THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

IN EASY DIALOGUES,

FOR

YOUNG CHILDREN.

BY A LADY.

Price 1s. 6*d*.

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ENGLAND
1816

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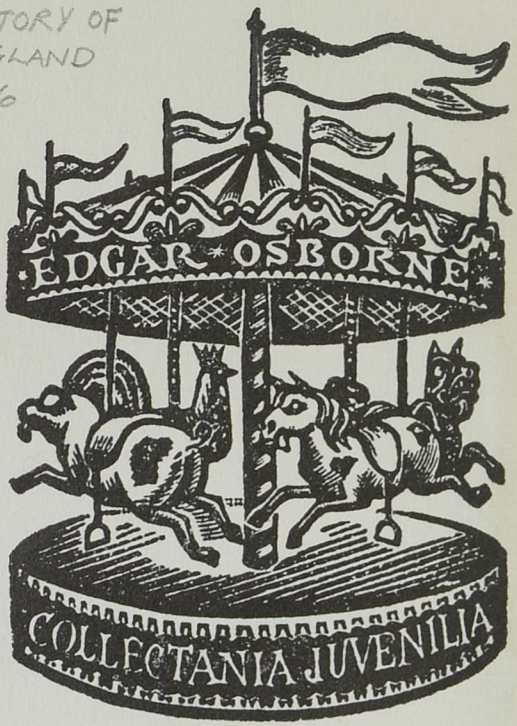

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

&c.

DIALOGUE I.

MAMA, CHARLOTTE, AND JOHN.

Charlotte. JOHN and I have been placing the map of the Kings and Queens of England, which you gave us, Mama. I should like playing with them better, if I knew something about them.

John. May we not read Mrs. Trimmer's History of England, Mama?

Mama. No, my dear; I do not think it is a book which either of you can understand, but if you are both willing to learn, I shall be very glad to teach you, as much as it is necessary for you to know at present.

John. Oh pray, Mama, begin with William I.; see, I have got his picture in my hand.

Mama. You are too impatient; William I. was not the first king of England.

Charlotte. I suppose there was always some king.

Mama. Not always; but there were many before William I.

Charlotte. Can you tell me their names?

Mama. Out of the few who are worth speaking of, I shall first mention Alfred, who was one of the best of our early kings. He divided England into counties.

John. I have read something about him, but I could not repeat it now.

Mama. The story is this: Alfred was at war with the Danes, who frequently landed in this island from Denmark; which of you can tell me where that is?

John. I can. It is in Europe, to the north of Germany.

Mama. Well, now I will go on with Alfred; he was very unfortunate in battle, and found himself obliged to go into retirement, in order to escape from his enemies.

John. I do not exactly understand you.

Mama. For fear of being killed by the Danes; he no longer appeared as a king, but changed his dress, and pretended to be a peasant.

John. Was he discovered?

Mama. No; he lived for some time with a herdsman, who employed him in looking after his cattle, till a favourable opportunity offered, when the king was very glad to resume his command, and after many battles the Danes were driven back.

Charlotte. Did they ever again attempt to land in England?

Mama. Yes; and after the death of Alfred, they succeeded in the attempt, and one of their kings, named Canute, was raised to the throne.

Charlotte. How did the people like that?

Mama. They were obliged to submit, and indeed I ought to tell you, that at the time we are speaking of, the inhabitants of England were little more than savages, till they were conquered by the Danes and other nations.

Charlotte. What other nations fought against England?

Mama. The Romans first landed there, and afterwards the Saxons and Danes: but let us return to Canute.

Charlotte. I hope he was a good king, and tried to gain the love of those whom he had subdued.

Mama. He was remarkable for justice and piety. It is related of this prince, that whilst walking one day on the sea-shore with his courtiers, they flattered him to such a degree, as to attempt to compare his power to that of God.

John. Was not that very wicked?

Mama. Certainly, and Canute, in order to convince them of their impiety, and to show how much he despised their conduct, ordered a chair to be placed upon the beach, while the tide was coming in, and sitting down, he commanded the sea to retire. You will easily guess that he was not obeyed, and was soon surrounded by the waves. He by this means had an opportunity of reproving his flatterers, for having bestowed upon

him the praise which was due to the Almighty alone.

Charlotte. Who succeeded Canute?

Mama. There were four other kings before William I.

John. I am very glad we are come to him.

Mama. You will not hear any more to-day; to-morrow your curiosity shall be gratified.

DIALOGUE II.

Mama. Good morning, my dear children; are you ready for another lesson?

Charlotte. Yes, Mama, we have been waiting for the last half hour in hopes of hearing what you had not time to tell us yesterday.

John. You promised us the history of William I.

Mama. And I have not forgotten my promise; but I must first mention Harold, who reigned before him.

Charlotte. I am sorry to interrupt you,

Mama, but I want to know why William was called the Conqueror.

Mama. If you had not asked that question, I was going to tell you that during Harold's reign, William, who was Duke of Normandy, invaded England.

John. Is not Normandy in France?

Mama. Yes it is; and a memorable battle was fought between the French and English near Hastings in Sussex.

Charlotte. Who gained the victory?

Mama. Both the commanders showed great skill, but at length Harold was killed; and the English, being quite disheartened, easily gave way to their enemies.

John. Now I can guess why William had the title of Conqueror.

Mama. Shortly after the battle of Hastings, he marched up to London, and was crowned King of England. Still there were many quarrels between the Normans and English, and his reign was disturbed by the jealousy of his sons.

Charlotte. I was thinking about his children; how many had he, Mama?

Mama. Three sons, besides several daughters. Robert, the eldest, was very bad tempered, and behaved very wickedly towards his father by attempting to obtain possession of his dominions in Normandy, during the king's lifetime.

Charlotte. What became of this unfeeling son?

Mama. In another lesson you will hear that this undutiful behaviour was punished by the treatment he himself received from his brother Henry. William soon after died, in consequence of a fall from his horse, and was succeeded by his second son.

John. Oh, that was William Rufus.

Mama. Yes, he was surnamed Rufus or the Red, from the colour of his hair.

Charlotte. Why did not Robert reign after his father, for he was the eldest?

Mama. Robert was made Duke of Normandy, and being satisfied with this, his brother was crowned King of England. About this time the Crusades or Holy Wars began.

Charlotte. I am sure, Mama, I have not an idea what the Crusades were.

Mama. I do not expect you to know till I have explained what they mean. In those days it was reckoned an act of religion to travel to Jerusalem, in order to worship what was supposed to be the sepulchre of our Saviour. Those persons who travelled for this purpose were called Pilgrims, and were frequently very ill treated by the inhabitants of the Holy Land, so that they could not go in safety. For this reason, the English and other Christian nations assembled a large army against these Infidels; and men of all ranks joined in this cause, amongst the number, Robert Duke of Normandy.

Charlotte. Did the king accompany them?

Mama. No, my dear; an accident very soon put an end to his life: he was shot by an arrow which Sir Walter Tyrell, a French gentleman, discharged at a deer, as they were hunting together. The arrow struck the king in the heart, and he immediately expired.

John. I dare say the person who killed him was sadly frightened.

Mama. Sir W. Tyrell immediately has-

tened to the sea, and joined the Crusade; but our lesson has been longer than I intended; we will not, therefore, talk about any other king at present.

DIALOGUE III.

Mama. We finished yesterday with the death of William Rufus. Can either of you recollect who succeeded him?

Charlotte. I can, Mama, it was Henry I.

Mama. He was the younger brother of William and Robert, and consequently had no right to the throne during the lifetime of Robert.

Charlotte. Had William Rufus no children?

Mama. None at all; and Robert being engaged on the Crusade, and at too great a distance even to hear of his brother's death, Henry took advantage of his absence, and got possession of the throne; not long afterwards Robert returned from Palestine, and asserted his right to the crown of England. His bro-

ther was not disposed to resign what he had so unjustly obtained, and Robert not being sufficiently powerful to oblige him to do so, was contented to give up his claims, for the sake of a large sum of money, and returned to Normandy.

John. I hope after this that they did not quarrel any more.

Mama. I am sorry to say they did. Robert was a very thoughtless, extravagant prince, and spent all his time in amusement, instead of trying to govern his subjects properly; this rendered them discontented, and the greatest part of them refused any longer to obey him, and applied to Henry for assistance, offering the government to him.

John. I hope he was not so wicked as to go and fight against his brother.

Charlotte. I think he should have tried to make peace between Robert and his subjects, and he might have advised him to alter his conduct towards them, and give them less reason to complain of him.

Mama. This would have been acting like a kind brother, but you have already seen how

Henry behaved upon a former occasion, and therefore you will not be surprised to learn that he took advantage of the opportunity which was thus given him, and landed in Normandy with a powerful army. The worst part of his conduct remains still to be told; for, having conquered his brother in battle and taken him prisoner, he brought him with him to England, and had the cruelty to confine him till his death in a castle in Wales.

Charlotte. How very shocking! Did Robert live long after he was imprisoned, Mama?

