

CHAPTER XLIV.
ELIZABETH. - 1558 to 1603.

How Queen Elizabeth allowed the people to be Protestants;
how they learned many useful things
from foreigners who had been persecuted in their own country;
how Mary Queen of Scots was driven from her kingdom,
and was imprisoned, and at last beheaded, by Elizabeth.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S reign was so very long, and there are so many things in it to tell you about, that I am sure we must have three chapters about her, and you will find both good and bad in them; but after all you will think that her being queen was a very good thing for England.

When Queen Mary died, Elizabeth was at Hatfield, where she stayed a little while, till some of the great and wise men belonging to the country went to her to advise her what she had best do for the good of England, and how she should begin. At the end of a week she went to London.

She was twenty-five years old, and very pleasant looking. She was a good scholar, in Latin, Greek, Italian, and some other languages; but she loved English above all.

The first thing Elizabeth and her wise counsellors did was to set free all the poor Protestants whom Queen Mary and Bishop Bonner had put in prison, and intended to burn. Then she allowed the Bible, and prayers to be read in English.

When Elizabeth rode through London to be crowned in Westminster Abbey, the citizens made all sorts of fine shows to do honour to a queen who had already been so good to the poor Protestants. They hung beautiful silks and satins out at the windows like flags; they built fine wooden arches across the streets, which they dressed up with branches of trees and flowers; and just as the queen was riding under one of them, a boy beautifully dressed was let down by cords from the top, who gave the queen a beautiful Bible, and then he was drawn up again. Elizabeth took the Bible and kissed it, and pressed it to her bosom, and said it was a present she liked best of all the fine things the people had given her that day.

Afterwards she appointed Protestant bishops, and made a very good and learned man, named Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Queen Elizabeth did not find it very easy to undo all the mischief that Queen Mary had done; but at last, with the help of her good counsellors, England was at peace, and the people were settled, some on their lands, where they were beginning to sow more corn and make more gardens than they had done before, and some in different trades; for the English learned to make a great many things at this time from strangers that came to live here.

I will tell you why they came. That cruel Philip the Second, King of Spain, who had been married to Queen Mary, was King over Flanders and Holland, as well as Spain. A great many of the people in those countries were Protestants; but Philip wanted to make them Papists by force, and would have burnt them as Queen Mary did the Protestants in England. But they got away from him, and, hearing that Queen Elizabeth was a friend to the Protestants, they came here. And as some of them were spinners and weavers, and others dyers, and so on, they began to work at their trades, and taught them to the English. Since that time we have always been able to make woollen and linen cloths ourselves.

So you see that King Philip, by being cruel, drove away useful people from his country, and Queen Elizabeth, by being kind and just, got those useful people to do good to our own dear