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Mr. French

These
Splendid Women

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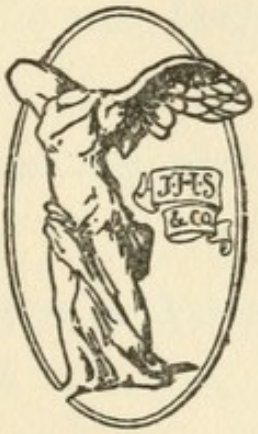
with

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES



"With the wind of God in her vesture, proclaiming the deathless, ever-soaring spirit of man."—Locke

J. H. SEARS & COMPANY, *Inc.*
PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK

Set up, Printed and Bound at the
KINGSPORT PRESS
KINGSPORT TENNESSEE
United States of America

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Introduction
to
These Splendid Women

THE ladies are dangerous creatures for a man, to say nothing of an editor, to tamper with, unless it be from a distance. They have at various periods been likened to angels, tigresses, cats, dynamite, fairies and furies. They are like the weather in Eastern Massachusetts. The self-contained Bostonian starts out in the morning with the sun smiling in entrancing beauty. He says to himself: "This is a stimulating and a fascinating day. I could be happy with it forever." As he turns the corner of the street with a smile on his face and a little purring glow in his heart, it begins to snow. He turns back in haste and hurries home for an overcoat and an umbrella. Coming forth a second time with grim determination to stand anything and see the thing through, he finds the air tropical and the sun mysteriously blinking through a mist. Off comes the coat and down comes the umbrella. Turning the corner again with perspiring brow and a clammy feeling down his spine, he discovers the sun breaking through, and hope springs towards a newer and a lovelier day. Just before reaching the office a terrific downpour of rain saturates his clothes before he can again put on his overcoat or put up his umbrella. There is nothing to do but push on.

At luncheon the air is clear and invigorating. The sun is bright and strong. It is the day of days. It is the kind of

weather that makes a man do great things. After an hour of luncheon, the return to the office is finally achieved through a fog so impenetrable that he runs into other men who curse him and thrust him into the street. And on the way home in the evening, tired with the commercial and climatic struggle of the day, he finally makes the haven of his domicile completely exhausted, alternately burning with fever and frozen with chills.

Finally, all through the night, dreams and visions chase one another through his fevered brain until, being unable to sleep, he rises and pulls aside the curtains to find all nature smiling in entrancing beauty out of the pink-faced dawn.

If you criticize his weather, the Bostonian will agree that it may be a trying climate, but he will ask you to bear in mind what New England has done for the country and the world in general. It is in his judgment the infinite variety of the weather which custom cannot stale that has achieved all these benefits for the world—that keeps the Yankee constantly on what is known as the jump.

Perhaps we are happier if we are always alert. At all events, so far as the records go in Massachusetts, this infinite variety has existed in the case of the weather from the beginning; and so far as the records go throughout history, the same infinite variety has existed for the same period in the case of woman.

In this modern day of ours, when woman's idea of the family appears in danger of being submerged in the idea of stenography, or secretaryship, or clerkship; when moving picture shows are pushing out the sewing of the family socks; when a career is more important than a child, some of us look with dread at the future and wonder what will become of mankind a hundred years hence when we are not here to be troubled by it.

Perhaps the whole makeup of woman will be as different as her costume now is from that of fifty years ago. Perhaps she will no longer be a tigress or a fairy, a fury or an angel, all in one; but only a calm person going to her occupations with supreme regularity like the rest of us. The changes that have taken place in her point of view within the lifetime of an ancient moralizer like the perpetrator of this preface are appalling in their significance. If in these few years such developments, what in the next hundred? It is distressing to think on.

Reading some of the memoirs written a hundred years ago, it appears that the changes in the new generation of that day appalled the ancient moralizer. He or she asked: "If this goes on, what will the world be a hundred years hence?" —that is to say, today. It would be safe to say that if these moralizers could revisit the scenes of their activities now, they would be horrified at woman. Think of the legs alone!

And yet the world seems to wag along much as heretofore.

If the view be extended over a greater period, there is something amusing in finding the differences and likenesses between this hour and one, two, three hundred—even one, two, three thousand—years ago. The result of such examinations, so far as any accuracy can be maintained, seems to show that while everything external has altered materially, the inner woman remains substantially the same.

Cleopatra, living just before the beginning of the Christian era, that is to say about two thousand years ago, was born the queen of one of the great kingdoms of that day at a time when that kingdom itself was at its height in the sense that it was at its richest and best organized point. She ruled with absolute sway over the destinies of her people, and so far as history goes she carried out her great responsibilities with more wisdom and judgment than most of

the potentates, male or female, of her time. She did not create a nation, but she did administer one. At the same time she would never have been marked in the history of the world as unique, if she had not had and exercised the feminine qualities common to all women, but enhanced a thousandfold in her case.

If the immense amount of description of her goings and comings be discounted, she still remains the woman who by her femininity, her personality, fascinated two of the great men of history, one practically to his ruin, and both to the distinct advantage of her country politically. She was a genius in bringing about the results she desired through the means and weapons that were at her disposal. But so far as any one can discover at this late date, she used no other weapons to achieve her victories than half a dozen young women have used in the last few years who have become notorious the world over; unless perhaps Cleopatra had more brains. Had these easily identified young ladies been born queens of great empires running on reasonably well greased wheels when they arrived at their thrones, they might have done as well as Cleopatra and, instead of being notorious, they might have been as famous as she. Which would seem to suggest how little is the difference between the woman of today and of two thousand years ago, except in custom and costume.

If Cleopatra had been a man, she would doubtless have written her memoirs and we should have much more to go by. But women up to a few years ago have, for some reason, refrained from telling us how they struggled and thought and won this or that victory. It is a pity—this historic modesty on the part of the female. She could have told us so much of interest in the past 2,000 years. Cleopatra's memoirs would have fascinated mankind. They

would be a best seller even to-day. You can see them in imagination—the first chapter filled with charming little stories of how she twisted her father around her finger, or fascinated the family dog by just looking at him—little hints of the origins from which sprang the discovery in her restless bosom of the best way in which Antony or Cæsar could be induced on a later day to relinquish some of the demands of Rome. Later chapters would have developed confessions of the joy of life, hints of experiments upon good-looking Egyptians attached to the Court, the way in which a smile upon a doubting councilor won him over, or perhaps a gentle pressure upon the arm and a glance upward caused the chains of defeat to drop from her people and bind themselves permanently about the person of a proud victor.

What a story would have been here for us to read—the inner workings of a woman's mind!

There have been scoffers, such as Schopenhauer, who have maintained that women had no minds. If only these memoirs of Cleopatra, and Madame de Pompadour, and Mary Queen of Scots had come down to us as complete and full of confidential detail as they would have come if such women had been men, then we should have known definitely. We can guess now what a lot of re-writing of our histories would become necessary. Should we see the great human currents of the ages shifted by a lovely girl's whim, or a bit of jealousy, or sudden love? Should we find that the Battle of Waterloo was won and lost because of a woman's wish?

There have been rumors here and there in man-made tomes that a female impetus, if it may be so styled, has upset great councils as well as great councilors time out of mind. Here and there in our novels we are given a hint,

though a clumsy male one, that some of the great movements of mankind are but the outcome of a lady's smile or frown. But there is nothing authentic. For myself, though I cannot prove it, I am convinced that if there had been no women there would have been no history, and from this conviction comes the inevitable conclusion that it is, therefore, the women who have really made history.

It is inconceivable that King Arthur's Round Table could have maintained itself without a woman. And who started the Trojan War?

It is a pity—this historic modesty on the part of the female. Fortunately, in our later and better day, women are at last taking their place in the world as well as in the home, and as they fill the places of men it seems fair to assume that they will be filled with the qualities of men, amongst which is the inevitable urge to write memoirs, to tell "how I did it," for the benefit of those who come after. Hence, from now on, we may hope to learn definitely not only whether woman has a mind, but how it works in its infinite and various ways.

But even without any authentic, first-hand information to work on, there is enough to be gathered from inference out of a collection of sketches gathered in such a volume as the present one, to prove that splendid women have lived and accomplished much by their own methods, though there is nothing to prove that they have changed, any more than man, in either method or power, since the first one upset her spouse in the Garden of Eden.

Cleopatra is an interesting example taken from ancient times.

At a later day, Catherine II. of Russia is still more interesting. She, unlike Cleopatra, did create a nation. She made laws, created precedents, began things, inaugurated

customs, did the thousands of things the contemporary counterparts of which were in existence when Cleopatra began her reign. And yet Catherine rouged and painted her face just as little Nellie does on Sixth Avenue today and, unlike Nellie, Catherine denied it all her life. She gave the most careful attention to her dress and attitude and to the costumes and behavior of those about her. She herself in her letters confesses that she changed her mind constantly without rhyme or reason. She frankly indulged in the wiles so identified with Cleopatra, but she never let these idle hours interfere with the upbuilding of Russia. She cut off people's heads and allowed her friends to slap her on the back with typical, modern feminine waywardness, and withal she was a creator, a builder and a governor greater than any male ruler of her day, greater than most rulers of any day.

In this or any similar exhaustive analysis of the female mind and heart it would be unjust to omit to mention that all women of today are not exactly alike. While each doubtless has infinite variety within herself, there appears to be an almost infinite variety in the species, or gender, or sex. It is true that our journals from time to time devote innumerable columns to the amorous but amateurish poetry, as well as the amorous but quite professional methods of ladies who have so upset gentlemen of large means that they hie them to the courts for protection. But it is just as true that in this same land great souls like a Jane Addams or a Clara Barton carry on their work to the infinite benefit of mankind, if with less newspaper notoriety.

In this particular, too, the past seems to have been much the same as today. While many fair damsels in the courts of Europe were using their peculiar and age-old methods to influence the course of empire, a little peasant maid carried on her daily occupations in the village of Domrémy and

dreamed of a French nation, sovereign and independent. She did not secure the space in the newspapers, or their counterparts of that day, that her sisters did; but she had a vision, a tenacity of purpose, a power of concentration, and a courage that have made the name of Joan of Arc a light shining in a dingy world down through the centuries. In spite of the fact that she fought battles and wore armor and led men on horseback, there appears to be no hint in all that has been written of her that she was anything but feminine.

So, too, in England less than a hundred years ago lived and worked Florence Nightingale, daughter of a rich man—a society girl, who had her vision of what should be done to help the sick. In her quiet life she not only invented the modern trained nurse, but she set in motion an idea, a standard, that makes it impossible for posterity to drop back in the smallest degree into the old ways. She not only changed the views of humanity in regard to nursing; she set a pace that never again can slacken. Yet so far as all the records, books and panegyrics of herself and her work go there is no hint that she was anything but the most feminine of women.

So with others in different eras and different lands.

It has seemed, therefore, in this day when we ask if womanhood is degenerating, that a little collection, not of biographies, but of pictures by master hands, of women in different periods would make an amusing, if not instructive, contradiction or corroboration of our fears for the future. It would be presumptuous to forecast the opinions of readers, but it may be permitted an editor to summarize his weak, masculine views, gathered from a reading of what follows in this volume.

Here it is: The characteristics of woman have not changed in the last ten thousand years. They will not change in the

next ten thousand years. The differences in the whole twenty thousand years between woman and woman are the same differences as those between man and man. Some are great; some are small; most are in between. Some are born leaders; some are weak sisters; many are just nice human beings. The appeal of sex will continue as it has begun—and that is as it should be. If it were not for that and the spiritual in all of us, men and women alike, there would be no civilization and no happiness.

When a young man comes to love a maid, in this century or forty centuries ago, something awakens in his soul that makes him long to do not only that which shall please her, but that which shall be worthy of her; and nothing is worthy of her but the best, whether that best be in honor, or courage, or industry, or ambition, or only treasure. And whether she darns socks or punches typewriters, cooks dinner or makes speeches, wears skirts long or short, that something awakened in the man's soul has come pretty near making the world in the past, and will continue to advance it in the future. There is, after all, little else of value within us.

If I should approach the question of the ladies nearer than this, the danger zone would be entered which is strewn with the literary corpses of thousands of enthusiastic but silly fools who have rushed in where angels fear to tread.

HAMBLEN SEARS

Cleopatra

By HENRY HOUSSAYE

AFTER an existence of forty or fifty centuries, the empire of Egypt was expiring under the "evil eye" of the Romans. The Greek dynasty, which had given to the country a new strength and reviving brilliancy, had exhausted itself in debauchery, crimes, and civil wars. It was now sustained only by the good-will of Rome, whose fatal protection was bought at a high price, and who still designed to tolerate, for a time, at least, the independence of Egypt. Freed from nearly all military service by the introduction of Hellenic and Gallic mercenaries the Egyptians had lost their warlike habits. They had suffered so many invasions and submitted to so many foreign dominations that all that remained for patriotism was the religion of their ancestors. Little mattered it to them, born servile and used to despotism, whether they were governed by a Greek king or a Roman proconsul—they would give not an ear of corn less, nor receive a blow the more.

Her glory eclipsed and her power decayed, Egypt still possessed her marvelous wealth. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce poured into Alexandria a triple wave of gold. Egypt had erewhile supplied Greece and Asia Minor with corn; it remained the inexhaustible granary of the Mediterranean basin. But the fertile valley of the Nile—"so fertile," says Herodotus, "that there was no need of the plough," produced not corn only. Barley,

maize, flax, cotton, indigo, the papyrus, henna, with which the women tinted their finger nails, clover sufficient for countless herds of cattle and sheep, onions and radishes, supplied to the laborers employed in building the great pyramid of Cheops to the amount of eight millions of drachms, grapes, dates, figs, and that delicious fruit of the lotus, which, according to Homer, "made one forget his native land," were other sources of wealth. Native industry produced paper, furniture of wood, ivory, and metal; weapons, carpets, mats, fabrics of linen, wool, and silk; cloths, embroidered and painted; glazed pottery, glass-ware, vases of bronze and alabaster, enamels, jewels of gold and settings of gems. Finally commerce, which had its factories beyond the Aromatic Cape, which sent its caravans across Arabia and the Lybian Desert, and whose countless ships ploughed the seas from the Pillars of Hercules to the mouth of the Indus, had made Alexandria the emporium of the three continents. Under Ptolemy XI., the father of Cleopatra, the taxes, tithes, import and export duties cast annually into the royal treasury twelve thousand five hundred talents—sixty-eight millions of francs.

Ptolemy XI. (Auletes) died in July, 51 B.C. He left four children. By his will he appointed to succeed him on the throne his eldest daughter Cleopatra, and his eldest son Ptolemy, and according to the custom of Egypt the brother was to marry the sister. At her father's death Cleopatra was sixteen and Ptolemy thirteen years old. The tutor of young Ptolemy, the eunuch Pothinus, was an ambitious man, and, being complete master of the mind of his pupil, he calculated to rule Egypt under the new reign; but he soon found that Cleopatra would permit neither him nor Ptolemy to govern the kingdom. Proud and headstrong, Cleopatra was likewise skillful, intelligent, and very learned; she spoke eight or ten languages, among them Egyptian, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, and Syriac. How is it possible to think that this

woman, so haughty and so gifted, would abandon her share of the sovereignty in favor of a child governed by a eunuch?

Cæsar soon learned the contentions of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, the flight of the latter in consequence of the threats of the populace, and the battle about to take place between the two armies assembled at Pelusium. It had always been the Roman policy to intermeddle in the private dissensions of nations. This policy of intervention was still more in order for Cæsar with regard to Egypt, because during his first consulate Ptolemy Auletes had been declared the ally of Rome, and in his will had conjured the Roman people to have his last wishes executed. Another motive, which he does not mention in his "Commentaries," induced Cæsar to intermeddle in the affairs of Egypt. With little expense he had made himself the creditor of the late king, and he had to call upon the heirs for a large amount. This was no less than seven millions fifty thousand sesterces which remained due of the thirty-three thousand talents which Ptolemy had promised to pay Cæsar and Pompey if by the assistance of the Romans he should recover his crown.

The queen was waiting impatiently for news from Cæsar. On the receipt of his first message, but partially transmitted by Pothinus, she had hastened to disband her army. She already felt full confidence in the favor of the great leader who was called "the husband of all women," but she knew that she must see Cæsar, or rather that Cæsar must see her. But the days passed and the invitation to Alexandria did not arrive. Finally the second message reached her, and she learned that Cæsar had already sent for her to go to him, but that Pothinus had taken measures to prevent her knowing it.

Cleopatra, abandoning the idea of entering Alexandria with the trappings of a queen, bethought herself of a plan to do so not merely under a disguise, but as a bale of goods. Accompanied by a single devoted attendant,

Apollodorus, the Sicilian, she embarked from near Pelusium in a decked bark which, in the middle of the night, entered the port of Alexandria. They landed at a pier before one of the lesser gates of the palace. Cleopatra enveloped herself in a great sack of coarse cloth of many colors, such as were used by travelers to pack up mats and mattresses, and Apollodorus bound it round with a strap, then taking the sack upon his shoulders, entered the gate of the palace, went straight to the apartments of Cæsar, and laid his precious burden at his feet.

Aphrodite rose radiant from the sea: Cleopatra less pretendingly from a sack; but Cæsar was none the less moved at the surprise and ravished with the apparition. Cleopatra, who was then nineteen, was in the flower of her marvelous and seductive beauty. Dion Cassius calls the queen of Egypt the most beautiful of women, but Plutarch finds one epithet insufficient to depict her, and expresses himself thus: "There was nothing so incomparable in her beauty as to compel admiration; but by the charm of her physiognomy, the grace of her whole person, the fascination of her presence, Cleopatra left a sting in the soul." This is her veritable portrait. Cleopatra did not possess supreme beauty, she possessed supreme seductiveness. As Victor Hugo said of a celebrated theatrical character, "She is not pretty, she is worse," which suggestive expression may well apply to Cleopatra. Plutarch adds, and his testimony is confirmed by Dion, that Cleopatra spoke in a melodius voice and with infinite sweetness. This information is valuable in a psychological point of view. Certes, this charm of voice, divine gift so rarely bestowed, this pure and winning caress, this ever new delight was not one of the least attractions of the Siren of the Nile.

This first interview between Cæsar and Cleopatra probably extended far into the night. It is certain that, with the earliest dawn, Cæsar sent for Ptolemy, and told him he must be reconciled to his sister and associate her in

the government. "In one night," says Dion Cassius, "Cæsar had become the advocate of her of whom he had erewhile thought himself the judge."

Eighteen years previous to these events, Cæsar, being ædile, had endeavored to have voted by a plebiscit the execution of the will of Alexander II., who had bequeathed Egypt to the Roman people. Now, Egypt was subjugated and Cæsar had but to say the word for this vast and rich country to become a Roman province. But in the year 63 Cleopatra was only just born; in the year 65 Cæsar had not felt the bite of the "Serpent of the Nile," as Shakspeare calls her—the consul took good care not to remember the propositions of the ædile. The first act of Cæsar on reëntering Alexandria was solemnly to recognize Cleopatra as Queen of Egypt. In order, however, to humor the ideas of the Egyptians he determined that she should espouse her second brother, Ptolemy Neoteras, and share the sovereignty with him. As, however, Dion remarks, this union and this sharing were equally visionary; the young prince, who was only fifteen, could be neither king nor even husband to the queen; apparently Cleopatra was the wife of her brother, and his partner on the throne; in reality she reigned solely, and continued the mistress of Cæsar.

During the eight months of the Alexandrian struggle Cæsar, shut up in the palace, had scarcely quitted Cleopatra, except for the fight, and this long honeymoon had seemed short to him. He loved the beautiful queen as fondly, and perhaps more so, than in the early days, and he could not resolve to leave her. In vain the gravest interests called him to Rome, where disorder reigned and blood was flowing, and where, since the December of the preceding year, not a letter had been received from him; in vain, in Asia, Pharnaces, the conquerer of the royal allies of Rome and of the legions of Domitius, has seized on Pontus, Cappadocia, and Armenia; in vain, in Africa, Cato and the last adherents of Pompey have concentrated

at Utica an immense army—fourteen legions, ten thousand Numidian horsemen, and one hundred and twenty elephants of war; in vain, in Spain, all minds are excited and revolt is brewing. Duty, interest, ambition, danger —Cæsar forgets everything in the arms of Cleopatra. Truly he is preparing to leave Alexandria, but it is to accompany the beautiful queen on a pleasure excursion up the Nile. By the orders of Cleopatra, one of those immense flat-bottomed pleasure vessels has been prepared, such as were used by the Lagidæ for sailing on the river, and called thalamegos (pleasure pinnace). It was a veritable floating palace, half a stadium long and forty cubits high above the water-line. The stories rose one above the other, surrounded by porticos and open galleries, and surmounted by belvederes sheltered from the sun by purple awnings. Within were numerous apartments, furnished with every convenience and every luxurious refinement of Greco-Egyptian civilization, vast saloons surrounded by colonnades, a banqueting-hall provided with thirteen couches, with a ceiling arched like a grotto, and sparkling with a rock-work of jasper, lapis lazuli, cornelian, alabaster, amethyst, aquamarine, and topaz. The vessel was built of cedar and cypress, the sails were of byssus, the ropes were dyed purple. Throughout, carved by skillful hands, were the opening chalices of the lotus, wound the volutes of the acanthus, twined garlands of bean-leaves and flowers of the date palm. On all sides shone facings of marble, of thyia, ivory, onyx, capitals and architraves of bronze. Mimes, acrobats, troops of dancing-girls, and flutists were on board to cheer the austere solitude of the Thebaïd with the diversions and luxuries of Alexandria.

Cæsar and Cleopatra anticipate with rapture this voyage of enchantments; they will carry their young loves amid the old cities of Egypt, along the "Golden Nile," which they will ascend as far as the mysterious land of Ethiopia. But on the very eve of their departure the legionaries

become indignant, they murmur, they rebel; their officers cry aloud to the consul, and Cæsar returns to reason. For an instant he contemplates carrying Cleopatra away with him to Rome, but that project must be deferred. It is in Armenia that the danger is most pressing; it is to Armenia that he will first repair. He leaves two legions with Cleopatra—a faithful and formidable guard, which will secure the tranquillity of Alexandria, and sets sail for Antioch.

During the campaigns of Cæsar in Armenia and Africa (from July, 47, to June, 46, B. C.) Cleopatra remained in Alexandria, where a few months after the departure of the dictator she gave birth to a son. She named him Ptolemy-Cæsarion, thus proclaiming her intimate relations with Cæsar, which, however, were no secret to the Alexandrians.

When Cæsar, the army of Cato under Thapsus being crushed, was about to return to Rome, he wrote to Cleopatra to meet him there. Probably she arrived there about midsummer of the year 46, at the period of the celebration of Cæsar's four triumphs. In the second, the triumph of Egypt, Cleopatra must have beheld, at the head of the train of captives, her sister Arsinoë, who at the breaking out of the war of Alexandria had joined her enemies. The queen had brought with her her son Cæsarion, her pseudo-husband the young Ptolemy, and a numerous train of courtiers and officers. Cæsar gave up his superb villa on the right bank of the Tiber as a residence for Cleopatra and her court.

Officially, if we may thus use this very new word to express a very old thing, Cleopatra was well received in Rome. She was the queen of a great country, the ally of the Republic, and she was the guest of Cæsar, then all-powerful; but, beneath the homage offered, lurked contempt and hatred. Not that Roman society took offense at her intrigue with Cæsar; for more than half

a century, republican Rome had strangely changed its chaste morals and severe principles.

In so dissolute and adulterous a city, it could shock no one that Cæsar should be false to his wife with one mistress or even with several; but in the midst of her debaucheries, and even though Rome had lost many of her ancient virtues, she still preserved the pride of the Roman name. These conquerors of the world looked upon other nations as of servile race and inferior humanity. Little did they care for the transient loves of Cæsar and Ennoah, queen of Mauritania, nor would they have cared any more had Cleopatra served merely to beguile his leisure during the war of Alexandria; but in bringing this woman to the seven-hilled city, in publicly acknowledging her as his mistress, in forcing on all the spectacle of a Roman citizen, five times consul and thrice dictator, as the lover of an Egyptian woman, Cæsar seemed, according to the ideas of the time, to insult all Rome. As Merivale justly observes: "If one can imagine the effect that would have been produced in the fifteenth century by the marriage of a peer of England or of a grandee of Spain with a jewess some idea may be formed of the impression made on the Roman people by the intrigue of Cæsar and Cleopatra."

Cæsar had received supreme power and had been deified. He was created dictator for ten years, and in the city his statue bore this inscription: "Cæsari semideo"—To Cæsar the demigod. He might believe himself sufficiently powerful to despise Roman prejudices; for the rest, during the last two years of his life, Cæsar, till then so prudent, so cautious in humoring the sentiments of the plebeians, so skillful in using them for his own designs, pretended in his public life to despise and brave public opinion. It was the same in his private life; far from dismissing Cleopatra, he visited her more frequently than ever at the villa on the Tiber, talked in-

cessantly of the queen, and allowed her publicly to call her son Cæsarion.

He went further still; he erected in the temple of Venus the golden statue of Cleopatra, thus adding to the insult to the Roman people the outrage to the Roman gods. It was not enough that Cæsar for love of Cleopatra had not reduced Egypt to a Roman province; not enough that he had installed this foreigner in Rome, in his villa on the banks of the Tiber, and that he lavished on her every mark of honor and every testimony of love; —now he dedicated, in the temple of a national divinity, the statue of this prostitute of Alexandria, this barbarous queen of the land of magicians, of thaumaturgy [wonder-working], of eunuchs, of servile dwellers by the Nile, these worshipers of stuffed birds and gods with the heads of beasts. Men asked each other where the infatuation of Cæsar would end. It was reported that the dictator was preparing to propose, by the tribune Helvius Cinna, a law which would permit him to espouse as many wives as he desired in order to beget children by them. It was said that he was about to recognize the son of Cleopatra as his heir, and still further, that after having exhausted Italy in levies of men and money he would leave the government of Rome in the hands of his creatures and transfer the seat of empire to Alexandria. These rumors aroused all minds against Cæsar, and, if we may credit Dion, tended *to arm his assassins against him* (to furnish the dagger to slay him). Notwithstanding this hostility, Cleopatra was not deserted in the villa on the Tiber. To please the divine Julius, to approach him more intimately, the Cæsarians controlled their antipathy and frequently visited the beautiful queen. To this court of Egypt transported to the banks of the Tiber came Mark Antony, Dolabella, Lepidus, then general-of-horse; Oppius Curio, Cornelius Balbus, Helvius Cinna, Matius, the prætor Vendidius, Trebonius, and others. Side by side with the partisans of Cæsar were also some of his secret enemies,

such as Atticus, a celebrated silver merchant with great interests in Egypt, and others whom he had won over, like Cicero. The latter while making his peace with Cæsar did not forget his master-passion, love of books and of curiosities. An insatiable collector, he thought to enrich his library at Tusculum without loosing his purse-strings, and requested Cleopatra to send for him to Alexandria, where such treasures abounded, for a few Greek manuscripts and Egyptian antiquities. The queen promised willingly, and one of her officers, Aumonius, who, formerly an ambassador of Ptolemy Auletes to Rome, had there known Cicero, undertook the commission; but whether through forgetfulness or negligence the promised gifts came not, and Cicero preserved so deep an enmity to the queen in consequence that he afterwards wrote to Atticus, "I hate the queen (odi reginam)," giving as his only reason for this aversion the failure of the royal promise. The former consul had also received an affront from Sarapion, one of Cleopatra's officers. This man had gone to his house, and when Cicero asked him what he wished he had replied rudely: "I seek Atticus," and at once departed. How often does the ill-conduct of upper servants create a prejudice against the great.

The assassination of Cæsar, which struck Cleopatra like a thunderbolt, would have been the destruction of all her hopes if one could lose hope at twenty-five. Cæsar dead, there was nothing to detain her in Rome, and she did not feel safe in this hostile city amid the bloody scenes of the parricidal days. She prepared to depart, but Antony having entertained for a moment the weak desire of opposing to Octavius as Cæsar's heir the little Cæsarian, Cleopatra remained in Rome until the middle of April. When the queen perceived that this project was finally abandoned, she hastened to depart from the city where she had experienced so much contempt and which she quitted with rage in her heart.

After his victory over Brutus, Antony overran Greece

and Asia Minor for the purpose of levying tribute, and was everywhere received as a conqueror. Cities and kings vied with each other in adulation, heaped up honors and lavished gifts on him to secure immunity for the succor they had afforded, willingly or by force, to the vanquished party. At Athens, Megara, Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tarsus embassies and royal visits followed each other. To preserve to their kingdoms a quasi-autonomy, every petty sovereign of Asia hastened to obtain from the powerful triumvir, a new investiture of his crown. Cleopatra alone, whether from queenly pride or womanly art, remained in Egypt and sent no ambassador; she seemed to pretend to ignore that the victory at Philippi had rendered Antony the master of the East.

The silence of Cleopatra surprised and irritated Antony. Perhaps wounded pride was not the only sentiment in the soul of the triumvir. When he was commanding the cavalry of Gabinius he had seen Cleopatra, then fifteen years old; he had seen her again at Rome, the year of Cæsar's death. Without agreeing wholly with Appian, that Antony was already in love with the queen of Egypt, it may be credited that her beauty and her attractions had made on him a deep impression. He remembered the "Siren of the Nile," and amid the visits of so many kings and powers it was, above all, hers that he awaited, but awaited in vain. In the position of Antony, however, to speak was to be obeyed. He commanded Cleopatra to repair to Tarsus, to vindicate before his tribunal her ambiguous conduct during the civil war. Antony enjoyed in advance this deliciously cruel pleasure: the beautiful Cleopatra, the haughty queen of Egypt, the woman at whose feet he had seen the divine Julius, coming to him as a suppliant.

On a day when the triumvir on his judgment-seat was giving public audience in the midst of the agora of Tarsus, a great uproar arose on the banks of the Cydnus. Antony inquired what it meant. Flatterers as all Greeks

are, the Cilicians replied that it was Aphrodite herself who, for the happiness of Asia, was coming to visit Bacchus. Antony liked to assume the name of Bacchus. The crowd which thronged the public square rushed in a body to the shore. Antony was left alone with his lictors in the deserted agora—his dignity kept him there, but he fidgets in his curule chair, till finally curiosity gains the day. Unaccustomed to self-control, he, also, descends to the strand. The sight is worth the trouble—a vision divine which carries one back to the dawn of mythologic times. Cleopatra is entering Tarsus, ascending the Cydnus on a vessel plated with gold over which float sails of Tyrian purple. The silver oars rise and fall in measured cadence to the music of Greek lyres and Egyptian harps. The queen, the goddess Cleopatra, lying beneath an awning of cloth of gold which shades the deck, appears as the painters usually represent Aphrodite, surrounded by rosy children like the Loves, beautiful young girls scarcely clad with lightest drapery as Graces and sea-nymphs, bearing garlands of roses and the lotus-flower and waving great fans of the feathers of the ibis. On the prow of the vessel other Nereides form groups worthy the brush of Apelles; Loves suspended to the yards and rigging seem descending from the skies. Incense and spikenard kept burning by slaves surround the vessel with a light and odorous vapor which sends its perfume to both banks of the stream.

Antony at once despatched one of his favorites to Cleopatra to request her to sup with him that same night. Cleopatra, availing herself doubtless of her title of goddess rather than of that of queen—a queen of Egypt was nobody in comparison with a triumvir—made response that it was she who invited Antony to supper, and the Roman did not decline the invitation. He went at the hour appointed to the palace, which several days previously Cleopatra had had secretly prepared with gorgeous magnificence. The banquet-hall, sumptuously adorned,

shone with the brilliancy of chandeliers, candelabra, and a multitude of golden sconces arranged symmetrically in circles, lozenges, etc. The feast, worthy of its decorations, abounded in nectarean wines served in vases of solid gold, and in rare and artistic viands prepared by a master hand. Antony was a great gastronomist, and three months before this had given his cook a house for a dish that pleased him. He would have given a whole town to the cook of Cleopatra. As for the beautiful Egyptian, the triumvir was already willing to give her the whole world. The next day Antony gave a supper to the queen. He hoped to surpass, by means of money, the magnificence of his reception, but he was the first to recognize his inability to rival her as an Amphitryon, and, clever man that he was, he jested gayly in Cleopatra's presence at his meanness and coarse taste. Probably in these two entertainments there was no mention of the grievances, real or pretended, with which Rome charged Cleopatra. Antony had no longer any thought of summoning her before his tribunal as a suppliant—the suppliant would have been Antony himself if Cleopatra had rejected his advances. Henceforth it was the queen that commanded; the all-powerful triumvir had become the "slave of the Egyptian woman," as Dion Cassius indignantly exclaims.

The first advantage Cleopatra took of her power was to have her son, by Cæsar, Ptolemy-Cæsarion, recognized as legitimate heir to the crown of Egypt. At Antony's request the decree was immediately ratified by his colleagues, Octavius and Lepidus.

When Cleopatra arrived at Tarsus in the summer of 41 B. C., Antony was preparing to march against the Parthians. At the end of a month the concentration of his troops was accomplished, the fleets ready, and no obstacle remained to the departure of the army. But this month had been passed with Cleopatra, and Antony had found it very short. Listening only to his passion, he put off the

expedition till the spring and followed the queen into Egypt.

Then began that mad life of pleasure and debauchery, that long and sumptuous orgy, which even in the third century of our era, and after the excesses of Nero and Heliogabalus, was still quoted in the Roman world, though then slaves to every corruption and exhausted in efforts of magnificence, as an inimitable model.

Οἱ Ἀχιμητοδιοι: "Those whose life is inimitable." This, moreover, was the name assumed by Antony and Cleopatra and the intimate companions of their pleasures. Plutarch and Dion relate that festival succeeded to festival, entertainment to entertainment, and hunting parties to excursions on the Nile. Cleopatra quitted Antony neither day nor night. She drank with him, she gambled with him, hunted with him, she was even present at his military exercises when by chance this man of war, remembering that he was a soldier, took a fancy to review his legions. It is further related that Cleopatra was incessantly inventing some new diversion, some unexpected pleasure. But this list is very brief, this sketch a very modest and faint description to give an idea of the superb orgies, the unrestrained voluptuousness, and the nameless prodigalities of the "Inimitables." Pliny alone of the ancient writers has summed them up, perhaps unknown to himself, in the legend, more or less symbolic, of the Pearl. One day, says this writer, when Antony was extolling the luxuriousness and profusion of a certain entertainment, he exclaimed that no other could surpass it. Cleopatra, who always affected to put no limit to the possible, replied that the present feast was a wretched affair, and she laid a wager that the next day she would give one on which she would expend ten millions of sesterces (two millions one hundred thousand francs). Antony took the bet. The next day the feast, magnificent as it was, had nothing to distinguish it from the preceding, and Antony did not fail to rally Cleopatra. "Per

Bacchus," cried he, "this would never cost ten millions of sesterces!" "I know that," replied the queen, "but you see only the accessories. I myself will drink alone the ten millions," and at once detaching from her ear a single pearl—the largest and most perfect ever seen—she threw it into a golden cup, in which it was dissolved in the vinegar there prepared, and swallowed at one draught the acid beverage. She was about to sacrifice the second pearl when L. Plancus, the umpire of the wager, arrested her hand by declaring that she had won.

Picture to yourself the most costly materials, marbles, breccia, granites, ebony and cedar woods, porphyry, basalt, agate, onyx, lapis-lazuli, bronze, silver, ivory, and gold; conceive the most imposing Egyptian, the most beautiful Grecian architecture, imagine the Parthenon and the temple of Jupiter Olympus, the Pavilion of Rameses, and the ruins of Apollinopolis Magna; recreate the royal palaces of Alexandria, which, with their dependencies, their gardens, their terraces, rising one above another, made up a third of the city: reconstruct the massive enclosures—those double pylons into which opened avenues bordered with sphinxes; those obelisks, those magnificent propylæa, those saloons three hundred feet long and a hundred and fifty wide, supported by vast columns, in which rise double rows of pillars ten meters in circumference and twenty meters in height, bursting into lotus blossoms at their summits; those sanctuaries with their screens enameled in gold and tortoise shell, and studded with gems; those long picture galleries adorned with the paintings of Zeuxis, Apelles, and Protogenes; those magnificent thermæ with their calidaria, their basins of hot and cold water, their retiring-rooms with walls of red porphyry, their porticos adorned with statues; those gymnasia, theaters, hippodromes, those stages covered with saffron powder, those triclinia where the couches of embossed silver rested on Babylonian carpets; those atria with their uncovered roofs, sustained by Corinthian

columns with capitals of golden bronze, by day shaded by purple awnings, the silk of which was worth its weight in gold, and at night open to the starry sky. See, at all seasons, blooming in the gardens roses and violets, and scatter the pavements of onyx and mosaics four times a day with fresh flowers; people this scenery with crowds of slaves, pipers, players of the harp and psaltery, dancers, actors, Atellans [of the drama, as at Atellan, of lascivious character, Atellanæ], acrobats, mimes, gymnasts, ballet-dancers, and serpent-charmers. Load these tables with oysters from Tarentum, lampreys dressed with garum, bonitos cooked in fig-leaves, pink ousels, quails, pheasants, swans, geese livers, stews made of the brains of birds, hares cooked rare and dusted with coriander seeds, truffles as large as the fist which were assumed to fall from the sky like aërolites, cakes of honey and wheat flour, and the most delicious fruits of the Mediterranean basin. In the kitchens, roasting before the fires on immense hearths, for the entertainment of fifteen guests, twelve wild boars, spitted successively at intervals of three minutes, so that, according to the duration of the feast, one of these animals might be exactly cooked at the very moment it was required to be served. Cool in snow the old Cæcuban wine, the Falernian ripened for twenty years, the wines of Phlemtes, Chios, Issa, the imperial wine of Lesbos, the ripe wine of Rhodes, the sweet wine of Mitylene, the Saprian, smelling of violets, and the Thasos, said to "rekindle failing love." Light up the lamps, the torches, and the chandeliers, wind the pillars with streamers of fire; open the mouths of the bronze colossi that the icy water may flow and cool the atmosphere, and the breasts of Isis that the sweet waters may perfume it; call in the choirs of singing women with their harps and cythera, and the females who dance nude with castanets of gold in their hands; add to them representations of comedies, the farces of mimes, the tricks of jugglers, and the phantasmagorias of the magicians; offer mock engagements in

the harbor, and in the hippodrome chariot races and combats between lions; summon the masqueraders and witness the processions where cluster, around the golden car of Bacchus and the Cyprian, fifteen hundred satyrs, a thousand cupids, and eight hundred beautiful slaves as nymphs and mimes. Finally, imagine all that Asiatic pomp, Egyptian state, and Grecian refinement and depravity, and Roman power and licentiousness blended in a single form—a sensual and splendid woman, delighting in pleasure and sumptuousness—can achieve with such elements and you will have some idea, though very vague and feeble, of the "Life Inimitable."

Sometimes Antony and Cleopatra indulged in more vulgar pleasures. Disguised, she as a barmaid, and he as a porter or a sailor, they ran, by night, about the streets of Alexandria, knocking at the doors of houses, abusing belated pedestrians, entering low lodging-houses, and quarreling with drunken men. To the great delight of Antony these frolics usually ended in fights. Despite his strength and skill, the Roman did not always win, and Cleopatra was sometimes well splashed with mud; but victors or vanquished, the lovers returned happy to the palace, quite willing to renew their adventures. The secret, however, escaped, and thenceforth the royal pair were handled more cautiously, without being entirely spared.

These follies did not turn the Alexandrians against the triumvir as much as might have been supposed. If they had little esteem for him, they liked him for his good humor, and the ease with which he was approached. They delighted to say: "Antony wears for the Romans a tragic mask, but here he lays it aside, and assumes for us the mask of comedy." His intimate companions and his officers, who shared without scruple his voluptuous and unbridled excesses, were still less inclined to resent them, for, like himself, they yielded to the bewitching charm of Cleopatra. They loved, they admired her, they

bore cheerfully her snubs and sarcasms, and were not shocked, even if in the midst of a feast, at a sign from Antony, she quitted the banquet hall with him, and returning after a short absense resumed her position on the couch of the triclinium. They studied to please and divert her, each strove to be the vilest toady to the queen—"humillimus assentator reginæ"—for a smile of Cleopatra they sacrificed all dignity. Once, L. Plancus, a man of consular dignity, crowned with rushes, a fish's tail attached to his loins, and his naked body painted blue, actually performed in her presence the dance of Glaukos.

With Cæsar, Cleopatra had instinctively played the part of a crowned Aspasia, ever bewitching, but uniting dignity with grace, concealing the courtesan beneath the robe of a queen, ever equable in mood, expressing herself in the choicest language, talking politics, art, literature, her marvelous faculties rising without effort to the level of the lofty intelligence of the dictator: with Antony, Cleopatra, at first through policy, afterwards through love, played the part of a Laïs born by chance to a throne. Seeing at once that the inclinations of Antony were coarse and low, that his wit was commonplace and his language very loose, she immediately set herself to the same tone. She kept pace with this great drinker, remaining even till dawn with the foaming flagons and goblets continually replenished; she accompanied him by night into the suspicious streets of Rhakotis, the old portion of Alexandria; she jested cynically, sang amatory songs, recited licentious poems; she quarreled with him, provoking and returning both abuse and blows. Nothing delighted Antony like the sight of that ravishing little hand threatening and beating him, or to hear from those divine lips, fit for the choruses of Sophocles or the odes of Sappho, the same words that he had heard bandied among the guard of the Esquiline gate and in the unmentionable dens of the Suburra.

On the morning of September 2d the vessels of Antony

formed in four grand divisions, crossed the channel of Actium, and, issuing thence, were disposed in battle array opposite the fleet of Octavius, who was awaiting them at eight or ten stadia from the land. On the side of Antony, he himself, with Publicola, commanded the right wing; Marcus Justus and Marcus Octavius the center, and Cœlius the left wing. Cleopatra commanded the reserve with sixty Egyptian vessels. On the side of the Romans, Octavius commanded the right wing, Agrippa the left, and Arruntius the center. About noon the battle began. The troops on land, who were under arms and motionless near the shore, saw not, as is usual in sea-fights, the galleys rush at each other seeking to strike with their rostra or beaks of steel. On account of their slow rate of speed, the heavy vessels of Antony could not strike with that impetuosity which gives force to the shock, and the light galleys of the Romans feared to break their rostra against those enormous ships, constructed of strong beams joined with iron. The battle was like a succession of sieges, a combat of moving citadels with moving towers. Three or four Roman galleys would unite to attack one of Antony's vessels, so huge, says Virgil, that they looked like the Cyclades sailing on the waters. The soldiers cast grappling-irons, fired burning arrows on the decks, attached fire-ships to the keels, and rushed to board them, while the powerful batteries placed at the summit of the towers of the beleaguered ship showered down on the assailants a hail of stones and arrows. At the very first the Roman right wing, commanded by Octavius, gave way before the attack of the division under Cœlius. At the other extremity Agrippa, having designed a movement to surround Antony and Publicola, these turned on their right and thus uncovered the center of the line of battle. The swift Liburnian galleys improved the opportunity to attack the vessels of the two Marcuses, in the rear of which was the reserve under Cleopatra. Success and reverse went hand in hand; the two sides fought with

equal fury, and the victory was doubtful, but the nervousness of Cleopatra was to be the ruin of Antony's cause. For hours she had suffered a fever of agony. From the deck of the *Antoniad* she anxiously watched the movements of the fleets. In the beginning she had hoped for victory; now, terrified by the clamor and tumult, her only desire was to escape. She awaited with ever-increasing impatience the signal for retreat. Suddenly she noticed the right wing moving towards the coast of Epirus, the left putting to sea, and the center, which protected her, attacked, separated, broken, penetrated by the Roman Liburnians. Then, "pale with her approaching death"—*pallens morte futura*—listening only to her terror, she ordered the sails to be hoisted, and with her sixty vessels she passed through the midst of the combatants and fled towards the open sea. In the midst of the battle Antony perceived the motion of the Egyptian squadron, and recognized the *Antoniad* by its purple sails; Cleopatra was fleeing, robbing him at the decisive moment of his powerful reserve; but the queen could not order the retreat, he alone could give the signal for that. There is some mistake—a feint, perhaps a panic. Antony in his turn hoists the sails of his galley and rushes in the wake of Cleopatra. He will bring back the Egyptian vessels and restore the chances of the battle. But before overtaking the *Antoniad* the unhappy man has time to think. Cleopatra has deserted him either through cowardice or treason; he can bring back to Actium neither her nor her fleet. Next he thinks he will return to the combat, which is now only a rout, to die with his soldiers—to *die* without seeing Cleopatra once more! he cannot do it. A fatal power drags him after this woman. He reaches the *Antoniad,* but then he is overcome with his disgrace. He refuses to see the queen. He seats himself on the prow of the vessel, his head on his hands, and remains thus for three days and three nights.

The Egyptian fleet and some other vessels which had

followed the fugitives put into the part of Cænopolis, near Cape Tenarum. Often repulsed by the obstinate silence of Antony, Cleopatra's women finally succeeded in bringing about an interview between the lovers. They supped and passed the night together. O, wretched human weakness!

Some of his friends who had escaped from Actium brought them news. The fleet had made an obstinate resistance, but all the vessels which were not sunk or burned were now in possession of Octavius. The army still maintained its position, and appeared to be faithful. Antony at once sent messengers and despatched Canidius with orders to recall those troops, and himself embarked for Cyrenaica, where he still had several legions. One of his vessels bore his jewels, his valuables, and all the services of gold and silver which he had used at his entertainments of the kings, his allies. Before departing from Cænopolis, Antony divided all this wealth among a few of his friends, whom he constrained to seek an asylum in Greece, refusing to allow them any longer to follow his fatal fortunes. When parting from them he talked in the kindest manner, seeking to console them and regarding their tears with a sad but kindly smile.

Cleopatra had sailed from Greece some days before Antony. She was in haste to return to Egypt, fearing that the news of the disaster of Actium might provoke a revolution. To mislead the people for a few days, and thus gain time to take her measures, she entered the port of Alexandria with all the parade of a triumph. Her ships, their prows adorned with crowns, resounded with the songs of victory, and the music of flutes and sistra. No sooner was she reinstalled in the palace than she put to death many whose intrigues she feared. These executions, which benefited the royal treasury, for death involved the confiscation of the wealth of the real or pretended guilty, delivered Cleopatra from all fear of an immediate revolution, but she none the less felt a mortal terror about the

future. She still suffered from the horror of Actium;—at times haunted by the idea of suicide, she contemplated a death as pompous as had been her life, and she erected at the extremity of Cape Lochias an immense tomb, in which to consume herself and her treasures. At other times she thought of flight, and by her orders a number of her largest ships were transported with great reënforcements of men, engines, and beasts of burden across the isthmus to the Red Sea. She had a vision of embarking with all her wealth for some unknown country of Asia or Africa, there to renew her existence of lust and pleasure.

Antony soon returned to Alexandria. He was in a state of gloomy discouragement; his army in Acarnania, deserted by Canidius, who had taken flight, had surrendered to Octavius after a week of hesitation; in Cyrenaica he could not even obtain a meeting with his lieutenant Scarpus, who, having taken sides with the Cæsarians, had threatened his life; Herod, his creature, whom he had made king of the Jews, had offered his allegiance to the conqueror of Actium; defection on all sides with his allies as with his legions. Antony reached the point of doubting even Cleopatra; he would scarcely see her. Exasperated at the cruelty of the gods, and still more so at the perfidy of men, he resolved to pass in solitude the wretched days that his enemies might yet permit him to live. The story of Timon, the misanthrope of Athens, which he heard in happier days, recurred to his memory, and, determined to live like Timon, he settled in the barren mole of Poseidon, and busied himself there in erecting a tower which he intended to call the Timonion.

Cleopatra yielded less submissively to fate. Attacked in the crisis of danger by a fainting courage to which Antony was an utter stranger, the immediate danger past she recovered all her powers. With her exalted imagination she could not despair either wholly or even for very long. She learned that the vessels she had had transported

to the Red Sea had been burned by the Arabs, and thus her flight prevented. She at once prepared for determined resistance. Whilst Antony was losing his time playing the misanthrope, the queen raised fresh forces, furnished new vessels, formed new alliances, repaired the fortifications of Pelusium and Alexandria, distributed arms to the people, and to encourage the Alexandrians to the determined defense of their city, she inscribed the name of her son, Cæsarion, in the rolls of the militia. Antony could not but admire the courage and energy of Cleopatra, and, entreated by his friends besides being weary of his solitude, he resumed his residence at the palace. The queen received him as in the happy days of his return from Cilicia or Armenia. They again enjoyed with the friends of the last hour banquets, festivals, orgies—only "The Inimitables" changed their appellation, and called themselves the "Inseparables in Death": οἱ συναποθανουμένοι.

The choice of this funereal name, assumed as much from resignation as bravado, sufficiently reveals the state of mind of the lovers. Antony, it seems, had lost all hope; Cleopatra still hoped, but with intervals of gloomy discouragement. At such times she would descend to the crypts of the palace, near the prisons of the condemned; slaves would drag them, a few at a time, from their cells, to test on them the effects of different poisons. Cleopatra watched with a curiosity, more painful even than cruel, the dying agonies of the victims. The experiments were frequently repeated, for the queen could not discover the poison of her dreams—a poison that slays instantly without pain and without shock. She noticed that violent poisons killed swiftly but with frightful torture, and that less active ones inflicted lingering agonies; then she studied the bites of serpents, and after new experiments she discovered that the venom of an Egyptian viper, called in Greek "Aspis," caused neither convulsion nor any painful sensation, and led by a constantly increasing drowsiness to a gentle death, like a

sleep. As for Antony, like Cato and Brutus, he had his sword.

Octavius already considered himself the master of Egypt—and of the world. He feared but little the broken sword in the hand of Antony, still less the shattered remains of the army of Cleopatra and the wrecks of her navy. But there were two things still beyond his power —all powerful emperor as he was—the immense treasures of Cleopatra, on which he had reckoned to pay his legionaries, and Cleopatra herself, whom he wished to grace his triumph; she might escape the Roman by death and her treasure by fire. Traitors and spies were not lacking in Alexandria; and Octavius knew, through their reports, of the queen's experiments in poisons as well as that she had collected all her treasures in her future tomb. He was compelled to employ cunning with the Egyptian, and, believing himself justified by the words of her ambassador to propose such a step, he declared that if the queen would compass Antony's death she should preserve her sovereignty. Some days after, fearful that this somewhat savage diplomacy might not prevail with Cleopatra, he despatched to her Thyreus, his freedman. In Egypt, Thyreus talked openly before the court and Antony of the resentment of Octavius and of his severe decrees, but having obtained without difficulty a secret audience of Cleopatra he told her that he had been charged by his master to repeat his assurances that she had nothing to fear. To satisfy her of this, he pretended to confide to her that she was beloved by Octavius as of old by Cæsar and Antony. Cleopatra had many interviews with Thyreus and publicly showed him much friendliness.

About the middle of the spring of 30 B. C. news reached Alexandria that a Roman army had crossed the western frontier of Egypt. Antony collected a few troops and marched to meet the enemy. A battle was fought beneath the walls of the strong city of Prætonium, which was already in the hands of the Romans. Antony, with

his handful of men, was repulsed. When he returned to Alexandria Octavius was within two days' march of the city. Whilst his lieutenant, Cornelius Gallus, was penetrating into Egypt by Cyrenaica he himself had entered through Syria and had taken Pelusium, after a real or feigned resistance, in either case a very brief one. After the surrender of Pelusium, the last of the Romans who had remained faithful to Antony cried out treason, declaring that Seleucus had surrendered the city by the orders of Cleopatra herself. Is it true that the queen had given such instructions? It may be doubted; nevertheless, Cleopatra's trouble of mind and her secret hopes give a color to these suspicions. To vindicate herself she gave up to Antony the wife and children of Seleucus, and proposed that he should put them to death. This was but a very doubtful proof of her innocence, but Antony had to be satisfied with it. His anger subsided before her protestations and tears, true or false; now was not the time for recriminations: he must fight. Octavius had pitched his camp on the heights about twenty stadia east of Alexandria. Antony, having led in person a strong reconnoitering body of cavalry in that direction, fell in, not far from the Hippodrome, with the whole body of the Roman cavalry. A furious battle was fought in which, notwithstanding their great superiority of numbers, the Romans were broken and utterly routed. Antony pursued them to their entrenchments; then he returned to the city, strengthened by this victory, of little importance indeed, but brilliant and of good augury. He sprang from his horse before the palace, and, without taking time to lay aside his armor, rushed, still wearing helmet and cuirass, and covered with the blood and sweat of the fight, to embrace Cleopatra. She, deceiving herself as to the importance of this skirmish, felt her love and her hopes at the same time revive. She had again found her Antony, her emperor, her god of war. She threw herself passionately on his neck, wounding her breasts

against his cuirass. At this moment of sincere feeling she must have reproached herself grievously (if she had committed it) with the treason of Pelusium; and the confidences which she had accepted from the envoy of Octavius must have recurred to her as a bitter remorse. Cleopatra desired to review the troops. She made them a speech, and, having had the bravest of them pointed out to her, she gave him a complete armor of solid gold.

Antony, restored to hope, no longer contemplated negotiating, and the same day sent a herald to Octavius to invite him to decide their quarrel by single combat in sight of the two armies. Octavius replied disdainfully that there was more than one other way for Antony to seek death. This speech, that marked so great assurance in his enemy, struck Antony as a fatal omen. Suddenly, dashed from his chimerical hopes, he felt his situation in all its gloomy reality. Resolved, nevertheless, the next day to fight one last battle, he ordered a sumptuous feast. "To-morrow," said he, "it will, perhaps, be too late!" The supper was sad as a funeral banquet; the few friends that were faithful to him maintained a gloomy silence; some even wept. Antony, simulating a confidence which he did not feel, said to them to revive their sinking spirits: "Think not that to-morrow I shall only seek a glorious death; I shall fight for life and victory." At daybreak, while the troops were taking up their position before the Roman camp, and the Egyptian fleet, which was to support the action by attacking that of Octavius, was doubling Cape Lochias, Antony posted himself on an eminence whence he commanded both the plain and the sea. The Egyptian vessels advanced in battle array against the Roman Liburnians, but, when within two arrow-flights, the rowers raised high in air their long oars in salute. The salute was returned by the Romans, and immediately the two fleets, mingling and making now but one, sailed into the port together. Almost at the same moment Antony sees his cavalry,—that cavalry

which the day previous had fought with such intrepidity,—move without orders and pass over to Octavius. In the Roman lines the trumpets sounded the onset; the legions dashed forward with their accustomed war-cry: *"Comminus! Comminus!"* (Hand-to-hand!) The infantry of Antony did not wait the shock—it broke and rushed towards the city, dragging their leader in the midst of the rout. Antony, mad with rage, uttering threats and curses, striking the fugitives indifferently with the blade and the flat of his sword, reëntered Alexandria exclaiming that he was betrayed by Cleopatra, given up by this woman to those with whom he had fought solely for love of her.

