duties and labors which he could perform himself, and he felt that his empire needed a more powerful protector than his infirmities permitted him to be. He was grown prematurely old, he felt his declining health; longed for repose, and sought religious consolation. Of all his vast possessions, he only reserved an annual pension of one hundred thousand crowns; resigning Spain and the Low Countries into the hands of Philip, and the empire of Germany to his brother Ferdinand, who had already been elected as King of the Romans. He then set out for his retreat in Spain, which was the monastery of St. Justus, near Placentia, situated in a lovely vale, surrounded with lofty trees, watered by a small brook, and rendered attractive by the fertility of the soil, and the delightful temperature of the climate. Here he spent his last days in agricultural improvements and religious exercises, apparently regardless of that noisy world which he had deserted forever, and indifferent to those political storms which his restless ambition had raised. Here his grandeur and his worldly hopes were buried in preparing himself for the future world. He lived with great simplicity, for two years after his retreat, and died (1558,) from the effects of the gout, which, added to his great labors, had shattered his constitution. He was not what the world would call a great genius, like Napoleon; but he was a man of great sagacity, untiring industry, and respectable attainments. He was cautious, cold, and selfish; had but little faith in human virtue, and was a slave, in his latter days, to superstition. He was neither affable nor courteous, but was sincere in his attachments, and munificent in rewarding his generals and friends. He was not envious nor cruel, but inordinately ambitious, and intent on aggrandizing his family. This was his characteristic defect, and this, in a man so prominent and so favored by circumstances, was enough to keep Europe in a turmoil for nearly half a century.

REFERENCES. — Robertson's History of Charles V. Ranke's History of the Reformation. Kohlrausch's History of Germany. Russell's Modern Europe. The above-mentioned authors are easily accessible, and are all that are necessary for the student. Robertson's History is a classic, and an immortal work.

CHAPTER IV

HENRY VIII.

THE history of Europe in the sixteenth century is peculiarly the history of the wars of kings, and of their efforts to establish themselves and their families on absolute thrones. The monotonous, and almost exclusive, record of royal pleasures and pursuits shows in how little consideration the people were held. They struggled, and toiled, and murmured as they do now. They probably had the same joys and sorrows as in our times. But, in these times, they have considerable influence on the government, the religion, the literature, and the social life of nations. In the sixteenth century, this influence was not so apparent; but power of all kinds seemed to emanate from kings and nobles; at least from wealthy and cultivated classes. When this is the case, when kings give a law to society, history is not unphilosophical which recognizes chiefly their enterprises and ideas.

The rise of absolute monarchy on the ruins of feudal states is one of the chief features of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was every where a strong tendency to centralization. Provinces, before independent, were controlled by a central government. Standing armies took the place of feudal armies. Kings took away from nobles the right to coin money, administer justice, and impose taxes. The power of the crown became supreme and unlimited.

But some monarchs were more independent than others, in proportion as the power of nobles was suppressed, or, as the cities sided with the central government, or, as provinces were connected and bound together. The power of Charles V. was somewhat limited, in Spain, by the free spirit of the Cortes, and, in Germany, by the independence of the princes of the empire. But, in France and England, the king was more absolute, although he did not rule over so great extent of territory as did the emperor of Germany; and this is one reason why Francis I. proved so strong an antagonist to his more powerful rival.

The history of France, during the reign of this monarch, is also the history of Charles V., since they were both engaged in the same wars; which wars have already been alluded to. Both of these monarchs failed in the objects of their existence. If Charles did not realize his dream of universal empire, neither did Francis leave his kingdom, at his death, in a more prosperous state than he found it.

Francis I. was succeeded by his son Henry II., a warlike prince, but destitute of prudence, and under the control of women. His policy, however, was substantially that of his father, and he continued hostilities against the emperor of Germany, till his resignation. He was a bitter persecutor of the Protestants, and the seeds of subsequent civil wars were sown by his zeal. He was removed from his throne prematurely, being killed at a tournament, in 1559, soon after the death of Charles V. Tournaments ceased with his death

The reign of Henry VIII., the other great contemporary of Charles V., merits a larger notice, not only because his reign was the commencement of a new era in England, but, also, because the affairs, which engaged his attention, are not much connected with continental history.

