

## XXX.

## THE CARDINAL'S LAST JOURNEY.—BREWER.

[Henry VII. was really the founder of a new dynasty, and his efforts were mainly directed to securing the throne for himself and his family. This he did by strong rule at home, and by skillful diplomacy abroad. His son, Henry VIII., under the guidance of his famous minister, Cardinal Wolsey, took a much more active part in European politics. In 1527 he determined, from a variety of motives, to obtain a divorce from his queen, Catherine of Aragon. This brought him into collision with the papal power. Wolsey, having promised to gratify the king in the matter of the divorce, and having failed to do so, was deprived of nearly all his offices in 1529, and, a little later, arrested on a charge of high treason.]

On Sunday, after dinner, as it drew toward night, he was conducted to Pomfret with five of his attendants only. At his departure, which had now got wind, a multitude of the country people assembled to testify their grief at his arrest, praying that "the foul fiend might catch" all those who had taken the cardinal from them.



HENRY VIII.

From the Abbey of Pomfret he proceeded next day to Doncaster where he lodged with the Black Friars; the day after, to Sheffield Park, where he was received by the earl and countess of Shrewsbury with great affability. There he remained for eighteen days, and was treated by his host with great consideration and generosity. Once every day he was visited by the earl, who sought to comfort his unfortunate prisoner. But he resolutely repelled all the efforts that were made to console him, applying himself wholly to devotion, and renouncing all earthly pleasure. Though he was not more than fifty-nine years of age, his health and strength had been completely broken down by his

long and laborious occupations, and the incessant vexations to which he had been exposed since his disgrace. Even in his most prosperous days he had never been a strong man: now his great anxiety of mind, and the enormous pressure upon his faculties during the progress of the divorce, had wholly undermined his constitution.

The final and heaviest blow was reserved for his last moments. The reasons for his arrest had been studiously kept from him, but as upon all occasions when the king had resolved to strike he struck once and never wavered, so it was now. When Henry had abandoned himself to his resentment, he was borne along its current with the blind impetuosity of fate. No doubt was allowed to enter his mind. No question of the wisdom or justice of his own determination, no feeling of pity, no sense of past services, however great, were allowed to arrest his hand. He had ordered Sir William Kingston, the keeper of the Tower, to proceed to Sheffield to receive the earl's prisoner, and bring him to the Tower. It required the greatest delicacy to break the dreadful news to the unhappy cardinal. For this purpose, the earl, who seems to have been unusually humane and considerate, hit upon the following expedient. During his conversations with Wolsey, when the latter expressed his apprehensions lest he should be condemned unheard, the earl either took, or pretended to take, an opportunity of writing to the king in Wolsey's behalf. Then, calling Cavendish to him, he said:

"My lord, your master, has often desired me to write to the king, that he might answer his accusers in the king's presence. Even so have I done; and this day I have received letters from his grace, by Sir William Kingston, by which I perceive that the king holds the cardinal in very good estimation, and has sent for him by Sir William, who is now here, to come up and make his answer. But do you play the part of a wise man, and break the matter unto him warily; for he is always so full of sorrow when

he is in my company that I am afraid he will not take it quietly."

Cavendish proceeded to break the news. "I found him," he says, "sitting at the upper end of the gallery upon a trussing chest of his own, with his beads and staff in hand."

"What news?" said he, seeing Cavendish come from the earl.

"Forsooth, sir," he replied, assuming the best appearance of cheerfulness he could muster, though his voice sadly belied his words, "I bring you the best news that ever came to you in your life."

"I pray God it be so," said Wolsey. "What is it?"

"Forsooth, sir," replied Cavendish, "my lord of Shrewsbury, perceiving how desirous you were to come before the king, has so exerted himself that the king has sent Master Kingston with twenty-four of his guard to bring you into his presence."

