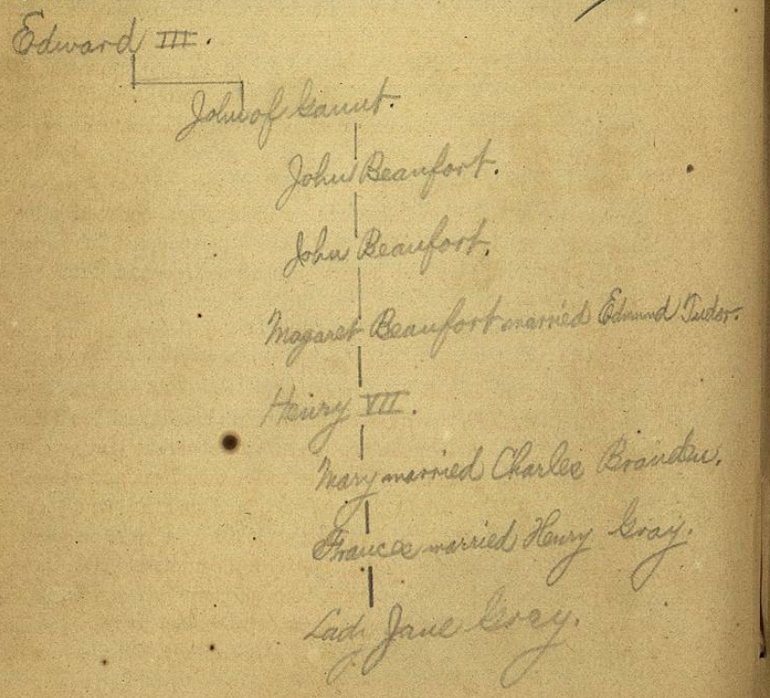
But her reign was disastrous, and the nation hailed with enthusiasm the accession of Elizabeth, on the 17th of November, 1558. With her reign commences a new epoch, even in the history of Europe. Who does not talk of the Elizabethan era, when Protestantism was established in England, when illustrious poets and philosophers adorned the literature of the country, when commerce and arts received a great impulse, when the colonies in North America were settled, and when a constellation of great statesmen raised England to a pitch of glory not before attained?

REFERENCES. — See Hume's, and Lingard's, and other standard Histories of England; Miss Strickland's Lives of the Queens of England; Burnet's History of the Reformation; Life of Cranmer; Fox's Book of Martyrs. These works contain all the easily-accessible information respecting the reigns of Edward and Mary, which is important.



CHAPTER VI.

ELIZABETH

ELIZABETH, daughter of Henry VIII., by Anne Boleyn, was in her twenty-sixth year when she ascended the throne. She was crowned the 15th of June, 1559, and soon assembled her parliament and selected her ministers. After establishing her own legitimacy, she set about settling the affairs of the church, but only restored the Protestant religion as Cranmer had left it. Indeed, she ever retained a fondness for ceremonial, and abhorred a reform spirit among the people. She insisted on her supremacy, as head of the church, and on conformity with her royal conscience. But she was not severe on the Catholics, and even the gluttonous and vindictive Bonner was permitted to end his days in peace.

As soon as the Protestant religion was established, the queen turned her attention towards Scotland, from which much trouble was expected.

Scotland was then governed by Mary, daughter of James V., and had succeeded her father while a mere infant, eight days after her birth, (1542.) In 1558, she married the dauphin, afterwards King of France, by which marriage she was Queen of France as well as of Scotland.

According to every canonical law of the Roman church, the claim of Mary Stuart to the English throne was preferable to that of her cousin Elizabeth. Her uncles, the Guises, represented that Anne Boleyn's marriage had never been lawful, and that Elizabeth was therefore illegitimate. In an evil hour, she and her husband quartered the arms of England with their own, and assumed the titles of King and Queen of Scotland and England. And Elizabeth's indignation was further excited by the insult which the pope had inflicted, in declaring her birth illegitimate. She, therefore, resolved to gratify, at once, both her ambition and her vengeance, encouraged by her ministers, who wished to advance the Protestant interest in the kingdom. Accordingly, Elizabeth, with

