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4. England witnessed an unimaginable prosperity. For the first time in the history of England it relished internal peace. This internal peace is achieved through

(a) throwing away the foreign powers in the great break up with Rome.

(b) resolution of the rivalry between Catholics and Protestants.

(c) Sudden growth of patriotic spirit among the Englishmen in view of his country's collision with Spain. This put an end to internal dispute.

Everything combined together made this age outstanding. The remarkable general attitude of this age are the pride in its country's greatness, dislike for its enemies and an overwhelming loyalty towards the Queen. Hudson rightly terms this age as an age in which 'men lived intensely, thought intensely, and wrote intensely'.

Printing press. Translation not only made the classics ready at hand it also made the English Bibles to reach every public. In this way knowledge got dispersed among the citizens of England. And Gutenberg's printing press was solely responsible for this change. On the whole people had the thirst for literature, developed an ~~both~~ aesthetic sense that enriched their life.

2) Reformation:

On one hand Renaissance kindled their intellectual and aesthetic faculties and on the other hand Reformation aroused their spiritual awakening. The printing press which readily made the Bible readily available in the hands of the people widened up the interest in religion along with an intense moral earnestness.

3) Discoveries:

Apart from Renaissance and Reformation the impact of the explorers of the 16th c is felt among the people of England. The explorers like Hawkins, Drake, Frobisher and Raleigh unravelled the distant land by sea route. With their uncompromising daringness explored new world beyond the seas. In fact their adventures kindled the curiosity and the zest for adventure. No doubt it bloomed fresh ideas about things around. It also expanded the boundaries of human imagination.

age saw the full fruition and the third is termed as autumn where everything started to decline. However, Hudson carefully demarcates the first two phases as where the term Elizabethan is applied and terms the last division as Jacobean age. Yet in a literary perspective both the Elizabethan and Jacobean age fall under one category, the Age of Shakespeare.

By its standard and greatness this period is considered as a remarkable one in the epoch of the world's literature. This period witnessed the prodigies like Spenser, Bacon and Shakespeare who were growing from boyhood into youth during the early years of the Queen's rule. Consequently attained maturity naturally during the end of the 16th c. This was the age where thoughts and imagination expanded beyond its boundaries. It produced geniuses who breathe life and energy to the Elizabethan literature. The greatness of this age lies on many factors.

1. Renaissance:

Renaissance is one of the major aspects that really contributed to the age's greatness. The impact of the Renaissance spirit is felt all over Europe. Translation was taking place in large numbers. It has brought a tremendous change over the citizens of England. Apart from the scholars the public of the British Empire had the thirst for learning. Their thirst for learning led to translation of classical works. Translation made it easier for the public to access the texts from Greece, Rome and Italy. The easy access of the translated texts were made possible by Gutenberg's

History Of English Literature

Chapter VI

The Age of Shakespeare (1558-1625)

Non dramatic Verse

The Age of Shakespeare:

The age of Shakespeare extends from the time the Queen Elizabeth accessed her throne in 1558 till the death of King James I in 1625. Hence the age of Shakespeare extends upto 67 years. These long years fall into three broad divisions.

First division:

It consists of 21 years of the Queen's reign.

Second division:

It comprises 24 years between the publication of Spenser's 'Shepherd's Calendar' and the subsequent death of Queen Elizabeth.

Third division:

This one covers up 22 years of King James I's reign in England.

The first phase is considered as the spring of the Elizabethan literature. In other words we can say that it was a time where everything was getting ready. The second is regarded as summer where the