difficulties, permission to walk in the royal apartments; and this under the constant inspection of the constable of the Tower and the lord-chamberlain, with the attendance of three of the queen's women; the windows also being shut, and she not permitted to look out at them. Afterwards she had liberty to walk in a small garden, the gates and doors being carefully closed; and the prisoners whose rooms looked into it being at such times closely watched by their keepers, to prevent the interchange of any word or sign with the princess. Even a child of five years old belonging to some inferior officer in the Tower, who was wont to cheer her by his daily visits, and to bring her flowers, was suspected of being employed as a messenger between her and the earl of Devonshire; and notwithstanding the innocent simplicity of

his answers to the lord-chamberlain by whom he was strictly examined, was ordered to visit her no more. The next day the child peeped in through a hole of the door as she walked in the garden, crying out, "Mistress, I can bring you no more flowers!" for which, it seems, his father was severely chidden and ordered to keep his boy out of the way.

From the beginning of her imprisonment orders had been given that the princess should have mass regularly said in her apartment. It is probable that Elizabeth did not feel any great repugnance to this rite:—however this might be, she at least expressed none; and by this compliance deprived her sister of all pretext for persecuting her on a religious ground. But some of her household were found less submissive on this head, and she had the mortification of seeing Mrs. Sands, one of her ladies, carried forcibly away from her under an accusation of heresy and her place supplied by another.

All these severities failed however of their intended effect: neither sufferings nor menaces could bring the princess to acknowledge herself guilty of offending even in thought against her sovereign and sister; and as the dying asseverations of Wyatt had fully acquitted her in the eyes of the country, it became evident that her detention in the Tower could not much longer be persisted in. Yet the habitual jealousy of Mary's government, and the apparent danger of furnishing a head to the protestants rendered desperate by her cruelties, forbade the entire liberation of the princess; and it was resolved to adopt as a middle course

the expedient sanctioned by many examples in that age, of committing her to the care of certain persons who should be answerable for her safe keeping, either in their own houses, or at some one of the royal seats. Lord Williams of Thame, and sir Henry Beddingfield captain of the guard, were accordingly joined in commission for the execution of this delicate and important trust.

The unfortunate prisoner conceived neither hope nor comfort from this approaching change in her situation, nor probably was it designed that she should; for intimidation seems still to have formed an essential feature in the policy of her relentless enemies. Sir Henry Beddingfield entered the Tower at the head of a hundred of his men; and Elizabeth, struck with the unexpected sight, could not forbear inquiring with dismay, whether the lady Jane's scaffold were removed? On being informed that it was, she received some comfort, but this was not of long duration; for soon a frightful rumor reached her, that she was to be carried away by this captain and his soldiers no one knew whither. She sent immediately for lord Chandos, constable of the Tower, whose humanity and courtesy had led him to soften as much as possible the hardships of her situation, though at the hazard of incurring the indignation of the court; and closely questioning him, he at length plainly told her that there was no help for it, orders were given, and she must be consigned to Beddingfield's care to be carried, as he believed, to Woodstock. Anxious and alarmed, she now asked of her attendants what kind

of man this Beddingfield was; and whether, if the murdering of her were secretly committed to him, his conscience would allow him to see it executed? None about her could give a satisfactory answer, for he was a stranger to them all; but they bade her trust in God that such wickedness should not be perpetrated against her.

At length, on May 19th, after a close imprisonment of three months, she was brought out of the Tower under the conduct of Beddingfield and his troop; and on the evening of the same day found herself at Richmond Palace, where her sister then kept her court. She was still treated in all respects like a captive: the manners of Beddingfield were harsh and insolent; and such terror did she conceive from the appearances around her, that sending for her gentleman-usher, she desired him and the rest of her officers to pray for her; "For this night," said she, "I think to die." The gentleman, much affected by her distress, encouraged her as well as he was able: then going down to lord Williams, who was walking with Beddingfield, he called him aside and implored him to tell him sincerely, whether any mischief were designed against his mistress that night or no; "that he and his men might take such part as God should please to appoint." "For certainly," added this faithful servant, "we will rather die than she should secretly and innocently miscarry." "Marry, God forbid," answered Williams, "that any such wicked purpose should be wrought; and rather than it should be so, I with my men are ready to die at her feet also."

In the midst of her gloomy apprehensions, the princess was surprised by an offer from the highest quarter, of immediate liberty on condition of her accepting the hand of the duke of Savoy in marriage.

Oppressed, persecuted, and a prisoner, sequestered from every friend and counsellor, guarded day and night by soldiers, and in hourly dread of some attempt upon her life, it must have been confidently expected that the young princess would embrace as a most joyful and fortunate deliverance this unhopèd-for proposal; and by few women, certainly, under all the circumstances, would such expectations have been frustrated. But the firm mind of Elizabeth was not thus to be shaken, nor her penetration deceived. She saw that it was banishment which was held out to her in the guise of marriage; she knew that it was her reversion of an independent English crown which she was required to barter for the matrimonial coronet of a foreign dukedom; and she felt the proposal as what in truth it was;—an injury in disguise. Fortunately for herself and her country, she had the magnanimity to disdain the purchase of present ease and safety at a price so disproportionate; and returning to the overture a modest but decided negative, she prepared herself to endure with patience and resolution the worst that her enraged and baffled enemies might dare against her.

No sooner was her refusal of the offered marriage made known, than orders were given for her immediate removal into Oxfordshire. On crossing the river at Richmond on this

melancholy journey, she descried on the other side "certain of her poor servants," who had been restrained from giving their attendance during her imprisonment, and were anxiously desirous of seeing her again. "Go to them," said she to one of her men, "and say these words from me, *Tanquam ovis*" (Like a sheep to the slaughter).

As she travelled on horseback the journey occupied four days, and the slowness of her progress gave opportunity for some striking displays of popular feeling. In one place, numbers of people were seen standing by the way-side who presented to her various little gifts; for which Beddingfield did not scruple, in his anger, to call them traitors and rebels. The bells were every where rung as she passed through the villages, in token of joy for her liberation; but the people were soon admonished that she was still a prisoner and in disgrace, by the orders of Beddingfield to set the ringers in the stocks.

On the third evening she arrived at Ricot, the house of lord Williams, where its owner, gracefully sinking the character of a watchful superintendant in that of a host who felt himself honored by her visit, introduced her to a large circle of nobility and gentry whom he had invited to bid her welcome. The severe or suspicious temper of Beddingfield took violent umbrage at the sight of such an assemblage: he caused his soldiers to keep strict watch; insisted that none of the guests should be permitted to pass the night in the house; and asked lord Williams if he were aware of the consequences of thus entertaining the

queen's prisoner? But he made answer, that he well knew what he did, and that "her grace might and should in his house be merry." Intelligence however had no sooner reached the court of the reception afforded to the princess at Ricot, than directions arrived for her immediate removal to Woodstock. Here, under the harsher inspection of Beddingfield, she found herself once more a prisoner. No visitant was permitted to approach; the doors were closed upon her as in the Tower; and a military guard again kept watch around the walls both day and night.

We possess many particulars relative to the captivity of Elizabeth at Woodstock. In some of them we may recognise that spirit of exaggeration which the anxious sympathy excited by her sufferings at the time, and the unbounded adulation paid to her afterwards, were certain to produce; others bear all the characters of truth and nature.

It is certain that her present residence, though less painful and especially less opprobrious than imprisonment in the Tower, was yet a state of rigorous constraint and jealous inspection, in which she was haunted with cares and fears which robbed her youth of its bloom and vivacity, and her constitution of its vigor. On June 8th such was the state of her health that two physicians were sent from the court who remained for several days in attendance on her. On their return, they performed for their patient the friendly office of making a favorable report of her behaviour and of the dutiful humility of her sentiments towards her majesty, which was received, we are told, with

more complacency by Mary than by her bishops. Soon after, she was advised by some friend to make her peace with the queen by submissions and acknowledgements, which, with her usual constancy, she absolutely refused, though apparently the only terms on which she could hope for liberty.

Under such circumstances we may give easy belief to the touching anecdote, that "she, hearing upon a time out of her garden at Woodstock, a milkmaid singing pleasantly, wished herself a milkmaid too; saying that her case was better, and her life merrier than hers."

The instances related of the severity and insolence of sir Henry Beddingfield are to be received with more distrust. We are told, that observing a chair of state prepared for the princess in an upper chamber at lord Williams's house, he seized upon it for himself and insolently ordered his boots to be pulled off in that apartment. Yet we learn from the same authority that afterwards at Woodstock, when she seems to have been in his sole custody, Elizabeth having called him her jailor, on observing him lock the gate of the garden while she was walking in it, he fell on his knees and entreated her grace not to give him that name, for he was appointed to be one of her officers. It has also been asserted, that on her accession to the throne she dismissed him from her presence with the speech, that she prayed God to forgive him, as she did, and that when she had a prisoner whom she would have straitly kept and hardly used, she would send for him. But if she ever used to him words like these, it must have been in jest;

for it is known from the best authority, that Beddingfield was frequently at the court of Elizabeth, and that she once visited him on a progress. If there is any truth in the stories told of persons of suspicious appearance lurking about the walls of the palace, who sought to gain admittance for the purpose of taking away her life, the exact vigilance of her keeper, by which all access was barred, might more deserve her thanks than her reproaches.

During the period that the princess was thus industriously secluded from conversation with any but the few attendants who had been allowed to remain about her person, her correspondence was not less watchfully restricted. We are told, that when, after urgent application to the council, she had at length been permitted to write to the queen, Beddingfield looked over her as she wrote, took the paper into his own keeping when she paused, and brought it back to her when she chose to resume her task.

Yet could not his utmost precaution entirely cut off her communications with the large and zealous party who rested upon her all their hopes of better times for themselves or for the country. Through the medium of a visitor to one of her ladies, she received the satisfactory assurance that none of the prisoners for Wyatt's business had been brought to utter any thing by which she could be endangered. Perhaps it was with immediate reference to this intelligence that she wrote with a diamond on her window the homely but expressive distich,

"Much suspected by me
Nothing proved can be,
Quoth Elizabeth prisoner."

But these secret intelligencers were not always fortunate enough to escape detection, of which the consequences were rendered very grievous through the arbitrary severity of Mary's government, and the peculiar malice exercised by Gardiner against the adherents of the princess.

Sir John Harrington, son to the gentleman of the same name formerly mentioned as a follower of admiral Seymour, thus, in his *Brief View of the Church*, sums up the character of this celebrated bishop of Winchester, with reference to this part of his conduct.

"Lastly, the plots he laid to entrap the lady Elizabeth, and his terrible hard usage of all her followers, I cannot yet scarce think of with charity, nor write of with patience. My father, for only carrying a letter to the lady Elizabeth, and professing to wish her well, he kept in the Tower twelve months, and made him spend a thousand pounds ere he could be free of that trouble. My mother, that then served the lady Elizabeth, he caused to be sequestered from her as an heretic, insomuch that her own father durst not take her into his house, but she was glad to sojourn with one Mr. Topcliff; so as I may say in some sort, this bishop persecuted me before I was born."

