



LIFE OF WILLIAM III.

CHAPTER I.

*"Vulgar parents cannot stamp their race,
With signatures of majestic grace."*

—HOMER.

THE illustrious family of Nassau, of which William III. of Orange, our noble king, was so famous a member, is one of the most ancient of the princely houses of Germany. Historians have endeavored to trace its origin to a date verging on the Roman invasion of Northern Europe, and many doughty deeds are recorded of heroes about whose very being and surroundings grave doubts exist. But there is abundant evidence within the period of authentic history to demonstrate the eminent *role* which it was the glory of this distinguished family to work out. A hardy and resolute race from the first, they carved a name for themselves wherever their destiny led