

The lord of Milherve tells us, "that she presented herself at the bar with the true dignity of a queen, and curtsied to her judges, looking round upon them all without any sign of fear." Neither does it appear that there was any thing like parade or attempt at theatrical effect in her manner, for her deportment was modest and cheerful. When the indictment was read, which charged her with such offences as never Christian queen had been arraigned for before, she held up her hand courageously, and pleaded "not guilty." She then seated herself in the chair which had been provided for her use while the evidence against her was stated.

Of what nature the evidence was, no one can now form an opinion, for the records of the trial have been carefully destroyed. Burnet affirms that he took great pains in searching for documents calculated to throw some light on the proceedings, and the chief result of his labours was an entry made by sir John Spelman in his private note-book, supposed to have been written on the bench when he sat as one of the judges before whom Norris, Weston, Brereton, and Smeaton were tried for the alleged offences in which they had been, as it was said, participators with the queen. These are the words quoted by Burnet :—"As for the evidence of the matter, it was discovered by the lady Wingfield, who had been a servant to the queen, and becoming suddenly infirm before her death, did swear this matter to one of her" ¹ Here the page containing the important communication of the dying lady is torn off, and with it all the other notes the learned judge had made on these mysterious trials were destroyed; so that, as Burnet has observed, the main evidence brought against the

¹ Burnet's Hist. Ref. vol. i. p. 197. The lady who is asserted to have made this deposition, must have been Bridget the daughter of sir John Wiltshire, comptroller of Calais, and widow of sir Richard Wingfield, who, by his first marriage with Katherine Woodville, daughter of earl Rivers, and widow of Jasper Tudor, duke of Bedford, stood in close connexion with the king. He was gentleman of the bedchamber, knight of the Garter, and chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, and died during his embassy to the emperor in 1525. It must have been in that year that the letter of condolence from Anne to lady Wingfield, signed Anne Rochford, (see p. 587) was written, in which the fair favourite of the fickle Henry professes to love her better than any woman, except lady Boleyn her step-mother; whom, according to the custom of the times, she calls her mother.