In the twelfth month of his imprisonment, this unfortunate

Harrington, having previously sent to the bishop many letters and petitions for liberty without effect, had the courage to address to him a "Sonnet," which his son has cited as "no ill verse for those unrefined times;" a modest commendation of lines so spirited, which the taste of the more modern reader, however fastidious, need not hesitate to confirm.

To Bishop Gardiner.

1

"At least withdraw your cruelty,
Or force the time to work your will;
It is too much extremity
To keep me pent in prison still,
Free from all fault, void of all cause,
Without all right, against all laws.
How can you do more cruel spite
Than proffer wrong and promise right?
Nor can accuse, nor will acquight.

2

Eleven months past and longer space
I have abode your dev'lish drifts,

While you have sought both man and place,
And set your snares, with all your shifts,
The faultless foot to wrap in wile
With any guilt, by any guile:
And now you see that will not be,
How can you thus for shame agree
To keep him bound you should set free?

3

Your chance was once as mine is now,
To keep this hold against your will,
And then you sware you well know how,
Though now you swerve, I know how ill.
But thus this world his course doth pass,
The priest forgets a clerk he was,
And you that have cried justice still,
And now have justice at your will,
Wrest justice wrong against all skill.

4

But why do I thus coldly plain
As if it were my cause alone?

When cause doth each man so constrain
As England through hath cause to moan,
To see your bloody search of such
As all the earth can no way touch.
And better were that all your kind
Like hounds in hell with shame were shrined,
Than you add might unto your mind.

5

But as the stone that strikes the wall
Sometimes bounds back on th' hurler's head,
So your foul fetch, to your foul fall
May turn, and 'noy the breast that bred.
And then, such measure as you gave
Of right and justice look to have,
If good or ill, if short or long;
If false or true, if right or wrong;
And thus, till then, I end my song."

Such were the trials and sufferings which exercised the fortitude of Elizabeth and her faithful followers during her deplorable abode at Woodstock. Mary, meanwhile, was rapt in fond anticipations of the felicity of her married life with a prince for whom, on the sight of his picture, she is said to have conceived the most violent passion. The more strongly her people

expressed their aversion and dread of the Spanish match, the more vehemently did she show herself bent on its conclusion; and having succeeded in suppressing by force the formidable rebellion to which the first report of such an union had given birth, she judged it unnecessary to employ any of those arts of popularity to which her disposition was naturally adverse, for conciliating to herself or her destined spouse the good will of her subjects. After many delays which severely tried her temper, the arrival of the prince of Spain at Southampton was announced to the expecting queen, who went as far as Winchester to meet him, in which city Gardiner blessed their nuptials on July the 27th, 1554.

The royal pair passed in state through London a few days after, and the city exhibited by command the outward tokens of rejoicing customary in that age. Bonfires were kindled in the open places, tables spread in the streets at which all passers-by might freely regale themselves with liquor: every parish sent forth its procession singing *Te Deum*; the fine cross in Cheapside was beautified and newly gilt, and pageants were set up in the principal streets. But there was little gladness of heart among the people; and one of these festal devices gave occasion to a manifestation of the dispositions of the court respecting religion, which filled the citizens with grief and horror. A large picture had been hung over the conduit in Gracechurch street representing the nine Worthies, and among them king Henry VIII. made his appearance, according to former draughts of him, holding in

his hand a book on which was inscribed "*Verbum Dei*." This accompaniment gave so much offence, that Gardiner sent for the painter; and after chiding him severely, ordered that a pair of gloves should be substituted for the bible.

Religion had already been restored to the state in which it remained at the death of Henry; but this was by no means sufficient to satisfy the conscience of the queen, which required the entire restoration in all its parts, of the ancient church-establishment. It had been, in fact, one of the first acts of her reign to forward to Rome a respectful embassy which conveyed to the sovereign pontiff her recognition of the supremacy of the holy see, and a petition that he would be pleased to invest with the character of his legate for England Cardinal Pole,—that earnest champion of her own legitimacy and the church's unity, who had been for so many years the object of her father's bitterest animosity.

Mary's precipitate zeal had received some check in this instance from the worldly policy of the emperor Charles V., who, either entertaining some jealousy of the influence of Pole with the queen, or at least judging it fit to secure the great point of his son's marriage before the patience of the people of England should be proved by the arrival of a papal legate, had impeded the journey of the cardinal by a detention of several weeks in his court at Brussels. But no sooner was Philip in secure possession of his bride, than Pole was suffered to proceed on his mission. The parliament, which met early in November 1554, reversed

the attainder which had laid him under sentence of death, and on the 24th of the same month he was received at court with great solemnity, and with every demonstration of affection on the part of his royal cousin.

From this period the cause of popery proceeded triumphantly: a reign of terror commenced; and the government gained fresh strength and courage by every exertion of the tyrannic power which it had assumed. After the married clergy had been reduced to give up either their wives or their benefices, and the protestant bishops deprived, and many of them imprisoned, without exciting any popular commotion in their behalf, the court became emboldened to propose in parliament a solemn reconciliation of the country to the papal see. A house of commons more obsequious than the former acceded to the motion, and on November 29th the legate formally absolved the nation from all ecclesiastical censures, and readmitted it within the pale of the church.

The ancient statutes against heretics were next revived; and the violent counsels of Gardiner proving more acceptable to the queen than the milder ones of Pole, a furious persecution was immediately set on foot. Bishops Hooper and Rogers were the first victims; Saunders and Taylor, two eminent divines, succeeded; upon all of whom Gardiner pronounced sentence in person; after which he resigned to Bonner, his more brutal but not more merciless colleague, the inglorious task of dragging forth to punishment the heretics of inferior note and humbler

station. In the midst however of his barbarous proceedings, of which London was the principal theatre, the bench of bishops thought proper in solemn assembly to declare that they had no part in such severities; and Philip, who shrank from the odium of the very deeds most grateful to his savage soul, caused a Spanish friar his confessor to preach before him in praise of toleration, and to show that Christians could bring no warrant from Scripture for shedding the blood of their brethren on account of religious differences. But justly apprehensive that so extraordinary a declaration of opinion from such a person might not of itself suffice to establish in the minds of the English that character of lenity and moderation which he found it his interest to acquire, he determined to add some few deeds to words.

About the close of the year 1554, sir Nicholas Throgmorton, Robert Dudley, and all the other prisoners on account of the usurpation of Jane Grey or the insurrection of Wyat, were liberated, at the intercession, as was publicly declared, of king Philip; and he soon after employed his good offices in the cause of two personages still more interesting to the feelings of the nation,—the princess Elizabeth and the earl of Devonshire.

It is worth while to estimate the value of these boasted acts of generosity. With regard to Courtney it may be sufficient to observe, that a close investigation of facts had proved him to have been grateful for the liberation extended to him by Mary on her accession, and averse from all schemes for disturbing her government, and that the queen's marriage had served to banish

from her mind some former grounds of displeasure against him. Nothing but an union with Elizabeth could at this time have rendered him formidable; and it was easy to guard effectually against the accomplishment of any such design, without the odious measure of detaining the earl in perpetual imprisonment at Fotheringay Castle, whither he had been already removed from the Tower. After all, it was but the shadow of liberty which he was permitted to enjoy; and he found himself so beset with spies and suspicion, that a very few months after his release he requested and obtained the royal license to travel. Proceeding into Italy, he shortly after ended at Padua his blameless and unfortunate career. Popular fame attributed his early death to poison administered by the Imperialists, but probably, as in a multitude of similar cases, on no sufficient authority.

As to Elizabeth, certain writers have ascribed Philip's protection of her at this juncture to the following deduction of consequences;—that if she were taken off, and if the queen should die childless, England would become the inheritance of the queen of Scots, now betrothed to the dauphin, and thus go to augment the power of France, already the most formidable rival of the Spanish monarchy. Admitting however that such a calculation of remote contingencies might not be too refined to act upon the politic brain of Philip, it is yet plainly absurd to suppose that the life or death of Elizabeth was at this time at all the matter in question. Secret assassination does not appear to have been so much as dreamed of, and Mary and her

council, even supposing them to have been sufficiently wicked, were certainly not audacious enough to think of bringing to the scaffold, without form of trial, without even a plausible accusation, the immediate heiress of the crown, and the hope and favorite of the nation. The only question must now have been, what degree of liberty it would be advisable to allow her; and a due consideration of the facts, that she had already been removed from the Tower, and that after her second release, (that, namely, from Woodstock), she was never, to the end of the reign, permitted to reside in a house of her own without an inspector of her conduct, will reduce within very moderate limits the vaunted claims of Philip to her lasting gratitude.

The project of marrying the princess to the duke of Savoy had doubtless originated with the Spanish court; and it was still persisted in by Philip, from the double motive of providing for the head of the protestant party in England a kind of honorable exile, and of attaching to himself by the gift of her hand, a young prince whom he favored and destined to high employments in his service. But as severity had already been tried in vain to bring Elizabeth to compliance on this point, it seems now to have been determined to make experiment of opposite measures. The duke of Savoy, who had attended Philip to England, was still in the country; and as he was in the prime of life and a man of merit and talents, it appeared not unreasonable to hope that a personal interview might incline the princess to lend a more propitious ear to his suit. To this consideration then we are probably to ascribe

the invitation which admitted Elizabeth to share in the festivals of a Christmas celebrated by Philip and Mary at Hampton Court with great magnificence, and which must have been that of the year 1554, because this is well known to have been the only one passed by the Spanish prince in England.

A contemporary chronicle still preserved amongst the MSS of the British Museum, furnishes several particulars of her entertainment. On Christmas eve, the great hall of the palace being illuminated with a thousand lamps artificially disposed, the king and queen supped in it; the princess being seated at the same table, next to the cloth of estate. After supper she was served with a perfumed napkin and a plate of "comfects" by lord Paget, but retired to her ladies before the revels, masking, and disguisings began. On St. Stephen's day she heard mattins in the queen's closet adjoining to the chapel, where she was attired in a robe of white satin, strung all over with large pearls; and on December the 29th she sat with their majesties and the nobility at a grand spectacle of justing, when two hundred spears were broken by combatants of whom half were accoutered in the Almaine and half in the Spanish fashion.

How soon the princess again exchanged the splendors of a court for the melancholy monotony of Woodstock does not appear from this document, nor from any other with which I am acquainted; but several circumstances make it clear that we ought to place about this period an incident recorded by Holinshed, and vaguely stated to have occurred soon after "the stir of

Wyat" and the troubles of Elizabeth for that cause. A servant of the princess's had summoned a person before the magistrates for having mentioned his lady by the contumelious appellation of a *jill*, and having made use of other disparaging language respecting her. Was it to be endured, asked the accuser, that a low fellow like this should speak of her grace thus insolently, when the greatest personages in the land treated her with every mark of respect? He added, "I saw yesterday in the court that my lord cardinal Pole, meeting her in the chamber of presence, kneeled down on his knee and kissed her hand; and I saw also, that king Philip meeting her made her such obeisance that his knee touched the ground."

If this story be correct, which is not indeed vouched by the chronicler, but which seems to bear internal evidence of genuineness, it will go far to prove that the situation of Elizabeth during her abode at Woodstock was by no means that opprobrious captivity which it has usually been represented. She visited the court, it appears, occasionally, perhaps frequently; and was greeted in public by the king himself with every demonstration of civility and respect;—demonstrations which, whether accompanied or not by the corresponding sentiments, would surely suffice to protect her from all harsh or insolent treatment on the part of those to whom the immediate superintendence of her actions was committed.