He ascended the throne in the year 1509, in his eighteenth year, without opposition, and amid the universal joy of the nation; for his manners were easy and frank, his disposition was cheerful, and his person was handsome. He had made respectable literary attainments, and he gave promise of considerable abilities. He was married, soon after his accession, to Catharine, daughter of the King of Spain, and the first years of his reign were happy, both to himself and to his subjects. He had a well-filled treasury, which his father had amassed with great care, a devoted people and an obedient parliament. All circumstances seemed to conspire to strengthen his power, and to make him the arbiter of Europe.

But this state did not last long. The young king was resolved to make war on France, but was diverted from his aim by troubles in Scotland, growing out of his own rapacity — a trait which ever peculiarly distinguished him. These troubles resulted in a war with the Scots, who were defeated at the memorable battle of

Flodden Field, which Sir Walter Scott, in his Marmion, has immortalized. The Scotch commanders, Lenox and Argyle, both perished, as well as the valiant King James himself. There is scarcely an illustrious Scotch family who had not an ancestor slain on that fatal day, September 9, 1513. But the victory was dearly bought, and Surrey, the English general, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, was unable to pursue his advantages.

About this time, the celebrated Cardinal Wolsey began to act a conspicuous part in English affairs. His father was a butcher of Ipswich; but was able to give his son a good education. He studied at Oxford, was soon distinguished for his attainments, and became tutor to the sons of the Marquis of Dorset. The marquis gave him the rich living of Limington; but the young parson, with his restless ambition, and love of excitement and pleasure, was soon wearied of a country life. He left his parish to become domestic chaplain to the treasurer of Calais. This post introduced him to Fox, bishop of Winchester, who shared with the Earl of Surrey the highest favors of royalty. The minister and diplomatist, finding in the young man learning, tact, vivacity, and talent for business, introduced him to the king, hoping that he would prove an agreeable companion for Henry, and a useful tool for himself. But those who are able to manage other people's business, generally are able to manage their own. The tool of Fox looked after his own interest chiefly. He supplanted his master in the royal favor, and soon acquired more favor and influence at court than any of the ministers or favorites. Though twenty years older than Henry, he adapted himself to all his tastes, flattered his vanity and passions, and became his bosom friend. He gossiped with him about Thomas Aquinas, the Indies, and affairs of gallantry. He was a great refiner of sensual pleasures, had a passion for magnificence and display, and a real genius for court entertainments. He could eat and drink with the gayest courtiers, sing merry songs, and join in the dance. He was blunt and frank in his manners; but these only concealed craft and cunning. "It is art to conceal art," and Wolsey was a master of all the tricks of dissimulation. He rose rapidly after he had once gained the heart of the king. He became successively dean of York, papal legate, cardinal, bishop of Lincoln, archbishop of York, and lord chancellor

He also obtained the administration and the temporalities of the rich abbey of St. Albans, and of the bishoprics of Bath and Wells, Durham and Winchester. By these gifts, his revenues almost equalled those of the crown; and he squandered them in a style of unparalleled extravagance. He dressed in purple and gold, supported a train of eight hundred persons, and built Hampton Court. He was the channel through which the royal favors flowed. But he made a good chancellor, dispensed justice, repressed the power of the nobles, encouraged and rewarded literary men, and endowed colleges. He was the most magnificent and the most powerful subject that England has ever seen. Even nobles were proud to join his train of dependants. There was nothing sordid or vulgar, however, in all his ostentation. Henry took pleasure in his pomp, for it was a reflection of the greatness of his own majesty.

The first years of the reign of Henry VIII., after the battle of Flodden Field, were spent in pleasure, and in great public displays of magnificence, which charmed the people, and made him a popular idol. Among these, the interview of the king with Francis I. is the most noted, on the 4th of June, 1520; the most gorgeous pageant of the sixteenth century, designed by Wolsey, who had a genius for such things. The monarchs met in a beautiful valley, where jousts and tournaments were held, and where was exhibited all the magnificence which the united resources of France and England could command. The interview was sought by Francis to win, through Wolsey, the favor of the king, and to counterbalance the advantages which it was supposed Charles V. had gained on a previous visit to the king at Dover.

