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THE DAWN OF MODERN ENGLAND





# THE DAWN OF MODERN ENGLAND

BEING

A History of the Reformation in England  
1509-1525

BY

CARLOS B. LUMSDEN

BARRISTER-AT-LAW

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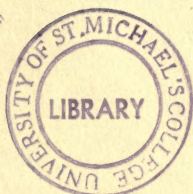
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MODERN ENGLAND

A History of the Reformation in England

1534-1547



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### *Errata*

- Page 61, line 3, page 63, line 24, page 71, line 16, *for* Edmund  
*read* Edward Howard
- „ 65, „ 26, *for* D'Albert *read* d'Albret
- „ 72, „ 18, *for* Sands *read* Sandys
- „ 85, „ 9, *for* Banbridge *read* Bainbridge
- „ 89, „ 10, *for* Navarra *read* Novara
- „ 212, note 2, *for* James *read* Jacques B. Bossuet

# THE DAWN OF MODERN ENGLAND

HENRY VIII (1509-1525)

## INTRODUCTION

THE first thing that seemed necessary in the study of such a period was the finding out of some common denominator by which one could with ease distinguish not merely the Reformers from the Catholics, but also those whose sympathies and tendencies were with Wittenberg and Geneva and against Rome. But diligent as the search was, it merely revealed the impossibility of such a common invariable principle. 'Justification by Faith alone' was soon found useless for such a purpose; 'mere hatred of Rome' was even too narrow a mesh. But besides this mere difficulty of inclusion and exclusion, the thing itself was unsatisfactory. In the progress of the future, however great the part it played during the

Reformation itself, such a dogma as 'Justification by Faith alone' in the centuries to come was seen to be discarded and forgotten, while the division of Christendom remained as bitter as ever. The history of the Reformation as written from a dogmatic view clearly could not explain the message of the Reformation, however much interlarded by vague references to a contemporaneous social revolution; as Professor Maitland has said, 'Many currents and cross currents were flowing in that turbid age.'<sup>1</sup> And the mention of Professor Maitland turned one's thoughts to the History of Law. Here again there was turmoil and change; was it possible to find here the mainspring of all the turmoil of the sixteenth century? Maitland's warning in the lines immediately preceding those just quoted seemed to forbid the way. 'Some German historians, as the reader is aware, have tried to find or fashion links that will in some direct and obvious manner connect the Reform and the Reception. In one popular version of the tale (Janssen) Protestantism finds a congenial ally in the individualism and capitalism of the pagan digest. In truth I take it that the story is complex.'

That the history of the Reformation is complex one need not doubt, but it seemed necessary, highly necessary, to see if there was not

<sup>1</sup> *English Law and the Renaissance*, p. 11.

something common in the practically simultaneous revolutions in religion, in learning, in law and in social economy that convulsed Europe in the later fifteenth and early years of the sixteenth centuries. That there was a common cause, a common line of thought, that impelled different men to attack the established order in so many different points at practically the same time seemed to admit of no doubt. Bishop Creighton has well stated the problem in his Introductory Note to the 'Cambridge Modern History.'<sup>1</sup> 'Any one who works through the records of the fifteenth and the sixteenth century becomes conscious of an extraordinary change of mental attitude showing itself on all sides in unexpected ways. He finds at the same time that all attempts to analyse and account for this change are to a great extent unsatisfactory. After marshalling all the forces and ideas which were at work to produce it, he still feels that there was behind all these an animating spirit which he cannot but most imperfectly catch, whose power blended all else together and gave a sudden cohesion to the whole.' Bishop Stubbs could point with truth to the fact that the Reformation spread and remained more permanently rooted in countries where the dioceses of bishops were large and episcopal control was slack.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i. pp. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on European History*, p. 33.

A French statesman<sup>1</sup> could publicly declare that Protestantism was the first form of liberty in modern times. Dr. Lindsay says, 'While underlying all, there was the beginning of the assertion of the supreme right of individual revolt against every custom, law or theory which would subordinate the man to the caste or class.'<sup>2</sup> But Janssen could point out, 'There was no question of serfdom; it was unknown before the sixteenth century';<sup>3</sup> and again: 'So long as the principles of the canon law and of its outgrowth, the German secular law, were adhered to, national political life continued to flourish in Germany. It was the casting aside of these principles that caused the ruin of the working classes and the rise of the proletariat of latter times.'<sup>4</sup> Professor Pollard points out how the Reformation helped the formation of royal despotism,<sup>5</sup> and Dr. Mackinnon that 'Lutheranism became a religion of subordination, political nullity, for the "common man."'<sup>6</sup> M. Baudrillart makes the Reformation a forming of an idea of Christian life all individualistic and founded on free

<sup>1</sup> M. Jules Ferry, quoted in *Histoire de la Réformation à Bordeaux*, par Gaullieur, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Reformation*, vol. i. pp. 43, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Janssen, *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. by Mitchell and Christie, vol. i., note to p. 313.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 103, 104.

<sup>5</sup> *Factors of Modern History*, pp. 70, 71.

<sup>6</sup> *History of Modern Liberty*, vol. ii. p. 103.



will,<sup>1</sup> while Lord Acton points out that 'the Stuarts adopted from Luther his new and admired doctrine of the divine right of kings.'<sup>2</sup> Professor Cunningham, viewing the period from the standpoint of the Historian of Economics, says, 'From this time forward the desire of wealth, as the means of gratifying the desire of social distinction and all else, became a much more important factor in economic affairs than it had been before.'<sup>3</sup> Professor Brewer, pointing out the same phenomena: 'Yet it is undeniable that the power and temptation of money were then beginning to be felt as they had never been felt before.'<sup>4</sup> Mr. Lea thus expresses the same idea: 'Thus we may reasonably conclude that in its essence the Reformation was due more largely to financial than to religious considerations.'<sup>5</sup> Abbot Gasquet states it thus: 'In great measure at least, questions of money and property, even of national interest and prosperity, were intimately concerned in the matter in dispute. They touched the people's pocket; and whether rightly or wrongly, those who found the money wished to have a say in its disposal. One thing cannot fail to strike an inquirer into the literature of this period: the

<sup>1</sup> *L'Eglise Catholique, La Renaissance, La Protestantisme*, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> *Growth of Industry and Commerce*, vol. i. p. 467.

<sup>4</sup> *The Reign of Henry VIII*, edited by Gairdner, vol. ii. p. 148.

<sup>5</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i. p. 667.

very small number of people who were enthusiasts in the doctrinal matters with which the more ardent reformers occupied themselves.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Beard says of the English Reformation, and many other writers agree with him in this, that 'its motive power was at least as much political as religious.'<sup>2</sup>

But amidst all these different views, to say nothing of the old Protestant view of the Reformation as merely an uprising of the people against the godless tyranny of Rome, to the present writer there seemed to lie a real agreement, stated crudely and bluntly, no doubt, drawn with too heavy a pencil by Mr. Belfort Bax, but in the main truly, in the following quotation :

The true inwardness of the change of which the Protestant Reformation represented the ideological side, meant the transformation of society from a basis mainly corporative and co-operative to one individualistic in its essential character. The whole polity of the middle ages, industrial, social, political, ecclesiastical, was based on the principle of the group or the community—ranging in hierarchical order from the trade-guild to the town corporation; from the town corporation through the feudal orders to the imperial throne itself; from the single monastery to the order as a whole; and from the order as a whole to the complete hierarchy of the Church as represented by the papal chair. The principle of this social organisation was now breaking down.

<sup>1</sup> *Eve of the Reformation*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Hibbert Lectures* (1883), p. 303.

The modern and bourgeois conception of the autonomy of the individual in all spheres of life was beginning to affirm itself.<sup>1</sup>

And though this is the broad outline it is nothing more. We must now attempt to give our own view of the principle or principles at work in the fifteenth century, and which culminated in the Reformation in the sixteenth, and thus founded the basis of our modern life, which now in this twentieth century of ours seems to be again breaking up.

There has been nothing more apparent in the political and social history of modern times than the beginnings of the struggle between capital and labour, or, in other words, between the rights of the individual and the needs of the community. And for anyone to understand the rights and wrongs of this great question thoroughly, it is necessary to go back and study bit by bit the origin and growth of this antagonism. We often hear the supporters of the modern capitalist party lay down as a hard and fast rule that capital has always and must always exist in any civilised country, and yet there can be no more apparent historic truth than that—dealing with England for the moment—capital in its strict meaning hardly existed, if it existed at all, before the beginning of the fifteenth century. And, on the other hand, we have many exponents of the

<sup>1</sup> *Peasant War in Germany*, p. 19.

socialist party dealing with historic questions in the same ignorant manner. In a humble way, it is our duty to point out the historic bearings of this question in the sixteenth century, and there can be no century in which this question, among many others, can be studied to more purpose than the sixteenth century, for it was that century that saw the final break-up of the mediæval theories of statecraft and church-craft.

Professor Ashley has pointed out in his economic history that 'the spirit of self-seeking in the sixteenth century became a most remarkable fact,' 'which, however we may explain it, was so much more intense and widely prevalent than before, that it strikes us almost as the manifestation of a new economic force,'<sup>1</sup> and if we must search for a generalisation to describe the sixteenth century, it would be as the century when self-interest became predominant. It is not that human nature became changed, but that all the circumstances in every department of human activity were so altered and so changed that all the old ideas of mediæval communism—if one may use that term of a system which, whatever its defects, both practical and theoretical, was yet a definite theory to which all human conduct was supposed, and did to a very large extent try, to adapt itself—were gradually discarded.

<sup>1</sup> Ashley's *Economic History*, Part II. p. 49.

Looking back on the early centuries of English history down to the beginning of the sixteenth century, we find one common principle that underlay all the legislation of the State and of the Church, and also we find the same principle underlying all the literature, the customs and the habits of the people, and that principle, broadly stated, was that man did not exist for himself alone but also for the community of which he was a part. It is quite true that the same principle might be said to underlie the whole theory and practice of human life to the present day, but in mediæval times they read that principle in a totally different way from how we now read it. Nowadays we say that the best way to gain the welfare of the community is to allow the individual the freest possible play, but then the position was reversed: the whole mediæval conception of this principle was to allow the individual the smallest possible scope and to make the community the all in all. To put it in another form, we trust the individual, and though recognising that by so doing it may and does in some instances cause harm, yet that the evil of circumscribing individual freedom would be much greater than the evil caused by those individuals who abuse their freedom.

In the Middle Ages they considered that the evil caused by the abuse of freedom was much greater than the evil caused by limiting that

freedom ; they did not trust the individual, and so they elaborated a code of laws and morals which limited in every way individual action. You were not allowed to invest your money as you wanted, both by the laws of the land and the laws of the Church ; you could not leave your lands or your goods to whom you wanted ; you could not trade with what country or in what manner you wished ; you could not give expression to what thoughts you thought ; you could not join or hold any religious creed save the creed of the land. You could not even wear the clothes you wished to, or eat the food that you preferred. In all cases—some of them seem trivial enough to modern minds—the individual found himself fettered and hampered by the State ; and these regulations were not made in a capricious manner, they were not made by the arbitrary will of a despot, but were made, agreed to, and consented to by the whole body of public opinion throughout Europe for many centuries ; and it is surprising perhaps to modern minds, imbued with what some people call the sacredness of liberty, to find that kings, lawgivers, and canonists in this respect often lagged behind public opinion. In many cases, as Professor Cunningham has pointed out, numerous petitions used to be presented both to the King and to Parliament, begging of them both to enact and to more strictly enforce laws against individual freedom. It is only

necessary here to point out the many petitions presented to the English Parliament by merchants and municipal corporations, requesting the Government to enforce more strictly the laws against usury and freedom of trading.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out in more detail the very obvious differences between the Middle Ages and modern times. It is more for us to examine in what way the sixteenth century and the Reformation were the first great protests of the individual against authority. Of course, mediæval strictness of rule had become weaker and more lax during the course of the preceding centuries, but there had been no great successful repudiation of mediæval doctrines until the Reformation swept over Europe.

Let us examine for a minute what were the doctrines and customs which were attacked by the Reformation. Looking for a moment at the purely theological side, we remember that the great principle that Luther claimed to have borrowed from Augustine was the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Luther and his followers thundered against the Catholic doctrine of good works. 'How rich a Christian or baptised man is since, even if he would, he cannot lose his salvation by any sins however great, unless he refuse to believe; for no sins whatever can

condemn him but unbelief alone,' thundered Luther.<sup>1</sup> The whole line of German reforming theology was a great protest against the individual being bound and fettered to the performance of any act or works by an outside authority. The individual is only bound to believe according to their theology, even if in practice they did not often make their deeds square with their theories; still, theoretically, the theology of Luther is one prolonged protest on behalf of the individual and against authority. Then take another point: what institution of Christendom was more bitterly and consistently attacked than the monastic institution? and, thinking for a moment on what was the principle in monasticism, we cannot fail to see that they proclaimed and aimed at the annihilation of individuality and making it subservient to a community; and we must remember that monasticism was the expression of the whole spirit of the early and the Middle Ages, and the great champion of individuality, Luther, for this very reason attacked monastic vows and institutions so bitterly. No man had the right to stand between the individual and his Maker, no man had the right to bind and fetter himself

<sup>1</sup> Refer *Martin Luther and the Reformation in Germany*, by Charles Beard, p. 155, quoting Luther's *Babylonish Captivity of the Church*; also *Luther's Primary Works*, edited and translated by Wace and Buchheim, p. 343; also Janssen's *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*, trans. Mitchell and Christie, vol. iii. p. 86.



with the obligation of performing numerous works and deeds which he was otherwise not obliged to do, no man must barter his own individual freedom away; and so reformation, where it was triumphant, swept away monasticism, good, bad, and indifferent, all in the same stroke.

Let us look for a moment how the practical as distinct from the theological reformer looked at these two great pillars of mediævalism, the doctrine of good works and monastic institutions. Time after time we read in pamphlets, in letters, in controversial books, popular songs, chronicles and records of that time, what the reformers, who were first of all practical men, attacked in these two doctrines. In good works they more particularly resented the power that this gave the Church over money, and we must remember that it was this very doctrine of good works which really lay at the bottom of the mediæval conception of the duties of property and the employment of capital. What Froude has pointed out as regards the landowning class is equally true of nearly all the classes in pre-Reformation days: 'the necessities of their position obliged them (the landed classes) to regard their property rather as a revenue to be administered in trust, than as "a fortune" to be expended in indulgence. Before the Reformation, while the differences of social degree were enormous, the differences in habits of life were comparatively slight, and

the practice of men was curiously the reverse of our own.'<sup>1</sup> Capital indeed, as represented by spare money, was by the whole spirit of mediævalism almost useless, but the Church, by the doctrine of good works, found a means of employing this otherwise useless commodity. They preached and taught that what a man must do with his spare money was not to employ it for the purpose of getting more money, or for the purpose of his own amusement or pleasure, but for the purpose of the good of himself in the after-world, and for the benefit of his fellow-creatures in this. The Church had found out and developed many hundreds of ways for doing this: the giving of dowries to portionless girls, the keeping and supporting of orphans, the giving of alms to the poor, the supporting of poor scholars at the universities or at the monastic schools, the building and endowing of churches, colleges, monasteries and cathedrals, and in many other hundred ways the Church, supported by public opinion, had dealt with superfluous riches; and the doctrine of indulgences—without for the moment entering into the details of this question, which will occupy us later on—was only another form of the wider doctrine of good works. In the doctrine of indulgences the Church found out another way of getting men to spend their money not for their own individual needs. And we see

<sup>1</sup> Froude, *History of England*, vol. i. p. 15.

at once how practical men were only too pleased and too glad to have a theological leader who could prove that all this was not only unnecessary but actually harmful, in Luther and his co-theologians. The practical men had been long hampered and annoyed by what to them was a shocking waste of wealth and economic power. We can hardly nowadays imagine how scarce capital and bullion then were. The revival of commerce, the opening up of new forms of industries, the discovery of America, all made the commercial and mercantile classes anxious to be able to have capital at their disposal to take advantage of these new conditions. For the first time men began to see that money for its own sake was an immense advantage; they began to see the power that wealth could confer upon its holder; and thus, wanting money so badly, they saw with anger and dismay that even the small available amount of wealth, instead of being used in industrial and commercial undertakings, was being wasted and taken into what were to them useless channels. They resented the drain of money to the foundation and the support of monastic and such-like institutions, and with even more bitterness, because it was more apparent, they resented the drain of bullion out of their country to Rome—a drain which the doctrine of indulgences was but an attempt on the Church's part to make more effective. And

the trader who looked about for a moral reason to justify his hatred of what he called clerical greed unfortunately was only too able to get that moral reason. The moral state of Rome in the later half of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century could hardly have been worse, and he was able to point out that the wealth which might otherwise have been used for the developing of commerce and industry was being squandered in the shameless vice and luxury of the Roman Court.

For capital was rapidly becoming all-powerful—as Professor Cunningham has pointed out: ‘He [Jacques Coeur (died 1456)] was the most prominent figure of the times; and since his day the political power of the banking class has been constantly felt’<sup>1</sup>—and everything was to help on its power. As Karl Kautsky has pointed out, ‘the development of fire-arms is the last link in that chain, which was forged in the sixteenth century; after that period the one thing necessary for carrying on war was money, money—and once again money! To purchase fire-arms for the exigencies of war and to employ them for that purpose was the privilege of the wealthy possessors of power in the great towns and the princes.’<sup>2</sup>

And as we know that this growing power of

<sup>1</sup> *An Essay on Western Civilisation in its Economic Aspects*, by W. Cunningham, D.D., vol. ii. p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation*, by Karl Kautsky, translated by J. L. and E. G. Mulliken, p. 125.

money was well on in its triumphant progress by the end of the fifteenth century, it may be as well here to point out that this must in no way be considered as an effect of the discovery of America and the consequent enormous increase of the precious metals, as Mr. Shaw has shown that it was not till 1520 that any effect of the inflow of the precious metals from America is perceptible ;<sup>1</sup> though of course when this inflow began it helped in some way to accelerate the rapid growth of the power of wealth.

And the doctrine of monasticism which practical reformers joined in attacking was equally obnoxious to the mercantile and commercial classes. The men who joined in the new race for wealth found that the monasteries scattered all over the land acted as little charitable sponges gathering up all the superfluous riches. They would not have minded the gathering of wealth if it had been by a successful individual, for they knew that what was this man's money to-day might be theirs to-morrow. But they knew that wealth, whether in the form of money or of land, once in the hands of the monasteries, was there for always ; they knew that the doctrine that once a thing, whether it be land or a personal chattel, was dedicated to the service of God, it could never be alienated out of that service, acted as a binder-up of

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Currency* (1252-1894), by W. A. Shaw, pp. 61-62.

wealth that would otherwise be circulated among individuals.

And not only in these two great doctrines did the reforming theologian and the man of the world join hands, they both joined hands to attack the whole series of mediæval restrictions on individuality; and as the State had been captured previously, they bent their energies on destroying the one great obstacle to individualism, the Catholic Church. But of course we must bear in mind that no one reformer probably ever generalised in this way: he grasped one or two points in mediævalism and spent his whole energy in combating them, accepting with that exception the rest of mediævalism; but once it was held and successfully held that the individual right must stand first, it was only a process of time that was necessary to complete the triumph of individualism. Once the seamless garment of mediævalism was rent, it was but a mere question of a century more or less before the opponents of mediævalism would reject the last vestige of mediævalism; and yet there is a seeming fact in later history that seems to point out that modern individualism, which was born in the sixteenth century, was an opponent of individual liberty: this is the fact that despotism was often the result of the questioning and rejection of mediævalism. Never before, and never since, has England seen such despotic power

wielded by her sovereign as she saw wielded by the Tudors. Never before had France seen such personal despotism as she saw in Louis XIV. And yet, this theory of the divine right of kings which came in with the Reformation was really but another manifestation of the spirit of individualism. The individual, the king, was not to be hampered or limited by any such old-fashioned and idolatrous notions as the benefit of the community. There was to be no outside power to warn and check his tyrannical instincts. As an individual he was king, and a king who adopts the doctrine of complete individualism is a despotic tyrant; and so that curious phenomenon, that the protest against one kind of authority should give birth to the most absolute form of another authority, may be explained in the same way as we explain the other phenomena of the Reformation.

It is hardly necessary, perhaps, here to point out that the rejection of the authority to bind and mould man's religious convictions into one universal pattern was followed in time by the extremest form of individualism in religious matters and gave birth to the almost numberless sects which nowadays call themselves Christians. It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that the extreme economic adaptation of individualism, the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, that doctrine that prohibits the community

interfering with the individual's right to trade as he will and to use his wealth as he will, is but another outcome of the same revolt against authority which the sixteenth century witnessed : without entering into that fertile source of discussion which always rages round 'Liberty,' and merely expressing the opinion that liberty may mean either pure individualism when it is looked at from the individual point of view, or may mean the strictest form of socialism when it is looked at from humanity's point of view, and also that one cannot help thinking that, as used by the ordinary person, it means little or nothing.

Two more examples may be given which show this difference which became apparent in such a short time between mediæval life and modern times. It has been one of the curious little coincidences that generally before a great change there has been a great outburst of personal luxury both in clothes, food, and other such smaller personal matters, and the Reformation is certainly no exception to this rule. We have in the Renaissance a period which in all countries was a time of lavish personal expenditure of this nature.

Of course Italy is the stock example, but no less in our own country, with infinitely less of art and taste, yet with the same reckless extravagance which characterised the more splendid



Renaissance in Italy, the earlier days of the reign of Henry VIII were a time of a somewhat sickening profusion of millinery and banquets. But behind this glitter one can trace the principles that underlie in a broad manner the whole basis of human life, here again at work. A period before a great convulsion is a period in which the old restraints are fast breaking down, and before the new code has been able properly to establish itself in men's hearts and minds, and for this reason, broadly stated, these periods have been ones of gross and reckless personal profusion and vice. But to deal specifically with the period before us, the old ways of dealing with money and surplus money which the faith of Christendom had been so fertile in devising had lost all hold on the imaginations and the minds of the upper classes, while the new, which was to show and point out to mankind the enormous power of hoarded wealth, had only been grasped by a few cunning spirits such as the Medici in Florence, and thus the only outlet for personal surplus cash was in personal expenditure. If one may put it shortly, the lust for future heavenly happiness was dead, and the lust for future worldly capital was not yet born, and so the eternal naked lust for present self only remained.

Art is also in some way an index to a nation's or a period's thoughts. One can trace the almost gradual death of the whole spirit and the whole

beauty of mediæval life, the simplicity and the almost childish joy in colour and mystery ; of tracery and delicacy that exists throughout all mediæval art—the pictures of Fra Angelico in its later form in Italy, the dim mysterious aisles of our own Gothic cathedrals—down to the last blaze of triumphant beauty and triumphant faith in the glories of Raphael ; but even in Raphael the too human beauty of his Madonnas shows that the eye of the painter was leaving the heaven which the old faith had bidden him look on and was scanning humanity closer ; that behind Raphael's Madonna are the features of La Fontarina. But the plunge into modern art and all that it meant may be best seen, not by glancing down the long line of its manifestations, where the changes are imperceptible one from another, but by taking the whole spirit as manifested in the early art of Italy and, say, the art of Rembrandt. In the one it is childish if you will, it has not learnt many tricks nor much science, it is merely the artist's soul straining after things that it cannot see up into and beyond his bright Italian sky. But in Rembrandt or, for the matter of that, in all modern artists, the painter's eye has left the vision of things that are not, to look at the things that are, and Nature and Man, and the thoughts of men about other men and about other things are what artists portray. Rembrandt's wonderful

studies of his mother or his other portraits show us that he is not looking into the clouds, but looking close, very close indeed, into each individual man's life and thoughts. But it is almost too wearisome to continue harping on a somewhat one-string theory, even though that one string be the chord of self which is the chiefest note in history, and which, for the first time since the advent of Christianity, Christians had been free to strike without shame or without fear.

And the passionate individuality that burst out in the revolt of the sixteenth century is seen clearly to have marred all the work of German artists of that period. Here is what Ruskin said of Albert Dürer's portrait of Erasmus: 'All egotism and insanity this, gentlemen. Hard words to use; but not too hard to define the faults which rendered so much of Dürer's great genius abortive, and to this day paralyse, among the details of a lifeless and ambitious precision, the student no less than the artist of German blood.'<sup>1</sup> Egotism perilously near insanity. Ruskin describing Dürer might have been describing Luther or Calvin or many another leader of that restless age.

It is necessary for us to go on with the facts of history and not to spend more time in theory, but before plunging into the reign of Henry VIII it

<sup>1</sup> *Ariadne Florentina*, in vol. xxii. of the Library edition of Ruskin's works edited by Cook and Wedderburn, p. 419.

would be as well to point out why we have theorised at all. History, when read as a mere storehouse of facts, can only be dull; history, when read as a storehouse of facts that will illuminate a theory or theories, is the most useful, the most necessary, and the most interesting of work: and though the theory that runs through the author's mind may not always be obvious, still, if this volume be read in conjunction with these few words, it may in some slight degree become apparent that the battle that was fought in England and in Europe, and which we call the Reformation, was no dead and dull battle over mere theology, or over mere items of passing interest, but was a battle which, with altered characters and with slightly different watchwords, is being refought in our own times and in our own land. And reading the history of the sixteenth century with this point of view constantly before one will serve in some slight way to make the dull pages that open with pageantry and end in tragedy somewhat more interesting than they might otherwise be.

But besides this, the fascinating ultimate aim of history, it is necessary, and nowhere more so than in dealing with the history of the Reformation, to get clear, definite data of dull facts on which to build one's theories. In this work the author has attempted to recapitulate the facts,

not the gossip which so often has done duty for the facts, of the English Reformation. The author cannot and, if he could, would not desire to be colourlessly impartial in the deductions he may draw and the theories he has attempted to build on them, but in the statement of facts it is not so difficult to be impartial; it suffices to be truthful. The question of authorities is one, if not the main, question that the historian of facts has to reckon with. In the list of authorities, contemporary and modern, which is appended to this work, the author has included only those which he has read and studied, not consulted. It has been the work of several years of toil; perhaps much of it might have been spared if not so many merely second-rate modern books had been included, but the author had a definite reason for their inclusion: it was important for him to know as fully as possible what opinion the average Englishman held of the Reformation, and this could only be acquired by a careful and prolonged study of these popular manuals of Reformation history. Many more might perhaps have been added, but human life, after all, is of limited duration. Further instalments will appear in subsequent volumes. Of course these remarks do not apply to the entries at the end of the Bibliography. They are placed separately as works of reference, and as such the author has used them.

One word may here be added of a personal nature. If health and life are spared, the author hopes to be able to carry on this work down to the execution of Charles I in 1649. This, of course, will take many volumes, how many it is impossible to say.

As in the course of this work the author has had to carefully study modern economical books and many works relating to the present condition of England, more especially of course of the working-classes, it were well here to state that none of these have been included in the present Bibliography, but will be all placed separately in a further volume. In the footnotes the abbreviations *L. and P.* refer to the 'Letters and Papers: Foreign and Domestic,' edited by J. S. Brewer; *V. Cl.*, to the Venetian Calendar; *Sp. Cl.*, to the Spanish Calendar.

## CHAPTER I

HENRY VII died on the 22nd of April 1509 at Richmond Palace, Sheen ; his only surviving son, Henry, Prince of Wales, then nearly eighteen years of age, was by the old monarch's bedside when the end came. The next day the new King moved to the Tower of London. Hall thus describes the first days of the reign :

‘ And the same day, he departed from his manour of Richemond to the tower of London, where he remained, closely and secrete, with his counsaill, till the funeralles of his father were finished and ended.’<sup>1</sup>

There seems to have been a double fear for the new King's safety in the minds of his Council, for on the 23rd the Duke of Buckingham's brother, Lord Henry Stafford, was sent to the Tower, as well as the late King's two unpopular ministers Empson and Dudley. Stafford was soon released and made Earl of Wiltshire. Empson and Dudley, however, were reserved for a worse

<sup>1</sup> Hall's *Chronicle*, edition 1809, p. 505.

fate. It is difficult to say exactly on what they based their fears, but the unsettled state of England, hardly recovered from the civil wars, made a quiet succession a thing to be hoped for rather than to be believed in. Ferdinand of Spain, writing to the young King on the 11th of May, offers him the help of a large army if it should be necessary to secure his succession to the throne,<sup>1</sup> but the work of Henry VII had been completed, and no competitor dared to oppose his son's succession; so, after this first cautious beginning, the new King's Council, realising that repression was unnecessary, bent their energies to taking advantage of his popularity. So the general pardon promised by the late King was proclaimed on the 30th of April, with about seventy-five exceptions, many of whom, however, later received their pardon.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the exceptions were Empson and Dudley; besides the pardon many recognisances of noblemen and gentlemen to Empson and Dudley were cancelled.<sup>3</sup> After this preliminary business was finished the funeral of the late King was carried out with fitting splendour. Services were first held at Richmond; then on the 9th of May the body was brought with great pomp to St. Paul's, where Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preached a

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 22; Hall, p. 506.



sermon, praising the dead sovereign without the least suspicion of flattery. Then referring to Henry's last hours, he said :

This noble prynce ordred hymselfe thereafter, let call for his sone the kynge that now is our gouernour and souerayne endued with all graces of god and nature and with as grete habyltees and lykelyhodes of well doynge as euer was in kynge, whose begynnynge is now so gracyous and so comfortable vnto all his people, that the reioysynge in hym in maner shadoweth the sorowe that elles wolde haue ben taken for the deth of his fader.<sup>1</sup>

So Fisher greeted Henry VIII, and in this he was but the spokesman of the English nation, for never had a monarch ascended the throne who was so universally popular. What happened afterwards to change Fisher's and most of his subjects' opinion of Henry is written on the face of England to this day.

After Fisher's sermon, the body was taken on the next day to Westminster, and the end of the funeral on the 11th of May was solemnised by a great banquet at the Palace of Westminster.<sup>2</sup>

With this the new reign may have been said to have definitely begun; but before entering into the details of the first years of that ever-memorable period, it is necessary to take a bird's-eye view of the new sovereign, his ministers, the

<sup>1</sup> *English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*, edited by John Mayor : E. E. T. Society : Part I. p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 507.

state of England at home, and the position of affairs abroad. Henry Tudor, who at the age of eighteen ascended the throne, is one of the most difficult personages in history to obtain a proper estimate of. Here it is hardly the place to sum up his character, but we may, before describing him at the date of his accession, point out how the enigma of his personality has struck two historians. One, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, whose *Life of Henry VIII* was published in 1649, says :

It is not easy to write that Prince's history, of whom no one thing may constantly be affirmed. Changing of manners and condition alters the coherence of parts, which should give a uniform description. Nor is it probable that contradictories should agree to the same person : so that nothing can shake the credit of a narration more than if it grows unlike itself ; when yet it may be not the Author but the argument caused the variation. It is impossible to draw his picture well, who hath several countenances. I shall labour with this difficulty in King Henry VIII ; not yet so much for the general observation (among Politiques), that the government of Princes rarely grows milder towards their latter end ; but that this King in particular (being about his declining age, so diverse in many of his desires, as he knew not well how either to command or obey them) interverted all, falling at last into such violent courses, as in common opinion derogated not a little from those virtues which at first made him one of the most renowned princes of Christendom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herbert of Cherbury, p. 1.

The other, Mr. Pollard, whose *Life of Henry* appeared in 1902, thus expresses the same difficulty :

To one historian an inhuman embodiment of cruelty and vice, to another a superhuman incarnation of courage, wisdom and strength of will, Henry VIII has by an almost universal consent been placed above or below the rank of humanity.<sup>1</sup>

Without accepting either estimate, but merely recognising the difficulty of forming an estimate of Henry's character, which we can only correctly arrive at after a careful consideration of his life and times, passing on to the youthful monarch's personal appearance, we must quote the oft-quoted words of Giustinian, the Venetian envoy, who thus described him some eleven years afterwards, and which he embodied in his report to the Senate of his embassy in England :

His Majesty was twenty-nine years old, and much handsomer than any other Sovereign in Christendom, a great deal handsomer than the King of France ; very fair, and his whole frame admirably proportioned. On hearing that the King of France wore a beard, he allowed his to grow ; and as it was reddish, he had then got a beard which looked like gold. He was very accomplished, a good musician, composed well, was a capital horseman, and fine jousting, spoke good French, Latin, and Spanish, was very religious, heard three masses daily when he hunted, sometimes five on other days, besides hearing the Office daily in the Queen's chamber, that is to say, Vespers and Compline.

<sup>1</sup> Pollard's *Henry VIII*, p. 1.

He was extremely fond of hunting, and never took that diversion without tiring eight or ten horses, which he caused to be stationed beforehand along the line of country he was to take. He was also fond of tennis, at which game it was the prettiest thing in the world to see him play, his fair skin glowing through his shirt of the finest texture; he gambled with the French hostages, to the amount occasionally it was said from six thousand to eight thousand ducats a day. He was affable and gracious, harmed no one, did not covet his neighbours' goods and was satisfied with his own dominion.<sup>1</sup>

If we allow for the eleven years of growth, we have a description of undoubted impartiality of Henry at his accession. He had been carefully educated; Lord Herbert indeed says that he had been destined by his father, during his elder brother's life, for the Archbishopric of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup> However that may be, that Henry was an accomplished scholar for his position admits of no doubt. Erasmus, describing his interview with Henry VII's children, warmly praised the accomplishments of Henry, then Duke of York. We know he was no mean musician; indeed one or two of his works are still played. As a theological student and writer we will discuss him later on. As an expert in personal feats of arms and chivalry, the praise of Giustinian has been supported by many testimonies, as will abundantly appear later on. His love of magnificence, lavish display and pomp, is evident

<sup>1</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 1287.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert, p. 2.

throughout all the earlier years of his reign. Thus we can preface of his character that he was young, handsome, active, accomplished and many-sided ; how he developed remains to be shown.

The King's Council <sup>1</sup> consisted of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor ; Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, Lord Privy Seal ; Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, Lord Treasurer ; Sir C. Somerset ; Lord Herbert, Lord Chamberlain ; G. Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Steward of the King's Household ; Sir Thomas Lovell, Master of the Wards and Constable of the Tower ; Sir H. Wyatt ; Sir E. Poynings, Controller of the Household ; Sir H. Marney, afterwards Lord Marney ; and Sir Thomas Darcy, later Lord Darcy ; to whom we may add Thomas Ruthal, the King's Secretary, who was nominated Bishop of Durham on the 24th of April.<sup>2</sup>

Little need be said of most of these, who were the carefully trained Council of Henry VIII. The three who stood above the rest were Warham, Fox, and Surrey.

Warham,<sup>3</sup> who was about fifty-nine years of age, had been employed largely in legal and

<sup>1</sup> Herbert, p. 3 ; Stow's *Annals*.

<sup>2</sup> Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, vol. i. p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol. lix. pp. 378 et seq.

diplomatic work. He had been Chancellor and Archbishop since 1504. From the great position he held one would have expected him to have had the most influence in the Government, but Warham's legal and somewhat pedantic mind was never able to gain influence over the young King; he gradually relapsed without a struggle into a mere honorary member of the Government.

Fox, Bishop of Winchester, despite struggles with Surrey, was really the Prime Minister, if such a word be permitted of Henry's earlier days. Luis Carroz de Villaragut, the Spanish ambassador in London, writing on the 29th of May 1510 to King Ferdinand, said, 'All business affairs are in the hands of the Bishop of Durham and the Bishop of Winchester'; and later in the same letter:

Whilst having a conversation with the King about the Councillors of the Emperor, who were bribed by France, said to the King: in affairs which concern the French one scarcely knows to whom to speak, for they get to know it directly and then they countermines all one's designs; I beg therefore your Highness to tell me which of them are the most trustworthy because suspicions are rife in all quarters. The King answered: Do not speak with any one except with the Bishop of Winchester about French affairs. I then asked him: Do you confide in him? The King replied, Yes, at my risk. Here in England they think he is a fox, and such is his name.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 44.

