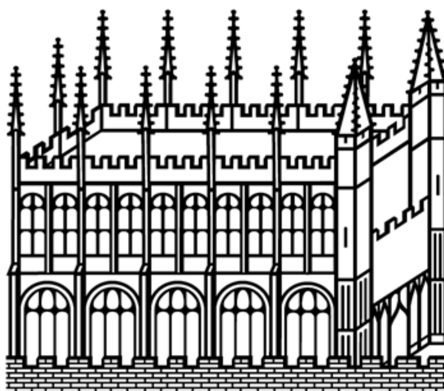

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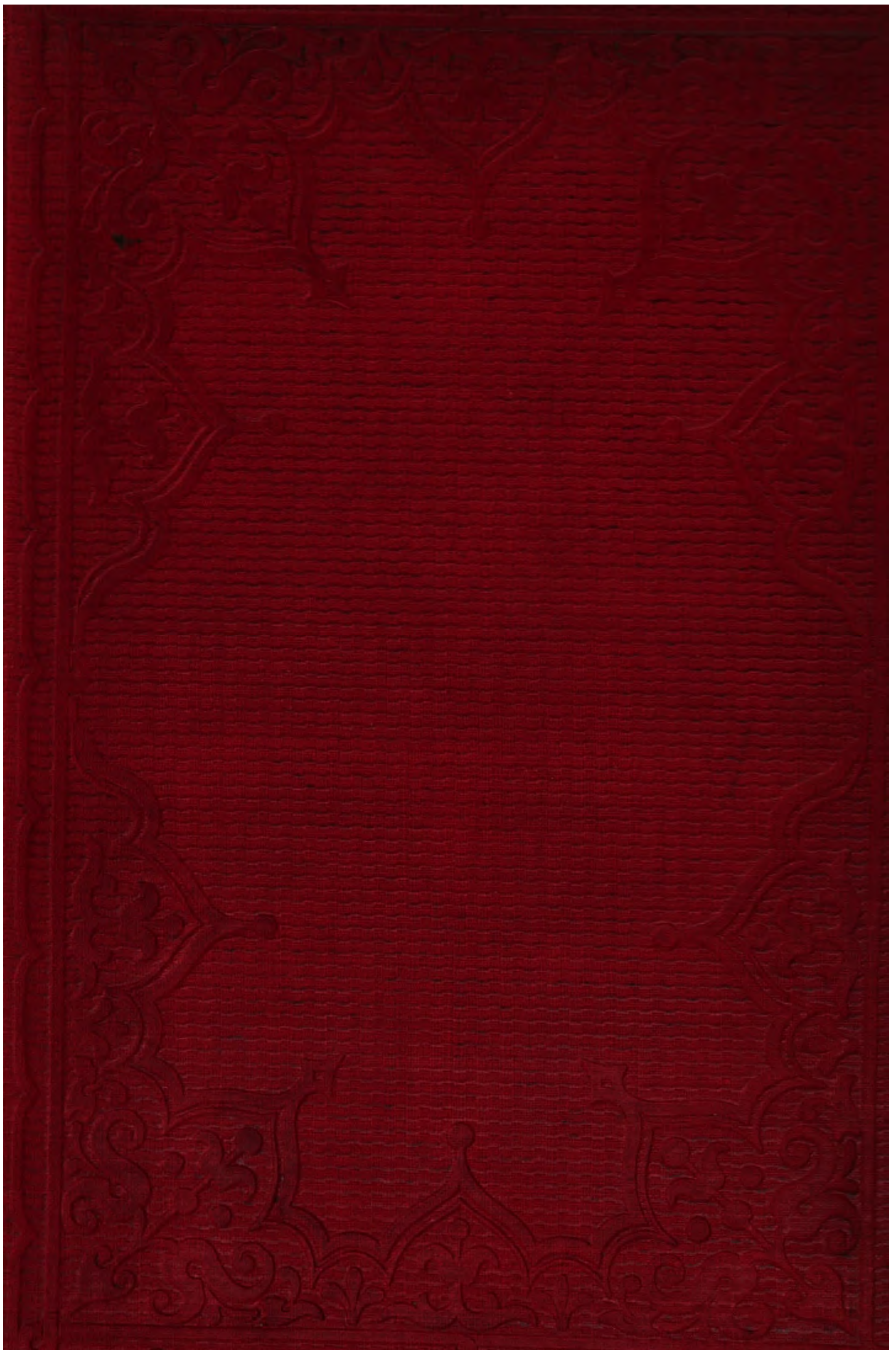

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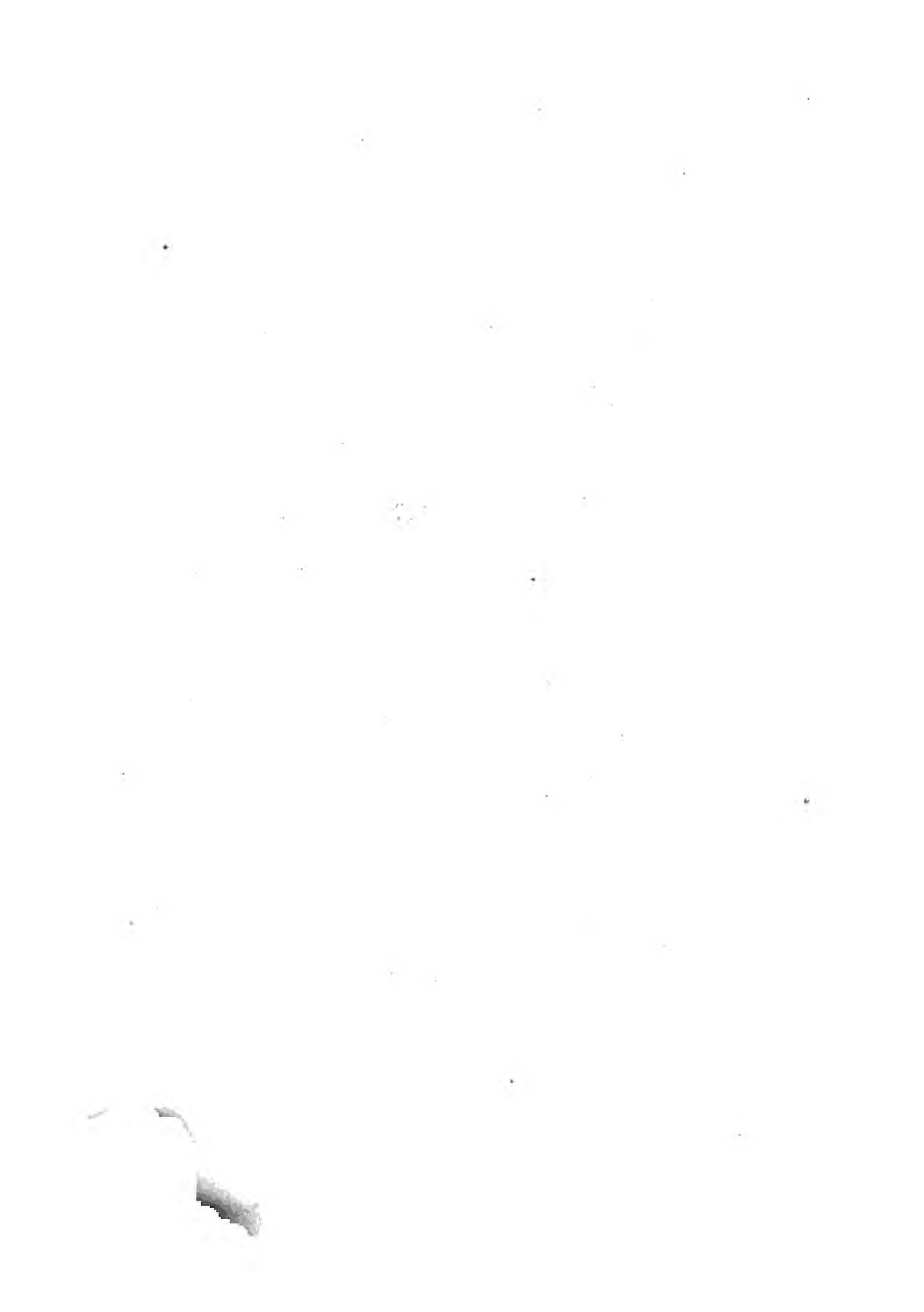

Mrs. Fry in Newgate

EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN:

THEIR

Girlhood and Early Life.

By WILLIAM RUSSELL, Esq.

AUTHOR OF
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Extraordinary Women.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

IT would be vain to search the illuminated volumes of the romance of history for a more varied, brilliant, and withal mournful page than that in which are recorded the struggle, victory, defeat,—the hero-life, the martyr-death of the young peasant maiden who had the glory of saving France at a crisis of extremest peril. The worst that can be said of La Pucelle d'Orléans is, that she, a girl of fervid temperament, living in an age of unquestioning faith in supernatural manifestations, attributed the impulses of her own earnest soul—its inner, divine voices urging her to attempt a glorious and mighty enterprise—to a less spiritual manifestation, to less ethereal utterances. The girlhood of the heroic maid comprises her whole history, for she perished in the dawn of her nineteenth summer. Though her days were short, she has achieved a renown that will endure as long as passionate love of country, and valiant enthusiasm in its defence, have power to enlist the sympathies and to command the admiration of mankind.

Jeanne Darc—Joan *of* Arc her name is commonly rendered, as if Arc were her birthplace or a locality in which she had become famous—was the fifth child and second

daughter of Jacques Darc and Isabelle Romée. Her father was a small farmer living at Domremy, a village on the borders of Lorraine, about equidistant from Neufchâteau and Vaucouleurs, and there Jeanne, in 1412, was born. She had no school education whatever, and could neither read nor write. Few children of her station obtained any in those days, unless they happened to be received into a nunnery, but the quick intelligence, the enthusiastic, imaginative tone of mind for which she was early remarkable, readily acquired cultivation, and that too of a more stimulating kind than books can supply. Even in childhood she manifested a strong religious feeling, and when her daily drudgery in house or field, always diligently performed, was over, generally betook herself to the village church. There she recited her orisons, it is essential to note, before two portraits or representations of the Saints Catherine and Margaret, to whom the chapel was dedicated. To her these pictures were miracles of art; and the poetry of the Roman Catholic religion, so to speak, strongly excited and impressed her. Once at least in each week Joan would light a votive taper or hang a garland of fresh flowers before the image of the Mother of Christ, niched in a rustic shrine called the Hermitage of the Virgin. "Jeanne Darc," said the aged curé of Domremy, when questioned in after days respecting her character by the envoys of the Parliament of Poictiers,—"Jeanne Darc was the only girl I have known who always attended, and never needed confession." Local traditions helped to nourish her superstitious fancies. An ancient beech-tree in the neighbourhood of Domremy was supposed to be haunted by fairies that on moonlit nights danced beneath its wide-spreading branches, and cast elfin gifts into the stream which flowed close by its root; and the water

of the stream was believed to possess marvellous medicinal properties, derived, it was said, from coming in contact with the roots of this sacred tree. One of Joan's brothers declared that it was upon this enchanted spot his sister *pris son fait;* meaning, that here the conviction first flashed upon her that a local tradition, according to which "there would come from *Bois Chenu* (oak-forest, in the vicinage of Domremy, often resorted to by Joan) a virgin destined to save France," applied to herself; a statement, however, solemnly denied by Joan when defending her life before her judges at Rouen. France, by the time Jeanne Darc attained her sixteenth birthday, never stood in more pressing need of the promised champion. Henry the Fifth's victory at Agincourt, his subsequent successes, and his marriage with a French princess, transferred the succession of the crown of France to the English monarchs. The resistance which, after Henry the Fifth's death, Charles, the Dauphin of France, opposed to the pretensions of the infant son of the deceased king of England—our Henry the Sixth, was not very formidable. His armies were overborne by the energy of the Duke of Bedford and his warlike lieutenants, Salisbury, Talbot, Suffolk, and others, aided by their allies the Burgundians. With the daily-expected fall of the beleaguered city of Orleans—the only place of importance that then held out against the intrusive strangers—the last chance remaining to Charles of vindicating the independence of France and his own right to the crown would, it was generally concluded, pass away. In medieval, as in modern Gaul, the spirit of patriotic nationality, irrespective of forms of government, burned fiercest in the veins of her gallant peasantry. It thus happened, that whilst Rouen and other northern towns were essentially English strongholds, and the

populace of Paris, oddly as it sounds, furious partisans of the Anglo-Burgundian confederacy, the hamlets of France continued an unwavering defiance. They replied proudly to the exultant cries of triumph which rang over their trampled, desolated country; and none more enthusiastically than the villagers of Domremy, amongst whom there was but one partisan of the foreigners—an old man whom Jeanne Darc "often wished might die, if God so pleased."

Mendicant friars, soldiers disabled in the wars, impostors trading upon fictitious hurts, pedlers, travellers, and wanderers of various conditions and pursuits, were the peripatetic newsmen of those days; and when one of these halted at the hamlet to exchange his budget of true or simulated tidings for the hospitality or alms of the villagers, Joan was ever amongst the auditory, listening with suspended breath to the sad details of national calamity and humiliation, and at length eliminating from the mass of confused, contradictory intelligence, the one paramount fact that Charles's hope of being crowned at Rheims by the consecrating hand of the Church, after the custom of his ancestors, depended entirely upon the successful defence of the city of Orleans! One Sunday evening, whilst sitting in her father's garden, after having listened to the exciting narrative of a disabled soldier till she could bear it no longer, a brilliant light shone round about her, and a voice, announcing itself to be that of the Archangel Michael, bade her continue to be good and virtuous, and she would be called to the performance of great deeds. This was all the voice then uttered; but not long afterwards, whilst tending her father's sheep, at about noon, on a sultry day, she again heard the voice, and, moreover, saw the form of the Angel of Battle, who on this occasion was accompanied by the two saints Catherine and Mar-

garet. The Archangel told her she was the virgin pointed out by prophecy to save France, and conduct Charles, the lawful king, to Rheims; that she ought to make known her mission to Baudricourt, the Governor of Vaucouleurs; and that whilst she remained pure and innocent as then, the two saints Catherine and Margaret would constantly attend upon and shield her. There is no doubt that the enthusiastic girl firmly believed in the reality of this interview. It appears, too, almost self-evident that it was neither more nor less than a vivid dream, reproducing the thoughts and images with which her waking mind was incessantly occupied. Joan spoke of this revelation to her father and mother, who heard her with serious interest, but dissuaded her from pursuing the train of ideas to which it had given birth. Her uncle was more confiding and hopeful, and ultimately—the voices in the interval having sorrowfully reproached her with lack of zeal and devotedness—accompanied her to Vaucouleurs, where he with difficulty procured an audience of the Governor. Baudricourt listened contemptuously to a peasant-girl, in a coarse red woollen dress, announcing her intention, if the opportunity were afforded her, of chasing the English from the soil of France, and conducting Charles to be crowned at Rheims. He soon rudely dismissed both uncle and niece from his presence.

Joan and her relative did not, however, quit Vaucouleurs at once; and in that credulous age, the girl's pretensions were not only eagerly canvassed, but widely credited. The Duke of Lorraine, who had been long suffering under an incurable malady, sent a message, offering a large reward if Joan would restore him to health. "I have no mission to cure diseases," she replied; "the voices never mentioned the duke's name to me." Charles at the time

was at Chinon, in Touraine, a distance of more than four hundred miles, where rumours, nevertheless, relative to the inspired maid did not fail to reach him, and a messenger was forthwith despatched to bring her to his presence. Charles's affairs were at that period in a state of absolute desperation: his exchequer was empty, his remaining troops were utterly downcast and unnerved by repeated disasters. In this extremity it doubtless occurred to him, or the more astute of his councillors, that if a belief in the maid's miraculous powers could be widely diffused, it would revive the spirit of the French, at the same time that the courage of the English soldiery would be depressed, their stubborn hardihood subdued in presence of supernatural interposition. Be this as it may, Joan obeyed the summons with joyful alacrity, assumed male attire, and, escorted by six persons only, accomplished the long and, from the state of the country, perilous journey on horseback, in perfect safety—a piece of good fortune, in itself deemed almost miraculous. Charles received her at Fierbois, a place at some distance from Chinon, in a magnificent banqueting-hall, lighted by numerous torches, and thronged by upwards of a hundred knights, many of whom were splendidly accoutred. Charles himself was as plainly habited as possible, and took his station among the least distinguished of the mailed auditory. Joan, it is said, recognised him instantly and without hesitation. "God give you good life, gentle king," she said, approaching Charles, and bending her knee. "It is not I who am the king," he replied. "In the name of God, it is you, and no other!" rejoined the girl; adding, "I am Joan, the maid sent on the part of God to aid you and the kingdom, and by His order I announce to you that you will be crowned in the city of Rheims." Joan's first appearance having proved suc-

cessful, she was the next day clothed in light, brilliant armour, and presented on horseback to the people. Practice with her father's horses had made her a good and fearless rider; and a slight, graceful figure, a wonderfully expressive countenance, black lustrous hair, falling in thick tresses upon her shoulders, must have given to this young maiden, at that time in her seventeenth year, an imposing appearance; and as she proceeded in state, attended by nobles and knights, with all the pomp and circumstance of war, the people crowded after her with acclamations, implicitly believing in the truth of her celestial mission.

All this, as far as Charles and his advisers were concerned, may have been practice; but Joan's sincerity—the sincerity of an over-excited imagination, if you will—cannot be questioned. It may be, too, that it was for the purpose of enhancing the *prestige* she had already acquired, that high-placed clerical and civil dignitaries affected a dread that her mission might be derived from the Evil One, and caused her to be cited before the Parliament of Poictiers, to disprove, if possible, her alleged complicity with infernal powers. Joan confronted the tribunal without fear and without bravado; and in answer to a request that she would make a demonstration of her power by performing a miracle, said, "The only miracle I am empowered to work is the raising of the siege of Orleans." And to one who quoted texts of Scripture against her, she answered: "There are more things in my Lord's book than in yours." She firmly re-asserted that she had not only heard the voice of the Archangel, but seen his form with her bodily eyes; "and when he vanished, I wept that he had not taken me with him:" and she was finally decreed to be a true and pious daughter of Holy Church, and a special messenger from

Heaven. This formality over, Joan was solemnly invested with the command of the forces assembled for the relief of Orleans; and having first girded on, with much imposing ceremonial, a miraculous sword, opportunely found buried beneath the altar of the chapel at Fierbois, and provided herself with a white banner, blazoned with the figure of Christ sitting in Judgment, and inscribed with the words "Jesus: Maria," began the exercise of her authority by ordering all bad characters to leave the camp, and bidding the soldiers attend mass, and confess themselves. This accomplished, Joan insisted that the troops should march to the attack by the right bank of the Loire, directly through the besieging forces. The English were garrisoned in bastiles, or forts, which, except at the river approaches, encircled the devoted city. This order, in a purely military sense, was so absurd, that Dunois, whilst feigning to acquiesce, quietly disobeyed it, and the men embarked in boats for the left bank, where the attack could be made with some slight chance of success. The wind and current baffled this attempt, and Joan's plan was, perforce, adopted. It proved entirely successful. The English soldiery, it was found, believed as firmly in Joan's supernatural powers as the French themselves; the only difference being that they imagined her to be an instrument of hell, not Heaven—an envoy of the devil, not of God. This difference of opinion did not at all diminish their disinclination to encounter the diabolical champion of the French with merely mortal weapons; and they kept within their forts, hurling only anathemas at the relieving forces, which entered the city with Joan at their head, in jubilant triumph, amidst the ringing of bells, firing of ordnance, and the shoutings of the

citizens, by whom the "Maid of Orleans," as she was now called, was almost deified.

We cannot in these pages relate the victorious assaults upon the encircling forts, ending with that of Tournelles, in all of which the Maid of Orleans was the soul of the enterprise; leading, exhorting, rallying her soldiers, and herself fighting with the vigour of a man-at-arms and the enthusiasm of a Crusader. The Duke d'Alençon, a soldier of repute, assured Talbot, that although simple as a child in all matters unconnected with the profession of arms, Jeanne Darc was an expert warrior, alike in handling the lance, the disposition of troops, and the employment of artillery. It is certain, nevertheless, that till success had vindicated her pretensions, the French commanders held her martial genius in very slight esteem, and that it was no fault of theirs that she was present at the storming of the Bastile of Saint Loup, her first actual battle. M. de Barante, quoting from the deposition of D'Aulon, her esquire, relates the circumstance as follows:—"The day had been a weary one, and Joan, throwing herself on her bed, tried to sleep, but could not do so from perturbation of mind. All of a sudden she sprang up, and called out to the Sire D'Aulon that her council (Saints Catherine and Margaret) told her to march against the English; but she did not know whether it should be against their bastiles, or against Fascot (Falstaff), and desired D'Aulon to arm her. He began accordingly to do so. During this time she heard a great noise in the street, the cry being that the enemy were destroying the French. 'My God!' she exclaimed, 'the blood of our people is flowing! Why was I not wakened sooner? Oh, that was ill done! My arms! my arms! my horse!' Leaving behind her esquire, who had

not yet got his armour on, she hurried down stairs, and found her page idling before the door. 'You wicked boy!' she said; 'why did you not come to tell me the blood of France was being shed? Quick! quick!—my horse!' Her horse was brought; she desired that her banner, which she had left in the house, might be reached to her out of the window, and without further pause set off towards the Porte Bourgogne. When she had nearly reached it, one of the townsmen was carried past severely wounded. 'Alas!' said she, 'never have I seen the blood of Frenchmen flow without my hair standing on end.'"

After the fall of Tournelles—as the chief bastile or fort had been named—Suffolk abandoned the siege, and his troops sullenly withdrew to some distance from the city, where they halted, and offered battle in the open plain, in the face of God's daylight, to the fiend-led forces of their enemy. The French soldiers, under Dunois, followed, but, by Joan's order, halted out of range of the English archers, whilst mass was celebrated in their front. Joan, who knelt with her face towards the delivered city, asked, after a while, which way the countenances of the English were then turned. "Towards Melun," was the reply. "That is well," said Joan, "and let them go quietly; we will not pursue, as it is Sunday."

The miraculous deliverance of Orleans, in the space of eleven days, decided the fate of the campaign, and, in its ultimate results, of the entire war. The panic which had seized upon the English soldiery could not be stayed. Talbot was defeated and made prisoner; Falstaff compelled to make an ignominious retreat; Suffolk overthrown at Jargeau; the city of Rheims opened its gates to a body of cavalry commanded by the Maid of Orleans; and there, as she had promised, Charles was crowned King of France

his victorious female champion standing at his right hand the while, holding the white banner in her hand.

Jeanne Darc now anxiously desired to return to her humble home at Domremy. "The voices no longer communed with her," she said; "and Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine had ceased to compass her about with their protecting wings." Charles would not consent to part with her as yet; and, to induce her to remain, granted privileges to her native village; and ennobled her family, which thenceforth spelt their name, D'Arc. But Joan was no longer the inspired champion, the irresistible leader, to whose banner Victory formerly had seemed chained. Her counsel was hesitating and changeful. She failed in an attack upon Paris, where Bedford had shut himself up; then undertook to raise the siege of Compiègne, threw herself into that town, and headed a gallant sally, which proved unsuccessful. Joan, the last to retire, and fighting valiantly to the end, was unhorsed, and compelled to surrender.

The intelligence of Jeanne D'Arc's capture was received in Paris with transports of joy: *Te Deums* were chanted in the temples, and bonfires kindled in the streets, whilst the monarch who was indebted to her for his crown did not stir a step for her rescue.

She was altogether abandoned by her sovereign and her countrymen; neither by force nor pecuniary ransom did they seek to save her. They left her to the mercy of the exasperated English soldiery, whose sorely-wounded self-love imperatively required a sacrifice, and who wished it to be judicially established that they had fled, not before Frenchmen, but from an emissary of the Prince of Darkness. The unhappy girl was hurried from one jail to another, and at length cast into a prison at Rouen. There, at the instance

of the Bishop of Beauvais and the University of Paris, she was formally accused, "in the interest of religion and the Catholic faith," before an ecclesiastical tribunal, of being an agent of Satan. In reply to an entrapping question of the Bishop of Beauvais, Jeanne said: "If I have not the grace of God, I pray God that it may be vouchsafed to me: if I have, I pray God that I may be preserved in it." She was also hardly pressed with respect to the alleged miraculous banner:—

"When you first took the banner, did you ask whether it would make you victorious in every battle?"

"The voices," she replied, "told me to take it without fear, and that God would help me."

"Was the hope of victory founded on the banner, or on yourself?"

"It was founded on God, and on nought besides."

"If another had carried it, would victory have followed?"

"I cannot tell: I refer myself to God."

"Why should you be chosen sooner than another?"

"It pleased God that thus a simple Maid should put the King's enemies to flight."

"Were you not wont to say, to encourage the soldiers, that all the standards made to resemble your own would be fortunate?"

"I used to say to them, 'Rush in boldly among the English!' and then I used to rush in myself."

The simple faith and earnestness of her replies, though they extorted, it is said, from the Duke of Bedford the half-involuntary exclamation—"A worthy wench, if she were only English!" availed nothing to the predoomed Maid. Torture, and the promise of life and freedom, extorted

from her a confession of the imputed guilt, and she was sentenced by the Bishop of Beauvais to perpetual imprisonment; that merciful prelate condescending to express, whilst pronouncing judgment, a charitable hope "that the bread of grief and waters of bitterness, which thenceforth would be her only food, might be the means of leading her to a state of genuine repentance and grace."

But the vengeance of her implacable enemies, many of these her own countrymen, was not yet satisfied. Moreover, the soldiers clamoured for her blood, and the leaders of the army were determined to make an example of her. A pretence was soon found to fasten upon her the charge of relapsing into heresy, and for this crime there was but one punishment—death. She was doomed to suffer as a sorceress, in the market-place of Rouen. And there, on the 31st of May, 1431, was the heroic girl, amid the taunts of the cruel mob and the insults of rude soldiers, dragged to the stake and burnt. In that fearful hour she turned to her patron saints Margaret and Catherine; she implored the blessing of the Virgin Mary, and maintained her fortitude to the last. As the ravenous flames encircled her, she still prayed fervently, and the last words that escaped from her were: "Jesus! mercy, Jesus!"

The iniquitous sentence which consigned the Maid of Orleans to the flames has been long since reversed; not formally only, by a judicial tribunal receiving its inspirations, as did that by which she was condemned, from the ruling powers for the time being; but by the deliberate suffrages of Christendom, in whose enthusiastic All hail! the sneers of Monsieur de Voltaire, and other of her malignant detractors, have been dissipated,—lost! A costly monument

has been recently erected to her memory at Rouen, the scene of her martyrdom; and her countrymen gratefully recognise in the peasant-girl of Domremy, one of the most brilliant illustrations of courage and patriotism to be found in the annals of Old France.

MRS. FRY.

IN the good old days when George the Third was king, and as late as the beginning of the present century, a quadrangular enclosure within the jail of Newgate, measuring something less than two hundred superficial yards, was occupied by the female prisoners, averaging about three hundred in number, inclusive of children, under the supervision of one man and a boy, without any attempt at classification;—prisoners under sentence—presumedly innocent, because untried captives,—wretches convicted or accused of atrocious felonies—others, whose real or imputed offences were comparatively venial,—all herded promiscuously together there, without bedding or other covering than the verminous rags which revealed their nakedness. The common speech of those miserable outcasts was made up of curses and obscene blasphemy, except when visitors to the prison, passing hurriedly along by the low wall which on one side gave to view the fetid den of shame and guilt, were assailed by clamorous prayers for money, which, if obtained, was instantly despatched to the regular prison-tap for drink. Many years had passed since Howard's visits to Newgate, and the reforms effected by that illustrious philanthropist, who as yet had no successor, had long since become a tradition only in the dreary sepulchres of breathing men and women, into which he had for a time succeeded in admitting some rays of hope and healthier life. The stern, custom-hardened officials of the jail smiled with superior scorn at any suggestion pointing to the possible reformation of their prisoners. "They

are utterly irreclaimable," a principal officer of Newgate was, one day in the autumn of 1804, peremptorily assuring a party of "Friends," who had just before looked shudderingly in upon the wretches in the quadrangle,—"They are utterly irreclaimable, be assured; sunk in depravity and crime beyond the power of rescue." "Thou dost not surely mean," replied a voice of singular sweetness, "that they are beyond the reach and power of God?" The startled official looked sharply at the speaker, who, he saw, was a tall, youthful matron, richly habited as "a plain Quaker," with light flaxen hair, and a mild, expressive countenance, lit up at the moment into more than usual animation by the newly-kindled zeal which shone in her gentle, suffused eyes; and it was some moments before he rather confusedly replied, "that, of course, he could not mean *that;* but he, at all events, knew very well that the chaplain of the jail could do nothing with them."

The Friends soon left, and a few days afterwards the youthful matron returned alone; was, of course, received with the respect which character and social position always command, and to the indescribable astonishment—almost consternation—of those who heard her, requested admittance to the quadrangle, and to be left alone there with the female prisoners. Vainly did governor, chaplain, turnkeys, strive to dissuade her from the disgusting—in some degree dangerous, and altogether hopeless—task upon which she appeared so strangely bent. The calm reply to every argument and objection was, that she was in the hands of God, in whose fear she felt no other. The lady's firm persistence at last prevailed, and she was presently standing alone in the midst of the denizens of the quadrangle—her only shield her faith and purity—her sole weapons the charity that hopeth

all things, believeth all things, and a copy of the New Testament opened in her hand at a previously-selected chapter more especially addressed to the manifestly fallen and lost ones of the earth. The reprobate crowd, momently stricken dumb by the sudden apparition, quickly recovered their accustomed audacity, and clamorously petitioned—demanded rather—money,—money to purchase food, meaning thereby beer and tobacco. Those Babel-cries so far disconcerted the visitor, that the few introductory sentences she intended to deliver passed from her memory, and she instantly commenced reading, in the clear, thrilling tones peculiar to her, from the sacred volume in her trembling hands. As she read, the tumult gradually stilled, and the greater portion of the ruffian auditory listened with breathless surprise and eagerness to the Divine words, by many of them heard for the first time, and now but dimly comprehended, we may be sure. But the most hardened, brutified minds there could not but feel that the strange accents to which they listened wonderingly, were uttered by a compassionate, sympathising woman, and one, too, evidently of that superior class, who, when seen flashing in their splendour past the end of the miserable court or alley in which they, the pariahs of civilization, burrowed, when theoretically free, in chains and bondage as crushing and hopeless as those of Newgate, seemed beings of a higher sphere and life,—not, as it now confusedly broke upon them, children of the same Father, and heritors with no higher title than the meanest there possessed, of the same immortal destiny. "Hush!" exclaimed a woman, in whose eyes glittered the fire of incipient fever, as some slight interruption occurred,—"hush!—the angels have lent her their voices!"

The scene thus roughly sketched was that which inaugu-

rated the prison-teachings that have rendered the name of Elizabeth Fry a household word throughout Great Britain, and illustrious wherever true heroism, unostentatious self-sacrifice, is recognised and held in honour. It was no sudden impulse of undisciplined enthusiasm—no passing spasm of fanatical excitement—that constrained the footsteps of that young and wealthy wife and mother to those abodes of suffering and shame—that nerved a delicately-nurtured lady to hold personal communion with thôse moral lepers. Nor did Elizabeth Fry at all resemble what is understood by a strong-minded woman—a setter-up of new schemes of life and governance, rummaging, with averted head and shrinking nostril, amidst the offal of society in quest of striking platform or pamphlet statistics. The world's applause she had not dreamt of; and when it came, it so dismayed, so pained her, that she was half tempted to abandon a work which drew after it such unwelcome notoriety. Over Elizabeth Fry, vulgar, worldly incentives had no power; her sole spring of action being an imperious sense of duty derived from the teachings of the Divine Book—in which she herself moreover, strangely as it may sound, did not once entirely believe. The simple story of her youth will inform the reader how dark and blinding in other respects were the mists of doubt, pride, irresolution, from which Elizabeth Fry at last emerged to a true perception of the lofty mission assigned to her, and which, once clearly discerned, she pursued with the elevation of a martyr, the energy and zeal of a seraph!

Elizabeth Fry, third daughter of John Gurney and Catherine Bell, was born in the city of Norwich, on the 21st of May, 1780. The Gurneys—or Gourveneys, as the lady-biographers to whom we are indebted for many interesting

details of their honoured mother's private history carefully inform the world—date as a family of importance from the highly-respectable antiquity of the William Rufus epoch,—if, indeed, they are not entitled to the higher ancestral glory of having come in with the Conqueror; whilst Catherine Bell, the daughter of a London merchant, was a lineal descendant, on the maternal side, of Robert Barclay, the Apologist of the Quakers. Both parents were fortunately possessed of more tangible advantages than such shadowy honours confer; John Gurney being a man of large wealth, and his wife a lady of great beauty, talent, and worth. Elizabeth was one of a family of twelve children, nine of whom reached maturity, the eldest being seventeen and the youngest two years old when their mother died, in 1792. Eight years previous to that event, the Gurneys left St. Clement's parish, Norwich, for Earlham Hall, about two miles distant from that city,—a stately old mansion of the middle ages, once belonging to the Verulam family, charmingly situated in the midst of a finely-wooded park, past which meanders the silver Wensum. Elizabeth, though not so handsome as her two older sisters, is described as a tall, graceful, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed girl, with a very sweet expression of face, and withal of such a timid, fearful temperament, that she would burst into tears if only earnestly looked at, appearing to be always dominated by a vague feeling of terror, which, with the development of her intellectual faculties, settled for a time into a morbid anxiety relative to the phenomena of life and death. Often, when but seven or eight years of age, she would watch her mother, whilst asleep, with breathless apprehension, lest she might never wake again; and a passionate wish would frequently arise in her mind, when

excited by dread of final separation from her parents, brothers, sisters, or any one of them, that two huge walls might fall upon and crush them all together in one common grave! Her extreme dislike of the mechanical routine of lesson-learning exposed her to the imputation of dulness, not to say stupidity; and albeit her natural affections were remarkably acute, there was, it is hinted, a strong dash of obstinacy in her temper, which boded ill for her future peace —an alleged defect of character which must, one would suppose, have escaped the observation of her mother, who, writing to an intimate friend, says—"My dear little Betsey never offends, and is in every sense of the word truly engaging."

As before intimated, this admirable and accomplished mother died whilst Elizabeth was in her twelfth year; and John Gurney, the father, it is quite evident, was by no means a rigid "Friend," in a doctrinal and disciplinary sense. The sceptical spirit of the age had, it is clear, penetrated even the stolid ranks of Quakerism, and orthodox formality was, in numerous families, fast giving way to a slip-shod latitudinarianism, grievously offensive to the "plain Quakers," as sticklers for the precepts and practices inculcated by George Fox are, or were, wont to style themselves. The Misses Gurney were taught drawing, music, dancing, and other ornamental accomplishments; Rachel and Elizabeth sang duets out of plays and operas charmingly together; and the latter especially excelled in dancing—an amusement in which she greatly delighted. It was not in formality and discipline alone that this interesting family had fallen away from the faith and practices of their progenitors; and one is startled to read, that it was the conversation of an amiable and intelligent Roman Catholic gentleman—a Mr. Pitchford

—that first revived in their minds some faint reverence for the positive or dogmatical teachings of the Christian religion; an impression subsequently deepened by the reasonings of Marianne Galton, a plain Quaker and very pious person. A few extracts, taken at random from Elizabeth Gurney's private journal, will display, as in a mirror, her state of mind at this turning point of her life:—"My mind is so dark, that I see everything through a black medium." . . . . "I love to feel for the sorrows of others—to pour wine and oil into the wounds of the afflicted: there is a luxury in feeling the heart glow, whether it be with joy or sorrow." At one moment she thus writes:—"It is a great comfort to me that life is short, and soon passes away." And anon occurs this oddly-contrastive passage:—"I shall die! I must die! This wonderful death is utterly beyond my apprehension." Here, again, is a strange entry by such a pen:—"I don't feel any real religion; I should think those feelings impossible to obtain; for even if I thought all the Bible was true, I don't think I could make myself feel it." Elizabeth, who, like her sisters, attracted a great deal of admiration, candidly confesses the pleasure such observance afforded her, and her fears that she "may become a flirt!" His Royal Highness of Gloucester happening to be quartered at Norwich in the spring of 1797, she was restlessly anxious that he should pay a visit to Earlham Hall:—"Why do I wish the Prince would come? Pride, alas! is the cause." The actual presence of the Royal Duke disabused her of the illusion she had indulged in regarding such personages:—"I have seen the Prince!—it shows me the folly of the world." Early in 1798, a few months before Elizabeth Gurney's eighteenth birthday, William Savery, an eloquent American Friend, arrived in Norwich, and was present "at the gayest meeting

of Friends I ever sat in; and was grieved to see it. . . . . The marks of wealth and grandeur are too obvious in several families of Friends in this place, which makes me very sorrowful." The gayest at that gay meeting were undoubtedly the Misses Gurney; and Elizabeth's boots, "purple laced with scarlet," just then the newest fashion, so engrossed the admiring attention of her youngest sister, who sat next her, that she did not for a time observe that the wearer, usually so unheeding and listless at "Meeting," was greatly agitated by William Savery's discourse, which, untainted by any admixture of spiritual mysticism, was full of eloquent warning to his gay and wealthy audience, of the dangers that beset those "who wander from the simple, safe path of self-denial." Elizabeth Gurney again attended chapel in the afternoon,—a very unusual occurrence,—and returned home weeping in the carriage, having that day first felt that there was a God! "May that belief," she exclaims, "never leave me!—or, if it does, may I at least always remember that I *have* felt there is a God and immortality." William Savery saw her at Earlham Hall, and prophesied enthusiastically of the high and glorious mission she was, he felt, destined to fulfil. "Strange," she writes, modestly unconscious of the mind-power clearly apparent to all who knew her,—"Strange, it should be said I may prove a sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, feet to the lame!—Can it be?" There were, however, dangerous pitfalls still in her path, as witness this subsequent paragraph in her Journal:—"Rode on horseback to Norwich yesterday; and being looked at with apparent admiration by some officers, brought on a fit of vanity. Went to hear the band: wish I had not gone."

Soon after this, Elizabeth Gurney went to see the world, as it could only be advantageously seen, in London, and was,

upon the whole, greatly disappointed and saddened. Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres, which she visited with her hair so dressed up and frizzed, "that she felt like a monkey," had no charms for her, although Bannister, Mrs. Jordan, and Mrs. Deschamps were amongst the performers, and *Hamlet* and *Blue Beard*, "the grandest things, she supposed, on the stage," the pieces represented. She did not, however, omit to take a few lessons in dancing, and went to the Opera, where she saw the Prince of Wales, and was much better pleased, "for I do, I own, love grand company;" and another ingenuous confession admits that, "I do love a piece of scandal."

The beneficent career of Elizabeth Gurney, the religion in action which sanctified her life and has ennobled her memory, dates from the termination of this unsatisfactory pleasure-trip. The practice of benevolence, the activity of compassion, fixed her wavering intellectual credence of the soul's divinity of life, and we find her, whilst ministering to the physical needs of a dying servant, "poor Bob," telling him she could feel no pity for one so much nearer, to all appearance, than herself, to the future and better life. The education of children, for whom she had long felt an almost romantic sympathy, "for we know not how great and good they may become," was now undertaken by Elizabeth Gurney, and persisted in with untiring zeal as long as she remained at Earlham Hall. She commenced with one poor little boy; and so rapidly did her school increase, that a large vacant laundry was set apart for the accommodation of the scholars, who, when their benefactress quitted the parental for a conjugal home, were eighty-seven in number.

So absorbed and delighted was Elizabeth Gurney with

these and kindred self-imposed duties, that it was with considerable difficulty Joseph Fry, youngest son of William Storrs Fry, residing at a country-seat near Plaistow, Essex, and the head of an extremely wealthy London firm, of which he, Joseph, was a partner, succeeded in inducing her to even listen to his matrimonial overtures. The constancy and perseverance of the lover-Friend at length prevailed: the lady one day "received a letter from Joseph Fry which she liked, and answered it;" and the result was, that on the morning of the 19th of October, 1800, Elizabeth Gurney "woke in a sort of terror at the prospect before her, but soon gained quietness and something of cheerfulness"—sufficient, at all events, to go through the wedding ceremony at the Friends' Meeting-house, Norwich, with tolerable composure, notwithstanding "her cold hands and beating heart" did not for several hours afterwards regain their normal condition.

Previous to her marriage, Elizabeth Gurney had subsided, or soared, by slow but continuous process, into "plain Quakerism." First, dancing was abolished; next, Rachel was informed that singing must be given up; and *pari passu* with these sacrifices, gay colours in dress, elegant bonnets, purple boots laced with scarlet, were for ever discarded;—sectarian eccentricities these, no doubt, which may be obnoxious to ridicule or censure when resulting from a spirit of pharisaical assumption, but in the case of Elizabeth Gurney commanding respect, as the earliest positive indices of the unshrinking self-denial, the singularity of zeal, so to speak, which prompted her to enter upon and steadfastly pursue the tangled, thorny, untrodden path, illumined now by her bright footsteps, wherein she won for herself alike the reverence of the down-trodden, lowly ones

to whose moral and physical needs she ministered in love, and the esteem and admiration of the highest in the land—of all, indeed, who are capable of appreciating the true glory of a life which owes its lustre and beauty to its own inherent purity and brightness, unhelped by the meretricious glare that for a time circles and transfigures the conventional heroes and heroines of the world.

Her earthly mission finished, Elizabeth Fry passed tranquilly away to the reward of the Just, in the sixty-seventh year of her mortal life; the seraphic smile which accompanied her last words, "It is a strife—but I am safe," remaining, whilst human eyes rested upon it, as bright and placid as when the passing angel traced it there

THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.

THE politic allusion by Napoleon the Third, when announcing to his Senate the resolution he had himself formed to wed without the pale of sovereign families, to "the good and virtuous wife" (*la bonne et vertueuse femme*), whom the founder of his dynasty, in sheer insanity of lawless power and ambition, cast off, to make way for the Austrian princess, by whom, in the hour of misfortune, he in his turn was shamelessly abandoned, met with ready approval in this country, where, for various reasons,—resentful dislike of her imperial husband one of them,—the name of the amiable, cruelly-sacrificed Joséphine seldom fails to awaken emotions of respectful sympathy and regret. The brilliant noon of that meteoric life, suddenly terminating in black, premature eclipse, has chiefly challenged the attention and wonder of mankind, albeit it will, I think, be found that the story of its dawn and changeful morning is scarcely inferior in romantic interest and tragic potency to that of the later fortunes of the divorced, discrowned Empress; and this, too, when divested of the false lights and illusive colouring had recourse to by prejudiced or enthusiastic historiographers, and related with the brevity and plainness with which, in these pages, it must necessarily be treated.

Marie Françoise Joséphine Tascher de la Pagérie, the only child of Captain Joseph Gaspard Tascher de la Pagérie, and his wife, Marie de Sanois, who had been for some years settled at St. Domingo, was born at the residence of her uncle and aunt, M. and Madame Renaudin, St. Pierre,

Napoleon's First Interview with Josephine.

Martinique, one of the lesser queens of the Antilles, on the 24th of June, 1761. This at least is the date assigned by French historians; but as that happens to be the precise day whereon the treaty of peace restoring Martinique to France was signed, it is quite possible that a natural desire to establish the French birth of the Empress beyond quibble or question may have led to some slight inaccuracy in the matter. The Renaudins were possessed of considerable property in the neighbourhood of St. Pierre, in land and slaves, and Madame Renaudin, a well-educated *Parisienne*, adopted the child, with a cheerful good-will, which the early development of Josephine's graces of mind and person increased to a thoughtful, zealous tenderness, ever spoken of in after life by her charming niece with grateful acknowledgment. Yes, graces of mind and person—not intellectual superiority of the one, nor absolute beauty in an artistic, or more properly statuary, sense of the other; Joséphine neither as girl or woman having been remarkable for mental power, whilst her beauty confessedly owed its subduing charm to the irresistible fascination which the glowing softness of Creole loveliness, when allied to purity of heart and quiet elegance of manner, exerts over the least impressionable of mankind. Joséphine's large, spiritual eyes were, no doubt, exquisitely beautiful; her complexion in youth, too, was as bright and sunny as her place of birth; her hair lustrous and silken, her teeth unexceptionable, her figure elastic and sylph-like, and her low-pitched, agitating voice so finely toned and modulated that Bonaparte could find no words forcible enough to express the exultant gratification with which the plaudits of the French people for his victories filled him, than "that they were sweet as the voice of Joséphine." Mademoiselle Tascher's aptitude for feminine accomplishments was sedu-

lously cultivated by her aunt, and whilst still very young she played charmingly on the harp, and danced with surprising elegance and grace. Her tastes—one a passionate love of flowers, to which Europe is indebted for several tropical varieties, the camelia amongst them—were as refined as her temper and disposition were mild and endearing, the sympathising gentleness which added lustre to the diadem of the Empress being equally conspicuous in the days of her obscure girlhood. At that time, ere yet the labours of Clarkson and his zealous coadjutors had to a great extent crippled the traffic in slaves, the facility with which negroes were procured from the African continent rendered them cheap as offal, and the torturing rigour by which they were coerced into incessant exertion, unmitigated by fear of pecuniary loss, was consequently such as the most hardened slave-owner of the present day would probably shrink from. To those of the oppressed and trampled race belonging to her uncle, Joséphine was a guardian angel; and so tenderly was she loved by her relations, that the slaves were exempt from punishment, except in very flagrant cases, to spare her the agony of mind which its infliction would have excited. This relaxation of discipline did not, it would appear, answer in a commercial sense; but it none the less for that rendered Joséphine the idol of the coloured race, and their devotion to "*la jeune Reine*"—an appellation which may have suggested the strange prophecy to be presently noticed—manifested itself in a thousand ways and instances, once in the saving of her life by the sacrifice of that of a young negress, who suddenly interposed her own person between Joséphine and the spring of an irritated and deadly serpent, received the reptile's fatal bite, and expired a few hours afterwards in the arms of her sobbing, inconsolable young mistress.

The passions kindle early into flame in that fiery, precocious clime, and Mademoiselle Tascher was not more than thirteen when she and a young Englishman—lad, I should say, for he was not more than two years her senior—conceived a violent attachment for each other, and exchanged vows of eternal love and faithfulness. William, the boy-lover, was a son of English parents who had been long domiciled at Martinique, were related, it seems, to the Lord Lovell, and had been compelled to fly their native country for participation in the rebellion of '45. Madame Renaudin appears to have sanctioned the betrothment of the juvenile lovers, and there was no end of trees knife-graven with their intertwined initials, and morning melodies, evening serenades, sung by the enraptured boy at his mistress' lattice usually to the responsive accompaniment of the Creole maiden's harp. Of course, happiness like this was too bright, too ethereal, to last long in this common-place, hum-drum world, wherein too sensitive souls have so often the misfortune to be born; and in this particular instance young love's dream was rudely dissipated by the awakening grip of the flinty-hearted father, who carried "ce cher William" to England, where family affairs, that had unexpectedly assumed a more favourable aspect, required his immediate presence. The cruelly-sundered sweethearts engaged to write to each other at least once a day, and they did so for a considerable time, Madame Renaudin undertaking to post Joséphine's letters, which she did punctually—into the fire; and William's missives, as they arrived, were also ruthlessly consigned to the same dead-letter office. An old tale!—but, although Joséphine must, of course, have pined grievously in thought, her personal charms and graces continued to expand and bloom so strikingly, that her sable maids of honour, and the

petted companions of her sports, were every day prouder and prouder of their "jeune Reine,"—so much so, that the since much-marvelled-at prophecy of the African sibyl, in so far as it announced the future greatness of Joséphine, excited not the least surprise in their credulous and simple minds. This curious incident is thus related:—Mademoiselle Tascher, then about fourteen years of age, was dancing and otherwise disporting herself with a number of negro girls, some of whom suddenly caught sight of an old black beldame famous for sorceries and fortune-telling, scampered after her, and brought her to Joséphine's presence, with the hope that she might be permitted to read and expound the, no doubt, brilliant future, mysteriously inscribed on her palm. Joséphine laughingly consented; but the old woman had no sooner looked upon the delicate white hand placed in hers, than she affected to be terribly agitated, and it was only after much entreaty that the dark oracle thus delivered herself:—"You will be married soon, and the union will not be a happy one: you will be a widow, and then queen of France: some happy years will be yours, but you will die in a hospital amidst civil commotion." "Such, ladies," said the divorced Empress at Malmaison, addressing her profoundly interested attendants, "is the exact truth respecting this famous prophecy. The menacing end does not greatly disquiet me. I live here in peaceful retirement; I have no longer anything to do with politics, and hope to die calmly in my bed."

When the slave seer uttered this prediction, Joséphine treated it with contemptuous disdain, and gravely lectured the young negresses upon the folly of placing credence in the silly inventions of such manifest impostors as the pretended prophetess. The gradual unrolling of her many-coloured

web of life changed, as we shall see, that feeling of contemptuous disdain successively to one of exultant credulity, and of boding disquiet; and a luckier guess certainly never fell from the lying lips of the astutest Aruspex of classic Greece or Rome than this apparently well-attested one of the negress of Martinique.

Mademoiselle Tascher's first marriage was near at hand, and was probably known to be so by the fortune-teller. Vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais, a captain in the French army, visited Martinique upon business connected with his brother the Marquis de Beauharnais' property there; was introduced to Joséphine, felt or fancied himself furiously in love with her, and forthwith solicited her hand in marriage. The young lady would not listen to the proposal, though made by a vicomte; she would remain, her aunt was solemnly assured, faithful to her English lover, and Monsieur Alexandre de Beauharnais might look elsewhere for a wife! Madame Renaudin, a lady of much *savoir faire*, and fully resolved that her niece should marry the Vicomte, gave this amiable sentimentality free play for a while, and in the end managed the affair so adroitly, that when M. de Beauharnais embarked for Europe, which he did after a stay of about two months only at Martinique, he and Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagérie were legally contracted to each other; and it had been arranged that Joséphine and her aunt should follow him to France as speedily as might be, where the marriage would be definitively solemnized. It so came to pass: Madame Renaudin and her niece sailed from Martinique in 1776, arrived safely at Marseilles, and were met at Fontainebleau by the Vicomte Beauharnais. The wedding did not take place for several months afterwards, during which Mademoiselle Tascher took up her abode in a convent at Pan-

thémont. This delay has been attributed to a reluctance on the part of Joséphine, revived by a chance interview with "William," whom she met at Marseilles. Whatever may have been the difficulty, it was smoothed over by the address of Madame Renaudin; the marriage of her niece with the Vicomte—he was thirty years old, just double the age of his bride—was duly solemnized at Paris, and Madame de Beauharnais was soon afterwards presented to Queen Marie Antoinette, who had not long previously ascended the throne upon which that blushing, confused girl-wife was destined to succeed her.

Hortense, the mother of the present Emperor of the French (and composer, by the way, of both the words and music of "*Partant pour la Syrie*," and "*Brulant d'amour, et partant pour la guerre*"), and Eugène, viceroy of Italy, were the children of this marriage—a very unhappy one, especially after about four years of simulated, impatient decorum on the part of M. de Beauharnais, who by that time had thoroughly emancipated himself from "the superstition of conjugal fidelity." One of his mistresses, a person of rank and fair reputation in society, insinuated herself into the confidence of the young neglected wife, condoled with her, spoke of her English lover, and contrived to purloin an unfinished letter written by Joséphine to her aunt, Madame Renaudin,—who had long since returned to Martinique,—in which the following passage occurred:—"But for my children, I should, without a pang, renounce France for ever. My duty requires me to forget William; and yet, if he and I had been married, I should not to-day have been troubling you with my griefs." This letter the abandoned woman placed at a fitting moment in M. de Beauharnais' hands, whom it rendered furious with unrea-

soning jealousy; "the superstition of conjugal fidelity," according to his one-sided ethics, being of such binding force upon a wife, that but to *think* reproachfully of her husband was high treason against marital morality. He immediately separated himself from Madame de Beauharnais, and instituted a suit at law for a formal divorce; his wife the while sheltering herself in a convent with her daughter Hortense, M. de Beauharnais having insisted upon retaining the custody of his son. The tribunal to which he appealed pronounced in favour of his wife, exonerating her from all blame. Shortly after this decision, Madame de Beauharnais met the Queen, walking with Louis XVI., near the Petit Trianon, Versailles, when Marie Antoinette, whilst warmly congratulating her upon the judicial award, took from her own neck an antique ornament set with precious stones, and clasped it round Joséphine's, promising at the same time that she would one day present her son Eugène with a *brevet d'officier*.

