

her sampler, to dance, and other accomplishments, we will take a glance at the history of the monarch destined to become her partner for life.

The calamities of the royal house of Stuart have been the theme of many a page. Hard have been their fates, and harder still it is that the common sympathies of humanity have been denied to them, though the very nature of their misfortunes prove they were more sinned against than sinning. Such has been the venom infused on the page of history by national, polemic, and political prejudices, that no one has taken the trouble to compare line by line of their private lives, in order justly to decide whether this royal Stuart who received a dagger in his bosom, that who was shot in the back, or another who was hoisted by the treacherous mine from his peaceful bed, or those who, "done to death by slanderous tongues," laid down their heads on the block as on a pillow of rest, were, in reality, as wicked as the agents who produced these results. Yet, if facts are sifted, and effects traced carefully back to their true causes, the mystery of an evil destiny, which is so often laid to the charge as if it were a personal crime attached to this line of hapless princes, will vanish before the broad light of truth.

Most of the calamities of the royal line of Scotland originated in the antagonism which, for long ages, was sustained between England and their country. Either by open violence or insidious intrigue, five Scottish monarchs had suffered long captivities in England;¹ and owing to the wars with England, or the commotions nurtured in Scotland by the English, six long minorities² had successively taken place before James VI. was born. The regents who governed in the names of these minor sovereigns were placed or replaced by factions of the fierce nobility, who, at last, refused to submit to any control, either of king or law. In fact, the possessor of the Scottish crown was either destroyed or harassed to death as soon as an heir to the throne was born. "Woe to the land that is governed by a child!" says the wise proverb. This was a woe

¹ David I. William the Lion, David II. James I. kings; and Mary, queen of Scots.

² James I. James II. James III. James IV. James V. and Mary.