"Master Kingston! Master Kingston!" exclaimed the unhappy cardinal, musing for a time, as if to recollect himself, and then, clapping his hand on his thigh, he gave a deep sigh. Cavendish endeavored to cheer him. He urged the old argument that the king had no other intention by this act than to bring Wolsey into his presence, and had sent the constable with a guard of honor out of consideration for Wolsey's high estate, and he had no reason, therefore, to mistrust his master's kindness. All his efforts were useless. The cardinal knew too well the king's temper to be deceived. He had not served him so long without being fully aware how implacable and immovable were his resentments.

"I perceive," he said, with very significant words, "more than you can imagine or can know. *Experience of old has taught me.*"

It was the sentence of death, and he knew it full well; but his despondency and waning health anticipated the sword of the executioner, and disappointed the malice of his enemies.

That night his disease increased rapidly; he became very weak and was scarce able to move.

The next day he commenced his journey, and lodged at night, still very sick, at Hardwick Hall. The day after he rode to Nottingham, his sickness and infirmity increasing at every stage. On Saturday, November 26, he rode his last stage to Leicester Abbey, "and by the way he waxed so sick that he was divers times likely to have fallen from his mule."

As the journey was necessarily impeded by these delays, Sir William and his prisoner did not reach Leicester until late at night; where, on his entering the gates, the abbot with all his convent went out to meet him, with the light of many torches, and received him with great demonstrations of respect. "To whom my lord said: 'Father Abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you.'"

They then brought him on his mule to the stair's foot of his chamber, where Kingston took him by the arm and led him up. Immediately he went to his bed. On the Monday morning, "as I stood by his bedside," says Cavendish, "about eight of the clock, the windows being close shut, having lights, burning upon the cupboard, I beheld him, as meseemed, drawing fast to his end. He, perceiving my shadow upon the wall by his bedside, asked who was there; and inquiring what was the clock, 'Sir,' said Cavendish, 'it is past eight of the clock in the morning.' 'Eight of the clock, eight of the clock,' slowly repeated the dying man; 'nay, that cannot be, for by eight of the clock you must lose your master. My time draweth nigh.'"

But even in these last faltering moments he was not allowed to remain unmolested. The king had received information from Northumberland that by an account found in Cawood the cardinal had in his possession £1,500, of which no portion could be found. Anxious to obtain the money, the king's impatience could brook no delay, although the cardinal was now on his way to the Tower. He sent a special messenger to

Kingston, commanding him to examine the cardinal, and discover where this money was deposited. The commission would have been immediately executed, but the weakness of the cardinal was so great, and increased so rapidly, that Kingston was obliged to put off the examination till the next day. The same night Wolsey was very sick, and swooned often, but rallied a little at four the next morning. About seven Kingston entered the room, intending to fulfill the king's command respecting the money. But seeing the feeble condition of the patient, he endeavored to encourage him with the usual topic, telling the cardinal he was sad and pensive from dread of that which he had no occasion to apprehend.

"Well, well, Master Kingston," replied Wolsey, "I see the matter against me, how it is framed; but if I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, *he* would not have given me over in my gray hairs. Howbeit, this is the just reward that I must receive for my worldly diligence and pains that I have had to do him service. Commend me to his majesty, beseeching him to call to his remembrance all that has passed between him and me to the present day, and most chiefly in his great matter; then shall his conscience declare whether I have offended him or no. He is a prince of royal courage, and hath a princely heart; and rather than he will miss or want part of his appetite he will hazard the loss of one half of his kingdom. I assure you I have often kneeled before him in his privy chamber, the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite, but I could never dissuade him." Then his words and his voice failed him. His eyes grew fixed and glazed. Incontinently the clock struck eight, and he breathed his last. "And calling to our remembrance," says Cavendish, "his words the day before, how he said that at eight of the clock we should lose our master, we stood looking upon each other, supposing he had prophesied of his departure."