Mama. He is said to have lived twenty-eight years in confinement. Henry had now obtained the object of all his wishes, and yet you will see that his life was far from being happy, for his joys were very soon turned into sorrow by the death of a favourite and only son. This young prince had been over to Normandy with his father and several of the English nobility, and in returning from thence, the vessel in which the prince was unfortunately struck upon a rock, and was instantly dashed to pieces. He was put into the boat, and might have reached the shore

in safety had he not been induced to return to the vessel for his sister, who had been left in it. His affection for her proved the cause of his death; for several of the passengers who had remained behind with the princess, upon seeing the boat within reach, jumped into it, and as it was a ready full, the whole party immediately sunk to the bottom, and only one out of the number escaped to land. The king reached England in safety, and for some days flattered himself that the vessel in which his son was had put into some distant port; but the melancholy intelligence of his death at once put an end to his hopes, as well as to his happiness for the remainder of his life.

Charlotte. I am quite grieved for the poor young prince who showed such love for his sister; he was very different from his cruel father, and would most likely have made a very good king.

Mama. Henry did not live long after this calamity. He died at a little town in Normandy, in consequence of having eaten too plentifully of lampreys, a dish he was particularly fond of.

John. Why he was greedy, as well as cruel—but I do not know what lampreys are, Mama.

Mama. Lampreys are a species of fish, which are reckoned a great delicacy. Henry had one daughter named Matilda, at that time the wife of Geoffry Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, who ought to have inherited all her father's dominions. Her undoubted right to the crown was however disputed by Stephen, a nephew of the late king; and though Matilda landed in England, and so far succeeded as to be crowned queen, yet the party of Stephen at length prevailed, and she was obliged to withdraw herself altogether, till her son Prince Henry was of an age to take her part. Upon his arrival in England, at the age of eighteen, he found so large a part of the nation inclined to favour his pretensions, that it is probable he would finally have entirely subdued Stephen, had not the king, in the mean-time, entered into a treaty with him, by which it was agreed, that Stephen should retain possession of the throne for his life, but that at his death he

should be succeeded by Prince Henry, in preference to any children of his own. Stephen did not long survive this decision.

Charlotte. Well now, Mama, pray tell us about Henry II.

Mama. I would willingly oblige you, but your brother looks tired, and I think I have told you to-day as much as you will recollect.

DIALOGUE IV.

Mama. I hope, Charlotte, you have not forgotten who Henry II. was, and why he came to the throne.

Charlotte. I remember that he was grandson to Henry I. and his mother Matilda ought to have reigned instead of Stephen.

Mama. You must likewise recollect, that during the lifetime of Stephen, it was decided for Henry to succeed him instead of his own son. This king began his reign very prosperously, he gained great advantages over the Irish and the French, with whom

he was at war, and being thus become one of the most powerful princes of the age, he did not expect any opposition for the future. But it happened otherwise, as you will see.

Charlotte. I long to know what occurred to render him unhappy.

Mama. Henry's uneasiness was occasioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who refused to submit to his will.

John. What was his name?

Mama. Thomas a Becket: in order to make the people imagine that he was particularly pious, this man wore sackcloth next his skin, fed upon bread and water, and pretended to be constantly engaged in the duties of his profession.

Charlotte. What a sad hypocrite he seems to have been—did not the king dislike him very much?

Mama. His behaviour provoked Henry, and they lived in a state of constant hostility; the clergy supporting Becket as much as they dared, till the whole kingdom was thrown into confusion.

John. And how did all this end?

Mama. At length, four gentlemen belonging to the Court, judging from an expression which the king made use of, that he wished to get rid of the archbishop, agreed together to put him to death: for this purpose, they rode to Canterbury, followed Becket to the altar, and knocked him down without any opposition.

Charlotte. What did the king say when he heard of it?

Mama. The news of this murder made him so very unhappy, that he shut himself up, and for three days refused to eat or drink.

John. I wonder he was so very miserable at the death of his enemy.

Mama. Probably he did not regret his death, but he thought he should bear the blame of it, and be hated by his subjects: however, no ill consequences ensued, and Henry seemed again at the height of his glory, when three of his own sons rebelled against him.

Charlotte. I pity this poor king exceed-

ingly, and I only hope he did not give up to them.

Mama. The two eldest soon died, but Richard the youngest, now heir to the crown, was quite as ambitious as his brothers had been; and in consequence of this cruel conduct, the unhappy father was thrown into a fever, of which he expired, at a castle in France. The following day, Richard came to view his body, and was so struck with horror at the sight of it, that he cried out, "I have been the murderer of my father."

Charlotte. He deserved to suffer for his cruelty to him, and perhaps after all his sorrow was not sincere.

Mama. We have every reason to hope, my dear Charlotte, that he was really penitent, and I think you will be more ready to forgive him, when you hear the account of his reign, for certainly he had many good qualities.

Charlotte. At present, Mama, I cannot bear Richard, but perhaps my opinion may be altered by our next lesson.

DIALOGUE V.

Mama. Richard was become heir to the crown, by the death of his two elder brothers, and was proclaimed king by the title of Richard I. He was surnamed Cœur de Lion, on account of his extraordinary courage and bravery, and he immediately gave a proof of his warlike disposition, by joining Philip, King of France, in an expedition to the Holy Land. The two kings collected together a vast army, and assembled in the plains of Burgundy.

John. That is one of the provinces of France, is it not, Mama?

Mama. Yes, and there the two monarchs promised most solemnly to support each other to the last, in the contest they were about to engage in. The two armies being embarked, were prevented by stormy weather from proceeding any farther than Sicily, where they passed the winter; and during their residence in this island, re-

peated disagreements occurred between these two princes. In the spring, they once more set sail for Palestine; but the French king, Philip, was very soon obliged to return home again, in consequence of ill health, and he took with him the greater part of his army, leaving only 10,000 men to assist the King of England in his undertaking. The city of Jerusalem was at that time in the possession of a very powerful monarch, named Saladin; but though he opposed the Christians with an army considerably more numerous than theirs, he was completely defeated, and Richard advanced within sight of Jerusalem, when, finding his troops greatly wasted, and their numbers much diminished, by famine and fatigue, he entered into an agreement with Saladin, not to make war against him for the three following years, during which period, the pilgrims were to be allowed to visit Jerusalem without being molested.

John. I think it was very unfair in the King of France to go away, and leave Richard, after promising not to abandon him.

How mortifying it must have been to him, to be obliged to return home!

Mama. It was; but Richard met with a much more severe mortification, in his way to England, for in passing through Germany, he was arrested, and thrown into prison by order of the Emperor.

Charlotte. What reason had the Emperor of Germany, for treating Richard in this manner?

Mama. I am afraid Charlotte, that his motive for acting thus, was for the sake of the money which he expected to receive from the English, upon releasing to them their sovereign. It was some time before his subjects in England knew what was become of their unfortunate monarch; during this time of suspense, his brother John attempted to persuade them that he was dead, in the hope of getting possession of his throne. The people, however, who loved their brave king, had no sooner discovered the place of his confinement, than they offered a large sum for his ransom; and Richard was restored to his country, and re-

ceived by all ranks of people with every demonstration of joy. He behaved with the greatest generosity to his brother John, and forgave all his unkindness towards him.

Charlotte. I do now begin to feel interested for Richard, and I hope, as you said, Mama, that he was sincerely grieved for his undutiful conduct to his father.

Mama. I thought this kindness to his brother would give you a more favourable opinion of him; what do you think of him, John?

John. I think he was a very bold fellow, and I like his history better than any you have told us.

Mama. Well, John, I am sorry then to inform you that his reign is at an end, for not long after his return to England, he was shot at by a Norman soldier, whose father and brother he had accidentally killed in battle; the wound was in the shoulder, and proved mortal. Richard was much beloved by the English, and as he had no children, he left his kingdom to his brother John.

DIALOGUE VI.

Mama. Though Richard had appointed his brother to succeed him, several of the princes in France declared that young Arthur had a right to the throne.

Charlotte. Did you mention him before to us?

Mama. No, I do not think you have yet heard of this prince, who was nephew to King Richard and King John, being the son of their elder brother Geoffry. After the death of Richard, the French king took him under his protection, and sent him to Paris to be educated with his own son.

John. Was he a little boy then?

Mama. Yes, only twelve years of age, but notwithstanding his youth, John was extremely jealous of him, and the more so, as his own pride made him generally detested by his subjects. He immediately made war against the King of France, and Arthur was taken prisoner.

Charlotte. What did this cruel king do to him?

Mama. John thought it advisable to put an end to his life, but not being able to prevail on others to commit such a horrid murder, he commanded the poor little prince to be brought before him, stabbed him with his own hand, and then threw his body into the river. In addition to this, he got Arthur's sister into his power, and kept her for ever in captivity.

Charlotte. Certainly this must be the worst king that ever reigned in England.

Mama. I fear we shall come to others full as bad, though I confess John was of a most vicious disposition.

John. Did he remain in France after his nephew's death?

Mama. He hastened to return to his native country, fearing that some disturbances might take place in his absence, and you may imagine his consternation upon finding that his own Barons had actually formed a conspiracy against him.