Madame Beauharnais now returned to Martinique, the only true home she had known,—her father and mother both died whilst she was still very young,—where she remained over three years, her only solace and chief occupation the society and education of Hortense. Prolonged absence, and an awakening sense of remorse, revived in M. de Beauharnais' mind the image of his wife in all its former power and brightness, and he wrote to Martinique soliciting forgiveness, and imploring her to return home. The forgiving gentleness of Joséphine's disposition could not resist this appeal, the less, no doubt, that reconciliation with her husband involved reunion with her son; and speedily as possible she embarked with Hortense for France in the *Pomone* frigate, the captain of which politely offered her a

passage—a fortunate act of civility, to which he was indebted for dying an admiral.

The meeting of Monsieur and Madame de Beauharnais was an affectionate and cordial one, and peace and happiness sat at their hearth till scared away by the despotic Terror, beneath whose bloody sceptre "France—free, regenerated France,"—crouched, cursed, and trembled. M. de Beauharnais had been a member of the Constituent and National Assemblies, an adherent of Lafayette, and supported generally the principles and policy professed by the moderate section of the Girondists;—more than enough this to stamp him as a traitor to republican perfectibility, ensure his arrest for "*incivisme*," of which his aristocratic birth was superabundantly conclusive proof, and send him to the scaffold. The letter he addressed to Joséphine, from the prison of the Conciergerie the night previous to his execution, of which I subjoin an extract, is an affecting testimony to the sincerity of his contrition for the past, and the amiability and worth of his wife:—"Yet some moments to tears, to tenderness, and to regret; then wholly to the glory of my fate, to the grand thoughts of immortality. When you receive this letter, beloved Joséphine, your husband will have ceased to live here; but in the bosom of his God he will have begun to enjoy a real existence. Thou seest, then, there is no cause for mourning on his account: it is over the wicked, the insensate men who survive him, that tears are to be shed, for they inflicted and could repair the evil. But let me not sully with their guilty image these last moments: I would, on the contrary, adorn them with the thought that, having been united to a charming woman, I might have beheld the years passed with her glide away without a cloud, had it not been that wrongs, of

which I have been sensible when too late, troubled our union."

Quickly upon the death of her husband followed Joséphine's own arrest and incarceration in the prison of the Carmelites,—the shambles wherein a whole hecatomb of priests were slaughtered by the ruthless Septembrists,—her crime, the unpardonable one of being the widow of a distinguished victim of the Terrorists. The Duchesse d'Aiguillon; La Cabarus, a young and beautiful Spanish woman, by first marriage Madame de Fontenay, and other ladies, were confined in the same place. Madame de Fontenay had been proscribed because, having acquired supreme sway over the heart of Tallien—the commissioner deputed to wreak the vengeance of the Convention upon the city of Bordeaux—she used that influence to mitigate the ferocity of decrees of which Tallien, but for her, would have been the ready and remorseless executioner. Of all the inmates of that gloomy ante-room to the guillotine, Madame de Beauharnais alone believed in the possibility of a happy deliverance therefrom. Her union with and the death of M. de Beauharnais had impressed her with the belief that the prophecy of the Martinique beldame was supernaturally inspired, and would be fulfilled throughout; and she excited the astonishment and ridicule of her fellow-captives by openly declaring her conviction, that so far from perishing by the guillotine, as they foreboded, she was destined to be Queen of France! "You had better, then, appoint your ladies of honour at once," exclaimed the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, in sarcastic rebuke of such, as she deemed it, ill-timed levity. "I will begin at least to do so," quietly replied Madame Beauharnais; "and you, my dear duchess, shall be the first,"—a promise thereafter literally fulfilled. Warning, that they must briefly prepare to bid

farewell to life, was given the prisoned ladies by a notice that they would, on the morrow, be required to appear before Fouquier Tinville, and still Joséphine's superstitious confidence abated not in the slightest degree. Madame de Fontenay's last hope of rescue rested upon a more apparently reasonable basis. Tallien—whose indignation at the imprisonment of a lady to whom he was madly attached, and whom he was under an engagement to marry, was the main cause of his already tacit revolt against the Robespierre-Saint-Just-Couthon triumvirate of assassins—was permitted to see her at the prison-grate every evening; but no syllable unheard by the jailers was allowed to pass between them. In this terrible crisis of her life, Madame de Fontenay punctured a vein in her arm with a sharp-pointed piece of wood, and with the same instrument, dipped in the red fluid thus obtained, scratched upon a piece of cambric the following words:—"My trial is decreed. If you love me, as you say you do, urge every means to save France and me." This scrap of cambric, folded up in a cabbage-leaf, Madame de Fontenay contrived to slip, unobserved, into Tallien's hand; and the safe delivery of that brief missive proved to be the turning-point of the Revolution. Tallien resolutely setting his own life upon the cast, attacked Robespierre in the Convention on the following day, triumphed in the mortal struggle that ensued, and the Reign of Terror, properly so called, had passed away. The future Madame Tallien was the first of the Carmelite captives set at liberty; but a few days only elapsed before she procured the liberation of Madame de Beauharnais, and soon afterwards of all the rest of her lately fellow-prisoners.

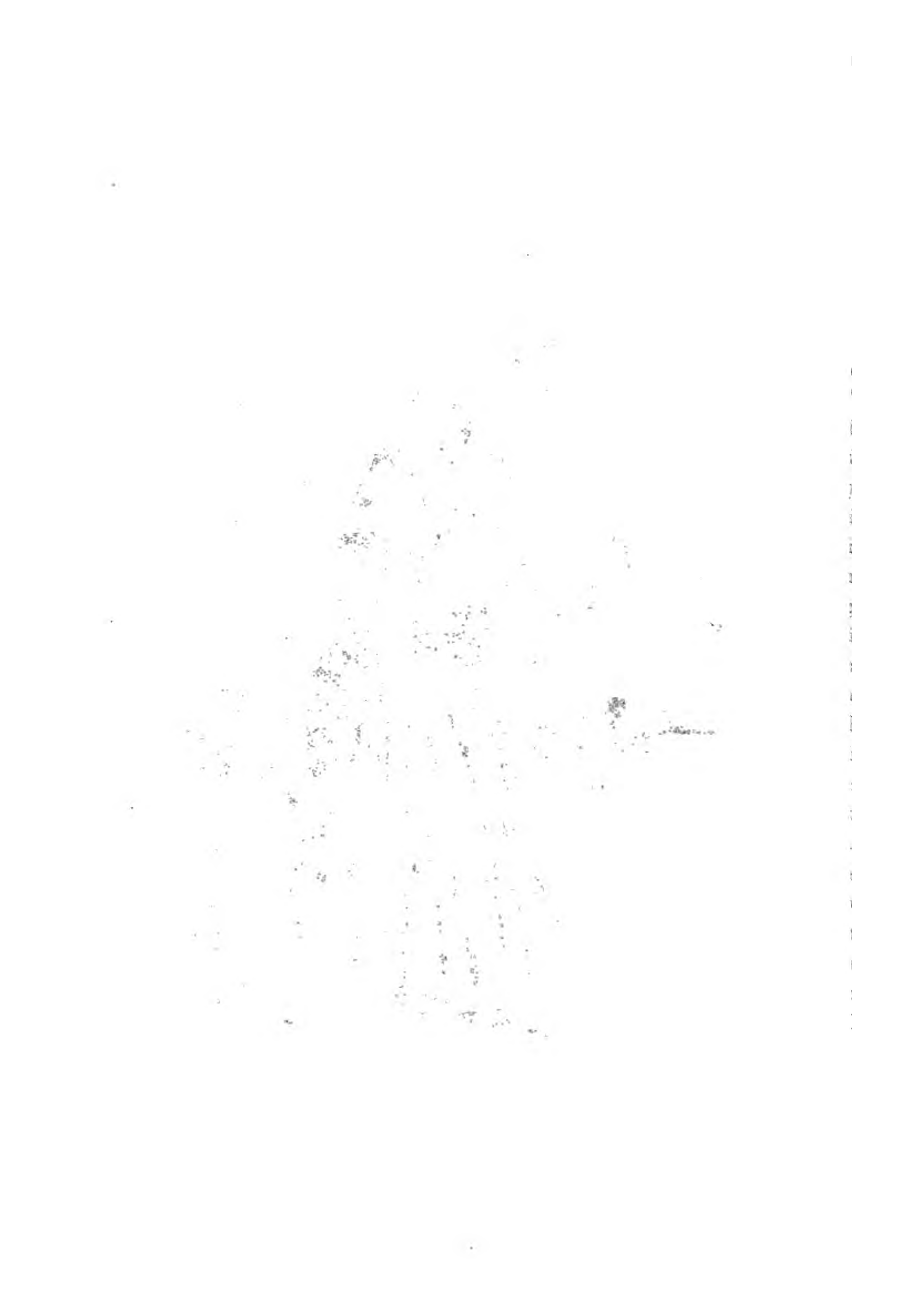
Some twelve months must, in play-bill phraseology, be supposed to have passed before the curtain rises upon the

second and imperial phase of the fortunes of Joséphine, the opening scene whereof is the *salon de réception* of Madame Tallien. "Le Général Bonaparte," that lady is saying, as she introduces the young officer whose decision on the day of the Sections saved the Directory, and will, he hopes, procure him the command of the army of Italy—"Le Général Bonaparte,—my friend, Madame de Beauharnais, *veuve!*" The self-concentrated, saturnine expression of the officer's face, as his glance rests upon the charming woman thus presented to him, kindles with emotion, and a rare, singularly-fascinating smile accompanies the brief words with which he acknowledges the pleasure the introduction affords him. "My friend has, I think, made an important conquest," remarked Madame Tallien, later in the evening, addressing Barras and her husband in an undertone, as she glanced towards Madame de Beauharnais and General Bonaparte. "*C'est possible,*" replied Barras, after looking for a few moments in the same direction, "though the General Bonaparte's serious vows will be offered, or I am greatly mistaken, at the altar of glory, not love."

Not possible only, but perfectly true—an accomplished fact. Bonaparte had conceived a vehement and genuine passion for the fascinating widow, to whom he a few days afterwards offered his hand. Joséphine hesitated—seemed rather frightened than flattered by the general's *brusque,* almost fierce avowal of tenderness,—"even at what ought to please me, the force of a passion described with an energy that leaves not a doubt of his sincerity." The lady's coy indifference or reserve soon yielded to the ardour of the fiery Corsican soldier, and in August, 1795, Madame Beauharnais became the wife of General Bonaparte. Fifteen brilliant years followed, during which the wife of the triumphant

general—the lady of the First Consul—the crowned Empress of the French, won golden opinions from all who approached her or came within the range of her influence. We then discern the obverse of the medal,—the divorce,—the death at Malmaison, resulting less from physical ailment than from grief for the fallen fortunes of the man by whom she had been vainly sacrificed,—amidst the jeers and yellings that accompanied the restoration of the Bourbon throne, destined to be again supplanted, and trampled upon, and by Napoleon the Third,—the child-grandson sobbing with convulsive grief at the bedside of the dying Empress.

Madame Roland.



MADAME ROLAND.

SWIFTLY as hurries past the historic death-march of the fanatics, dupes, and ruffians of the first French Revolution, doomed to perish by the Terror evoked and organised by themselves, there is one white-robed figure in the doleful procession, with pale, bright, classic face, mantled with dark silken hair, and illumined by deep blue, transparent eyes, kindled to indignant flame by the hootings and curses of the multitude, which arrests the attention, and dwells in the gazer's memory long after it has disappeared from the scaffold still wet with the blood of a queen, and been flung, as carrion, into the common *fosse* at Clamart. That vanishing apparition is Jeanne Manon (not Marie, as usually written) Philipon, wife of the ex-minister Roland; and if, upon looking more closely at this votary and victim of the Revolution, chiefly by the light of her self-written memoirs, we discover that the apparent invulnerability of a clear conscience, the lofty, unblenching heroism which in that supreme hour encircled her as with an atmosphere of light and purity, were in a great degree indebted for their seeming brightness to the contrastive foil afforded by the grimed, blood-spotted companions and fellow-workers from whom she can never be mentally dissociated,—still the courage, energy, devotion, the high-reaching if often misdirected impulses and aims, the cruel and untimely death of Madame Roland, can never fail to command the admiration, qualified as it may be, and to excite the unbounded sympathy and compassion of all who include in the great life-account the sinister influences sur-

rounding her youth, and the false lights by which, in her matured years, she was bewildered, and turned aside from the path she purposed to pursue, to one which, all too late, was discovered to terminate in an impassable abyss.

Jeanne Manon Philipon was born in March, 1754, in a house on the Quai des Orfèvres, Paris, where her father, Gratien Philipon, carried on the business of an engraver, and painter on enamel. From her earliest years, Christianity, and the gospel according to Voltaire and Rousseau, as severally illustrated by the lives and precepts of her father and mother, contended for supremacy over the mind of the precociously-gifted child. Gratien Philipon, in common with vast numbers of the Paris *bourgeoisie* at that period, held the idea of God to be an illusion; Church and State confederate despotisms, cemented by force and hypocrisy; the unequal distribution of wealth a crime against humanity, and an insult to common sense. Individual ill-fortune converted general, and therefore easily-borne wrongs into personal and exasperating grievances; ambition of riches, an eager thirst after sensuous gratification, tempted him from the safe routine of a business which, writes his daughter, would have assured a modest competence, into the always perilous path of speculation, where, instead of overtaking Fortune, he encountered Ruin. Poverty sharpened and envenomed the curses which he incessantly hurled at a political and social organisation in the scale whereof he found himself constantly sinking lower and lower, and even the beauty and intelligence of his child, the only one of eight that survived its birth, were converted, by the alchemy of a morose and envious spirit, into witnesses against the providence of God and the justice of man; for of what value, according to Gratien Philipon's reasoning, were beauty and intelligence, denied

the rank and wealth monopolised by a privileged class, for the most part but slightly endowed with either of those divine gifts? As happens once or twice in a century, the public professions of the politician were not in exact unison with the domestic habits of the citizen; M. Philipon at home being a selfish, unreasoning despot, who, moreover, wasted in low debauchery the time and money that, well employed, would have assured the present and future independence of his family. The downward progress towards absolute ruin was arrested by the industry and prudence of Madame Philipon, a woman of placid beauty alike of mind and person—pale, touching remains of the fresh loveliness, the elastic buoyancy of spirit by which Margaret Binant was distinguished before she, with much bodeful hesitation, became the wife of Gratien Philipon. A woman, too, of simple, earnest faith, and guileless purity of heart; and it may be imagined with what anxious solicitude such a mother must have watched the intellectual development of her rarely-gifted daughter, amidst evil influences against which she could only warn, not effectually shield her! Jeanne Manon's educational progress was singularly rapid. At four years of age she read perfectly, without clearly remembering, she says, the process by which that faculty was acquired; and, assisted by competent instructors, she became, whilst yet the merest girl, sufficiently mistress of the ordinary accomplishments, as well useful as ornamental, that made up the education of a carefully-nurtured daughter of a Paris shopkeeper. Mademoiselle Philipon had a finely-toned, vibrating voice, and was passionately fond of choral harmony, a power and taste which led to her constant attendance at church, where the imposing pomp of the Catholic worship, with its effective accessories of magnificent music, illumi-

nated altars, gorgeous processions, aided by the constraining example of her mother's blameless life, gave a strong but ephemeral bias to the as yet ductile mind of the enthusiastic young maiden. Writing nearly thirty years afterwards in her prison-cell at Ste. Pélagie, Madame Roland says, "At eleven I found myself deeply religious; at sixteen I was a philosopher; at twenty a sceptic." *Facilis descensus Averni.* And it is only surprising that her religious self-illusion should have endured so long, breathing, as she did, a daily atmosphere constantly vocal with outspoken, brazen atheism. One instance, decisive of the tone prevalent in her class of society, in relation to such topics, may be quoted. Gabriel, an artist occasionally employed by her father, used to delight in placing himself in an arm-chair, and with his comical face twisted into an expression of intense amusement, request Mademoiselle Philipon to explain to him one or more of the solemn and mysterious—solemn and mysterious as life and thought—of the Christian faith; which done, he would, as a return in kind, amuse her with a description of one Tanger's nose, which was of so extraordinary a length that he could twist it round his arms like a rope! Gratien Philipon used to delight in such elevating colloquies, and more than once brutally rebuked his wife for endeavouring to counteract their enlightening influence upon the inquisitive intellect of her child.

Mademoiselle Philipon's devotional fervour could have been at any time but fitful and intermittent; for she tells us that, having, when but nine years old, heartily devoured, in her omnivorous appetite for books, Dacier's translation of Plutarch, belonging to one of her father's *élèves*, she was so enchanted therewith as to carry it secretly to church, in lieu of the Book of Prayers, during the penitential season of

Lent, 1763, and there peruse and reperuse a work which delighted her above all others, and gave a tone and colour to her mind never afterwards effaced. To her girlish, undisciplined apprehension, the heroes of the classic biographer were incarnations of the loftiest attributes of humanity; the despotic democracies which they championed, communities of freemen—model republics! What real sympathy, then, what true reverence, could have been felt by this young person, who intuitively recognised, in the deification of pride and force by the glowing pencil of Plutarch, a worship congenial with her own soul, for the religion of humility and compassion, which teaches, in precise opposition to the Greek and Roman morality, that meekness, not pride—mercy, not vengeance—to forgive and save, not trample and slay, your enemy, are the highest virtues—the holiest duties required of man? The upas of the old philosophy had found in the mind of Jeanne Manon a favourable and tenacious soil, and speedily bore fruit after its kind. Whilst her brain was still throbbing with the fresh enthusiasm kindled by the magic pages of Plutarch, an illness, requiring to be promptly dealt with, attacked her, and she was ordered to take some extremely nauseous medicine: she refused to do so, and twice her father, spite of Madame Philipon's remonstrances, severely whipped her. Once more the father insisted upon compliance, menacing her, if she again dared to disobey, with still heavier chastisement. As the threat left M. Philipon's lips, the resolution of the imitative Spartan girl was taken; her cries and tears ceased instantly, and turning towards her father, with a look of calm disdain, she deliberately repeated her refusal to swallow the medicine, lifted her clothes with her own hand, and invited him to fulfil his threat! Madame Philipon now resolutely interposed, and induced her husband

to leave the room, herself accompanying him. The mother knew how only her daughter's fierce pride of heart and stiff-necked wilfulness could be effectually dealt with; and after allowing a considerable interval to elapse, returned to the chamber, saw that Jeanne Manon had got into bed, stepped softly towards her with the indispensable medicine in her hand, and entreated her to take it. The daughter looked in her mother's meek, suffused eyes, saw no menace there, only anxiety and love, and instantly swallowed the proffered draught. Her stomach could not bear it; but she offered to repeat the dose as often as her mother wished her to do so.

Madame Philipon's precepts and example must about this time have obtained a signal ascendancy over her daughter's mind; for we find that as the day approached whereon she was to make her first communion—the festival of the Assumption, August 15th, 1764,—Jeanne Manon became so impressed with the ineffable holiness of the rite, that she shrank from its celebration till, by vigil, prayer, and temporary withdrawal from the world, she had prepared herself to do so in some degree less unworthily. So passionate and determined were her supplications upon this point, that her mother, aided by Aunt Besnard, at last obtained Gratien Philipon's contemptuous assent to her domiciliation with the Sisters of the Congregation, at their convent in the Rue Neuve St. Etienne, Faubourg St. Marceau,—as a lay boarder, of course. The exaltation of her mind at this epoch she thus describes:—"I was placed in bed in a room where four children of my own age slept with me; but I was too agitated for slumber. A dim light diffused itself throughout the chamber; and I rose, crept softly, that I might not disturb the sacred silence which reigned around, towards the

window, and gazed upon the tall leafy trees waving in the moonlight, and the golden stars which gemmed the tranquil heavens, whilst tears of rapture flowed down my cheeks. I then repeated my orisons with a holy ecstasy, and retired to bed to taste the slumber of God's chosen children." The final self-dedication of a nun, during Mademoiselle Philipon's abode in the convent, strongly interested her; and as the service proceeded, a kind of delirious sympathy grew upon her, so that at last, when the nun intoned the Canticle—"Here have I chosen my abode and established myself for ever," the excited girl cried out that "they were tearing her from her mother!" and fell fainting on the stone pavement.

The bold, mounting spirit of Mademoiselle Philipon soon wearied of the dull, circumscribed routine of a convent, where she remained but about a twelvemonth only, during which period she gained the lasting friendship of two sisters, Sophie and Henriette Cannet, of Amiens, and but little else of permanent value. Instead of returning home, she went to reside for a time at the Ile St. Louis, with her grandmother and aunt, in the unwatched freedom of which abode she quietly exchanged Saint Francis de Sales, Fénélon, and Thomson's *Seasons*, for M. de Voltaire's *Candide*, *L'Ingénu*, Rousseau's *Héloise*, Secretary Mirabeau and Company's *Système de la Nature*, the Disquisitions of Montesquieu, Hobbes, Hume, and others of that class of *esprits forts*, by the aid whereof the Christian maiden rapidly grew—or ought I to write, shrank?—into a strong-minded *jeune philosophe*, with a strong tendency, helped by the unquiet spirit of the time, towards ultra-democratic theories of civil polity. Thoroughly conscious of her own comparative personal and mental superiority, Jeanne Manon was highly incensed when taken, handsomely dressed, by her grandmamma, to one or two

patrician houses to which that lady had a kind of *entrée*, upon sufferance, at hours when important visitors were not likely to call—at the patronizing superciliousness with which she was treated by the "withered and witless *grandes dames*" who condescended to receive them; and infinitely more galling to the daughter of the engraver of the Quai des Orfèvres than the haughty condescension of the great, was the plebeian familiarity of the little—of the servants, who dared to shake hands with and press delicacies upon the acceptance of Demoiselle Philipon, *philosophe éclairée*, and already mentally in arms against social distinctions!

This fever of the mind was greatly inflamed by a visit to Versailles, where she lodged and slept in an attic of the palace with one of the royal domestics. The insolence of the high, the servility of the low, which she witnessed there, "making her feel injustice whilst she looked upon absurdity, caused her to cherish, more ardently than before, the sublime hope of republican freedom and equality first kindled by the heroic annals of Greece and Rome." Error! Mademoiselle Philipon! Illusion! *jeune philosophe*, and of a gross and very common-place kind. In the first place, your famous Greek and Roman helot and slave proprietors were aristocratic despots, to whom freedom in its true sense was unknown or hateful; and as to yourself individually, Mademoiselle, the aspiration of that proud, courageous heart, which beats so fiercely as the feathered and jewelled crowd sweep haughtily past, is not for an impossible equality, but that Jeanne Manon Philipon should take the place for which nature has so well fitted her amongst the highest there! Of this abundant proofs might be adduced; here is one: Mademoiselle Philipon, by this time seventeen or eighteen years of age, beautiful, intelligent, and of such

graceful, winning manners that when she goes, as she has lately done, to market—her mother's time being wholly taken up in superintending what should be her husband's business, which must else fall to cureless ruin—the vendors of fruit, vegetables, &c., press eagerly forward to serve her before any one else, whoever may be in waiting, and always ask of her the lowest possible price,—had, of course, numerous suitors for her hand, but she would have none of them: Jeanne Manon had no inclination towards marriage, and for mankind generally, with the exception of those dead Greeks and Romans, felt a decidedly contemptuous aversion, more especially if they were traders. One young and well-to-do butcher of the *quartier* was amongst her declared lovers, and when counselled by her mother not to hastily reject the offer, she exclaimed, indignantly, "What! shall I, who have lived with Plato; with all the philosophers, unite myself with a shopkeeper!" and the butcher was unceremoniously sent to the right-about—not, one would think, to his ultimate disadvantage, however he might be temporarily cast down or exasperated. The professions did not find more favour in Jeanne Manon's eyes than arts mechanical. A young physician made proposals, and Madame Philipon, whose fast-failing health increased her anxiety for the settlement of her daughter in life, warmly supported the offer; "He may not be all you desire or deserve in a husband," she urged, "but he has already a good position, and you will be happy with him." "As happy as *you* have been, possibly," quickly rejoined Mademoiselle Philipon. This home retort could not be parried, and the conversation or debate terminated.

The portrait of this much-sought-after young lady has been sketched by various hands, and with considerable

diversity of colouring. A painting of her when a child, represents her of fair complexion, clear deep-blue eyes, and brown glossy hair, holding a burin in one hand and a bunch of flowers in the other. Riouffe, imprisoned in the same jail, and who saw her frequently for some time previous to her execution, speaks of "those large *black* eyes of hers, full of sweetness." Lamartine says she was of tall, lithe figure, had black silken hair, blue eyes, the nose of a Greek statue, superb teeth, a beautiful smile, and a melodious voice. The pen-and-ink sketch drawn by her own hand is a curious specimen of self-painting:—"I am five feet five inches in height, have a well-made leg, and my foot is well set on; my chest is broad and nobly decorated. My carriage is graceful, and my face has a great deal of colour, with much softness and expression. No single feature, perhaps, is strictly beautiful, but taken together could not but please. My mouth is a little wide, you may see a prettier every day, but not one with a smile more tender and engaging. My eyes are fine and well opened, and the colour of the iris is hazel; and my look is open, frank, tender, varying in expression with the emotions of the affectionate heart of which it indicates the movements, and if, serene and lofty, it sometimes astonishes, it charms much more. My hair is dark brown; my nose I used to think too full at the end, but taken with the rest, especially in profile, it is not amiss."

This evidently quite sincere self-description sufficiently accounts for the numerous matrimonial overtures which she, a very slightly portioned damsel, received, and rashly, it would seem, rejected one after another, without doubt or hesitation. Poor girl! the tender monitor who alone had power to restrain and guide her aright was soon to be with-

drawn from her labour of love, and the death-bed of Madame Philipon had no pang so sharp as the dread of what might be the fate of her impulsive and gifted child, left to the guidance of the *Dictionnaire Philosophique* and the *Système de la Nature.* The last stroke was a sudden one. Jeanne Manon hastily summoned to the presence of her dying mother, found only a priest there, "administering a rite she did not understand; and falling senseless on the floor, she extinguished the light by which the priest was reading the prayers for a parting soul."

The household ruin which the care and exertions of Madame Philipon had barely sufficed to postpone, now came on with unchecked speed, and his wife had not long been carried to her grave, when Gabriel Philipon brought home a mistress to usurp and pollute her vacated place. Jeanne Manon's innate purity, aided no doubt by her dimly ascertained but high-reaching aims, shielded her from the debasing associations of her home; and one of her convent friends, Sophie Cannet, now and for some time past Sister Saint Agatha, was the unintentional agent of effecting her escape therefrom to a position affording vantage ground for the display of her restless, untameable energies. Sophie Cannet had known M. Roland de la Platière, originally from the neighbourhood of Lyons, but long settled at Amiens, a well-descended gentleman of ability, fortune, and literary tastes, who had long held the important post of Inspector of Manufactures; and he, calling at the convent whilst on a visit to Paris, she gave him a letter of introduction to her charming friend, Mademoiselle Philipon:—"In the bearer of my friend's note of introduction," writes Madame Roland, "I saw a man of quite double my own age, tall, careless in his address, with that kind of awkwardness which a solitary

life always produces; but his manners were easy and winning, and without possessing the elegance of the world, they united the politeness of the well-bred man with the seriousness of the philosopher." They do not appear to have been much struck with each other at first, but Jeanne Manon had "an admirable talent for listening;" and M. Roland, a contributor to the *Encyclopédie*, and a grave, austere *bavard* to boot, was so softened and charmed by the intelligent appreciation of his beautiful auditor, that he finally proposed to make her his wife. The lady hesitated for a while, or appeared to do so, but in conclusion referred the declarant to her father. That worthy, however, thought proper to reject M. Roland's alliance, from dislike, it is said, of that gentleman's rigid morality, which had permitted itself to frown upon his, Gabriel Philipon's, "little irregularities." This rebuff, Mademoiselle Philipon being of age, would not have greatly disconcerted an ordinary lover; but M. Roland, being unfortunately, like his intended bride, a philosopher, acquiesced in the adverse decree with perfect serenity, and forthwith took his departure from Paris. Conduct this to provoke a saint! It is no wonder, therefore, that Jeanne Manon felt greatly irritated, and "that all illusion was thenceforth at an end for ever." Still, although "the romance of marriage," with a man older than herself by something more than a quarter of a century, had vanished, the tangible realities involved in her union with M. Roland were not to be so easily relinquished, and so, to practically demonstrate her independence of M. Philipon, she betook herself once more to the convent of the Sisters of the Congregation, where she was accommodated with a garret bedroom, and anything but luxurious fare. Week after week, month after month, limped slowly past, still no M. Roland; and upwards of half

a year had elapsed when that Platonic lover called at the convent to see Sister St. Agatha and her friend Mademoiselle Philipon. The sight albeit of Jeanne Manon through the intervening grating rekindled M. Roland's passion to a flame, and he entreated her to permit his brother the Abbé to marry them there and then without delay. The lady demurred to such extreme haste, but frankly accepted the renewed tender of his allegiance, and in the winter of 1780, Jeanne Manon Philipon became Madame Roland de la Platière. The only issue of this marriage was a daughter, Eudora, afterwards Madame Champaneaux.

The wedding tour of M. and Madame Roland extended to Switzerland and England, with which last-named country and its institutions Madame was upon the whole reasonably satisfied, seeing "that in England man at least was something." On their return to France they settled at M. Roland's recently-purchased estate, La Platière, near Lyons, laboured in various ways to obtain letters patent of nobility, in revival of some lapsed hereditary claim; and therein unsuccessful, Madame had no difficulty "in inspiring the mind of her husband with a hatred of royalty." The time was not distant when that hatred could develop itself in action, and swiftly turning over the leaves which record the career of M. Roland, from the day he was elected a Member of the National Assembly by the city of Lyons, and glancing only at the more salient incidents set forth therein, we find that Madame Roland was the life, the soul, the grace of the circle of politicians, Girondist deputies chiefly, (Maximilian Robespierre was, for a time, one of them,) to which her husband belonged, that met at her house. That when M. Roland was Minister of the Interior, ere yet Louis the Sixteenth had been stripped of all real authority; and again,

when the massacre of the 10th of August replaced power in the hands of the Gironde, Madame herself was the real minister whose hand traced the official letters, despatches, the telling reports and speeches, which her husband copied and read; albeit Madame herself only modestly claims "to have infused into her husband's writings that union of gentleness, of reasoning and sentiment, which only a woman can combine." That troubled and fantastic dream has passed away; and now, towards the close of 1793, the deputies of the Gironde, having celebrated their last supper—a profuse banquet, brilliant with lights and flowers, and enlivened by wine and eloquent speeches, to be thereafter carefully reported, touching the possibility of God and Immortality,—have followed Louis to the scaffold; and Madame Roland herself, who might, like her husband, have escaped the clutch of the assassins, but disdained to do so, has been arrested, and awaits in St. Pélagie the purely formal and inevitable decree of death, amusing herself meanwhile in writing memoirs, and passionate appeals to the Terrorists for justice in the name—poor prisoned maniac!—of the sacred principles consecrated by the Revolution! Riouffe and other prisoners were enthusiastic in their admiration of the unquailing courage of the queenly woman. "Ah," sadly replied her female attendant, "you do not know all: before you, Madame calls up all her courage, but when in her own room, she sometimes stands for hours together, leaning against the window and weeping bitterly." At length, on the 9th November, 1793, Madame Roland stood before Fouquier Tinville's tribunal; was not, of course, permitted to be heard, and received sentence, which, upon returning to the prison, she communicated to her fellow-captives by passing her hand sharply across her throat. Early on the following morning, the still beautiful woman—

she was in her thirty-ninth year only, and the peculiar character of her physiognomy reduced her apparent age by at least ten years—was bound in a cart, and slowly conveyed to execution. She was habited in a white muslin robe, her dark abundant tresses waved freely in the wind, and a smile of haughty scorn curled her finely-chiselled lips as they murmured, in reply to the hooting crowd who continued to shout "À la guillotine! à la guillotine!"—"I am going to the guillotine; they who send me there will soon follow, and you will hoot them also." Lamarche, an old man, fettered in the same cart, was overwhelmed with terror, which Madame Roland strove vainly to dispel, and passing a tall column, on the summit of which a statue of Liberty had been placed, she exclaimed, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" Another expression, of much greater significance and interest, is not so well known:—"Can I have pen and paper?" she said, addressing the official who received her at the foot of the scaffold; "I would, if possible, write down the strange thoughts that are rising in my mind." The request was brutally refused, and a few moments afterwards Madame Roland had thought her last on earth!

The best evidence of the true womanly worth of Madame Roland is seen in the effect which her execution produced upon the minds of her husband and servants. M. Roland, as his wife predicted he would, slew himself a few hours after the intelligence reached him, "finding it impossible to live in a world where such a crime was permitted." Two servants, a man and woman, burst, in a paroxysm of grief and rage, into Fouquier Tinville's hall of doom, and denounced him and his myrmidons to their faces as villains and murderers The woman was held to be insane, and dismissed; the man's audacious tongue was silenced by the guillotine!

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

IT was this Queen's Chancellor, Axel Oxensteirn, who bade his son observe how slight an amount of wisdom was required for the governance of nations,—a reflection possibly suggested by the Chancellor's estimate of Christina's capacity, and her fame as a sovereign : and quite as surprising and providential as the fact enunciated by Oxensteirn, is that of how slight a remedial agency suffices to save the foundering vessel of the State when most hopelessly emperilled, and restore realms, apparently undone, to pristine prosperity and power. The sun of England, as everybody knows, has been time out of mind on the very point of setting; but ever some fortunate chance—a brilliant speech, or triumphant division in either House—nay, the final state of the poll at a city or county election—has saved us, at the last moment, from being plunged in outer darkness. It may be doubted, however, judging from contemporary chronicles, that the great interests of humanity were at any time in such imminent and mortal peril as in the year 1632, or saved from ruin by such seemingly inadequate means. Gustavus-Adolphus, King of Sweden, Lion of the North, and Bulwark of the Protestant Faith, had fallen at the victory of Lutzen, in Upper Saxony; and not only was Sweden thought to have been thereby hurled from her place of pride and power, but the cause of Scriptural truth itself struck down in the person of its valiant champion, when, amidst the general consternation, Chancellor Oxensteirn reminded the assembled States that the slain hero had left a

Christina of Sweden.

daughter, and only child, then about six years of age, and that there might be still hope for the country in her immediate recognition as Queen of Sweden; which sentiment or prophecy was applauded to the echo, the instant Christina was introduced and seen to be the very image in miniature of her great father. "Behold," exclaimed one Larson, a peasant-deputy, giving voice to the general feeling,—"Behold the very features of Gustavus-Adolphus! We will have her for our sovereign. Let her be seated on the throne and proclaimed *king!*" This was done, and the salvation of Sweden was an accomplished fact.

The child herself was only less delighted than the rescued nation. "I was so young," she wrote many years afterwards, "that I knew not either my own worth, or my great fortune; but I remember how delighted I was to see all those men kneeling at my feet and kissing my hand;" adding, with as much piety as modesty, in the fragment of autobiography entitled 'The Life of the Queen Christina, written by herself and dedicated to God,' "It was Thou, O Lord, that didst render the child admirable to her people, who were amazed at the grand manner in which I enacted the part of Queen upon that first occasion. I was little, but upon the throne I displayed an air and countenance that inspired the beholders with respect and fear. It was Thou, O Lord, that caused a girl to appear thus who had not yet arrived at the full use of her reason. Thou hadst impressed upon my brow a mark of grandeur not always bestowed by Thee upon those Thou hadst destined, like me, to glory, and to be Thy lieutenant over men."

Christina, drawn by other though flattering hands, does not quite accord with this splendid self-portraiture, except in its aspect of masculine imperiousness, which was very early

developed, and seemed natural to a child born, as she herself exultingly boasted, amidst shouts of triumph, and cradled amidst palms and laurels, in the arms of her playmates, Victory and Fortune. In truth, the attendants at her birth, misled by the hair-helmet, so to speak, which encased her head, the thick down upon her face, and the rough, harsh cry with which she greeted the world, exclaimed that a man-child was born, in fulfilment of the unanimous predictions of the astrologers consulted by Gustavus-Adolphus and his Queen, the beauteous Maria-Eleonora, daughter of John Sigismund, Elector of Brandenburgh; which star-interpreters, moreover, not only so prophesied, but explained the dreams disclosed to them by the royal parents, to predict, as read by the light of the signs in the heavens—the Sun, Mars, Mercury, and Venus, in conjunction, as at the birth of Gustavus-Adolphus himself—that the boy, supposing him to outlive the first twenty-four hours, which Mercury made doubtful, would attain to as great celebrity as his father; a perplexing blunder on the part of the soothsayers, but subsequently shown to be merely a verbal one, Christina having been, it was soon discovered, "born with the head of a Machiavel, the heart of a Titus, the courage of an Alexander, and the eloquence of a Tully!"

Gustavus-Adolphus bore the disappointment better than the, for a time, discomfited astrologers. "Sister," said the King, addressing the Princess Catherine, who with some trepidation informed him that the supposed boy was in sad verity a girl,—"Sister, let us return thanks to God. I trust this daughter will prove as valuable to us as a son; and may the Almighty, who has vouchsafed her to us, graciously preserve her! She will be an arch girl," added Gustavus, "who

begins to play tricks upon us so soon." And he forthwith ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung.

Gustavus was not the less determined that his successor on the throne of Sweden, though a queen by sex, should be a king, as he comprehended kingship, by education, tastes, and habit; a resolution to which, it will be seen, his daughter was chiefly indebted for her meteoric celebrity, and its premature disastrous eclipse. Very early was his child inoculated with a taste for the pomp and circumstance of war; "and, as a soldier's daughter should," remarked the delighted father, "crowed and clapped her tiny hands at the blare of trumpets and roar of cannon;" and was yet teething, when promised by the Lion of the North that she should thereafter accompany him to a field where she should behold much finer sights—meaning by finer sights, the scientific carnage of impious wretches who declined accepting, or were coerced into withstanding the propagation of the gospel of peace as interpreted by the great Gustavus. "But, to my misfortune," laments speedily-unwomanised Christina, "death prevented him from keeping his word, and me from serving an apprenticeship under so complete a master." Concurrently with a liking and aptitude for war, and all masculine accomplishments and sports, Gustavus was anxious that Christina should be well and early grounded in the Lutheran faith and Holy Scripture, the basis of all knowledge. The tares germinated far more vigorously than the wheat upon the virgin volcanic soil where they were both indiscriminately sown; and a vivid commentary upon the wisdom of the great King of Sweden's educational precepts is presented by the fact, that whilst his daughter's predilection for violence and contemptuous disregard of the sanctity of human life became—as witness the deliberate assassina-

tion, late in her career, of the Chamberlain Monaldeschi—an arbitrary principle of her moral creed, an indefensible right to slay being hers, she maintained, by divine inheritance, about all of divinity she ultimately believed in, Christina at an early age exchanged Lutheranism for Philosophism; and when Philosophism had lost its hold upon her mind, she finally, and whilst still under thirty, formally professed herself a Roman Catholic! — "The greatest scandal she could afflict us with," remarked the most sagacious of the Popes, with whom she was perpetually quarrelling, "unless the idea of writing a book in defence of the Faith should unhappily seize her."

In minor points, the masculine and military propensities of Christina were assiduously cultivated—grew with and much faster than her growth; so that long before she attained the maturity of her teens, she felt and avowed illimitable contempt for women, their duties, accomplishments—save dancing—tastes, conversation, manners, dress,—vehemently regretting she was not a man—not because she liked men overmuch, but that they were not women. Her own appearance has been thus rhymingly depicted:—

"By her petticoat so slight,
And her legs too much in sight;
By her doublet, cap, and dress,
To a masculine excess,—
Hat and plume, and ribands tied
Fore and aft in careless pride;
By her gallant, martial mien,
Like an Amazonian queen,—
Nose from Roman consul sprung,
And a fierce virago's tongue—
Large eyes, now sweet and now severe,—
Tell us 'tis Christina clear."

Personally, Christina was by no means unattractive. She was short, but well formed, with the exception of a slight deformity of one shoulder, caused by the falling of a beam of wood thereon when she was a child. She had large, bright-hazel, expressive eyes; a profusion of light-brown hair, which would have been more ornamental had she permitted her attendants to comb and dress it oftener than about once a month; and had fine, regular teeth, that might easily have been white. But her mouth was large, and not, it was thought, agreeable "in repose;" neither, one would imagine, could it have been so in activity of boisterous, immoderate laughter, or of swearing, to which masculine habit the young and royal lady appears to have been incurably addicted. She was distinguished for remorseless industry withal;—so much so, "that the men and women that waited upon me were quite in despair, for I gave them no rest night nor day." This incessant mental activity acquired for her the reality or reputation of immense learning; and she is said to have rapidly and thoroughly mastered Greek, Latin, most of the modern languages, history, philosophy, mathematics, geography, astronomy, and divinity and moral duties as interpreted by John Mathias, a pious, earnest man, from Luther's Catechism, and the best authors; the duty of reverencing her mother, the tender, loving wife and faithful widow of the great Gustavus, not, it would seem, included,—for so pained, offended at last, became the disconsolate lady with Christina's conduct, that she fled secretly to Denmark, declaring she preferred begging her bread elsewhere, to the state of Queen-Mother at her daughter's Court! Maria-Eleonora's indignation did not, however, endure, and after the lapse of a few years she and Christina were outwardly reconciled.

Combined with the pernicious effect of the education prescribed by Gustavus-Adolphus, in pursuance of his resolution to be even in the grave the governor of his child and moulder of her character, was the hardening, debasing influence which must ever surround the heir to an absolute crown, and this upon the unimpeachable testimony of Christina herself—a firm believer in the divinity of despotism. "Those," she writes, "who believe that childhood is the season when princes hear truth are mistaken, for even in the cradle they are feared and flattered. Men fear the memories of princes as much as their power, and handle them gently as they do young lions, who can only draw blood now, but hereafter will have strength to tear and devour." Unquestionably true; and a curious commentary upon another dictum of hers, that an heir-apparent to a (despotic) throne is a universal blessing,—the glory of the State, and the happiness of individuals depending upon it!

Christina, as queen, especially when arrayed and prepared for the public representation of the part, shows to much greater advantage than as girl or woman. When scarcely seven years old, she received the Muscovite ambassadors, serenely seated upon her lofty silver throne, and was not, her historiographers admiringly relate, in the least frightened by their long beards. "Why should I be afraid of their beards?" she asked her apprehensive councillors: "have you not also long beards? and yet I am not afraid of you!" At sixteen she openly presided in the Senate, and became at once, says the courtly French ambassador, "incredibly powerful therein. She adds," he goes on to say, "to her quality of sovereign those of grace, honour, courtesy, and the art of persuasion; so that the senators, when they assemble, are astonished at the influence she gains over their sentiments."

One may have doubts of the "grace" and the "courtesy," but not of the "influence;"—the young lady having reached the age when, to adopt her own illustration, the offspring of the Lion of the North could, if she so willed it, tear and devour, and required consequently more delicate, respectful handling than ever. On the 18th of December, 1644, Christina attained her legal majority,—that is, eighteen years of age,—and thenceforth governed without the nominal check of a regency, and with a naked despotism which Gustavus-Adolphus himself would not have ventured to exercise; but it is a remarkable fact that nations have always more patiently endured the autocracy of a woman, especially of a youthful one, than of a man,—possibly because the better half of creation naturally sympathize with a queen or empress, and even in constitutional England, as every candidate for a borough perfectly well knows, it is Mary that in nine cases out of ten decides how John is to act in a crisis of political difficulty. Certainly, the girl-Queen of Sweden was scarcely less popular than imperious, arbitrary, self-willed, and whilst the novelty of governing retained its charm, indefatigably absolute in all matters, great and small, that came within the range of or could be reached by her sceptre, regulating by the simple magic of *Sic volo, sic jubeo,* all questions of taxation, revenue, commerce, peace, and war; and having a distaste for the elegances of dress herself, dictated a law forbidding the Swedish ladies to wear lace; interdicted the festal celebration of betrothals, bridals, christenings, and other family festivals, forasmuch that people often drank to excess at such meetings—a vice which Christina's preferential taste for water could not tolerate. These and many other similar vagaries of irresponsible power, it is not uninstructive to observe, because marking the relative progress of nations

in the knowledge of what is due to themselves, took place in the same year that absolute sovereignty received its death-blow at Naseby, in a country not many hours' sail from the Swedish shores.

Christina's successful persistence, in opposition to the counsel of Oxensteirn, in putting an end to the thirty years' war, amidst the palms and laurels whereof she boasted to have been born, deserves honourable recognition; and in 1650, the year following that which witnessed the rejoicings for the Peace of Westphalia, she was crowned *King* of Sweden, with great pomp and splendour. By that time, the anxiety of the Swedish nation that their sovereign should marry, lest peradventure they should be left in a state of orphanage,—destitute of even a girl six years of age capable of saving Sweden,—had become intense, and suitors for her hand (the Crown, as she pleasantly remarked, being a very pretty girl), were numerous and ardent;—amongst others of less note, the Prince of Denmark, the Elector of Brandenburgh, the Elector Palatine, the King of Spain, King of the Romans, King of Poland, and Duke Charles-Augustus, her first cousin and son of her father's sister.

Christina would have none of them. As with Hamlet, women delighted her not, nor men either,—no particular individual more than another amongst them, at all events: neither earth nor heaven should, she declared to her suppliant councillors, force her will; and she remained to the last inexorable in her aversion to marriage, which, she declared, "required more courage than to fight a battle." Graciously, however, yielding so far to the solicitude of her people as to provide them with an heir-apparent, she suddenly nominated her cousin, Charles-Augustus, Crown-Prince of Sweden, and the general anxiety and alarm subsided.

After this, Christina rapidly exhausted all the resources of practically-unlimited sway to supply her volatile wilfulness with occupation or amusement. She endowed universities and academies, patronised literature and men of letters; then suddenly, on the persuasion of Bourdelet, a French charlatan, forswore books, and grossly insulted the native and foreign *savans* with whom she had surrounded herself. Two grave philosophers she compelled to play at shuttlecock with her; two eminent polyglot scholars she made pirouette before her in a Greek dance; and poor Descartes, her once favourite philosopher and parasite, she in a few months literally worried and worked into a consumption, by refusing him the quiet, harmless delight of occasionally sunning himself in the beauty of Elizabeth, Princess Palatine, and sister of Prince Rupert, and by insisting, in that rigorous climate, upon his attendance in her library every morning exactly at five o'clock. Wearied at length with her agreeable quacks, and the round of luxurious dissipations into which she had plunged, her Majesty betook herself to the society and conversation of certain Jesuits; and finally, on the 6th of June, 1654, formally abdicated the throne in favour of Charles-Augustus, the Crown-Prince, at an extraordinary convocation of the States, and in defiance of the remonstrances of her wisest councillors, amongst whom the Marshal of the Boors — a rude, coarsely-attired country fellow, according to Whitelock, Cromwell's envoy, who was present—was not the least forcible and earnest. "O Lord God, madam," he exclaimed, "what are you about to do? It humbles us to hear you speak of forsaking those who love you as well as we do. Can you be better than you are? You are queen of all these countries; and if you leave this large kingdom, where will you get such another? If you should do it—as I hope you won't, for all this—both you and we shall have

cause, when it is too late, to be sorry for it. Therefore, my fellows and I pray you to think better on't, and keep your crown on your head; then you will keep your own honour and our peace: but if you lay it down, in my conscience you will endanger all. Continue in your gears, good madam, and be the fore-horse as long as you live, and we will help you the best we can to bear your burden. Your father was an honest gentleman and a good king, and very shining in the world, and we obeyed and loved him as long as he lived; and you are his child, and have governed us very well, and we love you with all our hearts; and the Prince is an honest gentleman, and when the time comes we shall be ready to do our duties to him as we do to you. But, as long as you live, we are unwilling to part with you; and therefore I pray, madam, do not part with us."

The unadorned eloquence of the Marshal of the Boors was expended in vain; the ceremony of abdication was gone through with; self-discrowned Christina hurried out of the kingdom with an immense treasure in gold, silver, and jewels, and upon arriving at Brussels solemnly recanted the Reformed Faith, and was received into the fold of Rome—an event which was celebrated by balls, concerts, masquerades, and the performance of French and Italian plays, the Cardinal Mazarin having despatched a troupe of comedians from Paris for the express purpose of doing honour to an illustrious convert, the sincerity of whose ostensible convictions may be judged of by the remark she made after her first mockery of confession—"If there is a God, I shall be prettily caught,"—and the following extract from a letter addressed at the time to the Countess Ebba Sparre: "My chief employments are to eat well and sleep well, to study a little, chat, laugh, see French and Italian plays, and pass my time in an agreeable

dissipation. In conclusion, I hear no more sermons, and utterly despise all orators. As Solomon says, all wisdom is vanity: every one ought to live contentedly; eat, drink, and be merry."

Here we part company with this remarkable woman; and were it my purpose in these pages to accompany her to the end of her long disjointed life—marked and stained by capricious contradictions, vain regrets for a lost crown, and puerile efforts to regain it—the boldly-avowed murder of her chamberlain, Monaldeschi, by the authority of her divine right over the lives of her subjects and servants—which life terminated at Rome, in April, 1689, I could scarcely hope to carry the reader with me. "*E donna,*" was the charitable exclamation of the Pope, with whom she had quarrelled almost every day till her last, when she applied to him and obtained plenary absolution for all her sins,—and one, we may add, who, had she been the child of a less glorious, and, as regarded herself, fatally mistaken father, and nurtured in the atmosphere of a less servile Court, might have been a truly royal woman and great queen.

In proof that Christina's eccentricities were not the promptings of a lofty, erratic genius, that, with its head amidst the stars, not unfrequently stumbles helplessly upon the plain beaten paths of life, I subjoin a few of the carefully-elaborated maxims, after Rochefoucauld, which she bequeathed to posterity:—

"The great resemble perfumes: those who wear are scarcely conscious of them."

"There are moments when great men weep without peril to their dignity: Cæsar wept, and the tears were worthy of him."

"All passes like a flash of lightning: good and evil are of

[illegible] it is hardly worth while to rejoice [illegible] [illegible] little heaven."

