

**A HISTORY
OF THE PROTESTANT
REFORMATION**

LETTER EIGHT



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 VIII**

**Mary's Accession to the Throne.
Her mild and benevolent Laws.
The Nation reconciled to the Church.
The Queen's great Generosity and Piety.
Her Marriage with Philip.
Fox's "Martyrs."**

By William Cobbett

Kensington, 30th June, 1825

Dear Friends,

223. We are now entering upon that reign, the punishments meted out during which have furnished such a handle to the those of the Catholic Church, who have left no art which exaggerate those punishments in the first place, in the second place, to ascribe them to the "Catholic Reformation" keeping out of sight, all the while, the thousand times the mass of cruelty occasioned by Protestants, in this Kingdom. Of all cruelties I disapprove. I disapprove also of corporal and pecuniary punishments, on the score of the Reformation. Far be it from me, therefore, to defend all the punishments inflicted, on this score, in the reign of **QUEEN MARY**; but, it will be my duty to show, first, that the degree of punishment then inflicted, on this account, has been considerably exaggerated; second, that the circumstances under which they were inflicted found more apology for the offence than the circumstances under which the Protestant punishments were inflicted; thirdly, that they were in fact as a single grain of wheat is to a whole bushel, compared with the mass of punishments under the Protestant Christianity "as by law established"; lastly, that, be they what they might, it is a base perversion of reason to; ascribe them to the principles of the Catholic religion; and that, as to the Queen herself, she was one of the most virtuous of human beings, and was rendered miserable, not by her own disposition or misdeeds, but by the misfortune and misery entailed on her by her two immediate predecessors, who had uprooted the institutions of the country, who had plunged the kingdom into confusion, and who had left no choice but that of making severe examples, or, of being an encourager of, and a participator in, heresy, plunder, and sacrilege. Her reign our deceivers have taught us to call the reign of "**BLOODY QUEEN MARY**"; while they have taught us to call that of her sister, the "**GOLDEN DAYS OF GOOD QUEEN BESS**." They have taken good care never to tell us, that, for every drop of blood that Mary shed, Elizabeth shed a pint; that the former gave up every fragment of the plunder of which the deeds of her predecessors had put in her possession, and that the latter resumed this plunder again, and took from the poor every pittance which had, by oversight, been left them; that the former never changed her religion, and that the

latter changed from Catholic to Protestant, then to Catholic again, and then back again to Protestant; that the former punished people for departing from that religion which she and they and their fathers had been born and to which she had always adhered; and, that the latter punished People for not departing from the religion of her and their fathers, and which religion, too, she herself professed and openly lived in even at the time of her coronation. Yet, we have been taught to call the former "bloody" and the latter good! How have we been deceived! And is it not time, then, that this deception, so injurious to our Catholic fellow-subject and so debasing to ourselves should cease? It is, perhaps, too much to hope, that I shall be able to make it cease; but, towards accomplishing this great and most desirable object, I shall do something, at any rate, by a plain and true account of the principal transactions of the reign of Mary.

224. The Queen, who, as we have seen in paragraph 219; was at Framlingham, in Suffolk, immediately set off for London, where, having been greeted on the road with the strongest demonstrations of joy at her accession, she arrived on the 31st of July, 1553. As she approached London the throngs thickened; Elizabeth, who had kept cautiously silent while the issue was uncertain went out to to meet her, and the two sisters, riding on horseback, entered the city, the houses being decorated, the streets strewed with flowers, and the people dressed in their gayest clothes. She was crowned soon afterwards, in the most splendid manner, and after the Catholic ritual, by **GARDINER** who had, as we have seen, opposed **CRANMER'S** new church, and whom she found a prisoner in the Tower, he having been deprived of his Bishopric of Winchester; but whom we are to see one of the great actors in restoring the Catholic religion. The joy of the people was boundless, was a coronation of greater splendour and more universal joy than ever had before been witnessed. This is agreed on all hands. And this fact gives the lie to **HUME**, who would have us believe, that the people did not like the Queen's principles. This fact has reason on its side as well as historical authority; for, was it not natural that the people, who, only three years before, had actually risen in insurrection in all parts of the kingdom against the new church, and its authors, should be half mad with joy at the accession of a Queen, who they were sure would put down that church; and put down those who had quelled them by the aid of German Troops?

225. Mary began her reign by acts the most just and beneficent. Generously disregarding herself, her ease and her means of splendour, she abolished the debased currency, which her father had introduced and her brother had made still later; she paid the debts due by the crown.

