

A HISTORY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

LETTER NINE



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 IX**

**Mary at War with France.
The Capture of Calais by the French.
The Death of Queen Mary
Accession of Queen Elizabeth.
Her cruel and bloody Laws relative to Religion.
Her Perfidy with regard to France.
The Disgrace she brought upon her Government and the Country
by this Perfidy.
Her base and perpetual Surrender of Calais.**

By William Cobbett

Kensington, 31st July, 1825

Dear Friends,

253. I now, before I proceed to the "Reformation" works in the reign of Elizabeth, must conclude the reign of Mary. "Few and full of sorrow" were the days of her power. She had innumerable difficulties to struggle with, a most inveterate and wicked faction continually plotting against her, and the state of her health, owing partly to her weak frame, and partly to the anxieties of her whole life, rendered her life so uncertain, that the unprincipled plunderers, though they had again become Catholics, were continually casting an eye towards her successor, who, though she was now a Catholic, was pretty sure to become Protestant whenever she came to the throne, because it was impossible that the Pope should ever acknowledge her legitimacy.

254 In the year 1557, the Queen was at war with France, on account of the endeavours of that Court to excite rebellion against her in England. Her husband, Philip, whose father, the Emperor, had now retired to a convent, leaving his son to supply his place, and possess all his dominions was also at war with France, the scene of which war was the Netherlands and the North of France. An English army had joined Philip, who penetrated into France, and gained a great and important victory over the French. But a French army, under the Duke of Guise, took advantage of the naked state of Calais to possess himself of that important town, which had been in possession of the English for more than two hundred years. It was not Calais alone that England held but the whole country round for many miles, including Guisnesse, Fanim, Ardres, and other places together with the whole territory called the county of Oye. Edward III. had taken Calais after a siege of nearly a year. It had always been regarded as very valuable for the purposes of trade; it was deemed a great monument of glory to England, and it was a thorn continually rankling in

the side of France. **DR. HAYLIN** tells us, that **MONSIEUR DE CORDIS**, a nobleman who lived in the reign of Louis XI, used to say, "that he would be content to lie seven years in hell upon condition that this town were regained from the English,"

255. The Queen felt this blow most severely. It hastened and, when her end approached, she told her attendants; that, if they opened her body, they would find Calais at the bottom of her heart. This great misfortune was owing to the neglect, if not perfidy, of her councillors, joined to the dread of Philip to see Calais and its dependencies in the hands of Mary's successor. Doctor Haylin (a Protestant, mind) tells us, that Philip, seeing that danger might arise to Calais, advised the Queen of it, and freely offered his assistance for the defence of it; but, that the English Council, over-wisely jealous of Philip, neglected both his advice and proffer. They left the place with only five hundred men in it; and that they did this intentionally it is hardly possible to doubt. Still, however, if the Queen had lived but a little longer, Calais would have been restored. The war was not yet over. In 1558 Philip and the King of France began negotiations for peace; and one of the conditions of Philip (who was the most powerful, and who had beaten the French) was, that Calais should be restored to England; and this condition would unquestionably have been adhered to by Philip; but, in the midst of these negotiations, Mary died.

256. Thus, then, it is to the "Reformation," which had caused the loss of Boulogne, in the plundering and cowardly reign of Edward VI., that we, even to this day, owe that we have to lament, the loss of Calais, which was at last, irretrievably lost by the selfishness and perfidy of Elizabeth. While all historians agree! that the loss of Calais preyed most severely upon the Queen, and hastened her death; while they all do this great honour to her memory, some attempted to say that the loss of Boulogne had even the smallest effect on the spirits of her "Reformation" brother. He was too busy in pulling down altars and in confiscating the property of Guilds and Fraternities to think much about national honour; or, perhaps, though he, while he was pulling down altars, still called himself "Defender of the Faith" he might think, that territory and glory, won by Catholics, ought not to be retained by Protestants. Be this as it may, we have seen a loss to England much greater than that of Calais; we have seen the half of a continent cut off from the crown of England, and seen it become a most formidable rival on the seas; and we have never heard, that it preyed much upon the spirits of the sovereign, in whose reign the loss took place.

