

**TWELVE ENGLISH  
STATESMEN. HENRY  
THE SEVENTH**

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Twelve English Statesmen. Henry the Seventh by James Gairdner

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**JAMES GAIRDNER**

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# Twelve English Statesmen

HENRY THE SEVENTH





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BY  
JAMES GAIRDNER

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## CHAPTER I

### EARLY LIFE

NEVER was king so thoroughly disciplined by adversity before he came to the throne as was King Henry VII. Without a father even from his birth, driven abroad in his childhood owing to the attainder of his family, more than once nearly delivered up to his enemies and owing life and liberty to his own and his friends' astuteness, his ultimate conquest of the Crown was scarcely so much a triumph of ambition as the achievement of personal safety. He could not help his birth, and in spite of the imperfections in his title he could not help being regarded as head of the House of Lancaster after Henry VI. and his son had been cut off. He could not help, in short, being an object of suspicion and jealousy to Edward IV. and Richard III. successively, even if he had made no effort to dispossess them of the throne; and, in truth, against Edward he seems to have done nothing for his own part, though the Earl of Oxford's expedition to St. Michael's Mount must have been with a view to advance his claims. He might, indeed, for anything we know to the contrary, have remained an exile and a refugee to the end of his days, had not the tyranny of Richard III. drawn towards