

**A HISTORY  
OF THE PROTESTANT  
REFORMATION**

**LETTER TEN**



**By William Cobbett**

**1825**

**A HISTORY  
OF THE  
PROTESTANT "REFORMATION"  
IN  
ENGLAND AND IRELAND**

**Showing how that event has impoverished and degraded  
the main  
body of the People in those Countries**

**IN A SERIES OF LETTERS**

**Addressed to all sensible and just Englishmen**

**BY WILLIAM COBBETT.**

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**A HISTORY  
OF THE  
PROTESTANT REFORMATION  
LETTER X**

**Massacre of Saint Bartholomew.**

**Tail-piece to it.**

**A Man's Hand Cut off for thwarting Bess in Her Love-sick Fit.**

**Her Favourites and Ministers**

**History and Murder of Mary Queen of Scots**

**By William Cobbett**

**Kensington, 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1825**

**Dear Friends,**

**288.** Though the **Massacre of Saint Bartholomew** took place in France, yet, it has formed so fertile a source of calumny against the religion of our fathers; it has served in pretence with Protestant historians to justify, or place so many atrocities on the part of their divers sects; and Queen of England and her Ministers had so great and in the first producing it, and then in punishing Catholics in the pretence of avenging it, that it is necessary for me to record an account of it.

**289.** We have seen, in the paragraphs from 273 to 281, treacherous works of **Coligni**, and, in paragraph 278, we have seen that this pretended Saint has basely caused that gallant Patriotic nobleman, the **Duke of Guise**, to be assassinated. In assassinating this nobleman, the wretch did not take the whole of his family. There was a son left to avenge the father, and the just vengeance of this son the treacherous **Coligni**, had yet to feel. We have seen, that peace had taken place between the French king and his rebellious subjects; but, **Coligni** had all along discovered that his treacherous designs only slept. The king was making a progress through the kingdom about four years after the pacification; a plot was formed by **Coligni** and his associates to kill or seize him; but, by riding fourteen hours, without getting off his horse, and without food or drink, he escaped, and got safe to Paris. Another civil war soon broke out, followed by another pacification; but, such had been the barbarities **Coligni** committed on both sides, that there could be, and there was no real forgiveness. The Protestants had been full as sanguinary as the Catholics to find, which has been remarked even by their own historians, their conduct was frequently not say uniformly, characterised by plundering and by hypocrisy and perfidy, unknown to their enemies.

**290.** During this pacification **Coligni**, had, by the dissimulation, endeavoured to worm himself into favour with the young King, and upon the occasion of a marriage between the King's sister and the young King of Navero (afterwards the famous Henry IV), **Coligni** who, **CONDÉ** being

now dead, was become the chief of his sect, came to Paris, with a company of his Protestant adherents, to partake in the celebration, and that, too, at the King's invitation. After he had been there a day or two, some one shot at him, in the street, with a blunderbuss, and wounded him in two or three places, but not dangerously. His partisans ascribed this to the young Duke of Guise, though no proof has ever been produced in Support of the assertion. They, however, got about their leader, and threatened revenge, which was very natural. Taking this for the ground of that Justification, the Court resolved to anticipate the blow; and on Sunday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 1572, it being it being St. Bartholomew's day, they put their design in execution. There was great difficulty in prevailing upon the young King to give his consent; but, at last, by the representations and entreaties of his mother, those of the Duke of Anjon, his brother, and those of the Duke of Guise, he was prevailed upon. The dreadful orders were given; at the appointed moment the signal was made; the Duke of Guise With his band of followers rushed to and broke open the house of **Coligni**, whose dead body was soon thrown out of the window into the street. The people of Paris, who mortally hated the Protestants, and who could not have forgotten that **Coligni's** having put the English in possession of Dieppe and Havre; who could not have forgotten, that, while the old enemy of France was thus again brought into the country. **Coligni** and his Protestants, this same traitor and his sect had basely assassinated that brave nobleman, the Duke of Guise, who had driven the English from their last hold, Calais, and who had been assassinated at the very moment when he was endeavouring to drive this old enemy from Havre, into which this **Coligni** and his sect had brought that enemy: the people of Paris could not but remember these things, and, remembering them, they could not but hold **Coligni** and his sect in detestation indescribable. Besides this, there were few of them some one or more of whose relations had not perished, or suffered in the same way or other, from the plundering, or butcheries, of marauding and murdering Calvinists, whose creed taught them, that good works were unavailing and that no deeds, however base or bloody, could bar their way to salvation. These "Protestants" as they were called, bore no more resemblance to Protestants of the present day, than the wasp bears a resemblance to the bee. That name then was, and it was justly, synonymous with banditti; that is, robber and murderer; and the persons bearing it had been, by becoming the willing tool of every ambitious rebel, a greater scourge to France than foreign war, pestilence and famine united.