Her enemies however were still numerous and powerful; and it is certain that she found no advocate in the heart of her

sister. That able, but thoroughly profligate politician lord Paget, notwithstanding his serving the princess with "comfects," is reported to have said, that the queen would never have peace in the country till her head were smitten off; and Gardiner never ceased to look upon her with an evil eye. Lord Williams, it seems, had made suit that he might be permitted to take her from Woodstock to his own home, giving large bail for her safe keeping; and as he was a known catholic and much in favor, it was supposed at first that his petition would be heard; but by some secret influence the mind of Mary was indisposed to the granting of this indulgence and the proposal was dropped. But the Spanish counsellors who attended their prince never ceased, we are told, to persuade him "that the like honor he should never obtain as he should in delivering the lady Elizabeth" out of her confinement: and Philip, who was now labouring earnestly at the design, which he had entertained ever since his marriage, of procuring himself to be crowned king of England, was himself aware of the necessity of previously softening the prejudices of the nation by some act of conspicuous popularity: he renewed therefore his solicitations on this point with a zeal which rendered them effectual. The moment indeed was favorable;—Mary, who now believed herself far advanced in pregnancy, was too happy in her hopes to remain inflexible to the entreaties of her husband; and the privy-council, in their sanguine expectations of an heir, viewed the princess as less than formerly an object of political jealousy. And thus,

by a contrariety of cause and effect by no means rare in the complicated system of human affairs, Elizabeth became indebted for present tranquillity and comparative freedom to the concurrence of projects and expectations the most fatal to all her hopes of future greatness.

About the end of April, 1555, the princess took at length her final departure from Woodstock, and proceeded,—but still under the escort of Beddingfield and his men,—to Hampton Court. At Colnbrook she was met by her own gentlemen and yeomen to the number of sixty, "much," says John Fox, "to all their comforts, which had not seen her of long season before, notwithstanding they were immediately commanded in the queen's name to depart the town, and she not suffered once to speak to them."

The next day she reached Hampton Court, and was ushered into the prince's lodgings; but the doors were closed upon her and guarded as at Woodstock, and it was a fortnight, according to the martyrologist, before any one had recourse to her.

At the end of this time she was solaced by a visit from lord William Howard, son of the old duke of Norfolk, and first-cousin to her mother, who "very honorably used her," and through whom she requested to speak to some of the privy-council. Several of its members waited upon her in consequence, and Gardiner among the rest, who "humbled himself before her with all humility," but nevertheless seized the opportunity to urge her once more to make submission to the queen, as a necessary

preliminary to the obtaining of her favor. Elizabeth, with that firmness and wisdom which had never, in her severest trials, forsaken her, declared that rather than do so, she would lie in prison all the days of her life; adding, that she craved no mercy at her majesty's hand, but rather the law, if ever she did offend her in thought, word, or deed. "And besides this," said she, "in yielding I should speak against myself, and confess myself an offender, by occasion of which the king and queen might ever after conceive of me an ill opinion; and it were better for me to lie in prison for the truth, than to be abroad and suspected of my prince." The councillors now departed, promising to deliver her message to the queen. The next day Gardiner waited upon her again and told her that her majesty " marvelled she would so stoutly carry herself, denying to have offended; so that it should seem the queen had wrongfully imprisoned her grace:" and that she must tell another tale ere she had her liberty. The lady Elizabeth declared she would stand to her former resolution, for she would never belie herself. "Then," said the bishop, "your grace hath the 'vantage of me and the other councillors for your long and wrong imprisonment." She took God to witness that she sought no 'vantage against them for their so dealing with her. Gardiner and the rest then kneeled, desiring that all might be forgotten, and so departed; she being locked up again.

About a week after the failure of this last effort of her crafty enemy to extort some concession which might afterwards be employed to criminate her or justify himself, she received a

sudden summons from the queen, and was conducted by torch-light to the royal apartments.

Mary received her in her chamber, to which she had now confined herself in expectation of that joyful event which was destined never to arrive. The princess on entering kneeled down, and protested herself a true and loyal subject, adding, that she did not doubt that her majesty would one day find her to be such, whatever different report had gone of her. The queen expressed at first some dissatisfaction at her still persisting so strongly in her assertions of innocence, thinking that she might take occasion to inveigh against her imprisonment as the act of injustice and oppression which in truth it was; but on her sister's replying in a submissive manner, that it was her business to bear what the queen was pleased to inflict and that she should make no complaints, she appears to have been appeased. Fox's account however is, that they parted with few comfortable words of the queen in English, but what she said in Spanish was not known: that it was thought that king Philip was there behind a cloth, and not seen, and that he showed himself "a very friend" in this business. From other accounts we learn, that Elizabeth scrupled not the attempt to ingratiate herself with Mary at this interview by requesting that her majesty would be pleased to send her some catholic tractates for confirmation of her faith and to counteract the doctrines which she had imbibed from the works of the reformers. Mary showed herself somewhat distrustful of her professions on this point, but dismissed her at length with

tokens of kindness. She put upon her finger, as a pledge of amity, a ring worth seven hundred crowns;—mentioned that sir Thomas Pope was again appointed to reside with her, and observing that he was already well known to her sister commended him as a person whose prudence, humanity, and other estimable qualities, were calculated to render her new situation perfectly agreeable.

To what place the princess was first conveyed from this audience does not appear, but it must have been to one of the royal seats in the neighbourhood of London, to several of which she was successively removed during some time; after which she was permitted to establish herself permanently at the palace of Hatfield in Hertfordshire.

From this auspicious interview the termination of her prisoner-state may be dated. Henceforth she was released from the formidable parade of guards and keepers; no doors were closed, no locks were turned upon her; and though her place of residence was still prescribed, and could not, apparently, be changed by her at pleasure, she was treated in all respects as at home and mistress of her actions.

Sir Thomas Pope was a man of worth and a gentleman; and such were the tenderness and discretion with which he exercised the delicate trust reposed in him, that the princess must soon have learned to regard him in the light of a real friend. It is not a little remarkable at the same time, that the person selected by Mary to receive so distinguished a proof of her confidence, should have made his first appearance in public life as the active assistant

of Cromwel in the great work of the destruction of monasteries; and that from grants of abbey lands, which the queen esteemed it sacrilege to touch, he had derived the whole of that wealth of which he was now employing a considerable portion in the foundation of Trinity college Oxford.

But sir Thomas Pope, even in the execution of the arbitrary and rapacious mandates of Henry, had been advantageously distinguished amongst his colleagues by the qualities of mildness and integrity; and the circumstance of his having obtained a seat at the council-board of Mary from the very commencement of her reign, proves him to have acquired some peculiar merits in her eyes. Certain it is, however, that a furious zeal, whether real or pretended, for the Romish faith, was not amongst his courtly arts; for though strictly enjoined to watch over the due performance and attendance of mass in the family of the princess, he connived at her retaining about her person many servants who were earnest protestants.

This circumstance unfortunately reached the vigilant ears of Gardiner; and it was to a last expiring effort of his indefatigable malice that Elizabeth owed the mortification of seeing two gentlemen from the queen arrive at Lamer, a house in Hertfordshire which she then occupied, who carried away her favorite Mrs. Ashley and three of her maids of honor, and lodged them in the Tower.

Isabella Markham, afterwards the wife of that sir John Harrington whose sufferings in the princess's service have been

already adverted to, was doubtless one of these unfortunate ladies. Elizabeth, highly to her honor, never dismissed from remembrance the claims of such as had been faithful to her in her adversity; she distinguished this worthy pair by many tokens of her royal favor; stood godfather to their son, and admitted him from his tenderest youth to a degree of affectionate intimacy little inferior to that in which she indulged the best beloved of her own relations.

In the beginning of September 1555 king Philip, mortified by the refusal of his coronation, in which the parliament with steady patriotism persisted; disappointed in his hopes of an heir; and disgusted by the fondness and the jealousy of a spouse devoid of every attraction personal and mental, quitted England for the continent, and deigned not to revisit it during a year and a half. Elizabeth might regret his absence, as depriving her of the personal attentions of a powerful protector; but late events had so firmly established her as next heir to the crown, that she was now perfectly secure against the recurrence of any attempt to degrade her from her proper station; and her reconciliation with the queen, whether cordial or not, obtained for her occasional admission to the courtly circle.

A few days after the king's departure we find it mentioned that "the queen's grace, the lady Elizabeth, and all the court, did fast from flesh to qualify them to take the Pope's jubilee and pardon granted to all out of his abundant clemency²⁷;" a trait which

²⁷ Strype's Ecclesiastical Memorials.

makes it probable that Mary was now in the habit of exacting her sister's attendance at court, for the purpose of witnessing with her own eyes her punctual observance of the rites of that church to which she still believed her a reluctant conformist.

A few weeks afterwards, the death of her capital enemy, Gardiner, removed the worst of the ill instruments who had interposed to aggravate the suspicions of the queen, and there is reason to believe that the princess found in various ways the beneficial effects of this event.

CHAPTER VIII

1555 TO 1558

Elizabeth applies herself to classical literature.—Its neglected state.—Progress of English poetry.—Account of Sackville and his works.—Plan of his *Mirror for Magistrates*.—Extracts.—Notice of the contributors to this collection.—Its popularity and literary merits.—Entertainment given to Elizabeth by sir Thomas Pope.—Dudley Ashton's attempt.—Elizabeth acknowledged innocent of his designs.—Her letter to the queen.—She returns to London—quits it in some disgrace after again refusing the duke of Savoy.—Violence of Philip respecting this match.—Mary protects her sister.—Festivities at Hatfield, Enfield, and Richmond.—King of Sweden's addresses to Elizabeth rejected.—Letter of sir T. Pope respecting her dislike of marriage.—Proceedings of the ecclesiastical commission.—Cruel treatment of sir John Cheke.—General decay of national prosperity.—Loss of Calais.—Death of Mary.

Notwithstanding the late fortunate change in her situation, Elizabeth must have entertained an anxious sense of its remaining difficulties, if not dangers; and the prudent circumspection of her character again, as in the latter years of

her brother, dictated the expediency of shrouding herself in all the obscurity compatible with her rank and expectations. To literature, the never failing resource of its votaries, she turned again for solace and occupation; and claiming the assistance which Ascham was proud and happy to afford her, she resumed the diligent perusal of the Greek and Latin classics.

The concerns of the college of which sir Thomas Pope was the founder likewise engaged a portion of her thoughts; and this gentleman, in a letter to a friend, mentions that the lady Elizabeth, whom he served, and who was "not only gracious but right learned," often asked him of the course which he had devised for his scholars.