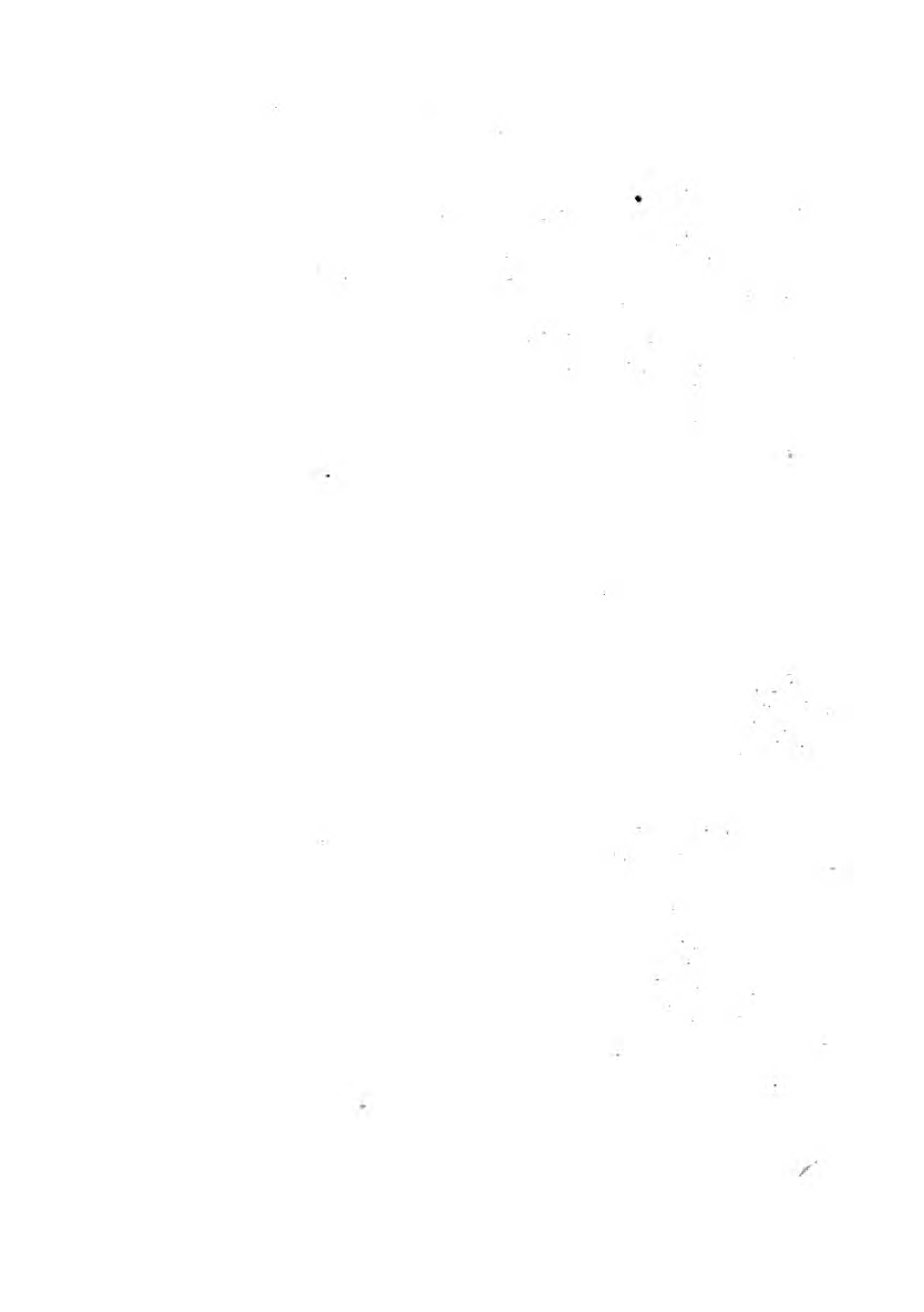
[illegible] is one of the poor, and the labour [illegible] [illegible] souls of a superior order, [illegible]

such brief duration, that it is hardly worth while to rejoice or grieve."

"The art of vengeance is little known."

"The money of the rich is due to the poor, and the labour of the poor is due to the rich."

"There is a star which unites souls of a superior order, though worlds and ages divide them."



Elizabeth in the house of Lady Bryan.

ELIZABETH WOODVILLE.

A VERY attractive episode in the regal annals of England, particularly to minds of a romantic and imaginative cast, is the story of portionless Elizabeth Woodville, whose "charming figure, fair skin, golden hair, timid beseeching eyes, and soft caressing manners," subdued, whilst she was yet in her teens (amongst other conquests of less mark), and held in indissoluble thrall, the stout heart of valiant Sir Hugh Johns, Knight Marshal of England and France; obtained for her in first nuptials the hand of handsome Sir John Gray, heir to the Earl of Ferrers of Groby, and dashing commander of the Lancastrian Queen Margaret's Cavalry; and finally, when their possessor was more than thirty years of age, the widow of a slain rebel, and mother of two children, compelled King Edward to her feet, a suppliant for the favour of her whose agitating glances and caressing tones won for her a Crown, whilst pleading timidly in behalf of her sons for restoration of the estate forfeited by their father for his unswerving resistance to the pretensions of the House of York; pretensions at length triumphant in the person of the gay and youthful monarch, who, moreover, at the very moment the magical spell of the charming widow's grace and beauty was cast over him, was the affianced suitor of the Princess Bona of Savoy, sister of the Queen of France! Dazzling evidence this of the potency of feminine fascination—a fascination which, in this particular instance, ceased only with the else volatile, capricious husband's life. Then indeed the night of

life fell suddenly—blank, starless, total eclipse, upon its yet glaring summer-noon. In these pages we do not accompany her so far, nor is it needful to the moral teachings of her varied story that we should do so, a sinister catastrophe being clearly presaged by the insolence of power, the all-grasping merciless ambition that not only precedes and prepares a fall, but deepens calamity to despair, which had clearly taken unresisted possession of the mind of Elizabeth Woodville, at the same moment that her eager hand clutched the sceptre, her flushed temples throbbed beneath the pressure of the crown-matrimonial of England.

Elizabeth Woodville's mother was a Frenchwoman, Jaqueline of Luxembourg, who having buried her first English husband, the Duke of Bedford, selected for her second marriage-mate Sir Richard Woodville, of Grafton, Northamptonshire, and reputedly the handsomest man in England. This union, contracted with indecent haste, was not made public till five years after. Their eldest child, Elizabeth, the future queen, was probably born in 1431; and so indignant were the members of the House of Luxembourg at the *mêsalliance* contracted by their relative, that not one of them would visit her in England, or receive her in France, till Elizabeth's marriage with Edward IV.—a circumstance which effected an immediate and thorough revolution in their ideas upon the subject. Jaqueline the wife of an English commoner of slender estate, and Jaqueline the mother of the Queen of England, were obviously two very different personages; and thoroughly impressed with the spirit of the advice given to his son by a dispossessed Lancastrian nobleman, "to, if possible, marry nigh to the Queen's blood, so that he might be sure to get his land again," they hurried over in hot haste to reknit the sundered bond of

kindred, and be in the way of the substantial favours which the uxorious King placed at the disposal of his beautiful wife.

It was yet, however (1431), some thirty years to those golden days, and the Woodville family meanwhile vegetated at Grafton, in dull respectable obscurity, unillumined by the condescendent graciousness of their great maternal relatives, or the yet far-off regal glories awaiting them beyond the undrawn curtain of the future; their charming, golden-haired, blue-eyed Elizabeth, equally ungifted with prophetic visions, laughed, frollicked, rejoiced through life's young morning with her brother and sisters, Antony, Margaret, Katherine, Jaqueline, and, as was the custom of the time, garlanded on May-days the younger Woodvilles with spring flowers, in as lavish profusion as, after a future and yet distant first of May, she showered coronets, stars, and estates upon them, she the while developing beneath the kindling kisses of the sun, the breezy perfume of the woods, the fellowship of flowers, into exceeding personal loveliness. Her mental being was nurtured by less potential influences: tolerable skill in caligraphy; quickness at elementary arithmetic, the servants' accounts and housekeeping outlays generally having been confided to her charge; some knowledge of simple music, acquaintance with the mass-service, and other religious formulæ,—constituting the sum of her ostensible accomplishments, though earlier endowed, and in a much higher degree than usual, with the bewildering faculty acquired by the inscrutable agency through which *l'esprit vient aux filles,* of distracting the minds of men whilst apparently thinking of nothing less. Sir Hugh Johns, before spoken of, was the demure damsel's first considerable victim; and terribly confounded that valiant soldier

appears to have been to find that a pair of soft eyes, timidly withdrawn if encountered by his, made his heart beat as the sudden onslaught of a score of the stoutest men-at-arms in France could not have done; and that he could not, moreover, with all his approved valiancy, muster up sufficient courage to personally inform the young lady of the disastrous effect she had unconsciously — passion-blinded bachelor as he must have been not to discern that hers was the *ars celare artem* which wears the guise of artlessness—produced upon his peace of mind. The too-charming Elizabeth's family was, besides, of the Lancastrian faction; she herself soon to be one of Queen Margaret's maids of honour; whilst he, Sir Hugh Johns, was a steadfast Yorkist partisan! But what were the rival Roses to him, compared with those that, in combination with fairest lilies, irradiated Elizabeth's beautiful face? And so, in his extremity, betaking himself to Richard, Duke of York, Protector, he persuaded that powerful patron to address a missive to the lady, assuring her of the good knight's passion, "excited," said the princely writer, "by the great womanhood and gentleness known in your person, and being sole, and to be married, and as you his heart wholly have," Richard, Duke of York, strenuously advised her to look favourably upon Sir Hugh's suit; in which case he, Duke Richard, would take care to advance the fortunes of the happy bridegroom. This letter not having produced the desired result, the persistent suitor solicited the intercession of Neville, king-making Earl of Warwick, who, on behalf of the disconsolate lover, wrote to Elizabeth thus:—"He hath informed me how that he hath, from the great love and affection he hath unto your person, as well for the great sadness and wisdom that he hath found and proved in you,

as also for your great and praised beauty and womanly demeanour, he desireth with all haste to do you worship by way of marriage, before any other creature living, as he saith."

Very flattering all this, it cannot be denied; but in the family council which ensued upon those proxial overtures, the patent fact that Sir Hugh Johns, with all his acknowledged worth and honour, was comparatively poor, in a land and money sense, proved conclusive against his pretensions, in the opinion not only of the parents, but of Elizabeth herself, who had, moreover, clearly read, with those downcast dove eyes of hers, a secret which rich, youthful John Gray, heir, as before stated, to the earldom and estate of Ferrers, innocently believed to be confined to his own breast—a secret which Elizabeth also knew, inexperienced as she might be in such matters, required but one encouragingly-interrogative glance of hers to make leap forth at his lips, in open passionate avowal. It so fell out, and Elizabeth Woodville's decisive reply to the solicitations of the great Yorkist chieftains was her marriage with Sir John Gray, of Bradgate, the influential Lancastrian partisan.

Two sons, Thomas and Richard, were born of this marriage, amidst the tumults, tramplings, victories, and defeats of the War of the Roses. Elizabeth continued zealously attached to the cause of the Lancastrians, and was present at the second battle of St. Alban's with Queen Margaret;—the example of which merciless lady, whose throne she was destined to so soon usurp, probably first awakened in her mind the instincts of arrogance and vengeance that dishonoured her after-life. It is said, albeit the authority for the statement is not very precise or trustworthy, that, at the Queen's request, Elizabeth Gray obtained an interview with

the Earl of Warwick previous to the battle, with what defined purpose in view is not stated. Sir John Gray commanded Queen Margaret's cavalry in that battle; and his wife's influence with the Queen must have been very great, the Abbot of St. Alban's having, we find, entreated her good offices with her Majesty to save the abbey from destruction. Sir John Gray was mortally wounded in the conflict, and died of his hurts on the 28th of February, 1461, in his wife's thirtieth year.

The Yorkist cause was soon after in the ascendant, and Lady Elizabeth Gray sadly retired with her children to Grafton,—not the more cheerful abode that her mother's pension, as Dowager-Duchess of Bedford, had been, like Sir John Gray's lands, declared forfeit to the Crown.

Elizabeth's star, seemingly set for ever, had not yet begun its brilliant course. If her lands were gone, the beauty and blandishments that had given her a title to them were lustrous and potent as ever; and having ascertained that Edward IV. would pass on a certain day through the Forest of Whittlebury, the Lady Elizabeth Gray, in her third year of widowhood, there waylaid the susceptible monarch, standing "holding her two fatherless boys by the hand," beneath the Queen's Oak, as it is to this day called, and upon the King's appearance solicited him with "those soft, caressing tones, and timid glances" she had so often proved the power of, to restore the forfeited estate of her deceased husband at Bradgate.

The petition was granted as soon as asked; and the enchanted monarch was in his turn the suppliant, unsuccessfully as regarded his first advances, the lady firmly replying, "that though not good enough to be his queen, she was far too good to be his mistress." The King was too deeply

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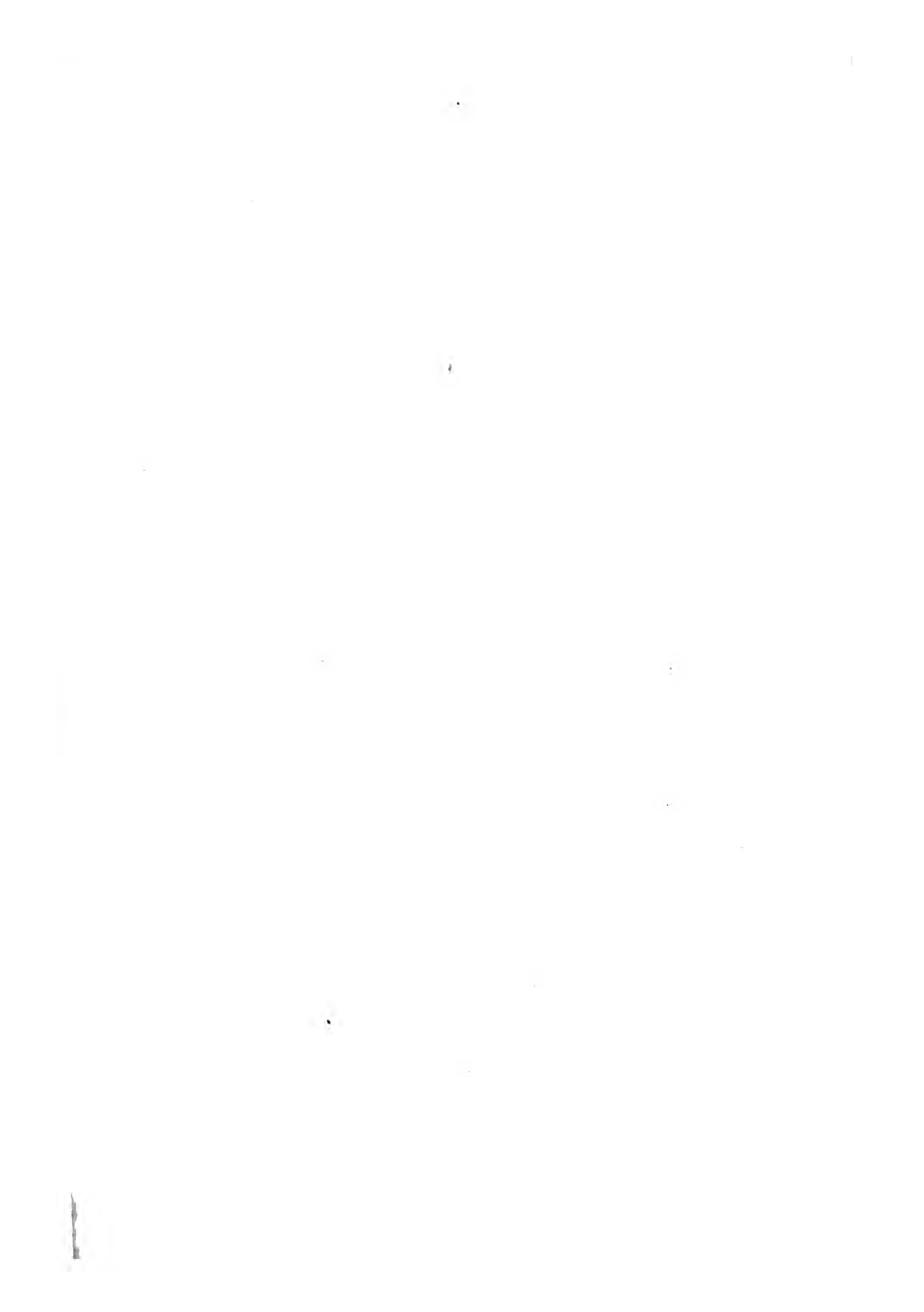
Elizabeth Woodville and Edward.



charmed to long hesitate at offering to share his crown with the enchantress that had subjugated his affections, and on the 1st of May, 1464, Edward IV. "espoused, early in the morning and with the greatest secrecy, at the town of Grafton, not far from Stony-Stratford, Elizabeth Gray, the parties present at the ceremony being, in all, the bride and bridegroom, the mother of the bride, the priest, two gentlewomen, and a young man to help the priest sing."

"Witchcraft!" many exclaimed in angry whispers, which, after the "bewitched" King had descended from the throne to the tomb, broke into a fierce, out-spoken tumult of accusation; and it was for some time hoped and believed that the fickle King would, after all, refuse to publicly acknowledge his marriage. Those hopes were speedily dissipated: the hold of Elizabeth upon her husband's affections was strengthened instead of weakened by possession, and on Michaelmas-day of the same year, 1464, Edward presented her at the Palace of Reading to his obsequious Court as the legitimate Queen of England, and then led her with royal pomp to the Abbey Church, amidst the real or simulated plaudits of both nobles and commonalty, who further participated with zealous loyalty in the jousts and tournaments by which the inauguration of the beauteous Queen Elizabeth was celebrated.

MRS. HUTCHINSON.

THIS lady, one of the few great women of the Commonwealth whose names are familiarly associated with that heroic phase of our national life, was the daughter of Sir Allen Apsley and Lucy Saint John, his third wife and the youngest child of Sir John St. John, of Lediard Tregony, Wiltshire. Sir Allen, who had been knighted by King James, was at the time of his marriage Victualler of the Navy, an office "of credit and great reverence," and, being on his way to make proposals to a wealthy widow, "chanced," writes Mrs. Hutchinson in her unfinished autobiography, "to see my mother at the house of Sir William St. John; and though he went on his journey, yet something in her person and behaviour he carried along with him which would not let him accomplish it, brought him back to my mother." Sir Allen was then forty-eight years old, Lucy St. John but sixteen: she nevertheless blithely accepted the addresses of her elderly suitor, and had never reason to repent her decision. He made her "a noble allowance of three hundred a year" for her private, unquestioned use; and Sir Allen being soon after their union appointed Lieutenant of the Tower, Lady Apsley became a ministering angel to the hapless captives in her husband's custody, amongst whom was Sir Walter Raleigh, whom, "being addicted to chemistry," she supplied with the necessary apparatus and materials for prosecuting his time-cheating studies. Sir Allen was of a similar kind and beneficent disposition, "so that the affliction of a prison was not felt in his dayes." Lucy Apsley—

Mrs. Hutchinson attending the sick at Nottingham.

[illegible] Westminster [illegible]

[illegible] Covenant," and, [illegible] wealthy widow, "charmed, [illegible] Mrs. Hutchinson [illegible] autobiography, [illegible] at [illegible] Sir William St. John [illegible] something [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] addicted [illegible]

Mrs. Hutchinson attending the sick at Nottingham.

the Mrs. Hutchinson of this brief memoir—was the third child of those admirable parents, two brothers having preceded her into the world. "It was on the 29th of January," she states in her quaint and somewhat dislocated phraseology, "in the year of Our Lord 1620, that, in the Tower of London, the principal citie of the English ile, I was, about four of the clock of the morning, brought forth to behold the ensuing light." Her birth had been anticipated with more than ordinary parental anxiety, in consequence of Lady Apsley having dreamt that she would be vouchsafed "a daughter of extraordinary eminency, which," adds that daughter with modest self-complacency, "like all such vain prophecies, wrought as far as it could its own accomplishment; for my father and mother, fancying me beautiful and more than ordinarily apprehensive, applied all their cares and spared no cost to improve me in my education, which procured me the admiration of all those that flattered my parents." Certainly, a child of a remarkable idiosyncrasy, and clearly prefigurative of the firm-minded, high-principled woman, who, though tender, loving, feminine as the pattern-lady of conventional romance, stood unflinchingly by her gallant husband alike in the shock of mortal strife and the yet sterner struggle required to cast off all bonds of kindred, station, companionship, ancestral prejudice, that might hamper him in helping to maintain against high-handed prerogative "the celebrated glory of this isle's inhabitants, which confers some honour upon every one of her children, and with it an obligation to continue in that magnanimity and virtue which have famed this island, and rayed her head in glory higher than the greatest kingdoms of the neighbouring continents." Lucy Apsley, the writer of the foregoing patriotic sentences, was, when the merest child, passionately

devoted to serious studies; she could read English perfectly when but four years of age, and, with the exception of dancing, cared little for the lighter accomplishments her tutors sought to instruct her in. The harpsichord and lute she would only play when commanded to do so; ornamental needlework she hated; and so contemned the society of children, "that when forced to entertain such as came to visit me, I tired them with more grave instructions than their mothers, and plucked all their babes to pieces, and kept them in such awe that they were glad when I entertained myself with elder company, by whom I was always well received." The prevalent tendency of the period in which the lot of this adult-child was cast, harmonised with and strengthened her natural bent of mind. She "loved sermons, and regularly exhorted her mother's maids," not, however, solely with regard to their spiritual concerns, she having been "a confidant in all the loves that were managed amongst my mother's young women,"—a preliminary insight into the art and mystery of courtship which, as we shall presently find, was not without its influence when the opportunity came to put her own *futur* "through various exercises of his mind in the pursuit of his love"—a delectation obligingly extended by her over fourteen months of probationary suspense.

Sir Allen Apsley, the father of this sensible and sprightly damsel, died when she was in her eleventh year, after a long illness, originating in a fever caught during the disastrous expedition to the Isle of Rhé; soon after which the family took up their abode at Richmond. Of Lucy Apsley's next seven years of life, all that is incidentally suggested by her memoirs is, that she grew equally in spiritual, mental, and personal graces and attractions, to the grievous distraction of numerous admirers; the too charming and cruel maiden

persisting "to shun men (in a matrimonial sense) like the plague," till May, 1637, when she and young Mr. Hutchinson first met; "a purpose," the lady writes, "certainly of the Lord's, (though he perceived it not,) who had ordained him through many providences to be yoked with her in whom he found so much satisfaction." This fate-favoured gentleman was the eldest surviving son of Sir Thomas Hutchinson, of Owthorpe, Nottinghamshire, and the Lady Margaret, a daughter of Sir John Biron, of Newstead, in the same county. He was about four years Lucy Apsley's senior, and a well-principled, handsome, accomplished, every-way eligible gentleman and bachelor; "to number whose virtues," testifies his widow, addressing his and her children, "is to give an epitome of his life." Mr. Hutchinson had tried the law, but not delighting or making much progress therein, and the plague being rife in London, whither he had come to reside, he had some thought of travelling abroad, when an invitation to pass a few days at Mr. Coleman's, a teacher of music at Richmond, changed his purpose and fixed his destiny. The "providences" just spoken of as having been mercifully vouchsafed to him, were his deliverances from many matrimonial lures, and notably of two ladies, one "a beautiful young maid, esteemed to be rich, but of base (plebeian) parentage and pernicious education," who subsequently espoused an earl's son, notwithstanding that "the great heart of Mr. Hutchinson could never think of marrying into so mean a stock." The other was of "such admirable tempting beauty as would have thawed a rock of ice," though it entirely failed of effect upon Mr. Hutchinson's colder temperament. But his time was close at hand. Richmond in those days had, it seems, a reputation for being almost invariably fatal to such flinty-hearted bachelors as Mr.

Hutchinson, and he professing much disinclination to the marriage state, was warned by a friend of the peril he incurred in venturing into such a subtile and subduing atmosphere, illustrated in the example of a gentleman who, whilst residing there, grew so desperately enamoured of his fancy-painted *idea* of a deceased young lady whose beauties and virtues were reported to him, that he would go to a mount where the print of her foot was cut, and lie there pining and kissing it all day long till death released him from his woes. "This story was very true," adds Mrs. Hutchinson, with pleasant simplicity; "but Mr. Hutchinson was not easy to believe it, nor frightened at the example." The rash adventurer was disabused of his scepticism in a very singular manner. A sister of Lucy Apsley, but much younger than her, "a child of much pleasantnesse," happened to be tabled (boarded) at Mr. Coleman's for the facility of her musical studies during the absence of Lady and Lucy Apsley in Wiltshire, whence it was currently given out the young lady would return either a wife or a contracted bride. The youngest sister naturally spoke frequently and favourably of the absent Lucy—a topic which was besides a favourite one with other inmates of Mr. Coleman's establishment, one of whom, "a gentleman inspired with a passion for me himself, saw all my perfections through a multiplying glass," was perpetually harping to Mr. Hutchinson thereon : a song of her composition was shown to him, in which he discerned extraordinary "rationality;" and thus, and in divers other ways, a so charming ideal image of Lucy Apsley was created in his mind, that had she been lost to him, the fate of the unlucky gentleman with whose tragical end he had vainly been made acquainted, would assuredly have been his, as was evident by the emotion he displayed when a footboy,

sent to Mr. Coleman's to announce the speedy arrival of Lady Apsley and her daughter from Wiltshire, produced, as had been merrily agreed upon, when questioned of Lucy Apsley's marriage, some bride-laces as a sufficing answer. "Mr. Hutchinson turned pale as ashes," avers the said Lucy, "and hastening from the dinner-table for relief into the open air, suffered for some time a cold sweate, and such a depression of spirit, that all the courage he could at present recollect was little enough to keep him alive." The bridal news was happily false; and a few evenings afterwards, *l'amant imaginaire* happened to be in company with the younger Miss Apsley, at Sion Gardens, when a messenger came to inform her that Lady Apsley and her sister were come home. The strongly-prepossessed bachelor did not miss this opportunity of obtaining a sight of the much-bepraised young lady, who thus describes her own appearance and impression at this her first meeting with Mr. Hutchinson:—"She (the said Lucy Apsley) was not ugly; in a careless riding-habit; she had a melancholy (pensive) negligence, both of herself and others, as if she neither affected to please others, nor took notice of anything before her: yet, spite of all her indifferency, she was surprised with some unusual liking in her soul when she saw this gentleman, who had hair, eyes, shape, and countenance enough to beget love in any one at the first." Mr. Hutchinson's first glimpse of his future wife, "though only an evening sight," was so satisfactory, that he saw her again the next day—"quite by accident," of course,—and—accidentally too, no doubt—learnt from her own lips, "to his great joy," that the Wiltshire marriage-treaty was at an end. Lucy Apsley, who had hitherto shunned men like the plague, was by no means sorry to have made Mr. Hutchinson's acquaintance—not that she felt any emotion of

love towards him, but that "she was glad to have acquired a friend of wisdom and vertue enough to be trusted with her councils, for she was then much perplexed in mind from various offers of marriage;" all which offers, after being dispassionately discussed and commented upon by Mr. Hutchinson, "who had much opportunitie of conversing with her at that sweet season of the spring," were found, every one of them, to be altogether objectionable; and the result was, that himself entering the lists for the ingenuous damsel's favour, "he prosecuted his love with so much discretion, duty, and honour," that the course of it, Mrs. Hutchinson was of opinion, had she time to record such vanities of youth, "would make a true history of a more handsome management of love than the best romancers describe." They were joined together in holy wedlock at St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, on the 3rd July, 1638, the lover-husband's ardour not having been in the slightest degree chilled or abated by the sickening of his beloved *fiancée* with the small-pox on the very day their mutual friends met to arrange the marriage-contract. The terrible disease so disfigured the bride, that on the wedding-day, the priest and all that saw her were frightened to look upon her—except, of course, the bridegroom, whose generous constancy was speedily rewarded by the complete restoration of the bride's comeliness.

The first years of Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson's wedded life were passed at Blew House, Enfield Chase, where, about a year after their union, Mrs. Hutchinson gave birth to twins, Thomas and Edward Hutchinson.

Mr. Hutchinson had not yet decided upon the course of professional or office life it behoved him to pursue, when the gathering of the political tempest warned all men of sense and spirit that the hour was at hand that must see

them ranged with their lives in their hands, either on the side of a Government of will or of law, in defence of national right or of kingly prerogative. In hastening that decision, never ultimately doubtful, the gentle, true-hearted girl whom he had wooed, in the sweet season of the spring, amidst the woods and glades of Richmond, bore a large share, and not the less decisively that her own family were uncompromising Royalists. Nor did her resolution falter when the hour of trial came, and the strife waxed hotter, deadlier, from month to month—from year to year. She was, whenever it was possible, at her valiant husband's side, in the battle—the march—the hunted covert; and she never willingly left the side of Colonel Hutchinson at the memorable defence of Nottingham Castle, save when called to succour the dying and wounded of both parties. Lucy Hutchinson witnessed the triumph of the Parliamentarians with a sober, half-fearful joy—the execution of the King, whose death-warrant bore her husband's signature, with womanly sympathy and compassion; and when the terrible reaction came, when death in prison alone saved Colonel Hutchinson from death on the scaffold, she, with unquailing cheerfulness and spirit, devoted herself not only to lighten and sanctify the last hours of the conscientious regicide, but to vindicate his memory by the graphic transcript of his life addressed to his children; which task accomplished, this true English maiden, wife, and mother passed from earth, in the 49th year of her age, to rejoin him of whom, in relation to herself, she thus truthfully testified :—"The greatest excellence I had was the power of apprehending and the virtue of loving his, so as his shadow I waited upon him everywhere, till he was taken into that region of light which admits of none, and then I vanished into nothing."

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

THE early life of Elizabeth has not been partially veiled only, but transfigured to the popular apprehension by the splendour of the great Queen's reign; and the common impression is, that a youthful princess whose levity—to use a very mild term—excited the jealous rage of the Dowager Queen Catherine, was a serious, pious-minded, Diana-like young person, against whose coldly-adamantine heart the hottest of young Cupid's fiery bolts were aimed, incessantly indeed, but all in vain. Other illusions cast their fantastic clouds over the history of this true daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, which, blown aside, will reveal, if nothing else, how much "the fair vestal throned by the West" has gained in reputation for moral and intellectual grace and greatness by being pedestalled so high above the ken of vulgar vision, that the casual observer imagines the purity and brilliance of the ermined robe and imperial diadem by which he is dazzled to be the effulgent personal attributes of the royal wearer herself. There are few sovereigns that make a more splendid and imposing state-figure in the regal statue-gallery of England than Queen Elizabeth; and as few, in sooth, that can less afford to be faithfully limned and displayed *en déshabille.*

King Henry privately espoused Anne Boleyn on the 25th of January, 1533; and on the 7th of September in the same year, the new Queen was delivered of the Princess Elizabeth, in an apartment of the palace at Greenwich, hung

with tapestry representing the Scripture parable of the Virgins—a prophetic intimation of the new-born infant's future maiden life, subsequently improved by a loyal historiographer after the following fashion:—"The Lady Elizabeth, born in the chamber thus figuratively tapestried, on the eve of the Virgin's nativity, died on the vigil of the Virgin's annunciation, and is now in heaven, with all those blessed virgins that had oil in their lamps." The royal father's chagrin at being presented with a princess instead of a prince did not prevent him from ordaining that his daughter should be magnificently christened,—a ceremonial immortalised by the courtier-eloquence which Shakspere, with keenest if covert irony, has placed in the mouth of the officiating Archbishop, who, not long subsequently, "having first invoked the name of Christ, and having God alone before his eyes," decreed that the marriage contracted, solemnized, and consummated between Henry and Anne Boleyn—which he had formerly examined juridically, and pronounced by his authority as metropolitan and judge to be good and valid—"was and always had been null and void," and the child Elizabeth therefore manifestly illegitimate.

The King's passion for Elizabeth's ill-starred mother survived the ordeal of marriage for between two and three brief years only; and with the divorce and execution of the Queen passed away, for a considerable time, the greatness of the Princess, who was transferred to the royal manor of Hunsdon, placed under the charge of Lady Margaret Bryan, and so little cared for, apparently, that Lady Margaret, writing to Vicar-general Thomas Cromwell, begged him to send the child some raiment, "as she had neither gown nor kirtle, nor no manner of linen, nor foresmocks, nor kerchiefs, nor

sleeves, nor veils, nor mufflers, nor biggins,"—an enumeration which seems well-nigh to exhaust the catalogue of juvenile indispensables. Elizabeth's half-sister, Mary, the daughter of Queen Catherine of Arragon, resided with her some years afterwards at Hunsdon; and when the Lady Mary was herself so far restored to favour as to be permitted to occasionally address a letter to the King's Majesty, she thus spoke of Elizabeth: "My sister is in good health, thanks be to our Lord, and such a child toward as I doubt not but your Highness will have cause to rejoice in, as one that knoweth Almighty God." It was probably through Mary's intercession that Elizabeth was present at the christening of Queen Jane Seymour's son, afterwards Edward VI., where she held the chrism, and was permitted to make an offering "of a shirt of cambric worked with her own hands." There are other testimonies to Elizabeth's early personal and mental perfections, which would have quite as much weight if less elaborately set forth. Anne of Cleves was so charmed with her grace, beauty, and wit, (this was early in 1540, when the Princess was in her seventh year,) that she felt the most ardent attachment for her; and after her own divorce was pronounced, requested the especial favour "of being sometimes allowed to see Elizabeth, inasmuch that to have had that Princess for her daughter would have been greater happiness than being herself a queen." Five years later, Henry's last wife, Katherine Parr, obtained leave from the King for Elizabeth to take up her abode at Whitehall; by which time, we are informed, she not only wrote a beautiful hand, spoke the Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, and Flemish languages as fluently as English, but was skilled in geography, astronomy, architecture, and mathematics. She was somewhat older when written of as follows by Roger Ascham:—"My

illustrious mistress shines like a star, exalted the more by the splendour of her virtues than by the glory of her royal birth. . . . . . With respect to personal decoration, she prefers a simple elegance to show and splendour; so despising the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, that in her whole manner of life she rather resembles Hippolyta than Phœdra." At the death of Henry, —January 28, 1547, in Elizabeth's fifteenth year,—the precocious Princess wrote a beautiful and moving letter in choice Latin to her half-brother, the boy-king Edward VI., who, in reply, complimented her upon the elegance of her sentences, adding—ironically, one would suppose, were not the young monarch known to be totally innocent of that virile faculty,—"I perceive you think of our father's death with a calm mind." Another hand paints Elizabeth's grief for the death of her mother's murderer with quaint prettiness of phrase: "Never was sorrow more sweetly set forth; her face seeming rather to beautify her sorrow, than sorrow to cloud the beauty of her face."

The sorrow and beauty here spoken of were both alike imaginary: not so the growing splendour of her fortunes, consequent upon the accession of her brother, by whom she was ever affectionately regarded, "there being, in addition to the tie of blood, a concurrence and sympathy of their nature and affections, together with the celestial bond of conformity in religion, which made them one." This intimate community of religious sentiment did not, however, prevent the prudent Princess from cultivating the regard of her Catholic sister Mary, and all the more assiduously when it began to be feared that the fragile health of the young King would leave her, before long, with no near relative in the world save that sister, the destined successor to Edward's crown, whom

Elizabeth, with prescient wariness, thus addressed by letter: "I shall always pay the greatest deference to the instructions your Highness may give me, and submit to whatever your Highness shall be pleased to ordain:" with much more to the like effect.

But the most curious phase in the girl-life of Elizabeth was her flirtation, or whatever more appropriate term may be applied thereto, with Sir Thomas Seymour, Lord High Admiral of England, and martial Adonis of the Court, and described by his friend Sir John Harrington—in some very indifferent verses which he presented, with a portrait of the deceased Admiral, to Elizabeth, when queen,—to be

> "Of person rare, strong limbs, and manly shape,"

and endowed, moreover, with all the moral and social virtues; spite whereof,

> "His blood was spilt, guiltless, without just cause,"

by his unnatural brother, Edward Seymour, the Protector.

A few retrogressive words will here be necessary. Queen Jane Seymour's brothers had been created by Henry VIII., the first, a peer, Edward, Earl of Hertford; the other, a knight, Sir Thomas Seymour. The elevation of their sister and birth of an heir-apparent, their nephew, fired the ambition of the brothers, and no means, legal or illegal, which promised the safe gratification of that ambition, came amiss to either of them. The expediency of espousing the Princess Elizabeth had already suggested itself to the fertile brain of Sir Thomas, when the death of the King, and second widowhood of his sixth queen, Katherine Parr,—by first nuptials Lady Latimer, and a former flame of the adven-

turous knight's,—changed his half-formed purpose, and in verification of the rhymed distich, according to which

> "L'on revient toujours
> A ses premières amours,"

Sir Thomas proposed immediate marriage to the royal relict, was blithely accepted, and Katherine Parr became, for the third time, a wife, a few days only after the tomb had closed over her second husband: a prudent and pious lady withal, notwithstanding this somewhat indecorous haste, and of such nice discretion that she contrived not only to procure King Edward's assent to her union *at some future time*, and as privately as might be, with Sir Thomas Seymour, but to make the boy-monarch believe that he (Edward) first suggested the marriage to her mind, he being prompted thereto, wrote the young King to the supposed widow, by the hope of promoting her happiness, in reward "of the great love you bear my father, the late King, of most noble memory, of the good-will you bear towards me, and, lastly, your godliness and knowledge and learning in the Scriptures." The Princess Elizabeth went to reside at the Lady Seymour's, or Queen Dowager's, house at Chelsea; and whether it was that Sir Thomas, discerning symptoms of failing health in his wife, deemed it prudent to cast about in time for a personage worthy to be her successor, or that he acted from a habit of unmeaning gallantry, certain it is that he behaved towards the Princess Elizabeth, then in her sixteenth year, in a way which induced the angry and indignant wife to insist that she should leave the house.

Sir Thomas, "whose name the Princess could never hear without blushing," used to intrude into her chamber before she was up, upon which occasions Mistress Katherine Ashley

her governess, "angrily bade him begone for shame;" and Elizabeth herself told Thomas Parry, her confidential cofferer (cash-keeper, or treasurer), that "she feared Sir Thomas loved her but too well; that the Queen Dowager was jealous of them both, and, suspecting the Admiral's frequent visits to her, came suddenly upon them when they were alone, and she, Elizabeth, in his arms." The Queen Dowager would not permit these innocent freedoms, as her husband called them, and the Princess, with her suite, left Chelsea for Hatfield House. Lady Seymour not long afterwards died; whereupon William Grindall, Elizabeth's tutor previous to Roger Ascham's appointment, a simple gentleman and scholar, suggested that the Princess ought to write a letter of sympathetic condolence to the bereaved widower; whereat the Princess laughed, and said, "I will not do it, for he needs it not." This was quite true; and after paying a brief, reluctant homage to marital decency, Sir Thomas renewed his suit to the Lady Elizabeth, and had no reason whatever to complain of its reception by the royal maiden: she frankly "accepting his gentleness," provided—for mortal peril hinged upon that condition—provided Sir Thomas could obtain the consent of the Council. This, the Admiral knew, was out of the question in the then failing condition of Edward's health, and with the views his brother, the head and arm of that Council, was known to entertain relative to the succession, which assuredly did not include the contingency of Sir Thomas becoming the king-consort of a Queen Elizabeth. The Admiral nevertheless determined to be thorough in the matter; but, as after all the crown matrimonial was at best a hazardous and doubtful speculation, he, before finally committing himself with the Princess, minutely cross-examined her trusted servitor, Thomas Parry,

anent the substantial income and property in the absolute possession of his intended bride; what houses and what lands she possessed; "whether her lands were good lands;" and, above all, if the letters patent confirming them to her had been actually issued, inasmuch that, in that case, he, Sir Thomas, might wish to obtain a portion of those lands in exchange for some of his own;—"and this," added the gay Admiral, "I tell you merrily;—you understand me, Parry—merrily." Sir Thomas Seymour's merriment was premature. He was arrested, by his brother's order, on a charge of high treason, in seeking to compass a change in the succession to the crown: Thomas Parry and Katherine Ashley were committed to close custody as aiders and abettors of his crime, and the Princess herself was placed under the strict surveillance of Sir Thomas Tyrwhit. Parry, faithful to his declaration, as he understood it, "to be rather torn asunder by horses than disclose anything injurious to his royal mistress," nevertheless freely admitted the love—well, the familiar passages already noticed that had passed between the Princess and the Admiral—he, by the way, being something more than double her age: and it further appears that Mistress Ashley was severely rebuked "for having permitted the Lady Elizabeth's Grace to go one night on the Thames in a barge, and for other light parts, was not thought worthy to have the countenance of a king's daughter." The task entrusted to Sir Thomas Tyrwhit, that of extracting evidence of the Princess's complicity with the Admiral's treasonous designs from her own lips, proved to be of impossible achievement. Elizabeth would admit nothing; "yet," reported her custodian,—"yet did I perceive in her face that she was guilty." Tyrwhit sought to frighten her, by alleging that her cofferer, Thomas Parry, and Mistress

Ashley had confessed everything; a statement which agitated the Princess greatly, but presently recovering, she demanded to see the confessions they had subscribed. They were shown to her. Whilst perusing them, the fled colour came back to her face; and having made an end of the reading, she deliberately and with the air of a numismatic connoisseur examined the seals attached to the parchments—a piece of cool self-possession, under the circumstances, strikingly indicative of the future astute and wary Queen, and which mightily provoked the ire of her baffled inquisitor. Either what Ashley and Parry did or did *not* confess earned for them the lasting gratitude of their mistress; for no sooner was Elizabeth seated on the throne, than her disgraced governess was taken into high favour, and Thomas Parry made Comptroller of the Household.

The audacious Admiral was beheaded; but Elizabeth's dissimulation or prudence carried her safely through, and it required but slight gift of prophecy to foretell that she who so young could give out such a seeming would hardly be likely to lose her way thereafter, when no obscuring passion interposed to mislead or blind her. Edward's death, the ephemeral grandeur and untimely death of her cousin, the Lady Jane Grey, Mary's accession, and the horrible persecutions which followed, found Elizabeth equal to the situation, how trying soever, in which she was placed. Neither for the fate of Lady Jane, nor of the Protestant religion supposed to be involved in the success or failure of that unhappy lady, did the Princess Elizabeth evince the slightest sympathy, albeit as Queen Jane *might* have succeeded in obtaining firm possession of her usurped crown, Elizabeth held it prudent to temporize, and a convenient fit of sickness confined her to Somerset House, where she then

resided, till the triumph of Mary was assured beyond doubt or question. She then forthwith hastened, with loyal alacrity, at the head of two thousand followers, to meet the victorious sovereign, by whose side she re-entered the city—presenting a gallant, youthful contrast to her comparatively aged and ailing sister, and displaying with especial care the beauty of her hand and arm, of which she was extremely proud.

A few more chequered years of patient wariness, and the great prize was gained—Elizabeth was in her true place on the throne, the visible embodiment and illustration of national independence, of the nation's right to choose its own faith, its own sovereign, irrespective and in defiance of both secular and spiritual divine right, and hereditary claims, and therefore clothed with a personal lustre in her people's eyes which the disenchanting breath of Time has indeed dissipated, but not happily till the crown of these realms had descended upon the brow of a royal lady whose virtues shed a higher, purer lustre upon the imperial diadem than it confers. Mr. Macaulay, in one of his public addresses, eulogized Queen Victoria as "a milder, better Elizabeth;" a compliment which, at all events, will not render the celebrated historian obnoxious to the charge of flattery or servilism.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ.

"IT is to-day many years, my child," wrote this tenderest of mothers and most *spirituelle* of letter-writers to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, on the 5th of February, 1674, "that there came into the world a being destined to love you beyond all things else;"—an incidental allusion which supplies the only proof now extant that Madame de Sévigné was born on the 5th of February—and, it is conjectured from by no means decisive passages in other letters, in 1627, and probably in Burgundy. Be this really as it may, the accepted belief now is that Marie de Rabutin-Chantal was born on the precited day and year, at the chateau of Bourbilly, in the parish of Vice-Chessanay, between the towns of Epoisses and Sémur, the capital of Auxois. The future Madame de Sévigné was born Lady of Bourbilly, not of Chantal, as often stated, that property, although the name was retained by the Rabutins, having passed from the family by marriage-gift, when Marie's aunt, Françoise de Rabutin-Chantal. espoused Count Antony de Toulongeon. The young lady's ancestry comprised some distinguished celebrities: her grandfather, Christophe de Rabutin-Chantal, one of Henry the Fourth's "verts gâlants," whose recognised vocation was "de boire et de battre," achieved no less than eighteen duels during a not very long life, which abruptly terminating in 1600, his widow, *née* Jeanne-Françoise Frémiot, retired from the world, and, as the best sacrifice she could offer for the repose of his soul, founded the Conventual Order of the Visitation, of which

Madame de Sévigné and her Children

Madame de Sévigné and her Children

she lived to see approaching to one hundred affiliated houses in active operation. Celse Benique de Rabutin-Chantal, Marie's father, inherited the combative propensities of his immediate progenitor in full force and vivacity,—so thoroughly, indeed, that upon receiving a whispered message in church on Easter Sunday, 1624, from a valet of the Count Bouteville, he instantly sprang up from his knees, left the altar and the church, and ten minutes afterwards had mortally wounded his antagonist. This redoubtable fighter was himself slain, when Marie, his only child, was about a twelvemonth old, in the defence of Rochelle against the forces of Charles I., and by a no less distinguished soldier than Cromwell, according to an imaginative French historian, ignorant apparently that the future Protector was, at the period of Buckingham's ill-concerted descent on the Isle of Rhé, peaceably engaged brewing ale at Huntingdon. Marie de Coulanges, the slain warrior's highly-descended wife, survived him but a few years, which she appears to have passed with her infant daughter chiefly at Paris, and Sucy, a pleasant village about four leagues from Paris, where her husband had built a handsome residence. Madame de Sévigné's love of the country was intense and constant; and no wonder that it should have been so, remembering the charming scenes amidst which she grew to womanhood. The suburban retreat at Sucy was beautifully situate and environed,—and there were chiefly passed the delightful days of " le bel age," when " I had no rheumatism." The ancient chateau of Bourbilly was built in a delicious valley, carpeted with meadows, and shut in on all sides by woods and vine-clad hills. The swift, sparkling Senain leaped *en cascade* from a rock into the valley, which, traversing in two channels, it refreshed with verdure and

fertility, and, in issuing therefrom into the outer world, lent motive power and animation to an ancient corn-mill. The chateau, a congregation of round towers and Gothic walls, formed a square, enclosing a spacious open court. One of the sides of this quadrangle has been pulled down, and, in the immense apartments converted into granaries, may still be seen antique chimney-pieces carved into sculptures, panels covered with half-effaced paintings, doubtfully representing the ancestral glories of the Rabutins. A portrait of the sainted Madame de Chantal, the foundress of the Visitationists, alone seems to defy the ravages of time. The entrance to the chateau was by a drawbridge commanded by a tower; but now in place of the drawbridge is one of arched bricks, and the grim tower has given way to a pretty modern habitation surrounded by a belt of fruit-trees. Madame de Sévigné thus writes, in 1673, to her daughter from Bourbilly:—" At last, dear child, I am again arrived in the old chateau of my fathers. Here, where they once triumphed after the fashion of their days, I find again the beautiful meadows, the tiny river, the magnificent woods, and the pretty mill, just as I left them." Marie resided after her mother's death with a female relative till about her ninth year, when her uncle, the Abbé Coulanges, surnamed by her " le bien bon," took charge of her educational and other interests. So well did he discharge his self-assumed responsibilities, that not only was Marie efficiently instructed in the knowledge and accomplishments deemed, in her day, essential and sufficient,—Ménage and Le Capelain, the first of whom finished by falling in love with his fascinating pupil, superintending the more serious studies,—but her worldly affairs, left by her parent's death in a state of uttermost confusion, were so wisely guided, that by the

time she had attained a marriageable age, Marie was possessed in her own right of a magnificent sum according to French notions even of the present day, approaching to twenty-five thousand pounds sterling! "I shall have a fortune," she writes with girlish exultation, "of five hundred and thirty thousand francs, counting all my little successions." Arnauld and other *gravissimo* casuists of Port Royal, to whom her uncle introduced her, did something towards leavening her mind with Jansenist Calvinism, the only effect whereof was to somewhat sharpen her antipathy to the Jesuits and their *parvenue* patroness, Madame de Maintenon. The brilliancy of the Court of Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria more permanently impressed her, and induced in her fine spiritual nature a reverential bias towards the conventional vanities of court-society, which ultimately included in its sympathies of *caste* and fashion Louis the XIV.'s *entourage* of pimps and parasites. La jeune Dame de Bourbilly's inherited and acquired advantages were enhanced by considerable personal attractions. Her physiognomy is said to have been more agreeable than regularly handsome; but its lively, spiritual aspect, equally expressive of grief and gladness, of tenderness and mirth—a complexion of dazzling purity—profusion of light, wavy hair, and a graceful figure something above the medium height, amply compensated for the absence of mere feature-symmetry. This highly-desirable young person was given in marriage by her uncle the Abbé, on the 1st of August, 1644, to the *Très-Haut et Très-Puissant* Field-Marshal Henri, Marquis de Sévigné, Governor of Fougères *etcetera*, and a reckless *roué*, moreover; from which ill-assorted union she was released by the gay Marquis's death in a duel with the Chevalier D'Albret, provoked by a quarrel about one

Madame Gondrand, a married woman. "Sévigné," writes the academician Conrard, "who was about five-and-twenty when he died, had married the only daughter of the Baron de Bourbilly and of Marie de Coulanges. Though his wife was very pretty and amiable, they did not live in much harmony together at Les Rochers en Bretagne, he having always some affair of gallantry on his hands in Paris. He told her once that he thought she might have been agreeable to another husband, but that as to himself she did not at all please him. It is said also, that there was this difference between them—that she liked but did not esteem him, and he esteemed but did not like her." Two children were born of this marriage—the first a son, Charles, Marquis de Sévigné, a dwarfed duplicate in both person and morals of his father, and Françoise, the beloved daughter before whom Madame de Sévigné exhaled the incense of a genius which has breathed perennial life into both worshipper and idol. The Count Bussy de Rabutin, a person remarked for a certain flippancy of sarcasm, being somewhat "épris des charmes de sa belle cousine," had the profligate audacity to suggest to the girl-wife, neglected for the society of Ninon de l'Enclos and others of that stamp, that she might punish her husband's infidelity by imitating his example! Bussy's overtures were coolly repulsed; and one is enabled to gauge pretty accurately the *morale* of high female society in Paris under the Montespan and Maintenon *régime*, by knowing that this act of common decency and self-respect won for the young widow a reputation for singular modesty and virtue amongst the fashionable world of Paris! Bussy, who, although repulsed as a lover, continued nevertheless upon terms of close friendly intimacy with his charming cousin, records his own and others' appreciation of her attractiveness and insensibility as follows:—

"Antiquity would have raised altars in your honour, and you would assuredly have been goddess of something or other. In our age—which is not lavish of its incense, especially to living merit—we are contented with saying that you are the most amiable and virtuous woman of your years in existence. I know princes of the blood, princes of foreign race, prince-like seigneurs, great captains, ministers of state, magistrates, and philosophers, all eager to throw themselves at your feet. What more could you desire?"

Fortunately for a lady so admired and sought after, her irrepressible love of the country drew her frequently away from companionship with the courtesans of the Tuileries and the sentimental pedants of the Hôtel Rambouillet to the freshening life and genial influences of fields and flowers; and that there was the while, gradually budding into grace and beauty, that *chère* Françoise, la plus jolie fille de France, whose absence in after years elicited those effusions of tenderness which, associated with inimitable felicity of style and a power of description unrivalled for vivacity and vraisemblance, have rendered the letters of Madame de Sévigné, throughout which it would be perhaps difficult to find an original thought or a stirring sentiment, the most delightful epistolary literature in the world. Our space permits only to give a very few brief excerpta from those remarkable productions—the shortest of them in both French and English, in order to reflect, as in a near mirror, the difference which must always exist between the original and the closest copy in another tongue.