**291.** Considering these things and, taking into view that the people, always ready to suspect even beyond the limits of reason, heard the cry of "treason" on all sides, is it any wonder that they fell upon the followers of **Coligni** and that they spared none of the sect that they were able destroy? When we consider these things, and especially when we see the son of the assassinated Duke of Guise lead the way, is it not a most monstrous violation of truth to| ascribe this massacre to the principles of the Catholic religion? With equal justice might we ascribe the act **BELLINGHAM** (who sent for his Church Prayer Book the moment he was lodged in Newgate) to the principles of Church of England. No one has ever been base and impudent enough to do this; why, then, are there men so base and impudent as to ascribe this French massacre to Catholic principles.

**292.** The massacre at Paris very far exceeded the wishes of the court; and, orders were instantly dispatched to the great towns in the provinces to prevent similar scenes. Such scenes took place, however, in several places; but, though, by some Protestant writers, the whole number of people killed, has been made to amount to a hundred thousand by an account, published in 1582, and made up from accounts, collected from the ministers in the different towns, made; the number, for all France, amount to only 786 persons! **DR. LINGARD** (Note T. Vol. V.), with his usual fairness, says, "if we double this number, we shall not be far from the real amount." The Protestant writers began at 100,000; then fell to 70,000; then to 30,000; then to 20,000; then to 15,000; and, at last, to 10,000! All in round numbers! One of them, in an hour of great indiscretion, ventured upon obtaining returns of names from the ministers themselves; and, then, out came the 786 persons in the whole!

**293.** A number truly horrible to think of; but a number not half so great as that of those English Catholics whom "good Queen Bess" had, even at this time (the 14th year of her reign), caused

to be ripped up, racked till the blood came out of their sockets, or caused to be dispatched, or die, in prison, or in exile; and this, too, observe, not for rebellions, treasons, robberies and assassinations, like those of **Coligni** and his followers; but, simply and solely by adhering to the religion of their and her fathers, which religion she had openly practised for years, and to which religion she had most solemnly sworn that she sincerely belonged! The annals of hypocrisy conjoined with impudence afforded loathing to equal her behaviour upon the occasion of the St. Bartholomew. She was daily racking people nearly to death to get secrets from them; she was daily ripping the bowels out of women as well as men for saying, or hearing the mass, for the celebration of which the churches of England had been erected; she was daily mutilating, racking, and butchering her own innocent and conscientious subjects; and yet, she and her profligate court-women, when the French ambassador came with the King of France's explanation of the cause of the massacre, received him in deep mourning, and with all the marks of disapprobation. But, when' she remonstrated with her "good brother," the King of France and, added her hope, that he would be indulgent to his Protestant subjects, her hypocrisy carried her a little too far; for, the Queen Mother, in her answer to "good Bess," observed, that, as to this matter, her son could not take a safer guide than his "good sister of England and that, while, like her, he forced no man's conscience; like her he was resolved to suffer no man to practice any religion but that which he himself practised. The French Queen Mother was still short of "good Betsy's" mark; for she not only punished the practice of all religion but her own, she, moreover, punished people for not practising her religion; though she herself was a notorious apostate, and that, too, from motives as notoriously selfish.

**294.** But, there is a tail-piece, which most admirably, elucidates "good Betsy's" sincerity upon this memorable occasion, and also that same quality that induced her to profess that she wished to live and die a virgin Queen. The Parliament and her Ministers, anxious for an undisputed accession, and anxious also to keep out the Scotch branch of the royal family, urged her, several times to marry. She always rejected their advice. Her "virgin," propensity led her to prefer that sort of intercourse with men, which I need not more particularly allude to Her amours with **LEICESTER**, of whom we shall see enough by and by, were open and notorious, and have been most, amply detailed by Protestant historians, some of whom have been clergy of the Church of England; it is, moreover, well known that these amours became the subject of a play, acted in reign of **CHARLES II**. She was now, at the time of the St. Bartholomew in the 39<sup>th</sup> year of her age; and she was, and she long had been, leading with **LEICESTER**, the life that she alluded to. Ten years afterward, whether from the advanced age of Leicester, or from some other cause the "virgin" propensity seemed, all of a sudden, to quit "good Betsy"; she became bent on wedlock; and, being now thirty-nine years of age, there was, to be sure, no time to be lost in providing an hereditary successor to her throne. She had, in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of her reign, assented to an Act that was passed, which secured the crown to her "natural issue" by which any bastard that she might have by any body, became heir to the throne; and it was, by the same Act, that it was high treason to deny that such issue was heir to it. This Act, which is still in the **Statute-Book, 13 Eliz. chap. S. 2.**, is a proof, of the most hardened profligacy that ever was witnessed in woman, and it is surprising, that such a mark of apparent national abjectness and infamy should have been suffered to remain in black and white to this day. However, at forty-nine "good Betsy" resolved to lead a married life; and, as her savage father, whom she so much resembled, always looked out for a young man. So "good virgin Betsy" looked out for a French nobleman, and in order to convince the world of her sincerity of the massacre of St. Bartholomew who she should fix on as a companion for life. Who she fix on as a companion for life, but the Duke of **ANJOU** Brother of **CHARLES IX** and one of the perpetrators of those bloody deeds, on account of which she and her court ladies, all of her own stamp, had gone into mourning. The Duke was not handsome but, he had what the French call, *la beaute au stuble*: He was young, only 28 years of age, and her old paramour Leicester was now 50! Betsy, though well stricken in years herself, still had a "Colts Tooth" for Ministers and the Nation, who saw all the dangers of such a match, to the independence of the country, protested against it most vehemently, and finally deterred her from it. Also, a gentleman of Lincoln's Inn who had written and published a pamphlet against the marriage was prosecuted, and had his right hand chopped off for this public-spirited effort in