257. With the loss of Calais at the bottom of her heart, and with a well-grounded fear, that her successor would undo, as to religion, all that she had done, the unfortunate Mary expired on the 17th of November 1558, in the forty-second year of her age, and in the sixth year of her reign, leaving to her sister and successor the example of fidelity, sincerity, patience, resignation, generosity, gratitude, and purity in thought, word and deed; an example, however, which, in every particular, that sister and successor took special care not to follow. As to those punishments, which have served as the ground for all the abuse heaped on the memory of this. Queen, what were they other than punishments inflicted on offenders against the religion of the country? The "Fires of Smithfield" have a horrid sound; but, to say nothing about the burnings of Edward VI., Elizabeth, and James I., is it more pleasant to have one's bowels ripped out while the body was alive (as was Queen Elizabeth's favourite way), than to be burnt? Protestants have even exceeded Catholics in the work of punishing offenders of this sort; And, they have punished, too, with less reason on their side. The Catholics have one faith; the Protestants have fifty faiths; and yet, each sect, whenever it gets uppermost, punishes, in some way. or other, the rest as offenders. Even at this very time, there are, according to a return, recently laid before the House of Commons, no less than fifty-seven persons, who have, within a few years, suffered imprisonment and other punishments added to it, as offenders against religion and this, too, at a time, when men are permitted openly to deny the divinity of Christ, and others openly to preach in their synagogues, that there never was any Christ at all, A man sees the laws tolerate twenty sorts of Christians (as they all call themselves), each condemning all the rest to eternal flames; and if, in consequence of this, he be led to express his belief, that they are all wrong, and that the thing they are disputing about is altogether something unreal, he may be punished with six years (or his whole life) of

imprisonment in a loathsome gaol! Let us think of these things, when we are talking of the bloody Queen Mary. The punishments now-a-days proceed from the maxim that "Christianity is part and parcel of the law of the land. When did it begin? Before, or since, the "Reformation"? And, who,, amongst all these sects, which, it would seem, this law tolerates; which of them is to tell us; from which of them are we to learn, what Christianity?

258. As to the mass of suffering, supposing the whole of the 277 persons, who suffered in the reign of Mary, to have suffered solely for the sake of religion, instead of having been, like **CRANMER** and **RIDLEY**, traitors and felons as well as offenders on the score of religion; let us suppose the whole 277 to have suffered for offences against religion, did the mass of suffering surpass the mass of suffering on, this same account, during the reign of the late King? And, unless Smithfield and burning have any peculiar agony, anything worse than death, to impart, did Smithfield ever witness so great a mass of suffering as the Old Bailey has witnessed, on account of offences against that purely Protestant invention, bank notes? Perhaps this invention, expressly intended to keep out Popery, has cost ten times, if not ten times ten times, the blood that was shed in the rags of her, whom we still have the injustice, or the folly, to call the bloody Queen Mary, all whose excellent qualities, all whose exalted virtues, all her piety, charity, generosity, caused adherence to her faith and her word, all her gratitude, and even those feelings of anxiety for the greatness and honour of England, which feelings hastened her to the grave: all these, in which she was never equalled by any sovereign that sat on the English throne, **ALFRED** alone excepted, whose religion she sought to re-establish for ever: all these are to pass for nothing, and we are to call her the "bloody Mary," because it suits the views of those who fatten on the spoils of that Church which never suffered Englishmen to bear the odious and debasing name of pauper.

ELIZABETH

259. To the pauper and ripping-up reign we now come. This is the reign of "good Queen Bess." We shall, in a short time, see how good she was. The Act of Parliament, which is still in force, relative to the poor and poor-rates, was passed in the 43rd year of this reign; but, that was not the only act of the kind: there were eleven acts passed before that, in consequence of the poverty and misery, into which the "Reformation" had plunged the people, However, it is the last Number of my work, which is to contain the history of the rise and progress of English pauperism, from the beginning of the "Reformation" down to the present time. At present I have to relate what took place with regard to the affairs of religion.

260. Elizabeth, during the reign of her brother, had been a Protestant, and during the reign of her sister, a Catholic. At the time of her sister's death, she not only went to mass publicly; but, she had a Catholic chapel in her house, and also a confessor. These appearances had not, however, deceived her sister, who, to the very last, doubted her sincerity. On her death bed, honest and sincere Mary required from her a frank avowal of her opinions as to religion. Elizabeth, in answer, prayed God that the earth might open and swallow her, if she were not a true Roman Catholic. She made the same declaration to the Duke of Feria, the Spanish envoy, whom she so completely deceived, that he wrote to Philip, that the accession of Elizabeth would make no alteration in matters of religion, in England. In spite of all this, it was not long before she began ripping up the bowels of her unhappy subjects, because they were Roman Catholics.