As an illustration of Mme. de Sévigné's graphic power of dealing with a striking incident so that it seems actually to live before the reader's eye, take the following sketch of the crowd at Mademoiselle de Louvois' wedding:—

"J'ai été à cette noce de Mademoiselle de Louvois—que vous dirai-je? Magnificence—illumination, all France,—habits rebattus et rebrochés d'or, pierreries, brasiers de feu et de fleurs, embarras de carosses, cris dans la rue, flambeaux allumés, réculements et gens roués; enfin, le tourbillon,—la distraction; les démandes sans réponses, les compliments sans savoir ce qu'on dit, les civilités sans savoir à qui l'on parle, les pieds entortillés dans les queues: au milieu de tout cela il est sorti quelques questions de votre santé, à quoi ne m'étant pas pressé de répondre, ceux qui les faisoient sont demeurés dans l'ignorance, et vraisemblant dans l'indifférence de ce qui en est. O vanité des vanités, &c."

"I have been to this wedding of Mademoiselle de Louvois—what shall I say of it? Magnificence, illumination, all France,—dresses glittering with gold and jewels, tripods of fire and of flowers, confusion of carriages, cries in the street, flaming flambeaux, thrustings back and people crushed, whirlwind—in short, distraction; questions without answers, compliments without knowing what is said, civilities without knowing who is spoken to, feet caught in trains. From the midst of all this issue inquiries after your health, to which, I not hasting to reply, the inquirers pass on as ignorant of, and probably as indifferent as before to, what they apparently wished to be informed of. O vanity of vanities, &c."

As a pendant to the above might be quoted, had we room, the description of Madame Brissac lying in colic-state,—"*coiffée à coiffer tout le monde,*"—and displaying her interesting agonies to admiring visitors. The adored and not too grateful daughter to whom the mass of these letters were addressed had been given in marriage, I should have stated, by her mother,—fathers or mothers invariably ma-

nage such matters in France,—to the Comte de Grignan, a man about forty years of age,—more than double that of his bride, and already twice a widower, "but," reasoned Madame de Sévigné, "eligible by birth, establishments, and good qualities." This last item may be questionable, but the others were positive and unexaggerated, M. de Grignan's family dating from a famous bandit-baron, who, in the merry days previous to the time when, according to Froissart, the feudal nobles of the continent "cessèrent de voler sur le grand chemin," acquired a great name and property by his freebooting prowess; and the actual Comte de Grignan being now, moreover, in addition to his standing as a great court lord, Governor of Provence, whither he, not long after his marriage, betook himself "with the prettiest wife in the world," for the companion of his stately solitude. A slight cloud had arisen between the sundered mother and daughter, which, happily passing away, the mother's beseeching tenderness thus gushes forth :—

"Je reçois vos lettres comme vous avez reçu ma bague; je fonds en larmes en les lisant; il me semble que mon cœur veuille se fendre en moitié. On croiroit que vous êtes malade, qu'il vous êtes arrivé quelque accident, et ce n'est rien de tout cela. Vous m'aimez, ma chère fille; vous me le dites d'une manière que je ne puis soutenir sans des pleurs en abondance. Vous vous amusez à penser à moi, à en parler; vous aimez à m'écrire vos sentiments, à me les dire. De quelle façon qu'ils viennent, ils sont reçus avec une sensibilité qui n'est comprise que de ceux qui savent aimer comme je le fais. . . . . On ne me trouve guère avancée de ne pouvoir encore recevoir vos lettres sans pleurer. Je ne le puis, ma fille, mais ne souhaitez pas que je puisse. Aimez mes tendresses, aimez mes foiblesses: pour moi, je les aime mieux

que les sentiments de Sénèque ou d'Epictetus. Vous m'êtes toutes choses, ma chère fille. Je ne connois que vous."

"I receive your letters as you received my ring; I burst into tears in reading them, and I feel as if my heart were breaking in halves. It was thought you might be ill, that some accident had befallen you, and it is nothing of the kind. You love me, my dear child; you tell me so in a way that I cannot bear without shedding abundance of tears. You love to think, to speak of me, to tell me of your sentiments. In whatever way they come they are received with a sensibility, a joy, which can only be comprehended by those who know how to love as I do. . . . . I am thought to be very little advanced, in not being yet able to receive your letters without weeping. I cannot, my child; and do not you wish that I should. Love this tenderness, this weakness, which, for my part, I prefer to the finest sentiments of Seneca or Epictetus. You are all the world to me, my dear child. I know no one else."

The following is a favourable specimen of madame's not very brilliant power of pathetic painting. The Princess de Longueville's son had been slain at the passage of the Rhine in 1672, where her brother Condé, called the Great, had also been wounded, and a messenger from Port-Royal is the bearer of the sad intelligence, tremblingly anticipated by the foreboding mother :—

"Comment se porte mon frère? Sa pensée n'osa aller plus loin. Votre frère, madame, se porte bien de sa blessure; il a eu un combat. Et mon fils? On ne lui réponds rien. Ah, mon fils! mon cher fils! est il mort sur-le-champ,—n'a-t-il pas eu un seul moment? O, mon Dieu, quelle sacrifice! Elle tombe sur son lit, et tout ce que la plus vive douleur peut faire, et par des convulsions, et par des évanouisse-

ments, et par un silence mortel, et par des cris étouffés, et par des larmes amères, et par des élans vers le ciel, et par des plaintes tendres et pitoyables, elle a tout éprouvée."

"How does my brother? Her thought dared not venture farther. Your brother, madam, is recovering from his wound: there has been a battle. And my son? There is no answer. Oh, my son! my beloved son! did he perish instantly upon the field,—had he not one single moment? Oh, God, what a sacrifice! With that she falls upon the bed, and all that could express the most piercing agony;—convulsions, and faintings, and a mortal silence, and stifled cries, and bitter tears, and gestured supplications towards heaven, and wailings the most tender and piteous,—all these did she suffer and pass through."

We can permit ourselves but one more quotation from pages which sparkle throughout with gems of almost equal lustre. It is the famous letter to her cousin de Coulanges, announcing the betrothment of the Princess of Baubon, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, &c., with M. de Lauzun,—the prologue to a wedding *manquée,* as it proved:—

"Paris, Monday, Dec. 15th, 1670.

"I am going to tell you a thing which, of all things in the world, is the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most triumphant, the most bewildering, the most unheard of, the most singular, the most incredible, the most unexpected, the most exalting, the most humbling, the most extraordinary, the most common, the most public, the most private,—till the moment, the most brilliant, the most enviable,—in fine, a thing of which no example is to be found in past times—at least, nothing quite like it, a thing which we hardly can

believe in Paris,—how, then, are you to believe it at Lyons? a thing which makes everybody cry out, 'The Lord have mercy on us;' a thing which is to be done on Sunday, when those who see it will not believe their own eyes, and yet, perhaps, will not be finished till Monday. I cannot expect you to guess it at once. I give you three times to try. Do you give it up? Well, then, I must tell you. M. de Lauzun is to marry next Sunday, at the Louvre,—guess whom? I give you four times to guess it in,—I give you six,—I give you a hundred times. 'Truly,' cries Madame de Coulanges, 'a very difficult thing to guess. It is Madame de la Vallière?' 'No, madam, it is not.' 'Mademoiselle de Retz, then?' 'No, it is not, madam; you are sadly provincial.' 'O, we are very stupid, no doubt, you say,—it is Mademoiselle Colbert?' 'Further off than ever.' 'Well, then, it must be Mademoiselle de Créqui?' 'You are not a jot nearer. Come, I see I must tell you at last. Well; M. de Lauzun marries next Sunday at the Louvre, with the king's permission, Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle de—Mademoiselle—guess the name: he marries Mademoiselle, the great Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle, the daughter of the late Monsieur—Mademoiselle, grand-daughter of Henry the Fourth—Mademoiselle d'Eu—Mademoiselle de Montpensier—Mademoiselle d'Orléans—Mademoiselle, cousin-german to the king—Mademoiselle, once destined to the throne—Mademoiselle, the only woman in France fit to marry Monsieur.' Here's news for your coteries. Exclaim about it as you will. Let it turn your heads; say we fib; that it is a pleasant joke; that it is tiresome; that we are a parcel of ninnies. You are welcome: we have done the same by others. Adieu: the letters by the post will show whether I have been speaking the truth or not."

Strange to say, the exquisite taste which guided her own pen was at fault in estimating the merits of contemporary writings. She greatly admired the De Scudery and La Fayette novels, and entertained a mean opinion of Racine's genius. "Racine and coffee," she used to say, "would go out together;" a dual prediction doubly falsified by experience; the popularity of coffee, first introduced in Racine's day, having however found wider extension than that of the author of *Andromâque* and *Athalie.* Racine's great dramatic power may be questioned, but as a poet of sentiment he is certainly equal to any France has at any time produced.

The final exit of this charming woman from the gay scenes which she adorned and daguerreotyped by her brilliant genius was through a loathsome portal. She was seized in her seventieth year, at the Château de Grignan, with virulent small-pox, died after a week's suffering, and her remains, refused sepulture in the vaults of the parish church, lest the effluvium therefrom might propagate the dreaded disease, were finally deposited in a deep fosse scooped out at the sanctuary end of the church and closely bricked up. This circumstance saved the tomb of Madame de Sévigné from violation at the hands of the grave-plundering ruffians of 1792, who, stimulated by their hatred of greatness,—which, whether intellectual or material, must be ever the sworn foe of 'Equality,'—and by the high price of lead, made bonfires of the coffined bones found in the church vaults, and the dust, consequently, of the gay and witty Frenchwoman still rests, unprofaned, beneath the tablet which records that

"Ci-gît
MARIE DE RABUTIN-CHANTAL,
MARQUISE DE SÉVIGNÉ,
Décédé le 18 Avril 1696."

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

THE sovereign and the woman—majesty and mildness—have never been more harmoniously blended than in Isabella of Castile, unquestionably the greatest monarch that ever sat upon the throne of Saint Ferdinand, not excepting the canonised king himself. At the birth, on the 22nd April, 1451, of this daughter of John the Second of Castile and Leon, Spain, Gothic, Christian Spain was mainly divided into the often rival kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, with their subordinate regal satellites; the Moslem invader, gradually chased, through seven centuries of desolating, implacable strife, to the mountains of Granada, was there zealously preparing himself for a final desperate effort to retain his hold of what yet remained to him of the vast peninsula once wholly subjected to his sway, with the exception of the hill-fastnesses of the Asturias; and the Councils of Castile and Aragon, composed for the most part of a haughty, soldier nobility, and the equally warlike prelates of the Spanish Church Militant, virtually ruled in the names of monarchs whom they claimed a right in certain exigencies, determinable by themselves, to degrade and depose. These sources of weakness, and provocations to anarchy and misrule, were immensely aggravated and envenomed by the succeeding reign of Isabella's elder half-brother, Henry the Fourth, rightly surnamed the Imbecile—fifteen years of civil discord and internecine strife,—and yet, ascending a tottering and disputed throne—disputed both from within and without, by foreign levy and domestic faction—whilst

yet a girl in years, Isabella bore her high faculties with so much wisdom, courage, and prudence, that at her death the Spanish kingdom, become one by her marriage with Ferdinand, the heir of Aragon, and consequent union of the two crowns after a separation of four hundred years—was completely freed of its Moslem invaders,—the imperious nobles were firmly restricted to their high but subordinate position in the state; and by the rigorous administration of affairs, both at home and abroad, a spirit of resolute adventure and commercial enterprise was excited amongst the people which, had succeeding sovereigns inherited Isabella's prudence and judgment with the crown she had rendered illustrious and sacred, must have laid the foundations deep and broad of a national prosperity and progress, independent of and superior to the vicissitudes of foreign conflict and the criminal selfishness of dynastic ambition. The history of Isabella's reign would have been without spot had she not, in reluctant compliance with the zealot-seeming policy of her crafty husband, and the frenzied entreaties of Torquemada, yielded her hesitating assent to the establishment of the Inquisition; a fatal concession to the evil and violent spirit of the time,—(the consequences whereof were only fully developed after Isabella's death had rendered that hideous development possible),—than which nothing could be more utterly at variance with the generous spirit and policy of the patroness of Columbus, of the Queen who commanded her representatives to civilize and treat gently the poor Indians; of the Christian lady of whom Peter Martyr thus earnestly testified:—"I know of none of her sex in ancient or modern times who, in my judgment, is at all worthy to be named with this incomparable woman;" and scarcely requiring, therefore, the evidence of history to

prove that it was an act into which she was criminally betrayed by those upon whose authority and judgment she, in matters of conscience and religion, placed too high a value.

Isabella of Castile had English blood in her veins, being descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, whose daughter Catherine, by Pedro the Fourth's daughter Constancia, married Henry the Third of Castile. Her father, John the Second, had been twice married; first, to Maria of Aragon, by whom he left issue one son, afterwards Henry the Fourth; his second wife was Isabella of Portugal, by whom he had two children, Alphonso and the subject of this memoir, who was four years old only when the king, her father, died.

The ceremonies attendant upon the funeral of the late, and the accession of the new, king concluded, the queen-dowager withdrew with her daughter the infanta, to whom the town of Cuellar with its territory had been assigned for an inheritance, to the Convent of Arevalo, where the education of the princess was sedulously superintended by her mother. Spanish writers dwell with enthusiasm upon the beauty, dignity, and grace which distinguished Isabella even when a child; a royalty of nature which, according to them, indicated her as with the visible finger of destiny for the throne, whilst yet both her brothers and their possible descendants interposed between her and the Castilian crown. This prophetic anticipation, which appears to have been widely diffused, was the more eagerly caught up and repeated by the zealously catholic people of Spain, that the infanta was reputed to be as remarkable for piety and reverential regard for holy church as for personal advantages. The young Alphonso, though nearer to the succession, did not occupy

so large a space in the public eye as his sister; whilst the character of the reigning monarch, Henry the Fourth, presented a striking contrast to the reputation which already attached to the infanta. At the commencement of his reign he, after repudiating his wife, Blanche of Aragon, exhibited a great show of zeal against the Moslems; and as a pledge of his determination to root them out of Spain, had a pomegranate branch, the device of Granada, blazoned upon his shield; but infirm of purpose and fond of ease, his warlike energy evaporated in promises and vaunts; and suddenly transferring his allegiance from the god of War to the more genial divinity of Love, he espoused Joanna, the sister of Alonzo the Fifth, King of Portugal, a facile lady whom common fame pronounced to be the all but acknowledged mistress of Bertran de la Cueva, Duke of Albuquerque, a fact or a calumny which took firm hold of Castilians of all ranks and degrees; and when the new queen gave birth to the Princess Joanna, the name of Il Beltraneja, which at once became her popular designation, testified to the almost universality of the conviction that she was the daughter of Albuquerque, who had followed the queen to Castile, and was a prime favourite with the imbecile Henry, as well as with his wife. Castilian pride thus deeply wounded, and other causes of discontent concurring, a large and influential portion of the nobility and dignitaries of the church broke with their followers into open revolt, and Henry the Fourth was by them solemnly deposed after the following strange fashion. A lofty scaffold was erected in an open plain near the city of Avila, surmounted by a chair of state in which was placed a crowned, sceptred, and armed effigy of the king. Proclamation was next made of the king's crimes and misdemeanours, the sentence of deposition was read, and then

the Archbishop of Toledo tore away the mimic diadem, the Marquis of Villena seized the sceptre, other nobles the sword and remaining insignia of royalty, and the despoiled image was hurled from the scaffold, amidst the shouts and execrations of the people. Prince Alphonso was then placed in the vacated chair, proclaimed king, and received the homage of the assembled notabilities in church and state. It was, however, found much easier to dethrone the king figuratively than in actual fact, and a civil war ensued till the death, by poison it was supposed, of Alphonso on the 5th July, 1468, opened the way to an arrangement which, thanks to the conscientiousness and sagacity of Isabella, gave lasting peace to Castile.

Previous to this phase in the infanta's youthful life, her position had been one of extreme anxiety and peril. After the birth of the Princess Joanna, Henry was advised that Alphonso and Isabella ought to be made to reside in the royal palace in order to prevent either of them being made the rallying cry of the agitation which pervaded all ranks of society in Castile. It was further deemed necessary to effect the marriage, as early as possible, of Isabella, either with a relative or a devoted partisan of the spurious infanta. Alfonso of Portugal was first fixed upon, a proposal which Isabella resisted with dignity and firmness. "The infantas of Castile," she replied to the menacing solicitations of Il Beltraneja's partisans, "cannot be disposed of in marriage without the consent of the nobles of the realm." This project was not persisted in; and an overture from the English Edward the Fourth, asking the princess's hand for the Duke of Clarence, the brother whom he not long afterwards caused to be drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, had no better fortune. Another and more persistent effort was made to force her

into a marriage with Don Pedro Gion, a brother of the Marquis Pacheco, and Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava. A papal dispensation, absolving the grand master from his priestly vows, was obtained, and spite of the indignant protest of Isabella, preparations for the enforcement of the ceremony were relentlessly urged forwards. The princess was in despair; not so her partisans, who, resolute and unscrupulous as her foes, were determined the hated marriage should *not* take place. "God will not permit it," exclaimed Beatriz de Bobadilla, one of the infanta's attendants, addressing her weeping mistress; "and if God should permit it, *I* will not," added the Spanish maiden, displaying as she spoke the handle of a poniard concealed in her dress, and touching it with fierce significance. The resolve of Beatriz, whatever it might have been, whether to slay the reluctant bride or the audacious bridegroom, was not put to the test. The grand master, arrived at Villa Franca, near Ciudad Rodrigo, on his exulting way to espouse the princess, was seized with sudden and mortal illness; and he died cursing God and man with his last breath. He had been poisoned; by whom was not discovered; but I hardly need add not the faintest suspicion of complicity attached to Isabella.

The infanta was at the monastery of Avila when a deputation of nobles, headed by the Archbishop of Toledo, waited upon her after the death of Alphonso, with a tender of the crown of Castile. Isabella replied, that whilst Henry lived, no other had a right to the crown; but added, with a clear-sighted prudence marvellous in one so young, that it would be a legitimate use of the force and influence of the confederated nobles of Castile to insist upon her recognition as the Princess of the Asturias and heiress-apparent to the

throne. This modified course of action was acquiesced in, and after some months spent in negotiation, Henry the Fourth was partly cajoled, partly intimidated into compliance; and at an assemblage of the Cortes, held at Toros de Guisando, New Castile, Isabella was solemnly acknowledged Princess of the Asturias, and as a legal consequence rightful heiress to the crown of Castile and Leon.

The Beltraneja faction quickly rallied from this defeat, and their efforts to secure the infanta's person were persisted in with such reckless audacity, that Isabella, yielding to the importunities of her friends, consented to espouse Ferdinand, Prince of Aragon, and heir to the throne of that kingdom, an alliance which it was thought would utterly confound and dispirit the party of Joanna,—but not till she, Isabella, had received a highly favourable report of the young prince's personal and mental qualifications from her confessor, a sensible and discreet ecclesiastic, whom she had for that purpose despatched to the Aragonese court. The prime difficulty now was how to bring Prince Ferdinand to the presence of Isabella, the frontier lines being strictly watched, and other precautions taken by Henry's forces and Joanna's partisans, in anticipation of such an attempt being made. It was at length determined that Ferdinand should make the venture, accompanied by twelve persons disguised as traders, he himself to play the part of serving man, and busy himself during the necessary halts at the *posadas* on the road, by attending to the mules, looking after the merchandise, and so on. The perilous enterprise was successfully carried through, and on the 5th of October, 1469, Isabella being in her nineteenth, Ferdinand in his eighteenth year, the Prince of Aragon was introduced for the first time to the presence of the Princess of the Asturias by the

Archbishop of Toledo. "Isabella," says a contemporary historiographer, "was the handsomest lady I ever beheld, and the most gracious in her manners. In person she was well formed, of the middle size, with great dignity and gracefulness of deportment, her hair was golden, her eyes clear blue, her complexion lustrously fair, and she far exceeded her husband in personal majesty and grandeur of soul." The punctilious Castilian nobles wished to insist upon a public act of homage towards her on the part of the Prince of Aragon, but this the princess would not permit, feeling quite satisfied that the ante-nuptial conditions which Ferdinand swore faithfully to observe sufficiently provided for her future pre-eminence in the state and government. Those conditions bound the prince to strictly respect the privileges of Castile, to live in Castile, and not leave it without Isabella's permission; to wage uncompromising war against the Moslem; no appointment, civil or military, was to be valid without her signature; she alone was to nominate to ecclesiastical offices; and public ordinances were to be of no effect unless signed by both, with Isabella's name first—a stipulation strongly objected to by the Aragonese, but which Isabella, from deference to the wishes of her faithful Castilians, would not consent to waive.

These stringent articles finally settled, subscribed, and sworn to, the marriage took place on the 14th of October, 1469, in the presence of two thousand exulting spectators, a papal bull having been read previous to the ceremony, permitting the marriage notwithstanding the bar of consanguinity; the contracted pair being cousins. This instrument was a forged device of the archbishop's to quiet Isabella's scruples; but subsequently a genuine *ex post facto* dispensation was obtained, at her instance, of Sextus the Fourth. The

death of Henry the Fourth on the 11th December, 1474, five years after Isabella's marriage, raised her to the throne, and on the following May, the claims of Joanna, who had been betrothed to her uncle, the King of Portugal, were set at rest by the ruinous defeat of that monarch's forces at the decisive battle of Toro. Joanna retired to a convent, and the, at last, undisputed sovereign of Castile became by the decease of John, King of Aragon, in January, 1479, joint ruler with her husband of that kingdom.

She died on the 26th November, 1504, after a reign of thirty years' duration, the most glorious in the annals of monarchical Spain, and deriving as bright a lustre from the private virtues of Isabella of Castile, as woman, wife, and mother, as from the wisdom, firmness, and success with which the attributes of her crown were administered by the great queen.

ANNE BOLEYN.

A SAD, eventful history is that brief one of Anne Boleyn —a stern commentary, pointed by the headsman's axe, upon the eloquent text she is made to utter in the play of "Henry the Eighth," by the poet of life and wisdom, that

> "————— 'Tis better
> To dwell with humble livers in content,
> Than to be perked up in a glistering grief,
> And wear a golden sorrow."

Excuse for the regal ruffian that deliberately slew the fair girl he had not long before wooed and wedded—the youthful, and, in his regard, guiltless mother of his child, there is none; but commiseration for the unhappy lady is checked by the reflection that a Nemesis presided at the early scaffold where Katherine's frail attendant expiated her treason towards that true wife and queen, at whose death—untimely also, though not compassed by open, red-handed violence—she had but a few months previously* exulted, as in a new title to the fatal crown about to be again transferred to the girl-brow of a new queen—Jane Seymour, her own maid of honour!

Anne's father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, or Bullen, the son of a London lord mayor, was groom of the body to Henry

* The King ordered his household to put on mourning on the day of Katherine's funeral, January, 1536; but Anne arrayed herself in robes of yellow silk, and openly boasted that she was now indeed a queen!

VIII.; and her mother, Elizabeth, a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk, was one of the ladies of Katherine's Court. The future Queen was born in 1507, and, from childhood, appears to have attracted the favourable notice of the King—a predilection which gave some colour to a scandalous aspersion, first published in Elizabeth's reign, upon her mother's chastity, an imputation which, it is admitted, may have been true of the second Lady Boleyn, "a low woman"—by birth is meant—and presumedly, therefore, more accessible to princely advances than the daughter of a ducal house. Beside that Anne was a pretty, vivacious child, the King's favour was probably a reflection, so to speak, of that which he entertained for her much older sister, Mary Boleyn, for a time one of the royal mistresses; and this, unquestionably, notwithstanding the ingenious efforts that have been made, by ignoring the plainest evidence, and misquotation of dates, to suppress so ugly a fact in the family history of the Boleyns. The King's fancy resulted less tragically in Mary's than in Anne's case; his Majesty, instead of depriving the former lady of her head, having given her a husband, Master William Carey, one of his grooms of the chamber, an honorary marriage gift, and graced the ceremony, moreover, with his august presence, as witness the following voucher in the book of expenses of the privy purse:—"*Item*, for the King's offering upon Saturday, January 31st, 1521, at the marriage of Master Carey and Mary Bullayn, six shillings and eightpence."

Anne was appointed at a very early age fourth maid of honour to the King's sister Mary, then recently betrothed to Louis XII. of France. She accompanied her royal mistress to that country, but did not return with her when, a few months only having elapsed, during which she had

successively become Queen Consort, Queen Dowager of France, and Duchess of Suffolk, Mary came back to England. Anne continued to reside at the Court of Queen Claude, consort of Francis I., till the imminence of the war about to break out between the two countries, and Henry's positive command, compelled her return home in 1522, or two or three years later than that, and not till after Claude's death, according to some authorities. Be that as it may, the young lady was preceded by a well-deserved reputation for great beauty of person, buoyancy of temperament, and graceful vivacity of manners. She sang, we are told, with an enchanting sweetness that wolves and bears, had they been within hearing, could not have resisted; played divinely upon the harp, lute, and rebec; danced, leapt, and jumped with infinite grace and agility; dressed with inimitable taste; and was, moreover, a charming poetess—a faculty vouched for, I am sorry to say, by no better evidence than the probability of her having resembled her cousin-german, the Earl of Surry, in that quality of mind, forasmuch that, according to Miss Strickland, poetical, like musical genius, often runs in families.

Her beauty is more satisfactorily established. Sir Thomas Wyatt, a married man, an admirer of hers, and a poet, praises the rare and admirable beauty, the nobleness of shape and feature, evincing both mildness and majesty, of the fresh and young Lady Anne Boleyn. Another less enthusiastic writer describes her as tall, slender, having an oval face, warm complexion, one upper tooth slightly projecting, a double finger on her left hand, and a large mole resembling a strawberry on her throat. The double finger—double at the nail, that is—she managed to conceal by the hanging sleeves of which she introduced the

fashion, and the mole by a jewelled neck ornament. Altogether, there is no question that Mistress Anne Boleyn was a very charming person, who, but for the King's fatal passion, might have selected a husband from amongst the wealthiest and noblest families in England, notwithstanding her open coquetry with such men as Wyatt,—a sufficient proof to my mind that she was deemed to be thoughtless, *étourdie*, rather than lightly inclined, by those who had the opportunity of best observing her.

One of her numerous suitors was Percy, heir to the earldom of Northumberland, whose offer of marriage, without the privity of his father, she accepted. Henry's vigilant jealousy quickly discovered the secret of the lovers, and Cardinal Wolsey was directed to place an effectual bar between them, by sending such an intimation to the Earl of Northumberland as he would not dare to disobey, of the King's wish that the union formerly contemplated between Percy and the Lady Mary Talbot should be forthwith solemnized. The Earl readily acquiesced, and compelled his son to espouse Lord Shrewsbury's equally reluctant daughter. The King's hand was not openly seen in this affair; and Anne, attributing her disappointment to the officious meddling of the Cardinal, conceived a dislike towards that eminent functionary, which no after compliance or submission on his part could subdue or soften. But if at that time, unconscious of the influence her charms had acquired over the King,—or, which is more likely, believing that she had only attracted a passing fancy, no more permanent than that which her sister had excited,—it was not long before she clearly perceived that his Majesty was much more seriously enthralled than she could have hoped or imagined. Of this, the rank and emoluments of a viscount (Rochford)

and treasurer of the household, bestowed upon her father—splendid presents of jewellery upon herself, and other unmistakeable tokens, gave dazzling certitude; and being necessarily aware—the King's connubial position and sentiments having, there can be no doubt, furnished frequent discourse in Sir Thomas Boleyn's family—that grave doubts had been entertained of the validity of his Majesty's union with the widow of his brother, Prince Arthur, Katherine's first, though merely ceremonial husband,—doubts, it was true, legally set at rest seventeen years before by the King's Council, but revivable, notwithstanding, did Henry's imperious will point that way,—the possibility of sharing her royal lover's throne soon inflamed the imagination and disturbed the judgment of the beautiful maid of honour. Determined, at all events to be no second Mrs. Carey, the coy and politic damsel at first affected an utter unconsciousness of what his Majesty's presents and assiduities could possibly mean, quite charming in its ingenuous simplicity—"I understand you not, mighty king," and so on; and when at last it was no longer possible to simulate ignorance, bluntly declared "that though she might be happy to be his wife, she would never condescend to become his mistress."

This suggestive repulse inflamed the King's ardour, and at the same time awakened his long-slumbering conscience. The passage in Leviticus forbidding marriage with a deceased brother's widow, though apparently repealed as a law of nature by that in Deuteronomy, which enjoins a brother to marry his brother's widow if he die without children—also by the Saviour's sanction, in reply to the Sadducees, of the doctrine as modified in Deuteronomy,—suddenly assumed irresistible authority in his eyes, and he could not rest till he had communicated his disturbing scruples to a number of

eminent canonists and divines, a large majority of whom cruelly concurred in aggravating the tortures of the Royal conscience by a declaration that the prohibition in Leviticus was peremptory and binding under all possible circumstances; so that, till certain of them, commissioned for that purpose, says Cardinal Pole, by the Lady Anne, as she was now called, suggested his escape from criminal cohabitation by means of a divorce, Henry could obtain no balm or solace for his mental disquietude and alarm. This idea of a divorce, and the applications in furtherance thereof to the Roman Pontiffs, were favoured by Cardinal Wolsey, not with any thought of placing the crown-matrimonial upon the head of Anne Boleyn, whose ascendency in the King's affections would, he rashly assumed, prove as evanescent as that of her sister, but with a view to strengthen the alliance with France by Henry's marriage with the Princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII.,—a project with which his own chance of seating himself in the Papal Chair was closely bound up. Queen Katherine herself was not for a moment imposed upon by Henry's precaution in swearing every one to secrecy whom he consulted upon the matter. With a woman's unerring sagacity in such cases, she had long since ascertained her husband's sentiments towards her attractive maid of honour, and one day, losing her ordinary self-control, she indignantly taxed him with his baseness. The King replied by declaring that he had no other object than the searching out of truth, and thereby tranquillizing his conscience, and, after a "short tragedie," succeeded in somewhat appeasing her.

Henry, the meanwhile, sought relief in other than dialectic and spiritual exercises and expedients. At a magnificent entertainment given in honour of the French Ambassador, at Greenwich, the Lady Anne was the recog-

nised star of the brilliant assemblage, and at the ball in the evening, where she was the King's partner, incomparably outshone all others, by her "grace, beauty, and splendour of attire;" although Cavendish, an eye-witness, avers that all the ladies present were gifted with marvellous loveliness:—"They seemed to all men to be rather celestial angels descended from heaven, than flesh and bone: surely to me, simple soul, it was inestimable." Such scenes of "pleasant delight" were of frequent occurrence, and it soon became plain, amidst all the *imbroglio* of embassies to the popes—negotiations with universities, bishops, and other godly men, that the "King's secret matter" could have but one termination, whatever pontiffs, or courts, or natural justice and equity, might determine. It was not long, either, before the Lady Anne had a splendid establishment of her own,—that the courtiers were commanded to attend her levees, as if she were already Queen; and in 1529, shortly after Wolsey's disgrace and death,—the undoubted work of "that night-crow,"—her uncle, the Duke of Northumberland, was created president of the council, her father, the Earl of Wiltshire, retaining the treasurership; she herself being, wrote the Bishop of Bayonne, the real chief of the Ministry, ruling the King's heart by the influence of her charms, and the Cabinet through her two Minister-relatives:—"The Duke of Norfolk is chief of the Council; in his absence, him of Suffolk; and high above all, Mademoiselle Anne." The long and tedious farce of clerical and judicial investigation was at last fitly closed by the purposely-chosen Archbishop of Canterbury's primatial decree, declarative of the divorce of Henry and Katherine, and his pastoral benediction of the King's marriage with the Lady Anne, which had been privately performed at an early hour

on the 25th of the previous January, at Whitehall, by Dr. Lee, one of the royal chaplains, — the witnesses being Norris and Heneage, two grooms of the bedchamber, and Ann Savage, subsequently Lady Berkeley, the new Queen's train-bearer.

The prize was achieved; and the crown, so foully played for, was placed with great pomp and ceremony upon Queen Anne's head, on the 1st of June, 1533. In the following September the Princess Elizabeth was born, several weeks too soon, and thenceforth clouds daily growing darker, thicker, lowered upon and overgrew that fleeting splendour. When the first mutterings of the gathering storm struck Anne's startled ear, she solicited the friendly mediation of the King of France; which failing her, she proclaimed herself to be a distracted, ruined woman! The fierce menaces of the royal tiger within whose power a guilty ambition had placed her were for the moment stifled by a hope that she might give birth to an heir-apparent to the throne; an event of likely occurrence, had not she suddenly surprised the King with Jane Seymour sitting on his knee. In that sight, the palpable reflex of her own crime, the unfortunate lady clearly discerned the foreshadowing of the inevitable thunderbolt, and was shortly afterwards delivered of a still-born male infant. Nothing further interposed between her and the scaffold. Inconstancy was charged against her with Norris, Smeaton, Weston, Brereton, and her own brother, Lord Rochford. Nothing was too gross for accusation and belief, and they all suffered capitally.

Upon arriving at the Tower, the doomed Queen was shown into the apartment she had occupied on the night previous to her coronation. It seemed the very arch-fiend's mock, and, falling on her knees, she exclaimed,

"Jesus, have mercy on me!" and then laughed and wept by turns. The Lieutenant bade her rely upon the King's justice; whereupon she burst into a violent paroxysm of maniacal mirth. Bid her who had been *particeps criminis* with Henry in his dealings towards Katherine, rely upon the King's justice! No wonder she seemed stricken with convulsive madness. The Peers registered Henry's decree of death, heedless of her passionate adjuration—"O Father! O Creator! Thou knowest I do not deserve this death!" And one merciful blow with the executioner's sword concluded the tragedy on Tower Hill, on the 19th of May, 1536—just four months after the death of Katherine.

On the following morning, Henry, who had dressed himself in white on the day of Anne's execution, married Jane Seymour.

LADY JANE GREY.

ONE of the most affecting episodes in the regal history of England is the story of the Lady Jane Grey; and, assuredly, the piteous interest which it inspires required not to be deepened by the false lights thrown thereon, by which the victim of her own and husband's father's unscrupulous ambition is made to figure as a martyr to religious truth. The catalogue of murders committed by Queen Mary in the name of Christ is long and hideous enough, without adding to it the death of the usurper, however innocently so, of her crown, and the impersonation of armed rebellion.

The Lady Jane Grey was the granddaughter of a crowned Queen of France, Mary, the beautiful sister of Henry VIII., who at the age of sixteen was compelled, by the policy of her imperious brother, to marry Louis XII., an infirm debauchee of considerably more than thrice her years. The doting husband survived his nuptials about three months only; and three months was the extent of his relict's widowhood—the emancipated young lady having peremptorily signified to the accomplished Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, her former lover, and King Henry's envoy sent to escort her back to England, that he must either by a certain day marry her, or never hope to do so. Suffolk deferred his happiness till the last moment, and then privately married the royal widow, in Paris. Of this union was born Frances Brandon, who became the wife of Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, subsequently created Duke of Suffolk, and had issue three daughters, who were all married on the same day at Durham

House; the Lady Jane, to Lord Guilford Dudley, fourth son of the Duke of Northumberland; Katherine, to Henry, heir to the earldom of Pembroke; and Mary, who was somewhat deformed in person, to Martin Keyes, gentleman-porter to King Edward VI.;—Jane, the eldest bride, who was born in 1537, being then in her sixteenth year.

The poor children were in this, as in all other things, mere automata in the hands of their imperious parents, by whom they were treated with a brutal harshness that in these days would justify the interference of a magistrate. Witness to the truth of this, the Lady Jane's own avowal, reported by Roger Ascham, some time tutor and Latin secretary to Queen Elizabeth:—

"And one example," writes Ascham in his 'Schoolmaster,' "whether love or fear doth work more in a child for virtue and learning, I will gladly report, which may be heard with some pleasure and followed with more profit. Before I went into Germany, I came to Broadgate, Leicestershire, to take my leave of that noble Lady Jane Grey, to whom I was exceedingly much beholding. Her parents, the Duke and Duchess, with all the household, gentlemen and gentlewomen, were hunting in the park. I found her in her chamber, reading Phædo Platonis in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale in Boccace. After salutation and duty done, with some other talk, I asked her why she should lose such pastime in the park.

"'I wist all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure that I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure meant.

"'And how came you, madam,' quoth I, 'to this deep knowledge of pleasure? And what did chiefly allure you

under it, seeing not many women, but very few men, have attained thereunto?'

"'I will tell you,' quoth she, 'and tell you a truth which perchance you will marvel at. One of the benefits that ever God gave me is, that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence of either father or mother,—whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand or go, eat, drink, be merry or sad—be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else,—I must do it as it were in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly as God made the world; or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened—yea, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways (which I will not name for the honour I bear them), and so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell till time come that I must go to Mr. Elmer, who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing that I have been with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because whatsoever I do else but learning is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, that in respect of it all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles unto me.'

"I remember this talk gladly," adds Roger Ascham, "both because it is worthy of memory, and because also it was the last talk that ever I had, and the last time that ever I saw that noble lady."

Hard as marble must have been the hearts of "the sharp and severe parents," that the patient sweetness of such a child could not soften. Doubtless, too, it was the misery of the home wherein "she thought herself in hell," that

so early directed the mind of the gentle enthusiast to the earnest study of the volume which opened to her the view of the better world she was fated soon to reach by the dark and bloody passage whither a father's hand remorselessly dragged her. An incomparably pious, amiable child she appears to have been, though fonder of dress than the ultra reformers of her time deemed consistent with godliness —and, withal, learned, polemical as a bishop. Her cousin Edward VI. was much attached to her, both for her natural amiability of disposition, and the wonderful theological acumen which enabled her, whilst the boy-monarch lived, and frequently in his presence, to vindicate the reformed doctrines with singular power and success, and in the evil after-time to do valiant theological battle with Feckenham, abbot of Westminster, whom personally she appears to have much esteemed. It was this ardent championship of the Reformation which induced Edward, when languishing hopelessly in his last sickness, to hearken favourably to the suggestion of wily Northumberland, that he ought, in the interest of religion, to set aside by will, or letters patent under the great seal, the succession to the Crown, secured by statute to his sisters Mary and Elizabeth; Mary being a bigoted Catholic, and Elizabeth (wary, temporizing Elizabeth) probably at heart of the same way of thinking—in favour of the Lady Jane, just become his (the Duke's) daughter-in-law. Edward yielded to Northumberland's counsel; but upon the proposition being submitted to the judges, these learned personages pronounced unanimously against its legality. Nevertheless, with help of the persuasive logic peculiar to kings, Archbishop Cranmer, Chief-justice Montague, and finally all the judges, except Sir James Hailes of the Common Pleas, were induced to set

their hands and seals to the royal letters patent changing the succession as proposed by Northumberland; the Archbishop and justices taking care, however, that *pari passu* with their signing and sealing, the King should present each of them with a pardon for doing so, under the great seal.

Soon after this, the King died; and Northumberland, the Earl of Northampton, Cranmer, the Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, waited upon the Lady Jane at Sion House, and falling upon their knees before the astonished young lady, announced to her that, by King Edward's letters patent and the ancient laws of the land, she was now the rightful Queen of England! At hearing these ominous words, the Lady Jane, it is said, screamed loudly and fainted; and when restored to consciousness, wept and wrung her hands, declaring that the Lady Mary was the rightful heir to the throne, and none other. But her opposition to the will of persons it had been the habit of her life to obey could not long endure. Her father and mother enjoined her, by the duty she owed them, to accept the high trust which had devolved upon her: Guilford Dudley, her husband, added the persuasion of his tears; the Archbishop and Northumberland, arguments of Church and State; and finally yielding, she exclaimed, "If this right be truly mine, O gracious God, give me strength so to rule as to promote Thy honour and my country's good!"

On the following day, Queen Jane proceeded in great state to the Tower, and was proclaimed throughout London by sound of trumpet. Bishop Ridley preached a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in vindication of her claim to the throne; and the only overt opposition manifested in the metropolis was a verbal one by Gilbert Punt, a vintner's boy, who had his ears clipped off for his pains.

But the whole affair was a mere Court intrigue, with which no considerable party in the nation would associate itself, Mary's right to the throne being all but universally recognised; and on the tenth day of her shadowy sovereignty, Jane was abruptly informed by her father, that she must put off her state and royal robes, and be content with a private station. "I shall put them off," she replied, "much more willingly than I put them on; and I should never have done it, but for you and my mother."

The Lady Jane's palace was thenceforth her prison; and on the 3rd of November following, she, her husband, and others, were arraigned for high treason at Guildhall, found guilty, and condemned to die: but there was no apparent intention on the part of the Queen to carry the sentence into execution, forasmuch that she was allowed the liberty of the Tower; and a belief, grounded upon expressions which her Majesty had designedly let fall, that she and Dudley would be ultimately liberated, became general.

Meanwhile, Mary was busy with her coronation, which she celebrated with great splendour, and next with negotiations for her marriage with Philip of Spain; a project that was no sooner bruited in the common ear, than it was everywhere denounced as a scheme to bring England under the yoke of Spain, and make Englishmen slaves to strangers. The perturbation of the people increased: Sir Thomas Wyatt, a gentleman of Kent, with the Duke of Suffolk and others, took up arms, with the ostensible purpose of removing the Queen's evil counsellors; and having obtained some slight successes against the Royal forces, Wyatt advanced to London, and fought a successful skirmish at Charing Cross, but was soon baffled, secured, beheaded, and quartered; his head

being placed upon the gallows at Hay Hill, near Hyde Park! Suffolk, the Lady Jane's father, was captured in Warwickshire by the Earl of Huntingdon, and the rebellion was at an end.

Its heaviest penalty remained to be paid by the innocent blood of the Lady Jane, to whom word was sent by Dr. Feckenham that she must prepare for death on the morrow; —brief warning, but needless counsel, for that preparation had been her sole employment during six months of captivity, and the Queen's message was received by her as the announcement of a great deliverance! Dr. Feckenham, who had held many conferences with her upon points of doctrine, was again earnest with her to reconcile herself with the Roman Catholic Church; but, with more than her usual sweetness, she declined further controversy. He, however, unasked, procured her and Dudley a three days' respite, during which she addressed the following letter to the Duke of Suffolk:—

"Father,—Though it hath pleased God to hasten my death by you, by whom my life should rather have been lengthened, yet can I patiently take it; and I yield God more hearty thanks for shortening my woful days, than if all the world had been given unto my possession with life lengthened at my own will."

Had the father a human heart, it must have been pierced as with daggers by those words!

The earnest faith, the meek resignedness that graced the life and glorified the death of the Lady Jane, were not more strikingly evinced than her unaffected recognition of the legality of the sentence that had gone forth against her. In a letter to the marble-hearted Queen, she says, after full admission of her technical guilt,—

"Yet do I assuredly trust that my offence towards God is so much the less, in that, being of so royal a state as I was, mine enforced honours blended never with mine innocent heart."

She had beguiled the long, sad hours of captivity by such lines as these:—

"Do never think it strange,
Though now I have misfortune;
For if that fortune change,
The same to thee may happen.
If God do help thee,
Hate shall not hurt thee;
If God do fail thee,
Then shall not labour prevail thee."

She sent her sister Katherine a Greek Testament, as the most precious bequest she could make her, were the riches of the whole world hers; and all that remained for her to do fulfilled, she rose at dawn of her last day on earth in perfect peace with herself and all mankind. She refused to see her husband previous to his execution, lest the interview should shake his resolution, and saw his corpse carried past her window with but passing emotion. He had gone before her; but their eternal reunion would be but for a brief space delayed!

She was accompanied to the scaffold by her maiden, Mistress Tylney, and Helen, to whom she gave her gloves and handkerchief, and Doctor Feckenham, whom, though he had failed in changing her religious convictions, she warmly esteemed. "God," said she, addressing him,—"God will abundantly requite you, good sir, for your humanity to me; though it gave me more uneasiness than all the terrors of approaching death." Then turning towards the spectators,

he said,—"Good people, I am come hither to die, and by law I am condemned to do the same. The fact against the Queen's Highness was unlawful, and the consenting thereunto by me; but touching the procurement and desire thereof by me or on my behalf, I do wash my hands thereof in innocency before God and the face of you good Christian people this day." And therewith, it is added, "she wrung her hands in token of her innocency."

The trembling hands of her maidens could not remove her neck-clothing: she did it herself, and then said to Dr. Feckenham, "Shall we repeat the 51st Psalm?" They did so, in English. "Pray you, despatch me quickly," she said, after a handkerchief had been placed before her eyes, and kneeling down, sought with her hand for the block, and not immediately finding it, piteously exclaimed, "What shall I do?—where is it?" It was found: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" rose tremblingly to heaven, and all was over!

This tragedy was consummated on the 12th of February, 1554, the seventeenth year of the Lady Jane's brief but memorable life. Ten days later, the Duke of Suffolk perished by the headsman's axe.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

THE fiery reaction against the time-sanctioned and time-worn ecclesiastical polity of Christendom which, in the sixteenth century, swept over Europe,—in some countries lighting up an undying flame, in others fading quickly out with the weak straw on fire which lent it ephemeral brightness and fervency,—greatly inflamed and envenomed the strife and turmoil into which a succession of misfortunes had plunged Scotland; and never, perhaps, did her dearly-won nationality appear so deeply perilled as by the fierce ordeal by which, in its spirit and essence, it has been stamped with enduring vitality. The first throes of the volcanic conflagration kindled by the breath of Knox, and fed by the fires of persecution, threw its lava-spray upon the baby-diadem of Mary Queen of Scots, and abated nothing of its unrespecting fury till she, the crowned impersonation of a Right no longer recognised as Divine, had been swept from her throne to exile and to death:—a brief recapitulation, therefore, of the preliminary events which gave the revolt of the Scottish people against Papal domination fatal and overwhelming power in her own regard, is essential to the slightest sketch of her character and fortunes as marked and foreshadowed in the story of her girlish days;—a story moreover, I may premise, which, though not directly involving the imputations upon her mature years, still as hotly as ever disputed by enthusiastic and unscrupulous champions and assailants, cast, nevertheless, a bright glow of youthful promise over those dubious and obscure passages which, strengthened by

the interpretive radiance of her death,—so contrastive in its calm sublimity of resignation with the gloomy despondency that darkened the last hours of her royal cousin and executioner,—justify a hope that, were all the accompanying circumstances clearly ascertained, Mary Stuart's chequered noon of life would not be found utterly irreconcileable with the innocent joyaunce of its dawn, the saintly serenity of its close.

Up to the union of the two crowns by the accession of James VI. of Scotland, son of Mary Queen of Scots, to the throne of England, Scotland was emphatically "England's difficulty,"—a disastrous distinction since assumed, with much less truth, by the Emerald Isle. Till about two centuries and a half ago, Scotland's "natural ally" was France; and the English monarchs, when tempted to make war upon their Gallic neighbours, had always to take into account the certainty of a Scottish invasion of the northern counties the instant the English forces were seriously engaged on the other side of the Channel. Each nation could boast its Bannockburns and Halidon Hills; but after the termination of the Wars of the Roses, it was evident to all clear-sighted men that the consolidated superiority in wealth and numbers of England would prove an overmatch for Scotland beyond any counterbalance derivable from the shifting, unreliable alliance with France. The successes achieved by Henry VIII.'s lieutenants fully established this truth; and the flight at Solway Moss, by disabusing James V. of the hope he had hesitatingly entertained that he might be able to one day avenge the discomfiture of Flodden, proved almost as immediately fatal to him as that disastrous field had to his father, the chivalrous James IV. He was dying of fever brought on by grief of mind, at Falk-

land, on the 8th of December, 1542,—three weeks only subsequent to the Solway Moss catastrophe,—when a messenger arrived with the intelligence that his queen, Mary of Guise, was safely delivered, at Linlithgow Palace, of a daughter. "Ay," murmured the despairing monarch, upon whose mind the loss of his two sons had pressed as heavily as military defeat and civil commotion, "it cam wi' a lass, and it will gang wi' a lass,"—an allusion to the acquirement of the Scottish crown by the Stuarts through intermarriage with Marjory, Bruce's only daughter. Five days afterwards James died; and his daughter Mary, the news of whose birth he had so ungraciously received, became by that event the Queen *de jure* of Scotland and the Isles.

It was not alone, nor perhaps chiefly, the loss of battle that hastened and embittered the last hours of James V.: the stubborn hardihood of Scotland had withstood blows quite as heavy as those of Flodden and Solway Moss: but a fatal heresy, in his sick apprehension, was riving his kingdom asunder, and furnishing his unscrupulous uncle, the English monarch, with weapons far more effective in the prosecution of his ambitious purposes than any wielded by his soldiers. James was himself so steadfast an adherent of the Papal unity, that he engaged, a few years before his death, to aid the King of France and Emperor of Germany in their professed determination to enforce the Pontifical decree of deprivation issued by Paul against Henry VIII. His royal and imperial colleagues did not venture to attempt carrying out their design, and the Scottish monarch could not long conceal from himself that a large and fast-increasing portion of all classes of his subjects were falling away, not only from their allegiance to the spiritual supremacy, but their faith in the doctrinal teachings of

Rome; the inevitable consequence of which change of opinion, certain not to be adopted by the French, was, he foresaw, to at first weaken, and ultimately render impossible, the traditional policy of the House of Stuart, with which, he was himself firmly persuaded, the security of Scotland was intimately bound up,—namely, a close alliance with France. Henry saw all this as plainly as the Scottish King; and no sooner did the intelligence of James's death reach him, than he demanded, with the reckless insolence habitual with him, the custody of the infant Queen, who, upon reaching the age of puberty, was to marry his son, afterwards Edward VI.,—Henry the meanwhile to be the lord paramount and governor of Scotland! For the furtherance of these imperious views, the English monarch relied, in addition to his own armed power, upon the zealous co-operation of the Earl of Angus and his brother, Sir George Douglas, who had long been his pensioners; upon the enforced subservience of seven Scottish Earls and Barons,—Cassilis, Glencairn, Maxwell, Fleming, Somerville, Oliphant, and Gray,—who, having been made prisoners at Solway Moss, obtained their freedom by promising to aid his purposes, and furnishing hostages for their return to custody should they fail to do so effectually; and, in a less degree, upon all that were opposed to the domination of the high Catholic party, at the head of which party were the Queen-mother, and Cardinal Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews.

For a time the course of events seemed to favour Henry's audacious schemes, and promise complete ultimate success, could he but have schooled himself to patience. James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, heir-presumptive to the throne, inclined to the new opinions and the English alliance, was appointed governor during the Queen's minority; Cardinal

Beaton was thrown into prison; and a Parliament hastily assembled decided in favour of the marriage of Mary and Edward, refusing only their consent to their infant sovereign being placed in Henry's custody, and the preposterous proposal that he should assume the government of the kingdom during her minority. The Earl of Angus and his fellow-traitors assured their irascible master that the temper of the people would not permit of more being done for the present, unless he marched a powerful army into Scotland; in which case they promised him their best assistance. In the meanwhile, they endeavoured to execute Henry's order to obtain possession of the child-Queen's person, either by stratagem or force; failed in doing so, as did the King's efforts to bribe or bully the Earl of Arran into submission to his imperious will; and after some months of angry contention, Henry found himself compelled to temporize, and accept the terms proffered by the Scottish Council, by which it was arranged that as soon as Mary attained her tenth year, she should be sent to England; for the due fulfilment of which stipulation, several Scottish nobles were to be placed as hostages in his hands.

Whilst these proceedings were taking place, Cardinal Beaton had contrived to negotiate his own liberation and procure aid from France in money and ammunition. He next succeeded in carrying off Mary from Linlithgow Palace to Stirling Castle, and, reconciling himself with the Earl of Arran, caused her to be crowned there with much solemnity on the 9th of September, 1543, she being then about nine months old. Henry, rendered furious by this bold defiance, instantly commenced hostilities, and persisted in ruthless though utterly abortive war for two years, when Scotland was included in the treaty of peace with France.