The getting up of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold" created some murmurs among the English nobility, many of whom were injured by the expensive tastes of Wolsey. Among these was the Duke of Buckingham, hereditary high constable of England, and connected with the royal house of the Plantagenets. Henry, from motives of jealousy, both on account of his birth and fortune, had long singled him out as his victim. He was, also, obnoxious to Wolsey, since he would not flatter his pride, and he had, moreover, insulted him. It is very easy for a king to find a pretence for committing a crime; and Buckingham was arrested, tried, and executed, for making traitorous prophecies. His real crime was in

being more powerful than it suited the policy of the king. With the death of Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, in 1521, commenced the bloody cruelty of Henry VIII.

Soon after the death of Buckingham, the king made himself notorious for his theological writings against Luther, whose doctrines he detested. He ever had a taste for theological disputation, and a love of the schoolmen. His tracts against Luther, very respectable for talent and learning, though disgraced by coarse and vulgar vituperation, secured for him the favor of the pope, who bestowed upon him the title of "Defender of the Faith;" and a strong alliance existed between them until the divorce of Queen Catharine.

The difficulties and delays, attending this act of cruelty and injustice, constitute no small part of the domestic history of England during the reign of Henry VIII. Any event, which furnishes subjects of universal gossip and discussion, is ever worthy of historical notice, inasmuch as it shows prevailing opinions and tastes

Queen Catharine, daughter of Ferdinand, King of Spain, was eight years older than her husband, whom she married in the first year of his reign. She had been previously married to his brother Arthur, who died of the plague in 1502. For several years after her marriage with Henry VIII., her domestic happiness was a subject of remark; and the emperor, Charles V., congratulated her on her brilliant fortune. She was beautiful, sincere, accomplished, religious, and disinterested, and every way calculated to secure, as she had won, the king's affections.

But among her maids of honor there was one peculiarly accomplished and fascinating, to whom the king transferred his affections with unwonted vehemence. This was Anne Boleyn, daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, who, from his great wealth, married Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the first duke of Norfolk. This noble alliance brought Sir Thomas Boleyn into close connection with royalty, and led to the appointment of his daughter to the high post which she held at the court of Queen Catharine. It is probable that the king suppressed his passion for some time; and it would have been longer concealed, even from its object, had not his jealousy been excited by her attachment to Percy, son of the Earl of Northumberland. The king at last made known his pas-

sion; but the daughter of the Howards was too proud, or too politic, or too high principled, to listen to his overtures. It was only *as queen of England*, that she would return the passion of her royal lover. Moreover, she resolved to be revenged on the all-powerful cardinal, for assisting in her separation from Percy, whom she loved with romantic attachment. The king waited four years, but Anne remained inflexibly virtuous. He then meditated the divorce from Catharine, as the only way to accomplish the object which now seemed to animate his existence. He confided the matter to his favorite minister; but Wolsey was thunderstruck at the disclosure, and remained with him four hours on his knees, to dissuade him from a step which he justly regarded as madness. Here Wolsey appears as an honest man and a true friend; but royal infatuation knows neither wisdom, justice, nor humanity. Wolsey, as a man of the world, here made a blunder, and departed from the policy he had hitherto pursued — that of flattering the humors of his absolute master. Wolsey, however, recommended the king to consult the divines; for Henry pretended that, after nearly twenty years of married life, he had conscientious scruples about the lawfulness of his marriage. The learned English doctors were afraid to pronounce their opinions, and suggested a reference to the fathers. But the king was not content with their authority; he appealed to the pope, and to the decisions of half of the universities of Europe. It seems very singular that a sovereign so unprincipled, unscrupulous, and passionate, and yet so absolute and powerful as was Henry, should have wasted his time and money in seeking countenance to an act on which he was fully determined, and which countenance he never could reasonably hope to secure. But his character was made up of contradictions. His caprice, violence, and want of good faith, were strangely blended with superstition and reverence for the authority of the church. His temper urged him to the most rigorous measure of injustice; and his injustice produced no shame, although he was restrained somewhat by the opinions of the very men whom he did not hesitate to murder.