Cleopatra had no longer the power either to betray or to save Antony; for she, the "New Goddess," the "Queen of Kings," she, too, was abandoned by her people, as he, the great captain, was deserted by his army. Their cause was lost, who would be faithful to it? During the preceding day and night, Octavius's emissaries had worked upon the legionaries and the Egyptians, promising to the former amnesty, to the latter safety. The valiant soldier on whom Cleopatra the day before had bestowed the golden suit of armor had not even waited for the morning to pass into the Roman camp; that very night he had deserted! At the sight of the fugitives rushing like a torrent into the city, Cleopatra is overcome with terror. She is aware of the suspicions of Antony, she knows his terrible fits of rage. Already she is familiar with the idea of death, but she desires a more easy death, a death the sister of sleep. She shudders and revolts at the thought of Antony's sword; she has a vision of hideous wounds in her person, her breast, perhaps her face. As for attempting to calm his fury, she has neither strength nor courage for that. Desperate, she quits the palace with Iras and Charmion, and withdraws to her tomb, of which she has the door closed; and, to prevent Antony's

attempting to force this refuge, she gives orders to tell him she is no more.

Antony, rushing like a madman about the deserted apartments of the palace, learns the news. His anger dissolves in tears: "What more have you to expect, Antony?" exclaimed he, "Fortune robs you of the only blessing which made life dear." He commands his freedman Eros to slay him; then, unfastening his cuirass, he addresses this last adieu to Cleopatra: "O, Cleopatra! I do not complain that thou art taken from me, since in a moment I shall rejoin thee." Eros, meanwhile, has drawn his sword, but instead of striking Antony, he stabs himself. "Brave Eros," said Antony, seeing him fall dead at his feet, "you set me the example!" and, thrusting the sword into his breast, he sinks fainting upon a couch.

In a few minutes he recovers consciousness. He calls and entreats the slaves, the soldiers, to put an end to him, but none dare to comply, and he is left alone, howling and struggling on the couch. Meanwhile the queen has been informed of the fact. Her grief is bitter and profound—the more bitter that it is mingled with remorse. She must see Antony again; she commands that he be brought, dead or alive. Diomedes, her secretary, hastens to the palace. Antony is at the last gasp, but the joy at hearing that the queen is not dead revives him, and "he rises," says Dion Cassius, "as if he might still live!" Slaves bear him in their arms, and, to hasten their movements, he utters entreaties, invectives, threats, which mingle with the death-rattle. They reach the tomb; the queen leans from a window of the upper story; fearing a surprise, she will not have the portcullis raised, but she throws down some ropes, and commands them to be fastened round Antony. Then, aided by Iras and Charmion, the only ones she has allowed to enter the mausoleum, she begins to drag him up. "It was not easy," says Plutarch, "for

women thus to lift a man of Antony's size. " Never, say those who witnessed it, was a sadder or more pitiful sight. Cleopatra, with arms stiff and brow contracted, dragged painfully at the ropes, whilst Antony, bleeding and dying, raised himself as much as possible, extending towards her his dying hands.

At last he reached her, and they laid him on a bed, where she long held him in a close embrace. Her grief spent itself in tears, in sobs, in despairing kisses. She called him her husband, her master, her emperor; she struck her breast, tore it with her nails then again casting herself upon him, she kissed his wound, wiping off on her face the blood that flowed from it. Antony endeavored to calm and console her, and entreated her to care for her own safety. Burning with fever, he begged for a drink, and swallowed a cup of wine. Death was rapidly approaching. Cleopatra renewed her lamentations. "Do not grieve," said he, "for this last misfortune; rather congratulate me for the blessings I have enjoyed in my life, and the happiness that has been mine in being the most powerful and illustrious of men; congratulate me on this, that, being a Roman, none but a Roman has conquered me." He expired in the arms of Cleopatra, dying, as Shakspeare says, where he had wished to live.

When Octavius heard of Antony's death, he despatched Proculeius and Gallus with orders to seize Cleopatra before she could have time to kill herself. Their calls attracted the attention of the queen; she descended and began to parley with them from behind the portcullis. Deaf to the promises and protestations of the two Romans, Cleopatra declared that she would only surrender if Octavius would agree by oath to maintain her or her son on the throne of Egypt; otherwise Cæsar should have but her dead body. Proculeius, espying the window which had admitted Antony, left his companion to converse alone with the queen, and, finding a ladder, placed it

against the thick wall, and thus entering the tomb, he descended the staircase within and sprang upon Cleopatra. Charmion, turning at the noise, exclaimed: "Unhappy queen, thou art taken alive!" Cleopatra snatched from her girdle a dagger which for some time she had carried in order to kill herself, but Proculeius seized her wrist and only allowed her to free herself after being assured that she had no other weapon and no suspicious phial about her. He then resumed the respectful attitude demanded by the rank and misfortunes of the royal captive. He assured her she had nothing to fear from Octavius. "O Queen," said he, "you are unjust towards Cæsar, whom you would rob of the noblest opportunity of exercising clemency."

Her treasures and her person in the power of the Romans, Cleopatra felt herself without the means of defense. What availed it that Cæsar left her her life, since henceforth she desired only to die? The only favor she asked was to be allowed to pay funeral honors to Antony. Although the same request had already been made by the captains of his army who had served under Antony, Octavius, touched with compassion, granted the prayer of the Egyptian. Cleopatra bathed the body of her lover, adorned and armed it as for a last battle, then she laid it in the tomb which she had built for herself and in which she had vainly sought death. After the obsequies the queen was conducted, by order of Octavius, to the palace of the Lagidæ. There she was treated with every attention, but she was, so to speak, never lost sight of (a prisoner forever watched).

The terrible emotions through which Cleopatra had passed, the intense grief which overwhelmed her, above all the wounds she had inflicted on herself during the death-struggle of Antony, brought on an inflammation of the chest, attended by a burning fever. In this illness she saw the hoped-for death, and to hasten her deliverance she refused for many days all medical treat-

ment and all food. Octavius was informed of this, and he sent her word that she must have forgotten that he held her four children as hostages, and that their lives should answer for hers. This horrid threat overcame the resolution of Cleopatra, who then consented to be properly cared for.

Octavius meanwhile felt he had cause for disquiet. What if the pride of the queen overpowered her motherly instincts? what if the horror of gracing as a captive his approaching triumph should decide her to a self-inflicted death? Doubtless she was well guarded, but what negligence or what treason might he not fear? Besides, though without arms or poison, might she not induce the faithful Charmion to strangle her? "Now Octavius," so says Dion Cassius, "conceived that the death of Cleopatra would have robbed him of his glory." He resolved, therefore, to see her. He knew he possessed sufficient self-control not to become entangled, and believed himself sufficiently skillful to keep the queen uncertain of the fate to which he destined her.

Cleopatra was no longer deceived as to the pretended sentiments of love with which, according to Thyreus, she had inspired Octavius; of this we are assured by Plutarch. Since the emperor's arrival in Alexandria he had not even expressed the intention of seeing her, and the harsh treatment, the rigorous seclusion, and the savage threats which she had to endure from him did not certainly indicate a man in love. Can it be said, however, that the prospect of the unexpected visit of Octavius aroused in Cleopatra, desperate as she was, no glimpse of hope, no fugitive vision of a throne, no last enthusiasm? that from her beautiful eyes shot no ray of half-seen triumph?

The queen, scarcely convalescent, was in bed when Octavius entered. She sprang from the couch, though wearing only a tunic, and knelt before him. At the sight of this woman, worn out by fever, emaciated, dreadfully pale, with drawn features, eyes sunken and red with tears,

bearing on her face and breasts the marks made by her own hands, Octavius found it hard to believe that this was the enchantress that had captivated Cæsar and enslaved Mark Antony; but had Cleopatra been more beautiful than Venus he would not have been her lover. Continence was not among his virtues, but he was too prudent and too clever ever to sacrifice his interests to his passions. He urged the queen to return to her couch, and seated himself near her. Cleopatra began to vindicate herself, referring all that had passed to the force of circumstances and the fear she felt of Antony. She often ceased speaking, interrupted by her choking sobs; then, in the hope of moving Octavius to pity (of seducing him, some say), she drew from her bosom some of Cæsar's letters, kissed them, and exclaimed: "Wouldst thou know how thy father loved me, read these letters . . . Oh! Cæsar! why did I not die before thee! . . . but for me you live again in this man!" and through her tears she essayed to smile at Octavius. Lamentable scene of coquetry, which the wretched woman no longer could or knew how to play.

To her sighs, her moans, the emperor made no reply, even avoiding looking at her and keeping his eyes fixed on the floor. He spoke only to reply, one by one, to all the arguments by which the queen sought to justify herself. Chilled by the impassibility of this man, who, without being at all moved by her misfortunes and her sufferings, was arguing with her like a schoolmaster, Cleopatra felt that she had nothing to hope. Again death appeared as the only liberator. Then she ceased her pleas, dried her tears, and, in order completely to deceive Octavius, she pretended to be resigned to everything, provided her life was spared. She handed him the list of her treasures, and entreated him to permit her to retain certain jewels that she might present them herself to Livia and Octavia in order to secure their protection. "Take

courage, O woman!" said the emperor as he left her. "Be hopeful; no harm shall happen to you!"

Deceived by the pretended resignation of Cleopatra Octavius no longer doubted that he would be able to exhibit to the Roman rabble the haughty queen of Egypt walking in chains before his triumphal car. He had not heard, as he left her, the last word uttered by Cleopatra, that word which, since the taking of Alexandria, she had incessantly repeated: Οὐ θριαμβεύσομαι! "I will not contribute to his triumph."

A few days after this interview, an intimate companion of Octavius, taking pity on such dire reverses, secretly revealed to Cleopatra that the next day she would be embarked for Rome. She asked to be allowed to go with her women to offer libations at the tomb of Antony. She was borne thither in a litter, being still too weak to walk. After pouring the wine and adjusting the crowns she kissed for the last time the sepulchral stone, saying: "Oh, beloved Antony, if thy gods have any power—for mine have betrayed me—do not abandon thy living wife. Do not let thyself be triumphed over, by making her at Rome take part in a disgraceful show. Hide me with thee under this earth of Egypt."

On her return, Cleopatra went to the bath; her women arrayed her in her most magnificent robes, dressed her hair with care, and adjusted her royal crown. Cleopatra had ordered a splendid repast; her toilet ended, she was placed at the table. A countryman entered, carrying a basket. A soldier of the guard desiring to see the contents, the man opened it and showed some figs; and, the guard exclaiming at the beauty of them, he offered them some to taste. His good nature lulled all suspicion; he was allowed to pass. Cleopatra received the basket, sent to Octavius a letter she had written in the morning, and was then left alone with Iras and Charmion. She opened the basket and separated the figs, hoping to be stung unawares, but the reptile was asleep. Cleopatra dis-

covered it beneath the figs. "There it is, then!" cried she, and began to rouse it with a golden pin. The asp bit her on the arm.

Warned by the letter of Cleopatra, Octavius sent in haste to the apartments. His officers found the guards at their post, ignorant of what had occurred. They forced the door and beheld Cleopatra, clad in her royal robes, lying lifeless on her golden couch, and at her feet the corpse of Iras. Charmion was still alive; leaning over Cleopatra, she was arranging with her dying hands the diadem around the head of the queen. A soldier exclaimed in a voice of wrath: "Is this well done, Charmion?" "Yes," said the dying Charmion, "it is well done, and worthy of a queen, the descendant of so many kings!"

Octavius put to death Cæsarion, the son of Cæsar and Cleopatra, but he was merciful to the dead body of the queen. Granting the mournful prayer she had made to him in her last letter, he permitted her to be buried beside Antony. He also granted honorable burial to the faithful slaves, Charmion and Iras, who had accompanied their mistress to the world of shadows.

By her suicide, Cleopatra escaped contributing to the triumph of Octavius, but failing her person he had her effigy, and the statue of Cleopatra with a serpent wound about her arm was borne in the triumphal procession. Does it not seem that the statue of this illustrious queen, who had subdued the greatest of the Romans, who had made Rome tremble, and who preferred death to assisting at her own humiliation, had by her death triumphed over her conqueror, and still defied the senate and the people on the way to the Capitol?

We can easily conceive of Cleopatra as a great queen, the rival of the mythic Semiramis, and the elder sister of the Zenobias, the Isabelles, the Maria-Theresas, and the Catherines; but, in truth, only those queens are great who possess manly virtues, who rule nations and compel

events as a great king might do. Cleopatra was too essentially a woman to be reckoned among these glorious androgynuses. If for twenty years she preserved her throne and maintained the independence of Egypt, it was done by mere womanly means—intrigue, gallantry, grace, and weakness which is also a grace. Her sole method of governing was, in reality, by becoming the mistress of Cæsar and the mistress of Mark Antony. It was the Roman sword that sustained the throne of the Lagidæ. When by the fault of Cleopatra the weapon was broken, the throne tottered and fell. Ambition, her only royal virtue, would have been limited to the exercise of her hereditary government if circumstances had not developed and exalted it.

Knowing herself weak, without genius and without mental force, she reckoned wholly on her lovers for the accomplishment of her designs, and it too often happened to this woman, fatal to others as to herself, to retard the execution of these, dominated, as she ever was, by the imperious desire of some entertainment or some pleasure. This queen had the recklessness of the courtesan; women of gallantry might have considered her their august and tragic ancestress. She only lived for love, pomp, and magnificence; wherefore, when her lover was slain, her beauty marred, her wealth lost, and her crown shattered, she found, to face death, the masculine courage which had failed her in life.

No, Cleopatra was not a great queen. But for her connection with Antony, she would be forgotten with Arsinoë or Berenice. If her renown is immortal, it is because she is the heroine of the most dramatic love-story of antiquity.

Zenobia

By EDWARD GIBBON

AS early as the reign of Claudius, 270 A. D., the city of Autun, alone and unassisted, had ventured to declare against the legions of Gaul. After a siege of seven months they stormed and plundered that unfortunate city, already wasted by famine. Lyons, on the contrary, had resisted with obstinate disaffecion the arms of Aurelian. We read of the punishment of Lyons, but there is not any mention of the rewards of Autun. Such, indeed, is the policy of civil war: severely to remember injuries, and to forget the most important services. Revenge is profitable, gratitude is expensive.

Aurelian had no sooner secured the person and provinces of Tetricus than he turned his arms against Zenobia,[2] the celebrated queen of Palmyra and the East. Modern Europe has produced several illustrious women who have sustained with glory the weight of empire; nor is our own age destitute of such distinguished characters. But if we except the doubtful achievements of Semiramis, Zenobia is perhaps the only female whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex by the climate and manners of Asia. She claimed her descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, equaled in beauty her ancestor Cleopatra, and far surpassed that princess in chastity and valor.

Zenobia was esteemed the most lovely as well as the most heroic of her sex. She was of a dark complexion (for in speaking of a lady these trifles become important).

Her teeth were of a pearly whiteness, and her large black eyes sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered by the most attractive sweetness. Her voice was strong and harmonious. Her manly understanding was strengthened and adorned by study. She was not ignorant of the Latin tongue, but possessed in equal perfection the Greek, the Syriac, and the Egyptian languages. She had drawn up for her own use an epitome of oriental history, and familiarly compared the beauties of Homer and Plato under the tuition of the sublime Longinus.

This accomplished woman gave her hand to Odenathus, who, from a private station, raised himself to the dominion of the East.

She soon became the friend and companion of a hero. In the intervals of war Odenathus passionately delighted in the exercise of hunting; he pursued with ardor the wild beasts of the desert, lions, panthers, and bears; and the ardor of Zenobia in that dangerous amusement was not inferior to his own. She had inured her constitution to fatigue, disdained the use of a covered carriage, generally appeared on horseback in a military habit, and sometimes marched several miles on foot at the head of the troops.

The success of Odenathus was in a great measure ascribed to her incomparable prudence and fortitude. Their splendid victories over the Great King, whom they twice pursued as far as the gates of Ctesiphon, laid the foundations of their united fame and power. The armies which they commanded, and the provinces which they had saved, acknowledged not any other sovereigns than their invincible chiefs. The senate and people of Rome revered a stranger who had avenged their captive emperor, and even the insensible son of Valerian accepted Odenathus for his legitimate colleague.

After a successful expedition against the Gothic plunderers of Asia, the Palmyrenian prince returned to the city of Emesa in Syria. Invincible in war, he was there

cut off by domestic treason, and his favorite amusement of hunting was the cause, or at least the occasion, of his death. His nephew, Mæonius, presumed to dart his javelin before that of his uncle; and, though admonished of his error, repeated the same insolence. As a monarch, and as a sportsman, Odenathus was provoked, took away his horse, a mark of ignominy among the barbarians, and chastized the rash youth by a short confinement. The offence was soon forgot, but the punishment was remembered; and Mæonius, with a few daring associates, assassinated his uncle in the midst of a great entertainment.

Herod, the son of Odenathus, though not of Zenobia, a young man of a soft and effeminate temper, was killed with his father. But Mæonius obtained only the pleasure of revenge by this bloody deed. He had scarcely time to assume the title of Augustus before he was sacrificed by Zenobia to the memory of her husband.

With the assistance of his most faithful friends, she immediately filled the vacant throne, and governed with manly counsels Palmyra, Syria, and the East, above five years. By the death of Odenathus, that authority was at an end which the senate had granted him only as a personal distinction; but his martial widow, disdaining both the senate and Gallienus, obliged one of the Roman generals who was sent against her to retreat into Europe, with the loss of his army and his reputation. Instead of the little passions which so frequently perplex a female reign, the steady administration of Zenobia was guided by the most judicious maxims of policy. If it was expedient to pardon, she could calm her resentment; if it was necessary to punish, she could impose silence on the voice of pity.

Her strict economy was accused of avarice; yet on every proper occasion she appeared magnificent and liberal. The neighboring states of Arabia, Armenia, and Persia, dreaded her enmity, and solicited her alliance. To the

dominions of Odenathus, which extended from the Euphrates to the frontiers of Bithynia, his widow added the inheritance of her ancestors, the populous and fertile kingdom of Egypt. The emperor Claudius acknowledged her merit, and was content that, while *he* pursued the Gothic war, *she* should assert the dignity of the empire in the East.

The conduct, however, of Zenobia was attended with some ambiguity; nor is it unlikely that she conceived the design of erecting an independent and hostile monarchy. She blended with the popular manners of Roman princes the stately pomp of the courts of Asia, and exacted from her subjects the same adoration that was paid to the successors of Cyrus. She bestowed on her three sons a Latin education, and often showed them to the troops adorned with the Imperial purple. For herself she reserved the diadem, with the splendid but doubtful title of Queen of the East.

When Aurelian passed over into Asia, against an adversary whose sex alone could render her an object of contempt, his presence restored obedience to the province of Bithynia, already shaken by the arms and intrigues of Zenobia. Advancing at the head of his legions, he accepted the submission of Ancyra, and was admitted into Tyana, after an obstinate siege, by the help of a perfidious citizen. The generous though fierce temper of Aurelian abandoned the traitor to the rage of the soldiers: a superstitious reverence induced him to treat with lenity the countrymen of Apollonius the philosopher.

Antioch was deserted on his approach, till the emperor, by his salutary edicts, recalled the fugitives, and granted a general pardon to all who, from necessity rather than choice, had been engaged in the service of the Palmyrenian queen. The unexpected mildness of such a conduct reconciled the minds of the Syrians, and, as far as the gates of Emesa, the wishes of the people seconded the terror of his arms.

Zenobia would have ill deserved her reputation had she indolently permitted the emperor of the West to approach within a hundred miles of her capital. The fate of the East was decided in two great battles; so similar in almost every circumstance, that we can scarcely distinguish them from each other, except by observing that the first was fought near Antioch, and the second near Emesa. In both the queen of Palmyra animated the armies by her presence, and devolved the execution of her orders on Zabdas, who had already signalized his military talents by the conquest of Egypt.

The numerous forces of Zenobia consisted for the most part of light archers, and of heavy cavalry clothed in complete steel. The Moorish and Illyrian horse of Aurelian were unable to sustain the ponderous charge of their antagonists. They fled in real or affected disorder, engaged the Palmyrenians in a laborious pursuit, harassed them by a desultory combat, and at length discomfited this impenetrable but unwieldy body of cavalry. The light infantry, in the meantime, when they had exhausted their quivers, remaining without protection against a closer onset, exposed their naked sides to the swords of the legions. Aurelian had chosen these veteran troops who were usually stationed on the Upper Danube, and whose valor had been severely tried in the Alemannic war.

After the defeat of Emesa, Zenobia found it impossible to collect a third army. As far as the frontier of Egypt, the nations subject to her empire had joined the standard of the conqueror, who detached Probus, the bravest of his generals, to possess himself of the Egyptian provinces. Palmyra was the last resource of the widow of Odenathus.

She retired within the walls of her capital, made every preparation for a vigorous resistance, and declared, with the intrepidity of a heroine, that the last moment of her reign and of her life should be the same.

Amid the barren deserts of Arabia a few cultivated

spots rise like islands out of the sandy ocean. Even the name of Tadmor, or Palmyra, by its signification in the Syriac as well as in the Latin language, denoted the multitude of palm-trees which afforded shade and verdure to that temperate region. The air was pure, and the soil, watered by some invaluable springs, was capable of producing fruits as well as corn.

A place possessed of such singular advantages, and situated at a convenient distance between the Gulf of Persia and the Mediterranean, was soon frequented by the caravans which conveyed to the nations of Europe a considerable part of the rich commodities of India. Palmyra insensibly increased into an opulent and independent city, and, connecting the Roman and the Parthian monarchies by the mutual benefits of commerce, was suffered to observe an humble neutrality, till at length, after the victories of Trajan, the little republic sunk into the bosom of Rome, and flourished more than one hundred and fifty years in the subordinate though honorable rank of a colony.

It was during that peaceful period, if we may judge from a few remaining inscriptions, that the wealthy Palmyrenians constructed those temples, palaces, and porticos of Grecian architecture, whose ruins, scattered over an extent of several miles, have deserved the curiosity of our travelers. The elevation of Odenathus and Zenobia appeared to reflect new splendor on their country, and Palmyra, for a while, stood forth the rival of Rome; but the competition was fatal, and ages of prosperity were sacrificed to a moment of glory.

In his march over the sandy desert between Emesa and Palmyra, the emperor Aurelian was perpetually harassed by the Arabs; nor could he always defend his army, and especially his baggage, from those flying troops of active and daring robbers, who watched the moment of surprise, and eluded the slow pursuit of the legions. The siege of Palmyra was an object far more difficult and

important, and the emperor, who, with incessant vigor, pressed the attacks in person, was himself wounded with a dart.

"The Roman people," says Aurelian, in an original letter, "speak with contempt of the war which I am waging against a woman. They are ignorant both of the character and of the power of Zenobia. It is impossible to enumerate her warlike preparations, of stones, of arrows, and of every species of missile weapons. Every part of the walls is provided with two or three *balistæ*, and artificial fires are thrown from her military engines. The fear of punishment has armed her with a desperate courage. Yet still I trust in the protecting deities of Rome, who have hitherto been favorable to all my undertakings." Doubtful, however, of the protection of the gods, and of the event of the siege, Aurelian judged it more prudent to offer terms of an advantageous capitulation; to the queen, a splendid retreat; to the citizens, their ancient privileges. His proposals were obstinately rejected, and the refusal was accompanied with insult.

The firmness of Zenobia was supported by the hope that in a very short time famine would compel the Roman army to repass the desert; and by the reasonable expectation that the kings of the East, and particularly the Persian monarch, would arm in the defence of their most natural ally. But fortune and the perseverance of Aurelian overcame every obstacle. The death of Sapor, which happened about this time, distracted the councils of Persia, and the inconsiderable succors that attempted to relieve Palmyra were easily intercepted either by the arms or the liberality of the emperor. From every part of Syria a regular succession of convoys safely arrived in the camp, which was increased by the return of Probus with his victorious troops from the conquest of Egypt.

It was then that Zenobia resolved to fly. She mounted the fleetest of her dromedaries, and had already reached the banks of the Euphrates, about sixty miles from

Palmyra, when she was overtaken by the pursuit of Aurelian's light horse, seized and brought back a captive to the feet of the emperor. Her capital soon afterwards surrendered, and was treated with unexpected lenity. The arms, horses, and camels, with an immense treasure of gold, silver, silk, and precious stones, were all delivered to the conqueror, who, leaving only a garrison of six hundred archers, returned to Emesa, and employed some time in the distribution of rewards and punishments at the end of so memorable a war, which restored to the obedience of Rome those provinces that had renounced their allegiance since the captivity of Valerian.

When the Syrian queen was brought into the presence of Aurelian, he sternly asked her, How she had presumed to rise in arms against the emperors of Rome? The answer of Zenobia was a prudent mixture of respect and firmness.

"Because I disdained to consider as Roman emperors an Aureolus or a Gallienus. You alone I acknowledge as my conqueror and my sovereign."

But as female fortitude is commonly artificial, so it is seldom steady or consistent. The courage of Zenobia deserted her in the hour of trial; she trembled at the angry clamors of the soldiers, who called aloud for her immediate execution, forgot the generous despair of Cleopatra, which she had proposed as her model, and ignominiously purchased life by the sacrifice of her fame and her friends. It was to their counsels, which governed the weakness of her sex, that she imputed the guilt of her obstinate resistance; it was on their heads that she directed the vengeance of the cruel Aurelian.

The fame of Longinus, who was included among the numerous and perhaps innocent victims of her fear, will survive that of the queen who betrayed, or the tyrant who condemned him. Genius and learning were incapable of moving a fierce unlettered soldier, but they had served to elevate and harmonize the soul of Longinus. Without

a complaint, he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing comfort on his afflicted friends.

Returning from the conquest of the East, Aurelian had already crossed the Straits which divided Europe from Asia, when he was provoked by the intelligence that the Palmyrenians had massacred the governor and garrison which he had left among them, and again erected the standard of revolt. Without a moment's deliberation, he once more turned his face towards Syria. Antioch was alarmed by his rapid approach, and the helpless city of Palmyra felt the irresistible weight of his resentment. We have a letter of Aurelian himself, in which he acknowledges that old men, women, children, and peasants, had been involved in that dreadful execution, which should have been confined to armed rebellion; and although his principal concern seems directed to the reestablishments of a temple of the Sun, he discovers some pity for the remnant of the Palmyrenians, to whom he grants the permission of rebuilding and inhabiting their city. But it is easier to destroy than to restore. The seat of commerce, of arts, and of Zenobia, gradually sunk into an obscure town, a trifling fortress, and at length a miserable village. The present citizens of Palmyra, consisting of thirty or forty families, have erected their mud-cottages within the spacious court of a magnificent temple.

Another and a last labor still awaited the indefatigable Aurelian; to suppress a dangerous though obscure rebel, who, during the revolt of Palmyra, had arisen on the banks of the Nile. Firmus, the friend and ally, as he proudly styled himself, of Odenathus and Zenobia, was no more than a wealthy merchant of Egypt. In the course of his trade to India he had formed very intimate connections with the Saracens and the Blemmyes, whose situation, on either coast of the Red Sea, gave them an easy introduction into the Upper Egypt.

The Egyptians he inflamed with the hope of freedom, and, at the head of their furious multitude, broke into the city of Alexandria, where he assumed the Imperial purple, coined money, published edicts, and raised an army, which, as he vainly boasted, he was capable of maintaining from the sole profits of his paper trade. Such troops were a feeble defence against the approach of Aurelian; and it seems almost unnecessary to relate that Firmus was routed, taken, tortured, and put to death.

Aurelian might now congratulate the senate, the people, and himself, that, in little more than three years, he had restored peace and order to the Roman world.

Since the foundation of Rome no general had more nobly deserved a triumph than Aurelian; nor was a triumph ever celebrated with superior pride and magnificence. The pomp was opened by twenty elephants, four royal tigers, and above two hundred of the most curious animals from every climate of the North, the East, and the South. They were followed by sixteen hundred gladiators, devoted to the cruel amusement of the amphitheater. The wealth of Asia, the arms and ensigns of so many conquered nations, and the magnificent plate and wardrobe of the Syrian queen, were disposed in exact symmetry or artful disorder.

The ambassadors of the most remote parts of the earth, of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, Bactriana, India, and China, all remarkable by their rich or singular dresses, displayed the fame and power of the Roman emperor, who exposed likewise to the public view the presents that he had received, and particularly a great number of crowns of gold, the offerings of grateful cities.

The victories of Aurelian were attested by the long train of captives who reluctantly attended his triumph—Goths, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alemanni, Franks, Gauls, Syrians, and Egyptians. Each people was distinguished by its peculiar inscription, and the title of Amazons was bestowed on ten martial heroines of the Gothic nation

who had been taken in arms. But every eye, disregarding the crowd of captives, was fixed on the emperor Tetricus and the queen of the East. The former, as well as his son, whom he had created Augustus, was dressed in Gallic trousers, a saffron tunic, and a robe of purple. The beauteous figure of Zenobia was confined by fetters of gold; a slave supported the gold chain which encircled her neck, and she almost fainted under the intolerable weight of jewels.

She preceded on foot the magnificent chariot in which she once hoped to enter the gates of Rome. It was followed by two other chariots, still more sumptuous, of Odenathus and of the Persian monarch. The triumphal car of Aurelian (it had formerly been used by a Gothic king) was drawn, on this memorable occasion, either by four stags or by four elephants. The most illustrious of the senate, the people, and the army closed the solemn procession. Joy, wonder, and gratitude swelled the acclamations of the multitude; but the satisfaction of the senate was clouded by the appearance of Tetricus; nor could they suppress a rising murmur that the haughty emperor should thus expose to public ignominy the person of a Roman and a magistrate.

But, however in the treatment of his unfortunate rivals Aurelian might indulge his pride, he behaved towards them with a generous clemency which was seldom exercised by the ancient conquerors. Princes who, without success, had defended their throne or freedom, were frequently strangled in prison as soon as the triumphal pomp ascended the Capitol. These usurpers, whom their defeat had convicted of the crime of treason, were permitted to spend their lives in affluence and honorable repose. The emperor presented Zenobia with an elegant villa at Tibur or Tivoli, about twenty miles from the capital; the Syrian queen insensibly sunk into a Roman matron, her daughters married into noble families, and her race was not yet extinct in the fifth century.

Joan of Arc

By THOMAS DE QUINCEY

WHAT is to be thought of *her?* What is to be thought of the poor shepherd girl from the hills and forests of Lorraine, that—like the Hebrew shepherd boy from the hills and forests of Judea—rose suddenly out of the quiet, out of the safety, out of the religious inspiration, rooted in deep pastoral solitudes, to a station in the van of armies, and to the more perilous station at the right hand of kings.[3] The Hebrew boy inaugurated his patriotic mission by an *act,* by a victorious *act,* such as no man could deny. But so did the girl of Lorraine, if we read her story as it was read by those who saw her nearest. Adverse armies bore witness to the boy as no pretender; but so they did to the gentle girl. Judged by the voices of all who saw them *from a station of good will,* both were found true and loyal to any promises involved in their first acts. Enemies it was that made the difference between their subsequent fortunes.

The boy rose to a splendor, and a noonday prosperity, both personal and public, that rang through the records of his people, and became a byword among his posterity for a thousand years, until the scepter was departing from Judah. The poor, forsaken girl, on the contrary, drank not herself from that cup of rest which she had secured for France. She never sang together with the songs that rose in her native Domrémy as echoes to the

departing steps of invaders. She mingled not in the festal dances of Vaucouleurs which celebrated in rapture the redemption of France. No! for her voice was then silent; no! for her feet were dust. Pure, innocent, noble-hearted girl! whom, from earliest youth, ever I believed in as full of truth and self-sacrifice, this was amongst the strongest pledges for *thy* truth, that never once—no, not for a moment of weakness—didst thou revel in the vision of coronets and honor from man. Coronets for thee! Oh, no! Honors, if they come when all is over, are for those that share thy blood. Daughter of Domrémy, when the gratitude of thy king shall awaken, thou wilt be sleeping the sleep of the dead. Call her, King of France, but she will not hear thee. Cite her by the apparitors to come and receive a robe of honor, but she will be found *en contumace*. When the thunders of universal France, as even yet may happen, shall proclaim the grandeur of the poor shepherd girl that gave up all for her country, thy ear, young shepherd girl, will have been deaf for five centuries. To suffer and to do, that was thy portion in this life; that was thy destiny; and not for a moment was it hidden from thyself.

Life, thou saidst, is short; and the sleep which is in the grave is long; let me use that life, so transitory, for the glory of those heavenly dreams destined to comfort the sleep which is so long! This pure creature—pure from every suspicion of even a visionary self-interest, even as she was pure in senses more obvious—never once did this holy child, as regarded herself, relax from her belief in the darkness that was traveling to meet her. She might not prefigure the very manner of her death; she saw not in vision, perhaps, the aërial altitude of the fiery scaffold, the spectators without end, on every road, pouring into Rouen as to a coronation, the surging smoke, the volleying flames, the hostile faces all around, the pitying eye that lurked but here and there, until nature and imperishable truth broke loose from artificial restraints—

these might not be apparent through the mists of the hurrying future. But the voice that called her to death, *that* she heard for ever.

Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it; but well Joanna knew that not the throne, nor he that sat upon it, was for *her;* but, on the contrary, that she was for *them;* not she by them, but they by her, should rise from the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France, and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them; but well Joanna knew, early at Domrémy she had read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her.* Flower nor bud, bell nor blossom, would ever bloom for *her!* * * *

But stay. What reason is there taking up this subject of Joanna precisely in the spring of 1847? Might it not have been left till the spring of 1947, or, perhaps, left till called for? Yes, but it *is* called for, and clamorously. You are aware, reader, that amongst the many original thinkers whom modern France has produced, one of the reputed leaders is M. Michelet. All these writers are of a revolutionary cast; not in a political sense merely, but in all senses; mad, oftentimes, as March hares; crazy with the laughing gas of recovered liberty; drunk with the wine cup of their mighty Revolution, snorting, whinnying, throwing up their heels, like wild horses in the boundless pampas, and running races of defiance with snipes, or with the winds, or with their own shadows, if they can find nothing else to challenge.

Some time or other, I, that have leisure to read, may introduce *you,* that have not, to two or three dozen of these writers; of whom I can assure you beforehand that they are often profound, and at intervals are even as impassioned as if they were come of our best English blood. But now, confining our attention to M. Michelet, we in England—who know him best by his worst book,

the book against priests, etc.—know him disadvantageously.

That book is a rhapsody of incoherence. But his "History of France" is quite another thing. A man, in whatsoever craft he sails, cannot stretch away out of sight when he is linked to the windings of the shore by towing-ropes of History. Facts, and the consequences of facts, draw the writer back to the falconer's lure from the giddiest heights of speculation. Here, therefore—in his "France"—if not always free from flightiness, if now and then off like a rocket for an airy wheel in the clouds, M. Michelet, with natural politeness, never forgets that he has left a large audience waiting for him on earth, and gazing upward in anxiety for his return; return, therefore, he does.

But History, though clear of certain temptations in one direction, has separate dangers of its own. It is impossible so to write a history of France, or of England—works becoming every hour more indispensable to the inevitably political man of this day—without perilous openings for error. If I, for instance, on the part of England, should happen to turn my labors into that channel, and (on the model of Lord Percy going to Chevy Chase)

> "A vow to God should make
> My pleasure in the Michelet woods
> Three summer days to take,"

probably, from simple delirium, I might hunt M. Michelet into *delirium tremens*. Two strong angels stand by the side of History, whether French history or English, as heraldic supporters: the angel of research on the left hand, that must read millions of dusty parchments, and of pages blotted with lies; the angel of meditation on the right hand, that must cleanse these lying records with fire, even as of old the draperies of *asbestos* were cleansed, and must quicken them into regenerated life. Willingly I acknowledge that no man will ever avoid in-

numerable errors of detail; with so vast a compass of ground to traverse, this is impossible; but such errors (though I have a bushel on hand, at M. Michelet's service) are not the game I chase; it is the bitter and unfair spirit in which M. Michelet writes against England. Even *that,* after all, is but my secondary object; the real one is Joanna the Pucelle d'Orléans herself.

I am not going to write the history of La Pucelle: to do this, or even circumstantially to report the history of her persecution and bitter death, of her struggle with false witnesses and with ensnaring judges, it would be necessary to have before us *all* the documents, and therefore the collection only now forthcoming in Paris. But *my* purpose is narrower. There have been great thinkers, disdaining the careless judgments of contemporaries, who have thrown themselves boldly on the judgment of a far posterity, that should have had time to review, to ponder, to compare. There have been great actors on the stage of tragic humanity that might, with the same depth of confidence, have appealed from the levity of compatriot friends—too heartless for the sublime interest of their story, and too impatient for the labour of sifting its perplexities—to the magnanimity and justice of enemies. To this class belongs the Maid of Arc. The ancient Romans were too faithful to the ideal of grandeur in themselves not to relent, after a generation or two, before the grandeur of Hannibal. Mithridates, a more doubtful person, yet, merely for the magic perseverance of his indomitable malice, won from the same Romans the only real honour that ever he received on earth. And we English have ever shown the same homage to stubborn enmity. To work unflinchingly for the ruin of England; to say through life, by word and by deed, *Delenda est Anglia Victrix!*—that one purpose of malice, faithfully pursued, has quartered some people upon our national funds of homage as by a perpetual annuity. Better than an inheritance of service rendered to England herself has

sometimes proved the most insane hatred to England. Hyder Ali, even his son Tippoo, though so far inferior, and Napoleon, have all benefitted by this disposition among ourselves to exaggerate the merit of diabolic enmity.

Not one of these men was ever capable, in a solitary instance, of praising an enemy (what do you say to *that,* reader?); and yet in *their* behalf, we consent to forget, not their crimes only, but (which is worse) their hideous bigotry and anti-magnanimous egotism—for nationality it was not. Suffren, and some half dozen of other French nautical heroes, because rightly they did us all the mischief they could (which was really great), are names justly reverenced in England. On the same principle, La Pucelle d'Orléans, the victorious enemy of England, has been destined to receive her deepest commemoration from the magnanimous justice of Englishmen.

Joanna, as we in England should call her, but according to her own statement, Jeanne (or, as M. Michelet asserts, Jean) D'Arc was born at Domrémy, a village on the marches of Lorraine and Champagne, and dependent upon the town of Vaucouleurs. I have called her a Lorrainer, not simply because the word is prettier, but because Champagne too odiously reminds us English of what are for *us* imaginary wines—which, undoubtedly, La Pucelle tasted as rarely as we English: we English, because the champagne of London is chiefly grown in Devonshire; La Pucelle, because the champagne of Champagne never, by any chance, flowed into the fountain of Domrémy, from which only she drank. M. Michelet will have her to be a *Champenoise,* and for no better reason than that she "took after her father," who happened to be a *Champanois.*

These disputes, however, turn on refinements too nice. Domrémy stood upon the frontiers, and, like other frontiers, produced a *mixed* race, representing the *cis* and the *trans.* A river (it is true) formed the boundary

line at this point—the river Meuse; and *that,* in old days, might have divided the populations; but in these days it did not; there were bridges, there were ferries, and weddings crossed from the right bank to the left. Here lay two great roads, not so much for travellers that were few, as for armies that were too many by half.

These two roads, one of which was the great high-road between France and Germany, *decussated* at this very point; which is a learned way of saying that they formed a St. Andrew's Cross, or letter X. I hope the compositor will choose a good large X; in which case the point of intersection, the *locus* of conflux and intersection for these four diverging arms, will finish the reader's geographical education, by showing him to a hair's-breadth where it was that Domrémy stood. These roads, so grandly situated, as great trunk arteries between two mighty realms, and haunted for ever by wars or rumors of wars, decussated (for anything I know to the contrary) absolutely under Joanna's bedroom window; one rolling away to the right, past M. D'Arc's old barn, and the other unaccountably preferring to sweep round that odious man's pig-sty to the left.

On whichever side of the border chance had thrown Joanna, the same love to France would have been nurtured. For it is a strange fact, noticed by M. Michelet and others, that the Dukes of Bar and Lorraine had for generations pursued the policy of eternal warfare with France on their own account, yet also of eternal amity and league with France in case anybody else presumed to attack her. Let peace settle upon France, and before long you might rely upon seeing the little vixen Lorraine flying at the throat of France. Let France be assailed by a formidable enemy, and instantly you saw a Duke of Lorraine insisting on having his own throat cut in support of France; which favour accordingly was cheerfully granted to him in three great successive battles: twice by the English,

viz., at Crécy and Agincourt, once by the Sultan at Nicopolis.

This sympathy with France during great eclipses, in those that during ordinary seasons were always teasing her with brawls and guerilla inroads, strengthened the natural piety to France of those that were confessedly the children of her own house. The outposts of France, as one may call the great frontier provinces, were of all localities the most devoted to the Fleurs de Lys. To witness, at any great crisis, the generous devotion to these lilies of the little fiery cousin that in gentler weather was forever tilting at the breast of France, could not but fan the zeal of France's legitimate daughters; while to occupy a post of honour on the frontiers against an old hereditary enemy of France would naturally stimulate this zeal by a sentiment of martial pride, by a sense of danger always threatening, and of hatred always smouldering. That great four-headed road was perpetual memento to patriotic ardour. To say "This way lies the road to Paris, and that other way to Aix-la-Chapelle; this to Prague, that to Vienna," nourished the warfare of the heart by daily ministrations of sense. The eye that watched for the gleams of lance or helmet from the hostile frontier, the ear that listened for the groaning of wheels, made the highroad itself, with its relations to centres so remote, into a manual of patriotic duty.

The situation, therefore, *locally,* of Joanna was full of profound suggestions to a heart that listened for the stealthy steps of change and fear that too surely were in motion. But, if the place were grand, the time, the burden of the time, was far more so. The air overhead in its upper chambers was *hurtling* with the obscure sound; was dark with sullen fermenting of storms that had been gathering for a hundred and thirty years. The battle of Agincourt in Joanna's childhood had reopened the wounds of France. Crécy and Poictiers, those withering overthrows for the chivalry of France, had, before

Agincourt occurred, been tranquillised by more than half a century; but this resurrection of their trumpet wails made the whole series of battles and endless skirmishes take their stations as parts in one drama. The graves that had closed sixty years ago seemed to fly open in sympathy with a sorrow that echoed their own. The monarchy of France laboured in extremity, rocked and reeled like a ship fighting with the darkness of monsoons.

The madness of the king (Charles VI.), falling in at such a crisis, like the case of women laboring in childbirth during the storming of a city, trebled the awfulness of the time. Even the wild story of the incident which had immediately occasioned the explosion of this madness —the case of a man unknown, gloomy, and perhaps maniacal himself, coming out of a forest at noonday, laying his hand upon the bridle of the king's horse, checking him for a moment to say, "Oh, king, thou art betrayed," and then vanishing, no man knew whither, as he had appeared for no man knew what—fell in with the universal prostration of mind that laid France on her knees, as before the slow unweaving of some ancient prophetic doom.

The famines, the extraordinary diseases, the insurrections of the peasantry up and down Europe—these were chords struck from the same mysterious harp; but these were transitory chords. There had been others of deeper and more ominous sound. The termination of the Crusades, the destruction of the Templars, the Papal interdicts, the tragedies caused or suffered by the house of Anjou, and by the Emperor—these were full of a more permanent significance. But, since then, the colossal figure of feudalism was seen standing, as it were on tiptoe, at Crécy, for flight from earth: that was a revolution unparalleled; yet *that* was a trifle by comparison with the more fearful revolutions that were mining below the Church. By her own internal schisms, by the abominable spectacle of a double Pope—so that no man,

except through political bias, could even guess which was Heaven's vicegerent, and which the creature of Hell—the Church was rehearsing, as in still earlier forms she had already rehearsed, those vast rents in her foundations which no man should ever heal.

These were the loftiest peaks of the cloudland in the skies that to the scientific gazer first caught the colours of the *new* morning in advance. But the whole vast range alike of sweeping glooms overhead dwelt upon all meditative minds, even upon those that could not distinguish the tendencies nor decipher the forms. It was therefore, not her own age alone, as affected by its immediate calamities, that lay with such weight upon Joanna's mind, but her own age as one section in a vast mysterious drama, unweaving through a century back, and drawing nearer continually to some dreadful crisis. Cataracts and rapids were heard roaring ahead; and signs were seen far back, by help of old men's memories, which answered secretly to signs now coming forward on the eye, even as locks answer to keys. It was not wonderful that in such a haunted solitude, with such a haunted heart, Joanna could see angelic visions, and hear angelic voices. These voices whispered to her for ever the duty self-imposed of delivering France. Five years she listened to these monitory voices with internal struggles. At length she could resist no longer. Doubt gave way; and she left her home for ever in order to present herself at the dauphin's court.

The education of this poor girl was mean according to the present standard: was ineffably grand, according to a purer philosophic standard: and only not good for our age because for us it would be unattainable. She read nothing, for she could not read; but she had heard others read parts of the Roman martyrology. She wept in sympathy with the sad "Misereres" of the Romish Church; she rose to heaven with the glad triumphant "Te Deums" of Rome; she drew her comfort and her vital

strength from the rites of the same Church. But, next after these spiritual advantages, she owed most to the advantages of her situation. The fountain of Domrémy was on the brink of a boundless forest; and it was haunted to that degree by fairies that the parish priest (*curé*) was obliged to read mass there once a year, in order to keep them in any decent bounds. Fairies are important, even in a statistical view: certain weeds mark poverty in the soil, fairies mark its solitude. As surely as the wolf retires before cities does the fairy sequester herself from the haunts of the licensed victualer. A village is too much for her nervous delicacy; at most, she can tolerate a distant view of a hamlet. We may judge, therefore, by the uneasiness and extra trouble which they gave to the parson, in what strength the fairies mustered at Domrémy, and, by a satisfactory consequence, how thinly sown with men and women must have been that region even in its inhabited spots. But the forests of Domrémy—those were the glories of the land: for in them abode mysterious powers and ancient secrets that towered into tragic strength. "Abbeys there were, and abbey windows"—"like Moorish temples of the Hindoos"—that exercised even princely power both in Lorraine and in the German Diets.

These had their sweet bells that pierced the forests for many a league of matins or vespers, and each its own dreamy legend. Few enough, and scattered enough, were these abbeys, so as in no degree to disturb the deep solitude of the region; yet many enough to spread a network or awning of Christian sanctity over what else might have seemed a heathen wilderness. This sort of religious talisman being secured, a man the most afraid of ghosts (like myself, suppose, or the reader) becomes armed into courage to wander for days in their sylvan recesses. The mountains of the Vosges, on the eastern frontier of France, have never attracted much notice from Europe, except in 1813-14 for a few brief months, when they fell

within Napoleon's line of defence against the Allies. But they are interesting for this among other features, that they do not, like some loftier ranges, repel woods; the forests and the hills are on sociable terms. "Live and let live" is their motto.

For this reason, in part, these tracts in Lorraine were a favorite hunting-ground with the Carlovingian princes. About six hundred years before Joanna's childhood, Charlemagne was known to have hunted there. That, of itself, was a grand incident in the traditions of a forest or a chase. In these vast forests, also, were to be found (if anywhere to be found) those mysterious fawns that tempted solitary hunters into visionary and perilous pursuits. Here was seen (if anywhere seen) that ancient stag who was already nine hundred years old, but possibly a hundred or two more, when met by Charlemagne; and the thing was put beyond doubt by the inscription upon his golden collar.

I believe Charlemagne knighted the stag; and, if ever he is met again by a king, he ought to be made an earl, or, being upon the marches of France, a marquis. Observe, I don't absolutely vouch for all these things: my own opinion varies. On a fine breezy forenoon I am audaciously sceptical; but as twilight sets in my credulity grows steadily, till it becomes equal to anything that could be desired. And I have heard candid sportsmen declare that, outside of these very forests, they laughed loudly at all the dim tales connected with their haunted solitudes, but, on reaching a spot notoriously eighteen miles deep within them, they agreed with Sir Roger de Coverley that a good deal might be said on both sides.

Such traditions, or any others that (like the stag) connect distant generations with each other, are, for that cause, sublime; and the sense of the shadowy, connected with such appearances that reveal themselves or not according to circumstances, leaves a colouring of sanctity

over ancient forests, even in those minds that utterly reject the legend as a fact.

But, apart from all distinct stories of that order, in any solitary frontier between two great empires—as here, for instance, or in the desert between Syria and the Euphrates—there is an inevitable tendency, in minds of any deep sensibility, to people the solitudes with phantom images of powers that were of old so vast. Joanna, therefore, in her quiet occupation of a shepherdess, would be led continually to brood over the political condition of her country by the traditions of the past no less than by the mementoes of the local present.

Michelet, indeed, says that La Pucelle was *not* a shepherdess. I beg his pardon; she *was*. What he rests upon I can guess pretty well: it is the evidence of a woman called Haumette, the most confidential friend of Joanna. Now, she is a good witness, and a good girl, and I like her; for she makes a natural and affectionate report of Joanna's ordinary life. But still, however good she may be as a witness, Joanna is better; and she, when speaking to the dauphin, calls herself in the Latin report *Bergereta*. Even Haumette confesses that Joanna tended sheep in her girlhood. And I believe that, if Miss Haumette were taking coffee along with me this very evening (February 12, 1847)—in which there would be no subject for scandal or for maiden blushes, because I am an intense philosopher, and Miss H. would be hard upon 450 years old—she would admit the following comment upon her evidence to be right. A Frenchman, about forty years ago—M. Simond, in his "Travels"—mentions accidentally the following hideous scene as one steadily observed and watched by himself in chivalrous France not very long before the French Revolution: A peasant was ploughing; and the team that drew his plough was a donkey and a woman. Both were regularly harnessed; both pulled alike. This is bad enough; but the Frenchman adds that, in distributing his lashes, the peasant was obviously de-

sirous of being impartial; or, if either of the yoke fellows had a right to complain, certainly it was not the donkey.

Now, in any country where such degradation of females could be tolerated by the state of manners, a woman of delicacy would shrink from acknowledging either for herself or her friend, that she had ever been addicted to any mode of labor not strictly domestic; because, if once owning herself a prædial servant, she would be sensible that this confession extended by probability in the hearer's thoughts to the having incurred indignities of this horrible kind. Haumette clearly thinks it more dignified for Joanna to have been darning the stockings of her horny-hoofed father, M. D'Arc, than keeping sheep, lest she might then be suspected of having ever done something worse. But, luckily, there was no danger of *that;* Joanna never was in service; and my opinion is that her father should have mended his own stockings, since probably he was the party to make the holes in them, as many a better man than D'Arc does—meaning by *that* not myself, because, though probably a better man than D'Arc, I protest against doing anything of the kind. If I lived even with Friday in Juan Fernandez, either Friday must do all the darning, or else it must go undone. The better men that I meant were the sailors in the British navy, every man of whom mends his own stockings. Who else is to do it? Do you suppose, reader, that the junior lords of the admiralty are under articles to darn for the navy?

It is probable (as M. Michelet suggests) that the title of Virgin or Pucelle had in itself, and apart from the miraculous stories about her, a secret power over the rude soldiery and partisan chiefs of that period; for in such a person they saw a representative manifestation of the Virgin Mary, who, in the course of centuries, had grown steadily upon the popular heart.

As to Joanna's supernatural detection of the dauphin (Charles VII.) among three hundred lords and knights, I am surprised at the credulity which could ever lend

itself to that theatrical juggle. Who admires more than myself the sublime enthusiasm, the rapturous faith in herself, of this pure creature? But I am far from admiring stage artifices which not La Pucelle, but the court, must have arranged; nor can surrender myself to the conjurer's legerdemain, such as may be seen every day for a shilling. Southey's "Joan of Arc" was published in 1796. Twenty years after, talking with Southey, I was surprised to find him still owning a secret bias in favour of Joan, founded on her detection of the dauphin. The story, for the benefit of the reader new to the case, was this: La Pucelle was first made known to the dauphin, and presented to his court, at Chinon; and here came her first trial. By way of testing her supernatural pretensions, she was to find out the royal personage amongst the whole ark of clean and unclean creatures. Failing in this *coup d'essai,* she would not simply disappoint many a beating heart in the glittering crowd that on different motives yearned for her success, but she would ruin herself, and, as the oracle within had told her, would, by ruining herself, ruin France. Our own Sovereign Lady Victoria rehearses annually a trial not so severe in degree, but the same in kind. She "pricks" for sheriffs. Joanna pricked for a king. But observe the difference: our own Lady pricks for two men out of three; Joanna for one man out of three hundred.

Happy Lady of the Islands and the Orient!—she *can* go astray in her choice only by one-half: to the extent of one-half she *must* have the satisfaction of being right. And yet, even with these tight limits to the misery of a boundless discretion, permit me, Liege Lady, with all loyalty, to submit that now and then you prick with your pin the wrong man.

But the poor child from Domrémy, shrinking under the gaze of a dazzling court—not *because* dazzling (for in visions she had seen those that were more so), but because some of them wore a scoffing smile on their

features—how should *she* throw her line into so deep a river to angle for a king, where many a gay creature was sporting that masqueraded as kings in dress! Nay, even more than any true king would have done: for, in Southey's version of the story, the dauphin says, by way of trying the virgin's magnetic sympathy with royalty,

> "On the throne,
> I the while mingling with the menial throng,
> Some courtier shall be seated."

This usurper is even crowned; "the jeweled crown shines on a menial's head." But, really, that is *"un peu fort"*; and the mob of spectators might raise a scruple whether our friend the jackdaw upon the throne, and the dauphin himself, were not grazing the shins of treason. For the dauphin could not lend more than belonged to him. According to the popular notion, he had no crown for himself; consequently none to lend, on any pretence whatever, until the consecrated Maid should take him to Rheims. This was the *popular* notion in France. But certainly it was the dauphin's interest to support the popular notion, as he meant to use the services of Joanna. For if he were king already, what was it that she could do for him beyond Orléans?

That is to say, what more than a merely *military* service could she render him? And, above all, if he were king without a coronation, and without the oil from the sacred ampulla, what advantage was yet open to him by celerity above his competitor, the English boy? Now was to be a race for a coronation: he that should win *that* race carried the superstition of France along with him: he that should first be drawn from the ovens of Rheims was under that superstition baked into a king.

La Pucelle, before she could be allowed to practice as a warrior, was put through her manual and platoon exercise, as a pupil in divinity, at the bar of six eminent men in wigs. According to Southey she "appalled the doctors."

