

JACOB ABBOTT

QUEEN
ELIZABETH

Jacob Abbott

Queen Elizabeth

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Jacob Abbott

Queen Elizabeth / Makers of History

PREFACE

The author of this series has made it his special object to confine himself very strictly, even in the most minute details which he records, to historic truth. The narratives are not tales founded upon history, but history itself, without any embellishment or any deviations from the strict truth, so far as it can now be discovered by an attentive examination of the annals written at the time when the events themselves occurred. In writing the narratives, the author has endeavored to avail himself of the best sources of information which this country affords; and though, of course, there must be in these volumes, as in all historical accounts, more or less of imperfection and error, there is no intentional embellishment. Nothing is stated, not even the most minute and apparently imaginary details, without what was deemed good historical authority. The readers, therefore, may rely upon the record as the truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as an honest purpose and a careful examination have been effectual in ascertaining it.

Chapter I. Elizabeth's Mother

1533-1536

Greenwich.
The hospital.
Its inmates.
Greenwich Observatory.
Manner of taking time.

Travelers, in ascending the Thames by the steamboat from Rotterdam, on their return from an excursion to the Rhine, have often their attention strongly attracted by what appears to be a splendid palace on the banks of the river at Greenwich. The edifice is not a palace, however, but a hospital, or, rather, a retreat where the worn out, maimed, and crippled veterans of the English navy spend the remnant of their days in comfort and peace, on pensions allowed them by the government in whose service they have spent their strength or lost their limbs. The magnificent buildings of the hospital stand on level land near the river. Behind them there is a beautiful park, which extends over the undulating and rising ground in the rear; and on the summit of one of the eminences there is the famous Greenwich Observatory, on the precision of whose quadrants and micrometers depend those calculations by which the navigation of the world is guided. The most unconcerned and careless spectator is interested in the manner in which the ships which throng the river all the way from Greenwich to London, "take their time" from this observatory before setting sail for distant seas. From the top of a cupola surmounting the edifice, a slender pole ascends, with a black ball upon it, so constructed as to slide up and down for a few feet upon the pole. When the hour of 12 M. approaches, the ball slowly rises to within a few inches of the top, warning the ship-masters in the river to be ready with their chronometers, to observe and note the precise instant of its fall. When a few seconds only remain of the time, the ball ascends the remainder of the distance by a very deliberate motion, and then drops suddenly when the instant arrives. The ships depart on their several destinations, and for months afterward when thousands of miles away they depend for their safety in dark and stormy nights, and among dangerous reefs and rocky shores, on the nice approximation to correctness in the note of time which this descending ball had given them.

Henry the Eighth.
His character.
His six wives.

This is Greenwich, as it exists at the present day. At the time when the events occurred which are to be related in this narrative, it was most known on account of a royal palace which was situated there. This palace was the residence of the then queen consort of England. The king reigning at that time was Henry the Eighth. He was an unprincipled and cruel tyrant, and the chief business of his life seemed to be selecting and marrying new queens, making room for each succeeding one by discarding, divorcing, or beheading her predecessor. There were six of them in all, and, with one exception, the history of each one is a distinct and separate, but dreadful tragedy. As there were so many of them, and they figured as queens each for so short a period, they are commonly designated in history by their personal family names, and even in these names there is a great similarity. There were three Catharines, two Annes, and a Jane. The only one who lived and died in peace, respected and beloved to the end, was the Jane.

Anne Boleyn.
Catharine of Aragon.
Henry discards her.
Origin of the English Church.

Queen Elizabeth, the subject of this narrative, was the daughter of the second wife in this strange succession, and her mother was one of the Annes. Her name in full was Anne Boleyn. She was young and very beautiful, and Henry, to prepare the way for making her his wife, divorced his first queen, or rather declared his marriage with her null and void, because she had been, before he married her, the wife of his brother. Her name was Catharine of Aragon. She was, while connected with him, a faithful, true, and affectionate wife. She was a Catholic. The Catholic rules are very strict in respect to the marriage of relatives, and a special dispensation from the pope was necessary to authorize marriage in such a case as that of Henry and Catharine. This dispensation had, however, been obtained, and Catharine had, in reliance upon it, consented to become Henry's wife. When, however, she was no longer young and beautiful, and Henry had become enamored of Anne Boleyn, who was so, he discarded Catharine, and espoused the beautiful girl in her stead. He wished the pope to annul his dispensation, which would, of course, annul the marriage; and because the pontiff refused, and all the efforts of Henry's government were unavailing to move him, he abandoned the Catholic faith, and established an independent Protestant church in England, whose supreme authority *would* annul the marriage. Thus, in a great measure, came the Reformation in England. The Catholics reproach us, and, it must be confessed, with some justice, with the ignominiousness of its origin.

Henry marries Anne Boleyn.
Birth of Elizabeth.

The course which things thus took created a great deal of delay in the formal annulling of the marriage with Catharine, which Henry was too impatient and imperious to bear. He would not wait for the decree of divorce, but took Anne Boleyn for his wife before his previous connection was made void. He said he was privately married to her. This he had, as he maintained, a right to do, for he considered his first marriage as void, absolutely and of itself, without any decree. When, at length, the decree was finally passed, he brought Anne Boleyn forward as his queen, and introduced her as such to England and to the world by a genuine marriage and a most magnificent coronation. The people of England pitied poor Catharine, but they joined very cordially, notwithstanding, in welcoming the youthful and beautiful lady who was to take her place. All London gave itself up to festivities and rejoicings on the occasion of these nuptials. Immediately after this the young queen retired to her palace in Greenwich, and in two or three months afterward little Elizabeth was born. Her birth-day was the 7th of September, 1533.

Ceremony of christening.

The mother may have loved the babe, but Henry himself was sadly disappointed that his child was not a son. Notwithstanding her sex, however, she was a personage of great distinction from her very birth, as all the realm looked upon her as heir to the crown. Henry was himself, at this time, very fond of Anne Boleyn, though his feelings afterward were entirely changed. He determined on giving to the infant a very splendid christening. The usage in the Church of England is to make the christening of a child not merely a solemn religious ceremony, but a great festive occasion of congratulations and rejoicing. The unconscious subject of the ceremony is taken to the church. Certain near and distinguished friends, gentlemen and ladies, appear as godfathers and godmothers, as they are termed, to the child. They, in the ceremony, are considered as presenting the infant for consecration to Christ, and as becoming responsible for its future initiation into the Christian faith. They are hence sometimes called sponsors. These sponsors are supposed to take, from the time of the baptism forward, a strong interest in all that pertains to the welfare of their little charge, and they usually manifest this interest

by presents on the day of the christening. These things are all conducted with considerable ceremony and parade in ordinary cases, occurring in private life; and when a princess is to be baptized, all, even the most minute details of the ceremony, assume a great importance, and the whole scene becomes one of great pomp and splendor.

Baptism of Elizabeth.

Grand procession.

Train-bearers.

