



THE QUEEN AGED SEVENTEEN YEARS.

Scenes From the Queen's Early Life.

When a great and good person dies we are all anxious to become acquainted with the events of that person's early life, knowing what an influence the training received in youth has upon the later days. And when it is the case of the death of a noble and beloved Sovereign such as the late Queen Victoria, that desire arises doubly strong within us. It will be our endeavor, then, to give a general picture of Her late Majesty's childhood and early youth, so that readers of the 'Northern Messenger' may see the development of the traits of character which fitted her to fulfil so nobly and faithfully her position as the ruler of a great nation and of a mighty Empire.

Her Majesty was born at Kensington Palace, London, on May 24, 1819. She was the only child of Edward, Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III., and of her Serene Highness the widowed Victoria Mary Louisa, daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld and sister of Prince Leopold.

The little Princess was baptized on June 24 in the grand saloon of Kensington Palace, and received the name of Alexandrina Victoria. The Prince Regent was godfather, and the sponsors were the Emperor Alexander of Russia, the Queen Dowager of Wurtemberg and the Duchess Dowager of Coburg.

It is stated by the Hon. Amelia Murray, in her 'Recollections,' that the Duke of Kent wished to name his child Elizabeth, that being a popular name with the English people; but at the baptism the Prince Regent gave only the name of Alexandrina. The Duke requested that another name might be added, whereupon the Prince said: 'Give her her mother's also, then; but it cannot precede that of the Emperor.' So

It is interesting to note that the Princess Victoria was successfully vaccinated in the following August, and that she was the first member of the Royal Family of Britain who received the benefit of Jenner's remarkable discovery.

There seemed little probability, then, that this Princess would ever become Queen of England, but a series of unexpected changes brought her soon near the throne.

Upon the death of Princess Charlotte, the only child of George IV., the Duke of York had become heir-presumptive to the throne. His Royal Highness had no children, however, and the Duke of Clarence, the third son of George III., came next. He and his wife, Princess Adélaïde, had one daughter, who, if she had lived, would have been Queen. But this child died in infancy, leaving the Princess Victoria the only scion of the royal stock.

The Duke and Duchess of Kent with their infant daughter went to Sidmouth on the east coast of Devon, at the close of 1819. Early in the following year the Princess had a narrow escape from death.

A youth who had obtained possession of a gun fired at some small birds so near to the residence of their Royal Highnesses that the charge broke the nursery windows, and some of the shot passed quite close to the head of the infant Princess, then in the arms of her nurse. The offender was brought before the Duke, but owing to the kindness of disposition of His Royal Highness, he escaped with a reprimand.

The stay at Sidmouth, however, was destined to end sadly. The Duke of Kent took cold occasioned by delaying to change his wet boots after a walk through the snow. Affection for his child had drawn him to the nursery immediately on reaching home. To a severe chill succeeded inflammation of the chest with high fever, which resulted fatally.



THE QUEEN AGED EIGHTEEN YEARS.