226. But, there were the plunderers to deal with! And, now, we are about to witness a scene, which, were not its existence so well attested, must pass for the wildest of romance. What? That Parliament, who had declared **CRANMER'S** divorce of **CATHERINE** to be lawful, and who had enacted that Mary was a bastard, acknowledged that same **MARY** to be the lawful heir to the throne! That Parliament which had abolished the Catholic worship and created the Protestant worship, on the ground that the former was idolatrous and damnable, and the latter agreeable to the will of God, abolish the latter and restore the former! What Do these things? And that, too, without any force; without being compelled to do them? No not exactly so: for it had the people to fear, a vast majority of whom were cordially with the Queen as far as related to these matters, respecting which it is surprising what dispatch was made. The late King died only in July, and, before the end of the next November, all the work of **CRANMER**, as to the divorce as well as to the worship, was completely overset, and that, too, by Acts of the very Parliament who had confirmed the one and "established" the other. The first of these acts declared, that, Henry and Catherine had been lawfully married, and it laid all the blame upon **CRANMER** by name! The second Act called the Protestant Church, "as by law established," a new thing imagined by a few singular opinions, though the Parliament, when it established it, asserted it to have come from the Holy Ghost. What was now said of it was true enough: but it might have been added, established by German bayonets. The great inventor, **CRANMER**, who was, at last, in a fair way of receiving the just reward of his numerous misdeeds, could only hear of the overthrow of his work for, having, though clearly as guilty of high treason as **DUDLEY** himself, been, as yet, only confined to his palace at Lambeth, and hearing that mass had been celebrated in his Cathedral

church of Canterbury, he put forth a most inflammatory and abusive declaration (which, mind, he afterwards recanted), for which declaration as well as for his treason, he was committed to the Tower, where he lay at the time when these Acts were passed. But, the new Church required no law to abolish it. It was, in fact, abolished by the general feeling of the nation; and, as we shall see in the next Number, it required rivers of blood to re-establish it in the reign of Elizabeth. Hume following Fox, the "Martyr" man, complains bitterly of the court for its contempt of the laws, in celebrating, before the two Houses, at the opening of the Parliament's mass of Latin, with all the ancient rites and ceremonies, though abolished by Act of Parliament. Abolished! Why, so had Cromwell and his canting crew abolished the kingly government by Act of Parliament, and by the bayonet; and yet this did not induce Charles to wait for a repeal before he called himself king. Nor did the bring over of the "deliverer" William, wait for an Act of Parliament to authorize them to introduce the said "deliverer" The new thing fell of itself. It had been forced upon the people and they hated it.

227. But, when, the question came, whether the Parliament should restore the Papal Supremacy, the plunder was at stake; for, to take the Church property was sacrilege, and, if the Pope regained his power in the kingdom, he might insist on restitution of the greater part of this property had been seized on eighteen years before. In many cases it had been divided and sub-divided; in many, the original grantees were dead. The common people, too, had, in many cases, become dependent on the new proprietors: and, besides, they could not so easily trace the connexion between their faith and that supremacy, as they could between their faith and the mass and the sacraments. The Queen, therefore, though she most anxiously wished to avoid giving, in any way whatever, her sanction to the plunder, was reduced to the necessity of risking a civil war for the **POPE'S** supremacy; to leave her kingdom unreconciled to the Church; and to keep to herself the title of Head of the Church, to her so hateful; or to make a compromise with the plunderers. She was induced to prefer the latter; though it is by no means certain that civil war would not have been better for the country, even if it had ended in the triumph of the plunderers, which, in all human probability, it would not. But, observe in how forlorn a state, as to this question, she was placed. There was scarcely a nobleman, or gentleman of any note, in her kingdom, who had not, in one way or another, soiled his hands with the plunder. The Catholic bishops, all but **FISHER**, had assented to the abolition of the **POPE'S** supremacy. Bishop **GARDINER**, who was now her High Chancellor, was one of these, though he had been deprived of his bishopric and imprisoned in the Tower, because he opposed **CRANMER'S** further projects. These Catholic bishops, and **GARDINER** especially, must naturally wish to get over this matter as quietly as possible; for, how was he to advise the Queen to risk a civil war for the restoration of that, the abolition of which he had so fully assented to, and so strenuously supported? And how was she to do any thing without councillors of some sort?

228. Nevertheless the Queen, whose zeal was equal to her sincerity, was bent on the restoration; and, therefore, a compromise with the plunderers was adopted. Now, then, it was fully proved to all the world, and now this plundered nation, who had been reduced to the greatest misery by what had been impudently called the "Reformation," saw as clearly as they saw the light of day, that all those who had abetted the "Reformation;" that all the railings against the **POPE**; that all the accusations against the monks and nuns; that all the pretences of abuses in the Catholic Church; that all the confiscations, sackings, and bloodshed; that all these, from first to last, had proceeded from the love of plunder; for, now, the two Houses of Parliament, who had, only about three or four years before, established **CRANMER'S** Church, and declared it to be "the work of the Holy Ghost;" now these pious "Reformation" men, having first made a firm bargain to keep the plunder, confessed (to use the words even of **HUME**) "that they had been guilty of a most horrible defection from the true Church; professed their sincere repentance for their past transgressions; and declared their resolution to repeal all laws enacted in prejudice of the **POPE'S** authority"! Are the people of England aware of this? No: not one man out of fifty thousand. These, let it be remembered, were the men who made the Protestant religion in England!

229. But this is a matter of too much importance to be dismissed without the mention of some particulars. The Queen had not about her one single man of any eminence, who had not, in some degree, departed from the straight path, during one or the other, or both, of the two last reigns. But there was Cardinal **POLE**, of whom, and of the butchery of whose aged and brave mother, we have seen an account in paragraph 115 . He still remained on the Continent; but now he could with safety return to his native country, on which the fame of his talents and virtues reflected so much honour. The Cardinal was appointed by the **POPE** to be his Legate, or representative, in England. The Queen had been married on the 25th of July, 1554, to **PHILIP**, Prince of Spain, son and heir of the Emperor **CHARLES V.**, of which marriage I shall speak more fully by-and-by.