The babe, in this case, was conveyed to the church in a grand procession. The mayor and other civic authorities in London came down to Greenwich in barges, tastefully ornamented, to join in the ceremony. The lords and ladies of King Henry's court were also there, in attendance at the palace. When all were assembled, and every thing was ready, the procession moved from the palace to the church with great pomp. The road, all the way, was carpeted with green rushes, spread upon the ground. Over this road the little infant was borne by one of her godmothers. She was wrapped in a mantle of purple velvet, with a long train appended to it, which was trimmed with ermine, a very costly kind of fur, used in England as a badge of authority. This train was borne by lords and ladies of high rank, who were appointed for the purpose by the king, and who deemed their office a very distinguished honor. Besides these train-bearers, there were four lords, who walked two on each side of the child, and who held over her a magnificent canopy. Other personages of high rank and station followed, bearing various insignia and emblems, such as by the ancient customs of England are employed on these occasions, and all dressed sumptuously in gorgeous robes, and wearing the badges and decorations pertaining to their rank or the offices they held. Vast crowds of spectators lined the way, and gazed upon the scene.

The church.

The silver font.

The presents.

On arriving at the church, they found the interior splendidly decorated for the occasion. Its walls were lined throughout with tapestry, and in the center was a crimson canopy, under which was placed a large silver font, containing the water with which the child was to be baptized. The ceremony was performed by Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, which is the office of the highest dignitary of the English Church. After it was performed, the procession returned as it came, only now there was an addition of four persons of high rank, who followed the child with the presents intended for her by the godfathers and godmothers. These presents consisted of cups and bowls, of beautiful workmanship, some of silver gilt, and some of solid gold. They were very costly, though not prized much yet by the unconscious infant for whom they were intended. She went and came, in the midst of this gay and joyous procession, little imagining into what a restless and unsatisfying life all this pageantry and splendor were ushering her.

Name of the infant princess.

They named the child Elizabeth, from her grandmother. There have been many queens of that name, but Queen Elizabeth of England became so much more distinguished than any other, that that name alone has become her usual designation. Her family name was Tudor. As she was never married – for, though her life was one perpetual scene of matrimonial schemes and negotiations, she lived and died a maiden lady – she has been sometimes called the Virgin Queen, and one of the states of this Union, Virginia, receives its name from this designation of Elizabeth. She is also often familiarly called Queen Bess.

Elizabeth made Princess of Wales.

Matrimonial schemes.

Making little Elizabeth presents of gold and silver plate, and arranging splendid pageants for her, were not the only plans for her aggrandizement which were formed during the period of her infantile unconsciousness. The king, her father, first had an act of Parliament passed, solemnly recognizing and confirming her claim as heir to the crown, and the title of Princess of Wales was formally conferred upon her. When these things were done, Henry began to consider how he could best promote his own political schemes by forming an engagement of marriage for her, and, when she was only about two years of age, he offered her to the King of France as the future wife of one of his sons, on certain conditions of political service which he wished him to perform. But the King of France would not accede to the terms, and so this plan was abandoned. Elizabeth was, however, notwithstanding this failure, an object of universal interest and attention, as the daughter of a very powerful monarch, and the heir to his crown. Her life opened with very bright and serene prospects of future greatness; but all these prospects were soon apparently cut off by a very heavy cloud which arose to darken her sky. This cloud was the sudden and dreadful fall and ruin of her mother.

Jane Seymour.

Queen Anne Boleyn was originally a maid of honor to Queen Catharine, and became acquainted with King Henry and gained his affections while she was acting in that capacity. When she became queen herself, she had, of course, her own maids of honor, and among them was one named Jane Seymour. Jane was a beautiful and accomplished lady, and in the end she supplanted her mistress and queen in Henry's affections, just as Anne herself had supplanted Catharine. The king had removed Catharine to make way for Anne, by annulling his marriage with her on account of their relationship: what way could he contrive now to remove Anne, so as to make way for Jane?

The tournament.

The king's suspicions.

Queen Anne arrested.

He began to entertain, or to pretend to entertain, feelings of jealousy and suspicion that Anne was unfaithful to him. One day, at a sort of tournament in the park of the royal palace at Greenwich, when a great crowd of gayly-dressed ladies and gentlemen were assembled to witness the spectacle, the queen dropped her handkerchief. A gentleman whom the king had suspected of being one of her favorites picked it up. He did not immediately restore it to her. There was, besides, something in the air and manner of the gentleman, and in the attendant circumstances of the case, which the king's mind seized upon as evidence of criminal gallantry between the parties. He was, or at least pretended to be, in a great rage. He left the field immediately and went to London. The tournament was broken up in confusion, the queen was seized by the king's orders, conveyed to her palace in Greenwich, and shut up in her chamber, with a lady who had always been her rival and enemy to guard her. She was in great consternation and sorrow, but she declared most solemnly that she was innocent of any crime, and had always been true and faithful to the king.

She is sent to the Tower.

The next day she was taken from her palace at Greenwich up the river, probably in a barge well guarded by armed men, to the Tower of London. The Tower is an ancient and very extensive castle, consisting of a great number of buildings inclosed within a high wall. It is in the lower part of London, on the bank of the Thames, with a flight of stairs leading down to the river from a great postern gate. The unhappy queen was landed at these stairs and conveyed into the castle, and shut up in a gloomy apartment, with walls of stone and windows barricaded with strong bars of iron. There were four or five gentlemen, attendants upon the queen in her palace at Greenwich, whom the king suspected, or pretended to suspect, of being her accomplices in crime, that were arrested at the same time with her and closely confined.

Sufferings of the queen.

Her mental distress.

When the poor queen was introduced into her dungeon, she fell on her knees, and, in an agony of terror and despair, she implored God to help her in this hour of her extremity, and most solemnly called him to witness that she was innocent of the crime imputed to her charge. Seeking thus a refuge in God calmed and composed her in some small degree; but when, again, thoughts of the imperious and implacable temper of her husband came over her, of the impetuosity of his passions, of the certainty that he wished her removed out of the way in order that room might be made for her rival, and then, when her distracted mind turned to the forlorn and helpless condition of her little daughter Elizabeth, now scarcely three years old, her fortitude and self-possession forsook her entirely; she sank half insane upon her bed, in long and uncontrollable paroxysms of sobs and tears, alternating with still more uncontrollable and frightful bursts of hysterical laughter.

Examination of Anne.

The king sent a commission to take her examination. At the same time, he urged her, by the persons whom he sent, to confess her guilt, promising her that, if she did so, her life should be spared. She, however, protested her innocence with the utmost firmness and constancy. She begged earnestly to be allowed to see the king, and, when this was refused, she wrote a letter to him, which still remains, and which expresses very strongly the acuteness of her mental sufferings.

Her letter to the king.