Charlotte. What particular reason had they for being displeased with the king?

Mama. You know I told you before that

he was by no means popular among any of his subjects, and it seems that he refused to sign some papers which the Barons demanded of him.

Charlotte. What did these papers contain?

Mama. I can only explain it to you by telling you that they granted very important liberties to every order of men in the kingdom, but were quite useless without the king's signature.

Charlotte. I suppose that nothing could induce him to grant their demand.

Mama. After a debate of some days, a conference was appointed at Runnymede near Windsor, and there the king reluctantly consented to put his name to that celebrated deed commonly called Magna Charta; still however peace was not restored between John and the nobility, and continual disagreements arose between them till the close of this detested reign.

John. Had he any children?

Mama. Yes, he was succeeded on the throne by his eldest son, Henry III.

John. Was he as wicked as his father?

Mama. No, but through the weakness and capriciousness of his disposition, he was very unfit to govern, and his extravagance was so great that he was reduced to the necessity of selling all his jewels and plate to pay his debts.

John. Did his subjects like him?

Mama. They could not be attached to a king whom it was impossible to trust, and at length the Barons attempted to take the government into their own hands. Henry in this emergency summoned a Parliament to advise with and assist him, and this is supposed to have been the first origin of the House of Commons; the nobility were all in arms, and in one of the skirmishes between them and the royal party, the young Prince Edward was taken prisoner.

John. Was he soon released, Mama?

Mama. The king, in order to recover his son's liberty, was willing to yield to any conditions; but he was no sooner restored to him than he raised a powerful army, and attacked his rebellious subjects. In this battle, which was gained by Henry, the

prince displayed uncommon courage, and at one time saved his father's life. After this victory, the Barons submitted, and order was gradually restored in the state. Edward having by his prudence accomplished the settlement of the kingdom, went to the Holy Wars. The laws were very ill executed in his absence; and the king, who had greatly wished for his return, was overcome at length by the cares of government, and died in the 56th year of his reign. The building of Westminster Abbey commenced at this period.

DIALOGUE VII.

Mama. You will recollect that at the time of Henry III.'s death, his son Edward was engaged in the Holy Wars, where he had distinguished himself by his valour and courage, but as he was one day sitting in his tent he was stabbed in the arm by an assas-

sin; as the wound was inflicted by a poisoned dagger, his life was in the greatest danger, and it is said that he owed his recovery to his Queen Eleanor, who sucked the poison from his arm. Edward was received in England with the greatest joy, having entirely gained the affection of his people by his conduct; he was not however of a disposition to remain long quiet, and the first enterprise in which he engaged was one against the Welsh.

Charlotte. I thought, Mama, that Wales always belonged to England.

Mama. Not till the reign of Edward I. At this time it was governed by a prince named Llewellin, and as he had taken part against the late king when his subjects rebelled, Edward made his conduct an excuse for declaring war against him; but his real motive, no doubt, was to get possession of his dominions, and in this attempt he was completely successful, for the Prince of Wales was defeated and killed in battle, and David his brother was taken prisoner by the English.

Charlotte. I hope, Mama, we shall not hear that the king treated David with cruelty, for I like him very well at present.

Mama. I am afraid, Charlotte, that you will have reason to alter your opinion of him, for he behaved with great harshness to the Welsh; and David, who had been guilty of no crime, and had only fought in defence of his own country, was carried to Shrewsbury, where he was hung. From this time, Wales was considered as forming part of the kingdom of England; Edward's son was called the Prince of Wales, and the eldest sons of our kings have ever since had that title.

John. Edward was a very brave king, it is a pity he was so barbarous to his enemies. Did he go to war again, after he had conquered the Welsh?

Mama. Yes, an opportunity very soon offered for attacking the Scotch, who were not at that time governed by the King of England as they are now.

Charlotte. Had they any king of their own?

Mama. The throne was at this time disputed by two rivals, and Edward took advantage of these disturbances to invade Scotland, with the hope of securing the crown for himself.

John. Did he succeed, Mama?

Mama. He gained many victories over the Scotch, and probably might have entirely subdued them, but his death put an end to their fears; and you will see that his son, Edward II. was not of a disposition to cause them any alarm.

Charlotte. What sort of a king was he, Mama?

Mama. I have very little to tell you about him; he was a sad weak prince, entirely given up to folly and pleasure; the consequence of which was, that he was deposed from the throne.

Charlotte. Will you tell me, what the word deposed means, Mama?

Mama. It means, that all power was taken from him, and his subjects would no longer suffer him to reign over them. The Queen, Isabella, was wicked enough to take

part against her husband, and she was permitted to govern the kingdom, till her son, who was then very young, should be of a proper age.

Charlotte. What became of the king?

Mama. He was imprisoned in Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire, and was shortly afterwards most cruelly murdered by the lords who had the charge of him.

DIALOGUE VIII.

John. The last reign was so short and uninteresting, that I long for something more amusing to-day.

Charlotte. I hope, Mama, the young king behaved well, when he was left to govern by himself.

Mama. I think you will both be pleased with my account of Edward III. His first object was to settle the affairs of his own kingdom, and having accomplished this to

his satisfaction, he was eager to display his valour against the Scotch, who had been unmolested during the short reign of his father.

John. I had not forgotten that Edward I. was preparing to subdue them, before his death.

Mama. The war was now carried on with great vigour, a complete victory was obtained by the English, and most of the chief nobility of Scotland were either killed or taken prisoners. Soon after this, Edward declared war against the King of France, and invaded that country.

Charlotte. Was he as successful there as he had been in Scotland?

Mama. A celebrated battle was fought between the English and French, near Cressy.

John. Where is that place, Mama?

Mama. It is a village in France, not very far from Amiens, which you know is the capital of Picardy. In this engagement, the King of France narrowly escaped being killed, and his whole army was put to flight.

A few days after this, Edward besieged Calais, which the governor and citizens bravely defended. While he was thus engaged, the Scotch took advantage of his absence to invade England.

Charlotte. What did the people do without their gallant king?

Mama. His queen, Philippa, raised an army to oppose the enemy, and rode herself through the ranks encouraging the soldiers to do their duty. The Scotch were defeated, and their monarch taken prisoner; after which Philippa went over to Calais to join the king, and was received there with great triumph.

John. We have not heard whether Edward was able to take possession of that town or not.

Mama. After a very long contest the governor consented to deliver it up to the King of England, upon condition that he would grant the inhabitants their lives and liberties.

John. I hope he did not make any objection to this.

Mama. Edward insisted that six of the

most considerable citizens should be sent to him with the keys of their city, barefooted, bareheaded, and with ropes about their necks.

Charlotte. Was he cruel enough to think of putting them to death, Mama?

Mama. Yes, he was indeed, my dear; These unfortunate men were sent to him in the manner required, and were immediately ordered to be carried to execution; but queen Philippa was touched with compassion for them, and threw herself upon her knees before the king, entreating him with tears to spare their lives.

Charlotte. How very much I like that queen! What answer did she receive from Edward?

Mama. He granted her request, and a truce was agreed upon between him and the French.

John. I do not suppose it lasted very long.

Mama. You are right in your conjecture; the war was soon renewed, and the two armies met near Poictiers in France, where the English were again victorious, and the King of France and his son were both taken prison-

ers. I ought before this to have mentioned the young Prince of Wales, who had greatly distinguished himself upon this, as well as upon former occasions. He was named Edward the Black Prince, from the colour of his armour. The generosity and kindness with which he treated these captive princes are far more worthy of admiration than his courage and military skill. After the battle of Poictiers, he came out to meet the King of France, and endeavoured to console him under his misfortunes; he ordered a repast to be prepared in his own tent, into which he conducted his royal prisoner, and even waited upon him at table himself.

Charlotte. I quite long for this young prince to come to the throne.

Mama. Unfortunately he died before his father, to the grief of the whole nation, by whom he was universally beloved.

Charlotte. What became of the King of France?

Mama. He was taken to England, where the King of Scotland had already been confined during eleven years. They were

both well treated by Edward, and he finally consented to restore them to liberty for the sake of a large sum of money. The latter part of his reign was rendered melancholy by the death of his favourite son, the Black Prince: he did not long survive this event, and was succeeded by his grandson Richard. Windsor Castle was built by Edward III.

John. Shall we like Richard II. Mama?

Mama. You will be able to answer that question yourself when we meet to-morrow, I cannot tell you beforehand.

DIALOGUE IX.

Mama. John, do you remember who Richard II. was?

John. He was son to Edward the Black Prince, and grandson to the last king.

Mama. He was only eleven years of age when he came to the throne.

John. Was he able then to govern the kingdom alone?

Mama. He was assisted in so doing by his

three uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester. For some years nothing material happened; but as the king grew older, and his character better known, he became more and more unpopular among his subjects, and his pride and haughtiness of temper had given such offence to the nobles, that they began to form a strong party against him. At the head of this confederation was his own cousin, Henry Earl of Hereford, the son of the Duke of Lancaster, commonly called John of Gaunt.

Charlotte. What had the king done to offend so near a relation, Mama?