230. In November, the same year, a Parliament was called, and was opened with a most splendid procession of the two Houses, closed by the King and Queen, the first on horseback, the last in a litter, dressed in robes of purple. Their first act was a repeal of the attainder of **POLE**, passed in the reign of the cruel **Henry VIII.** While, this was going on, many noblemen, and gentlemen had gone to Brussels, to conduct **POLE** to England; and it is worth observing, that amongst these was that **Sir WILLIAM CECIL** who was afterwards so bitter and cruel an enemy of the Catholics and their religion, in the reign of **ELIZABETH.** **POLE** was received at Dover with every demonstration of public joy and exultation; and, before he reached Gravesend, where he took water for Westminster, the gentlemen of the country had flocked to his train, to the number of nearly two thousand horsemen. Here is a fact, which, amongst thousands of others, shows what the populousness and opulence of England then were.

231. On the 29th of November the two Houses petitioned the King and Queen. In this petition they expressed their deep regret at having been guilty of defection from the Church; and prayed their Majesties, who had not participated in the sin, to intercede with the Holy Father, the **POPE**, for their forgiveness, and for their re-admission into the fold of Christ. The next day, the Queen being seated on the throne, having the King on her left, and Pole, the Pope's legate, on her right, the Lord High Chancellor, Bishop Gardiner, read the petition; the King and Queen then spoke to Pole, and he, at the close of a long speech, gave, in the name of the Pope, to the two Houses and to the whole nation, absolution in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, at which words the members of the two Houses, being on their knees, made the hall resound with **AMEN!**

232. Thus was England once more a Catholic country. She was restored to the "fold of Christ"; but the fold had been plundered of its hospitality and charity; and the plunderers, before they pronounced the "amen," had taken care, that the plunder should not be restored. The Pope had hesitated to consent to this; **CARDINAL POLE**, who was a man full of justice, had hesitated still longer; but, as we have seen before, **GARDINER**, who was now the Queen's prime minister, and, indeed, all her council, were for the compromise; and, therefore, these "amen" people, while they confessed that they had sinned by that defection, in virtue of which defection, and of that alone, they got the property of the Church and the poor; while they prayed for absolution for that sin; while they rose from their knees to join the Queen in singing Te Deum in thanks giving for that absolution; while they were doing these things, they enacted, that all the holders of Church property should keep it, and that any person who should attempt to molest or disturb them therein should be deemed guilty of præmunire, and be punished accordingly!

233. It, doubtless, went to the heart of the Queen to assent to this act, which was the very worst deed of her whole reign, the monstrously exaggerated fires of Smithfield not excepted. We have seen how she was situated as to her councillors, and particularly as to **GARDINER**, who, besides being a most zealous and active minister, was a man of the greatest talents. We have seen, that there was scarcely a man of any note, who had not, first or last, partook of the plunder; but still great as her difficulty certainly was, she would have done better to follow the dictates of her own mind insisting upon doing what was right, and leaving the consequences to God, as she had so

nobly done, when **CRANMER** and the rest of the base council of **EDWARD VI.**, commanded her to desist from hearing mass and most cruelly took her chaplains from her.

234. However, she was resolved to keep none of the plunder herself. Old Harry, as Head of the Church? had taken to himself the tenths and first-fruits; that is to say, the tenth part of the annual worth of each church benefice and the first whole year's income of each. These had, of course, been kept by **KING EDWARD**. Then there were some of the Church estates, some of the hospitals and other things, and these amounting to a large sum altogether, that still belonged to the crown; and of which the Queen was, of course, the possessor. In November, 1555, she gave up to the Church the tenths, and first-fruits, which, together with the tithes, which her two immediate predecessors had seized on and kept, were worth about £63,000. a year in money of that day, and were equal to about a million a year of our present money! Have we ever heard of any other sovereign doing the like? "Good Queen Bess" we shall find taking them back again to herself; and, though we shall find Queen was giving them up to the Church, we are to bear in mind that, in **MARY'S** days, the Crown and its officers, ambassadors, judges, pensioners, and all employed by it, were supported out of the landed estate of the Crown itself the remains of which estate we now see in the pitiful rest of the Crown-lands. Taxes were never, in those days, called for, but for wars, and other really national purposes; and **MARY** was Queen two years and a half, before she imposed upon her people a single farthing of tax in any shape whatever! So that this act of surrendering the tenths and first fruits was the effect of her generosity and piety; and of heart alone too; for it was done against the remonstrances of her council, and it was not without great opposition that the bill passed in parliament, where it was naturally feared that this just act of the Queen would awaken the people's hatred of the plunderers. But the Queen persevered, saying, that she would be a "Defender of the Faith" in reality, and not merely in name. This was the woman, whom we had been taught to call "the Bloody Queen Mary"!

