The mansions of the nobility at this period exhibited great elegance. Crosby Hall, London, at one time the residence of Richard III., and still standing, is a fine specimen of the "Inns," as they were called, of the great families and wealthy knights.

GENERAL INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE.

377. Agriculture and Trade. — Notwithstanding the civil wars of the Roses, agriculture was prosperous, and foreign trade largely increased. The latter was well represented by Sir Richard Whittington, thrice mayor of London, who, according to tradition, lent Henry V. large sums of money, and then at an entertainment which he gave to the king and queen in his city mansion, generously cancelled the debt by throwing the bonds into the open sandal-wood fire.

Goldsmiths from Lombardy had now settled in London in such numbers as to give the name of Lombard Street to the quarter they occupied. They succeeded the Jews in the business of money-lending and banking, and Lombard Street still remains famous for its bankers and brokers.

MODES OF LIFE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS.

378. Dress. — Great sums were spent on dress by both sexes, and the courtiers' doublets, or jackets, were of the most costly silks and velvets, elaborately puffed and slashed. During the latter part of the period the pointed shoes, which had formerly been of prodigious length, suddenly began to grow broad, with such rapidity that Parliament passed a law limiting the width of the toes to six inches. At the same time the court ladies adopted the fashion of wearing horns as huge in proportion as the noblemen's shoes. The government tried legislating them down, and the clergy fulminated a solemn curse against them; but fashion was more powerful than church and Parliament combined, and horns and hoofs came out triumphant.

VIII.

"One half her soil has walked the rest
In heroes, martyrs, poets, sages."

O. W. Holmes.

POLITICAL REACTION. — ABSOLUTISM OF THE CROWN, — THE ENGLISH REFORMATION AND THE NEW LEARNING.

CROWN or POPE?

House of Tudor. — 1485–1603.

Henry VII., 1485–1509.
Henry VIII., 1509–1547.
Edward VI., 1547–1553.
Mary, 1553–1558.
Elizabeth, 1558–1603.

379. Union of the Houses of Lancaster and York. — Before leaving the continent, Henry Tudor had promised the Yorkist party that he would marry Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward IV., and sister to the young princes murdered by Richard III. Such a marriage would unite the rival houses of Lancaster and York, and thus put an end to the civil war. A few months after the new king's accession the wedding was duly celebrated, and in the beautiful east window of stained glass in Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster Abbey, the Roses are seen joined; so that, as the quaint verse of that day says: —

"Both roses flourish — red and white —
In love and sisterly delight;
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended."

Peace came from the union, but it was peace interrupted by insurrections.[1]

380. Condition of the Country; Power of the Crown. — Henry, it is said, had his claim to the throne printed by Caxton, and distributed broadcast over the country. It was the first political appeal to the people made through the press, and was a sign of the new period upon which English history had entered. Since Caxton began his work, the kingdom had undergone a most momentous change. The great nobles, like the Earl of Warwick, were, with few exceptions, dead, their estates confiscated, their thousands of followers either buried on the battle-field or dispersed throughout the land. The small number of titled families remaining was no longer to be feared. The nation itself, though it had taken comparatively little part in the war, was weary of bloodshed, and ready for peace on any terms.

The accession of the house of Tudor marks the beginning of a long period of well-nigh absolute royal power. The nobility were

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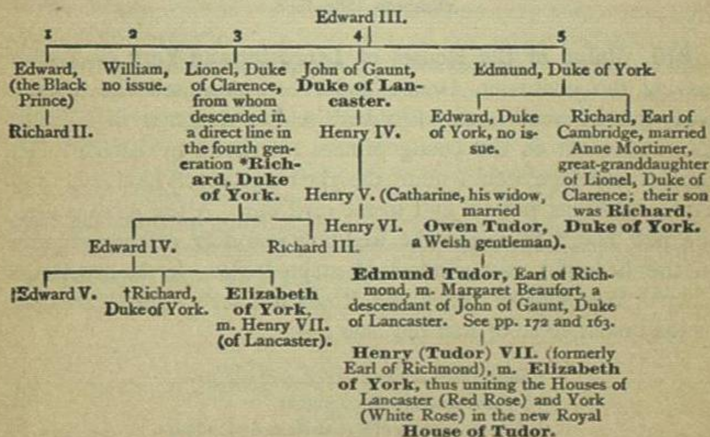
[1] ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF TUDOR.



* Inherited the title Duke of York from his uncle Edward. See No. 5.
† The princes murdered by Richard III.

too weak to place any check on the king; the clergy, who had not recovered from their dread of Lollardism and its attacks on their wealth and influence, were anxious for a strong conservative government such as Henry promised; as for the commons, they had no clear united policy, and though the first Parliament put certain restraints on the crown, yet they were never really enforced.[1] The truth is, that the new king was both too prudent and too crafty to give them an opportunity. By avoiding foreign wars he dispensed with the necessity of summoning frequent parliaments, and also with demands for large sums of money. By thus ruling alone for a large part of the time, Henry got the management of affairs into his own hands, and transmitted the power to those who came after him. In this way the Tudors with their successors, the Stuarts, built up that system of "personal sovereignty" which continued for a hundred and fifty years, until the outbreak of a new civil war brought it to an end forever.