assisting to save England from the ruin about to be brought upon it for the gratification of the appetite of gross libidinous, nasty, shameless old woman. It was her monster of a father who began the "Reformation", that he spared no man in his anger and no woman in his lust. The very same, in substance with a little change of terms, might be said of these terms, might be said of this his monster of a daughter, who completed this "Reformation", and, something approaching to the same degree of wickedness, might justly be ascribed to almost everyone, who acted a conspicuous part, in bringing that, to England, impoverishing and degrading event.

**295.** Before we come to the three other great transactions of the long reign of this wicked woman, her foul murder of **MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS**; her war with Spain, her scourging of Ireland, which unhappy country, still bares the mark of her scorpion venom, before we come to these, it will be necessary to make ourselves acquainted with the names and characters of some of her principal advisers and co-operators; because, unless we do this we shall hardly be able to comprehend many things, which we ought, nevertheless, to carry along clearly in our minds.

**296. LEICESTER** was her favourite, both in council and in the field. **DOCTOR HAYLIN** (*History of the Reformation, Elizabeth*, p. 168) describes him in these words:

"**Sir Robert Dudley**, the second son of the **Duke of Northumberland** (the odious traitor executed in the last reign), she made, soon after she came to the throne, **Lord Denbeigh** and **Earl of Leicester**, having before made him her Master of Horse, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and a Knight of the Garter; and she now gave him the fair manor of Denbeigh, with more gentlemen owing suit and service to it than any other in England in the hands of a subject, adding eves to this the goodly castle and manor of Kenilworth. Advanced to this height, he engrossed unto himself the disposing of all offices in court and state, and of a preferments in the church, proving in fine so unappeasable in his malice, and so insatiable in his lusts, so sacrilegious in his rapines, so false in promises, and so treacherous in point of trust, and finally so destructive of the lives and properties of particular persons, that his little finger lay far heavier on the English subjects, than the loins of all the favourites, of the two last Kings."

And, mind, those two Kings were the plundering and confiscating **HENRY VIII.** and **EDWARD VI.**! And, that his monstrous vices might either be connived at, or not complained of, as he cloaks them with a seeming zeal for true religion, and made himself the head of the Puritan faction, who spared no pains in setting forth his praises; nor was he wanting to caress them after such manner as he found most agreeable to these holy hypocrites, using no other language in his speech and letters than the Scripture phrase, in which he was as dexterous as if he had received the same inspirations as the sacred penmen."

We must bear in mind, that this character is drawn by a Doctor of the Church of England (Betsey's own Church), in a work, dedicated by Permission to **King Charles II**, She, beyond all doubt, meant to marry **LEICESTER**, who had, as all the world believed murdered his own wife to make way for the match. She was prevented from marrying him by the reports from her ambassadors of what was said about this odious proceeding in foreign courts, and also by the remonstrances of her other. Ministers. **HIGGONS**, an historian of distinguished talent and veracity, states distinctly, that **Leicester** murdered his first wife for the purpose of marrying the Queen. He afterwards married, secretly, a second wife, and when she, upon his wanting to marry a third, refused to be divorced, he poisoned her; at least, so said at least a publication called *Leicester's Republic*, put forth in 1568. Yet, after all these things, this man, or, rather, this monster, continued to possess all his power and his emoluments, and his favour with "**the virgin Queen**," to the last day of his life, which ended in 1588, after 30 years of plunder and oppressing

the people of England. This was a "reformer" of religion, truly worthy of being enrolled with **HENRY VIII., CRANMER, THOMAS CROMWELL,** and "**GOOD QUEEN BESS.**"

