

**ENGLISH GRAMMAR
SCHOOLS IN THE REIGN
OF QUEEN ELIZABETH**

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English Grammar Schools in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth by A. Monroe Stowe

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A. MONROE STOWE

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IN THE

REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

BY

A. Monroe Stowe

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INTRODUCTION

The history of English secondary education in the sixteenth century reveals two movements, one of destruction, the other of reconstruction. The former movement reached its climax in the destruction of the monasteries,¹ guilds, and chantries,² since with these there perished a very large number of the institutions of English secondary education. But before this climax had been reached, the latter movement had exhibited itself in the foundation of such schools as St. Paul's³ and the City Grammar School of Bristol.⁴ While the former movement was spending itself, the latter continued to grow. Close upon the destruction of the monasteries and their schools followed the refoundation of the cathedrals and the cathedral schools by Henry VIII.,⁵ while simultaneously with the destruction of the guild and chantry schools occurred the foundation of increasing numbers of independent schools.⁶

It is with these independent schools as they existed in the reign of Elizabeth that the present study is concerned, since it is hoped that through the study of the facts concerning their foundation and support, their government, their teaching staff, their curricula, and the school life of their pupils there may result not only a description of the schools as they existed at that period,⁷ but also the discovery of at least some of the chief characteristics of the education and educational institutions of this reconstructive movement in the English secondary education of the Elizabethan period.

¹ The lesser monasteries were suppressed in 1536; the greater abbeys in 1539. As to the importance of the education furnished by the monasteries at this time, there is considerable difference of opinion. Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation*, p. 19, is inclined to rate the educational influence of the monasteries very low, while Brown in his *Study of the English Grammar Schools before the Reformation* believes that Leach has underestimated their influence.

² For discussion cf. Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation*, 34-55, 58-73.

³ Cf. Carlisle, II., 70ff; also, St. Paul's in the various School Histories given in Bibliography.

⁴ Cf. Bristol, *City Grammar School*, Appendix A.

⁵ Cf. Leach, *loc. cit.* 58.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 78ff.

⁷ The treatment will be "cross sectional" rather than "longitudinal;" no effort has been made to trace in the sequence of events of our period the interaction of cause and effect. The period has been studied rather as a static whole than as a dynamic unit.