If further testimony be needed of Fox's influence, the statement of Polydore Vergil that Fox and Surrey divided the Government between them may be adduced.<sup>1</sup> Fox at this time was about sixty-one years of age, and had been one of the late King's most trusted advisers—a careful, able diplomat and administrator, a munificent patron of the universities, where amongst other benefactions he founded Corpus Christi College, Oxford.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, who as Lord Treasurer shared with Fox the chief influence in the new Government, was about sixty-six years of age, and the most distinguished of the English generals of that age. He had fought often and well, and was yet to win his great victory of Flodden for his young master, and with it win back again his dukedom of Norfolk, which had been lost by his having fought for Richard III at Bosworth. Howard, as a great nobleman and soldier, disliked the clerical influence of Fox, Ruthal and others, though he long maintained his position, only to lose it when Wolsey eclipsed all others in Henry's favour.

If we view the state of England internally, without attempting to touch the social and economic part, which must be kept for separate and more detailed consideration, but view it

<sup>1</sup> Polydorus Vergilius, *Anglicae Historicae*, Basle, 1570, p. 621.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol. xx. p. 150.

merely from its political aspect, we must pronounce that the accession of Henry VIII conferred an unmixed benefit on the English race, for it settled once and for all the grave question whether dynastic claims and counter-claims should be made the reasons for long and bitter civil wars. The reign of his father had ended the Wars of the Roses, though the after-mutterings of that great storm were heard constantly throughout his reign in rebellions on the part of pretended or real claimants to his throne : to mention only the two most conspicuous, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck. But the day of Henry VII's death ended the day of rebellions for dynastic claims, and England saw and was glad to see a monarch ascend the throne whose title was unchallenged and remained unchallenged by any competitor worth considering.

And yet from another constitutional point of view the accession of Henry VIII is worthy of note, for without trenching on social questions one may here premise that for the first time an occupant of the throne found himself absolutely independent of the great barons of the land. It is little exaggeration to say that the baronage of England had committed suicide on the fields of Towton, Tewkesbury and many others.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps as well here to be a little more accurate, as loose language as regards the effect of the Wars of the Roses on the peerage has been the father of many a grave misconception. In the first place,



enfeebled remnants had been settled and dealt with by the politic Henry VII. His son had nothing to fear from the lay barons of England as a political factor.

The internal political situation was summed up by a curious dispatch of the Venetian ambassador, Andrea Badoer (date 26th and 28th April 1590), where he said—that the new King is a worthy King; he has received the allegiance of the whole kingdom with the exception of two individuals, one of whom is a certain President of Scotland and supposed to be an agent of the King of France; the result may cause the King of England to take up arms against them, for he is already greatly inclined so to do.<sup>1</sup> Whom Badoer

to say they had committed suicide does not mean that the majority or even any very considerable number had died heirless; but what is meant is that the perpetual calls to support first one side, often changing over to the other side, had gradually sickened their tenantry of feudal loyalty. They could no longer, except in very rare and exceptional cases, be got to follow their lords in private or civil warfare. The power of the feudal lords was effectually broken. And this breaking of feudal ties was hastened and made more effectual by the now rapid change which was substituting money payments for personal services, and the ever-growing tendency of the landlords to squeeze as much money as possible out of their tenantry, this last being itself in part another effect of the wars; for the larger part of the landowning classes were left with a heavy burden of debt, the result of war, which made them more than ever grasping for money. It was in this way chiefly—to which one may add that loss of prestige by forfeitures and attainders (though perhaps many were reversed) that taught the nation as well as the barons that there were limits and somewhat narrow limits to the power of the baronage of England—that one may say that the feudal lords committed suicide on the battlefields of the Wars of the Roses.

<sup>1</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 1.

meant by a President of Scotland I cannot say, but cannot help thinking that the worthy ambassador meant Henry's brother-in-law, James IV of Scotland.

The last sentence leads us to the state of foreign affairs as regards England's position in continental politics. Bishop Stubbs has thus summarised it :

‘The position of England at the opening of modern history, the position which she had assumed under Henry VII and in which Henry VIII found her at his accession, was that of a young, well concentrated and well equipped but untrained actor for the great drama of European politics.’<sup>1</sup>

Without altogether accepting this summary, for, remembering the difficulties which Wolsey afterwards had to contend with in gathering together and dispatching a small expeditionary force, and also the difficulty which he had always to face of finding even moderately well-trained diplomats, we can hardly acquiesce in the statement that England was well equipped for mixing in continental politics.

Henry VIII succeeded amidst the opening of an international storm that, with interruptions and changes of parties, went on for nearly the whole of his long reign. Maximilian was

<sup>1</sup> *Seventeen Lectures on Mediæval and Modern History*, by William Stubbs, D.D., p. 278.

Emperor—brave and chivalrous, but utterly inconsequent and unreliable; Louis XII of France—sagacious and ambitious, but prematurely old and a physical wreck; Ferdinand of Aragon, the most unscrupulous, but ablest, of Spanish sovereigns, held sway in Aragon, Naples and Sicily as natural sovereign, and in Castile as regent for his little grandson the Archduke Charles, who was also grandson and heir to the Emperor, and the nominal ruler of the Netherlands. But at this moment probably the most important of all contemporary potentates, both for his dauntless courage, inordinate ambition, and great mental powers, was Julius II (Della Rovere), the Pope.

At the end of 1508 (December) a League was formed at Cambrai, consisting of the Emperor, the Pope, and France, while Ferdinand of Spain was also nominally included and was without doubt a secret party to it.<sup>1</sup> The League was formed for the despoiling of Venice. Each contracting party was to take possession of the places which Venice held against it, while France was to receive Brescia and other towns which had been ceded to Venice out of the spoils of the duchy of Milan. Venice, when she heard of this League, made vain diplomatic efforts to ward off the danger, but it was too late.<sup>2</sup> On

<sup>1</sup> Brewer's *Reign of Henry VIII*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i. p. 132

the 7th of April 1509, France declared war, and on the 27th of April the Pope excommunicated the Venetians, which was announced in a letter of Jerome Bonvixi, addressed to the late King.<sup>1</sup> This was, shortly, at the date of Henry's accession the political aspect of Europe—specifically, England stood on outwardly friendly terms with all the powers. On 11th June James IV of Scotland wrote to Henry to acknowledge his letter and to say that he was glad to understand the goodwill Henry bore him, promising to return his affection.<sup>2</sup> With persecuted Venice England stood on good terms; in fact, we hear early in 1510 (5th January) that a rumour had reached the Senate of the Venetian Republic that Henry was anxious to mediate on their behalf with the Emperor.<sup>3</sup> England was also on good terms with the Emperor, the Pope, and France.

The most intimate relations, soon to be cemented by Henry's marriage, existed between Spain and England. Without entering into the intricate questions of bulls and briefs, or the *minutiae* of the previous transactions, which will concern us considerably later on, it is necessary here to briefly indicate how Henry's marriage arose. Henry VII, looking about for a royal alliance for his children, fixed on the Princess Katherine, daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 22.

and Isabella of Castile, as the most suitable and desirable *parti* for his eldest son and heir, Arthur, Prince of Wales. After much tedious diplomatic delay and seemingly endless negotiations, the Princess, with a large dowry, was sent to England to be married to Prince Arthur. Without entering here into the discussion, afterwards so important, as to whether the marriage was ever consummated, it suffices here to state that the young couple were officially married on the 14th of November 1501, at St. Paul's by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that on the 2nd April 1502, Prince Arthur died at Ludlow Castle. The widowed Princess remained in England, the subject of quarrels and disputes between her father and father-in-law. One thing Henry would keep, and Ferdinand would have back, was Katherine's dowry. At last an arrangement was arrived at, though indeed during the rest of Henry VII's lifetime it was constantly being broken and patched up again, and by that arrangement Ferdinand and Henry begged the Pope for a dispensation so that Katherine might marry her brother-in-law Henry, now heir to the throne. After considerable delay the Court of Rome yielded to the request and the dispensation was granted.

These are the main lines of the position when Henry VII died. Ferdinand immediately pressed on the marriage; writing on the 11th May

1509, to his envoy the Knight Commander of Membrillia, he instructs him that after congratulating the new sovereign and presenting his credentials he must press the King to marry without delay and most earnestly to consummate the marriage with the Princess Katherine, who is already his wife ; that he must never admit that the marriage can be dissolved ; on the contrary, he must always speak of it as though nothing can be changed in that respect.<sup>1</sup> Again, on the same day Ferdinand hastily dispatched another letter to the Knight Commander that the projected union was lawful, putting forward the papal dispensation as an answer to the doubts raised in England as to its lawfulness, the parties being brother-in-law and sister-in-law, and hinting that the projected union between Henry's sister Mary and Ferdinand's grandson, the young Archduke Charles, depended on the marriage between Katherine and Henry taking place.<sup>2</sup> However, there was no need for Ferdinand's anxiety. On June 11th they were married privately by Archbishop Warham. Some confusion has arisen about the exact date, as Hall distinctly states the 3rd June, and Lord Herbert copies Hall as to this.<sup>3</sup> But from Henry's own words in the letter quoted in the notes and other documents, there can be no doubt that it was the 11th. Henry, in announcing

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Hall, p. 507 ; Herbert, p. 8.

his marriage to Margaret of Savoy in a letter dated the 27th June, says that having been charged by Henry VII on his deathbed to fulfil the old treaty by taking Katherine as his wife, moreover considering alliances and the Pope's dispensation, he had married her on the 11th, and they had been crowned together, and that the realm was in good peace.<sup>1</sup>

The young couple had been crowned on June 24th. Hall the chronicler thus describes the gorgeous pageantry of that ceremony :

And the morowe folowyng beyng Saterdaie, the xxiiij day of the said monthe, his grace with the Quene departed from the Tower, through the citie of London, against whose cōmyng the streates where his grace should passe, were hanged with Tapistrie and clothe of Arras. And the greate parte, of the Southe side of Chepe, with clothe of gold, and some parte of Cornehill also. And the streates railed and barred, on the one side, from ouer against Grace Church, unto Bradstreate, in Cheapeside, where euery occupation stode, in their liueries in ordre, beginnyng with base and meane occupations, and so assendyng to the worshipfull craftes : highest and lastly stode the Maior with the Aldermen. The Goldesmithes stalles, vnto the ende of the Olde Chaunge, beeyng replenished with Virgins in white, with braunches of white Waxe : the priestes and clerkes in riche Copes, with Crosses and censers of siluer with censyng his grace and the quene also as they passed. The features of his body, his goodly personage, his amiable visage, princely countenance, with the noble qualities of his royall estate,

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 224.

to euery man knowen nedeth no rehersall, consideryng that for lacke of cunnyng I cannot expresse the giftes of grace and of nature, that God hath endowed hym with all : yet partly, to descriue his apparel, it is to bee noted, his grace ware in his vpperest apparel, a robe of Crimosyn Veluet, furred with armyns his jacket or cote of raised gold, the Placard embrowered with Diamōdes, Rubies, Emeraudes, greate Pearles, and other riche stones, a greate Bauderike about his necke, or greate Balasses. The Trapper of His Horse, Damaske gold, with a depe purfell of Armyns, his knightes and Esquires for his body in Crimosyn Veluet, and all the gentlemen, with other of his chappell, and all his officers, and household seruanutes wer appareled in Skarlet. The Barons of the Fiue Portes, bare the Canaby, or clothe of estate : For to resite vnto you the greate estates by name, the ordre of their goyng, the nombre of the lordes Spirituall and temporall, Knightes, Esquires, and Gentlemen, and of their costly and rich apparell of seuerall deuises and fashions, who tooke vp his horse best, or who was richest besene, it would aske long tyme, and yet I should omitte many thynges, and faile of the nombre, for they were verie many : wherefore I passe ouer, but this I dare well saie, there was no lacke or scarcitie of clothe of Tissue, clothe of Golde, clothe of Siluer, Broderie, or Golde smithes workes : but in more plentie and abundance, then hath been seen, or redde of at any tyme before, and thereto many and a greate nombre of chaines of Golde, and Bauderikes, bothe massy and greate.<sup>1</sup>

And so on through one or two pages more of costly millinery and gorgeous pageantry, ending with sumptuous banquets and magnificent jousts. Thus was Henry VIII married to Katherine

<sup>1</sup> Hall, pp. 507 et seq.



of Aragon. Fuller in his quaint way says: 'However Divine Providence overruling all actions to his own glory so ordered it that the breaking off the Pope's power and the banishing of superstition out of England is at this day the only surviving issue of this marriage.'<sup>1</sup>

But while England was marrying and crowning her new monarch, the storm of war was sweeping over Venice. On May 14th, the French routed her forces at Agnadello.<sup>2</sup> On May 30th, the Doge and Senate wrote bitterly to Badoer, their ambassador in England, of this battle, which they called a rout rather than a defeat, mentioning that instructions had been sent him how he was to negotiate with Henry.<sup>3</sup> Venice was indeed hard pressed. The French pushed forward and occupied Bergamo, Brescia, and Crema.<sup>4</sup> The Venetians were driven out of Cremona, the towns in the Romagna were evacuated and were entered by the papal troops. Verona, Vicenza, and Padua gave themselves up to the dilatory Maximilian, who did not move till August, by which time the Venetian forces had managed to reoccupy Padua. Maximilian, with French aid, proceeded to besiege that city, but owing to dissensions with his allies he was

<sup>1</sup> Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, ed. Brewer, vol. iii. p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i. p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i. p. 133.

forced to raise the siege on the 2nd of October. Shortly after this Maximilian retired back into the Tyrol, the French retiring on to Milan. The break-up of the Alliance against Venice was imminent, but before speaking of that it is necessary to go back and gather up the threads of the story as it affected England, and especially her relations with France and Spain, for by that means we shall be able to see how Venice was saved, despite the utter defeat of her troops at Agnadello.

## CHAPTER II

At first all went as happily and as well with the newly wedded couple as could possibly be desired. In a quaint letter dated 26th July Henry told his father-in-law that his love for his wife was great.<sup>1</sup> Three days later Queen Katherine wrote to her father that she would act as his ambassador to Henry, that she loved Henry, and that there was continual feasting at Court.<sup>2</sup> The irony of fate was not far off, for between the dates of these two letters, on the 27th July, Sir Thomas Bullen, Knight of the Body, was made Keeper of the Exchange at Calais and of the Foreign Exchange in England.<sup>3</sup>

The grave crisis of the war in Italy turned the attention of the English Government to foreign matters. They could only see with grave misgivings the power and influence that their ancient foes the French were rapidly acquiring in Italy. At this time a curious letter from John Stile, the English ambassador in Spain, shows the watchful

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 338.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 368.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 343.

jealousy of England towards France.<sup>1</sup> Stile says that Ferdinand answers Henry's question as to whether the French King and he were in good amity, replying that he (Ferdinand) will be so long as Henry is. Careful Ferdinand, for to him the anxieties of the existing state of European affairs are a matter of grave concern. Already the Emperor is disputing with him his right to the governance of Castile on behalf of the heir of Castile, their common grandchild and heir, the Archduke Charles. Ferdinand is nervous, as well, of the designs of the French upon Naples. Indeed, as was said at the end of the last chapter, the break-up of the League of Cambrai was imminent. 'Comme les Vénitiens l'avaient prévu, tout l'orage vint de la France,' says the French historian Martin of the obvious result;<sup>2</sup> France had done all the work, and her allies became inspired with profound distrust that, having done so much, she would claim a proportionally large reward in Italy. Julius II had acquired all he wanted in the recovery to the Holy See of the Romagna towns which Venice had taken possession of and in the humiliation of the proud Queen of the Adriatic; satisfied in that direction, the fiery, impetuous pontiff turned to what was always the ideal of his pontificate—the freeing of Italy from foreign rule, the driving of

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 490.

<sup>2</sup> Martin, *Histoire de France*, vol. vii. p. 372.

the barbarians, as he termed them, out of his sunny land. First and foremost now amongst the alien powers who ruled Italy stood France, and against Louis of France Julius II prepared to turn himself, regardless of everything else. Ferdinand, nervous and apprehensive of everyone, stood tentatively for the moment aside. Maximilian blustered against the Venetians and was delighted at the successes of the French, but the tide was turning in the favour of Venice. All parties, for the moment neglecting war, started a game of mutual intriguing one against the other.

Henry was anxious to emulate the glories of Henry V by himself leading some vaguely planned invasion of France by which he might win back to the English crown the fair Plantagenet heritage which the long Wars of the Roses had finally ended. Henry's ministers, however, were too experienced not to know that England alone was powerless before the great power of the French King. There was nothing left for them to do but to stir up the fears and jealousies of Louis's neighbours, so that England might find allies to help her to humble the French crown.

They turned in the first place to Ferdinand and carefully sounded him. Ferdinand was vague in his answer but did not reject altogether their suggestion, for Ferdinand had his own ends in

view. The humiliation of France would have been a great triumph to him, but he saw that if the French should be attacked by himself and England the brunt of the fighting would fall upon him, whether in Italy or in the Pyrenees, and the risk was too great ; he preferred to go to work more cautiously.

Indeed, at this moment, Louis XII of France held the predominant position in Europe. His armies had swept all before them on the plains of Lombardy ; he ruled over the only rich, well consolidated and contented nation ; he had no extraneous difficulties such as Ferdinand had in the question of the governance of Castile to cope with. But where Ferdinand feared to move Julius had no such fears. He had bent his energies to the task of driving the French back across the Alps, and Louis, who was no stranger to the Pope's wishes and schemes, sought to meet the danger by carrying the war into the enemy's territories. For Julius's position on the Chair of St. Peter was hardly a safe one ; the promise of ecclesiastical reform by the summoning of a general council, so often made by cardinals before the election and always broken or put off when they had been elected to the Papacy, was rapidly becoming a very urgent question. Julius, when he had been a cardinal, had been one of the most vehement supporters of the calling of a general council, but after his election to the Papacy his

zeal in this direction had rapidly cooled, so Louis thought that in taking up the demand of ecclesiastical reform and a general council he would have the support of public opinion throughout Europe. Besides, whispers and rumours had it that Julius's election had been brought about by lavish bribery, and that it was therefore void as being simoniacal. Suddenly Louis set on foot the project of a general council, which he called together at Pisa, where it would be under the protection of the French armies; but the project, instead of strengthening his position, was the cause of the temporary ruin of the French dominion in Lombardy. It was the one thing that was needful: it gathered together all the open and secret enemies of France, for they were able to combine against him on the ground that he was an enemy of the Church.

But to go back a little. The Pope's first move against Louis was to absolve the Venetians from their excommunication, which ceremony was performed in Rome on the 24th February 1510. After this his next work was to gain allies to form the League which he was to wield against France. Ferdinand, he knew, would be bound eventually to join the League once formed, for Ferdinand's position in Naples was very similar to his own in the Papal States. Maximilian the Pope cared little for, though he hoped he too would join the League eventually. His energies

were therefore bent to gain Henry VIII of England, who, no doubt he considered, would make a most useful paymaster to the forces of the League. Besides England, Julius II quickly opened negotiations with the Swiss by means of Matthias Schinner, Bishop of Sitten.<sup>1</sup> Louis XII had refused to grant the terms demanded by the Swiss for the renewal of the alliance between France and Switzerland which had existed for the previous ten years. Julius took advantage of this and by means of Schinner made an alliance for five years with the Swiss, who undertook to invade Lombardy with 1500 men. To gain England he dispatched Fisher, an English Clerk of the Sacred College,<sup>2</sup> with the much-coveted golden rose, which, the Pope was careful to explain in a letter to Archbishop Warham, was to be presented with certain ceremonies, a list of which were enclosed;<sup>3</sup> but before Fisher reached England—to the unspeakable rage of the Pope—England concluded on the 23rd of March a treaty of peace with France.<sup>4</sup> When the Pope heard of it, in his first outburst of rage he told the English ambassadors that they were all rascals;<sup>5</sup> but after this outburst Julius, nothing daunted, went quietly on with his plans for the humiliation of France.

<sup>1</sup> Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, vol. v. p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 983.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 978.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 962.

<sup>5</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 56.



Things looked black indeed for the projected League. Maximilian was furious and wrote to Henry that he heard that the Pope had written to him to say that he and Ferdinand had promised the Pope to help him against France, and flatly denied it, accusing the Pope of trickery.<sup>1</sup> However much Maximilian might bluster, Julius never for one moment swerved from the resolution he had pledged himself to. Having gained the Swiss, he prepared for what he knew was equivalent to open war on the French King.<sup>2</sup> His scheme was to attack Louis's ally, the Duke of Ferrara. Before doing so he laid a bait for Ferdinand's friendship: on June 17th he invested him with the crown of Naples, thus disposing of the French claims on that country. As Bishop Creighton observes, the Pope grew more sanguine of success as each day brought war nearer.<sup>3</sup> The French in Rome were ill-treated; one of their cardinals who tried to escape was seized and shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo. When the cardinal protested on his imprisonment without a trial the Pope answered, 'By God's body, if he makes me angry I will have his head cut off in the Campi del Fiori.'<sup>4</sup>

In July 1510 the Pope excommunicated the Duke of Ferrara;<sup>5</sup> but his carefully laid plans for the present were doomed to failure. The Swiss

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 1221.

<sup>2</sup> Creighton, vol. v. p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 136.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 136.

were bribed by the French on their invasion of Lombardy and retired home without fighting. This at least would have daunted a less resolute man than Julius II. He went on with the war, after a characteristic letter to the Swiss, as if nothing had happened. His troops, joined with the Venetians, captured Modena. The French, however, turning southwards, suddenly besieged the Pope in Bologna. The old man was ill in bed, but not even this broke his spirit. The French commander wasted precious time in negotiations, and at last Spanish and Venetian reinforcements made their appearance and relieved Bologna. The Pope excommunicated all in the French camp. Meanwhile Louis made the mistake of deciding to carry the struggle into the ecclesiastical sphere, and on 14th September 1510 summoned a synod of French bishops to meet at Tours.<sup>1</sup> The synod approved of Louis's suggestion to summon a general council to inquire into the conduct of the Pope. We need hardly go into the details of the Italian campaign. Suffice it to say that after unheard-of exertions the Pope seemed beaten. Though he captured Mirandola it was of little avail to him, for on 28th February his forces were defeated by the Duke of Ferrara.<sup>2</sup> The French on the 23rd of May captured Bologna, and when the Pope arrived at Rimini he found fixed on the door of the church

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, vol. v. p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 145.

a document summoning a general council to meet at Pisa on September 1st.<sup>1</sup> His answer to this move was to convoke himself a council to be held at the Lateran on April 19th, 1512.

But as we have seen before, this step of Louis was of great use to the Pope, and he was quickly able to finish his negotiations for a League against the French. On October 5th a League was formed between the Pope, Ferdinand and Venice for the defence of the Church.<sup>2</sup> On the 17th of November 1511, Henry VIII joined the League. The terms of the League between Ferdinand and Henry were :<sup>3</sup>

1. To defend the Church.
2. Aragon to carry on hostilities until the Pope recovers possession of his Italian Estate.
3. The two Kings to attack France in Aquitaine and, in April 1512, send thither 6000 men.
4. The Lateran Council to be acknowledged by both.

Thus England was fairly committed to war with France. Before this we may mention two abortive little expeditions : one, headed by Lord Darcy, to help Ferdinand against the Moors, which arrived only to return, and another expedition under Poynings into the Low Countries,

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, vol. v. p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 1457.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 1980.

which returned in a short time without having accomplished much.

Before plunging into the further details of European affairs, into which, by her joining the Holy League, England was definitely committed to an active part, it is necessary to go back, and gather up the story of these first few years as it affected England at home. As we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Henry's first few years of married life were very happy ones for himself and his bride, and he did not bother himself much at first with state affairs. On the 7th July 1509, Henry, writing to Ferdinand, says that he diverts himself with jousts, birding, hunting and other innocent and honest pastimes; also in visiting different parts of his kingdoms, but does not on that account neglect affairs of state.<sup>1</sup> And indeed, these first few years present little to be recorded save one continuous round of festivities at Court. Hall thus describes one of these festivities :

After the King and his companions had danced he appointed the ladies gentlewomen and the ambassadors to take the letters off their garments, in token of liberality, which thing the common people perceiving, ran to the King, and stripped him unto his hosen and doublet, and all his companions likewise. Sir Thomas Knevet stood on a stage, and for all his defence he lost his apparel. The ladies likewise were spoiled, wherefore the King's guard came suddenly and put the people back, or else as

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 18.

it was supposed more inconvenience had ensued. So the King with the Queen and the Ladies returned to his chamber, where they had a great banquet and all these hurts were turned to laughing and game, and thought that, all that was taken away, was but for honour, and largess, and so this triumph ended with mirth and gladness. At this banquet a shipman of London caught certain letters which he sold to a goldsmith for three pounds twelve shillings and eightpence by reason whereof it appeared that the garments were of great value.<sup>1</sup>

But even to the festivities, there was a slightly darker side, a side of Henry's character which afterwards became so prominent, and to feed which the accumulated wealth of the monasteries was to be sacrificed. Hall has this significant note: 'The King this time was much enticed to play tennis and at dice which appetite certain crafty persons about him perceiving brought in Frenchmen and Lombards to make wagers with him, and so he lost much money, but when he perceived their craft he exchanged their company and let them go.'<sup>2</sup>

It seems unnecessary to give more descriptions from Hall or elsewhere of the Court festivities, and we confine ourselves to a more or less bare chronicle of the few events that are worth noting during this period.

On the 24th of September 1509, Christopher Bainbridge, Archbishop of York, soon to be made Cardinal, was appointed the King's representative

<sup>1</sup> Hall, p. 519.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 520.

at Rome.<sup>1</sup> During the end of this year we come across two grants to the personage who was to be the greatest man of the reign, Thomas Wolsey, then Dean of Lincoln.<sup>2</sup> At the close of the year Parliament was summoned and it met in January 1510, Sir Thomas Inglefelde being chosen Speaker.<sup>3</sup> In August (27th) Empson and Dudley were executed on Tower Hill.<sup>4</sup>

On the 6th June 1510, a licence for mortmain was granted to Dean Colet for the proposed foundation of St. Paul's School, of which more anon.<sup>5</sup>

On the 12th of February there was a tourney for the birth of a Prince, but in the midst of the rejoicings the child died on the 22nd February.<sup>6</sup>

This concludes all that it is necessary to chronicle of internal affairs in England; but before going on it is necessary to see from the English standpoint how Henry had joined the Holy League against France after having so shortly before signed a treaty of peace with that country.

As we have said before, it was obviously Ferdinand of Spain's wish to keep England embroiled with France. Mr. Bergenroth in his preface to the second volume of the Spanish Calendar has declared that in this Ferdinand

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 520.

<sup>3</sup> Hall, p. 512.

<sup>5</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 1076.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Nos. 555, 626.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 510.

<sup>6</sup> Herbert, p. 14; Hall, p. 519.

was completely successful, and that England was during these early years the easy dupe of that astute monarch, and he points out that Ferdinand actually called John Stile, the English ambassador (1509), into his presence and severely rebuked him for writing unfavourable accounts to England.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bergenroth fails to point out that John Stile did not pay much heed to this, as we find him writing some seven months later (January 1510) that he is very suspicious of all the fair words he gets from the Spanish.<sup>2</sup> The influence of Katherine with her young husband undoubtedly gave the wily Spanish monarch considerable and undue influence in the foreign policy of England. But Henry, even in the early days of his reign and on his honeymoon, evinced an irritating friendship for Venice and the Pope, which dismayed and annoyed his father-in-law considerably. Again, later, when Julius was attempting to form the Holy League against France, Ferdinand, whose whole correspondence with the English Court at this time shows an ill-concealed desire that England should make a move against France while he remained unbound, so that he might be able to side with the eventual victor, to his anger as well as to the Pope's, was met with the news that England had suddenly and secretly signed a treaty with France.

It never was and never could have been a

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 1796.

cordial understanding, for Henry from the first day of his reign had shown that he cherished the desire of gaining back the Crown's lost possessions in France; but it was a clever move on the part of Henry and his ministers to show Europe in general and Ferdinand in particular, that England was not to be a cat's-paw for the other powers, and that her monarch's well-known desire for attacking France could not be traded on to her disadvantage. Ferdinand accepted the situation, and instructed his ambassador to negotiate a stricter treaty of friendship between him and his son-in-law, but before the instructions reached London Carroz, frightened by the treaty with France, had signed a worthless treaty on his own account. Indeed, the policy of the English ministry (apart from the King's personal desire for war) was the unambitious policy of keeping free from all dangerous alliances or complications. But events, as we have seen, became too much for them, and when the Holy League was formed and Spain, the Pope, and Venice stood arrayed against France, Henry's ambition and his devotedness to the Church swept away his cautious ministers' views, and England embarked on a foreign policy which meant war with France.

Before leaving these early years, it would be as well to mention an event which afterwards bore fruit. This was the defeat of Andrew



Barton, a subject of the King of Scotland, at sea by Lord Edmund Howard.<sup>1</sup> The English Government contended that Barton was a pirate, whilst James IV protested that he was his admiral. The end of 1511 saw relations between Scotland and England strained to the breaking-point. Besides the question of Barton and the chronic state of disorder on the borders, always a fertile subject of dispute between the two countries, England, by joining the Holy League against France, the hereditary and ancient ally of Scotland, brought war on the horizon, and we find James IV writing to the Pope on the 5th of December 1611, to require exemption from his oath of peace with England, owing to the injuries his subjects have received.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herbert, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No: 2020,

### CHAPTER III

THE new year began in the midst of open war in Italy and busy preparations for war in England.

It will be convenient for us to divide the two separate portions of the opening campaign, and to deal first with that portion which more directly affected England, namely, the war on the sea and the ill-starred expedition to Guienne. But before doing so the most important thing that remains to be noticed is, how Henry made provision for extra finances. It is quite true that Henry had been left an immense treasure which had been amassed by his father, but three years of Court gaieties had no doubt made considerable inroads in a store which, though no doubt very large, has probably been somewhat exaggerated in its amount.

A Parliament met at Westminster on the 4th of February 1512.<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Sheffield was Speaker, and the seventh Act that it passed was a subsidy of fifteenths and tenths. Not only money was required; it had also become apparent to the Government that English archery,

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 2082.

which had been her great asset in war, was slowly becoming almost obsolete. The training of a good archer was one that took considerable time and trouble, but there had been a new form of the bow and arrow, not nearly so effective in actual war, but one which took much less time and trouble to become proficient in. This was the cross-bow, and so we find that the twelfth statute is for the encouragement of shooting with the long-bow, while the twentieth is against shooting with cross-bows. This ended the Parliamentary business so far as we are concerned with it.

The next thing that meets us in the preparation for war is documents on the 6th of March relating to the victualling of the army;<sup>1</sup> still there is no definite sign where the expedition that was now being fitted out was going.

On the 1st of April we have news from France that the King is waiting to learn the plans for invasion, whether they intend to attack Normandy or Guienne—with the significant note that Henry is entirely under the influence of Ferdinand.<sup>2</sup>

The next step was to appoint an Admiral for the Fleet. On the 7th of April Sir Edmund Howard is appointed to the post.<sup>3</sup> On the 8th of April we get a list of eighteen ships enumerated, which were to compose Howard's fleet, and the instructions for Howard.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3051.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3112.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3115.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3117.

On the 8th Henry, writing to Maximilian, informs him that his forces are only waiting for a favourable wind.<sup>1</sup>

On the 20th of May, we learn that the English fleet is busy chasing French fishing-boats and capturing a bark of Dieppe.<sup>2</sup>

On the 22nd of May we get a list of appointments for the war. The Marquis of Dorset was to be Lieutenant-General, and at last it had been decided that the province of Guienne in the south-west of France was to be the objective of the expedition.<sup>3</sup> A little hint of the magnitude of the English preparations may be got from Sanuto's diaries, where we are informed that news is arrived from England of Henry's preparations for the war with France, that he had salted 25,000 oxen, so that the price of meat had risen from a penny to threepence per pound.<sup>4</sup>

Eventually the expedition sailed in May and landed on the coast of Spain on June 7.<sup>5</sup> The plan was for an invasion of France simultaneously on the south by the English expedition and by a Spanish army, by mutual arrangement between Henry and Ferdinand, but disaster was to follow this somewhat ambitious scheme.

On the 8th of July Lord Thomas Howard

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i: No. 3188.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Papers relating to the War with France (1512-1513)*, edited by Alfred Spont for the Navy Record Society, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3231.

<sup>4</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 168.

<sup>5</sup> Hall, p. 528.

wrote to Wolsey, of whom more anon, that the army was in danger, owing to a great sickness which had broken out amongst the Spaniards; wishes the King had never trusted the King of Aragon more than they do, then they would never have been sent to this ungracious country, where the people love a ducat better than all their kin; were it not for the King's displeasure they would have called the King of Aragon to account.<sup>1</sup> In fact, from the beginning jealousy and suspicion had been rife between the two allies.

Ferdinand, who preferred a bird in the hand to any number in the bush, was particularly anxious to make the more modest but, to him, very useful acquisition of the tiny kingdom of Navarre, but he was willing after Navarre had been secured, if it were still possible, to do what he could to help the English to secure something in Guienne. The English troops and commanders, unused to foreign service, and indeed to war, were burning with impatience to start at once on the invasion of Guienne, and did not at all relish being kept inactive while Ferdinand seized Navarre. Though they were inactive they were exceedingly useful to Ferdinand, for their presence forbade the French from helping D'Albert to keep his mountain kingdom. Besides, the commissariat department of the English forces broke hopelessly down, tents were few and far

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i, No. 3298.

between, victuals were not over-plentiful, but above all there was no beer, and in those days an Englishman without beer was bad-tempered and useless. Stile, writing to the King, says: 'The greatest lack of victuals that is here is of beer, for your subjects had lever for to drink beer than wine or cider; for the hot wines doth harm them, and the cider doth cast them in disease and sickness.'<sup>1</sup> But, beer or no beer, Henry was determined that his forces should remain on until something tangible was done in Guienne. But the friction between Dorset and Ferdinand grew more and more.

The Spanish forces under Alva had seized Navarre, on which Dorset had protested.<sup>2</sup> The army got more and more discontented and out of hand; they demanded an increase in pay, and actually mutinied, but for the moment this was quelled. At a council of war held on the 28th of August they determined to return home, and in the first week of October, refusing to listen to the advice of Ferdinand, or of a few of their officers who begged them to stay, and without even waiting for King Henry's leave, the army set sail on its return voyage to England. As Mr. Brewer has pointed out, 'According to Polydore Vergil, who was exceedingly well informed on the subject, and evidently compiled this portion of his history

<sup>1</sup> Brewer, *Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. 3356.

from authentic materials, the indignation of the King was unbounded. He wrote to Ferdinand to stop them at all hazards and cut every man's throat who disobeyed, but the order came too late.'<sup>1</sup>

The first real active war of Henry VIII's reign thus ended in the most ignominious and shameful manner, for without doubt what caused this disaster was the utter incompetency of Dorset and the other commanders and the private soldiers' liking for beer and want of experience in warfare.

On their arrival back in England the people waited with anxiety to see what vengeance the King would take, but he was politic enough to merely hush the matter up. It was not only a disaster to our arms, it was a disgrace, and made England the laughing-stock of Europe. It took many years of Wolsey's genius to wipe out that stain.

The mention of Wolsey brings us back again to the beginning of the war, and it were well here to sketch briefly the earlier years of that extraordinary man, who was soon to become Henry's all-powerful minister.