In this letter, she said that she was so distressed and bewildered by the king's displeasure and her imprisonment, that she hardly knew what to think or to say. She assured him that she had always been faithful and true to him, and begged that he would not cast an indelible stain upon her own fair fame and that of her innocent and helpless child by such unjust and groundless imputations. She begged him to let her have a fair trial by impartial persons, who would weigh the evidence against her in a just and equitable manner. She was sure that by this course her innocence would be established, and he himself, and all mankind would see that she had been most unjustly accused.

But if, on the other hand, she added, the king had determined on her destruction, in order to remove an obstacle in the way of his possession of a new object of love, she prayed that God would forgive him and all her enemies for so great a sin, and not call him to account for it at the last day. She urged him, at all events, to spare the lives of the four gentlemen who had been accused, as she assured him they were wholly innocent of the crime laid to their charge, begging him, if he had ever loved the name of Anne Boleyn, to grant this her last request. She signed her letter his "most loyal and ever faithful wife," and dated it from her "doleful prison in the Tower."

Anne's fellow-prisoners.

They are executed.

The four gentlemen were promised that their lives should be spared if they would confess their guilt. One of them did, accordingly, admit his guilt, and the others persisted to the end in firmly denying it. They who think Anne Boleyn was innocent, suppose that the one who confessed did it as the most likely mode of averting destruction, as men have often been known, under the influence of fear, to confess crimes of which it was afterward proved they could not have been guilty. If this was his motive, it was of no avail. The four persons accused, after a very informal trial, in which nothing was really proved against them, were condemned, apparently to please the king, and were executed together.

Anne tried and condemned.

Three days after this the queen herself was brought to trial before the peers. The number of peers of the realm in England at this time was fifty-three. Only twenty-six were present at the trial. The king is charged with making such arrangements as to prevent the attendance of those who would

be unwilling to pass sentence of condemnation. At any rate, those who did attend professed to be satisfied of the guilt of the accused, and they sentenced her to be burned, or to be beheaded, at the pleasure of the king. He decided that she should be beheaded.

She protests her innocence.

The execution was to take place in a little green area within the Tower. The platform was erected here, and the block placed upon it, the whole being covered with a black cloth, as usual on such occasions. On the morning of the fatal day, Anne sent for the constable of the Tower to come in and receive her dying protestations that she was innocent of the crimes alleged against her. She told him that she understood that she was not to die until 12 o'clock, and that she was sorry for it, for she wished to have it over. The constable told her the pain would be very slight and momentary. "Yes," she rejoined, "I am told that a very skillful executioner is provided, and my neck is very slender."

Anne's execution.

At the appointed hour she was led out into the court-yard where the execution was to take place. There were about twenty persons present, all officers of state or of the city of London. The bodily suffering attendant upon the execution was very soon over, for the slender neck was severed at a single blow, and probably all sensibility to pain immediately ceased. Still, the lips and the eyes were observed to move and quiver for a few seconds after the separation of the head from the body. It was a relief, however, to the spectators when this strange and unnatural prolongation of the mysterious functions of life came to an end.

Disposition of the body.

The king's brutality.

No coffin had been provided. They found, however, an old wooden chest, made to contain arrows, lying in one of the apartments of the tower, which they used instead. They first laid the decapitated trunk within it, and then adjusted the dissevered head to its place, as if vainly attempting to repair the irretrievable injury they had done. They hurried the body, thus enshrined, to its burial in a chapel, which was also within the tower, doing all with such dispatch that the whole was finished before the clock struck twelve; and the next day the unfeeling monster who was the author of this dreadful deed was publicly married to his new favorite, Jane Seymour.

Elizabeth's forlorn condition.

The king had not merely procured Anne's personal condemnation; he had also obtained a decree annulling his marriage with her, on the ground of her having been, as he attempted to prove, previously affianced to another man. This was, obviously, a mere pretense. The object was to cut off Elizabeth's rights to inherit the crown, by making his marriage with her mother void. Thus was the little princess left motherless and friendless when only three years old.

Chapter II. The Childhood of a Princess

1536-1548

Elizabeth's condition at the death of her mother.

Elizabeth was about three years old at the death of her mother. She was a princess, but she was left in a very forlorn and desolate condition. She was not, however, entirely abandoned. Her claims to inherit the crown had been set aside, but then she was, as all admitted, the daughter of the king, and she must, of course, be the object of a certain degree of consideration and ceremony. It would be entirely inconsistent with the notions of royal dignity which then prevailed to have her treated like an ordinary child.

Her residence.

She had a residence assigned her at a place called Hunsdon, and was put under the charge of a governess whose name was Lady Bryan. There is an ancient letter from Lady Bryan, still extant, which was written to one of the king's officers about Elizabeth, explaining her destitute condition, and asking for a more suitable supply for her wants. It may entertain the reader to see this relic, which not only illustrates our little heroine's condition, but also shows how great the changes are which our language has undergone within the last three hundred years. The letter, as here given, is abridged a little from the original:

Letter of Lady Bryan, Elizabeth's governess.

Conclusion of letter.

My Lord:

When your Lordship was last here, it pleased you to say that I should not be mistrustful of the King's Grace, nor of your Lordship, which word was of great comfort to me, and emboldeneth me now to speak my poor mind.

Now so it is, my Lord, that my Lady Elizabeth is put from the degree she was afore, and what degree she is at now¹ I know not but by hearsay. Therefore I know not how to order her, nor myself, nor none of hers that I have the rule of – that is, her women and her grooms. But I beseech you to be good, my Lord, to her and to all hers, and to let her have some rayment; for she has neither gown, nor kirtle, nor no manner of linen, nor foresmocks, nor kerchiefs, nor sleeves, nor rails, nor bodystitchets, nor mufflers, nor biggins. All these her Grace's wants I have driven off as long as I can, by my troth, but I can not any longer. Beseeching you, my Lord, that you will see that her Grace may have that is needful for her, and that I may know from you, in writing, how I shall order myself towards her, and whatever is the King's Grace's pleasure and yours, in every thing, that I shall do.

My Lord Mr. Shelton would have my Lady Elizabeth to dine and sup at the board of estate. Alas, my Lord, it is not meet for a child of her age to keep such rule yet. I promise you, my Lord, I dare not take upon me to keep her in health and she keep that rule; for there she shall see divers meats and fruits, and wines, which would be hard for me to restrain her Grace from it. You know, my Lord, there is no

¹ That is, in what light the king and the government wish to have her regarded, and how they wish her to be treated.

place of correction² there, and she is yet too young to correct greatly. I know well, and she be there, I shall never bring her up to the King's Grace's honor nor hers, nor to her health, nor my poor honesty. Wherefore, I beseech you, my Lord, that my Lady may have a mess of meat to her own lodging, with a good dish or two that is meet for her Grace to eat of.

Troubles and trials of infancy.

My Lady hath likewise great pain with her teeth, and they come very slowly forth, and this causeth me to suffer her Grace to have her will more than I would. I trust to God, and her teeth were well graft, to have her Grace after another fashion than she is yet, so as I trust the King's Grace shall have great comfort in her Grace; for she is as toward a child, and as gentle of conditions, as ever I knew any in my life. Jesu preserve her Grace.