**297.** Sir William Cecil was her next man. He was her Secretary of State; but, she afterwards made him Lord, under the title of **BURLEIGH**, and also made him Lord Treasurer. He had been a Protestant in the reign of Edward the Sixth, when he was Secretary, first under the **PROTECTOR SOMERSET**, who, when Dudley overpowered him, is abandoned by Cecil, who took to the latter, and was the very man that drew up the treasonable instrument, by which **EDWARD**, on his death-bed, disinherited his sisters. His boast to join in communion only two years before. We have heard a great deal about the cruelties of the "**bloody Bishop Bonner**"; but, nobody ever tells us, that this Marquis of Winchester, as president of the council, repeatedly remanded **Bonner**, in very severe terms, for want of zeal and diligence sending Protestants to the stake! **FOX** says that, "of the Council, the most active in these prosecutions was the Marquis of Winchester" But, now, **MARY** being dead, and Elizabeth being resolved to extirpate Catholics,

**298. PAULET**, instantly became a Protestant and a most cruel persecutor of the Catholics, president of several commissions for condemning them to death, and he was in such high favour with "**good Bess**" that she said, were he not so very old as he was, she would prefer him, as a husband, to any man in her dominions. He died in the 13th year of her reign, at the age of 97, having kept his place during the reigns of five sovereigns, and having made four changes in his religion to correspond with the change made by four out of the five. A French historian says, that **PAULET** being asked, how he had been able to get through so many storms not only unhurt, but rising all the while, answered, "*En etant un saule, et non pas un chine*" - "by being a willow, and not an oak" Our present prime Minister who, in 1822, while collections were making for the starving Irish, ascribed the distresses of the country to a surplus of food, seems also to be of this willow kind; for with the exception of about fifteen months, he has been in place ever since he was a man. He was under Pitt the first for a time; Pitt went out, but he stuck in with Addington, Addington went out, but he stuck in again with Pitt second this time, he was pushed quite out by the "Whigs"; but in he came again with the Duke of Portland; he stuck in with Perceval; and, at last, he got to the top where he will remain for his natural life; unless the paper-money storm should tear the "willows" up by the roots. What this-Saint would have done, if there had been a change of religion at every change of ministry, I shall not pretend to say.

**299.** Such were the tools with which "good Bess" had worked ; and we have now to see in what manner they all did with regard to **MARY STUART**, the celebrated and unfortunate queen of the Scotch. Without going into her history it is impossible to make it clearly appear how Betsy was able to establish the Protestant religion in England in respect of the people of England; for it was, an act, in spite of the cost to the whole of the people of all ranks and degrees who were actually butchered, that is to say, ripped up the bellies of some hundreds of them; she put many and many hundreds of them to the rack; she killed, in various ways, many thousands; and she reduced to absolute beggary as made the population of one of the smaller counties of England; to say nothing, at present, of that great slaughter and abuse in Ireland.

**300.** It is impossible for us to see how she was able to do this; how she came to be able to get approval of parliament to do the many monstrous things, that they did, without any force, indeed, came to do such forced things, as to provide that any bastard that she should have, should inherit the throne, and to make it high treason as well as to deny that such bastard was rightful heir to the throne. It is impossible to account for her being able to continue to reign in England after that act of indelible infamy, the **murder of Mary Stuart**. It is impossible for us to see these and their causes, unless we make ourselves acquainted With the **history of Mary**, and thereby show how the English influence at this most interesting period, the transaction of which were so decisive as to the fate of the Catholics in England.

**301. MARY STUART**, born in 1542 (nine years after the birth of Elizabeth), was daughter of **James V. king of Scotland** of **Mary of Lorraine**, sister of that brave and patriotic nobleman

the **DUKE OF GUISE**, who as we have seen, was barbarously murdered by the vile traitor **Caligni**. **Mary Stuart's** father died when she was only eight days old, so that she became the reigning queen of Scotland, while in the cradle. Her father James V, was the son of James IV and Margaret, the eldest sister of the of the old savage Henry VIII. This "Defender of the Faith" wished Mary Stuart to be betrothed to his son Edward, and by that means to add Scotland to the dominions of England. The family of Guise were too deep for the old "Defender". Mary Stuart (A Regency having been settled in Scotland), was taken to France, where she had her education. And where she seemed to remain all her life The French, were in a mind to secure Scotland for themselves as a constant ally against England, got Mary betrothed to Francis, Dauphin of France, son and successor of Henry II, King of France. She, at the age of 17 years, she was married to him, who was two years younger than herself, in 1558, the very year that Elizabeth mounted the throne of England.