It's not easy to do *that:* but they had some reason to

feel bothered, as that surgeon would assuredly feel bothered who, upon proceeding to dissect a subject, should find the subject retaliating as a dissector upon himself, especially if Joanna ever made the speech to them which occupies v. 354-391, bk. iii. It is a double impossibility; 1st, became a piracy from Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation"—a piracy *a parte ante,* and by three centuries; 2d, it is quite contrary to the evidence on Joanna's trial. Southey's "Joan" of A. D. 1796 (Cottle, Bristol) tells the doctors, among other secrets, that she never in her life attended—1st, Mass; nor 2d, the Sacramental Table; nor 3d, Confession. In the meantime, all this deistical confession of Joanna's, besides being suicidal for the interest of her cause, is opposed to the depositions upon *both* trials. The very best witness called from first to last deposes that Joanna attended these rites of her Church even too often; was taxed with doing so: and by blushing, owned the charge as a fact, though certainly not as a fault. Joanna was a girl of natural piety, that saw God in forests and hills and fountains, but did not the less seek Him in chapels and consecrated oratories.

This peasant girl was self-educated through her own natural meditativeness. If the reader turns to that divine passage in "Paradise Regained" which Milton has put into the mouth of our Saviour when first entering the wilderness, and musing upon the tendency of those great impulses growing within himself—

> "Oh, what a multitude of thoughts at once
> Awakened in me swarm, while I consider
> What from within I feel myself, and hear
> What from without comes often to my ears,
> Ill sorting with my present state compared!
> When I was yet a child, no childish play
> To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
> Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,
> What might be public good; myself I thought
> Born to that end—"

he will have some notion of the vast reveries which brooded over the heart of Joanna in early girlhood, when the wings were budding that should carry her from Orléans to Rheims; when the golden chariot was dimly revealing itself that should carry her from the kingdom of *France Delivered* to the Eternal Kingdom.

It is not requisite for the honour of Joanna to pursue her brief career of *action*. That, though wonderful, forms the earthly part of her story; the spiritual part is the saintly passion of her imprisonment, trial, and execution. But Joanna's history bisects into two opposite hemispheres. It is sufficient, as concerns the first half of Joanna's life, to say that she fulfilled, to the height of her promises, the restoration of the prostrate throne. France had become a province of England, and for the ruin of both, if such a yoke could be maintained. Dreadful pecuniary exhaustion caused the English energy to droop; and that critical opening La Pucelle used with a corresponding felicity of audacity and suddenness (that were in themselves portentous) for introducing the wedge of French native resources, for rekindling the national pride, and for planting the dauphin once more upon his feet. When Joanna appeared, he had been on the point of giving up the struggle with the English, distressed as they were, and of flying to the south of France. She taught him to blush for such abject counsels. She liberated Orléans, that great city, so decisive by its fate for the issue of the war, and then beleagured by the English with an elaborate application of engineering skill unprecedented in Europe.

Entering the city after sunset the 29th of April, she sang mass on Sunday, May 8th, for the entire disappearance of the besieging force. On the 29th of June she fought and gained over the English the decisive battle of Patay; on the 9th of July she took Troyes by a *coup-de-main* from a mixed garrison of English and Burgundians; on the 15th of that month she carried the dauphin into Rheims; on Sunday the 17th she crowned him; and there

she rested from her labour of triumph. All that was to be *done* she had now accomplished; what remained was —to *suffer*.

All this forward movement was her own; excepting one man, the whole council was against her. Her enemies were all that drew power from earth. Her supporters were her own strong enthusiasm, and the headlong contagion by which she carried this sublime frenzy into the hearts of women, of soldiers, and of all who lived by labour. Henceforward she was thwarted; and the worst error that she committed was to lend the sanction of her presence to counsels which she had ceased to approve. But she had now accomplished the capital objects which her own visions had dictated. These involved all the rest. Errors were now less important; and doubtless it had now become more difficult for herself to pronounce authentically what *were* errors. The noble girl had achieved, as by a rapture of motion, the capital end of clearing out a free space around her sovereign, giving him the power to move his arms with effect, and, secondly, the inappreciable end of winning for that sovereign what seemed to all France the heavenly ratification of his rights, by crowning him with the ancient solemnities. She had made it impossible for the English now to step before her. They were caught in an irretrievable blunder, owing partly to discord among the uncles of Henry VI., partly to a want of funds, but partly to the very impossibility which they believed to press with tenfold force upon any French attempt to forestall theirs. They laughed at such a thought; and, while they laughed, she *did* it. Henceforth the single redress for the English of this capital oversight, but which never *could* have redressed it effectually, was to vitiate and taint the coronation of Charles VII. as the work of a witch. That policy was the moving principle in the subsequent prosecution of Joanna. Unless they unhinged the force of the first coronation in the popular mind by associating it with power given from hell,

they felt that the sceptre of the invader was broken.

But she, the child that, at nineteen, had wrought wonders so great for France, was she not elated? Did she not lose, as men so often *have* lost, all sobriety of mind when standing upon the pinnacle of success so giddy? Let her enemies declare. During the progress of her movement, and in the centre of ferocious struggles, she had manifested the temper of her feelings by the pity which she had everywhere expressed for the suffering enemy. She forwarded to the English leaders a touching invitation to unite with the French, as brothers, in a common crusade against infidels—thus opening the road for a soldierly retreat. She interposed to protect the captive or the wounded; she mourned over the excesses of her countrymen; she threw herself off her horse to kneel by the dying English soldier, and to comfort him with such ministrations, physical or spiritual, as his situation allowed. She sheltered the English that invoked her aid in her own quarters. She wept as she beheld, stretched on the field of battle, so many brave enemies that had died without confession. And, as regarded herself, her elation expressed itself thus: on the day when she had finished her work, she wept; for she knew that, when her *triumphal* task was done, her end must be approaching.

Her aspirations pointed only to a place which seemed to her more than usually full of natural piety, as one in which it would give her pleasure to die. And she uttered, between smiles and tears, as a wish that inexpressibly fascinated her heart, and yet was half fantastic, a broken prayer that God would return her to the solitudes from which he had drawn her, and suffer her to become a shepherdess once more. It was a natural prayer, because nature has laid a necessity upon every human heart to seek for rest and to shrink from torment. Yet, again, it was a half-fantastic prayer, because from childhood upward, visions that she had no power to mistrust, and the voices which sounded in her ear for ever, had long

since persuaded her mind that for *her* no such prayer could be granted. Too well she felt that her mission must be worked out to the end, and that the end was now at hand.

All went wrong from this time. She herself had created the *funds* out of which the French restoration should grow; but she was not suffered to witness their development or their prosperous application. More than one military plan was entered upon which she did not approve. But she still continued to expose her person as before. Severe wounds had not taught her caution. And at length, in a sortie from Compiègne (whether through treacherous collusion on the part of her own friends is doubtful to this day) she was made prisoner by the Burgundians, and finally surrendered to the English.

Now came her trial. This trial, moving of course under English influence, was conducted in chief by the Bishop of Beauvais. He was a Frenchman, sold to English interests, and hoping, by favour of the English leaders, to reach the highest preferment. "Bishop that art, Archbishop that shalt be, Cardinal that mayest be," were the words that sounded continually in his ear; and doubtless a whisper of visions still higher, of a triple crown, and feet upon the necks of kings, sometimes stole into his heart. M. Michelet is anxious to keep us in mind that this bishop was but an agent of the English. True. But it does not better the case for his countryman that, being an accomplice in the crime, making himself the leader in the persecution against the helpless girl, he was willing to be all this in the spirit, and with the conscious vileness of a cat's-paw. Never from the foundations of the earth was there such a trial as this, if it were laid open in all its beauty of defence and all its hellishness of attack.

Oh, child of France! shepherdess, peasant girl! trodden under foot by all around thee, how I honor thy flashing intellect, quick as God's lightning, and true as God's lightning to its mark, that ran before France and laggard

Europe by many a century, confounding the malice of the ensnarer, and making dumb the oracles of falsehood! "Would you examine me as a witness against myself?" was the question by which many times she defied their arts. Continually she showed that their interrogations were irrelevant to any business before the court, or that entered into the ridiculous charges against her. General questions were proposed to her on points or casuistical divinity; two-edged questions, which not one of themselves could have answered, without, on the one side, landing himself in heresy (as then interpreted), or, on the other, in some presumptuous expression of self-esteem.

Next came a wretched Dominican, that pressed her with an objection, which, if applied to the Bible, would tax every one of its miracles with unsoundness. The monk had the excuse of never having read the Bible. Her answer to this, if there were room to place the whole in a clear light, was as shattering as it was rapid. Another thought to entrap her by asking what language the angelic visitors of her solitude had talked—as though heavenly counsels could want polyglot interpreters for every word, or that God needed language at all in whispering thoughts to a human heart. Then came a worse devil, who asked her whether the Archangel Michael had appeared naked. Not comprehending the vile insinuation, Joanna, whose poverty suggested to her simplicity that it might be the *costliness* of suitable robes which caused the demur, asked them if they fancied God, who clothed the flowers of the valleys, unable to find raiment for his servants. The answer of Joanna moves a smile of tenderness, but the disappointment of her judges makes one laugh exultingly. Others succeeded by troops, who upbraided her with leaving her father; as if that greater Father, whom she believed herself to have been serving, did not retain the power of dispensing with his own rules, or had not said that for a less cause than martyrdom

man and woman should leave both father and mother.

On Easter Sunday, when the trial had been long proceeding, the poor girl fell so ill as to cause a belief that she had been poisoned. It was not poison. Nobody had any interest in hastening a death so certain. M. Michelet, whose sympathies with all feelings are so quick that one would gladly see them always as justly directed, reads the case most truly. Joanna had a twofold malady. She was visited by a paroxysm of the complaint called *homesickness.* The cruel nature of her imprisonment, and its length, could not but point her solitary thoughts, in darkness and in chains (for chained she was), to Domrémy. And the season, which was the most heavenly period of the spring, added stings to this yearning. That was one of her maladies—*nostalgia,* as medicine calls it; the other was weariness and exhaustion from daily combats with malice. She saw that everybody hated her and thirsted for her blood; nay, many kind-hearted creatures that would have pitied her profoundly, as regarded all political charges, had their natural feelings warped by the belief that she had dealings with fiendish powers. She knew she was to die; that was *not* the misery! the misery was that this consummation could not be reached without so much intermediate strife, as if she were contending for some chance (where chance was none) of happiness, or were dreaming for a moment of escaping the inevitable.

Why, then, *did* she contend? Knowing that she would reap nothing from answering her persecutors, why did she not retire by silence from the superfluous contest? It was because her quick and eager loyalty to truth would not suffer her to see it darkened by frauds which *she* could expose, but others, even of candid listeners, perhaps could not; it was through that imperishable grandeur of soul which taught her to submit meekly and without a struggle to her punishment, but taught her *not* to submit—no, not for a moment—to calumny as to facts, or to misconstruction as to motives. Besides, there were secre-

taries all around the court taking down her words. That was meant for no good to *her*. But the end does not always correspond to the meaning. And Joanna might say to herself, "These words that will be used against me to-morrow and the next day, perhaps, in some nobler generation, may rise again for my justification." Yes, Joanna, they *are* rising even now in Paris, and for more than justification.

Woman, sister, there are some things which you do not execute as well as your brother, man; no, nor ever will. Pardon me if I doubt whether you will ever produce a great poet from your choirs, or a Mozart, or a Phidias, or a Michael Angelo, or a great philosopher, or a great scholar. By which last is meant—not one who depends simply on an infinite memory, but also on an infinite and electrical power of combination; bringing together from the four winds, like the angel of the resurrection, what else were dust from dead men's bones, into the unity of breathing life. If you *can* create yourselves into any of these great creators, why have you not?

Yet, sister woman, though I cannot consent to find a Mozart or a Michael Angelo in your sex, cheerfully, and with the love that burns in depths of admiration, I acknowledge that you can do one thing as well as the best of us men—a greater thing than even Milton is known to have done, or Michael Angelo; you can die grandly, and as goddesses would die, were goddesses mortal. If any distant worlds (which *may* be the case) are so far ahead of us Tellurians in optical resources as to see distinctly through their telescopes all that we do on earth, what is the grandest sight to which we ever treat them? St. Peter's at Rome, do you fancy, on Easter Sunday, or Luxor, or perhaps the Himalayas? Oh, no! my friend; suggest something better; these are baubles to *them;* they see in other worlds, in their own, far better toys of the same kind. These, take my word for it, are nothing. Do

you give it up? The finest thing, then, we have to show them is a scaffold on the morning of execution.

I assure you there is a strong muster in those far telescopic worlds, on any such morning, of those who happen to find themselves occupying the right hemisphere for a peep at *us*. How, then, if it be announced in some such telescopic world by those who make a livelihood of catching glimpses at our newspapers, whose language they have long since deciphered, that the poor victim in the morning's sacrifice is a woman?

How, if it be published in that distant world that the sufferer wears upon her head, in the eyes of many, the garlands of martyrdom?

How, if it should be some Marie Antoinette, the widowed queen, coming forward on the scaffold, and presenting to the morning air her head, turned gray by sorrow—daughter of Cæsars kneeling down humbly to kiss the guillotine, as one that worships death?

How, if it were the noble Charlotte Corday, that in the bloom of youth, that with the loveliest of persons, that with homage waiting upon her smiles wherever she turned her face to scatter them—homage that followed those smiles as surely as the carols of the birds, after showers in spring, follow the reappearing sun and the racing of sunbeams over the hills—yet thought all these things cheaper than the dust upon her sandals, in comparison of deliverance from hell for her dear suffering France!

Ah! these were spectacles indeed for those sympathizing people in distant worlds, and some, perhaps, would suffer a sort of martyrdom themselves, because they could not testify the wrath, could not bear witness to the strength of love and to the fury hatred that burned within them at such scenes, could not gather into golden urns some of that glorious dust which rested in the catacombs of earth.

On the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday in 1431, being

then about nineteen years of age, the Maid of Arc underwent her martyrdom. She was conducted before mid-day, guarded by eight hundred spearmen, to a platform of prodigious height, constructed of wooden billets supported by occasional walls of lath and plaster, and traversed by hollow spaces in every direction for the creation of air currents. The pile "struck terror," says M. Michelet, "by its height"; and, as usual, the English purpose in this is viewed as one of pure malignity. But there are two ways of explaining all that. It is probable that the purpose was merciful. On the circumstance of the execution I shall not linger. Yet, to mark the almost fatal felicity of M. Michelet in finding out whatever may injure the English name, at a moment when every reader will be interested in Joanna's personal appearance, it is really edifying to notice the ingenuity by which he draws into light from a dark corner a very unjust account of it, and neglects, though lying upon the highroad, a very pleasing one. Both are from English pens. Grafton, a chronicler, but little read, being a stiff-necked John Bull, thought fit to say that no wonder Joanna should be virgin, since her "foule face" was a satisfactory solution of that particular merit. Holinshead, on the other hand, a chronicler somewhat later, every way more important, and at one time universally read, has given a very pleasing testimony to the interesting character of Joanna's person and engaging manners. Neither of these men lived till the following century, so that personally this evidence is none at all. Grafton suddenly and carelessly believed as he wished to believe; Holinshead took pains to inquire, and reports undoubtedly the general impression of France.

The circumstantial incidents of the excution, unless with more space than I can now command, I should be unwilling to relate. I should fear to injure, by imperfect report, a martyrdom which to myself appears so unspeakably grand. Yet, for a purpose, pointing not at Joanna, but at M. Michelet—viz., to convince him that an

Englishman is capable of thinking more highly of La Pucelle than even her admiring countrymen—I shall, in parting, allude to one or two traits in Joanna's demeanor on the scaffold, and to one or two in that of the bystanders, which authorize me in questioning an opinion of his upon this martyr's firmness. The reader ought to be reminded that Joanna D'Arc was subject to an unusually unfair trial of opinion. Any of the elder Christian martyrs had not much to fear of *personal* rancor.

The martyr was chiefly regarded as the enemy of Cæsar; at times, also, where any knowledge of the Christian faith and morals existed, with the enmity that arises spontaneously in the worldly against the spiritual. But the martyr, though disloyal, was not supposed to be therefore anti-national; and still less was *individually* hateful. What was hated (if anything) belonged to his class, not to himself separately. Now, Joanna, if hated at all, was hated personally, and in Rouen on national grounds. Hence there would be a certainty of calumny arising against *her* such as would not affect martyrs in general. That being the case, it would follow of necessity that some people would impute to her a willingness to recant. No innocence could escape *that*. Now, had she really testified this willingness on the scaffold, it would have argued nothing at all but the weakness of a genial nature shrinking from the instant approach of torment. And those will often pity that weakness most who, in their own persons, would yield to it least. Meantime, there never was a calumny uttered that drew less support from the recorded circumstances. It rests upon no *positive* testimony, and it has a weight of contradicting testimony to stem.

And yet, strange to say, M. Michelet, who at times seems to admire the Maid of Arc as much as I do, is the one sole writer among her *friends* who lends some countenance to this odious slander. His words are that, if she did not utter this word *recant* with her lips, she uttered it

in her heart. "Whether she *said* the word is uncertain; but I affirm that she *thought* it."

Now, I affirm that she did not; not in any sense of the word *"thought"* applicable to the case. Here is France calumniating La Pucelle; here is England defending her. M. Michelet can only mean that, on *a priori* principles, every woman must be presumed liable to such a weakness; that Joanna was a woman; *ergo,* that she was liable to such a weakness. That is, he only supposes her to have uttered the word by an argument which presumes it impossible for anybody to have done otherwise. I, on the contrary, throw the onus of the argument not on presumable tendencies of nature, but on the known fact of that morning's execution, as recorded by multitudes.

What else, I demand, than mere weight of metal, absolute nobility of deportment, broke the vast line of battle then against her? What else but her meek, saintly demeanor won, from the enemies that till now had believed her a witch, tears of rapturous admiration? "Ten thousand men," says M. Michelet, "ten thousand men wept"; and of these ten thousand the majority were political enemies knitted together by cords of superstition. What else was it but her constancy, united with her angelic gentleness, that drove the fanatic English soldier—who had sworn to throw a fagot on her scaffold as *his* tribute of abhorrence, that *did* so, that fulfilled his vow—suddenly to turn away a penitent for life, saying everywhere that he had seen a dove rising upon wings to heaven from the ashes where she had stood? What else drove the executioner to kneel at every shrine for pardon to *his* share in the tragedy? And, if all this were insufficient, then I cite the closing act of her life as valid on her behalf, were all other testimonies against her. The executioner had been directed to apply his torch from below. He did so. The fiery smoke rose upward in billowing volumes. A Dominican monk was then standing almost at her side.

Wrapped up in his sublime office, he saw not the danger, but still persisted in his prayers. Even then, when the last enemy was racing up the fiery stairs to seize her, even at that moment did this noblest of girls think only for *him,* the one friend that would not forsake her, and not for herself; bidding him with her last breath to care for his own preservation, but to leave *her* to God. That girl, whose latest breath ascended in this sublime expression of self-oblivion, did not utter the word *recant* either with her lips or in her heart. No; she did not, though one should rise from the dead to swear it.

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Bishop of Beauvais! The victim died in fire upon a scaffold—thou upon a down bed. But, for the departing minutes of life, both are oftentimes alike. At the farewell crisis, when the gates of death are opening, and flesh is resting from its struggles, oftentimes the tortured and the torturer have the same truce from carnal torment; both sink together into sleep; together both sometimes kindle into dreams. When the mortal mists were gathering fast upon you two, bishop and shepherd girl—when the pavilions of life were closing up their shadowy curtains about you—let us try, through the gigantic glooms, to decipher the flying features of your separate visions.

The shepherd girl that had delivered France—she, from her dungeon, she, from her baiting at the stake, she, from her duel with fire, as she entered her last dream—saw Domrémy, saw the fountain of Domrémy, saw the pomp of forests in which her childhood had wandered. That Easter festival which man had denied to her languishing heart—that resurrection of springtime, which the darkness of dungeons had intercepted from *her,* hungering after the glorious liberty of forests—were by God given back into her hands as jewels that had been stolen from her by robbers. With those, perhaps (for the minutes of dreams can stretch into ages), was given back to

her by God the bliss of childhood. By special privilege for *her* might be created, in this farewell dream, a second childhood innocent as the first; but not, like *that,* sad with the gloom of a fearful mission in the rear. This mission had now been fulfilled. The storm was weathered; the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. The hatred to herself in all eyes had been faced steadily, had been suffered, had been survived. And in her last fight upon the scaffold she had triumphed gloriously; victoriously she had tasted the stings of death. For all, except this comfort from her farewell dream, she had died—died amid the tears of ten thousand enemies—died amid the drums and trumpets of armies—died amid peals redoubling upon peals, volleys upon volleys, from the saluting clarions of martyrs.

Bishop of Beauvais! because the guilt-burdened man is in dreams haunted and waylaid by the most frightful of his crimes, and because upon the fluctuating mirror—rising (like the mocking mirrors of *mirage* in Arabian deserts) from the fens of death—most of all are reflected the sweet countenances which the man has laid in ruins; therefore I know, bishop, that you also, entering your final dream, saw Domrémy. That fountain, of which the witnesses spoke so much, showed itself to your eyes in pure morning dews; but neither dews, nor the holy dawn, could cleanse away the bright spots of innocent blood upon its surface. By the fountain, bishop, you saw a woman seated, that hid her face. But, as *you* draw near, the woman raises her wasted features. Would Domrémy know them again for the features of her child? Ah, but *you* know them, bishop, well! Oh, mercy! what a groan was *that* which the servants, waiting outside the bishop's dream at his bedside, heard from his laboring heart, as at this moment he turned away from the fountain and the woman, seeking rest in the forests afar off.

Yet not *so* to escape the woman, whom once again he must behold before he dies. In the forests to which he prays for pity, will he find a respite? What a tumult, what a gathering of feet is there! In glades where only wild deer should run armies and nations are assembling; towering in the fluctuating crowd are phantoms that belong to departed hours. There is the great English Prince, Regent of France. There is my Lord of Winchester, the princely cardinal, that died and made no sign. There is the bishop of Beauvais, clinging to the shelter of thickets. What building is that which hands so rapid are raising? Is it a martyr's scaffold? Will they burn the child of Domrémy a second time? No; it is a tribunal that rises to the clouds; and two nations stand around it, waiting for a trial. Shall my Lord of Beauvais sit again upon the judgment-seat, and again number the hours for the innocent? Ah, no! he is the prisoner at the bar. Already all is waiting: the mighty audience is gathered, the Court is hurrying to their seats, the witnesses are arrayed, the trumpets are sounding, the judge is taking his place. Oh, but this is sudden! My lord, have you no counsel? "Counsel I have none; in heaven above, or on earth beneath, counsellor there is none now that would take a brief from *me:* all are silent." Is it, indeed, come to this? Alas! the time is short, the tumult is wondrous, the crowd stretches away into infinity; but yet I will search in it for somebody to take your brief; I know of somebody that will be your counsel. Who is this that cometh from Domrémy? Who is she in bloody coronation robes from Rheims? Who is she that cometh with blackened flesh from walking the furnaces of Rouen? This is she, the shepherd girl, counsellor that had none for herself, whom I choose, bishop, for yours. She it is, I engage, that shall take my lord's brief. She it is, bishop, that would plead for you; yes, bishop, *she*—when heaven and earth are silent.

Vittoria Colonna

By THOMAS ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE

VITTORIA COLONNA,[4] was the daughter of Fabrizio, brother of that protonotary Colonna whose miserable death at the hands of the hereditary enemies of his family, the Orsini, allied with the Riarii, then in power for the nonce during the popedom of Sixtus IV., has been related in the life of Caterina Sforza. Her mother was Agnes of Montefeltre; and all the biographers and historians tell us that she was the youngest of six children born to her parents. The statement is a curious instance of the extreme and very easily detected inaccuracy which may often be found handed on unchallenged from one generation to another of Italian writers of biography and history.

It can scarcely be necessary to tell even the most exclusively English reader how ancient, how noble, how magnificent, was the princely house of Colonna. They were so noble that their lawless violence, freebooting habits, private wars, and clan enmities, rendered them a scourge to their country; and for several centuries contributed largely to the mass of anarchy and barbarism, that rendered Rome one of the most insecure places of abode in Europe, and still taints the instincts of its populace with characteristics which make it one of the least civilizable races of Italy. The Orsini being equally noble, and equally powerful and lawless, the high-bred mastiffs of either princely house for more than two hundred years, with short respites of ill-kept truce, never lost an oppor-

tunity of flying at each other's throats, to the infinite annoyance and injury of their less noble and more peaceably-disposed fellow-citizens.

Though the possessions of the Colonna clan had before been wide-spread and extensive, they received the considerable additions, during the papacy of the Colonna pope, Martin V, great uncle of Fabrizio, Vittoria's father, who occupied the papal chair from 1417 to 1431. At the period of our heroine's birth, the family property was immense.

Very many were the fiefs held by the Colonna in the immediate neighborhood of the city, and especially among the hills to the east and south-east of the Campagna. There several of the strongest positions, and most delightfully situated towns and castles, belonged to them. Among the more important of these was Marino, admirably placed among the hills that surround the lovely lake of Albano.

Few excursionists among the storied sites in the environs of Rome make Marino the object of a pilgrimage. The town had a bad name in these days. The Colonna vassals who inhabit it, and still pay to the feudal lord a tribute, recently ruled by the Roman tribunals to be due (a suit having been instituted by the inhabitants with a view of shaking off this old mark of vassalage), are said to be eminent among the inhabitants of the Campagna for violence, lawlessness, and dishonesty.

It was at Marino that Vittoria was born, in a rare period of most unusually prolonged peace. Her parents had selected, we are told, from among their numerous castles, that beautiful spot, for the enjoyment of the short interval of tranquillity which smiled on their first years of marriage. A very successful raid, in which Fabrizio and his cousin Prospero Colonna had harried the fiefs of the Orsini, and driven off a great quantity of cattle, had been followed by a peace made under the auspices of Innocent VIII. on the 11th of August,

1486, which seems absolutely to have lasted till 1494, when we find the two cousins at open war with the new Pope Alexander VI.

Far more important contests, however, were at hand, the progress of which led to the youthful daughter of the house being treated, while yet in her fifth year, as part of the family capital, to be made use of for the advancement of the family interests, and thus fixed the destiny of her life.

When Charles VIII. passed through Rome on his march against Naples, at the end of 1494, the Colonna cousins sided with him; placed themselves under his banners, and contributed materially to aid his successful invasion. But on his flight from Naples, in 1495, they suddenly changed sides, and took service under Ferdinand II. The fact of this change of party, which to our ideas seems to require so much explanation, probably appeared to their contemporaries a perfectly simple matter; for it is mentioned as such without any word of the motives or causes of it. Perhaps they merely sought to sever themselves from a losing game. Possibly, as we find them rewarded for their adherence to the King of Naples by the grant of a great number of fiefs previously possessed by the Orsini, who were on the other side, they were induced to changed their allegiance by the hope of obtaining those possessions, and by the Colonna instinct of enmity to the Orsini race. Ferdinand, however, was naturally anxious to have some better hold over his new friends than that furnished by their own oaths of fealty; and with this view caused the infant Vittoria to be betrothed to his subject, Ferdinand d'Avalos, son of Alphonso, Marquis of Pescara, a child of about the same age as the little bride.

Little, as it must appear to our modern notions, as the child's future happiness could have been cared for in the stipulation of a contract entered into from such motives, it so turned out that nothing could have more

effectually secured it. To Vittoria's parents, if any doubts on such a point had presented themselves to their minds, it would doubtless have appeared abundantly sufficient to know that the rank and position of the affianced bridegroom were such as to secure their daughter one of the highest places among the nobility of the court of Naples, and the enjoyment of vast and widespread possessions. But to Vittoria herself all this would not have been enough. And the earliest and most important advantage arising to her from her betrothal was the bringing her under the influence of that training, which made her such a woman as could not find her happiness in such matters.

We are told that henceforth—that is, after the betrothal—she was educated, together with her future husband, in the island of Ischia, under the care of the widowed Duchessa di Francavilla, the young Pescara's elder sister. Costanza d'Avalos, Duchessa di Francavilla, appears to have been one of the most remarkable women of her time. When her father Alphonso, Marchessa di Pescara, lost his life by the treason of a black slave, on the 7th of September, 1495, leaving Ferdinand his son the heir to his titles and estates, an infant five years old, then quite recently betrothed to Vittoria, the Duchessa di Francavilla assumed the entire direction and governance of the family. So high was her reputation for prudence, energy, and trustworthiness in every way, that on the death of her husband, King Ferdinand made her governor and "châtelaine" of Ischia, one of the most important keys of the kingdom. Nor were her gifts and qualities only such as were calculated to fit her for holding such a post. Her contemporary, Caterina Sforza, would have made a "châtelaine" as vigilant, as prudent, as brave, and energetic as Costanza. But the Neapolitan lady was something more than this.

Intellectual culture had been held in honor at Naples

during the entire period of the Arragonese dynasty. All the princes of that house, with the exception, perhaps, of Alphonso, the father of Ferdinand II., had been lovers of literature and patrons of learning. Of this Ferdinand II., under whose auspices the young Pescara was betrothed to Vittoria, and who chose the Duchessa di Francavilla as his governor in Ischia, it is recorded that when returning in triumph to his kingdom after the retreat of the French he rode into Naples with the Marchese de Pescara on his right hand, and the poet Cariteo on his left. Poets and their art especially were welcomed in that literary court; and the tastes and habits of the Neapolitan nobles were at that period probably more tempered by those studies, which humanize the mind and manners, than the chivalry of any other part of Italy.

Among this cultured society Costanza d'Avalos was eminent for culture, and admirably qualified in every respect to make an invaluable protectress and friend to her youthful sister-in-law. The transplantation, indeed, of the infant Colonna from her native feudal castle to the Duchessa di Francavilla's home in Ischia was a change so complete and so favorable that it may be fairly supposed that without it the young Roman girl would not have grown into the woman she did.

For in truth, Marino, little calculated, as it will be supposed such a stronghold of the ever turbulent Colonna was to afford the means and opportunity for intellectual culture, became, shortly after the period of Vittoria's betrothal to the heir of the D'Avalos, wholly unfit to offer her even a safe home. Whether it continued to be the residence of Agnus, while her husband Fabrizio was fighting in Naples and her daughter was under the care of the Duchessa di Francavilla in Ischia, has not been recorded. But we find that when Fabrizio had deserted the French King, and arranged himself on the side of Ferdinand of Naples, he was fully aware of the dangers to which his

castle would be exposed at the hands of the French troops as they passed through Rome on their way to or from Naples. To provide against this, he had essayed to place them in safety by consigning them as a deposit in trust to the Sacred College. But Pope Borgia, deeming, probably that he might find the means of possessing himself some of the estates in question, refused to permit this, ordering that they should, instead, be delivered into his keeping. On this being refused, he ordered Marino to be leveled to the ground. And Guicciardini writes, that the Colonna, having placed garrisons in Amelici and Roca di Papa, two other of the family strongholds, abandoned all the rest of the possessions in the Roman States. It seems probable, therefore, that Agnus accompanied her husband and daughter to Naples. Subsequently the same historian relates that Marino was burned by order of Clement VII in 1526, so that it must be supposed that the order of Alexander for its utter destruction in 1501 was not wholly carried into execution.

The kingdom and city of Naples was during this time by no means without a large share of the turmoil and warfare that was vexing every part of Italy. Yet whosoever had his lot cast during these years elsewhere than in Rome was in some degree fortunate. And considering the general state of the peninsula and her own social position and connections, Vittoria may be deemed very particularly so, to have found a safe retreat and an admirably governed home on the rock of Ischia. In after life we find her clinging to it with tenacious affection, and dedicating more than one sonnet to the remembrances which made it sacred to her. And though in her widowhood her memory naturally most frequently recurs to the happy years of her married life there, the remote little island had at least a strong claim upon her affection as the home of her childhood. For to the years there passed under the care of her noble sister-in-law, Costanza d'Avalos, she owed the possibility that the daughter of a Roman

chieftain who passed his life in harrying others and being harried himself, and in acquiring as a "Condottiere" captain the reputation of one of the first soldiers of his day, could become either morally or intellectually the woman Vittoria Colonna became.

From the time of her bethrothal in 1495 to that of her marriage in 1509, history altogether loses sight of Vittoria. We must suppose her to be quietly and happily growing from infancy to adolescence under the roof of Costanza d'Avalos, the chatelaine of Ischia, sharing the studies of her future husband and present playmate, and increasing, as in stature, so in every grace both of mind and body. The young Pescara seems also to have profited by the golden opportunities offered him of becoming something better than a mere *preux chevalier*. A taste for literature and especially for poesy, was then a ruling fashion among the nobles of the court of Naples. And the young Ferdinand, of whose personal beauty and knightly accomplishments we hear so much, manifested also excellent qualities of disposition and intelligence.

Vittoria, if we are to believe the concurrent testimony of nearly all the poets and literateurs of her day, must have been beautiful and fascinating in no ordinary degree. The most authentic portrait of her is one preserved in the Colonna gallery at Rome, supposed to be a copy by Girolamo Muziano, from an original picture by some artist of higher note. It is a beautiful face of the true Roman type, perfectly regular, of exceeding purity of outline, and perhaps a little heavy about the lower part of the face. But the calm, large, thoughtful eye, and the superbly developed forehead, secure it from any approach towards an expression of sensualism. The fulness of the lip is only sufficient to indicate that sensitiveness to and appreciation of beauty, which constitutes an essential element in the poetical temperament. The hair is of that bright golden tint that Titian loved so well to paint; and its beauty has been especially recorded

by more than one of her contemporaries. The poet Galeazzo da Tarsia, who professed himself, after the fashion of the time, her most fervent admirer and devoted slave, recurs in many passages of his poems to those fascinating "chiome d'oro;" as here he sings, with more enthusiasm than taste, of the

> "Trecce d'or, che in gli alti giri,
> Non è che' unqua pareggi o sole o stella;"

or again where he tells us that the sun and his lady-love appeared

> "Ambi con chiome d'or lucide e terse."

But the testimony of graver writers, lay and clerical, is not wanting to induce us to believe that Vittoria, in her prime, really might be considered "the most beautiful woman of her day," with more truth than that hackneyed phrase often conveys. So when at length the Colonna seniors, and the Duchessa di Francavilla thought that the fitting moment had arrived for carrying into effect the long-standing engagement—which was not till 1509, when the *promessi sposi* were both in their nineteenth year—the young couple were thoroughly in love with each other, and went to the altar with every prospect of wedded happiness.

The marriage festival was held in Ischia on the 27th of December, 1509, with all the pomp then usual on such occasions; and that, as will be seen in a subsequent page, from the account preserved by Passeri of another wedding, at which Vittoria was present, was a serious matter. The only particulars recorded for us of her own marriage ceremony consist of two lists of the presents reciprocally made by the bride and bridegroom. These have been printed from the original documents in the Colonna archives, by Signor Visconti, and are curious illustrations of the habits and manners of that day.

The Marquis acknowledges to have received, says the

document, from the Lord Fabrizio Colonna and the Lady Vittoria:

1. A bed of French fashion, with the curtains and all the hangings of crimson satin, lined with blue taffetas with large fringes of gold; with three mattresses and a counterpane of crimson satin of similar workmanship; and four pillows of crimson satin garnished with fringes and tassels of gold.
2. A cloak of crimson raised brocade.
3. A cloak of black raised brocade, and white silk.
4. A cloak of purple velvet and purple brocade.
5. A cross of diamonds and a housing for a mule, of wrought gold.

The other document sets forth the presents offered by Pescara to his bride:

1. A cross of diamonds with a chain of gold, of the value of 1000 ducats ($75,000).
2. A ruby, a diamond, and an emerald set in gold, of the value of 400 ducats ($28,000).
3. A "desciorgh" of gold (whatever that may be), of the value of one hundred ducats.
4. Twelve bracelets of gold, of the value of forty ducats.

Then follow fifteen articles of female dress, gowns, petticoats, mantles, skirts, and various other finery with strange names, only to be explained by the ghost of some sixteenth-century milliner, and altogether ignored by Ducange and all other lexicographers. But they are described as composed of satin, velvet, brocade; besides crimson velvet trimmed with gold fringe and lined with ermine, and flesh-colored silk petticoats trimmed with black velvet. The favorite color appears to be decidedly crimson.

It is noticeable that while all the more valuable presents of Pescara to Vittoria are priced, nothing is said of the value of her gifts to the bridegroom. Are we to see in this an indication of a greater delicacy of feeling on the part of the lady?

So the priests did their office—a part of the celebration, which, curiously enough, we learn from Passeri, was often, in those days, at Naples, deferred, sometimes for years, till after the consummation of the marriage—the Pantagruelian feastings were got through, the guests departed, boat-load after boat-load, from the rocky shore of Ischia; and the little island, restored after the unusual hubbub to its wonted quiet, was left to be the scene of as happy a honeymoon as the most romantic of novel readers could wish for her favorite heroine.

The two years which followed, Vittoria always looked back on as the only truly happy portion of her life, and many are the passages of her poems which recall their tranquil and unbroken felicity, a sweet dream, from which she was too soon to be awakened to the ordinary vicissitudes of sixteenth-century life.

Vittoria continued her peaceful and quiet life in Ischia, lonely indeed, as far as the dearest affections of her heart was concerned, but cheered and improved by the society of that select knot of poets and men of learning whom Costanza di Francavilla, not unassisted by the presence of Vittoria, attracted to her little island court. We find Musefilo, Filocalo, Giovio, Minturno, Cariteo, Rota, Sanazarro, and Bernardo Tasso, among those who helped to make this remote rock celebrated throughout Europe at that day as one of the best-loved haunts of Apollo and the muses, to speak in the phraseology of the time.

Many among them have left passages recording the happy days spent on that fortunate island. The social circle was doubtless a charming and brilliant one, and the more so as contrasted with the general tone and habits of the society of the period. But the style of the following sonnet by Bernardo Tasso, selected by Visconti as a specimen of the various effusions by members of the select circle upon the subject, while it accurately illustrates the prevailing modes of thought and diction of

that period, will hardly fail to suggest the idea of a comparison—mutatis mutandis—between this company of sixteenth century choice spirits and that which assembled and provoked so severe a lashing in the memorable Hôtel de Rambouillet, more than a hundred years afterward. But an Italian Molière is as wholly impossible in the nature of things as a French Dante. And the sixteenth century swarm of Petrarchists and Classicists have, unlike true prophets, found honor in their own country.

Gentle Bernardo celebrates in this wise these famed Ischia meetings; which may be thus "done into English" for the sake of giving those unacquainted with original Italian some tolerably accurate idea of Messer Bernardo's euphuisms:

"Proud rock! the loved retreat of such a band
Of earth's best, noblest, greatest, that their light
Pales other glories to the dazzled sight,
And like a beacon shines throughout the land;
If truest worth can reach the perfect state,
And man may hope to merit heavenly rest,
Those whom thou harborest in thy rocky breast,
First in the race will reach the heavenly gate.
Glory of martial deeds is thine. In thee,
Brightest the world e'er saw, or heaven gave,
Dwell chastest beauty, worth, and courtesy!
Well be it with thee! May both wind and sea
Respect thee: and thy native air and wave
Be temper'd ever by a genial sky!"

Such is the poetry of one of the brightest of stars of the Ischian galaxy; and the incredulous reader is assured that it would be easy to find much worse sonnets by the ream among the extant productions of the crowd who were affected with the prevalent Petrarch mania of that epoch. The statistical returns of the ravages of this malady, given by the poetical registrar—general Crescimbeni, would astonish even Paternoster Row at the present day. But Vittoria Colonna, though a great number of her sonnets do not rise above the level of

Bernardo Tasso in the foregoing specimen, could occasionally, especially in her later years, reach a much higher tone, as will, it is hoped, be shown in future pages.

In October of 1522 Pescara made a flying visit to his wife and home. He was with her three days only, and then hastened back to the army. It was the last time she ever saw him. Pescara received three wounds, though none of them serious, in a battle. He obtained the rank of generalissimo of the imperial forces in Italy. In the latter end of that year he fell into a state of health which seems to have been not well accounted for by the medical science of that day. The wounds he had received at Pavia in the previous February are specially described by Passeri as having been very slight. It seems clearly to have been of the nature of a sudden and premature decay of all the vital forces.

Toward the end of the year he abandoned all hope of recovery, and sent to his wife to desire her to come to him with all speed. He was then at Milan. She set out instantly on her painful journey, and had reached Viterbo on her way northward when she was met by the news of his death.

Thus Vittoria became a widow in the thirty-sixth year of her age. She was still in the full pride of her beauty, as contemporary writers assert, and as two extant medals, struck at Milan shortly before her husband's death, attest. One of them presents the bust of Pescara on the obverse, and that of Vittoria on the reverse; the other has the same portrait of her on the obverse, and a military trophy on the reverse. The face presented is a very beautiful one, and seen thus in profile is perhaps more pleasing than the portrait, which has been spoken of in a previous chapter. She was, moreover, even now probably the most celebrated woman in Italy, although she had done little as yet to achieve that immense reputation which awaited her a few years later. Very few, probably, of her sonnets were written before the death of her

husband. But the exalted rank and prominent position of her own family, the high military grade of her husband, the widespread hopes and fears of which he had recently been the center in the affairs of the conspiracy, joined to the fame of her talents, learning and virtues, which had been made the subject of enthusiastic praise by nearly all the Ischian knot of poets and wits, rendered her a very conspicuous person in the eyes of all Italy. Her husband's premature and unexpected death added a source of interest of yet another kind of person. A young, beautiful and very wealthy widow gave rise to quite as many hopes, speculations, and designs in the sixteenth century as in any other.

Here is a sonnet, which was probably written at the time of her return to Ischia in 1527; when the sight of all the well-beloved scenery of the home of her happy years must have brought to her mind Dante's—

"Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria!"

Thus Vittoria looks back on the happy time:

"On what smooth seas, on what clear waves did sail
My fresh careenèd bark! what costly freight
Of noble merchandise adorn'd its state!
How pure the breeze, how favoring the gale!
And Heaven, which now its beauteous rays doth veil,
Shone then serene and shadowless. But fate
For the too happy voyager lies in wait.
Oft fair beginnings in their endings fail.
And now doth impious changeful fortune bare
Her angry ruthless brow, whose threat'ning power
Rouses the tempest, and lets loose its war
But though rains, winds, and lightnings fill the air,
And wild beasts seek to rend me and devour,
Still shines o'er my true soul its faithful star."

In considering the collection of 117 sonnets from which the above specimen has been selected, and which were

probably the product of about seven or eight years, from 1526 to 1533-4 (in one she laments that the seventh year from her husband's death should have brought with it no alleviation of her grief), the most interesting question that suggests itself is, whether we are to suppose the sentiments expressed in them to be genuine outpourings of the heart, or rather to consider them all as part of the professional equipment of a poet, earnest only in the work of achieving a high and brilliant poetical reputation? The question is a prominent one, as regards the concrete notion to be formed of the sixteenth-century woman, Vittoria Colonna; and is not without interest as bearing on the great subject of woman's nature.

Vittoria's moral conduct, both as a wife and as a widow, was wholly irreproachable. A mass of concurrent temporary testimony seems to leave no doubt whatever on this point. More than one of the poets of her day professed themselves her ardent admirers, devoted slaves, and despairing lovers, according to the most approved poetical and Platonic fashion of the time; and she received their inflated bombast not unpleased with the incense, and answered them with other bombast, all *en règle* and in character. The "carte de tendre" was then laid down on the Platonic projection; and the sixteenth-century fashion in this respect was made a convenient screen, for those to whom a screen was needful, quite as frequently as the less classical whimsies of a later period. But Platonic love to Vittoria was merely an occasion for indulging in the spiritualistic pedantries by which the classicists of that day sought to link the infant metaphysical speculations, then beginning to grow out of questions of church doctrine, with the ever-interesting subject of romantic love. Vittoria, when she began to write on religious subjects, was more in earnest; and the result, as we shall see, is accordingly improved.

The noble rivalry of Francis I. and Charles V. was again, in 1530, making Naples a field of glory in such sort

that outraged nature appeared also on the scene with pestilence in her hand. The first infliction had driven most of the literary society in Naples to take refuge in the comparative security of Ischia. The latter calamity had reached even that retreat; and Vittoria some time in that year again visited Rome and resided during her stay there with Donna Giovanna d'Aragona, her sister-in-law. Paul III., Farnese, had succeeded Clement in the chair of St. Peter; and though Paul was on many accounts very far from being a good pope or a good priest, yet the Farnese was an improvement on the Medici. As ever, Rome began to show signs of improvement when danger to her system from without began to make itself felt. Paul seems very soon to have become convinced that the general council, which had been so haunting a dread to Clement during the whole of his pontificate, could no longer be avoided. But it was still hoped in the council chambers of the Vatican, that the doctrinal difficulties of the German reformers which threatened the church with so fatal a schism, might be got over by conciliation and dexterous theological diplomacy. As soon as it became evident that this hope was vain, fear began to influence the papal policy, and at its bidding the ferocious persecuting bigotry of Paul IV. was contrasted with the shameless profligacy of Alexander, the epicurean indifferentism of Leo, and the pettifogging worldliness of Clement.

Accordingly, we are told that her stay in Rome on this occasion was a continued ovation; and Signor Visconti informs us, on the authority of the Neapolitan historian, Gregorio Rosso, that Charles V., being then in Rome, condescended to visit in their own house the ladies Giovanna di' Aragona, wife of Ascanio Colonna, and Vittoria Colonna, Marchesa di Pescara.[37]

The following year she went, Visconti says, to Lucca, from which city she passed to Ferrara, arriving there on the 8th of April, "in humble guise, with six waiting-women only." Ercole d'Este, the second of the name, was

then the reigning duke, having succeeded to his father Alphonso in 1534. And the court of Ferrara, which had been for several years pre-eminent among the principalities of Italy for its love of literature and its patronage of literary men, became yet more notably so in consequence of the marriage of Hercules II. with Renée of France, the daughter of Louis XII. The Protestant tendencies and sympathies of this princess had rendered Ferrara also the resort, and in some instances the refuge, of many professors and favorers of the new ideas which were beginning to stir the mind of Italy. And though Vittoria's orthodox Catholic biographers are above all things anxious to clear her from all suspicion of having ever held opinions eventually condemned by the church, there is every reason to believe that her journey to Ferrara was prompted by the wish to exchange ideas upon these subjects with some of those leading minds which were known to have imbibed Protestant tendencies, if not to have acquired fully formed Protestant convictions. It is abundantly clear, from the character of her friendships, from her correspondence, and from the tone of her poetry at this period, and during the remainder of her life, that her mind was absorbingly occupied with topics of this nature. And the short examination of the latter division of her works, will probably convince such as have no partisan Catholic feelings on the subject, that Vittoria's mind had made very considerable progress in the Protestant direction.

The reader fortunate enough to be wholly unread in controversial divinity will yet probably not have escaped hearing of the utterly interminable disputes on justification, free-will, election, faith, good works, prevenient grace, original sin, absolute decrees, and predestination, which, with much of evil, and as yet little good consequence, have occupied the most acute intellects and most learning-stored brains of Europe for the last three centuries. Without any accurate knowledge of the manner

in which the doctrines represented by these familiar terms are dependent on, and necessitated by, each other, and of the precise point on which the opposing creeds have fought this eternal battle, he will be aware that the system popularly known as Calvinism represents the side of the question taken by the reformers of the sixteenth century, while the opposite theory of justification by good works was that held by the orthodox Catholic Church, or unreforming party. And with merely these general ideas to guide him, it will appear strangely unaccountable to find all the best, noblest, and purest minds adopting a system which in its simplest logical development inevitably leads to the most debasing demonolatry, and lays the axe to the root of all morality and noble action; while the corrupt, the worldly, the ambitious, the unspiritual, the unintellectual natures that formed the dominant party, held the opposite opinion, apparently so favorable to virtue.

An explanation of this phenomenon by a partisan of either school would probably be long and somewhat intricate. But the matter becomes intelligible enough, and the true key to the wishes and conduct of both parties is found, if, without regarding the moral or theological results of either scheme, or troubling ourselves with the subtleties by which either side sought to meet the objections of the other, we consider simply the bearings of the new doctrines on that ecclesiastical system, which the orthodox and dominant party were determined at all cost to support.

Indeed, even among the reformers in Italy the fear of schism was so great, and the value attached to church unity so high, that these considerations probably did as much toward checking and finally extinguishing Protestantism in Italy as did the strong hand of persecution. From the first, many of the most earnest advocates of the new doctrines were by no means prepared to sever themselves from the Church for the sake of their opinions.

Some were ready to face such schism and martyrdom also in the cause; as, for instance, Bernardino Ochino, the General of the Capuchins, and the most powerful preacher of his day, who fled from Italy and became a professed Protestant, and Carnesecchi, the Florentine, who was put to death for his heresy at Rome.

But it had not yet become clear how far the new doctrines might be held compatibly with perfect community with the Church of Rome at the time when Vittoria arrived in that city from Ferrara. The conference with the German Protestants, by means of which it was hoped to effect a reconciliation, was then being arranged, and the hopes of Vittoria's friends ran high. When these hopes proved delusive, and when Rome pronounced herself decisively on the doctrines held by the Italian reformers, the most conspicuous friends of Vittoria did not quit the church. She herself writes ever as its submissive and faithful daughter. But as to her having held opinions which were afterward declared heretical, and for which others suffered, much of her poetry, written probably about this time, affords evidence so clear that it is wonderful Tiraboschi and her biographers can deem it possible to maintain her orthodoxy.

Take, for example, the following sonnet, thus rendered into English blank verse, with a greater closeness to the original than might perhaps have been attained in a translation hampered by the necessity of rhyming:

"When I reflect on that bright noble ray
Of grace divine, and on that mighty power,
Which clears the intellect, inflames the heart
With virtue, strong with more than human strength,
My soul then gathers up her will, intent
To render to that Power the honor due;
But only so much can she, as free grace
Gives her to feel and know th' inspiring fire.
Thus can the soul her high election make
Fruitful and sure; but only to such point
As, in his goodness, wills the Fount of good.

Nor art nor industry can speed her course;
He most securely and alertly runs
Who most by Heaven's free favor is upheld."

The leading points of the Calvinistic doctrine could hardly be in the limits of a sonnet more clearly and comprehensively stated.

And again, in the following sonnet will be remarked a tone of thought and style of phrase perfectly congenial to modern devotional feeling of what is termed the evangelical school; while it is assuredly not such as would meet the approval of orthodox members of either Roman Catholic or Anglo-Catholic churches; thus rendered into English:

"When by the light, whose living ray both peace
And joy to faithful bosoms doth impart,
The indurated ice, around the heart
So often gather'd, is dissolved through grace,
Beneath that blessed radiance from above
Falls from me the dark mantle of my sin;
Sudden I stand forth pure and radiant in
The garb of primal innocence and love.
And though I strive with lock and trusty key
To keep that ray, so subtle 'tis and coy,
By one low thought 'tis scared and put to flight.
So flies it from me. I in sorrowing plight
Remain, and pray, that he from base alloy
May purge me, so the light come sooner back to me."

Here, in addition to the "point of doctrine" laid down in the previous sonnet, we have that sudden and instantaneous conversion and sanctification; and that without any aid from sacrament, altar, or priest.

Similar thoughts are again expressed in the next sonnet selected, which in Signor Visconti's edition immediately follows the preceding:

"Feeling new force to conquer primal sin,
Yet all in vain I spread my wings to thee
My light, until the air around shall be
Made clear for me by thy warm breath within.
That mortal works should reach the infinite

Is thy work, Lord! For in a moment Thou
Cans't give them work. Left to myself I know
My thought would fall, when at its utmost height.
I long for that clear radiance above
That puts to flight all clouds; and that bright flame
Which secret burning warms the pagan soul;
So that set free from every mortal aim,
And all intent alone on heavenly love,
She flies with stronger pinion toward her goal."

The readers of the foregoing sonnets will probably have wondered at the greatness of the poetical reputation, which was built out of such materials. It is but fair, however, to the poetess to state, that the citations have been selected, rather with the view of decisively proving these Protestant leanings of Vittoria, which have been so eagerly denied, and of illustrating the tone of Italian Protestant feeling at that period, than of presenting the most favorable specimens of her poetry. However fitly devotional feeling may be clothed in poetry of the highest order, controversial divinity is not a happy subject for verse. And Vittoria, on the comparatively rare occasions, when she permits herself to escape from the consideration of disputed dogma, can make a nearer approach to true poetry of thought and expression.

In the following sonnet, the more subjective tone of her thought affords us an autobiographical glimpse of her state of mind on religious subjects. We find that the new tenets which she had imbibed had failed to give her peace of mind. That comfortable security, and undoubting satisfied tranquillity, procured for the mass of her orthodox contemporaries, by the due performance of their fasts, vigils, penitences, etc., was not attained for Vittoria by a creed, which required her, as she here tells us, to stifle the suggestions of her reason.

"Had I with heavenly arms 'gainst self and sense
And human reason waged successful war,
Then with a different spirit soaring far
I'd fly the world's vain glory and pretence.
Then soaring thought on wings of faith might rise.

Armed by a hope no longer vain or frail,
Far from the madness of this earthly vale,
Led by true virtue toward its native skies.
That better aim is ever in my sight,
Of man's existence; but not yet 'tis mine
To speed sure-footed on the happy way.
Signs the rising sun and coming day
I see; but enter not the courts divine
Whose holy portals lead to perfect light."

There is every reason to feel satisfied, both from such records as we have of her life and from the perfectly agreeing testimony of her contemporaries, that the tenor of her own life and conduct was not only blameless but marked by the consistent exercise of many noble virtues. But, much as we hear from the lamentations of preachers of the habitual tendency of human conduct to fall short of human professions, the opposite phenomena exhibited by men, whose intuitive moral sense is superior to the teaching derivable from their creed, is perhaps quite as common. That band of eminent men, who were especially known as the maintainers and defenders of the peculiar tenets held by Vittoria, were unquestionably in all respects the best and noblest of their age and country. Yet their creed was assuredly an immoral one. And in the rare passages of our poetess's writings in which a glimpse of moral theory can be discerned, the low and unenlightened nature of it is such as to prove that the heaven-taught heart reached purer heights than the creed-taught intelligence could attain.

Vittoria Colonna has survived in men's memory as a poetess. But she is far more interesting to the historical student, who would obtain a full understanding of that wonderful sixteenth century, as a Protestant. Her highly gifted and richly cultivated intelligence, her great social position, and above all, her close intimacy with the eminent men who most strove to set on foot an Italian reformation which should not be incompatible with the papacy, make the illustration of her religious opinions a

matter of no slight historical interest. And the bulk of the citations from her works has accordingly been selected with this view. But it is fair to her reputation to give one sonnet at least, chosen for no other reason than its merit.

The following, written apparently on the anniversary of our Saviour's crucifixion, is certainly one of the best, if not the best, in the collection:

"The angels to eternal bliss preferred,
  Long on this day, a painful death to die,
  Lest in the heavenly mansions of the sky
The servant be more favored than his Lord.
Man's ancient mother weeps the deed, this day
  That shut the gates of heaven against her race,
  Weeps the two pierced hands, whose work of grace,
Refinds the path, from which she made man stray.
The sun his ever-burning ray doth veil;
  Earth and sky tremble; ocean quakes amain,
  And mountains gape, and living rocks are torn.
The fiends, on watch for human evil, wail
  The added weight of their restraining chain.
  Man only weeps not; yet was weeping born."

