

they would plead for her," she said.¹ Cranmer, from whom she probably expected most, wrote in the following guarded strain to Henry on the subject:—

"If it be true what is openly reported of the queen's grace, if men had a right estimation of things, they should not esteem any part of your grace's honour to be touched thereby, but her honour only to be clearly disparaged. And I am in such a perplexity, that my mind is clean amazed; for I never had a better opinion in woman than I had of her, which maketh me think that she should not be culpable. Now I think that your grace best knoweth that, next unto your grace, I was most bound unto her of all creatures living. Wherefore I most humbly beseech your grace to suffer me, in that which both God's law, nature, and her kindness bindeth me unto, that I may (with your grace's favour) wish and pray for her. And from what condition your grace, of your only mere goodness, took her, and set the crown upon her head, I repute him not your grace's faithful servant and subject, nor true to the realm, that would not desire the offence to be without mercy punished, to the example of all others. And as I loved her not a little, for the love I judged her to bear towards God and his holy gospel, so, if she be proved culpable, there is not one that loveth God and his gospel that will ever favour her, but must hate her above all other; and the more they love the gospel, the more they will hate her, for then there never was creature in our time that so much slandered the gospel. And God hath sent her this punishment for that she feignedly hath professed the gospel in her mouth, and not in her heart and deed; and though she hath offended so that she hath deserved never to be reconciled to your grace's favour, yet God Almighty hath manifoldly declared his goodness towards your grace, and never offended you."²

The letter concludes with an exhortation to the king not to think less of the gospel on this account. The letter is dated from Lambeth, May 3rd. Cranmer adds a postscript, stating, "That the lord chancellor and others of his majesty's house had sent for him to the Star-chamber, and there declared such things as the king wished him to be shown, which had made him lament that such faults could be proved on the queen as he had heard from their relation."

Anne entreated Kingston to convey a letter from her to Cromwell, but he declined so perilous a service. She was, at times, like a newly caged eagle in her impatience and despair. "The king wist what he did," she said, bitterly, "when he put such women as my lady Boleyn and Mrs. Cosyns about her." She had two other ladies in attendance on her in her doleful prison-house, of more compassionate dispositions we may presume, for they were not allowed to have any communication with her, except in the presence of Kingston³ and his wife,

¹ Kingston's letters to Cromwell; Cotton. MSS., Otho. c. x. f. 225.

² Burnet's Hist. Reformation.

³ Singer, p. 219. Ellis.