

and Fiction was delighting mankind with rare enchantment; and Religion was busying all brains with her solemn and profound discoursing. Bacon was sounding the depths of human intellect, and calling from their silence the energies of endless progression. Shakespeare was shaping, to enduring beauty, those wondrous creations which embody the universal life of man. Cervantes, the glorious Spaniard, in soul a brother to the glorious Briton, had sent forth among men's fancies, *Dón Quixotte* and *Saneba Panza*; the high-dreaming knight, and the low-thinking squire; the grave in company with the grotesque, a goodly image of humanity for everlasting laughter and everlasting love. Luther had arisen, awful and gigantic, half the earth his platform, and millions of excited men his audience. Liberty had begun to know her rights, and was gathering courage to maintain them. Traditional claims had already lost in the ecatest against natural justice. Priests and princes had ceased to be gods, and the people were fast rising to be men. Commerce had enlarged her boundaries; wealth had increased its enterprise; independence had grown with industry. The course of freedom went nobly onward. Britain had humbled Spain; and Holland, after one of the most heroic struggles in the history of patriotism, had cast off the Spanish yoke. While Europe was thus rejoicing in spreading grandeur, the fairest island on its western border, with every means of prosperity and glory, lay like a ruin at moonlight, where pirates had assembled to divide their plunder in blasphemy and in blood.

James of Scotland, the successor of his mother's slayer, treated unfortunate Ireland with no gentler policy. Without accusation of sedition or rebellion, he alienated six counties from their owners, and colonized them with his countrymen. The outcasts wandered on their own soil, as strangers and as vagabonds. Fearful deeds were done in revenge