

Mary Stuart – from *Moving Ideas* by F. Salerno

She was Elizabeth's eternal rival. Mary I, Queen of Catholic Scotland, was the wife of Francis II, king of France, for a very short time because of his sudden death. She left Scotland to live in France but when she was widowed and went back to her land, she found that a lot of things had changed: Scotland followed the Calvinist John Knox's ideas and frustrated by Catholic corruption and inefficiency; furthermore it didn't endure the arrogance of the French anymore, who ruled Scotland in Mary's absence. She married Lord Darnley, a Tudor, who was mysteriously murdered and, after a very short time, she married the Scottish Earl of Bothwell who was suspected of Darnley's murder. The Pope, Spain, France and Scottish opinion were against her: she was taken prisoner and deposed in favour of her son James. She escaped and asked Elizabeth for help who gave her refuge for 19 years. Even if she continuously plotted against Elizabeth and the House of Commons asked for her execution, Elizabeth refused, and not only because she was her cousin: Elizabeth knew that Mary's execution would provoke a war with Spain, and England didn't have the means to face it. Anyway, after the discovery of an nth plot, in 1587 Elizabeth signed her execution.