381. Growth of a Stronger Feeling of Nationality. — It would be an error, however, to consider this absolutism of the crown as an unmitigated evil. On the contrary, it was in one important direction an advantage. There are times when the great need of a people is not more individual liberty, but greater national unity. Spain and France were two countries consisting of a collection of petty feudal states, whose nobility were always trying to steal each other's possessions and cut each other's throats, until the rise in each of a royal despotism forced the turbulent barons to make peace, to obey a common central law, and by this means both realms ultimately developed into great and powerful kingdoms. When the Tudors came to the throne, England was still full of

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[1] At the accession of Henry VII., Parliament imposed the following checks on the power of the king: —

1. No new tax to be levied without consent of Parliament.
2. No new law to be made without the same consent.
3. No committal to prison without a warrant specifying the offence, and the trial to be speedy.
4. Criminal charges and questions of fact in civil cases to be decided by jury.
5. The king's officers to be held responsible to the nation.

the rankling hate engendered by the Wars of the Roses. Held down by the heavy hand of Henry VII., and by the still heavier one of his son, the country learned the same salutary lesson of growth under repression which had benefited Spain and France. Henceforth Englishmen of all classes, instead of boasting that they belonged to the Yorkist or the Lancastrian faction, came to pride themselves on their loyalty to crown and country, and their readiness to draw their swords to defend both.

382. Henry's Methods of raising Money; the Court of Star-Chamber. — Henry's reign was in the interest of the middle classes, — the farmers, tradesmen, and mechanics. His policy was to avoid heavy taxation, to exempt the poor from the burdens of state, and so ingratiate himself with a large body of the people. In order to accomplish this, he revived "benevolences," and by a device suggested by his chief minister, Cardinal Morton, and hence known and dreaded as "Morton's Fork," he extorted large sums from the rich and well-to-do.[1] The cardinal's agents made it their business to learn every man's income, and visit him accordingly. If, for instance, a person lived handsomely, the cardinal would insist on a correspondingly liberal gift; if, however, a citizen lived very plainly, the king's minister insisted none the less, telling the unfortunate man that by his economy he must surely have accumulated enough to bestow the required "benevolence."[2] Thus on one prong or the other of his terrible "fork" the shrewd cardinal impaled his writhing victims, and speedily filled the royal treasury as it had never been filled before.[3]

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1 Those whose income from land was less than £2, or whose movable property did not exceed £15 (say \$150 and \$1125 now), were exempt. The lowest rate of assessment for the "benevolences" was fixed at twenty pence on the pound on land, and half that rate on other property.

2 Richard Reed, a London alderman, refused to contribute a "benevolence." He was sent to serve as a soldier in the Scotch wars at his own expense, and the general received government orders to "use him in all things according to sharp military discipline." The effect was such that few after that ventured to deny the king what he asked.

3 Henry is said to have accumulated a fortune of nearly two millions sterling; an amount which would perhaps represent upwards of \$150,000,000 now.

But Henry had other methods for raising money. He sold offices in church and state, and took bribes for pardoning rebels. When he summoned a parliament he obtained grants for putting down some real or pretended insurrection, or to defray the expenses of a threatened attack from abroad, and then quietly pocketed the appropriation, — a device not altogether unknown to modern government officials. A third and last method for getting funds was invented in Henry's behalf by two lawyers, Empson and Dudley, who were so rapacious and cut so close that they were commonly known as "the king's skin-shearers." They went about the country enforcing old and forgotten laws, by which they reaped a rich harvest. Their chief instrument for gain, however, was a revival of the Statute of Liveries, which imposed enormous fines on those noblemen who dared to equip their followers in military garb, or designate them by a badge equivalent to it, as had been their custom during the civil wars.[1]

In order to thoroughly enforce the Statute of Liveries, Henry reorganized the Court of Star-Chamber, so called from the starred ceiling where the tribunal met. This court had originally for its object the punishment of such crimes committed by the great families, or their adherents, as the ordinary law courts could not, or through intimidation dared not, deal with. It had no power to inflict death, but might impose long terms of imprisonment and ruinous fines. It, too, first made use of torture in England to extort confessions of guilt.

Henry seems to have enforced the law of Livery against friend and foe alike. Said the king to the Earl of Oxford, as he left his castle, where a large number of retainers in uniform were drawn up to do him honor, "My Lord, I thank you for your entertainment, but my attorney must speak to you." The attorney, who was the notorious Empson, brought suit in the Star-Chamber against the earl, who was fined 15,000 marks, or something like \$750,000, for the incautious display he had made.

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1 See Paragraph No. 348.

383. The Introduction of Artillery strengthens the Power of the King. — It was easier for Henry to pursue this arbitrary course because the introduction of artillery had changed the art of war. Throughout the Middle Ages the call of a great baron had, as Macaulay says, been sufficient to raise a formidable revolt. Countrymen and followers took down their tough yew long-bows from the chimney-corner, knights buckled on their steel armor, mounted their horses, and in a few days an army threatened the throne, which had no troops save those furnished by loyal subjects.

But now that men had digged "villanous saltpetre out of the bowels of the harmless earth" to manufacture powder, and that others had invented cannon, "those devilish iron engines," as the poet Spenser called them, "ordained to kill," all was different. Without artillery, the old feudal army, with its bows, swords, and battle-axes, could do little against a king like Henry who had it. For this reason, the whole kingdom lay at his mercy; and though the nobles and the rich might groan, they saw that it was useless to fight.

384. The Pretenders Symnel and Warbeck. — During Henry's reign, two pretenders laid claim to the crown: Lambert Symnel, who represented himself to be Edward Plantagenet, nephew of the late king; and Perkin Warbeck, who asserted that he was Richard, Duke of York, generally and rightly supposed to have been murdered in the Tower by his uncle, Richard III. Symnel's attempt was easily suppressed, and he commuted his claim to the crown for the position of scullion in the king's kitchen. Warbeck kept the kingdom in a turmoil for more than five years, during which time one hundred and fifty of his adherents were executed, and their bodies exposed on gibbets along the South shore to deter their master's French supporters from landing. At length Warbeck was captured, imprisoned, and finally hanged at Tyburn.