235. The Queen did not stop here, but proceeded to restore all the Church and Abbey lands, which were in her possession, being, whatever might be the consequence to her, firmly resolved not to be a possessor of the plunder. Having called some members of her council together, she declared her resolution to them, and bade them prepare an account of those lands and possessions that she might know what measures to adopt for the putting her intention in execution. Her intention was to apply the revenues, as nearly as possible, to their ancient purposes. She began with Westminster Abbey, which had, in the year 610, been the site of a church immediately after the introduction of Christianity by St. Austin, which church had been destroyed by the Danes, and, in 958, restored by **KING EDGAR** and St. Dunstan, who placed twelve Benedictine monks in it: and which became, under **EDWARD THE CONFESSOR**, in 1049, a noble and richly endowed abbey, which, when plundered and suppressed by Henry, had revenues to the amount of £3,977 a year of good old rent, in money of that day, and, therefore, equal to about eighty thousand pounds a year of money of this day! Little of this, however, remained, in all probability, to the Queen, the estates having in great part, been parcelled out amongst the plunderers of the two last reigns. But, whatever there remained to her she restored; and, Westminster Abbey once more saw a convent of Benedictine monks within its walls. She next restored the Friary at Greenwich, to which had belonged friars **PEYTO** and **ELSTOW**, whom we have seen, in paragraphs 81 and 82, so nobly pleading, before the tyrant's face, the cause of her injured mother, for which they had felt the fury of that ferocious tyrant. She re-established the Black-Friars in London. She restored the Nunnery at Sion near Brentford, on the spot where Sion-House now stands. At Sheen she restored the Priory. She restored and liberally endowed the Hospital of St. John, Smithfield. She re-established the Hospital in the Savoy, for the benefit of the poor, and allotted to it a suitable yearly revenue out of her own purse; and, as her example would naturally have great effect, it is, as **DR. HEYLYN** (a Protestant, and a great enemy of her memory, observes, "hard to say how far the nobility and gentry might have done the like, if the Queen had lived some few years longer."

236. These acts were so laudable, so unequivocally good, so clearly the effect of justice, generosity and charity, in the Queen, that, coming before us, as they do, in company with great

zeal for the Catholic religion, we are naturally curious to hear what remarks they bring from the unfeeling and malignant **HUME**. Of her own free-will, and even against the wish of very powerful men, she gave up, in this way, a yearly revenue of probably not less than a million and a half of pounds of our present money. And for what? Because she held it unjustly; because it was plunder; because it had been taken to the Crown in violation of Magna Charta and all the laws and usages of the realm; because she hoped to be able to make a beginning in the restoring of that hospitality and charity which her predecessors had banished from the land; and because her conscience, as she herself declared, forbade her to retain these ill-gotten possessions, valuing, as she did (she told her council), her conscience more than ten kingdoms. Was there ever a more praise-worthy act? And, were there ever motives more excellent? Yet **HUME**, who exults in the act in which the plunderers insisted on, to secure their plunder recalls this noble act of the Queen as an "impudent" one, and ascribes it solely to the influence of the new Pope, who, he tells us, told her ambassadors, that the English I would never have the doors of Paradise opened to them, unless the whole of the Church property was restored. How false this is, in spite of Hume's authorities, is clear from this undeniable fact; namely, that she gave the Tenth and First Fruits to the Bishops and Priests of the Church in England, and not to the Pope, to whom they were formerly paid. This, therefore, is a malignant misrepresentation. Then again, he says, that the Pope's remonstrances on this score, had little influence with the nation. With the plunderers, he means; for, he has been obliged to confess, that in all parts of the country, the people, in Edward's reign, demanded a restoration of a part of the monasteries; and, is it not clear, then, that they must have greatly rejoiced to see their sovereign make a beginning in that restoration? But, it was his business to lessen, as much as possible, the merit of these generous and pious acts of this basely calumniated Queen.

237. Events soon proved to this just and good, but singularly unfortunate, Queen, that she would have done better to risk a civil war against the plunderers than assent to the Act of Parliament by which was secured to them the quiet possession of their plunder. Her generous example had no effect upon them; but, on the contrary, made them dislike her, because it exposed them to odium, presenting a contrast with their own conduct, so much to their disadvantage. From this cause, more than from any other, arose those troubles, which harassed her during the remainder of her short reign.

238. She had not been many months on the throne before a rebellion was raised against her; instigated by the "Reformation" preachers, who had bawled in favour of **LADY JANE GREY**, but who now discovered, amongst other things, that it was contrary to God's word to be governed by a woman. The fighting rebels were defeated, and the leaders executed, and, at the same time, the Lady Jane herself, who had been convicted of high treason, who had been kept in prison, but whose life had hitherto been spared, and would evidently still have been spared, if it had not manifestly tended to keep alive the hopes of the traitors and disaffected. And, as this Queen has been called "the bloody" is another instance to be found of so much lenity shown towards one, who had been guilty, of treason to the extent of actually proclaiming herself the sovereign? Then was another rebellion afterwards, which was quelled in like manner, and was followed by the execution of the principal traitors, who had been abetted by a Protestant faction in France, if not by the Government of that country, which was bitterly hostile towards the Queen on account of her marriage with Philip, the Prince of Spain, which marriage became a great subject of invective and false accusation with the Protestants and disaffected of all sorts.