Six months afterwards, the monster-king died; but his Scottish policy was followed out by the Protector Somerset, uncle of Edward VI. Scotland was again invaded in force; but even the disastrous battle of Pinkie failed to shake the resolution of the Scots, and the only decisive result was the reinvigoration of the old feeling in favour of the alliance with France, the chief partisans whereof, supported by French fleets and armies, gradually obtained complete ascendency. The Queen-mother was nominated Regent. Knox was sent to the galleys at Brest; George Wishart and other reformers suffered death; whilst, as early as July, 1548, the three estates ratified the contract of marriage between the young Queen and the Dauphin of France, for which country Mary embarked at Dumbarton in the following month, and, escorted by a French fleet, reached Brest in safety. She was now close upon six years old, and had resided during the previous four years at Inchmahone, a small island in the Lake of Monteith, chiefly companioned by four noble children of her own age, creed, sex, and baptismal name—Mary Beaton, Mary Fleming, Mary Seaton, and Mary Livingstone—all of whom accompanied her to France. Thus sequestered and early expatriated, Mary Queen of Scots became inevitably, and by no fault of her own, identified with the intolerant party ruling in her name, and with the alliance from which that party derived its chief support.

The royal child was received with great honour by Henry II., king of France; the doors of prisons were flung wide as she passed along in triumphal procession to the Palace of St. Germain-en-Laye; and she was soon afterwards solemnly affianced to the Dauphin, Francis de Valois, an amiable boy of about her own age, but of a feeble consti-

tution. The beauty of Mary Queen of Scots has passed into a proverb; and if there is some doubt whether the popular idea of it—derived, it is asserted, from portraits, not of the youthful Scottish Queen, but of a Countess of Mansfield—is a correct one, there can be no question that she was of surpassing loveliness. Her finely-shaped figure was something above the middle height; her complexion luminously fair; her head, moulded after the Greek type, was mantled with a profusion of bright auburn hair; and her brilliant, dark hazel eyes, full, flexile lips, and dimpled chin, lent such enchanting expression to the intelligent vivacity of her speech and smile, that Henry II.'s exclamation on first beholding her, "Are you not an angel?" seemed rather a natural expression of delighted surprise than a hyperbolical extravagance.

The royal bride elect was placed, with a French princess, in a convent for the completion of her education, and became, we are told, so deeply fascinated by the tranquil seclusion of nun-life, that, but for the opposition of Henry II. and her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, she would have taken the veil—a story which rests upon little better evidence than that she wept at parting with the gentle nuns, and embroidered an altar-piece for the convent, previous to exchanging its sacred shade for the infinitely more congenial mundane splendour of the French Court, where she at once was recognised as its supreme grace and ornament. Fêtes innumerable were given in her honour, and courtly historiographers exhausted the resources of panegyric in high-flown description of her charms and accomplishments. She sang and played divinely; in dancing outstripped Anne of Este; her poetry eclipsed that of Ronzard—which is quite believeable; Fauchet was less

skilled in rhetoric; Pasquier's knowledge of history could not compare with hers, and Buchanan had nothing further to teach her of the language of Cicero. "Ah, kingdom of Scotland!" exclaimed Brantôme, "I cannot but think your days must be shorter, your nights longer, now you have lost the princess by whom you were illumined!"—and, as the highest possible eulogy upon her talents which he could invent, he declared that the lovely Queen of Scotland "had as much wit and eloquence as if she had been born in France!" Even when arrayed, as she sometimes chose to be, in a Highland dress, "*à la sauvage*," her exquisite beauty was but slightly dimmed by the "barbarous dress;" but it was when illustrated by "a lovely robe *à la Française*, a bonnet *à l'Italienne*, the flowing white dress vainly emulating the pure lustre of her complexion," that it shone forth in unclouded splendour.

This peerless lady, whose hand Charles, the French king's second son, more envied his brother than his elder right to the crown, was married to the Dauphin at Notre Dame, on the 24th April, 1558, by the Cardinal de Bourbon, with great ceremony and magnificence. The two queens, Mary of Scotland and Catherine de Medicis of France, rode together in the same palanquin, a cardinal walking on each side thereof; a juxtaposition which, in the bride's opinion, conferred great honour upon "the descendant of a Florentine merchant," whom no accidental elevation could raise to a true equality with the hereditary Queen of Scots. By the conditions of this marriage, Francis became King of Scotland; and the eldest child, if a boy, was to be heir to the thrones of both France and Scotland: if there was no male heir, the eldest girl would be a daughter of France only, though Queen of Scotland; and even in the event of Mary's

decease without issue, her husband was to retain possession of the Scottish crown, and all other rights vested in his wife.

The events that now swiftly succeeded each other cast ominous shadows over this brightly-promising destiny. By the accidental death of Henry II. at a mock tournament, the diadem of France devolved upon Mary's fair young brow, to rest loosely there about seventeen months only, her boy-husband dying without issue on the 5th of December, 1560, soon after the demise of Mary, Queen of England. Her mother, the Queen-regent of Scotland, had also previously shuffled off this mortal coil; and the youthful sovereign of the Scots, despoiled of the marital sceptre which so greatly strengthened her hold of that which she inherited, found herself confronted at the very threshold of her actual reign by the powerful and politic Elizabeth, whom she was unwisely counselled to immediately defy, by a refusal to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh, by which the Queen of Scots formally renounced any claim she might be supposed to possess to the English crown; she being Henry VIII.'s grand-niece, and nearest legitimate blood relative; the illegitimacy of Anne Boleyn's daughter being unswervingly insisted upon by the Catholic and Divine hereditary-right partisans, however otherwise Acts of Parliament or the will of peoples might determine. The Queen of Scots did not contemplate any overt or military means of seating herself upon the English throne; but to hold tenacious possession of an arrow in her quiver, which, at a favourable conjuncture, very possible to occur in the then unsettled state of men's minds, might be used with irresistible effect, was not the less to challenge and ensure the English Queen's implacable hostility; and Elizabeth lost no opportunity of envenoming the

revolt of the Scottish people against the Papal supremacy, and of associating her own right to sovereignty with that of the nation to be custodian of its own conscience. Mary, though inextricably identified with the Papal pretensions, does not appear to have been influenced by any feeling of bigotry or reactionary zeal, and she thus sensibly expressed herself upon the subject to Sir N. Throckmorton, Elizabeth's envoy :—"The religion which I profess, I take to be most acceptable to God; and, indeed, I neither know nor desire to know any other. I mean to constrain none of my subjects, though I could wish they were all as I am, and I trust they shall have no support to constrain me." Neither did she scruple to admit that some administrative Church reforms were called for and desirable :—"Though I be young and not well learned, yet have I heard the matter oft disputed with my uncle, my Lord Cardinal, with those that thought they could say something on the matter, and I found no great reason to change my opinion; but I have often heard him confess that great errors have come into the Church, and great disorders amongst the clergy, of which errors and disorders he wished there might be a reformation." Wise words, and from beautiful lips; but no human speech might quench the flame quickened by the fiery breath of Knox,—he had several years before returned from the galleys,—and one is not surprised that the mind of the beauteous young Queen was filled with gloomy forebodings when quitting the tranquilly-stagnant moral atmosphere of despotic France for stormy Scotland, tossed and torn in the tumultuous birth-throes of a freer and sterner life.

Upon the decease of her husband, Mary secluded herself for forty days in a *chambre de deuil* at Orleans, albeit her mourning privacy was broken in upon by a visit from Darn-

ley, when, it is alleged, her future union with that poor popinjay was decided upon; a circumstance which considerably mitigates the sorrowing sympathy excited by her elegiac lament commencing with—

> "En mon triste et doux chant,
> D'un ton fort lamentable,
> Je jette un œil tranchant
> De perte incomparable:
> En soupirs cuisans,
> Passent mes meilleurs ans."

Mary's rhymed Farewell to France has been thus prettily paraphrased:—

> "Adieu, thou pleasant land of France,
> The dearest of all lands to me,
> When life was like a joyful dance—
> The joyful dance of infancy!
> Farewell my childhood's laughing wiles;
> Farewell the joys of youth's bright day!
> The bark that bears me from thy smiles,
> Bears but my meaner half away:
> The best is thine; my changeless heart
> Is given, beloved France, to thee!
> And let it sometimes, though we part,
> Remind thee with a sigh of me."

The acclamations which greeted Mary's arrival in Scotland were partly the echo of the old traditional loyalty to the House of Stuart, partly the expression of a natural sympathy and admiration for a young and beautiful woman, called to the performance of duties so high and perilous. That affectionate sympathy stood the Queen of Scots in good stead upon many trying occasions, which, in these pages, we cannot so much as glance at. The death of Darnley,

darkly interpreted in the popular mind by the subsequent shameful marriage with Bothwell, deprived her of that strong support, and thenceforth she was a queen in name only. Material power was irretrievably gone; but in the solitude of Fotheringay Castle her moral royalty resumed its empire, and Mary, prisoned and slain by lawless violence, shields the beautiful Queen of Scots far more effectually than her stoutest and most eloquent champions, from the arrows of a demonstrative accusation which would else be irresistible.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

THE members of the very exclusive Kit-Kat Club assembled in council at the commencement of the London season, 1698, to nominate the lady who should be their standing toast for the current year—have her honoured name inscribed upon their drinking-glasses, and her portrait painted in Kit-Kat fashion,—were considerably puzzled for a choice; when the Earl of Dorchester, afterwards Duke of Kingston, suggested the eldest of his three daughters, the Lady Mary Pierrepoint. This proposition being demurred to, inasmuch as the said Lady Mary Pierrepoint was personally unknown to the members of the club, the Earl volunteered to go at once and bring her there for approval. He soon returned, bringing with him a beautiful child of about eight years of age, the Lady Mary in question, who was received with acclamation, declared the toast of the year, and remained throughout the banquet, receiving the compliments and caresses of the members with a delighted ease far more womanly than child-like,—so early responsive to opportunity was her gay coquetry of nature. The emotions of gratified vanity excited upon this occasion left an indelible impression on her mind. "Pleasure were too poor a word," she exclaims, "to express my sensations : never again throughout my life have I spent so happy a day." There is an unconscious self-revelation in these few words rarely observable in her ladyship's clever and elaborate correspondence with all its artistic confidences, and here and there apparent *abandon.*

The charming girl thus oddly introduced to the society of a drinking-club was born in 1690, at Thoresby, Nottinghamshire, and had lost her mother (before marriage, the Lady Mary Fielding, the daughter of the Earl of Denbigh) when she was in her fifth year only, since when her education had been under the direction of the Earl, her father, of the same quality and reach as that of her brother, the Viscount Newark. With such facility did she acquire a familiarity with the Greek and Latin classics and Parliamentary politics, that before she had left off her frocks, she had translated Epictetus, and sent her performance to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, accompanied by a long, verbose letter, in which she prattles sententiously of "the sinking liberties of England," only to be saved from final wreck by his Right Reverend Lordship's "fortitude of soul," and, moreover, dilates upon the necessity of ladies being learned, (in a conventional sense learned, that is,—versed in Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Martial, *etcetera*,) in order to reclaim them to piety, —there being, she positively assures the Bishop, "more Atheists among fine ladies than the loosest sort of rakes;" a rather bold venture in such a department of comparative statistics for a young girl of fifteen to make! Lady Mary's studies in modern, and especially English literature, contrasted strikingly with the lofty range of her classical acquirements, being chiefly confined to romances, in which Damons and Phylisses, Clelias and Celadons, Harriet Byrons and Pharamonds, sighed and simpered through interminable volumes of fantastic sentiment and puerile adventure; whilst, in dramatic writing, the *beau idéal* from which she never swerved was the tragedy of "George Barnwell." In other respects, Lady Mary Pierrepoint's home culture had a direct tendency to prematurely mould a girl of

her temperament and mental force into a self-confident, "strong-minded" woman of the world. She presided in her father's household and at his table almost before she was physically capable of doing so—a principal duty being to carve for and urgently importune each individual guest to eat more than he had inclination for; an office that, from the conversational contact incident thereto, must have been utterly destructive of the charm and sanctity of maidenly sensitiveness and reserve. A very attractive, much-admired personage, withal, was the Lady Mary Pierrepoint—handsome, graceful, vivacious, buoyant with animal life, and the wittiest woman of her time—if wit consist in phrasing brilliantly, by no means extraordinarily brilliant, subtle, or suggestive thoughts. She herself, indeed, had the highest opinion of herself, and especially of her epistolary powers: "Keep my letters," she exclaims, with laughable self-appreciation; "they will be as good as Madame de Sévigné's, forty years hence." One of the earliest of the compositions—and a favourable specimen, too—that were to rival the sparkling and tender effusions of the *spirituelle*, loving, unselfish Frenchwoman, is the following clever and coarse epistle, addressed to her intimate friend, Anne Wortley, the daughter of Mr. Sidney Wortley Montague, a son of Admiral Montague, Earl of Sandwich, from Yorkshire:—

"In the first form of these creatures (the Yorkshire beaux) is Mr. Vanbrog. Heaven, no doubt compassionating our dulness, has inspired him with a passion that makes us all ready to die with laughing. 'Tis credibly reported that he is endeavouring at the honourable estate of matrimony, and vows to lead a sinful life no more. Whether pure holiness inspires his mind, or dotage turns his brain, is hard to say. 'Tis certain he keeps Monday and Thursday market

(Assembly days) constantly, and for those that don't regard worldly muck there's extra good choice indeed. I believe last Monday there were two hundred pieces of woman's flesh — fat and lean, — but you know Van's taste was always odd. His inclination to ruins has given him a taste for Mrs. Yarborough: he sighs and ogles so that it would do your heart good to see him, and she is not a little pleased, in so small a proportion of men amongst such a number of women, that a whole man should fall to her share."

Lady Mary's intense love of admiration and applause was gratified by the more or less sincere adulation of numerous danglers—lovers they called themselves, and many no doubt were; and it is difficult to say which delighted her most—the incense offered to the woman or the wit, her beauty or her genius. It happened, however, that her friend Miss Anne Wortley's brother, the Honourable Edward Wortley Montague, a learned, methodic gentleman, and member of Parliament, either had or affected to have a contempt for feminine talent and acquirement; but Lady Mary chancing to meet him one day at his sister's, so effectually exerted her powers of fascination, that the disdainful gentleman was vanquished at once—not by wit, as her biographers pretend, which never yet had power to appreciably quicken a masculine pulse,—but by her face and figure, as she well knew, and her married life abundantly proved. It was found during this first very vivacious colloquy with her future husband, that she had not read Quintus Curtius; a circumstance which afforded Mr. Wortley Montague an excellent opportunity of improving his acquaintance with her charming ladyship, by sending her on the following day a handsomely-bound copy, with these leaden lines written on the fly-leaf:—

"Beauty like hers had vanquish'd Persia shown,
The Macedon had laid his empire down,
And polish'd Greece obey'd a barbarous throne:
Had wit so bright adorn'd a Grecian dame,
The amorous youth had lost his thirst for fame,
Nor distant India sought through Syria's plain,
But to the Muse's stream hither had run,
And thought her lover more than Ammon's son."

The fascinated, but, in more senses than one, fearful lover's next device was to write his sister's letters to Lady Mary, which, though faithfully transcribed and signed by Miss Wortley, could not have been for a moment mistaken, especially by the sharp-sighted young lady to whom they were addressed, for the language of one female to another, thickly interspersed, as they were, with such phrases as, "So fond an admirer as I am of the charming Lady Mary;"—"It is as impossible for my dearest Lady Mary to utter a thought that can seem dull, as to put on a look that is not beautiful;" and so on. The following answer to one of these thinly-masked declarations, dated August 21, 1709, Lady Mary's nineteenth year, is at all events quite decisive that the writer knew perfectly well whose compliments she was replying to and provoking:—

"I am infinitely obliged to you, my dear Miss Wortley, for the wit, beauty, and other fine qualities you bestow upon me. Next to receiving them from Heaven, you are the person from whom I would choose to receive gifts and graces. I am very well satisfied to owe them to your own delicacy of imagination, which represents to you the idea of a fine lady, and you have good-nature enough to fancy I am she. All this is mighty well; but you do not stop there;—imagination is boundless. After giving me imagi-

nary wit and beauty, you give me imaginary passions, and you tell me I'm in love. If I am, 'tis a perfect sin of ignorance, for I don't so much as know the man's name! I have been studying these three hours, and cannot guess who you mean. I passed the days of Nottingham Races at Thoresby, without seeing or wishing to see one of the sex. Now, if I *am* in love, I have very hard fortune to conceal it so industriously from my own knowledge, and yet discover it so much to other people. 'Tis against all form to have such a passion as that without giving one sigh for the matter. Pray tell me the name of him I love, that I may, according to the laudable custom of lovers, sigh to the woods and groves hereabouts, and teach it to the echo."

Miss Anne Wortley died, and the correspondence between he lover and the lady became direct and to the purpose of marriage, though shrinkingly, hesitatingly so on both sides. Mr. Wortley had evidently an unconquerable misgiving that he was about to wreck the happiness of his life for the evanescent gratification of a misplaced passion, which, however, he could not conquer; and Lady Mary shared his doubts and fears, if she did not participate his ardour. His letters to her are full of such passages as these:—"Never engage with a man unless you propose to yourself the highest satisfaction from him, and none other;"—"I would give a great deal to know what passes in your heart." Her replies echoed and confirmed these misgivings:—"You think," she wrote, "if you married me, I should be passionately fond of you for one month, and of somebody else the next. Neither would happen: I can esteem, I can be a friend; but I don't know whether I can love. Expect all that is complaisant and easy, but never what is fond, in me." Like all lovers, Mr. Wortley Montague imagined that true

felicity could only be secured by seclusion in the country "with one fair spirit for his minister." Lady Mary was clearer-sighted, because unblinded by the mists of passion. "Retirement," she urged, "would soon be disagreeable to you. *A face is too slight a foundation for happiness:* you would soon be tired of seeing every day the same thing." Another letter thus concludes: "Make no answer to this. If you can like me on my own terms, 'tis not to me you must make the proposals; if not, to what purpose is our correspondence?"

Mr. Wortley did at length make a formal proposal to the Earl of Dorchester; for although thoroughly conscious of the folly he was committing, yet, as Lord Wharncliffe, Lady Mary's naturally-partial biographer, truly remarks, "every struggle to get free left him still a captive, galled by his chain, but unable to sever one link of it effectually." An unexpected difficulty presented itself when the property-arrangements came to be discussed. Mr. Wortley entertained notions with respect to the transmission to heirs of real property not common to his class, and peremptorily refused to irrevocably entail his landed estate upon the eldest male issue of the proposed marriage, who might, he remarked with prophetic truth, "prove a spendthrift, an idiot, or a villain." The Earl of Dorchester was as firmly resolved that his grandson should run no risk of beggary, and the nuptial negotiations were broken off. Probably, Mr. Wortley Montague's more than doubts of the prudence of his choice strengthened his scruples regarding entails and the privileges of primogeniture; but the appearance of another, and, in the Earl's opinion, more eligible suitor for the hand he had relinquised, gave new and irresistible force to his passion. This fresh candidate for Lady Mary's favour gave the Earl *carte blanche* as to settlements, and moreover

agreed to maintain a town-establishment—a point Mr. Wortley had never distinctly conceded to the lady's wishes. Lady Mary's objections to the proposed union were silenced, though not removed, by the Earl of Dorchester's positive declaration that if she proved refractory, he would forthwith pack her off to the country, and keep her shut up there till she regained her senses: the wedding dresses were ordered, and other bridal preliminaries hurried forward, to be at the last moment defeated by Lady Mary Pierrepoint's elopement and marriage with Mr. Edward Wortley Montague, the final step having been preceded by the following ominously apprehensive letter from the vacillating lady to her rash lover:—"I tremble for what we are doing! Are you sure you will love me for ever? Shall we never repent? I fear and I hope. . . . I foresee all that will happen on this occasion; I shall incense my family to the highest degree. The generality of the world will blame my conduct, and the relations and friends of —— will invent a thousand stories of me; yet 'tis possible you may recompense everything to me. In this last letter which I am fond of, you promise me all that I wish. . . . . Since I writ so far, I received your Friday letter. I will be only yours, and I will do as you please." The marriage took place in the bride's twenty-fourth year, 1713.

The sinister forebodings of both the lady and her husband were fully realized. They soon grew indifferent to each other; and Lady Mary fluttered wearily through a wasted life, as ambassadress at Constantinople, in dangling about the English Court, sentimental flirtation with Pope and the Muses, and discreditable dabblings in South Sea and other bubbles, till 1739, when she finally separated from her husband, and left England for a foreign residence, her former

residence in Turkey having immensely increased her distaste for English domesticity; and did not revisit her native country till her husband's death, in 1761—a lapse of twenty-two years—though her daughter, Lady Bute, had repeatedly solicited her return.

The still "strong-minded" lady filled up the vacuity of an unreverenced old age by cards and scandal, and dying, left no other memorial of the large intellectual gifts, with which few women have been so lavishly endowed, than a collection of extremely clever, cosmopolitan letters, which no genuine Englishman would wish a relative of his to have been the author of—no true English mother, wife, or maiden can read with sympathy or advantage, except to mark how futile, for the achievement of a noble purpose and lasting fame, are the highest talents a woman may possess, when not associated with womanly tenderness, simplicity, and truth.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

IT is a common experience, that only the night-flowers of memory upon which tears have fallen, permanently retain their freshness and perfume; its sun-blossoms usually passing away with the ephemeral brightness that gave them transient life and colour. Hence it is, that of the long line of Queens of France, but one, the hapless Marie-Antoinette, lives in the world's remembrance; consecrated to a sad immortality by the baptism of the scaffold, and surviving, not as the imperial daughter of Maria-Theresa, the crowned consort of a French King: for the

> "———— shadow like an angel,
> With bright hair dabbled with blood,"

which ever, as we mentally revert to the saturnalia of fiends in which she perished, gleams out vividly in the foreground of the hideous hurly-burly, is not the beautiful and brilliant Queen, but the pale prisoner of the Temple, the Widow Capet "appealing to all mothers" from Tinville's tribunal of ruffians; the Christian woman meekly bowing down her discrowned, majestic head beneath the death-stroke of the guillotine! Yet Marie-Antoinette, it may be urged, was withal only one of many thousand innocent women slain ruthlessly as she, and should, therefore, excite no keener sympathy than the socially meanest sufferer of them all. It might be so, were it not that we all instinctively measure the depth and terror of the abyss by the loftiness of the height from which the victim has been precipitated, and that imagination, more powerful over the minds of men

than abstract reason, will ever contrastively associate the circumstances attending the birth and death of the martyred Queen of France—the brilliancy and promise of the young life I am about to briefly outline, with the gloom and horror of its untimely close. If not purely philosophical, it is, at all events, quite natural to so feel; and I for one devoutly hold that it is a genuine and divine, not a factitious and earth-born sentiment, which can reach and sound with so true and sure a finger the inner chords of human sympathy. We are soul-inspired men, after all,—not brute reasoning-machines.

Marie-Antoinette-Josèphe-Jeanne de Lorraine, daughter of the Empress Maria-Theresa and Francis Duke of Lorraine, was born at the Palace of Schönbrun, near Vienna, on the 2nd of November, 1755, the day whereon Lisbon was destroyed by earthquake; and Marie-Antoinette,—I use the French orthography of her baptismal names, because most familiar to English readers,—Marie-Antoinette, when hopelessly involved in the infinitely more terrible moral convulsion of the Revolution, frequently reverted to the circumstance as prefiguring the catastrophe of her own life; one of numerous instances of egotistical superstition in great personages, always absurdly prone to fancy that remarkable natural phenomena are excited and controlled by sympathy with their imperial or royal destinies. The young Archduchess, who differed chiefly from her numerous sisters and brothers by much greater beauty of person and joyous vivacity of temperament, seems to have felt for her magnificent Empress-mother unbounded awe and admiration; but her father, the mild and courteous Francis of Lorraine, certainly possessed by far the largest space of her filial love. The alliance of the Lorraine family with the Imperial House of Austria infused a

more genial spirit of kindliness and *bonhommie* into the palatial circles of Vienna, which, helped by Maria-Theresa's superb disdain of household ways and manners—the education of her children included,—of everything, in fact, below the region of *la haute politique*,—brought about a relaxation of the rules of courtly ceremony, which, presently agreeable as it might have been, had an injurious effect upon the future of Marie-Antoinette, destined as she was, almost from her cradle, to one day preside at a Court, of which the deep-seated Pompadour, Dubarry profligacy, imperatively required to be concealed from the public eye by the glittering veil of a scrupulous and imposing etiquette. In after years, when worried and perplexed by the toilsome exactions of French ceremonial, Marie-Antoinette used to revert regretfully to the gay *abandon* which characterized the manners of the Imperial Court during her early days, and was never tired of relating anecdotes, derived from her father, of the patriarchal simplicity which marked the intercourse of the Dukes of Lorraine with their subjects or vassals. Their mode of levying taxes was certainly of the oddest, most primitive kind. The Duke, when in want of money, used to rise in church after sermon, raise his hat as a sign for silence, and then state the precise sum required, which he was sure to receive by voluntary contribution before the week was out, and usually something over. I mention these things because they throw a strong light upon the youthful career of this much-slandered Queen of France, and, whilst revealing the source, stamp the true character of an impressive vivacity of disposition, which malignity and prejudice have distorted into unqueenlike levity and indecorum.

Marie-Antoinette's bookish, or, so to speak, mechanical

education, was shamefully neglected. The French language being the vernacular of the nursery, she learned with sufficient accuracy; and Italian—taught her by the Abbé Metastasio, the only conscientious preceptor engaged by Maria-Theresa — she spoke with fluency; but German, strange to say, she could with difficulty understand. Of history, geography, and correlative branches of ordinary knowledge, she knew next to nothing; and even her musical and drawing lessons were either hurried over carelessly, or totally neglected; the Empress contenting herself with a formal periodical report of her children's educational progress, which she never attempted to verify. This defective youthful training was a source of bitter after-regret to Marie-Antoinette, exposing her, as it did, to the sneers and sarcasms of the numerous class of Court reptiles, that are never more delighted than when they are enabled to sharpen their dull venom with some admixture of rankling truth. When, however, the time approached for the solemnization of her marriage with Louis XV.'s grandson, it was deemed indispensable that the future Dauphiness and Queen should at least be instructed in the conventional manners and maxims of the French Court; and, at Madame Dubarry's suggestion, two comedians of the Théâtre Français were despatched to Vienna for that purpose. This was *un peu trop fort.* With all Maria-Theresa's neglect of maternal duties, she could not overlook the glaring impropriety of such a selection, and the comedians were superseded by the Abbé Vermond, a creature of Choiseul the minister, who hoped to play off the influence of the young Dauphiness against that of the Dubarry *coterie,* with whom he was himself at deadly, though covert feud. The vain and volatile Abbé fulfilled his mission by strongly prejudicing the mind of the Archduchess

against the favourite, and the Court *noblesse*, who for their own purposes bowed to her supremacy; and adroitly falling in with the bias of Marie-Antoinette's sentiments, insisted that the antiquated and cumbrous barbarism of French etiquette must quickly collapse and disappear when brought into contact with the natural grace and frank urbanity of her Imperial Highness. The bride thus cleverly practised upon was in her sixteenth year only when summoned from her home and country to wed a prince about two years older than herself, whom she had never seen, and who—but this at the time was unknown to her—had shown as marked a repugnance to the alliance as his mild passiveness of temperament permitted. Nature had, indeed, been very bountiful in both personal and mental gifts to the high-born damsel thus early setting out upon the brilliant path leading directly to a throne—the scaffold beyond that throne hidden for yet many years behind the cloud-curtain of the future. Tall, of an exquisitely graceful figure; her Grecian head wreathed with light-brown silken hair, set superbly upon a neck of ivory; her finely-chiselled features illumined by brilliant eyes of blue, and softened by a pensive, intelligent smile,—Marie-Antoinette presented an *ensemble* of loveliness, gentle yet queenlike, described as entrancing, and which, we know, inspired Burke's exclamatory burst of eloquent regret that the days of chivalry were gone, "when millions of swords would have leapt from their scabbards to have avenged the thought that had dared insult her." Its effect upon the Viennese assembled to witness her departure,—aided by recollections of her free, generous kindliness of disposition, evinced in a thousand instances familiar to them all,—was such that a spontaneous and general cry of grief and anger arose from the crowd as the youthful Princess left the palace-

balcony to enter her travelling-carriage; and frantic efforts, with some difficulty repressed by the cavalry escort, were made to prevent her leaving, by cutting the harness-traces.

Arrived at Kell on the frontier, where the Archduchess was to be taken charge of by the ladies of the French Court deputed to receive her there, she was compelled to submit to a custom of absurd ceremonial etiquette which must have alike surprised and disconcerted her. In the days of the old French monarchy, the foreign bride of the King or Dauphin was not to bring to her adopted country—that is, not to wear on her person—one single article of dress, not so much as a pair of stockings; and in order to facilitate in this instance the exchange of Austrian for French habiliments, and that all might be done in conformity with strict precedent, a kind of tent was erected on the frontier line, with an enclosed compartment at each end—one for the accommodation of the bride's Austrian lady-attendants, the other for that of the French *grandes dames*, at the head of whom was the Comtesse de Noailles, whose hereditary privilege it was to present the first article of French clothing to the denuded Dauphiness-elect, who, however, it happened on this occasion, after, at a given signal, hurrying abashed and terrified from one extremity of the tent to the other, threw herself weeping and blushing into the arms of the wrong lady! and the ceremony, but for the resolute resistance of the Archduchess, would have been gone over again.

On the following day the wedding cavalcade set out for Paris. The journey was one continuously triumphal progress throughout; and at Compiègne, Louis, a not at all impatient bridegroom, awaited the Archduchess, whom he received with a civil indifference, which the bride mentally concluded to be the mode of behaviour prescribed for such occasions by the inexo-

rable rules of French etiquette. She presented the Dauphin with the following brief note from her mother, the Empress: "Your bride, dear Dauphin, is now separated from me. As she has ever been my delight, she will, I doubt not, be your happiness. For this purpose I have educated her."—Which having glanced at, Louis shuffled without a word of comment into his pocket.

The marriage ceremony was performed at Compiègne, on the 16th of May, 1770; and immediately it was concluded, the cortege was again *en route* for Paris. Marie Antoinette's reception there by both Monarch and people was enthusiastic, magnificent. The King, Louis XV., was so delighted with the Dauphiness, that he immediately presented her with a pearl necklace of immense value, to the great chagrin of Madame Dubarry, by whom it had long been coveted; and the citizens of Paris, crowding in front of the Palace of the Tuileries, clamorously insisted upon seeing the beautiful stranger. The hurricane of acclaim which greeted her appearance in the balcony surprised and startled her. "*Quelle foule!*" she exclaimed, with some, as if prophetic, nervousness of tone and manner. "Yes, madame," reassuringly replied the Governor of Paris, Monsieur le Duc de Brissac,—"Yes, madame, and they are all, I may say without offence, your lovers." This first tumultuous reception of Marie-Antoinette by the Paris populace agitated her more than when—the palace-balcony exchanged for the felon's cart, the timid girl developed into the heroic woman — their furious cries and curses heralded and pursued her to a bloody grave!

The bridal month—hardly to be called so—was clouded from the first with sinister foreshadowings. The accidental or malicious kindling of an immense *feu d'artifice* before it was properly placed and secured, during a magnificent fire-

work display on the Place Louis-Quinze in honour of the Dauphin's marriage, caused fifty-three persons to be burnt and trampled to death, and a still larger number to be more or less grievously hurt and mangled. The newly-wedded pair instantly offered their joint income for a year, in mitigation of the calamity; an act of considerate humanity which did not in the least abate the efforts of active and influential parties, already from various motives organized for the common purpose of unpopularizing the Dauphiness, to thus early connect the name of Marie-Antoinette in the memories of the populace with misfortune and disaster. The outspoken frankness of the inexperienced girl-wife supplied weapons which her enemies eagerly availed themselves of. Invited to Versailles by the King, she refused to sit at the same table with Madame Dubarry; a mortal offence not only to the all-powerful favourite herself, but to the crowd of buzzing, stinging Court parasites, who resented, as an insult personal to themselves, the womanly pride which disdained to win the favour of a King by so much as tacitly countenancing his vices. And Marie-Antoinette, a stranger in that hostile Court, had, although the Dauphiness, need of the Monarch's favour; for Louis, her husband—husband in name only during the first seven years of their nominally-married life — was too much absorbed in his mechanical pursuits (smith-work chiefly) to have ear for, much less leisure to perceive and appreciate the drift of, the venemous slanders spat at his beautiful wife by serpent-tongues, whose instinct it was to beslime and sting whatever by contrast reproached their own vileness. "Your daughter is only imprudent," wrote the secret Envoy of Maria-Theresa, deputed to privately ascertain what truth there might be in the hourly-darkening rumours respecting her that flew from courtly

mouth to mouth, quite audible though spoken in undertones. Decidedly imprudent! When her carriage broke down, Marie-Antoinette had the inconceivable temerity to continue her ride in a hackney-coach; and was more than once seen walking at Trianon in a mere straw hat!

Not the simplicity of her manners only, but her very virtues, the compassionate kindliness of her disposition, were sanctified and holy traitors to her. She was riding out, when a child was thrown down by the carriage and severely hurt. Marie-Antoinette, who had a passion for children—rendered more acute by the belief, caused by the strange indifference of Louis to the charming woman whom he subsequently idolized, that she would never be blessed with offspring of her own—conceived a strong liking for the handsome little boy, and purchased of its parents, poor working people, the right to educate and provide for the child; an adoption which speaks little for the Queen's Lavaterian discernment—for a more ungrateful, graceless scamp than her *protégé* proved himself to be, when calamity fell upon his royal benefactress, never perhaps existed. The adoption of the child—knowing, as the courtiers did, the state of marital relation existing between Marie-Antoinette and her husband—was too suggestive an incident to be left unimproved, and by intangible, but not the less effective, machinery of sneer, innuendo, shoulder-shrugging, eyebrows raised, mouths pursed adroitly, an impression was extensively propagated that the child was Marie-Antoinette's own,—as much her own as the puerile device by which she had foolishly thought not only to seal up her husband's eyes, but the world's lips!

Happily, Louis, though for so many years an indifferent, was not a suspicious or jealous husband, and the calumny, if it reached his ear, found no resting-place in his mind:

nay, he was just then awakening to an individualizing perception, so to speak, of the grace and loveliness of his young wife and, before long, surprised and affected her to tears by suddenly taking her arm and addressing her in terms of familiar endearment. Thenceforth their union was a reality, to be sundered only by the glaive of the executioner. Their eldest child, the dauphin, who, in the after bitter time, fell a victim to Simon the shoemaker's brutality, was born in the eighth year of his parent's marriage.

Still, with all his new-sprung tenderness and devotion, the circlet of sovereignty which Louis XVI. at length placed upon his young wife's brow could be but a glittering crown of thorns. Veneration, respect, love for the ancient monarchy of France, was extinct in the national mind; the last faint sparkles had been quenched in the Pompadour-Dubarry profligacy, and the new occupant of the Bourbon throne, though a just, well-meaning man, was not one to restore by brilliant achievement, or boldness of *coup d'état* despotism, the glory or terror of his dimmed, dishonoured crown. And Marie-Antoinette could in kingcraft be no helpmate for him: a bewildering phantasm rather, beguiling him into fatalest depths earlier than he might have fallen therein but for her misleading guidance; believing as she—a sister of the child held in Maria-Theresa's arms when the Hungarian nobles replied to the appeal addressed to their chivalrous loyalty, by the hurricane-shout of "Moriamur pro nostra Regina" must have done—did, that the crown was a talisman of power, that, if courageously exerted, could not fail to ultimately quell the fiercest outbreak of rebellious discontent;—benevolent contempt of the people being as much part of Marie-Antoinette's nature, as personal

amiability and graciousness: a grievous error, very bitterly expiated!

That the spell of loyalty, upon which Marie-Antoinette too confidently relied, was, though not all-potent, one of mighty mastery, especially when the crown glitters on the brow of a beautiful woman, was well known to the subtle and selfish men who, for their own purposes, were indefatigable in widening the breach that had gradually yawned between the throne and nation; and no artifice, no calumny was spared, that might in the eyes of the suffering, exasperated people defile with moral leprosy the queenly grace and beauty which compelled the homage of the beholder, and, as in the case of Edmund Burke, had power to transform the most ardent of philosophic reformers into a devoted champion of the divinity of hereditary kings. Many were the imprudences, born of pardonable vanity and natural gaiety of heart, by which the Queen helped the work of her slanderers; but that which—cleverly confused, distorted, falsified by the band of literary bravoes in the pay of the Duke of Orleans, subsequently "Egalité"—did her, and through her the crown, the deepest and most lasting injury, was the affair of the diamond necklace, with respect to which, it has long since been admitted that her Majesty was not even chargeable with indiscretion. That once perplexing web of fact and fiction, woven with such patient cunning, with so much difficulty unravelled, has since shrunk in the light of impartial investigation into the following tissue of consummate knavery and folly.

Herr, or Monsieur Behmer, jeweller to the French Court, conceived the project, towards the close of Louis XV.'s reign, of making the costliest necklace the world had ever seen, with the view of disposing of it to Madame Dubarry, who

would, he knew, have no difficulty in persuading her valet, La France, as she was accustomed to call the King, to gratify her by its possession, enormous as the price might be. Long, however, before the *chef-d'œuvre* of costly jewellery could be achieved, Louis XV. was carried off by the small-pox, and the Dubarry driven from the Court she had dominated and disgraced. But, achieved it at last was, by dint of exhausting all Behmer's available funds, and pledging his credit to an immense amount; and being composed of fourteen glorious diamonds, must have been one of the most splendid ornaments that ever glittered upon the neck of queen or empress. Behmer offered it to Marie-Antoinette; but the price, 70,000 pounds sterling, was a far greater sum than, in the then condition of the royal exchequer, she dared expend for a personal ornament, matchless as it might be; and when the King wished to bestow it upon her, she peremptorily declined the uxorious gift, remarking that they had just then "more need of ships-of-war than of diamonds;"—France at the time being at war with Great Britain, in defence of the revolted States of America.

Poor Behmer, pressed by his clamorous creditors, forced his way into the Queen's presence, threw himself at her feet, and implored her Majesty either to purchase his necklace or "permit him to drown himself!" The Queen was indignant; told the man he required no royal leave and licence to cast himself into the Seine; but, touched by his evident frenzy of distress, suggested that he might sell the diamonds singly. "*Dépecez votre collet,*" was her Majesty's sensible advice, which, however, Behmer could not, it appeared, acquiesce in without incurring terrible loss, the diamonds, singly, being nothing like so valuable as in the brilliant and artistic combination he had with so much care and perseverance brought

about. There was nothing for it, consequently, but to tempt the other royalties of Europe with the sight of his unique treasure; and Behmer, having with difficulty obtained an extension of time from his creditors, visited the principal courts for that purpose. Vainly! No one could be found rich and prodigal enough to disburse pretty nearly two millions of francs for a necklace, and Behmer returned to Paris, to indite frantic letters to Marie-Antoinette—over two hundred, it is said,—beseeching her Majesty to rescue him from ruin and despair; which letters were burnt, unread. Further than this, the Queen was profoundly unconscious of Behmer's proceedings, and of the ultimate disposal of the necklace, which the jeweller himself, not long afterwards, declared had been sold to the favourite Sultana of the Emperor of the Turks!

There dwelt at that time in some of the inferior apartments of the palace at Versailles a lady of vivacious imagination and facile morality, calling herself the Countess Lamotte. Her maiden name was Jeanne de St. Reni, and she claimed to be, in some left-handed way, descended from the royalty of France; a fact or pretence which, combined with the influence of the Countess of Boulainvilliers, who had picked her up somewhere in Paris when a child, obtained her the post of court-milliner, apartments in the palace, and a pension of eight hundred francs per annum. Previously, however, to finally accepting a position so much beneath that which she had a right to claim, Jeanne de St. Reni had espoused one Lamotte, a gendarme, who, though a gentleman of great merit, being in rank a private soldier only, added nothing to the marital revenues, and who presently settled down with his comrade, Villette de Rétaux, an adept, amongst other accomplishments, in the art of imitating handwriting, as a gambler

and blackleg in the minor hells of Paris and Versailles. These worthies were, we may be sure, cognisant, through Madame, the countess-milliner, of the diamond necklace affair, and Behmer's pitiable distraction. They also knew, or, at least, Madame did, which was the same thing, that the Cardinal-Prince Louis de Rohan, a grey-bearded, pursy personage of some sixty years of age, who had been ambassador at Vienna, and recalled thence in disgrace at the instance, it was supposed, of the Queen, to whom, when dauphiness, he had given offence, was hanging about the Court in the hope of getting reinstated in favour and power; and to that end, having recourse to every imaginable agency, including that of the arch-quack and conjuror, Cagliostro, who supplied him with prophetic horoscopes in cipher, for his guidance in the slippery and perilous path he had entered upon. Under such circumstances it was not at all difficult for Madame Lamotte, then about twenty-seven years of age, and though not exactly a beauty, remarked for her fine dark hair and brilliant blue eyes, who had, moreover, all her wits about her, and a tongue of unrivalled fluency, to insinuate herself into the Prince Louis de Rohan's good graces, and make him believe that, partly by reason of her quasi-royal descent, partly by virtue of her duties as queen's milliner, she had the ear of the fair Majesty of France, and could, if she chose to do so, effectually forward the Prince's views! So skilfully indeed did the woman play this first move in her audacious game, that the Prince-Cardinal was delighted at obtaining the services of so potent an auxiliary,—a delight freely endorsed in cipher by Count Cagliostro, who had suddenly discovered that the fortunes of his princely dupe were intimately bound up with those of Madame Lamotte, which, in a certain sense, proved to be the truth. Slowly,

very slowly,—carefully distilled, drop by drop, came to Prince Louis de Rohan the precious tokens of reviving royal favour, through the court-milliner channel he had been so fortunate as to secure. First, he was assured that although the dauphiness had taken offence at his conduct, the Queen forgave it. Then, after a sufficient interval, and although it was distinctly stated his public restoration to favour could not for a long time be brought about, her Majesty condescended to privately accept his services as her Grand Almoner, the vouchers for which gracious condescendence were gilt autographs, in Villette de Rétaux's best imitation of the Queen's handwriting; the objects of her Majesty's vicarious benevolence being only known to her milliner intermediary, through whom they were of course to be relieved. Whilst this minor play was going on, Behmer's unsold necklace was often the subject of conversation, Madame la Comtesse frequently taking occasion to exclaim against the parsimony of Louis, who could refuse to his beautiful Queen an ornament upon which she had set her heart!

In order, however, to make assurance doubly sure, and the more especially as the Prince-Cardinal, *gobe-mouche* as he might be, was becoming somewhat weary of onerous gilt autographs, followed by no other sign of royal recognition, Lamotte and her confederates, before hazarding their grand *coup*, determined upon a device which would not only effectually dissipate any lingering doubt he might entertain of the reality of Marie-Antoinette's reviving regard, but as the piercing blue eyes of Madame readily perceived, suggest to the Prince-Cardinal, notwithstanding his grey beard, pursy person, and threescore years *sonnés*, delirious, blinding fancies, that would render him their eager, facile dupe. This

was nothing less than to procure for him a personal and private—strictly private—interview with the Queen in the park at Versailles, in a retired arbour there, and as evening was falling, that it might be unobserved of busybodies that would report the matter to the King! Prince Louis de Rohan listened with all his ears, though he could hardly believe them, to Madame Lamotte's intimation of her Majesty's astounding condescendence. Nevertheless, as Madame persisted that she was in her right senses, and had in very truth been commissioned to arrange the interview, his Eminence gradually brought himself to believe in his unimaginable good fortune; and it was finally arranged that the stolen meeting between the Queen of France and the Prince-Cardinal de Rohan should take place on the evening of the 28th July, 1784!

At the appointed hour his Eminence having exchanged a sign with watchful Madame Lamotte, and scarcely knowing whether he walked upon his head or heels, hurried towards the Hornbean Arbour, where he saw by the dim moonlight her Majesty, attired in a white robe of *linon moucheté*, and wearing a black domino, awaiting him. The pursy Prince was at the bright vision's feet, asthmatically gasping out protestations of duty and devotion, when Lamotte hurried up: "On vient! on vient!" she exclaimed. "Vous savez ce que cela veut dire!" In fact, footsteps were heard approaching; and the Queen—first dropping a rose, which the Prince-Cardinal, confounded as he was, made instant prize of—hastened away; his Eminence, urged by Lamotte, did the same, reached his hotel in safety, and no question dreamt that night, as they say in the play, of seeing heaven and clasping angels.

The pretended queen was a Demoiselle d'Oliva, a tall, fair

handsome young woman, whom the conspirators had found on the Paris *pavé;* and the approaching footsteps were those of the Sieur Lamotte and his co-scoundrel, Villette de Rétaux!

The game of the confederates was thenceforth an easy one. A day or two after that supreme interview, and whilst yet the befooled Cardinal breathed the air of the seventh heaven to which it had raised him, he received a new gilt autograph, requesting him to go to Paris on a small matter of business which the Countess would explain. The small matter of business was to negotiate with Behmer, on behalf of the Queen, for the diamond necklace her Majesty had set her heart upon, and feared to lose by delay, not having as yet been able to persuade the King to purchase it. His Eminence flew to execute the Queen's wishes; Behmer, first sworn to secrecy, was informed how matters stood; and after some haggling, consented to take sixteen hundred thousand francs (£64,000) for his necklace, payable by the Prince-Cardinal in five equal instalments, the first in six months; payment being guaranteed by the signature of the Queen; he, Behmer, in the mean time and till her Majesty could wear the necklace openly, to tell inquirers that the Turkish Ambassador had purchased it for the reigning Sultana!

Our Countess found no difficulty in affixing the Queen's signature at the foot of the memorandum of sale—"*Bon,* (right,) *Marie-Antoinette de France,*" in exchange for which his Eminence the Prince-Cardinal de Rohan received from Behmer a casket containing the precious *collet,* hurried therewith to Versailles, where, in the apartment and presence of Madame la Comtesse, he delivered the necklace into the hands of Lesclaux, the Queen's valet, personated for the occasion by Villette de Rétaux, attired in queen's-valet uniform.

The sale of the *collet de diamants* being at length accomplished, and his creditors satisfied by a strictly private and confidential sight of "*Bon, Marie-Antoinette de France*," Behmer slept in peace; the Prince-Cardinal rapt, for a time, in ecstatic visions,—which would hardly have been the case had they been aware that the Queen's former advice to sell the necklace piecemeal was being carried into effect by Countess and Company; that the Sieur la Motte was actually in London, the Sieur Villette de Rêtaux in Amsterdam, disposing of the glorious diamonds singly to the highest bidder,—Mr. Grey, of Bond-street, and Mr. Jefferys, of Piccadilly, being amongst the buyers; the latter, it is said, to the extent of ten thousand pounds!

Ignorance of a fact so frightful was bliss for a time—for a fast evanishing time only, forasmuch that when the stipulated periods of payment came round, and no actual money was forthcoming, Behmer's creditors, whose mouths had been previously stopped with "*Bon, Marie-Antoinette de France*," became fiercely clamorous again; and the unhappy jeweller—warned by the Countess that to ask directly for his own, since, as he saw, the Queen dared not yet wear the *collet* in public, would be ruin,—lapsed rapidly into his former distracted state of mind; whilst his Eminence the Prince-Cardinal, persecuted by Behmer, and unnoticed by the Queen, save by a glance of haughtiest disdain, whenever he ventured upon levee-days to thrust himself for a moment upon her presence, was getting furious, unrestrainable by all the sedative suggestions of Madame la Comtesse, who persisted that the Queen's outward ungraciousness was but a mask worn in the presence of the caballing factions,—notably that of De Breteuil, the Prince-Cardinal's deadly enemy, with whom her Majesty was for the present compelled to

keep on fair terms. At length both jeweller and Cardinal vowed they could endure such hideous suspense no longer; whereupon Madame fairly warned them that to speak openly of so delicate a matter would be to draw down instant ruin upon their own heads, as her Majesty, rather than incur the King's anger, would not only deny her signature to the memorandum of sale, but that she had ever had the necklace! which astounding declaration, it is said, threw the Prince-Cardinal de Rohan and the jeweller Behmer into such a transport of frenzy, that they danced, leapt, raged about the room like two unchained maniacs, as no doubt, for the time, they were.

But the hour of discovery and doom was at hand—could no longer be postponed,—and Lamotte and Company began, too late, to make preparation for flight. Behmer managed to convey a note into the Queen's own hands, containing these enigmatical words:—"I rejoice that your Majesty is in possession of the finest diamonds in the world; and I pray your Majesty not to forget me. *Behmer*." Marie-Antoinette, in the first impulse of impatient annoyance, and only comprehending that Behmer was tormenting her again about his eternal *collet*, lit the note at a taper and burnt it; but afterwards mentioned the matter to Madame Campan, her favourite lady in waiting, and requested her to tell Behmer that to pester her any more about an article which she had hoped was sold, as reported, to the Turkish Emperor, would be to incur her serious displeasure. Madame Campan did so the very next day; and thunder-stricken Behmer, as soon as he sufficiently recovered from the shock of such a communication to do so, made a clean breast of it. Madame Campan flew to the Queen with the story,—her Majesty to the King;—Behmer was summoned to the royal presence,

and an officer was dispatched to Paris to require Prince Louis de Rohan's attendance at Versailles forthwith. This occurred on the 15th of August, a day of high festival at the courts and churches of Catholic countries, and the Prince-Cardinal appears to have imagined that he was at length summoned to receive openly, before the world, those marks of royal favour, of which the faded rose-leaves and gilt autographs, secured in a gold box of exquisite workmanship, were the precious pledges. He was rudely awakened from that delightful dream upon arriving at Versailles. De Breteuil, his ancient enemy, arrested him, "*de par le Roi*," the moment his foot passed the palace threshold: he was forthwith conducted into the presence of their Majesties, and peremptorily interrogated as to his complicity in the fraud by which Behmer had been robbed of his diamond necklace. The confounded Cardinal, who could not yet believe but that Marie-Antoinette was playing a compelled part to shield herself from the King's displeasure, answered the questions addressed to him so incoherently, and with such manifest trepidation, that their Majesties withdrew for a while to give him time to recollect himself, after assuring him that, provided he was perfectly candid in the matter, no harm should befal him. The interval allowed the Prince-Cardinal for reflection was thrown away,—he would say nothing—make no intelligible statement—and the order was given to convey him to the Bastille, and place all his effects under seal. The Prince-Cardinal managed, however, to whisper a few German words in the ear of his valet, Heyduc, who instantly rode off *ventre à terre* to Paris, and by the sacrifice of his horse, which fell dead as he entered the courtyard of the Cardinal's hotel, secured and destroyed the gilt autographs,

etcetera before the arrival of the officers of justice. The Countess Lamotte, her husband, and Count Cagliostro, were also arrested; and the result of a scandalous process, extending over two years, was the acquittal of the Prince-Cardinal and conviction of the Lamottes and Cagliostro. The Sieur Lamotte and Cagliostro were condemned to imprisonment only, but the Countess was sentenced to be flogged, branded with the letter V (*voleuse*), and imprisoned for life. She was however liberated, after about twenty months' confinement, when she betook herself to London, where, on the morning of the 23rd of August, 1791, her battered corpse was found upon the pavement, she having flung herself, or been flung, out of a three-pair-of-stairs window during a bacchanal debauch and riot.