Good my Lord, have my Lady's Grace, and us that be her poor servants, in your remembrance.

Birth of Edward.

This letter evinces that strange mixture of state and splendor with discomfort and destitution, which prevailed very extensively in royal households in those early times. A part of the privation which Elizabeth seems, from this letter, to have endured, was doubtless owing to the rough manners of the day; but there is no doubt that she was also, at least for a time, in a neglected and forsaken condition. The new queen, Jane Seymour, who succeeded Elizabeth's mother, had a son a year or two after her marriage. He was named Edward. Thus Henry had three children, Mary, Elizabeth, and Edward, each one the child of a different wife; and the last of them, the son, appears to have monopolized, for a time, the king's affection and care.

The king reconciled to his daughters.

Still, the hostility which the king had felt for these queens in succession was owing, as has been already said, to his desire to remove them out of his way, that he might be at liberty to marry again; and so, after the mothers were, one after another, removed, the hostility itself, so far as the children were concerned, gradually subsided, and the king began to look both upon Mary and Elizabeth with favor again. He even formed plans for marrying Elizabeth to persons of distinction in foreign countries, and he entered into some negotiations for this purpose. He had a decree passed, too, at last, reversing the sentence by which the two princesses were cut off from an inheritance of the crown. Thus they were restored, during their father's life, to their proper rank as royal princesses.

Death of King Henry.

His children.

At last the king died in 1547, leaving only these three children, each one the child of a different wife. Mary was a maiden lady, of about thirty-one years of age. She was a stern, austere, hard-hearted woman, whom nobody loved. She was the daughter of King Henry's first wife, Catharine of Aragon, and, like her mother, was a decided Catholic.

Next came Elizabeth, who was about fourteen years of age. She was the daughter of the king's second wife, Queen Anne Boleyn. She had been educated a Protestant. She was not pretty, but was a very lively and sprightly child, altogether different in her cast of character and in her manners from her sister Mary.

Then, lastly, there was Edward, the son of Jane Seymour, the third queen. He was about nine years of age at his father's death. He was a boy of good character, mild and gentle in his disposition, fond of study and reflection, and a general favorite with all who knew him.

² That is, opportunity for correction.

King Henry's violence.

It was considered in those days that a king might, in some sense, dispose of his crown by will, just as, at the present time, a man may bequeath his house or his farm. Of course, there were some limits to this power, and the concurrence of Parliament seems to have been required to the complete validity of such a settlement. King Henry the Eighth, however, had little difficulty in carrying any law through Parliament which he desired to have enacted. It is said that, on one occasion, when there was some delay about passing a bill of his, he sent for one of the most influential of the members of the House of Commons to come into his presence. The member came and kneeled before him. "Ho, man!" said the king, "and will they not suffer my bill to pass?" He then came up and put his hand upon the kneeling legislator's head, and added, "Get my bill passed to-morrow, or else by to-morrow this head of yours shall be off." The next day the bill was passed accordingly.

The order of succession.

Elizabeth's troubles.

King Henry, before he died, arranged the order of succession to the throne as follows: Edward was to succeed him; but, as he was a minor, being then only nine years of age, a great council of state, consisting of sixteen persons of the highest rank, was appointed to govern the kingdom in his name until he should be *eighteen* years of age, when he was to become king in reality as well as in name. In case he should die without heirs, then Mary, his oldest sister, was to succeed him; and if she died without heirs, then Elizabeth was to succeed her. This arrangement went into full effect. The council governed the kingdom in Edward's name until he was sixteen years of age, when he died. Then Mary followed, and reigned as queen five years longer, and died without children, and during all this time Elizabeth held the rank of a princess, exposed to a thousand difficulties and dangers from the plots, intrigues and conspiracies of those about her, in which, on account of her peculiar position and prospects, she was necessarily involved.

The two Seymours.

One of the worst of these cases occurred soon after her father's death. There were two brothers of Jane Seymour, who were high in King Henry's favor at the time of his decease. The oldest is known in history by his title of the Earl of Hertford at first, and afterward by that of Duke of Somerset. The youngest was called Sir Thomas Seymour. They were both made members of the government which was to administer the affairs of state during young Edward's minority. They were not, however, satisfied with any moderate degree of power. Being brothers of Jane Seymour, who was Edward's mother, they were his uncles, of course, and the oldest one soon succeeded in causing himself to be appointed protector. By this office he was, in fact, king, all except in name.

The queen dowager's marriage.

The younger brother, who was an agreeable and accomplished man, paid his addresses to the queen dowager, that is, to the widow whom King Henry left, for the last of his wives was living at the time of his death. She consented to marry him, and the marriage took place almost immediately after the king's death – so soon in fact, that it was considered extremely hasty and unbecoming. This queen dowager had two houses left to her, one at Chelsea, and the other at Hanworth, towns some little distance up the river from London. Here she resided with her new husband, sometimes at one of the houses, and sometimes at the other. The king had also directed, in his will, that the Princess Elizabeth should be under her care, so that Elizabeth, immediately after her father's death, lived at one or the other of these two houses under the care of Seymour, who, from having been her uncle, became now, in some sense, her father. He was a sort of uncle, for he was the brother of one of her father's wives. He was a sort of father, for he was the husband of another of them. Yet, really, by blood, there was no relation between them.

The Seymours quarrel.
Somerset's power and influence.

The two brothers, Somerset and Seymour, quarreled. Each was very ambitious, and very jealous of the other. Somerset, in addition to being appointed protector by the council, got a grant of power from the young king called a patent. This commission was executed with great formality, and was sealed with the great seal of state, and it made Somerset, in some measure independent of the other nobles whom King Henry had associated with him in the government. By this patent he was placed in supreme command of all the forces by land and sea. He had a seat on the right hand of the throne, under the great canopy of state, and whenever he went abroad on public occasions, he assumed all the pomp and parade which would have been expected in a real king. Young Edward was wholly under his influence, and did always whatever Somerset recommended him to do. Seymour was very jealous of all this greatness, and was contriving every means in his power to circumvent and supersede his brother.

Jealousies and quarrels.

The wives, too, of these great statesmen quarreled. The Duchess of Somerset thought she was entitled to the precedence, because she was the wife of the protector, who, being a kind of regent, she thought he was entitled to have his wife considered as a sort of queen. The wife of Seymour, on the other hand, contended that she was entitled to the precedence as a real queen, having been herself the actual consort of a reigning monarch. The two ladies disputed perpetually on this point, which, of course, could never be settled. They enlisted, however, on their respective sides various partisans, producing a great deal of jealousy and ill will, and increasing the animosity of their husbands.

Mary Queen of Scots.
Marriage schemes.