**302.** That very thing now took place which old Henry had been so much afraid of, and which indeed, had been the dread of his councillors and his people. **Edward** was dead, **Queen Mary** was dead, and, as **Elizabeth** was a bastard, both in law and in fact, Mary Stuart was the heiress to the throne of England, and she was now the wife of the immediate heir to the **King of France**. Nothing could be so fortunate for Elizabeth. The nation had no choice but one: to take her and uphold her; or become a great province of France. If **Elizabeth** had died at this time, or had died before her sister Mary, England must have become degraded thus; or, it must have created a new dynasty, or become a republic. Therefore it was, that all men, whether Catholic or Protestants, were for the placing and supporting of **Elizabeth** and for setting aside **Mary Stuart**, though unquestionably she was the lawful heiress to the crown England.

**303.** As if purposely to add to the weight of this motive itself weighty enough, Henry II., King of France, died eight months after Elisabeth's accession; so that **Mary Stuart** was now, 1559, **Queen consort of France, Queen of Scotland**, and called herself Queen of England; she and her husband bore the arms of England along with those of France and Scotland; and the Pope had refused to acknowledge the right of **Elizabeth** to the English throne, and, as old Harry had foreseen, when he made his will setting aside the Scotch branch of his family, was England actually transferred to the dominion of France, unless the nation set at nought the decision of the **Pope**, and supported **Elisabeth**.

**304.** This was the real cause of Elizabeth's success in her work of extirpating the Catholic religion. According the decision of the head of the Catholic church, Elizabeth was an usurper; if she were an usurper, she ought to be set aside; if she were set aside, **Mary Stuart** and the **King of France** became **Queen and King of England**; if they became **Queen and King of England**, England became a mere province, ruled by Scotchmen and Frenchmen, the idea of which was quite sufficient to put every drop of English blood in motion. All men, therefore, of all ranks of life, whether Protestants or Catholics, were for Elizabeth, choose to preserve her life became an object dear to all her people; though her cruelties did, in one or two instances, arm Catholics against her life, as a body they were as loyal to her as her Protestant subjects; and, even when her knife approaching their bowels, they, without a single exception declared her to be their lawful Queen. Therefore, though the decision of the Pope was perfectly honest of itself, that decision was in its obvious and inevitable consequences rendered, by a combination of circumstances so hostile to the greatness, the laws, the liberties: and the laudable pride of Englishmen, that they were reduced to the absolute necessity of setting his decision to nought, or, of surrendering their very name as a nation. But observe, by-the-bye, this dilemma and all the sufferings that it produced, arose entirely out of the "Reformation." Had the savage old Harry listened to **Sir Thomas More** and **Bishop Fisher**, there would have been no obstacle to the marrying of his son with Mary Stuart; and, besides, he would have had no children, who legitimacy could have been disputed, and, in all human probability, several children to be, in lawful succession, to the throne of England.

**305.** Here we have the great, and, indeed, the only cause, of Elizabeth's success in rooting out the Catholic religion. Her people were ninety-nine hundredths of the Catholics. They had shown

this clearly at the accession of her sister Mary. Elizabeth was as great a tyrant as ever lived; she was the most cruel of women; her disgusting amours were notorious; yet, she was the most popular sovereign that had ever reigned since the days of Alfred; and we have thousands of proofs, that her people, of all ranks and degrees, felt a most anxious interest in every thing affecting her life or her health. Effects like this do not come from ordinary causes. Her treatment of great matters of her people, her almost unparalleled cruelties, her flagrant falsehoods, her haughtiness, her insolence and her lewd life were naturally calculated to make her detested, and to make her people pray for any thing that might rid them of her. But, they saw nothing but her between them and subjection to foreigners, a thing which they had always laudably held in the greatest abhorrence. Hence it was that the Parliament, when they could not prevail upon to marry, passed an Act to make any bastard ("natural issue") of her lawful heir to the throne. Wtaker a clergyman of the Church of England) calls this a most infamous act. It was, in itself, an infamous act; but, that abjectness in the nation, which it now, at first sight, appears to denote, disappears, when we consider well what I have stated above. To be preserved from Mary Stuart, from the mastership of the Scotch and the French, was, at that time, the great object of anxiety with the English nation. **HUME**, whose head always runs upon something hostile to the Catholic religion, ascribes Elizabeth's popularity to the dislike that her people had to what he calls the "Romish superstition" **WITAKER** ascribes the extirpation of the Catholic religion to the choice of her people, and not to her. The Catholic writers ascribe it to her cruelties; and they are right so far; but, they do not, as I have endeavoured to show how it came to pass, that those numerous and unparalleled cruelties came to be perpetrated with impunity by her and her Ministers. The question with the nation was, in short, the Protestant religion, Elizabeth, and independence; or, the Catholic religion, **MARY STUART**, and subjection of foreigners. They decided for the former, and hence all the calamities, and the final tragical end of the latter lady.

