

promise that, if she now yielded to his wishes, she should afterwards be at liberty to marry whom she *listed*, and in her strong attachment to Charles Brandon, the Prince from whom she might soonest obtain release might be the more acceptable. Prince Charles was quite young and might gain strength, but Louis had never been very strong, and he had reached the usual term of life, and Mary therefore consented to become Queen of France. The young Queen won all hearts by her beauty and amiability. She entered into all the festivities of the French Court, its tournaments and pageants, and Louis lavished on her the choicest gifts. Never had France and England been so closely united. The scheme of Henry and Wolsey had succeeded, and Louis was willing to do anything for his "*deare brother*." The *salons* of the French Court were filled with Englishmen, and Frenchmen were most cordially received at Windsor and at York Place. All went bright, and merry, and prosperous, but only for a short time, for before three months the feeble old King was suddenly called to his rest, and Mary was released to marry whom she listed. But not yet did the stream of love run smoothly. A young and ambitious Prince had succeeded Louis, Francis of Valois. He could scarcely be expected to be friendly to Mary, for she had imperilled his succession, and he was not likely to be more friendly to Henry and Wolsey. But they hastened to send their congratulations to Francis, and an embassy, with Charles Brandon (who had been raised to the Dukedom of Suffolk) at its head, visited Francis to express the kind wishes of the English King, and to thank him for his thoughtful attention to Mary in her late bereavement, and to beseech a continuance of his kind consideration. Francis replied that he "would neither do her any wrong, nor suffer her to take wrong of any other person, but be to her as a loving son should be to his mother." After the audience he called Suffolk and said to him, "There is a bruit in this my realm, that you have come to marry with the Queen, your master's sister." Suffolk, confused, and believing that he saw the frustration of his fondest hopes, blurted out a flat denial, and "begged the King to think that he would never come into a strange realm to marry a Queen without the permission of the Sovereign." "Sire, you will not be plain with me," replied the King, "therefore I must be plain with you. Her Majesty informed me of your mutual attachment, and I have promised on my faith and truth, and by the troth of a King, to do my best to help her." The Duke of Suffolk, after the interview, visited the Queen and reproached her for betraying their secret, when she assured him that she had been obliged to divulge it in order to escape the importunities of Francis. Henry and Wolsey were now, however, forming other plans, and they extorted a pro-

mise from Mary that she would not marry without her brother's consent. She yielded, no doubt relying on his promise that on the death of Louis she might marry whom she listed, and also on the strong friendship which had grown up between Henry and Suffolk. But Henry was now looking to an alliance with Germany, and Maximilian, still older than Louis had been, worn out and penniless, was tempted by an heiress so charming and with prospective advantages. Wolsey indeed furthered the suit of Suffolk, but there were other "hinderers" about the King, especially the Duke of Norfolk, and Henry urged Mary to consent to the marriage with Maximilian. She now assumed a determined and independent attitude, relying on the fact that she, as Queen of France, was her own mistress. She wrote to Henry that she would marry none but Suffolk, and that if this were prevented, she would enter some religious house,—she would marry Suffolk or take the veil. She now induced Suffolk to a clandestine marriage, and in the early light of a spring morning, in the Chapel of the Hotel de Cluguy, and in the presence of a few witnesses, one of whom was Francis, Mary became the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. This rash act was certain to annoy Henry, and Suffolk therefore wrote a private letter to Wolsey telling him of the marriage, and urging him to intercede with Henry. In his awful orthography he wrote, "Me Lord, sche and I bowth rymyttys thes mattar holle to your dysskraseum, tresting yt in hall hast possebbyll we schall her from you some good tydynges tocheng howar afyeres."

Henry refused to be reconciled. "Cursed be the blind affection, and counsel," wrote Wolsey, "that hath brought you hereunto, fearing that such sudden and inadvised dealing shall have sudden repentance." He advised that Mary should pay over to Henry her dower as Queen of France, and also all the jewels and plate she had received from Louis. After a time this offer was accepted by the avaricious Henry, and he consented to the return of the lovers to England. From Calais Mary wrote to Henry, "I am contented, and expressly promise and bind me to you by these presents to give you all the whole dote, which was delivered with me, and also all such plate of gold and jewels as I shall have of my late husband." In the whole history of correspondence it would be difficult to find a letter in which sisterly affection, unblushing calculation, and unselfish devotion to a husband are more strongly blended. Suffolk also wrote, in a style rather more beseeching, and a favorable answer having been received they crossed the Channel and were welcomed by Henry. A formal document was drawn up, in which it was stipulated that Mary was to pay £24,000 out of her French rents, in annual payments of £2,000, and 200,000 crowns, her dower remaining unpaid, and all the plate and jewels she had received from Louis.