Mama. The Earl of Hereford had quarrelled with the Duke of Norfolk, and they met, according to the custom of those days, to decide the point by a duel. A concourse of people, as was usual, assembled upon the occasion, but just as they were preparing to engage with each other the king interposed, and would not suffer them to fight. The Duke of Norfolk was condemned to be banished the country for his life; and the Earl of Hereford for six years. Richard after this committed another act of injustice towards

the Earl of Hereford; for upon the death of the Duke of Lancaster, he seized upon all his estates, which ought of course to have descended to his son. The Earl of Hereford was now by his father's death become Duke of Lancaster, and was ready to join the strong party among the nobles who had conspired against Richard. He returned, therefore, from his banishment, and landed in England, where he was received by the Earl of Northumberland, and soon found himself at the head of a powerful army. Richard was unable to oppose his progress, and finding himself daily forsaken by his subjects he resigned his crown, and Henry was placed upon the throne.

Charlotte. I do not like Henry for dethroning his cousin, but I cannot feel much compassion for Richard II.

John. You have not told us, Mama, what became of Richard.

Mama. He was sent into confinement, and soon afterwards murdered by order of Henry IV.

DIALOGUE X.

Mama. Henry IV. did not long peaceably enjoy the throne which he had usurped; the Earl of Northumberland, who had been chiefly instrumental in raising him to it, was the first who disturbed his government.

Charlotte. He had been so unfaithful to the last king, that I am not surprised to hear that he acted again in the same manner; but what did he do now, Mama?

Mama. He considered himself as ill treated by Henry, concerning some prisoners whom he had taken from the Scotch, and resented the king's conduct upon this occasion so much, that he immediately formed a conspiracy to dethrone him, in which he was joined by many other lords. Northumberland's forces were commanded by his son Harry Percy, who, from his extraordinary ardour and courage, was surnamed Hotspur, and a battle was fought between him and the king, in which the rebels were defeated, and Hotspur himself killed. The Earl of Northum-

berland having thrown himself upon the mercy of the king received his pardon. In this battle Henry the young Prince of Wales particularly distinguished himself.

John. Was he a good prince?

Mama. In the early part of his life his conduct was such as to occasion his father great uneasiness; his companions were men of the worst characters, and of the lowest description; but an anecdote is related of him which will show you that he always possessed great generosity of disposition, and after he became king, he repented of all his wickedness and folly.

Charlotte. I hope you will tell us this anecdote, Mama.

Mama. It was this: One of the prince's wild companions had been carried before Sir William Gascoigne, a judge, in order to be tried for some offence which he had committed, and having been found guilty by him, the prince was so exasperated at it that he struck the judge in open court.

John. What did the judge do? I suppose he was afraid to punish the prince.

Mama. Indeed he was not, but instantly

ordered him to be conveyed to prison; and the prince, who felt how improperly he had acted and how much he deserved his punishment, submitted to it with the greatest patience. Shortly after this incident the king died, and you may imagine that the judge expected to be dismissed from his office; but the young king, far from showing any resentment towards him, retained him in his service, and always showed him every mark of his favour and approbation.

Charlotte. I am quite impatient to hear more of this generous young prince.

Mama. His reign, though short, was very glorious. Soon after he ascended the throne he engaged in a war with the King of France, and landed in that country with a numerous army.

John. Which of them conquered, Mama?

Mama. A dreadful sickness prevailed among the English, of which more than half their number died, and the remainder were so weakened by illness, fatigue, and want of provisions, that Henry was preparing to retreat till he should have recruited his army, when he was unexpectedly met by the French

headed by the Dauphin, in the plains of Agincourt in Picardy.

Charlotte. Who can the Dauphin be?

Mama. It is the title which is given to the eldest sons of the kings of France, from Dauphiné one of the French provinces. Notwithstanding the reduced state of the English, the king did not hesitate to engage with the French, and his troops fully justified the confidence he placed in them; the enemy were completely vanquished, though they were so greatly superior to them in numbers, and many thousand prisoners were taken; Henry then returned to England, where he assembled another army, and again invaded France. The French king being too deficient in intellect to govern his kingdom himself, and the Dauphin being totally unable to oppose the forces of Henry, a treaty of peace was concluded, by which it was agreed that the king of England should marry the French princess, and that he should succeed to the throne of France upon the death of the king her father. Henry did not however live to enjoy these high dignities, but died at the age of thirty-four, leaving an infant son named Henry.

DIALOGUE XI.

Mama. The Duke of Bedford, who was uncle as well as protector and guardian to the infant king, determined to attempt the final conquest of France; he besieged the city of Orleans, and at the moment when it was supposed the town must surrender for want of provisions, it was unexpectedly relieved in a very strange manner.

John. I like a wonderful story; pray go on, Mama.

Mama. A country girl, named Joan of Arc, who was a servant at an inn, and had been accustomed to ride and take care of horses, fancied herself able to deliver her country.

John. Why what could she do, Mama?

Mama. When this young woman was armed and mounted on horseback, she was received by the French army with the utmost joy; her courage and spirit inspired the soldiers with confidence, and under her command they attacked the English and completely repulsed them.

Charlotte. I cannot imagine how she could be so courageous; did she ever fight again?

Mama. Her next attempt was not so successful, for she was unfortunately taken prisoner by the English, was loaded with irons, and after a variety of sufferings, was condemned to be burnt alive; her enemies however never regained the ground which through her means they had lost in France; and the Duke of Bedford, finding it was in vain to make any further attempt, returned to England.

Charlotte. I am curious to know something about the young king; was he like his father?

Mama. Nothing could be more different in disposition. Henry VI. was extremely meek and quiet, and easily led by those who surrounded him. At this time two opposite parties began to be formed in the kingdom, one for the Duke of York, and the other for the king, who was of the house of Lancaster.

Charlotte. I remember that Henry IV. was son to the Duke of Lancaster; but who was the Duke of York, Mama?

Mama. He was descended from the second

son of king Edward III. whereas John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster was the third son, consequently neither Henry IV. V. or VI. had any right to the throne. All those who favoured the House of York wore a white rose as a mark of distinction, and the friends of the House of Lancaster a red one. Which colour should you have chosen, John?

John. O the white rose certainly, Mama, for the Duke of York was certainly the true heir, though I should have been sorry for Henry VI. who was so good.

Mama. He suffered for the injustice of his grandfather in usurping the crown, and was indeed much to be pitied, for dreadful contests arose between those two parties, and the king fell into the hands of his enemies.

John. Did they put him in prison?

Mama. He was set at liberty by his queen, Margaret of Anjou, who was of a masculine spirit and temper, and had collected together an army with which she attacked the Duke of York, who lost his life in this engagement. The queen then ordered his head to be cut off and fixed upon the gates of the city of York, with a paper crown in ridicule of his design.

Charlotte. How very savage! I suppose after the duke's death that every thing went on quietly.

Mama. By no means. He left a son now Duke of York, who persevered in his father's designs, and another battle took place, in which Henry was taken prisoner, and sent to the Tower of London.

John. What became of the queen?

Mama. She escaped into Flanders with her son Edward Prince of Wales, and there she remained till, with the assistance of the Earl of Warwick one of the most powerful of the English nobility, she had once more an opportunity of attacking the Duke of York, and Henry was released from prison and once more seated upon the throne. Very shortly afterwards, however, the Duke of York assembled another army, and a battle ensued in which Henry again fell into his hands; the queen and the Prince of Wales made their escape, and Warwick was killed. Henry was once more committed to the Tower, and his rival was proclaimed king by the title of Edward IV.

DIALOGUE XII.

Charlotte. I cannot help feeling very much interested for the misfortunes of Henry VI. and I am frightened for him, now that he is so entirely in the power of his enemies. Pray tell me what became of him, Mama.

Mama. He was for some time detained a prisoner in the Tower, and in the meanwhile Queen Margaret and her son made a last attempt to replace him upon the throne. They had still many friends left in England, who once more collected around them, and another battle was fought, in which both the queen and the prince were taken prisoners. The latter being brought before the king was inhumanly stabbed in his presence by his brothers, the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence.

John. Did not the king try to stop them?

Mama. So far from it, that he himself gave the first blow to the unfortunate young prince.

Charlotte. What a cruel wretch! I sup-

pose now we shall hear of the poor king Henry VI. being put to death.

Mama. You are very right, my dear Charlotte, he was not long suffered to survive his son, and was murdered in the Tower by the savage Duke of Gloucester.

Charlotte. Was the queen suffered to live, Mama?

Mama. The King of France having offered Edward IV. a large sum of money for her ransom, he was induced to spare her life and set her at liberty.

Charlotte. I hope this king did not reign long, for I am sure the people must have been very unhappy under such a barbarous prince.

Mama. He was indeed guilty of great severity to many of his subjects, who had been faithful to the late king and his family, but the most savage act which is related of him was the murder of his own brother the Duke of Clarence, who had given him some trifling cause of offence.

John. How was he killed, Mama?

Mama. The king allowed him to choose the mode of his death, and the duke being

particularly fond of wine desired to be drowned in a vessel full of his favourite liquor.