As the previous extracts from the works of Vittoria have been, as has been stated, selected principally with a view to prove her Protestantism, it is fair to observe that there are several sonnets addressed to the Virgin Mary, and some to various saints, from which (though they are wholly free from any allusion to the grosser superstitions that Rome encourages her faithful disciples to connect with these personages) it is yet clear that the writer believed in the value of saintly intercession at the throne of grace. It is also worth remarking, that she nowhere betrays the smallest consciousness that she is differing in opinion from the recognized tenets of the Church, unless it is found, as was before suggested, in an occasional obscurity of phrase, which seems open to the suspicion of having been intentional.

The majority of these poems, however, were in all probability composed before the Church had entered on

her new career of persecution. And as regards the ever-recurring leading point of "justification by grace", it was impossible to say exactly how far it was orthodox to go in the statement of this tenet, until Rome had finally decided her doctrine by the decrees of the "Council of Trent."

One other remark, which will hardly fail to suggest itself to the modern reader of Vittoria's poetry, may be added respecting these once celebrated and enthusiastically received works. There is not to be discovered throughout the whole of them one spark of Italian patriotic feeling. The absence of any such, must undoubtedly be regarded only as a confirmation of the fact asserted in the previous pages, that no sentiment of the kind was then known in Italy. In that earlier portion of her works, which is occupied almost exclusively with her husband's praises, it is hardly possible that the expression of such feelings should have found no place, had they existed in her mind. But it is a curious instance of the degree to which even the better intellects of an age are blinded by and made subservient to the tone of feeling and habits of thoughts prevalent around them, it never occurs to this pure and lofty minded Vittoria, in celebrating the prowess of her hero, to give a thought to the cause for which he was drawing the sword. To prevail, to be the stronger, "to take great cities," "to rout the foe" appears to be all that her beau ideal of heroism required.

Wrong is done, and the strong-handed doer of it admired, the moral sense is blunted by the cowardly worship of success, and might takes from right the suffrages of the public, in the nineteenth as in the sixteenth century. But the contemplation of the total absence from such a mind as that of Vittoria Colonna, of a recognition of a right and a wrong in such matters, furnishes highly instructive evidence of the reality of the moral progress mankind has achieved.

Vittoria arrived in Rome from Ferrara in all probability

about the end of the year 1537. She was now in the zenith of her reputation. The learned and elegant Bembo writes of her that he considered her poetical judgment as sound and authoritative as that of the greatest masters of the art of song. Guidiccioni, the poetical Bishop of Fossombrone, and of Paul III.'s ablest diplomatists, declares that the ancient glory of Tuscany had altogether passed into Latium in her person; and sends her sonnets of his own, with earnest entreaties that she will point out the faults of them. Veronica Gambara, herself a poetess of merit perhaps not inferior to that of Vittoria, professed herself her most ardent admirer, and engaged Rinaldo Corso to write the commentary on her poems, which he executed as we have seen. Bernardo Tasso made her the subject of several of his poems. Giovio dedicated to her his life of Pescara, and Cardinal Pompeo Colonna his book on "The Praises of Women;" and Contarini paid her the far more remarkable compliment of dedicating to her his work, "On Free Will."

Paul III. was, as Muratori says, by no means well disposed toward the Colonna family. Yet Vittoria must have had influence with the haughty and severe old Farnese. For both Bembo and Fregoso, the Bishop of Naples, have taken occasion to acknowledge that they owed their promotion to the purple in great measure to her.

But the most noteworthy event of this period of Vittoria's life, was the commencement of her acquaintance with Michael Angelo Buonarroti. That great man was then in his 63d year, while the poetess was in her 47th. The acquaintanceship grew rapidly into a close and durable friendship, which lasted during the remainder of Vittoria's life. It was a friendship eminently honorable to both of them. Michael Angelo was a man whose influence on his age was felt and acknowledged, while he was yet living and exercising it to a degree rarely observable even in the case of the greatest minds. He had, at the time in question, already reached the zenith of his

fame, although he lived to witness and enjoy it for another quarter of a century. He was a man formed by nature, and already habituated by the social position his contemporaries had accorded to him, to mould men—not to be moulded by them—not a smooth or pliable man; rugged rather, self-relying, self-concentrated, and, though full of kindness for those who needed kindness, almost a stern man; no courtier, though accustomed to the society of courts; and apt to consider courtier-like courtesies and habitudes as impertinent impediments to the requirements of his high calling, to be repressed rather than condescended to. Yet the strong and kingly nature of this high-souled old man was moulded into new form by contact with that of the comparatively youthful poetess.

The religious portion of the great artist's nature had scarcely shaped out for itself any more defined and substantial form of expression than a worship of the beautiful in spirit as well as in matter. By Vittoria he was made a devout Christian. The change is strongly marked in his poetry; and in several passages of the poems, four or five in number, addressed to her, he attributes it entirely to her influence.

Some silly stuff has been written by very silly writers, by way of imparting the "interesting" character of a *belle passion,* more or less platonic, to this friendship between the sexagenarian artist and the immaculate Colonna. No argument is necessary to indicate the utter absurdity of an idea which implies a thorough ignorance of the persons in question, of the circumstances of their friendship, and of all that remains on record of what passed between them. Mr. Harford, whose "Life of Michael Angelo" has been already quoted, was permitted, he says, to hear read the letters from Vittoria to her friend, which are preserved in that collection of papers and memorials of the great artist, which forms the most treasured possession of his descendants; and he gives the following account of them:

"They are five in number; and there is a sixth, addressed by her to a friend, which relates to Michael Angelo. Two of these letters refer in very grateful terms to the fine drawings he had been making for her, and to which she alludes with admiration. Another glances with deep interest at the devout sentiments of a sonnet, which it appears he had sent for her perusal. . . . Another tells him in playful terms that his duties as architect of St. Peter's, and her own to the youthful inmates of the convent of St. Catherine at Viterbo, admit not of their frequently exchanging letters. This must have been written just a year before her death, which occurred in 1547. Michael Angelo became architect of St. Peter's in 1546. These letters are written with the most perfect ease, in a firm, strong hand; but there is not a syllable in any of them approaching to tenderness."

The period of Vittoria's stay in Rome on this occasion must have been a pleasant one. The acknowledged leader of the best and most intellectual society in that city; surrounded by a company of gifted and high-minded men, bound to her and to each other by that most intimate and ennobling of all ties, the common profession of a higher, nobler, purer theory of life than that which prevailed around them, and a common membership of what might almost be called a select church within a church, whose principles and teaching its disciples hoped to see rapidly spreading and beneficially triumphant; dividing her time between her religious duties, her literary occupations, and conversation with well-beloved and well-understood friends—Vittoria can hardly have been still tormented by temptations to commit suicide. Yet in a medal struck in her honor at this period of her life, the last of a series engraved for Visconti's edition of her works, the reverse represents a phœnix on her funeral pile gazing at the sun, while the flames are rising around her. The obverse has a bust of the poetess, showing the features a good deal changed in the course of the six or

seven years which had elapsed since the execution of that silly Pyramus and Thisbe medal mentioned in a previous chapter, though still regular and well formed. The tendency to fatness, and to a comfortable looking double chin, is considerably increased. She wears a singularly unbecoming head-dress of plaited linen, sitting close to and covering the entire head, with long pendants at the sides falling over the shoulders.

These pleasant Roman days were, however, destined to be of brief duration. They were cut short, strange as the statement may seem, by the imposition of an increased tax upon salt. For when Paul III. resorted, in 1539, to that always odious and cruel means of pillaging his people, Ascanio Colonna maintained that, by virtue of some ancient privilege, the new tax could not be levied upon his estates. The pontifical tax-gatherers imprisoned certain of his vassals for refusing to pay; whereupon Ascanio assembled his retainers, made a raid into the Campagna, and drove off a large number of cattle. The pope lost no time in gathering an army of ten thousand men, and "war was declared" between the sovereign and the Colonna. The varying fortunes of this "war" have been narrated in detail by more than one historian. Much mischief was done, and a great deal of misery occasioned by both the contending parties. But at length the forces of the sovereign got the better of those of his vassal, and the principal fortresses of the Colonna were taken, and their fortifications ordered to be razed.

It was in consequence of these misfortunes, and of that remarkable "solidarity" which, as has been before observed, united in those days the members of a family in their fortunes and reverses, that Vittoria quitted Rome, probably toward the end of 1540, and retired to Orvieto. But the loss of their brightest ornament was a misfortune which the highest circles of Roman society could not submit to patiently. Many of the most influential personages at Paul III.'s court visited the celebrated exile at

Orvieto, and succeeded ere long in obtaining her return to Rome after a very short absence. And we accordingly find her again in the Eternal City in the August of 1541.

There is a letter written by Luca Contile, the Sienese historian, dramatist and poet, in which he speaks of a visit he had paid to Vittoria in Rome in that month. She asked him, he writes, for news of Fra Bernardino (Ochino), and on his replying that he had left behind him at Milan the highest reputation for virtue and holiness, she answered, "God grant that he so persevere!"

On this passage of Luca Contile's letter, Visconti and others have built a long argument in proof of Vittoria's orthodoxy. It is quite clear, they say, that she already suspected and lamented Ochino's progress toward heresy, and thus indicates her own aversion to aught that might lead to separation from the Church of Rome. It would be difficult, however, to show that the simple phrase in question had necessarily any such meaning. But any dispute on this point is altogether nugatory; for it may be at once admitted that Vittoria did not quit, and in all probability would not under any circumstances have quitted the communion of the Church. And if this is all that her Romanist biographers wish to maintain, they unquestionably are correct in their statements. She acted in this respect in conformity with the conduct of the majority of those eminent men whose disciple and friend she was during so many years. And the final extinction of the reformatory movement in Italy was in great measure due precisely to the fact, that conformity to Rome was dearer to most Italian minds than the independent assertion of their own opinions. It may be freely granted, that there is every reason to suppose that it would have been so to Vittoria, had she not been so fortunate as to die before her peculiar tenets were so definitively condemned as to make it necessary for her to choose between abandoning them or abandoning Rome. But surely all the interest which belongs to the question of her religious

opinions consists in the fact that she, like the majority of the best minds of her country and age, assuredly held doctrines which Rome discovered and declared to be incompatible with her creed.

A more agreeable record of Vittoria's presence in Rome at this time, and an interesting glimpse of the manner in which many of her hours were passed, is to be found in the papers left by one Francesco d'Olanda, a Portuguese painter, who was then in the Eternal City. He had been introduced, he tells us, by the kindness of Messer Lattanzio Tolemei of Siena to the Marchesa de Pescara, and also to Michael Angelo and he has recorded at length several conversations between these and two or three other members of their society, in which he took part. The object of his notes appears to have been chiefly to preserve the opinions expressed by the great Florentine on subjects connected with the arts. And it must be admitted, that the conversation of the eminent personages mentioned, as recorded by the Portuguese painter, appears, if judged by the standard of nineteenth-century notions, to have been wonderfully dull and flat.

The record is a very curious one even in this point of view. It is interesting to measure the distance between what was considered first-rate conversation in 1540, and what would be tolerated among intelligent people in 1850. The good-old-times admirers, who would have us believe that the ponderous erudition of past generations is distasteful to us, only by reason of the touch-and-go butterfly frivolousness of the modern mind, are in error. The long discourses which charmed a sixteenth-century audience are to us intolerably boring, because they are filled with platitudes—with facts, inferences, and speculations, that is, which have passed and repassed through the popular mind till they have assumed the appearance of self-evident truths and fundamental axioms, which it is loss of time to spend words on. And time has so wonderfully risen in value! And though there are more than ever

men whose discourse might be instructive and profitable to their associates, the universality of the habit of reading prevents conversation from being turned into a lecture. Those who have matter worth communicating can do so more effectually and to a larger audience by means of the pen; and those willing to be instructed can make themselves masters of the thoughts of others far more satisfactorily by the medium of a book.

But the external circumstances of these conversations, noted down for us by Francesco d'Olanda, give us an amusing peep into the literary life of the Roman world three hundred years ago.

It was one Sunday afternoon that the Portuguese artist went to call on Messer Lattanzio Tolemei, nephew of the cardinal of that name. The servants told him that their master was in the church of San Silvestro, at Monte Cavallo, in company with the Marchesa di Pescara, for the purpose of hearing a lecture on the Epistles of St. Paul, from a certain Friar Ambrose of Siene. Maestro Francesco lost no time in following his friend thither. And "as soon as the reading and the interpretations of it were over," the Marchesa, turning to the stranger and inviting him to sit beside her, said, "If I am not mistaken, Francesco d'Olanda would better like to hear Michael Angelo preach on painting, than to listen to Friar Ambrose's lecture."

Whereupon the painter, "feeling himself piqued," assures the lady that he can take interest in other matters than painting, and that, however willingly he would listen to Michael Angelo on art, he would prefer to hear Friar Ambrose when St. Paul's epistles were in question.

"Do not be angry, Messer Francesco," said Signor Lattanzio, thereupon. "The Marchesa is far from doubting that the man capable of painting may be capable of aught else. We, in Italy, have too high an estimate of art for that. But perhaps we should gather from the remark of the Signora Marchesa the intention of adding

to the pleasure you have already had, that of hearing Michael Angelo."

"In that case," said I, "her Excellence would do only as is her wont—that is, to accord greater favors than one would have dared to ask of her."

So Vittoria calls to a servant, and bids him go to the house of Michael Angelo and tell him "that I and Messer Lattanzio are here in this cool chapel, that the church is shut, and very pleasant, and ask him if he will come and spend a part of the day with us, that we may put it to profit in his company. But do not tell him that Francesco d'Olanda the Spaniard is here."

Then there is some very mild raillery about how Michael Angelo was to be led to speak of painting—it being, it seems, very questionable whether he could be induced to do so; and a little bickering follows between Maestro Francesco and Friar Ambrose, who feels convinced that Michael will not be got to talk before the Portuguese, while the latter boasts of his intimacy with the great man.

Presently there is a knock at the church door. It is Michael Angelo, who has been met by the servants as he was going toward the baths, talking with Orbino, his color-grinder.

"The Marchesa rose to receive him, and remained standing a good while before making him sit down between her and Messer Lattanzio." Then, "with an art which I can neither describe nor imitate, she began to talk of various matters with infinite wit and grace, without ever touching the subject of painting, the better to make sure of the great painter."

"One is sure enough," she says at last, "to be completely beaten, as often as one ventures to attack Michael Angelo on his own ground, which is that of wit and raillery. You will see, Messer Lattanzio, that to put him down and reduce him to silence, we must talk to him of briefs, law processes, or painting."

By which subtle and deep-laid plot the great man is set

off into a long discourse on painters and painting.

"His Holiness," said the Marchesa after a while, "has granted me the favor of authorizing me to build a new convent, near this spot, on the slope of Monte Cavallo, where there is the ruined portico, from the top of which, it is said, that Nero looked on while Rome was burning; so that virtuous women may efface the trace of so wicked a man. I do not know, Michael Angelo, what form or proportions to give the building, or on which side to make the entrance. Would it not be possible to join together some parts of the ancient constructions, and make them available toward the new building?"

"Yes," said Michael Angelo; "the ruined portico might serve for a bell-tower."

This repartee, says our Portuguese reporter, was uttered with so much seriousness and *aplomb* that Messer Lattanzio could not forbear from remarking it.

From which we are led to infer that the great Michael was understood to have made a joke. He added, however, more seriously, "I think that your Excellence may build the proposed convent without difficulty; and when we go out, we can, if your Excellence so please, have a look at the spot, and suggest to you some ideas."

Then, after a complimentary speech from Vittoria, in which she declares that the public, who know Michael Angelo's works only without being acquainted with his character, are ignorant of the best part of him, the lecture, to which all this is introductory, begins. And when the company part at its close, an appointment is made to meet again another Sunday in the same church.

A painter in search of an unhackneyed subject might easily choose a worse one than that suggested by this notable group, making the cool and quiet church their Sunday afternoon drawing-room.

The few remaining years of Vittoria's life were spent between Rome and Viterbo, an episcopal city some thirty miles to the north of it. In this latter her home was in

the convent of the nuns of St. Catherine. Her society there consisted chiefly of Cardinal Pole, the governor of Viterbo, her old friend Marco Antonio Flaminio, and Archbishop Soranzo.

During these years the rapidly increasing consciousness on the part of the Church of the danger of the doctrines held by the reforming party was speedily making it unsafe to profess those opinions, which, as we have seen, gave the color to so large a portion of Vittoria's poetry, and which had formed her spiritual character. And these friends, in the closest intimacy with whom she lived at Viterbo, were not the sort of men calculated to support her in any daring reliance on the dictates of her own soul, when these chanced to be in opposition to the views of the Church. Pole appears to have been at this time the special director of her conscience. And we know but too well, from the lamentable sequel of his own career, the sort of counsel he would be likely to give her under the circumstances. There is an extremely interesting letter extant, written by her from Viterbo to the Cardinal Cervino, who was afterward Pope Marcellus II., which proves clearly enough, to the great delight of her orthodox admirers, that let her opinions have been what they might, she was ready to "submit" them to the censorship of Rome. We have seen how closely her opinions agreed with those which drove Bernardino Ochino to separate himself from the Church and fly from its vengeance. Yet under Pole's tutelage she writes as follows:

"Most Illustrious and most Reverend Sir: The more opportunity I have had of observing the actions of his Eminence the Cardinal of England (Pole), the more clear has it seemed to me that he is a true and sincere servant of God. Whenever, therefore, he charitably condescends to give me his opinion on any point, I conceive myself safe from error in following his advice. And he

told me that, in his opinion, I ought, in case any letter or other matter should reach me from Fra Bernardino, to send the same to your most Reverend Lordship, and return no answer, unless I should be directed to do so. I send you therefore the enclosed, which I have this day received, together with the little book attached. The whole was in a packet, which came to the post here by a courier from Bologna, without any other writing inside. And I have thought it best not to make use of any other means of sending it, than by a servant of my own."

She adds in a postscript:

"It grieves me much that the more he tries to excuse himself the more he accuses himself; and the more he thinks to save others from shipwreck, the more he exposes himself to the flood, being himself out of the ark which saves and secures."

Poor Ochino little thought probably that his letter to his former admiring and fervent disciple would be passed on with such a remark to the hands of his enemies! He ought, however, to have been aware that princesses and cardinals, whatever speculations they may have indulged in, do not easily become heretics.

She returned once more from Viterbo to Rome toward the end of the year 1544, and took up her residence in the convent of Benedictines of St. Anne. While there she composed a Latin prayer, which has been much admired, and which though not so Ciceronian in its diction as Bembo might have written, will bear comparison with similar compositions by many more celebrated persons. Several of the latest of her poems were also written at this time. But her health began to fail so rapidly as to give great uneasiness to her friends. Several letters are extant from Tolomei to her physician, anxiously inquiring after her health, urging him to neglect no resources of

his art, and bidding him remember that "the lives of many, who continually receive from her their food—some that of the body and others that of the mind—are bound up in hers." The celebrated physician and poet, Fracastoro, was written to in Verona. In his reply, after suggesting medical remedies, he says, "Would that a physician for her mind could be found! Otherwise the fairest light in this world will, from causes by no means clear (*a non so che strano modo*) be extinguished and taken from our eyes."

The medical opinion of Fracastoro, writing from a distance, may not be of much value. But it is certain that many circumstances combined to render these declining years of Vittoria's life unhappy. The fortunes of her family were under a cloud; and it is probable that she was as much grieved by her brother's conduct as by the consequences of it. The death also of the Marchese del Vasto, in the flower of his age, about this time, was a severe blow to her. Ever since those happy early days in Ischia, when she had been to him, as she said, morally and intellectually a mother, the closest ties of affection had united them; and his loss was to Vittoria like that of a son. Then again, though she had perfectly made up her mind as to the line of conduct it behooved her to take in regard to any difficulties of religious opinion, yet it cannot be doubted that the necessity of separating herself from so many whom she had loved and venerated, deserting them, as it were, in their falling fortunes, must have been acutely painful to her. Possibly also conscience was not wholly at rest with her on this matter. It may be that the still voice of inward conviction would sometimes make obstinate murmur against blindfold submission to a priesthood, who ought not, according to the once expressed opinion of the poetess, to come between the creature and his Creator.

As she became gradually worse and weaker, she was

removed from the convent of St. Anne to the neighboring house of Giuliano Cesarini, the husband of Guilia Colonna, the only one of her kindred then left in Rome. And there she breathed her last, toward the end of February, 1547, in the 57th year of her age.

In her last hours she was visited by her faithful and devotedly attached friend, Michael Angelo, who watched the departure of the spirit from her frame; and who declared, years afterward, that he had never ceased to regret that in that solemn moment he had not ventured to press his lips, for the first and last time, to the marble forehead of the dead.

She had directed that her funeral should be in all respects like that of one of the sisters of the convent in which she last resided. And so completely were her behests attended to that no memorial of any kind remains to tell the place of her sepulchre.

Catherine de' Medici

By IMBERT DE SAINT-ARMAND

TO Francis II. had succeeded Charles IX.; to an imaginary majority, a real minority. The little King was only ten years old. At last Catherine de' Medici reigned.[5] Never had a more overwhelming burden rested on a woman's shoulders. True, history has a right to be severe towards this woman. Yet, for all that, it must recognize the terrible obstacles she had to surmount, and give her credit for the courage with which she accepted the struggle. There is no science more contingent than that of politics. Assuredly, Catherine knew what she wanted; her aim was to save the house of Valois, and solidify the royal authority. But the means to do this varied with events. Justice demands us to recognize that she began by trying the paths of gentleness, moderation, and impartiality. In a time when there were as yet no constitutions, she acted, at the beginning of her regency, like a true constitutional sovereign. She sought to balance powers, she tried conciliation, she induced mortal enemies like the Duke of Guise and the Prince of Condé to embrace each other.

In troublous and violent epochs, the masses listen to nothing but exaggerations. Moderate people are considered lukewarm. There is no longer either impartiality or justice. The moral sense and the reason disappear together. Doubtless, truly noble souls are not immoderately affected by these aberrations of public opinion. Persevering without uneasiness in the path of right and duty,

they remember the old adage, which is the device of virtue, Do what you ought, come what may. But Catherine was not one of those grand characters which events do not affect. From the day on which she became convinced that mildness would not succeed, she never recoiled from crime.

It is incontestable that the Queen-mother hesitated momentarily between the rival cults. She had been greatly impressed by the progress of Protestantism. In 1555, there was but a single reformed church in all France; in 1559, there were two thousand. Surrounded as she was by a great number of Protestant ladies, Catherine questioned whether it were the interest of the dynasty to remain loyal to the Catholic faith.

She liked much the notion of replenishing the funds by seizing the ecclesiastical property. Her Huguenot courtiers said that nothing could be easier than to make France Protestant, and that where Henry VIII. and Gustavus Wasa had succeeded so easily she could not fail. Would not a word from Catherine suffice to change the religion of the kingdom, as had happened in England and in Sweden? Nothing was more dangerous than such counsels, and the Queen-mother soon repented of having, for several months, entertained an inclination to follow them. It is evident, none the less, that at the beginning of her regency she inclined toward the new ideas. Brought up in the Catholic religion, however, she retained up to a certain point the impressions of her childhood. She certainly believed in hell and in paradise, in the devil and in God. But she varied as to other doctrines. There were hours when, like Montaigne, she would have been tempted to say: What do I know? There were others when the religious sentiment regained entire possession of her soul. Nothing absolute can be found in her. Her character is full of contradictions, and the historians who will conscientiously analyze her

life, will waver, like her contemporaries, between sympathy and dislike for this mobile nature.

From the day when she gained the twofold conviction that Protestantism was sapping the foundations of royal authority, and that Catholicism was assured of success, Catherine no longer hesitated. The first wars of religion opened her eyes to the tendencies, by turns republican and feudal, of the Calvinist leaders, to the ambition of the Prince of Condé and Admiral Coligny, to the danger to the great cause of French unity arising from the new ideas, and to the anti-national character of the Huguenot alliance with England.

It is impossible to deny that, with all her faults, Catherine had the national sentiment. When she saw that the heart of the nation beat for the Catholic cause, she would have no more of the Reformation. Moreover, she had too much intelligence not to comprehend that to abandon the honor of protecting the faith to the Guises, was to destroy, for their behoof, all the prestige of the crown. "The churches were the theatre of all the fêtes and all the joys of the people; their palaces were more splendid than those of the kings, where, kings in their turn, they forgot all their hard labors and their miserable dwellings in dreams of heaven. What was offered them in place of all this magnificent Catholic symbolism, this immense poem in action which incessantly unrolled with the rolling year? Abstract worship of the spirit, in temples void and empty to eyes of flesh, enthusiasm for moral reform, praise of the Christian's dignity sounding in the chants of a new harmony, the sole act of an iconoclastic worship."

When Catherine beheld the Huguenots, like true Vandals, destroying the masterpieces of the Middle Ages, dragging crucifixes and relics through the mud, raging at everything which to the people meant civilization, happiness, and glory; when these modern Saracens respected not even the dead; when they profaned, at Angoulême,

the sepulchres of the ancestors of the reigning family; when they burned, at Cléri, the bones of Louis XI., and at Sainte-Croix the heart of Francis II.; Catherine, as she listened to the cry of wrath and vengeance which rose from the Catholic masses told herself that the Valois must range themselves on the side of the people, if they would not perish in the tempest. Moreover, the Catholic triumvirate, which had so alarmed Catherine, no longer existed. The Marshal of Saint-André had been killed at the battle of Dreux, and the Duke of Guise assassinated before Orleans. Protestantism was now the danger for authority. Ideas of moderation had no longer any influence. The civil war assumed a savage character on both sides; whole garrisons had their throats cut. The wells were choked with human bodies; the soldiers became headsmen. Roadside trees turned into gibbets. "The civil war," says Castelnau in his Memoirs, "were an inexhaustible source of all villainies, thefts, robberies, murders, incests, adulteries, parricides."

And yet Catherine did not despair of appeasing all hatreds, ending all discords, and bringing out the royal authority victorious from all its trials. Nothing discouraged her. The more difficult the situation, the more astuteness, patience, and activity she displayed. Her life was an incessant labor.

I think I see her in her Louvre, living by her intelligence, her head, far more than by her heart, never losing sight of her plans and ideas, pursuing her ends by the most crooked paths, displaying in all circumstances the resources of an adroit and pliant character. "At table, and while walking, she is constantly conversing with some one on affairs. Her mind is bent, not merely on political matters, but on so many others that I do not know how she can endure and go through so much." Notwithstanding all her preoccupations, she still finds time to think of letters and the arts. She makes Amyot preceptor to Charles IX., takes pleasure in Montaigne's conversation,

and, in 1564, begins the erection of the Tuileries after the plans of Jean Bullant and Philibert Delorme.

Calm, smiling, happy, apparently at least, amidst the gravest perils and most horrible tragedies, I behold her feared by her children, held in great consideration even by her enemies, pleasing even the most rebellious by the courtesy of her manners and the sweetness of her words, overwhelming with attentions every one likely to be of use to her. To her, more than to any other personage, may be applied that line of a great poet:—

> "Sans haine, sans amour, tu vivais pour penser."
> ("Without hate, without love, thou livest to think.")

To reign, is what one should say. To rule is Catherine's joy. "All her actions," says the Venetian ambassador, Sigismund Cavalli, "are founded on that invincible passion which, even during her husband's lifetime, was recognized in her,—the passion for domineering; *un affetto di signoreggiare.*" She yields to this lust for power, but without conceit, without arrogance, and with a sort of good-nature. Amiable, attractive, and exquisitely polite, she takes pains to make herself agreeable to all who approach her. Her conversation is by turns jovial and instructive. She is conversant, not merely with French affairs, but with those of all other kingdoms and European states.

Mistress of herself, she has the great art of self-control. If she is dissatisfied with one of her officials or attendants, she expresses her displeasure in affectionate terms. "When she calls any one 'my friend,'" says Brantôme, "it is either because she thinks him a fool, or is angry; so true is this, that she had a noble servant named M. de Bois-Février, who said as much when she called him 'my friend': 'Ah, Madame, I would like it better if you called me your enemy, for it amounts to saying that I am a fool, or that you are angry with me, for I have known your disposition this long while.'"

Up to the fatal moment when the Saint Bartholomew Massacre spotted her black robe with an ineffaceable stain of blood, she was much oftener accused of moderation and mildness than of violence and cruelty. The parties reproached her with being too conciliating, and with wishing to pacify everybody. It was by means of the beautiful girls in her train, her flying squadron as they were called, that she attacked and vanquished her harshest enemies. She wanted to blunt hatreds by pleasures, to change shouts of rage into voluptuous chants; and this woman, destined a few years later to wear a sinister aspect, never appeared, during the childhood of Charles IX., but with a smile on her lips and the olive-branch in her hand.

Fate reserved for her the spectacle of other struggles more bloody than those of the Medici and the Pazzi. The childhood of Catherine de' Medici had prepared her for the crises and storms of her career. The prologue was worthy of the drama.

The city of Marseilles was in great joy on October 12, 1533. The signals of the tower of If and of Notre Dame de la Garde had just announced that the pontifical fleet was approaching, with Pope Clement VII. and his niece, the betrothed of the King's son, the young Catherine de' Medici, on board. The steeples of the Major responded to the municipal belfry on the Place de Linche in ringing welcome to the august voyagers. Numerous boats, containing a crowd of gentlemen and musicians, left the shore to go and meet them. Three hundred pieces of artillery rent the air with their joyous salvos. The populace were on their knees. At the head of the fleet came the principal galley, which carried the Blessed Sacrament, according to the custom of the Popes when travelling by sea. Carpeted with crimson satin and covered with a tent of cloth-of-gold, the vessel of Clement VII. was richly sculptured in the Venetian fashion. Ten cardinals and a great number of bishops and prelates accompanied the successor of Saint Peter.

The solemn entry into the town was surrounded with extraordinary pomp. Throned on the *sedia gestatoria,* the Vicar of Jesus Christ was borne on the shoulders of robust men. Preceding him, on a white horse led by two equerries in sumptuous costumes, was the Blessed Sacrament, in a magnificent ostensory. The crowd, receiving the Apostolic benediction piously, rained flowers along the path of the procession; priests chanted canticles, and there rose a cloud of incense in the air. Vested in their purple, the cardinals, on horseback, followed the Pope by twos. Then, giving her hand to her uncle, John Stuart, Duke of Albany, and wearing a robe of gold brocade, came the fourteen-year-old Florentine, with her black eyes, her dull complexion, her gentle and intelligent expression. Curiosity, so great already, would have been far more excited, could the part this young girl was called to play in the destinies of France have been foreseen. The next day, Francis I. attended by his court and all the foreign ambassadors, went as the Most Christian King, to pay homage to the Holy Father. For the Pope and the King, two palaces had been made ready, separated from each other only by a street, and united by a great wooden bridge, forming a vast hall hung with rich tapestries, and intended for the consistories as well as for the interviews between the two sovereigns.

The Pope's attendants, bragging much about the advantages of the pontifical alliance, claimed that Catherine would give to the house of France "three rings of inestimable price: Genoa, Milan, and Naples." Francis I. had never displayed more courtesy, or made a greater show of luxury. The young Duke of Orleans testified a lively sympathy for his young betrothed, and all France participated in his joy. The marriage was celebrated October 23, in the cathedral church, the Major, by the Pope, who said the Mass, and gave the nuptial ring to the spouses. Catherine wore a robe of white silk enriched with precious stones and ornaments of Florentine wrought

gold. Her head was covered by a veil of Brussels point. She looked like the Italian Madonnas in their glittering frames. The Pope and the King did not separate until November 27, when His Holiness went on board of the pontifical galley, and Francis I. took the road to Avignon, whence he was to return to Fontainebleau.

This residence, which Catherine occupied, had never been more gorgeous. At the age of thirty-nine, Francis I. retained all the tastes of his early youth, and his court was not a school of morality. Brantôme describes him as inciting his "worthy gentlemen to have mistresses under penalty of being regarded by him as dolts or blockheads, and promising them his good offices with such as were inhuman; he was not contented with merely seeing them follow his example; he wanted to be their confidant. Often, too, when he saw them in great discussions with their mistresses, he would accost them, asking what good things they had said, and, if he did not think them good, would correct them and teach them others." It was not merely in matters of gallantry that Francis I. might be esteemed a master. A Venetian ambassador, Marino Cavalli, wrote concerning him: "This Prince has very good judgment and great knowledge: listening to him, one recognizes that there is neither study nor art which he cannot discuss with much pertinence, and criticise in a manner as positive as those who have specially devoted themselves to it. His acquirements are not limited to war, the manner of provisioning and commanding an army, arranging a plan of battle, preparing quarters, assaulting or defending a town, directing artillery; he not only understands all that appertains to maritime warfare, but he has great experience in hunting, painting, literature, the languages, and the different exercises befitting a handsome and brilliant chevalier." Catherine understood at once how much was to be gained in the society of this learned, amiable, and powerful King. She wished to become his pupil, and seeking every occasion

to follow and ply him with homage, she set to work to become an assiduous companion, a sort of maid-of-honor to him.

Francis I. had a passion for the chase. Catherine became a great huntress. "She prayed the King," says Brantôme, "to permit her to be always at his side. They say that, being subtle and crafty, she did this as much or more for the sake of watching the King's actions, extracting his secrets, and listening to and knowing everything, as for the sake of hunting." After this reflection, Brantôme adds: "King Francis was so pleased with such a prayer, and her ready fondness for his company, that he granted it very cordially, and besides his natural affection for her, his liking continually grew, and he delighted in giving her pleasure at the hunt, where she never quitted the King, but always followed him at full speed; she rode well and was daring, and had a very graceful seat, being the first one who threw her leg over the saddle bow, insomuch that her grace was even more striking and apparent there than on a floor." Catherine followed from city to city, from castle to castle, this monarch whose custom it was to change his abode incessantly. Marin Giustinian, Venetian ambassador to France from 1532 to 1535, says concerning this: "Never, during my embassy, did the court remain in the same place for more than fifteen consecutive days." Agreeable by the quickness of her intellect, as well as her evenness of temper, the young Florentine sought to make friends, not merely of the King and the Princes, but of all who approached her. She lived on good terms with "the little band of court ladies," as Brantôme says, "ladies of family, damsels of reputation," whom Francis I. assiduously sought for among "the most beautiful and most noble," and who appeared "in the court like goddesses from heaven."

Catherine needed all her address and prudence to avoid the snares already laid for her. Aristocratic prejudices

were enlisted against her. The French nobles did not think the escutcheon of the Medici sufficiently gilded by the pontifical tiara of Leo X. and Clement VII. They said it was, after all, but a family of merchants, and that even with the best will in the world the marriage of the Duke of Orleans could not be considered other than a *mésalliance*. It was claimed, also, that the Pope had not kept his promises very well, and had in fact been of no advantage. Catherine, who had only married the king's second son, did not at this time seem destined to play an important political rôle. The sole ambition which she and her husband could hope to realize was that, when the war between Charles V. and France was over, they might receive the investiture of the Duchy of Milan or that of Urbino.

An unexpected event abruptly changed this situation. The Dauphin, who had followed the King to the war of Provence, died suddenly at Tournon, July 15, 1536. The Duke of Orleans became the heir to the throne, and assumed the title of Dauphin. He was eighteen years old, and Catherine seventeen.

The position of the new Dauphiness was becoming very difficult. Though she had been married for three years, she had no children, and people said she never could have any. A beautiful and imperious woman, accustomed to power, Diana of Poitiers, had subjugated the heart of Catherine's husband, and Catherine, with rare penetration, saw at once that it would be impossible to contend with her. And yet Diana of Poitiers, born in 1499, was twenty-three years older than the Dauphiness. But she was an enchantress, an Armida, a woman full of seduction and prestige, whose charm was like a talisman to bewitch the feeble Henry.

During the last years of the reign of Francis I., a feminine duel raged between the two favorites, the Duchess d'Étampes, mistress of the King, and Diana of Poitiers, mistress of the Dauphin. The court was divided

into two camps, and the King, instead of putting a stop to the quarrels, disputes, and intrigues, took a certain pleasure in them. It was a war of slanders, calumnies, and epigrams. Very proud of being ten years younger than her rival, the Duchess who, according to her flatterers, was the most learned of beauties and the most beautiful of learned women, triumphed insolently, and wanted to see the whole court at her feet. Queen Eleanor, the sister of Charles V., a gentle, modest woman, kept herself apart, and sought consolation in piety and in reading, of which she was passionately fond. The Duchess d'Étampes had all power in her hands. The Emperor was well aware of this. When he was in France, the King had said to him, pointing to his favorite: "Brother, there is a beautiful lady who thinks I ought not to let you depart until you revoke the treaty of Madrid," and he contented himself with answering coldly: "If the advice is good, you must follow it." But the same day at dinner he let a diamond of great value drop before the Duchess, who was giving him his napkin, and refused to take it back, saying: "Madame, it is in too fair hands."

The wily monarch knew how to make an ally of his rival's mistress. She became the head of the party which desired him to base French policy on an agreement with the Emperor. Diana supported the contrary opinion, and the struggle between the two women attained the proportions of a great affair of state. Poets and artists took part in this rivalry of women which occupied the court more than that between Francis I. and Charles V. While Primaticio endlessly reproduced the features of the Duchess d'Étampes in the decorations of the royal galleries, Benvenuto Cellini chose as his model Diana of Poitiers, the beautiful huntress, and in his Memoirs the famous engraver has detailed in the most picturesque fashion his quarrels with the King's mistress and Primaticio. The poets enlisted on the side of the Duchess

d'Étampes celebrate her as a resplendent, unparalleled beauty, and were one to judge by their French and Latin epigrams, the Seneschale was nothing but a toothless, hairless, old woman, who owed her remnant of deceptive brilliancy to paint.

A less intelligent woman than Catherine would have ranged herself openly on the side of the Duchess, and tried to form a league, a connection with the powerful favorite, for an attack on the Seneschale. But this bold stroke would not have been in keeping with the temporizing genius of the Florentine. She understood that in declaring against Diana she would run a risk of being repudiated, and instead of clashing with a force which was now irresistible, she employed all her skill in remaining on equally good terms with both the favorites, irreconcilable enemies though they were. Thus the woman, who was thereafter to occupy so great a place, now sought only to efface herself; she seemed a real model of simplicity and reserve. Francis I., to whom she had never occasioned any vexation, was astonished and enraptured. He attributed her precocious wisdom to his instructions, and was both pleased and flattered by it. As to the Dauphin, in spite of the lack of warmth in his affection for his wife, he could not avoid doing justice to her physical and moral qualities.

The *ménage à trois* continued therefore, and if the Dauphin loved his mistress he certainly had a friendship for his wife. And, on her part, whenever she felt an inclination to complain of her lot, Catherine bethought herself that if she quitted her position she would probably find no refuge but the cloister, and that, taking it all round, the court of France, in spite of the humiliations and vexations one might experience there, was an abode less disagreeable than a convent.

At the end of nine years of marriage, she had still no children, and was constantly troubled by fear of a divorce. "It is unknown," says Varillas, "whether Francis I. had

been deterred from such a step by its visible injustice, the oaths by which Clement VII. had bound him never to send away this Princess who was his niece, or the pity inspired by Catherine, whose condition was then so deplorable that no place of refuge would have been open to her, the new Duke of Florence being too politic to receive her in his dominions where her rights exceeded his; or, finally, by the address of Catherine herself, who spared no pains to preserve the rank her uncle had acquired for her." The account given by the Venetian ambassador, Lorenzo Contarini, explains how prudently Catherine averted the dangers impending over her: "She went to the King and told him she had heard it was His Majesty's intention to give his son another wife, and as it had not yet pleased God to bestow on her the grace of having children, it was proper that, as soon as His Majesty found it disagreeable to wait longer, he should provide for the succession to so great a throne; that, for her part, considering the great obligations she was under to His Majesty, who had deigned to accept her as a daughter-in-law, she was much more disposed to endure this affliction than to oppose his will, and was determined either to enter a convent or remain in his service and his favor. This communication she made to King Francis I., with many tears and much emotion. The noble and indulgent heart of the King was so greatly moved by it that he replied: 'Daughter, do not fear that, since God has willed you to be my daughter-in-law, I would have it otherwise; perhaps it will yet please Him to grant to you and to me, the grace we desire more than anything else in the world.' Not long afterwards she became pregnant, and in the year 1543 she brought a male infant into the world to the great satisfaction of everybody."

Not long before, a Venetian ambassador, Matteo Dandolo, had written concerning Catherine: "Her Majesty is so much liked by both the court and the people, that I think there is no one who would not shed

some of his blood to procure her a son." She was as fruitful in the later years of her marriage as she had at first been sterile. Between 1543 and 1555 she had ten children. As soon as she became a mother she felt reassured. Her fear of divorce departed, and the wily Princess inwardly congratulated herself on the prudence which had extricated her from a difficult situation. Much younger than Diana of Poitiers, she waited for time to put her in the right and brilliantly avenge her. The astrologers, who were her counsellors, had promised her domination. Relying on their words, she waited. An interior voice said to her: "Thou shalt govern!" She did not doubt it for an instant, and each day brought her nearer to her goal. To her might be applied the famous saying: Genius is a long patience.

Mary Queen of Scots

A Portrait Study, By Andrew Lang—The Execution, By Alphonse de Lamartine—A Defense of Mary Queen of Scots, By Algernon C. Swinburne

A Portrait Study

By ANDREW LANG

THE Queen is a tall girl of twenty-four, with brown hair, and sidelong eyes of red brown. Such are her sidelong eyes in the Morton portrait; such she bequeathed to her great-great-grandson, James, "the King over the Water." She was half French in temper, one of the proud bold Guises, by her mother's side; and if not beautiful, she was so beguiling that Elizabeth recognized her magic even in the reports of her enemies.

"This lady and Princess is a notable woman," said Knollys; "she showeth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, and to be very familiar. She showeth a great desire to be avenged of her enemies, she showeth a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory, she delighteth much to hear of hardiness and valiance, commending by name all approved hardy men of her country, although they be her enemies, and concealeth no cowardice even in her friends."

There was something "divine," Elizabeth said, in the face and manner which won the hearts of her gaolers in Loch Leven and in England. "Heaven bless that sweet face!" cried the people in the streets as the Queen rode

by, or swept along with the long train, the "targetted tails" and "stinking pride of women," that Knox denounced.

She was gay, as when Randolph met her, in no more state than a burgess's wife might use, in the little house of St. Andrews, hard by the desecrated Cathedral. She could be madly mirthful, dancing, or walking the black midnight streets of Edinburgh, masked, in male apparel, or flitting in "homely attire," said her enemies, about the Market Cross in Stirling. She loved, at sea, to "handle the boisterous cables," as Buchanan tells. Pursuing her brother, Moray, on a day of storm, or hard on the doomed Huntly's track among the hills and morasses of the North; or galloping through the red bracken of the October moors, and the hills of the robbers, to Hermitage; her energy outwore the picked warriors in her company. At other times, in a fascinating languor, she would lie long abed, receiving company in the French fashion, waited on by her Maries, whose four names "are four sweet symphonies," Mary Seton and Mary Beaton, Mary Fleming and Mary Livingstone. To the Council Board she would bring her woman's work, embroidery of silk and gold. She was fabled to have carried pistols at her saddle-bow in war, and she excelled in matches of archery and pall-mall.

Her costumes, when she would be queenly, have left their mark on the memory of men: the ruff from which rose the snowy neck; the brocaded bodice, with puffed and jewelled sleeves and stomacher; the diamonds, gifts of Henri II. or of Diane; the rich pearls that became the spoil of Elizabeth; the brooches enamelled with sacred scenes, or scenes from fable. Many of her jewels—the ruby tortoise given by Riccio; the enamel of the mouse and the ensnared lioness, passed by Lethington as a token into her dungeon of Loch Leven; the diamonds bequeathed by her to one whom she might not name; the red enamelled wedding-ring, the gift of Darnley; the

diamond worn in her bosom, the betrothal present of Norfolk—are, to our fancy, like the fabled star-ruby of Helen of Troy, that dripped with blood-gouts which vanished as they fell. Riccio, Darnley, Lethington, Norfolk, the donors of these jewels, they were all to die for her, as Bothwell, too, was to perish, the giver of the diamond carried by Paris, the recipient of the black betrothal ring enamelled with bones and tears. "Her feet go down to death," her feet that were so light in the dance, "her steps take hold on hell. . . . Her lips drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword." The lips that dropped as honeycomb, the laughing mouth, could wildly threaten, and vainly rage or beseech, when she was entrapped at Carberry; or could waken pity in the sternest Puritan when, half-clad, her bosom bare, her loose hair flowing, she wailed from her window to the crowd of hostile Edinburgh.

She was of a high impatient spirit: we seem to recognize her in an anecdote told by the Black Laird of Ormistoun, one of Darnley's murderers, in prison before his execution. He had been warned by his brother, in a letter, that he was suspected of the crime, and should "get some good way to purge himself." He showed the letter to Bothwell, who read it, and gave it to Mary. She glanced at it, handed it to Huntly, "and thereafter turnit unto me, and turnit her back, and gave *ane thring* with her shoulder, and passit away, and spake nothing to me." But that "thring" spoke much of Mary's mood, unrepentant, contemptuous, defiant.

Mary's gratitude was not of the kind proverbial in princes. In September 1571, when the Ridolfi plot collapsed, and Mary's household was reduced, her sorest grief was for Archibald Beaton, her usher, and little Willie Douglas, who rescued her from Loch Leven. They were to be sent to Scotland, which meant death to both, and she pleaded pitifully for them. To her servants she

wrote: "I thank God, who has given me strength to endure, and I pray Him to grant you the like grace. To you will your loyalty bring the greatest honor, and whensoever it pleases God to set me free, I will never fail you, but reward you according to my power. . . . Pray God that you be true men and constant, to such He will never deny his grace, and for you, John Gordon and William Douglas, I pray that He will inspire your hearts. I can no more. Live in friendship and holy charity one with another, bearing each other's imperfections. . . . You, William Douglas, be assured that the life which you hazarded for me shall never be destitute while I have one friend alive."

In a trifling transaction she writes: "Rather would I pay twice over, than injure or suspect any man."

In the long lament of her letters written during her twenty years of captivity, but a few moods return and repeat themselves, like phrases in a fugue. Vain complaints, vain hopes, vain intrigues with Spain, France, the Pope, the Guises, the English Catholics, succeed each other with futile iteration. But always we hear the note of loyalty even to her humblest servants, of sleepless memory of their sacrifices for her, of unstinting and generous gratitude. Such was the Queen's "natural," *mon naturel*: with this character she faced the world: a lady to live and die for: and many died.

This woman, sensitive, proud, tameless, fierce, and kind, was browbeaten by the implacable Knox; her priests were scourged and pilloried, her creed was outraged every day; herself scolded, preached at, insulted; her every plan thwarted by Elizabeth. Mary had reason enough for tears even before her servant was slain almost in her sight by her witless husband and the merciless Lords. She could be gay, later, dancing and hunting, but it may well be that, after this last and worst of cruel insults, her heart had now become hard as the diamond; and that she was possessed by the evil spirits of

loathing, and hatred, and longing for revenge. It had not been a hard heart, but a tender; capable of sorrow for slaves at the galley oars. After her child's birth, when she was holiday-making at Alloa, according to Buchanan, with Bothwell and his gang of pirates, she wrote to the Laird of Abercairnie, bidding him be merciful to a poor woman and her "company of puir bairnis" whom he had evicted from their "kindly rowme," or little croft.

Her more than masculine courage her enemies have never denied. Her resolution was incapable of despair; "her last word should be that of a Queen." Her plighted promise she revered, but, in such an age, a woman's weapon was deceit.

She was the centre and pivot of innumerable intrigues. The fierce nobles looked on her as a means for procuring lands, office, and revenge on their feudal enemies. To the fiercer ministers she was an idolatress, who ought to die the death, and, meanwhile, must be thwarted and insulted. To France, Spain, and Austria she was a piece in the game of diplomatic chess. To the Pope she seemed an instrument that might win back both Scotland and England for the Church, while the English Catholics regarded her as either their lawful or their future Queen. To Elizabeth she was, naturally, and inevitably, and, in part, by her own fault, a deadly rival; whatever feline caresses might pass between them; gifts of Mary's heart, in a heart-shaped diamond; Elizabeth's diamond "like a rock," a rock in which was no refuge. Yet Mary was of a nature so large and unsuspicious that, on the strength of a ring and a promise, she trusted herself to Elizabeth, contrary to the advice of her staunchest adherents. She was no natural dissembler, and with difficulty came to understand that others could be false. Her sense of honour might become perverted, but she had a strong native sense of honour.

One thing this woman wanted, a master. Even before

Darnley and she were wedded, at least publicly, Randolph wrote, "All honour that may be attributed unto any man by a wife, he hath it wholly and fully." In her authentic letters to Norfolk, when, a captive in England, she regarded herself as betrothed to him, we find her adopting an attitude of submissive obedience. The same tone pervades the disputed Casket Letters, to Bothwell, and is certainly in singular consonance with the later, and genuine epistles to Norfolk. But the tone—if the Casket Letters are forged—may have been borrowed from what was known of her early submission to Darnley.

The Execution

By ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

THE punishment of her friends impressed Mary with a presentiment of her own fate. Involved in their plots, and more feared than they were, she could not long remain in suspense as to her own destiny. She was carried, in fact, some days afterward to Fotheringay Castle, her last prison. This feudal residence was solemn and gloomy, even as the hour of approaching death. Elizabeth, after long and serious deliberation, at last named thirty-six judges to examine Mary and report to the council. The Queen of Scots protested against the right of trying a queen and of judging her in a foreign country, where she was forcibly detained as a prisoner.

"Is it thus," cried she, when she appeared before the commissioners, "that Queen Elizabeth makes kings to be tried by their subjects? I only accept this place" (pointing to a seat lower than that of the judges) "because as a Christian I humble myself. My place is there," she

added, raising her hand toward the dais. "I was a queen from the cradle, and the first day that saw me a woman saw me a queen!" Then turning toward Melvil, her esquire, and the chief of her household, on whose arm she leaned, she said, "Here are many judges, but not one friend!"

She denied energetically having consented to the plan for assassinating Elizabeth; she insinuated, but without formally asserting, that secretaries might easily have added to the meaning of the letters dictated to them, as none were produced in her own handwriting. "When I came to Scotland," she said to Lord Burleigh, the principal minister, who interrogated her, "I offered to your mistress, through Lethington, a ring shaped like a heart, in token of my friendship; and when, overcome by rebels, I entered England, I in my turn received from her this pledge of encouragement and protection." Saying these words, she drew from her finger the ring which had been sent her by Elizabeth. "Look at this, my lords, and answer. During the eighteen years that I have passed under your bolts and bars, how often have your queen and the English people despised it in my person!"

The commissioners, on their return to London, assembled at Westminster, declared the Queen of Scots guilty of participation in the plot against the life of Elizabeth, and pronounced upon her sentence of death. The two houses of parliament ratified the sentence.

Mary asked, as a single favor, not to be executed in secret, but before her servants and the people, so that no one might attribute to her a cowardice unworthy of her rank, and that all might bear testimony to her constancy in suffering martyrdom. Thus she already spoke of her punishment, a consolatory idea most natural in a queen who desired that her death should be imputed to her faith rather than to her faults. She wrote letters to all her relatives and friends in France and Scotland.

"My good cousin," she wrote to the Duke of Guise, "who are the most dear to me in the world, I bid you farewell, being ready by unjust judgment to be put to death—what no one of our race, thanks to God, has ever suffered, much less one of my quality. But, praise God, my good cousin, for I was useless in the world to the cause of God and of his Church, being in the state in which I was; and I hope that my death will testify my constancy in the faith, and my readiness to die for the maintenance and restoration of the Catholic Church in this unhappy island; and though never executioner dipped his hands in our blood, be not ashamed, my friend, for the judgment of heretics and the enemies of the Church, who have no jurisdiction over me, a free queen, is profitable before God to the children of his Church. If I had yielded to them I would not have suffered this stroke. All of our house have been persecuted by this sect; witness your good father, with whom I hope to be received by the mercy of the just Judge. I recommend to you my poor servants, the payment of my debts, and the founding of some annual masses for my soul; not at your expense, but to make solicitation and ordinance as may be required, and as you will learn my intentions from my poor afflicted servants, eye-witnesses of this my last tragedy.

"God prosper you, your wife, children, brothers, and cousins, and above all our chief, my good brother and cousin, and all his. May the blessing of God and that which I would bestow on my children be yours, whom I recommend less to God than my own—who is unfortunate and ill-used.

"You will receive tokens from me to remind you to pray for the soul of your poor cousin, deprived of all help and counsel but that of God, who gives me strength and courage to resist alone so many wolves howling after me; to Him be the glory.

"Believe, in particular, what will be told you by a person who will give you a ruby ring from me, for I take it

to my conscience that you shall be told the truth in that with which I have charged her, specially as to what regards my poor servants, and the share of each. I recommend to you this person for her simple sincerity and honesty. that she may be settled in some good place. I have chosen her as the least partial, and who will the more plainly report to you my commands. I pray you that it be not known that she have said anything particular to you, for envy might injure her.

"I have suffered much for two years and more, and have not made it known to you for an important reason. God be praised for all, and give you the grace to persevere in the service of the Church as long as you live; and never may this honor depart from our race, that, men as well as women, we have been ready to shed our blood to maintain the cause of the faith, putting aside all other worldly conditions; as for me, I esteem myself born, on both father's and mother's side, to offer my blood in this matter, and have no intention of falling back. Jesus crucified for us and all the holy martyrs, make us, through their intercession, worthy of the voluntary sacrifice of our bodies for his glory!

"Thinking to humble me, my dais had been thrown down, and, afterward, my guardian offered to write to the queen, as this act was not by her command, but by the advice of some one in the council. I showed them, in place of my arms on the said dais, the cross of my Saviour. You will understand all this discourse; they were milder afterward."

This letter is signed, "Votre affectionée cousine et parfaitte amye-Marie R. d'Ecosse, D. de France."

When she was shown the ratification of her sentence, and the order for her execution signed by Elizabeth, she tranquilly remarked, "It is well; this is the generosity of Queen Elizabeth! Could any one believe she would have dared to go to these extremities with me, who am

her sister and her equal, and who could not be her subject? Nevertheless, God be praised for all, since he does me this honor of dying for him and for his Church! Blessed be the moment that will end my sad pilgrimage; a soul so cowardly as not to accept this last combat on earth would be unworthy of heaven!"