Classical literature was now daily declining from the eminence on which the two preceding sovereigns had labored to place it. The destruction of monastic institutions, and the dispersion of libraries, with the impoverishment of public schools and colleges through the rapacity of Edward's courtiers, had inflicted far deeper injury on the cause of learning than the studious example of the young monarch and his chosen companions was able to compensate. The persecuting spirit of Mary, by driving into exile or suspending from the exercise of their functions the able and enlightened professors of the protestant doctrine, had robbed the church and the universities of their brightest luminaries; and it was not under the auspices of her fierce and ignorant bigotry that the cultivators of the elegant and humanizing arts would seek encouragement or protection. Gardiner indeed, where particular

prejudices did not interfere, was inclined to favor the learned; and Ascham owed to him the place of Latin secretary. Cardinal Pole also, himself a scholar, was desirous to support, as much as present circumstances would permit, his ancient character of a patron of scholars, and he earnestly pleaded with sir Thomas Pope to provide for the teaching of Greek as well as Latin in his college; but sir Thomas persisted in his opinion that a Latin professorship was sufficient, considering the general decay of erudition in the country, which had caused an almost total cessation of the study of the Greek language.

It was in the department of English poetry alone that any perceptible advance was effected or prepared during this deplorable æra; and it was to the vigorous genius of one man, whose vivid personifications of abstract beings were then quite unrivalled, and have since been rarely excelled in our language, and whose clear, copious, and forcible style of poetic narrative interested all readers, and inspired a whole school of writers who worked upon his model, that this advance is chiefly to be attributed. This benefactor to our literature was Thomas Sackville, son of sir Richard Sackville, an eminent member of queen Mary's council, and second-cousin to the lady Elizabeth by his paternal grandmother, who was a Boleyn. The time of his birth is doubtful, some placing it in 1536, others as early as 1527. He studied first at Oxford and afterwards at Cambridge, distinguishing himself at both universities by the vivacity of his parts and the excellence of his compositions both in verse

and prose. According to the custom of that age, which required that an English gentleman should acquaint himself intimately with the laws of his country before he took a seat amongst her legislators, he next entered himself of the Inner Temple, and about the last year of Mary's reign he served in parliament. But at this early period of life poetry had more charms for Sackville than law or politics; and following the bent of his genius, he first produced "Gorboduc," confessedly the earliest specimen of regular tragedy in our language; but which will be noticed with more propriety when we reach the period of its representation before queen Elizabeth. He then, about the year 1557 as is supposed, laid the plan of an extensive work to be called "A Mirror for Magistrates;" of which the design is thus unfolded in a highly poetical "Induction."

The poet wandering forth on a winter's evening, and taking occasion from the various objects which "told the cruel season," to muse on the melancholy changes of human affairs, and especially on the reverses incident to greatness, suddenly encounters a "piteous wight," clad all in black, who was weeping, sighing, and wringing her hands, in such lamentable guise, that

"—never man did see

A wight but half so woe-begone as she."

Struck with grief and horror at the view, he earnestly requires her to "unwrap" her woes, and inform him who and whence she

is, since her anguish, if not relieved, must soon put an end to her life. She answers,

"Sorrow am I, in endless torments pained
Among the furies in th' infernal lake:"

from these dismal regions she is come, she says, to bemoan the luckless lot of those

"Whom Fortune in this maze of misery,
Of wretched chance most woful Mirrors chose:"

and she ends by inviting him to accompany her in her return:

"Come, come, quoth she, and see what I shall show,
Come hear the plaining and the bitter bale
Of worthy men by Fortune's overthrow:
Come thou and see them ruing all in row.
They were but shades that erst in mind thou rolled,
Come, come with me, thine eyes shall then behold."

He accepts the invitation, having first done homage to Sorrow as to a goddess, since she had been able to read his thought. The scenery and personages are now chiefly copied from the sixth book of the *Æneid*; but with the addition of many highly picturesque and original touches.

The companions enter, hand in hand, a gloomy wood, through which Sorrow only could have found the way.

"But lo, while thus amid the desert dark
We passed on with steps and pace unmeet,
A rumbling roar, confused with howl and bark
Of dogs, shook all the ground beneath our feet,
And struck the din within our ears so deep,
As half distraught unto the ground I fell;
Besought return, and not to visit hell."

His guide however encourages him, and they proceed by the
"lothly lake" Avernus,

"In dreadful fear amid the dreadful place."

"And first within the porch and jaws of hell
Sat deep Remorse of Conscience, all besprent
With tears; and to herself oft would she tell
Her wretchedness, and cursing never stent
To sob and sigh: but ever thus lament
With thoughtful care, as she that all in vain
Should wear and waste continually in pain.

Her eyes, unsteadfast rolling here and there,
Whirled on each place as place that vengeance brought,
So was her mind continually in fear,
Tossed and tormented with tedious thought
Of those detested crimes that she had wrought:
With dreadful cheer and looks thrown to the sky,
Longing for death, and yet she could not die.

Next saw we Dread, all trembling how he shook
With foot uncertain proffered here and there,
Benumbed of speech, and with a ghastly look
Searched every place, all pale and dead with fear,
His cap borne up with staring of his hair." &c.

All the other allegorical personages named, and only named, by Virgil, as well as a few additional ones, are pourtrayed in succession, and with the same strength and fullness of delineation; but with the exception of War, who appears in the attributes of Mars, they are represented simply as *examples* of Old age, Malady, &c., not as the *agents* by whom these evils are inflicted upon others. Cerberus and Charon occur in their appropriate offices, but the monstrous forms Gorgon, Chimæra, &c., are judiciously suppressed; and the poet is speedily conducted to the banks of that "main broad flood"

"Which parts the gladsome fields from place of woe."

"With Sorrow for my guide, as there I stood,

A troop of men the most in arms bedight,

In tumult clustered 'bout both sides the flood:

'Mongst whom, who were ordained t' eternal night,

Or who to blissful peace and sweet delight,

I wot not well, it seemed that they were all

Such as by death's untimely stroke did fall."

Sorrow acquaints him that these are all illustrious examples of

the reverses which he was lately deploring, who will themselves relate to him their misfortunes; and that he must afterwards

"Recount the same to Kesar, king and peer."

The first whom he sees advancing towards him from the throng of ghosts is Henry duke of Buckingham, put to death under Richard III.: and his "Legend," or story, is unfortunately the only one which its author ever found leisure to complete; the favor of his illustrious kinswoman on her accession causing him to sink the poet in the courtier, the ambassador, and finally the minister of state. But he had already done enough to earn himself a lasting name amongst the improvers of poetry in England. In tragedy he gave the first regular model; in personification he advanced far beyond all his predecessors, and furnished a prototype to that master of allegory, Spenser. A greater than Spenser has also been indebted to him; as will be evident, I think, to all who compare the description of the figures on the shield of war in his Induction, and especially those of them which relate to the siege of Troy, with the exquisitely rich and vivid description of a picture on that subject in Shakespeare's early poem on Tarquin and Lucretia.

The legend of the duke of Buckingham is composed in a style rich, free and forcible; the examples brought from ancient history, of the suspicion and inward wretchedness to which tyrants have ever been a prey, and afterwards, of the instability

of popular favor, might in this age be accounted tedious and pedantic; they are however pertinent, well recited, and doubtless possessed the charm of novelty with respect to the majority of contemporary readers. The curses which the unhappy duke pours forth against the dependent who had betrayed him, may almost compare, in the energy and inventiveness of malice, with those of Shakespeare's queen Margaret; but they lose their effect by being thrown into the form of monologue and ascribed to a departed spirit, whose agonies of grief and rage in reciting his own death have something in them bordering on the burlesque.

The mind of Sackville was deeply fraught, as we have seen, with classic stores; and at a time when England possessed as yet no complete translation of Virgil, he might justly regard it as a considerable service to the cause of national taste to transplant into our vernacular poetry some scattered flowers from his rich garden of poetic sweets. Thus he has embellished his legend with an imitation or rather paraphrase of the celebrated description of night in the fourth book of the *Æneid*. The lines well merit transcription.

"Midnight was come, when ev'ry vital thing
With sweet sound sleep their weary limbs did rest;
The beasts were still, the little birds that sing
Now sweetly slept besides their mother's breast,
The old and all were shrowded in their nest;
The waters calm, the cruel seas did cease;
The woods, the fields, and all things held their peace.

The golden stars were whirled amid their race,
And on the earth did laugh with twinkling light,
When each thing nestled in his resting place
Forgot day's pain with pleasure of the night:
The hare had not the greedy hounds in sight;
The fearful deer had not the dogs in doubt,
The partridge dreamt not of the falcon's foot.

The ugly bear now minded not the stake,
Nor how the cruel mastives do him tear;
The stag lay still unroused from the brake;
The foamy boar feared not the hunter's spear:
All things were still in desert, bush and breer.
With quiet heart now from their travails ceast
Soundly they slept in midst of all their rest."

The allusion to bear-bating in the concluding stanza may offend the delicacy of a modern reader; but let it be remembered that in the days of Mary, and even of Elizabeth, this amusement was accounted "sport for ladies."

The "Mirror for Magistrates" was not lost to the world by the desertion of Sackville from the service of the muses; for a similar or rather perhaps the same design was entertained, and soon after carried into execution, by other and able though certainly inferior hands.

During the reign of Mary,—but whether before or after the composition of Sackville's Induction does not appear,—

a certain printer, having communicated to several "worshipful and honorable persons" his intention of republishing Lydgate's translation in verse of Boccacio's "Fall of Princes," was by them advised to procure a continuation of the work, chiefly in English examples; and he applied in consequence to Baldwyne, an ecclesiastic and graduate of Oxford. Baldwyne declined to embark alone in so vast a design, and one, as he thought, so little likely to prove profitable; but seven other contemporary poets, of whom George Ferrers has already been mentioned as one, having promised their assistance, he consented to assume the editorship of the work. The general frame agreed upon by these associates was that employed in the original work of Boccacio, who feigned, that a party of friends being assembled, it was determined that each of them should contribute to the pleasure of the company by personating some illustrious and unfortunate character, and relating his adventures in the first person. A contrivance so tame and meagre compared with the descent to the regions of the dead sketched with so much spirit by Sackville, that it must have preceded, in all probability, their knowledge at least of his performance. The first part of the work, almost entirely by Baldwyne, was written, and partly printed, in Mary's time, but its publication was prevented by the interference of the lord-chancellor,—a trait of the mean and cowardly jealousy of the administration, which speaks volumes. In the first year of Elizabeth lord Stafford, an enlightened patron of letters, procured a licence for its appearance. A second part

soon followed, in which Sackville's Induction and Legend were inserted. The success of this collection was prodigious; edition after edition was given to the public under the inspection of different poetical revisers, by each of whom copious additions were made to the original work. Its favor and reputation continued during all the reign of Elizabeth, and far into that of James; for Mr. Warton tells us that in Chapman's "May-day," printed in 1611, "a gentleman of the most elegant taste for reading and highly accomplished in the current books of the times, is called 'one that has read Marcus Aurelius, Gesta Romanorum, and the Mirror of Magistrates.'²⁸"

The greater part of the contributors to this work were lawyers; an order of men who, in most ages and nations, have accounted it a part of professional duty to stand in opposition to popular seditions on one hand, and to the violent and illegal exertion of arbitrary power on the other. Accordingly, many of the legends are made to exemplify the evils of both these excesses; and though, in more places than one, the unlawfulness, on any provocation, of lifting a hand against "the Lord's anointed" is in strong terms asserted, the deposition of tyrants is often recorded with applause; and no mercy is shown to the corrupt judge or minister who wrests law and justice in compliance with the wicked will of his prince.