261. She was a bastard by law. The marriage of her mother had been, by law, which yet remained un-repealed, declared to be null and void from the beginning. Her accession having been, in the usual way, notified to foreign powers, that is, that she had succeeded to the throne by hereditary right and the consent of the nation, the Pope answered, that he did not understand the hereditary right of a person not born in lawful wedlock. So that he, of course, could not acknowledge her hereditary right. This was, of itself, a pretty strong inducement for a lady of so flexible a conscience as she had, to resolve to be a Protestant. But, there was another and even a stronger motive. Mary, Queen of Scotland, who had married the Dauphin of France, claimed the crown

of England, as the nearest legitimate descendant of Henry VII. So that Elizabeth ran a manifest risk of losing the crown, unless she became a Protestant, and crammed **CRAMER'S** creed down the throats of her people. If she remained a Catholic, she must yield submission to the decrees from Rome: the Pope could have made it a duty with her people to abandon her; or, at the very least, he could have greatly embarrassed her. In short, she saw clearly, that, if her people remained Catholics, she could never reign in perfect safety. She knew, that she had no hereditary right; she knew that the law ascribed her birth to adultery. She never could think of reigning quietly over a people the head of whose Church refused to acknowledge her right to the crown. And, resolving to wear that crown, she resolved, cost what ruin or blood it might, to compel her people to abandon that very religion, her belief in which she had, a few months before, declared, by praying to God that the earth might open and swallow her alive, if she were not a true Roman Catholic.

262. The Pope's answer was honest; (but it was impolitic) and most unfortunate it was for the English and Irish people who had now to prepare for sufferings such as they had never known before. The situation of things was extremely favourable to the Protestants. Mary, the Queen of Scots, the real lawful heir to the throne, was, as we have seen, married to the Dauphin of France. If Elizabeth were set aside, or, if she died without issue before Mary, England must become an appendage of France. The loss of Calais and of Boulogne had mortified the nation enough; but, for England herself to be transferred to France, was what no Englishman could think of with patience. So that she became strong from the dread that the people had of the consequences of her being put down. It was the betrothing of Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Dauphin, which induced Mary, Queen of England, to marry Philip, and thereby to secure an ally for England in case of Scotland becoming a dependence of France, How much more pressing was the danger now, when the Queen of Scots was actually married to the Dauphin (the heir apparent to the French throne), and when, if she were permitted to possess the crown of England, England, in case of her bearing a son, must become a province of France!

263. This state of things was, therefore, most unfortunate for the Catholics. It made many, very many, of themselves cool in opposition to the change which the new Queen soon showed her determination to effect; for, however faithful to their religion, they were Englishmen, and abhorred the thought of being the underlings of Frenchmen. They might hate the Queen for her apostasy and tyranny; but still they could not but desire that England should remain an independent state; and to keep her such, the upholding of Elizabeth seemed absolutely necessary. Those who eulogise Henry IV. of France, who became a Catholic expressly and avowedly for the purpose of possessing and keeping the throne of that country, cannot very consistently blame Elizabeth for becoming a Protestant for an exactly similar reason. I do not attempt to justify either of them; but I must confess, that, if any thing would have induced me to uphold Elizabeth, it would have been, that she, as far as human foresight could go, was an instrument necessary to preserve England from subjection to France; and, beyond all doubt, this was the main reason for which, at the outset at least, she was upheld by many of the eminent and powerful men of that day.

264. But if we admit that she was justified in thus consulting her preservation as a Queen, and the nation's independence at the expense of religious considerations; if we admit that she had a right to give a preference to Protestants and to use all gentle means for the totally changing of the religion of her people; if we admit this, and that is admitting a great deal more than justice demands of us, who can refrain from being filled with honour, at the barbarity which she too unsparingly exercised for the accomplishment of her purpose?

265. The intention to change the religion of the country became, in a short time, so manifest, that all the Bishops but one refused to crown her. She, at last, found one to do it; but even he would not consent to do the thing without her conformity to the Catholic ritual. Very soon, however, a series of acts were passed, which, by degrees, put down the Catholic worship, and re-introduced the Protestant; and she found the plunderers and possessors of plunder just as ready to conform to her ecclesiastical sway, as they had been to receive absolution from Cardinal Pole,

in the last reign. **Cranmer's book of Common Prayer**, which had been ascribed by the Parliament to the suggestions of the "Holy Ghost" had been altered and amended even in Edward's reign. It was now revived, and altered and amended again; and still it was ascribed to the dictates of the Holy Ghost!

266. If these Acts of Parliament had stopped here, they would certainly have been bad and disgraceful enough. But such a change was not to be effected without blood. This Queen was resolved to reign: the blood of her people she deemed necessary to her own safety; and she never scrupled to make it flow. She looked upon the Catholic religion her mortal enemy; and, cost what it might, she was resolved to destroy it, if she could, the means being, by her, those which best answered her end.