That Marie-Antoinette was guiltless as an unborn babe of complicity with the infamous Lamotte, no sane, calmly-judging man could have doubted, even previous to the ampler investigation which has placed that perfect innocence beyond cavil or question; but the opportunity of dragging the Queen's name through the mire, of connecting it, in the common ear, and for a time inextricably, with those of forgers, courtesans, and thieves, was eagerly seized by the Orleanist faction, and the money of his Royal Highness, the father of Louis-Philippe, was freely dispensed to scribblers and spouters of all shades and degrees of eloquence and infamy, in furtherance of that vile purpose. The Duke too well succeeded in mutually irritating and disgusting Marie-Antoinette and the people of Paris with each other; in rendering her indignantly disdainful of a people who could credit such vile fictions, solely because they dishonoured a queen, and the people furious against a sovereign who, whilst revelling in the lap of luxury,

stooped, as they were made to believe, to the basest arts, conspired with the most infamous wretches, for the gratification of a boundless selfishness and vanity! That mutual hatred and contempt bore bitter and abundant fruit during the stormy years that followed; prompted the rabid insults that pierced the heart of the woman; inflamed the maledictions that pursued the Queen to the scaffold; and, on her part, inspired the calm disdain of the hooting rabble, which shone upon her brow, never more royal than at that supreme moment, and glanced from her proud eyes, when, turning from the temple-towers wherein her children were confined, Marie-Antoinette yielded her neck to the executioner—her soul to Him who gave it!

MRS. SIDDONS.

IN "The Chronicle of the Kings of England, from the time of the Romans' Government unto the Death of King James," written by Sir Richard Baker, Knight, there occurs, at the end of each monarch's reign, a list of "Men of Note in his (or her) time," which list of Elizabethan worthies is a lengthened one; and after reciting such eminent names as "Sir Thomas Smith, born at Saffron Walden, Essex, sometime Secretary to King Edward 6th, the first man that set afoot the law for serving the Colledges with Provisions"—"John Whitaker, Master of St. John's Colledge, in Cambridge, who learnedly answered all the Books of Bellarmine,"—the historian breaks off to remark, that "after such men it might be thought ridiculous to speak of Stage-players; yet that, seeing the meanest thing deserves remembering, and Roscious the Comedian is recorded in History with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our nation." This apologetic preface concluded, Sir Richard proceeds to include with his men of note, "William Shakspere and Benjamin Johnson, Stage-players, and Makers of Playes;" and with heartier commendation, "Richard Bainbridge and Edward Allen, two such actors as no age must ever look to see the like; and to make their comedies complete, Richard Tarleton, who, for the part called the Clown's Part, never had his match, never will have." Thus emboldened, by classic authority, and the example of a knightly historian, who, upon reflection, did not deem it derogatory to Sir Thomas Smith, however ridiculous it might at first sight

appear, to couple with his name, as a man of note, that of William Shakspere; and who thought Benjamin Johnson might, without too great offence, be mentioned in the same column with John Whitaker, I venture to introduce Mrs. Siddons amongst the Boleyns, Christinas, Montagues, and other crowned and courtly personages, without fear of incurring the penalties attaching to "*Scandalum magnatum*," unless, indeed, the representatives of the "stage-player" should prosecute under the statute! But that could hardly succeed without a new legal definition of *magnatum*, which will hardly take place in our time.

The first glimpse we obtain of the Siddons is, from a court-calendar point of view, far from a satisfactory one. There is, I fear, no denying the plebeian fact, that Mrs. Kemble, wife of Roger Kemble, and both members of a company of strolling players, gave birth to her first born child, Sarah Kemble, on the fifth of July, 1755, at the Shoulder of Mutton public house, Brecon, South Wales; no question, unhappily, that the first breath of life drawn by the mightest tragedian of this or any other age, was impregnated with the vulgar odours of tobacco and Welsh ale. But genius, if it cannot pass by and overlook an objectionable fact, can, by a comparatively slight exertion of the faculty which enables it to clothe the palpable and the familiar with golden exhalations of the dawn, so gild and glorify the objectionable fact, that it will be scarcely recognisable. Thus, Thomas Campbell, in his life of Mrs. Siddons, confesses, perforce, to Brecon and the Shoulder of Mutton public-house; but then Brecon, you will please to understand, is a distinguished locality, "being the first place in Wales where the Anglo-Norman banner rested;" the Rev. Hugh Evans, the prototype of the Merry Wives' Hugh Evans, was curate of

Brecon,—his friend, and Shakspere's friend, Sir John Price, lived in the neighbourhood of Brecon; and the scenery in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" is copied from that in the neighbourhood of Brecon! And who shall say that Sir John Price, the Rev. Hugh Evans, and Shakspere did not frequently hob-nob together over Welsh ale at the Shoulder of Mutton, the most ancient hostelry there; or that this combination of circumstances does not invest the place of Sarah Kemble's birth with a dignity which the palatial residence of a monarch cannot boast of?

Be it so—and it is certainly indisputable that noble, heroic blood flowed in the veins of Roger Kemble, the father of the child, a good man, and bad actor, blessed with unequal placidity of temper, who loved his pipe and quiet ways generally, and had more the appearance of a clerical dignitary than a profane player—characteristics which he inherited, with his religion, from his great grand-uncle, the Rev. Roger Kemble, a Roman Catholic priest, who was hanged, in his eightieth year, in a field adjoining his native city of Hereford, under pretence of complicity in Titus Oates' "*plaat.*" He was the last man, or last but one, who suffered capitally in England for conscience sake; and so resignedly, calmly did he suffer, that he smoked his pipe on the way to execution, only putting it from his lips at the last moment, to say that he knew nothing about the plot—did not believe there was a plot; and that he was really hanged for belonging to the old religion of the country. His nephew, Captain Kemble, who had fought gallantly for King Charles II., obtained, in reward of his loyalty, one of his relative's hands—the remainder of his body being burnt to ashes,—which is still preserved as a sacred relic in the Catholic Chapel at Worcester. "Kemble's pipe" was long a

cant phrase in Hereford for the last social pipe smoked in convivial society.

The property of the Kembles had been lost or squandered during the Civil Wars, and Roger, the great-grandnephew of the martyr, was probably not the only descendant of Captain Kemble whose sole revenue was the produce of his head or hands, although the first that sought to fight the battle of life upon the stage. He joined a peripatetic *troupe* of comedians, acting in Warwickshire under the management of John Ward, an actor who had played with Betterton; and albeit that Roger Kemble failed to please the manager, he succeeded to admiration with the manager's daughter, Sarah Ward, a handsome, well-principled young woman, who had spurned the overtures of a lord, and who, after much unavailing opposition on her father's part, became the wife, and, it would appear, the manager, of Roger Kemble; her liking for him not having, however, been called forth by any extravagant estimate of his professional merits; all that even her wifely partiality could in that particular suggest in after-years being, that he was the most gentlemanly Falstaff she had ever seen! She was a lady of decided character, and much declamative talent—qualities that probably brought into stronger relief than might otherwise have been the case, her husband's inherited placidity and enjoyment of a quiet pipe. It had been arranged—Roger Kemble being a Roman Catholic—that the sons born of the marriage should be educated in that faith, the girls in their mother's—a marital *concordat* which assured to their daughter the privilege of being trained in the faith of the Church of England; and so zealously, if not wisely, did the actress-mother instil that faith into the mind of her child, that the little Sarah, having been promised, if the morrow proved

fine, that she should have a holiday and wear her new pink frock, had undoubting recourse to her Prayer-book, using it after a singular fashion, by placing it upon her pillow, opened at the prayer for fine weather. Unfortunately, in her bewildering excitement, she left it open at the passage supplicative of rain; and sure enough down came the rain in torrents, awakening the child by its violence to the perception of the blunder she had made, and the pressing necessity for its immediate rectification; which accomplished, the clouds rolled away, and delighted Sarah Kemble arose in the bright sunshine of an assured holiday. This anecdote, derived from Mrs. Siddons herself, and elaborately set forth in the polished periods of her poet-biographer, proves, if nothing else, how barren of incident that she cared to remember, or chose to relate, was the childhood of one born and from her earliest years subject to the precarious fortunes, the harassing shifts, the mortifications, contempts, condescensions, which are the daily bread of every member of a country *troupe* of comedians, however irreproachable in conduct, or how brilliantly soever the fire of latent genius may, to observant eyes, flash fitfully forth in the performances of the slighted stroller.

Thus, all that is known of the first timid, hesitating footsteps of the great actress upon the stage which it is her glory to have peopled with impersonations of remorse, terror, ambition, love,—which modern histrions, in despair of rivalling, are content to feebly imitate,—is that she sang simple ballads, recited simple pieces of poetry and prose, very pleasingly, and, at the age of twelve (1767), played the Princess Elizabeth in Howard's now forgotten tragedy of "Charles the First!" But, though few details are given, the earnest industry with which Sarah

Kemble must have laboured to develop and discipline her high faculties is abundantly proved by the great progress in her art which, competent judges assure us, she had made by her eighteenth year. She was instructed in elocution by Mrs. Kemble, whose full-volumed voice her own resembled: and this was not the only similarity between the mother and daughter,—Miss Kemble, in imitation of the maternal example, having chosen to accept the addresses of Mr. Siddons, a young, fair, and handsome man, who had not long joined the company, and who, to render the filial imitation more complete, was as indifferent an actor as her own father! Mrs. Kemble was not at all disposed to accept Mr. Siddons as the husband of her beautiful and gifted child; much preferring Mr. Evans, a Welsh landed proprietor, who had been so desperately smitten with the young lady whilst singing "Sweet Robin," as to offer her his hand; not a very desirable one—unless, indeed, the riotous dissipation by which he subsequently brought himself to absolute beggary resulted from his having failed to obtain the fascinating songstress for a wife, and not, as alleged, from early predisposition and ineradicable habit. Remembering, withal, how futile in their own case had been parental counsel and command, Mr. and Mrs. Kemble followed up their peremptory denunciation of Mr. Siddons' pretensions by the acceptance of a situation for their daughter with the Greatheeds, of Guy's Cliff, Warwickshire,—that of nursery-maid, as some say; very absurdly, remarks Thomas Campbell, it being known that Mrs. Greatheed presented Sarah Kemble with a copy of the "Paradise Lost," a gift not usually made to nursery-maids; and he concludes that the young lady's position was that of companion to Mrs. Greatheed. Lady's-maid would, perhaps, be nearer the truth; and if, as asserted, the

unformed taste of Miss Kemble preferred the stately sculptured imagery of the Miltonic verse to the passionate or tender utterances of Shakspere's human creations, it was probably in approval of that preference that Mrs. Greatheed presented her youthful attendant—or companion, if that please better—with the great Christian epic. Happily, Sarah Kemble was not rescued from,—not lost to the stage, neither she nor her lover being at all disposed to quietly acquiesce in the decree of separation pronounced by the parental tribunal. Mr. Siddons especially declaimed furiously against the flinty hearts of fathers and mothers,—made a public affair and a bumper-benefit of his discharge from the theatre and banishment from the presence of his adored mistress; upon which occasion he sang between the play and farce, in the character of "Colin, the discarded lover," a long doggerel song descriptive of his woes and wrongs, beginning thus—

> "Ye ladies of Brecon, whose hearts ever feel,
> For wrongs like to these I'm about to reveal,"—

with immense applause; and so potently did the general sympathy and his own unconquerable persistence operate in his favour, that Mrs. Kemble's obstinacy was at length vanquished, and in November, 1773, the bride being then at the commencement of her nineteenth year, the faithful lovers were made man and wife, at Trinity Church, Coventry.

In the following year, Mr. and Mrs. Siddons obtained an engagement at Cheltenham, then, comparatively with now, a mere village, consisting mainly of one street, through which, as at the town of Kilkenny, there ran a clear stream, furnished with stepping-stones for the convenience of passing from one side to the other. The theatre could not, therefore,

have been a very splendid one; yet was it, on the evening of Mrs. Siddons' first appearance in Otway's "Venice Preserved," honoured by the presence of a noble party, comprising the Honourable and beautiful Miss Boyle, afterwards Lady O'Neil, and her father-in-law, then Lord Bruce, subsequently the Earl of Aylesbury, who were so charmed with the Belvidera of the youthful *débutante*, that they called the next day to felicitate her upon the great success she had achieved, and to assure her of their good offices in helping her to a fitter arena for the display of her talents than the boards of the Cheltenham theatre. The young actress was naturally greatly lifted up by the praise of honourable and noble persons, whose rank was a sure guarantee of the soundness of their judgment; and when, primarily and chiefly in consequence of their zealous trumpeting in influential circles of the transcendent merits of their *protégée*—David Garrick, then about, as Doctor Johnson with equal truth and simplicity expressed it, " to eclipse the gaiety of nations" by retirement from the stage, offered her an engagement at Drury Lane, it was accepted in the full confidence that the verdict of her noble patrons would be ratified by the public voice. It did not prove so: her *début*, on the 29th December, 1775, in the *rôle* of Portia, was an unsuccessful one; and other comparatively slight parts which she subsequently played did nothing to retrieve that failure—her Lady Anne especially, played to Garrick's Richard, being pronounced a lamentable failure!

Sweet are the uses of adversity to the courageous and self-helpful; and the summary dismissal which Mrs. Siddons, whilst playing at Birmingham, received from the new Management at Drury Lane,—though felt as a cruel blow at the time, the inquietudes of a mother having by that time been added to

those inseparable from her profession,—striking one of so strong and capable a spirit, was the most fortunate chance that could have befallen her. Mrs. Siddons' metropolitan failure in 1775, contrasted with her triumphant success in 1782, has greatly puzzled her biographers, who attribute it to the jealousy of Garrick—of rival and favourite actresses, Mrs. Younge, Mrs. Yates, and others,—to her name not having been displayed with sufficient prominence in the play-bills ;—to any and every cause, in fact, except the true one, that the Mrs. Siddons hurried to the metropolitan boards by the mistaken zeal of her noble patrons was no more comparable to the Mrs. Siddons who re-appeared there after her powers had become thoroughly developed by seven years of exigent, incessant exertion in the highest walk of her profession, than is the promising pupil of the painter's studio to the consummate master, the practised cunning of whose hand can seize and shape into forms of immortal truth and beauty the fleeting phantoms of his brain.

Birmingham, Manchester, York, Bristol, Bath, witnessed and applauded the gradual and constant advance of the great actress towards perfection in her art; and when the doors of Drury Lane Theatre again opened to her, they were flung wide, not by the favour of patrons, but by the force of her own thoroughly matured and disciplined powers, which the acclamations that on the night of the 10th of October, 1782, greeted her Isabella in Southern's tragedy, but confirmed and sealed. Thenceforth her scenic career was a succession of triumphs. Jane Shore, Belvidera, Calista, Zara, swiftly followed each other; and on the 2nd of February, 1785, Lady Macbeth lived for the first time upon the stage with the true and terrible life in which she had been created, and the mighty actress—to quote an overpowering passage of the

learned Dr. Parr's, applied to the sudden and complete silencing by that magnificent personation of her busy detractors, who had persisted that she was only equal to the representation of Rowe's, Otway's, Voltaire's showy, semblant shadows — Mrs. Siddons, "from her towering and distant heights rushed down upon her prey, and disdaining the ostentatious prodigalities of cruelty, destroyed it at a blow."

Mrs. Siddons lived to the ripe age of seventy-six,—a lengthened span of life, the last forty years whereof were passed in amplest competence, illumined by the love and esteem of her children and relatives, and graced by the consideration of that highest class of society of whose favour and countenance she had ever been ambitious.

MADAME DE STAEL-HOLSTEIN.

OF the names which Republican France proudly inscribed upon her flaunting banner, those chiefly remain that were traced thereon by the sword; and of her literary celebrities—more especially those comet-lights that for a time so dazzled the world—but few indeed survive to pale their decaying fires beside the undimmed, steadfast stars they were to irrevocably eclipse. In saying this, I allude only to the intellectual offspring and expositors or apostles of the genius and principles of the Revolution—of the orators and writers whom Lamartine has sought to reanimate with life by the fervour of his glowing periods—and notably of the extraordinary woman whose earlier history I am about to briefly outline. The once widely-bruited fame of Madame de Staël-Holstein has already faded to a memory in the general mind, surviving chiefly in the simulated echoes of an admiration no longer felt for works that are no longer read,—a swift oblivion, certainly not ascribable to any deficiency of mental power—few men have been in that respect so largely gifted as Madame de Staël—but that, from being unfortunately exposed, by early position and society, to the influence of the sparkling theories which burst upon the world towards the close of the eighteenth century,—claiming to be new inspirations, although, in truth, but old dreams, that in almost every age have, with more or less success, bewildered, maddened, and amused mankind,—she was induced to bend her lofty genius to the impossible task of imparting vital force and reality to those cloud-visions—to

link her own future with that of a galvanized corpse, therein self-doomed to perish, sooner or later, with the decaying form she had embraced beyond the power of dissociation. It required a genius no less divine than that of Milton, to survive in inherent, vigorous, yet withal not unimpaired life, the crumbling into dust of the polemical dry bones whereof he had framed its mortal tabernacle. This privilege was not given to a no doubt mighty, but immeasurably less potent intelligence; and already "Delphine" exists only—if such life-in-death can be called existence—in its polluting progeny of George Sand novels; "Corinne," in the verbose, finely-phrasing patriotism, unvouched as yet by commensurate deeds, of *Giovine Italia;* and her great work on human progress and perfectibility, amongst the curiosities of a bygone, disastrous literature.

The mother of Madame de Staël was the daughter of M. Curchod, a Protestant clergyman of Berne, Switzerland, and is described as a very handsome, carefully-instructed, unimpeachably estimable piece of animated formality, whose only imaginable fault was, according to her husband's testimony, that she was so entirely faultless. Susanne Curchod might, it is presumed, have wedded with Mr. Gibbon, who, whilst rusticating in Switzerland, chanced to meet and fall in love with her. The judicious damsel prudently preferred the liberal-minded and wealthy banker of Geneva, M. Necker, to the author of the superbly-toned "Decline and Fall," and, like his ethical brother, Hume, the servile and ever-ready apologist of despotism, provided only it be not wielded by a Church. On the 22nd of April, 1766, Madame Necker, then resident with her husband in Paris, gave birth to a daughter, the future Baroness de Staël-Holstein, who was baptismally named Anne Louisa Germaine.

Madame Necker, a sternly-severe religionist of the Calvinist sect, insisted that its rigid discipline should be applied to all matters of life and household governance, the most trivial equally with the more apparently important; and in accordance with this theory, Anne Louisa Germaine, the Neckers' only child, was trained to close, unremitting study till past her tenth year, when failing health compelled a change of system, and another kind of stimulant, as opposed to sound mental development as that which it superseded, was had recourse to. But of this presently.

Mademoiselle Huber gives a graphic account of her first introduction to the adult-child, who was yet distant about three years from her teens:—"She addressed me with a warmth and facility which was already eloquence, and strongly impressed me. We did not think of playing together, after the manner of children; she immediately inquiring about my lessons, how many foreign languages I knew, and whether I went frequently to the theatre. She exclaimed with astonishment, when I said I had only been three or four times, and promised that we should often go together; adding, that it would be advisable, on our return, to write out the subjects and plots of the pieces represented, and anything in the language that particularly struck us—a practice she herself constantly followed. We entered the *salon*, where close by Madame Necker was a little wooden stool, upon which Anne Louisa seated herself in a very upright position. Hardly had she taken her accustomed place, when three or four of the oldest of the company accosted her with the tenderest interest. One of them, who wore a little round wig, took and retained her hands between his, conversing with her as if she was five-and-twenty instead of ten years old. This was the Abbé Raynal;

the others were Marmontel, the Marquis de Pesay, and Baron Grimm. She sat down to table, and you should have seen how she listened! She did not say a word, and, nevertheless, appeared to speak in her turn; so full of expression was her flexile, varying countenance. Her eyes followed the eyes and movements of the talkers, and it seemed that she anticipated and outstripped their ideas. She was *au fait* of everything—even politics, which at that period was the chief topic of conversation."

This singularly-precocious girl was curiously anticipative in another direction. Mr. Gibbon, her mother's quondam admirer, was a rather frequent visitor at the wealthy and influential M. Necker's *réunions*, where his great erudition and conversational facility assured him a constant welcome, and strongly excited the daughter's interest and admiration; so much so, that in order, as she said, to ensure his society to her parents, she gravely suggested to her mother whether it might not be desirable that she, M. Necker's only daughter and heiress, should be at once betrothed to the interesting Englishman, with the view, of course, to an as early as convenient marriage;—a proposition which, one can hardly help thinking, must have occasioned some misgiving in Madame Necker's mind as to the expediency of insisting upon such extremely rapid progress in girl-education.

The constant strain upon the child's intellectual faculties at length affected her health; and, by the physician's order, books, masters, and *hommes de lettres* were exchanged for country air, out-of-door exercise, and companions of her own sex and age. Under this sensible regimen she rallied rapidly; and it was now her father's turn to apply *his* educational theory in the cultivation of his promising daughter's

talents. M. Necker—a man of probity and clear common sense, in monetary affairs at all events, and, contrasted with such quacks as Calonne, a prodigy of financial genius and honesty—being persuaded that Mademoiselle Necker's stock of acquired knowledge was amply sufficient, decided that her genius could be most beneficially exercised and matured by the unrestricted conversational display of its intuitive mastery of all branches of human inquiry or speculation that had vainly employed and puzzled inferior intellects in the bygone ages of the world. It is wonderful how the gifted girl took to this pleasant mode of self-development, how ardently she loved her father for prescribing it, and how eloquently, how convincingly, how unsparingly, she exercised herself therein. Never since woman talked over Adam to his ruin has there been so resistless a talker; in proof whereof, I have only to advance the fact that M. Rocca, a French officer, young, poor, and entirely amiable, fell in love with and married widowed Madame de Staël when she was near fifty years of age, not for her large wealth, but solely, he declared, for her divine talk—by that union to be rendered the ceaseless music of his waking life, and, possibly, not without its echo in his dreams.

Mademoiselle Necker's pen was almost as incessantly occupied as her oral faculty of speech. She was inflamed by a love of glory, of liberty, of tender sentiments, of the natural beauty of virtue; and all these she celebrated unwearyingly in prose and verse. "Sophie, or Secret Sentiments," a *comédie en vers*—half-a-dozen tragedies—epistolary glorification of Rousseau's character and genius—commentaries upon "*L'Esprit des Lois*"—a long Chancellor-of-the-Exchequer-like public letter addressed to her father

on his "*Compte Rendu*" or detailed statement of the exact condition and resources of the public treasury—with admittedly "fugitive" pieces uncountable, attested the inexorable activity of this remarkable young woman. A magniloquent writer and *habitué* of M. Necker's house thus spoke of her in one of his *feuilletons*:—"Zulmé (Mademoiselle Necker) is but twenty years of age, and already the most celebrated priestess of Apollo. She is the favourite of the god whose incense pleases him best, and whose accents cause him most frequently to descend from the skies, to embellish his temple and mingle with mortals. . . . . Her large dark eyes scintillate with genius; her hair, of the colour of ebony, falls in clustering ringlets upon her shoulders; her features are more decided than delicate; and one feels that she has a loftier mission than the ordinary destiny of her sex." Madame Necker regarded these triumphs of her daughter with almost contemptuous indifference: "It is nothing, absolutely nothing," she would often repeat, "in comparison with what I would have made her."

It is somewhat surprising that the young lady should have found leisure, amidst such multifarious avocations, to get married; which she did, however,—at her father's insistence, it is said,—in her twentieth year, with the Baron de Staël-Holstein, the Swedish ambassador—a gentleman twice as old as herself; but, being a Protestant, her mother's indispensable condition, and engaging not to take his young wife, without her own consent, away from beloved Paris—her own peremptory postulate—the union was unreluctantly accomplished. Her husband's diplomatic character protected her for a time against the violence of the Terrorists, and emboldened her to write a well-intentioned pamphlet in favour of sparing the life of Marie-Antoinette. It was

a timid affair withal, without spirit and without force, unworthy alike of the perilled Queen and the genius of the writer, and full of civilities towards the assassins who held the illustrious victim's life in their bloody hands.

Still, Madame de Staël's horror of the miscreant rulers of the Days of Terror was unaffected and intense; and she had barely recovered the shock which that illustration of the new theories gave her moral nature, when Napoleon's rising power disquieted her for the liberties of France; and she not only herself declaimed incessantly against it in the Paris *salons*, but encouraged Benjamin Constant to attack it in the *Tribunat*—a rash adventure, which aroused the deep displeasure of Bonaparte, and led to her banishment to a distance of not less than forty leagues from Paris, and ultimately from France; an irreparable calamity, in her estimation; for where, except in the French capital, could her conversational brilliancy be appreciated?—A sad weakness, let us admit, hardly more respectable than the grief of an ordinary fine lady deprived of the opportunity of displaying her charms and jewellery before admiring and envious eyes; but it is a world-old truth, that

> "There was never yet philosopher
> That could endure the toothache patiently,
> However they have writ the style of gods,
> And made a pish! at chance and suffering."

Madame de Staël once endeavoured to soften Napoleon's antipathy towards her by a personal interview, relying, it has been said, not more upon her oratorical gifts than her charms of person; a subject, by the way, with respect to which she appears to have all her life laboured under the strangest delusion, her features being, in fact, only redeemed from excessive plainness by the intellectual

brilliancy of her eyes; whilst her figure was anything but fascinating, if we may trust the opinion of a very competent judge, the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Charles X., upon whom she waited, in 1814, to instruct him gratuitously in the provisions she deemed it essential that Louis XVIII. should introduce into the promised *Charte.* "The lady was dressed," said the Prince, "in extremely youthful fashion; and never, I think, did so low a cut corsage reveal less inviting charms." Napoleon was, however, not to be won upon; and his conduct was, in the opinion of many persons, in some slight degree excused by the publication of "Delphine." "Corinne," "L'Allemagne," and other works of vast range and power, followed; and the celebrity of the authoress, enhanced by Napoleon's persecution, became European.

In 1811 she married, after a few years' widowhood, M. Rocca, a young officer whose name she never assumed, and died on the 14th of July, 1817, leaving her "Ten Years of Exile" still unfinished.

"I have always felt," said Madame de Staël, as the pulses of life grew faint and sluggish, "the veneration of a child for the Christian religion; and I should be sorry to think that all was finished between me and Albertine (her daughter) in another world." "The Imitation of Christ" was the last literary resource of the once ardent disciple of Rousseau; and her final words were, "*Mon père m'attend sur l'autre bord.*" Another sentence touches the supreme error of her social and governmental theories:—"The errors which I have committed in politics have proceeded from the idea that men were always capable of being guided by truth, if presented to them with force." She could, however, with truth say, "I have loved God, my father, and liberty,"—and that is a noble epitaph.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

AN extraordinary and striking deed, if performed upon a sufficiently lofty stage, with a nation for spectators, is rarely contemplated or judged of, save as it may chance to be transfigured by its accessories—the eminence, good or bad, of the actors—the glitter of the scenic properties, and the boldness and skill with which it is accomplished. That "this thing was not done in a corner," sustained by the applause which ever follows the successful manifestation of force upon a large scale, would appear to be amplest vindication of acts that, read by less dazzling lights, might be called by truer names. Thus, for example, perjury, blushed, boggled at, a pistol or dagger aimed with uncertain aim at one poor life, shall consign the weak caitiff to prison, to the gallows; but perjury, *un*blushing, audacious, —the massacre of a helpless city valiantly conceived, remorselessly carried out by sound of trumpet, shall constitute the sayer and doer thereof a "hero, as king," whose manifest mission it is "to command over men, furnish them with practical teaching, tell them for the day and hour what they are to do—to whose will their wills must be loyally surrendered." In seemingly strict accordance with this theory of the divinity of strength and success, its great expounder, Mr. Carlyle, in his "History of the French Revolution," pronounces the subject of this sketch to be "a demonic-angelic" person; meaning, as I interpret him, that the attributes he speaks of were severally and distinctly manifested;—the first, celestial, by the fact that Charlotte Corday struck Jean-Paul

Marat *home*, effectually; the other, by the equally positive fact that she struck *in*effectually, abortively, with reference to her proclaimed purpose,—*failed*, in short, by her desperate act, to incite "the French nation to arouse themselves, and cast off the pitiless tyranny that was devouring them, of monsters condemned by the universe and beyond the pale of the law." Her eloquent countryman, Lamartine, discourses differently of "the Jeanne Darc of Liberty, who, under the impulsion of a great thought, sought, by a woman's arm, to arrest the destiny of the Revolution;" and his appreciation of the character and motives of the beautiful Nemesis, if all too highly coloured, is perhaps juster upon the whole than that of Mr. Carlyle; though both these eminent writers have evidently, if we may be permitted to say so, suffered themselves to be misled, dazzled by the circumstances incident to the bold deed that has stamped her crimsoned name indelibly upon one of the bloodiest pages of man's history. This, at all events, is the impression I have myself derived from the sad story which in miniature, unvarnished outline, I now present to the reader.

Marie-Anne Charlotte Corday, "*D'Armont*," was born in the year 1768, of poor but patrician parents, at a cottage in the vicinage of Argentan, Normandy. She was one of a family of five children, two boys and three girls, and, till the age of thirteen, worked with her sisters upon the petty farm inherited with his nobility by her father, François Corday D'Armont,—like other, but happier peasant-girls, who, though even lowlier placed, had not fallen from a height, and were free, therefore, from vain and cankering regrets. Madame D'Armont died at a comparatively early age, unable to bear up against the pressure of a penury which became the more insupportable as there were additional

little ones to bear it; and Monsieur D'Armont sought, and vainly, to draw consolation and courage from desultory literary trifling, and in marking the progress of the clouds that by ordinarily observant eyes were seen gathering in the electric atmosphere of Bourbon France, and which, whether charged with light from heaven or fire from hell, or both, would, he, with thousands of others, was persuaded, ultimately burst in a tempest of flame, that would level throne and tower and temple with the ground, and over their ruins open up a new and facile road to fortune for oppressed men of genius and gentle blood, like himself—the "*D'Armont*" being a distinction in his eyes as paramount and inviolable as the patrician *status* of Brutus was in the estimation of that sublime model and champion of republican freedom and equality. But the good time, however rapidly it may approach, is still a laggard when its pace is measured by the swiftly-passing lives of suffering, impatient men; and tower and temple still remained erect in semblant strength, thoroughly undermined as they might be, when François Corday D'Armont's hair was fast sprinkling with grey, his daughter Charlotte had passed her thirteenth birthday, and the pressure of adverse circumstances had so increased upon him, that he was compelled to part with all his children, who, however, by virtue of their noble descent, he was enabled to so far provide for, that the two boys were received into the King's service—the girls into the Abbaye-aux-Dames, at Caen, founded by Matilda, queen of England, and consort of the Conqueror.

Charlotte Corday remained six years there;—an innocent and happy time, it is said, for about two-thirds of that period, during which she appeared desirous of passing her life in the asylum where she had found rest, friendship,

happiness. But the faith which illumined that else drear sepulchre of human hearts was gradually extinguished by the everywhere-permeating exhalations of the Encyclopedists—of Rousseau's misty dreams; and the teachings of Christ were superseded in the young girl's esteem by the sterner, "sublimer" lessons of Plutarch. Infinite, inappreciable calamity! as those who saw her after the suppression, in common with the conventual establishments throughout France, of the Abbaye-aux-Dames might easily have read on her thought-shadowed, beautiful face—have heard in the touching sadness of her low-toned, agitating voice, of which it is said "men spoke years after they heard it, as of a strange music indelibly graven upon their memory." Before the suppression of the Abbaye, one of her sisters had died; the other now went home to keep house for her father, at Argentan; and Charlotte was received by her aunt, Madame de Bretteville, a childless, ailing widow, as proud and well-nigh as poor as Monsieur Corday D'Armont himself, and inclining, like him, though less decidedly, to the new philosophy,—who, with one woman-servant, occupied the two or three sufficiently-habitable rooms of a large, antique, dilapidated house in the Rue St. Jean, Caen, known as Le Grand Manoir.

This must have been a far gloomier abode than the Abbaye-aux-Dames, and one is not surprised to find that each day seemed to deepen the profound melancholy which, save when at rare intervals dissipated by the natural sunshine of a pure though perturbed soul, hung like a mourning veil over her beauty; and that those who, in passing the courtyard gate of Le Grand Manoir, beheld her, as she sat reading and dreaming upon the broken steps of a crumbling fountain, or when accompanying her aunt to church,—to her, un-

happy maiden! no longer a temple,—looked upon her with an admiration with which pity, compassion, and a certain indefinable awe largely mingled.

Meanwhile the years roll on: the Revolution triumphs; the King loses first his crown, next his life; Christianity is abolished; there is no God in France, and Brutuses innumerable, though, from a pestilent propensity to devour each other, short-lived. How comes it, then, that monarchy, aristocracy, clericacy being swept away, and the rule of the people established in unquestioned supremacy, liberty, freedom—the realization, embodiment of Rousseau's dreams, of Raynal's ravings, is as far off—nay, by the abolished Heavens! much farther off than ever? Charlotte Corday cannot for a long time comprehend this; her faith in the perfectibility of the people wavers, but at length revives under the influence of the impassioned harangues and writings of the proscribed Girondists, Louvet, Barbaroux, Péthion, and others, who arrive in the departments of the Eure and Calvados to organize armed resistance to the Paris mob-appointed Dictators of the Republic. Charlotte attends constantly at the Hôtel de l'Intendance, Caen, where the harangues are delivered, and reads the "Bulletin de Caen," in which they are published, till light breaks in upon her troubled soul. It is plain that the monster, demon, that has perverted the instincts of the people—the leper whose foul breath has poisoned the healing waters of the Republic at the source—is Jean-Paul Marat!—he who, says Louvet, has, in addition to the massacres already accomplished by his devilish agency, prepared lists of four hundred thousand victims, dwellers chiefly in the North and South of France, to feed the insatiable guillotine which is about to make the tour of the provinces. Could, then, that loathsome

fiend be deprived of the power he has usurped, and uses to such atrocious ends, the infamously-abused, deceived people would recover their senses, and the republican reign of peace, freedom, fraternity, be thenceforth a realized, resplendent fact! Yes; but *how* to hurl the sanguinary devil from his burning throne—how wrench the bloody sceptre from his remorseless hands? This, by the early summer months of 1793, was "the great thought," according to Lamartine, which possessed, dominated the mind of Charlotte Corday. A bold, valiant thought, if you will,—and childish, absurd, as bold or valiant;—childish and absurd as that of him who should seek to quench a volcano by clutching at and stifling the sparks it belches forth. However, the thought, such as it was, gradually assumed defined shape and purpose; and by the first days of July, the fair and fanatic republican had nothing to decide but the likeliest mode of giving it birth and successful action. This, too, was soon resolved upon. Péthion, waited upon by a beautiful young woman—Charlotte Corday was now in her twenty-fifth year—acceded with a smile to her request for an introduction to his handsome colleague, Barbaroux, from whom she obtained, under a fictitious pretence, a letter to Dupont, a Girondist deputy residing in Paris, and who was as yet permitted to carry his fearful head upon his shoulders in the very presence of the Mountain. Barbaroux as much misapprehended Charlotte Corday's errand to Paris, as had Péthion her motive in visiting Barbaroux, who, though by no means one of the most sagacious of men, subsequently declared that could he have divined her thought, he would, had he found her determined upon the accomplishment of so futile an act of vengeance, have counselled her to strike at that more astute and dangerous devil than Marat—Maximilian Robespierre.

By the 9th of July, nothing further remained for the fanaticized maiden to do out of Paris. She had broken the last ties that bound her to home and kindred—sacred ligatures that could not be severed without inflicting wounds which, beneath the exterior mask of Plutarchian stoicism, bled internally; for Charlotte Corday, in her natural, unphilosophized state, was perfectly human—neither angelic nor demonic, but a true, gentle-hearted woman, only lately, a girl loving and beloved, and now anything but unconscious of or indifferent to her personal charms and graces. The death of her earliest accepted lover, slain in a popular outbreak in the streets of Caen, did not prevent her from so far accepting the homage of a Monsieur de Franquelin, as to correspond with him, present him with her portrait, and encourage him to enlist in the battalion of Caen volunteers, that, at the call of Louvet, marched to join General Wimpfen, who, to the summons of the Convention, had replied that he *would* come to Paris, but it should be at the head of an army, and to enforce redress of abuses. Young Franquelin, as he marched proudly past the balcony where she stood, saw, and with a bounding pulse, that the face of the tall, beauteous maiden, as she smiled and waved approbation of his patriotic zeal, was deathly pale, and that her eyes, whose dark blue depths his own had never been able to fathom, were full of tears. Perhaps he did not wholly misinterpret that emotion, since Péthion, who was standing by and observed it, angrily exclaimed, "What! would you be pleased, then, if they did not go?"—to which question the agitated enthusiast replied only by a blush, and immediately retired.

Charlotte's brothers had emigrated, and her father and surviving sister she had taken leave of, under the pretence of going to England, where, she said, some emigrant friends

had prepared a suitable position for her. Citizen Corday, no longer D'Armont, (the retention, in the reign of liberty, of such a designation would have infallibly consigned him to the guillotine,—and he, by the way, was quite as poorly off as in the old church-and-king days,) approved his daughter's design; and Madame de Bretteville, deceived by the same fiction, was not surprised at her niece's solicitude to bestow upon every one with whom she had been on terms of intimacy, however slight, some token of remembrance. In this way, Charlotte Corday distributed her books, reserving only a volume of Plutarch; and when leaving Le Grand Manoir, never to return, early in the morning of the 9th of July, she gave her drawing-board to a neighbour's child, a little boy—kissed him, wept, but presently recovering herself, proceeded on her way to the *diligence,* in which she had secretly secured a place.

Lamartine's Jeanne Darc of Liberty reached Paris about mid-day on the 11th of July, and took up her abode at what had been the Hôtel de la Providence, in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, in the days when Providence and Vieux Augustins were tolerated. On the morrow she called with her letter of introduction at Dupont's, and saw his daughters, who informed her that their father was at the Convention, and would not return till the evening; whereupon Charlotte returned to the hotel, read Plutarch till six, and again presented herself at the Girondist deputy's house, was received by that gentleman, and, in pursuance of the pretext which obtained her Barbaroux' letter, arranged to wait with Dupont upon Garat, the Minister of the Interior, on the following day. They did so, but were refused admittance, under the plea that the hour was unseasonable—really because Dupont's name was already down in one of the proscription lists, and

Garat, therefore, by no means desirous of further intimacy with his friend Dupont. Charlotte, meanwhile, adroitly contrived to obtain of Dupont the information she required; but found, to her consternation, that Marat was prevented by a loathsome disease from attending the sittings of the Convention, whose decrees, nevertheless, were but too faithful transcripts of the ferocious denunciations which the brutal anarchist dictated to them from his death-lair. She intended to have struck Marat in his place at the summit of the Mountain; a circumstance that would have thrown a dramatic *éclat* over the deed, essential to its aspect of picturesque heroism, besides affording herself the likeliest chance of living to witness its magical effect upon the erring multitude—of hearing with her own bodily ears the "All hail!" which could hardly fail to greet the beautiful deliverer of her country from a dictatorship so ignoble and so odious. That such thoughts *did* mingle with, and colour, strengthen Charlotte Corday's delirious enthusiasm, is evident from the address found upon her, and still extant in her own handwriting, which I have before quoted, justifying the assassination of Marat, and calling upon the French nation to cast off the remorseless tyranny of monsters condemned by the universe and beyond the pale of the law! But to steal upon Marat in his home, and if it were possible to do so, destroy him there, was, in her bewildered judgment, to degrade a sublime sacrifice to a vulgar murder; and Charlotte faltered for a moment in her purpose. Alas! the frenzy of self-glorifying pagan fanaticism kindled at the pictured pages of Plutarch raged too fiercely, compressed within that calm, marble exterior, to be quenched by a few drops wrung from human weakness; and Charlotte, dismissing her scruples, purchased a sharp-pointed knife for three francs, concealed it beneath

the kerchief which covered her woman's bosom, loitered awhile to play with children in the garden of the Palais-Royal, and returned to the hotel, whence she despatched the following note to Marat's address in the Rue des Cordeliers: —"I am from Caen. I presume, from your ardent love for France, that you must desire to hear particulars of the unhappy state of that portion of the Republic. In an hour from this I will present myself at your house, when, if you will favour me with a few minutes' conversation, I will place you in a position to do France a real service."

This appeal was fruitless: Charlotte was denied admittance to Marat's dilapidated den; and she wrote another, more pressing, craftier note, which she delivered at his door with her own hands. But, too restless, excited, to await the answer, she dressed herself with the care and taste natural to a young and handsome woman about to enter upon the public performance of a great part; hired a carriage, and, "in that seducing guise," alighted in front of Marat's dwelling, knocked, and was again refused admission by the portress, whom she, however, pushed past, but was arrested upon the broken, dirty stair by Albertine, Marat's concubine. The doomed leper, who was immersed to his armpits in a bath, and even then tracing with restless fingers fresh decrees of proscription and death, heard the altercation, and, with a loud voice, commanded Albertine to admit the stranger to his presence.—We will pass quickly over the incidents attending the actual consummation of Charlotte Corday's terrible purpose;—the feigned communication,—the swift, sure stroke, reaching sheer down to the heart,—the slain felon's shriek, "*A moi, chère amie!*"—the panic-terror of his slayer, distractedly seeking to conceal herself behind the window-curtain,—the inrush of Albertine and the portress, with one

Laurent Basse, who fells Charlotte to the floor with a chair, for Marat's trull to trample upon her,—the tumult, vociferations, increasing every moment in volume and violence, as soldiers and mob come trampling, hurrying in, (the soldiers first, happily for the swooning Jeanne Darc of Liberty, or she would have been torn piecemeal,)—the binding her with cords,—the insults, imprecations heaped upon her, by way of chorus to an oration, after Plutarch, over the dead body, by a drunken Cordelier; which finished, the wretched girl, who has fainted from excess of terror, is with difficulty escorted through the cursing crowd to the Abbaye prison!

The enlightened, magnanimous people of Paris have not, then, at once recognised their deliverer, as Charlotte Corday had half persuaded herself they would. On the contrary, whilst she, hardly yet recovered from that trance of terror, can scarcely realize the full horror of her position, they, the delivered people, are decreeing the honours of the Panthéon ("*Aux grands hommes la patrie reconnaissante*") to Jean-Paul Marat,—thrusting out Mirabeau's coffin therefrom to make room for his, over which young girls cast flowers, orators utter inconceivable blasphemies in his honour, and David, carried away by the general enthusiasm, undertakes to paint his portrait!

Still, a revulsion of opinion may one day take place in the popular mind as to the relative deservings of Jean-Paul Marat and Charlotte Corday, and the pale prisoner, rousing herself from the torpor of despair into which she had been for many hours plunged, feels anxious that her possible apotheosis should lack nothing of completeness, and with that view writes thus to the Committee of the Salut-Public:

"Citizens,—Since I have but a few hours to live, may I hope that you will permit me to have my portrait taken? I

should be glad to leave this token of myself to my friends: and as we cherish the likeness of good citizens, so curiosity causes us to set a value upon that of great criminals, in order to perpetuate horror of their crimes. If you deign to grant my request, I beg you to send me a miniature-painter."

This assuredly neither great, angelic, nor demonic thought was not heeded by the citizens to whom it was addressed, who, for all answer, transferred the writer first to the Conciergerie, and early on the following day, Wednesday, the 17th, to the hall above the vaults of that prison where sat the Revolutionary Tribunal. Before ascending thereto, Charlotte Corday carefully arranged her hair and dress; and so vivid was the impression of her beauty upon the thronging crowd of spectators, that the curses which leapt to their lips as she entered the judgment-hall were arrested in the utterance, and followed by a confused, involuntary murmur of admiration. Moreover, the anxious wish she had expressed, that that beauty should be pictorially perpetuated, was unexpectedly gratified by the presence amongst the auditory of a M. Hauer, a portrait-painter; and Charlotte was no sooner aware that he was sketching her likeness, than, without interrupting the long, tedious formality of interrogation and trial to which she was subjected, she contrived to so place herself that the artist should have every possible facility for the complete accomplishment of his task!—Was this Roman heroism, or—delirious vanity?

The slayer of the "martyred Marat" was doomed to immediate death, and Charlotte Corday, returned to her prison-cell, passed the few minutes that elapsed before the arrival of the executioner and cart by sitting to M. Hauer, in order that he might perfect his work; chatting the while upon the events of the day, and the "peace" she had ensured

to France by the sacrifice of her own life;—a colloquy interrupted by the entrance of the headsman with the red chemise on his arm, the scissors in his hand. "So soon!" faltered the hapless woman. Ay! the preparations were complete, and the sovereign people, to whom she had given "peace," impatient to behold her on the way to the scaffold; to see that charming head fall into the basket.

Her long black hair was then shorn off—a lock given as a remembrance to M. Hauer—the red chemise put on,—her arms were pinioned, and having declined the services of a priest, the blood of Marat and her own being the only sacrifices she could offer to the Eternal, Charlotte Corday mounted the cart and confronted the yelling multitude, whose maledictions, vociferate as they might, could, however, be only partially heard amidst the heavy thunder-claps, the driving rain, and howling wind of the furious storm which at that moment burst over Paris. The summer tempest was brief as fierce, and that fearful ride was not half accomplished, when the dark clouds rolled away, the setting sun shone forth upon the wet, shrinking form, and kindled the pale face of the self-immolated girl, as with the new-born hope of an immortality other than that given by Plutarchs and painters—*not* purchased by the blood of Marat or her own—and which was, let us hope, realized even as Legros, one of the executioners, struck the cheek with one hand, as he showed to the shouting multitude the head of Charlotte Corday with the other!

Immediately young Franquelin heard of this catastrophe, he withdrew with his mother to an obscure cottage in Normandy, where he languished for a few months only; and the last request that trembled upon his dying lips was, that the letters and portrait of his adored Charlotte should be buried with him.

MADAME RECAMIER.

JULIETTE BERNARD was born at Lyons on the 3rd of December, 1777, in the Rue de Cage, and was placed as a permanent boarder in the Abbaye des Chartreux, near that city, at a very tender age, by her parents, whom unprosperous circumstances compelled to seek a new home in Paris. Pretty convent-inmates are by no means uncommon in France, true as it may be that that country is better entitled to boast of the acquired elegance and grace of its females than of their natural beauty of person; but as Juliette Bernard grew to girlhood, her dazzling, celestial loveliness (*une beauté éblouissante—céleste*) gradually became the exhaustless theme, not only of the ordinary frequenters of the Abbey Church, but of the citizens of Lyons, who, crowding thither on days of high festival, when only she could be seen, could hardly believe, as they looked upon her angel-face and drank in the thrilling strains of her exquisite voice, that she was a being of mortal mould, and formed of the same dull earth as themselves. There is no exaggeration in this language, if faith can be placed in the recorded testimonies of persons of every age, condition, and taste, that have written or spoken of this remarkable lady; of men and women,—the old, the middle-aged, the young,—of emperors and popes, soldiers and saints, poets and philosophers,—whose unanimous suffrages present a universality of homage, the sincerity of which cannot be questioned. Unhappily for her, the fame of her beauty had found far wider echoes by the time she had reached her fifteenth

birthday; and, amongst others, M. Récamier, a wealthy Paris banker of about four times her age, having first ascertained by the evidence of his own eyes that rumour had not overrated her personal attractions, presented himself to her parents as a suitor for the divine Juliette's hand. M. Récamier made no vain parade of sentiment or affection; he was well known to be a man who piqued himself upon surpassing all others in the splendour of his mansion, his furniture, his equipages, and he was consequently ambitious of obtaining an incomparable wife. The father readily consented to the rich man's proposal—Madame Bernard with some reluctance. It was not the custom in France then, any more than it is now, to consult a daughter in the choice of a husband; and the legal abduction of the beautiful Juliette, which immediately followed the conclusion of the business-bargain by which she was disposed of, from the tranquil retreat where she had passed so many happy years, to wed—a word she hardly understood—a stranger old enough to have been her grandfather, is thus described by Madame Récamier herself:—"On the evening of the day my aunt was to take me from the convent, I went to the apartment of the abbess to receive her benediction; and the next morning, I passed, bitterly weeping, out of the gate I did not remember to have seen opened to receive me, to find myself in a carriage with my aunt, and we set off for Paris. I pass with regret from an epoch so calm, so pure, to enter upon one full of agitation. It returns to me, sometimes, like a sweet, vague dream, with its clouds of incense, its multiplied ceremonies, its processions in gardens, its hymns and its flowers."

M. Récamier's ambition was fully gratified: all heads bowed down in delighted acknowledgment of his young

wife's unmatched loveliness; and when she appeared in public, which was seldom, the admiring crowds that thronged around her echoed the verdict of the *salons.* Upon one of these occasions, Madame Récamier encountered Danton and Camille Desmoulins on their way to the guillotine;—a vision of Paradise at the very brink of the abyss, which, till she could escape from the hideous hurly-burly, rivetted, it is said, the fascinated gaze of the gloomy Tribune, and his shrinking companion in crime and its expiation, and for a moment stilled the maledictions of the rabble pursuing them to the scaffold. After this horrible *rencontre,* Madame Récamier did not venture again to walk in the public streets till such ghastly celebrations of the triumph of freedom and fraternity were no longer the every-day *délassements* of a liberated people. Benjamin Constant, the grave publicist and political philosopher, whose wise, grey head was turned, unwittingly and to her great regret, by Madame Récamier, some quarter of a century later than this, at a brief interview with her soon after M. Constant's return to Paris in the wake of the restored Bourbons, thus writes of her joyous and radiant youth:—"Her look, to-day so expressive, so profound, seeming to reveal mysteries unknown to herself, was then full of gaiety. Her beautiful hair, which, if it now chance to detach itself, so agitates us all, then fell profusely, without danger to any one, upon her white shoulders. A brilliant and prolonged laugh frequently interrupted her charming and almost infantine conversation, whilst over all was shed an exquisite sentiment of purity, of elegance, of fine taste,—a veritable nobleness of nature, the titles whereof are only imprinted upon privileged beings."

The beautiful temple was illumined and informed by a soul as beautiful. Cast, whilst yet a child in years, an

infant in experience of the world, amidst the refined sensualism of a Parisian society which made haste to burn before her all it had of intoxicating incense, she passed through the seven-times heated furnace of temptation impenetrable to its subtlest fires, retaining, undimmed by a shadow of suspicion, the star-like purity and brightness which with her radiant loveliness ever seemed to associate her presence with the aspirations we form after a higher, purer, happier state of existence. Her *réunions* were a kind of neutral ground, where men of all shades of politics consented to forget the pitiless social warfare of the distracted time; her influence and purse, the while, being ever at the service of its victims, without regard to the colour or devices of the banner beneath which they had fought and fallen. Proscribed La Harpe, the once-ardent disciple of Voltaire, converted to Christianity by the spectacle of the philosophic sceptic's creed *in action*, found in her, as did very many others, a generous and sympathizing protectress; and she was only deterred from seeing him personally by his remonstrance, that the "*éclat* of her youth and beauty, following her everywhere, would infallibly reveal his den of refuge."

As the brilliant years swept on, a host of passionate admirers fluttered vainly round her, amongst them, though with more direct assailment, the Imperial Conqueror himself, who, it was thought, would easily have forgiven her persistent intimacy with Madame de Staël, but for the mortification she had inflicted upon a self-love unparalleled in its overweening haughtiness. Napoleon's insulting overtures were made, too, when Madame Récamier had fallen into, comparatively speaking, extreme poverty, through the failure of her adventurous husband's enormous speculations; the sole pecuniary means left her being a very moderate annuity, fortunately

secured to her, at Madame Bernard's instance, by the ante-nuptial contract. This was in 1805; Madame Récamier withdrew to the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and for once, M. Ballance remarks, Fortune retired alone; Madame Récamier's society being as eagerly courted as when she commanded in the most splendid establishment of Paris. "You are the heroine," wrote Madame de Staël, "of the sentiments, and are exposed to the events of which romances and tragedies are made; and in the midst of all these successes, that which you are and will remain is an angel of purity and beauty, and you will receive alike the reverence of the worldly-minded and the pious."