As the lieutenant of the Tower had now no further charge,

and was anxious to be gone, the burial was fixed for the next day. The body was placed in a rude coffin of wood, with miter, cross, and ring, and other archiepiscopal ornaments. He lay in state until five o'clock in the afternoon, when he was carried down into the church, with great solemnity, by the abbot and convent, with many torches. Here the body rested all night in the Lady Chapel, watched by four men holding lights in their hands, while the convent chanted the old and solemn office for the dead. About four in the morning, while it was yet dark, they sung a mass. By six they had laid him in his grave, on that cold and dreary November morning, unwept and unlamented by all, except by the very few who, for the glory of human nature, amid so much of baseness, greed, ingratitude, and cruelty, remained loving and faithful to the last.

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 XXXI.

## THE ENGLISH TERROR.—GREEN.

[After the fall of Wolsey, events marched rapidly in England. The king, impatient of the delays of the Papal Court in granting the divorce, determined to take matters into his own hand. Statute after statute was enacted in quick succession by the "Reformation Parliament" to break the connection between England and the Church of Rome. Thomas Cromwell became Henry's chief adviser, and was made "vicar-general." He forced the clergy to accept the king as Supreme Head of the Church of England, destroyed the great and wealthy monasteries, and ruled the country with an iron hand. But in 1540 he was overthrown, and executed on a charge of treason.]

WHILE the great revolution which struck down the Church was in progress, England looked silently on. In all the earlier ecclesiastical changes, in the contest over the Papal jurisdiction and Papal exactions, in the reform of the Church courts, even in the curtailment of the legislative independence

of the clergy, the nation as a whole had gone with the king. But from the enslavement of the priesthood, from the gagging of the pulpits, from the suppression of the monasteries, the bulk of the nation stood aloof. There were few voices, indeed, of protest. As the royal policy disclosed itself, as the monarchy trampled under foot the tradition and reverence of ages gone by, as its figure rose bare and terrible out of the wreck of old institutions, England simply held her breath. It is only through the stray depositions of royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under this silence of the people. For the silence was a silence of terror. Before Cromwell's rise, and after his fall from power, the reign of Henry the Eighth witnessed no more than the common tyranny and bloodshed of the time. But the years of Cromwell's administration form the one period in our history which deserves the name that men have given to the rule of Robespierre. It was the English Terror. It was by terror that Cromwell mastered the king. Cranmer could plead for him at a later time with Henry as "one whose surety was only by your majesty, who loved your majesty, as I ever thought, no less than God." But the attitude of Cromwell toward the king was something more than that of absolute dependence and unquestioning devotion. He was "so vigilant to preserve your majesty from all treasons," adds the primate, "that few could be so secretly conceived but he detected the same from the beginning."

Henry, like every Tudor, was fearless of open danger, but tremulously sensitive to the lightest breath of hidden disloyalty; and it was on this dread that Cromwell based the fabric of his power. He was hardly secretary before spies were scattered broadcast over the land. Secret denunciations poured into the open ear of the minister. The air was thick with tales of plots and conspiracies, and, with the detection and suppression of each, Cromwell tightened his hold on the king. As it was by terror that he mastered the king,

so it was by terror that he mastered the people. Men felt in England, to use the figure by which Erasmus paints the rime, "as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." The confessional had no secrets for Cromwell. Men's talk with their closest friends found its way to his ear. "Words idly spoken," the murmurs of a petulant abbot, the ravings of a moon-struck nun, were, as the nobles cried passionately at his fall, "tortured into treason." The only chance of safety lay in silence. "Friends who used to write and send me presents," Erasmus tells us, "now send neither letter nor gifts, nor receive any from any one, and this through fear." But even the refuge of silence was closed by a law more infamous than any that has ever blotted the statute-book of England. Not only was thought made treason, but men were forced to reveal their thoughts on pain of their very silence being punished with the penalties of treason. All trust in the older bulwarks of liberty was destroyed by a policy as daring as it was unscrupulous. The noblest institutions were degraded into instruments of terror. Though Wolsey had strained the law to the utmost he had made no open attack on the freedom of justice. If he shrank from assembling Parliaments, it was from his sense that they were the bulwarks of liberty. But under Cromwell the coercion of juries and the management of judges rendered the courts mere mouth-pieces of the royal will; and where even this shadow of justice proved an obstacle to bloodshed, Parliament was brought into play to pass bill after bill of attainder. "He shall be judged by the bloody laws he has himself made," was the cry of the Council at the moment of his fall, and, by a singular retribution, the crowning-piece of injustice which he sought to introduce even into the practice of attainder, the condemnation of a man without hearing his defense, was only practiced on himself.

