

There, also, was the ungrateful blacksmith-secretary of state, Cromwell; who, though he had been chiefly indebted to the patronage of Anne Boleyn for his present greatness, had shown no disposition to succour her in her adversity. The fact was, he meant to make alliance offensive and defensive with the family of Henry's bride-elect, Jane Seymour. The climbing *parvenu* was one of the parties most active in completing the ruin of queen Anne,¹ and affixing the stigma of illegitimacy on her daughter. Anne must have been perfectly aware of his motives, but she accorded him and the other *reptilia* of the privy council the mercy of her silence when she met them on the scaffold. She came there, as she with true dignity observed, "to die, and not to accuse her enemies." When she had looked round her, she turned to Kingston, and entreated him "not to hasten the signal for her death till she had spoken that which was on her mind to say;" to which he consented, and she then spoke,—“Good Christian people, I am come hither to die according to law, for by the law I am judged to die, and therefore I will speak nothing against it.”² I am come hither to accuse no man, nor to speak any thing of that whereof I am accused, as I know full well that aught that I could say in my defence doth not appertain unto you,³ and that I could draw no hope of life from the same. But I come here only to die, and thus to yield myself humbly unto the will of my lord the king. I pray God to save the king, and send him long to reign over you, for a gentler or more merciful prince was there never. To me he was ever a good and gentle sovereign lord. If any person will meddle with my cause, I require them to judge the best. Thus I take my leave of the world and of you, and I heartily desire you all to pray

¹ In Kingston's last letter to Cromwell relating to Anne Boleyn, it may be observed that no sort of title is vouchsafed to the fallen queen, not so much as that of the lady Anne, which in common courtesy would have been rendered to her as the daughter of the earl of Wiltshire, but she is designated by the unceremonious pronoun *she* throughout. Yet there is something in Kingston's letters which betrays more interest and kindly feeling towards the royal prisoner than he ventures openly to show to the person he is addressing, and which gives us the idea that she might have fallen into the hands of a harder gaoler.

² Hall. Wyatt.

³ Excerpta Historica.