385. Henry's Politic Marriages. — Henry accomplished more by the marriages of his children and by diplomacy than other monarchs had by their wars. He gave his daughter Margaret to King

James IV. of Scotland, and thus prepared the way for the union of the two kingdoms. He married his eldest son, Prince Arthur, to Catharine of Aragon, daughter of the king of Spain, by which he secured a very large marriage portion for the prince, and what was of equal importance, the alliance of Spain against France. Arthur died soon afterwards, and the king got a dispensation from the Pope, granting him permission to marry his younger son Henry to Arthur's widow. It was this prince who eventually became king of England, with the title of Henry VIII., and we shall hereafter see that this marriage was destined by its results to change the whole course of the country's history.

386. The World as known at Henry's Accession. — The king also took some small part in certain other events, which seemed to him, at the time, of less consequence than these matrimonial alliances, but which history has regarded in a different light from that in which the cunning and cautious monarch considered them. A glance at the map[1] will show how different our world is from that with which the English of Henry's time were acquainted. Then, the earth was not supposed to be a globe, but simply a flat body surrounded by the ocean. The only countries of which anything was certainly known, with the exception of Europe, were parts of Western Asia, together with a small strip of the northern and eastern coast of Africa. The knowledge which had once existed of India, China, and Japan appears to have died out in great measure with the travellers and merchants of earlier times who had brought it. The land farthest west of which anything was then known was Iceland.

387. First Voyages of Exploration; the Cabots. — About the time of Henry's accession a new spirit of exploration sprang up. The Portuguese had coasted along Africa as far as the Gulf of Guinea, and there established trading-posts. Stimulated by what they had done, Columbus, who believed the earth to be round,

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[1] See Map No. 11, page 186.

determined to sail westward in the hope of reaching the Indies. In 1492 he made his first voyage, and discovered one of the West India Islands.

Five years later, John Cabot, a Venetian residing in Bristol, England, with his son Sebastian, who was probably born there, persuaded the king to aid them in a similar undertaking. On a map drawn by the father after his return we read the following lines: "In the year of our Lord 1497, John Cabot and his son Sebastian discovered that country which no one before his time had ventured to approach, on the 24th June, about 5 o'clock in the morning." That entry records the discovery of Newfoundland, which led a few days later to that of the mainland of North America, which was thus first seen by the Cabots.

As an offset to that record we have the following, taken from the king's private account-book: "10. Aug. 1497, To him that found the new isle £10."

Such was the humble beginning of a series of explorations which gave England possession of the largest part of the North American continent.

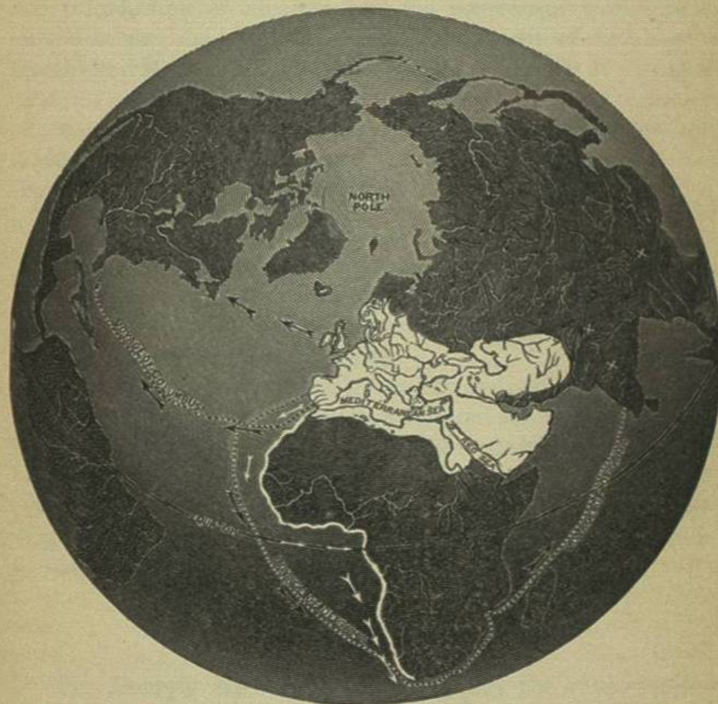
388. Henry VII.'s Reign the Beginning of a New Epoch. — A few years after Cabot's return Henry laid the corner-stone of that "solemn and sumptuous chapel" which bears his own name, and which joins Westminster Abbey on the east. There he gave orders that his tomb should be erected, and that prayers should be said over it "as long as the world lasted." Emerson remarks[1] that when the visitor to the Abbey mounts the flight of twelve black marble steps which lead from it to the edifice where Henry lies buried, he passes from the mediæval to the beginning of the modern age — a change which the architecture itself distinctly marks. The true significance of Henry's reign is, that it, in like manner, stands for a new epoch, new in modes of government, in law, in geographical discovery, in letters, art, and religion.

The century just closing was indeed one of the most remarkable

[1] English Traits.

No. 11.

THE WORLD SHORTLY AFTER THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII.



Light arrows show voyages south made up to 1492; (light track, Da Gama's voyage, 1497).

Dark arrows, voyages of Columbus and Cabot.

White crosses, countries of which something was known before 1492.

