

31 From Spain to England to France

One Man, Six Wives

In book 2 of *A History of US*, you'll read that Henry VIII was angry with the Catholic Church because the Pope wouldn't let him divorce his wife. So he formed his own church and married again and again. Altogether Henry had six wives (he cut off the heads of two of them).



Mary I of England persecuted the Protestant church her father had founded.

By the middle of the 16th century everything seemed to be going right for Spain. King Philip II, who was on the Spanish throne, was married to Queen Mary I of England. That marriage gave Spain power in England. Philip's half sister, Margaret of Parma, was ruler of the Netherlands—more influence for Spain.

Spanish ships were said to be the best in the world. Spanish colonies were sending shiploads of gold and silver home from Mexico and Peru. Then King Philip invaded Portugal and

captured the Portuguese throne.

As you might guess, some of the other European nations were jealous. They didn't like Spain having all that power and wealth. There was something else that made some other European nations unhappy with Spain. That had to do with religion. Spain was a Catholic nation, but the new Protestant religions were growing in other parts of Europe.

When Henry VIII was king of England, he became angry with the Catholic Church. He set up a new Protestant Church and made himself its leader. (That was in 1534.) He called it the Anglican Church, or the Church of England, and insisted it was the "true" Church. Many English men and women became Anglicans, but Henry's older daughter, Mary, was not one of them. She never liked the Anglican Church, so she stayed a Roman Catholic. She was the Queen Mary who married King Philip II of Spain.

Mary tried to make England Catholic again. She had Protestants killed, and her husband, Philip of Spain, en-



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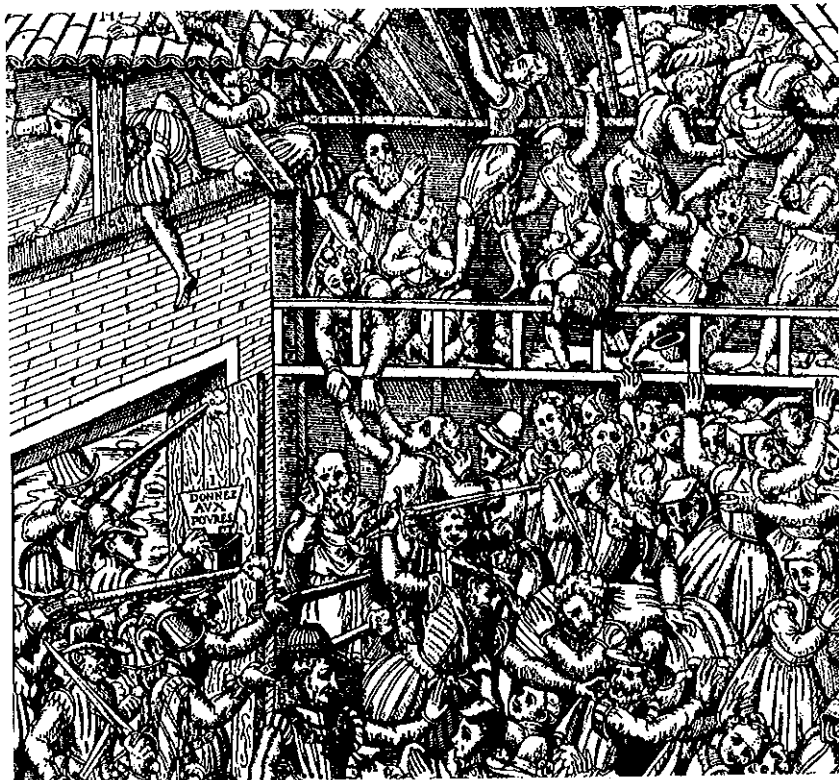


couraged her. That didn't make them popular. The English people called her "Bloody Mary." They called him worse names.

When Mary died in 1558, bonfires were lit all over London in celebration. Then Mary's half sister, Elizabeth, became queen—and just about everyone really celebrated. Queen Elizabeth was an Anglican. (Of course, the English Catholics weren't so happy. Now *they* were persecuted.)

In France the situation was even worse. During the last half of the 16th century, from 1562 to 1598, the French people fought eight ferocious civil wars—and all over religion. Some French people wanted to be Catholic, some Protestant, and they couldn't seem to agree to live peacefully together. Can you understand why, during almost 40 years of war, many French men and women were eager to head for the New World?

Looking back, today, it seems as if people and nations were acting just like silly little kids. Each one was saying, "My religion is better than yours." Actually, each believed God was on his side.



French Protestants flee as Catholic soldiers interrupt their church service. Do you see the soldier who is stealing from the Huguenots' poor box? (It says *Donnez aux pauvres*—"give to the poor.")