

spokesman was Sir Henry Sidney, Viceroy of Ireland, President of Wales and brother-in-law of the Queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester. Court interests and local economic conflicts come together in this particular dispute.<sup>24</sup>

Court interests and politics provide some of the most dramatic examples of the patron client mechanism at work in parliament. This can be demonstrated by the careers of several courtier-patrons and parliament men. The political career of the first of these, Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, extended into three reigns. In the 1530s Gardiner, in alliance with the Duke of Norfolk, led the religious conservatives against the neo-Lutheran Thomas Cromwell. In 1539 Cromwell appeared to be at the peak of his power. For years he had kept Gardiner and Norfolk away from Court, either in exile or on royal service abroad. Now he persuaded Henry VIII to summon a parliament to confirm the dissolution of the larger monasteries. Indeed he promised his royal master 'the most tractable parliament' that he had ever had. Unfortunately for Cromwell, parliament brought his enemies back to Court. Utilising the king's powerful conservative instincts, they outmanoeuvred the minister, securing the passage of the notorious catholic Six Articles Act with the help of episcopal allies in the Lords. A year later Cromwell fell.<sup>25</sup>

In the next reign, however, Gardiner himself was the victim of the protestant reformation of Edward VI's Council. The Bishop was imprisoned during every session of the reign. He wrote from prison denying the existence of 'Winchester's faction, as some term it; whereas, I take God to record, I never joined myself with any man'. Yet shortly afterwards he contradicted this when he warned, 'If it should be of any man, through policy, to keep me from the parliament, it were good to be remembered whether mine absence from the upper house, with the absence of those I have used to name in the nether house, will not engender more cause of objection, *if opportunity serve hereafter*, than my presence with such as I should appoint there.' This was a warning, a threat. It is worth noting two crucial phrases: 'those I have used to name in the nether house' and 'such as I should appoint there'. In normal circumstances Gardiner nominated six members to his episcopal boroughs of Taunton, Downton and Hindon, and influenced elections in Hampshire, Winchester and other Hampshire boroughs. There is no clearer statement of a patron's parliamentary clientage and his willingness to use it to political ends.<sup>26</sup>

With Mary I's accession the wheel of fortune turned and Gardiner became Lord Chancellor. He wanted reunion with Rome, Mary's marriage to an Englishman, and Elizabeth's exclusion from the succession. His great rival on the Council was William, Lord Paget,