

his story is an amazing record of courage and ingenuity...as he was persecuted in England, fled to the mainland, suffered raids by secret police and inter-national agents, had manuscripts destroyed, survived shipwreck and various incidental confiscations of material, His printers also suffered but he persevered and worked on his New Testament translation...produced in 1525, and thereafter on the Old Testament work, never really completed by himself. He was martyred in Brussels in 1536...an act applauded by Henry VIII although the latter was, at the time, outside the church of Rome, himself. Henry VIII never had forgiven Tyndale for the publication of the Scriptures at a time when Henry had not desired it. But Tyndale's martyrdom gave feet to his writings which eventually became the backbone of the English Bible translations.

Immediately before the Reformation there were a few smallish, splinter groups of non-conformists and some readers of Luther (the "Germans") but the religious life of the land was under the rule of the Roman See albeit believers are found dotting the pages of the national history.

### Politics in England

#### English Politics

English politics had, for a long time been marked by the rivalry of various houses to rule the land. It is much too complicated an account to delve into when our purpose relates to the church. But following the conclusion of the War of the Roses in 1485, the house of Tudor held the supremacy of England with King Henry VII and his family ruling the land throughout the Reformation century.

The heir apparent to the English throne was Arthur, eldest son of Henry, VII. From his earliest days he was trained to be king! His father, anxious for the power of the English throne, secured a marriage alliance with Spain in which Arthur received for a bride, Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. While Arthur prepared to be king on the demise of his father, the second son, Henry, prepared for the clergy. What was more logical than one son to rule the state and one to rule the church?

But in 1502 Arthur died just a few months after the marriage. Both Henry VII and Ferdinand of Spain were apprehensive. Henry feared that if another marriage should be arranged for Catherine outside of England, her new husband might make aspirations for the English throne. Ferdinand was anxious for the continued