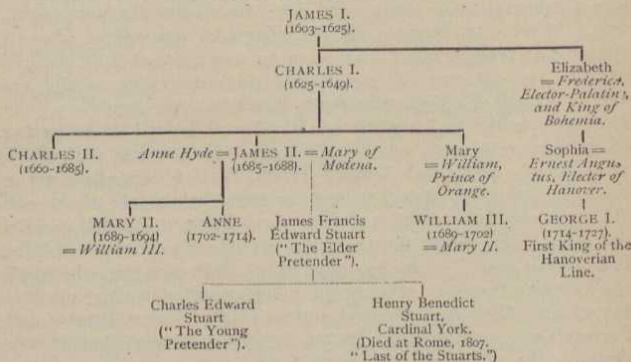


The commerce which has made the last-named city one of the greatest sea-ports in the world was still in its infancy. The introduction of the manufacture of cotton was just beginning to make Manchester a place of some importance. Toward the end of the Stuart Period, stage-coaches were introduced, and a journey from London to Chester (about two hundred miles) took four days in summer and six in winter. The great mass of the people were employed in agriculture. Wages were low, and the food of the laboring class was coarse. Much ignorance prevailed among the peasantry, and even in the higher grades of society; but, through such organizations as the *Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge*, the light of education was gradually extended.

THE HOUSE OF STUART.



CHAPTER XLV.

HOUSE OF HANOVER.—GEORGE I. 1714 to 1727 A.D.

1. On the death of Anne without surviving issue, George, Elector of Hanover, became King of England by virtue of the Act of Settlement. He was fifty-four years of age, of short stature, and of exceedingly awkward manners. He could neither write nor speak English, and had to learn, like a parrot, the few words with which he opened Parliament. As much of his time as possible after his accession was spent in Hanover. His private character was not above reproach, and he left his wife, Sophia of Brunswick, who was his own cousin, in con-

Accession
and char-
acter of
George I.