

**COUSIN DEBORAH'S
STORY; OR,
THE GREAT PLAGUE**

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Cousin Deborah's story; or, the great plague by Lucy Ellen Guernsey

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LUCY ELLEN GUERNSEY

**COUSIN DEBORAH'S
STORY; OR,
THE GREAT PLAGUE**

THE
CHILDREN OF STANTOUN-CORBET; *

OR,

Tales of English Children,

FROM THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY TO THAT OF
QUEEN ANNE.

Cousin Deborah's Story.—frontispiece.



"Kneeling at my father's great chair, with my book before me."
p. 49.

The Children of Stantoun-Corbet Series.

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OR,

THE GREAT PLAGUE.

By the Author of

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"IRISH AMY," ETC.

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COUSIN DEBORAH'S STORY;

OR,

The Great Plague.

CHAPTER I.

UCY, how would you like to go to Corby-End to-morrow?"

Cousin Deborah and Lucy were walking upon the terrace at Stantoun Court, watching the sunset. It was a lovely spring evening. The air was full of the smell of flowers and the song of birds, mingled with the distant chime of the bells at Stantoun church, and a very soft

murmur of waves far away. The rooks in the avenue did not seem to be able to settle for the night, and were cawing and disputing after their noisy fashion, but the sounds at that distance were not disagreeable.

Lady Lucy had improved very greatly in her personal appearance during the seven or eight months she had passed under her cousin's care. She had grown somewhat taller, and her thin arms and neck had grown plump and round, while her cheeks had a bright, healthy colour. She was also a little tanned, from living so much in the open air. Aunt Bernard's Hannah, who never lost the opportunity of observing Lady Lucy, told her mistress that the child was grown to look as much

like a little milkmaid as Polly Burgess herself.

But the greatest change was in Lucy's manner and expression. She still carried herself very upright, and held up her head, and drew in her chin, as did all well-bred young ladies in those days: for Cousin Deborah loved Lucy too well to allow her to contract any awkward or unbecoming habits. But there was a lightness and freedom in her movements very different from her old stiffness and constraint, and her eyes were no longer fixed upon the ground, or glancing about her like a frightened hare for some means of escape. She now talked and laughed freely at all proper times, and was often heard singing like a bird through the

galleries and gardens at Stantoun Court.

“To-morrow is my birthday,” continued Cousin Deborah, “and I have a fancy to see once more the old place where all my family have dwelt, where I was born and lived till I was twelve years old. I suppose the poor old house is desolate and forlorn enough.”

“I thought that the house was shut up, and had been so for a great many years,” said Lucy. “Does any one live there at present, Cousin Deborah?”

“Nobody but an old woman who has charge of the place. I do not know her name. We might set out early with the donkey, with Will Mat-tison for escort, and spend the day,