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MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

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Mary, Queen of Scots, was the only child of James V., of Scotland, and his wife, Mary of Guise.

Nothing could be sadder than the circumstances in which she was born. Her father died a few days after her birth, disappointed, discouraged and heart-broken.

No wonder that he trembled for his child. There was not in Europe a fiercer race of nobles than those who were now left without any one to hold them in check, tearing our poor country of Scotland in pieces among them. And though there was then rising up a force which was strong enough eventually to make head against the nobles—the force of religion and of the people, whom the new movement of the Reformation roused everywhere—yet that force was never to be friendly to the young princess who was brought up a Roman Catholic.

Mary was born at Linlithgow on the 7th of December, 1542, and in September of the next year she was crowned, the poor baby, about nine months old. The child was crowned, not for her own sake, as you may suppose, but in order that contending statesmen might exercise power in her name. As the fighting and struggles continued, she was taken to a convent of Augustinian nuns on the secluded and beautiful little island of Inchmahone.

After this she was sent to France, to be out of harm's way, and also because she was betrothed to the Dauphin, which, you know, was the title borne by the heir to the French throne, just as the heir of England is called the Prince of Wales.

The French court was then about the most splendid place in the world—more gay, more grand, more stately and beautiful than any other. Mary received what we should call the very best education there.

You have all heard how very beautiful she was—one of the famous beauties of the world. But, I think, from her pictures, that it was not mere beauty that Mary had. According to all the portraits, there was a great family resemblance between her and her cousin, Queen Elizabeth, whom nobody ever supposed to be beautiful. What Mary had, beside her beautiful eyes, and her luxuriant hair, and the features which have been so often praised, was such a charm of sweet manners and looks, and grave and lovely ways, as made her beautiful and charming to everybody who came near her. I think it was this that made Mary Stuart so

beautiful that nobody could resist her.

She was married to the Dauphin in 1558, when she was sixteen, and in little more than a year after, her husband, Francis II., succeeded his father on the throne, and the young Scots queen became also Queen of France. In the same year in which Mary was married, Mary Tador, her cousin, the Queen of England, so often called "Bloody Mary," died, and in the opinion of all good Catholics Mary Stuart was her lawful heir, for Elizabeth, who actually succeeded to the throne of England, was the daughter of Annie Boleyn, whom Henry VIII., had

married when his first wife was still alive.

But this merry, splendid life did not last long. In less than three years after their marriage, young King Francis died, and Mary's sorrows began.

There can be no doubt that Mary Stuart really believed herself to be the rightful heir. Her favorite device, when she was at the head of the gay and splendid court of France, was the two crowns of France and Scotland, with the motto of "*Aliansque moratur*," which may be translated, "Waiting for another."

Another king ascended the throne, and

all the courtiers who had worshipped and served her began to serve and worship their new monarch, and Mary turned her eyes over the sea to her own northern kingdom, the only place she had now a right to, and which was her natural home. She was not then nineteen, a widow, her mother just dead, her relations all left behind, and nobody to welcome her to the cold and frowning shores to which she was bound.

The world knew nothing then of what we call toleration nowadays. That is one of the good things of which, three hundred years ago, people had no idea. A Roman Catholic thought then that it was his duty, if he had it in his power, to make everybody go to mass, and to burn those who would not; and the Protestant believed that it was his duty to prevent people from going to mass, to compel them to go and hear a sermon instead, or, if they would not, to banish them and put them in prison. When Mary had mass said in her chapel, which was the only divine worship she understood, there was an uproar and almost a riot.

Amid all the bitter conflict that followed, Mary, hearing much of John Knox, who was the chief of the Reformers, sent for him, thinking that her smiles could subdue him, or her arguments, though she was so young and inexperienced, convince him. But she did not convince him, as you may suppose; and he spoke to her so seriously, so sternly some people think, that he made the beautiful young queen weep. But Mary was as firm in her way of thinking as Knox in his, and neither of them did much good, nor much harm, to the other, and though she was a Papist, which they did not love, this beautiful, brave, smiling young queen won the heart of her people. For four or five years, Scotland, fighting fiercely all the time within herself, and torn in pieces by perpetual conflicts, was yet unanimous in a tender admiration for her queen.

In Holyrood and other royal castles and palaces, scattered over the country, Mary lived a life more free, more simple, but not less gay, than that which she lived in France.

But amid all these gayeties, Mary did not forget that she was a queen, and she took her own way in politics as well as in her life. She would not give over her dancing and music and merry evenings, as John Knox required; nor would she quarrel with Queen Elizabeth, as her uncles in France urged her to do.

And in the matter of her marriage, Mary again acted for herself. A queen cannot wait to be asked in marriage, like

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