Thomas Wolsey was born in Suffolk, probably in March 1471.<sup>2</sup> He was educated first at the Grammar School at Ipswich, but when very young was

<sup>1</sup> Brewer, vol. i. p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Taunton, E. L., *Thomas Wolsey, Legate and Reformer*, p. 10.

sent to Oxford, where he entered St. Mary Magdalen College.<sup>1</sup> Here he made wonderful progress, and at the age of fifteen was a Bachelor of Arts—the Boy Bachelor, they called him. Two years later he was a Master of Arts. Wolsey then went on and became a Fellow of his College. Some short time after this Wolsey became tutor to the sons of the Marquis of Dorset.<sup>2</sup> Wolsey received from Dorset the living of St. Mary's at Lymington, in the county of Somerset.<sup>3</sup> This was in 1500.

In 1501 Wolsey received a severe check to his career in the well-known story of Sir Amyas Paulet.<sup>4</sup> The facts of the dispute are unknown, but it ended in Wolsey being put into the stocks. Wolsey never forgot it, and years afterwards, when he was Lord Chancellor, Sir Amyas was enforced to a kind of honourable imprisonment in the Temple, where he decorated the Gate-house of the Temple with Wolsey's arms.<sup>5</sup>

But even this check does not seem to have for long kept Wolsey back. In 1501 he was Chaplain to Henry Deane, Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor of England.<sup>6</sup> Deane died early, in 1503, and Wolsey went to Calais in the service of Sir John Nanfan.<sup>7</sup> It was through his means that Wolsey entered the royal service, and was made a Chaplain to the King.<sup>8</sup> This was about

<sup>1</sup> Taunton, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> George Cavendish, *Life of Wolsey* (Dent's edition), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Taunton, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Cavendish, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Taunton, p. 26.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> Cavendish, p. 6.



1505 or 1506. As Cavendish tells us, Wolsey did not waste his time or opportunities, but assiduously courted the favour of Fox, Bishop of Winchester, and Sir Thomas Lovell, the two most trusted of Henry VII's ministers.<sup>1</sup> He was soon employed and sent on a mission to the Emperor Maximilian on some question concerning the King's proposed marriage with Margaret of Savoy. The story is too well known for repetition here, how Wolsey performed this journey.<sup>2</sup> In reward for this and other things, on the 2nd of February 1508, he was made Dean of Lincoln.<sup>3</sup> Preferments were now literally showered upon him. On November 3rd he was made Royal Almoner. Then the old King died, and the new reign opened prosperously for Wolsey, for on the 27th of November 1510 he was presented to the parish church of Great Torrington in the Diocese of Exeter.<sup>4</sup> The next year saw him Registrar of the Order of the Garter, and so on through a long list of preferments.

But we are more specially here concerned with Wolsey's rise in the King's favour than with a list of his preferments. As Mr. Gairdner has pointed out,<sup>5</sup> 'it was only in August 1511 that we find Wolsey for the first time signing documents as a Member of the Privy Council,' but the

<sup>1</sup> Cavendish, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 8-11.

<sup>3</sup> Taunton, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 1359.

<sup>5</sup> *History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 18.

advent of war made Wolsey, with his wonderful gifts of administration, more and more indispensable to Henry.

We early find that the discontented troops on the ill-starred expedition to Guienne looked on Wolsey as the real author of the expedition. In fact, it is a point that needs considerable clearing up to find out Wolsey's exact responsibility for this expedition, and also to know how one who had only such a short time before become an active member of the Privy Council should have been looked upon as the prime mover in this, which was the most important event which had so far occurred in the reign. Knight, a confidential clerk to Wolsey, who was with the expedition, in his letters to Wolsey leaves no doubt that the commanders of the expedition blamed Wolsey for the whole thing. In one of his letters he says that he begs Wolsey to obtain his recall, but before making his request known, as it might cost him his life, as he is held in great suspicion here. Divers had spoken against Wolsey, and Knight had answered as far as he durst.<sup>1</sup> This letter was written on the 5th of August.

On the 7th of August Lord Darcy, writing to Henry about some information he had received as to the Scottish King's intentions, mentions that he is glad that the King confides in his Almoner (Wolsey).<sup>2</sup> And on the 26th of August Wolsey

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3356.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3359.

writes to Fox, Bishop of Winchester, apologising for not writing before, thinks Fox has heard the news from Spain already; by Knight's letter enclosed he will know all that has been written by the Lord Marquis and Stile; the desire of the English to return home will be as bad a hindrance to the attack on Guienne as the King of Aragon's slackness. They have sent an ambassador to excuse it. Forwards letters from the English ambassador in Italy; gives an account of a severe fight near Brest, where the Regent captured the great carrick of Brest, but both, fouling, were burnt and most part of the crews of them, and Sir Thomas and Sir James Carew slain; begs he will keep the news secret. P.S.—The French Fleet has fled to Brest; Sir Edmund Howard has vowed that he will never see the King in the face till he hath revenged the death of the noble and valiant knight Sir Thomas Knevett. Sends the letters of thanks to Cardinal Hadrian.<sup>1</sup>

Again on the 30th of September we find Wolsey writing to the Bishop of Winchester. News from the Emperor that the Pope is dying; the Emperor favours Cardinal Hadrian. Wolsey has urged the King also to support him; hopes that Fox is not offended. The Lord Chamberlain and the Bishop of Durham favour the Cardinal of St. George; wishes Fox would repair to Court. The ambassador of Aragon has dealt liberally

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3388.

with Lord Darcy in the matter of his soldiers ; the King has given him a thousand pounds. Thus the King's money goeth away in every corner. My Lord Treasurer [Surrey], being discountenanced by the King, has left the Court. Wolsey thinks it would be a good thing if he were ousted from his lodging there altogether. Mr. Howard urges the King against the Scots, 'by whose wanton means his Grace spendeth much money and is more disposed to war than peace. Your presence would be very necessary to repress this appetite.' The Queen is thought to be with child.<sup>1</sup>

The man that wrote these two letters must have been very intimate with all the ins and outs of home and foreign affairs and Court intrigues.

In another letter of the 4th of October Knight, writing to Wolsey, says that Sir William Sands opposed Knight's being sent to England to excuse the expedition's return, saying that Wolsey was the cause of all this mischief, that Knight was in his favour, and that if he went to England he would so represent matters to the King as to occasion their further abiding there. Further on Knight says that the great men of England say that Wolsey is the author of this war, and the ill-success of it must be attributed to him, and begs him to be cautious.<sup>2</sup>

We have little knowledge of exactly how

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3443.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3451.

Wolsey so suddenly became so prominent. Cavendish, his faithful usher and biographer, thus explains Wolsey's rise in his master's favour: 'This Almoner climbing thus hastily up Fortune's wheel that no man was of that estimation with the King as he was for his wisdom and other witty qualities. He had a special gift of natural eloquence with a filed tongue to pronounce the same, that he was able with the same to persuade and allure all men to his purpose.'<sup>1</sup>

Whatever may have been the exact reason for Wolsey's having acquired his influence so quickly with the King, the fact remains that very shortly Wolsey became the all-in-all to Henry and to England. As Lingard quietly puts it, 'During fifteen years he [Wolsey] governed the kingdom with more absolute sway than had fallen to the lot of any former Minister.'<sup>2</sup>

But this is anticipating, for at the date at which we have arrived Wolsey had hardly acquired the ascendancy which he afterwards gained. It is not for us here and at this juncture to deal with the vexed question of Wolsey's character and his relations with the King. Mr. Plummer has said: 'If you want an epithet for Wolsey take masterly; if you want one for Henry take masterful.'<sup>3</sup> What is true in this

<sup>1</sup> Cavendish, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard, *History of England*, vol. vi. p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> *English Church History*, p. 5.

and what is not true will become apparent as the tale of Wolsey's administration unfolds itself.

We must go back now to what we have left for some time—the state of the war in Italy.

After Julius II had formed the Holy League against France he proceeded to deal with the cardinals of Pisa. On October 24th, 1511, he deprived them of their dignities and annulled their Council.<sup>1</sup> But Julius II had little need to be frightened by this abortive attempt at a Council. From the first it became apparent that they could rely upon the support of no one save the French King, and at the beginning the doubtful and lukewarm friendship of the Emperor.

Florence was not happy at the Council having chosen Pisa as their place of meeting, and Machiavelli was sent to the cardinals to try and persuade them to abandon the city. But though the Florentine Government could only offer advice, the people of Pisa showed no respect at all for the schismatic cardinals. A riot in the street hastened events, and on November 12th the Council translated itself to Milan;<sup>2</sup> but even here there was no rest for the wicked, for Milan was attacked in December by a formidable invasion of the Swiss, whom Julius II had again employed. However, the Swiss retreated without doing much damage, but a new complexion

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, vol. v. p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 161.

was soon given to the war by the new French general, Gaston de Foix, Duc de Nemours, a nephew of the French King.

Gaston de Foix is one of the most engaging of those characters in history that come on the stage for one brief moment of triumph. Only twenty-two years of age, he took over the command of the French army, dispirited and harassed by changeable councils and incompetent generals. He was face to face at once with the danger of a junction between the Spanish and Venetian forces. Without a moment's hesitation Gaston led his troops in the bitter cold of the winter across the snowy passes of the Apennines to the aid of Bologna, then besieged by the Spanish and Papal forces under Raimondo di Cardona.<sup>1</sup> The rapidity of his march was astounding, and Cardona at once withdrew from the siege of Bologna. But news reached Gaston that Brescia had surrendered to the Venetians. Without a moment's delay he turned northwards, in nine days reached Brescia, stormed it and gave it to pillage. But this was not all. He returned at once to Milan, gathered together his forces and marched to the Romagna, determined once and for all to end the war by a decisive battle. Cardona, with slightly smaller forces, lay at Ravenna. On the French approaching he withdrew to Faenza. On the 11th of April the two

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, vol. vi. pp. 164-5.

armies were face to face.<sup>1</sup> By brilliant manœuvring Gaston routed his opponents, but, with the eagerness of youth, wishing to make his victory even more decisive, charged the retreating Spaniards himself at the head of his men-at-arms. His horse was killed and so was he. The battle of Ravenna was a great triumph to the French arms, but France lost more in the death of her boy-general than she gained by his dying victory. From the moment of his death the French armies became demoralised, and the weakness of incompetent generals paralysed the army that Gaston had done so much with.

Julius II, to gain time after the defeat of Ravenna, entered into negotiations with Louis of France, but these were soon laid aside, for in April the Council of Milan pretended to depose the Pontiff; but Julius's counter-blow against the schismatic Council was far more effective. On the 3rd of May the Council of the Lateran was opened in the presence of the Pope.<sup>2</sup> But Julius thought more of war than of councils. An invasion of the Swiss, backed up by the Emperor and Venice, was too much for the French troops, who retired across the Alps. The schismatic Council departed with it, taking up its quarters at Lyons. In June 1512 the Pope was able to recover Bologna.

The first move in the great design of Julius

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, vol. vi. p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. v. p. 171.



II—to drive the barbarians out of Italy—was accomplished, but the Spaniards remained in the south. For the moment he could not dream of openly attacking them, so he bent his energies to checkmate Ferdinand and Maximilian's design for seizing the duchy of Milan for their grandson, the Archduke Charles. With the aid of the Swiss he was able to do this, and the Sforza returned once again to Milan and to their duchy.

The next question to be dealt with was the vexed one of Florence, which, since the ejection of Piero de' Medici, was in the hands of a republican government, whose chief for the present was Piero, son of Soderini.

One of the exiled house of Medici, the Cardinal of Medici, had done good service to the Pope, while on the other hand the republican government of Florence was looked upon as an ever-faithful ally of the French. For this reason the Medici family, who had a large party, especially among the poorer citizens of Florence, were sanguine that with the help of the Pope and his allies they would once again rule in Florence. And so, at the head of the Spanish army, the Medici attacked Florence with success, and on September 1st Giuliano de' Medici entered Florence and the republic was at an end.

However, in the midst of his triumph, on the 20th of February 1513, Julius II died. It is difficult, perhaps, to estimate rightly the character

of such an extraordinary man as Julius II, and, perhaps, it is not our place to enter into such a vexed question. We need only mention that he was the founder of the Papal States, that he was the greatest patron of art that the world has ever seen, that Michelangelo and Raphael worked for him, and their greatest labours were done for him. The Sistine Chapel was painted by Michelangelo, and the tomb of Julius II, begun but never completed by Michelangelo, shows us how the greatest of sculptors looked on one of the greatest of the Popes. The gigantic figure of Moses as the great patriotic leader of his people, the resolute great lawgiver, has left us a record for all time of the fiery Pope. It is hardly our place here to go into what Julius II did for Rome, but we know that the whole tendency of modern historic opinion is to give the crown in matters of art to Julius II at the expense of his successor, Leo X.

We must go back again and deal with the remaining portion of the war, with which we have not dealt. We have seen how Sir Edward Howard had been given the command of the fleet for the protection of the expedition to Guienne. But, now that the expedition had returned so ingloriously, harder work was in front of Sir Edward Howard and his fleet.

A new treaty had been signed on the 10th of January 1513 between Maximilian and Henry. Within two months the Pope (Julius II) was to

invade Provence; the Emperor was to invade France; Ferdinand, Bern and Aquitaine.<sup>1</sup> Henry's part was to contribute 100,000 crowns of gold. Spinelly, writing to the King two days afterwards, mentioned the rumour in the Low Countries of the dissatisfaction of Scotland, and its having made a treaty with France.<sup>2</sup> Wingfield, on the 20th of February, reports a few skirmishes at Calais to Wolsey.<sup>3</sup>

A letter of Knight and Stile to the King of the 3rd of March shows us how the expedition to Guienne had permanently damaged the reputation of English troops in the eyes of Europe. The King of Aragon, in negotiating for the treaty with Henry, holds out that Henry should send an army of Germans into Guienne, and also requests large sums of money; but, at the same time, Knight and Stile do not fail to point out that there are no evident preparations for war being made by Ferdinand, but that, nevertheless, he will soon have to defend Navarre; and they drop a hint of a secret mission of the Provincial of the Grey Friars, whom they believe to have returned with overtures of peace in a letter from the French Queen to the Queen of Aragon; but Ferdinand seems pleased with this, and they think that Henry should make sure of what assistance the Pope and Venice will give him before

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3647.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3661.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3744.

continuing the war. They end up by saying that Ferdinand really has no wish for further war with France save to defend Navarre and Naples, and that he has secretly sent the Bishop of Catanza to Bayonne to open negotiations with France.<sup>1</sup> But before this letter had reached England the news of the death of the founder of the League, Julius II, had reached the English Government.

On the 11th of March Spinelly is able to let the King know that Leo X is Pope.<sup>2</sup> He had been the Cardinal Medici, and was supposed to be an opponent of the French. I cannot resist putting in here one of those little touches that one comes across so often in the state papers, and that light up their otherwise somewhat dreary pages. On the 18th of March Spinelly, writing to Henry VIII, says that Madame de Savoie wishes to warn the King against certain foreigners at whose houses she has heard he has been privately banqueting.<sup>3</sup>

But, to go on with the more serious and more warlike portion of the tale, it were well to look at the position of the English Government. They had a disaster, and a very great disaster, to wipe out. If they made peace and did not prosecute the war with energy, England's military reputation was gone; her power in the councils of Europe as a military power would be next to nothing. Besides this, her young and ambitious

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3766.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3780,

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3805.

monarch was hardly the man to sit down under such a rebuff as he had received. But, on the other hand, her ministers could hardly fail to see that the military resources of England, as Guienne had proved, were hardly of much account as compared with those of France, and, as for allies, she was in a somewhat precarious position. There could be no doubt in the English Government's mind that Ferdinand, having gained all he wanted, was very averse to the continuance of the war, and could not be relied on. The Pope was dead, and the new Pope's policy had not yet been made so definitely clear as to enable them to count on him. The Emperor, they knew, was a weak reed to depend on, and was constantly employed in bickering with Venice. So it seemed that, if England was to attempt to wipe out Guienne, she would have to do it alone, and with but slender resources. One cannot help seeing the hand of Wolsey in the dauntless resolution that governed the English counsels at this critical juncture.

Some historians have considered that the main object of what followed was the vain dream of reconquering the lost possessions of the English crown in France. But even if it was so—and there is no indication that it was—yet the dream, at least before the disaster of the Guienne expedition, was perhaps not as imaginary as some have held it to be. There could have been

no shrewder man than Ferdinand of Aragon, and none who knew the state of Guienne better than he did, and yet there is little doubt that Ferdinand did not consider this altogether a vain dream.

On the 11th of January 1513, Ferdinand, writing to Pedro de Urea, his ambassador with the Emperor, said if the English when they came to Spain had done as he had advised, the King of England would by this time be master and lord of Guienne ; the enterprize of Guienne was so well planned that the French could not have offered any resistance, and God alone could have prevented the conquest of that duchy. Had Guienne been conquered, how different would have been the position of France from that she now holds ; but the English were so blind as not to believe it, and thus they themselves have prevented what they most desired.<sup>1</sup>

Again, writing on the 11th of January to Raimondo di Cardona, the viceroy of Naples : if the King of England had recovered Guienne and Normandy, the King of France would never have thought of attacking Italy, as he would always have had the enemy in his own country ; no greater security for Italy could have been found than this.<sup>2</sup>

Again, writing in February to his ambassador in Rome, he states that the main object of the

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 82.

treaty is the defence of the Church and to wrest Guienne, Normandy, and Burgundy from France;<sup>1</sup> and, writing to his ambassador in England in March, Ferdinand says: 'The conquest of Guienne and Normandy is so great an undertaking that it would be necessary to begin it on the 1st of April, when the whole summer can be employed on the war.'<sup>2</sup>

Surely Ferdinand did not deceive, at least, his own viceroy or his ambassadors in Rome and with the Emperor, though perhaps it might be said that he had done so with regard to his ambassador in England.

But the resolution that the English Government took, one might almost call a heroic one. Not only was it decided to wipe out the disaster of Guienne by a fresh invasion of France, but that invasion was to be led by the King in person; and if one realises what the King's person at that moment meant to England, one can better realise the heroism of this decision. For we must remember that he had no heir, and that if he died or any disaster occurred to him, there was nothing to save England from a disputed succession and fresh Wars of the Roses. If there was a fresh disaster it would not merely result, as Guienne had resulted, in a mere loss of prestige; it meant untold horrors and ruin to England. Besides, the expedition was to invade France by

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 87.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 89.

way of Calais. Though it is true that the Low Countries would support the English, that support, the English knew, would not be as powerful or as effective as the support of Spain might have been in Guienne. The risk was taken ; it was a very grave risk, but we will see how the result proved the wisdom of the decision. And besides this, there was the danger of Scotland. There could be little doubt in the minds of the English Government that it was very probable that, while the King and his army were absent in France, James IV would take advantage of this to invade England.

Indeed, there could have been little doubt of James IV's intentions, despite the treaty of peace between the two countries. West, who had been sent as special envoy to Edinburgh, writing on the 1st of April to Henry VIII, says in recording an interview with Henry's sister Queen Margaret, that she is desirous of peace, and the King says that he will keep the peace in the King's absence if the King of England will do him justice. West says commissioners had been sent to the Border for that purpose ; James complained of them, and would give no decisive answer. At last the Earl of Argyle told him they would keep the peace if the English did, but they refused to put this in writing.<sup>1</sup>

On the 13th of April West again announced

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3838.



that he could get no decisive answer from James.<sup>1</sup> But despite all this the preparations for war went on apace. On the 5th of April Howard had written to Wolsey that he wanted victuals badly for the fleet.<sup>2</sup> The same day a league was signed by Margaret of Savoy on the Emperor's behalf with England for the defence of the Church;<sup>3</sup> and on the 12th of April Henry VIII wrote to Cardinal Banbridge that his one object was to humble France, the inveterate foe of the Church; that he hoped Leo, like his predecessor, would support the League.<sup>4</sup> The same day Howard wrote to the King with news of the fleet and that the French fleet had fled into Brest.<sup>5</sup> On the 17th Howard informed him of skirmishes round Brest and of the want of victuals.<sup>6</sup> The 25th of April saw Howard cruising off Brest,<sup>7</sup> where he caught sight of the French galleys laid up in shallow water and strongly protected from the land. Howard resolved to cut the galleys out with his boats. The engagement, rash to the verge of folly, which resulted in the death of Howard, had little other result save to, in some slight measure, re-establish the British reputation for courage which had been lost in Guienne.

The King was not overpleased with the behaviour of the captains of the other ships, who,

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3882.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3857.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3859.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3876.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3877.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3903.

<sup>7</sup> Brewer, vol. i. pp. 24-25.

he considered, had abandoned Howard to his fate, and wrote sharp letters of reproof. The captains, through their new Admiral, Thomas, Lord Howard, who had been appointed on the 4th of May to succeed his brother,<sup>1</sup> excused themselves for having returned from Brest by the want of victuals and the power of the French galleys.<sup>2</sup> But under Lord Howard the French fleet was securely bottled up in the haven of Brest, and the preparations for the King's personal invasion of France by way of Calais were pushed on apace. On the 6th of May the King wrote to Poynings that he would be at Calais, weather permitting, on the 16th.<sup>3</sup> But even yet there must have been some doubts in the minds of some of Henry's council of the wisdom of the invasion, for though a treaty was signed between Henry and Ferdinand for the mutual invasion of France—England by way of Picardy, Spain by way of Aquitaine—yet on the 12th of May Knight wrote to the King that Ferdinand wished to keep the truce with France, and that he was utterly untrustworthy and would leave England in the lurch.<sup>4</sup> We know that Knight wrote the truth, for Ferdinand, writing to the viceroy of Naples in April, points out that if he chose war with France as the ally of the King of England, it would render all further negotiations impossible and thus perpetuate war.<sup>5</sup> And

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 3997.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4010.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4008.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4058.

<sup>5</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 95.

writing on the 21st of May to his ambassador in Rome, no doubt with the intention of hindering the new Pope from helping England, he informed him that the King of England was not in earnest with respect to the war with France; his intention is only to frighten the King of France and to make a profitable peace with him.<sup>1</sup>

The Emperor too began, as usual, to hedge. Wingfield on the 17th of May had to inform the King that Milan was in danger; that owing to this the Emperor said he would not be able to keep his oath and send an army into France.<sup>2</sup> But the English Council never for an instant wavered; Guienne had to be wiped out; and so Henry wrote to Poynings to try and induce the Emperor, who, with all his faults—and they were many—was yet one of the most distinguished generals of the age, to serve in person with the King's army in the war for payment of 25,000 crowns,<sup>3</sup> and the offer was accepted.

We can have little doubt that Wolsey's hand was the strong hand that held England true in her right path all this while, for Fox, the Bishop of Winchester, on the 21st of May, writing to Wolsey, 'prays God may send us speed and soon deliver you of your outrageous charge and labour.'<sup>4</sup> Then at last the army was ready, and on the 13th of June the vanguard marched from Calais to Newnam

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 106.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4078.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4085.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4103.

Bridge,<sup>1</sup> and on the 15th entered Picardy. On the 30th of June the King himself arrived at Calais.<sup>2</sup> On July 21st the King with his whole army left Calais for the siege of Terouenne, where he was joined by the Emperor.<sup>3</sup> On the 22nd of August Terouenne surrendered.<sup>4</sup> On the 21st of September Tournay also surrendered to the King, but, the winter drawing near, on the 19th of October he returned to Calais, and on the 21st embarked for England.

Before dealing with the important events which happened in England during the King's absence, it were as well to see how the French army fared in Italy while the English forces were invading her in the north.

Leo X, on his election to the Papacy, was face to face with grave difficulties, the legacy of his militant predecessor. Giovanni de' Medici had always been in reality averse to the warlike schemes of Julius II. Easy-going, pleasure-loving, more interested in the world of art and letters than in the world of action, the new Pope was by no means inclined to continue the war with France. He was not the type of man to wish for any ambitious schemes for the political advancement of his office.

The League that Henry VIII now formed, and which he called the Holy League, Leo looked

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4253.    <sup>2</sup> Brewer, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4284.

coldly on ; but events were stronger than the pontiff. Louis, wishing to take advantage of the pacific nature of Leo, the perpetual hesitations of Ferdinand and the inconsistencies of Maximilian, and knowing that he was threatened by invasion from England, determined, before it was too late, to make an attempt to recover possession of Milan. But his army, after having had some slight successes at the commencement, was utterly routed at the battle of Navarra, June 6th, 1513, by the Swiss, the allies of Sforza.<sup>1</sup>

France bowed to the storm ; the Swiss who invaded France were bought off ; the schismatic Council made its submission and disappeared. On the 19th of December the French Government formally made its submission to the Lateran Council and to the Pope.

Even more important was the invasion of England itself by James IV of Scotland, while the King was absent in France.

Going back so as to be able more clearly to understand the position in England during Henry's invasion of France, the first thing of importance to be done was to appoint a regent during the King's absence. The Queen was immediately appointed to that high office, while the Earl of Surrey was appointed to be the King's lieutenant in the north for the purpose of meeting the threatened Scottish danger.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4196.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4179.

The next step was the execution of Edmund de la Pole, the last possible claimant to the throne, who was a prisoner in the Tower.<sup>1</sup>

Henry had hardly well set out on his expedition when James IV's letter of defiance reached him in his camp before Terouenne.<sup>2</sup> The King's answer was a contemptuous and bold one, but at home the danger was great. Queen Katherine, whose bravery and whose pride was to stand out very clearly during all this time, writing on July 26th to Wolsey, shows the tenderest solicitude for the King her husband's fate.<sup>3</sup>

On August 13th, again writing to Wolsey, she says they are all glad 'to be busy with the Scots, for they take it for a pastime, my heart is very good to it, and I am horribly busy with making standards and badges.'<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile Surrey, who had hurried northward, was gathering together the forces of the northern counties to meet the threatened danger.

James IV, at the head of one of the largest armies that Scotland had ever gathered together, left Edinburgh for the south, crossed the Tweed, and took up his position at Twizel on the 22nd of August. Proceeding to Norham, after a short siege he captured the castle and destroyed its fortifications, much to the subsequent grief of its owner, Ruthal, Bishop of Durham; but as in

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4324.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4284.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4365.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4398.

most Scottish invasions, instead of striking boldly forward, time and energy were wasted in small, unimportant work. Tradition relates that in one of these little border holds, Ford Castle, the susceptible monarch dallied and trifled many precious hours away with the beautiful châtelaine, Lady Heron.

Surrey, hastening forward, gathering together as best he could the scattered forces of the north under the banner of St. Cuthbert to meet the Scottish King, was well aware that his task was no light one. The first thing that must have been uppermost in Surrey's mind was to force a battle with the Scots before his own hasty levies had taken to their favourite pursuit of pillage. Here he was helped by the character of James, who was credulous and chivalrous beyond belief: Surrey sent him an insolent message defying the King to battle.

The Scottish army, leaving Ford Castle, took up a strong position on the hill of Flodden, on the left bank of the river Till.<sup>1</sup> Surrey, by the 7th of September, had reached Wooler Haugh, about ten miles south and on the same bank of the river.<sup>2</sup> The position of the Scots was a very strong one,<sup>3</sup> and so Surrey, by another insolent message, tried to tempt the King down from the hills to the plain beneath, where he challenged the King to battle.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4441.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert, pp. 42-44.

<sup>3</sup> Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 334-39.

But this time, for a wonder, James was not to be caught, so tactics had to be adopted by the English to accomplish this. Crossing the Till, Surrey marched northwards to Twizel Bridge, where he recrossed the river with his main body, the rest crossing higher up. He was thus north of the Scots, turning down southwards towards where they lay. His objective was obviously Branksome Hill, a little to the north of Flodden, where the northern forces lay, which in some ways would have been an equally advantageous position. Then King James made the mistake which was to cost him his life. Seeing Surrey's move, he attempted to anticipate him, and, setting fire to his tents, marched to Branksome. It was late in the evening; the armies were now quite close; the Scots were in four bodies. The left wing, in two parts, was led respectively by Lords Crawford and Huntly. The English forces opposed to them were under the command of Lord Howard and his brother, Sir Edmund. The centre of the Scottish host was led by the King, who was opposed by Surrey. Their right, under Lennox and Argyle was faced by Sir Edward Stanley. The Scottish reserve was under Bothwell, the English under Lord Dacre.

The battle started with a cannonade, which was slightly favourable to the English; then the Scots, in their impatience and want of discipline, made their second fatal mistake by quitting



the high ground and charging to meet the enemy in the plain.

The Scots left swept Sir Edmund Howard's forces before them, but Huntly was no general, and after this success he never attempted to aid his fellow-countrymen in the other parts of the field. The rest of the left, under Crawford, maintained an unequal fight against Lord Howard, and after losing their two leaders, Crawford and Montrose, was finally defeated. On the Scottish right Lennox and Argyle were soon routed and slain; but it was with the two centres that the main issue lay. For long the stubborn fight went on on equal terms. Bothwell, with the reserves, went to the King's help, but the English were reinforced by both their left and right wings, and soon the Scottish centre was surrounded on all sides. Round their beloved sovereign the Scottish noblemen and soldiers formed a circle, which still remained unbroken by the repeated charges of the English from all sides when night fell, and the English forces withdrew from what did not at that moment appear a very complete victory. But when dawn broke over the Cheviots, Surrey found that the remnant of the Scottish centre had retreated during the night, and he soon was able to discover the completeness of his victory. The King himself had been killed, and more than half of the Scottish leaders, thirteen earls, fourteen

lords, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, a bishop and two abbots, with numberless knights and gentlemen, lay dead around the King. The disaster to the Scottish army was complete. It was the last battle in which a crowned sovereign was to lose his life at the head of his troops, and the battle of Flodden may well be accounted the last battle of Chivalry.

Queen Katherine, when she heard the news, was wild with joy and pride that her regency had brought a greater victory to the English armies than her husband's armed invasion of France had. Writing to the King on the 16th of September, she says: 'My Lord of Howard has sent me a letter open unto your Grace within one of mine, by the which ye shall see at length the great victory that our Lord has sent your subjects in your absence.' Again, later in the same letter, she says: 'The piece of the King of Scots' coat which John Glynn now bringeth. In this your Grace shall see how I can keep my promise, sending for your banners a King's coat.'<sup>1</sup> They were proud words, written in a moment of triumph, but unwise words to send to one so vain and greedy of flattery as the King was.

It will become apparent later on that in all probability Henry never forgave her for this insult to his pride. His own expedition, with all its fanfare of trumpets, had accomplished but

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4451.

little. Two unimportant towns captured, a successful skirmish which can hardly be called a battle, was all he had accomplished, while, without any of the gorgeous preparations and equipments, Katherine's forces had won the greatest victory that the English arms had effected since Agincourt. However, the King was now at home, crowned with success both at home and abroad. To what use Wolsey put this success must be told in another chapter, for from this date we can have no doubt that Wolsey was the all-in-all of the English Government.

## CHAPTER IV

AMONGST the prisoners taken by Henry VIII was the Duke of Longueville. He had been sent over for greater security to the charge of Queen Katherine, who was much perplexed what to do, and suggested in a letter to Wolsey that he should be sent to the Tower.<sup>1</sup> But Longueville was a most useful prisoner to the British Government, for it was by means of him that peace was eventually made. Upon Wolsey's return with the King he was face to face with another difficult diplomatic situation.

England, it was true, had emerged triumphant and had wiped out the stain of Guienne. Again she had acquired a position in the councils of Europe by her military prowess. But, all the same, the position was fraught with danger. The open treachery of the King's father-in-law, Ferdinand, could no longer be doubted, and he was now striving, with considerable chance of success, to detach Maximilian from the English alliance, and to join with him in a separate peace

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4432.

with France. This would leave England without an ally, at open war with both France and Scotland; and even Henry's late victorious expedition into France had accomplished but little. That little, Wolsey knew, had been very largely due to the military talents of the Emperor and the easily got supplies from the territories of the Archduke Charles; but if England was to face the undivided power of France with no friendly Low Countries to supply her forces with victuals, it would be a very different matter; and very rightly Wolsey, seeing that the whole object of the late campaign, the restoration of England's prestige, had been accomplished, and that all that had been gained might very easily be lost if the war was continued, turned his attention to the outwitting of Maximilian and Ferdinand. Wolsey, after the capture of Tournay, had been appointed bishop of that see, the see at that moment having been vacant. On his return to England the see of Lincoln became also vacant, to which he was appointed in February 1514.<sup>1</sup> But Wolsey had other work besides mere accumulation of honours.

On February 25th, 1514, Wingfield had let Wolsey know that a treaty had been concluded between the Emperor and the Venetians.<sup>2</sup> On the same day Quintane had signed a truce on

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4722.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* No 4811.

behalf of Ferdinand, purporting to be for all the belligerents with France.

On the 27th Henry wrote to Spinelly that he suspected Ferdinand of wishing to make peace with France, and trying to induce the Emperor to do the same.<sup>1</sup>

On March 16th Longueville wrote to Wolsey that he had received news of the good feelings of Louis for Henry.<sup>2</sup>

Two difficulties were in the way. The first was Scotland, and the second was the betrothal of the beautiful Princess Mary, Henry's sister, to the young Archduke Charles.

The difficulty as to Scotland was shortly this. The late King had left two sons, nephews of King Henry, one of whom was now James V. But the next heir to the throne after the two infants was John, Duke of Albany, who was now in exile in France. The regency of Scotland under the late monarch's will was in the hands of Queen Margaret, with a Council consisting of Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, and the Earls of Huntly, Angus, and Arran. But this arrangement could hardly last, and a secret message was dispatched to Albany, requesting him to come to Scotland and assume the regency. If Albany came, the power of Margaret, the King's sister, would go. His family history, his pretensions to the crown, boded ill for the baby monarch;

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4828.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4883.

his long connexion with France made the permanent alliance between these two countries a settled question. So on the side of Scotland Wolsey could make no peace with France that permitted Albany to return.

On the side of the Archduke Charles, Mary had been betrothed for many years to him, and though they had never seen each other, she had cultivated diplomatic ways of expressing her warm attachment to him. But Charles on his side, or rather, one should say, his councillors, had in their zeal for France determined that, if possible, Charles should marry a French princess.

Wolsey had thus a double difficulty to contend with: in the first place, to prevent the Archduke from jilting his master's sister, and acquiring a French bride, which would make French influence, already much too powerful in the Low Countries, probably absolutely predominant—for the general opinion of the young Archduke Charles then was, that he was a slow, heavy, lazy and easily-led boy; he had also the object to cement in some way an alliance with France that would enable his country to retire with honour and profit from the war.

One thing was in Wolsey's favour. Louis XII had suddenly become a widower, and, though he was an old, decrepit, broken-down man, Wolsey determined to make that fact the basis of his negotiations.

On the 24th of April Spinelly writes to the King that the Council of the Prince of Castile are greatly inclined to France and against England, and that Albany, he hears, has sailed for Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

On the 28th of April Margaret of Savoy, worried to death by the Emperor's perpetual changeableness, informs the Emperor that England is dissatisfied with his delays; that they will not dispose or alter the terms of the marriage treaty, so she must have his definite answer; she cannot delay longer—is he going to make the truce or not with France? she must know definitely.<sup>2</sup> For, under the terms of the agreement, Prince Charles was bound to consummate the marriage in May; but, though the English Government pressed for a definite answer, Maximilian, as the Prince's governor, was making perpetual excuses for delay.

On the 2nd of May Knight wrote to Wolsey that the Emperor did not intend to keep his promise, that the Prince's Council are French in sympathy, and he advises peace with France.<sup>3</sup> But though Wolsey had already decided to make peace if possible, though negotiations were, as we have seen, already in progress, it was necessary to keep the matter a profound secret still. So on the 5th of May Henry wrote to Margaret of Savoy

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5006.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 5018.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 5029.



that he doubts not the Emperor nor her.<sup>1</sup> But it was unnecessary to keep the King's displeasure with the Emperor a secret, for, if he had done so, no one would have believed it, but would have considered it a cloak to other designs. Bismarck said that the truth is very useful sometimes in diplomacy, as when you tell the truth you are never believed. And so Henry openly threatened to make terms with France. But negotiations now were rapidly approaching a conclusion. They were conducted through the General of Normandy, as well as through the Duc de Longueville.