But ruthless as was the Terror of Cromwell, it was of a nobler type than the Terror of France. He never struck uselessly or capriciously, or stooped to the meaner victims of the guil-

otine. His blows were effective just because he chose his victims from among the noblest and the best. If he struck at the Church, it was through the Carthusians, the holiest and the most-renowned of English churchmen. If he struck at the baronage, it was through Lady Salisbury, in whose veins flowed the blood of kings. If he struck at the new learning, it was through the murder of Sir Thomas More. But no personal vindictiveness mingled with his crime. In temper, indeed, so far as we can judge from the few stories which lingered among his friends, he was a generous, kindly-hearted man, with pleasant and winning manners, which atoned for a certain awkwardness of person, and with a constancy of friendship which won him a host of devoted adherents. But no touch either of love or hate swayed him from his course. The student of Machiavelli had not studied the "Prince" in vain. He had reduced bloodshed to a system. Fragments of his papers still show us with what a business-like brevity he ticked off human lives among the casual remembrances of the day: "Item, the abbot of Reading to be sent down to be tried and executed at Reading." "Item, to know the king's pleasure touching Master More." "Item, when Master Fisher shall go to his execution, and the other." It is, indeed, this utter absence of all passion, of all personal feeling, that makes the figure of Cromwell the most terrible in our history. He has an absolute faith in the end he is pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it, as a woodman hews his way through the forest, ax in hand.

The choice of his first victim showed the ruthless precision with which Cromwell was to strike. In the general opinion of Europe, the foremost Englishman of his time was Sir Thomas More. As the policy of the divorce ended in an open rupture with Rome, he had withdrawn silently from the ministry, but his silent disapproval of the new policy was far more telling than the opposition of obscurer foes. To Cromwell there must have been something

specially galling in More's attitude of reserve. The religious reforms of the new learning were being rapidly carried out, but it was plain that the man who represented the very life of the new learning believed that the sacrifice of liberty and justice was too dear a price to pay even for religious reform. In the actual changes which the divorce brought about there was nothing to move More to active or open opposition. Though he looked on the divorce and re-marriage as without religious warrant, he found no difficulty in accepting an Act of Succession passed in 1534, which declared the marriage of Anne Boleyn valid, annulled the title of Catherine's child, Mary, and declared the children of Anne the only lawful heirs to the crown. His faith in the power of Parliament over all civil matters was too complete to admit a doubt of its competence to regulate the succession to the throne. But, by the same act, an oath recognizing the succession as then arranged, was ordered to be taken by all persons; and this oath contained an acknowledgment that the marriage with Catherine was against Scripture, and invalid from the beginning. Henry had long known More's belief on this point; and the summons to take this oath was simply a summons to death. More was at his house at Chelsea when the summons called him to Lambeth, to the house where he had bandied fun with Warham and Erasmus, or bent over the easel of Holbein. For a moment there may have been some passing impulse to yield. But it was soon over. Triumphant in all else, the monarchy was to find its power stop short at the conscience of man. The great battle of spiritual freedom, the battle of the Protestant against Mary, of the Catholic against Elizabeth, of the Puritan against Charles, of the Independent against the Presbyterian, began at the moment when More refused to bend, or to deny his convictions at a king's bidding.