267. With this view, statutes the most bloody were passed. All persons were compelled to take the oath of supremacy, on pain of death. To take the oath of supremacy; that is to say, to acknowledge the Queen's supremacy in spiritual matters, was to renounce the Pope and the Catholic religion; or, in other words, to become an apostate. Thus was a very large part of her people at once condemned to death for adhering to the religion of their fathers; and, moreover, for adhering; to that very religion, in which she had openly lived till she became Queen, and to her firm belief in which she had sworn at her coronation.

268. Besides this act of monstrous barbarity, it was made high treason in a priest to say mass; it was made high treason in a priest to come into the kingdom from abroad; it was made high treason to harbour or to relieve a priest, on these grounds, and others of a like nature, hundreds upon hundreds were butchered in the most inhuman manner, being first hung up, then cut down alive, their bowels then ripped up, and their bodies chopped into quarters: and this, I again beg you, sensible and just English to observe, only because the unfortunate persons were too virtuous and sincere to apostatise from that faith which this Queen herself had, at her coronation, in her coronation oath, solemnly sworn to adhere to and defend!

269. Having pulled down the altars, set up the tables; having ousted the Catholic priests and worship, and put in their stead a set of hungry, beggarly creatures, the very scum of the earth; with **Cranmer's prayer-book** amended at their hands; having done this, she compelled her Catholic subjects to attend in the churches under enormous penalties which rose, at last, to death itself, in case of perseverance in refusal! Thus were all the good, all the sincere, all the conscientious people in the kingdom incessantly harassed, ruined by enormous fines, brought to the gallows, or compelled to flee from their native country. Thus was this protestant religion watered with the tears and the blood of the people of England. Talk of Catholic persecution and cruelty! Where are you to find persecution and cruelty like this, inflicted by Catholic princes? Elizabeth put, in one way or another, more Catholics to death, in one year, for not becoming apostates to the religion which she had sworn to be hers, and to be the only true one, than Mary put to death in her whole reign for having apostatised from, the religion of her and their fathers, and to which religion she herself had always adhered Yet, the former is called, or has been called, good "**Queen Bess**" and the latter "**bloody Queen Mary.**" Even the horrid massacre or St. Bartholomew was nothing, when fairly compared with the butcheries and other cruelties of the reign of this Protestant Queen of England; yes, a mere nothing; and yet she put on mourning upon that occasion, and had the consummate hypocrisy to affect horror at the cruelties that the King of France had committed.

270. This massacre took place at Paris, in the year 1572, and in the 14th year of Elizabeth's reign; and, as it belongs to the history of that day, as it was, in fact, in part, produced by her own incessant and most mischievous intrigues, and, as it has been made a great handle of in the work of calumniating the Catholics, even to this day, it is necessary that I give a true account of it, and that I go back to those civil wars in France which she occasioned, and in which she took so large a part, and which finally lost Calais and its territory to England. The "Reformation" which **Luther**

said he was taught by the Devil, had found its way into France so early as in the year 1530, or thereabouts. The "reformers" there were called Huguenots. For along time while they were of little consequence; but they, at last, in the reign of **CHARLES IX.**, became formidable to the government by being taken hold of by those ambitious and rebellious leaders **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**. The faction, of which these two were the chiefs, wanted to have the governing of France during the minority of Charles, who came to the throne in the year 1561, at ten years of age. His mother, the Queen Dowager, gave the preference to the Duke of **GUISE** and his party. The disappointed nobles, **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**, needed no better motive for becoming most zealous Protestants, the Guises being zealous in the Catholic cause! Hence arose an open rebellion on the part of the former, fomented by the Queen of England, who seemed to think, that she never could be safe as long as there were Catholic prince, priest, or people left upon the face of the earth; and who never stuck at means if they were but calculated to effect her end. She was herself an apostate; she wanted to annihilate that, from which she had apostatised; and, by her endeavours to effect her purpose, she made her people bleed at every pore, and made no scruple, upon any occasion, to sacrifice the national honour.

