



ROSE AND POMEGRANATE are the great symbols of Tudor England and Aragon in this woodcut of the coronation of Henry VIII and Catherine. Edward Hall, the chronicler, wrote: 'if I should declare what pain, labour and diligence the tailors, embroiderers and goldsmiths took both to make and devise garments for lords, ladies, knights and esquires, and also for decking, trapping and adorning of coursers, jennets and palfreys, it were too long to rehearse.' The banquet after the ceremony was said to be 'greater than any Caesar had known'.

by 1534. During the last seven years of Henry's reign, after the execution of Cromwell, no leading minister emerged, and with matters of state receiving but fitful attention from an ailing king, it is hard to see much but drift and improvisation.

Christopher Columbus set out on his first great voyage the year after Henry's birth, and throughout his childhood the New World was being opened up by the Spanish and Portuguese. In these developments, Henry showed little interest. His world remained that of western Europe. Foreign affairs consisted of the ever-changing patterns woven by the emperor, the king of Spain, and the king of France, with the kings of Portugal, England, Denmark, and Scotland playing supporting roles. It was natural enough that Henry should wish to measure himself against the young French king, Francis I, who succeeded in 1515, and Charles V, who united Spain and the empire in 1519. Indeed, for the monarch,