

THE QUEEN'S TRAGEDY

CHAPTER I

MASTER MANTON COMES TO COURT

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THE little square court of Gonville College lay in shadow beneath a rosy evening sky as the door from the hall opened, and a young man in a master's gown and cap ran out and across the cobbles, followed by half a dozen others. He waved his hand hurriedly as they called after him, shouted something back, and disappeared into a staircase-door in the chapel corner.

Supper had been done ten minutes before; and the half-dozen sizars had been eyeing the cooling dishes regretfully as the old Master, standing up in his place, had told to the company the news for which they had almost forgotten to look.

It was now nearly a year since the fierce doings of the previous summer, when Cambridge had been full of Northumberland's soldiers, and the Duke himself had been taken in King's College, and sent with the Vice-Chancellor and others up to London for trial; and the whole place had hummed with gossip, and reverberated with the tramp of armed men.

Their own College too had distinguished itself Master Guy Manton, one of their Fellows, had ridden out to Sawston through the gloom of the July night, to take news to Mary Tudor that an assault on her lodging was imminent. He had come back with one of Huddleston's men on the following morning, with an arrow-wound in his arm, and reported that he had seen