Queen Catharine, besides being a virtuous and excellent woman, was powerfully allied, and was a zealous Catholic. Her repudiation, therefore, could not take place without offending the very

persons whose favor the king was most anxious to conciliate, especially the Emperor Charles, her nephew, and the pope, and all the high dignitaries and adherents of the church. Even Wolsey could not in honor favor the divorce, although it was his policy to do so. In consequence of his intrigues, and the scandal and offence so outrageous an act as the divorce of Catharine must necessarily produce throughout the civilized world, Henry long delayed to bring the matter to a crisis, being afraid of a war with Charles V., and of the anathemas of the pope. Moreover, he hoped to gain him over, for the pope had sent Cardinal Campeggio to London, to hold, with his legate Wolsey, a court to hear the case. But it was the farthest from his intention to grant the divorce, for the pope was more afraid of Charles V. than he was of Henry VIII.

The court settled nothing, and the king's wrath now turned towards Wolsey, whom he suspected of secretly thwarting his measures. The accomplished courtier, so long accustomed to the smiles and favors of royalty, could not bear his disgrace with dignity. The proudest man in England became, all at once, the meanest. He wept, he cringed, he lost his spirits; he surrendered his palace, his treasures, his honors, and his offices, into the hands of him who gave them to him, without a single expostulation; wrote most abject letters to "his most gracious, most merciful, and most pious sovereign lord;" and died of a broken heart on his way to a prison and the scaffold. "Had I but served my God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs" — these were the words of the dying cardinal; his sad confessions on experiencing the vanity of human life. But the vindictive prince suffered no word of sorrow or regret to escape him, when he heard of the death of his prime minister, and his intimate friend for twenty years.

Shortly after the disgrace of Wolsey, which happened nearly a year before his death, (1529,) three remarkable men began to figure in English politics and history. These were Sir Thomas More, Thomas Cranmer, and Thomas Cromwell. More was the most accomplished, most learned, and most enlightened of the three. He was a Catholic, but very exemplary in his life, and charitable in his views. In moral elevation of character, and

beautiful serenity of soul, the annals of the great men of his country furnish no superior. His extensive erudition and moral integrity alone secured him the official station which Wolsey held as lord chancellor. He was always the intimate friend of the king; and his conversation, so enlivened by wit, and so rich and varied in matter, caused his society to be universally sought. He discharged his duties with singular conscientiousness and ability; and no one ever had cause to complain that justice was not rendered him.

Cranmer's elevation was owing to a fortunate circumstance, notwithstanding his exalted merit. He happened to say, while tutor to a gentleman of the name of Cressy, in the hearing of Dr. Gardiner, then secretary to Henry, that the proper way to settle the difficulty about the divorce was, to appeal to learned men, who would settle the matter on the sole authority of the Bible, without reference to the pope. This remark was reported to the king, and Cranmer was sent to reside with the father of Anne Boleyn, and was employed in writing a treatise to support his opinion. His ability led to further honors, until, on the death of Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, he was appointed to the vacant see, the first office in dignity and importance in the kingdom, and from which no king, however absolute, could eject him, except by the loss of life. We shall see that, in all matters of religion, Cranmer was the ruling spirit in England until the accession of Mary.

Cromwell's origin was even more obscure than that of Wolsey's; but he received his education at one of the universities. We first hear of him as a clerk in an English factory at Antwerp, then as a soldier in the army of the Constable Bourbon when it sacked Rome, then as a clerk in a mercantile house in Venice, and then again as a lawyer in England, where he attracted the attention of Wolsey, who made him his solicitor, and employed him in the dissolution of monasteries. He then became a member of the house of commons, where his address and business talents were conspicuous. He was well received at court, and confirmed in the stewardship of the monasteries, after the disgrace of his master. His office brought him often into personal conference with the king; and, at one of these, he recommended him to deny the authority of the pope altogether, and declare himself supreme head of the church. The boldness of this advice was congenial to the temper of the

king, worried by the opposition of Rome to his intended divorce, and Cromwell became a member of the privy council. His fortune was thus made by his seasonable advice. All who opposed the king were sure to fall, and all who favored him were sure to rise, as must ever be the case in an absolute monarchy, where the king is the centre and the fountain of all honor and dignity.

