

**BLACKWOODS' EDUCATIONAL  
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READER. STANDARDS VI AND VII.  
ENGLAND FROM 1603 A.D. TO  
THE PRESENT TIME**

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**PROFESSOR MEIKLEJOHN**

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ENGLAND

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THIRD  
HISTORICAL READER.



THE HOUSE OF STEWART.

1.—JAMES THE FIRST.—I.

1603-1625.—*Reigned 22 years.*

1. Who James I was.—James the First of England was also James the Sixth of Scotland. He was the only son of the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley, her second husband. Darnley was the grandson of Margaret Tudor, the eldest sister of Henry VIII. James I. was thirty-seven years of



James I.

age when he came to the English throne ; and he took the title of King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. His wife was a Danish princess—Anne of Denmark ; and he had been married for about fourteen years before his accession to the crown of England.

2 **“Divine Right.”**—James had got into his head the idea that kings rule “by divine right” ; and that they should answer for their acts, not to their subjects, but to God alone. This idea he taught to his sons ; and it cost one of them his head, and one of his grandsons his throne.

3 **Arabella Stewart.**—The king was hardly settled in his palace in Whitehall, when he was informed of a plot, called the Main Plot, that had been hatched to seize his own person, and to place his cousin, **Arabella Stewart**, another descendant of Margaret Tudor’s, upon the English throne. At the head of this plot there was said to be a very famous man, **Sir Walter Raleigh**. He was brought to trial ; and though no evidence of his guilt was brought forward, he was found guilty, and sentenced to death. But his sentence was commuted into imprisonment for life, and he was thrown into the Tower. Here he remained for about thirteen years ; and he spent his time not unhappily—gardening, reading, and writing. He gave most of his time and thoughts to the composition of his famous ‘History of the World.’

4 **The Hampton Court Conference, 1604.**—There was at this time in the Church of England a very active party called the **Puritan Party**. The Puritans, as they were called, wanted to omit certain parts of the Church Service ; they objected to the wearing of surplices in the pulpit ; they did not want to make the sign of the cross ; *and they even* thought it wrong to use a ring for the

finger of the bride at the marriage-service. James, who was a very learned man, resolved to have some talk with these Puritan clergymen. He asked them to meet him at **Hampton Court Palace**—a beautiful house that had been built by Cardinal Wolsey, and by him presented to his friend and master Henry VIII. James himself took the chair at this meeting of clergy—which went by the name of the **Hampton Court Conference**. The Puritans objected to bishops in the Church; but James cut them short with his favourite saying: “No Bishop, no King!” The conference did not produce a reconciliation between the parties in the Church. The only good fruit of it was a new and careful translation of the Bible. On this work forty-seven divines were engaged for three years—from 1607 to 1610. It was published in the year 1611; and it is this version that we still use in our churches and our homes.

**5. The Gunpowder Plot, 1605.**—The Roman Catholics had expected that, when James came to the throne, they would be much better treated; they hoped that the son of a Catholic lady would do something to make life easier for them, and to do away with the laws that were oppressing them. But James did nothing. They were still liable to fines, imprisonment, and other heavy punishments; and many of the country gentlemen, who were still Catholics, groaned deeply under their burdens. At length **Robert Catesby**, a Catholic gentleman of Northamptonshire, formed the plan of blowing up with gunpowder the king, his sons, and the Lords and Commons, at the opening of Parliament on the 5th of November 1605. Catesby was the head of this plot; **Guy Fawkes** was the hand. **Guy** or **Guido Fawkes** was a Yorkshire gentleman, who had served in the Spanish



army. But, as we all know, the plot was discovered; Fawkes and the others were arrested; and most of the conspirators were put to death either before or after trial.

**6. The Results of the Gunpowder Plot.**—The Roman Catholics were now much worse off than they had ever been before. New laws—harder and more cruel than ever—were passed against them. They were not allowed to live in London; no Roman Catholic could be a lawyer or a doctor; and, in one word, they were made outlaws from the society of their fellow-men.

ac-ces'-sion, the coming to.

ev'-i-dence, proof.

com-mut'-ed, changed.

sur'-plice, a white gown worn by the clergy.

con'-fer-ence, a meeting at which certain things are talked over and arranged.

re-con-cil-i-a'-tion, agreement; good feeling.

con-spir'-a-tors, plotters.

**By Divine Right.** By this was meant that the king was appointed by God alone, that only to Him he should answer for his acts, and that his subjects should obey him at once and without question.

**One of his sons,**—Charles I., who was executed 1649.

**One of his grandsons,**—James II., who was dethroned in the Revolution of 1688.

**Arabella Stewart.** See the Genealogical Table.

**Tower.** The Tower in the times of the Wars of the Roses was a palace of the kings of England. By this time it was used only as a prison.

## 2.—JAMES THE FIRST.—II.

1603-1625.—*Reigned 22 years.*

**1. The Great Contract.**—James was always in want of money, and perpetually falling into debt. He was fond of shows, games, and all kinds of amusement; and he liked to give expensive presents to his Court

favourites. A number of monopolies and rights over trade and commerce belonged to him as king; and he offered to give these up if Parliament would give him a large annual income. This proposed agreement went by the name of the **Great Contract**. But, after a great deal of talk and writing, it came to nothing; and James broke up his Parliament in a rage.

**2 The Addled Parliament.**—James called together a new Parliament, and hoped that it would prove more pliant to his wishes. But it was no better than the last. It sat for a few weeks; did nothing; and was also dismissed in anger. It received the name of the "Addled Parliament," because it did not "hatch" a single new law. James now began to try to do without a Parliament; he imposed taxes as he pleased; and in this way he laid the foundation of a long and fatal quarrel, which lasted through his own reign and also through that of his son and successor.

**3. James's Favourites.**—James's first favourite was a young Scotchman named Robert Carr, whom he created Earl of Somerset. But both Somerset and his wife were found guilty of having murdered by poison an English gentleman who had formerly been their friend. They were condemned to death, but James pardoned them, and sent them to live in the country, where they died in misery, disgrace, and want. . . . His next favourite was George Villiers, a handsome young man, with gay, pleasant, and attractive manners. This gentleman he created **Duke of Buckingham**. In no long time Buckingham had become the chief person in the State. No one could get an office or a pension without first gaining the favour of Buckingham; and no Bill could pass through Parliament without his permission.

**4. James and his Parliaments.**—We have already seen that James did not agree very well with the Parliaments which from time to time he called together. Indeed, he was almost always quarrelling with his House of Commons. When he asked them for money, they asked him for their rights, and demanded also that he should get rid of his favourites. The Commons at length laid it down as a fixed principle :

**No Supplies without Redress of Grievances !**

That is to say, we will not supply you with money, unless you first put right what is wrong. There were only four Parliaments during the reign of James. They were generally sent away in anger, did little good while they sat ; and James would contrive to rule without a Parliament for as long as seven years at one time.

**5. Lord Bacon.**—Francis Bacon was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal under Queen Elizabeth. He had been when quite a little boy a great favourite of the queen, who used to call him her young Lord Keeper. He was a man of the highest ability and a hard worker ; and he gradually rose to the highest office in the State—that of Lord High Chancellor. He was, besides, one of the great-



Lord Bacon.

est English thinkers, and one of the best prose-writers that ever lived. But he was accused of taking bribes, and of giving unjust judgments for the purpose of pleasing the Duke of Buckingham. The House of Lords brought *him* to trial, found him guilty, and sentenced him to