**306. MARY STUART** was, in the year 1559, as we have see in paragraph 303, on the highest pinnacle of earthly glory, Queen Consort of France, Queen regnant of Scotland and Queen, in lawful right, of England, and she was deemed one of the most beautiful women in the whole world. Never was there such like that of this Queen. Her husband, **FRANCIS II**, died seventeen months after his accession, and was succeeded by **CHARLES IX.**, then not more than three years old. Her husband's mother, **CATHERINE DE MEDICI**, soon convinced her, that to be anything, she must return to Scotland. To Scotland she returned with a heavy heart, anticipating very little quiet in a country which was plunged in all the horrors of the "Reformation" still more deeply than England had been. Her long minority together with her absence from her dominions, had given rise to contending factions of nobles, who alternately triumphed over each other, and who kept the country continually in a state of almost incessant civil war, accompanied with deeds of perfidy and ferocity, of which there is scarcely any parallel to be found in history, ancient or modern. Added to this the work of the new Saints, who had carried on the work of "reformation" much further than in England. The famous **John Knox**, an apostate monk, whom **Dr. Johnson** calls the "**Ruffian of the Reformation**," was leader of the "**holy hypocrites**" (as **Dr. Heylin** calls them) in Scotland, **MARY**, who had been bred a Catholic, and who had almost been deified in the court of France, was not likely to lead a happy life amongst people like these.

**307.** All this, however, Elizabeth and her Ministers and (for let us have no disguise) the English people, saw with great and ungenerous satisfaction. There was, at present at least, an end to the danger from the union of Scotland with France. But, **MARY STUART** might marry again. There were the powerful family of Guise, her relations; and she was still a formidable person, especially to Elizabeth, If Mary had been a man, Betsy would certainly have married her; but here was a difficulty too even for Cecil to overcome. The English Queen was soon to stir up factions and rebellions against her cousin; and indeed, by her intrigues with the religious factions and with the aspiring nobles, became, in a short time, with the help of her money (a drug of infallible effect with the Scotch reformers) more the real ruler of Scotland than poor Mary was. She had, for the greater part of her whole reign, always to head one faction or the other at, or about, her court. Her object was to keep Mary from possessing any power, and to destroy her, if, by any means short of detectable murder, she could effect that purpose.

**308.** In 1565. about three years after the return of **MARY** to Scotland, she was married to **HENRY STUART**, Earl of **DARNLEY** her cousin, in which she over-reached the Queen of England, who, fearing that a visible heir to her throne (as it actually happened) might come from this marriage, took desperate measures to prevent it; but, those measures came too late. **DARNLEY**, though young and handsome, proved to be a very foolish and disagreeable husband, he was a Protestant into the bargain. She soon treated him with great contempt, suffered him to have no real authority and, in fact, as good as banished him from her court and disowned him. **Darnley** sought revenge. He compared his ill treatment to Mary's being under the advice and control of her Catholic favourites, and particularly to the advice of **RIZZIO**, a foreigner, her private secretary. Several mal-content "reformed" nobles joined with **DARNLEY** agreeing to assist him in the assassinating of Rizzio, taking a bond from him to protect them against evil consequences. **Mary** was sitting at supper with some ladies of the court, **Rizzio** and other servants being in waiting, when the conspirators rushed in. **Darnley** went to the back of the Queen's chair; **Rizzio**, seeing their object, ran to the Queen for protection; she, who was in the sixth month of pregnancy, endeavoured by entreaties and screams, to save his life. The ruffians stabbed him at her feet, and then dragged, him out and covered his body with wounds.

**309.** This black and bloody transaction, for which not one of the assistants of **Darnley** was ever punished, was, in all probability, the cause, the chief cause, of the just, though legal killing of **Darnley** himself. The next year after murder of Rizzio, 1567, Mary having, in the meantime brought a son (afterwards our James I. of half Pope and half Puritanical memory), **Darnley** was taken ill at Linlithgow. The Queen went to visit him, treated him with great kindness, and, when he became better in health, brought him back to Edinburgh, but, for the sake of better comfort lodged him in a house, at some distance from other houses, out of the town, where she visited him daily and there, in a room immediately under his, she slept every night. But, on the night of the 19<sup>th</sup> of February (1567), she having notified it to him, slept at her palace, having promised to be present at the marriage of two of the attendants of her court, which marriage took place and at which she was present, on this very night the king's lodging house was blown up by powder, and his dead body cast into an adjoining piece of ground! If the powder had given this base and bloody man time for thought, he would, perhaps, have reflected on the stabs he had given **Rizzio** in spite of the screams of a swooning and pregnant wife.