With such ministers as Cranmer and Cromwell, the measures of Henry were now prompt and bold. Queen Catharine was soon disposed of; she was divorced and disgraced, and Anne Boleyn was elevated to her throne, (1533.) The anathemas of the pope and the outcry of all Europe followed. Sir Thomas More resigned the seals, and retired to poverty and solitude. But he was not permitted to enjoy his retirement long. Refusing to take the oath of supremacy to Henry, as head of the church as well as of the state, he was executed, with other illustrious Catholics. The execution of More was the most cruel and uncalled-for act of the whole reign, and entailed on its author the execrations of all the learned and virtuous men in Europe, most of whom appreciated the transcendent excellences of the murdered chancellor, the author of the Utopia, and the Boethius of his age.

The fulminations of the pope only excited Henry to more decided opposition. The parliament, controlled by Cromwell, acknowledged him as the supreme head of the Church of England, and the separation from Rome was final and irrevocable. The tenths were annexed to the crown, and the bishops took a new oath of supremacy.

The independence of the Church of England, effected in 1535, was followed by important consequences, and was the first step to the reformation, afterwards perfected by Edward VI. But as the first acts of the reformation were prompted by political considerations, the reformers in England, during the reign of Henry VIII., should be considered chiefly in a political point of view. The separation from Rome, during the reign of this prince, was not followed by the abolition of the Roman Catholic worship, nor any of the rites and ceremonies of that church. Nor was religious toleration secured. Every thing was subservient to the royal conscience, and a secular, instead of an ecclesiastical pope, still reigned in England

Henry soon found that his new position, as head of the English Church, imposed new duties and cares: he therefore established a separate department for the conduct of ecclesiastical affairs, over which he placed the unscrupulous, but energetic Cromwell — a fit minister to such a monarch. A layman, who hated the clergy, and who looked solely to the pecuniary interests of his master, was thus placed over the highest prelates of the church. But Cromwell, in consulting the pecuniary interests of the king, also had an eye to the political interests of the kingdom. He was a sagacious and practical man of the world, and was disgusted with the vices of the clergy, and especially with the custom of sending money to Rome, in the shape of annates and taxes. This evil he remedied, which tended greatly to enrich the country, for the popes at this time were peculiarly extortionate. He then turned his attention to the reform of the whole monastic institution, but with an eye also to its entire destruction. Cromwell hated the monks. They were lazy, ignorant, and debauched. They were a great burden on the people, and were as insolent and proud as they were idle and profligate. The country swarmed with them. The roads, taverns, and the houses of the credulous were infested with them. Cranmer, who sympathized with the German reformers, hated them on religious grounds, and readily coöperated with Cromwell; while the king, whose extortion and rapacity knew no bounds, listened, with glistening eye, to the suggestions of his two favorite ministers. The nation was suddenly astounded with the intelligence that parliament had passed a bill, giving to the king and his heirs all the monastic establishments in the kingdom, which did not exceed two hundred pounds a year. Three hundred and eighty thus fell at a blow, whereby the king was enriched by thirty-two thousand pounds a year, and one hundred thousand pounds ready money—an immense sum in that age. By this spoliation, perhaps called for, but exceedingly unjust and harsh, and in violation of all the rights of property, thousands were reduced to beggary and misery, while there was scarcely an eminent man in the kingdom who did not come in for a share of the plunder. Vast grants of lands were bestowed by the king on his favorites and courtiers, in order to appease the nation; and thus the foundations of many of the great estates of the English nobility were

laid. The spoliations, however, led to many serious riots and insurrections, especially in Lincolnshire. At one place there were forty thousand rebels under arms; but they were easily suppressed.