White area, including western coast of Africa, the world as known shortly after Henry VII.'s accession.

in history, not only in what it had actually accomplished, but still more in the seed it was sowing for the future. The artist Kaulbach, in his fresco entitled "The Age of the Reformation,"[1] has summed up all that it was, and all that it was destined to become in its full development. Therein we see it as the period which witnessed the introduction of firearms, and the consequent overthrow of feudal warfare and feudal institutions; the growth of the power of royalty and of nationality through royalty; the sailing of Columbus and of Cabot; the revival of classical learning; the publication of the first printed book; and finally, the birth of that monk, Martin Luther, who was to emancipate the human mind from its long bondage to unmeaning tradition and arbitrary authority.

389. Summary. — Looking back, we find that with Henry the absolutism of the crown or "personal monarchy" began in England. Yet through its repressive power the country gained a prolonged peace, and, despite "benevolences" and other exactions, it grew into stronger national unity.

Simultaneously with this increase of royal authority came the discovery of a new world, in which England was to have the chief part. A century will elapse before those discoveries bear fruit. After that, our attention will no longer be confined to the British Islands, but will be fixed as well on that western continent where English enterprise and English love of liberty are destined to find a new and broader field of activity.

HENRY VIII. — 1509–1547.

390. Henry's Advantages. — Henry was not quite eighteen when he came to the throne. The country was at peace, was fairly prosperous, and the young king had everything in his favor. He was handsome, well-educated, and fond of athletic sports. His frank disposition won friends everywhere, and he had inherited

[1] Kaulbach's (Kowl'bäk) Age of the Reformation: one of a historical series of colossal wall paintings in the Berlin Museum.

from his father the largest private fortune that had ever descended to an English sovereign. Intellectually, he was in hearty sympathy with the revival of learning, then in progress both on the continent and in England.

391. The New Learning; Colet, Erasmus, More. — During the greater part of the Middle Ages the chief object of education was to make men monks, and originally the schools established at Oxford and Cambridge were exclusively for that purpose. In their day they did excellent work; but a time came when men ceased to found monasteries, and began to erect colleges and hospitals instead.[1] In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries William of Wykeham and King Henry VI. built and endowed colleges which were specially designed to fit their pupils to live in the world and serve the state, instead of withdrawing from it to seek their own salvation. These new institutions encouraged a broader range of studies, and in Henry VI.'s time particular attention was given to the Latin classics, hitherto but little known. The geographical discoveries of Henry VII.'s reign, made by Columbus, Cabot, and others, began to stimulate scientific thought, and it was evident that the day was not far distant when questions about the earth and the stars would no longer be settled by a text from Scripture which forbade further inquiry.

With the accession of Henry VIII. education received a still further impulse. A few zealous English scholars had just returned from Italy to Oxford, full of ardor for a new study, — that of Greek. Among them was a young clergyman named John Colet. He saw that by means of that language, of which the alphabet was as yet hardly known in England, men might put themselves in direct communication with the greatest thinkers and writers of the past. Better still, they might acquire the power of reading the Gospels and the writings of St. Paul in the original, and thus reach their

[1] In the twelfth century 418 monasteries were founded in England; in the next century only about a third as many; in the fourteenth only 23; after that date their establishment may be said to cease.

true meaning and feel their full influence. Colet's intimate friend and fellow-worker, the Dutch scholar Erasmus, had the same enthusiasm. When in sore need of everything, he wrote in one of his letters, "As soon as I get some money I shall buy Greek books, and then I may buy some clothes." The third young man, who, with Erasmus and Colet devoted himself to the study of Greek and to the advancement of learning, was Thomas More, who later became lord chancellor. The three looked to King Henry for encouragement in the work they had undertaken; nor did they look in vain. Colet, who had become a doctor of divinity and a dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, encountered a furious storm of opposition on account of his devotion to the "New Learning," as it was sneeringly called. His attempts at educational reform met the same resistance. But Henry stood by him, liking the man's spirit, and saying, "Let others have what doctors they will; this is the doctor for me." The king also took a lively interest in Erasmus, who was appointed professor of Greek at Cambridge, where he began his great work of preparing an edition of the Greek Testament with a Latin translation in parallel columns. Up to this time the Greek Testament had existed in scattered manuscripts only. The publication of the work in printed form gave an additional impetus to the study of the Scriptures, helped forward the Reformation, and in a measure laid the foundation for a revised English translation of the Bible far superior to Wycliffe's. In the same spirit of genuine love of learning, Henry founded Trinity College, Cambridge, and at a later date confirmed and extended Cardinal Wolsey's endowment of Christ Church College, Oxford.

392. Henry versus Luther. — The king continued, however, to be a stanch Catholic, and certainly had no thought at this period of doing anything which should tend to undermine that ancient form of worship. In Germany, Martin Luther was making ready to begin his tremendous battle against the power and teachings of the Papacy. In 1517 he nailed to the door of the

church of Wittenberg that famous series of denunciations which started the movement that ultimately protested against the authority of Rome, and gave the name of Protestant to all who joined it. A few years later Henry published a reply to one of Luther's books, and sent a copy bound in cloth of gold to the Pope. The Pope was so delighted with what he termed Henry's "angelic spirit," that he forthwith conferred on him that title of "Defender of the Faith," which the English sovereigns have persisted in retaining to the present time, though for what reason, and with what right, even a royal intellect might be somewhat puzzled to explain. With the new and flattering title the Pope also sent the king a costly two-handed sword, intended to represent Henry's zeal in smiting the enemies of Rome, but destined by fate to be the symbol of the king's final separation from the power that bestowed it.