On the 30th of July the Princess Mary formally renounced her contract with Charles at Wanstead.<sup>2</sup>

On the 5th of August Louis XII wrote to Wolsey to thank him for his services. On the 7th the treaty was signed. On the 10th it was proclaimed.<sup>3</sup>

Though, for some few weeks before, news of this had leaked out, it was too late to stop it. Maximilian and the Archduke Charles were left in a position which can only be thus described. They had betrayed England without scruple, and they had attempted to jilt the King's sister so as to gain a French princess; and what really happened was that the Archduke Charles himself

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5041.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 5282.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Nos. 5302, 5305, 5315.

had been jilted, and his promised bride betrothed and shortly to be married to the King of France, while England had made a treaty with France far more honourable and advantageous than that which the Emperor had obtained by such gross treachery. It was Wolsey's first great diplomatic triumph, the prelude to a series which was to raise England to the highest position in European diplomacy.

But before detailing the articles of the treaty, it were as well to go back to the internal affairs of England during this period.

We have seen before that Wolsey, on his return from France, had been promoted to the bishopric of Lincoln. Other promotions were also made. On the 1st of February 1514, Surrey was rewarded for his great victory at Flodden by the restoration of his duchy of Norfolk,<sup>1</sup> while his son, the Admiral, was made Earl of Surrey. Somerset, Lord Herbert, was made Earl of Worcester, and the King's favourite, Charles Brandon, who had been made Lord Lisle not very long before, now became Duke of Suffolk.<sup>2</sup> One of the curious little things connected with Suffolk's promotion is that probably Henry wanted his favourite to marry the Archduchess Margaret of Savoy, the Emperor's daughter, and undoubtedly—for we find many

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4694.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Nos. 4695, 4696, 4698.

references to it—Suffolk wooed Margaret, who at first appears not to have been unfavourable.

Parliament met on March 4th, 1514, and granted a subsidy of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds.<sup>1</sup>

Though Wolsey's promotion had been rapid, it appears that very early his object was the cardinal's hat, for on May 21st, 1514, Polydore Vergil wrote to Wolsey that he had broken this business to the Cardinal of Bath,<sup>2</sup> who used his efforts so that the Pope thought it would be expedient, if Wolsey had great authority with the King, to make him a cardinal, but for the present it appears that the matter was let drop. On the 24th, however, Wolsey accepted the office of Chancellor of the University of Cambridge,<sup>3</sup> and a greater honour was shortly to be his. On July 14th the Cardinal de' Medici wrote to Henry VIII that Cardinal Bainbridge, the Archbishop of York, was dead.<sup>4</sup> Suspicion arose in the mind of his secretary, Richard Pace, that the Cardinal had been poisoned by his chamberlain. The Pope ordered him to be arrested; he confessed it without being pressed, and said that he had done it at the request of the Bishop of Worcester. When the news reached England, Henry VIII at once fixed on Wolsey as the new Archbishop, and on the 5th of August we have the document

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 4848.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 5110.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 5121.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Nos. 5252, 5253.

that Wolsey, now Archbishop-elect of York, do have the custody of the see.<sup>1</sup>

Having now finished with Wolsey's promotions, there are one or two matters which must be dealt with.

On December 31st, 1513, the Bishop of Worcester was able to announce to the King that the Pope had conferred on him a consecrated sword and cap of maintenance.<sup>2</sup> On July 12th, Nicholas de Favri, who was attached to the Venetian embassy in England, describes in a letter how these were received: 'The King next knelt at the High Altar and two noblemen girded him with the sword, and on his head they placed a cap which, by reason of its length, covered his whole face, both sword and cap being emblematical, for it was not intended that he should wear either one or the other.'<sup>3</sup>

It is startling to find, not many pages later on in the same volume of the Venetian Calendar, an early and certainly the earliest rumour of the great tragedy which, many years afterwards, was to be fraught with such gigantic issues. On September 1st, Vettor Lippomano, writing from Rome, says that it was also said that the King of England meant to repudiate his present wife, the daughter of the King of Spain, and his brother's widow, because he is unable to have children by

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5300.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4621.

<sup>3</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 445.

her, and intends to marry a daughter of the French Duke of Bourbon. Later in the same letter he says that, according to report, the King of England demands a million ducats from the Emperor on account of his expenditure in the war last year in France; he means to annul his own marriage, and will obtain what he wants from the Pope, as France did with Pope Julius.<sup>1</sup> As the editor of the Calendar points out, 'Pope Julius' is a mistake here for Pope Alexander VI, who granted the divorce of Louis XII from Jeanne of France. Whether this was a very intelligent anticipation or whether it had foundation in fact it is hard to decide, but the question will have to be dealt with in full when we reach the divorce, and need not detain us longer here, except merely to say that there is considerable confirmation that it was more than a guess in a letter, dated 31st December, of Peter Martyr to Lud. Furtado, that the Queen of England has given birth to a premature child, through grief, it is said, of the misunderstanding between her father and husband, that he (Henry) had reproached her with her father's bad faith.<sup>2</sup>

Now it is time to consider the treaty between England and France which had closed the year.

The main terms of the treaty of peace were an alliance with England, to be cemented, as we have seen, by a royal marriage between the old

<sup>1</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 479.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5718.

King and the youthful Princess Mary, and the promise by the King of France to pay certain sums of money to the King of England.

The Princess Mary was conducted across to France with great splendour, where she met her bridegroom at Abbeville. No sooner was she married than her servants were dismissed, and the young bride wrote an angry letter to her brother: 'I marvel much that my Lord of Norfolk would at all times so lightly grant everything at their requests here. I am well assured that when ye know the truth of everything, as my Mother Guildford can show, you would have little thought I should have been ill-treated thus. Would God my Lord of York' (Wolsey) 'had come with me in the room of my Lord of Norfolk, for then I am sure I should have been left much more at my heart's ease than I am now.'<sup>1</sup>

But it appears that this was not the only cause of offence to the English. Hall states that the Duke of Longueville was highly entertained in England by many noblemen, and had great cheer, but when they came into France with the Queen he would scarce know them.<sup>2</sup> The French nobles, indeed, looked down on our insular nobles as distinctly their inferior in rank and culture. But all this was hidden by the blaze of pageantry which surrounded the marriage, and gave time only for one curious little diplomatic manœuvre,

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5488.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 570.

of which we have only one little indication in a letter of Louis XII to the Duke of Suffolk.<sup>1</sup> From the letter it appears that definite instructions had been given to Suffolk by Henry to ask the King of France to join in an alliance against Ferdinand of Spain, France to have Navarre, while England set up a claim to Castile. As regards Navarre, Louis consents, but points out the expense. As regards Castile Louis gives no advice, but promises that, if Henry will set an enterprise on foot for this purpose, he (Louis) will help; but the matter appears not to have gone further, for suddenly the whole fabric of alliance with France was shaken to its foundations. The sacrifice of the beautiful Princess Mary appeared to have been in vain, for on January 1st, 1515, Louis XII died, in his fifty-third year, and the crown of France passed to his nephew Francis, Duke of Angoulême, who, as a youth of twenty years of age, now ascended the throne as Francis I of France.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. i. No. 5637.

## CHAPTER V

THE old King being dead, the first and most pressing question for Wolsey was the position of his master's sister as a young widow at the French Court.

Early in January Wolsey, who had not yet heard of the King's death, but had heard of his imminent danger, begged Mary to do nothing without the King's advice, 'and if any notions of marriage or other offers fortune to be made unto you, in no wise give hearing.'<sup>1</sup> On January 10th Mary writes to Wolsey: 'As it shall please the King my brother and his Council I shall be ordered, and whereas you advise me that I should make no promise, my Lord, I trust the King my brother and you will not reckon in me such childhood.'<sup>2</sup> On January 14th the mission of condolence and of congratulation to Francis I, headed by the Duke of Suffolk, left England for France.<sup>3</sup> It was a curious choice, that of Suffolk, for, reading in the light of after-events, there can be little doubt that both Wolsey and the King

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 25.



knew he was Queen Mary's lover, and Mary was surely too valuable a diplomatic asset to be thrown away on an upstart favourite like Suffolk.

One of the most important parts of Suffolk's mission was that Mary should bring back to England not only her own jewels, but the jewels that her doting old husband had lavished on her, as well as securing the return of her dowry and the punctual payment of her marriage portion. But Suffolk was no diplomat, as Wolsey was to find out to his cost. It is hardly necessary to go into the details of this sixteenth-century romance. Suffice it to say that Francis became conversant with the lovers' secret, cajoled Suffolk and bullied Mary, till the young girl, taking her courage in her two hands, told Suffolk that, if he did not marry her at once, 'he need never look to have her.' Suffolk weakly consented, and the couple were married privately. Both then appealed to the King for forgiveness,<sup>1</sup> but Henry was furious at Suffolk having broken his word, which he had pledged before leaving, and at his stupidity in his diplomatic dealings with Francis. All hope of recovery of jewels and dowry was gone, and for a short period it seemed certain that Suffolk would pay for his temerity with his head; but Wolsey, though he lectured the couple on their behaviour, stood their firm friend in the Privy Council; but it needed all Wolsey's influence and

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii, No. 224.

matchless tact to ride the storm. They were eventually entirely forgiven, and on their return to England were openly married at Greenwich before the King. It was some time, however, before Suffolk completely regained his position of influence at Court.

Indeed, the beginning of this year was troubled by the doings of both Henry's sisters. Margaret, the widowed Queen of Scotland, had determined that the state of widowhood was not to her liking; in fact, her matrimonial troubles bear a close resemblance to those of her brother in England; so she began to look about for a new husband, and later on, on the 6th of August 1514, she married the boy Earl of Angus, who was not quite twenty. At once a portion of the Scottish nobility, headed by Hume, the Lord Chamberlain, and Beaton, the Chancellor, Archbishop of Glasgow, determined to get rid of her authority as regent of the realm, turning their eyes in the direction of Albany, who was still in France.

The accession of Francis I made things easier.

On May 15th the Scots accepted the pacification which had been arranged between England and France in the previous year;<sup>1</sup> on May 17th Albany landed in Scotland; and in July he was proclaimed regent of the kingdom and guardian of the Princes. But before this had happened

<sup>1</sup> Hume Brown, p. 355.

Lennox had seized Dumbarton for Albany, and the Pope had attempted a compromise between Angus and the Humes by making Andrew Forman Archbishop of St. Andrews and Gavin Douglas Bishop of Dunkeld.<sup>1</sup> Here for the present we must leave Scotland.

Suffolk, before leaving France in February, had written to tell Wolsey that the French King was very desirous to come to an amicable agreement for the recovery of Tournay, which was still held by the English;<sup>2</sup> indeed, Francis was anxious to settle up matters with England, so as to be able to carry out his cherished plan for the invasion of Italy; so on April 5th a fresh treaty of peace was signed between England and France.<sup>3</sup> On March 23 Spinelly announced to Henry VIII that war had begun between France and Spain.<sup>4</sup>

Before entering into an account, which, however, of necessity must be a brief one, of the first Italian campaign of Francis I, it were perhaps as well to gain some idea of the personal characteristics of the young monarch who was to play such an important part in the affairs of Europe for many years to come.

It is difficult to disentangle the character of Francis I from the legends of romance and of abuse that have gathered round the last great

<sup>1</sup> Hume Brown, p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii, p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 261.

Valois King. Pictured by many as the last paragon of chivalry, handsome, dashing, brave, courteous, friend and munificent patron of poets, painters, and men of letters, François le Premier has been the idol of many a tale of knightly chivalry. On the other hand, his cruelty, his callousness to the sufferings of his people, his gross immorality, his half-cynical, half-superstitious piety, have made him an object of violent abuse. Perhaps it is possible to draw a middle line, recognising his great, though somewhat showy, qualities—at the same time seeing the darker traits in his character, which were evident from the first days of his reign, when an observer might have noticed his callousness to the feelings of the widowed Queen, which later developed into the frivolous brutalities which seem to have stained all the later Valois; his riding disguised through the streets of Paris, pelting the citizens with missiles for sheer amusement; his cynical bad faith, which became a byword through Europe. Again, the martial glory which crowned him in the first years of his reign as the young conqueror of Marignano, his courage in the dark hour of defeat at Pavia, stamped him as a gallant soldier; but towards the end of his life, sunk in a life of vicious brutality, he lost his energy and almost his courage, and paved the way for the fall of his house, and the ruin and devastation of France in the wars of religion.

The one redeeming feature that seems consistent and not showy was his deep affection for his mother and his mother's affection for him. There is something very pathetic in the journal that his mother, Louise de Savoie, kept of her son's doings. One quotation will suffice. 'Le jour de la Conversion de Saint Paul 1515, mon fils fuit oint et sacré en l'église de Rheims. Pour ce suis-je bien tenue et obligée à la divine misericorde par laquelle j'ay esté amplement récompensée de toutes les adversités et inconvéniens qui m'estoient advenues en mes premiers ans, et en la fleur de ma jeunesse. Humilité m'a tenu compagnie, et patience ne m'a jamais abandonnée.'<sup>1</sup>

Louise was to prove her affection for her son in many ways, and he proved his by his almost implicit trust in her powers of government, for all through the earlier portion of his reign she was her son's chief minister of state.

West, who was afterwards Bishop of Ely, had succeeded Suffolk as ambassador. But Francis's eyes were riveted on Italy, and Italy alone. Flanders had been made secure by a treaty of marriage between the young Archduke, who now, at the age of fifteen, had been called to the government as of age, and Renée, a daughter of Louis XII; and having secured himself on this side, and at peace with England, he prepared for the war in Italy.

<sup>1</sup> *Journal de Louise de Savoie*, edited by Buehon, p. 298.

Genoa joined the French, and in August 1515 Francis I descended into Italy. The Swiss, under Cardinal Schinner, retired to Milan; meanwhile the French army advanced to Marignano. On September 13th an alarm was raised in Milan that the French were approaching. The Swiss rushed to arms and hastily advanced. A desperate battle ensued, which resulted in the retreat of the Swiss. The effect was stupendous. The Swiss up to this time had been looked upon as invincible, and here they were crushed by a young monarch hardly out of his teens. Leo X, who had been hesitating for long, at last made up his mind under the force of the victory. Terms were signed between him and Francis on October 13th, but though Francis had thus acquired the Pope as far as treaties were concerned, Leo X was never a very faithful ally, and hardly was the accord signed when he was treating with Spain. However, this could not be done openly, and in December the Pope met Francis at Bologna, and they parted apparently friends. Early in 1516 Francis returned to France, leaving the Duke of Bourbon as Governor of Milan.

Meanwhile Henry was looking on with unconcealed disgust at the signs of French encroachment.

On July 3rd Giustinian writes to the Council of Ten that the King says Francis will not go into

Italy this year ; when he goes it will not be to help Venice, but to conquer Milan, and then the rest of Italy, for himself ; he distrusts Francis's forms of friendship ; ' and I became immediately aware of the existence between these two young Kings of so great a rivalry of glory that it would be a very easy matter for this metal to become rusted.' <sup>1</sup>

Pace was to be used by Wolsey to try and checkmate French hopes in Italy by subsidising the Swiss, but the news of Marignano put a stop to all these things. But on November 6th De Bapaume wrote to Louise de Savoie, who was acting as regent in her son's absence, that, despite the assurances of Suffolk and Wolsey, his own opinion is that if Francis had been unfortunate in Italy Henry would have attacked him.<sup>2</sup> But Francis had been successful, and for the moment we must leave the paths of diplomacy to turn to the internal affairs of England.

Before actually dealing with these, it will be convenient to give some slight account of how Wolsey reached the dignity of Cardinal. For long the English agents at the Court of Rome had been urging the Pope to create Wolsey Cardinal, but so far without success. Now, however, the Bishop of Worcester, who had been mixed up in the mystery of Cardinal Bainbridge's poisoning, actually brought the matter before the Pope.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii, No. 652.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 1113.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 647.

In July Wolsey wrote that the King was anxious that he should be made a cardinal.<sup>1</sup> On September 10th the Pope gave way, and Wolsey was nominated Cardinal Sole, a special mark of favour, as cardinals were generally created in batches at intervals. The red hat was sent to England and was placed on his head by Archbishop Warham on November 18th with gorgeous ceremony.

Parliament had met on February 5th, 1515, and besides granting a subsidy, passed an act against the wearing of costly apparel and one against the pulling down of towns.<sup>2</sup> It met again on November 12th, again granting another subsidy.<sup>3</sup> But almost more important than anything else was an incident that occurred at the beginning of this year, as it was significant of much that was to happen in the future, and was the first sign in this reign of the bad feeling between the Church dignitaries and the City of London.

Just before the end of 1514 a citizen of London, Richard Hunne, was found hanged in the Lollards' Tower of St. Paul's Cathedral, where he had been imprisoned on a charge of heresy.<sup>4</sup> The facts of the case, as far as they can be gleaned, putting aside all the doubtful points on both sides, were these.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii, No. 763.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 1130.

<sup>4</sup> Hall, pp. 573 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> Gairdner, *History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 25 et seq.



Hunne had refused to pay a mortuary charge on the burying sheet of an infant child, on the legal ground that the infant had no property in it. He was cited before the Spiritual Courts and, to avoid a trial, he sued out a writ of *Praemunire* against the priest. The Temporal Courts decided against him, and he found himself shut up in gaol on a charge of heresy, which appears to have had nothing to do with the original cause of dispute. On his being found, as we have stated before, hanged in prison, an inquest was held, the account of which in Hall, though long and detailed, bears the marks, as Mr. Gairdner has pointed out, of obvious inaccuracy. But though we cannot accept the account of this as strictly accurate, there can be little doubt as to what was the actual result of the finding of the inquest, and that was one of wilful murder against Dr. Horsey, the Bishop of London's chancellor, Charles Joseph Sumner, and John Spalding, bell-ringer.

The Bishop of London, who was then Fitzjames, wrote to Wolsey beseeching him to be a good lord to his poor chancellor, who is now in ward, being indicted on an untrue quest on the accusation of Charles Joseph Sumner, and to intercede with the King to have the matter examined before the Council; feels assured that a London jury will condemn any clerk, be he as innocent as Abel, 'they be so maliciously set in favorem

haereticae pravitatis.'<sup>1</sup> An inquiry was ordered by the King, which resulted in the chancellor's being 'indicted for the deed and arraigned for the indictment before the King's Bench, where he pleaded not guilty, thereupon the King's Grace, being well and sufficiently informed of his blessed disposition, not willing that there should be in his name any false matter being obtained, gave an commandment to his Attorney to confess what they plead to be true without any further trouble.'

Proceedings of some kind appear also to have been taken against the jury for returning a false verdict, and the friends of the jury, impatient of this imputation, got a Bill brought into Parliament in 1515 to make them true men. Hunne, though dead, was still tried for heresy, condemned, his body taken and burnt at Smithfield, and thus the matter ended. It will become of importance to us later, when we discuss the Lutheran movement in England; at present we have discussed it sufficiently.

Not only was there this case of Hunne, but also a curious case connected with the Abbot of Winchcombe, who preached a sermon at St. Paul's Cross either in 1514 or in 1515, declaring that the Act taking away the benefit of clergy from felons unless they were in Holy Orders was against the law of God and the liberties of the Church, and all the Lords who were parties to

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 2.

that Act had incurred the censures of the Church. Thereupon the King took counsel of divers divines at Blackfriars. Dr. Henry Standish, Warden of the Mendicant Friars of London, laid down that the Act was not against the liberties of the Church, as it was for the weal of the whole realm. There was a discussion on this. The Bishops supported the Abbot, and used the text, 'Nolite tangere Christos meos'; however, the Lords, after hearing both sides, desired the Bishops to make the Abbot make open renunciation at Paul's Cross. The Bishops refused, and the matter went over to Michaelmas, when Standish was summoned before Convocation to answer certain articles. Standish appealed to the King, and the judges decided that all in Convocation who had taken part against Standish were guilty of Praemunire. The King resolutely supported Standish, despite an appeal from Wolsey that the matter might be decided by the Pope, Wolsey declaring that nothing was intended against the King's prerogative. This the King refused, and the matter was let drop.<sup>1</sup> But in the two cases of Hunne and of Standish, as well as in the actions of the Parliament that was sitting at the end of this year, there were obvious signs of the unpopularity of the clergy.

<sup>1</sup> Gairdner, [p. 41 et seq. ; Brewer, pp. 250 et seq. ; *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 1313.

## CHAPTER VI

THE result of the battle of Marignano was not only to raise the reputation of Francis I as a general, as well as that of the French infantry, but also to cause the jealousy of Henry to drag Wolsey and England, not at first, indeed, into open war, but into a state that was the nearest possible thing to open war; and there is little doubt that, if Henry had had his own way entirely, it would have been open war. But Wolsey's influence was powerful enough to prevent this extreme taking place. However, Pace was sent on a mission to Switzerland, to hire the Swiss, in the King of England's service, to attack the French on the plains of Lombardy.

Maximilian was pressed, by Wolsey's instructions, by Sir Robert Wingfield, our ambassador at the Imperial Court. Maximilian was delighted. Nothing suited his ideas better than a plan which involved the sending of English gold into Switzerland, for he was perfectly certain that he would be able to retain a good deal of it for himself. The artful old man set himself at first to win over

our too credulous ambassador, Wingfield. Maximilian was a past master of the art of cajolery, and nobody could appear more innocent when he was right up to the hilt steeped in treachery than the Hapsburg monarch. Wingfield was an easy capture, and his letters to Wolsey form a monotonous chaunt of the praises of the chamois-hunting, spendthrift Emperor, whom Wingfield looked upon as a paragon of all knightly virtues. But unfortunately for the Emperor and to his extreme disgust, Wingfield was not trusted with the money for the payment of the Swiss, for Pace was put in complete control of how every florin was to be expended. Pace's instructions were to pay the Swiss 140,000 crowns, and in return they were to supply 20,000 men to serve wherever England wanted.<sup>1</sup> When he arrived in Switzerland he found a nation of Maximilian's greedy beyond measure, but brave soldiers. They first of all demanded 300,000 crowns, and it soon became apparent that more money was necessary. The money that Pace had brought with him disappeared rapidly, and Wolsey found difficulty in supplying Pace with the necessary funds.

Maximilian at once made up his mind. Up to this, though he had been toying with Wingfield, he had been also playing with the French; but the sight of the lavish expenditure of English money so close to him was far too much for

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 1065.

him. For the moment he was an ardent Englishman, and nothing could exceed his zeal in his attempts to obtain a little of the English money.

It is almost unnecessary to go through the details of the bargaining and counter-bargaining with Swiss and Emperor, the mean shifts that Maximilian employed, the credulity of Wingfield, the steadfastness of Pace. Suffice it to say here that the expedition at last got fairly started. Swiss and Emperor descended on Milan. It seemed as if success would crown the Cardinal's efforts to humble France without open war, when suddenly the shifty Emperor departed from the Swiss camp and returned sullenly to the Tyrol.<sup>1</sup> The Swiss, deserted by the Emperor, their pay having been delayed on the way, retired back to their own country. For a short time Pace's life was in danger. Maximilian having taken the opportunity of extorting from Pace a loan of money while he was ill, the whole plan tumbled down like a house of cards, and Wolsey had to build up fresh schemes to combat the French ascendancy in Europe.

Meanwhile Ferdinand of Aragon was no more. He died in February 1516, and the young Archduke Charles became King of Spain, as his mother, Ferdinand's daughter Juana, was a lunatic.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. Nos. 1470, 1721, 1729, 1736, 1746, 1775, 1813, 1817, 1892, 2034, 2070, 2565.

Charles, though now master of vast dominions, was, for the present at least, exceedingly short of money, and money was very necessary to him at this moment, for his immediate presence in Spain was a matter of most urgent importance, and that could not be accomplished unless money was forthcoming. The ministers of the Flemish Court were French by instinct and by interest, and in the first instance they turned to the French Court for pecuniary assistance. At the same time, of course, they did not neglect to try if it were possible to get some money out of England. Giustinian, writing to the Council of Ten, referring to England, says ambassadors arrive in London from all the great princes of Christendom, 'all hammer at this anvil, some for money, and some for favour.'<sup>1</sup>

Without entering into the details of these tiresome negotiations, we may at once state that on the 13th of August 1516, Charles signed a treaty with France, the Treaty of Noyon. By this arrangement England was left out in the cold, and Charles consented to marry, eventually, the French King's younger daughter Anne, while the Venetians acquired Brescia and Verona from the Emperor for the payment of 200,000 florins. It was a terrible blow to Wolsey. At one stroke all the money that he had lavished on the Emperor and on the Swiss was made useless—for there

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 1495.

could be little doubt now that the Emperor was a party to this disgraceful treaty. However, Wolsey was bold enough to put a good face on the matter, and no hint was given for the moment of his distrust in the Imperial word. On the contrary, more money was advanced to the Emperor on condition that he should come down into the Low Countries and persuade his grandson to dismiss his French advisers and repudiate the Treaty of Noyon. Maximilian greedily swallowed the bait and came down towards the Low Countries, but not for the purposes for which he had been paid. On the 8th of February 1517, after a disgraceful and pitiful exhibition of diplomatic lying, the Emperor admitted that he had agreed to the Treaty of Noyon. The result has been so well described by Dr. Brewer that one may use his words. 'Suspected by France, not trusted by England, despised by Charles and his ministers for his vacillation and deceit, Maximilian had totally disqualified himself by this last act from taking any further part in European politics. From this time he sank into insignificance.'<sup>1</sup>

As for Charles, the way was now clear for his voyage to Spain; he could now leave Flanders without any fear of its being attacked in his absence by the French. His presence in Spain became more necessary every day. The discontent at his absence had ripened into an intrigue

<sup>1</sup> Brewer, vol. i. p. 173.



to place his brother, the Infante Ferdinand, on the throne in his place ; but Cardinal Ximenes, who was regent in Spain, was able to nip the conspiracy in the bud, though the discontent remained. However, Charles could not get to Spain without money, and Wolsey once again had the satisfaction of having to be appealed to by him. The appeal was readily listened to, and a loan of 100,000 florins was made, which enabled the King to set out for Spain in September 1517, where he arrived after a stormy passage.<sup>1</sup>

Wolsey's policy during this time has been much criticised, but it is one of those policies the details of which can be both praised and blamed with an equal show of reason. In judging Wolsey's foreign policy, we must always look to what were the broad results of his diplomatic career, and that we can only do when the full extent of it has been traced and when the minister himself is dead.

From the moment of Ferdinand of Aragon's death another great figure begins to loom upon the European horizon, and that is Charles, the King of Spain, afterwards the Emperor Charles V. There can be little doubt that Charles was by far the greatest of contemporary monarchs, prudent, cautious, reserved, decorous, unsuccessful in the end, and dogged persistently by fate. In the

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. Nos. 3441, 3449, 3673.

great moments of his early triumphs, in the dark hours of the flight from Innsbruck or the siege of Metz, the same stern quiet dignity that never blustered in triumph or gave way to despair, the same caution, trusting no one too much, and at the same time never foolishly refusing to follow advice, Charles V is one of those figures that can never become a popular hero, and yet has a far greater title to fame than most of the heroes of romance. As one looks at his portraits—and they are many—the gloomy forehead and somewhat thick lips show the man who, though sensual, never allowed his vices to interfere with his policy. Though he never conquered as his rival did at Marignano, no one reading the chronicles of his time can doubt for an instant that he was a far greater general than was ever His Most Christian Majesty of France. No one can deny that Charles made mistakes; but who could have avoided mistakes, placed as he was placed? On one side ruler of the most Catholic portion of Europe—Spain; on another side Luther was his subject. Hemmed in on all sides by totally different enemies—by the Turk, by the Moorish pirates, by the French; with every conceivable kind of difficulty, coming not singly, but all at once; always insolvent—with all his power, Charles was never able to cease from struggling. And if he failed, he failed because no man could hope to cope with what he had

to cope with. The man that could have dealt successively with the Reformation and with the rise of the power of the princes in Germany—the man that could have dealt with these, and at the same time with the constitutional crisis in Spain, with the economic and religious changes of Flanders, with the Turkish invasions of Hungary, the Moorish piracy in the Mediterranean, with the refusal of the Papacy to be reformed, with the treachery and ever-changing politics of Italy, with the ambition and power of Wolsey, and the Divorce question in England, and, running through all, unscrupulously taking advantage of every difficulty, the undying hostility of Francis I—the man who could cope with all these and many other questions, always without money, with not the best of health, would surely have been more than mortal; and if Charles V failed, he failed because to be successful in everything was impossible.

But the young monarch had only begun his lifelong struggle and work when he set sail on that September day for his kingdom of Spain to begin a life of constant and unremitting toil, toil that was only to end when, broken in health and broken in spirit, the great Emperor, in that Flanders which he loved so well and was now leaving for the first time, was to resign his crown of Spain and his principalities of the Netherlands to his son Philip, and shortly after

the Imperial diadem to his well-trying brother, and himself, with the gloom of madness rapidly descending on his overwrought brain, to retire to that monastery in the mountains of Spain where he was to remain until the end came.

Having made sure of the untrustworthiness of the Emperor Maximilian, Wolsey turned once again to the French alliance, and one cannot help thinking that Wolsey's object from the beginning had been to show his master Henry that an alliance with France was an imperative necessity. The only way he could show that was by showing the impossibility of any other policy. Pace's mission to the Swiss and the Emperor's gross treachery at Noyon had made the position easier. But France had to be dealt with, and this needed the careful exercise of all Wolsey's diplomatic gifts. It would never do for England to show her hand or to court an alliance with France too openly. The terms that she would then get in a settlement of the outstanding questions, such as that connected with Tournay, would be poor terms if the French King had any suspicion of Wolsey's real wishes. But in the game of diplomacy there was nobody at the French Court who was anything like the equal of Wolsey.

In March 1517 some curious letters are found between the Dean of Tournay, the Duke of Orleans, and an unknown correspondent.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. Nos. 3006, 3007.

Though studiously vague and wrapt up in mystery, in the light of after-events they obviously point to negotiations with Wolsey.<sup>1</sup> Worcester was chosen by Wolsey as the official mouthpiece. His instructions were not to answer the Dean of Tournay, who had opened communications with him, because the French ambassador with the King of Castile spread false reports. Wolsey here hit the nail on the head. No negotiations with France, as long as the French showed the slightest signs of making use of those negotiations for the purposes of injuring the English position at the Court of Charles, and of making the ministers of Charles, already French enough, more French than before. The Dean was not discouraged. He had also opened communications with Sampson, who was Wolsey's deputy at Tournay, and the matter now progressed quickly.

On June 30th Giustinian wrote to the Doge of the coming of two ambassadors of France.<sup>2</sup> The Venetian had, as his duty, to ascertain why they came. Keen and able as the envoy was, he came to the conclusion that they had only come for the purpose of discussing private differences. He was probably correct, and the two envoys were a mere blind to prevent any suspicion of the far more important negotiations of the Dean and Sampson—for, after the first rebuff, the Dean was again in communication with Sampson in July.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 3048.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3415.

However, Giustinian was suspicious. On the 10th of July he wrote to the Doge that he thought there was something else besides what he had been able to discover; that there was a current rumour that they were negotiating together for a league; and that when this was reported to the ambassadors they smiled and said nothing.<sup>1</sup> Giustinian thought this very suspicious. However, the Venetian was soon involved in a little storm of his own with Wolsey on account of Venice having favoured Cardinal Hadrian, of which more anon. Soon the negotiations went into the hands of bigger men. On September 28th Poncher, Bishop of Paris, wrote directly to Wolsey, saying that the King had followed Wolsey's advice in pushing the treaty for the business of Tournay, and that they were ready now with full powers;<sup>2</sup> but the matter was still kept secret. On the 11th of November Giustinian reported to the Doge of the arrival of other French ambassadors.<sup>3</sup> 'It is said,' said the Venetian, 'they come about reprisals, but I do not believe that envoys of such dignity would have been sent on such a trivial errand.' But the matter now had reached such a pass that it was difficult to keep it absolutely secret.

So on February 27th, 1518, Wolsey wrote to the Bishop of Worcester, the English ambassador

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 3455.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3071.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3788.

at Rome, referring to the Pope's project of a crusade against the Turks, that if the Pope is in earnest about the league against the Turks, he must enjoin unanimous peace on all Christian princes. The design might already have taken effect, but for the inordinate ambition of certain princes. The King of France should be urged to set bounds to his ambition. The King is himself prepared for war or peace. The King of France is offended at our refusal to sell him the city of Tournay, which we have conquered at vast expense and peril, and now hold by indubitable right and inheritance. We have acted thus, not because we derive any advantage from that city, but solely that we may place our affairs and those of the King Catholic on a safer footing, and repel injury if any injury be offered us. The Pope must hold off from the French alliance for a time.<sup>1</sup>

It was difficult to keep matters secret any longer. On July 22nd Giustinian was able to inform the Doge that two great personages from France had arrived to conclude a marriage between the Princess Mary, Henry's daughter, and the Dauphin, and that this is true, though the Cardinal denies it.<sup>2</sup> On July 31st the formal commission to treat with Henry for the surrender of Tournay and the marriage of the Princess Mary was issued by the French King.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 3973.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4332.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4351.

The French ambassadors were given a great reception in London. On the 2nd of October the treaty was signed ; on the 3rd it was proclaimed at St. Paul's ; and the Princess Mary was married by proxy to the Dauphin of France on the 5th of October.<sup>1</sup> That night Wolsey gave a most gorgeous banquet. On the 9th of November Worcester and Herbert received their commissions to go to France for the confirmation of the treaty of marriage and peace.<sup>2</sup> On the 14th of December it was confirmed by Francis.<sup>3</sup>

The terms of the treaty were most favourable to England. Tournay was to be surrendered to France in return for a very large sum of money. Francis also agreed to desist from all interference in the affairs of Scotland. Besides this, the baby Princess Mary, who was just two years of age, was married by proxy to the Dauphin of France, who was not quite a year old. The marriage was to take place when the Dauphin was fourteen years old, and the Princess's dowry was to be 33,000 crowns of gold, half of which was to be paid at marriage, and half within a year after. There was also a provision that the two Kings should meet before the end of May, and a special gift by Francis of a pension to Wolsey, in lieu of his bishopric of Tournay, which he now surrendered.

Maximilian, when he got the first suspicion of

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. Nos. 4470-71.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4568.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4649.



what was going on, wrote to Wolsey on the 25th of October that he was glad of the peace, but did not believe Wolsey capable of such a breach of faith as to surrender Tournay to France.<sup>1</sup> But Maximilian had no right to complain of breaches of faith. Dr. Brewer has well summed up the peace when he says: 'The wheel had turned round and Wolsey had fulfilled his promise; he had united the two nations. Once more England stood arbiter among the sovereigns of Europe without a blow, by the mere force of Wolsey's policy. His triumph was complete; his enemies had not a word to say.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 4531.

<sup>2</sup> Brewer, vol. i. p. 206.

## CHAPTER VII

WE have seen before that Wolsey had been made a cardinal in July 1515, and that the formal ceremony of receiving the red hat had taken place on November 18th of the same year. His promotion to the great offices of state now became even more rapid. On Christmas Eve Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, resigned the chancellorship into the hands of the King, who at the same time handed over the great seal into the hands of the all-powerful Cardinal.<sup>1</sup> At this moment Wolsey stood without a rival in the good graces of his master. On the 17th of February 1516, Ammonius, the King's Latin secretary, writes to Erasmus, referring to the return of their mutual friend More from a mission abroad, and says that he haunts the Court, and no one pays a more early salutation to Wolsey than he does.<sup>2</sup> This I mention here because it will show that More at that time had means of knowledge of Court doings not granted, perhaps, to ordinary laymen.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 1335.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 1551.