239. The Parliament, almost immediately after her accession, advised her to marry; but not to marry a foreigner. How strangely our taste is changed! The English had always a deep-rooted prejudice against foreigners, till, for pure love of the Protestant religion, they looked out for, and soon felt the sweets of one who began the work of funding, and of making national debts! The Queen, however, after great deliberation, determined to marry Philip, who was son and heir to the Emperor Charles V., and who, though a widower, and having children by his first wife, was so much younger than the Queen, who was now (in July, 1554,) in the 39th year of her age, while Philip was only 27. Philip arrived at Southampton, in July, 1554, escorted by the combined fleets

of England, Spain, and the Netherlands, and on the 25th of that month the marriage took place in the Cathedral of Winchester, the ceremony being performed by **GARDINER**, who was the bishop of the see, and being attended by great numbers of nobles from all parts of Christendom. To show how little reliance is to be placed on **HUME**, I will here notice, that he says the marriage took place at Westminster, and to this adds many facts equally false. His account of the whole of this transaction were romance! made up from Protestant-writers, even who accounts he has shamefully distorted to the prejudice of the views and character of the Queen.

240. As things then stood, sound and evident good to England dictated this match. Leaving out **ELIZABETH**, the next heir to the throne was **MARY** Queen of Scots, and she was betrothed to the Dauphin of France; so that England might fall to the lot of the French king: and, as to Elizabeth, even supposing her to survive the Queen, she now stood bastardised by two Acts of Parliament; for the Act which had just been passed, declaring Catharine to be the lawful wife of her father, made her mother (what indeed **CRANMER** had declared her) an adulteress in law, as she was in fact. Besides, if France and Scotland were evidently likely to become the patrimony of one and the same prince, it was necessary that England should take steps for strengthening herself also in the way of preparation. Such was the policy that dictated this celebrated match, which the historical calumniators of Mary have attributed to the worst and most low and disgusting of motives; in which, however, they have only followed the example of the malignant traitors of the times we are referring to, it being only to be lamented that they were not then alive to share in their fate.

241. Nothing ever was, nothing could be, more to the honour of England than every part of this transaction; yet did it form the pretences of the traitors of that day, who, for the obvious reasons mentioned in the last paragraph, were constantly encouraged and abetted by France, and as constantly urged on by the disciples of **CRANMER** and his crew of German and Dutch teachers. When the rebels had, at one time, previous to Mary's marriage, advanced even to London, she went to the Guildhall, where she told the citizens, that, if she thought the marriage were injurious to her people, or to the honour of the state, she would not assent to it; and that, if it should not appear to the Parliament to be for the benefit of the whole kingdom, she would never marry at all. Wherefore, said she, stand fast against these rebels, your enemies and mine; fear them not; for I assure ye, that I fear them nothing at all. Thus she left them, leaving the Hall resounding with their acclamations.

242. When the marriage articles appeared, it was shown that on this occasion, as on all others, the Queen had kept her word most religiously: for even **HUME** is obliged to contest, that these articles were as favourable as possible for the interest and security and even the grandeur of "England." What more was wanted, then? And if, as Hume says was the case, these articles gave no satisfaction to the nation, all that we can say, is, that the nation was very unreasonable and ungrateful. This is, however, a great falsehood; for, what Hume here ascribes to the whole nation, he ought to have confined to the plunderers and the fanatics, whom, throughout his romance of this reign, he always calls the nation. The articles quoted from **RYMER** by **HUME** himself, were, that, though Philip should have the title of king, the administration should be wholly in the Queen; that no foreigner should hold any office in the kingdom; that no change should be made in the English laws, customs, and privileges; that sixty thousand pounds a year (a million of our present money) should be settled on the Queen as her jointure to be paid by Spain if she outlived him; that the male issue of this marriage should inherit together with England, both Burgundy and the Low Countries; and that, if Don Carlos, Philip's son by his former marriage, should die leaving no issue, the Queen's issue, whether male or female, should inherit Spain, Sicily, Milan, and all the other dominions of Philip. Just before the marriage ceremony was performed, an envoy from the Emperor, Philip's father, delivered to the English Chancellor, a deed resigning to his son the kingdom of Naples and the Duchy of Milan, the Emperor thinking it beneath the dignity of the Queen of England to marry one that was not a king.

243. What transaction was ever more honourable to a nation than this transaction was to England? What queen, what sovereign, ever took more care of the glory of a people? Yet the fact appears to be, that there was some jealousy in the nation at large, as to this foreign connexion; and, I am not one of those who are disposed to censure this jealousy. But, can I have the conscience to commend, or, even to abstain from censuring, this jealousy in our Catholic forefathers, without feeling as a Protestant, my cheeks burn with shame at what has taken place in Protestant times, and even in my own time! When another Mary, a Protestant Mary, was brought to the throne, did the Parliament take care to keep the administration wholly in her, and to give her husband the mere title of king? Did they take care then that no foreigners should hold offices in England? Oh, no! That foreign, that Dutch husband, had the administration vested in him; and he brought over whole crowds of foreigners put them into the highest offices, gave them the highest titles, and heaped upon them large parcels of what was left of the Crown estate, descending to that Crown, in part at least, from the days of Alfred himself! And this transaction is called "glorious"; and that, too, by the very merit, who talk of the "inglorious" reign of Mary! What, then, are sense and truth never to reign in England! Are we to be duped unto all generations?