During the peace or truce of Amiens, about two years before her husband's failure, Madame Récamier visited London, accompanied by her mother. The Duc de Guisnes, formerly Ambassador of France at the English Court, furnished her with introductions to the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Melbourne, the Marchioness of Douglas, and others of the nobility. The fame of her beauty had preceded her, and her arrival created quite a sensation in the British capital. She accompanied the Duchess of Devonshire to the Opera, and in the box with them were the Prince of Wales and the Duc d'Orléans (Louis-Philippe). Every glass in the house that could be brought to bear upon her Grace's box was levelled at the dazzling Frenchwoman; and so great and evident was the excitement, that the Prince of Wales advised Madame Récamier to leave before the conclusion of the ballet, if she would avoid the risk of being crushed to death. His counsel was followed; but the instant Madame Récamier rose, all the box-doors flew open; she was lifted off her feet by the pressure of the fashionable mob, and literally carried to her carriage! Equal excitement was manifested on the

following day, when she visited Kensington Gardens; and the harassed lady was not sorry when she found herself amongst the less impressionable Hollanders, through whose country she passed on her return to France.

The displeasure of Bonaparte banished Madame Récamier from Paris,—a grievous punishment, though not so keenly felt by her as by Madame de Staël, in whose society at Coppet she passed many of her days of exile. It was there she met Prince Augustus of Prussia, who had been wounded at the battle of Eylau. He immediately conceived an uncontrollable passion for her, and Madame de Staël persuaded her friend to write to M. Récamier, who, incessantly occupied by schemes for the re-establishment of his fortune, had been long practically separated from his wife, requesting him to say candidly if he would concur in the measures necessary to effect a legal divorce; which accomplished, Madame Récamier would accept the addresses of the Prince Augustus. A considerable delay intervened before the answer was received, and an hour afterwards the Prince had left Coppet in a state of the wildest grief, which time calmed, indeed, but also deepened and rendered ineradicable.

M. Récamier's letter was a full but sorrowing consent to the proposal for a divorce, and his wife, upon reflection, refused to take advantage of his magnanimity. It was at Coppet also that the Vicomte de Chateaubriand's first interview with Madame Récamier took place. He thus speaks in his "Mémoires d'outre Tombe," written when he was trembling on the verge of that tomb, of this supreme moment of his life:—"I should fear, this day, to profane with my aged lips an impression which my memory preserves in all its youth and freshness, and of which the charm increases in proportion as my life passes away. I thrust back my old

days to discover behind those days celestial forms,—to hear from beyond the abyss the harmonies of a happier region." Time, it is plain, could have had no power over this lady's transcendant attractions, since at Madame de Staël's death she was considerably on the shady side of forty.

Another illustration of the fascination she exercised over men of the most diverse character and intellect may not be omitted here, though it, like the last, refers to a period long past her early life. The following letter, dated Paris, 13th January, 1816, was addressed to her by no less a personage than the Duke of Wellington:—"I own, madame, that I do not greatly regret that urgent business will prevent me from calling on you this afternoon, since each time after seeing you I quit your presence more than ever penetrated by your attractions, and less disposed to give my attention to politics. I will, however, wait upon you to-morrow, on returning from the Abbé Sicard's, if you should be at home, notwithstanding the effect which these dangerous visits produce on me."

There was, it is averred, a sunshine in the presence of Madame Récamier to the last day of her life; and even when age had clouded her eyes and stilled her voice, it was the latest felicity of the yet more aged Vicomte de Chateaubriand to be wheeled into her apartment, and for an hour silently commune with her of the near future, of whose bright habitants he had, as he believed, beheld in her the prophetic image. Madame Récamier lingered but a short time on earth after Chateaubriand descended fearlessly, as he foretold, into the tomb with the Cross in his hands. She, too, died in faith and peace.

MARGARET FULLER.

THIS lady, chiefly known in Europe by her "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," is indebted for the high reputation she acquired in her native America, rather to the rich promise it was thought she gave of future eminence than to anything she had achieved, or, in sooth, very clearly manifested the power of achieving. Her countrymen, or those who assume to represent them, would seem to have endorsed the estimate of her future success she herself had published. "My history," she exclaims, "presents much superficial, temporary tragedy. The woman in me kneels and weeps in tender rapture; the man in me rushes forth, but only to be baffled. Yet the time will come, when, from the union of this tragic King and Queen, shall be born a radiant Sovereign-Self." This, at the first glance, looks like mere girlish romanticism and conceit, clothed in gilt rhetoric, but modern transcendentalism, especially of the imitative kind, is of too delicate and superfine a nature to be so rudely judged. The author of Hamlet, to be sure, it has been pertinently remarked, gave himself no airs for having written Hamlet; but in this advanced age allowance must be made for the fashion, which not only permits, but invites each particular "mountainous me" (an expressive Americanism, applied to the subject of this sketch by her laudatory biographer, Mr. Emerson) to proclaim, with flourish of trumpet, his or her approaching birth-travail with a new Evangel—a fashion which the ever-recurring "ridiculus mus" has, apparently, no tendency to rebuke or mitigate. The rapt tenderness of the woman and the combative energy of the man combined in

Margaret Fuller, finding no worthier function than that of striving to breathe new life into the dry bones of transcendental German mysticism,—a hopeful task to set about in practical America;—her "large, rich, but irregular, unclarified nature"—I am still quoting the lady's self-description,—rebelled against the conventional ligatures that bound her, a woman, to a woman's recognised sphere of action. "A man's ambition," she querulously exclaims; "a man's ambition with a woman's heart, is an evil lot." No doubt, if by man's ambition is meant platform ambition—party strife and leadership ambition,—not else,—there being range enough, as hundreds of illustrious examples testify, within the verge of woman's duties, and without unsexing her, for the flight of the most virile high-reaching ambition—for the exercise of the loftiest talents: and, if only authorial fame is in question, what comparison is there between that achieved by Mary Wollstonecraft and Maria Edgeworth, by Miss Austen and Madame Dudevant? No ordinary person withal was greatly-purposing, fine-minded, impulsive Margaret Fuller; and there are few biographies more entertaining and instructive than the story of her brief, eccentric life—her tragic and untimely death.

Margaret Fuller, the oldest child of Timothy and Margaret Fuller, was born at Cambridge Port, Massachusetts, on the 23rd of May, 1810. Nature, bountiful in intellectual gifts, was more than ordinarily churlish towards her in exterior favours. She was plain as a child,—extremely so, spite of a "fair complexion, strong light hair, and good teeth." Mr. Emerson says; as a young woman, the unprepossessing cast of her features being increased by an unpleasant habit of opening and shutting her eyelids, and the nasal tone of her voice. Mr. Fuller, a stern, dogmatic man of system and the

world, who piqued himself on his proficiency in Greek and Latin, no sooner was aware that Margaret had a large capacity for retaining words, and lesson-formulæ generally, than he caused her to be relentlessly crammed with the dead languages and analogous memory-learning, taking effectual care to assure himself that the prescribed quantum of language had been duly administered and imbibed by compelling the poor child to repeat her daily lessons to him every evening, however late the hour when he reached home. The same ruthless discipline was enforced in the acquirements of other branches of knowledge; and the result was loss of appetite, spirit, strength—broken health, hectic nervousness, accompanied by spectral illusions, which so haunted and disturbed her sleep, that she would frequently start up in the night and flee, shrieking, away from the frightful shapes with which her fevered brain peopled the bed-chamber, to the great disturbance of the household and anxious alarm of her mother. But for Mrs. Fuller's interposition, immediately-fatal consequences would probably have ensued;—and of this kind and tender mother Margaret writes with a charming earnestness of love. Speaking of her stern father, she says, "His love for my mother was the green spot in which he stood apart from the commonplaces of a mere bread-winning existence. She was one of those fair and flower-like natures which sometimes spring up even beside the dusty highways of life,—a creature not to be shaped into a merely useful instrument, but bound by one law with the blue sky, the dew, and frolic birds. Of all persons I have known, she had in her most of the angelic—that spontaneous love for every living thing—for man, and beast, and tree—which restores the golden age."

At six years of age Margaret Fuller could read Latin

correctly; a year later, Greek; after which her curriculum of study rapidly expanded. She was nine years old when she, for the first time, opened a volume of Shakspere, containing "Romeo and Juliet," upon which she immediately fastened, spell-bound by the fascination of the story. It was Sunday afternoon, and Mr. Fuller, who had insisted upon impressing Ovid's elevating Metamorphoses upon her young, plastic intellect, fearing contamination from "Romeo and Juliet," ordered her to put the book away, under the pretence that it was not one to be read on the Sabbath! Margaret murmured, reluctantly obeyed, re-obtained sly possession of the book, was again detected, and sent weeping to bed. Her appetite for reading now became insatiable, omnivorous; she devoured an enormous mass of books; and whilst yet in her teens could truly boast that most of the notable printed wit and wisdom of preceding ages had floated through her brain, leaving, however, no very clearly-defined impressions, except that the law of life in old Greece was beauty,—that of Rome—will, stern composure, the classic type of the true Roman having a noble brow, furrowed by counsels, and an eye which cut like a sword:—sounding puerilities, which Shakspere, whose divine vision pierced through the historic "make up" of classic life, with truer insight than that of Grote or Niebuhr, in some degree disabused her of; but the *quasi* paganism derived from the same source—belief in the influence of the planet Jupiter, in omens, talismans, sortes, the latent power and esoteric signification of precious stones and proper names—appears to have never wholly lost its hold on her mind. "When I first met with the name of Leila," she quite seriously writes, "I knew from the very look, and said, It is mine. I knew that it meant Night—Night which brings out truths."

Carbuncles she held to be of two kinds, male and female: "the female casts out light, the male has light within itself: mine is the male." When about to write to a particular acquaintance, she was scrupulous to put on a carbuncle; whilst other friends she associated with the onyx, amethyst, &c. Her amazing power of eloquent volubility was exercised without stint upon all who ventured within its range—on children, old people, men of the world, and sainted maidens. A Mr. Allcot pronounced her to be the most brilliant talker of her age; and Mr. Emerson professes to have been, not merely charmed, but astonished by her talking gifts. Margaret Fuller not only endorsed these praises, but drew large notes of admiration in her own favour with astounding coolness. "I am acquainted," she has been heard to say, "with all the people worth knowing in America, and I have found no intellect comparable to my own." Performance—of the kind that could be judged of, not mere fugitive talk—accorded ill with this self-trumpeting, which should, in all conscience, have heralded something superior to translations from the German, commonplace criticisms upon music, literature, politics, and poetry, published in the "Dial" and "New York Tribune;" from which, and other equally instructive commentaries, we gather that John Sterling was a genuine poet, and Longfellow a mere rhymester; that, had Shelley lived twenty years longer, he would have become a Christian, and so have attained the mental harmony necessary to him; and that Beethoven's music is the sublimest expression of which the soul of man is capable, and, moreover, distinct, articulate, positive in its meanings as human speech—an old rhapsodical extravagance, just as true of music as of colour or of perfume. Miss Fuller also distinguished herself as a teacher

in several establishments of repute, and was accustomed to enumerate, with much self-complacency, the many young men and girls whose minds she had formed, as closely as natural inferiority would permit, upon the model of her own. Finding, withal, that teaching, and especially writing, was "mighty dead work," she, in 1846, accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Spring to Europe.

Before, however, pausing for a few moments over the crowded incidents of that brief, agitated—yet, it may be, happiest—portion of her life, and the terrible catastrophe that ended all, let us turn to her early life, as it passed apart from books, intellectual antagonism, and self-display. Her first vivid experience was, she says, one of death—the death of a sister, "a sweet, playful child, in whom life and death were alike beautiful"—a heavy and lasting grief; and there can be little doubt that in Margaret Fuller there was a deep fount of feminine, trustful tenderness, which, but that a certain pedantry of pride hindered its free play, would have speedily swept away the mannish assumptions and affectations which overlaid her more amiable and natural qualities. An incident in her early girlhood indicates this well nigh as conclusively as her last three troubled years of life. I allude to her meeting with "the first angel of her life," an English lady of surpassing beauty, who chanced to be on a visit to that part of America, "whose presence was to me," she says, "a gate of paradise. She did not say much to me—to any one: she spoke with her whole being, rather than by choice words." One day Margaret was reading "Guy Mannering," and her eyes were wet and dim with the tears excited by the loss of little Henry Bertram, when the lady, observing the sorrowing child, and touched by her emotion, silently ap-

proached and accosted her. "She did not question me, but fixed on me looks of beautiful love. I laid my head against her shoulder and wept, dimly feeling that I must lose her and all who spake to me of the same things;—that the cold waves would rush over me. She waited till my tears were spent, then, rising, took from a box a bunch of golden amaranths. They were very fragrant. 'They came to me,' she said, 'from Madeira.'" The departure of this lady—a bright morning star suddenly risen, but to set as suddenly, upon the impressionable girl's dull, cold dawn of life—threw her into a deep melancholy, from which she was with difficulty roused. The amaranths Margaret kept during seventeen years. Madeira for long afterwards dwelt in her imagination as an island of the blest; and when ships sailed past the coast, their white wings glancing in the sunlight, and "bearing themselves with fulness of beautiful certainty," she felt assured they must be bound for happy, fortunate Madeira. Later in life, and subsequent to the death of her father, of cholera, in 1835, we find Margaret Fuller, wholly divested for the nonce of her paganish, fantastic eccentricities, zealously interesting herself in behalf of the wretched female outcasts of society imprisoned in Sing-Sing; ay, and discoursing to them on Christmas-day with hopeful commiseration, from the Scripture text, "The bruised reed he will not break: the smoking flax he will not quench." This was not the only instance, by many, in which Margaret Fuller's intensely egotistical bas-bleuism partially fell off, and revealed glimpses of a divine humility, shrouded beneath a mantle of self-glorifying arrogance.

The voyage to England was happily accomplished, and Margaret Fuller received there by Carlyle and other literary celebrities with much cordiality, in return for which—but

this is *selon les règles*—they and their peculiarities figure amusingly in their guest's published letters to her American friends. She was not, we are informed, aware, till she visited England, how much Mr. Carlyle deserved for having cast light across that monstrous sham, English society; of which society, simply-natural, unsophisticated Mistress Margaret Fuller having seen so much in her half-a-dozen days' sojourn in London, was of course so competent to speak with authority. Of the notorieties of France, which country she next visited, Madame Dudevant (George Sand) interested and charmed her most; a shockingly-maligned lady, it would appear, and especially by her numerous lovers, who might have known better, for in purpose, intention, at all events, Madame was ever immaculate!

From France Miss Fuller passed into Italy, and there privately married (1847), after brief acquaintance and briefer wooing—by letter chiefly—Giovanni-Angelo Ossoli, an impoverished Italian marquis, not at all the person, she informed her mother, that people would expect her to have chosen, he being not only unacquainted with books, but destitute of enthusiasm, and remarkable only for good sense and good temper. Ossoli belonged to the Mazzini republican party, with which Margaret naturally also sympathized; and during the siege of Rome,—which, by the way, she intimates was defended by very few Romans, Mazzini's partisans being chiefly Poles and other foreigners,—she was appointed directress of one of the hospitals for wounded soldiers, a duty which she zealously and efficiently fulfilled. So much had marriage and maternity—one child, a boy named Angelo, was born to her—aided by the wholesome uses of peril and adversity, improved her, that a lady who had known her in America, and been more repulsed than attracted by her intellectual self-suffisance,

conjoined with petulance of temper, exclaims, "How unlike was she to this now! so delicate, so simple, so confiding, so affectionate; with a true womanly heart and soul, and, what was to me a still greater surprise, possessed of so broad a charity that she could cover with its mantle the faults and defects of all about her."

Rome capitulated; the Marquis Ossoli escaped to Florence, whither Margaret hastened to join him and her darling little Angelo. They resided there in obscure lodgings till May, 1850, on the 15th of which month they embarked from Leghorn for the United States, on board the *Elizabeth*, an American barque-rigged merchant-vessel commanded by a Captain Harley. Forebodings of shipwreck and death, common to all persons unused to the sea and about to undertake a long voyage, agitated the minds of both wife and husband, and recalled or suggested to Ossoli a real or fancied warning, long since addressed to him, "to beware of the sea." Margaret seems to have chiefly feared for her boy, lest he should perish at sea "by unsolaced illness or the howling waves," affecting to contemplate her own possible or probable fate from the high stilts of a very transparent stoicism:—"I feel perfectly willing to stay my threescore years and ten, if it be thought I need so much tuition from this planet; but it seems to me my future upon earth will soon close. It may be terribly trying, but it will not be so very long now. God will transplant the root, if he wills to rear it into fruit-bearing." She further expresses a hope that the agony will be brief, and that herself, Ossoli, and Angelo may all go together.

A part only of this hope was fulfilled. Early in the morning of the 16th of July, the *Elizabeth*, after labouring through the night in a fierce hurricane, struck on Fire Beach, off the

Jersey coast, America; and, to quote Mr. Channing's affecting narrative, "after twelve hours communing face to face with death, a sea struck the forecastle, carrying with it the deck and all upon it. The steward and Angelo were washed upon the beach, both dead, though warm, some twenty minutes after. Céleste (Margaret's servant) and Ossoli were caught for a moment by the rigging, but the next wave swallowed them up. Margaret sank at once; when last seen, she was seated at the foot of the foremast, clad in her white night-dress, with her hair fallen loose upon her shoulders."

Thus prematurely perished Margaret Fuller Ossoli, a woman of great powers, which for their full and genial development seem to have required but a prolongation of the healthier, better life upon which she had but recently entered, and no words seem fitter to conclude the recital of such a dispensation than her own:—" I have faith in a glorious explanation that shall make manifest perfect justice and perfect wisdom."

LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

THAT must surely be an extraordinary woman who, born in the purple of the British aristocracy, and, before she was twenty, a personage of influence in the highest region of political power, deliberately, and whilst yet in the heyday of life, cast away the advantages of her social position to herd with the nomadic tribes of Asian deserts, for whom she neither felt nor affected either liking or esteem, and who, uninspired by genuine religious or political enthusiasm, dreamt vaguely, and died dreaming, of a sacerdotal empire in the East—of a throne in Jerusalem!

Was, then, the self-expatriation of the Lady Hester Stanhope, as her French admirers generally assert, the natural revolt of a sensitive and ardent nature against the life of paltry conventionalism and mean compliances into which she had been too early initiated?—or was it, as others insist with greater plausibility, the petulant outbreak of a vain, atrabilious woman, whose insane craving after applause and notoriety could, she well knew, only be gratified in countries where her pension of fifteen hundred pounds sterling per annum—against which her sensitive and ardent nature did *not* revolt—would be a princely revenue, and the shallowest acquirements, in a European sense, pass for profoundest knowledge?

The record of Lady Hester Stanhope's early life will, if read and interpreted aright, determine which of these two opposite assumptions is the true one; and we place it, there-

fore, before the reader without further preliminary comment.

Lady Hester Stanhope was the eldest of three daughters—Hester, Griselda, and Lucy—borne to Charles, Earl Stanhope, by his first wife, the sister of William Pitt, and daughter, consequently, of the first Earl of Chatham. Charles, Earl Stanhope, made some noise in his day, chiefly forasmuch that, being himself a hereditary Peer, he felt or affected a horror of hereditary rank, sympathized openly with the French Revolution, and gave such proof of the sincerity of his opinions as the erasure of armorial bearings from his plate and coach-panels might afford:—a whimsical gentleman in other respects, according to Lady Hester, who reports, that he slept without a nightcap under the weight of twelve blankets, and when he rose in the morning, slipped on a pair of silk breeches, and squatting down upon some part of the room where there was no carpet, ate his breakfast of tea and dry bread! His lordship, moreover, not content, when in a more inflamed state of republicanism than usual, with having painted out the armorial insignia from his carriage-panels, sold the carriages, to the great chagrin of the second Lady Stanhope, whose distress suggested to little Lady Hester a suitable plan for her relief. The child procured a pair of stilts, and stumped down a dirty lane where the Earl would be sure to see her. It so fell out, and his Lordship accosted her with, "I say, little girl, what have you been doing? Where was it I saw you going upon a pair of the—the devil knows what, eh, little girl?" To which the little girl replied, that as papa had sold his carriages and horses, it occurred to her that she might as well practise getting through the mud upon stilts; but that poor Lady Stanhope, who could not avail herself of

such expedients, felt the loss of her carriage acutely. Lady Hester's remonstrance had the hoped-for effect upon the peer-philosopher, who promised to restore the carriage, "but no more armorial bearings." This particular craze of the noble Earl was not hereditary in the family; the Lady Hester Stanhope glorifying herself to her dying day upon being an aristocrat, *pur sang*, as incontrovertibly "shown by the formation of my instep, which is so high that a kitten can walk under the sole of my foot."

Thus much in relation to Lady Hester's father, and the light which his peculiar idiosyncrasy projects over his daughter's. Her mother died early, and the second Lady Stanhope, a Grenville, could have had no influence over the education, such as it was, of her step-daughters; her ladyship's time, from the forenoon when she rose till the dawn of the following day, being wholly occupied in having her hair dressed by one of the only two men (Frenchmen) that were equal to the task—by dinner, the opera, and night-parties.

The young ladies' grandmother, the Dowager Lady Stanhope, who resided at Chevening, was an eccentricity of a statelier sort than her son. An immitigable formality regulated all things at Chevening, from the unheeled shoes and cropped heads of the women, and dress and demeanour of the men servants—attired like gentlemen-ushers—to the daily squeezing of the Ladies Hester, Griselda, and Lucy into shape and straightness by back-boards;—the rigid *régime* of the inexorable Dowager being enforced by a formidable array of scissors and rods; the scissors, to clip off any stray curl that should dare peep out from under a maid's cap; the rods, for general application, alike to granddaughters, and, considered as clothes-pegs, grander servants. "How I did hate our French and Swiss governesses!" exclaimed the Lady

Hester, half a century afterwards, whilst in daily expectation of the Millennium, and *en attendant* painting herself *en beau*, to the much-enduring medical gentleman who has since published his recollections of those charming colloquies in six closely-printed volumes. "How I did hate those French and Swiss governesses; they would have squeezed me, had it been possible to do so, into the size of a tiny Miss;"—and—inconceivable audacity of plebeian ignorance! —positively endeavoured to flatten down the sole of her ladyship's foot, which a kitten could walk under, "though that was one of the things which showed my high breeding." M. Lamartine, it may be here mentioned, was apprised by her ladyship, when he visited her at Dar Jöon, in Syria, that he, too, by the same sign, was high-bred; or, at all events, approximated towards that exalted condition—say half or two-thirds bred—forasmuch that, albeit a kitten might not be able to find its way under his foot, water could, without wetting the sole thereof. It is probable that her ladyship's magnificent contempt for the people of England was based upon the fact that, as a nation, we are defective in the pedal arch,—a comparatively even-soled race, from which no good could possibly arise.

The education, in a book sense, of the Ladies Stanhope appears to have been wofully neglected or thrown away; it having been one of Lady Hester's boasts, that she had never read more than the first three or four pages of any book, and that her especial aversion was "History;" which—from the spontaneous illumination of her star, I suppose—she knew to be all lies. Not that her ladyship held all human testimony to be untrustworthy; not, for example, when it set forth her own claims to the admiration and esteem of mankind; for every word or line of which personal history

she had a high respect and tenacious memory. "Men who were no fools" had declared that she might well be proud of the alabaster whiteness of her neck, rivalling that of her pearl necklace;—of her cheek's fine contour, rounding off so beautifully that Beau Brummel once exclaimed,—"For God's sake, take off those ear-rings, that we may see what is beneath them;" and when, tanned, shrivelled, shrunken with age, the Syrian climate, and tobacco-smoke, her ladyship would repeat the words of Sir Sidney Smith's description of her first appearance on the world's great (upper) stage: "You entered the room in your pale skirt, exciting our admiration by your magnificent and majestic figure. The roses and lilies were blended in your face, and the ineffable smiles of your countenance diffused happiness around you." At the same time the Lady Hester, it must be understood, did not —we have her own authority for saying—plume herself at all upon the possession of such transcendent charms and graces; albeit that, like the country she contemned and had cast off, the admiring terms in which they had been spoken of would cling to her memory, and find their frequent way unbidden to her lips. Indeed, she rather thought that her sister Lucy was "the prettiest" of the family; though certainly not gifted with the high qualities possessed in such perfection by herself as to call forth and justify George III.'s elaborate compliment, addressed to her uncle, Mr. Pitt, and carefully retained in that elastic memory of hers, side by side with ineffable spirit-teachings: "You have not reason, Mr. Pitt, to be proud that you are a Minister, for there have been many before and will be many after you; but you *have* reason to be proud of your niece, Lady Hester, who unites everything that is good and great in man and woman." The candour of Lady Hester slightly subdues the brilliancy of this

portraiture, which we are assured dates from before the King's mind gave way, by the admission that she was a mischievous mimic, and fierce, proud as the Devil!

Lady Hester early gained, by her imperious wilfulness, complete ascendency over her sisters and brothers; which vehemence of temperament, moreover, thoroughly defeated the Dowager-Lady Stanhope's injunctions to the governesses to keep the young ladies in ignorance of all things improper for young ladies to know. "I quickly knew, and remembered everything," triumphantly exclaims her ladyship;—a manifestation of precocity natural enough in an incipient prophetess, though somewhat unlovely in a noble damsel of sixteen. Her youthful ladyship, nevertheless, admired delicacy of mind and manners; and she relates with commendation, that having dropped her garter in the crowd at Warren Hastings' trial, Lord Grey,—then a young man,—who picked it up, and knew whose it was, handed it to the woman there who served tea and coffee.

The Lady Hester's ready acquiescence in her uncle's, Mr. Pitt's, invitation to preside over his household, was prompted by forecasting filial piety. The time was out of joint: Church-and-King mobs ran riot through the land, and the anti-Jacobin furor—fast becoming frenzy—of the people might prove dangerous to men of higher social mark than such plebeian patriots as Paine and Priestley,—her noble father, to wit,—who had rendered himself so obnoxious to the ultra-Royalism of the country by his absurd democratic whims. It would be well for him, therefore, she reflected, well for the family, "if she had Mr. Pitt by her side in the evil days that seemed to be at hand." Mr. Pitt, indeed—if Lady Hester's word can be relied upon—individually held "Tom Paine to be quite in the right;" though, as a states-

man, he could not tolerate Paineism; therein differing from his noble niece, who vaunted herself to be "a thorough aristocrat; and hated a pack of dirty Jacobins." Lady Hester continued to reside with Mr. Pitt till the great Minister's death; not only presiding over his household, but having a voice potential in the distribution of his patronage. That she had, is proved, not alone by her own boasts in the after time (Lady Hester incidentally remarked, when her physician was reading Sir Nathaniel Wraxall's Memoirs to her at Dar Jöon, that had she been aware there was so clever a man as Sir Nathaniel amongst the crowd of stupid people that surrounded Mr. Pitt, she would have made him a duke!), but by the smiling servility with which titled and untitled Courtdom submitted to her ladyship's supercilious insolence, of which she recounts many piquant instances. And what a charming picture her ladyship gives of the Court over which Queen Charlotte, of moral memory, held sway! Of the Prince of Wales, destitute, she declares, of one solitary good quality; of the profane swearer, his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland; of the Earl Chatham, keeping an artillery corps under arms from dawn of day till sundown, whilst he toyed with his mistress; and so on through half the Court Guide.

Her ladyship's pen was, moreover, a weapon of power. The Customs department being threatened with sweeping reforms, Lady Hester drew up a petition in defence; upon reading which Lord Grenville exclaimed, that nobody but her ladyship could have written it, and forthwith abandoned his reform project in despair. As to marriage, although "there were men who would have gone through fire for me," Lady Hester—who early knew, besides, that matrimony was all "star"—appears to have thought but little. She was

not disposed to marry any one less clever than herself; upon hearing which Mr. Pitt remarked, "Then she will never marry, for there is no such man." The Minister, her ladyship further reports to have said upon one occasion, that it was useless trying to mystify or conceal anything from her, for if she wished to cheat the Devil, she would do so. "And so I would," adds the Lady Hester.

A terrible downcome of that giddy greatness was at hand. Mr. Pitt died. His Royal Highness the Prince Regent rudely turned his back upon the Lady Hester the first time she met him publicly after that event; and the Courtocracy she found, to her intense disgust, had all at once discovered that the charming frankness of speech which they had not been able sufficiently to admire, was in very truth neither more nor less than ill-mannered insolence; the Lady Hester's disdain of conventionalism, indicative, they had—whilst Mr. Pitt was living, and a Minister—erroneously imagined, of superior and original genius, to be mere savagery—the vulgar antipathy of a masculine woman to feminine reticence and delicacy.

The consequence of this change of sentiment in fashionable circles was, that nobody—nobody that was anybody—visited the dethroned lady at her new residence in Montague Square; and after trying rustication at a small cottage near Brecon in Wales, the Lady Hester Stanhope finally took disdainful leave of Great Britain; suffered shipwreck off the Island of Rhodes; visited Constantinople, Lebanon, Arabia; sounding, as she went, praises of herself and Napoleon Bonaparte; and at length settled at Dar Jöon, in Syria, not very distant from St. Jean D'Acre. There she received numerous voyagers, and amongst others, MM. Lamartine and Marcellus, by whom her nothings have been so monstered

and transformed that, seen through that mist of eloquent verbiage, a woman of some talent, certainly, but utterly deficient in imagination or genius, whose faith was a muddle of mystical Magianism and transcendental Christianity, compounded, after a novel fashion, from the Apocalypse and Vox Stellarum; and who—whilst in hourly expectation of the Messiah of nations, of whom she was the self-proclaimed associate, chosen from before the foundations of the earth were laid, passed the time in smoking, chewing, and swearing at her servants (black beasts, in her familiar vocabulary)—seems a personage of exalted attributes and prophetic inspiration!

It is only just to add, that this unhappy, conceit-crazed lady held, or proclaimed, a very exalted estimate of the results of her Eastern sojourn; and especially, oddly as it sounds from her lips, for having exalted the English name in the East to a height it had never before attained. The occasion of this strange self-glorification was, when Lord Palmerston, then (1838) British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, apprised her ladyship, through Colonel Campbell, the English Consul at Beyrout, that she must pay her debts, or "the pension" would be sequestrated for that purpose. This "impertinence to a Pitt" was fiercely resented by Lady Hester, who forthwith dispatched a letter to Queen Victoria, intimating that she, Lady Hester Stanhope, "would give up her pension, and with it the name of an English subject, and the slavery that is entailed upon it!" With respect to Colonel Campbell, her ladyship was inclined to send a bullet through his head; and to Lord Palmerston, whom she opportunely remembered Mr. Pitt had half-promised he would some day ask to dinner, she addressed a fiery epistle, which loftily reproved him "for having alienated from the

Queen and her country a subject who both great and small must acknowledge has raised the English name in the East higher than any one had yet done; besides having made philosophic researches of every description for the advantage of human nature at large."

The absolute relinquishment of the pension was prudently postponed till an answer was received from Sir Francis Burdett, whom her ladyship had requested to inquire after the 25,000*l.* per annum which she had a strong notion had been bequeathed to her many years previously by some one in Ireland. The amiable Baronet's reply, when it at length came, was not satisfactory; and in June, 1839, the strict arrest of the fell Serjeant Death superseded the claims of less potent creditors, and her ladyship passed, one may say, suddenly from earth, leaving a name which will ever point a moral that he who runs may read,—but would scarcely adorn a tale.

MADAME DE GENLIS.

STEPHANIE-FELICITÉ-DUCREST De St. Aubin, Comtesse de Genlis, born on the 25th of January, 1746, at Champcéri, near Autun, in Burgundy,—nourished with wine-and-water in lieu of milk—who lived eighty-four years, published eighty-four thick volumes of political, moral, and romantic literature, and who, when fourscore years of age, "and having eyes that needed no spectacles, hearing acute as at twenty, good legs, unimpaired memory and intellect," undertook, in the interests of morality and religion, for which she had already done so much, to re-write the "Encyclopédie" ("abattre un colosse effrayant d'orgueil et d'impiété,")—had a narrow escape, in the very dawn of that remarkable existence, of being blotted out of being by a heavy, half-blind *Bailli* of the district, who, calling on Monsieur de St. Aubin for a gossip, spread his coat-tails, preparatory to seating himself in the roomy arm-chair wherein, unperceived by him, lay the future preceptress of Louis-Philippe, and eminent authoress, sewed up for safety's sake in a feather pillow. Fortunately, Monsieur le Bailli was not so deaf as dull-sighted, and the nurse's scream warning him just in time of the babycide he was about to commit, the imminent catastrophe was averted, and the tiny germ preserved, to be, in the fulness of time, developed into the wonderful woman who, with the hearty self-appreciation which runs through the six volumes of her autographic memoirs, sums up as follows her claims to the veneration of mankind :—

"As to my influence, I dare assert that it has been useful

to religion, and that, by the peculiar favour of Providence, my hand has struck heavy blows at a false philosophy. I flatter myself, moreover, that I have exercised a salutary influence upon both public and private education, and notably with respect to the study of living languages, which I brought into fashion; and as to the use of games, recreations, and the gymnastics proper to infancy and youth, of which I gave the first ideas in my 'Lessons of a Governess.' Society also owes to me the total abolition of fairy tales, formerly permitted to be used in the education of children. In a word, I have fought with success against false taste in all things, and especially in literature."

This extract from the "Mémoires Inédits de Madame la Comtesse de Genlis" conveys but a faint idea of the loss which the world would have sustained, had her marvellous faculties been extinguished in embryo by the ponderous *Bailli;* to fully realize which hypothetical calamity, it is necessary to have read all the charming passages of self-description with which those volumes abound, as well as the numerous testimonies by admiring contemporaries to her moral and intellectual eminence carefully preserved therein for the instruction of posterity. As, unfortunately, my canvas is far too small for the exhibition of a complete portraiture, I can only select and combine some of the more salient traits of character and genius that sparkle throughout those precious pages; which, however, will, I think, enable the reader to pretty accurately appreciate not only Madame la Comtesse herself, but the moral and intellectual state of society wherein she, for so many years, shone a bright particular star of the first magnitude.

The lady's sire was proprietor, by purchase, of the Marquisate and Château of St. Aubin, situate on the borders of the

Loire, where "mon heureuse enfance" was chiefly passed; but the title of Comtesse, assumed by Mademoiselle de St. Aubin in her seventh year, was obtained from a more "legitimate" fountain of honour than the breeches-pocket. At that age she was created a Canoness of the noble chapter of Alix, at Lyons; the symbol of which semi-spiritual dignity, a consecrated gold ring placed upon the recipient's finger by the Grand Prior, conferred the secular title of Comtesse, without the drawback of any obligation on the part of the neophyte to complete her profession when arrived at years of discretion; though, if she did so, the order was not without some "profitable prebends," to reward the renunciation of the world and its vanities. Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, as, till we accompany her to the marriage-altar it will be as well to call her, was publicly baptized in Paris, with an iron collar round her neck, to keep in its place the small Grecian head—unconscious casket, filled with divinest gifts—and goggles on her eyes, worn to conceal and correct a tendency to squint, happily thereby eradicated, or it might have marred "the expression of open yet gentle candour," which, in the opinion of many persons, constituted her soft eyes' supremest charm. Madame la Comtesse de Bellevau was one of her sponsors, and remarking upon her goddaughter's baptismal name, Félicité, she exclaimed, "Ah, poor child, she will never be happy! she possesses too much sensibility." "Elle avait raison," sighs octogenarian Madame de Genlis, mentally looking back over the long track of time, strewed with mementoes reminding her of how frequently that extreme sensibility had made shipwreck of her peace,—"Elle avait raison, hélas!"

Mademoiselle de St. Aubin's educational progress was marvellous, greatly outstripping that of her brother, "who was by no means so remarkable a child as I,"—and *he* learned of

M. Bertrand, a Paris professor, to read and write perfectly in six weeks! Her faculty of histrionic representation, displayed in the private theatricals got up at the château, was astonishing, both in tragedy and comedy; her Zaïre was declared by competent judges to surpass that of Clairon: but the applauses she received did not, one is glad to hear, intoxicate her. She was a perfect musician by power of the fine harmonies of her nature; and her harp-playing, especially, was distinguished by "effects" far surpassing those attained by David,—so, at least, pronounces a poet whose testimony is quoted approvingly in the "Mémoires Inédits:"—

> "Genlis, votre harpe magique
> Efface l'instrument antique
> Dont on nous vante les succès;
> Par lui Saül vit disparôitre
> Et ses transports et ses accès,
> Et vous en faites ici naître!"

Concurrently with the gourd-growth of those accomplishments, the imaginative faculty largely latent in Mademoiselle de St. Aubin's brain began to manifest itself in pensive reveries and romantic castle-building; which reveries and *châteaux en Espagne*, were, we are told, redeemed from commonplace by the pure and exalted aim which inspired them:—"I must say one thing in praise of myself, and which has distinguished me from all other persons of a romantic imagination; which is, that I only desired events in order to the display of certain qualities of the soul which I admired, such as patience, courage, presence of mind! Thus, in these reveries of mine, there was a foundation of love of glory and virtue, which in a child was remarkable."

The first flight in verse of that romantic imagination was suggested by the triple fact, that one of her own names was

Félicité; that of her mother's *femme de chambre,* Victoire; and that her governess was a Mademoiselle de Mars:—

> "Félicité, Mars, et Victoire
> Se trouvent rassemblés chez nous:
> Est-il rien de plus grand, est-il rien de plus doux,
> Que de fixer chez soi le bonheur et la gloire?"

This touching effusion threw Monsieur de Mondorge, a distinguished song-writer of the day, "and the first man that gave me the idea of a conversation really agreeable,"—a compliment, by the way, which bears a somewhat unfilial aspect,—into an ecstasy of admiration, which he thus versified:—

> "D'Hébé vous avez la jeunesse
> Et les appas;
> Dans les yeux, certaine finesse
> Qu'elle n'a pas.
> Si la belle eût joint votre grâce
> A sa beauté,
> Jamais Ganymède à sa place
> Ne fût monté."

Mademoiselle sang this brilliant *morceau* with such ravishing effect to the accompaniment of her harp, that M. de Mondorge, a sensible man and the father of a family, thought it prudent to withdraw himself whilst he was yet but partially delirious, and it was therefore possible to do so, from the too charming girl's intoxicating presence; and as no sinister catastrophe is recorded, it is probable that he ultimately recovered. It was about the same time, "when I was but eleven years old and small of my age, that the first passion I inspired" was revealed by the wild looks and generally distracted appearance of the son of Dr. Pinat, a celebrated physician, as unmistakeably as by the written words of fire

which he placed in her hands one fine day. Mademoiselle was not so much surprised that the young man should be smitten with her, albeit she was only eleven and small for her age, as startled by the utter *bouleversement de tête* evidenced by his forgetfulness of the immense gulf which separated him, the son of a physician, who was not even a *gentilhomme*, from a noble damsel, who, not to speak of hereditary distinction, was a consecrated Countess of the noble order of Alix at Lyons! The unfortunate lover, who was severely reprimanded for his audacity, yielding to adverse destiny, went into exile—Paris, probably, where he obtained a situation.

Clouds gradually overgrew and darkened the brilliancy of Mademoiselle de St. Aubin's morning of life. Her father became embarrassed in circumstances; the Marquisate and Château of St. Aubin were sold, and but a poor twelve thousand francs per annum remained to the family. Madame de St. Aubin resumed the name of Ducrest, and retired with her daughter to Passy. Monsieur de St. Aubin went to St. Domingo.

At Passy, Mademoiselle passed her time in perfecting herself on the harp, fiddle, guitar, and bagpipe; writing her first novel, and visiting with her mother at the house of Monsieur de la Popalinière a wealthy farmer-general, liberal patron of literature, and poet in a minor way himself. Whilst there too, another of the young lady's remarkable gifts manifested itself. "Nature," she writes, "endows some individuals with a precious instinct, that of judging the soul by the face: I possessed that gift." There can be no doubt she did, since by its means she knew M. de Chalons, a neighbour, to be a secret assassin—an imputation which a subsequent discovery went far to confirm; and foretold of the Abbé de la Coste—

not a clergyman, Madame is careful to note, who was afterwards condemned to the galleys—that he would be hanged! It is, however, to be regretted that the extreme sensibility before spoken of did not prevent Mademoiselle de St. Aubin from torturing to excruciation that of others. The Baron de Zevlachen, Colonel of Swiss Guards, and eighty years of age, fell so hopelessly in love with her, that the remnant of his days was visibly shortened by the violence of his emotions; and Monsieur de Monville, "a youthful widower, of a noble and romantic style of beauty, of charming accomplishments and ample fortune," was subdued by the same spell. He, too, found Mademoiselle to be as inexorably cruel as she was irresistibly fascinating. Young as she was—barely fourteen—her determination to marry a man of quality, and attached to the Court, was already irrevocably formed.

In what the spell consisted which led so many unfortunates captive, does not clearly appear. In the article of personal beauty Madame does not greatly vaunt herself, with the exception of her bright brown hair, and the sweet candour of her soft, spiritual eyes; and sketches by contemporary pens are less complimentary. The compelling charm must, therefore, have been her rare accomplishments—her exquisite performances upon the harp, fiddle, guitar, and bagpipes, helped by the wit and vivacity of her conversation. This seems to be the only rational solution, unless we adopt that suggested by certain ill-tempered critics, who will have it that the surprising "conquests" complacently recorded by Madame de Genlis afford the strongest proof of her imaginative powers to be found throughout her numerous volumes!

M. le Comte de Genlis, the destined "man of quality, and attached to the Court," at the time of the double distraction just mentioned, was fighting valiantly at Pondicherry against

the English, and, although a naval officer, at the head of a regiment. Fortune, however, proving false to valour and Count Lally Tollendal, M. de Genlis embarked for France, but had the misfortune to be captured by his old enemies, after a desperate naval combat, wherein "twenty-one out of twenty-two French officers were slain," and M. de Genlis, the sole survivor, received eight wounds, "one of which he kept open till he married." He was taken to Launceston, where he met M. de St. Aubin, whom the ubiquitous sea-wolves had made prize of as he was returning from St. Domingo. Naturally, the portrait worn by M de. St. Aubin of his gifted daughter, and illustrated by numerous parental anecdotes of her wondrous precocity of genius, must have interested the young and gallant captain, though not, it would appear, very deeply, forasmuch that, when restored by exchange to his native country, he was sufficiently well disposed towards a *mariage de convenance*, arranged for him by the head of his house, the Marquis de Pressieux, with a Mademoiselle de la Motte, a young lady possessed of forty thousand francs per annum. M. de St. Aubin returned to France at about the same time, where he was arrested for debt, and imprisoned in Fort L'Evêque. He soon afterwards died.

The destined Madame de Genlis and her mother had meanwhile taken up their abode in the nunnery of Les Filles du Précieux Sang, where Mademoiselle wrote her second novel, cured *la Mère de Vérona* and other nuns of apparently mortal maladies by *sirop de calabash*, and enslaved the ancient Baron d'Andlau, who sent her an offer of marriage, accompanied by his genealogy, engrossed on parchment. The disappointment in the Baron's case was less permanently crushing than it might have been, in consequence of his having, at Mademoiselle's suggestion, transferred his offer and genealogy to

her mother, whom he, about eighteen months afterwards, espoused.

At length M. le Comte de Genlis, recently promoted to the grade of Colonel of Grenadiers for his gallantry in the naval action before mentioned, called at the Convent of Les Filles du Précieux Sang, was received by Mademoiselle, and —albeit that he had not been powerfully impressed by the portrait of her personal charms—incontinently, at the sound of the harp, fiddle, guitar, and bagpipe, fell down and worshipped the Orphean enchantress, snapped his fingers at Mademoiselle de la Motte and her forty thousand francs per annum, and, in defiance of the remonstrances of the head of his house, married the fortunate Félicité! *La voilà Comtesse en plein droit!*

Madame is bitterly indignant with certain memoir-writers, who have had the insolent folly to insinuate that she won the hand of Monsieur le Comte de Genlis by the splendour of her literary fame; whereas, as she truly remarks, "the colossal reputation I have since achieved, and which I dare predict time will confirm and extend, was at that period scarcely risen above the intellectual horizon," brilliant in promise as it may have been to far-discerning eyes!

The matronhood of the young wife—she was only twenty when her daughter Caroline was born—was from the commencement distinguished by philosophic and literary activity and zeal. She was accustomed to gallop over the country in quest of interesting topics—such as deceived damsels, rustic geniuses, the state and progress of education, and of mechanical skill in carpentry, smith-work, &c. She also dispensed medicines in conjunction with Racine, the village barber, and acquired considerable skill in the art of phlebotomy, by untiring practice on the peasantry, whom

she paid at the rate of thirty sous for each bleeding, till Monsieur le Comte de Genlis complained of the frightful cost of her experiments. The moral and scientific knowledge thus acquired Madame embalmed in her books, and subsequently applied in the education of Louis-Philippe and the other children of Egalité, Duc d'Orleans. In proof of the prodigious pace at which she wrote, she mentions that, at near sixty, she threw off in one short morning an elaborate article upon "La Censure," to order of Consul Napoleon Bonaparte; the first chapter of a new novel; a *nouvelle*, entitled "Frédal, or the Artist," and an "Essay upon Sympathy" for the Misses Byrne!

It was not long before that brilliant light illumined the gay *salons* of Paris, where Madame la Comtesse shone with great effect, not only by her own inherent splendour, but that reflected from the alliance with the Orleans family—her aunt, Madame de Montesson, having at last succeeded in marrying the aged Duc d'Orleans, father of Egalité. It was through this left-handed kind of connexion that the intimacy of Madame de Genlis with Egalité and his amiable Duchess was brought about. The countenance of the Duchess was ultimately withdrawn from la Comtesse—for what reason will presently be obvious; but the favour of his Royal Highness she retained to the last. M. de Genlis dissented from his wife's acceptance of the office of "governor" of the Duke's children, and requested her to join him in the country. She refused to do so; and they never met again. Like her royal patron, Madame de Genlis at first coquetted with the Revolution; but, luckier than he, she eluded its fatal clutch, by fleeing in time to England, whence she passed over to Belgium, resided for a time in Switzerland, and was in Hamburg when she received, in 1804, an invitation from the First Consul,

Napoleon Bonaparte, to return to France. She eagerly complied; and Napoleon allotted her a pension of 6000 francs per annum, upon condition, as a message through Lavalette informed her, that she "wrote something every fortnight, whether of politics, literature, morality—anything that came into her head." As her harp had charmed the Queen of Naples into according her an annuity of one thousand crowns, Madame was now in easy circumstances, whilst her powers of intellect and fascination had, she declares, suffered no diminution!

Instead of pursuing further the course of this vainglorious, factitious life, let us revert to a past episode thereof, by the light of which the "Mémoires Inédits," of which we have so largely availed ourselves, may be studied with unerring accuracy.

About the year 1786, a charming little English girl was received into the family of Madame de Genlis, who named her Pamela, and educated her with care. This girl, who had grown up a beautiful young woman, accompanied Madame de Genlis in her continental wanderings, and was seen, whilst they were in Hamburg, by the unfortunate Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who forthwith solicited her in marriage. Madame de Genlis could have no possible objection, provided the consent of the Duchess of Leinster was first obtained, which having been done, Pamela, who in the marriage-register is called "Citoyenne Anne Caroline Stephanie Sims, daughter of William de Brixey," became Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and forthwith left Hamburg with her husband for Dublin. The parentage and history of Pamela is circumstantially set forth as follows, in Madame de Genlis's memoirs:—"Her father, whose name was Seymour, married, at Christchurch, in Hampshire, one Mary Sims, with whom

he embarked for a place called Fogo, in Newfoundland, where Pamela, baptized Nancy, was born. Seymour died; and the mother, with her child, returned to Christchurch, where M. Forth, an agent of the Duke of Orleans, saw her; and, having been charged by the Duke to procure him an English girl, he obtained Nancy of Mr. Sims, and brought her to Paris. As she grew up and became daily more attached and precious to Madame la Comtesse, her patroness was alarmed lest the mother should reclaim her; and, having consulted some eminent English jurisconsults, Madame was advised that the only mode by which she could secure the child was by inducing the mother to apprentice her daughter to Madame de Genlis for the whole term of Pamela's or Nancy's minority. "This was done," proceeds Madame, "according to the ordinary legal forms. The mother was cited before the *grand banc* (grand bench), then presided over by the *grand juge*, Lord Mansfield; the mother and Lord Mansfield signed the apprenticeship-paper, and Pamela could no longer be torn from me."

This tissue of absurdities could not have been precisely that which was palmed off upon Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the Duchess of Leinster, forasmuch that Pamela's father is called in the marriage-register William de Brixey, instead of William Seymour. "The indisputable truth being," remarks Thomas Moore, in his "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," "that Pamela was the daughter of Madame de Genlis by the Duke of Orleans!"

Madame de Genlis died on the 31st December, 1830, aged eighty-four, a few months after Louis-Philippe, her former pupil, ascended the French throne over the barricades of Paris.

CATHERINE II., EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

NEITHER Ivan the Terrible, nor Peter the Great, held the sceptre of all the Russias with a firmer grasp, or wielded it with more unscrupulous energy, than did the woman whose sole title to the Muscovite throne was the dethronement and murder of her husband,—whose flaming sword, during the first days of triumphant treason, was the terror which that bloody and unnatural deed inspired. Contemporary history, according to its wont, when recording the acts of successful *living* despots, has sought to conceal the crimes of this Semiramis of the North beneath the dazzling veil of military glory, and material progress:—a bootless task, for the crimson spots would not out; and were sure to ultimately pierce through and quench the overlaying glitter, by which they were partially hidden for a time. There are many examples in imperial and royal history of this retributive, though tardy justice. The English Richard III., though unquestionably a wise lawgiver for his age, lives only in the national mind as the assassin of his nephews; the brilliant Catherine de Medicis has come down to posterity, grimed with the infamy of the successful St. Bartholomew; and the story of the Russian Catherine's accession to power will cling to, and curse her memory, when the echoes of the applausive shouts that proclaimed her victories shall have ceased to offend the ears of, in their respect, a charitably-oblivious future generation. It is fortunate that nations possess a conscience, though too often a tardily awakened one, or the maxim, that it is lawful to do evil that good may

come, would obtain a wider sanction than it does at present. It is enough that the devil is permitted to have partial power over the present: the future of the present, so to speak, lies happily beyond his jurisdiction and control.

Sophia-Augusta Von Anhalt, by subsequent baptism in the Greek faith, and usurpation of the Muscovite throne, Catharina-Alexowena, Empress of all the Russias, was born at Stettin, in Prussian Pomerania, on the 23rd of May, 1729; and her father was the Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, and a Major in the Prussian service. If we may believe the adulating story told of her early youth, her respect and demeanour did not then afford any indication, save in a certain imperiousness of air and tone, of the in-dwelling tigress-spirit which awaited but its hour and opportunity to spring upon, and rend whatever impeded the gratification of its brutal passions. "Her deportment, from her earliest years," writes one of her pensioned parasites, "was always remarkably good. She grew to be uncommonly handsome, and was a great girl for her age. Her countenance was very agreeable, to which the peculiar gaiety and friendliness which she ever displayed gave additional charms. Her education was conducted by her mother alone, who kept her strictly, and never suffered her to show the least symptom of pride, to which she had some propensity, accustoming her from infancy to salute the ladies of distinction who came to visit the Princess with the marks of respect that became a girl!"

The young Sophia-Augusta, we are also told, was fond of reading, took pleasure in shooting at marks with common burgesses; and whilst upon a lengthened visit, at Brunswick, won golden opinions from all good people by her eagerness for instruction in vital religion by the learned and pious Dové.