## XXXII.

## A HOLY MISSION.—EWALD.

[Henry VIII. severed England from the papacy, and yet he did not reform the English Church. Under his young son, Edward VI., England became nominally Protestant, but the religious changes were made so rapidly that they had not time to take root among the mass of the people. On the accession of Edward's half-sister, Mary, all the religious innovations made by him and his father were annulled, and England again became Catholic. Mary chose, as her chief adviser in ecclesiastical affairs, Reginald Pole, a cardinal of the Church of Rome, whom she made archbishop of Canterbury. He was of royal blood, being a Plantagenet by descent. In consequence of his opposition to the measures of Henry VIII. he had been forced to flee to the Continent to save his life, had been prominent, for many years, in Catholic councils abroad, and, it is said, once narrowly missed an election to the papal chair. In the autumn of 1554 he was at Brussels, patiently waiting to be summoned home, in order to take part in the great work of restoring England to the old Church.]

If Pole was ever to land in England, the present moment was as opportune for the purpose as any other. A messenger was, accordingly, dispatched to Brussels to arrange certain details. The legate was to pledge himself not to interfere with such church property as had been secularised in the last two reigns; and, as it was considered advisable that he should enter England, not as a legate, but as a prince of the Church and an Englishman, he was to comply with this decision. These points being settled, Pole prepared for his journey.

Lord Paget and Sir Edward Hastings crossed the Channel to escort him to England. The envoys were charmed with the cardinal. "Whensoever he shall be in England," they wrote to their queen, "believe that country shall fare the better for him, for he is the man of God, full of all godliness and virtue, ready to humble himself to all fashions that may do good." From Brussels to Calais his eminence traveled

by easy stages, "for his weak body," says Paget, "can make no great journeys, and his estate is also to be considered." At Calais he was received by the governor with every honor; the bells rang, the men-of-war in the harbor fired salutes, and an enthusiastic crowd cheered his name and mission in front of his lodgings. The next day, the weather being propitious, Pole crossed over to Dover, and, having rested the night, took horse, escorted by a powerful cavalcade of neighboring gentry, to Canterbury. As the legate passed slowly along that undulating highway, trod by the feet of so many pilgrims, which leads to the famous cathedral town, not a hostile glance was leveled at him, not an irreverent remark was heard. Some looked on in silent curiosity; others knelt in the roadway, and bent their heads beneath the blessing hand; from the throats of most of them rose the cry, "God save your grace!" for, cardinal or no, he came of the proud stock of the Plantagenets, and in those days Englishmen thought far from lightly of the names which were then historical in the land. From Canterbury Pole rode slowly on to Rochester, where he became the guest of Lord Cobham. At Gravesend was moored the legate's barge, splendid in its trappings, and with the silver cross, which Pole had now received permission to exhibit, conspicuous at its prow. The cardinal sailed up the Thames, the river being crowded with gayly-dressed craft, and, after a voyage of three hours, landed at Whitehall Stairs, where he was received by Philip and Mary with every appearance of homage and affection. Lambeth Palace, now that Cranmer had been deposed, was assigned to him as his quarters.

St. Andrew's Day had been fixed for the solemn ceremony of restoring backsliding England to the apostolic fold. When the appointed time arrived the greatest excitement prevailed, and it was remarked that many of the lower classes, who hung about Lambeth and the palace gates, were in tears. Those who spoke disparagingly of what was about to take