All this time the celebrated Mary Queen of Scots was an infant in Janet Sinclair's arms, at the castle of Stirling, in Scotland. King Henry, during his life, had made a treaty with the government of Scotland, by which it was agreed that Mary should be married to his son Edward as soon as the two children should have grown to maturity; but afterward, the government of Scotland having fallen from Protestant into Catholic hands, they determined that this match must be given up. The English authorities were very much incensed. They wished to have the marriage take effect, as it would end in uniting the Scotch and English kingdoms; and the protector, when a time arrived which he thought was favorable for his purpose, raised an army and marched northward to make war upon Scotland, and compel the Scots to fulfill the contract of marriage.

Seymour's promotion.
Jane Grey.
Family quarrels.

While his brother was gone to the northward, Seymour remained at home, and endeavored, by every means within his reach, to strengthen his own influence and increase his power. He contrived to obtain from the council of government the office of lord high admiral, which gave him the command of the fleet, and made him, next to his brother, the most powerful and important personage in the realm. He had, besides, as has already been stated, the custody and care of Elizabeth, who lived in his house; though, as he was a profligate and unprincipled man, this position for the princess, now fast growing up to womanhood, was considered by many persons as of doubtful propriety. Still, she was at present only fourteen years old. There was another young lady likewise in his family, a niece of King Henry, and, of course, a second cousin of Elizabeth. Her name was Jane Grey. It was a very unhappy family. The manners and habits of all the members of it, excepting Jane Grey, seem to have been very rude and irregular. The admiral quarreled with his wife, and was jealous of the

very servants who waited upon her. The queen observed something in the manners of her husband toward the young princess which made her angry both with him and her. Elizabeth resented this, and a violent quarrel ensued, which ended in their separation. Elizabeth went away, and resided afterward at a place called Hatfield.

Death of the queen dowager.

Very soon after this, the queen dowager died suddenly. People accused Seymour, her husband, of having poisoned her, in order to make way for the Princess Elizabeth to be his wife. He denied this, but he immediately began to lay his plans for securing the hand of Elizabeth. There was a probability that she might, at some future time, succeed to the crown, and then, if he were her husband, he thought he should be the real sovereign, reigning in her name.

Seymour's schemes.

Elizabeth had in her household two persons, a certain Mrs. Ashley, who was then her governess, and a man named Parry, who was a sort of treasurer. He was called the *cofferer*. The admiral gained these persons over to his interests, and, through them, attempted to open communications with Elizabeth, and persuade her to enter into his designs. Of course, the whole affair was managed with great secrecy. They were all liable to a charge of treason against the government of Edward by such plots, as his ministers and counselors might maintain that their design was to overthrow Edward's government and make Elizabeth queen. They, therefore, were all banded together to keep their councils secret, and Elizabeth was drawn, in some degree, into the scheme, though precisely how far was never fully known. It was supposed that she began to love Seymour, although he was very much older than herself, and to be willing to become his wife. It is not surprising that, neglected and forsaken as she had been, she should have been inclined to regard with favor an agreeable and influential man, who expressed a strong affection for her, and a warm interest in her welfare.

Seymour's arrest.

His trial and attainder.

Seymour beheaded.

However this may be, Elizabeth was one day struck with consternation at hearing that Seymour was arrested by order of his brother, who had returned from Scotland and had received information of his designs, and that he had been committed to the Tower. He had a hurried and irregular trial, or what, in those days, was called a trial. The council went themselves to the Tower, and had him brought before them and examined. He demanded to have the charges made out in form, and the witnesses confronted with him, but the council were satisfied of his guilt without these formalities. The Parliament immediately afterward passed a bill of attainder against him, by which he was sentenced to death. His brother, the protector, signed the warrant for his execution, and he was beheaded on Tower Hill.

Elizabeth's trials.

Elizabeth's firmness.

The protector sent two messengers in the course of this affair to Elizabeth, to see what they could ascertain from her about it. Sir Robert Tyrwhitt was the name of the principal one of these messengers. When the cofferer learned that they were at the gate, he went in great terror into his chamber, and said that he was undone. At the same time, he pulled off a chain from his neck, and the rings from his fingers, and threw them away from him with gesticulations of despair. The messengers then came to Elizabeth, and told her, falsely as it seems, with a view to frighten her into confessions, that Mrs. Ashley and the cofferer were both secured and sent to the Tower. She seemed very much alarmed; she wept bitterly, and it was a long time before she regained her composure. She wanted to know whether they had confessed any thing. The protector's messengers would not tell her this, but

they urged her to confess herself all that had occurred; for, whatever it was, they said that the evil and shame would all be ascribed to the other persons concerned, and not to her, on account of her youth and inexperience. But Elizabeth would confess nothing. The messengers went away, convinced, as they said, that she was guilty; they could see that in her countenance; and that her silence was owing to her firm determination not to betray her lover. They sent word to the protector that they did not believe that any body would succeed in drawing the least information from her, unless it was the protector, or young King Edward himself.

These mysterious circumstances produced a somewhat unfavorable impression in regard to Elizabeth, and there were some instances, it was said, of light and trifling behavior between Elizabeth and Seymour, while she was in his house during the life-time of his wife. They took place in the presence of Seymour's wife, and seem of no consequence, except to show that dukes and princesses got into frolics sometimes in those days as well as other mortals. People censured Mrs. Ashley for not enjoining a greater dignity and propriety of demeanor in her young charge, and the government removed her from her place.

Lady Tyrwhitt.

Lady Tyrwhitt, who was the wife of the messenger referred to above that was sent to examine Elizabeth, was appointed to succeed Mrs. Ashley. Elizabeth was very much displeased at this change. She told Lady Tyrwhitt that Mrs. Ashley was her mistress, and that she had not done any thing to make it necessary for the council to put more mistresses over her. Sir Robert wrote to the protector that she took the affair so heavily that she "wept all night, and lowered all the next day." He said that her attachment to Mrs. Ashley was very strong; and that, if any thing were said against the lord admiral, she could not bear to hear it, but took up his defense in the most prompt and eager manner.

Elizabeth's sufferings.

Her fidelity to her friends.

How far it is true that Elizabeth loved the unfortunate Seymour can now never be known. There is no doubt, however, but that this whole affair was a very severe trial and affliction to her. It came upon her when she was but fourteen or fifteen years of age, and when she was in a position, as well of an age, which renders the heart acutely sensitive both to the effect of kindness and of injuries. Seymour, by his death, was lost to her forever, and Elizabeth lived in great retirement and seclusion during the remainder of her brother's reign. She did not, however, forget Mrs. Ashley and Parry. On her accession to the throne, many years afterward, she gave them offices very valuable, considering their station in life, and was a true friend to them both to the end of their days.

Chapter III.

Lady Jane Grey

1550-1553

Lady Jane Grey.

Among Elizabeth's companions and playmates in her early years was a young lady, her cousin, as she was often called, though she was really the daughter of her cousin, named Jane Grey, commonly called in history Lady Jane Grey. Her mother was the Marchioness of Dorset, and was the daughter of one of King Henry the Eighth's sisters. King Henry had named her as the next in the order of succession after his own children, that is, after Edward his son, and Mary and Elizabeth his two daughters; and, consequently, though she was very young, yet, as she might one day be Queen of England, she was a personage of considerable importance. She was, accordingly, kept near the court, and shared, in some respects, the education and the studies of the two princesses.