Charlotte. I wonder when he was so near his death, that he could think of indulging his love of drinking.

John. So do I, and I think he quite deserved to suffer for killing the young Prince of Wales, who had done nothing wrong.

Mama. It is certainly impossible to feel any compassion for so undeserving a man; but his crimes form no excuse for the king's conduct towards him. You will neither of you, I think, be sorry to hear that Edward's reign is drawing to a conclusion, his own death followed not long after that of his brother.

Charlotte. Well, I hope the next will be a better king; had he any sons?

Mama. Yes, he had two sons, who being still very young were left under the protection of their uncle the Duke of Gloucester. He was a prince of a most inhuman disposition, very much deformed in his person, and in every respect calculated to inspire terror and aversion. You will recollect that he had already committed two murders.

John. Yes, he killed Henry VI. and his son the young Prince of Wales. What were the names of these two little nephews of his, Mama?

Mama. The eldest was proclaimed king by the title of Edward V. and the youngest was called the Duke of York. The first thing their cruel uncle did, was to take them both from the queen their mother, and to lodge them in the Tower, under pretence of taking care of them, but in reality that he might have them completely in his power.

Charlotte. Oh, how I pity these poor little princes!

Mama. The Duke of Gloucester having secured them, and being in possession of all the authority of a king, caused many noblemen who were attached to the young king to be put to death; and having gained over the Duke of Buckingham and some others to his interest, he contrived to get himself proclaimed king by the title of Richard III. Still he did not feel himself in security while his nephews lived, and he therefore determined upon their destruction; and for this end he engaged three assassins to murder them in the Tower,

which was effected by smothering them during their sleep.

Charlotte. It makes me shudder to think of their sufferings.

John. I hope this monster did not reign in peace.

Mama. His government was soon disturbed by the Duke of Buckingham, who conceived himself not sufficiently rewarded by Richard for the part he had taken in bringing him to the throne; but he was betrayed by some of his own party into the king's hands, and was immediately condemned and executed. Richard was now become the object of general detestation, and a powerful confederacy was forming against him in favour of Henry Earl of Richmond, a prince of the House of Lancaster, who had left the country during the wars between that family and the House of York. He was earnestly invited to return to England, and was immediately joined by all who were disaffected to the king, the numbers of whom were daily increasing, and advanced a great way into the country. Richard in the mean time assembled an army to oppose him, and the two rivals met at

Bosworth in Leicestershire, where an engagement took place in which Richard lost his life. To-morrow you shall hear about his successor.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Mama. As soon as the battle of Bosworth was over, Henry VII. was welcomed to the throne with universal satisfaction; he was crowned with great splendour and ceremony, and half a year afterwards he married the Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter to King Edward IV. and sister to the two little princes who were murdered in the Tower.

Charlotte. I wonder, Mama, that the king liked to marry her, as she was of the House of York.

Mama. This marriage was very agreeable to the nation, as it put an end to the dreadful dissentions which had continued for so many years between the two families; but the queen never could gain the affection of

her husband, though her conduct was amiable and virtuous to the greatest degree.

John. I do not like the king for being so harsh.

Mama. The queen was decidedly the favourite of the people, and her popularity was increased by his treatment of her. They had several children, and a marriage was concluded between the eldest, Arthur Prince of Wales, and Catharine of Arragon.

Charlotte. I suppose she was a Spanish princess, Mama, as Arragon is in Spain.

Mama. I am glad you have not forgotten your geography, my dear Charlotte. Catherine very soon became a widow, and as her fortune was large, and the king was very fond of money, he obliged his second son Henry, then very young, to marry her, though the prince resisted the match as much as he was able. The king's rapacity and avarice had increased with his age, and his death was not regretted by any; particularly as the young monarch at that time gave the most promising hopes of making a good king. The beginning of Henry VIII.'s reign was happy, both in domestic and foreign affairs; but he

had, unfortunately for him and for his people, a minister who flattered him in every scheme to which he was inclined, and his character very soon began to change.

John. What was the name of this flatterer?

Mama. His name was Thomas Wolsey, the son of a butcher, who being a man of abilities and learning, was recommended to the king, and soon gained such an ascendancy over him as to be made sole minister. In this exalted situation Wolsey was haughty to his equals, and oppressive to his inferiors, but liberal to his friends, and he lived in the most ostentatious manner.

Charlotte. I am not at all surprised that such a man should ruin the king.

Mama. His conduct of course had made him many enemies, through whose means he lost the king's favour, and was required to give up most of his high offices. Thomas Cranmer, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, became the next favourite: he was a man of great integrity, and very different from Wolsey, who did not live above a year after his disgrace. At this period the Reformation began.

Charlotte. You must explain that to us if you please, Mama.

Mama. It is called the Reformation because a great change took place in the religion of the country, and many of the English who had till then been Roman Catholics, protested against that religion, and assumed the appellation of Protestants.

Charlotte. How came they to change, Mama?

Mama. Martin Luther, who was a German, openly preached against the errors of the Romish religion, and the authority of the Pope who is the head of it, and he converted numbers to his opinions. When Henry VIII. had been married eighteen years, he began to think he had done wrong in marrying his brother's widow, and he determined upon being separated from her.

John. Was he not fond of Catherine?

Mama. No: he had fixed his affections upon Anne Boleyn, a young lady of extraordinary beauty and accomplishments. His objection to Catherine, as being his sister-in-law, was only an excuse to get rid of her, and he immediately married Anne, who was

crowned with great pomp and splendour. This queen had a daughter named Elizabeth, upon whom Henry conferred the title of Princess of Wales, though he had an elder, named Mary, by his former wife.

Charlotte. If I were married to such a king, I should be afraid he would soon grow tired of me.

Mama. This was the case with respect to Anne Boleyn, and Henry was cruel enough to have her beheaded for a crime which she was not guilty of.

John. Of course he never found another wife, Mama.

Mama. You are mistaken, for the day after the execution the king married Jane Seymour, who did not live long enough to suffer from his capricious temper. She had one son, named Edward, who was only two days old when his mother died. Henry now determined upon a fourth wife, and his choice fell upon Anne of Cleves. I expect you to tell me what country she came from.

John. I can tell you, Mama, Cleves is in Germany.

Mama. This princess was neither hand-

some in her person, nor elegant in her manners, and Henry was quite disgusted with her appearance. You will not therefore be surprised to hear that a separation was quickly determined upon.

Charlotte. After all which I have heard of Henry VIII. I should not be surprised at any thing; I only wonder that he could persuade any one to marry him.

Mama. His next queen was Catherine Howard, niece to the Duke of Norfolk, and he appeared for a time quite happy in this marriage; but his joy was of very short duration, for Catherine was discovered to be a woman of very bad character, and he caused her to be brought to trial, and beheaded. In about a year after, Henry married his sixth and last wife, Catherine Parr, who managed his temper with prudence and success, and happily survived him. His severity to his subjects continued unabated, and as his health declined, his ill humour increased, so that his attendants were afraid to approach him.

Charlotte. I suppose they were all anxious for his death.

Mama. The king's danger had been for some time very apparent, before any one would venture to acquaint him with it, till at length Sir Anthony Denny disclosed to him the fatal secret.

John. Was Henry very angry with him, Mama?

Mama. Contrary to his usual custom, he received the news with resignation; but his anguish, and remorse, were at this time greater than can be expressed. Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was sent for; but before he arrived the king was speechless, and immediately expired, after a reign of thirty-seven years.

Charlotte. I must say that I am glad we have done with this tyrant, though the history of his six wives has been very entertaining.

DIALOGUE XIV.

Mama. Henry VIII. left only three children, Mary, the daughter of his first wife Catherine of Arragon; Elizabeth, daughter of the unfortunate Anne Boleyn; and Edward, whose mother was Jane Seymour. These all in turn ascended the throne of England. The young king, Edward VI. was only nine years of age when his father died, and his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, was appointed Protector, and guardian to him. The authority which was entrusted to him served only to excite the envy and jealousy of many of the nobility; and he was accused of crimes against the state, for which he was sent to the Tower, and shortly after executed; the most violent of his enemies was the Duke of Northumberland, whose son, Lord Guildford Dudley, had married the Lady Jane Grey.

Charlotte. Pray who was she, Mama?

Mama. She was very nearly related to Edward VI. being descended from a sister

of Henry VIII. The health of the young king, which had been always delicate, began now to decline very fast, and he died of consumption at the age of sixteen; he had shewn a high regard for the Protestant religion, was possessed of great knowledge and understanding for his age, and was of so gentle a disposition, that his early death was universally regretted. The Earl of Northumberland, who was a man of unbounded ambition, now conceived the absurd design of placing his daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, upon the throne, though the king's two sisters were living.

Charlotte. Did Lady Jane herself wish to be made a queen?

Mama. Far from it; she knew that she had no claim, and consequently had no wish to be raised to so elevated a situation. She was of a sweet and amiable disposition, was possessed of great piety, and was like her cousin Edward VI. distinguished for her learning and abilities, and it was with the greatest surprise and concern that she heard of her father-in-law's design in her favour. In the mean-time, the Princess Mary ar-

rived in London, where she was proclaimed queen without opposition; and Northumberland was by her orders arrested, and shortly afterwards beheaded.