The newly published chronicles of the wars of York and Lancaster by Hall, a writer who made some approach to the

²⁸ History of English Poetry, vol. iii.

character of a genuine historian, furnished facts to the first composers of the Mirror; the later ones might draw also from Holinshed and Stow. There is some probability that the idea of forming plays on English history was suggested to Shakespeare by the earlier of these legends; and it is certain that his plays, in their turn, furnished some of their brightest ornaments of sentiment and diction to the legends added by later editors.

To a modern reader, the greater part of these once admired pieces will appear trite, prosaic, and tedious; but an uncultivated age—like the children and the common people of all ages—is most attracted and impressed by that mode of narration which leaves the least to be supplied by the imagination of the hearer or reader; and when this collection of history in verse is compared, not with the finished labors of a Hume or a Robertson, but with the prolix and vulgar narratives of the chroniclers, the admiration and delight with which it was received will no longer surprise.

One circumstance more respecting a work so important by the quantity of historical knowledge which it diffused among the mass of readers, and the influence which it exerted over the public mind during half a century, deserves to be here adverted to. Baldwyne and his fellow-laborers began their series from the Norman conquest, and the same starting-point had been judiciously chosen by Sackville; but the fabulous history of Geffrey of Monmouth still found such powerful advocates in national vanity, ignorance and credulity, that succeeding editors found it convenient to embellish their work with moral examples

drawn from his fictitious series of British kings before the invasion of the Romans. Accordingly they have brought forward a long line of worthies, beginning with king Albanact, son of Brute the Trojan, and ending with Cadwallader the last king of the Britons, scarcely one of whom, excepting the renowned prince Arthur, is known even by name to the present race of students in English history; though amongst poetical readers, the immortal verse of Spenser preserves some recollection that such characters once were fabled. In return for this superfluity, our Saxon line of kings is passed over with very little notice, only three legends, and those of very obscure personages, being interposed between Cadwallader and king Harold. The descent of the royal race of Britain from the Trojans was at this period more than an article of poetical faith; it was maintained, or rather taken for granted, by the gravest and most learned writers. One Kelston, who dedicated a versified chronicle of the Brutes to Edward VI., went further still, and traced up the pedigree of his majesty through two-and-thirty generations, to Osiris king of Egypt. Troynovant, the name said to have been given to London by Brute its founder, was frequently employed in verse. A song addressed to Elizabeth entitles her the "beauteous queen of second Troy;" and in describing the pageants which celebrated her entrance into the provincial capitals which she visited in her progresses, it will frequently be necessary to introduce to the reader personages of the ancient race of this fabled conqueror of our island, who claimed for his direct ancestor,—but whether

in the third or fourth degree authors differ,—no less a hero than the pious Æneas himself.

But to return to the personal circumstances of Elizabeth.

The public and splendid celebration of the festivals of the church was the least reprehensible of the measures employed by Mary for restoring the ascendancy of her religion over the minds of her subjects. She had been profuse in her donations of sacred vestments and ornaments to the churches and the monasteries, of which she had restored several; and these gaudy trappings of a ceremonial worship were exhibited, rather indeed to the scandal than the edification of a dejected people, in frequent processions conducted with the utmost solemnity and magnificence. Court entertainments always accompanied these devotional ceremonies, and Elizabeth seems by assisting at the latter to have purchased admission to the former. The Christmas festivities in which she shared have already been described in the words of a contemporary chronicler; and from the same source we derive the following account of the "antique pageantries" with which another season of rejoicing was celebrated for her recreation, by the munificence of the indulgent superintendent of her conduct and affairs. "In Shrove-tide 1556, sir Thomas Pope made for the lady Elizabeth, all at his own costs, a great and rich masking in the great hall at Hatfield, where the pageants were marvellously furnished. There were there twelve minstrels anticly disguised; with forty six or more gentlemen and ladies, many of them knights or nobles, and ladies of honor, apparelled

in crimson sattin, embroidered upon with wreaths of gold, and garnished with borders of hanging pearl. And the devise of a castle of cloth of gold, set with pomegranates about the battlements, with shields of knights hanging therefrom; and six knights in rich harness tourneyed. At night the cupboard in the hall was of twelve stages mainly furnished with garnish of gold and silver vessul, and a banquet of seventy dishes, and after a voidee of spices and suttleties with thirty six spice-plates; all at the charges of sir Thomas Pope. And the next day the play of Holophernes. But the queen percease misliked these folleries as by her letters to sir Thomas it did appear; and so their disguisings ceased²⁹."

A circumstance soon afterwards occurred calculated to recall past dangers to the mind of the princess, and perhaps to disturb her with apprehensions of their recurrence.

Dudley Ashton, formerly a partisan of Wyatt, had escaped into France, after the defeat and capture of his leader, whence he was still plotting the overthrow of Mary's government. By the connivance or assistance of that court, now on the brink of war with England, he was at length enabled to send over one Cleberry, a condemned person, whom he instructed to counterfeit the earl of Devonshire, and endeavour to raise the country in his cause. Letters and proclamations were at the same time dispersed by Ashton, in which the name of Elizabeth was employed without scruple. The party had even the slanderous audacity to pretend,

²⁹ See Nichols's "Progresses," vol. i. p. 19.

that between Courtney and the heiress of the crown the closest of all intimacies, if not an actual marriage, subsisted; and the matter went so far that at Ipswich, one of the strong holds of protestantism, Cleberry proclaimed the earl of Devonshire and the princess, king and queen. But the times were past when any advantage could be taken of this circumstance against Elizabeth, whose perfect innocence was well known to the government; and the council immediately wrote in handsome terms to sir Thomas Pope, directing him to acquaint her, in whatever manner he should judge best, with the abominable falsehoods circulated respecting her. A few days after, the queen herself wrote also to her sister in terms fitted to assure her of perfect safety. The princess replied, says Strype, "in a well penned letter," "utterly detesting and disclaiming all concern in the enterprise, and declaiming against the actors in it." Of the epistle thus commended, a single paragraph will probably be esteemed a sufficient specimen.... "And among earthly things I chiefly wish this one; that there were as good surgeons for making anatomies of hearts, that might show my thoughts to your majesty, as there are expert physicians of the bodies, able to express the inward griefs of their maladies to the patient. For then I doubt not, but know well, that whatsoever others should suggest by malice, yet your majesty should be sure by knowledge; so that the more such misty clouds offusate the clear light of my truth, the more my tried thoughts should glisten to the dimming of their hidden malice." &c. It must be confessed that this erudite

princess had not perfectly succeeded in transplanting into her own language the epistolary graces of her favorite Cicero;—but to how many much superior classical scholars might a similar remark be applied!

The frustration of Mary's hope of becoming a mother, her subsequent ill state of health, and the resolute refusal of the parliament to permit the coronation of her husband, who had quitted England in disgust to attend his affairs on the continent, conferred, in spite of all the efforts of the catholic party, a daily augmenting importance on Elizabeth. When therefore in November 1556 she had come in state to Somerset Place, her town-residence, to take up her abode for the winter, a kind of court was immediately formed around her; and she might hope to be richly indemnified for any late anxieties or privations, by the brilliant festivities, the respectful observances, and the still more welcome flatteries, of which she found herself the distinguished object:—But disappointment awaited her.

She had been invited to court for the purpose of receiving a second and more solemn offer of the hand of the duke of Savoy, whose suit was enforced by the king her brother-in-law with the whole weight of his influence or authority. This alliance had been the subject of earnest correspondence between Philip and the English council; the Imperial ambassadors were waiting in England for her answer; and the disappointment of the high-raised hopes of the royal party, by her reiteration of a decided negative, was followed by her quitting London in a kind of

disgrace early in the month of December.

But Philip would not suffer the business to end here. Indignant at the resistance opposed by the princess to his measures, he seems to have urged the queen to interfere in a manner authoritative enough to compel obedience; but, by a remarkable exchange of characters, Mary now appeared as the protectress of her sister from the violence of Philip.

In a letter still preserved, she tells him, that unless the consent of parliament were first obtained, she fears that the accomplishment of the marriage would fail to procure for him the advantages which he expected; but that, however this might be, her conscience would not allow her to press the matter further. That the friar Alphonso, Philip's confessor, whom he had sent to argue the point with her, had entirely failed of convincing her; that in fact she could not comprehend the drift of his arguments. Philip, it is manifest, must already have made use of very harsh language towards the queen respecting her conduct in this affair, for she deprecates his further displeasure in very abject terms; but yet persists in her resolution with laudable firmness. Her husband was so far, however, from yielding with a good grace a point on which he had certainly no right to dictate either to Mary or to her sister, that soon afterwards he sent into England the duchesses of Parma and Lorrain for the purpose of conducting the princess into Flanders:—but this step was ill-judged.

His coldness and neglect had by this time nearly extinguished the fond passion of the queen, who is said to have torn his picture

in a fit of rage, on report of some disrespectful language which he had used concerning her since his departure for the continent. Resentment and jealousy now divided her gloomy soul; and Philip's behaviour, on which she had doubtless her spies, caused her to regard the duchess of Lorrain as the usurper of his heart. The extraordinary circumstances of pomp and parade with which this lady, notwithstanding the smallness of her revenues, now appeared in England, confirmed and aggravated her most painful suspicions; and so far from favoring the suit urged by such an ambassadress, Mary became more than ever determined on thwarting it. She would not permit the duchesses to pay the princess a single visit at Hatfield; and her reception gave them so little encouragement to persevere, that they speedily returned to report their failure to him who sent them.

These circumstances seem to have produced a cordiality of feeling and frequency of intercourse between the sisters which had never before existed. In February 1557 the princess arrived with a great retinue at Somerset Place, and went thence to wait upon the queen at Whitehall; and when the spring was somewhat further advanced, her majesty honored her by returning the visit at Hatfield. The royal guest was, of course, to be entertained with every species of courtly and elegant delight; and accordingly, on the morning after her arrival, she and the princess, after attending mass, went to witness a grand exhibition of *bear-bating*, "with which their highnesses were right well content." In the evening the chamber was adorned with a sumptuous suit of

tapestry, called, but from what circumstance does not appear, "the hangings of Antioch." After supper a play was represented by the choristers of St. Paul's, then the most applauded actors in London; and after it was over, one of the children accompanied with his voice the performance of the princess on the virginals.

Sir Thomas Pope could now without offence gratify his lady with another show, devised by him in that spirit of romantic magnificence equally agreeable to the taste of the age and the temper of Elizabeth herself. She was invited to repair to Enfield Chase to take the amusement of hunting the hart. Twelve ladies in white satin attended her on their "ambling palfreys," and twenty yeomen clad in green. At the entrance of the forest she was met by fifty archers in scarlet boots and yellow caps, armed with gilded bows, one of whom presented to her a silver-headed arrow winged with peacock's feathers. The splendid show concluded, according to the established laws of the chase, by the offering of the knife to the princess, as first lady on the field; and her *taking* 'say of the buck with her own fair and royal hand.

