

established by Henry to bring powerful offenders to justice. Any nobleman who broke the laws or took part in rebellious plots against the king, was tried and punished by this new tribunal with as little fear as if he were a peasant. The court was known as the Star Chamber, because stars were painted on the ceiling of the room in which it was held.

But perhaps the strongest reason why Henry was enabled to increase his power so materially was that he had the general support of the people. It was the nobles who had wrested the Great Charter from John and who had opposed the tyrannical kings, but they had used their power to oppress the people. Now that the people were stronger and knew their strength, they felt that their best protection lay in upholding the power of a king who did not fear to govern in their interests, and who was strong enough to keep peace in the land.

Of course, there were some rebellions, but none that Henry needed to fear. A boy was once brought forward with the claim that he was the nephew of Edward IV, but not many believed in him and he was soon taken prisoner. It was easily found out that his name was Lambert Simnel, and that he was the son of a baker at Oxford. Henry was amused rather than angry, and told his officers to take the boy to the kitchen and let him work there in peace. Not long after, a young man named Perkin Warbeck, who had been trained to personate the young Duke of York, who had been murdered in the Tower, was put forward as a claimant for the throne. Many of the Irish and of the Scots were inclined to help him, and his efforts lasted actually for five years. Finally, he was shut up in the Tower, and afterwards beheaded.

111. Henry's methods of raising money.—At the same time that Henry was bending all his energies towards increasing his power, he was also putting forth every effort to fill the royal treasury. He feared to alienate the people as a whole by taxing them too severely, and, moreover, he could not impose any general tax without the permission of Parliament. As he greatly preferred not to call a