

Then it was that she made the fourth and last great mistake of her life. She decided to go to England and take refuge with Queen Elizabeth. Of all people on earth, she was the least welcome at the court of the great English queen; for there were Catholic subjects in Elizabeth's kingdom who felt that Mary should have been their queen instead of Elizabeth. Naturally, Elizabeth looked upon Mary with distaste and even with fear. After much debating, Mary was made practically a prisoner and a trial was agreed upon. The trial was a mere farce, and Mary was convicted.

For nineteen years Mary remained a prisoner in England. In that time she was moved from place to place, and in every place where they put her she seemed able to make trouble. The truth was that, in her desperation, Mary was ready to plot with any one to get back her kingdom, and she was guilty of much that was unwise in her efforts to do this.

Elizabeth's advisers tried over and over again to get the Queen to consent to Mary's death. Partly because she feared her Catholic subjects, and partly because she may have had some reluctance to sign the death warrant of her own cousin, Elizabeth put off the evil day.

At last, however, a new and more daring plot than any before was brought to light. This time, Mary came to trial for her life, at Fotheringay Castle. Some say that the trial was fair; others contend that the Queen of the Scots was given no chance whatever. The Houses of Parliament asked for Mary's immediate execution. Again Elizabeth hesitated, but finally she gave in, and on February 8, 1587, Mary, very proud and very brave, laid down her head to receive the axe.

The world is divided in its estimate of the character of the Queen of the Scots. Many believe that she was grievously wronged. On the other hand, even her greatest admirers must admit that she did foolish things, and that she paid the price for her foolishness.



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