On the last moments of her life we shall follow the learned and pathetic historian who has treasured up, so to speak, her last sighs. The queen, guilty till then, became transformed into a martyr by the approach of death. When the soul is truly great it grows with its destiny; her destiny was sublime, for it was at once an accepted expiation and rehabilitation through blood.

It was night, and she entered her chapel and prayed, with her naked knees on the bare pavement. She then said to her women, "I would eat something, so that my heart may not fail me to-morrow, and that I may do nothing to make my friends ashamed of me." Her last repast was sober, solemn, but not without some sallies of humor. "Wherefore," she asked Bastien, who had been her chief buffoon, "dost thou not seek to amuse me? Thou art a good mimic, but a better servant."

Returning soon after to the idea that her death was a martyrdom, and addressing Bourgoin, her physician, who waited on her, and Melvil, her steward, who were both kept under arrest, as well as Préaux, her almoner: "Bourgoin," said she, "did you hear the Earl of Kent? It would have taken another kind of doctor to convict me. He has acknowledged besides that the warrant for my execution is the triumph of heresy in this country. It is true," she rejoined with pious satisfaction, "they put me to death not as an accomplice of conspiracy, but as a queen devoted to the Church. Before their tribunal my faith is my crime, and the same shall be my justification before my Sovereign Judge."

Her maidens, her officers, all her attendants were struck with grief, and looked upon her in silence, being

scarcely able to contain themselves. Toward the end of the repast Mary spoke of her testament, in which none of their names were to be omitted. She asked for the silver and jewels which remained, and distributed them with her hand as with her heart. She addressed farewells to each, with that delicate tact so natural to her, and with kindly emotion. She asked their pardon, and gave her own to every one present or absent, her secretary Nau excepted. They all burst into sobs, and threw themselves on their knees around the table. The queen, much moved, drank to their health, inviting them to drink also to her salvation. They weepingly obeyed, and in their turn drank to their mistress, carrying to their lips the cups in which their tears mingled with the wine.

The queen, affected at this sad spectacle, wished to be alone. She composed her last will. When written and finished, Mary, alone in her chamber with Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, asks how much money she has left. She possessed five thousand crowns, which she separates into as many lots as she has servants, proportioning the sums to their various ranks, functions, and wants. These portions she placed in an equal number of purses for the following day. She then asked for water, and had her feet washed by her maids of honor. Afterwards she wrote to the King of France:

"I recommend to you my servants once more. You will ordain, if it please you, for my soul's sake, that I be paid the sum that you owe to me, and that for the honor of Jesus Christ, to whom I shall pray for you to-morrow at the hour of my death, there may be enough to found a mass for the repose of my soul, and for the needful alms. This Wednesday, at two of the clock after midnight.

"M. R."

She now felt the necessity for repose, and lay down on

her bed. On her women approaching her, she said, "I would have preferred a sword in the French manner, rather than this axe." She then fell asleep for a short time, and even during her slumber her lips moved as if in prayer. Her face, as if lighted up from within with a spiritual beatitude, never shone with a beauty so charming and so pure. It was illuminated with so sweet a ravishment, so bathed in the grace of God, that she seemed to "smile with the angels," according to the expression of Elizabeth Curle. She slept and prayed, praying more than she slept, by the light of a little silver lamp given her by Henry II., and which she had preserved through all her fortunes. This little lamp, Mary's last light in her prison, was as the twilight of her tomb; humble implement made tragic by the memories it recalls!

Awaking before daylight, the queen rose. Her first thoughts were for eternity. She looked at the clock, and said, "I have only two hours to live here below." It was now six o'clock.

She added a postscript to her letter addressed to the King of France, requesting that the interest of her dowry should be paid after her death to her servants; that their wages and pensions should continue during their lives; that her physician (Bourgoin) should be received into the service of the king, and that Didier, an old officer of her household, might retain the place she had given him. She added, "Moreover, that my almoner may be restored to his estate, and in my favor provided with some small curacy, where he may pray God for my soul during the rest of his life." The letter was thus subscribed: "Faict le matin de ma mort, ce mercredy huitiesme Fevrier, 1587. Marie, Royne. Done on this morning of my death, this Wednesday, eighth February, 1587. Mary, Queen."

A pale winter daybreak illuminated these last lines. Mary perceived it, and, calling to her Elizabeth Curle and

Jane Kennedy, made a sign to them to robe her for this last ceremony of royalty. While their friendly hands thus apparelled her she remained silent. When fully dressed she placed herself before one of her two large mirrors inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and seemed to consider her face with pity. She then turned round and said to her maidens: "This is the moment to guard against weakness. I remember that, in my youth, my uncle Francis said to me one day in his house at Meudon, 'My niece, there is one mark above all by which I recognize you as of my own blood. You are brave as the bravest of my men-at-arms, and if women still fought as in the old times, I think you would know well how to die.' It remains for me to show to both friends and enemies from what race I have sprung."

She had asked for her almoner Préaux; two Protestant ministers were sent to her. "Madam, we come to console you," they said, stepping over the threshold of her chamber. "Are you Catholic priests?" she cried. "No," replied they. "Then I will have no comforter but Jesus," she added, with a melancholy firmness.

She now entered her chapel. She had there prepared with her own hands an altar, before which her almoner sometimes said mass to her secretly. There, kneeling down, she repeated many prayers in a low voice. She was reciting the prayers for the dying when a knock at the door of her chamber suddenly interrupted her. "What do they wish of me?" asked the queen, arising. Bourgoin replied from the chamber where he was placed with the other servants, that the lords awaited her Majesty. "It is not yet time," she replied; "let them return at the hour fixed." Then, throwing herself anew on her knees between Elizabeth Curle and Jane Kennedy, she melted into tears, and striking her breast gave thanks to God for all, praying to Him fervently and with deep sobs that He would support her in her last trial. Becoming calmer by degrees, in trying to calm her two companions, she re-

mained for some time in silent and supreme converse with her God.

What was passing at that moment within her conscience?

She then went to the window, looked out upon the calm sky, the river, the meadows, the woods. Returning to the middle of the chamber and casting her eyes toward the time-piece (called *la Reale*), she said to Jane, "The hour has struck, they will soon be here."

Scarcely had she pronounced these words when Andrew, sheriff of the county of Northampton, knocked a second time at the door, and, her women drawing back, she mildly commanded them to open it. The officer of justice entered, dressed in mourning, a white rod in his right hand, and, bowing before the queen, twice repeated, "I am here."

A slight blush mounted to the queen's cheeks, and, advancing with majesty, she said, "Let us go."

She took with her the ivory crucifix, which had never left her for seventeen years, and which she had carried from cell to cell, suspending it in the various chapels of her captivity. As she suffered much from pains brought on by the dampness of her prisons, she leaned on two of her domestics, who led her to the threshold of the chamber. There they stopped, and Bourgoin explained to the queen the strange scruple of her attendants, who desired to avoid the appearance of conducting her to slaughter. The queen, though she would have preferred their support, made allowance for their weakness, and was content to lean on two of Paulet's guards. Then all her attendants accompanied her to the uppermost flight of stairs, where the guards barred their passage in spite of their supplications, despair, and lamentations, with their arms extended toward the dear mistress whose footsteps they were hindered from following.

The queen, deeply pained, slightly quickened her steps,

with the design of protesting against this violence and of obtaining a more fitting escort.

Sir Amyas Paulet and Sir Drew Drury, the governor of Fotheringay, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Kent, the other commissioners, and many strangers of distinction, among whom were Sir Henry Talbot, Edward and William Montague, Sir Richard Knightly, Thomas Brudnell Bevil, Robert and John Wingfield, received her at the bottom of the stair.

Perceiving Melvil bent down with grief, "Courage, my faithful friend," she said; "learn to resign thyself." "Ah, madam," cried Melvil, approaching his mistress and falling at her feet, "I have lived too long, since my eyes now see you the prey of the executioner, and since my lips must tell of this fearful punishment in Scotland." Sobs then burst from his breast instead of words.

"No weakness, my dear Melvil!" she added. "Pity those who thirst for my blood, and who shed it unjustly. As for me, I make no complaint. Life is but a valley of tears, and I leave it without regret. I die for the Catholic faith, and in the Catholic faith; I die the friend of Scotland and of France. Bear testimony everywhere to the truth. Once more, cease, Melvil, to afflict thyself; rather rejoice that the misfortunes of Mary Stuart are at an end. Tell my son to remember his mother."

While the queen spoke, Melvil, still on his knees, shed a torrent of tears. Mary, having raised him up, took his hand, and, leaning forward, embraced him. "Farewell," she added, "farewell, my dear Melvil; never forget me in thy heart or thy prayers!"

Addressing the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, she then asked that her secretary Curle might be pardoned; Nau was left out. The earls keeping silence, she again prayed them to allow her women and servants to accompany her, and to be present at her death. The Earl of Kent replied that such a course would be unusual, and even dangerous; that the boldest would desire to dip their

handkerchiefs in her blood; that the most timid, and, above all, the women, would at least trouble the course of Elizabeth's justice by their cries. Mary persisted. "My lords," said she, "if your queen were here, your virgin queen, she would not think it fitting for my rank and my sex to die in the midst of men only, and would grant me some of my women to be beside my hard and last pillow." Her words were so eloquent and touching that the lords who surrounded her would have yielded to her request but for the obstinacy of the Earl of Kent. The queen perceived this, and, looking upon the puritan earl, she cried in a deep voice,

"Shed the blood of Henry VII., but despise it not. Am I not still Mary Stuart? a sister of your mistress and her equal: twice crowned; twice a queen; dowager Queen of France; legitimate Queen of Scotland." The earl was affected, but still unyielding.

Mary, with softer look and accent, then said, "My lords, I give you my word that my servants will avoid all you fear. Alas! the poor souls will do nothing but take farewell of me; surely you will not refuse this sad satisfaction either to me or to them? Think, my lords, of your own servants, of those who please you best; the nurses who have suckled you; the squires who have borne your arms in war; these servants of your prosperity are less dear to you than to me are the attendants of my misfortunes. Once more, my lords, do not send away mine in my last moments. They desire nothing but to remain faithful to me, to love me to the end, and to see me die."

The peers, after consultation, agreed to Mary's wishes. The Earl of Kent said, however, that he was still doubtful of the effect of their lamentations on the assistants, and on the queen herself.

"I will answer for them," Mary replied; "their love for me will give them strength, and my example will lend them courage. To me it will be sweet to know they are

there, and that I shall have witnesses of my perseverance in the faith."

The commissioners did not insist further, and granted to the queen four attendants and two of her maidens. She chose Melvil her steward, Bourgoin her physician, Gervais her surgeon, Gosion her druggist, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, the two companions who had replaced Elizabeth Pierrepoint in her heart. Melvil, who was present, was called by the queen herself, and an usher of Lord Paulet was sent for the others, who had remained at the upper balcony of the stair, and who now hastened down, happy even in their anguish to perform this last duty of devotion and fidelity.

Appeased by this complaisance on the part of the earls, the queen beckoned to the sheriff and his followers to advance. She was the first to lead the melancholy procession to the scaffold.

She arrived in the hall of death. Pale, but unflinching, she contemplated the dismal preparations. There lay the block and the axe. There stood the executioner and his assistant. All were clothed in mourning. On the floor was scattered the sawdust which was to soak her blood, and in a dark corner lay the bier which was to be her last prison.

It was nine o'clock when the queen appeared in the funeral hall. Fletcher, Dean of Peterborough, and certain privileged persons to the number of more than two hundred, were assembled. The hall was hung with black cloth; the scaffold, which was elevated about two feet and a half above the ground, was covered with black frieze of Lancaster; the armed chair in which Mary was to sit, the footstool on which she was to kneel, the block on which her head was to be laid, was covered with black velvet.

The queen was clothed in mourning like the hall and as the ensigns of punishment. Her black velvet robe, with its high collar and hanging sleeves, was bordered with

ermine. Her mantle, lined with marten sable, was of satin, with pearl buttons and a long train. A chain of sweet-smelling beads, to which was attached a scapulary, and beneath that a golden cross, fell upon her bosom. Two rosaries were suspended to her girdle, and a long veil of white lace, which, in some measure, softened this costume of a widow and of a condemned criminal, was thrown around her.

She was preceded by the sheriff, by Drury and Paulet, the earls and nobles of England, and followed by her two maidens and four officers, among whom was remarked Melvil, bearing the train of the royal robe. Mary's walk was firm and majestic. For a single moment she raised her veil, and her face, on which shone a hope no longer of this world, seemed beautiful as in the days of her youth. The whole assembly were deeply moved. In one hand she held a crucifix and in the other one of her chaplets.

The Earl of Kent rudely addressed her, "We should wear Christ in our hearts."

"And wherefore," she replied quickly, "should I have Christ in my hand if he were not in my heart?" Paulet assisting her to mount the scaffold, she threw upon him a look full of sweetness.

"Sir Amyas," she said, "I thank you for your courtesy; it is the last trouble I will give you, and the most agreeable service you can render me."

Arrived on the scaffold, Mary seated herself in the chair provided for her, with her face toward the spectators. The Dean of Peterborough, in ecclesiastical costume, sat on the right of the queen, with a black velvet footstool before him. The Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury were seated like him on the right, but upon larger chairs. On the other side of the queen stood the sheriff Andrews, with white wand. In front of Mary were seen the executioner and his assistant, distinguishable by their vestments of black velvet, with red crape round the left arm. Be-

hind the queen's chair, ranged by the wall, wept her attendants and maidens. In the body of the hall the nobles and citizens from the neighboring counties were guarded by the musketeers of Sir Amyas and Sir Drew Drury. Beyond the balustrade was the bar of the tribunal. The sentence was read; the queen protested against it in the name of royalty and innocence, but accepted death for the sake of the faith.

She then knelt down before the block, and the executioner proceeded to remove her veil. She repelled him by a gesture, and turning toward the earls with a blush on her forehead, "I am not accustomed," she said, "to be undressed before so numerous a company, and by the hands of such grooms of the chamber."

She then called Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, who took off her mantle, her veil, her chains, cross, and scapulary. On their touching her robe, the queen told them to unloose the corsage and fold down the ermine collar, so as to leave her neck bare for the axe. Her maidens weepingly yielded her these last services. Melvil and the three other attendants wept and lamented, and Mary placed her finger on her lips to signify that they should be silent.

"My friends," she cried, "I have answered for you, do not melt me; ought you not rather to praise God for having inspired your mistress with courage and resignation?" Yielding, however, in her turn to her own sensibility, she warmly embraced her maidens; then pressing them to descend from the scaffold, where they both clung to her dress, with hands bathed in their tears, she addressed to them a tender blessing and a last farewell. Melvil and his companions remained, as if choked with grief, at a short distance from the queen. Overcome by her accents, the executioners themselves besought her on their knees to pardon them.

"I pardon you," she said, "after the example of my Redeemer."

She then arranged the handkerchief embroidered with thistles of gold, with which her eyes had been covered by Jane Kennedy. Thrice she kissed the crucifix, each time repeating, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit." She knelt anew, and leaned her head on that block which was already scored with deep marks and in this solemn attitude she again recited some verses from the psalms. The executioner interrupted her at the third verse by a blow of the axe, but its trembling stroke only grazed her neck; she groaned slightly, and the second blow separated the head from the body. The executioner held it up at the window, within sight of all, proclaiming aloud, according to usage, "So perish the enemies of our queen!"

The queen's maids of honor and attendants enshrouded the body, and claimed it, in order that it should be sent to France; but these relics of their tenderness and faith were pitilessly refused. Relics which might rekindle fanaticism were to be feared.

But that cruel prudence was deceived by the result. Mary's death resembled a martyrdom; her memory, which had been execrated alike by the Scottish Presbyterians and the English Protestants, was practically adopted by the Catholics as that of a saint. The passions were Mary's judges; therefore she was not fairly judged, nor will she ever be.

Elizabeth, having thus mercilessly sacrificed the life of her whom she had so long and so unjustly retained in hopeless captivity, now added the most flagrant duplicity to her cruelty. Denying, with many oaths, all intention of having her own warrant carried into execution, she attempted to throw the entire odium on those who in reality had acted as her blind and devoted agents. This policy of the English queen was unsuccessful, however; posterity has with clear voice proclaimed her guilty of the blood of her royal sister, and the sanguinary stain will ever remain ineffaceable from the character of that otherwise great sovereign.

If we regard Mary Stuart in the light of her charms, her talents, her magical influence over all men who approached her, she may be called the Sappho of the sixteenth century. All that was not love in her soul was poetry; her verses, like those of Ronsard, her worshipper and teacher, possess a Greek softness combined with a quaint simplicity; they are written with tears, and even after the lapse of so many years retain something of the warmth of her sighs.

If we judge her by her life, she is the Scottish Semiramis; casting herself, before the eyes of all Europe, into the arms of the assassin of her husband, and thus giving to the people she had thrown into civil war a coronation of murder for a lesson of morality.

Her direct and personal participation in the death of her young husband has been denied, and nothing in effect, except those suspected letters, proves that she actually and personally accomplished or permitted the crime; but that she had attracted the victim into the snare; that she had given Bothwell the right and the hope of succeeding to the throne after his death; that she had been the end, the means, and the alleged prize of the crime; finally, that she absolved the murderer by bestowing upon him her hand—no doubt can be entertained regarding these points. To provoke to murder and then to absolve the perpetrator —is not this equivalent to guilt?

In fine, if she be judged by her death—comparable, in its majesty, its piety, and its courage, to the most heroic and the holiest sacrifices of the primitive martyrs—the horror and aversion with which she had been regarded change at last to pity, esteem, and admiration. As long as there was no expiation she remained a criminal; by expiation she became a victim. In her history blood seems to be washed out by blood; the guilt of her former years flows, as it were, from her veins with the crimson stream; we do not absolve, we sympathize; our pity is not absolution, but rather approaches to love; we try to find excuses

for her conduct in the ferocious and dissolute manners of the age; in that education, depraved, sanguinary, and fanatical, which she received at the court of the Valois; in her youth, her beauty, her love. We are constrained to say with M. Dargaud—to whom we feel deeply indebted for the researches which have guided us—"We judge not; we only relate."

A Defense of Mary Queen of Scots

By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

AMONG the various points of view taken in times past and present by students of a subject which must surely have lost its interest long since if that interest were less than inexhaustible, I have always missed, and wondered at the general oversight which appears to ignore it, one which would most naturally seem to present itself for candid and rational consideration by either party to the argument. Every shade of possible opinion on the matter has found in its various champions every possible gradation of ability in debate. And the universal result, as it appears to an outsider—to a student of history unconscious alike of prejudice and prepossession—is that they who came to curse the memory of Mary Stuart have blessed it as with the blessing of a Balaam, and they who came to bless it, with tribute of panegyric or with testimony in defence, have inevitably and invariably cursed it altogether. To vindicate her from the imputations of her vindicators would be the truest service that could now be done by the most loyal devotion to her name and fame.

A more thorough, more earnest, and on the whole a more able apology for any disputed or debatable char-

acter in all the range of history it would indeed be hard to find than that which has been attempted by Mr. Hosack in his two copious and laborious volumes on *Mary Queen of Scots and her Accusers.* Every point of vantage throughout the intricacies of irreconcilable evidence is clearly seen, is swiftly seized, is manfully defended. And the ultimate outcome of all is the presentation of a figure beside which, I do not say the Mary Stuart of Mr. Froude, but the Mary Stuart of George Buchanan, is an acceptable and respectable type of royal womanhood—a pardonable if not admirable example of human character. Many bitter and terrible things were said of that woman in her lifetime by many fierce and unscrupulous enemies of her person or her creed: many grave and crushing charges were alleged against her on plausible or improbable grounds of impeachment or suspicion. But two things were never imputed to her by the most reckless ferocity of malice or of fear. No one ever dreamed of saying that Mary Queen of Scots was a fool. And no one ever dared to suggest that Mary Queen of Scots was a coward.

That there are fewer moral impossibilities than would readily be granted by the professional moralist, those students of human character who are not professional moralists may very readily admit. A very short and a very narrow experience will suffice to preserve a man—or for that matter a boy—of average intelligence from any sense of shocked astonishment when his expectation is confronted by "fears of the brave and follies of the wise," instances of mercy in the unmerciful or cruelty in the humane. But there is a limit to the uttermost range of such paradoxical possibilities. And that limit is reached and crossed, cleared at a leap and left far out of sight, by the theorist who demands our assent to such a theorem as this: That a woman whose intelligence was below the average level of imbecility, and whose courage was below the average level of a coward's, should have

succeeded throughout the whole course of a singularly restless and adventurous career in imposing herself upon the judgment of every man and woman with whom she ever came into any sort or kind of contact, as a person of the most brilliant abilities and the most dauntless daring. Credat Catholicus; for such faith must surely exceed the most credulous capacity of ancient Jew or modern Gentile.

But this is not all, or nearly all. Let us admit, though it be no small admission, that Mary Stuart, who certainly managed to pass herself off upon every one who came near her under any circumstances as the brightest and the bravest creature of her kind in any rank or any country of the world, was dastard enough to be cowed into a marriage which she was idiot enough to imagine could be less than irretrievable ruin to her last chance of honour or prosperity. The violence of Bothwell and the perfidy of her council imposed forsooth this miserable necessity on the credulous though reluctant victim of brute force on the one hand and treasonable fraud on the other. Persuaded by the request and convinced by the reasoning of those about her, Lucretia felt it nothing less than a duty to accept the hand of Tarquin yet reeking from the blood of Collatinus. The situation is worthy of one of Mr. Gilbert's incomparable ballads or burlesques; and her contemporaries, Catholic or Protestant, friend or foe, rival or ally, may be forgiven if they failed at once to grasp and realize it as a sufficiently plausible solution of all doubts and difficulties not otherwise as rationally explicable. Yet possibly it may not be impossible that an exceptionally stupid girl, reared from her babyhood in an atmosphere of artificially exceptional innocence, might play at once the active and the passive part assigned to Mary, before and after the execution of the plot against her husband's life, by the traducers who have undertaken her defence. But for this improbability to be possible it is obviously necessary to assume in this pitiable puppet

an extent of ignorance to be equalled only, and scarcely, by the depth and density of her dulness. A woman utterly wanting in tact, intuition, perception of character or grasp of circumstance—a woman abnormally devoid of such native instinct and such acquired insight as would suffice to preserve all but the dullest of natures from ludicrous indiscretion and perilous indelicacy—might perhaps for lack of experience be betrayed into such a succession of mishaps as the training of an ideally rigid convent might have left it difficult or impossible for her fatuous innocence to foresee. But of the convent in which Mary Stuart had passed her novitiate the Lady Superior was Queen Catherine de Medici. The virgins who shared the vigils of her maidenhood or brightened the celebration of her nuptials were such as composed the Queen-Mother's famous "flying squadron" of high-born harlots, professionally employed in the task of making the worship of Venus Pandemos subserve the purposes of Catholic faith or polity, and occasionally, as on the Feast of St. Bartholomew, exhilarated by such diversions as the jocose examination of naked and newly-murdered corpses with an eye to the satisfaction of a curiosity which the secular pen of a modern historian must decline to explain with the frankness of a clerical contemporary. The cloistral precinct which sheltered her girlhood from such knowledge of evil as might in after days have been of some protection to her guileless levity was the circuit of a court whose pursuits and recreations were divided between the alcoves of Sodom and the playground of Aceldama. What were the vices of the society described by Brantôme it is impossible, or at least it would be repulsive, to suggest by so much as a hint: but its virtues were homicide and adultery. Knox or Ascham would have given plainer and juster expression, in shorter terms of speech more purely English, to the fact that no man was honoured who could not show blood on his hands, no woman admired who would not boast as loudly of the

favours she had granted as her gallants of the favours they had received. It is but a slight matter to add that the girl who was reared from her very infancy in this atmosphere—in the atmosphere of a palace which it would be flattery to call a brothel or a slaughter-house—had for her mother a woman of the blood-stained house of Guise, and for her father the gaberlunzie-man or jolly beggar of numberless and nameless traditional adventures in promiscuous erotic intrigue. The question of family is of course very far from conclusive, though certainly it may help "to thicken other proofs that do demonstrate thinly." The calendar of saints includes a Borgia; or, to put it perhaps more forcibly, the house of Borgia contains a saint. And some writers—Landor among them, who had little love for the brood—have averred that the Bonaparte family did once produce an honest man and equitable ruler—Louis king of Holland, whose only son gave his life in vain for Italy. It would certainly have been no greater miracle than these, no more startling exception to the general rule, that the daughter of James V. and Mary of Guise should have been a blameless though imbecile creature, an innocent in the least flattering sense of the word, whose blood was very snow-broth and whose brain a very feather. But mere innocence, as distinguished from the absolute idiocy which even her warmest admirers would hesitate to ascribe to her, will hardly suffice to explain her course of conduct in the most critical period of her life. A woman who could play the part assigned to Mary by the Whitakers, Stricklands, Aytouns, and Hosacks whose laudations have so cruelly libelled her, must have been either the veriest imbecile whose craven folly ever betrayed in every action an innate and irresponsible impotence of mind, or at least and at best a good girl of timid temper and weak intellect, who had been tenderly sheltered all her life from any possible knowledge or understanding of evil, from all apprehension as from all experience of wickedness and wrong.

Now it is of course just barely possible that a girl might come innocent as Shakespeare's Marina even out of such a house of entertainment as that kept by the last princes of the race of Valois: but it is absolutely and glaringly impossible that she should come forth from it ignorant of evil. And it is not a jot less impossible that an innocent woman who was not animally idiotic or angelically ignorant, a drivelling craven or a thing enskied and sainted, the pitifullest or the purest, the most thick-witted or the most unspotted of her kind, could have borne herself as did Mary after the murder of her caitiff husband. Let us assume, though it is no small assumption, that all her enemies were liars and forgers. Let us imagine that except among her adherents there was not a man of any note in all Scotland who was not capable of treason as infamous as that of the English conspirators on her behalf against the life of Elizabeth and the commonwealth of their country. Let us suppose that a Buchanan, for example, was what Mr. Hosack has called him, "the prince of literary prostitutes": a rascal cowardly enough to put forth in print a foul and formless mass of undigested falsehood and rancorous ribaldry, and venal enough to traffic in the disgrace of his dishonourable name for a purpose as infamous as his act. Let us concede that a Maitland was cur enough to steal that name as a mask for the impudent malice of ingratitude. Let us allow that Murray may have been the unscrupulous traitor and Elizabeth the malignant rival of Marian tradition. Let us admit that the truest solution of a complicated riddle may be that most ingenious theory advocated by Mr. Hosack, which addresses to Darnley instead of Bothwell the most passionate and pathetic of the Casket Letters, and cancels as incongruous forgeries all those which refuse to fit into this scheme of explanation. Let us grant that the forgers were at once as clumsy as Cloten and as ingenious as Iago. The fact remains no less obvious and obtrusive than before, that it is very much easier to

blacken the fame of Mary's confederate enemies than to whitewash the reputation of Bothwell's royal wife. And what manner of whitewash is that which substitutes for the features of an erring but heroic woman those of a creature not above but beneath the human possibility of error or of sin?

But if we reject as incredible the ideal of Prince Labanoff's loyal and single-hearted credulity, does it follow that we must accept the ideal of Mr. Froude's implacable and single-eyed animosity? Was the mistress of Bothwell, the murderess of Darnley, the conspiratress against the throne and life of her kinswoman and hostess, by any necessary consequence the mere panther and serpent of his fascinating and magnificent study? This seems to me no more certain a corollary than that because she went to the scaffold with a false front her severed head, at the age of forty-five, must have been that "of a grizzled, wrinkled old woman." By such flashes of fiery and ostentatious partisanship the brilliant and fervent advocate of the Tudors shows his hand, if I may say so without offence, a little too unconsciously and plainly. And his ultimate conclusion that "she was a bad woman, disguised in the livery of a martyr," (vol. 12, ch. 34) seems to me not much better supported by the sum of evidence producible on either side than the counter inference of his most pertinacious antagonist that "this illustrious victim of sectarian violence and barbarous statecraft will ever occupy the most prominent place in the annals of her sex" (Hosack, vol. 2, ch. 27). There are annals and annals, from the Acta Sanctorum to the Newgate Calendar. In the former of these records Mr. Hosack, in the latter Mr. Froude, would inscribe—as I cannot but think, with equal unreason—the name of Mary Stuart.

"She was a bad woman," says the ardent and energetic advocate on the devil's side in this matter, because "she was leaving the world with a lie on her lips," when with her last breath she protested her innocence of the charge

on which she was condemned to death. But the God of her worship, the God in whom she trusted, the God on whom she had been taught to lean for support of her conscience, would no more have been offended at this than the God of Dahomey is offended by human sacrifice. Witness all the leading spirits among his servants, in that age if in no other, from pope to king and from king to cutthroat—from Gregory XIII. and Sextus V. to Philip II. and Charles IX., and from Philip II. and Charles IX. to Saulx-Tavannes and Maurevel. To their God and hers a lie was hardly less acceptable service than a murder; Blessed Judas was a servant only less commendable than Saint Cain. Nor, on the whole, would it appear that the lapse of time has brought any perceptible improvement to the moral character of this deity. The *coup d'état* of August 24, 1572, was not an offering of sweeter savour in his expansive and insatiable nostrils than was the St. Bartholomew of December 2, 1851. From the same chair the vicar of the same God bestowed the same approving benediction on Florentine and on Corsican perjurer and murderer. And in a worshipper of this divine devil, in the ward of a Medici or a Bonaparte, it would be an inhuman absurdity to expect the presence or condemn the absence of what nothing far short of a miracle could have implanted—the sense of right and wrong, the distinction of good from evil, the preference of truth to falsehood. The heroine of Fotheringay was by no means a bad woman: she was a creature of the sixteenth century, a Catholic and a Queen. What is really remarkable is what is really admirable in her nature, and was ineradicable as surely as it was unteachable by royal training or by religious creed. I desire no better evidence in her favour than may be gathered from the admissions of her sternest judge and bitterest enemy. "Throughout her life," Mr. Froude allows, "she never lacked gratitude to those who had been true to her.—Never did any human creature meet death more bravely." Except in the dialect

of the pulpit, she is not a bad woman of whom so much at least must be said and cannot be denied. Had she been born the man that she fain would have been born, no historian surely would have refused her a right to a high place among other heroes and above other kings. All Mr. Froude's vituperative terms cannot impair the nobility of the figure he presents to our unapproving admiration: all Mr. Hosack's sympathetic phrases cannot exalt the poverty of the spirit he exposes for our unadmiring compassion. For however much we may admire the courage he ascribes to her at the last, we cannot remember with less than contemptuous pity the pusillanimous imbecility which on his showing had been the distinctive quality of her miserable life. According to her champion, a witness against her more pitiless than John Knox or Edmund Spenser, she had done nothing in her time of trial that an innocent woman would have done, and left nothing undone that an innocent woman would have studiously abstained from doing, if she had not been in the idiotic sense an innocent indeed. But it is in their respective presentations of the closing scene at Fotheringay that the incurable prepossession of view which is common to both advocates alike springs suddenly into sharpest illustration and relief. Mr. Froude cannot refrain from assuming, on grounds too slight for Macaulay to have accepted as sufficient for the damnation of a Jacobite, that on receipt of her death-warrant the Queen of Scots "was dreadfully agitated," and "at last broke down altogether," before the bearers of the sudden intelligence had left her. Now every line of the narrative preceding this imputation makes it more and more insuperably difficult to believe that in all her dauntless life Queen Mary can ever have been "dreadfully agitated," except by anger and another passion at least as different from fear. But this exhibition of prepense partisanship is nothing to the grotesque nakedness of Mr. Hosack's. At a first reading it is difficult for a reader to believe the evidence of his eyesight

when he finds a historian who writes himself "barrister-at-law," and should surely have some inkling of the moral weight or worth of evidence as to character, deliberately asserting that in her dying appeal for revenge to the deadliest enemy of England and its queen, Mary, after studious enumeration of every man's name against whom she bore such resentment as she desired might survive her death, and strike them down with her dead hand by way of retributive sacrifice, "exhibited an unparalleled instance of feminine forbearance and generosity" (the sarcasm implied on womanhood is too savage for the most sweeping satire of a Thackeray or a Pope) "in omitting the name of Elizabeth." *O sancta simplicitas!* Who shall say after this that the practice of the legal profession is liable to poison the gushing springs of youth's ingenuous trustfulness and single-minded optimism?

An advocate naturally or professionally incapable of such guileless confidence and ingenuous self-betrayal is Father John Morris, "Priest of the Society of Jesus," and editor of "The Letter-books of Sir Amias Poulet, Keeper of Mary Queen of Scots": a volume nothing less than invaluable as well as indispensable to all serious students of the subject in hand. Writers of genius and impetuosity such as Mr. Froude's and the late Canon Kingsley's lay themselves open at many points of minor importance to the decisive charge or the wary fence of an antagonist expert in the fine art of controversy: but their main or ultimate positions may prove none the less difficult to carry by the process of countermine or other sacerdotal tactics. Father Morris is not quite so hard on his client as Mr. Hasock: for by admitting something of what is undeniable in the charges of history against her he attenuates the effect and diminishes the prominence of his inevitable and obvious prepossessions: and though he suggests (p. 275) that "perhaps Mary was not quite 'the fiery woman' Mr. Froude imagines her to have been," he does not pretend to exhibit her as the watery

thing of tears and terrors held up to our compassion by the relentless if unconscious animosity of the implacable counsel for her defense.

On one point (p. 143) the pleading of Father Morris must in no inconsiderable measure command the sympathy of all Englishmen who honestly love fair play, and that not only when it plays into their own hands. It is surely much more than high time, after the lapse of three centuries, that honest and generous men of different creeds and parties should be equally ready to do justice, if not to each other's God,—since Gods are by necessity of nature irreconcilable and internecine,—at least to the memories of their common countrymen, who played their part manfully in their day on either side with fair and loyal weapons of attack and defence. We regard with disgust and the horror of revolted conscience that vile and execrable doctrine which assures us in childhood that the glory of martyrdom depends on the martyr's orthodoxy of opinion, on the accuracy of his reckoning or the justice of his conjecture as to spiritual matters of duty or of faith, on the happiness of a guess or the soundness of an argument; but surely it profits us little to have cleared our conscience of such a creed if we remain incapable of doing justice to Jesuit and Calvinist, creedsman and atheist, alike. It profits us little if we are to involve in one ignominy with the unscrupulous and treasonous intrigues of Parsons and Garnet the blameless labours and the patient heroism of Edmund Campion. So far, then, Father Morris has a good card in hand, and plays it well and fairly, when he pleads, for example, against Mr. Froude's charges, and on behalf of his own famous Society, that "Gilbert Gifford had no 'Jesuit training,' and 'the Order' never had anything to do with him;—but it is necessary to note that all through Mr. Froude's *History* he habitually styles 'Jesuits' those who never had anything in the world to do with the Society of which St. Ignatius Loyola was the founder." Gilbert Gifford

was a traitor, and any man must be eager to avoid the disgrace of any connection, though never so remote or oblique, with a traitor's infamy. But I hope it may not be held incompatible with all respect for the conscientious labours of Father Morris, and with all gratitude for help and obligation conferred by them, to remark with due deference that a champion of Jesuits against the malignant errors of calumnious misrepresentation would be wise to avoid all occasion given to heretical pravity for a scoff on the old scores of pious fraud or suggestion of falsehood. Exactly two hundred and five pages after this pathetic protest of conscious virtue and candid indignation against the inexcusable injustice of an anti-Catholic historian, this denouncer of Mr. Froude's unfair dealing and unfounded statements, "the parallel of which it would be difficult to find in any one claiming to occupy the judicial position of a historian," affords the following example of his own practical respect for historical justice and accuracy of statement.

"Not only," he says, with righteous disgust at such brutality, "not only would Poulet deprive Mary of Melville and du Préau, but, writing too from his own sick bed, he betrays his wish to remove the medical attendants also, though his prisoner was in chronic ill health."

The whole and sole ground for such an imputation is given, with inconsistent if not unwary frankness, on the very next page but one, in the text of Paulet's letter to Davison.

"The physician, apothecary, and the surgeon have been so often allowed to this lady by her Majesty's order, that I may not take upon me to displace them without special warrant, referring the same to your better consideration."

It is scarcely by the display of such literary tactics as these that a Jesuit will succeed in putting to shame the credulity of unbelievers who may be so far misguided by heretical reliance on a groundless tradition as to attribute the practice of holy prevarication, and the doctrine of an

end which sanctifies the most equivocal means of action or modes of argument, to the ingenuous and guileless children of Ignatius. For refutation of these inexplicable calumnies and explosion of this unaccountable error we must too evidently look elsewhere.

An elder luminary of the Roman Church, the most brilliant and impudent chronicler of courtly brothelry between the date of Petronius and the date of Grammont, has left on record that when news came to Paris of the execution at Fotheringay the general verdict passed by most of her old acquaintances on the Queen Dowager of France was that her death was a just if lamentable retribution for the death of Chastelard. The despatch of a disloyal husband by means of gunpowder was not, in the eyes of these Catholic moralists, an offence worth mention if set against the execution of a loyal lover, "even in her sight he loved so well." That the luckless young rhymester and swordsman had been Mary's favoured lover—a circumstance which would of course have given no scandal whatever to the society in which they had grown up to years of indiscretion—can be neither affirmed nor denied on the authority of any positive and incontrovertible proof: and the value of such moral if not legal evidence as we possess depends mainly on the credit which we may be disposed to assign to the reported statement of Murray. Knox, who will not generally be held capable of deliberate forgery and lying, has left an account of the affair which can hardly be regarded as a possible misrepresentation or perversion of fact, with some grain of discoloured and distorted truth half latent in a heap of lies. Either the falsehood is absolute, or the conclusion is obvious.

The first sentences of his brief narrative may be set down as giving merely an austere and hostile summary of common rumours. That Chastelard "at that tyme passed all otheris in credytt with the Quene"; that "in dansing of the Purpose, (so terme thei that danse, in the

which man and woman talkis secreatlie—wyese men wold judge such fassionis more lyke to the bordell than to the comelynes of honest wemen,) in this danse the Quene chosed Chattelett, and Chattelett took the Quene"; that "Chattelett had the best dress"; that "all this winter" (1563) "Chattelett was so familiare in the Quenis cabinett, ayre and laitt, that scarslye could any of the Nobilitie have access unto hir"; that "the Quene wold ly upoun Chattelettis shoulder, and sometymes prively she wold steall a kyss of his neck"; these are records which we may or may not pass by as mere court gossip retailed by the preacher, and to be taken with or without discount as the capable and equanimous reader shall think fit. We may presume however that the prophet-humourist did not append the following comment without sardonic intention. "And all this was honest yneuch; for it was the gentill entreatment of a stranger." The kernel of the matter lies in the few sentences following.

"But the familiaritie was so great, that upoun a nycht, he privelie did convey him self under the Quenis bed; but being espyed, he was commanded away. But the bruyte arysing, the Quene called the Erle of Murray, and bursting forth in a womanlie affectioun, charged him, 'That as he loved hir, he should slay Chattelett, and let him never speak word.' The other, at the first, maid promesse so to do; but after calling to mynd the judgementis of God pronunced against the scheddaris of innocent bloode, and also that none should dye, without the testimonye of two or thre witnesses, returned and fell upoun his kneis befoir the Quene, and said, 'Madam, I beseak your Grace, cause me not tack the bloode of this man upoun me. Your Grace has entreated him so familiarlie befoir, that ye have offended all your Nobilitie; and now yf he shalbe secreatlie slane at your awin commandiment, what shall the world judge of it? I shall bring him to the presence of Justice, and let him suffer be law according to his deserving.' 'Oh,' said the Quene,

'ye will never let him speak?' 'I shall do, said he, 'Madam, what in me lyeth to saiff your honour.'" (*The History of the Reformation in Scotland, Book IV.: The Works of John Knox; collected and edited by David Laing. Vol, II., p.* 368.) "Upon this hint I spake," when in the last year of my life as an undergraduate I began my play of *Chastelard;* nor have I to accuse myself, then or since, of any voluntary infraction of recorded fact or any conscious violation of historical chronology, except—to the best of my recollection—in two instances: the date of Mary's second marriage and the circumstances of her last interview with John Knox. I held it as allowable to anticipate by two years the event of Darnley's nuptials, or in other words to postpone for two years the event of Chastelard's execution, as to compile or condense into one dramatic scene the details of more than one conversation recorded by Knox between Mary and himself.

To accept the natural and unavoidable inference from the foregoing narrative, assuming of course that it is not to be dismissed on all counts as pure and simple falsehood, may seem equivalent to an admission that the worst view ever yet taken of Queen Mary's character is at least no worse than was undeniably deserved. And yet, without any straining of moral law or any indulgence in paradoxical casuistry, there is something if not much to be offered in her excuse. To spare the life of a suicidal young monomaniac who would not accept his dismissal with due submission to the inevitable and suppression of natural regret, would probably in her own eyes have been no less than ruin to her character under the changed circumstances and in the transformed atmosphere of her life. As, in extenuation of his perverse and insuppressible persistency in thrusting himself upon the compassion or endurance of a woman who possibly was weary of his homage, it may doubtless be alleged that Mary Stuart was hardly such a mistress as a man could be expected

readily to resign, or perhaps, at Chastelard's age, to forego with much less reluctance than life itself; so likewise may it be pleaded on the other hand that the Queen of Scotland could not without at least equal unreason be expected to sacrifice her reputation and imperil her security for the sake of a cast-off lover who could not see that it was his duty as a gentleman of good sense to submit himself and his passion to her pleasure and the force of circumstances. The act of Chastelard was the act of a rebel as surely as the conduct of Darnley three years later was the conduct of a traitor; and by all the laws then as yet unrepealed, by all precedents and rights of royalty, the life of the rebellious lover was scarce less unquestionably forfeit than the life of the traitorous consort. Nobody in those days had discovered the inestimable secret of being royalists or Christians by halves. At least, it was an unpromising time for any one who might attempt to anticipate this popular modern discovery.

It must be admitted that Queen Mary was generally and singularly unlucky in her practical assertion of prerogative. To every one of her royal descendants, with the possible exception of King Charles II., she transmitted this single incapacity by way of counterpoise to all the splendid and seductive gifts which she likewise bequeathed to not a few of their luckless line. They were a race of brilliant blunderers, with obtuse exceptions interspersed. To do the right thing at the wrong time, to fascinate many and satisfy none, to display every kind of faculty but the one which might happen to be wanted, was as fatally the sign of a Stuart as ever ferocity was of a Claudius or perjury of a Bonaparte. After the time of Queen Mary there were no more such men born into the race as her father and half-brother. The habits of her son were as suggestive of debased Italian blood in the worst age of Italian debasement as the profitless and incurable cunning with which her grandson tricked

his own head off his shoulders, the swarthy levity and epicurean cynicism of his elder son, or the bloody piety and sullen profligacy of his younger. The one apparently valid argument against the likelihood of their descent from Rizzio is that Darnley would undoubtedly seem to have pledged what he called his honour to the fact of his wife's infidelity. Towards that unhappy traitor her own conduct was not more merciless than just, or more treacherous than necessary, if justice was at all to be done upon him. In the house of Medici or in the house of Lorraine she could have found and cited at need in vindication of her strategy many far less excusable examples of guile as relentless and retaliation as implacable as that which lured or hunted a beardless Judas to his doom. If the manner in which justice was done upon him will hardly be justified by the most perverse and audacious lover of historical or moral paradox, yet neither can the most rigid upholder of moral law in whom rigour has not got the upper hand of reason deny that never was a lawless act committed with more excuse or more pretext for regarding it as lawful. To rid herself of a traitor and murderer who could not be got rid of by formal process of law was the object and problem which the action of Darnley had inevitably set before his royal consort. That the object was attained and the problem solved with such inconceivable awkwardness and perfection of mismanagement is proof that no infusion of Guisian blood or training of Medicean education could turn the daughter of an old heroic northern line into a consummate and cold intriguer of the southern Catholic pattern. The contempt of Catherine for her daughter-in-law when news reached Paris of the crowning blunder at Kirk of Field must have been hardly expressible by human utterance. At her best and worst alike, it seems to my poor apprehension that Mary showed herself a diplomatist only by education and force of native ability brought to bear on a line of life and conduct most alien from her inborn impulse as a

frank, passionate, generous, unscrupulous, courageous and loyal woman, naturally self-willed and trained to be self-seeking, born and bred an imperial and royal creature, at once in the good and bad or natural and artificial sense of the words. In such a view I can detect no necessary incoherence; in such a character I can perceive no radical inconsistency. But "to assert," as Mr. Hosak says (ch. 27), "that any human being," neither a born idiot nor a spiritless dastard, "could have been guilty" of such utterly abject and despicable conduct as the calumnious advocates of her innocence find themselves compelled to impute to her, "is," as I have always thought and must always continue to think, "an absurdity which refutes itself." The theory that an "unscupulous oligarchy at length accomplished her ruin by forcing her"—of all things in the world—"to marry Bothwell," is simply and amply sufficient, if accepted, to deprive her of all claim on any higher interest or any nobler sympathy than may be excited by the suffering of a beaten hound. Indeed, the most impossible monster of incongruous merits and demerits which can be found in the most chaotic and inconsequent work of Euripides or Fletcher is a credible and coherent production of consistent nature if compared with Mr. Hosack's heroine. Outside the range of the clerical and legal professions it should be difficult to find men of keen research and conscientious ability who can think that a woman of such working brain and burning heart as never faltered, never quailed, never rested till the end had come for them of all things, could be glorified by degradation to the likeness of a brainless, heartless, sexless and pusillanimous fool. Supposing she had taken part in the slaying of Darnley, there is every excuse for her; supposing she had not, there is none. Considered from any possible point of view, the tragic story of her life in Scotland admits but of one interpretation which is not incompatible with the impression she left on all friends and all foes alike. And this interpretation is simply that

she hated Darnley with a passionate but justifiable hatred, and loved Bothwell with a passionate but pardonable love. For the rest of her career, I cannot but think that whatever was evil and ignoble in it was the work of education and circumstance; whatever was good and noble, the gift of nature or of God.

Maria Theresa

By ANNA JAMESON

MARIA THERESA,[1] of Austria, born on the 13th of May, 1717—was the daughter of Charles the Sixth, Emperor of Germany, and Elizabeth Christina, of Brunswick, a lovely and amiable woman, who possessed and deserved her husband's entire confidence and affection.

Maria Theresa had been destined from her infancy to marry the young Duke of Lorraine, who was brought up in the court of Vienna, as her intended husband. It is very, very seldom that these political state-marriages terminate happily, or harmonize with the wishes and feelings of those principally concerned; but in the present case "the course of true love" was blended with that of policy. Francis Stephen of Lorraine was the son of Leopold, Duke of Lorraine, surnamed the Good and Benevolent. His grandmother, Leonora of Austria, was the eldest sister of Charles VI., and he was consequently the cousin of his intended bride. Francis was not possessed of shining talents, but he had a good understanding and an excellent heart; he was, besides, eminently handsome, indisputably brave, and accomplished in all the courtly exercises that became a prince and a gentleman. In other respects his education had been strangely neglected; he could scarcely read or write. From childhood the two cousins had been fondly attached, and their attachment was perhaps increased, at least on the side of Maria Theresa, by those political obstacles which long

deferred their union, and even threatened at one time a lasting separation. Towards the end of his reign the affairs of Charles VI., through his imbecility and misgovernment, fell into the most deplorable, the most inextricable confusion. Overwhelmed by his enemies, unaided by his friends and allies, he absolutely entertained the idea of entering into a treaty with Spain, and offering his daughter Maria Theresa, in marriage to Prince Charles, the heir of that monarchy.

But Maria Theresa was not of a temper to submit quietly to an arrangement of which she was to be made the victim; she remonstrated, she wept, she threw herself for support and assistance into her mother's arms. The empress, who idolized her daughter and regarded the Duke of Lorraine as her son, incessantly pleaded against this sacrifice of her daughter's happiness. The English minister at Vienna gives the following lively description of the state of affairs at this time, and of the feelings and deportment of the young archduchess:—"She is," says Mr. Robinson, "a princess of the highest spirit; her father's losses are her own. She reasons already; she enters into affairs; she 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 humor, she sighs and pines for her Duke of Lorraine. If she sleeps, it is only to dream of him—if she wakes, it is 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."

Charles VI., distracted and perplexed by the difficulties of his situation, by the passionate grief of his daughter, by the remonstrances of his wife and the rest of his family, and without spirit, or abilities, or confidence in himself or others, became a pitiable object. During the

day, and while transacting business with his ministers, he maintained his accustomed dignity and formality; but in the dead of night, in the retirement of his own chamber, and when alone with the empress, he gave way to such paroxysms of affliction, that not his health only, but his life was endangered, and his reason began to give way. A peace with France had become necessary on any terms, and almost at any sacrifice; and a secret negotiation was commenced with Cardinal Fleury, then at the head of the French government, under (or, more properly speaking, *over*) Louis the Fifteenth. By one of the principal articles of this treaty, the Duchy of Lorraine was to be given up to France, and annexed to that kingdom; and the Duke of Lorraine was to receive, in lieu of his hereditary possessions, the whole of Tuscany. The last Grand Duke of Tuscany of the family of the Medici, the feeble and degenerate Cosmo III., was still alive, but in a state of absolute dotage, and the claims of his heiress, Anna de' Medici, were to be set aside. Neither the inhabitants of Lorraine nor the people of Tuscany were consulted in this arbitrary exchange. A few diplomatic notes between Charles's secretary Bartenstein and the crafty old cardinal, settled the matter. It was in vain that the government of Tuscany remonstrated, and in vain that Francis of Lorraine overwhelmed the Austrian ministers with reproaches, and resisted, as far he was able, this impudent transfer of his own people and dominions to a foreign power. Bartenstein had the insolence to say to him, "Monseigneur, point de cession, point d'archiduchesse."

Putting love out of the question, Francis could not determine to stake his little inheritance against the brilliant succession which awaited him with Maria Theresa. The alternative, however, threw him into such agony and distress of mind, that even his health was seriously affected. But peace was necessary to the interests, and even the preservation of the empire. Lorraine was given

up, and the reversion of the grand-duchy of Tuscany settled upon Francis. The preliminaries of this treaty being signed in 1735, the emperor was relieved from impending ruin, and his daughter from all her apprehensions of the Prince of Spain; and, no further obstacles intervening, the nuptials of Maria Theresa and Francis of Lorraine were celebrated at Vienna in February, 1736. By the marriage contracts the Pragmatic Sanction was again signed and ratified, and the Duke of Lorraine solemnly bound himself never to assert any personal right to the Austrian dominions. The two great families of Hapsburgh and Lorraine, descended from a common ancestor, were by this marriage re-united in the same stock.

Prince Eugene, who had commanded the imperial armies for nearly forty years, died a few days after the marriage of Maria Theresa, at the age of seventy-three. His death was one of the greatest misfortunes that could have occurred at this period, both to the emperor and the nation.

A young princess, beautiful and amiable, the heiress of one of the greatest monarchies in Europe, married at the age of eighteen to the man whom she had long and deeply loved, and who returned her affection, and soon the happy mother of two fair infants, presents to the imagination as pretty a picture of splendor and felicity as ever was exhibited in romance or fairy tale; but when we turn over the pages of history, or look into real life, everywhere we behold the hand of a just Providence equalizing the destiny of mortals.

During the four years which elapsed between Maria Theresa's marriage and her accession to the throne, her life was embittered by anxieties arising out of her political position. Her husband was appointed generalissimo of the imperial armies against the Turks, in a war which both himself and Maria Theresa disapproved. He left her in the first year of their marriage, to take command

of the army, and more than once too rashly exposed his life. Francis had more bravery than military skill. He was baffled and hampered in his designs by the weak jealousy of the emperor and the cabals of the ministers and generals. All the disasters of two unfortunate campaigns were imputed to him, and he returned to Vienna disgusted, irritated, sick at heart, and suffering from illness. The court looked coldly on him; he was unpopular with the nation and with the soldiery; but his wife received him with open arms, and, with a true woman's tenderness, "loved him for the dangers he had passed." She nursed him into health, she consoled him, she took part in all his wrongs and feelings, and was content to share with him the frowns of her father and the popular dislike. They were soon afterward sent into a kind of honorable exile into Tuscany, under pretence of going to take possession of their new dominions, and in their absence it was publicly reported that the emperor intended to give his second daughter to the Elector of Bavaria, to change the order of succession in her favor, and disinherit Maria Theresa. The archduchess and her husband were more annoyed than alarmed by these reports, but their sojourn at Florence was a period of constant and cruel anxiety.

Maria Theresa had no sympathies with her Italian subjects; she had no poetical or patriotic associations to render the "fair white walls of Florence" and its olive and vine-covered hills interesting or dear to her; she disliked the heat of the climate; she wished herself at Vienna, whence every post brought some fresh instance of her father's misgovernment, some new tidings of defeat or disgrace. She mourned over the degradation of her house, and saw her magnificent and far-descended heritage crumbling away from her. The imbecile emperor, without confidence in his generals, his ministers, his family, or himself, exclaimed, in an agony, "Is then the fortune of my empire departed with Eugene?" and he lamented

hourly the absence of Maria Theresa, in whose strength of mind he had ever found support when his pride and jealousy allowed him to seek it. The archduchess and her husband returned to Vienna in 1739, and soon afterward the disastrous war with the Turks was terminated by a precipitate and dishonorable treaty, by which Belgrade was ceded to the Ottoman Porte. The situation of the court of Vienna at this period is thus described by the English minister, Robinson:—"Everything in this court is running into the last confusion and ruin, where there are as visible signs of folly and madness as ever were inflicted on a people whom Heaven is determined to destroy, no less by domestic divisions than by the more public calamities of repeated defeats, defencelessness, poverty, plague, and famine."

Such was the deplorable state in which Charles bequeathed to his youthful heiress the dominions which had fallen to him prosperous, powerful, and victorious, only thirty years before. The agitation of his mind fevered and disordered his frame, and one night after eating most voraciously of a favorite dish, he was seized with an indigestion, of which he expired October 20th, 1740. Maria Theresa, who was then near her confinement, was not allowed to enter her father's chamber. We are told that the grief she felt on hearing of his dissolution endangered her life for a few hours, but that the following day she was sufficiently recovered to give audience to the ministers.

Maria Theresa was in her twenty-fourth year when she became in her own right Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, Archduchess of Austria, Sovereign of the Netherlands, and Duchess of Milan, of Parma, and Placentia; in right of her husband she was also Grand Duchess of Tuscany. Naples and Sicily had indeed been wrested from her father, but she pretended to the right of these crowns, and long entertained the hope and design of recovering them. She reigned over some of

the finest and fairest provinces of Europe; over many nations speaking many different languages, governed by different laws, divided by mutual antipathies, and held together by no common link except that of acknowledging the same sovereign. That sovereign was now a young inexperienced woman, who had solemnly sworn to preserve inviolate and indivisible the vast and heterogeneous empire transmitted to her feeble hand, as if it had depended on her will to do so. Within the first few months of her reign the Pragmatic Sanction, so frequently guaranteed was trampled under foot. France deferred, and at length declined to acknowledge her title. The Elector of Bavaria, supported by France, laid claim to Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. The King of Spain also laid claim to the Austrian succession, and prepared to seize on the Italian states; the king of Sardinia claimed Milan; the King of Prussia, not satisfied with merely advancing pretensions, pounced like a falcon on his prey and seized the whole duchy of Silesia, which he laid waste and occupied with his armies.