During the summer of the same year the queen was pleased to invite her sister to an entertainment at Richmond, of which we have received some rather interesting particulars. The princess was brought from Somerset Place in the queen's barge, which was richly hung with garlands of artificial flowers and covered with a canopy of green sarcenet, wrought with branches of eglantine in embroidery and powdered with blossoms of gold. In the barge she was accompanied by sir Thomas Pope and four

ladies of her chamber. Six boats attended filled with her retinue, habited in russet damask and blue embroidered satin, tasseled and spangled with silver; their bonnets cloth of silver with green feathers. The queen received her in a sumptuous pavilion in the labyrinth of the gardens. This pavilion, which was of cloth of gold and purple velvet, was made in the form of a castle, probably in allusion to the kingdom of Castile; its sides were divided in compartments, which bore alternately the fleur de lis in silver, and the pomegranate, the bearing of Granada, in gold. A sumptuous banquet was here served up to the royal ladies, in which there was introduced a pomegranate-tree in confectionary work, bearing the arms of Spain:—so offensively glaring was the preference given by Mary to the country of her husband and of her maternal ancestry over that of which she was a native and in her own right queen! There was no masking or dancing, but a great number of minstrels performed. The princess returned to Somerset Place the same evening, and the next day to Hatfield.

The addresses of a new suitor soon after furnished Elizabeth with an occasion of gratifying the queen by fresh demonstrations of respect and duty. The king of Sweden was earnestly desirous of obtaining for Eric his eldest son the hand of a lady whose reversionary prospects, added to her merit and accomplishments, rendered her without dispute the first match in Europe. He had denied his son's request to be permitted to visit her in person, fearing that those violences of temper and eccentricities of conduct of which this ill-fated prince had already given

strong indications, might injure his cause in the judgement of so discerning a princess. The business was therefore to be transacted through the Swedish ambassador; but he was directed by his sovereign to make his application by a message to Elizabeth herself, in which the queen and council were not for the present to participate. The princess took hold of this circumstance as a convenient pretext for rejecting a proposal which she felt no disposition to encourage; and she declared that she could never listen to any overtures of this nature which had not first received the sanction of her majesty. The ambassador pleaded in answer, that as a gentleman his master had judged it becoming that his first application should be made to herself; but that should he be so happy as to obtain her concurrence, he would then, as a king, make his demand in form to the queen her sister. The princess replied, that if it were to depend on herself, a single life would ever be her choice; and she finally dismissed the suit with a negative.

On receiving some hint of this transaction, Mary sent for sir Thomas Pope, and having learned from him all the particulars, she directed him to express to her sister her high approbation of her proper and dutiful conduct on this occasion; and also to make himself acquainted with her sentiments on the subject of matrimony in general. He soon after transmitted to her majesty all the information she could desire, in the following letter:

"First after I had declared to her grace how well the queen's majesty liked of her prudent and honorable answer made to the

same messenger; I then opened unto her grace the effects of the said messenger's credence; which after her grace had heard, I said, the queen's highness had sent me to her grace, not only to declare the same, but also to understand how her grace liked the said motion. Whereunto, after a little pause taken, her grace answered in form following: 'Master Pope, I require you, after my most humble commendations to the queen's majesty, to render unto the same like thanks that it pleased her highness, of her goodness, to conceive so well of my answer made to the same messenger; and herewithal, of her princely consideration, with such speed to command you by your letters to signify the same unto me: who before remained wonderfully perplexed, fearing that her majesty might mistake the same: for which her goodness, I acknowledge myself bound to honor, serve, love, and obey her highness during my life. Requiring you also to say unto her majesty, that in the king my brother's time there was offered me a very honorable marriage, or two; and ambassadors sent to treat with me touching the same; whereupon I made my humble suit unto his highness, as some of honor yet living can be testimonies, that it would like the same to give me leave, with his grace's favor, to remain in that estate I was, which of all others best liked me, or pleased me. And, in good faith, I pray you say unto her highness, I am even at this present of the same mind, and so intend to continue, with her majesty's favor: and assuring her highness I so well like this estate, as I persuade myself there is not any kind of life comparable unto it. And as concerning my liking

the said motion made by the said messenger, I beseech you say unto her majesty, that to my remembrance I never heard of his master before this time; and that I so well like both the message and the messenger, as I shall most humbly pray God upon my knees, that from henceforth I never hear of the one nor the other: assure you that if he should eftsoons repair unto me, I would forbear to speak to him. And were there nothing else to move me to mislike the motion, other than that his master would attempt the same without making the queen's majesty privy thereunto, it were cause sufficient.'

"And when her grace had thus ended, I was so bold as of myself to say unto her grace, her pardon first required, that I thought few or none would believe but that her grace could be right well contented to marry; so that there were some honorable marriage offered her by the queen's highness, or by her majesty's assent. Whereunto her grace answered, 'What I shall do hereafter I know not; but I assure you, upon my truth and fidelity, and as God be merciful unto me, I am not at this time otherwise minded than I have declared unto you; no, though I were offered the greatest prince in all Europe.' And yet percase, the queen's majesty may conceive this rather to proceed of a maidenly shamefacedness, than upon any such certain determination³⁰."

This letter appears to have been the last transaction which

³⁰ The hint of "some honorable marriage" in the above letter, has been supposed to refer to the duke of Savoy; but if the date inscribed upon the copy which is found among the Harleian MSS. be correct (April 26th 1558), this could not well be; since the queen, early in the preceding year, had declined to interfere further in his behalf.

occurred between Mary and Elizabeth: from it, and from the whole of the notices relative to the situation of the latter thrown together in the preceding pages, it may be collected, that during the three last years of her sister's reign,—the period, namely, of her residence at Hatfield,—she had few privations, and no personal hardships to endure: but for individuals whom she esteemed, for principles to which her conscience secretly inclined, for her country which she truly loved, her apprehensions must have been continually excited, and too often justified by events the most cruel and disastrous.

The reestablishment, by solemn acts of the legislature, of the Romish ritual and the papal authority, though attended with the entire prohibition of all protestant worship, was not sufficient for the bigotry of Mary. Aware that the new doctrines still found harbour in the bosoms of her subjects, she sought to drag them by her violence from this last asylum; for to her, as to all tyrants, it appeared both desirable and possible to subject the liberty of thinking to the regulation and control of human laws.

By virtue of her authority as head of the English church,—a title which the murmurs of her parliament had compelled her against her conscience to resume after laying it aside for some time,—she issued an ecclesiastical commission, which wanted nothing of the Spanish inquisition but the name. The commissioners were empowered to call before them the leading men in every parish of the kingdom, and to compel them to bind themselves by oath to give information against such of their

neighbours as, by abstaining from attendance at church or other symptoms of disaffection to the present order of things, afforded room to doubt the soundness of their belief. Articles of faith were then offered to the suspected persons for their signature, and on their simple refusal they were handed over to the civil power, and fire and faggot awaited them. By this barbarous species of punishment, about two hundred and eighty persons are stated to have perished during the reign of Mary; but, to the disgrace of the learned, the rich, and the noble, these martyrs, with the exception of a few distinguished ecclesiastics, were almost all from the middling or lower, some from the very lowest classes of society.

Amongst these glorious sufferers, therefore, the princess could have few personal friends to regret; but in the much larger number of the disgraced, the suspected, the imprisoned, the fugitive, she saw the greater part of the public characters, whether statesmen or divines, on whose support and attachment she had learned to place reliance.

The extraordinary cruelties exercised upon sir John Cheke, who whilst he held the post of preceptor to her brother had also assisted in her own education, must have been viewed by Elizabeth with strong emotion of indignation and grief.

It has been already mentioned, that after his release from imprisonment incurred in the cause of lady Jane Grey,—a release, by the way, which was purchased by the sacrifice of his landed property and all his appointments,—this learned and

estimable person obtained permission to travel for a limited period. This was regarded as a special favor; for it was one of Mary's earliest acts of tyranny to prohibit the escape of her destined victims, and it was only by joining themselves to the foreign congregations of the reformed, who had license to depart the kingdom, or by eluding with much hazard the vigilance of the officers by whom the seaports were watched, that any of her protestant subjects had been enabled to secure liberty of conscience in a voluntary exile. It is a little remarkable that Rome should have been Cheke's first city of pilgrimage; but classical associations in this instance overcame the force of protestant antipathies. He took the opportunity however of visiting Basil in his way, where an English congregation was established, and where he had the pleasure of introducing himself to several learned characters, once perhaps the chosen associates of Erasmus.

In the beginning of 1556 he had reached Strasburgh, for it was thence that he addressed a letter to his dear friend and brother-in-law sir William Cecil, who appears to have made some compliances with the times which alarmed and grieved him. It is in a strain of the most affectionate earnestness that he entreats him to hold fast his faith, and "to take heed how he did in the least warp or strain his conscience by any compliance for his worldly security." But such exhortations, however salutary in themselves, did not come with the best grace from those who had found in flight a refuge from the terrors of that persecution

which was raging in all its fierceness before the eyes of such of their unfortunate brethren as had found themselves necessitated to abide the fiery trial. A remark by no means foreign to the case before us! Sir John Cheke's leave of absence seems now to have expired; and it was probably with the design of making interest for its renewal that he privately repaired, soon after the date of his letter, to Brussels, on a visit to his two learned friends, lord Paget and sir John Mason, then residing in that city as Mary's ambassadors. These men were recent converts, or more likely conformists, to the court religion; and Paget's furious councils against Elizabeth have been already mentioned. It is to be hoped that they did not add to the guilt of self-interested compliances in matters of faith the blacker crime of a barbarous act of perfidy against a former associate and brother-protestant who had scarcely ceased to be their guest;—but certain it is, that on some secret intimation of his having entered his territories, king Philip issued special orders for the seizure of Cheke. On his return, between Brussels and Antwerp, the unhappy man, with sir Peter Carew his companion, was apprehended by a provost-marshal, bound hand and foot, thrown into a cart, and so conveyed on board a vessel sailing for England. He is said to have been brought to the Tower muffled, according to an odious practice of Spanish despotism introduced into the country during the reign of Mary. Under the terror of such a surprise the awful alternative "Comply or burn" was laid before him. Human frailty under these trying circumstances prevailed; and in an evil hour

this champion of light and learning was tempted to subscribe his false assent to the doctrine of the real presence and the whole list of Romish articles. This was but the beginning of humiliations: he was now required to pronounce two ample recantations, one before the queen in person, the other before cardinal Pole, who also imposed upon him various acts of penance. Even this did not immediately procure his liberation from prison; and while he was obliged in public to applaud the mercy of his enemies in terms of the most abject submission, he bewailed in private, with abundance of bitter tears, their cruelty, and still more his own criminal compliance. The savage zealots knew not how to set bounds to their triumph over a man whom learning and acknowledged talents and honorable employments had rendered so considerable.

Even when at length he was set free, and flattered himself that he had drained to the dregs his cup of bitterness, he discovered that the masterpiece of barbarity, the refinement of insult, was yet in store. He was required, as evidence of the sincerity of his conversion and a token of his complete restoration to royal favor, to take his seat on the bench by the side of the savage Bonner, and assist at the condemnation of his brother-protestants. The unhappy man did not refuse,—so thoroughly was his spirit subdued within him,—but it broke his heart; and retiring at last to the house of an old and learned friend, whose door was opened to him in Christian charity, he there ended within a few months, his miserable life, a prey to shame, remorse and melancholy. A

sadder tale the annals of persecution do not furnish, or one more humbling to the pride and confidence of human virtue. Many have failed under lighter trials; few have expiated a failure by sufferings so severe. How often must this victim of a wounded spirit have dwelt with envy, amid his slower torments, on the brief agonies and lasting crown of a courageous martyrdom!