393. Victory of Flodden; Field of the Cloth of Gold. — Politically, Henry was equally fortunate. The Scotch had ventured to attack the kingdom during the king's absence on the continent. They were defeated at Flodden by the Earl of Surrey, with great slaughter. This victory placed Scotland at Henry's feet.[1]

The king of France and the emperor Charles V. of Germany now vied with each other in seeking Henry's alliance. The emperor visited England in order to meet the English sovereign, while the king of France arranged an interview in his own dominions, known, from the magnificence of its appointments, as the "Field of the Cloth of Gold." Henry held the balance of power by which he could make France or Germany predominate as he saw fit. It was owing to his able diplomatic policy that England reaped advantages from both sides, and advanced from a comparatively low position to one that was fully abreast of the foremost nations of Europe.

394. Henry's Marriage with his Brother's Widow. — Such was the king at the outset. In less than twenty years he had become another man. At the age of twelve he had married,[2] at his

[1] See Scott's Marmion. [2] See Hallam; other authorities call it a solemn betrothal.

father's command, and solely for political and mercenary reasons, Catharine of Aragon, his brother Arthur's widow, who was six years his senior. Such a marriage was forbidden, except in certain cases, both by the Old Testament and by the ordinances of the Roman Catholic Church. The Pope, however, had granted his permission, and when Henry ascended the throne, the ceremony was performed a second time. Several children were the fruit of this union, all of whom died in infancy, except one daughter, Mary, unhappily fated to figure as the "Bloody Mary" of later history.

395. The King's Anxiety for a Successor; Anne Boleyn. — No woman had yet ruled in her own right, either in England or in any prominent kingdom of Europe; and Henry was so anxious to have a son to succeed him, that he could not bear the thought of being disappointed; in fact he sent the Duke of Buckingham to the block for casually saying, that if the king died without issue, he should consider himself entitled to receive the crown.

It was while meditating this question of the succession, that Henry became attached to Anne Boleyn, one of the queen's maids of honor, a sprightly brunette of nineteen, with long black hair and strikingly beautiful eyes.

The light that shone in those eyes, though hardly that "Gospel-light" which the poet calls it,[1] was yet bright enough to effectually clear up all difficulties in the royal mind. The king now felt conscientiously moved to obtain a divorce from the old wife, and to marry a new one. In that determination lay most momentous consequences, since it finally separated England from the jurisdiction of the church of Rome.

396. Wolsey favors the Divorce from Catharine. — Cardinal Wolsey, Henry's chief counsellor, lent his powerful aid to bring about the divorce, but with the expectation that the king would marry a princess of France, and thus form an alliance with that

[1] "When love could teach a monarch to be wise,
And Gospel-light first dawned from Bullen's [Boleyn's] eyes." — GRAY.

country. If so, his own ambitious schemes would be forwarded, since the united influence of the two kingdoms might elevate him to the Papacy. When Wolsey learned that the king's choice was Anne Boleyn, he fell on his knees, and begged him not to persist in his purpose; but his entreaties had no effect, and the cardinal was obliged to continue what he had begun.

397. The Court at Blackfriars. — Application had been made to the Pope to annul the marriage with Catharine on the ground of illegality; but the Pope was in the power of the emperor, Charles V., who was the queen's nephew. Vexatious delays now became the order of the day. At last, a court composed of Cardinal Wolsey and Cardinal Campeggio, an Italian, as papal legates, or representatives, was convened at Blackfriars, London, to test the validity of the marriage. Henry and Catharine were summoned. The first appeared and answered to his name. When the queen was called she declined to answer, but throwing herself at Henry's feet, begged him with tears and sobs not to put her away without cause. Finding him inflexible, she left the court, and refused to attend again, appealing to Rome for justice.

This was in the spring of 1529. Nothing was done that summer, and in the autumn, the court, instead of reaching a decision, dissolved. Campeggio, the Italian legate, returned to Italy, and Henry, to his disappointment and rage, received an order from Rome to carry the question to the Pope for settlement.

398. Fall of Wolsey. — Both the king and Anne Boleyn believed that Wolsey had played false with them. They now resolved upon his destruction. The cardinal had a presentiment of his impending doom. The French ambassador, who saw him at this juncture, said that his face had shrunk to half its size. But his fortunes were destined to shrink even more than his face. By a law of Richard II. no representative of the Pope had any rightful authority in England.[1] Though the king had given his consent to Wolsey's holding the office of legate, yet now that a

[1] See Paragraph No. 317.

contrary result to what he expected had been reached, he proceeded to prosecute him to the full extent of the law.

It was an easy matter to crush the cardinal. His arrogance and extravagant ostentation had excited the jealous hate of the nobility; his constant demands for money in behalf of the king had set Parliament against him; and his exactions from the common people had, as the chronicle of the time tells us, made them weep, beg, and "speak cursedly." Wolsey bowed to the storm, and to save himself gave up everything; his riches, pomp, power, all vanished as suddenly as they had come. It was Henry's hand that stripped him, but it was Anne Boleyn who moved that hand. Well might the humbled favorite say of her: —

> "There was the weight that pulled me down.
> . . . all my glories
> In that one woman I have lost forever."[1]

Thus deprived of well-nigh everything but life, Wolsey was permitted to go into retirement in the north; but a twelvemonth later he was arrested on a charge of high treason; and as the irony of fate would have it, the warrant was served by a former lover of Anne Boleyn's, whom Wolsey, it is said, had separated from her in order that she might consummate her unhappy marriage with royalty. On the way to London Wolsey fell mortally ill, and turned aside at Leicester to die in the abbey there, with the words: —

> " . . . O, Father Abbot,
> An old man, broken with the storms of state,
> Is come to lay his weary bones among ye:
> Give him a little earth for charity!"[2]

399. Appeal to the Universities. — Before Wolsey's death, Dr. Thomas Cranmer, of Cambridge, suggested that the king lay the divorce question before the universities of Europe. Henry caught eagerly at this proposition, and exclaimed, "Cranmer has the right pig by the ear." The scheme was at once adopted. Several uni-

[1] Shakespeare's Henry VIII., Act III. Sc. 2.
[2] Shakespeare's Henry VIII., Act IV. Sc. 2.

versities returned favorable answers. In a few instances, as at Oxford and Cambridge, where the authorities hesitated, a judicious use of bribes or threats soon brought them to see the matter in a proper light.

