

Foreword

The Princess Elizabeth Stuart, second daughter of Charles I, and who died at the age of 15, just over 300 years ago, is one of the most beautiful characters in English history, and not the least pitiful: for her short and blameless life was spent almost completely in captivity, torn from her Father, to whom she was as passionately devoted as he to her.

Her learning and piety were far from being unusual in the very young of this period, to which common attributes Evelyn's diary alone bears abundant testimony. In this worldly-minded and largely pagan age, such early devotion is regarded as purely freakish, to be dismissed as "unnatural" and "unhealthy". But were a child in these days to develop a precocious proclivity for money-making, how this would be almost universally acclaimed as a mark of enviable genius, with his, or her, photograph reproduced in the Sunday Sensation, with columns of praise for the infant prodigy!

Mrs. M.A.E. Green's chapters on Elizabeth Stuart in her "Lives of the Princesses of England", published in 1855, is a most painstaking account of all that can be garnered about her, but of course this volume has been long unobtainable. Hence this new book, in which I have endeavoured to present the Princess as vividly as possible in her authentic setting, ~~Thus~~ I have called it "an animated biography", since apart from some typical street characters, I have introduced no fictitious persons.

Such conversations as have been attributed to the King, Princess, her fellow-captive brother, and lesser characters, are all entirely in keeping with them and their respective sentiments, whilst the utterances of the Presbyterian ministers are taken from their published works.

On the subject of religion, it is to be noted that, to quote the Oxford Dictionary, "In the 17th century (in England) 'Protestant' was generally accepted and used by members of the Established Church, and was even so applied to the exclusion of Presbyterians, Quakers and Separatists".

↙ I Last year revisited all the Palaces and houses still in existence in which Elizabeth was kept captive, excepting only St. James' and Penshurst Place, both visited many years ago. From Carisbrooke, the only one of them that has remained radically unaltered since her day, the stones

giving a picture of the times,

cried out of the wall (Hab. 2:11) and spoke alike of the White King and his hapless daughter. So, too, did St. Nicholas Chapel within the Castle, an exquisitely lovely little building, rebuilt as a national memorial to King Charles, and having personal gifts from Queen Victoria and other members of her family richly adorning it.

Finally, I desire to express my grateful thanks to Mr. D. B. Sinclair, W.S., for his kindness in giving me access to the Signet Library in this City, and to its Assistant Librarian for his assiduity in supplying me with the many books for which I sought. For the same reason, my thanks are due to the Librarian and Assistant Librarian of St. Alban's City Library, Herts., and to Mr. Robey J. Eldridge, of Newport, Isle of Wight, the recognised authority on the history of that beautiful island.

M.E.M. Donaldson,
Edinburgh.