**310.** Now it was that the great and life-long calamities of this unfortunate Queen began. She had been repeatedly insulted and even imprisoned by the different factions, who were aided and abetted by the English Queen, alternately pressed both her and her people; but, she was now to live the life and die the death of a malefactor. It has been proved beyond all doubt, that the Earl of **BOTHWEL**, and other associates, bound in a "bloody bond" murdered **Darnley**. This was openly alleged, and, in placards about the streets, it was averred that **Mary** was in the plot. No Positive proof has ever been produced to make good the charge, but, the subsequent conduct of the Queen was of nature very suspicious. I shall simply state such facts as are admitted on all hands; namely, that **Bothwel** had, before the murder, been in great favour with the Queen, possessed power that his talents and character did not entitle him to; that, after the murder, he was acquitted of it by a mock-trial, which she might have prevented; that, on 24<sup>th</sup> of April (53 days after the murder) she was, on return from a visit to her infant son, seized by Bothwel at the head of 3,000 horsemen, and carried to his castle Dunbar; that, before she left the castle, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, she agreed to marry him; that he had a wife then alive so that a divorce, both Protestant and Catholic, in one court for adultery and in the other for consanguinity, took place, between **Bothwel** and his wife, in the space of six days so that, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, Bothwel led the Queen to the Sessions House, where, in the presence of the judges, who pardoned him for the violence committed on her person so that, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, she openly married him; that the French Ambassador refused to appear at the ceremony and that Mary refused, in this case, to listen to the entreaties of the family of Guise.

311. Scores of volumes have been written, some in support of the assertion, that Mary was consenting to the murder of her husband; and others in support of the negative to that proposition. Her enemies brought forward letters and sonnets, which they alleged to have been written by

**Mary** to **Bothwel**, previous to her husband's murder. Her friends confirm the authenticity of these. **WITACKER**, an Englishman, a Rector in the Church of England, mind; a man, too, who has written much against the Catholic religion, defends **Mary** against the charge of having consented, or having known of the intention, to murder her husband. But, nobody can deny the above-stated fact ; nobody can deny, that she was carried off by **Bothwel**; that she, being at perfect liberty, pardoned him for that; and that she immediately married him, though it excited horror in the family of Guise, whom she had always theretofore listened to with the docility of a dutiful daughter.

**312.** This gross conduct, almost equal, in power of eating odium, to the murder of such a wretch as **Darnley**, as speedily followed by tremendous punishment A part of her subjects armed against her, defeated **Bothwel**, who was compelled to flee the country, and who, in a few years forwards, died in prison in Denmark. She herself became prisoner in the hands of her own subjects; and she escaped from their prison walls only to come and end her life within those of Elizabeth, her wily and deadly enemy.

**313.** The rebels were headed by the **EARL OF MURRAY**, a natural son of Mary's father, and to her a most unnatural and cruel brother. He had imprisoned and deposed the queen, had had her son crowned at thirteen months old, and he had had himself elected Regent of the Kingdom, Murray had begun his life of manhood, not only as a Catholic but as an ecclesiastic. He was prior of St. Andrew's; finding that he could gain by apostasy, he, like Knox, apostatised, and, of course, broke his oath; and **WITAKER'S** says of him, that though he was guilty of the most monstrous crimes, yet he was denominated a good man by the reformers of those days. His great object was to extirpate the Catholic religion, as the best means of retaining power; and, being also a bold liar and a man that stuck at no forgery, no perjury, no bloody deed, that answered his purpose, he was a man after "good Queen Bess's" own heart.

**314.** She, however, at first, affected to disapprove of his conduct, threatened to march an army to compel him to restore the Queen, gave the Queen positive assurances of her own support, and invited her to take, in case of need, shelter and receive protection in England. In an evil hour **Mary** confiding in these promises and invitations, took, confidently to. the prayers of her faithful friends, on their knees, the fatal resolution to throw herself into the jaws of her who so long thirsted for her blood. At the end of three days found that she had escaped to a prison. Her prison indeed, changed two or three times; but a prisoner she remained for nineteen long years; and was, at last, savagely murdered for an imputed crime, which she never did nor could commit.

**315.** During these nineteen years, Elizabeth was intriguing with Mary's rebellious subjects, tearing Scotland to be divided by means of her corruption spread amongst the dire bands of traitors, and inflicting on a people, who had not offended her, every species of evil that a nation can possibly Endure.