400. The Clergy declare Henry Head of the Church. — Armed with these decisions in his favor, Henry now charged the whole body of the English church with being guilty of the same crime of which Wolsey had been accused. In their terror they made haste to buy a pardon at a cost reckoned at nearly $5,000,000 at the present value of money. They furthermore declared Henry to be the supreme head on earth of the church of England, adroitly adding, "in so far as is permitted by the law of Christ." Thus the Reformation came into England "by a side door, as it were." Nevertheless, it came.

401. Henry marries Anne Boleyn; Act of Supremacy. — Events now moved rapidly toward a crisis. Thomas Cromwell, Wolsey's former servant and fast friend, succeeded him in the king's favor. In 1533, after having waited over five years, Henry privately married Anne, and she was soon after crowned in Westminster Abbey. When the Pope was informed of this, he ordered the king, under pain of excommunication, to put her away, and to take back Catharine. In 1534 Parliament met that demand by passing the Act of Supremacy, which declared Henry to be without reservation the sole head of the church, making denial thereof high treason.[1] As he signed the act, the king with one stroke of his pen overturned the traditions of a thousand years, and England stood boldly forth with a national church independent of the Pope.

402. Subserviency of Parliament. — But as Luther said, Henry had a pope within him. Through Cromwell's zealous aid

[1] Henry's full title was now "Henry VIII., by the Grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith and of the Church of England, and also of Ireland, on earth the Supreme Head."

he now proceeded to prove it. We have already seen that since the Wars of the Roses had destroyed the power of the barons, there was no effectual check on the despotic will of the king. The new nobility were the creatures of the crown, and hence bound to support it; the clergy were timid, the commons anything but bold, so that Parliament gradually became the servile echo and ready instrument of the throne, and empowered the king on his reaching the age of twenty-four to annul whatever legislative enactments he pleased of those which had been passed since his accession. It now humiliated itself still further by promulgating that law, in itself the destruction of all law, which enabled Henry by his simple proclamation to declare any opinions he disliked, heretical, and punishable with death.

403. Execution of More and Fisher. —Cromwell in his crooked and cruel policy had reduced bloodshed to a science. He first introduced the practice of condemning an accused prisoner without allowing him to speak in his own defence. No one was now safe who did not openly side with the king. Sir Thomas More, who had been lord chancellor, and the aged Bishop Fisher were executed because they could not affirm that they conscientiously believed that Henry was morally and spiritually entitled to be the head of the English church. Both died with Christian fortitude. More said to the governor of the Tower with a flash of his old humor, as the steps leading to the scaffold shook while he was mounting them, "Do you see me safe up, and I will make shift to get down by myself."

404. Suppression of the Monasteries; Seizure of their Property. — When the intelligence of the judicial murder of the venerable ex-chancellor reached Rome, the Pope proceeded to issue a bull of excommunication and deposition against Henry, by which he delivered his soul to the devil, and his kingdom to the first invader. The king retaliated by the suppression of the monasteries. In doing so, he simply hastened a process which had already begun. Years before, Cardinal Wolsey had not scrupled to shut up

several, and take their revenues to found a college at Oxford. The truth was, that monasticism had done its work, and as a recent writer has well said, "was dead long before the Reformation came to bury it." [1]

Henry, however, had no such worthy object as Wolsey had. His pretext was that these institutions had sunk into a state of ignorance, drunkenness, and profligacy.

Their vices, however, the king had already made his own. It was their wealth which he now coveted. The smaller religious houses were speedily swept out of existence. This caused a furious insurrection in the north, but the revolt was soon put down.

Though Parliament had readily given its sanction to the extinction of the smaller monasteries, it hesitated about abolishing the greater ones. Henry, it is reported, sent for a leading member of the House of Commons, and laying his hand on the head of the kneeling representative, said, "Get my bill passed by to-morrow little man, or else to-morrow this head of yours will come off.' The next day the bill passed, and the work of destruction began anew. It involved the confiscation of millions of property, and the summary execution of abbots, who, like those of Glastonbury and Charter House, dared to resist.[2]

The magnificent monastic buildings throughout England were now stripped of everything of value, and left as ruins. The beautiful windows of stained glass were wantonly broken; the images of the saints were cast down from their niches; the chimes of bells were melted and cast into cannon; while the valuable libraries were torn up and sold to grocers and soap-boilers for wrapping-paper. At Canterbury, Becket's tomb was broken open, and after he had been four centuries in his grave, the saint was summoned to answer a charge of rebellion and treason. The case was tried at Westminster Abbey, the martyr's bones were

[1] Armitage, Childhood of the English Nation.

[2] The total number of religious houses destroyed was 645 monasteries, 2374 chapels, 90 collegiate churches, and 110 charitable institutions. Among the most famous of these ruins are Kirkstall, Furness, Netley, Tintern, and Fountains Abbeys.

sentenced to be burned, and the jewels and rich offerings of his shrine were seized by the king.