consummate art, undermined the authority of Mary in Scotland, now distracted by religious as well as civil commotions. Mary was a Catholic, and had a perfect abhorrence and disgust of the opinions and customs of the reformers, especially of John Knox, whose influence in Scotland was almost druidical. The Catholics resolved to punish with fire and sword, while the Protestants were equally intent on defending themselves with the sword. And it so happened that some of the most powerful of the nobility were arrayed on the side of Protestantism. But the Scotch reformers were animated with a zeal unknown to Cranmer and his associates. The leaders had been trained at Geneva, under the guidance of Calvin, and had imbibed his opinions, and were, therefore, resolved to carry the work of reform after the model of the Genevan church. Accordingly, those pictures, and statues, and ornaments, and painted glass, and cathedrals, which Cranmer spared, were furiously destroyed by the Scotch reformers, who considered them as parts of an idolatrous worship. The antipathy to bishops and clerical vestments was equally strong, and a sweeping reform was carried on under the dictatorship of Knox. Elizabeth had no more sympathy with this bold, but uncouth, reformer and his movements, than had Mary herself, and never could forgive him for his book, written at Geneva, aimed against female government, called the "First Blast of a Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women." But Knox cared not for either the English or the Scottish queens, and zealously and fearlessly prosecuted his work, and gained over to his side the moral strength of the kingdom. Of course, a Catholic queen resolved to suppress his doctrines; but nearly the whole Scottish nobility rallied around his standard, marching with the Bible in one hand, and the sword in the other. The queen brought in troops from France to support her insulted and tottering government, which only increased the zeal of the Protestant party, headed by the Earls of Argyle, Arran, Morton, and Glencairn, and James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, who styled themselves "Lords of the Congregation." A civil war now raged in Scotland, between the queen regent, who wished to suppress the national independence, and extinguish the Protestant religion, and the Protestants, who comprised a great part of the nation, and who were resolved on the utter extirpation of Romanism and the limi

tation of the regal power. The Lords of the Congregation implored the aid of England, which Elizabeth was ready to grant, both from political and religious motives. The Protestant cause was in the ascendant, when the queen regent died, in 1560 The same year died Francis II of France; and Mary, now a widow, resolved to return to her own kingdom. She landed at Leith, August, 1561, and was received with the grandest demonstration of joy. For a time, affairs were tolerably tranquil, Mary having intrusted the great Protestant nobles with power. She was greatly annoyed, however, by Knox, who did not treat her with the respect due to a queen, and who called her Jezebel; but the reformer escaped punishment on account of his great power.

In 1565, Mary married her cousin, Lord Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox, — a match exceedingly distasteful to Elizabeth, who was ever jealous of Mary, especially in matrimonial matters, since the Scottish queen had not renounced her pretensions to the throne of her grandfather, Henry VII. The character of Elizabeth now appears in its worst light; and meanness and jealousy took the place of that magnanimity which her admirers have ascribed to her. She fomented disturbances in Scotland, and incited the queen's natural brother, the Prior of St. Andrews, now Earl of Murray, to rebellion, with the expectation of obtaining the government of the country. He formed a conspiracy to seize the persons of Mary and her husband. The plot was discovered, and Murray fled to England; but it was still unremittingly pursued, till at length it was accomplished.

Darnley, the consort of Mary, was a man of low tastes, profligate habits, and shallow understanding. Such a man could not long retain the affections of the most accomplished woman of her age, accustomed to flattery, and bent on pursuing her own pleasure, at any cost. Disgust and coldness therefore took place. Darnley, enraged at this increasing coldness, was taught to believe that he was supplanted in the queen's affections by an Italian favorite, the musician Rizzio, whom Mary had made her secretary. He therefore signed a bond, with certain lords, for the murder of the Italian, who seems to have been a man of no character. One evening, as the queen was at supper, in her private apartment, with the countess of Argyle and Rizzio, the Earl of Morton, with one hundred and

sixty men, took possession of the palace of Holyrood, while Darnley himself showed the way to a band of ruffians to the royal presence. Rizzio was barbarously murdered in the presence of the queen, who endeavored to protect him.

Darnley, in thus perpetrating this shocking murder, was but the tool of some of the great lords, who wished to make him hateful to the queen, and to the nation, and thus prepare the way for his own execution. And they succeeded. A plot was contrived for the murder of Darnley, of which Murray was probably the author. Shortly after, the house, in which he slept, was blown up by gunpowder, in the middle of the night.