Charlotte. I hope no harm happened to Lady Jane.

Mama. I grieve to tell you how cruelly she was treated. Mary was a violent Roman Catholic, and Lady Jane was a Protestant, and this difference in their religious opinions, added to the attempt which had been made to raise her to the throne, enraged the queen against her to such a degree, that, after detaining her a long time a prisoner in the Tower, she sent her word, that unless she would consent to change her religion, both herself and her husband should be executed.

Charlotte. How barbarous! pray go on, Mama, and tell me Lady Jane's answer.

Mama. She would not consent to give up her religion even to save her life, and withstood every argument which was used to convert her: her trust was in God, and though scarcely seventeen years of age, she was enabled to endure her sufferings with the greatest fortitude and resignation: her

husband and herself were both beheaded on the same day.

Charlotte. What a melancholy and interesting story this is, Mama!

John. I could not have believed that such a woman as Mary had ever existed.

Mama. Her cruelty did not end here. Great numbers of the protestants suffered death in her reign on account of their religious opinions; among these martyrs, were Ridley, Bishop of London, and Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, who were eminent for their piety and learning, and had been very zealous in promoting the Reformation, for which reason, they were condemned to be burned.

Charlotte. I have read an account of their death, Mama, but I did not know before in whose reign they suffered.

Mama. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Cranmer, was soon afterwards condemned to share the same fate. In all this severity, the queen was encouraged by Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and Bonner, Bishop of London, who had succeeded Ridley. They were both Roman Catholics, and their

delight was in persecuting all those who differed from them in opinion.

Charlotte. I am quite tired of all these horrors, it is to be hoped this queen did not reign long.

Mama. She lived but five years after her accession to the throne; and her death, as you will easily believe, was a great relief to her protestant subjects. She had been married to Philip II. King of Spain, but never had any children: a short time before Mary died, Calais was taken by the French, after having been in possession of the English ever since the reign of Edward III.

DIALOGUE XV.

Mama. Queen Mary having left no children, was of course succeeded by her sister, the Princess Elizabeth, who was a great favourite with the nation at the time of her coronation; she was conducted through the

city of London amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, and great magnificence was displayed upon the occasion.

John. Had Elizabeth any husband, Mama?

Mama. No, she was never married. Philip, the husband of the late queen, made proposals to marry her, but she wisely refused him: her nearest relation was Mary Queen of Scots, and the catholics thought she had a better right to the crown than Elizabeth herself.

Charlotte. Was Mary a catholic then?

Mama. Yes, my dear, and Elizabeth was a protestant. The Queen of Scots was celebrated for her beauty, and the elegance of her manners, and Elizabeth was extremely jealous of her. At this time great dissentions arose in Scotland between Mary and her subjects, and she was betrayed into the hands of her enemies, who treated her in the most rigorous manner, and finally compelled her to resign the throne to her son, James VI. Elizabeth offered Mary an asylum in England, and professed the greatest friendship for her, but she was no sooner arrived in England, than she was put into

close confinement, and never admitted into the presence of the queen.

Charlotte. How very treacherous Elizabeth was! I do not like her at all, Mama.

Mama. Your dislike will be increased by hearing that after being detained a prisoner for many years, Mary was accused of having entered into a conspiracy against the queen's life, of which she was found guilty, and condemned to be beheaded.

John. Did Elizabeth suffer her to be executed?

Mama. She hesitated for some time, but at last signed the warrant, and poor Mary was beheaded in Fotheringay Castle.

Charlotte. How did her son, the King of Scotland, act upon this occasion, Mama?

Mama. He expressed the highest resentment for the treatment of his mother, and threatened to make war against the Queen of England; but he well knew her power, and at length gave up his design, and became reconciled to her. Elizabeth was at this time under great apprehensions of an invasion from the Spaniards. Philip had long been carrying on hostilities against her,

and had prepared a prodigious army, and an immense fleet, which he called the Invincible Armada, to convey these troops to England. I must first remind you, that the king we are speaking of is the same who married our Queen Mary.

Charlotte. I was thinking of that, when you mentioned his name, Mama. Was not Elizabeth very much alarmed at all these vast preparations against her?

Mama. She shewed great firmness of mind and courage upon this occasion, and made every exertion in her power to defend her country. She had many able commanders, both by sea and land, and in order to inspire her subjects with confidence, and to excite their spirit, she appeared on horseback among the soldiers, and declared her resolution to lead them against the enemy, and to fight herself at the head of them, being determined to perish in battle, rather than see her kingdom under the dominion of the Spaniards.

John. I hope she conquered King Philip, Mama.

Mama. She did: her fleet, though far inferior in numbers to the invincible Ar-

mada, succeeded in destroying a great part of it, and the rest were driven back, and overtaken by a violent tempest, by which so much damage was done, that not one half of the Armada ever reached the coast of Spain.

John. How mortifying to King Philip!

Mama. He was justly punished for his presumption, and was made to see that God gives the victory to whom he will. The Earl of Essex had particularly distinguished himself in the action with the Spaniards: he was a young nobleman of great bravery and talents, and was the queen's particular favourite; but, having been afterwards sent to quiet some insurrections among the Irish, in which he was unsuccessful, he fell under the queen's displeasure, and he was deprived of many of his offices and employment. Essex was a man of an ungovernable temper, and was so much provoked at the treatment he had received, that he actually attempted to raise a sedition among the people, and for this imprudent conduct he was arrested, and sent to prison.

Charlotte. I am sadly afraid he will be punished.

Mama. After passing a few days in con-

finement, he confessed his guilt, and the queen felt much disposed to forgive him. She had given him formerly a ring, which she desired him to return to her in any distress of this kind; promising him, that whatever the occasion might be, his safety and pardon should be secured upon the restoration of this ring.

Charlotte. I conclude this promise was not forgotten by Essex.

Mama. It was not; but he unfortunately employed a very treacherous friend to convey it to the queen. The Countess of Nottingham, to whom he had entrusted the ring, and the secret belonging to it, was wicked enough to conceal the whole transaction from Elizabeth, who, when she found that Essex made no application for mercy, suffered him to be beheaded according to his sentence.

Charlotte. What an instance of deceit and cruelty! how was it discovered pray, Mama?

Mama. When Essex had been dead about two years, the Countess of Nottingham, being upon her death-bed, earnestly desired to

speak to the queen, to whom she related the adventure of the ring, with many expressions of sorrow and remorse for her conduct. Elizabeth burst into a passion of anger and grief at this instance of perfidy, and from that time she gave herself up to the deepest melancholy; her health rapidly declined, and when her end was visibly approaching, she named James King of Scotland, son of the unfortunate Queen Mary, as her successor, and soon afterwards expired.

John. I do not think she was a very good queen.

Mama. Elizabeth had certainly great talents for governing, and at first she appeared moderate and humble, but her behaviour was very harsh to Mary Queen of Scots, and towards the end of her reign she became haughty and severe.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Mama. We finished yesterday at the accession of James VI. King of Scotland to the throne of England.

John. I thought he was called James I. Mama.

Mama. So he was, my dear, after he became our king, as he was the first of that name who had ever reigned in England: he governed both countries equally, and from that period, England and Scotland have been considered as one kingdom, called Great Britain. In the beginning of this reign, a most horrible conspiracy was formed by the Roman Catholics to destroy the king and both houses of parliament by means of gunpowder.

Charlotte. Why did the catholics wish for the death of the king, Mama?

Mama. Because he had supported the protestant religion, which had been firmly established by Queen Elizabeth, contrary to

their expectations; for, as he was the son of a Roman Catholic, they had looked for much indulgence from him, and they were so disappointed and provoked that the king did not favour their opinions, that they resolved upon his destruction. To effect their purpose, they contrived to hire some cellars which were underneath the two houses of parliament, and deposited in them a quantity of gunpowder, covered with coals and faggots to conceal their evil designs.

Charlotte. What did they mean to do with all this?

Mama. Their intention was when the parliament first assembled, on which day the king, queen, and some of the royal family were expected to be present, to set fire to the gunpowder, and blow up the whole building, which would in all probability have occasioned the death of all who had been in it; but happily this wicked design was discovered in time to prevent the execution of it.

John. How was it found out, Mama?

Mama. In consequence of one of the conspirators having a friend in the House of Lords whose life he wished to save, he wrote him

a letter to intreat him to stay away from the scene of danger, though without disclosing the plot: sufficient however was said to excite suspicion in the mind of the person to whom it was addressed; and after a strict inquiry, and careful examination, the whole plan was discovered. A man, named Guy Fawkes, was seized in the very place where the gunpowder was concealed, and in his pocket were found matches, and every thing proper for setting fire to it; he was immediately sent to prison, where he very soon revealed the names of his accomplices, many of whom were tried and executed for this crime.

John. I have seen Guy Fawkes carried about by the boys on the fifth of November.