And we find him writing at this time to Erasmus that the Archbishop has succeeded at last in getting quit of the chancellorship, which he has been labouring to do for some years.<sup>1</sup> It seems perfectly certain that the idle stories frequently circulated by Polydore Vergil about Warham and Fox having retired from the Court in disgust at Wolsey's sudden elevation are absolutely without foundation; and, to make it stronger, in the same year 1516, in a letter dated April 23rd, Fox wrote to Wolsey that he was willing to serve the King, but his duty to his cure after twenty-seven years' absence keeps him from Court, especially since Wolsey's great charge 'perceiving better, straighter and speedier ways of justice and more diligence and labour for the King's right duties and profits to be in you than ever I see in times past in any other, and that I myself had more ease in attendance upon you in the said matter than ever I had before.' Wolsey, he fears, will be overworked, and he begs him to take rest.<sup>2</sup> And all through the state papers of this time we find Wolsey's hand tightening the reins of government over Court favourites and nobles. For instance, on the 8th of June in this year, we find Sir Thomas Allen writing to the Earl of Shrewsbury that Dorset, Hastings, Abergavenny, &c., are to be examined for retaining of servants,<sup>3</sup> while how he dealt with

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 1552.    *Ibid.* No. 1814.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 2018.

others of the King's minions will be seen later on.

But Wolsey was soon face to face with a somewhat graver home difficulty than any he had yet had to deal with.

London had of late been rather troublesome. The absence of the Court owing to the fear of the sweating sickness, the large amount of foreigners present in London, attracted thither by Wolsey's vigorous foreign policy, the economic changes and difficulties of the time, caused grave discontent among the lower populace of London. This culminated in a bitter dislike to foreigners, especially to the foreign merchants, who, Hall roundly declares, were grossly impertinent to the English; and not only that, but that, owing to their competition, English workmen could hardly get a living.

In the Easter of 1517 John Lincoln, a broker of the City of London, went to Standish, the Warden of the Mendicant Friars, one of the most popular preachers of the day, whose turn it was to preach at Paul's Cross, and begged him to deal in his sermon with the evil of the foreign residents in London.<sup>1</sup> Standish, however, very wisely for himself, refused to have anything to do with it, whereupon Lincoln, not discouraged, went to a Dr. Beale, a canon, and begged him to preach the sermon. Beale foolishly consented, and delivered

<sup>1</sup> Hall, pp. 588 et seq.

a most inflammatory one against the foreign residents in London. The matter looked grave indeed ; open threats were made that May-day would see the end of the foreigners. Giustinian, on the last day of April, hurried to Richmond, where the Court was, to warn the Cardinal of the imminent danger. The Cardinal reassured him and took precautions. He sent for the members of the corporation and cautioned them ; but, like most corporations, the wise old aldermen did nothing except issue an order that the apprentices were to stay in in the evening. One of their number, Sir John Maundy, coming from his ward, found two young men playing bucklers with a company looking on. He told them to desist, and on their refusal was going to commit them to ward. The well-known London cry of 'Clubs, 'prentices' was raised. Maundy fled ; the mob gathered ; the mayor made a proclamation ; it had not the slightest effect. Sir Thomas More made a gallant effort to stay the mob, but it was too late for mere words. The mob spent its energies in sacking the houses of the French and Flemish artificers. They tried to attack the Italian quarter, but the Italian merchants, who were well armed, proved too strong for them. From several roads leading into the City bodies of men-at-arms sent by the Cardinal marched into London. The riot was finished, and nothing was left but the punishing

of the offenders. Surrey was put in command of the military forces. On the 4th of May the prisoners were tried; thirteen were condemned, and executed for high treason. On the 7th Lincoln was executed; on the 11th a deputation of the City authorities visited the King at Greenwich to implore pardon for the rest. The King refused and referred them to the Cardinal.

The final scene is thus described by Nicholas Sagudino to Alvise Foscari in a letter dated the 19th of May.

He came one day to a place distant half a mile hence with his Court in excellent array, the Right Reverend Cardinal being there likewise with a number of Lords, both spiritual and temporal, with their followers in a very gallant trim; and His Majesty being seated on a lofty platform surrounded by all those Lords, who stood; he caused some 400 of these delinquents, all in their shirts and barefoot, and each with a halter round his neck, to be brought before him; and on their presenting themselves before His Majesty, the Cardinal implored him aloud to pardon them, which the King said he would not by any means do; whereupon the said Right Reverend Cardinal, turning towards the delinquents, announced the royal reply. The criminals, on hearing that the King chose them to be hanged, fell on their knees shouting: 'Mercy'; when the Cardinal again besought His Majesty to grant them grace, some of the chief Lords doing the like; so at length the King consented to pardon them, which was announced to these delinquents by the said Right Reverend Cardinal, with tears in his eyes; and he made them a long discourse, urging them to lead good lives and comply with the

royal will, which was that strangers should be well treated in this country, adding many other expressions hereon. And when the Cardinal told them this, that the King pardoned them, it was a fine sight to see each man take the halter which hung from his neck and throw it in the air; and they jumped for extreme joy, making such signs of rejoicing as became their escape from such peril. It was a fine spectacle and well arranged, and the crowd of people present was innumerable.<sup>1</sup>

Thus ended the riot that is known as Evil May-Day.

The next incident that we may mention is a somewhat curious one. Cardinal Hadrian del Cornato was Bishop of Bath and Wells, and also the Papal Collector of England, his deputy in England being Polydore Vergil the historian. Polydore wrote bitter letters to his master in Rome, criticising Wolsey. The letters were intercepted; Vergil found himself in the Tower, from which he wrote most abject letters, begging Wolsey's pardon. The Pope transferred the collectorship to the King's secretary, Ammonius. And now was to come Wolsey's opportunity to aim at the Cardinal himself. A curious conspiracy broke out in Rome against the life of Leo X.<sup>2</sup> The Cardinals De' Sauli and Siena were committed to the castle of St. Angelo in May 1517, charged with attempting to poison the Pope. The Cardinals St. George and Hadrian were implicated in the plot.<sup>3</sup> Siena was executed.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 3259.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3261.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 3352.

St. George bought his pardon. Hadrian fled to Venice, from whence he wrote to Wolsey begging for forgiveness, and for Wolsey to assist him. Hadrian's subsequent fate remains a mystery. The Venetians attempted to intercede with Wolsey, who had received Hadrian's forfeited bishopric of Bath and Wells, and they actually dared to approach the King behind Wolsey's back. Wolsey was furious, and told Giustinian's secretary: 'Your master has had the daring to give letters and to canvass against me at the request of a rebel against His Holiness, nor can I but complain of the Signory for taking such a delinquent under her protection.' And again he bursts out: 'I charge your ambassador and you not to write anything out of the kingdom without my consent under pain of the King's indignation and the heaviest of penalties';<sup>1</sup> and Giustinian says that Wolsey's rage was such that he gnawed with his teeth a rod that he held in his hand. The Venetians ceased their unwise attempts, and nothing more is heard of Hadrian, Wolsey retaining his bishopric of Bath and Wells.

The next ecclesiastical thing that was to give Wolsey trouble was the proposal for a crusade against the Turks, which the Council of the Lateran had sanctioned on March 16th, 1517. Leo X wrote to Warham on the 6th of November, hoping that he and the clergy of England would

<sup>1</sup> *V. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 951.



comply with the request shortly to be laid before them from the King of a subsidy for the Holy See.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the proposal for a crusade was only yet another means of getting money for the Papal Court, another excuse for more ecclesiastical taxation. But more than a mere request by letter was necessary to extract more money from the English clergy, so the Pope arranged, in the early part of 1518, to send special legates to the different sovereigns of Europe to arrange for the crusade. Campeggio was destined for England, but this would hardly have suited Wolsey; he would have been overshadowed by the presence of a Cardinal Legate when he was only a plain Cardinal. The Pope was informed that it was not usual to admit foreigners to legatine authority in England, and Pace, on the 1st of April, writes to Wolsey that the King has expressed his pleasure at Wolsey's being joined with the Legate-elect who is coming to England. The Legate will not then be able to attempt anything against the King's laws.<sup>2</sup> Pace was now the King's secretary, Ammonius having died of the sweating sickness the previous year. The Pope gave way rapidly. Wolsey was made joint Legate with Campeggio; but when the Legate arrived at Calais he was kept waiting until the Pope had finally deprived Cardinal Hadrian, and Wolsey was thus secure in his bishopric of Bath and Wells. This was done

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 3776.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 4055.

on the 5th of July. Campeggio was at once escorted over, arrived at Deal on the 23rd of July, and made a splendid entry into London.<sup>1</sup> When the joint audience of the two Legates took place on August 3rd, Wolsey took precedence, and from that moment Campeggio was a mere cipher, so much so that on August 11th Giustinian wrote to the Doge that little respect was shown to the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> But before Campeggio returned an event occurred which was profoundly to influence the political future of Europe. On the 3rd of January the Emperor Maximilian died at Veltry;<sup>3</sup> and here we must pause and return to diplomatic history.

The Emperor's death opened the struggle between Francis I and Charles of Spain. Even before his death Maximilian, knowing that his days were numbered, had attempted to secure the Electors on behalf of his heir and grandson Charles of Spain; but on his death the Electors absolutely refused to be bound by their promises to him, and a struggle ensued between the two great competitors. At one time it seemed that the French gold and lavish promises would win over the Electors, for the Spanish gold was somewhat slow in arriving; but when it did come Charles proved no niggard, and from that moment his election was practically assured. It meant a great deal to Charles that he should

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. ii. No. 4333.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4371.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 38.

be elected Emperor. Ruler of the Austrian duchies and the Tyrol, master of the Low Countries, and King of Spain, he needed the Imperial title and the Imperial power to cement together his widely scattered dominions. On the other hand, to his rival of France it would have meant but little more than a great increase of dignity and prestige without any increase of real power.

But the election was not to stand merely between the two great rivals, but was to be complicated by the candidature of Henry of England. On the 25th March 1519, Wolsey wrote to the Bishop of Worcester, who was ambassador in Rome, that he was to carefully sound the Pope on the question, but the matter was to be kept a secret to prevent a rupture between France and England.<sup>1</sup> Pace was despatched in May to the Electors as a secret agent. He was to study carefully if the King had a chance, and if so, he was to promise the Electors secretly that, if actually elected, the King would pay them large sums of money. If Henry's election was impossible, Pace was to favour the election of one of the Electors themselves, so as to avoid if possible an increase in power or dignity to the other two already sufficiently powerful candidates.<sup>2</sup>

The minute that Pace arrived in Germany he let Wolsey know the strong feeling throughout

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 137.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Nos. 215, 216, 240-41.



the country in favour of Charles as a German, and also, writing on the 22nd of June, informed him of the immense sums of money that Francis and Charles were spending on the election, 'so that here is the most dearest merchandise that ever was sold, and after mine opinion it shall be the worst that ever was bought to him that shall obtain it.'<sup>1</sup>

On the 28th of June the battle was over, and Charles was Emperor of the West as Charles V.<sup>2</sup>

Why Henry ever entered on the struggle is somewhat difficult to understand, but that it was the King's own personal wish, and that Wolsey did not favour the scheme, there can be little doubt. Besides the inherent improbability of Wolsey's favouring a plan that ran counter to the whole of his foreign policy, we have direct evidence in a letter of Clarke to Wolsey of the 13th of June, in which he tells Wolsey of the King's impatience at the delays in Pace's embassy, 'and as touching his enterprise of the Empire.' He has reasoned as deeply as his wit would serve him, not varying from Wolsey's instructions 'that His Grace methinketh considereth no jeopardy.'<sup>3</sup> Henry all his life never considered jeopardies, but not much harm was done, for Pace had arrived too late and with no money, and it was never seriously broached to the Electors that Henry was a very keen candidate.

Charles having been elected Emperor, the life-

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 323.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 339.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 302.

long struggle between him and Francis of France opened in earnest.

The next record of importance referring to foreign affairs during this year is Charles's approval of Wolsey's idea of a meeting between him and Henry of England, either on his visit from Spain to the Low Countries or after his arrival there. This letter is dated 12th December.<sup>1</sup> On August 24th Campeggio the Legate left England,<sup>2</sup> and on September 1st the Bishop of Worcester wrote to inform Wolsey that the Pope had extended his (Wolsey's) legateship, but it was to be by the year only.<sup>3</sup>

Before closing this chapter it were well to refer to the report that Giustinian, the Venetian ambassador, made at this time to Venice on his visit to England. Referring to Wolsey he says that he is of low origin ; rules both the King and the entire kingdom ; about forty-six ; very handsome, learned, extremely eloquent, of vast ability and indefatigable ; he alone transacts the same business as that which occupies all the magistracies, offices and councils of Venice, both civil and criminal, and all state affairs are likewise managed by him, let their nature be what it may. He is pensive and has the reputation of being extremely just ; he favours the people exceedingly, and especially the poor, hearing their suits and seeking to dispatch them instantly ; he also

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 551.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 437.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 444.

makes the lawyers plead gratis for all poor suitors; he is in very great repute, even more so than if he were Pope, very rich, magnificent palace, &c. Buckingham extremely popular. 'It is thought here that were the King to die without heirs male he, (Buckingham) 'might easily obtain the Crown. Norfolk very intimate with the Cardinal.'<sup>1</sup> Such was Giustinian's opinion of the great Cardinal, and indeed Wolsey ruled the realm. An undated letter of Henry's to Wolsey, placed by Dr. Brewer at the beginning of 1519, asks Wolsey to make good watch on the Dukes of Suffolk and Buckingham, on the Lords of Northumberland, Derby and Wiltshire, and others whom Wolsey thought suspected.<sup>2</sup>

Again, on the 14th of February of this year, Wolsey wrote a sharp rebuke to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Warham) for having dared to call a council of his suffragans for the reformation of enormities, because he had done it without the Cardinal-Legate's advice, consent, or knowledge. Warham was to appear before the Legate to explain his reasons for so doing.<sup>3</sup> And during the height of the struggle for the Empire Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was our ambassador in Paris, had written to Wolsey to tell him that Francis promised all his interest to Wolsey at the next papal election, as Giustinian said he was in great repute.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 402.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 77.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 122.

## CHAPTER VIII

AT first Wolsey's policy of keeping the balance between the young rivals, Charles V and Francis I, was both eminently successful and very striking, but events were to prove too much for him, and soon, only too soon, Wolsey had to bow to the inevitable, though he constantly kept in view that England was to be neither the perpetual ally nor the perpetual foe of either party. But, as we have said, at first blush it was exceedingly successful; both monarchs sued for England's alliance, both monarchs begged for personal interviews with England's sovereign. At first Francis had to be carefully dealt with, and Sir Richard Wingfield was sent to take Sir Thomas Boleyn's place as ambassador in Paris and to convey to Francis the warm assurances of Henry's personal friendship and his desire for a meeting with him.<sup>1</sup>

On March 2nd things took a more definite shape, and Wolsey was appointed Procurator to arrange a meeting between Henry and Francis; he was appointed to this by Francis as well as Henry.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 629.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 646.

The state papers of this month contain many letters and papers connected with the coming interview with Francis and Henry, and also with the negotiations for an interview between Charles and Henry on the Emperor's return voyage to Flanders from Spain.

It was known that Charles could not possibly arrive before May, and Wolsey was particularly anxious that Henry should have an interview with the Emperor before setting out to see his French rival, so he requested a delay of the French interview, alleging numerous excuses. But Francis, probably seeing through the somewhat flimsy reasons, got out of the difficulty by simply alleging that it was impossible to delay the interview past June 8, owing to the French Queen's condition, and of course Henry would not like, nor could Francis hear of, a meeting taking place without his wife being there to do honour to their royal visitor. There was nothing for it but to hope that Charles might arrive in time, and on April 7 De la Sauch wrote to Chièvres<sup>1</sup> that after the two sovereigns had met they, the Imperialists, might conclude for another interview beyond the sea after the meeting in France. On the same day the Imperial ambassadors wrote to Margaret of Savoy that England would attack whichever power was the aggressor.<sup>2</sup> Charles hurried up with a vengeance, and on April

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 728.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 927.



11, 1520, a definite treaty was signed<sup>1</sup> that Charles was to come and visit England by May 15, and afterwards Henry was to visit Charles, halfway between Calais and Gravelines, about July 22.

The French were nervously annoyed when the news reached them of Charles's intended visit to England.

On the 26th of April Worcester wrote to Henry that the French complained that Henry would wait to see the Emperor before speaking with Francis.<sup>2</sup> Henry replied that he knew of no promise to that effect, but that if the Emperor came, he must receive him. There could be no answer to this; the French dropped questioning, and the preparations for both interviews were pushed on as quickly as could be.

The King and Queen started for Dover on May 21.<sup>3</sup> On the 25th, Friday, they had arrived at Canterbury.<sup>4</sup> The news was brought to them on the following day that the Emperor's fleet was in sight.<sup>5</sup> The same evening the Emperor landed at Dover and was received by the Cardinal. Early in the morning King Henry rode over to Dover. On Sunday they were at Canterbury, and on May 31 the Emperor embarked at Sandwich for Flanders.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 740.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 603.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 604.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* No. 764.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 603-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

The interview was short, and had none of the pomp and pageantry which made the meeting between Henry and Francis famous, under the name of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, as the greatest spectacle known in European history—the last and final word in gorgeous pageantry. But devoid as it was of all splendour, the interview was probably of great political importance. It is quite obvious that the silent, taciturn Emperor made a great impression on Wolsey, who from that moment knew he had to reckon with a strong man.

To Queen Katherine the interview must have been one of great and real joy. Always somewhat in the background in Henry's boisterous Court, her pride had been mortified over and over again by the silent neglect of her husband and the semi-contemptuous respect of his courtiers, but now her nephew had come to visit her, and all the gay gadabouts of Henry's Court realised that the proud, silent, and unpretentious man who was their Queen's nephew was of far more importance, of far higher lineage, position, and power than ever their own master could hope to be, and that though they treated his aunt with contempt because she was neither gay nor beautiful, yet that it was Henry's alliance with her that gave him a good deal of his position amongst European monarchs. The aunt of the Emperor of the West, the King of Castile and of

Aragon, of Naples and Sicily, the Master of Burgundy and the Low Countries, the Archduke of Austria, &c., &c., was some one whom England might be proud to have as her Queen. But the impression amongst the light-headed courtiers was soon to be swept away by the glitter and tinsel of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, while the Emperor was to go on in his own silent and strong way to the tasks that awaited him as ruler of half the world.

On the same day as Charles V departed the King sailed, arriving at Calais at eleven o'clock.<sup>1</sup> He left again on June 4 for Guisnes. By this time Francis had arrived at Arde. On the same day Wolsey went to visit the French King, the visit being returned the next day.

On Thursday, June 7, after elaborate precautions, the two monarchs met in the valley half-way between Guisnes and Arde. The rest of the time was devoted to a series of jousts, banquets and visits, which terminated on Sunday, June 24, when the two Kings said good-bye, Henry for Calais, Francis for Abbeville.

On July 5 Henry visited the Emperor at Gravelines, returning three days afterwards to Calais, accompanied by the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

It is hardly necessary to describe again in detail the oft-told splendour of the meeting between Francis and Henry on the Field of the

<sup>1</sup> Hall, pp. 605 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 620-21.

Cloth of Gold ; for those who love the blazoned pages of pageantry the tale is so well told by Hall the chronicler and in the letters of the Venetian ambassador that it is hardly necessary to repeat it. Wolsey had lavished all the resources of boundless wealth and his great genius for scenic effect to make this meeting memorable. But of substantial results it has been the custom of historians to say that this meeting was a mere idle exhibition on Wolsey's part of wasteful and senseless splendour. But the reasons underlying his policy in this are in keeping with the rest of that matchless statesmanship that raised England from a comparatively unimportant power to the position of the arbiter of Europe.

The French, as we often read, more especially in Hall, looked down on the English as not only unwarlike but as uncouth barbarians. The first idea Wolsey had shattered by his bold decision after the disaster of Guienne to fight France and Scotland practically singlehanded, and the battles of the Spurs and Flodden had put their seal to the matter. But still the French considered that the English were mere barbarians, uncouth and inartistic. In the blaze of splendour of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the French were taught to realise—and with the French Europe in general—that even within the borders of their own country, far away from the English Court, these uncouth barbarians were able to make a richer, a more

splendid and a more artistic pageant than the French themselves. From that moment the French learnt to respect England not only in war, but also in those more showy qualities of peace which are held in such high esteem by the French character.

Of course it is quite true to say that as regards any immediate durable alliance the Field of the Cloth of Gold was a conspicuous failure, but it is difficult to believe that Wolsey had any intention to effect such an alliance, especially after the arranged visit of the Emperor to England.

Henry's visit to the Emperor at Gravelines was from this point of view more effective because, though on June 6 a treaty had been drafted between Henry VIII and Francis I touching the marriage of Mary and the Dauphin of France,<sup>1</sup> this treaty never was really seriously considered. But at the meeting with the Emperor a much less pretentious but far more effectual treaty was made,<sup>2</sup> to the effect that neither party would make any treaty with the King of France for any closer matrimonial alliance than existed at present. Wolsey by this guarded against the danger, as far as a treaty could guard, of Charles being induced to enter the meshes of a French alliance by contracting marriage with a French princess. Francis was quick to see the grave danger of this fresh meeting between uncle and nephew, and

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 861.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 941.

he hung about the borders of the Low Countries in the hope of being asked to join the meeting.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say the invitation was never given.

Soon news reached the English Court that all was not well in Spain,—in fact, an insurrection had broken out; the Emperor's Spanish throne was in grave danger and his presence there was absolutely essential. Charles, however, before going, had to receive the Imperial crown at Aachen. What it did mean, much to Wolsey's annoyance, was that the Emperor's hands would be tied, thus giving an opportunity to Francis again to dabble in the troubled waters of Italian politics.

Before going further, it were well to deal here shortly with the dramatic incident in home affairs with which Wolsey had to deal on returning from the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Of all the great nobles of England there was one who stood head and shoulders above all others in rank and wealth. This was Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. Buckingham appears to have been a man easily led and credulous, and at the same time of a testy and somewhat overbearing temper. We can have little doubt that he had for some time past been fretting at the monopoly of the reins of government which Wolsey had secured. At the same time he appears to have been a violent partisan of the Imperial party,

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 903.

and was bitterly opposed to Wolsey's policy of mediator between and ally of both France and Spain.

Buckingham's position would have needed a cool head and an astute brain to steer a man who by his wealth and estates was always reminding the Crown of the feudal anarchy of the Wars of the Roses, and whose birth made him aspire to the throne itself, as, if Henry died without male issue, it was still somewhat doubtful whether a woman could succeed to the throne of England. This would bar Henry's daughter, the Princess Mary, and his sisters, Mary of France and Suffolk and Margaret of Scotland, and Buckingham would then be the heir.

Henry's jealousy and the Tudor craft and policy were all against Buckingham, who was the most foolish of men. Instead of attempting to conciliate the great Cardinal and keep his pretensions to the throne in the background, he quarrelled with Wolsey and started listening to foolish prophecies of what would happen if the King were to die. He apparently even went so far as to make some slight preparations in his immense jurisdictions in Wales for armed support to his claims on the King's decease.<sup>1</sup> Closely allied as he was to the other great nobles of England—husband of Northumberland's sister, father-in-law to Norfolk, Westmoreland and Abergavenny—no Tudor

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1070.

government could afford to wink at any suspicion of treason in a person like Buckingham. So Wolsey and the King—for in this case it is Henry's hand that we see more than that of his minister, and in fact from the state papers we see that Henry took the deepest personal interest in the whole matter, examining the witnesses against Buckingham himself, while Wolsey kept sedulously in the background—struck him down.

There is little need to tarry over the tale. Buckingham was arrested and tried before a jury of peers ; his own son-in-law, Norfolk, with tears in his eyes, pronounced sentence of death against him, and on the 17th of May 1521 he was beheaded at the Tower of London.<sup>1</sup> Probably Buckingham was more foolish than guilty, but we can hardly blame Henry for the step.

The arrest of Buckingham and his execution caused a tremendous stir among the Courts of Europe. That the greatest peer could be arrested and executed without a sword being drawn in his defence was a marvel to France, with its Duke of Bourbon, and to the Emperor, with his electoral princes, and it definitely proved to Europe that Henry's seat was quite secure on the throne that his father had won.

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1284.



## CHAPTER IX

THE beginning of the year 1521 saw Wolsey's legation continued by Leo X for two years longer, while at the same time the political situation grew darker and darker,<sup>1</sup> the rivalry between Francis and Charles becoming more and more bitter, till it appeared that nothing short of a miracle could prevent open war. Both sides made violent efforts to secure the friendship of Henry and his all-powerful minister, but openly without success, though we know now that England was practically pledged to support the Imperial cause. For the student of history, as distinguished from the chronicler of a mere series of events, there is very little of interest or of use in chronicling the long negotiations and bickerings between the three great powers which culminated in the Conference of Calais, where Wolsey, after a great struggle, had at last got both parties to agree to his arbitration on the outstanding points of difference. From the first, it is highly probable, Wolsey had little hope that his efforts would

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1124.

result in peace, so he merely fought for time, hoping to postpone the inevitable conflict as long as possible, or at least to postpone the time when England should be drawn into the fray, and at the same time to get as much advantage as he could for his Sovereign.

In this he was more or less successful. Time after time it appeared as if war was inevitable between the Emperor and France, but Wolsey was still able to deceive the French King.

During the weary months of negotiations at Calais, Wolsey paid a visit to the Emperor and definitely arranged a treaty between Charles and Henry. The terms were most advantageous to England: the Emperor was to marry the Princess Mary, who was only to have the small dowry of eighty thousand pounds, while the Emperor pledged himself to indemnify England for all losses she might sustain on account of a rupture with France. With this and many months of peace to the good, Wolsey returned, broken in health, on the 28th of November 1521, to England.

On setting out for Calais, Wolsey had had a queer reminder from the King that even he was neither immortal nor indispensable.<sup>1</sup> Pace had written to him on the 24th of July that as old men decay greatly the King wishes young men

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1437.

to be acquainted with his affairs, and desires Wolsey to make Sir W. Sandys and Sir T. More privy to the negotiations at Calais. There is a note in this letter—and it is the first—of dissatisfaction of the King with his minister, for Wolsey did not like the secrets of his policy to be made known to any one save the King himself. But on his return the King, joyful at the treaty with the Emperor, and proud of his position as the master of the arbitrator of Europe, at once gave Wolsey the vacant Abbey of St. Albans on receiving a hint through Pace that the Cardinal desired it, saying, ‘My God, the Lord Cardinal hath sustained many charges in this his voyage and has expended ten thousand pounds,’ adding that ‘he would rather give unto Your Grace the Abbey of St. Albans than to any Monk.’

Though Wolsey had now reached the zenith of possible power for any subject within the realm, there was still a prize which was within his reach—that of the Papacy itself. Both Francis and Charles had pledged themselves to make Wolsey their candidate at the next election, but of course after the alliance with the Emperor no reliance could be placed on the promises of Francis, even if he had had the power. There is little doubt, however, that Wolsey really hoped that by the influence of the Emperor he might become Pope, and Charles’s promises were soon to

be put to the test, for suddenly on December 1, 1521, Leo X died at Rome.<sup>1</sup> It is not within our province to say much of the pontiff whose pontificate, though not of great importance to the political history of England, is of vital importance in the movement and sudden hastening on of the minds and thoughts of men that we call the Reformation.

And perhaps it is well here briefly to comment on what has no doubt struck our readers as a singular lacuna, that so far we have made no mention of Luther nor of the movement which, in Germany at least, was the most prominent feature of the time. The reason for this omission is that, at least for the first few years, the governments of Europe went on practically without reference to, or much thought of, the Wittenberg monk and his followers; alliances were made, treaties were broken, and wars went on just the same as if he had never existed, though this was soon to end. But for the present it is convenient to hurry on with the most uninteresting and bald narrative of the international and home political doings of the English Government.

Leo being dead, Wolsey was in a position to judge of the sincerity of Charles's promises. If ever an Emperor could or did influence a papal election, it was when Charles V's influence in 1521 caused the election of Pope Adrian VI, and

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1825.

on that pontiff's death in 1523, the election of Clement VII.

The French had been driven out of Milan and practically out of the north of Italy in November. In the north, on the same day that Leo died, Tournay had surrendered to Charles. Charles was careful to make great protestations to Wolsey that the whole of his influence should be used to secure his election, but protestations they were and protestations they remained, for on January 8th the Cardinal Tortosa, who had been the Emperor's tutor and was then his governor in Spain, was elected Pope and took the title of Adrian VI.

During the conclave a treaty was signed on December 28th between France and Scotland against England,<sup>1</sup> while Queen Margaret had announced with boastful joy to Lord Dacre the arrival of the Duke of Albany in Scotland. It was now merely a question of time before open war should follow.

Wolsey accepted the Imperial explanations of the result of the papal election, explanations that were so obviously untrue that the Spanish diplomats had to invent a miracle to account for them.

On May 27, 1522, the Emperor had again landed at Dover on a visit to his good uncle for the purpose of concerting a common plan of attack on France.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 2288.

On May 29 Clarencieux, herald, delivered the English defiance to the King of France at Lyons,<sup>1</sup> and on June 19 the Treaty of Windsor was signed between England and the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> Shortly afterwards the Emperor sailed to Spain, and England settled down to the business of war with France, and the possibility of war with Scotland also.

The first thing to be done in view of the war that Wolsey now saw England driven into was the choice of a commander, and his choice fell on the Earl of Surrey, a son of Surrey of Flodden. But the son was not to earn the laurels of decisive victory in France as his father had done in Scotland. The plan of campaign was to act as circumstances should allow in conjunction with the Imperial troops in the north of France. But even at the start it is evident that Wolsey entered into the campaign in a very half-hearted manner, for on September 17 he wrote to Surrey that he was to be circumspect in the entertaining of the Emperor's captains, for if it were thought that the King too much esteemed the Emperor he might endeavour to extract money under the threat of falling into accord with France.<sup>3</sup> While Surrey was ravaging the borders of France, the Turks had captured Rhodes, the last bulwark, as it seemed to many, of Christendom. But the fall of

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 2292.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* No. 2333.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* No. 2551.

Rhodes made little impression on the Western Powers; it mattered little to England and France, and the Emperor, to whom it was of great importance, was too busy all over the world to give much heed to the fall of the outpost of the defenders of Christendom.

But the next task before Wolsey was a harder one than Surrey's—the task of finding money for the war.

Parliament was summoned in April 1523.<sup>1</sup> On the 18th they chose Sir Thomas More as their Speaker. Besides passing many Acts, among which we may mention the Act of Attainder of the Duke of Buckingham and an Act for the Incorporation of the Physicians of London, the main business of Parliament, at least from the Government's point of view, was the finding of money. So Wolsey came down himself into Parliament in all the glory and state of his two crosses, pole-axes, &c., with his filed tongue, as Cavendish called it, and laid the commands of the King before his faithful Commons. The demand was a staggering one, nothing more or less than eight hundred thousand pounds, to be raised by a tax of 4s. in the pound upon every man's lands and goods.

It is a curious and somewhat significant fact that the House of Commons, however subservient to royalty in everything else, has always

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iii. No. 2956.

been very touchy about the voting of money, and so it was in this case. Parliament, after the famous scene in which, in deference to their Speaker's advice, they had admitted Wolsey and his train into the House of Commons, though they remained in silence, began a sharp debate after the Cardinal's withdrawal, which was followed by the appointment of a Committee to lay the views of the House before Wolsey, but with no result. After some more wrangling they proposed to give the King a much smaller amount. Wolsey met this by proroguing Parliament to the 10th of June. Then a somewhat curious incident occurred: the knights and gentlemen, who had taxed themselves a shilling in the pound upon land assessed at fifty pounds and over, turned upon the burgesses, and after a sharp debate carried the motion of a similar rate to be levied on all goods in the fourth year. Thus money was got, but at the cost of much murmuring and grudging throughout the country.

Without going into detail, it is sufficient to state that from this moment it becomes evident to any one who will go through the records of this period, that Wolsey and the Government, for which the nation held him responsible, became more and more unpopular.

Things in the war were going badly for the French. On May 1 Hannibal announced to



Wolsey that Milan castle had been surrendered by the French to the Imperialists. But more important than this was the disaffection in France itself to the government of the King, which terminated in the revolt of the chief subject of the French crown, the Duke of Bourbon.

On September 25, 1522, we get the first inkling in the state papers, where in a letter of instruction to Spinelly, Bourbon's discontent with the French King is mentioned, and the best way of negotiating with him is pointed out. The negotiations went on rapidly and secretly, and on May 12, 1523, Bourbon wrote to Wolsey to desire credence for his chamberlain whom he was sending to Wolsey. Bourbon had been finally alienated from the French King by that monarch's support of the bogus suit instituted against Bourbon by the King's mother, who claimed the whole inheritance of the duchy of Bourbon which had passed into the Duke's hands in right of his late wife's.

Surrey was recalled from France and Suffolk appointed in his place, the former being sent to the Scottish borders, where danger was very imminent. Although England was in alliance with the Emperor, the alliance was never of a very cordial description, and it was soon evident that both allies were not seeking a common object, but that each one was looking exclusively after his own interests. De Praet, the Spanish

ambassador in England, wrote to the Emperor on June 1 that 'the Cardinal's object is sufficiently apparent, that is, to bind your Majesty and leave the King his master at liberty.' But, however they mistrusted each other, on August 4 a fresh league was signed between Charles V, Henry VIII, the Archduke Ferdinand, and the Duke of Bourbon. A few days later, on August 12, King Francis signed an instrument appointing his mother, Louise of Savoie, regent during his absence in the wars, for he had made up his mind definitely to lead a new French army into Italy to retrieve in person the disasters of the former invasion. Events followed quickly. On September 14 Pope Adrian was dead, and once again Wolsey hoped that the Papacy might be his. On September 30 Wolsey wrote to the King, informing him of the Pope's death and sending him news regarding the state of matters over an election for a new Pope. Wolsey's only obstacle was his absence, but he did not think the cardinals would agree on any one present; though unworthy and unwilling, yet remembering the wish of the King for his advancement, he would devise such instructions as were given to Pace. Just at this time the question as to the object of Suffolk's campaign in France was in the balance: the English wished to besiege Boulogne, the Imperialists wished that Suffolk should co-operate with them in an invasion into the heart of France.

On October 6 De Praet informed the Emperor that the English had consented to their plans. Once again Wolsey relied on the promises of the Emperor in the papal election, and again he was grossly deceived. There is little need to go into the details of the petty tricks by which the Emperor tried to throw dust in the Cardinal's eyes; suffice it to say that on November 19, after a long conclave in which no mention was even made of Wolsey, Cardinal Medicis was elected Pope, taking the title of Clement VII. Medicis was an ardent supporter of the Imperial policy, and nobody dreamt that his election would make any difference in the coming war, though at the end of the year Clarke and Pace, in a letter to Wolsey, said that the new Pope seemed rather to favour the French, and would not openly declare himself on the side of the League.

During this period we have just been discussing there was intermittent warfare on the borders of England and Scotland, where once again Albany was regent. In September Surrey made an incursion into Scotland and burnt Jedburgh. Towards the end of October there came grave news from Surrey that Albany was making great preparations for an invasion of England, but it ended in little, for by November 3 Surrey was able to report to the King that Albany had assaulted Wark Castle, had been repulsed by the

garrison, and on Surrey's approach had retreated hastily into Scotland. For the present all danger from Scotland was over, so Surrey laid down his wardenship of the Borders on December 3, and was succeeded by Lord Dacre.