The public voice imputed to the Earl of Bothwell, a great favorite of the queen, the murder of Darnley. Nor did the queen herself escape suspicion. "But no inquiry or research," says Scott, "has ever been able to bring us either to that clear opinion upon the guilt of Mary which is expressed by many authors, or guide us to that triumphant conclusion in favor of her innocence of all accession, direct or tacit, to the death of her husband, which others have maintained with the same obstinacy." But whatever doubt exists as to the queen's guilt, there is none respecting her ministers — Maitland, Huntley, Morton, and Argyle. Still they offered a reward of two thousand pounds for the discovery of the murderers. The public voice accused Bothwell as the principal: and yet the ministers associated with him, and the queen, entirely exculpated him. He was brought to a trial, on the formal accusation of the Earl of Lennox, in the city of Edinburgh, which he was permitted to obtain possession of. In a place guarded by his own followers, it was not safe for any witnesses to appear against him, and he was therefore acquitted, though the whole nation believed him guilty.

Mary was rash enough to marry, shortly after, the man whom public opinion pronounced to be the murderer of her husband; and Murray, her brother, was so ambitious and treacherous, as to favor the marriage, with the hope that the unpopularity of the act would lead to the destruction of the queen, and place him at the helm of state. No sooner was Mary married to Bothwell, than Murray and other lords threw off the mask, pretended to be terribly indignant, took up arms against the queen, with the view of making her

prisoner, and with the pretence of delivering her from her husband. Bothwell escaped to Norway, and the queen surrendered herself, at Carberry Hill, to the insurgent army, the chiefs of which instantly assumed the reins of government, and confined the queen in the castle of Lochleven, and treated her with excessive harshness. Shortly after, (1567,) she resigned her crown to her infant son, and Murray, the prime mover of so many disturbances, became regent of the kingdom. Murray was a zealous Protestant, and had the support of Knox in all his measures, and the countenance of the English ministry. Abating his intrigue and ambition, he was a most estimable man, and deserved the affections of the nation, which he retained until his death. M'Crie, in his Life of Knox, represents him as a model of Christian virtue and integrity, and every way worthy of the place he held in the affections of his party.

The unfortunate queen suffered great unkindness in her lonely confinement, and Knox, with the more zealous of his party, clamored for her death, as an adulteress and a murderer. She succeeded in escaping from her prison, raised an army, marched against the regent, was defeated at the battle of Langside, fled to England, and became, May, 1568, the prisoner-guest of her envious rival. Elizabeth obtained the object of her desires. But the captivity of Mary, confined in Tutbury Castle, against all the laws of hospitality and justice, gave rise to incessant disturbances, both in England and Scotland, until her execution, in 1587. And these form no inconsiderable part of the history of England for seventeen years. Scotland was the scene of anarchy, growing out of the contentions and jealousies of rival chieftains, who stooped to every crime that appeared to facilitate their objects. In 1570, the regent Murray was assassinated. He was succeeded by his enemy, the Earl of Lennox, who, in his turn, was shot by an assassin. The Earl of Mar succeeded him, but lived only a year. Morton became regent, the reward of his many crimes but retribution at last overtook him, being executed when James assumed the sovereignty.

Meanwhile, the unfortunate Mary pined in hopeless captivity. It was natural for her to seek release, and also for her friends to help her. Among her friends was the Duke of Norfolk, the first

nobleman in England, and a zealous Catholic. He aspired to her hand; but Elizabeth chose to consider his courtship as a treasonable act, and Norfolk was arrested. On being afterwards released, he plotted for the liberation of Mary, and his intrigues brought him to the block. The unfortunate captive, wearied and impatient, naturally sought the assistance of foreign powers. She had her agents in Rome, France, Spain, and the Low Countries. The Catholics in England espoused her cause, and a conspiracy was formed to deliver her, assassinate Elizabeth, and restore the Catholic religion. From the fact that Mary was privy to that part of it which concerned her own deliverance, she was brought to trial as a criminal, found guilty by a court incompetent to sit on her case, and executed without remorse, 8th February, 1587.

Few persons have excited more commiseration than this unfortunate queen, both on account of her exalted rank, and her splendid intellectual accomplishments. Whatever obloquy she merited for her acts as queen of Scotland, no one can blame her for meditating escape from the power of her zealous but more fortunate rival; and her execution is the greatest blot in the character of the queen of England, at this time in the zenith of her glory.

Next to the troubles with Scotland growing out of the interference of Elizabeth, the great political events of the reign were the long and protracted war with Spain, and the Irish rebellion. Both of these events were important.