Mama. Yes, a figure intended as a representation of him, is displayed on that day, and the sport concludes with burning it in a large bonfire.

John. I like this story very much, Mama.

Mama. Excepting this, nothing very interesting or remarkable occurred during the reign of James I. He had two sons and a daughter. The eldest, named Henry, who

was a very promising young prince, died before the king at a very early age, to the great grief of the whole nation, and the second succeeded his father, by the name of Charles I.

Charlotte. This has been a very short lesson, Mama, cannot you tell us a little more?

Mama. We will not begin another reign to-day, but perhaps you will like to hear something of the manners and customs of the times we have been talking about; towards the latter end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, coaches were first introduced into England. The queen had always till then, upon all public occasions, rode on horseback, and carriages were for a number of years afterwards so little in use, that ladies, as well as gentlemen, performed even long journeys on horseback. London was at this time a very miserable looking city; the houses were almost entirely built of wood, and the floors of the rooms were strewed with rushes, instead of being covered with carpets, as they are now, and many of the houses had no chimneys, and

the smoke found its way out through the doors and windows.

Charlotte. I am very glad that I did not live in those days.

Mama. They did not feel the want of luxuries which they had never known, and were quite as happy without them.

John. Had they any books then, Mama?

Mama. The first book which was printed in England was in the reign of Edward IV. There were but very few before that period, and those were written upon sheets of parchment. Watches were first brought into England in the time of James I. from Germany, where they were originally invented. I have seen one which once belonged to Charles I. it was made of silver, and was remarkably clumsy and ugly.

John. I wonder the king did not have a prettier watch.

Mama. It was no doubt one of the best which was then to be had, but the arts and manufactories were not at that time brought to the state of perfection at which they are now arrived. To-morrow I shall relate to you the melancholy history of Charles I.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Charlotte. We are all impatience, Mama, for what you have to tell us of Charles I.

Mama. Well, my dear children, I am quite ready to gratify you. During the latter part of the reign of James I. the House of Commons had conceived the design of altering the form of government, so that the king should have less power than he had hitherto had, and the people more privileges. The young king being quite unsuspicious of their proceedings began his reign with the utmost security and confidence in the good will of his subjects. A short time however served to develop their designs. Charles had been brought up with the highest ideas of sovereign power, and was not disposed to give up any of his authority, and as they were equally determined to carry their point, the dissentions between the king and the parliament arose to the highest degree of animosity, and at length each had recourse to arms. The nobility and most considerable gentry en-

listed themselves in defence of their monarch. At the head of his enemies were Oliver Cromwell, Hampden, Fairfax, and many others. After repeated skirmishes, a grand battle was fought at Naseby, a village in Northamptonshire, which decided the fate of the king.

John. Did his enemies then gain the victory?

Mama. Yes; Charles was obliged to abandon the field to them, with all his cannon and baggage and five thousand prisoners.

Charlotte. Did he contrive to escape himself, Mama?

Mama. In this desperate extremity the king took the resolution of trusting himself to the Scottish army who had never expressed any animosity against him; but he soon found that instead of treating him as a sovereign, they insulted him as a captive.

John. How very unfortunate he was!

Mama. The parliament were no sooner informed of these proceedings than they entered into an agreement with the Scotch, who were base enough to deliver up their sovereign for a considerable sum of money. Oliver Cromwell conducted himself in so

artful a manner that he flattered Charles with the hope of being restored to the exercise of his former power. He was now invested with the supreme command of the army, which he led on from one act of violence to another till the king was in reality dethroned and his whole party destroyed.

John. What did Oliver Cromwell do with him?

Mama. A high court of justice was next appointed to try him.

Charlotte. Had he done any thing wrong then, Mama?

Mama. No: but he was accused of being a tyrant, a traitor, and an enemy to the liberties of the people; and as his accusers were also his judges, you will not be surprised to hear that sentence was passed upon him, and three days only were allowed him before his execution.

Charlotte. What barbarous treatment! had the king a wife or any children, pray, Mama?

Mama. Charles I. married Henrietta Maria, daughter to the King of France. She had gone over to her native country during the late commotions, and happily for her she was

not in England at the time of her husband's death. The poor king was allowed to see some of his children, but the elder ones were absent with the queen.

John. You have not told us the manner of the king's death, Māma.

Mama. He was beheaded on the 30th of January, after a miserable reign of twenty-four years. This unfortunate monarch had shown much gentleness and patience during his long sufferings, and prepared to meet his death with piety and resignation.

Charlotte. I hope they did not destroy the children, Mama.

Mama. They did not; but the Princess Elizabeth, the eldest of those who were in England at this time, died of grief not very long after her father's melancholy end. Two of her brothers, Charles and James, lived, as you will see, to be restored to the throne of their father.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Mama. After the execution of Charles I. his eldest son Prince Charles, who had for some time past taken refuge in Holland, was invited by the parliament of Scotland to return to that country, with a promise to assist him in recovering the throne; and though his father had been so shamefully deceived by them, he was induced, as a last resource, to listen to their proposals. Upon the first account of his landing there, Oliver Cromwell prepared to oppose the young prince, and marched into Scotland at the head of sixteen thousand men. He obtained the victory over the prince, who then determined upon trying his fortune in England, and proceeded thither with the remains of his army, expecting to be reinforced by all the royalists in his way.

Charlotte. Did many of the people join him?

Mama. But very few: among those who felt the inclination to join his cause, numbers were deterred from doing so through fear, and many even of those who had accompanied him from Scotland deserted him and returned

to their own country. In the mean time he was closely pursued by Cromwell and his victorious troops, and was overtaken near Worcester where an engagement took place. The prince's party were entirely defeated, and he himself was obliged to make his escape.

John. Pray what became of him, Mama?

Mama. He separated from his attendants that he might the more easily conceal himself; and for some time he was disguised like a countryman, and worked for a miller in whose house he had been received. Here he remained some time, and though a considerable reward was offered to any one who would deliver up the prince, neither the miller nor his four brothers who lived with him could be tempted to betray him. During his abode with these faithful people he was once in great danger of being taken by a party of soldiers who were in search of him, and passed very near the place where he was at work. Charles, in order to conceal himself from them, climbed up a large oak tree, which was afterwards called the royal oak from this circumstance.

Charlotte. I hope that the soldiers did not discover the poor prince, Mama.

Mama. No, my dear, they did not; but he thought it most prudent to leave the honest miller, and being assisted by different friends, and disguised in various ways, after much fatigue and many narrow escapes he reached the coast of Sussex, and there embarked for France in a vessel which had been waiting for him.

Charlotte. I am quite glad that he is arrived at a place of safety.

John. How did the people go on without any king, Mama?

Mama. Oliver Cromwell, though he had only assumed the title of protector, had in reality all the authority of a king. He engaged in a war with the Dutch, and afterwards with the Spaniards, in which he was very successful, especially at sea, where his fleet, commanded by the brave Admiral Blake, gained many victories over that of the enemy. But notwithstanding all these successes his government was detested by the whole nation, and his ambition and hypocrisy had rendered him hateful to those who had been the means of raising him to his present high station. Knowing how unpopular he

was become, he lived in the constant dread of being assassinated; he wore armour under his clothes, and never slept two nights together in the same apartment. The anxiety of his mind at length affected his health, and he was seized with an ague of which he died in the ninth year of his usurpation. He left his eldest son Richard his successor, but he was of a very different temper and disposition from his father, and he very soon resigned the dignity which was conferred upon him, and retired to his own estate in the country.

John. Who governed the people when he was gone?

Mama. For some time the parliament alone, but the greater part of the nation were beginning now to wish for the return of the royal family. General Monk, who commanded the army, and the parliament were favourably disposed towards them; at first each was afraid of expressing his sentiments, but the wish at length became so general, that the prince was proclaimed king by the title of Charles II. and he soon afterwards landed at Dover, where he was received by General Monk, and entered London on the

29th of May, which happened to be his birthday.

Charlotte. How rejoiced the people must have been to see the son of their unfortunate king restored to them.

Mama. He was indeed received with universal joy, and was welcomed by all ranks of people as he passed into London. But we have not time to enter any further upon his reign to-day.

DIALOGUE XIX.

Charlotte. I long to know if Charles II. made a good king, Mama, after all his misfortunes and adventures.

Mama. When first he came to the throne he gained the affection of all parties by his engaging manners and the easiness of his disposition: but it was soon perceived that his indolence and love of pleasure rendered him averse to all kinds of business. His ministers were left to act for him, and his chief care was to raise money from his subjects and to amuse himself.

Charlotte. Did his ministers take advantage of this weakness in the king?

Mama. Fortunately for the nation the king had made a good choice, and Lord Clarendon, who was his prime minister, conducted himself with great wisdom and integrity. But he was soon treated with neglect by the king, who behaved likewise very ungratefully to many of his father's most faithful friends. Soon after his restoration, war was declared against the Dutch; at the same time the people were visited by a dreadful calamity at home, for the plague broke out in London.

Charlotte. Pray what is the plague, Mama?