244. And, if we come down to our own dear Protestant days, do we find the **PRINCE OF SAXE COBURG** the heir to mighty dominions? Did he bring into the country, as Philip did, twenty-nine chests of bullion, loading to the Tower, 22 carts and 99 pack horses? Do we find him, settling on his wife's issue great states and kingdoms? Do we find his father making him a king, on the eve of the marriage, because a person of lower title would be beneath a Queen of England? Do we find him giving his bride, as a bridal present, jewels to the amount of half a million of our money? Do we find him settling on the Princess Charlote a jointure of a million sterling a year, if she should outlive him. No; but (and come and boast of it, you shameless revilers of this Catholic queen!) we find our Protestant parliament settling **ON HIM** fifty-thousand pounds a year, to come out of taxes raised on us, if he should outlive her; which sum we now duly and truly pay in full tale, and shall possibly have to pay it for forty-years yet to come! How, we feel ourselves shrink, when we thus compare our conduct with that of our Catholic fathers!

245. In my relation, I have not adhered to the exact chronological order, which would have too much broken my matter into detached parcels; but, I should here observe, that the marriage was previous to the reconciliation with the Pope, and also previous to the Queen's generous restoration of the property, which she held, of the Church and the poor. It was also previous to those dreadful punishments which she inflicted upon heretics, of which punishments I am now about to speak, and which, though monstrously exaggerated by the lying **FOX** and others, though a mere nothing compared with those inflicted afterwards on Catholics by Elizabeth, and though hardly to be called cruel, when set in comparison with the rivers of Catholic blood that have flowed in Ireland, were, nevertheless, such as to be deeply deplored by every one, and by nobody more than the Catholics whose religion, though these punishments were by no means caused by its principles, has been reproached at the cause, and the sole cause, of the whole of them.

246. We have seen, in paragraphs 200 and 201, what a Babel of opinions and of religions had been introduced by **CRANMER** and his crew; and we have also seen, that in morality, that vice of all sorts, that enmity and strife incessant had been the consequence. Besides this, it was so natural that the Queen should desire to put down all these sects, and that she should be so anxious on the subject, that we are not at all surprised that, if she saw all other means, ineffectual for the purpose, she should resort to means of the utmost severity that the laws of the land allowed of, for the accomplishment of that purpose. The traitors and the rebels of her reign were all, or affected to be, of the new sects. Though small in number, they made up for that disadvantage by their indefatigable malignity; by their efforts to trouble the state, and, indeed, to destroy the Queen herself. But, I am for rejecting all apologies for them, founded on provocations given to her; and also for rejecting all apologies founded on the disposition and influence of her councillors; for, if she had been opposed to the burning of heretics, that burning would, certainly, never have taken place. That burning is fairly to be ascribed to her; but, as even the malignant **HUME** gives her credit for sincerity, is it not just to conclude, that her motive was to put an end

to the propagation, amongst her people, of error which she deemed destructive of their souls, and the permission of the propagation of which she deemed destructive of her own? And, there is this much to be said in defence of her motive, at any rate, that these new lights, into however many sects they might be divided, all agreed in teaching the abominable doctrine of salvation by faith alone, without regard to works.

247. As a preliminary to the punishment of heretics there was an Act of Parliament passed in December, 1554 (a year and a half after the Queen came to the throne), to restore the ancient statutes, relative to heresy. These statutes were first passed against the Lollards, in the reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV. And they provided, that heretics, who were obstinate, should be burnt. These statutes were altered in the reign of Henry VIII. in order that he might get the property of heretics; and, in that of Edward, they were repealed. Not out of mercy, however but, because heresy was, according to those statutes to promulgate opinions contrary to the Catholic Faith; and this did, of course, not suit the state of things under the new church, as by law established. Therefore, it was then held, that heresy was punishable by common law, and, that, in case of obstinacy, heretics might be burnt; and, accordingly, many were punished and some burnt, in that reign, by process at common law; and these were, too, Protestants dissenting from **CRANMER'S** Church, who himself condemned them to the names. Now, however, the Catholic religion being again the religion of the country, it was thought necessary to return to ancient statutes; which, accordingly, were re-enacted. That which had been the law, during seven reigns, comprising nearly two centuries, and some of which reigns had been amongst the most glorious and most happy that England had ever known, one of the Kings having won the title of King of France and another of them having actually been crowned at Paris; that which had been the law for so long a period was now the few again: so that here was nothing new, at any rate. And, observe, though these statutes were again repealed, when Elizabeth's policy induced her to be a Protestant, she enacted others to supply their place, and that both she and her successor, James I., burnt heretics; though they had, as we shall see, a much more expeditious and less noisy way of putting out of the world those who still had the constancy to adhere to the religion of their fathers.