271. At her coming to the throne, she found the country at war with France, and Calais in its hands, that fortress and territory having, as we have seen in paragraph 254, been taken by a French army under the **DUKE OF GUISE**. She almost immediately made peace with France, and that, too, without getting Calais back, as she might have done, if she had not preferred her own private interest to the interest and honour of England. The negotiations for peace (England, Spain, and France being the parties) were carried on at Chateau Cambresis, in France. All was soon settled with regard to Spain and France; but Philip, (Mary's husband, remember,) faithful to his engagements, refused to sign the treaty, until the new Queen of England should be satisfied with regard to Calais; and he even offered to continue the war for six years, unless Calais were restored, provided Elizabeth would bind herself not to make a separate peace during that period. She declined this generous offer she had begun to rip up her subjects, and was afraid of war; and she, therefore, clandestinely entered into negotiations with France, and it was agreed that the latter should keep Calais for eight years, or pay to England 500,000 crowns! Never was there a baser act than this treaty, on the part of England. But this was not all; for the treaty further postulated that if France committed any act of aggression against England, during the eight years, or if England committed any act of aggression against France, during that time, the treaty should be void, and that the former should lose the right of retaining, and the latter the claim to the restoration, of this valuable town and territory.

272. This treaty was concluded in 1559, and it was a treaty not only of friendship, but of alliance between the parties. But, before three years out of the eight had passed away, "good Queen Bess" out of pure hatred and fear of the Catholics; from a pure desire to make her tyrannical sway secure; from the sole desire of being still able to imprison, and rip up her unfortunate subjects, forfeited all claim to the restoration of Calais, and that, too, by a breach of treaty more flagrant and more base than, perhaps, had ever before been witnessed in the world.

273. **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**, with their Huguenots, had stirred up a formidable civil war in France. "Good Queen Bess's" ambassador at that Court stimulated and assisted the rebels to the utmost of his power. At last, **VIDAME**, an agent of **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**, came, secretly, over to England to negotiate for military, naval, and pecuniary assistance. They succeeded with "good Bess" who, wholly disregarding the solemn treaties by which she was bound to **CHARLES IX.**, King of France, entered into a formal treaty with the French rebels to send them an army and money, for the purpose of carrying on war against their sovereign, of whom she was an ally, having bound herself, in that character, by a solemn oath on the Evangelists! By this treaty she engaged to furnish men, ships, and money; and the traitors, on their part, engaged to put **HAVRE DE GRACE** at once into her hands, as a pledge, not only for the repayment of the money to be advanced, but for the restoration of Calais! This infamous compact richly deserves the consequences that attended it.

274. The French ambassador in London, when he found that an intercourse was going on between the Queen and the agents of the rebels, went to **CECIL**, the secretary of state, carrying the treaty of **CHATEAU CAMBRESIS** in his hand, and demanded, agreeably to the stipulations of that treaty, that the agent of the rebels should be delivered up as traitors to their sovereign; and he warned the English government, that any act of aggression on its part, would annihilate its claim to the recovery of Calais at the end of the eight years. But "**Good Bess**" had caused the civil wars in France; she had, by her bribes, and other underhand means, stirred them up, and she believed that the success of the French rebels were necessary to her own security on her throne of doubtful right; and, as she hoped to get Calais in this perfidious way, she saw nothing but gain in the perfidy.

275. The rebels were in possession of **Dieppe, Rouen, Havre de Grace**, and had extended their power over a considerable part of Normandy. They at once put **Havre** and **Dieppe** into the hands of the English. So infamous and treacherous a proceeding roused the Catholics of France, who now became ashamed of that inactivity, which had suffered a sect, less than a hundredth part of the population, to sell their country under the blasphemous plea of a love of the Gospel, "**Good Bess**" with her usual mixture of hypocrisy and effrontery, sent her proclamations into Normandy, declaring, that she meant no hostility against her "**good brother**" the King of France; but merely to protect his Protestant subjects against the tyranny of the **House of Guise**; and that her "good brother" ought to be grateful to her for the assistance she was lending! This cool and hypocritical insolence added fury to the flame. All France could but recollect, that it was the skilful, the gallant, the patriotic **Duke of Guise**, who had, only five years before, ejected the English from Calais, their last hold in France; and they now saw these "**sons of the Gospel**," as they had the audacity to call themselves, bring those same English back again, and put two French sea-ports into their hands at once! Are we to wonder at the inextinguishable hatred of the people of France against this traitorous sect? Are we to wonder, that they felt a desire to extirpate the whole of infamous a race, who had already sold their country to the utmost of their power?

276. The French nobility, from every province and corner of France, flew to the aid of their sovereign, whose army was commanded by the Constable, **MONTMORENCY**, with the **Duke of Guise** under him. **CONDÈ** was. at the head of the rebel army, having **COLIGNI** as a sort of partner in the concern, and having been joined by the English troops under the **Earl of Warwick**, nephew of "good Bess's" paramour, and Dudley, of whom the Protestant clergymen, **HELYN** and **WHITAKER**, will tell us more than enough by-and-by. The first movement of the French against this combined mass of hypocrisy, audacity, perfidy and treason, was the besieging of Rouen, into which **SIR EDWARD POINNINGS** who had preceded **WARWICK**, had thrown an English reinforcement to assist the faithful "Sons of the Gospel." In order to encourage the French, the Queen-Mother (**Catherine de Medici**), her son the young King, Charles (now twelve years of age), and the **King of Navarre**, were present at the siege. The latter was mortally wounded in the attack; but the Catholics finally took the town by assault, and. put the whole of the garrison to the sword, including the English reinforcement sent by "good Queen Bess."