place were in the minority, and but few dared to give open expression to adverse opinions. The tone of the people was reverent, and charged with deep emotion. Parliament met in the early dusk of a November afternoon at Whitehall. On a raised dais sat the king and queen, under a canopy of cloth of gold, with the cardinal on their right, his chair slightly in advance of the royal seat. Facing the distinguished three, crowding every inch of the great hall, were the nobles and the commons, with such spectators as had obtained permission to attend. When silence had been restored, Gardyner, now lord chancellor, at the bidding of their majesties, opened the proceedings. He read from a written paper, and his words were to the effect that England, represented by her Parliament, expressed her deep repentance for her past schism and disobedience, and implored the apostolic see to receive her again into the bosom and unity of Christ's Church. The perusal finished, all eyes were fixed upon Pole. The moment that he had so long prayed for in his cell, by the waters of the Lago di Guarda, had at last arrived; the end for which he had defied sickness and fatigue had been attained; the goal of his ambition had been reached; and before him stood the once proud, rebellious England, penitent and submissive, begging grace for her misdeeds. His heart was full, and his voice trembled as he spoke a few prefatory words from his chair. England, he said, should indeed be grateful to the Almighty for bringing her to the unity of the Church and to the obedience of the see apostolic. As in the days of the primitive Church, she had been the first to be called from heathenism to Christianity, so now she was the first of the Protestant peoples to whom grace had been granted to repent her of her past heresy. If heaven, he exclaimed, rejoiced over the conversion of one penitent sinner, how great must be the celestial joy over the conversion of an entire nation! Then he rose from his seat and lifted his right hand.

The moment of reconciliation had arrived; the whole au-

dience fell on their knees and awaited in the stillest silence, broken only now and then by the smothered sob of an emotion that could not be controlled, the removal of the ban of excommunication. "Our Lord Jesus Christ," said the legate, in tones that filled every corner of the chamber, "who has, through his most precious blood, redeemed and washed us from all our sins and iniquities, that he might purchase unto himself a glorious spouse without spot or wrinkle, whom the Father has appointed head over all his Church; He by his mercy absolves you, and we, by apostolic authority given unto us by the Most Holy Lord Pope, Julius the Third, his vicerent on earth, do absolve and deliver you, and every of you, with this whole realm and the dominions thereof, from all heresy and schism, and from all and every judgment, censure, and pain for that cause incurred. And we do restore you again into the unity of our mother, the Holy Church, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." His words ended, there rose up from the relieved, yet awe-stricken, congregation "a spontaneous and repeated shout of Amen, Amen." Their majesties now made a move, followed by their subjects, to the palace chapel, where the organ pealed forth the jubilant strains of the *Te Deum*.

England had sworn fealty to the pope; still, the object of the legate was twofold—to have the papal supremacy acknowledged, and to stamp out the heresies that had sprung up in the English Church. A kind and amiable man in private life, Pole was severity itself when the favorite tenet of his creed was concerned. He would use all his persuasive powers to convert the heretic from his errors; but if such a one persistently refused to turn toward the light, let him at once be put away and cast into outer darkness. In the memorable Marian persecutions Cardinal Pole took a leading part. His voice was ever in favor of mercy, provided there seemed a prospect of a recantation from the heretic; but when no such hope was held out, no judge was sterner or

more inflexible than the legate. Hard and intolerant as he was on these occasions, his conduct was but the logical result of a sincere belief in his creed. Outside the pale of the Catholic Church he thought there was no salvation; to bring all within the fold was, therefore, the object of every true son of the Church; those who created schisms and disseminated heresies were guilty of the most awful of all crimes—the eternal destruction of immortal souls. To the man who destroyed the body the penalty of death was dealt out; was he who damned the soul to be more mercifully treated? In the eyes of Pole a heretic was the greatest enemy of God and man. "For be you assured," said he, when lecturing the citizens of London upon their sympathy with the Protestant martyrs, "there is no kind of men so pernicious to the commonwealth as these heretics be; there are no thieves, no murderers, no adulterers, nor no kind of treason to be compared to theirs, who, as it were, undermining the chief foundation of all commonwealths, which is religion, maketh an entry to all kinds of vices in the most heinous manner." The conduct of Pole, during the short period he held office in England, reveals the true nature of the creed of Rome where its actions are unfettered by the civil power. As a consistent Catholic, possessing the opportunity of enforcing his principles, the legate could not, and ought not to, have acted otherwise.