

natural poet. The genius which God gave him he marvellously perfected, until he lived in treaties and thought in campaigns. The very limitations of his talent favoured his success. Friend as he was of scholars, prodigal founder as he proved himself of learned houses, he was not of the breed of Erasmus and More. A Churchman by profession, he was no profound theologian; of the Reformation, which in his day tore Europe in pieces, he saw none other than the political aspect. But if his King and his country were touched, he was instant in defence as he was prudent in counsel. So there was a oneness in his character which made him irresistible to England's enemies. Endowed with such a weight of authority as scarce another has ever upheld, he was able by a word or a gesture to enforce his will upon the world. Moreover, as his biographer says, 'he had a special gift of natural eloquence, with a filed tongue to pronounce the same, that he was able to allure and persuade all men to his purpose.' And happy indeed was the monarch who might lean upon his patriotism and experience!

When Henry VIII. came to the throne he wished nothing so ardently as to distinguish himself in the pageantries of war and peace. His flamboyant demeanour, the gaiety of his aspect, were as far as the poles apart from the hard, penurious austerity of his father, whose hoarded wealth he was presently to squander with a lavish hand. The testimony of foreigners is unanimous in enthusiasm. To choose