It is happily not possible for a kingdom to flourish under the crushing weight of such a tyranny as that of Mary. The retreat of the foreign protestants had robbed the country of hundreds of industrious and skilful artificers; the arbitrary exactions of the queen impoverished and discouraged the trading classes, against whom they principally operated; tumults and insurrections were frequent, and afforded a pretext for the introduction of Spanish troops; the treasury was exhausted in efforts for maintaining the power of the sovereign, restoring the church to opulence and splendor, and re-edifying the fallen monasteries. To add to these evils, a foreign marriage rendered both the queen and country subservient to the interested or ambitious projects of the Spanish sovereign. For his sake a needless war was declared against France, which, after draining entirely an already failing treasury, ended in the loss of Calais, the last remaining trophy of the victories by which the Edwards and the Henrys had humbled in the dust the pride and power of France.

This last stroke completed the dejection of the nation; and Mary herself, who was by no means destitute of sensibility where the honor of her crown was concerned, sunk into an incurable

melancholy. "When I die," said she to her attendants who sought to discover the cause of her despondency, "Calais will be found at my heart."

The unfeeling desertion of her husband, the consciousness of having incurred the hatred of her subjects, the unprosperous state of her affairs, and the well founded apprehension that her successor would once more overthrow the whole edifice of papal power which she had labored with such indefatigable ardor to restore, may each be supposed to have infused its own drop of bitterness into the soul of this unhappy princess. The long and severe mortifications of her youth, while they soured her temper, had also undermined her constitution, and contributed to bring upon her a premature old age; dropsical symptoms began to appear, and after a lingering illness of nearly half a year she sunk into the grave on the 17th day of November 1558, in the forty-fourth year of her age.

CHAPTER IX

1558 AND 1559

General joy on the accession of Elizabeth.—Views of the nobility—of the middling and lower classes.—Flattery with which she is addressed.—Descriptions of her person.—Her first privy-council.—Parry and Cecil brought into office.—Notices of each.—Death of cardinal Pole.—The queen enters London—passes to the Tower.—Lord Robert Dudley her master of the horse.—Notices respecting him.—The queen's treatment of her relations.—The Howard family.—Sir Richard Sackville.—Henry Cary.—The last, created lord Hunsdon.—Preparations in London against the queen's coronation.—Splendid costume of the age.—She passes by water from Westminster to the Tower.—The procession described.—Her passage through the city.—Pageants exhibited.—The bishops refuse to crown her.—Bishop of Carlisle prevailed on.—Religious sentiments of the queen.—Prohibition of preaching—of theatrical exhibitions.

Never perhaps was the accession of any prince the subject of such keen and lively interest to a whole people as that of Elizabeth.

Both in the religious establishments and political relations

of the country, the most important changes were anticipated; changes in which the humblest individual found himself concerned, and to which a vast majority of the nation looked forward with hope and joy.

With the courtiers and great nobles, whose mutability of faith had so happily corresponded with every ecclesiastical vicissitude of the last three reigns, political and personal considerations may well be supposed to have held the first place; and though the old religion might still be endeared to them by many cherished associations and by early prejudice, there were few among them who did not regard the liberation of the country from Spanish influence as ample compensation for the probable restoration of the religious establishment of Henry or of Edward. Besides, there was scarcely an individual belonging to these classes who had not in some manner partaken of the plunder of the church, and whom the avowed principles of Mary had not disquieted with apprehensions that some plan of compulsory restitution would sooner or later be attempted by an union of royal and papal authority.

With the middling and lower classes religious views and feelings were predominant. The doctrines of the new and better system of faith and worship had now become more precious and important than ever in the eyes of its adherents from the hardships which many of them had encountered for its sake, and from the interest which each disciple vindicated to himself in the glory and merit of the holy martyrs whose triumphant exit they

had witnessed. With all the fervor of pious gratitude they offered up their thanksgivings for the signal deliverance by which their prayers had been answered. The bloody tyranny of Mary was at an end; and though the known conformity of Elizabeth to Romish rites might apparently give room for doubts and suspicions, it should seem that neither catholics nor protestants were willing to believe that the daughter of Anne Boleyn could in her heart be a papist. Under this impression the citizens of London, who spoke the sense of their own class throughout the kingdom, welcomed the new queen as a protectress sent by Heaven itself: but even in the first transports of their joy, and amid the pompous pageantries by which their loyal congratulations were expressed, they took care to intimate, in a manner not to be misunderstood, their hopes and expectations on the great concern now nearest to their hearts.

Prudence confined within their own bosoms the regrets and murmurs of the popish clergy; submission and a simulated loyalty were at present obviously their only policy: thus not a whisper breathed abroad but of joy and gratulation and happy presage of the days to come.

The sex, the youth, the accomplishments, the graces, the past misfortunes of the princess, all served to heighten the interest with which she was beheld: the age of chivalry had not yet expired; and in spite of the late unfortunate experience of a female reign, the romantic image of a maiden queen dazzled all eyes, subdued all hearts, inflamed the imaginations of the brave

and courtly youth with visions of love and glory, exalted into a passionate homage the principle of loyalty, and urged adulation to the very brink of idolatry.

The fulsome compliments on her beauty which Elizabeth, almost to the latest period of her life, not only permitted but required and delighted in, have been adverted to by all the writers who have made her reign and character their theme: and those of the number whom admiration and pity of the fair queen of Scots have rendered hostile to her memory, have taken a malicious pleasure in exaggerating the extravagance of this weakness, by denying her, even in her freshest years, all pretensions to those personal charms by which her rival was so eminently distinguished. Others however have been more favorable, and probably more just, to her on this point; and it would be an injury to her memory to withhold from the reader the following portraitures which authorize us to form a pleasing as well as majestic image of this illustrious female at the period of her accession and at the age of five-and-twenty.

"She was a lady of great beauty, of decent stature, and of an excellent shape. In her youth she was adorned with a more than usual maiden modesty; her skin was of pure white, and her hair of a yellow colour; her eyes were beautiful and lively. In short, her whole body was well made, and her face was adorned with a wonderful and sweet beauty and majesty. This beauty lasted till her middle age, though it declined³¹." &c.

³¹ Bohun's "Character of Queen Elizabeth."

"She was of personage tall, of hair and complexion fair, and therewith well favored, but high-nosed; of limbs and feature neat, and, which added to the lustre of those exterior graces, of stately and majestic comportment; participating in this more of her father than her mother, who was of an inferior allay, plausible, or, as the French hath it, more debonaire and affable, virtues which might suit well with majesty, and which descending as hereditary to the daughter, did render her of a more sweeter temper and endeared her more to the love and liking of her people, who gave her the name and fame of a most gracious and popular prince³²."

The death of Mary was announced to the two houses, which were then sitting, by Heath bishop of Ely, the lord-chancellor. In both assemblies, after the decorum of a short pause, the notification was followed by joyful shouts of "God save queen Elizabeth! long and happily may she reign!" and with great alacrity the members issued out to proclaim the new sovereign before the palace in Westminster and again at the great cross in Cheapside.

The Londoners knew not how to contain their joy on this happy occasion:—the bells of all the churches were set ringing, bonfires were kindled, and tables were spread in the streets according to the bountiful and hospitable custom of that day, "where was plentiful eating, drinking, and making merry." On the following Sunday *Te Deum* was sung in the churches; probably an unexampled, however merited, expression

³² Naunton's "Fragmenta Regalia."

of disrespect to the memory of the former sovereign.

Elizabeth received the news of her own accession at Hatfield. We are not told that she affected any great concern for the loss of her sister, much less did any unbecoming sign of exultation escape her; but, "falling on her knees, after a good time of respiration she uttered this verse of the Psalms; *A Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile oculis nostris*³³: which to this day we find on the stamp of her gold; with this on her silver, *Posui Deum adiutorem meum*³⁴." ³⁵

Several noblemen of the late queen's council now repairing to her, she held at Hatfield on November the 20th her first privy-council; at which she declared sir Thomas Parry comptroller of her household, sir Edward Rogers captain of the guard, and sir William Cecil principal secretary of state, all three being at the same time admitted to the council-board. From these appointments, the first of her reign, some presages might be drawn of her future government favorable to her own character and correspondent to the wishes of her people.

Parry was the person who had filled for many years the office of her cofferer, who was perfectly in the secret of whatever confidential intercourse she might formerly have held with the lord-admiral, and whose fidelity to her in that business had stood firm against all the threats of the protector and council, and the

³³ It is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.

³⁴ I have chosen God for my helper.

³⁵ "Fragmenta Regalia."

artifices of those by whom his examination had been conducted. That mindfulness of former services, of which the advancement of this man formed by no means a solitary instance in the conduct of Elizabeth, appeared the more commendable in her, because she accompanied it with a generous oblivion of the many slights and injuries to which her defenceless and persecuted condition had so long exposed her from others.

The merit of Cecil was already in part known to the public; and his promotion to an office of such importance was a happy omen for the protestant cause, his attachment to which had been judged the sole impediment to his advancement under the late reign to situations of power and trust corresponding with the opinion entertained of his integrity and political wisdom. A brief retrospect of the scenes of public life in which he had already been an actor will best explain the character and sentiments of this eminent person, destined to wield for more than forty years with unparalleled skill and felicity, under a mistress who knew his value, the energies of the English state.

Born, in 1520, the son of the master of the royal wardrobe, Cecil early engaged the notice of Henry VIII. by the fame of a religious dispute which he had held in Latin with two popish priests attached to the Irish chieftain O'Neal. A place in reversion freely bestowed on him by the king at once rewarded the zeal of the young polemic, and encouraged him to desert the profession of the law, in which he had embarked, for the political career.

His marriage with the sister of sir John Cheke strengthened

his interest at court by procuring him an introduction to the earl of Hertford, and early in the reign of Edward this powerful patronage obtained for him the office of secretary of state. In the first disgrace of the protector he lost his place, and was for a short time a prisoner in the Tower; but his compliant conduct soon restored him to favor: he scrupled not to draw the articles of impeachment against the protector; and Northumberland, finding him both able in business and highly acceptable to the young monarch, procured, or permitted, his reinstatement in office in September 1550.

Cecil, however, was both too wary and too honest to regard himself as pledged to the support of Northumberland's inordinate schemes of ambition; and scarcely any public man of the day, attached to the protestant cause, escaped better in the affair of lady Jane Grey. It is true that one writer accuses him of having drawn all the papers in her favor: but this appears to be, in part at least, either a mistake or a calumny; and it seems, on the contrary, that he refused to Northumberland some services of this nature. It has been already mentioned that his name appeared with those of the other privy-councillors to Edward's settlement of the crown; and his plea of having signed it merely as a witness to the king's signature, deserves to be regarded as a kind of subterfuge. But he was early in paying his respects to Mary, and he took advantage of the graciousness with which she received his explanations to obtain a general pardon, which protected him from all personal danger. He lost however his

place of secretary, which some have affirmed that he might have retained by further compliances in religion. This however is the more doubtful, because it cannot be questioned that he must have yielded a good deal on this point, without which he neither could nor would have made one of a deputation sent to conduct to England cardinal Pole the papal legate, nor probably would he have been joined in commission with the cardinal and other persons sent to treat of a peace with France.