Like the hind of the forest when the hunters are abroad, who hears on every side the fierce baying of the hounds, and stands and gazes round with dilated eye and head erect, not knowing on which side the fury of the chase is to burst upon her—so stood the lovely majesty of Austria, defenceless, and trembling for her very existence, but not weak, nor irresolute, nor despairing.

Maria Theresa was by no means an extraordinary woman. In talents and strength of character she was inferior to Catherine of Russia and Elizabeth of England, but in moral qualities far superior to either; and it may be questioned whether the brilliant genius of the former, or the worldly wisdom and sagacity of the latter, could have done more to sustain a sinking throne, than the popular and feminine virtues, the magnanimous spirit, and unbending fortitude of Maria Theresa. She had something of the inflexible pride and hereditary obstinacy

of her family; her understanding, naturally good, had been early tinged with bigotry and narrowed by illiberal prejudices; but in her early youth these qualities only showed on the fairer side, and served but to impart something fixed and serious to the vivacity of her disposition and the yielding tenderness of her heart. She had all the self-will and all the sensibility of her sex; she was full of kindly impulses and good intentions; she was not naturally ambitious, though circumstances afterward developed that passion in a strong degree; she could be roused to temper, but this was seldom, and never so far as to forget the dignity and propriety of her sex. It should be mentioned, (for in the situation in which she was placed it was by no means an unimportant advantage,) that at this period of her life few women could have excelled Maria Theresa in personal attractions. Her figure was tall, and formed with perfect elegance; her deportment at once graceful and majestic; her features were regular; her eyes were grey and full of lustre and expression; she had the full Austrian lips, but her mouth and smile were beautiful; her complexion was transparent; she had a profusion of fine hair; and, to complete her charms, the tone of her voice was peculiarly soft and sweet. Her strict religious principles, or her early and excessive love for her husband, or the pride of her royal station, or perhaps all these combined, had preserved her character from coquetry. She was not unconscious of her powers of captivation, but she used them, not as a woman, but as a queen—not to win lovers, but to gain over refractory subjects. The "fascinating manner" which the historian records, and for which she was so much admired, became later in life rather too courtly and too artificial; but at four-and-twenty it was the result of kind feeling, natural grace, and youthful gayety.

The perils which surrounded Maria Theresa at her accession were such as would have appalled the strongest mind. She was not only encompassed by enemies with-

out, but threatened with commotions within. She was without an army, without a treasury, and, in point of fact, without a ministry—for never was such a set of imbecile men collected together to direct the government of a kingdom, as those who composed the *conference* or state-council of Vienna, during this period. They agreed but in one thing—in jealousy of the duke of Lorraine, whom they considered as a foreigner, and who was content perforce to remain a mere cipher.

Maria Theresa began her reign by committing a mistake, very excusable at her age. Her father's confidential minister, Bartenstein, continued to direct the Government, though he had neither talents nor resources to meet the fearful exigencies in which they were placed. The young queen had sufficient sense to penetrate the characters of Sinzendorf and Staremberg; she had been disgusted by their attempts to take advantage of her sex and age, and to assume the whole power to themselves. She wished for instruction, but she was of a temper to resist any thing like dictation. Bartenstein discovered her foible; and by his affected submission to her judgment, and admiration of her abilities, he conciliated her good opinion. His knowledge of the forms of business, which extricated her out of many little embarrassments, she mistook for political sagacity—his presumption for genius; his volubility, his readiness with his pen, all conspired to dazzle the understanding and win the confidence of an inexperienced woman. It is generally allowed that he was a weak and superficial man; but he possessed two good qualities—he was sincerely attached to the interests of the house of Austria, and, as a minister, incorruptible.

In her husband Maria Theresa found ever a faithful friend, and comfort and sympathy, when she most needed them; but hardly advice, support, or aid. Francis was the soul of honor and affection, but he was illiterate, fond of pleasure, and unused to business. Much as his wife loved him, she either loved power more, or was conscious

of his inability to yield it. Had he been an artful or ambitious man, Francis might easily have obtained over the mind of Maria Theresa that unbounded influence which a man of sense can always exercise over an affectionate woman; but, humbled by her superiority of rank, and awed by her superiority of mind, he never made the slightest attempt to guide or control her, and was satisfied to hold all he possessed from her love or from her power.

The first war in which Maria Theresa was engaged was begun in self-defence—never was the sword drawn in a fairer quarrel or a juster cause. Her great adversary was Frederick II. of Prussia, aided by France and Bavaria. On the side of the young queen were England and Holland. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm which her helpless situation had excited among the English of all ranks: The queen of Hungary was a favorite toast —her head a favorite sign. The parliament voted large subsidies to support her, and the ladies of England, with the old Duchess of Marlborough at their head, subscribed a sum of £100,000, which they offered to her acceptance. Maria Theresa, who had been so munificently aided by the king and parliament, either did not think it consistent with her dignity to accept of private gifts, or from some other reason, declined the proffered contribution.

The war of the Austrian succession lasted nearly eight years. The battles and the sieges, the victories and defeats, the treaties made and broken, the strange events and vicissitudes which marked its course, may be found duly chronicled and minutely detailed in histories of France, England, or Germany. It is more to our present purpose to trace the influence which the character of Maria Theresa exercised over passing events, and their reaction on the fate, feelings, and character of the woman.

Her situation at the commencement of the war appeared desperate. Frederick occupied Silesia, and in the first great battle in which the Austrians and Prussians

were engaged, (the battle of Molwitz), the former were entirely defeated. Still the queen refused to yield up Silesia, at which price she might have purchased the friendship of her dangerous enemy. Indignant at his unprovoked and treacherous aggression, she disdainfully refused to negotiate while he had a regiment in Silesia, and rejected all attempts to mediate between them. The birth of her first son, the archduke Joseph, in the midst of these distresses, confirmed her resolution. Maternal tenderness now united with her family pride and her royal spirit; and to alienate voluntarily any part of his inheritance appeared not only humiliation, but a crime. She addressed herself to all the powers which had guarantied the Pragmatic Sanction, and were therefore bound to support her. And first to France: To use her own words—"I wrote," said she, "to Cardinal Fleury; pressed by hard necessity, I descended from my royal dignity, and wrote to him in terms which would have softened stone!" But the old cardinal was absolute *flint.* From age and long habit, he had become a kind of political machine, actuated by no other principle than the interests of his government; he deceived the queen with delusive promises and diplomatic delays till all was ready; then the French armies poured across the Rhine, and joined the Elector of Bavaria. They advanced in concert within a few leagues of Vienna. The elector was declared Duke of Austria; and, having overrun Bohemia, he invested the city of Prague.

Who has not read of the scene which ensued, which has so often been related, so often described? and yet we all feel that we cannot hear of it too often. When we first meet it on the page of history, we are taken by surprise, as though it had no business there; it has the glory and the freshness of old romance. Poetry never invented anything half so striking, or that so completely fills the imagination.

The Hungarians had been oppressed, enslaved, insulted,

by Maria Theresa's predecessors. In the beginning of her reign, she had abandoned the usurpations of her ancestors, and had voluntarily taken the oath to preserve all their privileges entire. This was partly from policy, but it was also partly from her own just and kind nature. The hearts of the Hungarians were already half won when she arrived at Presburg, in June, 1741. She was crowned Queen of Hungary on the 13th, with the peculiar national ceremonies. The iron crown of St. Stephen was placed on her head, the tattered but sacred robe thrown over her own rich habit, which was incrusted with gems, his scimitar girded to her side. Thus attired, and mounted upon a superb charger, she rode up the Royal Mount, and according to the antique custom, drew her sabre, and defied the four quarters of the world, "in a manner that showed she had no occasion for that weapon to conquer all who saw her." The crown of St. Stephen, which had never before been placed on so small or so lovely a head, had been lined with cushions to make it fit. It was also very heavy, and its weight, added to the heat of the weather, incommoded her; when she sat down to dinner in the great hall of the castle, she expressed a wish to lay it aside. On lifting the diadem from her brow, her hair, loosened from confinement, fell down in luxuriant ringlets over her neck and shoulders; the glow which the heat and emotion had diffused over her complexion added to her natural beauty, and the assembled nobles, struck with admiration, could scarce forbear from shouting their applause.

The effect which her youthful grace and loveliness produced on this occasion had not yet subsided when she called together the Diet, or Senate of Hungary, in order to lay before them the situation of her affairs. She entered the hall of the castle, habited in the Hungarian costume, but still in deep mourning for her father; she traversed the apartment with a slow and majestic step, and ascended the throne, where she stood for a few

minutes silent. The chancellor of state first explained the situation to which she was reduced, and then the queen, coming forward, addressed the assembly in Latin, a language which she spoke fluently, and which is still in common use among the Hungarians.

"The disastrous state of our affairs," said she, "has moved us to lay before our dear and faithful states of Hungary the recent invasion of Austria, the danger now impending over this kingdom, and propose to them the consideration of a remedy. The very existence of the kingdom of Hungary, of our own person, of our children, of our crown, are now at stake, and, forsaken by all, we place our sole hope in the fidelity, arms, and long-tried valor of the Hungarians!"

She pronounced these simple words in a firm but melancholy tone. Her beauty, her magnanimity, and her distress, roused the Hungarian chiefs to the wildest enthusiasm; they drew their sabres half out of the scabbard, then flung them back to the hilt with a martial sound, which re-echoed through the lofty hall, and exclaimed with one accord, "Our swords and our blood for your majesty—we will die for our *king,* Maria Theresa!" Overcome by sudden emotion, she burst into a flood of tears. At this sight, the nobles became almost frantic with enthusiasm. "We wept too," said a nobleman, who assisted on this occasion, (Count Koller); "but they were tears of admiration, pity, and fury." They retired from her presence, to vote supplies of men and money, which far exceeded all her expectations.

Two or three days after this extraordinary scene, the deputies again assembled, to receive the oath of Francis of Lorraine, who had been appointed co-regent of Hungary. Francis, having taken the required oath, waved his arm over his head and exclaimed with enthusiasm, "My blood and life for the queen and kingdom!" It was on this occasion that Maria Theresa took up her infant son in her arms and presented him to the deputies, and

again they burst into the acclamation, "We will die for Maria Theresa and her children!"

It had been the favorite object of Maria Theresa to place the imperial crown on the head of her husband. The election of Charles was, therefore, a deep mortification to her, and deeply she avenged it. Her armies, under the command of the Duke of Lorraine and General Kevenhuller, entered Bavaria, wasted the hereditary dominions of the new emperor with fire and sword, and on the very day on which he was proclaimed at Frankfort, his capital, Munich, surrendered to the Austrians, and the Duke of Lorraine entered the city in triumph. Such were the strange vicissitudes of war!

Within a few months afterward the French were everywhere beaten; they were obliged to evacuate Prague, and accomplished with great difficulty their retreat to Egra. So much was the queen's mind embittered against them, that their escape at this time absolutely threw her into an agony. She had, however, sufficient self-command to conceal her indignation and disappointment from the public, and celebrated the surrender of Prague by a magnificent fête at Vienna. Among other entertainments there was a chariot-race, in imitation of the Greeks—in which, to exhibit the triumph of her sex, ladies alone were permitted to contend, and the queen herself and her sister entered the lists. It must have been a beautiful and gallant sight. Soon afterward Maria Theresa proceeded to Prague, where she was crowned Queen of Bohemia, May 12, 1743.

In Italy she was also victorious. Her principal opponent in that quarter was the high-spirited Elizabeth Farnese, the Queen of Spain. This imperious woman, who thought she could manage war as she managed her husband, commanded her general, on pain of instant dismissal, to fight the Austrians within three days; he did so, and was defeated.

The effect produced on the mind of Maria Theresa, by

these sudden vicissitudes of fortune and extraordinary successes, was not altogether favorable. She had met dangers with fortitude—she had endured reverses with magnanimity; but she could not triumph with moderation. Sentiments of hatred, of vengeance, of ambition, had been awakened in her heart by the wrongs of her enemies and her own successes. She indulged a personal animosity against the Prussians and the French, which almost shut her heart, good and beneficent as Heaven had formed it, against humanity and the love of peace. She not only rejected with contempt all pacific overtures, and refused to acknowledge the new emperor, but she meditated vast schemes of conquest and retaliation. She not only resolved on recovering Silesia, and appropriating Bavaria, but she formed plans for crushing her great enemy, Frederick of Prussia, and partitioning his dominions, as he had conspired to ravage and dismember hers.

The enthusiasm which her charms and her address excited in Hungary from the proudest palatine to the meanest peasant, again saved her. In the following year Bohemia and Bavaria were recovered; and the unfortunate emperor, Charles the Seventh, was driven from all his possessions, after playing for a while a miserable pageant of royalty in the hands of the French, died almost broken-hearted. With his last breath he exhorted his successor to make peace with Austria, and reject the imperial dignity which had been so fatal to his family. The new elector, Maximilian Joseph, obeyed these last commands, and no other competitor appearing, Maria Theresa was enabled to fulfill the ambition of her heart, by placing the imperial diadem on her husband's head. Francis was proclaimed Emperor of Germany at Frankfort; and the queen, who witnessed from a balcony the ceremony of election, was the first who exclaimed "Vive l'emperor!" From this time Maria Theresa, uniting in herself the titles of Empress of Germany and Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, is styled in history, the empress-

queen. This accession of dignity was the only compensation for a year of disasters and losses in Italy and the Netherlands. Still she would not submit, nor bend her high spirit to an accommodation with Frederick on the terms he offered; and still she rejected all mediation. At length the native generosity of her disposition prevailed. The Elector of Saxony, who had been for some time her most faithful and efficient ally, was about to become a sacrifice through his devotion to her cause, and only peace could save him and his people. For his sake the queen stooped to what she never would have submitted to for any advantage to herself, and on Christmas-day, 1745, she signed the peace of Dresden, by which she finally ceded Silesia to Frederick, who, on this condition, withdrew his troops from Saxony, and acknowledged Francis as Emperor.

By this time (1747) all the sovereigns of Europe began to be wearied and exhausted by this sanguinary and burthensome war; all, except Maria Theresa, whose pride, wounded by the forced cession of Silesia and the reduction of her territories in the Netherlands and in Italy, could not endure to leave off a loser in this terrible game of life. It is rather painful to see how the turmoils and vicissitudes of the last few years, the habits of government and diplomacy, had acted on a disposition naturally so generous and so just. In her conference with the English minister she fairly got into a passion, exclaiming, with the utmost indignation and disdain, "that rather than agree to the terms of peace, she would lose her head"—raising her voice as she spoke, and suiting the gesture to the words. With the same warmth she had formerly declared, that before she would give up Silesia she would *sell her shift!* In both cases she was obliged to yield. When the plenipotentiaries of the various powers of Europe met at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, her ministers, acting by her instructions, threw every possible difficulty in the way of the pacification; and when

at length she was obliged to accede, by the threat of her allies to sign without her, she did so with obvious, with acknowledged reluctance, and never afterward forgave England for having extorted her consent to this measure.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, which was one of the great events of the last century, was signed by the empress-queen on the 23d of October, 1748. "Thus," says the historian of Maria Theresa, "terminated a bloody and extensive war, which at the commencement threatened the very existence of the house of Austria; but the magnanimity of Maria Theresa, the zeal of her subjects, and the support of Great Britain triumphed over her numerous enemies, and secured an honorable peace."

Maria Theresa had made peace with reluctance. She was convinced—that is, she *felt*—that it could not be of long continuance; but for the present she submitted. She directed her attention to the internal government of her dominions, and she resolved to place them in such a condition that she need not fear war whenever it was her interest to renew it.

Eight years of almost profound peace elapsed, and Maria Theresa was neither sensible of the value of the blessing, nor reconciled to the terms on which she had purchased it. While Frederick existed—Frederick, who had injured, braved, and humbled her—she was ready to exclaim, like Constance, "War! war!—no peace! Peace is to me a war!" In vain was she happy in her family, and literally adored by her subjects; she was not happy in herself. In her secret soul she nourished an implacable resentment against the King of Prussia; in the privacy of her cabinet she revolved the means of his destruction. The loss of Silesia was still nearest her heart, and she never could think of it but with shame and anguish. She could not bandy wit with her enemy—it was not in her nature; but hatred filled her heart, and projects of vengeance occupied all her thoughts. She looked round her for the means to realize them; there was no way

but by an alliance with France—with France, the hereditary enemy of her family and her country!—with France, separated from Austria by three centuries of mutual injuries and almost constant hostility. The smaller states of Europe had long regarded their own safety as depending, in a great measure, on the mutual enmity and jealousy of these two great central powers; a gulf seemed forever to divide them, but, instigated by the spirit of vengeance, Maria Theresa determined to leap that gulf.

Her plan was considered, matured, and executed in the profoundest secrecy; even her husband was kept in perfect ignorance of her designs. She was not of a temper to fear his opposition, but her strong affection for him made her shrink from his disapprobation. Prince Kaunitz was her only coadjutor; he alone was intrusted with this most delicate and intricate negotiation, which lasted nearly two years. It was found necessary to conciliate Madame de Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV., who was at that time all-powerful. Kaunitz, in suggesting the expediency of this condescension, thought it necessary to make some apology. The empress merely answered, "Have I not flattered Farinelli?" and, taking up her pen, without further hesitation, this descendant of a hundred kings and emperors—the pious, chaste, and proud Maria Theresa—addressed the low-born profligate favorite as "ma chère amie," and "ma cousine." The step was sufficiently degrading, but it answered its purpose. The Pompadour was won to the Austrian interest; and through her influence this extraordinary alliance was finally arranged, in opposition to the policy of both courts, and the real interests and inveterate prejudices of both nations.

When this treaty was first divulged in the council of Vienna, the Emperor Francis was so utterly shocked and confounded, that, striking the table with his hand, he vowed he would never consent to it, and left the room. Maria Theresa was prepared for this burst of indignation; she

affected, with that duplicity in which she had lately become an adept, to attribute the whole scheme to her minister, and to be as much astonished as Francis himself. But she represented the necessity of hearing and considering the whole of this new plan of policy before they decided against it. With a mixture of artifice, reason and tenderness, she gradually soothed the facile mind of her husband, and converted him to her own opinion, or at least convinced him that it was in vain to oppose it. When the report of a coalition between Austria and France was spread through Europe, it was regarded as something portentous. In England it was deemed incredible, or, as it was termed in parliament, unnatural and monstrous. The British minister at Vienna exclaimed, with astonishment, "Will you, the empress and archduchess, so far humble yourself as to throw yourself into the arms of France?" "Not into the arms," she replied, with some haste and confusion, "but on the side of France. I have," she continued, "hitherto *signed* nothing with France, though I know not what may happen; but whatever does happen, I promise, on my word of honor, not to sign anything contrary to the interests of your royal master, for whom I have a most sincere friendship and regard."

The immediate result of the alliance with France was "the seven years' war," in which Austria, France, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, and afterward Spain, were confederated against the King of Prussia, who was assisted by Great Britain and Hanover, and only preserved from destruction by the enormous subsidies of England, and by his own consummate genius and intrepidity.

In this war Maria Theresa recovered and again lost Silesia; at one time she was nearly overwhelmed and on the point of being driven from her capital; again the tide of war rolled back, and her troops drove Frederick from Berlin.

But all parties were by this time wearied and exhausted;

all wished for peace, and none would stoop to ask it. At length, one of Maria Theresa's officers, who had been wounded and taken prisoner, ventured to hint to Frederick that his imperial mistress was not unwilling to come to terms. This conversation took place at the castle of Hubertsberg. The king, snatching up half a sheet of paper, wrote down in few words the conditions on which he was willing to make peace. The whole was contained in about ten lines. He sent this off to Vienna by a courier, demanding a definitive answer *within twelve days*. The Austrian ministers were absolutely out of breath at the idea; they wished to temporize—to delay. But Maria Theresa, with the promptitude of her character, decided at once; she accepted the terms, and the peace of Hubertsberg was concluded in 1763. By this treaty, all places and prisoners were given up. Not a foot of territory was gained or lost by either party. Silesia continued in possession of Prussia; the political affairs of Germany remained in precisely the same state as before the war; but Saxony and Bohemia had been desolated, Prussia almost depopulated, and more than 500,000 men had fallen in battle.

At the conclusion of the seven years' war, Maria Theresa was in the forty-eighth year of her age. During the twenty-four years of her public life, the eyes of all Europe had been fixed upon her in hope, in fear, in admiration. She had contrived to avert from her own states the worst of those evils she had brought on others. Her subjects beheld her with a love and reverence little short of idolatry. In the midst of her weaknesses, she had displayed many virtues; and if she had committed great errors, she had also performed great and good actions.

In the summer of 1765, the imperial court left Vienna for Inspruck, in order to be present at the marriage of the Archduke Leopold with the Infanta of Spain. The emperor had previously complained of indisposition, and

seemed overcome by those melancholy presentiments which are often the result of a deranged system, and only remembered when they happen to be realized. He was particularly fond of his youngest daughter, Marie Antoinette, and, after taking leave of his children, he ordered her to be brought to him once more. He took her in his arms, kissed, and pressed her to his heart, saying, with emotion, "J'avais besoin d'embrasser encore cette enfant!" While at Inspruck he was much indisposed, and Maria Theresa, who watched him with solicitude, appeared miserable and anxious; she requested that he would be bled. He replied, with a petulance very unusual to him, "Madame, voulez vous que je meurs dans la saignée?" The heavy air of the valleys seemed to oppress him even to suffocation, and he was often heard to exclaim, "Ah! si je pouvais seulement sortir de ces montagnes du Tyrol!" On Sunday, August 18th, the empress and his sister again entreated him to be bled. He replied, "I must go to the opera, and I am engaged afterward to sup with Joseph, and cannot disappoint him; but I will be bled to-morrow." The same evening, on leaving the theatre, he fell down in an apoplectic fit, and expired in the arms of his son.

Maria Theresa was the mother of sixteen children. The unhappy Marie Antoinette, wife of the dauphin, afterward Louis XVI., was her youngest daughter. She was united to the dauphin in 1770, and thus was sealed an alliance between Austria and France—the great object of her wishes, which Maria Theresa had been engaged for years in accomplishing—for, in placing a daughter upon the throne of France, she believed that she was securing a predominant influence in the French cabinet, and that she was rendering, by this grand scheme of policy, the ancient and hereditary rival of her empire, subservient to the future aggrandizement of her house.

Maria Theresa lived in the interior of her palace with great simplicity. In the morning an old man, who could

hardly be entitled a chamberlain, but merely what is called on the continent a *frottiur,* entered her sleeping-room, about five or six o'clock in the morning, opened the shutters, lighted the stove, and arranged the apartment. She breakfasted on a cup of milk-coffee; then dressed and heard mass. She then proceeded to business. Every Tuesday she received the ministers of the different departments; other days were set apart for giving audience to foreigners and strangers, who, according to the etiquette of the imperial court, were always presented singly, and received in the private apartments. There were stated days on which the poorest and meanest of her subjects were admitted almost indiscriminately; and so entire was her confidence in their attachment and her own popularity, that they might whisper to her, or see her alone, if they required it. At other times she read memorials, or dictated letters and dispatches, signed papers, &c. At noon, her dinner was brought in, consisting of a few dishes, served with simplicity; she usually dined alone, like Napoleon, and for the same reason—to economize time. After dinner she was engaged in public business till six; after that hour her daughters were admitted to join in her evening prayer. If they absented themselves, she sent to know if they were indisposed; if not, they were certain of meeting with a maternal reprimand on the following day. At half past eight or nine, she retired to rest. When she held a drawing-room or an evening-circle, she remained till ten or eleven, and sometimes played at cards. Before the death of her husband, she was often present at the masked balls, or *ridottos,* which were given at court during the carnival; afterward these entertainments and the number of fêtes, or *gala-days,* were gradually diminished in number. During the last years of her life, when she became very infirm, the nobility and foreign ministers generally assembled at the houses of Prince Kaunitz and Prince Collerado.

The treaty of Teschen was the last political event of Maria Theresa's reign in which she was actively and personally concerned. Her health had been for some time declining, and for several months previous to her death she was unable to move from her chair without assistance; yet, notwithstanding her many infirmities, her deportment was still dignified, her manner graceful as well as gracious, and her countenance benign.

She had long accustomed herself to look death steadily in the face, and when the hour of trial came, her resignation, her fortitude, and her humble trust in Heaven never failed her. She preserved to the last her self-possession and her strength of mind, and betrayed none of those superstitious terrors which might have been expected and pardoned in Maria Theresa.

Until the evening preceding her death, she was engaged in signing papers, and in giving her last advice and directions to her successor; and when, perceiving her exhausted state, her son entreated her to take some repose, she replied steadily—"In a few hours I shall appear before the judgment-seat of God, and would you have me sleep?"

Maria Theresa expired on the 29th of November, 1780, in her sixty-fourth year; and it is, in truth, most worthy of remark, that the regrets of her family and her people did not end with the pageant of her funeral, nor were obliterated by the new interests, new hopes, new splendors of a new reign. Years after her death she was still remembered with tenderness and respect, and her subjects dated events from the time of their "mother," the empress. The Hungarians, who regarded themselves as her own especial people, still distinguish their country from Austria and Bohemia, by calling it the "territory of the queen."

Madame de Pompadour

By EDMUND DE GONCOURT

MADAME DE POMPADOUR[8] had the misfortune and the bad taste to be the daughter of a M. Poisson, interested in the commissariat, whose peculations had driven him into exile, and of a Madame Poisson, daughter of one De La Mothe, contractor of provisions for the Invalides, whose gallantry has passed into a proverb. At the moment of her birth, her mother was conducting a regular intrigue with M. Lenormand de Tournehem, who, deeming himself to have considerable share in the little Poisson's entrance into the world, provided for the cost of the young girl's magnificent education. It was not long before Mademoiselle Poisson was surrounded by a court of lovers; but the most ardent of her admirers was a nephew of M. Lenormand de Tournehem, M. Lenormand d'Étioles. The arrangements for a family marriage were soon settled without any difficulty.

M. Lenormand de Tournehem gave up the half of his property to his nephew, with the promise of the other half after his death; and Mademoiselle Poisson became Madame d'Étioles. She entered upon the fortune of her husband without embarrassment, and took possession, with perfect ease, of the charming estate of Étioles, in the government of Sens, where the young bride reorganized and recalled the society of Madame Poisson, and M. de Tournehem, Cahusac, Fontenelle, the Abbé de Bernis, Maupertuis and Voltaire, who will later remind the Mar-

quise, in a letter, of the wine of Tokay drunk at Étioles. Madame d'Étioles had married with the utmost coldness and reason. She was quite indifferent to her husband's passion, seeing him as he was, short, fairly ugly, and badly built. Marriage, moreover, to her was neither an aim nor an end; it was a state of transition and a means. A fixed ambition which had dazzled her childish instincts, her dreams as a young girl, filled her aspirations as a woman. The first impressions of her imagination, the credulous beliefs and superstitions which were in her, represented the frailty of her sex, the promises of the fortune-tellers to whom later she will hie secretly from Versailles to consult the future; the cynical and insolent hopes which issued from the lips of her mother in view of the grace and talents of her daughter, her nature and her education predestined Madame d'Étioles to become "a king's morsel." In her heart, as in the heart of Madame de Vintimille, there grew and germinated a rooted plan of seduction, the great project of an enormous fortune; and we have proof of this secret thought of Madame d'Étioles' premeditation in the curious accounts recently published. We read in the list of pensions, made by Madame de Pompadour: 600 *livres to Madame Lebon, for having predicted to her, when nine years old, that she would one day become the mistress of Louis XV.* That was the starting point of Mademoiselle de Poisson's dream.

It begins with the gipsy's prophecy, uttered on the threshold of life, as at the opening of a novel. Thenceforward Madame Lebon's auspicious forecast takes possession of her; and for all her smile, it is in no jesting mood that she says, that once married, no one in the world save the King shall make her unfaithful to her husband.

Madame d'Etioles caught sight of the King at Versailles: her whole life hinges on being seen, noticed by him. To this pursuit of a glance from Louis XV. she

brings the labor of all her ideas, her time without counting it; to it she consecrates all the liberty and facility afforded her by a husband who is in bondage to her caprices, submissive to her slightest wish. At Étioles she throws herself in the King's way in the forest of Sénart, the meeting-place of the royal hunt; she exposes herself to his curiosity, tempts in the daintiest of costumes; she flutters before his eyes that fan, upon which, it is said, some rival of Massé had depicted Henri IV. at Gabrielle's feet. She passes and repasses in the midst of the horses, dogs, and escort of the King, like some light and alluring Diana, now clad in azure, in a rose-coloured phaeton, now in an azure-coloured phaeton, clad in rose. The King looked at her, remarked her, and took a pleasure in the handsome equipage which set the court a-talking. One day, when the Duchesse de Chevreuse is talking to the King of the "little d'Étioles," the Duchesse de Châteauroux drew near her noiselessly and trod so heavily on her foot that Madame de Chevreuse was hurt. On the following day, Madame de Châteauroux, during the visit of apology she paid her, let fall, with a negligent air, the question: "Do you know that they are trying to force the little d'Étioles on the King, and are only seeking for the means?" Nor did Madame de Châteauroux stop short there: she gave Madame d'Étioles to understand that she was to appear no more at the King's hunt. Madame d'Étioles resigned herself to waiting for the death of Madame de Châteauroux before she ventured on any fresh attempt. The great masked ball given every year on the Sunday before Lent, at the Hôtel de Ville, gave her an opportunity of approaching the King, towards the end of February 1745. Louis XV. was attacked by a charming mask who tormented him with a thousand provocations, a thousand pretty sayings. At the King's entreaty, the domino consented to unmask, and the handkerchief which Madame d'Étioles dropped, as though by accident, when she raised her mask, was picked up by

Louis XV., to the accompaniment of this murmur amongst the company: "The handkerchief *has been thrown.*"

Some days later, if the biographers of the time are to be believed, when retiring to bed one night, the King unbosomed himself to Binet upon the disgust he derived from those amours without a morrow, his weariness of chance women and connections of caprice. He confided to him his repulsion towards Madame de Popelinière, who was pushed to the front and maintained by Richelieu, towards the Duchess de Rochechouart, afterwards Comtesse de Brionne, whom a court intrigue sought to foist on him, and of whom the scurvy tongues at court said jestingly that "she was like the horses in the small stables, always being offered, never accepted." Binet, who was distantly related to Madame d'Étioles, then spoke to the King of a person who could not fail to please him, and who had, from her very childhood, cherished the most tender sentiments towards the King of France. And Binet reminded Louis XV. of the woman of the forest of Sénart, the woman of the masked ball. He revived his memories, appealed to the recollection of his heart and eyes with so much eloquence, skill and fire, that the King authorized him to ask for an appointment. The appointment was granted.

A month elapsed. The King held his tongue. He seemed deaf to the allusions of Binet and of Bridge, one of his equerries, and a strong friend of Madame Étioles. Notwithstanding, the intrigue started by Binet, in concert with that indefatigable intriguer, Madame de Tencin, who had staked upon Madame d'Étiole's chances,—the first rendezvous had not taken place without exciting comment. It came to the ears of Boyer, the Dauphin's tutor, who had been delivered over by Madame de Châteauroux to the sarcasms of Voltaire. Boyer openly threatened Binet that he would have him dismissed by the Dauphin. He set himself against the evil example which would be derived from the acknowledgment of a mistress accused

of irreligion, whose youth had been spent in the society and the school of Voltaire, Fontenelle, Maupertius. But Madame d'Étioles had already a following amongst the King's intimates. They aroused Louis XV. with their suggestions, their remarks, the incitements they made to his vanity. They pointed out to him the affectation of the young Dauphine, in refusing to appear any longer in the private apartments, in consequence of the indecorous judgments her husband passed upon the King's conduct. They irritated him against what was censorious and insulting in this observation, and pointed out to him the feebleness he would show in submitting to the intrigues of his son's tutor, the lessons of his menials. One night the King asked Binet with a laugh what had become of his kinswoman. Louis XV. then admitted to his valet-de-chambre that she had pleased him, but added that he had thought to detect in her ambition and self-interest. Binet hastened to answer that Madame d'Étioles was madly in love with the King, and that, as her husband had conceived suspicions of her first fault, nothing was left her but to die of despair, in order that she might not survive the King's love, and to deceive the resentment of a man who adored her. The King declared that he would be charmed to see her a second time; and a second interview took place on the 22nd of April 1745. Madame d'Étioles was invited to sup in the private apartments with Luxembourg and Richelieu, who treated her coldly enough, omitted to praise her beauty or applaud her witty conversation. But this time Madame d'Étioles, forewarned by Binet, dissembled her ambitions and the character which had alarmed the King; she put a rein upon her soul, and was no more than the amiable woman the King desired her to be.

Binet had spoken the truth: the night spent away from the conjugal bed had opened the eyes of the poor husband, who, being sincerely and passionately in love, threatened, in the first violence of his resentment, his shame and his

sorrow, to proceed to extremities. Taking advantage of these threats, the jealous storms which awaited her at home, Madame d'Étioles played the part of a woman in a state of terror, and her fears moved the King, who allowed her in the morning to hide herself in the former apartment of Madame de Mailly. It was from there that, mistress of the man and the position, holding the King all day by her love and her caresses, the wife of M. d'Étioles exfracted from the King, successively, a lodging, the promise of her acknowledgment, the promise of her husband's banishment, the promise of protection against the cabal of the Dauphin. And a few days later she further obtained from the King the assurance that she should be installed, acknowledged as titular mistress in Easter week, in order that her triumph might be shown publicly to involve that absolute independence from the principles of the Dauphin which she exacted from the King.

After that, soaring forth suddenly in that Versailles whither she had crept so humbly, Madame d'Étioles, without being in any way disturbed by the approach of greatness, made her *début* by a master-stroke. Realizing that any compromise between the Dauphin and herself was impossible, she sought to diminish his following and forces, by disarming the Queen with her caresses, her submission, her careful efforts to be pleasant to her on all occasions. She played an admirable comedy to her, saying that people had injured her in her opinion, speaking of "a week's incomparable sorrow," and that with so moved an accent, a display of her graces so calculated to deceive and touch the Queen, that the Duchesse de Luynes came, on behalf of Marie-Leczinska, to assure Madame d'Étioles of her kindly feelings to her. It was such a new thing to the Queen to meet with consideration from one of her husband's mistresses!

The King, captivated, enthralled, succumbed to the bondage of this new amour, and by the 9th of July, 1745

Madame d'Étioles could exhibit with pride eighty love-letters of the King, sealed with the device *"discreet and faithful,"* which he had written to her since the beginning of May, when he had set off to become the conqueror of Fontenoy. At last, on the King's return—his long absence with the army had delayed her presentation—Madame d'Étioles was presented to the court (14th September 1745) at six o'clock, in the King's apartment, before a vast company which filled chamber and ante-chamber, and whose curiosity derived pleasure from the excessive embarrassment of the King and the mistress. Madame d'Étioles was escorted by the Princesse de Conti, who had played such a large part in the King's intrigue with Madame de Mailly, and whose prodigality, the disorders of her household, whose debts and whose husband's debts, had cast for these such complaisant *rôles*. She was accompanied by Madame de La Chaumontauban, and her cousin, Madame d'Estrades. From the King's apartment, Madame d'Étioles repaired to the Queen, where a host of curious persons, even more numerous than had been present at the King's, were thronged in expectation. Great was the astonishment of the courtiers, who were ignorant of Madame d'Étiole's skilful manœuvre, when, instead of some meaningless compliment upon her gown, the Queen, reminding the newly-presented mistress of one of the few women of the great *noblesse* with whom she was intimate, said to her: *"Pray, have you any news of Madame de Saissac? I was very pleased to have met her sometimes in Paris."* Touched at such noble charity, Madame d'Étioles stammered out this sentence: *"Madame, my greatest passion is to please you."* But the Dauphin was faithful to his part: as it had been previously arranged, he paid Madame d'Étioles a few frigid compliments upon her toilette.

At the time when Madame de Mailly became the mistress of Louis XV., public opinion declared, in the mouth of the chronicler, Barbier, "that nothing could be

said, the name of Nesle being one of the greatest names in the kingdom." Compare with this dictum, meaningless to-day, the sentiment which greets the arrival of Madame d'Étioles, who assumed in the year of her presentation the name of an extinct family, the title of Marquise de Pompadour, and you will have the measure of an extinct prejudice, a prejudice of which our age has lost the very meaning. This amorous *mésalliance* of the King, the novelty of a *parvenu* mistress, of a woman bearing no great name, raised to the administration of the royal favour, the installation at Versailles of this *grisette,* this *tradeswoman*—it is the expression of a republican of the Monarchy, of the Marquis d'Argenson—met from the very first with such contemptuous hostility, such obstacles, in the tradition of the court, the very habits of the nation, that for a moment it was thought the mistress would be unable to maintain her position. All the haughty jealousy innate in the aristocracy, all its contemptuous hatred for the enriching and aggrandisement of the middle classes, was directed against the little *bourgeoise* who had been so insolent as to usurp a heart whose frailties were the property of women of birth and of the world of Versailles. The scandal was not only a scandal, it was a breach of privilege; and hence the explosion and vehemence of discontent from the whole of that court, wounded, outraged, and, as it were, insulted by the insolent success of Madame d'Étioles. There is an immediate organization of a conspiracy of espionage and calumny. The women are all eyes, exercise the most piercing and malicious qualities of their spirit of observation, to penetrate the woman to the bottom. They spy, study, analyse her tone, her manners, her language, until they have found the foot of clay within the goddess: the lack of that distinction which is not taught or acquired, but is handed down like a natural tradition in the blood of a caste—the lack of race. The most malicious tongues, the most redoubtable scoffers, the most impertinent rakes take

up arms against her, accentuate her smallest inadvertences, her slightest breaches of etiquette, and, above all, the expressions she has not had time to forget on her journey from Paris to Versailles.

And is it not easy for them to attack this woman who brings familiar nicknames to court, who calls the Duc de Chaulnes "my pig," and Madame d'Amblimont, "my rag-bag," the vulgar tongue, a sort of familiar, popular speech which is one day to bestow on the daughters of Louis XV. the strange pet names with which their father will baptise them? A league is started to arouse the King's mocking instincts against the mistress, to discredit her, in the name of distinction, and to make the self-love of the lover blush for such an amour. The courtiers are so successful in their feigned astonishment at the nothings which fall from the favourite, at all that is over "free" in her speech and betrays her origin, that they extort from the embarrassed and quite shame-faced King this confession: "It is an education which it will amuse me to complete." Madame de Lauraguais, that wittiest of women, deceived in her hopes and supplanted, dismantles the little *bourgeoise* who has stolen the King from her, from head to foot, omitting not a gesture, dissects her, passes her from one hand to another like a stripped doll, and delivers her to the laughter of the gallery. The royal family, sensible to the humiliation of such a *liaison,* sulks and murmurs against the mistress who has detracted from the *honour* of the King's adultery. On that side of the court, they make a point of not speaking to Madame d'Étioles at the hunt, even of not replying to her questions; and disdain, in the somewhat rough nature of the Dauphin, almost becomes brutality. It is not long before the court infects the public with its hatred; the whispers of Versailles reach the street, the very populace, and unloose curiosity and insult. The malice of the nation peers into the foulness of Madame d'Étioles' cradle and the ignominy of her origin. A cluster of furtive, flying leaflets

falls around that rotten tree—the genealogical tree of Mademoiselle Poisson. It is one of those floods of songs and libels which, at certain moments in her history, relieve the gall of France. They spring up everywhere, these *Mazarinades* of the eighteenth century; the *Poissonnades* which fling at the forehead and the heart of Madame d'Étioles the double shame of her birth—her father, her mother.

Maurepas, faithful to his part of enemy to the King's mistresses or wives, led the war against the favorite. He was the soul of the satires which filled Paris and Versailles. Relying on that great power, the witty tribunal, which he held with Pont de Veyle and Caylus, even more redoubtable with him through those supper parties, where all the best society thronged, and where his genius for caricature, his vein of irony, spurred by the stimulus of wine, gave, amidst the freedom which attends the end of a repast, a comedy so admirably played, spoken, mimicked, gesticulated, of the airs, manners, tricks of Madame d'Étioles, Maurepas, that high-chancellor of ridicule and of the regiment of La Calotte, was of all the favorite's enemies the one who knew how to inflict the most grievous wounds, and to strike the woman most surely and pitilessly in the most intimate part of her vanity, her frailties, even to the very secrets of her body, her health, her temperament.

Madame de Pompadour was not ignorant of the dangers of this malicious war which might strike such a formidable blow at her favor by gaining the smile of the King's ironical mind. In order to resist the hostilities of Maurepas, to put herself on guard against the prejudices of his colleagues, the Comte d'Argenson, Machault and Orry, the Controller-General, she sought allies and made friends. She acquired the support of a Prince of the Blood, the Prince de Conti, whom she attached to the interest of her fortunes, by flattering his secret ambitions, by promising to arrange the marriage of Madame

Adelaide and his son. She surrounded herself with the devotion of those State financiers, the brothers Paris, from whom she received great services before becoming Marquise de Pompadour. She made them her men and her maintainers, by fortifying the King—so alarmed and annoyed at financial embarrassments—in the belief that only they, with their calculations, ideas, experience, were capable of furnishing the money necessary for the needs of the war. With her words and all her efforts she furthered the proud plans, the haughty audacity, the mobile and enraged policy of those real masters of the wealth of France, whose imagination contemplated successively the ruin of Austria, Holland, and Russia. She concealed with all the resources of her ability the extravagance and heritage of debt involved in this system, which ruined the provinces, but always found money for the King and Paris. She made the King and the Council lend an ear to the ideas of Duvernay, with whom she acquired credit through the eloquence and apparent good-nature of Marmontel. She incessantly dilated to the King on the uneasiness, the loss of public credit which would ensue, if these men were to fall; and by giving them on every occasion and at every hour the authority of her friendship, the succour of her protection, allying herself with them even to intimacy, entering into their families, where she brought peace, she made them auxiliaries at her orders, the foes of her foes; and it was with their aid that she overthrew the Controller-General, Orry, who was opposed to her expenses, and even less favourably disposed towards her than towards the Duchesse de Châteauroux.

For several Lents, already, in order to enliven the King's piety and his remorse, Madame de Pompadour had arranged his Holy Week for him after the pattern of an opera: she offered him spiritual concerts in her apartments, and grand motets, in which she sang herself, with Madame Marchais, Madame de l'Hôpital, Madame de La

Salle, the Vicomte de Rohan; Monsieur D'Ayen the younger, who were supported by the finest voices in Paris, Mademoiselle Fel and Géliotte, and the musicians of the Cabinets. But this was only an experiment to pave the way; and with these mundane canticles, which soothed, for an instant, the melancholy of the King, Madame de Pompadour was preparing him for the distraction of the theatre. The theatre, with its various resources, its changing spectacle, its speaking illusions, with its magic, its interest, all the hold it has over the mental and physical attention, must it not be, in the eyes of Madame de Pompadour, the surest and happiest means of interesting the King's senses, reviving his imagination, of making him live for a few hours afar from the realities and business of his royal life, in the enchanted deception of an animated fiction and a living dream? What better thought, indeed, could occur to the mind of a favorite in order to offer to a King what Pascal calls a King's greatest felicity: the diversion from himself and release from thoughts of himself?

Moreover, it was not merely the interests, it was also the instincts of Madame de Pompadour which led her to the theatre. Her mind, as her graces, were of their age, of that age, possessed, even in the lowest ranks of the middle classes, by the passion for the comedy of society. The tastes of the woman then were in harmony with the calculations of the favorite, and no less than her desire to occupy the King and dominate the court, the recollection and the regret for her past successes impelled her to seek once more upon a royal stage the applause whose triumph and joy had been hers upon the stage of Monsieur de Tournehem at Étioles, upon the stage of Madame de Villemur at Chautemerle.

To fix the King's will it was sufficient to fix his curiosity. An easy task! to which all Madame de Pompadour's friends applied themselves with ardor. The Duc de Richelieu, who had seen Madame de Pompadour play

at Chautemerle, the Duc de Nivernois and the Duc de Duras, who had played with her there, besieged the King's ear and filled his mind with words, notions of spectacle, comedy; they spoke to him of the talents of his mistress, of all the accomplishments, which she had not as yet had the opportunity or satisfaction of showing him. The King, interested and seduced, met the wishes of Madame de Pompadour; he smiled at the creation of a theatre in the private apartments. The stage was erected in the Cabinet of Medals. The pieces were chosen, the company formed, rehearsals organized. Madame de Pompadour associated the King with her energy, her labors; she made him share her impatience, triumphed over his antipathies; and it was a piece by Voltaire, *L'Enfant Prodigue,* which inaugurated this intimate theatre, where etiquette did not exist, and where, for the first time in France, the King's presence in person left the public free to its manifestations and permitted them to applaud. In the interval between the first and second performances of *L'Enfant Prodigue,* Madame de Pompadour produced *Le Méchant* of Gresset, which was still bidding for success with the Parisian public. Then to comedies succeeded operas, ballets, La Bruère's *Bacchus and Erigone,* Rebel's *Ismène,* La Garde's *L'Églée, La Surprise de l'Amour and Tancrède,* and the ballet of *L'Opératem Chinois.*

The theatre of the Cabinets was soon a perfectly organized and decorated theatre. Madame de Pompadour had appointed as director the Duc de La Vallière, the best organizer of comedies in France; as prompter, an abbé, her secretary and librarian, the Abbé de La Garde. The orchestra was a most excellent one; and Madame de Pompadour seated in it by the side of the King's professional musicians, the most renowned amateurs in the kingdom, the Prince de Dombes, Marlière's rival upon the bassoon, the Marquise de Souches so skilled upon the viol, and M. de Courtomer, who vied with Mondonville as a violinist.

Dehesse, an actor from the Italian Comedy, led and arranged the ballets. Bury directed the operatic portions and the choirs. Madame de Pompadour's theatrical company—a company into which the Duc de Chartres only entered with difficulty!—was as complete as it was highly born. Amongst the women, it included Madame de Sassenage, Madame de Pons, Madame de Brancas, such accomplished actresses in *Tartuffe,* and the youthful Madame de Livri, so charming as a miller's daughter. The operatic parts were sustained by Madame de Marchais, Madame de Brancas, and Madame de Trusson. The company was proud of possessing that rare comedian, the admirable Valère of *Le Méchant,* whose acting, at times, was a lesson to the Théâtre Français, the Duc de Nivernois. There were other good actors, such as the Marquise de Voyer, Croissy, Clermont d'Amboise. The Comte de Maillebois played admirably in Dufrèny's *Mariage fait et rompu,* La Vallière excelled in the parts of bailiffs, and the Duc de Duras as Blaise. The singers were Clermont d'Amboise, Courbanvaux, Luxembourg, D'Ayen, Villeroi. Dupré and Balletti had trained the Duc de Beuvron, the Comte de Melfort, the Prince of Hesse and the Comte de Langeron as dancers. And to complete the dancing, a battalion of *figurants* and *figurantes* from nine years old to twelve, a miniature opera, in which La Puvigné, La Camille and La Dorfeuille were already noticeable, supported the solo dancers. The company possessed a musical copyist, a wig-maker, no other than Notrelle, the wig-maker of the Menus-Plaisirs, so noted for his *sublime* wigs, for gods, demons, heroes, shepherds, Tritons, Cyclops, naiads and furies. It had seven costumiers, who went to take the measures of Versailles, two dressers, whose names were La Jaussin and La Dangeville. It had wardrobes, dancing-shoes, silken stockings that cost fifteen livres, Roman buskins and Roman wigs, black moustaches, flame-coloured top-knots, two hundred and two costumes for men, a hundred and

fifty-three costumes for women, and brocades, tissues, embroideries, braids and tassels of gold and silver to the value of two thousand one hundred and twenty livres. It possessed all necessary and conceivable properties, accessories of Tartarus or the Elysian fields, materials for a voyage to Cythera and a pilgrimage to Paphos; twelve blue and silver staffs and twelve gourds, four shepherds' crooks garnished with blue, a club imitated in cardboard, a set of mechanical serpents—and, not least, those speaking arms of Madame de Pompadour, a wheel of Fortune and a magician's wand! It was really a theatre, in which nothing was lacking, not even regulations, laws, a charter. Madame de Pompadour had given a code to her company; and ten articles, dictated by her and approved by the King, laid it down that in order to be admitted as an associate, one had to prove that it was not the first time one had acted in comedy; that everyone must define his line of business; that one could not, without having obtained the consent of his colleagues, take a different line from that for which one had been accepted; but no associate could refuse a part suitable to him, on the excuse that it would give him scanty opportunity; that the actresses alone would enjoy the right of choosing the pieces to be performed; that they would, likewise, have the right of fixing the date of the performance, and deciding the number of rehearsals, and the day and hour when these should take place. The regulations further declared that every actor was bound to appear at the exact time fixed for rehearsal, under penalty of a fine, which the actresses alone would settle; that to the actresses only would the half-hour's grace be accorded, after which the fine they might have incurred would be decided by themselves. Finally, the theatre of the Cabinets had its tickets. On a card, as big as a playing-card, upon which the word *Parade* was written, the witty pencil of Cochin had drawn a columbine upon a puppet-stage, her dress adorned with ribands, like the dress of Silvia in the portrait of Latour;

she minces astonishment, and flirts her fan, whilst beside her, Leandre, in ruffs, his arm upon the balustrade, declares his love to her, under the nose of Pierrot, who thrusts his head through the curtain behind: this was the gallant voucher, the "open sesame" of Madame de Pompadour's theatre.

This theatre, the performances of which succeeded one another without any interruptions save those caused by the King's hunting expeditions, became almost a government at Versailles. It was not long in attracting the whole attention of the court to it, and all the ardor of the courtiers. In putting into the King's hands a direction which amused him, it put into the hands of the favorite a fresh source of favor, and a new opportunity for domination. The list of admittances was surrounded and besieged by ambitions and solicitations as keen as those round the list of benefices; and this intimate approach to the King, which was at the disposal of the favorite, brought her an influence, hidden from the public, but real, effective, and increasing. The public, carefully chosen from the whole of Versailles, was small, select, and devoted to the mistress. The nucleus of it was formed by her family, her friends, by what might be termed her court: her brother, Vandières, her uncle, Tournehem, the Maréchal de Saxe, the two Champcenets, Madame d'Estrades, Madame du Roure. Madame de Pompadour also admitted the actors, who had their *entrée* to the entertainment, whether they played or not, and the actresses, who, when they were not playing, were accommodated in the stage-box, in which Madame de Pompadour reserved two seats, one of which was always given to her friend, the Maréchale de Mirepoix. The favorite also bestowed the honor and satisfaction of admissions upon the authors whose works were represented on the stage of the Cabinets, and the composer had the right of marking the time of his music to the orchestra. Often enough she dropped an invitation upon the

younger Coigny, the Marquis de Gontaud, Querchy, the Abbé de Bernis.

In the midst of these pleasures, and by means of these same pleasures, Madame de Pompadour waxed greater and enlarged the radius of her power. Each day saw her drawing nearer to royalty, affecting a more assured tone of authority, and playing more seriously with the exercise of sovereignty. One day, when M. de Maurepas happened to be with the King, Madame de Pompadour asked that a *lettre de cachet* should be cancelled. "Monsieur must return," and turning to the minister, she gives him the order in the King's name; and as Maurepas objects: "His Majesty must command it. . . ." *"Do what Madame wishes,"* says Louis XV. Furious at this omnipotence, at such a taking possession of the King's will, at this power which goes on acquiring strength, which nothing can shake, not even songs, Maurepas lost all reserve. His rashness and his indiscretion could no longer be contained; his wit, to which he gave loose rein, burst out in insults, and his muse indulged in those brutalities which strike a woman in her weakness and outrage her in her sex. After a supper-party in the cabinets, between the King, the Comtesse d'Estrades, Madame de Pompadour and Maurepas, the minister uttered the cruel and famous allusion to the bouquet of white hyacinths which Madame de Pompadour had pulled to pieces during supper and scattered beneath her shoes. Madame de Pompadour, demanding vengeance and failing to obtain it, finished by seeking the minister and asked him "what if he knew the author of the songs?"—"When I know him," replied Maurepas, "I will tell the King." "Monsieur," retorted the Marquise, "you make mighty small account of the King's mistresses." To which, Maurepas, without troubling himself: "I have always respected them, *whatever sort they were,"* and he accentuated the insolence of the phrase with a look.

At the conclusion of the interview at the Maréchal de

Villars', being complimented on the flattering visit he had received that morning: "Yes," he replied, "that of the Marquise. It will bring her misfortune. I remember that Madame de Mailly also came to see me, two days before she was dismissed by Madame de Châteauroux. I bring misfortune to them all." Madame de Pompadour hastened to carry off the King, and during an expedition to the little Château of La Celle, keeping the King all to herself, out of reach of exterior influences, away from the minister, who had gone to Mademoiselle de Maupeon's wedding, she spoke to her lover of the insults put upon his mistress, to the King of the disrespect of his chief servants. To the suspicious father, the Louis XV. so prone to suspicion, she depicted M. de Maurepas as responsible for the insurrection of the royal family against its head, as the instigator of the songs and innuendoes circulating everywhere against her and against the King himself. She laid perfidious stress on the intimacy of the Dauphin with M. de Maurepas. All, however, would have failed, perhaps, but for a stroke of cunning which flashed through Madame de Pompadour's head like an inspiration: she set to work to weary the King with pretended fears of having been poisoned by Maurepas. She incessantly repeated to him that she would perish by the hand which had caused the so opportune disappearance of Madame de Châteauroux. She carried the comedy and her feigned terror so far as to wish to have a surgeon sleeping near her apartment, and antidotes within her reach. And she filled the King's soul with such dreads, that she snatched from him a desire, and, as it were, a *coup d'état* of fear: Maurepas was exiled. But, on leaving for Bourges, with that smile which is the mask of his whole life, Maurepas bequeathed to Madame de Pompadour the enmity of his colleague d'Argenson. The latter was a foe of another sort; he had darker passions, a colder soul, graver hates.