Thus passed her life, till shortly after her sixteenth birthday, when, thanks to her mother's wiles, aided by her own matchless powers of dissimulation and self-control, the crown-matrimonial of all the Russias came within the clutch of her high-reaching ambition. The opportunity was thuswise brought about.

Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, being herself unmarried and childless, had adopted, in 1742, Charles Frederich, Duke of Anhalt, and son of a daughter of Peter the Great, as her successor on the Muscovite throne. He was fourteen years of age when summoned to St. Petersburgh, made to abjure the Lutheran for the Greek faith, and change his name from Charles Frederich to that of Peter Ferdorovitch—which done, he was created Grand Duke of Russia; and by the fiat of the Czarina, formally registered by the Senate, declared heir to the crown. Three years afterwards, the Empress bethought her of providing him with a wife; a proclaimed intention which sent an anxious flutter through all the host of German Princesses, and agitated none more profoundly than Sophia-Augusta Von Anhalt, and her mother, the Princess Anhalt-Zerbst. The Empress Elizabeth, who, when by the help of the revolted guards she usurped the Russian throne, was a beauteous and graceful woman, had by then, 1745, become a prematurely-withered debauchee; yet, albeit sunk in sensuality, and fierce, merciless as a wild beast, was known to cherish a tender remembrance of the Prince of Holstein, brother to the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, to whom she had been in youth contracted, and who died a few days only previous to that fixed upon for their nuptials.

To that one womanly sentiment, uneffaced by the demoralising habits of lawless power, the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst determined to appeal in furtherance of her own and daughter's

towering aims, and both set off without delay for St. Petersburgh. They were at first coldly received by the Czarina; but the Princess taking advantage of a pliant hour, pleaded with such effect, that "after mingling tears together over the memory of the Prince of Holstein," the Empress gave the Princess her solemn promise that her daughter, and the niece of the loved and lost one, should be the Grand Duchess of Russia, and consort of Peter Fedorovitch. The consent of the Grand Duke does not appear to have been asked, even as a matter of form; and the marriage was definitively resolved upon, contingently, however, upon the success of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburgh, in converting Sophia-Augusta from the Lutheran to the Greek faith. The young lady did not overtask the eloquence and zeal of the prelate; but, on the contrary, "evinced a pious readiness to receive the truth, which called forth the venerable Archimandrite's warmest gratulations." Peter Federovitch had, it was remembered, manifested the same touching teachableness, and fortunate auguries were inferred from the aptitude for orthodoxy displayed by the illustrious pair.

A cloud, threatening for a while perpetual obscuration, came over the brilliant future of Sophia-Augusta Von Anhalt. The feeble Grand Duke sickened suddenly of small-pox,—confluent small-pox, it proved to be; and for some days fears were entertained for his life. That, however, was mysteriously spared; but his features were seamed and distorted by the virulent malady into perfect hideousness: so frightful a spectacle did his face present that the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst with difficulty refrained from screaming aloud at her first visit to felicitate him on his convalescence, and immediately hurried away to prepare her daughter for the shock which awaited her. The task was not a difficult

one. The near prospect of an imperial crown, albeit but a crown-matrimonial, would have transfigured to the dazzled eyes of the ambitious girl a demon, that promised help in its attainment, to the likeness of an angel. Catherine, as we must now call her, upon entering the apartment where the Grand Duke expected her, ran towards and embraced him with marks of the liveliest joy, and kept up her simulated raptures till she had regained her own apartment, when she swooned in her mother's arms!

The marriage was celebrated with extraordinary pomp; but the aversion of the imperial pair for each other could not be long concealed from courtier-eyes by the mask of ceremonial etiquette; and it was not long before a murmur arose, and was industriously propagated, that the beauteous, amiable, pious Grand Duchess was united to one as unworthy of her as he was of Russia. The scars and seams inflicted by the small-pox upon the Grand Duke's face lost daily something of their repulsiveness, but the plague-spots of his moral character time seemed but to deepen and inflame. Had it been the settled design of the Empress to degrade and dwarf the intellect of the appointed successor to her throne, she could not have selected apter instruments for the purpose than the troop of young debauchees with whom she permitted him to associate: and the old Russian party, with Chancellor Bestuchef at their head, who hated Peter for his Prussian predilections, habits, tastes,—encouraged and stimulated his profligate course to the utmost of their power; effectually baffling the efforts of the few real friends he possessed to win him to a better course of life. Soon, too, the orthodox clergy were incensed and alarmed by expressions artfully elicited from him when he was in his cups, of his determination to protect the sectaries, the instant he had

power to do so, from the oppression of the State Church; his own freely-proclaimed notions of religion, when he was sufficiently brandy-bold to give them utterance, being, he boasted, identical with those of the God-denying, man-destroying King of Prussia, Frederick the *Great;* and a powerful party was quietly formed with the fixed purpose of excluding the Grand Duke from the throne, and placing thereon his son, little Paul, under the regency of his mother Catherine; little Paul, by the way, being no more Peter's child than he was the King of England's.

As an important step in the direction of their hopes, the confederates, counselled by Catherine, exerted themselves to alienate the favour of the Czarina from the heir-presumptive to her crown. It was contrived that she should see him when in a state of bestial inebriation; and notwithstanding that Elizabeth was herself a hard-drinker, she was annoyed and disgusted by the Grand Duke's open profligacy,—her own orgies being conducted after a decorous, or at all events private fashion. The Empress would listen to no excuses in his favour. One of her ladies having ventured to suggest that the source of the evil was to be sought in the Grand Duke's extremely defective education which it might not be too late to remedy. "Dost thou know the road to Siberia, Joanna?" fiercely exclaimed the Empress, for all reply. "Joanna" escaped that time for the fright, and took excellent care never again to obtrude her opinion upon the imperial ear.

Meanwhile, the charming Grand Duchess was winning golden opinions from man, priest, and monarch. She attended at the St. Kazan church daily, prayed with suffused eyes and saintly resignation before the holy pictures, and gave liberal alms to the poor with a heart-broken, downcast

meekness, piteous to behold. Hypocrisy more audacious the world has never seen. And assuredly it was not for Catherine to taunt her husband with immorality. The first upon a long list of her "favourites," was one Cyril Razumofsky, originally an itinerant guitar-player, and subsequently by imperial grace, Hetman of the Ukraine Cossacks, and President of the Academy of Sciences. The next was Saltikoff, the Grand Duke's Chamberlain, who—but enough of such details, let it suffice to remark that scandalous incidents occasionally came to light which, reported to the Empress by the Grand Duke, gave rise to violent altercations; her part wherein, the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst managed so unskilfully, that she was finally ordered out of Russia; and after wandering disconsolately over Europe for many months, at last found an asylum at the Court of France. She died at the Luxembourg in May, 1760, burthened with debts which her imperial daughter refused to pay.

Of course the Russian people knew nothing of those palace scandals, not daring even in imagination to lift their eyes so high,—therein resembling the old heathen world, that were content to humbly accept as divinities the lascivious habitants of Olympus; the Grand Duke himself, finding it impossible to shake the Czarina's confidence in the fair-seeming Catherine, adjourned his revenge to a more convenient season; and betaking himself to Oraienberg, passed the weary interval which separated him from the throne in drilling his attendants, who all wore the Prussian uniform; fiddle-playing, and getting drunk.

At length the signal for the open decisive collision of those mighty opposites was given. Elizabeth died on the 3rd January, 1762; and Peter III. was Emperor of all the Russias;—but whether that he had not really enter-

tained the design industriously imputed to him of repudiating Catherine, declaring her son illegitimate, and espousing his mistress, Elizabeth-Romanovna Woronzoff, or that he thought it more prudent to defer the execution of his plan for a time, certain it is, that week after week, month after month, slipped past without any overt act on his part confirmatory of such purposes. This delay Catherine and her confederates, one of the most active of whom was the Princess Dashkoff, sister of the Czar's mistress, skilfully embraced. Catherine's attendance at church, her devout behaviour whilst there, and her alms-gifts to the poor, were more exemplary and admirable than ever; the palace-guards were corrupted the while by gifts and cajoleries; and it was thought that the conspirators would be ready for action by the first week in August. An accident decided for an earlier day. One Passuch had gained over the soldiers of a company of the guards in which he was a lieutenant, and one of the men who supposed he had been acting under the orders of the colonel, asked that officer on what day he thought the great attempt would be made. An inquiry followed, and at nine that evening, (the 8th July, 1762,) Passuch was placed under strict arrest; but contrived, nevertheless, to despatch the following note to the Princess Dashkoff:—"Proceed to execution this instant, or we are undone."

This note was in the first instance taken to the palace of the Orloffs, and Alexis Orloff at once set off for Mon Plaisir, a summer residence on the shore of the Gulf of Finland, where Catherine and the Princess Dashkoff were then residing. Finding that the decisive moment had arrived, Catherine did not for a moment hesitate to challenge the hazard of the cast upon which she had set life as well as empire. "Few women are bold as I am," had been her fre-

quent vaunt when pouring her spirits in the ear of the more timid traitors; "I am of an unbounded courage;" and the events of that fearful night showed that she had not therein falsely boasted of herself. The Empress and Princess Dashkoff left Mon Plaisir, carefully disguised, at about midnight, took their places in a peasant's cart in waiting for them, and were driven off by Alexis Orloff towards St. Petersburgh. The night was fine and clear, and they had accomplished about half the distance, when the over-driven horse fell down, and was found to be incapable of proceeding further. This untoward accident had such an effect upon Alexis Orloff, that he lost his presence of mind, and seemed disposed to abandon the desperate enterprise, but Catherine's peremptory command to lead on at once rebuked his momentary panic, and they resumed their journey on foot. They had walked about a couple of versts when another cart was heard rapidly approaching from St. Petersburgh. It proved to be driven by Gregory Orloff, who, alarmed at the delay that had taken place, had come to seek the Empress. This fortunate precaution enabled Catherine to reach the palace by seven in the morning, where she was immediately surrounded by three or four hundred of the Ismailofsky Guards, who came rushing into her presence half dressed, and uttering frantic cries of "Long live the Empress! Death to her enemies and all Lutheran Traitors!" &c. &c. Catherine, though much startled by the fewness in number of the soldiers, showed no sign of doubt or dismay, and presently addressed them in a speech which excited them to the wildest enthusiasm. The contagion spread with the speed of flame, and by nine o'clock she was surrounded by two thousand devoted soldiers. Placing herself on horseback at their head, and accompanied by a large number of splendidly-habited

"popes," as Russian priests are called, she passed through the outside crowds of wonder-stricken people to the Kazan Church, where, as previously arranged, the Archimandrite of Novogorod solemnly crowned her. *Te Deums* were then sung by processions of popes, bearing sacred pictures through the streets; bells rang, cannon thundered, and the Empress made her appearance on horseback, dressed in a brilliant uniform, wearing an oak-wreath, and with a drawn sword glittering in her hand. This novel and imposing spectacle produced the hoped-for effect upon the bewildered, dazzled people. Cries of "Long live the Empress!" "Glory to our Mother Catherine!" rent the air; and, as far as St. Petersburgh was concerned, the Revolution was an accomplished fact. It was upon that occasion that the afterwards-celebrated Potemkin first thrust himself upon Catherine's notice. Perceiving that the casque of the Empress wanted a plume, he dashed out of the ranks of the Guards, in which he was a Cornet, and gallantly presented his own. It was graciously received, and Catherine did not again lose sight of the handsome young officer.

Whilst empire was thus departing from him, the Czar was trifling away the precious hours at Peterhoff, and when tidings of what was passing at St. Petersburgh reached him there, he obstinately refused to believe in the possibility of the gigantic treason, to which, confused and contradictory as they for a time were, those tidings pointed. Soon, however, all doubt that a menacing insurrection directed against his authority had triumphed in St. Petersburgh was at an end, and Marshal Munich, a veteran and faithful soldier, advised the Czar to march against the rebels without delay. "St. Petersburgh is not Russia," urged the Marshal, "and whilst the conflagration is confined to that city,

nothing will be easier than to extinguish it in the blood of the traitors by whom it has been kindled." But the trembling Czar could not nerve himself to the exigencies of his position, and, instead of following Munich's counsel, he despatched Chancellor Woronzoff to remonstrate with Catherine upon the wickedness and folly of her proceedings, and induce her, by a promise of pardon, to retrace the rebellious path she had entered upon, which would else lead her, the Chancellor was to assure her, to swift destruction.

Woronzoff found Catherine at the palace, seated in imperial state, and receiving the homage of all classes of the people, coerced thereto for the most part by the conviction she had already inspired, that those who did *not* hasten to prostrate themselves before the newly-risen sun, would find it to be a consuming fire to them! And therein lies the true secret of all the enthusiastic display of Russian loyalty, of which we have lately heard so much.

"You see how it is!" replied the triumphant woman, after listening with superb disdain to the stammering, scarcely audible phrases of the scared Chancellor. "You see how it is! It is not I that am doing anything. I merely yield to the ardent sensibility of my people."

Having received this answer, Chancellor Woronzoff was about to withdraw, when Catherine's lightning glance warned him that he too would act wisely in giving instant proof of his own "ardent sensibility" towards the imperious despot who held his life in her hands. He did so—forthwith knelt down, and pronounced the oath of fealty; which done, he was ordered to his own house, and not to leave it without the especial permission of the Empress.

Roused at last into hesitating activity by the magnitude of the peril, and the remonstrance of Marshal Munich, Peter,

accompanied by the Marshal, sailed in his yacht from Peterhoff to Cronstadt. He was too late. The seamen and soldiers there had been already gained over for Catherine, and the Commandant threatened to sink the yacht if any attempt was made to land from her. Munich, nothing daunted by the threat, urged Peter to leap with him on shore, there being no fear that Russian soldiers or sailors would really fire on the Czar. Instead of complying, Peter ran and hid himself in the cabin, where he mingled his tears and lamentations with those of his women; the yacht returned to Peterhoff, and all hope of successful assistance or of flight was at an end.

Even then the Czar could not bring himself to believe that his wife, who owed everything to her marriage with him, contemplated his utter ruin, much less that she aimed at his life; and he sent her a humble message, acknowledging his faults, and proposing to share the imperial power with her. No answer was vouchsafed; and the terror of his position rapidly gaining upon him, he sent another deputation, offering to resign the crown in exchange for life and a moderate pension. The reply was, his apprehension, and that of all his court, who were taken into close custody, and many of them very summarily dealt with. The Czar himself was exposed in his shirt, and barefoot, to the taunts and jeers of the brutal soldiery, and, after signing a formal act of abdication in favour of Catherine, dictated by Count Panim, he was dismissed under close guard to Rapscha. Pride, resentment, had vanished with his fortunes, and he humbly petitioned Catherine to allow him his negro, a dog he was fond of, his violin, and a few romances, he being determined for the future to devote himself to a philosophic life.

There was no future, philosophic or otherwise, for him;

Catherine could confide him to no other custody than that of the grave, and Alexis Orloff having received her commands, invited himself and one Teploff to dine with the deposed Czar. Whilst engaged in pretendedly commiserative converse, Orloff contrived to mix poison with the Czar's wine. Whether his victim discovered what had been done by the taste of the wine, or read it in the hell-light of the assassin's face, cannot be known, but he dashed the goblet on the ground and screamed loudly for milk. The thin mask till then worn by the murderers was instantly cast aside, and after a fierce struggle, Orloff and his assistant succeeded in strangling Peter III. with a napkin. A lineal descendant of the chief assassin is he who signed the Treaty of Paris in April last, and was created, at Alexander II.'s coronation, Prince Orloff.

Catherine was seated at table with a brilliant company, when Alexis Orloff presented himself, with the record of the damning deed stamped upon his face. Rebuking by a glance the betraying agitation of her weaker instrument, the Czarina led the way to another apartment; was absent about ten minutes; and, when returned, continued to preside at the banquet with unruffled serenity and grace. The next day she announced with profound emotion to her Court that God had been pleased to suddenly remove the late Czar from the world by an attack of internal hemorrhage; and a formal proclamation was made to the same effect, attested by the names of eminent physicians. The Court went immediately into deep mourning, and, by command of the Empress, prayers were offered up for the repose of the soul of the deceased Czar in every church throughout her vast dominions.

* * * * *

Thirty-four years have since then passed over the imperial

Catherine's head. Four-and-thirty years of supreme dominion, unbounded self-indulgence, brilliant military and political successes! The renowned massacres of Ismaïl and Praga have, during that long period of glory, humbled Turkey, and subjugated Poland. The philosophers of France, who scornfully reject Christ, have eagerly recognised the greatness of Catherine, and burned their sweetest incense in her honour. It cannot, therefore, be denied that the Tempter who proffered dominion, glory, riches, in exchange for her soul, has well fulfilled his part of the bargain. And now the day of final account is come: it is the 6th of November, 1796, and the great Empress, finding herself indisposed, has retired to her closet, from which, not returning so soon as her ladies expected, they enter the apartment unbidden, and discover that she has fallen on the floor in a state of insensibility. Pungent essences restore her for a moment to consciousness; her wild stare of terror recognises the dread presence that holds her in his choking grasp; and with a prolonged scream, so full of horror and despair that it haunts those who hear it for ever afterwards, Catherine the *Great* expires.

MRS. OPIE.

THIS pleasing writer and charming woman was the only child of Dr. Alderson, a physician of repute in Norwich, not only for his professional skill, but for his zealous ministrations amongst those who could requite his services with no other fee than that of their prayers and blessings. She was born at her father's house in that city on the 12th of November, 1769, and baptized Amelia, after Mrs. Alderson. The cultivation of their daughter's mind—a fruitful soil, it was early seen—was mainly confided to the mother, a firm-minded, sensible woman, who did not permit motherly tenderness to paralyse or weaken the parental discipline by which the child could alone be trained in the way she should go. There are not very many known instances wherein early guidance has been so manifestly the means of checking the growth of dangerous tendencies, and evolving the less forward germs of gentleness and piety into vigorous, healthy life. In her "Lays of the Dead," Mrs. Opie has recorded her sense of that wise maternal solicitude, in lines which have more sincerity and truth than is common to elegiac verse:—

> "Oh! how I mourn'd my heedless youth,
> Thy watchful care repaid so ill,
> Yet joy'd to think some words of truth,
> Sunk in my soul, and teach me still.
> Like lamps along life's fearful way,
> To me, at times, those truths have shone,
> And oft when snares around me lay
> That light has made the danger known."

Amelia Alderson was gifted with a handsome person, as well as a poetic mind. She was finely formed, somewhat taller than the medium height; had abundant golden hair, soft, yet sparkling eyes, and an animated freshness of mien, that amidst the heat of a ball-room, or the crowded press of a theatre, suggested the light and perfume of spring—of a cloudless morning of May, with its light of dews and fragrance of flowers. She manifested an early and vivid perception of the beautiful—the beautiful as coloured by a pure and lively imagination; and when the merest child, delighted, when awakened before the time for rising by the chiming of church bells, to lie gazing upon the bright blue skies—the ethereal veil, she imagined, to the angelic abodes immediately beyond, where the sweet bells were ringing! With her sensitive appreciation of the beautiful was combined a shuddering horror of repulsive objects—of beetles, negroes, and especially of insane people. This exaggeration of a natural sentiment Mrs. Alderson combated with rigour, and such success, in respect of mad people, as to convert the child's nervous terror of, into a marked interest in them. A crazy creature, whose dwelling she trembled to pass, Mrs. Alderson obliged her not only to speak with, but to take kindly by the hand; and thenceforth Amelia Alderson cultivated a strong interest in the phenomena of insanity. For the gratification of a sentiment so strangely superinduced, the young girl prevailed with some friends to take her to the Bedlam of Norwich, where the servant of an acquaintance, "who had been crossed in love," was confined. The dreadful reality disabused her of the romance of insanity, so to speak, in which she had indulged. She failed to recognise among the stricken wretches that glared and gibbered at her a face which she could possibly assign to the

woman whom traitorous love had betrayed to madness; and when about to leave the place, she asked one of the keepers where that person was confined. "You have seen her," replied the man, and reconducted his questioner to the cell. Amelia Alderson spoke kindly to the young woman, but received no answer, till she asked if money to buy her snuff would be acceptable. An affirmative answer was instantly given; and a gesture commanded that the gift should be placed upon the bed, which was no sooner done, than a horrible screaming laugh half scared the donor out of her own senses, and sent her away with a truer, more afflictive notion than she had before entertained of mental disorganization.

Miss Alderson was prone to the indulgence of strong emotions, loved to attend the assize court at Norwich, and mentally involve herself with the terrible issues fought out in an arena which in those good old days was a human shambles,—a Golgotha strewn with the bones of unhappy wretches strangled at the shrine of Property. She was so frequent a visitor there that Mr. Justice Gould, with whom her prepossessing appearance made her a sort of favourite, used to order the officials to make place "for that young lady." It was to this proclivity of mind towards exciting phenomena that the strong interest she from the first manifested for her French master, the Reverend John Bruckner, a Flemish clergyman, was attributable. The world had not gone smoothly with the old man; and the incipient madness which glared fitfully in his restless, unquiet eyes, and ultimately induced suicide, had been early detected by Amelia Alderson. Her compassionate interest in him was, moreover, deepened by respect for his talents, which were considerable, including the "accomplishment of verse," as witness

the lines which he sent to his former pupil, when in after years she asked him to sit for his portrait :—

> "Pourquoi me demander, aimable Amélie,
> De ce front tout-ridé le lugubre portrait?
> Pour être contemplé jamais il ne fut fait;
> Assez il a déplu—permettez qu'on l'oublie."

But it was yet a long time to the day when that particular death-note, amidst the echoes of the general doom, smote upon the ear of Mrs. Opie, then deadened thereto by the previous funeral knells of her mother and of her husband. Amelia Alderson has but just entered upon the joyous season of youth—of youth embellished, gladdened with beauty, health, and a buoyant temperament, heedless of prophetic shadows, cast behind her by the morning-sunshine of life,—is, in fact, completely, and for a long time, absorbed by the intoxicating images of a crowd of lovers; but whose furnace-sighs and passionate adjurations, however gratifying to her vanity, are without influence upon her heart, save in one instance, and that but passingly.

> "Yes, once, I confess, ('twas at blooming sixteen,)
> Love's agents were busy indeed round my heart;
> And nought but good fortune's assistance, I ween,
> Could e'er from my bosom have warded the dart."

Had the cloud-curtain of the future opened for a moment and revealed her destined husband, "a man of no conventional manners whatever," and at the best having, says Allan Cunningham, "the air of an inspired peasant," and who at that time was courting another with the like air-blown flatteries as floated around herself, the gay young beauty

would, we may be sure, have been terribly startled—shocked! But there are fate-favoured mortals, for whom time and circumstance choose fitter partners than could youthful fancy or caprice—and Amelia Alderson was one of them.

Her mother died in 1784, and thenceforth Miss Alderson superintended her father's household, and soon acquired a lively interest in the exciting topics which, at that pregnant phase in the life of nations, were everywhere eagerly discussed—namely, the French Revolution; its causes, aims, and probable results.

Dr. Alderson and his more intimate friends belonged to the party—not, nationally viewed, a numerous one—which hailed the day-star of Liberty that seemed to have risen in France with the unreasoning rapture of enthusiastic Idealists, and who for a long time refused to recognise in the sanguinary saturnalia of a demon-democracy anything worse than a regretable but passing phrenzy of heroic passion. The imaginative mind of Amelia Alderson coloured that admiration of the destroyers of the old Bourbon despotism with the brightest hues, and she was vehemently urgent with her father to seek an asylum in America from the reactionary and fanatic Church and King servilism which pervaded almost all classes of the British people. Miss Alderson went on a visit in London during the trials of Hardy, Horne Tooke, and others, and her letters relating thereto breathed a spirit so fiercely antagonistic to the political orthodoxy of the time, that Dr. Alderson thought it prudent to destroy, immediately after reading them.

No doubt that her hereditary antipathy to Toryism was inflamed, exasperated by her intimacy with Godwin, then living at Southgate, and his wife, Mary Wollstonecraft, of

sad celebrity, who, tenacious of her woman's rights in all things, subscribed the letters she addressed to her esteemed friend with "Mary Wollstonecraft, *femme Godwin*." That esteemed young friend's mind was of too inherently pure a quality to be permanently soiled by the slime of Atheism; but it was, no doubt, to the danger of defilement by her Southgate acquaintance that Mrs. Opie alluded, in the lines already quoted, as having been conferred by the recollection of her mother's warning precepts. The betraying avowals, too, of Mary Wollstonecraft, *femme* Godwin, that peace dwelt neither in her home or heart—that, in fact, but for her child she would have left the world long before—must have helped to shield Amelia Alderson from the contamination of an example over which misused genius had cast an evanescent lustre.

Four years subsequent to her mother's death, which is to say, when she was in her nineteenth year, Miss Alderson, having accidentally made acquaintance with the Kemble family, resolved to write a tragedy, did it, and named that first-born offspring of her genius "Adelaide." It did not long survive its baptism, notwithstanding that its enduring vitality had been confidently predicted by the nursing critics who presided at its birth; and, what with household cares, politics, and other discouragements to authorial exertion, some nine or ten years passed away without having given any considerable work of Amelia Alderson's to the world (a few ballads excepted, which she sang charmingly), and, far worse, without having given her a husband! True, there were yet suitors for her hand, but none so eligible as those whom, in her days of vanity—her days of youth, I should have written, those of vanity not being computable—she had scorned or slighted; and the fable of the crooked

stick began to acquire a saturnine significance much more vivid than agreeable.

Happily the undesirable refuge still open to her from senile spinsterhood was not required. The gentleman of no conventional manners whatever, and, at best, looking like an inspired peasant — otherwise Mr. Opie, the celebrated painter—was by then (1798) divorced from his wife. In pensive, impressionable mood, too, the tide of fashionable patronage, which upon his first arrival in London had flowed in upon him in such abundant measure that he threatened to place a cannon at his door to keep the crowd off, having so lamentably ebbed, that, leaping up to the lofty walk of high historic art from the lowlier pathway of portrait-painting giving way beneath his feet, Mr. Opie had resolved thenceforth, fortune being unattainable, to strive after Fame; and, in lieu of a handsome competence in old age, console himself with the hope of being buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, like Sir Joshua Reynolds!

The despondent artist was thus moralizing at a friend's house, where a large party were assembled, and Miss Alderson, who had recently come up from Norwich on her second visit to London, was impatiently expected by several of her intimates: presently she entered the room charmingly attired in a light-blue robe, a small hat placed coquettishly upon her head, and surmounted with a triple plume of white feathers; and, in accordance with the fashion of that period, with her neck and arms bare. "Who is that?—who is that?" exclaimed Mr. Opie, suddenly diverted by her bright presence from the contemplation of famous death to that of glowing life; and being forthwith introduced, "became," wrote Miss Alderson to her country friends, "from the first hour of my arrival my avowed lover!"

The lady, notwithstanding her eight-and-twenty years *sonnés*, demurred at first to the passionate proposals of her new admirer: she was not at all desirous of accompanying Mr. Opie to St. Paul's for, at all events, a very long time to come, and, under all the circumstances, begged to decline the honour. But Mr. Opie would not believe in her refusal—would not accept of a denial—and, persistence finally triumphing, Amelia Alderson became Mrs. Opie, on the 8th of May, 1798. They were married at Marylebone Church.

Re-married, Mr. Opie at once fell back from the pursuit of high art to the more profitable one of portrait-painting; and, as his wife delicately intimates by the lips of another person, having now a charming feminine model constantly before his eyes, improved so wonderfully in his lady portraits that the delighted sitters exclaimed, *una voce*, "This, Mr. Opie, must be owing to your wife."

That wife vigorously exerted her own talents in addition to stimulating her husband's. "Simple Tales," "Mother and Daughter," "Temper," "Tales of Real Life," appeared, and were received with deserved favour by the public. "Tenderness is your forte," remarked Sydney Smith, in a note to the authoress, "and carelessness your fault,"—a juster literary criticism than many which the prince of modern humorists delivered *ex cathedrâ*. Mr. Opie's own professional reputation was enhanced by that of his wife; and it seemed that by his second marriage the inspired peasant had taken at the flood the tide which leads to fortune. He was chosen to deliver lectures, as Professor of Painting, at the Royal Academy, when the pecuniary horizon had already so much brightened that he contemplated "keeping a horse." On the 11th of February and the 9th of March, 1807, two of the lectures were delivered to critical and admiring au-

diences; and on the 9th of April, in the same year, the Lecturer, after a brief illness, was borne to his tomb in St. Paul's cathedral, beside that of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The long after-life of the childless widow—passed with her father, Doctor Alderson, till his death—was a gentle, peaceful pilgrimage, during which, besides arranging her husband's lectures for the press, she published, at long intervals apart, "Valentine's Eve," "Tales of the Heart," and "Madeline." Gradually, and in a great degree through the influence of the Gurney family, with whom she had become intimately acquainted, Mrs. Opie gave up both romance writing and reading. Even her latest and feeblest tales, illustrative of "Lying" in all its phases, were of heterodox morality in the eyes of her serious friends, Mrs. Fry and Priscilla Gurney; and having at last successfully surmounted "plain-speaking"—her chief stumbling-block in the road to plain Quakerism—by speaking "plainly" to a gentleman on the 14th of the second month (St. Valentine's Day), 1824, Amelia Opie received, on the 11th of August of the following year (1825), her certificate of membership in the Society of Friends.

In 1830 we find her visiting Paris, and at sight of the new order of things achieved by the barricades, soaring or relapsing into her former political enthusiasm, as witness the following lines:—

"At sight of thee, O Tricolor!
I seem to feel youth's hours return:
The lov'd, the lost, those hours restore;
Again for Freedom's cause I burn!"

"*Vanitas vanitatum!*" On the 2nd of December, 1853, after nearly another quarter of a century of tranquil life, Mrs. Opie fell asleep, in peace, at midnight.

MARIA-THERESA.

The bold Bavarian in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cesarean power,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway:
Short sway! Fair Austria spreads her mournful charms;
The Queen, the Beauty, sets the world in arms.
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze,
Spreads wide the hope of plunder, and of praise:
The fierce Croatian and the wild Hussar,
With all the sons of Ravage, crowd the war.

DR. JOHNSON'S *Vanity of Human Wishes.*

THERE is truth, if not transcendent poetry, in the above lines, which refer to the bandit-attack upon Austria, at the accession of Maria-Theresa, daughter of Charles VI., by Bavaria, Prussia, Spain, France, and Saxony, and the successful appeal, when all seemed lost, of the youthful Queen to the Hungarian Magyars, whose chivalrous enthusiasm checked and rolled back the tide of victorious war that would else have erased Austria from the roll of sovereign states. With the antecedents and aims of that most unjustifiable of wars, Maria-Theresa was associated from her birth; and it will be necessary, therefore, to the appreciation of her eventful early life that these antecedents and aims be first passed briefly in review.

Joseph, Emperor of Germany, and his brother and successor Charles VI., acting upon a suggestion of their father, Leopold, agreed that in the event of Charles dying without male issue, Joseph's daughters should succeed to the

throne of Austria—that of Hungary, of Bohemia, Lombardy, and the Netherlands inclusive,—to the exclusion of the daughters of Charles. This arrangement received the name of "The Family Compact," and was readily acquiesced in by Charles till the death of his only son, Leopold; soon after which event that monarch openly refused to be bound by it. He had two daughters by his consort, Elizabeth-Christina of Brunswick; the eldest of whom, Maria-Theresa-Valperga-Amelia-Christina, born at Vienna, on the 18th of May, 1717, was endowed with a royalty of nature, both mental and physical, that rebuked, as with a visible sign from God, the stipulations of a compact which, by depriving her of the succession to a sceptre, hers by hereditary right, annulled the laws, in virtue whereof that sceptre was wielded by the House of Hapsburgh.

Enlightened by parental pride and affection as to the illegal tendency of the Family Compact, Charles exhausted every resource of diplomacy to set it definitively aside; not only because the high contracting parties had no power to dispose of the rights of others, but that in consequence of the alliances formed by Joseph's daughters—one of whom, Maria-Josepha, had married Augustus III. of Poland and Saxony; the other, Maria-Amelia, Albert, Elector of Bavaria,—it, to a certain extent, endangered the European equilibrium. All the great Powers of Europe ultimately acceded to those views, and the result was what is called "The Pragmatic Sanction," by which England, Holland, France, Prussia, and Spain, guaranteed the succession to Maria-Theresa, and bound themselves to support her right by arms if necessary. It was also provided that, in the event of Maria-Theresa previously dying childless, Maria-Ann, described as an equally beautiful girl, but not so fitted

for command as her sister, should upon the demise of Charles ascend the Austrian throne.

Not one of the Powers that sanctioned, and bound themselves to enforce the Pragmatic Sanction—except England and Holland—was influenced by the motives ostensibly set forth for doing so. France, the traditionary foe of Austria, saw in the arrangement the rupture of the golden link of the imperial crown by which Germany had been so long united to the discordant nationalities governed by the Austrian sceptre. That crown, though an elective one, had been borne during four centuries by the Hapsburgh sovereigns, but there could be no Empress-Regnant of Germany: and although, so far, the same result would have been obtained by upholding the Family Compact, the substitution of Charles's daughters for those of Joseph ensured the hostility of Bavaria and Saxony. Frederick-William of Prussia was inspired by the same motive as France, and the Spanish monarch with better excuse associated himself with their views, Charles VI. having always refused to abandon his pretensions to the crown of Spain. The conspiracy consequently to dismember the Austrian dominions was sealed by the Pragmatic Sanction, and its attempted enforcement, upon the death of Charles, was but the carrying out of a long since foregone conclusion.

The Archduchess Maria-Theresa, whose accession to power was to be the signal of attack, is described by Mr. Robinson, afterwards Lord Grantham, the English Ambassador at Vienna, in his despatch of the 5th July, 1735, to Lord Harrington, to be "no less esteemed for her spirit and talents than admired for her beauty and accomplishments." The figure of Maria-Theresa was tall and beautifully formed—her complexion brilliant,—her hair of a golden brown, fine

and abundant; she had the full Austrian lips; her mouth and smile were beautiful, her lustrous eyes full of expression, and her voice is described as inexpressibly sweet and musical. With all this, and although no one better than she, knew the effect of a woman's smile upon enthusiastic men, there was not a tinge of coquetry in Maria-Theresa; her religious convictions, which were profound and sincere, combining with her pride to shield her from that vice or weakness. She was very early and profoundly impressed by the ominous shadows cast before of the perilous magnitude and grandeur of the mission to which, upon her father's death, she would be called. Charles VI., a monarch of slight capacity, and of so grave and melancholic a temperament, that he was rarely seen to smile, and it is said laughed outright but once in his life,—was one of the most luckless of rulers, ever at war, and unsuccessful war! Yet a compassionate-minded man; much better fitted for the quiet pursuits of a private station, than to sustain the cares of empire, and so passionately fond of and skilled in music, that he composed an opera, which was performed at the Court Theatre, the Emperor himself presiding in the orchestra, and his daughters, the archduchesses, dancing in the incidental ballet! He was a munificent patron of Metastasio, to whom he entrusted the cultivation of the Archduchess's taste in belles lettres,—a study less congenial to Maria Theresa than that of the history and traditions of the countries she was destined to govern. As soon as she attained her fourteenth year, the Emperor consented to her presence at the deliberations of his council, for a time, as a listener only,—an early initiation into the mysteries of statecraft, of which she so well availed herself that, after the death of Prince Eugène, he had confessedly no abler, more

courageous adviser than she. With what might be called prophetic sagacity, the youthful Archduchess was the persistent advocate of the Hungarian privileges and immunities that had been unwisely trenched upon by preceding sovereigns, notably by Leopold,—and of which Charles himself was irritably jealous. To facilitate her intercourse with the magnates of that kingdom, she, resolutely conquering her aversion to the study of languages, acquired so perfect a knowledge of Latin as to speak it with admirable fluency; and it thus came to pass that, by tacit consent or arrangement, Hungarian affairs, remonstrances, petitions, and so on, were long before Charles's death referred to her for preliminary investigation, and as an inevitable consequence that the popularity of their future Queen took early and permanent root amongst the chivalrous Magyars. The magnanimous kindliness, so to speak, of Maria-Theresa, which, in after days, when age had dimmed the glory of her brilliant youth, and stolen away the grace and beauty to which it owed so much of its fascination, savoured somewhat of a stately formalism, was not, however, in the faintest degree sectional as regarded her future subjects. For all misfortunes she aimed at being a consoling providence. "One would suppose," exclaimed Charles, weary of the endless petitions of which she was the bearer and indefatigable advocate—"one would suppose that the sole business of a monarch was to grant favours." "It is that alone which makes power precious," was Maria-Theresa's prompt reply,—words which the history of her life bears witness were the true expression of her mind and will;—"for, throughout her reign," remarks a by no means over-partial writer, "Maria-Theresa insisted upon being made acquainted with every act of administration, gave free access to her presence to the humble and the poor,

as well as to the noble and the rich; listened benignantly to all, either granting their petitions, or, if she denied them, giving reasons for her refusal, without illusory promises or vague circumlocution."

High praise! Yet, albeit every inch a Queen, Maria-Theresa was, at the same time, a true woman—a gentle-hearted, loving maiden. She and Francis-Joseph, Duke of Lorraine, who was brought up at the Viennese Court, had been intended for each other from childhood. He was young, handsome, amiable; and if not himself possessed of brilliant abilities, held an exalted opinion of the mental as well as personal perfections of Maria-Theresa, whom he scarcely more loved than admired. No marvel, therefore, that she loved so every way loveable and discerning a Prince; and that when her imperial father, seeking distractedly after expedients to sustain and restore his failing fortunes, conceived the idea of giving her in marriage to Prince Charles of Spain, she broke into open and violent rebellion against the paternal decree—enlisted the Empress, by whom she was idolized, in her quarrel, and raised such a storm about the ears of the Emperor and his advisers, that they were compelled to yield the point, much as Charles had set his heart upon it. Mr. Robinson describes as follows this lively episode in Maria-Theresa's youthful career, in a letter to Lord Harrington:—

"The Archduchess is a Princess of the highest spirit: her father's losses are her own. She reasons and enters into affairs—admires his virtues, but condemns his mismanagement; and is of a temper so formed for rule and ambition, as to look upon him as little more than her administrator. Notwithstanding this lofty humour, she sighs and pines for her Duke of Lorraine. If she sleeps 'tis but to dream of him;

if she wakes 'tis but to talk of him to the lady in waiting; so that there is no more probability of her forgetting the very individual government, and the very individual husband which she thinks herself born to, than of her forgiving the authors of her losing either."

The cruel penalty exacted of the Duke of Lorraine for his matrimonial victory over the Spanish Pretender to the hand of the Archduchess, was nothing less than the surrender of his ducal inheritance. It was imperative in Charles to make peace with Louis, and that could only be accomplished by the cession of Lorraine to France. As some compensation to Francis-Joseph, he was promised the Grand Duchy of Tuscany upon the death of Gian Gastone,—the high and mighty belligerents having agreed in view of that arrangement to set forcibly aside the claim of Anne de Medici to the Grand-ducal throne; the people of Tuscany and Lorraine, after the fashion of those, and in truth of our own days, where feeble nationalities are concerned, being held to have no pretension or claim whatever to challenge the right divine of any ruler whom great powers chose to set over them.

The youthful Duke and his betrothed Princess were much less easily coerced into acquiescence than the coolly-transferred peoples. Francis-Joseph wept with rage and grief when informed of the arrangement, and Maria-Theresa entirely sympathised with his indignant protest; but what—the crown not having yet descended upon her brow—could be done to avert the sacrifice! "No cession of Lorraine, no Archduchess!" was the Austrian minister, Barenstein's, pithy reply to the Prince's passionate remonstrances; and, of course, the Archduchess, with kingdoms for a dowry, carried it hollow against Lorraine. Besides, Maria-Theresa assured

the indignant Duke, in presence of Barenstein, that she would one day wrest away Lorraine from the robber-grasp of France, and, moreover, place the imperial crown of Germany upon the head of the disinherited Duke;—a menace or prophecy which, as regards the imperial crown, she fulfilled.

The sacrifice consented to and accomplished, the marriage of Francis-Joseph—no longer of Lorraine, though, for the sake of perspicuity, I shall continue to so call him—with Maria-Theresa, Archduchess of Austria, was celebrated with great splendour at Vienna, on the 12th of February, 1736, about three months previous to the imperial bride's nineteenth birthday; one of the stipulations of the marriage contract being, that Francis-Joseph should have no part or voice in the future government of Austria;—a needless proviso, the characters of the wedded pair considered, forasmuch that, by the potency of an immeasurably stronger will and intellect, Maria-Theresa governed her husband and household with the same condescendent, high-handed kindliness as her ordinary subjects. The marriage proved to be a very happy one; and, it may be permitted us to remark, albeit her matron-life lies beyond the scope of this brief narrative, that the domestic *foyer* of Maria-Theresa was to her and her facile-tempered husband a haven of peace and refuge,—not alone for the storms which flashed around the lofty summits of imperial power, but from that imperial power's withering glare of meretricious splendour. There were few homes in the vast Austrian empire wherein simpler manners prevailed, or which tenderer love illumined, than that brightened and blessed by the numerous progeny of the Queen and Empress of Hungary and Austria; of which progeny the hapless Marie-Antoinette was the youngest, the best beloved,—the most worthy to be loved.

The consort of the heiress-presumptive to the Austrian throne was, not many months after his marriage, appointed to the command of the armies operating against the Turks, high talent, especially high military talent, being supposedly inseparable from high rank combined with high blood. Maria-Theresa reluctantly acquiesced in that appointment, her affection for her youthful, gallant husband not having for a moment, or in the slightest degree, blinded her to his intellectual deficiencies; and the event justified her misgivings. The two campaigns during which he held the chief command were disastrous to the Austrian forces; and the soured, angered people of Vienna—with that proneness to assign all the accidents of success to the skill and foresight of a successful general, all the accidents of failure to the incapacity or faithlessness of an unsuccessful general, common to all, whether rich or poor mobs of men—attributed all the disasters of their arms to the unlucky Duke of Lorraine. He was recalled in disgrace, was received on his return to Vienna by the sullen murmurs of the populace, and his disfavour with all classes of the people obscured for a while even the popularity of his wife. It was an evil time, "Everything," wrote the English ambassador, "everything at this court is running into the direst ruin. There are as visible signs of folly and madness as ever were inflicted upon a people whom Heaven was determined to destroy, even less by domestic divisions than by the more public calamities of repeated defeats, defencelessness, poverty, plague, and, famine."

In the midst of these calamities Gian Gastone, Grand Duke of Tuscany, died; and the opportunity was seized of honourably withdrawing the Duke of Lorraine from Vienna, where his presence kept alive the irritation of the populace.

Maria-Theresa accompanied him to Florence, and formal possession was taken of the sovereign power; but neither the new rulers nor the ruled had reason to congratulate themselves upon the novel circumstances surrounding them. Maria-Theresa had no sympathy with the Italians—with their genius, tastes, pursuits. She had no admiration for, because no knowledge of, art; in truth—save in acquaintance with Austrian history, rare fluency in the Latin tongue, and skill in music and dancing—Maria-Theresa was, in a comparative sense, an ill-educated person; whilst the enthusiasm of nationality—which, in the eyes of her countrymen, threw a glory over her that would have rendered invisible much greater deficiencies than she could be charged with—was not a recommendation to the Florentines. Besides, her whole soul was occupied during her sojourn in the Grand-Duchy by the sinister tidings which every post brought from Vienna. Prince Eugène, whose reputation and experience were worth an army to Charles, died unexpectedly, though at the advanced age of seventy-three; and so completely was the Emperor beaten down by his accumulated misfortunes, that, albeit he continued to wear an aspect of calmness and resignation in public, fears were entertained that his intellect would give way before the paroxysms of despair which found vent in private. It was consequently deemed advisable that Maria-Theresa should return to Vienna, to soothe, it was hoped, by her presence, the menacing state of public opinion which a humiliating peace concluded with the Turks, to whom Belgrade was surrendered, had exasperated to frenzy. She but partially succeeded in that object; and on the 28th of October, 1740, Charles VI. died, in the belief that the Austrian sceptre departed from his house with him for ever!

Maria-Theresa was immediately proclaimed Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, reigning Archduchess of Austria, Sovereign of the Netherlands, and Duchess of Parma, Milan, and Placentia; and, *pari passu* with that proclamation of the Austrian heralds, a decree, soon to be as openly avowed, went forth from the Courts of France, Prussia, Bavaria, Spain, and Saxony, which was to strip the youthful Sovereign of those high titles, and give the Netherlands to France, Lombardy to Spain, Bohemia and Upper Austria to Bavaria, Moravia and Upper Silesia to Saxony, and Lower Silesia to Prussia!

The Confederate Powers doubted not of rapid and complete success; and the few weeks' pause which preceded the bursting of the war-storm was solely employed in catching at and elaborating excuses and pleas that might throw some colour of right, or of the policy of necessity, over their proceedings. A glance at the situation, from a military point of view, of Austria and her assailants will show that, if the race were always to the swift, the battle to the strong—if the relative forces of nations could be always accurately measured by counting the bayonets and cannon on either side—they, the Confederates, were fully entitled to feel confidence in the early and thorough triumph of their arms.

The military power of France, Austria's dread foe when standing alone, had been sedulously organised, under the administration of Cardinal Fleury, for the great blow about to be struck. Bavaria and Saxony were prepared to enter the field with sixty thousand trained soldiers: the Spanish infantry, then accounted second to none in Europe, would enter the war with equal numbers; and, above all, Frederick II., called the Great, and one of the most unprincipled and ruthless of the "Great Captains" to whom power has been

for a time given to desolate the earth in honour of that bloodiest of idols, Military Glory, had succeeded a few months previously, on the death of his father, Frederick William (May 31, 1740), to the Prussian Throne—the command of eighty thousand perfectly disciplined and appointed soldiers, and a treasury containing nine millions of crowns!

To oppose the overwhelming force of the Allies, the Austrian armies, cowed by continuous disaster and defeat,—their pay several months' in arrear,—having neither confidence in themselves nor in their generals, amounted in numbers to about a hundred and twenty thousand effective troops; a considerably less number than the contingent which France would furnish, at the first shock, to the combined armies. The exchequer of Austria was, moreover, empty; her credit naught; and as to England and Holland, which had also been parties to the Pragmatic Sanction,—England, in the reign of George II., and governed by the profligate and pacific policy of Sir Robert Walpole, could not be relied upon, except, perhaps, for a subsidy; whilst as to Holland, although she had done great things in conjunction with Great Britain, and under the leadership of Marlborough, in continental war, it could not be anticipated that she would singly challenge the brunt of so powerful a coalition in defence of an Empire for which she could feel but little real sympathy. Still, the known sentiments of the English and Dutch Governments, and the courage and resources of the English and Dutch people, gave the military conspirators pause; and had Sir Robert Walpole, when sounded upon the subject, frankly declared that Great Britain held herself bound, in the terms of the Pragmatic Sanction, to withstand by force, if necessary, the

shameless violation of that treaty by the subscribing Powers, France, Prussia, and Spain, it is possible that the war of the Austrian Succession might not have polluted the pages of European history. Finding, however, that, eloquently as the British Minister might write and declaim against the immoral proceedings of the banded Powers, England would not resolutely fight them in defence of the rights of Maria-Theresa, the final signal for the sanguinary strife was given, and boldy responded to by Frederick of Prussia.

That illustrious Monarch had been prodigal of his good wishes and pure intentions towards Maria-Theresa up to the fifteenth of December, upon which day there was a grand masked ball in Berlin, at which he was present, and was noticed to be unusually friendly with the Austrian Ambassador. Two hours subsequently he left his capital at the head of thirty thousand men, after an interview with the French Envoy, to whom he jocularly remarked at parting, "I am going to play your game. If aces are dealt to me, we will go halves." He marched upon Silesia, which, without any previous declaration of war, he swept with the sword and flame, at first with ill, but soon with better fortune.

The bold Bavarian of Dr. Johnson next entered the lists, with Saxony; and Maria-Theresa applied for assistance to France, so completely had she been hoodwinked by Cardinal Fleury. The answer was the advance of a French army into Bohemia! She next invoked the aid of Great Britain; and was advised by George II. to purchase peace of Prussia by the sacrifice of Silesia—a proposal which the heroic young Queen rejected with disdain. Popular feeling in England ran strongly in her favour. "The Queen of Hungary, and confusion to her enemies!" was the favourite toast in all societies; the Parliament voted her a subsidy of 300,000*l.*;

the ladies of Great Britain, headed by Sara, the aged Duchess of Marlborough, raised by subscription 100,000*l.* in aid of the youthful Sovereign; George II. remonstrated on her behalf with his illustrious nephew, Frederick of Prussia; and his Holiness, Pope Benedict XIV., hurled a Bull at her foes.

Kingly remonstrance, parliamentary subsidy, and papal bull helped her but little. City after city surrendered: province after province was occupied and ravaged by the Allies. Vienna, where she had recently given birth to her son Joseph, was menaced, and Maria-Theresa hastened to Presburg, to invoke the only resource left to her, the loyalty of her faithful Hungarians. She arrived in Presburg in the first week of June, 1741, and was crowned Queen of Hungary, on the 13th of that month, with the ancient ceremonies. Mounted upon a noble charger, wearing the iron crown of St. Stephen, and girt with a sword, she rode amidst a crowd of noble Magyars to the Royal Mount without the city, where, drawing the sword, she brandished it successively towards the north, the south, the east, and the west, defying the four quarters of the world in the prescribed terms. A banquet at the castle followed, whereat an incident occurred of happy augury for the success of the appeal she intended making on the following day to the Diet, or Assembly of Nobles. The iron crown, which had been lined to make it fit her head, was a heavy one, and when, upon taking her seat at the banquet in the great hall, she put off the crown, her luxuriant auburn hair, escaped from the confining pressure, fell down in charming disorder over her superb neck and shoulders. The lustre of her eyes and complexion, heightened by excitement and the glow of exercise, completed the exquisite loveliness of the picture; and a thrill

of admiration, gradually swelling into a tumult of delight, ran through the warlike assembly.

The next day the young Queen presented herself before the Diet alone, ascended the throne prepared for her, and addressed the hushed assembly in a Latin speech, eloquent of her wrongs, her losses, her hopes and fears. "This kingdom of Hungary," she concluded by saying,—" this kingdom of Hungary—our person, our children, our crown—are at stake. Forsaken by all, I seek shelter only in the fidelity, the arms, the hereditary valour of the renowned Hungarian States."

As she ceased speaking the swords of the Magyars flew half out of their iron sheaths, and the ringing blades, thrust violently back into their scabbards, gave fierce significance to the shout of the excited warriors :—" Our lives, our blood for your Majesty ! We will die for our 'King,' Maria-Theresa !" (*Moriamur pro nostro Rege, Maria-Theresa*). It was a few days subsequently that the Queen appeared before them with her child in her arms; and the same oath to die, if need be, in her defence, was repeated, with, if possible, still wilder enthusiasm. "We wept, too," said Count Koller; "but they were tears of admiration, of pity, and of rage!"

The deeds of the Hungarians amply redeemed their promises. Crowds of enthusiastic soldiers flocked to her standard, including

> "The fierce Croatian and the wild Hussar ;"

the invading armies were everywhere driven back with immense loss; and the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, concluded the war of the Austrian Succession; three years previous to which, that is, in 1745, Maria-Theresa redeemed

her promise of placing the Imperial crown of Germany upon her husband's head.

Maria-Theresa lived to a great age in the exercise of supreme power, which, upon the whole, she wielded to beneficial uses. The greatest blot upon her name was her concurrence with Catherine of Russia and the great Frederick, in the partition of Poland. It is right, however, to add, that she did so with the utmost reluctance, and against the dictates of her better judgment, overborne, as she stated, by the importunities of wise and experienced councillors. She survived her husband many years.

THE END.

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