

BOYS AND GIRLS

Queen Victoria.

FROM THE CRADLE TO THE CROWN.

(By Janet Sanderson, in 'Boston Congregationalist'.)

'England's little Mayflower,' Victoria was called, for she was born in the month of May, 1819. The mother and baby were always together. As soon as the child could sit alone she took her dinners on a small table by her mother's side, and she slept in a little bed by her mother's all the years of her childhood.

'Dear Boppy,' the nurse, was also assiduous in the care of her royal charge who, at five years of age, is described as a fair,

the duties of life and rectitude in the smallest details were enforced. She was drilled in economy and had her allowance money, and she was expected to make it suffice. Many a time we find she had the moral courage to say, 'No, I can't afford it.'

The best of teachers and the constant companionship of a noble mother developed the mind and formed the character of the future queen. She was taught all that befitted her station, and had a wide knowledge of history and the bible, law, politics, modern languages, classics, painting and music. She excelled in archery, and to all these were added a natural courage, modesty, simplicity and candor.

It would seem that a special providence watched over this royal child, for we so often read of the many dangers from which her life had been almost miraculously pro-

were to be eternally united, met for the first time.

Victoria's eighteenth birthday was celebrated in London and throughout the country with great enthusiasm. She was awakened at seven o'clock by a serenade under her window.

Spring renews its golden dreams,
Sweet birds carol 'neath each spray;
Shed, O sun! thy milder beams
On the fairest flower of May.

Lightly o'er our early rose,
Angels pure, your wings display;
When the storm of sorrow blows,
Shield the fairest flower of May.

From morn till evening the great world moved towards Kensington Palace. Birthday gifts were countless. Fetes, illuminations and all sorts of holiday doings were indulged in; the king gave a ball at which for the first time Victoria took precedence of her mother and sat in the chair of state.

But happy girlhood was taking leave of the princess. She was to be taken from the carefully guarded home and thrown into the great world of rule and politics. On June 30, 1837, at five o'clock in the morning, a carriage and four dashed up to the great central avenue to Kensington Palace. The two grave men in the carriage, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain, came to call a queen to the throne of her ancestors. After waiting a few moments the door of the apartment opened and the princess came in, wrapped in a loose morning robe with slippers on her bare feet. On being told of the king's death she looked towards the archbishop and said in touching tones, 'I ask your prayers on my behalf.'

At eleven o'clock the council met, and Victoria took her seat at the head of the table. She wore a plain mourning robe, her hair dressed in close bands about her forehead and in a tight coil at the back of her head, and in this simple style this girl of eighteen, 'who,' as Carlyle puts it, 'at an age when in ordinary circumstances she would hardly be trusted to choose a bonnet for herself, was called upon to discharge responsibilities from which an archangel might have shrunk,' assumed the government of an empire.

Nothing in her aspect and demeanor caused more astonishment than her self-possession. She conducted herself with the dignity which proceeds from self-possession and deliberation. After her accession followed the proclamation, and then came the dissolution of parliament, when Victoria as queen appeared in a crimson velvet robe trimmed with gold and ermine, ablaze with diamonds. On her arms were diamond bracelets and on the left arm the badge of the Order of the Garter. Concerning the Garter, it is told that the young sovereign asked the Duke of Norfolk with an expression of perplexity, 'But, my Lord Duke, where am I to wear the Garter?' No one could see a way out of the difficulty until the duke remembered a picture of Queen Anne in which the Garter is on the left arm. On this occasion the Queen made her first speech, of which Charles Sumner wrote: 'I was astonished and delighted. Her voice is sweet and finely modulated, and she pronounced every word distinctly and with a just regard to the meaning. I think I never heard anything better in my life than her speech.'

The coronation at Westminster Abbey took place a year later, and henceforth the girlhood of the queen was a beautiful memory of the past.



PRINCESS VICTORIA RIDING HER DONKEY IN KENSINGTON GARDENS.

lovely child with soft hair, frank blue eyes and a countenance which bespeaks perfect health and good temper. Many were the romps Victoria and 'dear Boppy' had about her palace home in the Kensington Gardens, and here she used to ride a donkey gaily decked out with blue ribbons, and call to the passers-by a cheery 'Good morning.' At Malvern she is remembered as a youthful romp who delighted in climbing trees and walls, and at Tunbridge Wells the old people still tell of how Victoria rode her donkey at a free canter along the lanes and over the downs.

She must have been a clever child, for her grandmother wrote, just after Victoria had visited her Uncle, George IV., who was delighted with her charming manners: 'The little monkey must have pleased and amused him, she is such a pretty, clever child.'

Her education went steadily on. Great attention was paid to faithfulness in the 'lit-

served. When she was thirteen years old a magnificent ball was given in her honor to which all the children of the nobility were invited, and it is said that she charmed everybody by her sweet, childish dignity.

It must have been an especially eventful day in her life when her confirmation took place at sixteen years of age, for she knew and realized the great destiny before her, and during the archbishop's tender and solemn address in which he spoke of duties attaching to a princess of her high degree, and only by the help of the Almighty Ruler of the universe could she hope to discharge them, she was so deeply moved that she laid her head upon her mother's breast and sobbed aloud.

There were many suitors for the hand of the royal maiden, but her heart went out to none till her destined prince appeared when she was seventeen years old when the two, Prince Albert and Princess Victoria, who