**316.** To enumerate, barely to enumerate all, or half of the acts of hypocrisy, perfidy, meanness, and the barbarity that "good Bess" practised against this unfortunate Queen, who was little more than twenty-five years old when she was inveigled within the reach of her happy clan. Barely to enumerate these would require a space exceeding that of this whole Number. While she affected to disapprove of **Murray**, she instigated him to accuse his Queen's sister; while she pretended to assert the inviolability of sovereigns, she appointed a commission to try **MARY** for conduct in Scotland; while she was vowing vengeance against the Scotch traitors for their rebellious acts against her, cousin, she received, as presents from them, a part of the jewels, which Mary had received from her husband, the king of France; and when, at last, she compelled to declare Mary innocent of having consented to the murder, she not only refused to restore her agreed status to her solemn promise repeatedly made, but refused to give her her liberty, and, moreover, made her imprisonment more close, rigorous and painful than ever. Murray, her associate in perfidy, was killed in 1570 by a man whose estate he had unjustly confiscated; but, traitor after traitor succeeded him, every traitor in her pay, and Scotland bleeding all the while at every pore, because

her cruel parent taught her that it was necessary for her own security. **WITAKER** produces a crowd of authorities to prove, that she endeavoured to get Mary's infant son into her care and having failed in that, she endeavoured to have him to be taken off by poison!

**317.** At last, in 1587, the tigress brought her long-suffering victim to the block! Those means of dividing and ruling, which she had, all her life long, been employing to others, began now to be employed against herself, she saw her life in constant danger. She thought, and, rightly, that those machinations against her arose from desire in the Catholics (and a very natural desire it was) to rid the world of her and her horrid barbarities, and make way for her Catholic, lawful successor, **MARY**; now nothing short of the death of this Queen, seemed a competent guarantee for her own life. In order to make way for the foul deed that had been resolved on, by act of parliament was passed, making it death for anyone who was within the realm to conspire, with others for the purpose of invading it, or, for the purpose, of procuring death of the Queen. A seizure was made of Mary's estate.

**318.** What was wanting in reality was, as **WITAKER** proved, supplied by forgery, a crime, says he, with shame to us, it must be confessed, belonged purely to the Protestants. But, what right had Bess to complain of any hostile intention on the part of Mary? Who was a Queen as well as herself. She was held in prison in a palace; not having been made prisoner in war; but having been perfidiously entrapped and forcibly detained. Every thing had been done against her, in short of spilling her blood; had she not a clear and indisputable right, to make and to destiny, her remorseless enemy, by all the means within her power? And, as to a trial, where was the usage, that authorised one Queen to invite another queen of her dominions, then imprison her, and then bring her to trial for alleged offences against her. When the mode of getting rid of **MARY** was debated "good Bess's" council, **LEICESTER**, was for poison, others for or hardening her imprisonment, and killing her in there but **WALSINGHAM** was for death by means of a trial, this I proceeding being the only one that would silence the mass of the world. A commission was accordingly appointed and Mary was tried and condemned; and that, the evidence of papers, a part, at least, of which, were bare-faced forgeries, all of which were copies; and the originals, none of which were attempted to be produced! The sentence of death was pronounced in October. For four months the savage "good Queen Bess" was employed in devising plans for causing her victim to be assassinated, in order to avoid the odium of being herself the murderer! This is proved by **WITAKER** beyond all possibility of doubt; but, though she had entrusted the keeping of **MARY** to two men, mortal enemies of the Catholics, though repeatedly applied to for the purpose, persevering, refused. Having ordered her Secretary, **DAVISON**, to write to them on the subject, **SIR AMIAS PAULET**, one of keepers, returned for answer, that he was grieved at the motion made to him, that he offered his life and his property to the disposal of her Majesty; but absolutely refused to be concerned in the assassination of **Mary**. The other keeper, **SIR DRUE DRURY**, did the same. When she read this answer, she broke out into reproaches to them, complained of the "daintiness of their consciences, and talked scornfully of the niceness of such precise fellows, and swore that she would have it done without their assistance. At the end, however, of four months of unavailing efforts to find men base and bloody enough to do the deed, she resorted to her last shift, the legal murder, which was committed on her hapless victim on the 8th of February, 1597, a day of everlasting infamy to the memory of the English Queen, "who," says Witaker, "had no sensibilities of tenderness, and no sentiments of generosity; who looked not forward to the awful verdict of history, and who shuddered not at the infinitely more awful doom of God. I blush, as an Englishman, to, think that this was done by an English Queen, and one whose name, I was taught to lisp in my infancy, as the honour of her sex, and the "glory of our isle."

**319.** Ah! and thus was I taught; and thus have we have been taught. It is surely then our duty to teach our children to know the truth. Talk of "answers" to me, indeed! Let them deny, if they can, that this she "Head of the Church" this maker of it, was a murderer, and wished to be an assassin, in cold blood.

## The End of Letter 10



**The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots**



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Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"  
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