## CHAPTER X

THE next year opened with the thoughts of Wolsey turned decidedly towards peace. On January 24, 1524, he ordered Sampson and Jerningham carefully to sound the Emperor as to peace.<sup>1</sup> In March he was again attempting to end the war by means of the Pope. Peace, however, was still distant, and Henry, if not Wolsey, was eagerly intent upon the plans for a fresh invasion of France, to which the now rapidly culminating treason of the Duke of Bourbon seemed to hold out a promise of substantial success. Bourbon fled from the French Court—to put the whole affair in as short a space as possible, as unimportant in a history of England—and at the head of an Imperial army invaded Provence, but the French troops, refusing battle, retired before him, and Bourbon had to content himself with ravaging Provence and then turned to besiege Marseilles. The siege was abortive, and the French King, initiating a military movement very similar to Napoleon's march and the battle of

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iv, No. 60.

Marengo, suddenly crossed the Alps at the head of a large army and captured Milan. Meanwhile Bourbon had been forced to raise the siege, and retreated to Italy by the littoral route. The French fortunes stood high.

Meanwhile, what had Wolsey been doing? As we have seen, he had long tired of the war, if his heart had ever been really in it, and he did not scruple to open secret communications with the regent, Louise de Savoie.<sup>1</sup> Even before Francis had left Blois on his way to check Bourbon's advance into Provence, overtures had passed by means of a monk who had gone from Madame to the Cardinal. But these tentative feelings after peace, as well as some preliminary fencing between the deputy of Calais, Lord Berners, and other French diplomats, were merely preliminary to more important negotiations. Jean Joachim, *maitre d'hôtel* of Madame Louise, arrived in London on the 22nd of June 1524. Ostensibly his visit was a business one of a private nature with some foreign merchants in London; really he came to open overtures for peace. No wonder Wolsey turned a deaf ear to Pace's remonstrances from Bourbon's camp that Henry's promised invasion of Picardy had not yet taken place. The Imperial envoy, De Praet, was suspicious, but was unable to get any definite

<sup>1</sup> *La Politique extérieure de Louise de Savoie*, par G. Jacqueton, Paris, 1892, pp. 48 et seq.

news. It is unnecessary to enter into any detailed account of either of these delicate diplomatic overtures, which have been ably set out for those interested in M. Jacqueton's '*La Politique extérieure de Louise de Savoie*,' or into the varying fortunes of the French-Imperialist war in France and Italy, for, though England was the nominal ally of the Emperor and the foe of France, she no longer took any active part in the campaign.

After Francis had captured Milan he committed a series of inexcusable military blunders and eventually laid siege to Pavia, held by Antonio de Leiva for the Emperor, assaulted it twice, and was twice repulsed. Francis also attempted to create a diversion in the Imperialists' rear by sending the Duke of Albany with a portion of his army direct towards Naples. The diversion did him no good and merely weakened his own army. Meanwhile the scattered Imperial forces had time to concentrate and receive reinforcements commanded by Bourbon, Lannoy, the viceroy of Naples, and the Marquis de Pescara. On the night of the 23rd of February 1525, they attacked the French camp, which was prepared to receive them. The fight was stubborn, but an effective sally of the garrison of Pavia proved decisive, and the Imperialist victory was complete. Francis I himself was among the prisoners; he was taken fighting gallantly to the

last. The bulk of the French nobility were either slain on the field of battle or, like the King of Navarre, shared their sovereign's fate. The Duke d'Alençon, who was one of the few to escape, and whose indecision, if not worse, in command of the rearguard of the French army contributed greatly to the crushing defeat, on reaching the regent's court a fugitive was openly accused of being an incompetent coward, and took the accusation so much to heart that he shortly after died of chagrin.

The Abbot of Naejra exultantly announced the news to the Emperor: 'To-day is the feast of the Apostle St. Matthias, on which day five and twenty years ago your Majesty is said to have been born. Five and twenty thousand times thanks and praises to God for his mercy! Your Majesty is from this day in a position to prescribe laws to Christians and Turks according to your pleasure.'<sup>1</sup> On the 10th of March the wonderful news reached the young Emperor in Madrid; it was tidings that might have turned many an older head, for it meant, in all human probability, the absolute control of Christendom to this youth of twenty-five. Lord of Germany, Austria, the Low Countries, Naples, Milan and Spain, the victory of Pavia made him the master of the rest of Italy and crushed most effectively his only possible rival. But he

<sup>1</sup> *Sp. Cl.*, vol. ii. No. 722.



received the unexpected tidings with wonderful calm : he entered at once into his chapel to give quiet thanks to the Giver of all victory, while he forbade all rejoicings for the victory over fellow-Christians.

Here we must take leave of the Emperor in order to gather up the threads of European diplomacy to enable us to understand the Emperor's attitude towards the congratulatory visits of the different ambassadors. As regards England, we have seen how Wolsey had been negotiating secretly with the French by means of Joachim de Passano, the *maître d'hôtel* of Madame. However carefully Wolsey guarded the secrecy of these negotiations, Joachim's prolonged presence in London was in itself very suspicious, and when combined with the English slackness in the campaign, it became apparent that Wolsey was veering round towards France. On August 18, 1524, Sampson, the English envoy in Madrid, had let Wolsey know that the Spanish Government were suspicious of his intrigues ; on August 22 Clarke had told him that the Emperor and the Pope were very desirous of peace ; and though Bourbon so far had been successful in Provence, Wolsey was well aware that the Emperor was in great straits for money to pay the army. So, on the 26th of September, the day before Bourbon began his retreat, he wrote to Sampson accusing the Emperor's agents of trying to obtain a long truce

for the Emperor's sole advantage, and mentioned that there were still graver rumours of the Emperor's dealing for a treaty and marriage with France. But on October 20 Charles wrote to De Praet insisting on Wolsey's dismissing Joachim ; in fact, the relations between the allies were getting strained, and an incident early in 1525 made them more so. The English official version was given by Wolsey in a letter to Sampson, dated February 13, to be conveyed by him to the Emperor, and is as follows : After complaining bitterly of the sinister and false reports sent by De Praet to his master, Wolsey goes on to say that on the 11th ' at night one was taken by the ordinary watch riding to Brentford, and on being searched a packet of letters was found upon him, broken open, brought to the King's solicitor, sent by him to Sir Thomas More, and by him to me, sitting in Chancery the next morning. Perusing the same and finding their falsehood, I countermanded the Ambassador's letters sent by one of the Fulkers the day before, and a packet also to the Lady Margaret, which I herewith send, that the Emperor may understand that De Praet has contrived no few and false matters, both in Spain and Flanders.'<sup>1</sup>

That De Praet had reason to be suspicious of Wolsey's dealings with the French there can be no doubt. Even in December Joachim had been

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iv. part i. No. 1083.

superseded by Jean Brinon, the President of the Parliament of Rouen, who was sent by Madame with full and complete powers to treat with Wolsey. But though Wolsey was prepared for peace with France, it was not to be peace at any price. Though at first inclined to demand the cession of Boulogne, Guisnes and of the town of Arde, he now demanded a huge sum of money, partly in cash, partly by way of a yearly payment during the King's life. The negotiations went on and were in a good way to be shortly concluded when, like a thunderbolt, came the news of Pavia. To make it even more dramatic, Joachim and Brinon were actually on their way to the royal palace for an interview with the King, and were already in Holborn when the Lord Chamberlain met them with the news of the defeat and capture of their sovereign.

Besides considering the relations between England and the Emperor up to the time of Pavia, it is necessary to sketch the position as regards the Pope, Venice, and the other principal Italian powers.

As regards the Pope, Clement VII ever since his election in November 1523 had mediated and hesitated perpetually. His first political acts had been to attempt to negotiate peace, and ever since he had intermittently attempted the same thankless task. But when Francis descended into Italy, the irresolute Medici turned away

from the Imperial side towards the French monarch. It is difficult quite to grasp the threads of his policy without considering the process of the Reformation in Germany, but here it suffices to say that after much wobbling Clement permitted Albany a free passage through the States of the Church on his way to attempt the conquest of Naples, and finally, almost on the eve of Pavia, he entered into an agreement with the French. The Emperor, when he heard the news, spoke ominous words and referred to the monk Luther. When the news of Pavia reached Rome, the Pope was in a state of terrible nervousness and fear; he had never dreamt of such a catastrophe as this, which placed him and Italy in the hands of the outraged and betrayed Emperor. Yet there was a gleam of hope. Clarke, the English ambassador, hinted to the Pope that England would prevent the undue arrogance of the Spaniards in Italy, while Venice, Ferrara and Urbino, drawn together by the common danger, offered to enter into a league for the defence of Italy, if only the Pope would consent to be its head.

Such was the European situation when the young conqueror of Europe received the congratulations of the foreign envoys on the news of the victory of Pavia.

In two letters of Sampson's to Wolsey, both placed by Mr. Brewer as written on the 15th of

March,<sup>1</sup> we can see how the Emperor bore himself towards the English envoy. He thanked God for the victory given to him a sinner, expressed the hope that it would enable him to establish universal peace in Christendom and reform the Christian faith, and make this victory more profitable to his friends than to himself. He refused all great triumph for his victory over a brother-Christian sovereign. At the same time he assured Sampson that Henry would always find him faithful to his promises. In the second letter Sampson shows the trouble he is in owing to the De Praet incident and Joachim's stay in London. The Emperor spoke highly of the King, but said he was less highly bound to Wolsey than formerly for three reasons : (1) the presence of Joachim in London ; (2) that De Rieux was not allowed to speak to the King ; (3) that his ambassador's letters were intercepted and read. Sampson adds that the Emperor's *entourage* were deeply incensed at the De Praet incident.

But if Charles's attitude towards the English envoys was a guarded, but at the same time an apparently friendly one, it was because, although in appearance Pavia had left him master of Christendom, there was much future storm and stress clearly before him and his ultimate goal—Germany seething with religious revolt, the Italian princes fearful and treacherous, the

<sup>1</sup> *L. and P.*, vol. iv. part i. No. 1189 ; Ellis, 1st series, vol. i. p. 260.

Papacy in fact already leagued with the French, France herself quite unsubdued, though sorely stricken, and, worst of all, his own coffers empty and money sorely needed in every direction. He could not afford definitely to quarrel with England yet. To the envoy of Venice and the papal nuncio he was less restrained. Venice received a reprimand that in his hour of need the Signory had not raised a finger to help him ; the nuncio was pointedly told that the Emperor had heard of the leave given by the Pope to Albany to march through the Papal States towards Naples.

Before continuing the devious course of European policy, we have at last arrived at a stage when some account of the Reform movement is absolutely necessary before we can understand the ebb and flow of European diplomacy or appreciate the difficulties of contemporary statesmen. The personal relations between the Papacy and England, including the gift of the title of 'Defender of the Faith,' as well as the first effects of the German Reformation in England, will be dealt with in a later volume.

## CHAPTER XI

MARTIN LUTHER was born on the 10th of November, 1483, at Eisleben, but his childhood was passed at Mansfeld. His father, Hans Luther, was a miner in the district; he came of a peasant family in fairly good circumstances, and, for his position, received a good education. At thirteen he went to a school at Magdeburg, and to this period belongs one of those semi-dramatic incidents that he loved to remember, the story of how deeply he was impressed, child though he was, by seeing one of the princes of Anhalt in monkish garb begging his bread from door to door, and doing this for his soul's sake. But in dealing with all these semi-dramatic incidents we must remember the man's character, the absolute belief in himself and in his own immense importance. Zwingli could call him in 1529 'the impudent and the obstinate.'<sup>1</sup> Cochlaeus has told

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Jackson's *Zwingli*, p. 321 ('Heroes of the Reformation' Series).

us he loved praise.<sup>1</sup> But Zwingli wrote these words in the bitter moments after the failure of the Marburg conference, while Cochlaeus was his lifelong opponent. Still we may be allowed to preface our account of this and the other similar stories by saying that Luther loved the dramatic, and often the most ordinary events were twisted by him into being the very result of the direct interference of the Deity, or, to speak more in his own way, of the devil. But to continue the sketch of his career. From Magdeburg he went to school at Eisenach, where he remained three years; thence to the university of Erfurt. He was made bachelor in 1502, master in 1505, and in another dramatic moment, against the bitter opposition of his father, he became a monk by joining the Order of the Augustinian Eremites, of whom Staupitz was Vicar-General of the Saxon Province. In 1508 Luther, who had some time previously been ordained, was sent by his superiors to the new university of Wittenberg, which had been founded by the Elector Frederick in 1502, under a bull of the Emperor Maximilian; it had been formally opened on the 18th of October 1502. At first the university seemed to be prospering, for there were slightly over four hundred students entered in the first year, but by 1505 the number had sunk to fifty-six. Luther's

<sup>1</sup> Cochlaeus, *Acta et Scripta Martini Lutheri*, edition 1549, p. 2.



first post was to teach the dialectics and physics of Aristotle.

Then he was sent to Rome on business of his Order. The visit to Rome was a fateful one. We have all heard how the future reformer approached the Eternal City with feelings of awe and reverence, and left it disillusioned and disgusted. Rome in truth, it must be allowed, was shameless enough. The ghastly pontificate of Alexander VI was over, and though his successor, Julius II, was of a very different type, there was, alas, still a mass of profligate creatures, in one way or other connected with the Curia, swarming in Rome, and the passionate, headstrong monk seems to have noticed only the vice of Rome and never given a thought to the wonderful things that were being done in the Rome of Pope Julius. In the grandeur of the Florentine, the wonderful beauty of the Umbrian, the whole flower of the Renaissance, Luther seems to have found nothing congenial. By 1512 he was back in Wittenberg, and after a further short period of study at Erfurt he was made doctor of theology, and immediately succeeded Staupitz as professor of theology at Wittenberg.

The new professor of theology by September 1517 had begun to make himself conspicuous by attacking the system of scholastic philosophy. But he soon had an opportunity of making himself more conspicuous, for at twelve o'clock on

All Saints' Day, November 1, 1517, he nailed up his famous ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg. These theses were aimed principally at indulgences, and the proximate cause of their publication was the preaching of an indulgence which had been proclaimed by Leo X in 1513, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to the rebuilding of St. Peter's at Rome. The indulgence was in the hands of Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz, and did not apply to electoral Saxony, but it was the preaching of one of Albert's emissaries, the Dominican John Tetzel, that led to Luther's protest.

It is very necessary to show clearly what was and what is the Catholic teaching on this doctrine, and secondly to show what differences, if any, existed between this official doctrine and the popular belief and preaching of Luther's day—and as regards preaching with a particular reference to that of Tetzel—for on both these points there have been more false statements written than on almost any other historical question. This has been the case even with regard to the official doctrine, and dressed up with such a wealth of adjectives as only second-rate Protestant writers beating their old-fashioned No-Popery drum could command; while their statements about the teaching of the Catholic Church are such that the veriest little Catholic

child would be competent to teach them the truth—though to teach them courtesy and charity would be an impossible task to anyone.

The Catholic doctrine of indulgences is based upon the doctrine of good works. To put it shortly, the Church held that the merits of Christ over and above what was necessary for the redemption of the world, and the accumulated merits of the Saints over and above what was necessary for their own particular salvation, constituted a treasury over which the Church had power. As well as this it was held that after absolution had been pronounced by the priest over the repentant sinner in the sacrament of penance, there still remained over some temporal punishment which had to be satisfied either in this world or in purgatory, and to assist in satisfying this punishment the priest imposed some penitential work. In the early days of the Church these penances were excessively rigorous, and often lasted for many years, and in some cases even for a lifetime. But gradually the Church reduced them, and applied her power over the treasury, by means of an indulgence, which, if the sinner were repentant and fulfilled the conditions of the indulgence, was held to satisfy the whole or part of the otherwise unsatisfied punishment. Now indulgences were held to apply to the souls in purgatory, who were held to be partially or wholly freed from their pains by

the gaining of indulgences by the faithful for their benefit. Now, as Dr. Pastor has pointed out, in dealing with this question at the time of Luther, it is most important to keep quite separate the indulgences for the living from those of the dead. As regards the former, to quote Pastor: 'His [Tetzel's] teaching was in fact very definite and quite in harmony with the theology of the Church, as it was then and as it is now, i.e. that indulgences apply only to the temporal punishments due to sins which have been already repented of and confessed.'<sup>1</sup> Still there was an abuse connected with indulgences. They were, as all the world knows, publicly bought and sold, or at least, to be more accurate, the good works to which indulgences were attached were very frequently the payment of a certain sum of money, according to the repentant sinner's means, towards some specified ecclesiastical object. In the case of the indulgences preached by Tetzel, the money was to be applied to the rebuilding of St. Peter's.

It is impossible here to set out all the mass of proof that might be adduced as regards indulgences, but it may be well to quote the testimony of the Protestant author, Mr. Lea, who at least cannot be accused of any leanings towards Catholicism. 'But in theory at least the Church

<sup>1</sup> *The History of the Popes*, by Dr. Ludwig Pastor, translation, vol. vii., edited by M. Kerr, p. 348.

has consistently held that they [indulgences] are good only as against the temporal punishment after the Culpa has been removed by the Sacrament, and consequently their full benefit can only be enjoyed by him who is free from mortal sin and in a state of charity or grace.’<sup>1</sup> One may point out Mr. Lea’s obvious bias by his quite unnecessary use of the adjective ‘full,’ when he has previously admitted that indulgences are good only when the gainer is free from mortal sin. Even as regards Tetzels we may quote Mr. Lea again : ‘The instructions which Tetzels drew up for the guidance of his subordinates offer no specially reprehensible features apart from those inherent in the system. Formulas of sermons were furnished to them, containing the arguments which experience had shown to be most effective in securing liberal sales ; in these contrition and confession are alluded to as necessary.’<sup>2</sup> We may note that Mr. Lea grudgingly uses the words ‘alluded to’ when he might more properly have put ‘distinctly stated.’ This has been well put by Janssen : ‘With regard to the granting of indulgences to the living, Tetzels teaching was throughout irreproachable, and the statement that he sold pardon for sin for the sake of gain without

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*, by Henry Charles Lea, vol. iii. p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Lea, *op. cit.* vol. iii. p. 386.

requiring penitence has no warrant in fact.’<sup>1</sup> But though this was the case as regards indulgences for the living, we cannot say the same as regards those for the dead, and we cannot do better than quote Pastor again here : ‘ The case was very different with indulgences for the dead. As regards these, there is no doubt that Tetzels did, according to what he considered his authoritative instructions, proclaim as Christian doctrine that nothing but an offering of money was required to gain indulgence for the dead without there being any question of contrition or confession. He also taught, in accordance with the opinion then held, that an indulgence could be applied to any given soul with unfailing effect. Starting from this assumption, there is no doubt that his doctrine was virtually that of the drastic proverb :

As soon as money in the coffer rings,  
The soul from Purgatory’s fire springs.

The Papal Bull of indulgence gave no sanction whatever to this proposition.’<sup>2</sup>

We are now in a position to see clearly what were the undoubted abuses that existed in the administration and teaching of indulgences. They in no way warrant the lavish abuse that many Protestant writers have been so prodigal

<sup>1</sup> *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*, by Johannes Janssen, translated by M. A. Mitchell and A. M. Christie, vol. iii. p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Pastor, *op. cit.* vol. vii. p. 349.

in bestowing ; at the same time they were too often regarded by the Curia as a fertile source of money-raising, while popular teaching and preaching, though perfectly sound and unimpeachable as regards indulgences for the living, were not so as regards those for the dead. But still this last erroneous teaching can hardly be considered as having any evil effect on contemporary morals, and, as we shall see later on, the abolishing of the whole theory and practice of indulgences by the Reformers did not in any way nor in the smallest degree raise the current standard of morality amongst either the classes or the masses, for it is an undoubted historic fact, which we shall deal with more fully later on, that nowhere, either in England, Germany, Switzerland or the Scandinavian countries, did the advent of the Reformation bring about an advance either in theoretical or practical morality, but quite the contrary. If the moral state of England was bad in the reign of Henry VII and the early years of the reign of his son, it grew worse and worse from the breach with Rome right down through the whole Tudor period, and—if this work should ever reach that period—down through the Stuart line also. Of course there were reactions against this progressive immorality, but still at no time were moral matters in as good a state as they were before the breach with Rome. One must not, of course, lay the

whole of this moral disaster at the door of Protestantism; probably religion had little to do with it. What caused the Reformation caused the immorality or rather want of morality. It was not the Reformation (using this word in its theological sense) that was the cause of the evil and the good of contemporary and later days; the Reformation was the brother, not the parent, of the evil.

But to return to Luther and his theses—and here we must remember that we are not writing the history of the Reformation, but only of the Reformation as regards England, and so we must deal in a very cursory manner with the deeply interesting events in Germany inaugurated by that midday nailing on the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg, not only for Saxony or Germany, but for the whole world. Luther's ninety-five theses attacking indulgences and other ecclesiastical questions had a rapid and wide circulation. They were answered by Tetzels, who before the end of the year issued counter-theses, by the great orthodox champion John Eck, and also by Prierias, a Dominican monk, the Papal Censor of the Roman Province and a prominent figure at the Roman Court. We must perforce hurry over these deeply interesting years.

Luther was summoned to Rome in July 1518. The Elector Frederick of Saxony espoused his



cause, and the matter was left in the hands of Cardinal Cajetan, Papal Legate in Germany. Luther was summoned to appear before the Legate at Augsburg. He went. We cannot describe that momentous interview; suffice it to say that Luther departed still unrepentant, and the matter remained in a more perilous position after a ridiculous and unauthorised attempt to interfere and smooth matters over on the part of Miltitz, a Saxon nobleman who was bearing a present of the golden rose to the Elector of Saxony from the Pope. A public disputation took place at Leipzig between Eck on the orthodox side and Luther and Carlstadt on the reforming side, for by this time Luther's revolt had gained many adherents. Luther, forced by the unanswerable logic of his formidable opponent, had to advance further, admitting opinions of Hus and Wyclif, and in fact helplessly beaten in argument and only unconquerable in his obstinate pride. From this moment Luther was in the position that he must either abjure his opinions or break with the Church. He might try and face both ways for a time by promising humbly to submit to the Pope and at the same time attacking the Church, but the inevitable was bound to come, and the Bull of excommunication was published in Rome in June 1520.

This was the problem which faced the young

Emperor Charles, who had been elected to the Empire on June 28, 1519, reached Germany in 1520, and was crowned on October 23, 1520, at Aachen. So far we have merely dealt with the Reformation so far as it appertains to Luther's personal career up to this date, and with the causes that made Luther's personal outburst against Rome the centre of the great revolt that divided religious Europe into two opposite camps. But it is important to point out here the actual state of the problem that faced Charles V. In the first place we must observe the Emperor's youth, his quite recent election to the Imperial dignity, and that for many years past the Imperial title had been rather an honourable distinction than the sign of genuine power. It is true that Charles was potentially much more powerful than his predecessors had been for several centuries, but, though the inheritor of vast realms, he was but newly and not very securely seated on their thrones. In Germany itself the head of the electoral princes, the Elector of Saxony, supported, if not as yet openly, yet firmly, the pretensions of the Reformer, who had besides the support of several other princes, lords and knights of the Empire, and of the inhabitants of many of the chief cities. To make matters more dangerous, across the border was the mortified French King, smarting under his defeat in the contest for the Empire, at the head

of a strong compact nation, and still covered with warlike renown as the conqueror of Marignano.

What could, what would the youthful head of Christendom do? Here we cannot help thinking that the action of the Emperor was of more after-importance than such actions usually are: he decided to send a safe-conduct to Luther and to summon him to the Diet. If anything could have deeply stirred the growing nationality of the Germans—a national enthusiasm which had suddenly become intense, as the writings of that arch-blackguard Ulrich von Hutten clearly show—it was this summoning of the German monk-professor of Wittenberg to appear before the German Diet to answer for his life on charges brought by a foreign Italian Court—charges which in the heat and stress of the struggle, artfully and carefully fanned by such choice spirits as Ulrich von Hutten, appeared only to have been brought forward on account of this German monk's attack on Italian methods of swindling Germans out of their hard-earned money. The summons focussed half-awakened, half-dazzled Germany's eyes on the bold, impetuous German Luther, and made him more than ever the popular national hero.

Let us just glance at this first great movement in the history of Protestantism and see why the popular feeling is in Luther's favour and what classes made this monk a popular hero. There

appears at first sight to be mere hatred of Roman priestly rule, and the classes are first and foremost the burgher class in the chief towns, the knightly class, and a few of the princes and their attendants. Of what does this hatred consist, and why do these particular classes hate Roman rule so fiercely? There can be but one answer, and that a financial one. The great popular cry of Luther was his attack on the financial power of Rome. These Germans hated Rome because Rome took money for indulgences which Luther said were not only unnecessary but wrong. Rome took and demanded money for good works which Luther said were unnecessary. Therefore worthy burgher and smug cit flung their hats in the air and lustily cheered in the good city of Worms on that April day in 1521 when Luther (Martin Luther, who was to free them from the necessity of paying for any spiritual food for themselves or material food for their poorer brothers) drove past in his cart surrounded by Wittenberg students full of boyish enthusiasm for their German hero. The knightly class, half ruined, hoped to fill their empty coffers with the fat abbey lands, the Elector of Saxony and, later, Philip of Hess thought of the same, and besides had a shrewd idea that money sent from Hess and Saxony to Rome was bound to be bad for the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hess.

We cannot enter into Luther's appearance before the Diet. Suffice it to say that, after some hesitation, he refused to recant his heretical opinions. Some private negotiations followed, and then the Diet proclaimed him under the ban of the Empire. Luther on his way home was captured by the friendly forces of the Elector of Saxony and carried for safety to the castle of the Wartburg.

While in the asylum of the Wartburg, Luther busied himself with translating the New Testament, and allowed his morbid imagination full play with legions of devils. But the seed he had sown in Germany by his attacks on indulgences was left behind him, and from now Charles had an internal revolution to cope with—a revolution that once, at Mühlberg, he nearly crushed, but which later chased him from Innsbruck across the snow-clad Tyrolese Alps, and which was definitely an established order, no longer a revolutionary force in Germany, when in Brussels he laid down the burden of sovereignty and retired, still for a short time longer—though soon to resign that too—titular Emperor of the West, to the shady retreat of San Juste.

But to return. It is unnecessary here to trace how, when Luther's powerful personality was temporarily removed from Wittenberg, the inherent disruptive tendencies of Protestantism

appeared, and how, almost at its birth, it was distinguished by the number of its sects and the violence of its discordant ministers, traits which have ever since remained its most distinguishing features.<sup>1</sup>

But we must skip these deeply interesting years till we come to what in Germany is, to the modern observer, its most puzzling and instructive event, namely, the Peasants' Rising. The peasants had been discontented for the last thirty to fifty years: discontented with the tendency—a tendency daily becoming more apparent—in the upper and middle classes, to make more money, and to make it out of the peasantry. Here again we meet with the great cause of so much evil, and yet of some good, the desire of gaining wealth, a desire arising from the spirit of the time. By the spirit of the time we do not mean altogether an intangible cause, but a cause which was the combination of many circumstances in many different spheres, most of which taken singly were tangible enough, but which, taken altogether, produced the intangible driving power of masses of men, and which now drove their minds and energies in one direction, the way of gold. But the peasants were the last class to be influenced by this spirit, though in time it reached them, and it has made them often

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bossuet's *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*, translated into English, 2 vols., Dublin, 1829.

the blindest advocates of a state of things by which they benefit least. At the moment we are considering, still largely untouched by this spirit, they saw only the cruelty, to them ever present, of the new grinding spirit which drove them to despair, and so they rose in revolt, at first tentatively, in 1490, and then again, until Luther burst forth and for many snapped the last link that still held them to hope, for charity and good works, which had hitherto in some degree mitigated the ever-increasing worldliness, were no longer deemed to be fashionable, and were said to be positively harmful because they savoured of the Antichrist at Rome. Religion had thus decisively in the hands of Luther refused them help, and many of them, poor souls, believing his words, felt that they had now nothing to look to but their sturdy arms to help them.

The rebellion broke out in earnest in 1524 (June). In vain Luther at first appealed to both sides—to the princes and nobles to make concessions; to the peasants to have patience. He had broken the only rod that kept the covetous rich in order: good works were unnecessary to salvation, and he could not threaten them with God's anger; they had only to say with unction that they believed in Christ, and go on accumulating more and more of this world's gear by the vilest means. In faith, no man could judge another's sincerity; if he said he

believed everything else to this self-appointed Pope of Wittenberg was quite unnecessary. At first successful, the rising was eventually crushed in the battle of Mulhausen. There is little need here to paint the horrors of the terrible revenge that the now thoroughly frightened upper classes took on the helpless peasantry, hounded on in their brutal slaughter by that ever-representative middle-class reformer, the son of a successful peasant, Martin Luther.

But what is more interesting than this ghastly carnival of butchery are the demands of the peasants and their connexion with Luther. There can be little doubt that, over and above the questions discussed before as to the effect of Luther's teaching on good works, there were other forces at work. To point them all out here were an impossibility ; to point out some is all that is possible here or anywhere else. We must take into account the effect of the Biblical narrative of the rich man's difficulty in acquiring heaven being compared to a camel's difficulty in getting through the eye of a needle, a parable ever present, ever applied, in the teaching of the mediæval Church, so that the peasant was able to comfort himself with the pleasing thought that though it was his master's day now, in the next world it would probably be his—'the last shall be first, the first shall be last.' The Church's explanation of this was so clear, so



humanly true to human nature: the rich man loves his riches better than his soul, that is his terrible danger; the men in power love their power better than God, that way lies hell-fire; while rich and powerful are full of pride, 'and unless you are meek and humble of heart you shall not see God.' But Luther at one fell stroke struck it all away. Charity, humility, love of one's neighbour, they justified not: faith alone justifies. Poor men had felt akin to the highest in this world when they saw a prince of Anhalt, as Luther saw him, voluntarily begging his bread from door to door like one of themselves, their voluntary brother in sorrow. Here again Luther championed the down-trodden, moneyed middle class by attacking this voluntary poverty as a work of the devil. Up to this to be poor was no disgrace; to labour with one's hands was not beneath a king—the dignity of labour, of misfortune and of poverty, was well understood in the Middle Ages. A prince or noble would become a begging friar, or labour with his hands as a Benedictine, but he would have lost caste had he turned into a money-changing broker or a tradesman selling his wares. This will show us the topsy-turvy state of modern things as compared with those days. It is a disgrace for a prince or noble now to beg, and almost so if he works with his hands; he is advanced and enlightened if he turns financier or tradesman.

The dignity of labour is forgotten, the dignity of poverty is no longer in existence, and this we owe to Luther and his co-reformers.

But as well as these branches of the effect of Luther's main doctrine, it is of course clear that an attack such as his on the most venerable authority in Europe was bound to lessen respect for all other authorities. While we must not forget the economic factors of which Luther's teaching was after all only the theological phase, we know as a fact that for the last half-century the condition of the peasants had grown steadily worse. As Sastrow said,<sup>1</sup> 'The Lords seldom allow their vassals to amass the riches that once they were able to accumulate,' and Janssen has from numerous contemporary writings proved that the condition of serfdom itself was made worse by the Reformation. On all sides we can see, in all contemporary literature, not only in Germany, but in France and, as we shall see later, in England also, the universal cry was the increased burden of poverty, the increasing avarice and luxury of the rich.

Perhaps we have digressed far enough, if not too far, in describing the causes of this German Peasant Revolt in a history of English life, but Reformation phenomena apply so closely from one land to another, and this most striking

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, p. 6, translated and edited by A. Vandaun under the title of *Social Life in Germany in Luther's Time*.

incident helps to show the true colour of the Protestant revolt, not only in Germany, but all through Europe itself.

Here we must observe that the simultaneous Reformation in Switzerland proceeded on almost similar grounds to those of Luther's : an attack on indulgences was practically Zwingli's first breach with Rome. Dogmatically he differed from Luther, as Marburg was to show clearly, but the basis of this temporary success was a financial one, as was Luther's, and the probable cause of his failure was also financial, namely, his attack on the Swiss mercenaries. Zwingli broke the ice and failed, but the rising spirit of nationality was with his cause, though the powerful, only half-conciliated spirit of greed was not thoroughly satisfied till Calvin made Geneva the city of hypocrisy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Beard (Charles), *Hibbert Lecture*, 1883, p. 251.

## CHAPTER XII

It is somewhat difficult to sketch in any way the social condition of a country during such a brief period as the fifteen years we have been discussing, but we must attempt it, although we use materials which belong some to an earlier date and some to a later one.

Taking first the state of learning and education, our first care must be not to exaggerate the importance of the Renaissance, at least in England. Nowhere was it a sudden awakening, a few golden days between the dark ages and the gloom of the counter-reformation; rather it was gradual, very gradual, for it took several centuries—from Petrarch (born 1304, died 1374) down to its final eclipse in Italy at the sack of Rome. There had been glimmerings in the east before Petrarch, and there was a western glow even after Bourbon's Lutheran lance-knights had desolated Rome.

The growth of classical studies, in itself no very wonderful event, has been magnified by

many university professors, living their whole life in an atmosphere where the 'Classics' are the all-in-all, into a wonderful epoch-making event.

Many observers, seeing the immense chasm between the highest circles of society and its lowest strata, refuse to think that there can be any common spirit between them. They isolate them in history as they are isolated in fashion, and treat all that is the mainspring of one class in any given period as absolutely without effect on the other. This is of course wrong, and it is what gives one-sidedness to so much of history. Art and literature, learning, diplomacy and war may primarily affect the upper classes, but they react powerfully on all classes down to the lowest. The methods of agriculture, the domestic economy of the peasantry, the amount and type of the pauper element, affect in the first place the lower orders of society, but they react upwards as the other factors act downwards; and all are interested, though some not so closely as others, in any facts or theories that affect the doings or thoughts of any portion of their fellow-countrymen.

From this point of view the Renaissance is of vital interest to us who are trying to probe and find out the sources of our modern English life and habits. Dates are but the few scanty finger-posts that point aimlessly to unimportant villages

and give us no hint as to the cities beyond. Here at least they are of little use. It does not really matter who first taught Greek in England, or when or where. But what this Renaissance meant is of great importance. The philosophy of the Middle Ages, the greatest the world has ever seen, was dead or dying. Its intense study of purely intellectual problems, its refusal to think for one instant of man as a solitary animal, its ever-strenuous teaching that man was a member of a community first, foremost and always, till he ceased to be man, had done much for mankind, more than we can ever hope to realise. But mankind was slipping away from its old moorings and plunging into a restless, strictly utilitarian warfare, forgetting, or considering as sheer madness, or even striving to prove a similarity in his own modern ideas of a crusade for wealth, those wonderful uprisings of the west that followed Peter the Hermit and his successors to the Holy Land. If the Crusades had had as their object the winning of large gold mines held by the infidel who either did not know how to use them or simply would not work them, or even if mere crude robbery of the infidel had been their motive, the modern world might have condemned them in a fit of righteous indignation, but they would have been quite intelligible to us all the same; we could have appreciated their object even if we condemned the means. But

their object being what it was, the rescuing from the hands of the followers of the Prophet of the tomb of Christ,—this we simply cannot understand, and in our helplessness we are driven into the hypothesis of a wave of madness.

But to the few who try and take the trouble to think that all our most cherished beliefs and prejudices were perhaps not so to our forefathers, the Crusades have not quite the mystery nor the meanness that most writers have invested them with, and the same applies to the whole warp and woof of mediæval life. Far be it from us to imagine that those were perfect days or even that they were better or happier than our modern times ; they had their own vices, black enough in all conscience ; their own follies, ignorances and prejudices ; but they had not our special vices or follies.

Comte has ended the Middle Ages in the thirteenth century, and it is certain that they were breaking up about then. The Renaissance was dawning, the study of the antique, study for study's sake which was one day to become art for art's sake ; humanity became less and less and the individual more and more. At first it made slow progress north of the Alps, but by the beginning of our period it was in full swing in England, centring round Colet, More, Grocyn, Linaere and others, and kept at burning pitch by the visits of that prince of scholars,

Erasmus, who before our period had already visited England on two occasions.