Among the few monastic buildings which escaped was the beautiful abbey church of Peterborough, where Catharine of Aragon, who died soon after the king's marriage with her rival, was buried. Henry had the grace to give orders that on her account it should be spared, saying that he would leave to her memory "one of the goodliest monuments in Christendom."

The great estates thus suddenly acquired by the crown were granted to favorites or thrown away at the gambling-table. "It is from this date," says Hallam, "that the leading families of England, both within and without the peerage, became conspicuous through having obtained possession of the monastery lands." These were estimated to comprise about one-fourth of the whole area of the kingdom.

405. Effects of the Destruction of the Monasteries. — The sweeping character of this act had a twofold effect. First, it made the king more absolute than before, for, since it removed the abbots, who had had seats in the House of Lords, that body was made just so much smaller and less able to resist the royal will.

Next, the abolition of so many religious institutions necessarily caused great misery to those who were turned out upon the world destitute of means and without ability to work. In the end, however, no permanent injury was done, since the monasteries, by their profuse and indiscriminate charity, had undoubtedly encouraged much of the very pauperism which they had relieved.

406. Distress among the Laboring Classes. — An industrial revolution was also in progress at this time which was productive of wide-spread suffering. It had begun early in Henry's reign through the great numbers of discharged soldiers, who could not readily find work. Sir Thomas More had given a striking picture of their miserable condition in his "Utopia," a book in which he urged the government to consider measures for their relief; but the evil had since become much worse. Farmers, having discovered

that wool-growing was more profitable than the raising of grain, had turned their fields into sheep-pastures; so that a shepherd with his dog now took the place of several families of laborers. This change brought multitudes of poor people to the verge of starvation; and as the monasteries no longer existed to hold out a helping hand, the whole realm was overrun with beggars and thieves. Bishop Latimer, a noted preacher of that day, declared that if every farmer should raise two acres of hemp, it would not make rope enough to hang them all. Henry, however, set to work with characteristic vigor, and it is said made way with over 70,000, but without materially abating the evil.

407. Execution of Anne Boleyn; Marriage with Jane Seymour. — In 1536, less than three years after her coronation, the new queen, Anne Boleyn, for whom Henry had "turned England and Europe upside down," was accused of unfaithfulness. She was sent a prisoner to the Tower. A short time after, her head rolled in the dust, the light of its beauty gone out forever.

The next morning Henry married Jane Seymour, Anne's maid of honor. Parliament passed an act of approval, declaring that it was all done "of the king's most excellent goodness." A year later the queen died, leaving a son, Edward. She was no sooner gone than the king began looking about for some one to take her place.

408. More Marriages. — This time Cromwell had projects of his own for a German Protestant alliance. He succeeded in persuading his master to agree to marry Anne of Cleves, whom the king had never seen, but whom the painter Holbein represented in a portrait as a woman of surpassing beauty.

When Anne reached England, Henry hurried to meet her with all a lover's ardor. To his dismay, he found that not only was she ridiculously ugly, but that she could speak nothing but Dutch, of which he did not understand a word. Matters, however, had gone too far to retract, and the marriage was duly solemnized. The king obtained a divorce within six months, and then took his revenge by cutting off Cromwell's head.

The same year Henry married Catharine Howard, a fascinating girl still in her teens, whose charms so moved the king that it is said he was tempted to have a special thanksgiving service prepared to commemorate the day he found her. Unfortunately, Catharine had fallen into dishonor before her marriage. She tried hard to keep the terrible secret, but finding it impossible, confessed her fault. For such cases Henry had no mercy. The queen was tried for high treason, and soon walked that road in which Anne Boleyn had preceded her.

Not to be baffled in his matrimonial experiments, the king, in 1543, took Catherine Parr for his sixth and last wife. She, too, would have gone to the block, on a charge of heresy, had not her quick wit saved her by a happily turned compliment, which flattered the king's self-conceit as a profound theologian.

409. Henry's Action respecting Religion. — Though occupied with these rather numerous domestic infelicities, Henry was not idle in other directions. By an act known as the Six Articles, or, as the Protestants called it, the "Bloody Act," the king established a new form of religion, which was simply Papacy with the Pope left out. Geographically, the country was about equally divided between Romanism and Protestantism. The northern and western half clung to the ancient faith; the southern and eastern, including most of the large cities where Wycliffe's doctrines had formerly prevailed, was favorable to the Reformation. Henry did not throw his influence decidedly on either side, but made concessions to both. On the one hand, he prohibited the Lutheran doctrine; on the other, he caused the Bible to be translated, and ordered a copy to be chained to a desk in every parish church in England; but though all persons might now freely read the Scriptures, no one but the clergy was allowed to interpret them. Later in his reign, the king became alarmed at the spread of discussion about religious subjects, and prohibited the reading of the Bible by the "lower sort of people."

410. Heresy versus Treason. — Men now found themselves in a strange and cruel dilemma. If it was dangerous to believe too much, it was equally dangerous to believe too little. Traitor and heretic were dragged to execution on the same hurdle: the one a Catholic, who denied the king's supremacy, the other a Protestant, who refused to believe that the blessing of a priest could miraculously change a loaf of bread into the actual body of the Saviour. Thus Anne Askew, a young and beautiful woman, was nearly wrenched asunder on the rack, in the hope of making her implicate the queen in her heresy, and afterward burned because she persisted in declaring that the communion service is but a remembrance of Christ's death, or a sacrament of thanksgiving for it. On the other hand, the aged Countess of Salisbury suffered for treason; but with a spirit matching the king's, she refused to kneel at the block, and told the executioner he must get her gray head off as best he could.