The rapacious king was not satisfied with the plunder he had secured, and, in 1539, the final suppression of all the monasteries in England was decreed. Then followed the seizure of all the church property in England connected with monasteries — shrines, relics, gold and silver vessels of immense value and rarity, lands, and churches. Canterbury, Bath, Merton, Stratford, Bury St. Edmonds, Glastonbury, and St. Albans, suffered most, and many of those beautiful monuments of Gothic architecture were levelled with the dust. Their destruction deprived the people of many physical accommodations, for they had been hospitals and caravansaries, as well as "cages of unclean birds." Neither the church nor the universities profited much from the confiscation of so much property, and only six new bishoprics were formed, and only fourteen abbeys were converted into cathedrals and collegiate churches. The king and the nobles were the only gainers by the spoil; the people obtained no advantage in that age, although they have in succeeding ages.

After renouncing the pope's supremacy, and suppressing the monasteries, where were collected the treasures of the middle ages, one would naturally suppose that the king would have gone farther, and changed the religion of his people. But Henry hated Luther and his doctrines, and did not hate the pope, or the religion of which he was the sovereign pontiff. He loved gold and new wives better than the interests of the Catholic church. Reform proceeded no farther in his reign; while, on the other hand, he caused a decree to pass both houses of his timid, complying parliament, by which the doctrines of transubstantiation, the communion of one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, masses, and auricular confession, were established; and any departure from, or denial of, these subjected the offender to the punishment of death.

But Henry had new domestic difficulties long before the suppression of monasteries — the great political act of Thomas Cromwell. His new wife, Anne Boleyn, was suspected of the crime of inconstancy, and at the very time when she had reached the summit of power, and the gratification of all worldly wishes. She

had been very vain, and fond of display and of ornaments; but the latter years of her life were marked by her munificence, and attachment to the reform doctrines. But her power ceased almost as soon as she became queen. She could win, but she could not retain, the affections of her royal husband. His passion subsided into languor, and ended in disgust. The beauty of Anne Boleyn was soon forgotten when Jane Seymour, her maid of honor, attracted the attention of Henry. To make this lady his wife now became the object of his life, and this could only be effected by the divorce of his queen, who gave occasion for scandal by the levity and freedom of her manners. Henry believed every insinuation against her, because he wished to believe her guilty. There was but a step between the belief of guilt and the resolution to destroy her. She was committed to the Tower, impeached, brought to trial, condemned without evidence, and executed without remorse. Even Cranmer, whom she had honored and befriended, dared not defend her, although he must have believed in her innocence. He knew the temper of the master whom he served too well to risk much in her defence. She was the first woman who had been beheaded in the annals of England. Not one of the Plantagenet kings ever murdered a woman. But the age of chivalry was past, and the sentiments it encouraged found no response in the bosom of such a sensual and vindictive monarch as was Henry VIII.

The very day after the execution of that accomplished lady, for whose sake the king had squandered the treasures of his kingdom, and had kept Christendom in a ferment, he married Jane Seymour, "the fairest, discreetest, and most meritorious of all his wives," as the historians say, yet a woman who did not hesitate to steal the affections of Henry and receive his addresses, while his queen was devoted to her husband. But Anne Boleyn had done so before her, and suffered a natural retribution.

Jane Seymour lived only eighteen months after her marriage, and died two days after giving birth to a son, afterwards Edward VI. She was one of those passive women who make neither friends nor enemies. She indulged in no wit or repartee, like her brilliant but less beautiful predecessor, and she passed her regal life without uttering a sentence or a sentiment which has been deemed worthy of preservation.

She had been dead about a month, when the king looked round for another wife, and besought Francis I. to send the most beautiful ladies of his kingdom to Calais, that he might there inspect them, and select one according to his taste. But this Oriental notion was not indulged by the French king, who had more taste and delicacy; and Henry remained without a wife for more than two years, the princesses of Europe not being very eager to put themselves in the power of this royal Bluebeard. At last, at the suggestion of Cromwell, he was affianced to Anne, daughter of the Duke of Cleves, whose home was on the banks of the Rhine, in the city of Dusseldorf.

