

pretended to be a son of the Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV, and of Perkin Warbeck (1488), who affirmed that he was the duke of York, younger brother of Edward V; but neither of these attained any magnitude. The king's worst fault was the avarice which led him to employ in schemes of extortion such instruments as Empson and Dudley. His administration throughout did much to increase the royal power and to establish order and prosperity. He died in 1509.

The authority of the English crown, which had been so much extended by Henry VII, was by his son, Henry VIII, exerted in a tyrannical and capricious manner. The most important event of the reign was undoubtedly the Reformation; though it had its origin rather in Henry's caprice and in the casual situation of his private affairs than in his conviction of the necessity of a reformation in religion, or in the solidity of reasoning employed by the reformers. Henry had been espoused to Catharine of Spain, who was first married to his elder brother Arthur, a prince who died young. Henry became dissatisfied with his queen, and enamored of one of her maids of honor, Anne Boleyn. He had recourse, therefore, to the pope to dissolve a marriage which had at first been rendered legal only by a dispensation from the pontiff; but failing in his desires he broke away entirely from the Holy See, and in 1534 got himself recognized by act of parliament as the head of the English Church. He died in 1547. He was married six times, and left three children, each of whom reigned in turn. These were: Mary, by his first wife, Catharine of Aragon; Elizabeth, by his second wife, Anne Boleyn; and Edward, by his third wife, Jane Seymour.

Edward, who reigned first, with the title of Edward VI, was nine years of age at the time of his succession, and died in 1553, when he was only sixteen. His short reign, or rather the reign of the Earl of Hertford, afterwards Duke of Somerset, who was appointed regent, was distinguished chiefly by the success which attended the measures of the reformers, who acquired great part of the power formerly engrossed by the Catholics. The intrigues of Dudley, duke of Northumberland, during the reign of Edward, caused Lady Jane Grey to be declared his successor; but her reign, if it could be called such, lasted only a few days. Mary, daughter of Henry VIII, was placed upon the throne, and Lady Jane Grey and her husband were

both executed. Mary, a bigoted Catholic, seems to have wished for the crown only for the purpose of reestablishing the Roman Catholic faith. Political motives had induced Philip of Spain to accept of her as a spouse; but she could never prevail on her subjects to allow him any share of power. She died in 1558.

Elizabeth, who succeeded her sister Mary, was attached to the Protestant faith, and found little difficulty in establishing it in England. Having concluded peace with France (1559), Elizabeth set herself to promote the confusion which prevailed in Scotland, to which her cousin Mary had returned from France as queen in 1561. In this she was so far successful that Mary placed herself in her power (1568), and after many years' imprisonment was sent to the scaffold (1587). As the most powerful Protestant nation, and as a rival to Spain in the New World, it was natural that England should become involved in difficulties with that country. The dispersion of the Armada by the English fleet under Howard, Drake and Hawkins was the most brilliant event of a struggle which abounded in minor feats of valor. In Elizabeth's reign London became the center of the world's trade, the extension of British commercial enterprise being coincident with the ruin of Antwerp in 1585. The parliament was increased by the creation of sixty-two new boroughs, and its members were exempted from arrest. In literature not less than in politics and in commerce the same full life displayed itself, and England began definitely to assume the characteristics which distinguish her from the other European nations of to-day.

To Elizabeth succeeded (in 1603) James VI of Scotland and I of England, son of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Darnley. His accession to the crown of England in addition to that of Scotland did much to unite the two nations, though a certain smoldering animosity still lingered. His dissimulation, however, ended in his satisfying neither of the contending ecclesiastical parties—the Puritans or the Catholics; and his absurd insistence on his divine right made his reign a continuous struggle between the prerogative of the crown and the freedom of the people. His extravagance kept him in constant disputes with the parliament, which would not grant him the sums he demanded, and compelled him to resort to monopolies, loans, benevolences, and other illegal methods. The nation at large, however, continued to prosper through the whole of this inglorious reign. His son, Charles