Her disposition and character.

Lady Jane's parents.

Restraints put upon her.

Lady Jane was about four years younger than the Princess Elizabeth, and the sweetness of her disposition, united with an extraordinary intellectual superiority, which showed itself at a very early period, made her a universal favorite. Her father and mother, the Marquis and Marchioness of Dorset, lived at an estate they possessed, called Broadgate, in Leicestershire, which is in the central part of England, although they took their title from the county of Dorset, which is on the southwestern coast. They were very proud of their daughter, and attached infinite importance to her descent from Henry VII., and to the possibility that she might one day succeed to the English throne. They were very strict and severe in their manners, and paid great attention to etiquette and punctilio, as persons who are ambitious of rising in the world are very apt to do. In all ages of the world, and among all nations, those who have long been accustomed to a high position are easy and unconstrained in their manners and demeanor, while those who have been newly advanced from a lower station, or who are anticipating or aspiring to such an advance, make themselves slaves to the rules of etiquette and ceremony. It was thus that the father and mother of Lady Jane, anticipating that she might one day become a queen, watched and guarded her incessantly, subjected her to a thousand unwelcome restraints, and repressed all the spontaneous and natural gayety and sprightliness which belongs properly to such a child.

Lady Jane's attainments.

Character of her teacher.

Anecdote of Elizabeth and Aylmer.

She became, however, a very excellent scholar in consequence of this state of things. She had a private teacher, a man of great eminence for his learning and abilities, and yet of a very kind and gentle spirit, which enabled him to gain a strong hold on his pupil's affection and regard. His name was John Aylmer. The Marquis of Dorset, Lady Jane's father, became acquainted with Mr. Aylmer when he was quite young, and appointed him, when he had finished his education, to come and reside in his family as chaplain and tutor to his children. Aylmer afterward became a distinguished man, was made Bishop of London, and held many high offices of state under Queen Elizabeth, when she came to reign. He became very much attached to Queen Elizabeth in the middle and latter part of his life, as he had been to Lady Jane in the early part of it. A curious incident occurred during the time

that he was in the service of Elizabeth, which illustrates the character of the man. The queen was suffering from the toothache, and it was necessary that the tooth should be extracted. The surgeon was ready with his instruments, and several ladies and gentlemen of the royal household were in the queen's room commiserating her sufferings; but the queen dreaded the operation so excessively that she could not summon fortitude enough to submit to it. Aylmer, after trying some time in vain to encourage her, took his seat in the chair instead of her, and said to the surgeon, "I am an old man, and have but few teeth to lose; but come, draw this one, and let her majesty see how light a matter it is." One would not have supposed that Elizabeth would have allowed this to be done; but she did, and, finding that Aylmer made so light of the operation, she submitted to have it performed upon herself.

Lady Jane's attachment to Aylmer.

But to return to Lady Jane. She was very strongly attached to her teacher, and made great progress in the studies which he arranged for her. Ladies of high rank, in those days, were accustomed to devote great attention to the ancient and modern languages. There was, in fact, a great necessity then, as indeed there is now, for a European princess to be acquainted with the principal languages of Europe; for the various royal families were continually intermarrying with each other, which led to a great many visits, and other intercourse between the different courts. There was also a great deal of intercourse with the pope, in which the *Latin* language was the medium of communication. Lady Jane devoted a great deal of time to all these studies, and made rapid proficiency in them all.

Elizabeth's studies.

Roger Ascham.

The Princess Elizabeth was also an excellent scholar. Her teacher was a very learned and celebrated man, named Roger Ascham. She spoke French and Italian as fluently as she did English. She also wrote and spoke Latin with correctness and readiness. She made considerable progress in Greek too. She could write the Greek character very beautifully, and could express herself tolerably well in conversation in that language. One of her companions, a young lady of the name of Cecil, is said to have spoken Greek as well as English. Roger Ascham took great interest in advancing the princess in these studies, and in the course of these his instructions he became acquainted with Lady Jane, and he praises very highly, in his letters, the industry and assiduity of Lady Jane in similar pursuits.

Lady Jane's acquirements in Greek.

Her interview with Ascham.

One day Roger Ascham, being on a journey from the north of England to London, stopped to make a call at the mansion of the Marquis of Dorset. He found that the family were all away; they had gone off upon a hunting excursion in the park. Lady Jane, however, had been left at home, and Ascham went in to see her. He found her in the library reading Greek. Ascham examined her a little, and was very much surprised to find how well acquainted with the language she had become, although she was then only about fifteen years old. He told her that he should like very much to have her write him a letter in Greek, and this she readily promised to do. He asked her, also, how it happened that, at her age, she had made such advances in learning. "I will tell you," said she, "how it has happened. One of the greatest benefits that God ever conferred upon me was in giving me so sharp and severe parents and so gentle a teacher; for, when I am in the presence of either my father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go; eat, drink, be merry or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing any thing else, I must do it, as it were, in just such weight, measure, and number, as perfectly as possible, or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways, which I will not name for the honor I bear my parents, that I am continually teased and tormented. And then, when the time comes for me to go to Mr. Aylmer, he teaches me so gently, so pleasantly, and with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the

time nothing while I am with him; and I am always sorry to go away from him, because whatsoever else I do but learning is full of grief, trouble, fear, and suffering."

Lady Jane's intimacy with Edward.
The Earl of Northumberland.
Harsh treatment of Mary.

Lady Jane Grey was an intimate friend and companion of the young King Edward as long as he lived. Edward died when he was sixteen years of age, so that he did not reach the period which his father had assigned for his reigning in his own name. One of King Edward's most prominent and powerful ministers during the latter part of his life was the Earl of Northumberland. The original name of the Earl of Northumberland was John Dudley. He was one of the train who came in the procession at the close of the baptism of Elizabeth, carrying the presents. He was a Protestant, and was very friendly to Edward and to Lady Jane Grey, for they were Protestants too. But his feelings and policy were hostile to Mary, for she was a Catholic. Mary was sometimes treated very harshly by him, and she was subjected to many privations and hardships on account of her religious faith. The government of Edward justified these measures, on account of the necessity of promoting the Reformation, and discouraging popery by every means in their power. Northumberland supposed, too, that it was safe to do this, for Edward being very young, it was probable that he would live and reign a long time. It is true that Mary was named, in her father's will, as his successor, if she outlived him, but then it was highly probable that she would not outlive him, for she was several years older than he.

Decline of Edward's health.

All these calculations, however, were spoiled by the sudden failure of Edward's health when he was sixteen years old. Northumberland was much alarmed at this. He knew at once that if Edward should die, and Mary succeed him, all his power would be gone, and he determined to make desperate efforts to prevent such a result.