But admitting, as we must, that this eminent statesman was far from aspiring to the praise of a confessor, he will still be found to deserve high commendation for the zeal and courage with which, as a member of parliament, he defended the interests of his oppressed and suffering fellow-protestants. At considerable hazard to himself, he opposed with great freedom of speech a bill for confiscating the property of exiles for religion; and he appears to have escaped committal to the Tower on this account, solely by the presence of mind which he exhibited before the council and the friendship of some of its members.

He is known to have maintained a secret and intimate correspondence with Elizabeth during the time of her adversity, and to have assisted her on various trying occasions with his salutary counsels; and nothing could be more interesting than to trace the origin and progress of that confidential relation between these eminent and in many respects congenial characters, which after a long course of years was only terminated by the hand of death;—but materials for this purpose are unfortunately wanting.

The letters on both sides were probably sacrificed by the parties themselves to the caution which their situation required; and among the published extracts from the Burleigh papers, only a single document is found relative to the connexion subsisting between them during the reign of Mary. This is a short and uninteresting letter addressed to Cecil by sir Thomas Benger, one of the princess's officers, in which, after some mention of accounts, not now intelligible, he promises that he and sir Thomas Parry will move the princess to grant his correspondent's request, which is not particularized, and assures him that as his coming thither would be thankfully received, so he wishes that all the friends of the princess entertained the same sense of that matter as he does. The letter seems to point at some official concern of Cecil in the affairs of Elizabeth. It is dated October 24th 1556.

The private character of Cecil was in every respect exemplary, and his disposition truly amiable. His second marriage with one of the learned daughters of sir Anthony Cook conferred upon him that exalted species of domestic happiness which a sympathy in mental endowments can alone bestow; whilst it had the further advantage of connecting him with the excellent man her father, with sir Nicholas Bacon and sir Thomas Hobby, the husbands of two of her sisters, and generally with the wisest and most conscientious supporters of the protestant interest. This great minister was honorably distinguished through life by an ardor and constancy of friendship rare in all classes of men, but esteemed

peculiarly so in those whose lives are occupied amid the heartless ceremonial of courts and the political intrigues of princes. His attachments, as they never degenerated into the weakness of favoritism, were as much a source of benefit to his country as of enjoyment to himself; for his friends were those of virtue and the state. And there were few among the more estimable public men of this reign who were not indebted either for their first introduction to the notice of Elizabeth, their continuance in her favor, or their restoration to it when undeservedly lost, to the generous patronage or powerful intercession of Cecil.

On appointing him a member of her council, the queen addressed her secretary in the following gracious words:

"I give you this charge, that you shall be of my privy-council, and content yourself to take pains for me and my realm. This judgement I have of you, that you will not be corrupted with any gift, and that you will be faithful to the state, and that, without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best: And that if you shall know any thing necessary to be declared to me of secrecy, you shall show it to myself only, and assure yourself I will not fail to keep taciturnity therein. And therefore herewith I charge you³⁶."

Cardinal Pole was not doomed to be an eye-witness of the relapse of the nation into what he must have regarded as heresy of the most aggravated nature; he expired a few hours after his royal kinswoman: and Elizabeth, with due

³⁶ "Nugæ Antiquæ."

consideration for the illustrious ancestry, the learning, the moderation, and the blameless manners of the man, authorized his honorable interment at Canterbury among the archbishops his predecessors, with the attendance of two bishops, his ancient friends and the faithful companions of his long exile.

On November 23d the queen set forward for her capital, attended by a train of about a thousand nobles, knights, gentlemen, and ladies, and took up her abode for the present at the dissolved monastery of the Chartreux, or Charterhouse, then the residence of lord North; a splendid pile which offered ample accommodation for a royal retinue. Her next remove, in compliance with ancient custom, was to the Tower. On this occasion all the streets from the Charterhouse were spread with fine gravel; singers and musicians were stationed by the way, and a vast concourse of people freely lent their joyful and admiring acclamations, as preceded by her heralds and great officers, and richly attired in purple velvet, she passed along mounted on her palfrey, and returning the salutations of the humblest of her subjects with graceful and winning affability.

With what vivid and what affecting impressions of the vicissitudes attending on the great must she have passed again within the antique walls of that fortress once her dungeon, now her palace! She had entered it by the Traitor's gate, a terrified and defenceless prisoner, smarting under many wrongs, hopeless of deliverance, and apprehending nothing less than an ignominious death. She had quitted it, still a captive, under the guard of armed

men, to be conducted she knew not whither. She returned to it in all the pomp of royalty, surrounded by the ministers of her power, ushered by the applauses of her people; the cherished object of every eye, the idol of every heart.

Devotion alone could supply becoming language to the emotions which swelled her bosom; and no sooner had she reached the royal apartments, than falling on her knees she returned humble and fervent thanks to that Providence which had brought her in safety, like Daniel from the den of lions, to behold this day of exaltation.

Elizabeth was attended on her passage to the Tower by one who like herself returned with honor to that place of his former captivity; but not, like herself, with a mind disciplined by adversity to receive with moderation and wisdom "the good vicissitude of joy." This person was lord Robert Dudley, whom the queen had thus early encouraged to aspire to her future favors by appointing him to the office of master of the horse.

We are totally uninformed of the circumstances which had recommended to her peculiar patronage this bad son of a bad father; whose enterprises, if successful, would have disinherited of a kingdom Elizabeth herself no less than Mary. But it is remarkable, that even under the reign of the latter, the surviving members of the Dudley family had been able to recover in great measure from the effects of their late signal reverses. Lord Robert, soon after his release from the Tower, contrived to make himself so acceptable to king Philip by his courtier-like

attentions, and to Mary by his diligence in posting backwards and forwards to bring her intelligence of her husband during his long visits to the continent, that he earned from the latter several marks of favor. Two of his brothers fought, and one fell, in the battle of St. Quintin's; and immediately afterwards the duchess their mother found means, through some Spanish interests and connexions, to procure the restoration in blood of all her surviving children. The appointment of Robert to the place of master of the ordnance soon followed; so that even before the accession of Elizabeth he might be regarded as a rising man in the state. His personal graces and elegant accomplishments are on all hands acknowledged to have been sufficiently striking to dazzle the eyes and charm the heart of a young princess of a lively imagination and absolute mistress of her own actions. The circumstance of his being already married, blinded her perhaps to the nature of her sentiments towards him, or at least it was regarded by her as a sufficient sanction in the eyes of the public for those manifestations of favor and esteem with which she was pleased to honor him. But whether the affection which she entertained for him best deserved the name of friendship or a still tenderer one, seems after all a question of too subtle and obscure a nature for sober discussion; though in a French "*cour d'amour*" it might have furnished pleas and counterpleas of exquisite ingenuity, prodigious sentimental interest, and length interminable. What is unfortunately too certain is, that he was a favorite, and in the common judgement of the court, of the

nation, and of posterity, an unworthy one; but calumny and prejudice alone have dared to attack the reputation of the queen.

Elizabeth had no propensity to exalt immoderately her relations by the mother's side;—for she neither loved nor honored that mother's memory; but several of the number may be mentioned, whose merits towards herself, or whose qualifications for the public service, justly entitled them to share in her distribution of offices and honors, and whom she always treated with distinction. The whole illustrious family of the Howards were her relations; and in the first year of her reign she conferred on the duke of Norfolk, her second-cousin, the order of the garter. Her great-uncle lord William Howard, created baron of Effingham by Mary, was continued by her in the high office of lord-chamberlain, and soon after appointed one of the commissioners for concluding a peace with France. Lord Thomas Howard, her mother's first-cousin, who had treated her with distinguished respect and kindness on her arrival at Hampton Court from Woodstock, and had the further merit of being indulgent to protestants during the persecutions of Mary, received from her the title of viscount Bindon, and continued much in her favor to the end of his days.

Sir Richard Sackville, also her mother's first-cousin, had filled different fiscal offices under the three last reigns; he was a man of abilities, and derived from a long line of ancestors great estates and extensive influence in the county of Sussex. The people, who marked his growing wealth, and to whom he was perhaps

officially obnoxious, nicknamed him Fill-sack:

in Mary's time he was a catholic, a privy-councillor, and chancellor of the court of Augmentations; under her successor he changed the first designation and retained the two last, which he probably valued more. He is chiefly memorable as the father of Sackville the poet, afterwards lord Buckhurst and progenitor of the dukes of Dorset.

Sir Francis Knolles, whose lady was one of the queen's nearest kinswomen, was deservedly called to the privy-council on his return from his voluntary banishment for conscience' sake; his sons gained considerable influence in the court of Elizabeth; his daughter, the mother of Essex, and afterwards the wife of Leicester, was for various reasons long an object of the queen's particular aversion.

But of all her relations, the one who had deserved most at her hands was Henry Carey, brother to lady Knolles, and son to Mary Boleyn, her majesty's aunt. This gentleman had expended several thousand pounds of his own patrimony in her service and relief during the time of her imprisonment, and she liberally requited his friendship at her first creation of peers, by conferring upon him, with the title of baron Hunsdon, the royal residence of that name, with its surrounding park and several beneficial leases of crown lands. He was afterwards joined in various commissions and offices of trust: but his remuneration was, on the whole, by no means exorbitant; for he was not rapacious, and consequently not importunate; and the queen, in the employments which she

assigned him, seemed rather to consult her own advantage and that of her country, by availing herself of the abilities of a diligent and faithful servant, than to please herself by granting rewards to an affectionate and generous kinsman. In fact, lord Hunsdon was skilled as little in the ceremonious and sentimental gallantry which she required from her courtiers, as in the circumspect and winding policy which she approved in her statesmen. "As he lived in a ruffling time," says Naunton, "so he loved sword and buckler men, and such as our fathers wont to call men of their hands, of which sort he had many brave gentlemen that followed him; yet not taken for a popular or dangerous person." Though extremely choleric, he was honest, and not at all malicious. It was said of him that "his Latin and his dissimulation were both alike," equally bad, and that "his custom in swearing and obscenity in speech made him seem a worse Christian than he was."

Fuller relates of him the following characteristic anecdote. "Once, one Mr. Colt chanced to meet him coming from Hunsdon to London, in the equipage of a lord of those days. The lord, on some former grudge, gave him a box on the ear: Colt presently returned the principal with interest; and thereupon his servants drawing their swords, swarmed about him. 'You rogues,' said my lord, 'may not I and my neighbour change a blow but you must interpose?' Thus the quarrel was begun and ended in the same minute³⁷."

The queen's attachment to such of her family as she was

³⁷ "Worthies" in Herts.

pleased to honor with her notice, was probably the more constant because there was nothing in it of excess or of blindness:—even Leicester in the height of his favor felt that he must hold sacred their claims to her regard: according to Naunton's phrase, he used to say of Sackville and Hunsdon, "that they were of the tribe of Dan, and were Noli me tangere's."

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