277. In the meanwhile the brother of **COLIGNI** had, by the money of "good Bess," collected together a body of German mercenary Gospellers, and had got them to Orleans, which was then the main hold of the Huguenots; while "good Bess," in order to act her part faithfully, ordered public prayers, during three whole days, to implore "God's blessing" upon her cause and the cause of the "Gospel" Thus reinforced by another body of foreigners brought into their country, the base traitors, **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**, first made a feint on the side of Paris; but, finding themselves too weak on that side, they took their way towards Normandy, in the hope of there having the aid of the English forces. But, the Catholics, still under **MONTMORENCY** and the **Duke of Guise**, followed the traitors, overtook them at **DREUX**, compelled them to fight, took **CONDÈ** himself prisoner, and, though **Montmorency** was taken prisoner by the rebels, the Duke of Guise took the chief commander, and drove the rebel **COLIGNI** And his army before him; and, this, too, observe, in spite of "good Bess's" three whole days of prayers.

278. Nevertheless, **COLIGNI** kept the field, and pillaged Normandy pretty severely. "Good Bess" sent him some money, and offered to be bound for more, if he could get any merchants (that is, Jews) to lend it him; but, she sent him no troops; those, under the Earl of Warwick, being kept safe and sound in the strong fortress of Havre de Grace, which place honest and "good Bess" intended to keep, let things go which way they might, which honest intention we shall, however, find defeated in the end. **COLIGNI** and his ruffians and German mercenary Gospellers cruelly plundered the Normans as far as they could extend their arms. The Catholics, now under the **Duke of Guise**, laid siege to Orleans, While this siege was going on, one **POLTROT**, a Huguenot, in the pay of **COLIGNI**, went, under the guise of being a deserter from that inveterate rebel chief, and entered into the service of the army under the **Duke of Guise**. In a short time this miscreant found the means to assassinate that gallant nobleman and distinguished patriot, instigated, and, indeed, employed for the express purpose by **COLIGNI**, and urged on by **BEZA**, the "famous preacher," as **HUME** calls him, but really one of the most infamous of all the "reforming" preachers, and, perhaps, second to none but **LUTHER** himself. This atrocious deed met, afterwards, with retaliation in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when on **COLIGNI'S** mangled body there might have been placarded the name of **POLTROT**. This wretch had been paid by **COLIGNI**, and the money had come from honest and sincere "good Queen Bess" whom we shall hereafter find plainly accused by **Whitaker** (a clergyman of the Church of England) of plotting the assassination of her own cousin, and finding no man in her kingdom base enough to perform the deed.

279. This foul deed seems to have made **CONDÈ** ashamed of his infamous associate and followers. Ambition had made him a rebel; but he had sense of honour enough left to make him shudder at the thought of being the leader of assassins: and he, with one drop of true blood in him, could not think without horror of such a man as the **Duke of Guise**, who had rendered such inestimable services to France, being swept from existence by so base a miscreant as that whom his late colleague had hired and paid for that purpose. If the son of the Duke of Guise could have destroyed **COLIGNI** and his whole crew, he would have been justified in so doing. And yet, the world has been stunned with the Protestant cries of horror at the death of this same **Coligni** and a small part of his followers!

280. **CONDÈ** now sought to get rid of his miscreant associates by proposing, in February 1563, a pacification, and tendering his submission to his sovereign on condition of an act of oblivion. **COLIGNI** was included in the amnesty. The King granted to the **Huguenots** permission to practice their worship in one town in every bailiwick; and thus were all matters settled between the King and his rebellious subject. Sad tidings for "good Queen Bess," who, as **WHITAKER** well observes, continually sought her safety in the divisions and misery of others. **CONDÈ** in his treaty with her, had stipulated not to conclude any peace without her consent; but, had she a right to complain of a want of good faith? She, who had broken her treaty and her oath with **Charles IX**, and who, in defiance of both, had catered into a treaty with rebels, in open arms against their king?