Now this new movement took in England a line of its own; it was intensely religious, although it was religious nowhere else. More represents its greatest English life, and More died a martyr and was beatified. Fisher of Rochester, another beatified martyr, prelate though he was (and sixteenth-century prelates were not given to martyrdom), was one of its benefactors and the warm friend of all its illustrious scholars. Colet, narrow though he was and suspected of heresy, died a devout Catholic, and no whisper of vice blemishes the names of those great Catholic scholars, who were the light of the Renaissance in those days. That this was different from Italy with her Poggios, Aretinos and Macchiavellis it is needless to prove; and from Germany with its Ulrich von Hutten, dying of a vile disease, sensualist, drunkard, blackmailer, ribald poet-scholar that he was. And we may pause here over Ulrich to point out that because he hated the Pope Protestant writers have loved the drunken sensualist, and Dr. Jackson writes: 'Hutten was the most picturesque character to espouse the cause of Reformation. He was a scion of a noble family in Hesse-Cassel, accomplished, learned, extremely witty and humorous, a fearless fighter for intellectual and religious liberty, and one who



deserved well of the Cause of the Reformation, which he embraced with characteristic ardour, though dissipated and licentious.'<sup>1</sup> It is sufficient for him to have been a Reformer for Protestant writers to make him a hero! Many another half-infidel, half-immoral name polluted the annals of German and Italian scholarship in the sixteenth century. The one name connected with the early Renaissance in England that is smirched in any way is that of the illustrious Dutchman, and he, weak though he was and not altogether free from the suspicion of occasional lapses from morality, is a paragon of virtue when compared with Hutten and Macchiavelli. This trait in England had its effect in that impressionable period. When the old standards of belief, the old ideas of morality and of much else, were all being broken up and flung away, and the new half-formed ideas were hardly yet fixed in men's minds, this purity of secular learning meant much for England. Vice was never fashionable among the intellectual classes in England as it was in Germany and Italy for many a long day. When it deluged England's court in the days of Edward VI, Elizabeth, and much later, in the time of Charles II, it was never really a national fashion, and in all human probability England owes this to her students and teachers who, while bringing

<sup>1</sup> *H. Zwingli*, p. 124, note. (*Huldreich Zwingli*, by S. M. Jackson: 'Heroes of the Reformation' Series.)

in the new methods of study and the new passion for learning, from the days of Henry VI to the days of Queen Mary, kept their moral reputations singularly unsullied.

It is not our place here to give any detailed history of the Renaissance or of literature in England at this period. Here we can only deal with the general effect produced in England by the Renaissance, and our first duty is to clear away one or two old errors which the literary vanity of Protestant theological writers have created in this field as in many another. In the first place the Renaissance, though its tone was moral and so far clerical in England that the majority of its great names were clerics—as Erasmus, Colet, Tunstal, Fisher—was still in no sense a revival of theological learning, in fact it was, if anything, anti-theological. Its well-known labours in England as regards Biblical studies seem to contradict this statement, but a little careful inquiry will soon dispel any lingering doubts. Erasmus is of course the great example in this as in most other Renaissance matters north of the Alps. Putting aside all questions of truth and whether his work is valuable or not, Erasmus's work on the New Testament and on St. Jerome and on the other Fathers was primarily, if not solely, critical and scholarly, not theological: he criticised the received texts and corrected or amended. His work is that of a

scholar, not of a theologian, and this is what one would expect from one who hated theologians, and who was from first to last a scholar and an editor of texts, as well as a very brilliant satirical writer—a stylist, editor, satirist, but never a student of theological science. Colet was, of course, more of a theologian, but Colet's influence in this respect was of little weight. More, it is true, turned more and more to theology as his life wound on. But analogy, though often dangerous, is useful: nowhere else did the revival of letters and the Reformation really become one and the same movement. The few leaders of the Renaissance who were also theologians all over Europe turned full against Luther and all other reforming movements. Melanchthon is the solitary great scholar who became also a reforming theologian, and he was always suspected of secret leanings towards Rome. And so we must beware of thinking the glory of the revival of learning is a Protestant glory; rather we must grieve, as Erasmus grieved, that the Lutheran question was the ruin of letters. We know that this was the case in England. After the dispute with Rome the great names in learning and literature become few, the numbers at the universities become fewer and fewer, till there was grave risk of their extinction, for, as Professor Woodward has pointed out, 'Thus controversial theology overshadowed all else,

and both Universities were drawn into the whirlpool of politics. But political divinity has rarely stimulated learning.’<sup>1</sup> With the middle of Elizabeth’s reign there came a great revival, but by then the Protestant theology interested only the Puritans, and when they were to have their short day of rule, literature and learning were to suffer again.

But the great Protestant stand-by is the ‘Bible,’ and yet even here we must at least enter a caveat. Professor Pollard has satirised very neatly the prevailing and absolutely un-historical view of most of the manuals of Church History which Protestant ministers have been so fertile in producing: ‘The discovery of America was not a Protestant enterprise any more than the Bible is a Nonconformist publication.’<sup>2</sup> One would imagine from reading—and dull and heavy work it is—these numerous compilations that Protestantism was the re-saving of a darkened, ruined world. These good-intentioned, misinformed gentlemen consider that the Reformers suddenly discovered the ‘Bible,’ and tell the oft-repeated story of Luther’s discovery of the ‘Holy Scriptures’ at Erfurt. It is worth our while to consider a little closely this wonderful phenomenon of the loss and discovery

<sup>1</sup> In *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. iii. chap. xix., ‘English Universities, Schools, &c., in Sixteenth Century,’ by W. H. Woodward.

<sup>2</sup> *Factors in Modern History*, by A. F. Pollard, p. 38.

of the sacred writings. One eminently characteristic fable which all the older and even some modern Protestant writers have circulated, is that the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the vulgar tongues was the work of Protestantism, and yet we know that the New Testament was printed at Lyons in 1477 in French, and that the whole Bible was printed in French at Paris about ten years later. Gasquet has shown without a shadow of doubt that copies of the English Bible were circulated with clerical permission at all events before Luther was heard of.<sup>1</sup> We know that the Bible had been translated into Spanish with ecclesiastical approval.<sup>2</sup> The very first book printed in Germany was a Bible. In every country, in every age, the Bible had been no forgotten book buried in obscure corners of monastic libraries to be discovered by Luther. Luther himself characteristically complains: 'Now they' (the Romanists) 'invert this: the Bible is the first thing they study; this ceases with the Bachelor's degree, the Sentences are the last, and these they keep for ever with the Doctor's degree, and this, too, under such sacred obligation that one that is not a Priest may read the Bible, but a Priest must read the Sentences; so that, as far as I can see, a married man

<sup>1</sup> Gasquet, F. A., *The Old English Bible and Other Essays*.

<sup>2</sup> Balmez, *Protestantism and Catholicity*, translated by Hamford and Kershaw, p. 172.

might be a Doctor in the Bible, but not in the Sentences. How should we prosper so long as we act so perversely and degrade the Bible, the Holy Word of God ?' <sup>1</sup>

So far from prohibiting Biblical study, we here find Luther complaining of married men being able to be Doctors in the Bible. Did they (the Romanists) study the Bible ? Here again we have Luther's testimony of his own day : ' Our adversaries read the translation of the Bible much more frequently than we do. I believe Duke George has read it more carefully than any one of the nobles who are with us.' <sup>2</sup>

Of himself while still in the Church Luther says : ' I read very much in my Bible whilst I was a monk during my youth.' <sup>3</sup> Now what was the actual course of studies of the theological student in the Middle Ages ? We turn to Canon Rashdall's learned work on ' The Universities in Europe during the Middle Ages ' and we find : ' The theological student passed the first six years of his course as a simple auditor. For four years he attended lectures on the Bible, for two years on the Sentences of Peter the Lombard, these being the only text-books with which the theological Doctor necessarily became acquainted during

<sup>1</sup> *Luther's Primary Works*, Wace and Buchheim, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Michelet, *Life of Luther*, p. 290, translated by W. Hazlitt.

<sup>3</sup> Michelet, *op. cit.* p. 270.

the whole of his fifteen or sixteen years of study.'<sup>1</sup>

But besides these, you can hardly turn to any books dealing in any way with moral or religious questions written during the Middle Ages without finding abundance of quotations from the Scriptures. If we accept Luther's discovery of the Bible it is only by admitting his stupendous ignorance of the learning of the day.

We will not undertake to decide the question. Luther was always given to rhetorical exaggeration and to dramatic moments. Solemn writers like the Rev. Mr. Babington treat this statement of Luther's discovery as a terrific fact showing the terrible state of Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps a little more knowledge of what they are writing about might tend to a little less wonder and a good deal more fair-mindedness amongst compilers of this class; and the late Mr. Demaus might have thought it worth his while, which he states he did not—but we will use his own words, they are too good to lose: 'I have not thought it necessary to subjoin proofs of statements which could be substantiated by volumes of evidence, which indeed only gross ignorance can call in question'<sup>3</sup>—one of the 'statements' for which no proof is necessary being that 'ignorance,

<sup>1</sup> *Universities in Europe in the Middle Ages*, by Hastings Rashdall, vol. i. p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> *The Reformation*, by Rev. J. A. Babington, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Hugh Latimer*, by Rev. R. Demaus, note to page 465.

which has always been the great strength of Romanism, was again settling down upon the land.’<sup>1</sup> The worthy gentleman no doubt meant what he said ; that is the lamentable fact about it ; but to prove his own words he had best have become a convert to Romanism himself. Bossuet wrote truly about Protestantism when he said : ‘ The only fundamental article is, to cry out amain against the Pope and Church of Rome ; but if with Wycliffe and John Huss you stretch so far as to call that Church the Church of Antichrist, this doctrine is the remission of whatever sins, and covers all kinds of errors.’<sup>2</sup>

In Italy itself, Professor Pastor points out that the number of New Testaments printed there shows the popularity of the Gospels before Luther was heard of,<sup>3</sup> and, as Miss Stone has pointed out, we learn from the Caxton Exhibition of 1877 that from the invention of printing until Erasmus published in 1516 his edition of the New Testament, at the lowest computation seventy editions of the whole Bible were published by the presses of Europe in those first sixty-six years of printing, ten being in different vernaculars. And this list is by no means exhaustive, as it

<sup>1</sup> Demaus, *op. cit.* p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> *The History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*, by James B. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, translated, Dublin, 1829, vol. ii. p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> *The History of the Popes*, by Dr. L. Pastor, translation, edited Antrobus, vol. x. pp. 21-22.



includes only editions of which copies exist at the present day in the public and private collections of this country.<sup>1</sup> This is only up to 1516, some twelve months before Luther nailed his theses on the church door of Wittenberg, the very earliest date of the Reformation. The well-balanced judgment of Dr. Gairdner places the whole matter clearly: 'A vulgar error which was sedulously propagated by some even in Sir Thomas More's day, and which has been current ever since—that the Church of Rome was always opposed to any translation whatever of the Bible, and to its use by laymen. The only ground for such an insinuation in More's day was the suppression of Tyndale's New Testament and of other corrupt translations with heretical commentaries.'<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the kernel of the whole matter lay not in the use but the abuse of the Holy Scriptures in the eyes of ecclesiastics. Never has any writer been able to point to a single instance of objection by the Catholic Church or by the Papal See to the Holy Scriptures or to vernacular translations. The Church objected to and guarded against unauthorised vernacular translations because that might, and often did, mean a mistranslation or a translation with prefaces,

<sup>1</sup> *Reformation and Renaissance*, by J. M. Stone, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Lollardy and the Reformation in England*, by James Gairdner, vol. i. pp. 104-105.

marginal notes, or commentaries attached of a distinctly heretical character. To put the matter in plain English, the Church objected to heretical teaching, whether simple or tacked on to the Holy Scriptures. The objection was always to the heresy, never to the Word of God. And this objection to annotated Bibles was not confined to the Catholics, for Luther writes to the Elector John of Saxony, November 23, 1529, to have Emser's (the Catholic theologians) New Testament suppressed on account of its annotations and glossary.<sup>1</sup> But misrepresentation has ever been a favourite weapon of Protestant controversialists, whether they write under the guise of history or not.

But what was the message of the Renaissance to Europe in general and to England in particular? A question that has been answered times without number. It was first and foremost, Back to the ancient world, back to the golden days of Greek and Roman literature. And the way the men of the Renaissance read this appeal to the classics was very largely, one might almost say exclusively, Style. That was the important thing—the way to write or say a thing, not so much the thing itself; this is how they read the lesson of the ancient classic literatures. Nowadays it does not appeal to us: the matter is

<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of Martin Luther*, selected and translated by Margaret A. Currie, pp. 199-200.

all-important, the form is but little. Yet this in itself is but a very modern fashion; the wholesale revolt against the classic stylists in England is the prelude to the first signs of revolt against the intense economic individualism of modern life. The first beginning of this literary revolt preceded the social change by many decades, as the Renaissance preceded the Reformation and its contemporary social revolution by many a long year. Thought had conquered form in the later Middle Ages: style had been killed; so the Renaissance came and almost killed thought in aiming after nothing but style. Let us examine what this means a little more closely. Thought is of its nature so universal that the individual thinker is lost in the school to which he belongs or in the thoughts he thinks. Thought is utterly impersonal. But what can be more personal, more individualistic, than style? Now we know that the scholars of the Renaissance showed an intense realisation of self, in glaring contrast to the mediæval thinkers. So they turned towards style, which is so intensely individualistic, or perhaps the individualising effects of an exclusive devotion to style and a neglect of impersonal universal thought gave them their intense realisation of self. It matters little and it is impossible to decide which was cause and which effect. As Professor Ingram has said, 'All the Intellectual manifestations of a period in relation to human

questions have a kindred character, and bear a certain stamp of homogeneity which is vaguely present to our mind when we speak of the Spirit of the Age.'<sup>1</sup> But the fact remains that in the literary world the revolt against mediævalism was intensely individualistic and preceded a more general revolt against the mediævalistic system in religious, economic, and social life. History repeats itself. We have had the revolt of matter against form in literary matters in the rise in England, for instance, of the romantic school, though one might easily carry it back further. And now again the modern economic, religious, and social world is trembling on the abyss of transformation.

But besides this revival of classical studies, there was a contemporary movement in popular literature that is exceedingly interesting and has been little noticed by many writers. The intensely religious, moral, popular literature, at times taking an exceedingly mystical form, of the Middle Ages, was fast disappearing, and a new type of popular literature was appearing, or rather developing, for we cannot be too careful in remembering that there was actually no sudden appearance of the new life: it was rather a sudden quickening in the growth of a plant whose roots are hidden far away in the past. No one

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Political Economy*, by John Kells Ingram, p. 4.

who has any knowledge of the popular literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can fail to notice a gradual change at the commencement, getting, however, more and more rapid as the first quarter of the sixteenth century ends. It is a change that is twofold. One branch of literature becomes controversial, then rapidly abusive, till the art of abuse is quickly carried to perfection. The other is almost obscene, at least it takes a more and more sensual tone, even if its sensuality more often than not becomes mere vulgar jesting rather than calculated sensuality. The publications of the Ballad Society clearly portray this side. Anyone who has real knowledge of the fifteenth century could not imagine such publications as these appearing in that age; the late sixteenth century and the seventeenth alone could or would have produced them. I do not mean to suggest that obscenity, or rather vulgar jesting, was unknown in England before the sixteenth century dawned, but it was not produced in anything like the superabundance of later times. One knows that the publications of the Ballad Society are only a mere fraction of this class of writing that flooded England after the separation from Rome for many and many a decade. Of course, as we have said before, doubtful stories had been known in England before the beginning of the sixteenth century, but never in this unblushing profusion. Chaucer's stories are

sometimes not quite puritanical, but—strange irony of proof—those which are not proper he took from Boccaccio, admittedly one of the lights of the new movement, the Renaissance in Italy ; they do not belong to mediæval literature ; they belong rather in this respect to modern literature.

As regards controversial literature, it had never been popular in the Middle Ages, especially in religious matters : where it existed was in the schools. With the Reformation it naturally became so, and it soon was the most scurrilous and abusive in English literary history. Proof of so self-evident a fact is hardly needed to anyone acquainted with that dreary literature of Protestant controversial works in the sixteenth century ; we can only refer here to that pamphlet so praised by Arber, its editor, Fyshe's 'Supplication of Beggars,' or the controversial works of Bishop Bale. In fact, one might safely refer the reader to any of the Protestant controversial writings against the Catholics in the latter sixteenth century.

Another interesting question is that which refers to the benefits the Reformation is supposed to have conferred on humanity. How far did it favour the progress of invention and scientific knowledge ? Of course the old stock phrase of the breaking the chains of darkness in which the Papacy had fettered the human mind comes to

one's memory ; how far is this true, and is there another side to the question ? In the first place, what are the two great epoch-making inventions of the centuries, say, from the eleventh to the eighteenth, or even to the beginning of the nineteenth ? The answer is the invention of gunpowder and of printing, both affairs of the fifteenth century, both immense steps taken in man's progress in the supposed fettered state of men's minds. It is strange, but there can be no doubt that the fifteenth century was the age of great leaps and bounds in man's knowledge ; the sixteenth century, the age of the Reformation, is an age singularly barren of any great increase in knowledge. Gunpowder and printing we have already mentioned ; we may add the use of the compass, the discovery of America, almost finished before Luther's revolt, for the voyages of Columbus, Amerigo-Vespucci, and John and Sebastian Cabot had all been finished before this. Vasco di Gama had sailed round Africa to India, Balboa had seen the Pacific from the Isthmus of Darien. Mankind's knowledge of the world had been immensely increased, so much so that for after-ages there could only be the finishing in detail of the world of discovery. The classic revival, as we have already mentioned, had been commenced and nearly finished before. Art had dawned, and its most wonderful blaze of beauty was also nearly over before

Luther's revolt. The basis of our modern constitutional liberty had been laid in Catholic days, and the Reformation was to add nothing to it—in fact, as we shall see, it nearly caused its ruin. In philosophy no name can be mentioned as belonging to the sixteenth century which can be classed with the great philosophers of mediæval days. Bacon and Descartes, the first great modern names, belong to the seventeenth century, when the baleful influence of the Reformation was beginning to pass away. Literature is practically barren till Spenser heralded the new dawn, well towards the end of the sixteenth century. The age of architecture was gone with those so-called days of stagnation, apparently never to flourish again. Wherein, then, lies this wonderful leap in human progress that the Reformation is supposed to have produced ?

Facts are always preferable to prejudices in history. Still we must avoid putting at the door of the Reformation in theology more than its share of the evils of the sixteenth century. Let us remember that the Reformation was only the ecclesiastical and theological expression of the new, or comparatively new, spirit of intense individualism. This individualism has done much evil and also some good, and we must remember to blame the primary cause, not one of the effects, for all the evil effects. At the same time



the cause is entitled to praise for the good it did. In other words, outside theological and ecclesiastical matters we must deal with Individualism, not Protestantism : the first is the moving spirit, the primary cause ; the second, Protestantism, is only its religious effect. Of course, this religious movement caused by individualism had its effect on cognate subjects, such as literature, art, learning and morals, but even here it is only a subsidiary cause, not the dominant one. Thus the most earnest Catholic can and does find much to admire in Protestant lands ; he finds much to admire in modern times which he does not find in mediæval times, but it is not due to Protestantism.

Here we must give the new individualism its meed of praise. It very largely made modern literature, at the expense, it is true, of the old theological or philosophical learning. Man himself became the centre of literature, and thus made it more interesting, more generally useful. Learning and literature came down from the clouds to live amongst men and for men, and though, as was unfortunately only too natural, men have pushed this individualism to bitter extremes in social and governmental life, though they applied to it theology, which was quite outside its sphere, though they seized on its worst features and turned them to individual greed, intellectual pride in themselves and a stupid

contempt for the past, still it did wonders for mankind in its own proper spheres. We have already seen what wonderful things it did in its early days, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, before it turned to theology, and all sciences but that of war ceased to be practised in Germany and France—at least for many years, until people got thoroughly sickened of the whole theological question; when nothing save abusive controversy and scurrilous obscenity remained in literature, until the spirit of individualism turned again from theological matters more and more towards its proper domain of secular matters. Then again science and literature began to flourish luxuriantly, but the inherent evil of extremes beset it, and it became more and more wedded to its earliest mate, the mere innate greed and selfishness of the individual; while the one great check that would have been able to cope with this evil, the authority of the Church, had been largely rejected by mankind. What the future holds, who can say?

Let us now briefly examine the position of constitutional and legal affairs in England.

The anarchy of the Wars of the Roses, the firm government of Henry VII who laid deep the foundations for his family's despotism, are now truisms of history. But what of the power of Parliament? It is just this seemingly simple question that is so difficult to answer with any

degree of exactness. The constitutional lawyer's view of the omnipotence of Parliament, that is, of King, Lords and Commons, was of course strictly correct, but how far did the Crown control the two Houses, and how far again did the Commons wield authority? Now it is plain that the two Houses had, by the accession of Henry VII, gained immense power. In the future, despotism was only to be successful when it ruled through Parliamentary methods; downright fights between the Crown and the nation's representatives were of rare occurrence under the Tudors. Individual members were hectorred and bullied often enough, it is true. A more subtle method had been found: the Crown looked carefully after the elections and could always rely on a large body of members who were the King's actual nominees, while many more were only too glad to obey their sovereign's wishes, for on him their hopes of advancement were placed. Others, the timid ones, obeyed him implicitly, save perhaps when he touched their pockets rather too much, for they remembered the sufferings of their fathers' times and blessed the strong rule that at least prevented the horrors of anarchy and civil war. A few, the rare bold spirits, were on occasions, as we have said, bullied into complaisance. By these means the Tudors governed the House of Commons. The House of Lords, ruined, as we have seen, by the Wars of the

Roses, was packed with ruined lords, subservient courtiers, newly-created nobles, bishops who owed their sees to the Crown's appointment, and with their eyes turned towards the Crown as the source of all preferment, were hardly likely seriously to quarrel with the sovereign. The few powerful remnants of the older nobility were kept severely down by that unfailing Tudor remedy, the headsman's axe.

We must remember, however, that the absolute servility of the two Houses to the Crown that marks the declining years of Henry VIII was a matter of slow growth, or perhaps more strictly of slow decay. Here we are primarily concerned with the first years of Henry's reign. Let us see if we can trace any marks of this even in these few first years of quietness before the storm.

There is, in form at least, a vast difference between Henry's very first Parliament which, in its great care for the upkeep of the bridge at Staines and its desire that the bridge-tolls should be properly applied in the way directed, declared that all the King's letters-patent against this were to be void,<sup>1</sup> and his later Parliaments which, not merely in such a trifling matter but in nearly everything, were to give Parliamentary power to all the King's letters-patent, save in a few specified exceptions.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Henry VIII, Ch. 9.

Let us also note in passing how two insignificant and similar Courts were gradually changed from being the poor man's protectors into being the hated engine of tyranny; we mean the 'Star Chamber' and the 'Court of Requests.' As Mr. Leadam, the editor of the 'Select Cases of the Court of Requests,' says of this process: 'It is to be observed by the way that the abuse of the "Poor Man's Court" by wealthy and influential plaintiffs, practically unknown in the reign of Henry VII, grew up during the latter years of Henry VIII.'<sup>1</sup>

Now what are the peculiarities of constitutional government in these the earliest years of Henry VIII? We find two well-marked periods: first, an old humdrum period extending down to 1512 when the Wolsey régime came fully into power, a period when Parliament was vainly striving to stem the flood of individualism by carefully and laboriously enacting statute after statute aimed at some innovation in trade or at some body of merchants or employers who at the expense of their neighbours were attempting to make a semi-fraudulent profit. Regulating all things piecemeal—such is the legislation of these years. Disputes with the Crown were rare and unimportant.

Then came the second period, Wolsey's

<sup>1</sup> *Select Cases in the Court of Requests, 1497-1569*, edited by I. S. Leadam (for the Selden Society), Introduction, p. 26.

administration, and in any estimate of Wolsey's statesmanship we must not lose sight of his Parliamentary methods—or rather absence of methods. It was only natural that a strong, ambitious man should resent the interference of country knights of the shire and staid burgesses in his far-reaching plans, and soon they were at loggerheads. Remarkably careless or ignorant of foreign policy, they were keen and careful in matters affecting their own pockets; hence the famous scene when Wolsey entered the House to demand supplies of money and the House, on the supposed advice of More, remained dumb. From these disputes Henry learnt, no doubt, the advisability of having a subservient House.

In fact, we can hardly trace any actual development or actual decadence. The forms remained the same, but the spirit was slowly changing; the life-blood of Parliamentary independence was being slowly drained away, till it became the nerveless tool of Henry's grossness. But though the change came almost imperceptibly, what a change there was from the first Tudor's mounting the throne, under a Parliamentary title, and his son's Parliament meekly giving the King power to will away the crown, as if it were the personal property of the Welsh upstart's son.

Most of the more important details of this decadence are outside the survey of this work.

The best way to see the stagnant condition of legal and constitutional matters in these years is to read the following titles of the Acts of Parliament during these years.

#### FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. A revocation of an act made the VIII year of King Henry the VI for going into Denmark and Ireland.
2. A revocation of an act made the first year of King Richard III for cloth making.
3. An act concerning payments to be made to John Heron, general executor to our sovereign Lord the King.
4. An act for penalties upon actions popular.
5. A revocation of an act made the III year of the reign of King Henry the VII concerning the entering of merchandise in the customers' books.
6. A revocation of a Statute made concerning informations to be made before Justices of Assize and Justices of Peace.
7. An act concerning the office of Coroner.
8. An act concerning eschetours and commissioners.
9. An act concerning the bridge of Staines.
10. An act enlarging a statute concerning the travers of lands seised into the King's hands by inquests afore eschetours and commissioners.
11. An act concerning the confirmation of the act of atteint to continue.
12. An act concerning untrue inquisition procured by Empson and Dudley.
13. An act that no coin, plate, vessel, bullion nor jewel be carried out of this land.
14. An act concerning reformation of apparrell used within this realm.
15. An act annulling and revoking all feoffments made to Empson and Dudley.

THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. An act that no coin, plate, vessel, bullion nor jewels be carried out of this realm.
2. An act concerning eschetours and commissioners for true finding of offices to endure for ever.
3. An act concerning the maintenance of archery and shooting in long bows within this realm.
4. An act of protections and licence of alienation for such persons as shall be in the King's wars.
5. An act for payment of wages to soldiers being in the King's war.
6. An act concerning true making and drapping of woollen cloths.
7. An act concerning woollen cloths to be full wrought barbed sowed and shorn ere they be carried out of this realm.
8. An act repealling the act made at York for selling of victuals by head officers.
9. An act against mummers.
10. An act for curriers to have search of leather.
11. An act concerning the approbation of physicians and surgeons.
12. An act concerning the reformation of impanells for the King.
13. An act adnulling shooting in crossbows.
14. An act concerning unlawfull oils to be searched and seen that they be good and lawfull.
15. An act concerning the making of caps and hats.

FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. An act concerning making of bulwarks on the seaside.
2. An act concerning punishment for murder.
3. An act concerning Juries in London.



4. An act of proclamations to be made before exigents be awarded in foreign counties.
5. An act repealing penalties for giving of wages to labourers and artificers.
6. An act concerning customers and comptrollers for sealing of cloth of gold, silver and all other maner of silks corses.
7. An act concerning pewterers and true weights and beams.
8. An act concerning Richard Strode.

#### FIFTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. An act concerning ministration of Justice to the King's subjects of his city of Tournay.
2. An act for true making of cloths in Devon called white straights.
3. An act concerning white woollen cloths of V marks and under, may be carried over the seas unshorn.
4. An act for avoiding disceits in worsteds.
5. An act concerning Juries in London.
6. An act concerning surgeons to be discharged of quests and other things.
7. An act for strangers for buying of leather in open market.
8. An act concerning the manner and form of suit for the King's most gracious letters of general pardon.

#### SIXTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. An act concerning apparel to be used and worn.
2. An act concerning the maintenance of archers.
3. An act concerning artificers and labourers.
4. An act for proclamations to be made before the exigents be awarded in foreign shires.
5. An act avoiding destructions and pulling down of towns.

6. An act for remitting prisoners with their indictments to the places where the crimes were committed.

7. An act concerning wages for boatmen.

8. An act concerning the making of certain woollen cloths in the county of Devon.

9. An act avoiding deceits in making of woollen cloths.

10. An act for commissions of sewers.

11. An act for bow staves to be brought into this realm by strangers.

12. An act for Norfolk wolls not to be carried out of the land.

13. An act advoiding of shooting and keeping of cross-bows and hand guns.

14. An act for the King's subsidy of tonnage and poundage.

15. An act adnulling second letters patents during the King's pleasure making no mention of the first letters patents.

16. An act that no Knights of the shire nor burgess depart before the end of the parliament.

17. An act for cleansing of the river of Canterbury.

18. An act for the continuance of the under-sheriff of Bristol.

#### SEVENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

1. An act against pulling down and destruction of houses and towns.

2. An act concerning the maintenance of the King's navy.

3. An act concerning actions popular and statutes penal.

4. An act concerning advowries for rents and services.

5. An act concerning artificers and labourers.<sup>1</sup>
6. An act concerning artificers and labourers within the city of London.
7. An act concerning array and apparel to be used and worn.

FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH YEARS OF THE REIGN  
OF HENRY VIII

1. An act concerning broad white woollen cloths.
2. An act concerning strangers artificers for taking of apprentices, journeymen, and covenant servants.
3. An act concerning worsted workers of Yarmouth and Lynn.
4. An act concerning Englishmen sworn to foreign princes.
5. An act concerning physicians.
6. An act concerning the high ways in the weld of Kent.
7. An act for shooting in crossbows and handguns.
8. An act for the six clerks of the Chancery to be married.
9. An act concerning the liberty of Cordwainers or Shoo-makers.
10. An act for hunting of the hare.
11. An act concerning cloths called Wesses made in the county of Suffolk.
12. An act concerning coiners, that shall coin and make any money at any mint within this realm of England.
13. An act for the haven and port of Southampton.
14. An act for such as be in the King's wars over or upon the sea.

<sup>1</sup> As the editor of the edition printed by Berthelet points out, this act is the same, word for word, as that enacted in the sixth year of Henry VIII, and may have been reprinted in error.

This is perhaps the time and place to discuss the vexed question whether what is known as the 'Recension' in Germany vitally affected England or not. The Recension was the gradual victory of the 'Roman Law' over the more native German Law. Did 'Roman Law' to any great extent influence England in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? There can be little doubt that from early times it had always some effect on the growth of English law, though probably not in any great or vital degree. But did the 'Civil' or Roman Law have anything like the effect it had in Germany during these two centuries or not? Let us see a little more exactly what this might mean. The Roman Law is the embodiment of individualism and absolutism in a legal form, and if it did have any great effect, no doubt it would be one means to the triumph of modernism and the ruin of mediæval feudalism. This slight sketch can be merely suggestive; the question must be left without any real answer. We can only point out the ever-increasing study of the civil law at the universities, the ever-increasing Romanism of legal text-books.

## CHAPTER XIII

WE now come to the most difficult and perhaps the most disputed portion of the history of the social condition of England, but a portion that at the same time amply repays by its fascinating interest all the labour and study that may be put into it: the condition of agriculture and of the rural classes and of the country at large.

We must premise with Professor Ashley's absolutely true remark: 'It is worth while noticing before leaving this subject that the "decay" here spoken of was primarily one in the old municipal polity, and not one in material wellbeing. For the idea sometimes entertained that the Reformation, or the accession of Elizabeth, or any other event in the sixteenth century found England in a languishing condition, with towns falling to ruin and industry stagnant, there is certainly no sufficient evidence.'<sup>1</sup>

This is strictly true also of agriculture, including of course pastoral as well as tillage farming.

<sup>1</sup> *An Introduction to English Economic History and Theory*, vol. i. part ii. p. 50.

The period was one of continuous change, and this change has been succinctly described by Mr. Prothero in the following quotation: 'But between 1450 and 1560 an agricultural revolution was accomplished, which may be briefly described as a change from self-sufficing to profit-gaining agriculture, from common to individual ownership.'<sup>1</sup> And of course this, like all other changes, brought an immense burden of unmerited distress on huge portions of the population, distress which became, however, more terribly acute when Henry's rapacious ministers and courtiers seized the monastic lands and funds which had alleviated much of this distress. For the change had begun in the wonderful fifteenth century, and the sixteenth only continued it, of course at an accelerated rate till, when the Tudors passed away, it was practically completed. Take the so-called 'Husbandry' of Walter of Henley, which would have served for an agricultural manual during the whole of the Middle Ages, and Fitzherbert's 'Husbandrie' (1534) and his 'Surveying' (1539); we become at once aware of an immense difference, a change from manorial, open field, and communal methods to tenants and enclosed and individual farming. It seems hardly necessary to point out, save as a possible reminder to over-zealous modern land reformers, that the methods were communal not in any

<sup>1</sup> Rowland Prothero, *The Pioneers and Progress of English Farming*.

sense of national ownership, but of manorial ownership; only as tenants of a certain manor (using the word tenant in its widest sense) did they possess certain lands in common amongst them. This manorial system does not lie in our province to discuss, save to point out its great inherent weakness which had kept it almost stagnant for centuries. Agricultural operations were conducted by custom. For we must remind our readers that the general method of exercising this communal ownership was, roughly, to divide up each field (using the word field not as a fenced or walled or hedged-in piece of land, but as a piece of open land devoted to the production of one kind of crop, wheat, oats, barley, &c., &c., according to the desires of the community) into narrow strips, each member of the community having his own strip, but only for that harvest-time; after harvest his ownership of that strip ceased and the whole field became communal grazing ground. As Mr. Seebohm has pointed out in his 'English Village Community,'<sup>1</sup> if one man cleared his strip of ground of thistles, it would be seeded by the carelessly cleared ground of his neighbour, &c.<sup>2</sup> At the same time we

<sup>1</sup> *Vide op. cit.* pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> N.B.—Though Fortescue (before 1470) talks of fields enclosed by hedge-rows and ditches planted with trees for shelter to the beasts, and also so as to dispense with a herder, they could hardly when he wrote have been very common. *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, translated by J. A. Amos, p. 102.

must remember that this system of ownership of strips not adjacent was the only practical and economical way of carrying on agriculture by small tenants when stock and implements were dear and scarce. The small tenant or holder could not have had the stock of oxen, &c., necessary to work his own land, therefore the oxen, &c., were worked in a rude system of co-operation, and thus it was a positive economic gain to have all the bits of land in the village which had to be ploughed lying in one field, though the tenancy of that one field was divided up into numerous small pieces. It is this somewhat neglected point that accounts for the long-continued existence of the open-field method of agriculture, and also explains that it only broke down when capital came into agriculture, making the co-operative method unnecessary, and giving the capitalist farmer, with his holding in one continuous block, an immense advantage over his small and scattered co-operative rivals.

But the change came, and it came in the only possible way, in the breakdown of this communal tenancy, in other words in enclosures. We now come to a subject of considerable difficulty. What were these enclosures? In the first place, it is not disputed that they were of two kinds. First arable land was converted into pasturage, and secondly open communal arable land was converted into closed individual arable land.