Spain was at this time governed by Philip II., son of the emperor Charles, one of the most bigoted Catholics of the age, and allied with Catharine de Medicis of France for the entire suppression of Protestantism. She incited her son Charles IX. to the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and Philip established the inquisition in Flanders. This measure provoked an insurrection, to suppress which the Duke of Alva, one of the most celebrated of the generals of Charles V., was sent into the Netherlands with a large army, and almost unlimited powers. The cruelties of Alva were unparalleled. In six years, eighteen thousand persons perished by the hands of the executioner, and Alva counted on the entire suppression of Protestantism by the mere force of armies. He could count the physical resources of the people, but he could not estimate the degree of their resistance when animated by the

spirit of liberty or religion. Providence, too, takes care of those who strive to take care of themselves. A great leader appeared among the suffering Hollanders, almost driven to despair — the celebrated William of Nassau, Prince of Orange. He appeared as the champion of the oppressed and insulted people; they rallied around his standard, fought with desperate bravery, opened the dikes upon their cultivated fields, expelled their invaders, and laid the foundation of their liberties. But they could not have withstood the gigantic power of the Spanish monarchy, then in the fulness of its strength, and the most powerful in Europe, had it not been for aid rendered by Elizabeth. She compassionated their sufferings, and had respect for their cause. She entered into an alliance, defensive and offensive, and the Netherlands became the great theatre of war, even after they had thrown off the Spanish yoke. Although the United Provinces in the end obtained their liberty, they suffered incredible hardships, and lost some of the finest of their cities, Antwerp among the rest, long the rival of Amsterdam, and the scene of Rubens's labors.

The assistance which Elizabeth rendered to the Hollanders, of course, provoked the resentment of Philip II.; and this was increased by the legalized piracies of Sir Francis Drake, in the West Indies, and on the coasts of South America. This commander, in time of peace, insisted on a right to visit those ports which the Spaniards had closed, which, by the law of nations, is piracy. Philip, according to all political maxims, was forced to declare war with England, and he made immense preparations to subdue it. But the preparations of Elizabeth to resist the powerful monarch were also great, and Drake performed brilliant exploits on the sea, among other things, destroying one hundred ships in the Bay of Cadiz, and taking immense spoil. The preparations of the Spanish monarch were made on such a gigantic scale, that Elizabeth summoned a great council of war to meet the emergency, at which the all-accomplished Sir Walter Raleigh took a leading part. His advice was to meet the Spaniards on the sea. Although the royal navy consisted, at this time, of only thirty-six sail, such vigorous measures were prosecuted, that one hundred and ninety-one ships were collected, manned by seventeen thousand four hundred seamen. The merchants of London

granted thirty ships and ten thousand men, and all England was aroused to meet the expected danger. Never was patriotism more signally evinced, never were more decisive proofs given of the popularity of a sovereign. Indeed, Elizabeth was always popular with the nation; and with all her ceremony, and state, and rudeness to the commons, and with all their apparent servility, she never violated the laws, or irritated the people by oppressive exactions. Many acts of the Tudor princes seem to indicate the reign of despotism in England, but this despotism was never grievous, and had all the benignity of a paternal government. Capricious and arbitrary as Elizabeth was, in regard to some unfortunate individuals who provoked her hatred or her jealousy, still she ever sedulously guarded the interests of the nation, and listened to the counsel of patriotic and able ministers. When England was threatened with a Spanish invasion, there was not a corner of the land which did not rise to protect a beloved sovereign; nor was there a single spot, where a landing might be effected, around which an army of twenty thousand could not be rallied in forty-eight hours.

But Philip, nevertheless, expected the complete conquest of England; and, as his "Invincible Armada" of one hundred and thirty ships, left the mouth of the Tagus, commanded by Medina Sidonia, and manned by the noblest troops of Spain, he fancied his hour of triumph was at hand. But his hopes proved dreams, like most of the ambitious designs of men. The armada met with nothing but misfortunes, both from battle and from storms. Only fifty ships returned to Spain. An immense booty was divided among the English sailors, and Elizabeth sent, in her turn, a large fleet to Spain, the following year, (1589,) under the command of Drake, which, after burning a few towns, returned ingloriously to England, with a loss of ten thousand men. The war was continued with various success till 1598, when a peace was negotiated. The same year, died Philip II., and Lord Burleigh, who, for forty years, directed the councils of Elizabeth, and to whose voice she ever listened, even when opposed by such favorites as Leicester and Essex. Burleigh was not a great genius, but was a man admirably adapted to his station and his times, — was cool, sagacious, politic, and pacific, skilful in the details of business

competent to advise, but not aspiring to command. He was splendidly rewarded for his services, and left behind him three hundred distinct landed estates.