248. The laws, being passed, were not likely to remain a dead letter. They were put in execution chiefly in consequence of condemnations, in the spiritual court, by **BONNER**, Bishop of London. The punishment was inflicted in the usual manner; dragging to the place of execution, and then burning to death, the sufferer being tied to a stake, in the midst of a pile of faggots, which, when set on fire, consumed him. Bishop **GARDINER**, the Chancellor, has been by Protestant writers, charged with being the adviser of this measure. I can find no ground for this charge, while all agree, that **POLE**, who was now become Archbishop of Canterbury, in the place of **CRANMER**, disapproved of it. It is also undeniable, that a Spanish friar, the confessor of Philip, preaching before the Queen, expressed disapprobation of it. Now, as the Queen was much more likely to be influenced, if at all, by Pole, and especially by Philip, than by Gardiner, the fair presumption was that it was her own measure. And, as to **BONNER**, on whom so much blame has been thrown on this account, he had, indeed, been most cruelly used **CRANMER** and his Protestants; but, there was the continually accusing all the Bishops (and he more, than of the rest) of being too slow in the performance of this of their duty. Indeed, it is manifest, that, in this respect the Council spoke the almost then universal sentiment; though the French ceased not to hatch rebellions against the Queen, none of the grounds of the rebels ever were such, that she punished heretics. Their complaints related almost solely to the connexion with Spain; and never to "flames of Smithfield" though we of latter times have been made to believe, that nothing else was thought of; but, the fact is, the persons put to death were chiefly of very famous character, many of them foreigners, almost whole of them residing in London, and called, in derision by the people at large, the "London Gospellers." No less, out of two-hundred and seventy-seven persons number stated by **HUME** (on authority of **FOX**) who were punished, some may have been real martyrs to their opinions, and have been sincere and virtuous persons; but this number of 277, many were convicted felons, clearly traitors, as **RIDLEY** and **CRANMER**. These may be taken from the number; and, we may, surely, take it as were alive when Fox first published his book, and

expressly begged to decline the honour of being enrolled amongst his Martyrs. As a proof of Fox's total disregard of truth, there was, in the next reign, a Protestant parson, as **ANTHONY WOOD** (a Protestant) tells us, who a sermon, related, on authority of Fox, that a Catholic of the name, of **GRIMWOOD** had been, as Fox said a great enemy of the Gospellers, had been punished as judgment of God, and that his bowels fell out of body Grimwood was not only alive at the time when the sermon was preached, but happened to be in the church to hear it; and he brought an action of defamation against the preacher. Another instance of Fox's falseness relates to the death of **BISHOP GARDINER. FOX** and **BURNET**, and other vile calumniators of the and actors in Queen Mary's reign, say, that **GARDINER** on the day of the execution of Latimer and **RIDLEY**, kept dinner waiting till the news of their sufferings arrive, and that the **DUKE OF NORFOLK**, who was to be with him, expressed great chagrin at the delay; then the news came, "transported with joy," they sat down at a table, where Gardiner was suddenly seized with the disury, and died, in horrible torments, in a fortnight afterwards. Now, **LATIMER** and **RIDLEY** were put to death on the 16th of October; and Collier, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 386, states, that Gardiner opened the Parliament on the 21st of October; that he attended in Parliament twice afterwards; that he died on the 12th of November, of the gout, and not of disury; and that, as to the Duke of Norfolk, he had been dead a year, when this event took place! What a hypocrite, then, must that man be, who pretends to believe in this Fox! Yet, this Infamous book has, by the arts of the plunderers and their descendants, been circulated to a boundless extent amongst the people of England, who have been taught to look upon all the thieves, felons, and traitors, whom Fox calls "Martyrs" sufferers resembling St. Stephen, St. Peter, and St. Paul!

249. The real truth about these "Martyrs," is, that they were, generally, a set of most wicked wretches, who sought to destroy the Queen and her government, and, under the pretence of conscience and superior piety, to obtain the means of again preying upon the people. No mild means could claim them: those means had been tried: the Queen had to employ vigorous means, or, to suffer her people to continue be torn by the religious factions, created, not by her, but by her two immediate predecessors, who had been aided and betted by many of those who now were punished, and who were worthy of ten thousand deaths each, if ten thousand deaths could have been endured. They were, without a single exception, apostates, perjurers, or plunderers; and, the greater part of them had also been guilty of flagrant high treason against Mary herself, who had spared their lives; but, whose lenity they had requited by every means within their power to upset her authority and the government. To make particular mention of all the ruffians had perished upon this occasion, would be a task as irksome as it would be useless; but, there were amongst them, three of **CRANMER'S** Bishops and himself. For, now, justice, it last, overtook this most mischievous of all villains, who had justly to go to the same stake that he had unjustly caused so many others to be tied to; the three others were **HOOPER, LATIMER, and RIDLEY**, each of whom was, indeed, inferior in villainy to **CRANMER**, but to few other men had have ever.

250. Hooper was a Monk who broke his vow of celibacy and married a Flandican; he, being the ready tool for Protector Somerset, whom he had greatly aided in his plunder of the churches, got two Bishoprics, though he had written against pluralities; he was a co-operator of all the monstrous cruelties inflicted on the people, during the reign of Edward, and was particularly active commending the use of German troops to bend the knee of the English to the Protestant yoke. Latimer whose career, not only as a Catholic priest, but as a most ardent assailment of the Reformation religion. By this he obtained from Henry VIII. the Bishopric of Worcester. Henry changed his opinions; but did not give up his Catholic bishopric! Being suspected he made an abjuration of Protestantism; he thus kept his bishopric for twenty years while he inwardly reprobated the principle of the Catholic religion and which he held on virtue of an oath to maintain the religion as ordained to the utmost of his power, all dissenters from the Catholic Church in the reigns of Henry and Edward he sent to the stake Catholics and Protestants for holding opinions which he himself had before held openly, or that he secretly at the time of his so sending them. He was a chief tool in the hands of the tyrannical Plunderer **SOMERSET** in that black and unnatural act of bringing his brother, Lord **THOMAS SOMERSET**, to the block, who had been