281. The French King, wishing to get her troops quietly out of Havre de Grace, and finding that she now pretended to hold it as a pledge for the surrender of Calais, at the end of the eight years, offered to renew the treaty of **CHATEAU CAMBRESIS**, by which Calais was to be restored to England in 1567. But, she rejected this fair and reasonable proposal. She had got Havre; no matter how; and she said, that, "a bird in hand was worth two in the bush," snapping her fingers at the same time, and, as was the common practice with her upon such occasions, confirming her resolution with thundering oath, so becoming in a "Virgin Queen." Finding, however, that all parties in France were now united for the expulsion of the English, she reluctantly gave way. She authorized her ambassadors to present a new project of treaty; but, by this time, the French army, under **Montmoency**, **CONDÈ**, "Good Bess's" late friend and ally being serving in the army, was on its way to regain Havre by force of arms, the King of France being well convinced, that treaty with "Good Betsy" were things perfectly vain.

382. Still, it was not a trifling thing to take Havre out of the hands of the English. A great deal of taxes had been imposed upon this nation (to say nothing of the "prayers"), an order to ensure the possession of this place. The **Earl of Warwick**, instead of sending troops to assist Bess's allies, had kept his army at Havre; had, with six thousand soldiers and seven hundred pioneers, rendered the place "impregnable;" had, as soon as he heard that the rebellion was to an end, expelled all the French people from Havre, to their utter ruin, and in direct breach of Bess's treaty with **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**. But, in spite of all this, **Montmorency** was, at the end of a short time, ready to enter the place by assault, having made his breaches in preparation. The Queen-Mother and the King were present in the camp, where they had the indescribable pleasure to see "Good Queen Bess's" general humbly propose to surrender the place to the rightful sovereign, without any mention of Calais and territory, and on no condition whatever, but that of being permitted to return to England with the miserable remains of his army; and England, after all the treasure as was expended to gratify the malignity of "Good Bess" after all the just imputations of perfidy that she had brought upon it, had to receive that remnant, that ratification of disgrace, greater than it had to support from the day when glorious Alfred finally expelled the Danes. And, yet, the woman is called, or has been called, "Good Queen Bess" and her perfidious and butchering reign has been called glorious!

283. Great as the mortifications of "Good Bess" now were, and great as were the misfortunes of the country, brought upon it by these her proceedings of hitherto unheard of hypocrisy and breach of faith, we have, as yet, seen the full measure of neither the one nor the other. For, "religion and good Bess" had now to sue for peace, and with that King, with whose rebel subjects she had so recently cooperated. Her ambassadors, going with due passports, were arrested and imprisoned. She stamped and swore, but she swallowed the affront, and took the regular steps to cause them to be received at the French court, who, on their part, treated her pressing applications with a contemptuous sneer, and suffered many months to pass away, before they would listen to any terms of peace. Smith was one of her envoys, and the other was that same **THROCKMORTON** who had been her ambassador at Paris, and who had been her agent in stirring up **CONDÈ** and **COLIGNI**. to their rebellion. The former was imprisoned at Melun, and the latter at Saint Germain's. Smith was released upon her application; but Throckmorton was detained and was made use of for the following curious, and, "good Bess," most humiliating purpose. The treaty of **CHATEAU CAMBRESIS**, which stipulated for the restoration of Calais in eight years, or the forfeiture of 500,000 crowns by the French, contained a stipulation, that four French noblemen should be held by "good Bess," as hostages for fulfilment of the treaty on the part of France. "Good Bess" by her aiding of the French rebels, had broken this treaty, had lost all just claim to Calais, and ought to have released the hostages; but, as "good Bess" very seldom did what she ought to; as she might, almost every day of her mischievous life, have, with perfect truth, repeated that part of the Prayer-Book "amended," which says, we have done those things which we ought not to do, and have left undone those things which we ought to do; so, a pious "good" woman had kept the hostages, though she had forfeited all just claim to that for the fulfilment of which they had been put into her hands. Now, however, the French had got a "bird in hand" too. They had got **THROCKMORTON**, their old enemy, and he had got a large quantity of "good Bess's" horrible secrets locked up in his breast! So that, after long discussions, during which **Throckmorton** gave very significant signs of his determination not to end his days in prison without taking revenge, of some sort, on his fearless employer, the "good" woman agreed to exchange the four French noblemen for him; and, as a quarter of a loaf was better than no bread to take 125,000 crowns for the relinquishment of Calais to France in perpetuity!