Meanwhile the attention of the queen was directed to the affairs of Ireland, which had been conquered by Henry II. in the year 1170, but over which only an imperfect sovereignty had been exercised. The Irish princes and nobles, divided among themselves, paid the exterior marks of obedience, but kept the country in a constant state of insurrection.

The impolitic and romantic projects of the English princes for subduing France, prevented a due attention to Ireland, ever miserably governed. Elizabeth was the first of the English sovereigns to perceive the political importance of this island, and the necessity for the establishment of law and order. Besides furnishing governors of great capacity, she founded the university of Dublin, and attempted to civilize the half-barbarous people. Unfortunately, she also sought to make them Protestants, against their will, which laid the foundation of many subsequent troubles, not yet removed. A spirit of discontent pervaded the country, and the people were ready for rebellion. Hugh O'Neale, the head of a powerful clan, and who had been raised to the dignity of Earl of Tyrone, yet attached to the barbarous license in which he had been early trained, fomented the popular discontents, and excited a dangerous rebellion. Hostilities, of the most sanguinary character, commenced. The queen sent over her favorite, the Earl of Essex, with an army of twenty thousand men, to crush the rebellion. He was a brave commander, but was totally unacquainted with the country and the people he was expected to subdue, and was, consequently, unsuccessful. But his successor, Lord Mountjoy, succeeded in restoring the queen's authority, though at the cost of four millions and a half, an immense sum in that age, while poor Ireland was devastated with fire and sword, and suffered every aggravation of accumulated calamities.

Meanwhile, Essex, who had returned to England against the queen's orders, was treated with coldness, deprived of his employments, and sentenced to be confined. This was more than the haughty favorite could bear, accustomed as he had been to royal favor. At first, he acquiesced in his punishment, with every mark

of penitence, and Elizabeth was beginning to relax in her severity for she never intended to ruin him; but he soon gave vent to his violent temper, indulged in great liberties of speech, and threw off all appearance of duty and respect. He even engaged in treasonable designs, encouraged Roman Catholics at his house, and corresponded with James VI. of Scotland about his succession. His proceedings were discovered, and he was summoned before the privy council. Instead of obedience, he armed himself and his followers, and, in conjunction with some discontented nobles, and about three hundred gentlemen, attempted to excite an insurrection in London, where he was very popular with the citizens. He was captured and committed to the Tower, with the Earl of Southampton. These rash but brave noblemen were tried by their peers, and condemned as guilty of high treason. In this trial, the celebrated Bacon appeared against his old patron, and likened him to the Duke of Guise. The great lawyer Coke, who was attorney-general, compared him to Catiline.

Essex disdained to sue the queen for a pardon, and was privately beheaded in the Tower. He merited his fate, if the offence of which he was guilty deserved such a punishment. It is impossible not to be interested in the fate of a man so brave, high-spirited, and generous, the idol of the people, and the victor in so many enterprises. Some historians maintain that Elizabeth relented, and would have saved her favorite, had he only implored her clemency; but this statement is denied by others; nor have we any evidence to believe that Essex, caught with arms against the sovereign who had honored him, could have averted his fate.

Elizabeth may have wept for the death of the nobleman she had loved. It is certain that, after his death, she never regained her spirits, and that a deep melancholy was visible in her countenance. All her actions showed a deeply-settled inward grief, and that she longed for death, having tasted the unsubstantial nature of human greatness. She survived the execution of Essex two years, but lived long enough to see the neglect into which she was every day falling, and to feel that, in spite of all her glory and power, she was not exempted from drinking the cup of bitterness.

Whatever unamiable qualities she evinced as a woman, in spite of her vanity, and jealousy, and imperious temper, her reign was

one of the most glorious in the annals of her country. The policy of Burleigh was the policy of Sir Robert Walpole — that of peace, and a desire to increase the resources of the kingdom. Her taxes were never oppressive, and were raised without murmur; the people were loyal and contented; the Protestant religion was established on a firm foundation; and a constellation of great men shed around her throne the bright rays of immortal genius.