411. Henry's Death. — But the time was at hand when Henry was to cease his hangings, beheadings, and marriages. Worn out with debauchery, he died at the age of fifty-six, a loathsome, unwieldy, and helpless mass of corruption. In his will he left a large sum of money to pay for perpetual prayers for the repose of his soul. Sir Walter Raleigh said of him, "If all the pictures and patterns of a merciless prince were lost in the world, they might all again be painted to the life out of the story of this king." It may be well to remember this, and along with it this other saying of the ablest living writer on English constitutional history, that "the world owes some of its greatest debts to men from whose memory it recoils."[1] The obligation it is under to Henry VIII. is that through his influence — no matter what the motive — England was lifted up out of the old mediæval ruts, and placed squarely and securely on the new highway of national progress.

412. Summary. — In this reign we find that though England lost much of her former political freedom, yet she gained that

[1] Stubbs's Constitutional History of England.

order and peace which came from the iron hand of absolute power. Next, from the suppression of the monasteries, and the sale or gift of their lands to favorites of the king, three results ensued: (1) a new nobility was in great measure created, dependent on the crown; (2) the House of Lords was made less powerful by the removal of the abbots who had had seats in it; (3) pauperism was for a time largely increased, and much distress caused. Finally, England completely severed her connection with the Pope, and established for the first time an independent national church, having the king as its head.

EDWARD VI. — 1547-1553.

413. Bad Government; Seizure of Unenclosed Lands; High Rents; Latimer's Sermon. — Edward, son of Henry VIII. by Jane Seymour, died at sixteen. In the first of his reign of six years the government was managed by his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, an extreme Protestant, whose intentions were good, but who lacked practical judgment. During the latter part of his life Edward fell under the control of the Duke of Northumberland, who was the head of a band of scheming and profligate men. They, with other nobles, seized the unenclosed lands of the country and fenced them in for sheep pastures, thus driving into beggary many who had formerly got a good part of their living from these commons. At the same time farm rents rose in some cases ten and even twenty-fold,[1] depriving thousands of the means of subsistence, and reducing many who had been in comfortable circumstances to poverty.

The bitter complaints of the sufferers found expression in Bishop Latimer's outspoken sermon preached before the king, in which he said: "My father was a yeoman [small farmer], and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of three or four pounds

[1] This was owing to the greed for land on the part of the mercantile classes, who had now acquired wealth, and wished to become landed proprietors. See Froude's England.

[rent] by year, and hereupon tilled so much as kept half a dozen men; he had walk [pasture] for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able and did find the king a harness [suit of armor] with himself and his horse, until he came to the place where he should receive the king's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went into Blackheath Field. He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the king's majesty now. He married my sisters with five pounds . . . apiece. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbors, and some alms he gave to the poor. And all this he did off the said farm, where he that now hath it payeth sixteen pounds a year or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor." But as Latimer pathetically said, "Let the preacher preach till his tongue be worn to the stumps, nothing is amended."[1]

414. Edward establishes Protestantism. — Henry had established the Church of England as an independent organization. His son took the next great step, and made it Protestant in doctrine. At his desire, Archbishop Cranmer compiled a book of Common Prayer, taken largely from the Roman Catholic Prayer-book. This collection all churches were now obliged by law to use. Edward's sister, the Princess Mary, was a firm Catholic. She refused to adopt the new service, saying to Ridley, who urged her to accept it as God's word, "I cannot tell what you call God's word, for that is not God's word now which was God's word in my father's time." It was at this period, also, that the Articles of Faith of the Church of England were first drawn up.

415. King Edward and Mary Stuart. — Henry VIII. had attempted to marry his son Edward to young Queen Mary Stuart, daughter of the king of Scotland, but the match had been broken off. Edward's guardian now insisted that it should be carried out. He invaded Scotland with an army, and attempted to effect the

[1] Latimer's first sermon before King Edward VI., 8th of March, 1549.

marriage by force of arms, at the battle of Pinkie. The English gained a decided victory, but the youthful queen, instead of giving her hand to young King Edward, left the country and married the son of the king of France. She will appear with melancholy prominence in the reign of Elizabeth. Had she married Edward, we should perhaps have been spared that tragedy in which she was called to play both the leading and the losing part.

416. Renewed Confiscation of Church Property; Schools founded. — The confiscation of such Roman Catholic church property as had been spared was now renewed. The result of this and of the abandonment of Catholicism was in certain respects disastrous to the country. In this general break-up, many who had been held in restraint by the old forms of faith now went to the other extreme, and rejected all religion.

Part, however, of the money thus obtained from the sale of church property was devoted, mainly through Edward's influence, to the endowment of upwards of forty grammar schools, besides a number of hospitals, in different sections of the country. But for a long time the destruction of the monastic schools, poor as they were, was a serious blow to the education of the common people.

417. Edward's London Charities; Christ's Hospital. — Just before his death Edward established Christ's Hospital, and refounded and renewed the hospitals of St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew in London. Thus "he was the founder," says Burnet, "of those houses which, by many great additions since that time, have risen to be amongst the noblest of Europe."[1]

Christ's Hospital was, perhaps, the first Protestant charity school opened in England; many more were patterned on it. It is generally known as the Blue-Coat School, from the costume of the boys — a relic of the days of Edward VI. This consists of a long blue coat, like a monk's gown, reaching to the ankles, girded with a broad leathern belt, long, bright yellow stockings, and

[1] Burnet: History of the Reformation in England.