Uncertainty in respect to the succession.

It must not be understood, however, that in coming to this resolution, Northumberland considered himself as intending and planning a deliberate usurpation of power. There was a real uncertainty in respect to the question who was the true and rightful heir to the crown. Northumberland was, undoubtedly, strongly biased by his interest, but he may have been unconscious of the bias, and in advocating the mode of succession on which the continuance of his own power depended, he may have really believed that he was only maintaining what was in itself rightful and just.

Struggle for power.

In fact, there is no mode which human ingenuity has ever yet devised for determining the hands in which the supreme executive of a nation shall be lodged, which will always avoid doubt and contention. If this power devolves by hereditary descent, no rules can be made so minute and full as that cases will not sometimes occur that will transcend them. If, on the other hand, the plan of election be adopted, there will often be technical doubts about a portion of the votes, and cases will sometimes occur where the result will depend upon this doubtful portion. Thus there will be disputes under any system, and ambitious men will seize such occasions to struggle for power.

Queen Elizabeth's family connections.

In order that our readers may clearly understand the nature of the plan which Northumberland adopted, we present, on the following page, a sort of genealogical table of the royal family of England in the days of Elizabeth.

TABLE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF ENGLAND IN THE TIME OF ELIZABETH.

= 2. KING HENRY VIII.	
<i>Catharine of Aragon</i>	= 4. QUEEN MARY.
<i>Anne Boleyn</i>	= 5. QUEEN ELIZABETH.
<i>Jane Seymour</i>	= 3. KING EDWARD VI.
<i>Anne of Cleves.</i>	
<i>Catharine Howard.</i>	
<i>Catharine Parr.</i>	
1. KING HENRY VII.	
= Margaret	
<i>James IV. of Scotland</i>	= James V. of Scotland = Mary Queen of Scots
<i>Earl of Angus</i>	= Margaret Douglas = Earl of Lenox = Lord Darnley
= Mary.	6. KING JAMES VI. OF SCOTLAND AND I. OF ENGLAND.
<i>Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk</i>	= Frances, marchioness of Dorset = Lady Jane Grey.
	= Eleanor.

EXPLANATION

This table gives the immediate descendants of Henry VII., a descent being denoted by the sign =. The names of the persons whom they respectively married are in italics. Those who became sovereigns of England are in small capitals, and the order in which they reigned is denoted by the figures prefixed to their names.

Explanation of the table.

King Henry's will.

By examination of this table it will be seen that King Henry VII. left a son and two daughters. The son was King Henry VIII., and *he* had three children. His third child was King Edward VI., who was now about to die. The other two were the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth, who would naturally be considered the next heirs after Edward; and besides, King Henry had left a will, as has been already explained, confirming their rights to the succession. This will he had made near the time of his death; but it will be recollected that, during his life-time, both the marriages from which these princesses had sprung had been formally annulled. His marriage with Catharine of Aragon had been annulled on one plea, and that of Anne Boleyn on another. Both these decrees of annulment had afterward been revoked, and the right of the princesses to succeed had been restored, or attempted to be restored, by the will. Still, it admitted of a question, after all, whether Mary and Elizabeth were to be considered as the children of true and lawful wives or not.

Various claimants for the throne.

Perplexing questions.

If they were not, then Lady Jane Grey was the next heir, for she was placed next to the princesses by King Henry the Eighth's will. This will, for some reason or other, set aside the descendants of Margaret, who went to Scotland as the wife of James IV. of that country. What right the king had thus to disinherit the children of his sister Margaret was a great question. Among her descendants was Mary Queen of Scots, as will be seen by the table, and she was, at this time, the representative of that branch of the family. The friends of Mary Queen of Scots claimed that she was the lawful heir to the English throne after Edward. They maintained that the marriage of Catharine, the Princess Mary's mother, and also that of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother, had both been annulled, and that the will could not restore them. They maintained, also, that the will was equally powerless in setting aside the claims of Margaret, her grandmother. Mary Queen of Scots, though silent now, advanced her claim subsequently, and made Elizabeth a great deal of trouble.

Then there was, besides these, a third party, who maintained that King Henry the Eighth's will was not effectual in legalizing again the annulled marriages, but that it was sufficient to set aside the claims of Margaret. Of course, with them, Lady Jane Grey, who, as will be seen by the table, was the representative of the *second* sister of Henry VIII., was the only heir. The Earl of Northumberland embraced this view. His motive was to raise Lady Jane Grey to the throne, in order to exclude the Princess Mary, whose accession he knew very well would bring all his greatness to a very sudden end.

Power of Northumberland.

The Earl of Northumberland was at this time the principal minister of the young king. The protector Somerset had fallen long ago. Northumberland, whose name was then John Dudley, had supplanted him, and had acquired so great influence and power at court that almost every thing seemed to be at his disposal. He was, however, generally hated by the other courtiers and by the nation. Men who gain the confidence of a young or feeble-minded prince, so as to wield a great power not properly their own, are almost always odious. It was expected, however, that his career would be soon brought to an end, as all knew that King Edward must die, and it was generally understood that Mary was to succeed him.

His schemes.

Marriage of Lady Jane.

Feelings of the people.

Northumberland, however, was very anxious to devise some scheme to continue his power, and in revolving the subject in his mind, he conceived of plans which seemed to promise not only to continue, but also greatly to increase it. His scheme was to have the princesses' claims set aside, and Lady Jane Grey raised to the throne. He had several sons. One of them was young, handsome, and accomplished. He thought of proposing him to Lady Jane's father as the husband of Lady Jane, and, to induce the marquis to consent to this plan, he promised to obtain a dukedom for him by means of his influence with the king. The marquis agreed to the proposal. Lady Jane did not object to the husband they offered her. The dukedom was obtained, and the marriage, together with two others which Northumberland had arranged to strengthen his influence, were celebrated, all on the same day, with great festivities and rejoicings. The people looked on moodily, jealous and displeased, though they had no open ground of displeasure, except that it was unsuitable to have such scenes of gayety and rejoicing among the high officers of the court while the young monarch himself was lying upon his dying bed. They did not yet know that it was Northumberland's plan to raise his new daughter-in-law to the throne.

Efforts to set Mary aside.

Northumberland works on the young king.

Northumberland thought it would greatly increase his prospect of success if he could obtain some act of acknowledgment of Lady Jane's claims to the crown before Edward died. An opportunity soon occurred for effecting this purpose. One day, as he was sitting by young Edward's bedside, he turned the conversation to the subject of the Reformation, which had made great progress during Edward's reign, and he led Edward on in the conversation, until he remarked that it was a great pity to have the work all undone by Mary's accession, for she was a Catholic, and would, of course, endeavor to bring the country back again under the spiritual dominion of Rome. Northumberland then told him that there was one way, and one way only, to avert such a calamity, and that was to make Lady Jane his heir instead of Mary.