284. Thus, then, it was "good Queen Bess," after all, glorious and Protestant Bess, that plucked this jewel from the English crown! Nor was this the only signal consequence of her unhallowed and unprincipled treaty and intrigues with the French rebels. The plague, which had got into the garrison of Havre de Grace, and which had left **Warwick** with only about two thousand out of his seven thousand men; this dreadful disease was brought, by that miserable remnant of infected beings, to England. **HUME** himself allows, that it swept off great multitudes especially in London, where above twenty thousand sons died of it in one year. Thus was the heavily taxed,

afflicted with war, afflicted with pestilence, thus were thousands upon thousands of English people destroyed, or ruined, or rendered miserable, merely to this proud and malignant woman, who thought she could never be safe until all the world joined in her apostasy. Thus, and merely for this same reason Calais surrendered for ever; Calais, the proudest possession of England; Calais, one of the two keys to the North Seas; Calais, that had been won by our Catholic forefathers two hundred years before; Calais, which they would more thought of yielding to France, than they would thought of yielding Dover; Calais, the bare idea of a possibility of losing which had broken the heart of the virtuous, the patriotic and most calumniated Man.

284. It is surprising what baseness **HUME** discovered treating of the whole of this important series of traditions; how he glosses over all the breaches of faith; oath, on the part of the "good Bess"; how he lets without censure the flagrant and malignant treason of rebels; and even how he insinuates apologies for; and he skips by the rare fidelity of Philip to his engagements and how he praises the black-hearted **Coligni**, while he censures **CONDÉ** for seeking peace after the assassinating the **Duke of Guise**; how he wholly suppresses the decimation of England in the case of **Smith** and **Throckton**, how he makes the last bill of sale 200,000, instead of a fourth part of 500,000; how he passes over the loss of Calais for ever, as nothing in "good Bess," though he made the temporary loss of it every thing in Mary above all the rest, how he constantly aims his malign that skilful, brave, faithful; and patriotic nobleman of **Guise**, while he extols **Conde** as long as he was a rebel and a traitor, engaged in selling his country; and when he lauds the inveterate and treacherous **Cologni** to the last hour of that traitor's life.

285. Is there any man, who does not see the vast importance of Calais and its territory? Is there any man who does not see how desirable it would be to us to have it now. Is there an Englishman who does not lament the loss of it? Is it not clear as the sun at noonday, that it was lost forever by "good Bess's" perfidy in joining the rebels of France? If when those rebels were formidable to their sovereign, she had pressed him to restore Calais at once, or to take an equivalent for such anticipated restoration, was it not obvious, that he would have consented, rather than hear displeasure at such a moment? And, what is the reason that Hume makes for her conduct in joining the rebels? Elizabeth, besides the general and essential interest of supporting the Protestants, and opposing the rapid progress of her enemy, the **Duke of Guise** (how was he her enemy?) had other motives which engaged her to accept this proposal. When she concluded the peace at **Chateau Cambresis**, she had good reason to foresee, that if France would never voluntarily fulfil the article with regard to the restitution of Calais; and many subsequent incidents tended to confirm this suspicion. Considerable sums of money had been laid out on the fortifications long leases had been granted of the lands; and many inhabitants had been encouraged to build and settle there, by assurances that Calais would never be restored to the English. The Queen, therefore, very wisely concluded, that, could she get possession of Havre, a place which commanded the mouth of the Seine, and was of much greater importance than Calais, she should easily constrain the French to execute the treaty and should have the glory of restoring to the crown that ancient possession of which was so much the favourite of the nation.

286. Away, then, goes, at once, all her professions and desire to defend the cause of. the Gospel: she is a hypocrite the most profound at once: she breaks faith with the King of France and with the rebels too. But, if she as aforesaid that the French would not voluntarily fulfil treaty of **Chateau Cambresis**, why did she conclude it, when Philip was ready to aid her in compelling France to return Calais at once? And, as to the subsequent incident which had confirmed her suspicions, why should not French government repair the fortifications and should they not give assurances that the territory never would be restored to the English, seeing, that she had gained for the perpetual surrender of 500,000 crowns. The French meant, doubtless, to pay the money at the end of the eight years. They never, after she had rejected the treaty of Philip, intended to give up Calais: that every body knew, and nobody better than "good Bess:" she had hostages for the payment of the money; and she held those after she had received Havre from the rebels as a security for the payment of that money! She had, she thought, birds in the hand; but, though she

concluded very wisely, both birds escaped: she outwitted and reached herself: and the nation has, to this day, to lament the consequences of her selfishness, bad faith, and atrocious perfidy.

287. I should now proceed to follow good Bess and her worthy friend Coligni down to the date of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, which was a sort of wholesale of same work that "good Bess" carried on in detail: but, have filled my paper; and, I now see, that it will be impossible for me to do any thing like justice to my subject without stretching my little work further than I intended.

The End of Letter Nine



The Assassination of The Duke of Guise



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