The most unhappy peculiarity of her reign was the persecution of the Non-conformists, which, if not sanguinary, was irritating and severe. For some time after the accession of Elizabeth, the Puritans were permitted to indulge in their peculiarities, without being excluded from the established church; but when Elizabeth felt herself secure, then they were obliged to conform, or suffered imprisonment, fines, and other punishments. The original difficulty was their repugnance to the surplice, and to some few forms of worship, which gradually extended to an opposition to the order of bishops; to the temporal dignities of the church; to the various titles of the hierarchy; to the jurisdiction of the spiritual courts; to the promiscuous access of all persons to the communion table; to the liturgy; to the observance of holydays; to the cathedral worship; to the use of organs; to the presentation of living by patrons; and finally, to some of the doctrines of the established church. The separation of the Puritans from the Episcopal church, took place in 1566; and, from that time to the death of Elizabeth, they enjoyed no peace, although they sought redress in the most respectful manner, and raised no opposition to the royal authority. Thousands were ejected from their livings, and otherwise punished, for not conforming to the royal conscience. But persecution and penal laws fanned a fanatical spirit, which, in the reign of Charles, burst out into a destructive flame, and spread devastation and ruin through all parts of the kingdom.

If the queen and her ministers did not understand the principles of religious toleration, they pursued a much more enlightened policy in regard to all financial and political subjects, than during any former reign. The commercial importance of England received a new impulse. The reign of Henry VIII. was a reign of spoliation. The king was enriched beyond all former precedent, but his riches did not keep pace with his spendthrift habits. The

value of the abbey lands which Henry seized amounted, a century after his death, to six million pounds. The lands of the abbey of St. Alban's alone rented for two hundred thousand pounds. The king debased the coin, confiscated chapels and colleges, as well as monasteries, and raised money by embargoes, monopolies, and compulsory loans.

But Elizabeth, instead of contracting debts, paid off the old ones, restored the coin to its purity, and was content with an annual revenue of five hundred thousand pounds, even at a time when the rebellion in Ireland cost her four hundred thousand pounds. Her frugality equalled the rapacity of her father, and she was extravagant only in dress, and on great occasions of public rejoicings. But her economy was a small matter compared with the wise laws which were passed respecting the trade of the country, by which commercial industry began to characterize the people. Improvements in navigation followed, and also maritime discoveries and colonial settlements. Sir Francis Drake circumnavigated the globe, and the East India Company was formed. Under the auspices of Sir Walter Raleigh, Virginia was discovered and colonized. Unfortunately, also, the African slave trade commenced — a traffic which has been productive of more human misery, and led to more disastrous political evils, than can be traced to any other event in the history of modern times.

During this reign, the houses of the people became more comfortable; chimneys began to be used; pewter dishes took the place of wooden trenchers, and wheat was substituted for rye and barley; linen and woollen cloth was manufactured; salads, cabbages, gooseberries, apricots, pippins, currants, cherries, plums, carnations, and the damask rose were cultivated, for the first time. But the great glory of this reign was the revival of literature and science. Raleigh, "the soldier, the sailor, the scholar, the philosopher, the poet, the orator, the historian, the courtier," then adorned the court, and the prince of poets, the immortal Shakspeare, then wrote those plays, which, for moral wisdom and knowledge of the human soul, appear to us almost to be dictated by the voice of inspiration. The prince of philosophers too, the great miner and sapper of the false systems of the middle ages, Francis Bacon, then commenced his career, and Spenser dedicated to Elizabeth

his "Fairy Queen," one of the most truly poetical compositions that genius ever produced. The age produced also great divines; but these did not occupy so prominent a place in the nation's eye as during the succeeding reigns.

While the virgin queen was exercising so benign an influence on the English nation, great events, though not disconnected with English politics, were taking place on the continent. The most remarkable of these was the persecution of the Huguenots. The rise and fortunes of this sect, during the reigns of Henry II., Francis II., Charles IX., Henry III., and Henry IV., now demand our attention. If a newspaper had, in that age, been conducted upon the principles it now is, the sufferings of the Huguenots would always be noticed. It is our province to describe just what a modern newspaper would have alluded to, had it been printed three hundred years ago. It would not have been filled with genealogies of kings, but with descriptions of great popular movements. And this is history.

REFERENCES. — For the history of this reign, see Hume, Lingard, and Hallam; Miss Strickland's Queens of England; Life of Mary, Queen of Scots; M'Crie's Life of Knox; Robertson's History of Scotland; Macaulay's Essay on Nares's Life of Burleigh; Life of Sir Walter Raleigh; Neale's History of the Puritans. Kenilworth may also be profitably read.