a Catholic bishop in the reign of Henry when he sent to the stake Catholics who denied the supremacy, and Protestants who denied protestant transubstantiation. In Edwards reign" again he was a Protestant bishop, and denied transubstantiation himself, he then sent to protestants who differed from the creed of **CRANMER**. He, in Edward's reign, got the bishopric of London through a roguish agreement, as transfer the greater part of its possessions to the rapacious ministers and courtiers of that day. Lastly, he was guilty of high treason against the Queen openly from and from the pulpit, exhorting the people to stand against usurper **LADY JANE**. And lastly endeavouring to cause civil war and the death of his sovereign in order to by treason, be enabled to keep that bishopric he had obtained by Simony and Perjury.

251. A pretty trio of Protestant "Saints" quite a spectacle. However of such as **MARTIN LUTHER** who **CRANMER** says, in his in his own words it was by the argument of whom he says, (frequently ate, drank, and slept with him) he was induced to turn Protestant: three worthy followers of that Luther, who is, by his disciple **MELANCTHON**, called a brutal man, void of piety and humanity, more a Jew than a Christian three followers altogether by of this great founder of that Protestantism, which split the world into contending sects: but, black as they are, they bleach the moment **CRANMER** appears in his true colours. But, alas? where is the pen, or tongue, to give us those colours! Of the 65 years that he lived, of the 35 years of his manhood, 29 years were spent in commission of a series of acts, which, for wickedness of their nature and for mischief in their consequences, are absolutely without any thing approaching to a parallel in the annals of human infamy. Being a fellow of a college at Cambridge, and having, of course, made an engagement (the fellows do to this day), not to marry while he was a fellow, he married secretly, and still enjoyed his fellowship, and as a married man he became a priest, and took the vow of celibacy; and, going to Germany, he married another wife, the daughter of a Protestant "saint"; so he had now two wives at one time, though his oath bid him to have no wife at all. He, as Archbishop, ended the law of celibacy, while he himself secretly kept a German frau in the palace at Canterbury, having, as we have seen in paragraph 104, imported her in a chest. He as ecclesiastical judge, divorced Henry VIII from his several wives, the grounds of his decision in two of the cases being directly the contrary of those which he himself had laid down when he declared the marriages to be valid; in the case of **Anne Bolyn**, he, as ecclesiastical judge, pronounced, that Anne had never been the king's wife; while, as a member of the house of Peers, he voted for her death, as having been an adulteress, and, thereby, guilty of treason to her husband. As Archbishop under Henry (which office he entered upon with a premeditated oath on his lips) he sent men and women to the stake as they were not Catholics, and he sent Catholics to stake, because they would not acknowledge the King's supremacy, and thereby perjure themselves as he had so done. He become openly a Protestant, in Edward's reign, and openly professing those very principles, for the professing of which he had burnt others, he now burnt his fellow Protestants, because their grounds for protesting were different from his. As executor of the will of his old master, Henry, which gave the crown (after Edward) to his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, he conspired with others to rob those two daughters of their right, and to give the crown to **LADY JANE**, that Queen of nine days, whom he, with others, ordered to be proclaimed. Confined, notwithstanding his many monstrous crimes, merely to the palace at Lambeth, he, in requital of the Queen's lenity, plotted with traitors in the pay of France to upset her government. Brought, at last, to trial and to condemnation as a heretic, he professed himself ready to recant. He was respited for six weeks, during which time, he signed six different forms of recantation, each more ample than the former. He declared that the Protestant religion was false; that the Catholic religion was the only true one; that he now believed in all the doctrines of the Catholic Church; that he had been a horrid blasphemer against the sacrament; that he was unworthy of forgiveness; that he prayed the People, for the Queen and the Pope, to have pity on, and to pray for his wretched soul; and that he had made and signed this declaration without fear, and without hope of favour, and for the discharge of his conscience, and as a warning to others. It was a question in the Queen's council, whether he should be pardoned, as other recanters had been; but it was resolved, that his crimes were so enormous that it would be unjust to let him escape; to which might have been added, that it could have done the Catholic Church no honour to see reconciled to it a wretch covered with robberies, perjuries, treasons and bloodshed. Brought,

therefore, to the public reading of his recantation, on his way to the stake; seeing the pile ready; now finding that he must die, and carrying in his breast all his malignity undiminished, he recanted his recantation, thrust into the fire the hand that had signed it, and thus expired, protesting against that very religion in which, only nine hours before, he had called God to witness that he firmly believed!

252. And Mary is to be called "the Bloody", because she put to death monsters of iniquity like this! It is, surely, time to do justice to the memory of this calumniated queen; and not to do it by halves, I must, contrary to my intention, employ part of the next Number in giving the remainder of her history.

The End of Letter 8



Thomas Cranmer Being Burnt At The Stake





Cranmer

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Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"
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