

chivalry was over, and not one spark of its ennobling spirit lingered in the breast of the sensual tyrant who gave the first example of sending queens and princesses to the block, like sheep to the shambles. Perhaps there were moments when the lovely and once passionately beloved Anne Boleyn doubted the possibility of his consigning her to the sword of the executioner; Henry was certainly aware that his doing so would be deemed an outrage on public decency, by his ordering all strangers to be expelled from the Tower. There is an expression in Kingston's letter which implies that a rescue was apprehended; at any rate, the experiment was yet to be tried how Englishmen would brook the spectacle of seeing their beautiful queen mangled by a foreign headsman, that the sovereign might be at liberty to bestow her place on her hand-maid. As it was the king's pleasure that his conjugal victim should be decollated with a sword, after the French manner of execution, the headsman of Calais was brought over to England for the purpose, a man who was considered remarkably expert at his horrible calling. The unfortunate queen was duly apprized of this circumstance, with the other preparations for the last act of the tragedy that was to terminate her brilliant but fatal career. She had had mournful experience of the vanity and vexation of all the distinctions that had flattered her: beauty, wealth, genius, pleasure, power, royalty, had all been hers, and whither had they led her?

On Friday the 19th of May, the last sad morning of her life, Anne rose two hours after midnight, and resumed her devotions with her almoner. Her previous desire of having the consecrated elements remain *in her closet*, (which in such case is always for the purposes of adoration,) and the fact that she termed the sacrament "the good Lord," proves plainly that she did not die a Protestant. When she was about to receive the sacrament she sent for sir William Kingston, that he might be a witness of her last solemn protestation of her innocence of the crimes for which she was sentenced to die before she became partaker of the holy rite.¹ It is difficult to imagine any person wantonly provoking the wrath of God by

¹ Kingston's letters to Cromwell. Ellis's Letters.