The question as to which was the most prevalent form has been disputed between Mr. Leadam and Mr. Gay. But for our purpose the most important point to consider is that both meant a change from communal, as explained above, to individual tenancy. On the further point we have the contemporary evidence of there having been a very large amount of both kinds of change taking place. And such clear-sighted contemporary observers as Starkey welcomed the change, even though it proceeded under the less beneficial guise of conversion of tillage into pasture, in the following words, put into the mouth of Pole: 'This has been thought a fault many a day, but if the matter be well examined, peradventure it is not so great as it appeareth, and is judged of the common sort. For seeing it is as that our pride and nourishing standeth not only in corn and fruits of the ground, but also in beasts and cattle no less necessary than they, there must be provision for the breeding of them as well as for the tilling of the earth, which can not be without pastures and enclosures of ground. For this is certain, without pastures such multitude of cattle will not be maintained as is required to us here in our country, where as lacketh the manifold and diverse fruits which is had in other countrys for the sustenance of man. Wherefore I think it very necessary to have this enclosing of pastures for our cattle and beasts and

specially for sheep, by whose profit the wealth and pleasure here of this realm is much maintained. For if your plenty and abundance of wool were not here maintained, you should have little brought in by merchants from other parts, and we should live without any pleasure or comfort.’<sup>1</sup> Let us put in here two pieces of evidence against enclosures, more especially against conversion of tillage into pasture. The first is from the famous ‘Discourse of the Common Weal of the Realm of England,’ which I need hardly remind my readers is written in the form of a dialogue.

*Husbandman.* Marie for theise inclosures doe undoe us all, for they make us paye dearer for our land that we occupie, and causes that we can have no land in maner for oure monye to put to tillage; all is taken up for pastures, either for shepe or for grasinge of cattell. So that I have knowen of late a docen plowes with in lesse compasse then 6 myles aboute me laide downe with in theise [vii] yeares; and wheare xl persons had their lyvinges, nowe one man and his shepard hathe all. Which thinge is not the least cause of theise uprors, for by theise inclosures men doe lacke livinges and be idle; and therefore for verie necessitie they are desirous of a chaunge, being in hope to come therby to somewhat; and well assured, howe soeuer it befall with them, it can not be no harder with them then it was before. Moreover all thinges are so deare that by their daily labour they are not able to live.

*Capper.* I have well experience therof, for I am

<sup>1</sup> *England in the reign of King Henry VIII*, by Thomas Starkey, edited by J. M. Cowper for the Early English Text Society, p. 97.

faine, to give my journey men ii<sup>d</sup> a daye more than I was wonte to doe, and yet they saye they can not sufficiently live thereon. And I knowe for a truthe that the best husband of them all can save but little at the yeares ende; and by reason of such dearthe as ye speake of, we that are artificers can kepe few or no prentices like as we weare wonte to doe. Therefore the citie, which was heartofore well inhabited and wealthie (as ye knowe everie one of youe) is fallen of occupiers to greate desolation and povertie.

*Merchaunte.* So the moste parte of all the townes of England, London excepted; and not only the goode townes are decaied sore in their houses, stretes and other buyldinges, but also the countrie in their highe wayes, and bridges; for such pouertie reignethe every where that few men have so much to spare as they may give anie thinge to the reparacion of such wayes bridges and other common easmentes.<sup>1</sup>

Our other piece of evidence is a ballad, which is by some extraordinary mental process considered by its editor Goodwin to have been a satire against the monks, when it is obviously directed, like so much of the contemporary literature, against sheep farming. I give it in full.

The blacke shepe is a perylous beast  
Cuius contrarium falsum est.

The leon of lyme ys large and long,  
The beare to fyght is stowte and strong,  
But off all beastes that go or crepe  
The myghtiest ys the horned shepe.

The blacke shepe, &c.

<sup>1</sup> *A Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England*, edited by the late Elizabeth Lamond, pp. 15-16.

The shepe ys off a monstrous myght,  
 What thyng soever his hornes on lgyht  
 He bearyth downe bothe castell and towne ;  
 None is him licke in marciall powre.

The blacke shepe, &c.

Syx hundreth horseys with cart and plough  
 I haue earst knowen where nowght ys now  
 But grene moll-hilles they are layde playne,  
 This cruell beast over all dothe raygne.

The blacke shepe, &c.

This shepe he is a wycked wight  
 Man, woman and childe he deuowreth quite,  
 No hold, no howse can him wythstande  
 He swaloweth up both sea and lande.

The blacke shepe, &c.

Men were wont ones off shepe to fede  
 Shepe now eate men on dowtfull dede  
 This wollwysse shepe, this rampyng beast  
 Consumeth all thorow west and est.

The blacke shepe, &c.

Halfe Englande ys nowght now but shepe  
 In every corner they playe boe pepe ;  
 Lorde, them confownde by twentye and ten  
 And fyll their places with cristen men.

The blacke shepe, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Of course immense, as these show us, temporary misery was caused, and much of this misery even became permanent from the great dislocation and

<sup>1</sup> *Six Ballads with Burdens*, edited by James Goodwin, Percy Society, 1844.

change in the fundamental industry of the country. Greed had full sway, as we have so often had to point out, and this made the change the harder; not only the greed of King and courtiers, but that of every enterprising farmer and landlord who ruthlessly pressed on their paths of acquisition with hardly a thought of those they crushed on the way. Perhaps it was inevitable; for the change came when the minds of men were hardly tuned to listen to the voice of suffering when it spoke against their own self-interest.

What an accumulation of beggary and suffering there must have been in that early Tudor England when the sole charitable helps of the poor were swept ruthlessly away! We can only wonder how England survived it. For we have only too much direct contemporary evidence. Pamphlets and ballads tell us the popular view; serious treatises and statute-books give us the view of the governing classes; while the voices of the popular preachers, Catholic or Protestant, tell the same terrible tale. And we know only too well what misery such a change must have caused amongst the rural classes. But the change had begun before the Reformation—that we must in fairness admit, as well as the greed that aggravated it—and it went on increasing and increasing, in spite of Wolsey's efforts. Even in the comparatively quite small amount of

enclosures that have made many of the beautiful parks of England, how much unmerited misery did their making entail on the English people of those days. But to many of those who did not fall the times were prosperous. If we travel with prosaic Leland up and down England, how often do we find ‘. . . and is builded of stone as comunly al townes thereabout be.’<sup>1</sup> Yet we find often, as at Leicester, ‘the hole towne of Leicester at this tyme is builded of tymbre.’<sup>2</sup> But through the length of England we shall find in his scanty dull jottings evidence of a quickened life, a hard struggle for the survival of the fittest with no mercy for the down-trodden, while all along the south coast, as from Melcombe Regis near Weymouth to the old town of Hampton, we find many traces of the ravages of French foes and of pirates.<sup>3</sup>

Sheep were bitterly abused, as we have seen, for eating up the food of the poor and taking away the land on which they had worked, exactly as at a much later date machinery was to be equally abused. Unscrupulous adventurers, hard-hearted capitalists and landowners, abused the one as they later abused machinery, and thus aggravated the evil. But the change was perhaps necessary.

<sup>1</sup> *The Itinerary of John Leyland in or about the years 1535-43*, edited by Lucy Toulmin Smith, Parts I-III, pp. 7, 157.

<sup>2</sup> Leland, *op. cit.* p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 250, 276.

In an anonymous play called 'The Four Elements,' written somewhere in the early days of Henry VIII, the spirit of the age is thus sketched :

Yet amongst most folk that man is holden  
 Most wise, which to be rich studieth only,  
 But he that for a commonwealth busily  
 Studieth and laboureth and liveth by God's law  
 Except he wax rich men count him but a daw.  
 So he that is rich is ever honoured  
 Although he have got it never so falsely.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Mackinnon has well stated the condition of affairs, though referring to a slightly later date : 'The commercial spirit was already keen in sixteenth-century England, and the country was in the slow agony of an economic revolution. The mercantile class was accumulating wealth, and acquiring property in land or houses, and letting it out at exorbitant rents. Similarly the landowners were bent on screwing out of their land as much as they could possibly get, without consideration for the wrongs and sufferings of the masses.'<sup>2</sup>

So much for the general condition, for it would be quite easy to pile on quotations from many sources, each one ringing with the same tune of misery. As Dr. Furnivall says in his Forewords to Part I, vol. i. of the 'Ballads from

<sup>1</sup> In *Six Anonymous Plays* edited by John Farmer for the Early English Drama Society, 1908, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *A History of Modern Liberty*, by James Mackinnon, vol. ii. p. 308.

Manuscripts': 'Henry VIII's reign instead of being a specially bright time for working-men was a dark one; instead of being one that specially favoured their class, was one that saw a more sweeping blow smite the independent yeomen into poverty, than perhaps any former age had witnessed.'<sup>1</sup> So that Starkey had to put into Pole's mouth an attack on the yeomanry class, an attempt to show their uselessness. In them (the yeomanry) 'standeth the beggary of England; by them is nourished the common theft therein.'<sup>2</sup>

Let us examine a little more closely these contemporary and exceedingly interesting works of Fitzherbert, and see more in detail the exact state of agriculture, at least as far as we are able to do so.

First let us see what are the lists of crops which Fitzherbert gives instructions for cultivating. They are pease, beans, fytches, barley, oats, rye and wheat; and the stock reared are cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, bees, poultry, ducks and geese, and pea-fowls; these last are the housewife's duty to look after, as well as the garden, where flax and hemp are sown and herbs that are good for the pot. A fairly exhaustive list; the principal omissions com-

<sup>1</sup> *Ballads from Manuscripts*, edited by F. J. Furnivall for the Ballad Society in the Forewords, pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Starkey, *op. cit.* p. 79.



pared with what a modern farmer would produce are the different root-crops of the turnip nature.<sup>1</sup>

But besides this we are given a minute account of how to make a ditch and a hedge for enclosing. Five pages are devoted to this, out of a treatise which deals with the whole of agricultural methods as well as a good deal of incidental moralising, and yet only consists of 120 pages; this is a significant fact. Enclosing, according to Fitzherbert, was evidently a very important agricultural occupation, when dealing with pasture-lands, at all events.

The only other point that we need point out here is the question of the manures used. Fitzherbert mentions horse-dung as the worst, the dung of all beasts that chew the cud as good, and the dung of doves as the best.

From Tusser we know that the farmer's garden contained strawberries, raspberries, barberries and gooseberries.<sup>2</sup> He shows us tenant farming in full swing. The first edition, published during his lifetime, is dated 1557, and

<sup>1</sup> *Certain Ancient Tracts*, London, 1767, contains Fitzherbert's *Husbandry* and his *Surveying*.

<sup>2</sup> *Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, by Thomas Tusser, edited by W. Payne and Sidney Herotage for English Dialect Society, 1878, p. 41.

his jingling verses picture almost a modern England.

A good round rent their Lords they give  
And must keep touch in all their paie.<sup>1</sup>

and again :

Good landlord who findeth is blessed of God  
A cumbersome Landlord is husbandmen's rod ;  
He noieth, destroieth, and all to this drift,  
To strip his poore tenant of fermes and of thrift.<sup>2</sup>

What a different picture this from the England of 'Walter of Henley' ! Custom has evidently died with Tradition ; Competition has begun his long rule.

Tusser is more interesting than Fitzherbert, and though unfortunately he wrote later when the change was nearly completed, yet he gives us a picture of homely agricultural life which we could hardly do without. He is a confirmed believer in enclosures, and one or two of his couplets on this are well worth quoting :

The countrie enclosed I praise,  
The tother delighteth not me.<sup>3</sup>

and again :

More plentie of mutton and bief  
Corne, butter, and cheese of the best,  
More wealth any where (to be brieve)  
More people, more handsome and prest  
Where finde ye ? (go search any coast)  
Than there where enclosure is most.

<sup>1</sup> Tusser, op. cit. p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 140.

More worke for the labouring man,  
 As well in the towne as the field  
 Or thereof (devise if ye can)  
 More profit what countries doo yield,  
 More seldom where see ye the poore  
 Go begging from doore unto doore ? <sup>1</sup>

And though of course, as we have said before, the change was perhaps inevitable, we have far too much evidence to show that it pressed with terrible severity on large portions of the nation, and that the intense greediness it engendered amongst the fortunate and the corresponding bitterness and misery were viewed by some of the clearest-sighted and warmest-hearted men as the gravest social evil of their day. Even Tusser had to admit that the change was not generally popular nor always brought about in the kindest manner.

The poore at enclosing doo grutch  
 Because of abuses that fall,  
 Least some men have but too much  
 And some again nothing at all.  
 If order might therein be found  
 What were to the severall ground ? <sup>2</sup>

The statesmen of England tried vainly to find that order, as they are striving again in our day, to prevent the undue exploitation of the masses, while some, seeing its apparent hopelessness, suggest that it would be easier and juster not to

<sup>1</sup> Tusser, *op. cit.* p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 146.

attempt to set limits to exploitation, but to prevent it altogether.

The following long quotation from Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia' puts the case against enclosures, especially in its most objectionable form, which even Tusser does not defend, and which is defended hardly anywhere except in Starkey's Dialogues, where, as we have seen, Pole is made to uphold it. The importance of this quotation is the only excuse for its length.

But yet this is not only the necessary cause of stealing. There is another, whych, as I suppose, is proper and peculiar to you Englishmen alone. What is that, quod the Cardinal? forsooth my lorde (quod I) Your sheep that were wont to be so meeke and tame, and so smal eaters, now, as I heare say, be become so great devowerers and so wild, that they eat up, and swallow down the very men themselves. They consume, destroye and devour whole fields, houses and cities. For look in what parts of the realm doth grow the finest, and therefore dearest woll, there noblemen and gentlemen; yea and certain Abbots, holy men no doubt, not contenting themselves with the yearly revenues and profits, that were wont to grow to their forefathers and predecessors of their lands, nor being content that they live in rest and pleasure nothing profiting, yea much noyinge the weale publique: leave no ground for village, they enclose all into pastures: they throw down houses: they pluck down townes, and leave nothing standing, but only the church to be a sheep house. And as though you loste no small quantity of grounde by forestes, chases, lands and parks, these good holy men turn all dwelling-places and all glebland into desolation and wildernes. Therefore

that one covetous and unsatiabie cormoraunte and very plague of his native country may compass about and inclose many thousand akers of ground together within one pale or hedge, the husbandmen be thrust out of their own, or else by coveyne and fraud, or by violent oppression they be put besides it, or by wrongs and injuries, they be so wearied, that they be compelled to sell all : by one meanes therfore or by other, either by hook or crook they must needs depart away, poor, seelye, wretched soules, men, women, husbands, wives, fatherless children, widows, wofull mothers, with their young babes, and their whole household, small in substance, and much in number, as husbandry requireth many hands. Away they trudge, I say, out of their known and accustomed houses, finding no place to rest in. All their householdestuffe, which is very little worth, though it might well abide the sale : yet being suddenly thrust out, they be constrained to sell it for a thing of nought. And when they have wandered abroad till that be spent, what can they then else do but steal, and then justly pardy be hanged, or else go about a begging. And yet then also they be cast in prison as vagabonds, because they go about and work not : whom no man will set a work though they never so willingly proffer themselves therto. For one Shepherde or Herdman is enough to eat up that ground with cattel, to the occupying wherof about husbandry many hands were requisite. And this is also the cause why victualles be now in many places dearer. Yea, besides this the price of woll is so risen, that poor folkes, which were wont to work it, and make cloth therof, be now able to bye none at all. And by this means very many be forced to forsak work, and to give themselves to idelness. For after that so much ground was enclosed for pasture, an infinite multitude of sheep died of the rot, such vengeance God took of their inordinate and unsatiabie covetousness, sending among

the sheep that pestiferous murrain, which much more justly should have fallen on the sheepmasters own heads. And though the number of sheep increase never so fast, yet the price falleth not one mite, because there be so few sellers. For they be allmost all comen into a few rich mens hands, whom no need forceth to sell before they lust and they lust not before they may sell as dear as they lust. Now the same cause bringeth in like dearth of the other kinds of cattell, yea and that so much the more, because that after farms plucked down, and husbandry decayed, there is no man that passeth for the breeding of young store. For these rich men bring not up the young ones of great cattel as they do lambs. But first they buy them abroad very cheap, and afterwards when they be fatted in their pastures, they sell them again exceeding dear. And therefore (as I suppose) the whole incomoditie hereof is not yet felt. For yet they make dearth only in those places, where they sell. But when they shall fetch them away from thence where they be bred faster than they can be brought up: then shall there also be felt great dearth, store beginning there to fail, where the ware is bought. Thus the unreasonable covetousnes of a few hath turned that thing to the utter undoing of your island, in the which thing the chief felicity of your realm did consist. For this great dearth of victuals causeth men to keep as little houses, and as small hospitality as they possible may, and to put away their servants: whether, I pray you, but a begging: or else (which these gentel bloudes and stout stomachs will sooner set their minds unto) a stealing? Now to amend the matter, to this wretched beggery and miserable poverty is joined great wantonness, importunate superfluity, and excessive riot. For not only gentle mens servants, but also handicraft men: yea and allmost the ploughmen of the country, with all other sorts of people, use much strange and proud newfanglenes in

their apparel, and to much prodigal riot and sumptuous fare at their table. Now bawds and queans, whoores, harlotts, strumpetts, brothelhouses, stews, and yet another stews, winetaverns, ale houses, and tipling houses, with so many naughty lewd, and unlawful games, as dice, cards, tables, tennis, bowls, quoits, do not all these send the haunTERS of them straight a stealing when their money is gone? Cast out of these pernicious abominations, make a law, that they, which plucked down farms, and towns of husbandry, shall reedifie them, or else yield and uprender the possession thereof to such as will go to the cost of building them anew. Suffer not these rich men to buy up all, to engrose, and forstall, and with their monopoly to keep the market alone as please them. Let not so many be brought up in idelness, let husbandry and tillage be restored, let clothe working be renewed, that there may be honest labours for this idle sort to pass their time profitablye, which hitherto ether poverty hath caused to be thieves or else now be either vagabonds or idle serving men, and shortly will be thieves.<sup>1</sup>

This is More's picture of the England of this date: not a bright one, a picture of unrestricted selfishness let loose on the crumbling social structure of mediæval England. Quotations could be multiplied *ad nauseam* to show that More was not alone; the ballads and poetry of the time are not merry, nor religious; they are merely the bitter cry of the wronged, or take relief in sensual vulgarity. Unscrupulous speculators, whether parvenus or descendants of

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, translated by Ralphe Robynson, Temple Classics edition, pp. 18-22.

the old landowning class, ground down their tenants with terrible severity, spending the money thus obtained in the wild extravagances of the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold' and suchlike spectacles; gaming became a rage, luxury was rife. And Henry Tudor led the wasteful riot, for in any consideration of the effect of his reign and of his character, one must see the dark side of those big, joyous, early days of his reign that some historians have so delighted in describing; his jousts, tourneys, banquets, revels, gaming and shows had to be paid for, and they were paid for by the bitter sufferings of the peasantry of England. Popular, no doubt, he was with his courtiers, nobles and hangers-on, with the tradesmen of London who were enriched by the vast sums spent by him and his courtiers with them, perhaps even popular with the people who, poor, blind souls, did not see that one cause of their misery was the fashion of extravagance that he set, and saw only the proximate cause, landlord and usurer, and cursed them while they blessed the king who was doing so much to make landlord and usurer what they were. The only excuse for Henry was his youth; we are yet to see if age was to improve him or experience teach him.

Futile Acts of Parliament attempting to prevent people aping the Court in luxury could not stem the tide of extravagance. Thieves could



be hung, and were hung with all a Tudor's lavish whole-heartedness, but the usurious merchant, the extortionate landlord, who made them, went on their way unchecked. Discontent and misery were rife under the magnificent vesture of the days of the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold.'

The result of this we may here briefly indicate in Mr. Unwin's words, though it will claim our closer attention in a subsequent volume.<sup>1</sup>

There grew up in every industrial centre of Western Europe from the middle of the fourteenth century onward, a body of workmen in every craft who had no prospect before them but that of remaining journeymen all their lives, and who were bound together by an increasing consciousness of a class interest which separated them from their employers.<sup>1</sup>

And lucky they were to be journeymen, for even below these was the class who lived God alone knows how, a class half casual labourers, half paupers, sometimes the former, more often perhaps the latter, and the formation of this class, begun no doubt in the later fourteenth century, was triumphantly brought to maturity in that age which we call the Age of the Reformation.

We must now turn our attention to the urban population of England. And first let us mention that we do not intend to enter into any details of the actual position and powers of the governing

<sup>1</sup> George Unwin, *Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 48.

cliques in the towns, for at any rate by this time all really popular government had ceased, if there had ever been any. The power of the local authorities in the cities was centred in the hands of the rich bourgeois, and the bulk of the population were excluded from all practical interference in local affairs. Nowadays it is in the large towns that one finds the bitterest misery, the lowest degradation of the imperial race, but at the time we are now discussing it is probable that the misery of the poor in the towns was not so acute as in the rural districts, and that what misery there was in the towns was largely to be found amongst the masses of people whom the agricultural crisis had driven there in the dreary search for food, rather than amongst the citizens by birth. In modern times, as acute observers have pointed out, the reverse is the case. The agricultural population, driven into the towns by modern agricultural depression, become the pick of the casual and general labour market. Healthy, usually far more robust, physically stronger, with nerves unshattered and consequently of steadier and more reliable habits, they easily outdistance the less fortunate townsmen. But in Henry's day there was much less difference in environment and upbringing between the city and rural populations. While the questions of apprenticeship and guildship closed the avenues of skilled trades then far more effectually than

do the trade-unions nowadays, the general unskilled market was as free as it is to-day to the strongest man.

But though there was less misery in the towns, we are not hastily to conclude that they were flourishing; far from it. As regards material prosperity they were in a worse state than the rural districts, and this is only one more instance of a sad fact, that generally commercial prosperity merely means great gains for the few, moderate gains for a larger number, but for the bulk of the population bitterer misery and more labour than usual. And underlying the fact there is an equally sad reason. During times of prosperity men's minds are fastened more and more intently on money-making; all else is forgotten in the struggle; and if it continues for long, as in modern times, there sets in permanently an inborn curious worship and imitation of the 'business' man—meaning by the 'business' man one who in his business thinks of and considers nothing but the financial success of his business. The effect on the lower classes naturally follows. As far as he can, the 'business' man, whether in commerce or in land, grinds them down, and the result is the state of Lancashire before the Factory Acts, or the sweated industries of to-day. As it is now, so it was in Tudor England. Just because the ownership of land was suddenly found to be of such

commercial value, owing to this wave of prosperity in the agricultural and pastoral products of the land, the landowners raised rents to the highest possible point, and pulled down villages and farms for the purpose of gaining the higher profits of the now booming industry of the trade in raw wool.

But the towns generally were in a slowly decaying state, a peaceable, sleepy and perhaps comfortable state for the inhabitants, even if they were saddened by the grass in the streets and were somewhat in danger from ruinous buildings. We have plenty of evidence of this stagnating decay in town life. Town after town was relieved of its due payment of taxation owing to the state of decay into which it had fallen, but no complaint appears, not one word of misery amongst the inhabitants ; all that is reserved for the inhabitants of the quickly changing countryside. London, of course, we except for the moment.

But side by side with this stagnation in the older towns, new ones were springing up which were soon far to eclipse in wealth their elder sisters. This is a question we must consider a little. Why should the older towns decay and the new ones grow wealthy ? The reason is obvious. The restrictions on trade in the older cities, enforced by the guilds, drove the newly rising industries into new places where trade

could be free and unhampered by the old-fashioned economic morality of the older centres of population. This is one of the silent revolutions of which we know very little and would give much to know more. I do not mean of the really somewhat unimportant points of the methods of local government. What one would like to know is how it affected the daily life of the working classes themselves, but perhaps we can never know much about this; the wave of progress in wealth, inventions, the poor-laws, and the police-code have effectively blotted most of it out for ever.

One must always remember that to a very large extent, however we may refuse to face the question, morality is at the bottom, nay, is the very basis, of economic matters. We must boldly and once for all face the fact that the giving up of moral philosophy or ethics meant, and actually resulted in, the evils of the modern industrial system. We have prided ourselves on entirely discarding scholastic philosophy and on becoming, in our progress in science, utilitarians and materialists. Well, let us consider a little more closely what this meant. Estimable M.P.s have been jeering lately at the resuscitation of scholastic philosophy at the new Irish University. Perhaps we cannot expect much from M.P.s, but still this jeering seems a little more stupid than usual even for some

of these gentlemen. But let us go back to the dawn of our modern life. The ethical teaching of scholasticism was in economic matters very clear and precise. Property had its rights, no doubt, but it had also its duties, and scholasticism emphasised the duties even more than the rights, and wisely, for the rights would take care of themselves, but the duties were apt to be neglected. Nowadays, of course, the duties are merely occasionally mentioned as pious or charitable things, highly recommended on occasions from the pulpit and even praised at times in the press. But consider the 'business' man's methods. Does he consider the duties? are they not put aside in 'business' matters? or if to a certain extent considered, is it not merely as a matter of advertisement, or as a means of averting costly labour disputes? or when done from other reasons, is it not avowedly not as a matter of duty but as a matter of mere grace? This is, of course, the result of the utter abandonment of the influence of the scholastic ethical philosophy, combined with such by-matters as a few centuries of thundering against good works as necessary for salvation. It is difficult to make the ordinary man nowadays understand that at one time mankind really were influenced absolutely in their conduct in such mundane things as commercial transactions and the borrowing of money by religious belief and

teaching, not merely in the forbidding of sheer fraud or theft, but actually in the mere taking advantage of a good bargain or a neighbour's need. But in England in the Middle Ages such was emphatically the case. The 'business' man's methods were anathema to all honest citizens then, and were left to Jews, outcasts, or progressive foreigners. But times are changed; we have the railway, the telephone and the business man, sure products of the new philosophy. St. Francis of Assisi is no longer considered practical; Rockefeller is the pattern we are now asked to copy; to be successful in getting money is the acme of glory.

One of the results of the abandonment of the ethical treatment of economics has been the rising of the so-called science of political economy, the science that no one really believes in, but which the veriest newspaper hack is always quoting as infallible. The modern so-called science refuses as far as possible any admission of ethical considerations into economic relations, and has thus well earned Carlyle's epithet of 'the dismal science.' But modern thinkers are fast abandoning the old high-and-dry mere machine economics of Ricardo, &c. John Stuart Mill began to let in some faint glimmer of reason by admitting some few ethical considerations, and even amongst 'orthodox' writers since, such as Marshall, more and more

have turned to the old scholastic methods of dealing with economics. While the revolt against their teaching has been in all cases a plea for going back again to the moralising and humanising of economic science, Carlyle, Ruskin, Karl Marx, Sidney Webb, Devas, all in quite different ways, show the tendency to return to reasonable honest thought and science. It may sound a paradox to couple Karl Marx with the modern interpretation of Catholic economy of Devas, but the point which is for the moment before us is one on which all these writers agree, the only just, reasonable and scientific one, namely, that rights of necessity imply duties which are as important and as binding as the rights. These writers point to the importance of morality even in business matters.

Let us now get back to our proper work, the question of the position of the towns in Henry VIII's reign. We have seen that the reason for the stagnation and slow decay of the older towns and the rise of the new ones was the desire of the capitalists to escape from the guild regulations. Now the basis of these regulations was honesty; they enforced honesty in trading, honesty in manufacturing, thus attempting to protect the consumers, and at the same time the harder task of enforcing honesty on the artisans, apprentices or journeymen. Now we must not forget that it was the desire to escape this



perhaps rough and ready and no doubt antiquated enforcement of justice that led to the rise of the new towns, and thus to the industrial wealth and misery of England.

A modern question arises when one touches on the thorny guild question, a question which has two branches and many answers. Put broadly, the first and least interesting is whether the English guilds were the parents of trade-unionism. On one side is Dr. Brentano and on the other Mr. Sidney Webb, and the victory lies of course strictly with the latter, for there can be no doubt that the trade-unions are not resuscitated guilds, though equally, of course, they have much in common with them, especially as they were in their earlier, happier days.

The second question is whether guilds were institutions which we might with advantage copy, a question which has a kind of sub-postulate whether modern trade-unions are beneficial, and consequently whether the Government of the day should support them or not. Now before the latter question can be even considered impartially, much less answered, we must at once point out that all reasonable defenders of guilds or trade-unions admit that there have been unwise or even positively injurious guilds and trade-unions. What they are concerned to defend is the usefulness and necessity of fraternity societies of brother-workmen working openly

and fearlessly for the advancement of themselves, and preventing unscrupulous employers or masters making an unfair profit out of the workers.

On the other hand, the opponents of associations of workmen base their reasons against them on the broad ground of condemning all and sundry associations of workmen as being a crime against individual freedom of action and contract. This is suggestive : individualism rightly sees an opponent here, and so the leaders of this philosophy attack them openly, while modern middle-class Englishmen, in whom individualism has been bred till it has become almost a second nature, instinctively dislike and mistrust them. Even when they praise the modern trade-union, we can feel at the back of the praise the now almost hereditary mistrust of everything that interferes with individual freedom of action. The middle class of England are the finished product of Protestant individualism, and this explains their intense class selfishness and greed, their worship of success and wealth, which disfigures and degrades their noble qualities and deforms their whole lives. It is now past arguing with, and only the slow process of time sapping their prejudices bit by bit and their subconscious philosophic bases, will have the smallest effect on them. But the educated supporters of associations of working people are an interesting

study. Socialists applaud and admire them. The late Pope Leo XIII encouraged a limited form,<sup>1</sup> of course under clerical supervision. Many earnest Catholics have turned to them as the one hope of the future. High Churchmen have supported them; while many young Radicals, who have given up the faith of their Radical fathers and have not had time to substitute a new one, have given them their support for empirical reasons; and a few staunch old Tories, who had never quite bowed the knee to the full creed of Manchester, have given them their unhesitating support. All in the nation that was true to the modern traditions of government and morality that culminated in the political economy of the Manchester school but had begun with the revolt of Luther, attacked these new semi-guilds as their fathers had swept away the old guilds in the reign of Edward VI; while all that stood for the days before the great revolt, Catholic or High Churchman, joined with those who, though they loved not the past, yet made no idol of the present in supporting the main principle of the associations of workmen.

Socialist writers attack the days before the Reformation not half so bitterly as the days since; even Mr. Hyndman has his good word for the Catholic Church in those days: 'Abuses doubtless

<sup>1</sup> Encyclical Letter on 'The Condition of the Working Classes,' May 15, 1891.

there were, and most of them were bitterly attacked by members of the Church themselves ; tyranny and persecution there were too in many forms ; but the Church, as all know, was the one body in which equality of conditions was the rule from the start. There at least the man of ability, who outside her pale was forced to bow down before some Norman baron whose ruffianly ancestor had formed part of William's gang of marauders, could rise to a position in which this rough unlettered swashbuckler grovelled before him.'<sup>1</sup> He also points out truly that the Reformation was a large factor in modern misery and thus of its daughter Socialism : ' Rackrenting and usury were henceforth sanctified instead of being denounced, and the Protestant Reformation became a direct cause of the increasing misery of Englishmen.'<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the battle of to-day is the battle of the days of Luther ; at its basis the same antagonism, the same opponents facing each other as before, but both of course with the added gain of the experience of centuries. The only difference—and it is an important one—the extreme wing of each party being as before extremists, is that the attackers of to-day are largely composed of those who were the defenders in sixteenth-century days.

It is of course a truism of history that Henry

<sup>1</sup> *The Historical Basis of Socialism*, by H. M. Hyndman, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Hyndman, *op. cit.* p. 32.

cared for his navy, and though as in everything else he made it tawdry and dramatic, still he loved 'tall ships'; and though he mixed a real islander's love for a fleet with a gold mariner's whistle and a sailor's costume of cloth of gold, still it is true that, at the beginning of his reign at least, he took a genuine and intelligent interest in naval affairs. We can, however, postulate little of real interest; dates of launches, tonnage of ships, names of captains, and now, since Mr. Oppenheim, a consecutive view of naval policy, could be given; but the real beginnings of our maritime life are yet to be traced out. At present, to the ordinary person, we have apparently always been rulers of the sea, 'the boys of the bull-dog breed,' while to some historians the sudden leap into maritime supremacy under Elizabeth is either left unexplained or even perhaps suggested as a kind of Protestant miracle. Here, as elsewhere, work has yet to be done: careful sifting of facts and scientific arrangement of them. However, whatever it may be, the period before us at present is neither extensive nor important enough in naval affairs to warrant a digression that chronologically would have to wander so far from the period in question.

Having thus sketched some of the more striking points of the social condition of England at this time, let us see if we can get a bird's-eye view of the whole.

All is beginning to boil over with new life; change is so obviously imminent. A young, popular, extravagant monarch, with his surrounding of courtiers, makes a gay and frivolous scene, but all this glitter and tinsel must not blind us to the true state of England. The Field of the Cloth of Gold has had sufficient historians. Froude<sup>1</sup> has painted a glowing picture of the condition of England; other modern historians have painted a much darker one, and was it in truth a merry England which had bluff King Hal as monarch? Froude's description, if true at all, is true of an earlier date. The Wars of the Roses had ended feudal power, and the slower economic and social disintegration of the fifteenth century was gradually quickening into a social revolution. All the old ideas, as we have seen before, were slowly passing away. Landlords were mostly in a half-ruined state, the result of civil war and Court extravagance; their peasantry were becoming the victims of their greed, the necessity for wealth, ever more wealth; rackrenting and eviction, ever stalking after, came into fashion; enclosure into pasture claimed its measure of victims. In the towns the guilds had become aristocratic and were soon to be ended, or live on as a mere survival of the past. One class alone was beginning to

<sup>1</sup> *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey*, by James A. Froude (Silver Library edition), vol. i. pp. 1-89.

come to the front, in fact was beginning to appear separate from the nation, a class which was gradually to become dominant,—the middle class.

And the Church, still mighty outwardly—what of the Church? Ruled by Wolsey, the Cardinal-Archbishop of York, Lord Chancellor of England, the mighty ruler of State and Church, to the outward eye never so powerful, never so mighty, it would have needed an inspired prophet to foretell that the Church's sun was soon to set. One of the greatest problems to the historian lies in this fall. Had it forfeited the affections of the English people? and if not, how did Henry manage so easily to overthrow it? Perhaps the answer lies in the great tragedy that ended at Bosworth rather than in the tragic farce that ended at Dunstable.

It is now time to bring to a close this slender review of sixteen years of English history. Much that is more interesting, as well as more detailed, must necessarily be left for future volumes: the fall of the monasteries and the beginning of modern pauperism and poor-laws, the divorce and separation from Rome, with the beginnings of a class Church as distinct from a national Church, national pride, fashion and convention being its stronghold, and the unconventional, the rebellious, the soured fanatics building up the chapels of dissent—all this must await future

treatment. It only remains to sum up our conclusions.

History by suggestion—that has largely been our task ; an attempt to make people see that modern problems have their roots in the past ; that before we can understand them we must carefully study their origins and what caused their rise. When we have diagnosed the causes of disease, preventive medicine has its chance. We have, or rather the healing hand of Time has, cured much of the evil of mediæval times : brutality, cruelty, violent lust of war and passion, pride of caste, contempt of literature and knowledge, open robbery are no longer fashionable, no longer vital problems of modern England. If we can cure our modern problems and not bring back the old vices, a golden future seems to await our land ; but it is ever hard to be moral when there is no morality, and how that morality is to be brought back, and what kind of morality it is to be, is the problem of to-day and to-morrow. If this little volume can in any way help to solve the question, it can only be by suggestion and perhaps by encouraging others more qualified to follow the golden quest.

But a few somewhat timid conclusions may even now perhaps be drawn. The trend of human thought since before the Reformation, increasing with almost cyclonic quickness during Luther's stirring lifetime, then perhaps ebbing a



little, then sweeping onwards to the cyclones of the French Revolution and since then ebbing steadily, has been towards individualism in religion, morality, government, literature and art. This movement has caused untold misery to many, but at the same time has done some good. The problem of the future seems to be the limiting of individualism as to the evil that it does, and at the same time allowing it the fullest play where it has done and is doing good.

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