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LADY JANE GREY.

A story so touching as the life of Lady Jane Grey is scarcely to be found in the pages of history. Think of a little English girl, the daughter of a nobleman to be sure, but with far less of her own way than many young girls imagine they could live with now; a girl with so stern a father and mother that she turned for companionship and sympathy to her books and her schoolmaster; who had so employed her time during her short life that at the age of sixteen she excelled in needlework, vocal and instrumental music; could speak and write both Latin and Greek and had some knowledge of Hebrew, Chaldee and Arabic; and who when the rest of her family were out hunting found more enjoyment in staying at home and reading Plato; who had been nothing but sweet and obedient all her life to those over her; and yet this girl when only seventeen years old was seized upon, and imprisoned, though for no fault of her own, and a few months afterwards was beheaded like a common felon.

Those were strange times in England. The King, Edward VI., was only sixteen and of such delicate health that he could not be expected to live long, and there was great excitement as to who should be his successor. There was no male heir to the throne, but there were four women, Mary, Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, and Lady Jane Grey. Space forbids us to go into details, but please try and remember these few facts, for unless you do you cannot understand the story. Mary of England was daughter of King Henry VIII., (young Edward's father) by his first wife Catherine of Arragon, and Elizabeth was daughter of Anne Boleyn, his second wife. Mary Stuart, afterwards the renowned Mary Queen of Scots, was a grandchild of Henry's sister Margaret, and Lady Jane Grey granddaughter of his sister Mary.

And now came the trouble as to which of these four should be sovereign. The two Marys were bigoted Roman Catholics, and great was the distress among the Protestants for fear one of them should come to the throne. Lady Jane Grey was just as strong a Protestant, while Elizabeth, though not so earnest as she, was a thorough Englishwoman and in spite of the Pope would stand up for England and her own right.

But now the originator of all the trouble appears in the person of the Duke of Northumberland. He, too, was a Protestant and was very much

alarmed at the thought of having other than a Protestant queen on the throne. But he was also a very ambitious man and determined that, if possible, no man should hold so high a position in the kingdom as he. So he laid his plans. His fourth son, Lord Guildford Dudley, only a few years older than Lady Jane Grey, became very much attached to her and they were married, and these two Northumberland determined to use to accomplish his ends. Henry VIII. had named Mary and Elizabeth first in succession and Lady Jane Grey next, but

Northumberland urged the young, dying Edward to alter this and place Lady Jane Grey first. You see how this would work? If all things went well his son would be husband to the Queen of England, and then who would be more powerful in the realm than himself. Lord Guildford Dudley does not seem to have had any part whatever in the plot.

No sooner was poor young Edward dead than Northumberland conveyed the news to Lady Jane, and very much grieved indeed she was to hear that her gentle, accomplished

young cousin was no more. But what was her astonishment when in the next breath her father-in-law informed her that she was to be his successor, and he, and her father and mother bowed before her as the Queen of England. She cried, and protested and said that it could never be, that she did not want to be Queen, that it was cruelly unjust to Mary and Elizabeth whose claims were prior to hers. But it was all to no purpose. Her husband wished her to accept, her stern father-in-law urged, and her father and mother commanded. What could she do? She was only a girl, and had never disobeyed her father or mother in all her life, and how could she dare now? So away she was taken to the Tower and proclaimed Queen.

But the farce, of which she was so unwillingly a centre, was of short duration. Nine days it lasted and then came the end. The people refused to recognize her and rallied round Mary Tudor and crowned her queen. Only nine days on the throne, and there against her will, Lady Jane Grey left it with no regret. She had no ambition for anything of the kind and would have been glad to settle down again to her old quiet life. But she was not allowed to go home. Although her father was pardoned, Northumberland was beheaded for treason, and she and her husband were kept prisoners in the Tower. They were not treated harshly but still they were prisoners.

The country remained in a very unsettled condition. The Protestants hated Mary, and a few months after this there was a strong uprising against her, and Mary's friends, fearing that a party might again rise and try to make Lady Jane Grey queen in her place, insisted that for the safety of all she and her husband should be put to death.

She received her sentence very quietly. When they tried to make a queen of her she resisted with all her might, but she did not even weep now. She only said "I only consented to the thing I was forced into." Not one word of complaint did she utter. She would not say good-by to her husband for she said it would only increase her pain. She saw him from her window as he passed on his way to execution, and waved her hand to him as a sign that they would soon meet in heaven. An hour later she herself walked to the scaffold and without a tear or sign of agitation laid her own young head on the block.

(Continued on eighth page.)



LADY JANE GREY.

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