King Edward was a very thoughtful, considerate, and conscientious boy, and was very desirous of doing what he considered his duty. He thought it was his duty to do all in his power to sustain the Reformation, and to prevent the Catholic power from gaining ascendancy in England again. He was,

therefore, easily persuaded to accede to Northumberland's plan, especially as he was himself strongly attached to Lady Jane, who had often been his playmate and companion.

Conduct of the judges.

The king accordingly sent for three judges of the realm, and directed them to draw up a deed of assignment, by which the crown was to be conveyed to Lady Jane on the young king's death, Mary and Elizabeth being alike excluded. The judges were afraid to do this; for, by King Henry the Eighth's settlement of the crown, all those persons who should do any thing to disturb the succession as he arranged it were declared to be guilty of high treason. The judges knew very well, therefore, that if they should do what the king required of them, and then, if the friends of Lady Jane should fail of establishing her upon the throne, the end of the affair would be the cutting off of their own heads in the Tower. They represented this to the king, and begged to be excused from the duty that he required of them. Northumberland was in a great rage at this, and seemed almost ready to break out against the judges in open violence. They, however, persisted in their refusal to do what they well knew would subject them to the pains and penalties of treason.

Pardon by anticipation.

Edward's deed of settlement.

Northumberland, finding that threats and violence would not succeed, contrived another mode of obviating the difficulty. He proposed to protect the judges from any possible evil consequences of their act by a formal pardon for it, signed by the king, and sealed with the great seal, so that, in case they were ever charged with treason, the pardon would save them from punishment. This plan succeeded. The pardon was made out, being written with great formality upon a parchment roll, and sealed with the great seal. The judges then prepared and signed the deed of settlement by which the crown was given to Lady Jane, though, after all, they did it with much reluctance and many forebodings.

Plan to entrap the princesses.

Northumberland next wanted to contrive some plan for getting the princesses into his power, in order to prevent their heading any movement in behalf of their own claims at the death of the king. He was also desirous of making such arrangements as to conceal the death of the king for a few days after it should take place, in order that he might get Lady Jane and her officers in complete possession of the kingdom before the demise of the crown should be generally known. For this purpose he dismissed the regular physicians who had attended upon the king, and put him under the charge of a woman, who pretended that she had a medicine that would certainly cure him. He sent, also, messengers to the princesses, who were then in the country north of London, requesting that they would come to Greenwich, to be near the sick chamber where their brother was lying, that they might cheer and comfort him in his sickness and pain.

Death of Edward.

Escape of the princesses.

Precautions of Mary.

The princesses obeyed the summons. They each set out immediately on the journey, and moved toward London on their way to Greenwich. In the mean time, Edward was rapidly declining. The change in the treatment which took place when his physicians left him, made him worse instead of better. His cough increased, his breathing became more labored and difficult; in a word, his case presented all the symptoms of approaching dissolution. At length he died. Northumberland attempted to keep the fact concealed until after the princesses should arrive, that he might get them into his power. Some faithful friend, however, made all haste to meet them, in order to inform them what was going on. In this way Mary received intelligence of her brother's death when she had almost reached

London, and was informed, also, of the plans of Northumberland for raising Lady Jane to the throne. The two princesses were extremely alarmed, and both turned back at once toward the northward again. Mary stopped to write a letter to the council, remonstrating against their delay in proclaiming her queen, and then proceeded rapidly to a strong castle at a place called Framlingham, in the county of Suffolk, on the eastern coast of England. She made this her head-quarters, because she supposed that the people of that county were particularly friendly to her; and then, besides, it was near the sea, and, in case the course of events should turn against her, she could make her escape to foreign lands. It is true that the prospect of being fugitive and an exile was very dark and gloomy, but it was not so terrible as the idea of being shut up a prisoner in the Tower, or being beheaded on a block for treason.

Lady Jane proclaimed queen.

In the mean time, Northumberland went, at the head of a troop of his adherents, to the residence of Lady Jane Grey, informed her of the death of Edward, and announced to her their determination to proclaim her queen. Lady Jane was very much astonished at this news. At first she absolutely refused the offered honor; but the solicitations and urgency of Northumberland, and of her father and her young husband, at length prevailed. She was conducted to London, and instated in at least the semblance of power.

Great excitement.

Public opinion in favor of Mary.

As the news of these transactions spread throughout the land, a universal and strong excitement was produced, every body at once taking sides either for Mary or Lady Jane. Bands of armed men began to assemble. It soon became apparent, however, that, beyond the immediate precincts of London, the country was almost unanimous for Mary. They dreaded, it is true, the danger which they anticipated from her Catholic faith, but still they had all considered it a settled point, since the death of Henry the Eighth, that Mary was to reign whenever Edward should die; and this general expectation that she would be queen had passed insensibly into an opinion that she ought to be. Considered strictly as a legal question, it was certainly doubtful which of the four claimants to the throne had the strongest title; but the public were not disposed so to regard it. They chose, on the whole, that Mary should reign. Large military masses consequently flocked to her standard. Elizabeth took sides with her, and, as it was important to give as much public effect to her adhesion as possible, they furnished Elizabeth with a troop of a thousand horsemen, at the head of which she rode to meet Mary and tender her aid.

Northumberland taken prisoner.

Northumberland went forth at the head of such forces as he could collect, but he soon found that the attempt was vain. His troops forsook him. The castles which had at first been under his command surrendered themselves to Mary. The Tower of London went over to her side. Finally, all being lost, Northumberland himself was taken prisoner, and all his influential friends with him, and were committed to the Tower. Lady Jane herself too, together with her husband and father, were seized and sent to prison.

He is beheaded.

Northumberland was immediately put upon his trial for treason. He was condemned, and brought at once to the block. In fact, the whole affair moved very promptly and rapidly on, from its commencement to its consummation. Edward the Sixth died on the 5th of July, and it was only the 22d of August when Northumberland was beheaded. The period for which the unhappy Lady Jane enjoyed the honor of being called a queen was nine days.

Mary's triumphal procession.

Shared by Elizabeth.

It was about a month after this that Mary passed from the Tower through the city of London in a grand triumphal procession to be crowned. The royal chariot, covered with cloth of golden tissue, was drawn by six horses most splendidly caparisoned. Elizabeth, who had aided her sister, so far as she could, in the struggle, was admitted to share the triumph. She had a carriage drawn by six horses too, with cloth and decorations of silver. They proceeded in this manner, attended and followed by a great cavalcade of nobles and soldiery, to Westminster Abbey, where Mary took her seat with great formality upon her father's throne.

Chapter IV. The Spanish Match

1553-1555

Queen Mary's character.

When Queen Mary ascended the throne, she was a maiden lady not far from thirty-five years of age. She was cold, austere, and forbidding in her appearance and manners, though probably conscientious and honest in her convictions of duty. She was a very firm and decided Catholic, or, rather, she evinced a certain strict adherence to the principles of her religious faith, which we generally call firmness when it is exhibited by those whose opinions agree with our own, though we are very apt to name it bigotry in those who differ from us.

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