Mama. It is a dreadful disorder, which carried off ninety thousand of the inhabitants in one year. The following year another shocking misfortune took place; a fire began at a baker's shop near London Bridge, and spread with such rapidity for three days and three nights, that four hundred streets were reduced to ashes. You will recollect that I before told you the houses in London were originally mostly of wood which accounted for the violence of the flames. The city was rebuilt upon a better plan, the streets were

more regular and much wider than before, and since that time the plague has scarcely ever made its appearance. Peace was at length concluded with Holland, and the king proposed a marriage between the Prince of Orange and the Princess Mary.

John. Was she his daughter, Mama?

Mama. No: the king himself had no children. The princess was his niece, and was daughter to his brother James Duke of York. Notwithstanding this, and the termination of the war with the Dutch, great discontents prevailed in England, and universal dissatisfaction was expressed against the king's conduct, and many conspiracies were even formed against his life, but these designs were all discovered, and the authors of them condemned and executed. The king at last died of an apoplectic fit, and was succeeded by his brother James II. This prince was strongly bigotted to the Roman Catholic religion, and was very severe to the Protestant Clergy. He caused six of the Bishops to be imprisoned for defending the doctrines of their church.

Charlotte. How did the people endure these violent proceedings, Mama?

Mama. They were provoked and enraged to the greatest degree at them, but happily these prelates were finally acquitted and released from their confinement; but the king became daily more unpopular in consequence of his religious zeal, and the people began to turn their thoughts towards William Prince of Orange.

Charlotte. Did not he marry the king's daughter?

Mama. Yes, my dear, and as James had at that time no son, and the Prince and Princess of Orange were both Protestants, the English were desirous of putting the government into their hands.

Charlotte. Did William listen to the proposals that were made to him?

Mama. He began immediately to make vast preparations both by sea and land, and in a very short time had collected a considerable force with which he set sail for England, and landed in Torbay on the coast of Devonshire. The king was extremely surprised

and shocked at this intelligence, and when he found that all his friends had forsaken him, and that his youngest daughter the Princess Ann had declared herself in favour of the Prince of Orange, he gave himself up to despair, and thought only of making his escape. He immediately embarked for France, leaving the queen, who was his second wife, and her son, then very young, to follow him, which they did in a few days. James was received by the French king Lewis XIV. with the greatest kindness and generosity. The Prince of Orange having thus taken the government into his hands without any difficulty or opposition, James was compelled to abdicate the throne, and the Prince and Princess of Orange were proclaimed jointly King and Queen of England.

DIALOGUE XX.

Mama. Although William III. and Queen Mary were acknowledged as their sovereigns by the people of England, yet in Ireland, where the number of Roman Catholics was very considerable, most of the inhabitants still adhered to King James. In consequence of this favourable disposition towards him, James determined upon making an attempt to regain his kingdom, and being furnished by the King of France with some French troops, he landed in Ireland, and very soon assembled a considerable army among his Irish subjects. He was opposed by King William, who had hastened over from England upon the first information of James's intentions, and an engagement ensued between them in which William was the conqueror. This was called the battle of the Boyne, because it was fought upon the banks of that river. James was repulsed in every subsequent attempt, and was finally reduced to the necessity of

leaving the country and again taking refuge in France, where he subsisted almost entirely upon the bounty of Lewis XIV. Those among the Irish who had fought for James were allowed by William to leave Ireland, in safety, and about 14,000 of them went over to France and settled there. The French king, who had always supported the cause of James II. and had rendered him every assistance in his power, continued for many years at war with King William, but at length peace was concluded between them, and Lewis acknowledged him as King of England.

John. I do not much like William for being so ready to dethrone his father-in-law.

Charlotte. For my part I think Queen Mary was the most to blame.

Mama. As she was married to William I do not see how she could have acted differently, but she has been accused of showing some insensibility for the misfortunes of her father. She died some time before her husband. King William's death was occasioned by a fall from his horse, by which accident he broke his collar bone, and was in other respects so much hurt that he did not survive many days.

John. Queen Ann succeeded him I know, but who was she, Mama?

Mama. She was the younger sister of Queen Mary, and as William had no children, was of course the next heir to the crown.

Charlotte. I thought you told us that James II. had a son, Mama.

Mama. You are right, my dear Charlotte, he had a son who was many years younger than his two sisters, but he was excluded from the throne for the same reason as his father, that is, on account of the religion which he professed; both the daughters of James II. were protestants, and it had been determined by the parliament during the lifetime of King William that no Roman Catholic should thenceforth reign in England. The Princess Anne was therefore proclaimed queen; she was married to Prince George of Denmark, and had a large family, all of whom died young.

John. Was she a good queen, Mama?

Mama. Yes, and her reign was a very glorious one. William III. had for some time before his death been preparing for another war with France, for upon the

death of James II. which took place soon after the conclusion of the peace, Lewis XIV. declared his son to be King of England, and William had determined to resent the affront. Queen Anne was not backward in executing the designs which he had conceived, and she was joined by the Emperor of Germany, and the Dutch, who were jealous of the power of the King of France. A considerable army was sent over to the continent by the queen, commanded by the Duke of Marlborough, one of the greatest generals that ever lived; he obtained many splendid victories over the French in Germany, which was the scene of the war. While these events were passing there, the town of Gibraltar was taken from the Spaniards, and has ever since remained in our possession.

Charlotte. Did not Queen Anne's brother ever make an effort to regain his kingdom, Mama?

Mama. Yes, my dear, about this time he was encouraged to make an attempt for that purpose in Scotland, where he had many friends, and the King of France furnished

him with troops, but his expedition proved fruitless, for the English fleet intercepted him, and after being tossed about for a month in very tempestuous weather, he gave up the undertaking, and peace was at last concluded between the queen and Louis XIV. This young prince was called the Pretender. The queen died not very long after this event in the 50th year of her age.

Charlotte. You said, Mama, that all her children died, who then was George I. who succeeded her?

Mama. He was of the house of Brunswick in Germany, and was Elector of Hanover, his grandmother was the daughter of James I. who married a German prince, and he was therefore the nearest relation to the queen who professed the protestant religion. Upon the death of Anne he was proclaimed king, and his title was acknowledged without the smallest opposition.

DIALOGUE XXI.

Charlotte. Shall we hear any thing more of the Pretender during the reign of George I. Mama?

Mama. The king had not long been in possession of the crown before great commotions arose in different parts of the kingdom, and a rebellion in favour of the Pretender broke out in Scotland, and the prince actually landed there and assumed the title of king; but as he was neither furnished with money nor arms he was under the necessity of relinquishing the enterprise, and returned to France: those who had promoted his cause were many of them deprived of their estates and punished in the severest manner, and tranquillity was for a time restored. At this period died the great Duke of Marlborough; I hope you have not forgotten him, John.

John. Oh no, Mama, I remember the account of his battles in the last reign against the French.

Mama. There is so little to relate concerning George I. which can interest you, that we will pass on to his son George II. In his reign the son of the old Pretender resolved to make one more effort for regaining the throne of his fathers.

Charlotte. Was the Pretender himself dead?

Mama. No, but he was too far advanced in years to engage in such an expedition, but he transferred his pretensions to his son Charles Edward, a young man of promising talents. Being furnished with arms and money, but quite destitute of troops, he embarked for Scotland, and landed there in the year 1745; he had been encouraged to hope for succours from the King of France, and was assured that the people of Scotland were ready for an insurrection.

Charlotte. How was he received there, Mama?

Mama. A considerable number of the

highlanders joined him, and his party at first daily acquired strength, and no small alarm was excited in England at the intelligence of the prince having entered Edinburgh and taken possession of the palace of Holyrood-house in his father's name: during all these transactions the king had been in Germany, but upon his return from thence every measure was taken to subdue the rebels; the young prince, however, still gained ground, and advanced into England as far as Derby, here however his hopes began to fail him, his followers became discontented, and as none of the English had ventured to join him, it was at length determined, instead of proceeding any further, to return immediately to Scotland, which was effected with all possible expedition.

Charlotte. I cannot help admiring Charles Edward, and I only hope he escaped in safety.

Mama. The Duke of Cumberland, a son of the king's, had been sent into Scotland to oppose his progress, and an engagement took place between the rebels and the duke's

army on the plains of Culloden, where a decisive victory was obtained by the latter, and the prince was obliged to escape and dismiss his followers. After wandering about for many months among the islands and mountains of Scotland at the imminent danger of his life, he at length reached a part of the coast where a vessel had been stationed by his friends, and embarked in it for France. Thus the rebellion was entirely extinguished, and the king resolved to make examples of those who had contributed to disturb the peace of the country. Many of the highland chieftains who had served in the prince's army were executed, and a few Scotch noblemen were beheaded on Tower Hill, and their heads afterwards placed upon Temple-bar. This reign was remarkable for many brave naval officers who gained several glorious victories over the French and Spaniards, and the nation was arrived at a high state of prosperity when the king died. He was succeeded by his grandson George III. who is our present sovereign.

Charlotte. Is our history then at an end, Mama?

Mama. Yes, I think I have told you all which I am desirous of your knowing at present, when you are older, I shall let you read a better account of our past lessons.

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