The king no sooner set his eyes on her than he was disappointed and disgusted, and gave vent to his feelings before Cromwell, calling her a "great Flanders mare." Nevertheless, he consummated his marriage, although his disgust constantly increased. This mistake of Cromwell was fatal to his ambitious hopes. The king vented on him all the displeasure which had been gathering in his embittered soul. Cromwell's doom was sealed. He had offended an absolute monarch. He was accused of heresy and treason, — the common accusations in that age against men devoted to destruction, — tried by a servile board of judges, condemned, and judicially murdered, in 1540. In his misfortunes, he showed no more fortitude than Wolsey. The atmosphere of a court is fatal to all moral elevation.

But, before his execution, Anne of Cleves, a virtuous and worthy woman, was divorced, and Catharine Howard, granddaughter of the victor of Flodden Field, became queen of England. The king now fancied that his domestic felicity was complete; but, soon after his marriage, it was discovered that his wife had formerly led a dissolute life, and had been unfaithful also to her royal master. When the proofs of her incontinence were presented to him, he burst into a flood of tears; but soon his natural ferocity returned, and his guilty wife expiated her crime by death on the scaffold, in 1542.

Henry's sixth and last wife was Catharine Parr, relict of Lord Latimer, a woman of great sagacity, prudence, and good sense. She favored the reformers, but had sufficient address to keep her opinions from the king, who would have executed her, had he

suspected her real views. She survived her husband, who died four years after her marriage, in 1547.

The last years of any tyrant are always melancholy, and those of Henry were embittered by jealousies and domestic troubles. His finances were deranged, his treasury exhausted, and his subjects discontented. He was often at war with the Scots, and different continental powers. He added religious persecution to his other bad traits, and executed, for their opinions, some of the best people in the kingdom. His father had left him the richest sovereign of Europe, and he had seized the abbey lands, and extorted heavy sums from his oppressed people; and yet he was poor. All his wishes were apparently gratified; and yet he was the most miserable man in his dominions. He exhausted all the sources of pleasure, and nothing remained but satiety and disgust. His mind and his body were alike diseased. His inordinate gluttony made him most inconveniently corpulent, and produced ulcers and the gout. It was dangerous to approach this "corrupt mass of dying tyranny." It was impossible to please him, and the least contradiction drove him into fits of madness and frenzy.

In his latter days, he ordered, in a fit of jealousy, the execution of the Duke of Norfolk, the first nobleman of the kingdom, who had given offence to the Earl of Hertford, uncle to the young prince of Wales, and the founder of the greatness of the Seymours. But the tyrant died before the sentence was carried into effect, much to the joy of the good people of England, whom he had robbed and massacred. Several thousands perished by the axe of the executioner during his disgraceful reign, and some of them were the lights of the age, and the glory of their country.

Tyrannical as was Henry VIII., still he ever ruled by the laws. He did not abolish parliament, or retrench its privileges. The parliament authorized all his taxes, and gave sanction to all his violent measures. The parliament was his supple instrument; still, had the parliament resisted his will, doubtless he would have dissolved it, as did the Stuart princes. But it was not, in his reign, prepared for resistance, and the king had every thing after his own way.

By nature, he was amiable, generous, and munificent. But his temper was spoiled by self-indulgence and incessant flattery

The moroseness he exhibited in his latter days was partly the effect of physical disease, brought about, indeed, by intemperance and gluttony. He was faithful to his wives, so long as he lived with them; and, while he doted on them, listened to their advice. But few of his advisers dared tell him the truth; and Cranmer himself can never be exculpated from flattering his perverted conscience. No one had the courage to tell him he was dying but one of the nobles of the court. He died, in great agony, June, 1547, in the thirty-eighth year of his reign, and the fifty-sixth of his age, and was buried, with great pomp, in St. George Chapel, Windsor Castle.

REFERENCES. — The best English histories of the reign of Henry VIII. are the standard ones of Hume and Lingard. The Pictorial History, in spite of its pictures, is also excellent. Burnet should be consulted in reference to ecclesiastical matters, and Hallam, in reference to the constitution. See also the lives of Wolsey, Sir Thomas More, and Cranmer. **The lives of Henry's queens have been best narrated by Agnes Strickland**