At last the Marquise de Pompadour reigned, and her

tone was adapted to the superb insolence of her fortune. She endeavoured to drop upon all the projects and petitions a royal: *"We will see."* She said already to the ministers: "Proceed, I am pleased with you; you know that I have long been your friend." To the ambassadors she said again: "For several Tuesdays the King will be unable to see you, gentlemen, for I suppose you would not come to look for *us* at Compiègne." And she accustomed her mouth and the court to that *We,* which put the royal utterance on her lips, and was, as it were, the half of royalty. Her apartment at Versailles, on the ground floor, was the royal apartment of the Montespan. The utmost etiquette prevailed there, the traditions of which the Marquise had sought for in the manuscripts of the memorialists of the court of Louis XIV.: a single armchair forewarned all to remain standing before the enthroned favorite; and there was found in that humbled Versailles, but one man to seat himself on the arm of that chair, that frank and brave courtier, with so much heart and so much wit, daring and saying everything, the Marquise de Souvré, the last King's jester of the monarchy. Madame de Pompadour's carriage had the velvet cap and ducal mantle on the arms. It was a gentleman, a gentleman belonging to one of the oldest families of Guyenne, snatched from penury, who bore Madame de Pompadour's cloak upon his arm, followed at the door of her sedan-chair, and waited for her to come out in the antechamber. Her butler, Collin, she had not thought worthy to hold the napkin behind her who wore the cross of Saint Louis upon her breast. And as though her pride passed the bounds of her life and must accompany her in death, she bought a vault from the Crégni family, at the Capucines of the Place Vendôme, where she had the body of her mother conveyed and prepared a magnificent mausoleum for herself. In this majesty of scandal, in this huge enjoyment of favour, in the midst of this prosperity and these delights, loaded with riches, bounded by that

horizon of splendours which starts, around her and within her scope, with the suite of furniture which is the envy and admiration of Europe, Madame de Pompadour dreams of raising her family to her own level. She desires her kinsmen to follow her and gravitate in the orb of her greatness. She wishes the obscurity of her birth to be obliterated beneath the titles and offices of those to whom she belongs, and her blood to be so exalted in that court that she need no longer remember she ever blushed for it. She hides her father in the lordship of Marigny, which she buys from the confraternity of Saint-Côme. For her brother she obtains the captaincy of Grenelle, with the revenue of a hundred thousand livres attached to it, and covers his name with the Marquisate of Vandières. But what different projects, ambitions how far more impudent occupy the maternal vanity of Madame de Pompadour! What dreams for the future hover over the head of that fair young girl, her daughter and her portrait: Alexandrine d'Étioles, who is growing up in the Convent of the Assumption, where she attracts the greatest heiresses in the kingdom, eager to form a friendship which may, later on, become a protection. Madame de Pompadour's daughter is brought up like a princess; like princesses, she only calls herself by her Christian name; and her mother has nurtured her vanity so well that she disputes precedence with Mademoiselle de Soubise. The Marquise, dreaming of a duchy of Maine for her, had sent one day, in her fig-garden at Bellevue, for a handsome child, who in his face, gestures, attitudes was the living portrait of the King his father: this child was the Comte de Luc, the son of Louis XV. and Madame de Vintimille. Madame de Pompadour sought to interest the King in the union of these two beautiful children, and endeavoured to turn the King's softened mind towards that pretty castle in the air, a family in which the likeness of grandfather and grandmother should be reunited, a race to smile on their old age and speak to every eye, a race

which should mingle the blood of Louis and the Pompadour. But the King remained cold to this project; and Madame de Pompadour fell back upon an alliance with the Duc de Fronsac, the son of the Maréchal de Richelieu. Good courtier as Richelieu was, however submissive his pride to his ambition, he was almost wounded at the honour the Marquise would do him, and answered her ironically, "that he was most flattered by her choice, but that his son, on his mother's side, had the honour of belonging to the princes of the House of Lorraine, and that he was compelled to ask their consent." These two checks did not discourage Madame de Pompadour, and caused her to abate no whit of her pretensions. She returned to another side of the court, and was almost satisfied at having negotiated the marriage of Alexandrine with the Duc de Chaulnes, who was to bring three millions into the family he entered, when a chill, caught at Benediction in the Convent of the Assumption, degenerating into virulent small-pox, robbed her of this child of her hopes, and left only a brother and a father for the ambition of her affections.

But what could or would Madame de Pompadour do for her father, beyond hiding him and keeping him in the second plan of favour, in one of those satisfied obscurities, one of those positions of gratified and unassuming ease in which courtesans bury out of modesty a father without prejudices?

The paternal Poisson appears, from the few coarse traits which history has retained of him, as the type of a subordinate tax-farmer, vulgarising in his gross and robust person, the wit, the scepticism, the tastes, the vices, even the very insolence of the great financiers of the day. It is a gross man, full of wine, of blood and wine, fired and disordered by debauchery, drunken and dubious, who steeps the scandal he causes in his cynicism, and in that head of his, which has interviewed the gallows, nurses the theories and morals of a Neveu de Rameau.

Joyous, mocking and brutal, set squarely, hat on head, in the impunity of his fortune, and the disgrace of his pensions, he laughs at everything with a shameless irony and a crude speech; he reminds his daughter's lackeys of his title of father in language that can not be quoted; he escapes from the contempt of others by flaunting the contempt he has for himself; he enforces his commands on the Pompadour, wrests favours from her, through the intimidation his sight causes, and his threats of a disturbance; and it is he who, one night in the middle of a supper-party, bursting into a peal of laughter which checks the orgy, shouts at his fellow-guests, shouts at Montmartel, in tones as crushing as a blow from a fist: "You, Monsieur de Montmartel, are the son of an innkeeper. . . . You, Monsieur de Savalette, the son of a vinegar-maker. . . . You, Bourret, the son of a lackey. . . . What I am?. . . . Who is there does not know?"

A very different man, a perfectly presentable relation, was Madame de Pompadour's brother. He derived nothing from his father, neither in character nor in face. Before he grew fat, he was his sister's equal in beauty, in that smiling, and, as it were, princely beauty, which we see in Tocqué's portrait. He was elegant, graceful, finely built, of noble manners; in brief, graced with all the externals which put a man in his place in the elegant court of Louis XV. The King liked him; admitted him to his *tête-à-tête* suppers with Madame De Pompadour, called him by the name of *"little brother."* He was successful, he pleased; he was neither exacting nor compromising; finally, he was entirely devoted to his sister. Nevertheless, in this brother so well endowed, so happily adapted to the position of the favourite, forming such a contrast to the unworthy and compromising father, there existed an unfortunate quality which chilled Madame de Pompadour's good will by thwarting the dreams of her vanity and the ambitions of her affection. Madame de

Pompadour's brother, brought up and trained by the paternal Poisson to be excessively distrustful of himself, was modest to the point of shyness; he had that bashfulness which deprives ambition of assurance as it deprives the countenance of ease; and he himself recalled with a charming *naïveté,* his embarrassment when, being quite young, he could not drop his handkerchief in the gallery of Versailles without seeing in a moment the skilled cooks grovelling and disputing for the honor of picking it up. These were weaknesses too ridiculous in such a land, at court, not to be railed at and calumniated. The shyness of Madame de Pompadour's brother was voted nullity by all the courtiers; and there were not jests enough at Versailles against the Marquis *"Day-before-Yesterday,"* flouted in the song:

> Qu' ébloui par un vain èclat,
> Poisson tranche du petit maître ;
> Qu'il pense qu' à la cour un fat
> Soit difficile á réconnoitre :
> Ah! le voilá, ah! le voicy
> Celui qui n'en a nul souci.

These laughs, which cut the Marquise to the quick, excited her self-conceit against the brother who did not take his marquisate as seriously as she could have wished, and seemed to encourage the laughers by his philosophy and absent-minded ways. She endeavored to shake him up, to inspire him; she tormented and urged him to seek places, honors, aggrandizement, but was unsuccessful in rousing him from that sort of sluggishness of soul, and moderation of desires which made him ten times during his life refuse to become minister. She sent him on a visit to Italy with a host of historians, painters, draughtsmen, governors. On the death of Lenormand de Tournehem, she pushed him into the position of general director of buildings, gardens, arts, manufactures; that direction of art in which the brother of the Marquise becomes, according to the expression of a contemporary, *arbiter*

elegantiarum, and creates a new knowledge and a new taste in art by the internal arrangement of apartments, their architecture and decoration. And none the less, the sure tact, the rare style, all the zeal that he brings to this ministry of the ideal, and of the industry of France, the most able management, the most generous and sympathetic government of the things and world of art do not disarm the preconceived judgment of the court, and the injustice of opinion towards the man of whom Quesnay, a judge by no means to be accused of partiality, said: "He is a man very little known; no one speaks of his wit and his knowledge, nor of all he has done for the advancement of the arts; nobody, since Colbert, has done as much in his place; he is, moreover, a perfectly honest man, but people will only see in him the brother of the favourite, and because he is stout, deem him heavy and dull of wit."

But if Madame de Pompadour was humiliated to see her brother thus misconstrued, she was wounded and in despair at seeing him unmarried, an obstinate bachelor. A great and magnificent marriage for her brother, which would prevent her from dying altogether, and by carrying on her fortune in a family of her blood, hand down to nephews the inheritance of her opulence and her pride, was the hope to which the Marquise clung after the death of her daughter Alexandrine. And the grief she felt at being disappointed in this last dream, the sorrow caused her by the refusals and resistance of her brother, are clearly depicted in the following confidential letter to her father, curious, from the vivacity with which the Marquise defends herself against the charge of being insatiable for her family: "I know, my dear father, of many red ribands promised, and much doubt, therefore, whether it be possible to obtain one for M. de Petit; there has never been any question of the provost-ship of Paris for my brother, neither he nor I have funds to dispose of. This office is very dear, brings in little, and would not make

him a greater noble than he is, but it is very certain that everything that is vacant will be attributed to him by the public, it has become accustomed to people who are insatiable; I should be sorely displeased to have this infamous character, or that my brother should have it. I am very vexed that he will not marry, he will never find a match like the one I hoped to arrange for him. I am delighted that you amuse yourself as Crécy; stay there, my dear father, as long as the place suits you, and believe in my tender attachment."

The years glided away, without reconciling the Marquis de Vandières, now the Marquis de Marigny, to the projects of the Marquise. And satisfied with the present, glutted with honors and riches, detached from the court which he did not like, glad to live at his ease, gently rocked by the facile graces of life, in that world of artists which he had made his world, he would not consent to stake his happiness, his friendships, his indolence and his pleasant freedom against the noblest alliance; and he drove the Marquise to despair with the final impenitence of his epicurean wisdom.

In the midst of all these benefits lavished upon her family, all the fortunes she built up around her, the favorite was urging on her private fortune and raising it to a royal opulence. She amassed possessions and castles, and attained such a vast ownership of estates and houses as no other mistress had ever ventured to dream of. In 1746, she bought from the farmer-general, Rousset, the estate of La Celle, which cost her 155,000 livres, and for which she abandoned Montretout. The same year she bought the estate of Crécy. In 1747, she paid 100,000 crowns for a hôtel at Fontainebleau. She united the estate of Crécy with the estate of Aulnay, for which she paid 400,000 livres; in 1750, she acquired Brimborion, below Bellevue. In 1752, she bought the estate of Saint-Rémy, adjoining the estate of Crécy, and a hôtel, for 100,000 crowns, at Compiègne. On April 1st

of 1753, she bought the magnificent Hôtel of the Comte d'Évreux, on the Champs-Élysées, at a price of 800,000 livres. And to all these purchases must be added the Hermitage of Fontainebleau, the Hermitage of Versailles, the Château of Meudon, and, finally, Bellevue. But the sales-money was not the heaviest item in the expense of these acquisitions. No sooner was the land acquired, than money poured in upon it. A whole colony of painters, workers in marble, sculptors, gilders, metal-workers, potters, joiners, florists, and gardeners, swooped down upon each new domain of Madame de Pompadour, and remolding it, as her tastes, her caprices, her follies ordered, cast into the estate of La Celle, 68,114 livres; into Crécy and D'Aulnay, 3,947,264 livres; into the Hôtel at Compiègne, 30,242; Pompadour, 28,000; into the Hermitage of Fontainebleau, 216,382; into the Hermitage of Versailles, 283,013; into the Hôtel d'Évreux, 95,169; and into Bellevue 2,526,927 livres. From this vast prodigality, which raised the cost of Madame de Pompadour to France to more than thirty-six millions, from all this money lavished without reckoning on these dwelling-places of a luxury, an elegance, and an artistic taste hitherto unknown, there rose those pleasure-palaces of the favorite, of which Bellevue was the admirable example.

That small and delicious model of a royal château, that museum of French art created by Madame de Pompadour, and filled with her inspiration, Bellevue, sprang from the earth as if by magic. Struck by the extent and beauty of the view, when accidentally passing those hills which seem a natural terrace, the foot of which is bathed by the Seine, Madame de Pompadour made an appointment with two architects, L'Assurance and D'Isle, and there, on the territory of her dream, seated on a rustic operatic throne improvised out of grass and stones, she drew out her plan, marked the site of the buildings, and traced the arrangement of the gardens. The first blow of the pick was struck on the 30th June 1748, and the works were carried

on so energetically that the inauguration was able to take place on 2nd December 1750, in the presence of the King, with a charming ballet, *Love the Architect,* in which one saw a mountain, the *Mountain in Labour* of La Fontaine, delivered of the Château of Bellevue, while on the Bellevue road, one of those carriages known as *pots de chambre* was upset, and tumbled upon the stage a basket full of women, a ballet and dancers. The principal wing of the château had only nine windows, according to the expressed desire of the King. It displayed on the exterior, marble busts attached in the interspaces. The antechamber was adorned with two statues upon which the chisels of Falconnet and of Adam had vied with one another. In the dining-room Oudry had painted the accessories of hunting and fishing, and these were repeated on the wood-work by the fine carvings of Verbreck. Six paintings by Vanloo, *Comedy* and *Tragedy,* lined the walls of the reception-room. A gallery, in which Love smiled in the marble of Saly, led to the music-room, of which the door-panels were signed by Pierre. Next came the King's apartment, painted by Vanloo, and separated from the apartment of Madame de Pompadour by a boudoir in chintz, decorated in gold, enlivened by two Chinese landscapes from the brush and invention of Boucher. The elder Brunetti had painted the staircase, and his decorative genius had wrought, in the mass of a noble architecture extending to the first floor, the ladder of Olympus, Bacchus and Ariadne, Zephyrus and Flora, Diana and Endymion. Boulogne and Vernet had brougth their names and efforts to the paintings in the apartment of the Dauphin and Dauphine; for the château of Madame de Pompadour contained an apartment for the Dauphin and Dauphine. Next came the great curiosity and glory of Bellevue, the gallery conceived and designed by Madame de Pompadour in person, a gallery, throughout the whole length of which garlands of an amazing delicacy, carved by Verbreck and daintily painted by Dinaut and Du Fort,

formed a frame to some of the prettiest of Boucher's pictures, to which the texture of the furniture seemed a harmonious echo. The brush of Perrot had caught up there, with an exquisite art, the gaieties of colour, the frolic light, the rural and bedizened allegories cast upon the walls by the painter. In that Bellevue everything was in harmony; and in those painted saloons, gilded and splendid, or through those gardens, grottoes, those alleys which sloped down so pleasantly, beside those living and, as it were, truant waters, in the arbour by the waterfall, the green arbours, the arbours where the trees formed canopies, which were known as the *Rond de Sèvres*, the avenues of sycamores from Lebanon, and poplars from Lombardy, beside the two nymphs of Pigalle, the pedestrian statue of Louis XV. in Genoa marble, or the marble Apollo of Couston, there came and went, passed and strolled, a whole world dressed in the livery of the Château, and after the fantasy of the place: the men wore coats of purple cloth, embroidered with golden borders, with vests of grey satin worked with a design traced in purple, and fringed with four inches of dead gold embroidery; the women were clad in dresses similar to the vests of the men. And what uniform were better fitted for that palace of enchantment where, presently, in full winter, the Marquise is to astonish the King with that unheard-of and prodigious flower-bed, all the flowers of spring, all the sweet-smelling flowers of summer, living almost—a flower-bed in perfumed porcelain of Sèvres.

This imagination of Madame de Pompadour, a real imagination of Armides, did not confine itself to the fair domain she had created; she remoulded and added fresh decorations to the châteaux where the King received her, and repaid him with the hospitality of Bellevue.

Choisy, which belonged to the King, became, as it were, her property, owing to all the embellishments she brought to it, all the expenses incurred at her command. From small matters to great, all the luxury of the Château,

all that was beautiful in the life of Choisy belonged to her, and exhibited in its least details the delicacy of her inventiveness; was it not she who devised that castle of faery, in which the mechanical table invented by her in collaboration with the engineer, the model of which was sold at the Marquis de Menars' sale, the table of Loriot supplied the King with a pin for which he had asked, with verses by Lanjou?

Where Madame de Pompadour endeavoured and succeeded was in bringing change and contrast to all these retreats which afforded the King's *ennui* the distraction of a lucky-box. When he was weary of Bellevue and Choisy, she received him at the pretty Hermitage of Versailles, where all was countrified, where the house looked on nothing but sheep-folds, where the gardens, free of the pomp and monotony of French gardens, were all myrtle-bowers, shrubberies of roses, rustic hiding-places for Love's statue, fields of daffodils, pinks, violets, tuberoses, embalming the air with nature's own perfumes. It was there that, renewing her beauty, she revived the King's fancy by the changes and disguises of her person, now appearing to him in the dress of the Sultana of Vanloo, now dawning upon him as a fair gardener, in the costume which has been handed down to us, said by her to be her best likeness—her head covered by a straw hat lined with blue, with that blue, her favourite color, which was the cause of all blue garments being christened "the Marquise's clothes"; her left arm passed through the handle of a basket of flowers, her right hand holding a spray of hyacinths. Or again, she would charm the King's eyes with a dress, the conception and pattern of which she had found in a gallant assembly of Watteau, an ideal undress, since dubbed a *négligé à la Pompadour:* imagine a sort of Turkish vest, tight round the neck, buttoned at the wrist, plastic to the bust, clinging round the hips, revealing all that it left visible and suggesting all that it hid.

None the less, in spite of all these seductions and this perpetual bewitching of the King's senses and his love, the favourite was obliged each day to dispute and regain her power. Its exercise, its maintenance, and its augmentation was a laborious and incessant conquest. The effort of a perpetual battle, the tension of a sleepless activity, the constant labor of the head, a daily combination of intrigues, subterfuges and countermines was necessary to keep Madame de Pompadour enthroned in her slippery greatness, and in that high estate so envied and attacked, so beset with traps and snares, assaulted by ambition and treason; a cloud of favour at the mercy of a breath, a caprice, a storm, or a pin-stab. To possess the King, occupy his *ennui,* startle and amuse him by change of scene and the element of surprise in his pleasures; when ill, and restricted to a milk diet, to go abroad and sup, to remain beautiful and find factitious strength to keep beauty and freshness amid fatigue, this was the favourite's easiest task. What was that beside the most exhausting part of her *rôle,* the hardest expiation of her rule: to be every moment on the watch, to divine the menace of a smile, and the danger lurking in success, to surmount the indolence and indisposition of body and mind, to oppose a resistance to all who surrounded the King, to all who approached him, to hidden enemies, secret plots, to the Royal family, the ministry, the rivals which start up, the perils which are unmasked!

The light sceptre of a King's mistress, the government of favours and the command of pleasures no longer sufficed Madame de Pompadour. She dreamed of surviving herself, and, wishing to figure beyond the fleeting moment in the age of Louis XV., all her ambitions were directed to recommending the memory of her name to posterity by creations and monuments which time respects, and which seem to prolong the favour of a favourite into the future. This popularity which Madame de Pompadour sought to attach to her reign, she sought at the

outset, and passionately pursued in the order of her tastes. She created the manufactory of Sèvres, whose products, endowing French industry with an artistic porcelain, were to rob Saxony of the tribute paid to it by Europe, and no longer to leave to the foreigners an art, a taste, a fashion, an elegance which was not a source of revenue to France. And was it not a sore wound to the artistic patriotism of the favourite to see the whole host of merchants and commissioners hurrying to Dresden, and disputing that porcelain which had deceived the finest connoisseurs of Amsterdam, and made the King of Poland resolve not to manufacture a single piece of porcelain without his mark and arms? To rival, to ruin Dresden china by a china made in France became the Marquise's fixed idea. She will not be discouraged by the imperfection of the results, the half success of the attempts made at Mennecy, at Villeroy, and at Chantilly, where, in spite of the wagons that bring earth from Saxony, and the revelations as to the methods of manufacture made by the Comte d'Hoyn, punished for his indiscretion with disgrace, there issued from the furnaces only pieces far inferior, both for the substance and the enamelling, to the fine pieces of Saxony.

The manufactory of Vincennes, already transferred to Sèvres, was installed by her in the vast building, which still stands at the present day, in spite of the gloomy forebodings of the Marquis d'Argenson. She calls in the chemists, urges them to fresh efforts, new attempts, to those trials and experiments with all the clay in France, which were to lead to the discovery of the Kaolin of Saint-Yriex in 1765. A whole army of skilled workmen, painters of flowers and landscapes, sculptors, is put at Bachelier's disposal. The Marquise has Sèvres proclaimed a royal factory, like the Savonnerie and the Gobelins, and compels the King to take a third share in the enterprise. She makes Sèvres the habitual goal of her excursions, she lavishes her superintendence, her interest, her inspira-

tion, the ideas or the counsels of her fantasy on that workshop of frail ware which was destined to outlive the monarchy. She protects the establishment, encourages the artists, bespeaks zeal and enthusiasm through the gauntlet she flings down to the King of Saxony, by sending him a service which she declared to be superior to any yet produced. She starts, in short, and determines the fortune of Sévres ware by exhibitions in the Château of Versailles, by the warmth of her praise, the example of her custom, by all the means that a favorite possesses of imposing a new taste and an unforeseen expense upon a court, by that patronage, the passion of which is revealed to us in one of her sayings: "Not to buy this china, so long as one has any money, is to prove oneself a bad citizen."

But there was another creation to which Madame de Pompadour devoted herself even more completely, and upon which her ambitions were most heavily staked. She conceived the idea of completing the noble conception of Louis XIV., and making a pendant to the Invalides by the foundation of a military college which should make the King the father of the sons of soldiers killed in the wars or ruined in the service. It was a dream, which, no sooner conceived, became a project, a fever, a passion; she was absorbed and enraptured by it, and her mental impulse towards this great undertaking is so keen and genuine that it seems, at moments, to enlarge her heart. At the outset, the favourite's idea is a secret, a secret so well kept that the majority of historians attribute the project to the Comte d'Argenson; but it is an honour which must be rendered to Madame de Pompadour, after the perusal of this letter written by her on the 18th September 1750, on her return from a visit to Saint-Cyr.

"We went the day before yesterday to Saint-Cyr. I cannot tell you how much emotion I felt at the sight of this establishment, as well as of all therein; they all

came to tell me that a similar one should be founded for men. This made me want to laugh, for they will think when our affair transpires, that it was they who gave me the notion."

From that day forward we find the Marquise de Pompadour plotting with Paris Duvergney, *"her beloved booby."* She asks him for plans, makes him study Saint-Cyr and its organization, urges him to join his brother in seeking for the most suitable field for her project. It is a flood of letters, projects, devices, and an immense impatience for the spring, when the foundation stone of the edifice is to be laid! The Marquise never brought more fire or spirit to an affair of her own. In a letter of the 9th of November she writes: "I have been enchanted to see the King now concerning himself with the details. I am on fire to see the thing made public, since after that it will be impossible to draw back. I count on your eloquence to seduce M. de Machault, although I deem him too much attached to the King to thwart his glory. In short, my dear Duvergney, I count upon your vigilance presently to inform the universe. You will come to see me on Thursday, I hope. I need not tell you how charmed I shall be, and that I love you with all my heart."

And through the ensuing years, the desire, the activity, the passion and zeal of the Marquise never falter. She encourages and discusses the propositions of Duvergney. In order to endow the establishment, she seeks funds with him by means of a tax upon playing-cards; she soothes the altercations of her brother Marigny and Paris-Duvergney upon the subject of the buildings. She orders the internal arrangements of the school; she interests the King in the digging up of the earth for foundations, and when, at one moment, in 1755, money is lacking, when Madame de Pompadour sees that long cherished dream of her young school manœuvring to

the sound of drums before the King's eyes, on the point of vanishing, she takes up her pen and writes with an accent of grandeur and generous emotion: "No, most certainly, my dear booby, I will not allow to founder in harbor an establishment destined to render the King immortal, to give his nobility happiness, and testify my attachment for the State and for the person of his Majesty to posterity. I told Gabriel to-day to make arrangements to send the workmen necessary for the completion of the work to Grenelle. My revenues for this year have not yet come in; I shall devote them in their entirety for the payment of the weekly wage-bills of the laborers. I know not whether I shall find sureties for my repayment, but I am very sure that I will risk a hundred thousand livres with great satisfaction for the welfare of these poor children. Good-night, dear booby. If you are able to come to Paris on Tuesday, I shall have much pleasure in seeing you; if you can not come, send your nephew to me about six o'clock."

Voltaire, indeed, was not only Madame de Pompadour's courtier, but also her tool, her man, and her weapon of attack. Satires, epigrams, literary executions, tasteful tempers, all that in him seemed like the work of a friend, the pleading of a poet *pro domo sua,* masked and served the vengeance of Madame de Pompadour; and in that police of Parnassus, made of strokes of irony, it was at the political enemies of the Marquise that he aimed.

With his shower of *Whens* and *Ifs* and *Whys* and *Wherefores, Whos* and *Whats,* he cudgelled not Lefranc de Pompignau, but the party of the Dauphin and the Dauphin himself. A key to Voltaire's pamphlets is a fact not to be forgotten in the history of Madame de Pompadour. Thus bound to Voltaire by services and her need of his wit, the mistress favoured him with her friendship and patronage as long as she lived, in spite of coolnesses, susceptibilities, and petty squabbles, and Voltaire remained her most devoted pensioner. He had

to thank her for having retained the 1000 livres which he received from the King's treasury. He shared the resentment and the rancour of the favourite against Boyer, whom he accused of having compelled him to take refuge in Holland; he defended and consoled her all through her reign by his attacks upon those *"imbecile bigots of almoners"*; he devoted to her his flattery and his pen, and when Madame de Pompadour died he gave her the great canonisation of his party, proclaiming her a *philosopher.*

Madame de Pompadour had strength for all these interests, for labors so vast, occupations so diverse. And her indefatigable activity found leisure besides in a life so full, disputed by so many agitations. Here we see her stealing from her cares and the thousand affairs of each one of her days the time to recall herself to her friends in a familiar correspondence, which has the freedom and ease of conversation. The Gazette of the Court and the soul of the woman who holds the pen, all passes pell-mell in an unrestrained style whose tone of amiability is a brusque, almost virile cordiality. From commissions for stuffs for furnishing, Madame Pompadour leaps to the properties she has acquired, to the retreats where she loves to take refuge, to her removals to Versailles, the giddy round of the court, the dead of yesterdays, the marriages she has made at Crécy, the couples dancing in the courtyard of her château. Her troubles, her joys, her changing humors, and habits, have a frank and living echo in the short and interrupted epistles, which deserve a niche in the favorite's biography.

" 'Tis an age since I wrote to you, big woman. Playgoing, a thousand different matters have prevented me. Poor Coigny's misfortune has made us despair. The King frightened me from its effect on him. He gave such marks of his good heart that I dreaded the effect of them upon his health. Happily, reason has now got the upper hand. After long expecting Monsieur, your brother, I saw him yesterday. We were not able to meet. He gave

me a beautiful book, and has promised to deprive you of his house in order to compel you to come here; you will easily imagine my gratitude to him. I have given up Tretou, and bought La Selle in its stead, a little château near here, passably pretty. I want my dimities; write me what I owe you for I have no idea. I have spoken to Monsieur de Venelles; he told me that if it were possible he would take away the shop from you. Little Madame has just died from teething. Monsieur le Dauphin is heart-broken. Good-night, big woman; you know my friendship. This 26th of March 1748."

"I was heart-broken at Madame la Dauphin's miscarriage; but I hope that it will soon be repaired. The King, thank Heaven, is amazingly well, and I too; you thought that we were no longer moving, you make a mistake, we are still on the road: Choisy, La Muette, a little château and a certain hermitage near the Grille du Dragon, at Versailles, where I pass half my life. It is seventy-two feet long by thirty wide, and nothing above it, judge of its beauty; but I am alone or with the King and little company, thus I am happy here; you will have been told that it is a palace like Meudon with nine windows *out of seven* in front. But it is the fashion now in Paris to talk nonsense, and about everything. Goodbye, my biggest of women, I will prepare a room for you at Meudon, and should like you to promise to come there. This 27th of February."

"I hope and flatter myself greatly, big woman, that my silence has made no impression upon you; in any case, you would be wrong. The life I am leading is terrible, I have hardly a minute to myself, rehearsals and performances, and constant journeys twice a week both to the little Château and to La Muette, etc. Important and inevitable duties, Queen, Dauphin, Dauphine (mercifully confined to her couch), three girls, two Infantas, judge whether it is possible to breathe, pity me and do not accuse me."

"The little La Faye's accident is horrible, big woman, and I agree with you that it is impossible for your son to marry her. The Petites Maisons were never wedded; it is a case in point, and, although I pity her mightily, the thing is not practicable. The King has given me the lodging of Monsieur and Madame de Penthièvre which will be very convenient for me. They move to that of Madame la Comtesse de Toulouse, who retains a corner of it, in order to visit the King of evenings. They are all very pleased, and I too; it is consequently a pleasant arrangement. I shall not be able to move in until after Fontainebleau, because it will have to be fitted up. I receive your compliment to Madame la Duchesse with great satisfaction. There are surely few persons who are as contented as I am with the hopes we have. What they have told you about me is absolutely false. I will see that you are immediately reimbursed for what I owe you; I have all I need for all my furniture at Bellevue, so that I require no more chintz, and I thank you greatly for it and embrace you, big woman, with my whole heart. This 29th, 1750."

"The children have arrived safely, big woman, and have been sent at once to the Cabinet of the Jardin des Plantes. I do not find them over good-looking. You can well imagine how enchanted I was to receive the King at Bellevue. His Majesty has made three journeys there; he is to go there on the 25th of this month. It is a delicious place owing to the view; the house, although not very large, is commodious and charming, without any sort of magnificence. We shall play some comedies there. The spectacles of Versailles have not been started again. The King wishes to reduce his expenditure of every kind; although this is hardly considerable, as the public believe it to be so, I wished to respect its opinion and set an example. I hope that the others will think the same; I suppose you are mighty pleased with the edict which the King has issued ennobling the officers. You will be more

so with the one which is about to appear for the establishment of five hundred gentlemen whom his Majesty will educate in the military art. This Royal School will be built near the Invalides. This establishment is all the finer in that His Majesty has been working at it for more than a year and his ministers have no share in it, and only knew of it when he had arranged all to his liking, which happened at the end of the visit to Fontainebleau. What you wish for your son does not seem to me possible. I have consulted well-informed persons who tell me that the officers of the Guards would look upon it as a robbery I had committed on them; that, besides, the 12,000 livres increase would certainly be withdrawn; thus 2,000 livres would do your son no great good, but would be much to an exempt. Think of something else that I can obtain for your son; I will go about it with all the friendship that you know I bear you. This 3rd of January 1751."

Then, dropping her pen, Madame de Pompadour would seek recreation in reading. She would apply her mind or let her thought wander to some one of the volumes in that library which satisfied all the tastes of her intellect, and responded to all the needs of her position. The library of Madame de Pompadour, indeed, was not merely a woman's reading-room: it was also the favorite's arsenal and school. The most serious volumes were not there for show and parade; they completed Madame de Pompadour's education, they furnished her with the arms of government, the terms of matters of State, the knowledge of historical precedents, the art of touching politics without gaucherie, the capacity of speaking on the gravest questions of authority and the greatest conflicts between prerogatives, with the accent and almost the competence of a minister. The books on public law, the old French law, the history of all countries, the history of France taught her all that was necessary to enable her to play her part with competence if not with distinction. Like the political woman, the woman philosopher found succor

and resources in that library: the ancient and modern moralists lined the shelves; and Madame de Pompadour had but to stretch out an arm in order to touch the wisdom of Paganism or of Voltaire and strengthen herself in the stoicism of her last hour. Beside these books of study and these books of counsel, the manuals of her mind and breviaries of her soul, came the magnificent collection of the actress and the singer, the archives of the *Virtuosa,* the unique series of works upon the drama, of pieces since the time of the mysteries, of operas printed and engraved, for which the fine library of Beaumarchais, the author of *Researches into the Stage,* had supplied the first material. Here and there books with plates, engraved books, Callot, La Belle, Sylvestre, at times tempted the hand of the fair engraver, weary of holding her tool, and gave her their mute lessons. But, above all, how many books, among all those volumes, the most severe of which delighted the eye with their morocco backs and blazoned sides, how many volumes spoke to the imagination of the woman, amused her, soothed her, enticed her into the distraction of dream! The library of Madame de Pompadour was the palace of romance, love stories from all the lands of love, Spanish, Italian, French, romances of chivalry, heroic romances, historical romances, moral and political romances, satirical comic romances, romances of the marvellous and of faery,—the favorite had willed that all the children of human fiction should surround her with their falsehoods and their enchantments, and should give her for a few hours oblivion of the present and of so hugely envied a life!

Time and death served Madame de Pompadour. They rid her in succession of the two Dauphines and of the Dauphin, that constant and redoubtable foe, over whom she had never ceased casting ridicule. Disgrace again relieved her of the Marquis de Souvre, who had for so long represented in his sole person the opposition of the court to the favourite, with so much wit and audacity,

with such pitiless allusions, such fearless epigrams such as the one which earned him exile; he had said "that he was astonished that Madame de Pompadour should wish to learn German, whilst she did nothing but murder French."

And, nevertheless, all these deaths which diminished the party of the Royal family, this exile which deprived the little group of malcontents at court of a leader and a pattern, did not give Madame de Pompadour tranquillity. And she went back to Versailles with despair in her heart. She was alarmed further at the sight of her own alarm on the forehead of M. de Choiseul. But the advice of that Providence to the mistresses, the Maréchale de Mirepoix, restored her courage with her coolness, her healthy view of things, and that clear summing up of the situation which she knew how to make so clearly and keenly, with so practical a knowledge of life and character. Speaking of the King, Madame de Mirepoix said to Madame de Pompadour: "I will not tell you that he loves you better than her, and if by the stroke of a wand she could be transported here, if she could be offered to him to-night at supper, and initiated into his tastes, there would be cause, perhaps, for you to tremble. But princes are, before all, people of habit. The King's friendship for you is the same as for your apartment, your surroundings. You are used to his manners, his histories; he stands on no ceremony, is not afraid of boring you. How do you suppose he will have the courage to root up all that in a day, to form another establishment, and make a public spectacle of himself by so great a change of decoration?" She also said, in reference to the child, which was the great uneasiness of Madame de Pompadour: "You may be convinced that the King troubles mighty little about the child. *He has enough of it, and would not* wish to have mother and child on his hands. Look how he occupies himself with the Comte de Luc, who resembles him in the most striking manner; he never

speaks of him, and I am sure that he will never do anything for him. Once more, we are not under Louis XIV. . . ."

These words of Madame de Mirepoix saved Madame de Pompadour from discouragement; they gave her the strength to struggle, the certitude of victory, and the necessary presence of mind to hide her alarm and her dreads from the King, recover an undivided power over him, and reduce his amour to the proportions of an intrigue at the Parc-aux-Cerfs.

Thus, then, the very infidelities, the longest and keenest caprices of the King could not break her chain. Habit had subjugated him to Madame de Pompadour's domination. And the favorite had arrived at that moment of confidence and security in a *liaison,* when the infidelities of her lover's senses no longer convey any menace to her position as a mistress. After this last proof, Madame de Pompadour might well deem her favor impregnable. Nothing need any longer disquiet her; and she was delivered from that torment as to the future, which poisoned her fortune, the fixed idea of her dreams, the constant care that tainted all her joys, the jealousy of her ever restless, ever trembling ambitions. And nevertheless, in this deliverance, in the midst of these untroubled days, when her reign seemed definitely assured, and every blessing seemed to smile upon her, a sadness deeper and gloomier than the weariness of the last days of Madame de Maintenon gradually overcame Madame de Pompadour, suffused her face and her soul, the solitude of her heart and the gaze of her great dying eyes. The greatest, and, let it be added, the noblest dream of her life had been frustrated: she must needs renounce glory, *"renounce all glory! . . ."* she writes with despair in a letter which seems the supreme and heartrending cry of her vanquished hopes and pride. Do not, indeed, be deceived by the mask of Madame de Pompadour, by that parade of indifference and carelessness, by that saying, in which, in

order to shock Louis XV., her lips blasphemed posterity: "After us the deluge!" The favorite did not despise the memory of her name. She was concerned for, preoccupied with history. All the time of her favor, she had everywhere followed and entreated glory with all the passion and obstinacy of a woman. Upon the great throne to which chance had raised her, she had sought to attain to posterity, and the present, as little as the tomb, had seemed the term of her reign and fame. She had dreamed of binding up her image and the name of Pompadour with a reign of conquest, captured cities, and subjugated provinces, with the aggrandizement of the monarchy, the glory of our arms, the thunder of victories, with all the great immortalities of war, that patrimony of a people's honor. For a moment she had thought to surpass the political combinations of Richelieu and the vaunted plans of the Marquis de Louvois. For a moment, she had thrust out her hand upon Hanover, Hesse, the two Saxonies. For a moment, she had thought to push the frontiers and flag of France as far forward as L'Escaut. . . . What was left of all these illusions? The fortune of battles had played with France, and Madame de Pompadour had to count all those defeats which had followed Rosbach and Minden and Warbourg and Filingshausen, unparalleled reverses which had even detracted from the European reputation for bravery of the French soldier, and which exposed the French bank of the Rhine to the passage of foreign troops. What humiliations for her in these humiliations of France: our Channel coast ravaged by fire and bombarded; our fleets taking refuge in our ports and deserting the seas; and India and Africa where fortune betrayed us as in Europe! Then within the kingdom there were all the corresponding effects of these disasters, all the miseries entailed by an unfortunate war, the countryside bereft of a million of men, agriculture clamoring for arms, commerce destroyed, the finances exhausted and insufficient for the

needs of the King and the State, France more ruined, enfeebled and abased than in the gloomiest days of the close of the monarchy of Louis XIV.! Lugubrious spectacle thrust upon her from all sides, wounding her at every moment, maledictions of fates, men and things, in which she already heard the voice of her future unpopularity; dumb sorrows, stifled shames, wounds always open, where the King's shamefaced look before some foreign general rendered illustrious by our reverses made the vanity of a woman bleed almost as painfully as a people's pride!

And finally, when the whole policy of Madame de Pompadour was brought to a conclusion in the Treaty of Paris; when she had to resign herself to sign the abandonment of our rights over the New World, the cession of Arcadia, Canada, the Isle of Cape Breton, all the islands in the Gulf and River of the Saint-Lawrence; when she had to submit to all those sacrifices for which future ages were to ask Madame de Pompadour to account as the real master of the policy of King Louis XV.; what torture to the favorite, who, fighting over the details of the treaty, and wishing at least to preserve the King's dignity, came near to quarrelling with Choiseul over the ancient title of *King of France,* assumed in the treaty by the King of England.

This awakening, after that dream, the lack of glory after such an impatience and longing for glory was a most bitter deception to a woman accustomed to mould everything to her wishes and caprice. Madame de Pompadour found no consolation, and her grief at so great a fall was a torture to her as mortal as the disease she bore within her which was her death.

An internal malady, secret sufferings, were afflicting Madame de Pompadour. That nervous organization, that weak chest, which asked for rest and care, shaken and inflamed by the life of bustle and fatigue, "that life ever in the air and on the highways," as she has somewhere said, exhausted her more, day by day. The

tension of all the moral energies further enfevered and wasted that body to which Madame de Pompadour would show no mercy, and which she continued to exert and agitate. It was a miracle to see her thus, crushing down her disease and keeping about, to many who believed her undermined by a slow poison. Of her beauty, those fresh features so lively and animated in 1748, hardly anything remained but the brilliancy of her eyes, made bigger by fever and full of an ardent flame. That seductive physiognomy over which such soul and spirit passed and played in flashes, was only revealed now in a smile which grimaced beneath a mask of irony. In vain she plastered and loaded with vivid red and white that drawn, leaden, and extinguished face; in vain, beneath toilettes and artifices, the coquetries of despair, did she veil her leanness and seek passionately to hide all of her that was already dead; every one saw her as she was: worn out, sick, dying.

It was during a pleasure excursion to Choisy that the machinery suddenly stopped; strength failed the volition of the Marquise: she had to take to her bed. Troubles that were little suspected by the public beset the Marquise at the beginning of her illness. She was worried in the bed, where she was laid low by fever, by money difficulties. Such had for long been the wretched preoccupations of this grasping woman who took from every hand, and whom the populace accused of having invested enormous sums abroad. In her mad desire to build and make acquisitions of every kind, the favorite's expenditure had far exceeded her revenues, the perquisites of her position. She was forced, every moment, to have recourse to expedients, whilst nothing could cure her of her mania of acquiring, of her laboring to possess more. The pension which the King gave her in 1746, that pension of 2400 livres a month, which the King hardly counted, in his first moments of passion, amid the generosity which he lavished upon his mistress, became

regularized with the habit of the *liaison* and never exceeded 4000 livres a month. On the other side, the King's presents, which in 1747 amounted to 50,000 livres, soon fell as low as 20,000 livres; and from 1750 ceased altogether. How were matters to be met, especially during the bad years of the Seven Years' War; in 1760, for instance, when her pension had fallen to 3000 livres a month, and when she had also bought Menars? Madame de Pompadour faced what was most pressing with all sorts of resources and sacrifices, sometimes by her card winnings, which in 1752 amounted to nearly 38,000 livres, in 1753 to 20,000 livres; sometimes, when luck was against her, by the sale of snuff-boxes, jewelry, pearl bracelets; sometimes, again, by a small windfall, a present of 6000 livres, for instance, which she obtained from the King owing to her courage in letting herself be bled. This lack of balance between receipts and expenses, this difficulty in the midst of the opulence which piled up debts, reached such a point that Collin was obliged to borrow 70,000 livres at the moment when Madame de Pompadour fell ill. Who would have thought that the favorite would leave, for all money, at her death, but thirty-seven *louis d'or* in her writing-table?

After a few days the sick woman's cough grew worse. The bed suffocated her. The doctors did not conceal their anxiety. The King visited the patient almost every day; and upon the days when he was detained at Versailles, couriers brought him hourly reports from Choisy which the members of the Royal Family sent for in their turn. It was not long before the Marquise was condemned; and there seemed no more hope remaining, when, at the end of three weeks, a sudden improvement declared. The fever was diminished; the cough almost ceased; and, one morning, the friends of Madame de Pompadour were full of the good news: she had been able to sleep for five hours in an arm-chair, and felt so well that she was to make an attempt to sleep in her bed that night. After

some returns of fever, the Marquise was able to rise, then soon to take the air in a carriage in the neighbourhood of Choisy. The doctors themselves had already fixed the day for her return to Versailles. It was a resurrection. Cochin received the order to design, for the convalescence of the Marquise, a cartel in which Favart was already taking the measure of his song upon the eclipse of the sun:

Le Soleil est malade,
Et Pompadour aussi.
Ce n'est qu'une passade,
L'un et l'autre est guéri.
Le bon Dieu qui féconde
Nos voeux et notre amour
Pour le bonheur du monde
Nous a rendu le jour
Avec Pompadour.
Votum populi, laus ejus.

But engraving and song were destined to be too late. The Marquise, transported to Versailles, to the palace, deprived of the care of Quesnay, who was acquainted with her disease and her temperament, delivered into the unskilled hands of Richard, the Marquise died.

Charlotte Corday

By THOMAS CARLYLE

IN the leafy months of June and July, several French departments germinate a set of rebellious paper-leaves, named proclamations, resolutions, journals, or diurnals, of "the union for resistance to oppression." In particular, the town of Caen, in Calvados, sees its paper-leaf of *Bulletin de Caen* suddenly bud, suddenly establish itself as newspaper there; under the editorship of Girondin national representatives!

For among the proscribed Girondins are certain of a more desperate humor. Some, as Vergniaud, Valazé, Gensonné, "arrested in their own houses," will await with stoical resignation what the issue may be. Some, as Brissot, Rabaut, will take to flight, to concealment; which, as the Paris barriers are opened again in a day or two, is not yet difficult. But others there are who will rush, with Buzot, to Calvados; or far over France, to Lyons, Toulon, Nantes and elsewhither, and then rendezvous at Caen: to awaken as with war-trumpet the respectable departments; and strike down an anarchic mountain faction; at least not yield without a stroke at it. Of this latter temper we count some score or more, of the arrested, and of the not yet arrested; a Buzot, a Barbaroux, Louvet, Guadet, Pétition, who have escaped from arrestment in their own homes; a Salles, a Pythagorean Valady, a Duchâtel; the Duchâtel that came in blanket and nightcap to vote for the life of Louis, who have escaped from danger and likelihood of arrestment. These, to the number

at one time of twenty-seven, do accordingly lodge here, at the "*Intendance,* or departmental mansion," of the town of Caen in Calvados; welcomed by persons in authority; welcomed and defrayed, having no money of their own. And the *Bulletin de Caen* comes forth, with the most animating paragraphs: How the Bordeaux department, the Lyons department, this department after the other is declaring itself; sixty, or say sixty-nine, or seventy-two respectable departments either declaring, or ready to declare. Nay Marseilles, it seems, will march on Paris by itself, if need be. So has Marseilles town said, that she will march. But on the other hand, that Montélimart town has said, No thoroughfare; and means even to "bury herself" under her own stone and mortar first—of this be no mention in *Bulletin de Caen.*

Such animating paragraphs we read in this new newspaper; and fervors and eloquent sarcasm: tirades against the mountain, from the pen of Deputy Salles; which resemble, say friends, Pascal's *Provincials.* What is more to the purpose, these Girondins have got a general in chief, one Wimpfen, formerly under Dumouriez; also a secondary questionable General Puisaye, and others; and are doing their best to raise a force for war. National volunteers, whosoever is of right heart: gather in, ye national volunteers, friends of liberty; from our Calvados townships, from the Eure, from Brittany, from far and near; forward to Paris, and extinguish anarchy! Thus at Caen, in the early July days, there is a drumming and parading; a perorating and consulting; staff and army; council; Club of *Carabots,* Anti-Jacobin friends of freedom, to denounce atrocious Marat. With all which, and the editing of *bulletins,* a national representative has his hands full.

At Caen it is most animated; and, as one hopes, more or less animated in the "Seventy-two departments that adhere to us." And in a France begirt with Cimmerian invading coalitions, and torn with an internal La Vendée,

this is the conclusion we have arrived at: To put down anarchy by civil war! *Durum et durum,* the proverb says, *non faciunt murum.* La Vendée burns; Santerre can do nothing there; he may return home and brew beer. Cimmerian bombshells fly all along the north. That siege of Mentz is become famed; lovers of the picturesque (as Goethe will testify), washed country-people of both sexes, stroll thither on Sundays, to see the artillery work and counterwork; "you only duck a little while the shot whizzes past." Condé is capitulating to the Austrians; royal highness of York, these several weeks, fiercely batters Valenciennes. For, alas, our fortified camp of Famars was stormed; General Dampierre was killed; General Custine was blamed, and indeed is now come to Paris to give "explanations."

Against all which the mountain and atrocious Marat must even make head as they can. They, anarchic convention as they are, publish decrees, expostulatory, explanatory, yet not without severity; they ray forth commissioners, singly or in pairs, the olive-branch in one hand, yet the sword in the other. Commissioners come even to Caen; but without effect. Mathematical Romme, and Prieur named of the Côte d'Or, venturing thither, with their olive and sword, are packed into prison; there may Romme lie, under lock and key, "for fifty days;" and meditate his new calendar, if he please. Cimmeria, La Vendée, and civil war! Never was republic one and indivisible at a lower ebb.

Amid which dim ferment of Caen and the world, history specially notices one thing; in the lobby of the mansion *de l'Intendance,* where busy deputies are coming and going a young lady with an aged valet, taking grave graceful leave of Deputy Barbaroux. She is of stately Norman figure; in her twenty-fifth year; of beautiful still countenance: her name is Charlotte Corday,[9] heretofore styled D'Armans, while nobility still was. Barbaroux has given her a note to Deputy Duperret, him who once drew

his sword in the effervescence. Apparently she will to Paris on some errand? "She was a republican before the revolution, and never wanted energy." A completeness, a decision is in this fair female figure; "by energy she means the spirit that will prompt one to sacrifice himself for his country." What if she, this fair young Charlotte, had emerged from her secluded stillness, suddenly like a star; cruel; lovely with half-angelic, half dæmonic splendor; to gleam for a moment, and in a moment be extinguished; to be held in memory, so bright complete was she, through long centuries! Quitting Cimmerian coalitions without, and the dim-simmering twenty-five millions within, history will look fixedly at this one fair apparition of a Charlotte Corday; will note whither Charlotte moves, how the little life burns forth so radiant, then vanishes swallowed of the night.

With Barbaroux's note of introduction, and slight stock of luggage, we see Charlotte on Tuesday the 9th of July seated in the Caen diligence, with a place for Paris. None takes farewell of her, wishes her good-journey; her father will find a line left, signifying that she is gone to England, that he must pardon her, and forget her. The drowsy diligence lumbers along; amid drowsy talk of politics, and praise of the mountain; in which she mingles not; all night, all day, and again all night. On Thursday, not long before noon we are at the bridge of Neuilly; here is Paris with her thousand black domes, the goal and purpose of thy journey! Arrived at the inn de la Providence in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, Charlotte demands a room; hastens to bed; sleeps all afternoon and night, till the morrow morning.

On the morrow morning, she delivers her note to Duperret. It relates to certain family papers which are in the minister of the interior's hands; which a nun at Caen, an old convent-friend of Charlotte's, has need of; which Duperret shall assist her in getting: this then was Charlotte's errand to Paris? She has finished this, in the

course of Friday; yet says nothing of returning. She has seen and silently investigated several things. The convention, in bodily reality, she has seen; what the mountain is like. The living physiognomy of Marat she could not see; he is sick at present, and confined to home.

About eight on the Saturday morning, she purchases a large sheath-knife in the Palais Royal; then straightway, in the Place des Victoires, takes a hackney-coach. "To the Rue de l'Ecole de Médicine, No. 44." It is the residence of the Citoyen Marat! The Citoyen Marat is ill, and cannot be seen; which seems to disappoint her much. Her business is with Marat, then? Hapless beautiful Charlotte; hapless squalid Marat! From Caen in the utmost west, from Neuchâtel in the utmost east, they two are drawing nigh each other. They two have, very strangely, business together. Charlotte, returning to her inn, despatches a short note to Marat; signifying that she is from Caen, the seat of rebellion; that she desires earnestly to see him, and "will put it in his power to do France a great service." No answer. Charlotte writes another note, still more pressing; sets out with it by coach, about seven in the evening, herself. Tired day laborers have again finished their week; huge Paris is circling and simmering, manifold, according to its vague wont: this one fair figure has decision in it; drives straight, toward a purpose.

It is yellow July evening, we say, the thirteenth of the month; eve of the Bastille day, when "M. Marat," four years ago, in the crowd of the Pont Neuf, shrewdly required of that Besenval hussar-party, which had such friendly dispositions, "to dismount, and give up their arms, then;" and became notable among patriot men. Four years; what a road he has traveled; and sits now, about half-past seven of the clock, stewing in slipper bath; sore afflicted; ill of revolution fever, of what other malady this history had rather not name. Excessively sick and worn, poor man: with precisely elevenpenny-halfpenny

of ready-money, in paper; with slipper-bath; strong three-footed stool for writing on, the while; and a squalid washerwoman, one may call her; that is his civic establishment in Medical School street; thither and not elsewhither has his road led him. Not to the reign of brotherhood and perfect felicity; yet surely on the way toward that? Hark, a rap again! A musical woman's voice, refusing to be rejected: it is the citoyenne who would do France a service. Marat, recognizing from within, cries, admit her. Charlotte Corday is admitted.

Citoyen Marat, I am from Caen the seat of rebellion, and wished to speak with you. Be seated, *mon enfant.* Now what are the traitors doing at Caen? What deputies are at Caen? Charlotte names some deputies. "Their heads shall fall within a fortnight," croaks the eager people's friend, clutching his tablets to write; *Barbaroux, Pétion,* writes he with bare shrunk arm, turning aside in the bath: *Pétion,* and *Lòuvret,* and Charlotte has drawn her knife from the sheath; plunges it, with one sure stroke, into the writer's heart. *"A moi, chère amie,* Help, dear!" no more could the death-choked say or shriek. The helpful washerwoman running in, there is no friend of the people, or friend of the washerwoman left; but his life with a groan gushes out, indignant, to the shades below.

And so Marat people's-friend is ended; the lone Stylites has got hurled down suddenly from his pillar, *whitherward* He that made him knows. Patriot Paris may sound triple and tenfold, in dole and wail; re-echoed by patriot France; and the convention, "Chabot pale with terror, declaring that they are to be all assassinated," may decree him Pantheon honors, public funeral, Mirabeau's dust making way for him; and Jacobin societies, in lamentable oratory, summing up his character, parallel him to one, whom they think it honor to call "the good Sansculotte," whom we name not here; also a chapel may be made, for the urn that holds his heart, in the Place du Carrousel;

and new-born children be named Marat; and Lago-di-Como hawkers bake mountains of stucco into unbeautiful busts; and David paint his picture, or death-scene; and such other apotheosis take place as the human genius, in these circumstances, can devise; but Marat returns no more to the light of this sun. One sole circumstance we have read with clear sympathy, in the old *Moniteur* newspaper; how Marat's brother comes from Neuchâtel to ask of the convention, "that the deceased Jean-Paul Marat's musket be given to him." For Marat too had a brother and natural affections; and was wrapped once in swaddling-clothes and slept safe in a cradle like the rest of us. Ye children of men! A sister of his, they say, lives still to this day in Paris.

As for Charlotte Corday, her work is accomplished; the recompense of it is near and sure. The *chère ami,* and neighbors of the house, flying at her, she "overturns some movables," entrenches herself till the gendarmes arrive; then quietly surrenders; goes quietly to the Abbaye prison; she alone quiet, all Paris sounding, in wonder, in rage or admiration, round her. Duperret is put in arrest, on account of her; his papers sealed, which may lead to consequences. Fauchet, in like manner; though Fauchet had not so much as heard of her. Charlotte, confronted with these two deputies, praises the grave firmness of Duperret, censures the dejection of Fauchet.

On Wednesday morning, the thronged Palais de Justice and revolutionary tribunal can see her face; beautiful and calm; she dates it "fourth day of the preparation of peace." A strange murmur ran through the hall, at sight of her; you could not say of what character. Tinville has his indictments and tapepapers; the cutler of the Palais Royal will testify that he sold her the sheath-knife; "all these details are needless," interrupted Charlotte; "it is I that killed Marat." By whose instigation? "By no one's." What tempted you, then? His crimes. "I killed one man," added she, raising her voice extremely (*ex-*

trêmement), as they went on with their questions, "I killed one man to save a hundred thousand; a villain to save innocents; a savage wild-beast to give repose to my country. I was a republican before the revolution; I never wanted energy." There is therefore nothing to be said. The public gazes astonished; the hasty limners sketch her features, Charlotte not disapproving; the men of law proceed with their formalities. The doom is death as a murderess. To her advocate she gives thanks; in gentle phrase, in high-flown classical spirit. To the priest they send her she gives thanks; but needs not any shriving, any ghostly or other aid from him.

On this same evening therefore, about half-past seven o'clock, from the gate of the Conciergerie, to a city all on tiptoe, the fatal cart issues; seated on it a fair young creature, sheeted in red smock of murderess; so beautiful, serene, so full of life; journeying toward death, alone amid the world. Many take off their hats, saluting reverently; for what heart but must be touched? Others growl and howl. Adam Lux, of Mentz, declares that she is greater than Brutus; that it were beautiful to die with her; the head of this young man seems turned. At the Place de la Révolution, the countenance of Charlotte wears the same still smile. The executioners proceed to bind her feet; she resists, thinking it meant as an insult; on a word of explanation, she submits with cheerful apology. As the last act, all being now ready, they take the neckerchief from her neck! a blush of maidenly shame overspreads that fair face and neck; the cheeks were still tinged with it when the executioner lifted the severed head, to show it to the people. "It is most true," says Forster, "that he struck the cheek insultingly; for I saw it with my eyes; the police imprisoned him for it."

In this manner have the beautifulest and the squalidest come in collision, and extinguished one another. Jean-Paul Marat and Marie-Anne Charlotte Corday both, suddenly, are no more. "Day of the preparation of peace?"

Alas, how were peace possible or preparable, while for example, the hearts of lovely maidens, in their convent-stillness, are dreaming, not of love-paradises and the light of life, but of Cordrus'-sacrifices and death well-earned? That twenty-five million hearts have got to such temper, this *is* the anarchy; the soul of it lies in this; whereof not peace can be the embodiment! The death of Marat, whetting old animosities tenfold, will be worse than any life. Oh ye hapless two, mutually extinctive, the beautiful and the squalid, sleep ye well, in the mother's bosom that bore you both!

This is the history of Charlotte Corday; most definite, most complete; angelic-dæmonic: like a star! Adam Lux goes home, half-delirious; to pour forth his apotheosis of her, in paper and print; to propose that she have a statue with this inscription, *Greater than Brutus.* Friends represent his danger; Lux is reckless; thinks it were beautiful to die with her.

Catherine the Great

By K. WALIZEWSKI

TO tell the truth, I have never fancied myself extremely beautiful, but I had the gift of pleasing, and that, I think, was my greatest gift." So Catherine herself defines the particular kind of attraction that nature had given her in outward appearance.[10] Thus, having passed all her life in hearing herself compared to all the Cleopatras of history, she did not admit the justice of the comparison. Not that she underrated its worth. "Believe me," she wrote to Grimm, "there can never be too much of beauty, and I have always placed a very high estimation on it, though I have never been very beautiful." Did she deliberately depreciate her charms, through a modest ignorance or an artifice of refined coquetry? One is tempted to believe it, on hearing the almost unanimous opinion of her contemporaries. The "Semiramis of the North" flashed across the latter half of the eighteenth century, and over the very threshold of the nineteenth, as a marvellous incarnation, not only of power, grandeur, and triumphant success, but also of adorable and adored femininity. In the eyes of all, or nearly all, she was not only imposing, majestic, terrible, but also seductive, beautiful among the beautiful, queen by right of beauty as by right of genius, Pallas and Venus Victrix.

Well, it seems that her contemporaries saw the marvellous Czarina in a sort of mirage. The illusion was so complete that it extended to the most apparent and the

most insignificant details. Thus, the greater part of those who came into her presence speak of her lofty stature, by which she dominated a crowd. Now, as a matter of fact, she was under the middle height, short almost, with a precocious tendency to grow stout. The very color of her eyes has given rise to absurd contradictions. Some found them brown, others blue, and Rulhière has tried to harmonize both accounts by making them brown with a shade of blue in some lights. Here is his whole portrait—a portrait which belongs to the period a little before Catherine's accession to the throne, at the age of thirty-seven. No portrait of an earlier date has come down to us with anything like so much detail: Poniatowski's is only four or five years earlier in date, and is a lover's portrait.

"Her figure," writes Rulhière, "is noble and agreeable, her bearing proud; her person and her demeanour full of grace. Her air is that of a sovereign. All her features indicate character. Her neck is long, her head stands out well; the union of these two parts is of remarkable beauty, alike in the profile and in the movements of the head; and she is not unmindful of her beauty in this respect. Her forehead is large and open, her nose almost acquiline; her mouth is fresh, and embellished by her teeth; her chin a little large, and inclined to fleshiness. Her hair is chestnut in colour, and of the greatest beauty; her eyebrows brown, her eyes brown and very beautiful—in certain lights there seem to be shades of blue; and her skin is of dazzling whiteness. Pride is the main characteristic of her physiognomy. The amiability and good-nature which are also to be seen there seem, to a penetrating eye, merely the effect of an extreme desire to make a pleasing impression."

Rulhière is neither a lover nor an enthusiast. Compare, however, with this sketch the sketch done in pencil about this time by a Russian artist, Tchemessof. There is a story that this portrait was made at the desire of Patiom-

kine, whom Catherine began to favor just after, or perhaps just before, the revolution of July. Catherine was very pleased with it, and took the artist into her service as secretary to her cabinet. And yet what an Empress this Tchemessof shows us, and how unlike all that we see of other painters, sculptors, and memoir-writers, from Benner to Lampi, from Rulhière to the Prince de Ligne! The face is agreeable indeed, if you will, and intelligent, but so little ideal, but—dare one say it?—so common. The costume perhaps has something to do with this, a strange mourning attire with the hair oddly dressed, covering the forehead down to the eyebrows, and overtopping the head with a pair of bats'-wings. But the hard, smiling face, the heavy, half-masculine features, stand out with a brutal frankness. You would say a German *vivandière* turned into a nun. Cleopatra, never!

Was Tchemessof a deceiver, and did Catherine, in seeing herself in the portrait, merely show that total ignorance of art which she afterwards confessed with such candor to Falconet? It may be, to a certain point. We have nevertheless a sort of duplicate of the Russian artist's sketch in a written portrait done some years later by Richardson, who seems to have had a mind and eyes of his own, not to be taken in by any kind of illusion. This is how he notes his impressions:—

"The Empress of Russia is under the middle height, graceful and well-proportioned, but inclining to be stout. She has a good color, and nevertheless endeavors to improve it with rouge, after the manner of all the women of this country. Her mouth is well-shaped, with good teeth; her blue eyes have a scrutinizing expression—something not so pronounced as an inquisitive look, nor so ugly as a defiant look. The features are in general regular and agreeable. The general effect is such, that one would do an injustice in attributing to it a masculine air, and something less than justice in calling it entirely feminine."

This is not exactly in the tone of the *naïf* and all but gross realism of Tchemessof. A common trait, however, appears in both, and it is what would seem to have been the dominant trait of the model, and, from the point of view of plastic beauty, to have considerably diminished, if not destroyed, its charm: that *mannish* expression, namely, which is emphasized in both, and which we find, through all the magic of colors, in the work of even the least conscientious of artists. The portrait that was the delight of Voltaire, and is still to be seen at Ferney—even that betrays something of it. Catherine was nevertheless observant in the matter, and down to the very last. A wrinkle that she discovered near the root of the nose in the portrait painted by Lampi, not long before her death, seeming to her to give a hard expression to her face, brought both picture and painter into trouble. Lampi nevertheless, and quite justly, had the reputation of not saying the truth too cruelly to his models. He effaced the wrinkle, and the all but septuagenarian Empress took the air of a young nymph. History does not tell us if she was satisfied this time.

"What do you think I look like?" asked Catherine of the Prince de Ligne, on his first visit to St. Petersburg; "long, lanky, eyes like stars, and a big hoop." This was in 1780. The Empress was fifty. This is what the Prince de Ligne thought of her: "She still looked well. One saw that she had been beautiful rather than pretty: the majesty of her forehead was tempered by her pleasant eyes and smile, but the forehead was everything. It needed no Lavater to read there, as in a book, genius, justice, courage, depth, equanimity, sweetness, calm, and decision: the breadth of the forehead indicated memory and imagination; there was room for everything. Her chin, somewhat pointed, was not absolutely prominent, but it was anything but retiring, and had a certain nobility of aspect. The oval, notwithstanding, was not well designed, though excessively pleasing, for frankness and

gaiety dwelt on the lips. Her fine bust had been acquired somewhat at the expense of her waist, once so terribly thin; but people generally grow fat in Russia. If she had not so tightly drawn back her hair, which should have come down more around her face, she would have looked much better. One never noticed that she was short."

Again an enthusiast, but the Comte de Ségur, who piqued himself on being less so, in his quality of diplomatist, noted at the same time almost identically the same traits. "The whiteness and brilliance of her complexion," he says, "were the charms that she kept the longest." But Castéra explains in his own way her triumph over the "irreparable outrage": "In the last year of her reign she used a great deal of rouge." It is just this that Catherine would never confess to. We read in one of her letters to Grimm, dated 1783:—

"Thank you for the pots of rouge with which you advise me to brighten my complexion; but when I tried to use it, I found that it was so crude in colour that it made me look frightful. So you will excuse me if I cannot imitate or adopt this pretty fashion, notwithstanding my great liking for your Paris fashions."

The most authoritative, the least impressive, testimony, from the plastic point of view, is perhaps that of Mlle. Vigée-Lebrun, who, unfortunately never saw Catherine in her best days. She had nothing to praise in the conduct of the sovereign, so far a guarantee of her sincerity. She could not induce the Empress to pose to her. Her brush, later on, did no more than evoke certain recollections. Pen in hand, she retraced them thus:—

"I was at first extremely surprised to find that she was short; I had expected her to be mighty in stature, as high as her renown. She was very stout, but she had still a handsome face, admirably framed in by her white hair,

raised up on her head. Genius sat on her large high forehead; her eyes were soft and clear, her nose quite Grecian, her complexion bright, her physiognomy very mobile. . . . I said she was short; yet on her reception days, her head held high, her eagle glance, the composure that comes of the habit of command, all in her had such majesty that she seemed to me the queen of the world. She wore on these occasions the insigna of three orders, and her costume was simple and dignified. It consisted in a tunic of muslin embroidered with gold, the ample sleeves folded across in the Asiatic style. Above this tunic was a dolman of red velvet with very short sleeves. The bonnet that framed in her white hair was not decked with ribbons, but with diamonds of the greatest beauty."

Catherine had early adopted the habit of holding her head very high in public, and she kept it all her life. Aided by her prestige, this gave her an effect of height that deceived even observers like Richardson. The art of *mise en scène,* in which she was incomparable, has remained a tradition at the court of Russia. A court lady at Vienna once gave us her impressions of the arrival of the Emperor Nicholas in that capital. When she saw him enter the castle, in all the splendor of his uniform, his virile beauty, and that air of majesty that shone in his whole person, upright, lofty in stature, a head taller than the princes, aides-de-camp, and chamberlains, she felt that here was a demigod. In the upper gallery, where she was placed, she could not turn away her eyes from the sight. Suddenly, she saw that the swarm of courtiers had retired, the doors were closed. Only the imperial family and a few of the private retinue remained. But the Emperor—where was he? There, sunk into a seat, his tall form doubled in upon itself, the muscles of his face released from constraint, settling into an expression of unspeakable anguish; unrecognizable, only the half of himself, as if fallen from the height of grandeur to the

depth of misery, the demigod was but a handful of suffering human flesh. This was in 1850. Nicholas was then already stricken by the first attacks of the disease that undermined the last years of his life, and prematurely ended it. Withdrawn from the eyes of the crowd, he bowed beneath its weight. Before the public, by an heroic effort of will, he became once more the splendid Emperor of the past. Perhaps it was so with Catherine in the last years of her reign.

The Princess of Saxe-Coburg, who saw her for the first time in 1795, begins her account of the meeting unpleasantly enough, saying that she always fancied a sorceress must look much as did the old Empress. But the sequel shows that her idea of a sorceress was by no means disagreeable. She praises in particular the "singularly fine complexion" retained by the Empress, and says that in general she seemed to find in her "the personification of robust old age, though abroad there is much talk of her maladies."

Catherine, nevertheless, had never very good health. She suffered much from headaches, accompanied by colics. This did not prevent her from laughing at physics and physicians to the very last. It was quite an affair to make her swallow a potion. One day when her doctor, Rogerson, had succeeded in making her take some pills, he was so delighted as to forget himself, and clapped her familiarly on the shoulder, crying, "Bravo, madame!" She was not in the least offended.

From 1722 she was obliged to use glasses to read. Her hearing, though very sharp, was affected by an odd peculiarity: each of her ears heard sounds in a different way, not merely in loudness, but in tone. This no doubt was the reason why she could never appreciate music, hard as she tried to acquire the taste. Her sense of harmony was completely lacking.

It was pretended that when the scarves in which she was accustomed to wrap up her head at night came to

be washed, they were seen to emit sparks. The same phenomenon occurred with her bedclothes. Such fables only serve to indicate her actual physical influence over the minds of her contemporaries, marvelling just then over the mysterious discoveries of Franklin.

"I assure you," she writes in 1774 to Grimm, "that I have not the defects you impute to me, because I do not find in myself the qualities that you give me. I am, perhaps, good-natured, ordinarily, but, by nature, I am constrained to will terribly what I will, and there you have what I am worth."

Observe, however, that if, as a general thing, she is persevering in the exercise and in the invariable tension of this natural energy, having always willed, according to her expression, "that the good of the empire should be accomplished," and having willed it with extraordinary force, in small things she is inconstancy itself. She wills everything strongly, but she changes her mind with a no less surprising facility, as her idea of what is "good" varies. In this respect she is a woman, from head to foot. In 1767 she devotes herself to her *Instruction* for the new laws that she would give to Russia. This work, in which she has pillaged Montesquieu and Beccaria, is in her eyes destined to open a new era in the history of Russia. And she wills, ardently, passionately, that it should be put into action. Difficulties, however, arise; unlooked-for delays interpose themselves. Whereupon, all at once, she loses interest in the thing. In 1775 she excogitates *Rules* for the administration of her provinces. And she writes: "My last rules of the 7th November contain 250 quarto pages of print, and I swear to you that it is the best thing I have ever done, and that, in comparison, I look upon the *Instruction* as so much nonsense." And she is dying with desire to show this new masterpiece to her confidant. Less than a year

afterwards it is finished. Grimm has not had sight of the document, and as he insists on being favored with it, she loses patience: "Why is he so anxious to read anything so little amusing? It is very good, very fine, perhaps, but quite tedious." At the end of a month she has forgotten all about it.

She has the same way with men as with things; sudden, passionate infatuations, of an unexampled impetuosity, followed by disenchantments and by an equally rapid subsidence into the most complete indifference. The greater part of the able men whom she drew to Russia, Diderot among the rest, experienced it in turn. After having passed twenty years of her reign in adoring different residences which have been successively preferred and preferable in her eyes, she takes a fancy, all of a sudden, in 1786, to a site near St. Petersburg, which has no advantages in itself. She summons the Russian architect Starof, of the Academy of St. Petersburg, to build a palace there in all haste; and she writes to Grimm: "All my country houses are as hovels in comparison with Pella, which is rising like a phœnix."

Not being wanting, by any means, either in common sense or in acuteness, she comes to find out, late enough, what we have just noted. "Two days ago," she writes in 1781, "I made the discovery that I am a *beginner* by profession, and that up to now I have finished nothing of all that I have begun." And a year afterwards: "For all that, I only want the time to finish; it is like my laws, my regulations: everything is begun, nothing finished." She has her illusions, however, and she adds: "If I live ten years longer, all will be finished to perfection." Two years and more having passed, she ends by perceiving that time has nothing to do with the matter. "Never have I so completely realized that I am a very accumulation of broken ends," she declares, not without a certain melancholy. To which she adds, that she is "as stupid as a goose," and that she is convinced

Prince Patiomkine had much more notion of good management than she.

She would not be a woman if it did not sometimes happen to her not to know very well what she wanted, or even not know it at all, while she was very much in want of something. *Apropos* of a certain Wagnière, who was secretary to Voltaire, whose services she desired for herself, and whom, after all, she did not know what to do with, she writes to her *souffre-douleur*:—

"A truce to your excuses . . . and to mine, for not knowing exactly, now as often, what I wanted, nor what I did not want, and for having consequently written for and against. . . . If you will, I will found a professorship, in addition to the one you counsel, on the science of indecision, more natural to me than people think."

It is to be observed that a disposition of this kind is not made to give a firm and well-balanced direction to the affairs of an empire. And, indeed, nothing of the kind is to be found in the part that Catherine played in history. If this part was a large one, it was—as she well knew herself—because she had to do with a new people, at the first stage of its career, the stage of expansion. In this stage a people has no need of being directed; for the most part, it is not even susceptible of direction. It is an "impelled force," which follows its own impulsion. In obeying it, it is in no danger of going astray. The sole misfortune of which it is capable is that of falling asleep. It would be vain and useless to take such a nation by the hand, and lead it into the way that it knows so well how to find by itself. It suffices to give it a shaking, and start it forward from time to time. That is what Catherine understood in the most wonderful way. Her action was that of a stimulant and a propeller of prodigious vigor.

In this respect she bears comparison with the greatest men of history. Her soul is like a spring, always at full tension, always vibrating, of a temper which resists every test. In the month of August 1765 she is unwell, and is keeping her bed. Rumors are spread that she is *enceinte,* and that an abortion is to be procured. Nevertheless she has arranged for some great manœuvres, "a camp," as it was called then, for the end of the month, and she has announced that she will be present. She is present. The last day, during the "battle," she remains on horseback for five hours, having to direct the manœuvres and to send orders, by the intermediary of her aide-de-camp, to Marshal Boutourline and to General Prince Galitzine, who command the two wings of the army. The aide-de-camp, glittering in a cuirass of gold studded with jewels, is Gregory Orlof. Some months later, riots having broken out in the capital, she comes in the middle of the night from Tzarskoïe-Sielo to St. Petersburg with Orlof, Passek, and a few other trusty friends, mounts on horseback, and traverses the streets to make sure that her orders have been properly carried out, and proper precautions taken. Even now she has not fully recovered from the more or less mysterious crisis that she has passed through. She can take no nourishment. She, however, thinks well to appear cheerful and in good health. Festivity follows festivity; the French play comes to Tzarskoïe.

Physical or moral dejection, lassitude, or discouragement, are things equally unknown to her. Her force of resistance seems to increase in proportion to the demand upon it. In 1791, when things look dark about her, when she has to face Sweden and Turkey, and is in danger of a rupture with England, she has, or affects to have, the most tranquil serenity, the most contagious good humor. She laughs and jests; advises those about her to give up English liquors in good time, and get accustomed to the national drinks.

And what "go"; what ardor, for ever youthful; what impetuousness, never relaxed!

"Courage! Forward! That is the motto with which I have passed through good years and bad years alike, and now I have passed through forty, all told, and what is the present evil compared with the past?"

That is her habitual tone. The force of will that she has at command allows her both to control the outward expression of her feelings, and even to abstract herself when she will from these feelings when they become troublesome, intense as they may be, for she is far from being indifferent, or hard to move, or naturally calm. *Sang-froid,* for instance, is not at all a part of her disposition. In May 1790, on the eve of a sea-fight with Sweden, she passes whole nights without sleep, puts every one about her on pins and needles, gets a *rougeur* on her cheek, which she attributes to the acuteness of her emotions, and behaves in such a way that every one, including her Prime Minister, Besborodko, bursts into tears. No sooner has she known the issue of the battle than her peace of mind is restored, and no matter what bad news may follow, she is gay and light-hearted again. Every moment she is passing through some fever or other. She falls ill with anxiety, and has colics. One day Chrapowicki, her factotum, finds her lying on a sofa, complaining of pains in the region of her heart. "It is the bad weather, no doubt," says he, "that indisposes your Majesty." "No," replies she, "it is Otchakof; the fortress will be taken to-day or to-morrow; I have often such presentiments." These presentiments often prove deceptive, as in the present case, for Otchakof was not taken till two months after. On hearing the news of the death of Louis XVI., she receives such a shock that she is obliged to take to her bed. It is true that, this time, she makes no attempt to master or to dissimulate her emotion, which, however, is not inspired only by a sentiment of political solidarity, for the fibres of her

heart are extremely excitable. She has not merely "sensibility," after the fashion of the day; she is sincerely accessible to sympathy and pity.

"I forgot to drink, eat, and sleep," she writes in 1776, announcing the death of her daughter-in-law, "and I know not how I kept up my strength. There were moments when my very heart was torn by the suffering I saw about me."

This does not hinder her from adding to the letter, which is lengthy, a host of details concerning current affairs, with the usual jokes, a little heavy, which serve to season her familiar correspondence. After giving herself up to her impressions, she returns to herself, and she explains it all:—

"On Friday I seemed to turn to stone. . . . I who am so given to weeping, saw death without a tear. I said to myself: 'If thou weep, the others will sob; if thou sob, the others will faint, and every one will lose their head and their wits.'"

She never lost her head, and, she declares in one of her letters, she never fainted. Whenever she has to play a part, to take an attitude, and, by her example, to impose it upon others, she is always ready. In August 1790 she thinks seriously of accompanying the army reserve to Finland. "Had it been needful," she said afterwards, "I should have left my bones in the last battalion. I have never known fear."

With our present-day notions, it does not seem a very signal proof of courage that she gave in 1768, in being the first, or almost the first, in her capital and in her empire, to be inoculated. For the time it was a great event, and an act of heroism celebrated by all her contemporaries. One need but read the notes written on the subject by the inoculator himself, the Englishman Dimsdale, expressly brought over from London, to realize

the idea that the profession itself still cherished in regard to the danger of the operation. We cut open or trepan a man to-day with much less concern. Catherine bared her arm to the lancet on the 26th October 1768. A week afterwards she had her son inoculated. On the 22nd of November the members of the legislative commission, and all the chief dignitaries, assembled in the church of Our Lady of Kasan, where a decree of the senate was read, commanding public prayers for the occasion; after which they went in a body to present their compliments and thanks to her Majesty. A boy of seven, named Markof, who had been inoculated first of all, in order to use the lymph found on him, was ennobled in return for it, and received the surname of Ospiennyï (*Ospa*—smallpox). Catherine took a liking to him, and had him brought up under her eyes. The family of this name, now occupying a high position in Russia, owes its fortune to this ancestor. Dr. Dimsdale received the title of baron, the honorary charge of the physicians in ordinary to her Majesty, the rank of Chancellor of State, and a pension of £500 sterling. It was certainly much ado about nothing; but some years later, in 1772, the Abbé Galiani announced, as still an important piece of news, the inoculation of the son of the Prince of San Angelo Imperiali at Naples, the first that had taken place in that city. In 1768 Voltaire himself found much to admire in an Empress who had been inoculated "with less ceremony than a nun who takes a bath." Catherine is perhaps the one who thought least of her bravery. Before the deputations that came to compliment her, she thought it well to take a serious air, declaring "that she had done no more than her duty, for a shepherd is bound to give his life for his sheep." But, writing a few days afterwards to General Braun, the Governor of Livonia, she laughs at those who are lost in admiration of her courage: "As for courage, I think every little

urchin in the streets of London has just as much."

Certainly, she possesses a happy equilibrium of faculties, an excellent moral health. It is this which renders her easy to get on with, though she has perhaps less indulgence and benignity than she would credit herself with, but still is in no wise given to wrangling, nor excessively hard to please, nor unreasonably severe. Outside official ceremonies, in regard to which she is very particular, giving to them the greatest possible lustre, she is full of charm in her intercourse with others. She has an easy simplicity which puts every one at ease, and which allows her to maintain her own rank, and to keep others in their proper place, without her appearing to give the matter a thought. On the birth of her grandson, Alexander, she falls to regretting that there are no more fairies "to endow little children with all one would like them to have," and she writes to Grimm: "For my part, I would give them nice presents, and I would whisper in their ear: 'Ladies, be natural, only be natural, and experience will do pretty well all the rest.'" She is *bon enfant,* and puts on a familiar manner. She hits her secretary in the ribs with a roll of paper, and tells him: "Some day I will kill you like that." In corresponding with her master of the horse, M. Eck, she writes: "Monsieur mon voisin."

The Prince de Ligne recounts an episode of the tour in the Crimea, when she took it into her head to be thee'd and thou'd by every one, and to *tutoyer* them in return. This whim often returned to her. "You cannot conceive," she writes to Grimm, "how I love to be *tutoyée;* I wish it were done all over Europe." Then hear her account of her relations with Mme. Todi, a famous *prima donna,* whose talent she could not appreciate, but whom she was willing to pay very liberally. This was at Tzarskoïe-Sielo:—

"Mme. Todi is here, and she is always about with

her husband. Very often we meet face to face, always however without coming in collision. I say to her: "Good-morning or good-evening, Mme. Todi, how do you do?" She kisses my hands, and I her cheek; our dogs smell one another; she takes hers under her arm, I call mine, and we both go on our way. When she sings, I listen and applaud, and we both say that we get on very well together."

She carries her condescension in the matter of sociability to great lengths. If any one ventures to criticize her choice of friends and lovers, she replies: "Before being what I am I was thirty-three years what others are, and it is not quite twenty years that I have been what they are not. And that teaches one how to live." On the other hand she makes merry at the expense of the great: "Do you know why I dread Kings' visits? Because they are generally tiresome, insipid people, and you have to be stiff and formal with them. These persons of renown pay much respect to my unaffected ways, and I would show them all my wit; sometimes I show it by listening to them, and as I love to chatter, the silence bores me."

Her proverbial munificence is not only in ostentation. Grimm often distributed large sums for her anonymously. And she puts a charming grace and delicacy in some of her gifts. "Your Royal Highness," she writes to the Comte d'Artois, who is leaving Russia, "wishes, doubtless, to make some small presents to the people who have done you service during your stay here. But, as you know, I have forbidden all commerce and communication with your unhappy France, and you will seek in vain to buy any trinkets in the city; there are none in Russia save in my cabinet; and I hope your Highness will accept these from his affectionate friend Catherine."

What she lacks, in this as in so many things, is mod-

eration. She is well aware of it herself, and admits: "I know not how to give; I give too much or not enough." One would say that her destiny, in raising her to such a height, has taken from her the sense of proportion. She is either prodigal or miserly. When she has exhausted her resources by her excessive expenditure and liberalities she has "a heart of stone" for the most worthy, the most just, demands upon her. She gives a third of his pension to Prince Viazemski on his retirement. He has served her for thirty years, and she has appreciated his services, but he has ceased to please her. The poor man dies of vexation.

With those who please her, as long as they have that good fortune, she knows no stint. In 1781, when Count Branicki married a niece of Patiomkine, she gave 500,000 roubles as a marriage portion to the bride, and the same amount to her husband, to pay his debts. One day she amused herself with imagining how the principal people at her court might meet their end. Ivan Tchernichef would die of rage, Countess Roumiantsof of having shuffled the cards too much, Mme. Vsievolodsky of an excess of sighs; and so forth. She herself would die—of complaisance.

It is not only complaisance, there is in her an instinctive generosity which comes out in more than one way. With those whom she honors with her confidence she has none of that facile change of front so common to her sex. She is incapable of suspicion. One of the foreign artists whom she had commissioned to make considerable purchases for her gallery at the Hermitage, Reiffenstein—the "divine" Reiffenstein, as she called him—fancied his honesty suspected. Grimm, who acted as intermediary, became anxious about it.

"Begone with your notes and accounts, both of you!" wrote the Empress to the latter. "I never suspected either of you in my life. Why do you trouble me with stingy, useless things of that sort?"

She added: "No one about me has insinuated anything against *le divin.*" Grimm could well believe her, for she was absolutely averse to this kind of insinuation, so much favored in courts. In general, any one did but do a bad turn for himself by saying evil of others. Patiomkine himself experienced this in trying to shake the credit of Prince Viazemski.

If there was need, however, to serve or defend her friends, she was ready to do anything in total forgetfulness of her rank. She learns, for instance, that Mme. Ribas, the wife of an Italian adventurer whom she has made Admiral, is in childbed. She jumps into the first carriage that she finds at the gate of the palace, enters like a whirlwind into the room of her friend, turns up her sleeves, and puts on an apron. "Now here are two of us," she says to the midwife; "let us do our best." It often happens that advantage is taken of this well-known characteristic. "They know I am good to bother," she says. Is she simply "good," in reality? Yes, in her way, which assuredly is not the way of everybody. The absolute mistress of forty millions of men is not "everybody." Mme. Vigée-Lebrun dreamed of painting the portrait of the great sovereign. "Take," said some one, "the map of the empire of Russia for canvas, the darkness of ignorance for background, the spoils of Poland for drapery, human blood for coloring, the monuments of her reign for the cartoon, and for the shadow six months of her son's reign." There is some truth in this sombre picture, but it wants shading. At the moment of the terrible uprising of Pougatchef, sharp as was Catherine in the repression of a revolt which put her empire to the stake, she bids General Panine use no more than the indispensable severity. After the capture of the rebel, she does her best to succor the victims of this terrible civil war. Yet, in Poland, the conduct of her generals is for the most part atrocious, and she never interferes. She even compliments Souvarof after the massacre which

accompanies the taking of Warsaw. And in this empire of hers, "from which the light now comes," the knout still bears sway, the stick still falls on the bleeding shoulders of the serf. She lets knout and stick do their work. How is this to be understood?

It is needful first of all to realize the conception—a well-reasoned and elaborated conception—of the position of the sovereign and of the exigencies of that position, which obtained in the mind of this autocratic ruler. We cannot make war without dead or wounded, nor can we subdue a people jealous of its liberty without stifling its resistance in blood. Having resolved on the annexation of Poland—rightly or wrongly, need not be discussed here—it was necessary to accept all the consequences of the enterprise. This Catherine did, taking upon herself, calmly and frankly, the entire responsibility of the affair. Calmly, for, in these matters, reasons of state alone influence her; they take the place of conscience, and even of feeling. Frankly, for she is not a hypocrite. An actress ever, and of the first order, by reason of her position, which is nothing but a part to play. It is in this sense that the French envoy Durand could say of her: "My experience is quite useless; the woman is more false than our women are tricky. I can say no more." But she was never a hypocrite by preference, for the pleasure of deceiving, like so many; nor by need of deceiving herself. "She was too proud to deceive," said the Prince de Ligne.

In what she did, or suffered to be done, in Poland, she has had many imitators, beginning with the pious Maria Theresa herself. Only Maria Theresa mingled her tears with the blood that she shed. "She is always crying and stealing," said Frederick. Catherine keeps dry-eyed.

Catherine, too, followed a different principle of government. A sovereign, however absolute, cannot be everywhere at once. Souvarof has orders to take Warsaw. He takes it. How? That is his affair, not that of

any one else. The principle is contestable, but we have not to discuss political theories in a study of character.

Finally, Catherine is a Russian sovereign, and the Russia of the eighteenth century, without going further, is a country where European ideas in regard to justice and sentiment are quite out of place, where both moral and physical sensibility seem to obey different laws. In 1766, during the Empress's stay at Peterhof, a sudden alarm one night startles her Majesty and all about her. There is great excitement and confusion. It turns out that a lackey, who has been making love to one of the waiting-maids of Catherine, has caused all this fright. He is brought to trial, and condemned to receive a hundred and one strokes of the knout, which is practically equivalent to a sentence of death, to have his nose slit, to be branded on the forehead with a hot iron, and to end his days in Siberia, if he recovers. No one has anything to say against the sentence. It is after such traits, and on the scale of notions, sentiments, and sensations, apparently proper to the surroundings in which they have root, that we require to judge a sovereign who, politically speaking, could certainly not claim the title of "most gracious."

Apart from politics, Catherine is an adored and adorable sovereign. Those about her have nothing but praise for her dealings. Her servants are spoilt children. The story of the chimney-sweep is well known. Always an early riser, in order to work more quietly in the silence of the early hours, the Empress sometimes lights her own fire, so as not to disturb any one. One morning, as she sets the faggots in a blaze, she hears piercing cries from the chimney, followed by a volley of abuse. She understands, quickly puts out the fire, and humbly proffers her excuses to the poor little chimney-sweep whom she had nearly roasted alive. There are thousands of similar stories told of her. One day, the Countess Bruce enters the Empress's bedroom and finds her Majesty alone, half-

dressed, with her arms folded in the attitude of one who is waiting patiently because she is obliged to wait. Seeing her surprise, Catherine explains the case—

"What do you think? my waiting-maids have all deserted me. I had been trying on a dress which fitted so badly that I lost my temper; so they left me like this . . . and I am waiting till they have cooled down."

One day she sends Grimm an almost indecipherable letter, and thus excuses herself—

"My *valets de chambre* give me two new pens a day, but when they are worn out I never venture to ask for more, but I turn and turn them as best I can."

One evening, after ringing in vain for some time, she goes into the anteroom and finds these same *valets de chambre* absorbed in a game of cards. She offers one of them to take his place so that she can finish the game for him, while he can do an urgent errand for her. She catches some servants in the act of making off with provisions intended for her table. "Let this be the last time," she says, with severity; then she adds: "And now, be off quickly, or the *maréchal de la cour* will catch you." She sees in the courtyard of her palace an old woman running after a fowl, and soon the valets are running after the old woman, anxious to show their zeal under the eyes of the Empress. For this fowl is a fowl "belonging to her Majesty's treasure," and the woman is the grandmother of a court scullion; a double crime. Catherine, after making inquiries, orders a fowl to be given every day to the poor old soul, but a fowl already trussed.

She keeps by her, despite her infirmities, an old German nurse, whom she watches over with the greatest care. "I feared her," she writes to Grimm, announcing her death, "as I dread fire, or the visits of kings and great people. Whenever she saw me, she would seize me by the head, and kiss me again and again till she half stifled me. And

she always smelt of tobacco, which her respected husband used largely."

Nevertheless, she is far from being patient, for naturally she is quick-tempered, too quick-tempered. Her fits of rage are one of her most noticeable defects. Grimm compares her to Etna, and she delights in the comparison. She calls the volcano "my cousin," and frequently asks for news of it. For she knows her defect, and it is this that enables her to combat it effectually. If she gives way to the first paroxysm of anger, she immediately recovers command of herself. If it is in her private room, she turns up her sleeves with a gesture to which she is accustomed, and begins to walk to and fro, drinking glass after glass of water. Never does she give an order or a signature in one of these passing fits of rage. In her speech she gives way sometimes to undignified expressions, as in her sallies against Gustave III. during the war with Sweden. *"Canaille"* in French and *"Bestie"* in German are too often part of her vocabulary. She always, however, regrets what she has done or said, and, in course of time, so strictly does she watch over and restrain herself, she attains to a bearing which makes this weakness of her character or temperament seem almost incredible.

"She said to me slowly," writes the Prince de Ligne, "that she had been extremely quick-tempered, which one could scarcely believe. . . . Her three bows *à la Russe* are made always in the same way in entering a room, one to the left, one to the right, and one in the middle. Everything in her was measured, methodical. . . . She loves to repeat *'J'ai de l'imperturbabilité,'* taking a quarter of an hour to say the word."

Senac de Meilhan, who visited Russia in 1750, confirms these characteristics. In one of his letters, dated from St. Petersburg, he speaks of the inexpressible impression of tranquillity and serenity with which the appearance of Catherine before the court is always accompanied. She

does not affect the rigidity of a statue. She looks round her with eyes that seem to see everything. She speaks slowly, not as if seeking for words, but as if choosing quietly those that suit her."

Nevertheless, to the end of her life, Catherine kept to her habit of pinning her serviette under her chin on sitting down to table. "She could not otherwise," as she frankly avows, "eat an egg, without dropping half of it on her collerette."

Her temperament is particularly lively, sanguine, and impetuous. This appears, we know well, in more than one aspect of her private life. To this we shall have to return. Let us say here that the shamelessness of her morals, which it would be idle to try to attenuate, does not seem to have its root in any constitutional vice. She is neither hysterical nor tainted with nymphomania. It is a sensual woman who, being Empress, gives free course to her senses, imperially. What she does in this order of things is done as she does everything else, quietly, imperturbably—we might almost say methodically. She gives way to no bewilderments of imagination, to no disorder of nerves. Love with her is but the natural function of a physical and moral organism endowed with exceptional energy, and it has the same imperious character, the same lasting power, as the other phenomena of her life. She is still amorous at sixty-seven!

Her other tastes are those of a person well-balanced, both mentally and physically. She loves the arts, and the society of intelligent and learned people. She loves nature. Gardening, "plantomania" as she calls it, is one of her favorite occupations. Note that though she adores flowers, she cannot endure too strong perfumes, that of musk in particular. Every day, at a fixed hour, which a bell announces to the winged population, she appears at a window of the palace and throws out crumbs to the thousands of birds that are accustomed to come to

her to be fed. Elizabeth used to feed frogs, which were expressly kept in the park: one sees the difference, the morbid, extravagant note. In Catherine there is nothing of the kind. She likes birds, dogs, who play a considerable part in her private life, horses too; she likes animals in general, but she prefers those which are more generally liked. All that is very simple, very natural, very normal.

Elizabeth led an irregular life, turning night into day, never having a fixed hour for anything. Catherine is regularity itself; always early to bed, up with the dawn, fitting in her occupations as well as her pleasures with a programme that she has made out beforehand, and that she carries out without deviation. Elizabeth used to get drunk; Catherine is sober, eating little, only drinking a mouthful of wine at her principal meal, never taking supper. In public and in private, save for the mysteries of the alcove, she is perfectly correct in demeanour, never allowing an impropriety in conversation. And in this there is no hypocrisy, for she shows, and indeed shows off, her lovers.

In order to find something unnatural, abnormal, in her, some have laid emphasis on her supposed indifference to family feeling. The point is susceptible of controversy. She despised and detested her husband, if she did not kill him or let him be killed; and she was not tender towards her son, if she did not think of disinheriting him. Still it must be remembered what this husband and this son really were, both to her and to Russia. She never saw again her only brother, never having allowed him to come and see her, though she only survived him by three years. That was a matter of policy. She found that there were Germans enough in Russia, herself among the number. With her, it is certain, the head always ruled the heart, and, though German, she was by no means sentimental. But she was, as we shall see, a delightful grandmother, and she was passionately fond of children.

Her shameless sensuality thus seems an isolated phe-

nomenon, without connection with any other in her temperament. Perhaps this is only in appearance; perhaps we should seek a certain connection, if not the relation of cause to effect, between this side of her nature and another that we are about to look into, that is to say, the intellectual culture of one who loved to call herself the pupil of Voltaire. If, indeed, there is method in this madness of the senses, which she does not lose even in middle age, there is also a certain lofty cynicism, a certain tranquil assurance, which a physiological peculiarity, anomaly if you will, is not sufficient to explain. The philosophical spirit of the eighteenth century has passed over it, and not only the spirit of the age of Brantôme.

Catherine is a great temperament, not a great intellect. She herself did not pretend to "a creative mind." Nevertheless she prides herself on her originality. "All my life," she writes to Mme. de Bielke, "I never could tolerate imitation, and, to put it bluntly, I am as much of an original as the most determined Englishman." But it is in her tastes, her habits, her modes of action, that is to say in her temperament rather than in her mind, that we must look for this personal note. There is not a single new idea in her *Instruction* for the laws, written at the age of thirty-six, in the full vigor of her intellectual faculties. It is the second-rate work of a student of rhetoric, who has been given as a task the analysis of Montesquieu and Beccaria, and who has done creditably, but without showing any great talent. This work, nevertheless, gives her enormous trouble. At the end of March 1765 she has been toiling at it for two months, at the rate of three hours a day. Her best hours, in the morning, are given up to this work. By the middle of June she has covered sixty-four pages, and she feels that she has made a considerable effort. She is quite worn out. "I have emptied my sack," she writes, "and, after this, I shall not write another word for the rest of my life."

We have all known these vows, and, too, this impression of weariness at the end of the first long effort. But having regard to the actual result, this author's trouble is almost laughable. The sack, too, that she had emptied, or thought she had emptied, was easy to replace, for it was not hers. She found plenty more in turn.

Had she then nothing of her own? Yes, much good sense, to begin with, joined, singularly enough, to a great wealth of imagination. She passed the thirty-four years of her reign in building castles in the air, magnificent buildings founded on nothing, and evaporating in space at the least breath. But the day came when one stone, a single stone, was placed in the soil, as if by miracle, at the angle of the fantastic edifice. It was Catherine who had planted it there. The Russian people, this good people which has not yet come to realize itself, nor to dispute with those who govern it, did the rest. It brought its sweat and blood, and like the Egyptian colossi, where the effort of thousands of unknown existences is superposed, the edifice rose and assumed tangible form. The conquest of the Taurida was thus accomplished. This was one of Catherine's dreams, put in action and translated into a novel of adventures by Patiomkine. But the corner-stone appeared suddenly in a port of the Black Sea, and the Crimea of to-day was then created.

Florence Nightingale

By ELIZABETH ALDRIDGE

EVERYONE who knows London at all knows the Houses of Parliament at the foot of Westminster Bridge. Across the bridge on the Surrey bank, just opposite the great Gothic Houses where legislators talk and govern, stands the new St. Thomas's Hospital, where sick folk suffer, get cured, or die; where young doctors "walk," and older ones teach; where experienced nurses tend the sick, and where probationers are trained.

Let us go over the crowded bridge, through the long corridors of the hospital, and enter a large room, where tables are neatly laid for a numerous company, and there look at a statuette under a glass shade on a pedestal. There she stands, a ministering woman. Her dress is the simple garb of common life, as it was in the days of the Crimean War, with no separating badge to mark her off from her fellow-beings. In one hand she holds a nurse's night-lamp, with the other she shades the light from the eyes of the sick faces she is watching. You do not see their faces, but you know that *she* sees them; on every line of hers you read how carefully and wisely, and with what clear knowledge and gentle womanliness she is pondering what she sees.

It is a statuette of Florence Nightingale.[11] It stands in the dining-room of the Nightingale Home, St. Thomas's Hospital; where those who have eyes and hearts and brains may study it, and learn the lessons taught with such quiet, unobtrusive force.

That Nightingale Home is part of the British nation's tribute of thanks to the noble woman who found the death-rate in the Barrack Hospital at Scutari 60 per cent., and left it a fraction over 1.

The Nightingale Home is established for the purpose of training nurses. Two classes of women are admitted: those who are termed "nurse probationers;" and gentlewomen, who are "special probationers."

A very distinguished lady nurse who has been in half the hospitals in Europe once said to me, "To Florence Nightingale, who was my own first teacher and inspirer, we owe the wonderful change that has taken place in the public mind with regard to nursing. When I first began my hospital training, hospital nursing was thought to be a profession which no decent woman of any rank could follow. If a servant turned nurse, it was supposed she did so because she had lost her character. We have changed all that now. Modern nursing owes its first impulse to Florence Nightingale."

I don't suppose that any of my readers have ever seen a hospital nurse of the now nearly extinct Gamp type; but I have. I have seen her, coarse-faced, thick of limb, heavy of foot, brutal in speech, crawling up and down the stairs or about in the wards in dresses and aprons that made me feel (although quite well and with a good healthy appetite) as if I would rather not have my dinner just then. These were the old-fashioned "Sairey Gamps." But Florence Nightingale has been too strong for even the immortal "Sairey." Go now through the corridors and wards of a modern hospital; every nurse you meet will be neat and trim with spotless dress and cap and apron, moving quietly but quickly to and fro, doing her work with kindness and intelligence.

The Nightingale Home itself is charming; and many, were they to see the little white beds and pleasant rooms of the probationers, or were to stand at the windows of the wards, overlooking the busy Thames and the opposite

Houses of Parliament, or to meet the probationers trooping down to dinner, some in their soft grey alpacas, which tell they have just come from the lecture-room, and others, in print gowns and white aprons, from the wards, would desire to become "Nightingales." But this is no easy matter: no one is admitted before twenty-three years of age; the preliminary training is very thorough, and they have to work very hard; most of them find it trying at first; indeed, every woman must be sure of her vocation before she attempts the work, interesting as it is to those who care for it in the highest spirit.

It was in 1820, the year George the Third's long life quite faded out, that the younger of the two daughters of William Shore Nightingale was born at Florence, and named after that lovely city.

Mr. Nightingale, of Embley Park, Hampshire, and the Lea Hurst, Derbyshire, was a very wealthy landowner. He was of the Shores of Derbyshire, but inherited the fortune with the name of Nightingale through his mother. Lea Hurst, where Miss Nightingale passed the summer months of each year, is situated in the Matlock district, among bold masses of limestone rock, gray walls, full of fossils, covered with moss and lichen, with the changeful river Derwent now dashing over its stony bed, now quietly winding between little dales with clefts and dingles. Those who have travelled by the Derby and Buxton railway will remember the narrow valleys, the mountain streams, the wide spans of high moorland, the distant ranges of hills beyond hills of the district. Lea Hurst, a gable-ended house, standing among its own woods and commanding wonderful views of the Peak country, is about two miles from Cromford station.

At Lea Hurst much of Florence Nightingale's childhood was passed. There she early developed that intense love for every living suffering thing that grew with her growth, until it became the master-passion of her life.

A few years since a true story of her as a little girl

apeared in *Little Folks* Magazine, and it is so charmingly told, and gives so distinctly the key-note of her character, that I repeat it here in full, as to curtail it would be to spoil it:—

Some years ago, when the celebrated Florence Nightingale was a little girl, living at her father's home, a large, old Elizabethan house with great woods about it, in Hampshire, there was one thing that struck everybody who knew her. It was that she seemed to be always thinking what she could do to please or help any one who needed either help or comfort. She was very fond, too, of animals, and she was so gentle in her way, that even the shyest of them would come quite close to her, and pick up whatever she flung down for them to eat. There was, in the garden behind the house, a long walk with trees on each side, the abode of many squirrels; and when Florence came down the walk, dropping nuts as she went along, the squirrels would run down the trunks of their trees, and hardly waiting until she passed by, would pick up the prize, and dart away with their little bushy tails curled over their backs, and their black eyes looking about as if terrified at the least noise, though they did not seem to be afraid of Florence. The reason was that she loved them, and never did anything to startle or trouble them.

Then there was an old grey pony, named Peggy, past work, living in a paddock, with nothing to do all day long but to amuse herself. Whenever Florence appeared at the gate, Peggy would come trotting up and put her nose into the dress pocket of her little mistress, and pick it of the apple or the roll of bread that she knew she would always find there, for this was a trick Florence had taught the pony. Florence was fond of riding, and her father's old friend (the clergyman of the parish) used often to come and take her for a ride with him when he went to the farm cottages at a distance. He was a good man,

and very kind to the poor. As he had studied medicine when a young man, he was able to tell the people what would do them good when they were ill, or had met with an accident. Little Florence took great delight in helping to nurse those who were ill, and whenever she went on these long rides, she had a small basket fastened to her saddle, filled with something nice, which she had saved from her breakfast or dinner, or carried for her mother, who was very good to the poor. She thus learned to be useful as well as kind-hearted.

Now, there lived in one of two or three solitary cottages in the wood, an old shepherd of her father's, named Roger, who had a favourite sheep-dog called Cap. Roger had neither wife nor child, and Cap lived with him, and kept him company at nights, after he had penned his flock. Cap was a very sensible dog; indeed, people used to say he "could do everything but speak." He kept the sheep in wonderfully good order, and thus saved his master a great deal of trouble. One day as Florence and her old friend were out for a ride, they came to a field, where they found the shepherd giving his sheep their night feed; but he was without the dog, and the sheep knew it, for they were scampering about in all directions. Florence and her friend noticed that the old shepherd looked very sad this evening, and they stopped to ask what was the matter, and what had become of his dog.

"Oh," said Roger, "Cap will never be of any more use to me; I'll have to hang him, poor fellow, as soon as I go home to-night."

"Hang him!" said Florence. "Oh, Roger, how wicked of you! What has dear old Cap done?"

"He has done nothing," replied Roger; "but he will never be of any more use to me, and I cannot afford to keep him for nothing; one of the mischievous schoolboys throwed a stone at him yesterday, and broke one of his legs." And the old shepherd's eyes filled with

tears, which he wiped away with his shirt-sleeve; then he drove his spade deep in the ground to hide what he felt, for he did not like to be seen crying.

"Poor Cap!" he sighed, "he was as knowing as a human being almost."

"But are you sure his leg is broken?" asked Florence.

"Oh, yes, miss, it is broken safe enough; he has not put his foot to the ground since."

Florence and her friend rode on without saying anything more to Roger.

"We will go and see poor Cap," said the vicar. "I don't believe the leg is really broken. It would take a big stone, and a hard blow, to break the leg of a great dog like Cap."

"Oh, if you could but cure him, how glad Roger would be!" replied Florence.

They soon reached the shepherd's cottage; but the door was fastened, and when they moved the latch such a furious barking was heard, that they drew back startled. However, a little boy came out of the next cottage, and asked if they wanted to go in, as Roger had left the key with his mother. So the key was got, and the door opened, and there on the bare brick floor lay the dog, his hair dishevelled, and his eyes sparkling with anger at the intruders. But when he saw the little boy he grew pacified. Dogs always know their friends. And when he looked at Florence, and heard her call him "Poor Cap," he began to wag his short tail, and then crept from under the table, and lay down at her feet. She took hold of one of his paws, patted his old rough head, and talked to him, whilst her friend examined the injured leg. It was dreadfully swollen, and hurt him very much to have it examined; but the dog knew it was meant kindly, and though he moaned and winced with pain, he licked the hands that were hurting him.

"It's only a bad bruise; no bones are broken," said her

old friend; "rest is all Cap needs; he will soon be well again."

"I am so glad," exclaimed Florence; "but can we do nothing for him? he seems in such pain."

"There is one thing that would ease the pain, and heal the leg all the sooner, and that is plenty of hot water to foment the part."

"Well then," said Florence, "if that will do him good, I will foment poor Cap's leg."

"I fear you will only scald yourself," replied he.

But Florence had in the meantime struck a light with the tinder-box, and lighted the fire, which was already laid. She then set off to the other cottage to get something to bathe the leg with. She found an old flannel petticoat hanging up to dry, and this she carried off, and tore up into slips, which she wrung out in warm water, and laid them tenderly on Cap's swollen leg. It was not long before the poor dog felt the benefit of the application, and he looked grateful, wagging his little stump of a tail in thanks. On their way home they met the shepherd coming slowly along, with a piece of rope in his hand.

"Oh, Roger," cried Florence, "you are not to hang poor old Cap; his leg is not broken at all."

"No, he will serve you yet," said the vicar.

"Well, I be main glad to hear it," said the shepherd, "and many thanks to you for going to see him."

On the next morning Florence was up early, and the first thing she did was to take two flannel petticoats to give to the poor woman whose petticoat she had torn up to bathe Cap. Then she went to the dog, and was delighted to find the swelling of his leg much less. She bathed it again, and Cap was as grateful as before.

Two or three days afterwards Florence and her friend were riding together, when they came up to Roger and his sheep. This time Cap was watching the sheep, though he was lying quite still, and pretending to be asleep.

When he heard the voice of Florence speaking to his master, who was portioning out the usual feed, his tail wagged and his eyes sparkled, but he did not get up, for he was on duty. The shepherd stopped his work, and as he glanced at the dog with a merry laugh, said, "Do look at the dog, miss; he be so pleased to hear your voice." Cap's tail went faster and faster. "I be glad," continued the old man, "I did not hang him. I be greatly obliged to you, miss, and the vicar, for what you did. But for you I would have hanged the best dog I ever had in my life."

Florence Nightingale always retained her belief in animals. Many years afterwards, when her name was known all over the world, she wrote: "A small pet animal is often an excellent companion for the sick, for long chronic cases especially. An invalid, in giving an account of his nursing by a nurse and a dog, infinitely preferred that of the dog. 'Above all,' he said, 'it did not talk.'" Even Florence Nightingale's maimed dolls were tenderly nursed and bandaged.

Mr. Nightingale was a man singularly in advance of his time as regards the training of girls. The "higher education of women" was unknown to the general public in those days, but not to Mr. Nightingale. His daughter was taught mathematics, and studied the classics, history, and modern languages, under her father's guidance. These last were afterwards of the greatest use to her in the Crimea. But she was no "learned lady;" only a well-educated Englishwoman, all round. She was an excellent musician, and skilful in work with the needle; and the delicate trained touch thus acquired stood her in good stead, for the soldiers used to say that a wound which Miss Nightingale dressed "was sure to get well."

She felt a strong craving for work, more even than the schools and cottages, the care of the young, the sick, and

the aged (in which she followed her mother's example) could afford her at her father's home.

Mrs. Brownings tells us to

> "Get leave to work
> In this world; 'tis the best you get at all."

Florence Nightingale not only got leave to work, but did so, very quietly but very persistently. And so she became a pioneer for less courageous souls, and won for them also "leave to work." Taught by her father, she soon learned to distinguish between what was really good work and which mere make-believe. She had many opportunities even as a child of seeing really fine, artistic work both in science and art. She set up a high standard, and was never satisfied with anything short of the best, either in herself or others. It is a grand thing to know good work when you see it.

The love of work, however, with Florence Nightingale always went hand in hand with that love for every living thing in God's world, which was born with her, and which was never crowded out by all this education. As she grew up she more and more felt that helpfulness was the first law of her being; but her reason and intellect having been so carefully trained, she was thoroughly persuaded that in order to help effectually, one must know thoroughly both the cause of suffering and its radical cure.

The study of nursing had an irresistible attraction for her. Few people in England at that time valued nursing. Florence Nightingale was convinced that indifference arose from the all but absolute ignorance of what nursing should be, and she set herself to acquire the necessary knowledge to enable her to carry it out in the very best and most scientific way. She never lost an opportunity of visiting a hospital either at home or abroad. She gave up the life of so-called "pleasure" which it was

then considered a young woman of her position ought to lead, and after having very carefully examined innumerable nursing institutions at home and abroad, at length went to the well-known Pastor Fliedner's Deaconesses at Kaiserswerth, where she remained for several months.

When "Sweet Agnes Jones," who was at one time a "Nightingale" probationer at St. Thomas's, was learning to nurse at Kaiserswerth several years later, she found that Florence Nightingale was tenderly remembered there, not only for her wonderful skill, but for the earnestness with which she had tried to win the souls of her sick people to Christ.

After leaving Kaiserswerth, Miss Nightingale was for a while with the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris, so anxious was she to see how nursing was carried on under many different systems. It was during 1851, the year of the first Great Exhibition, that she was thus fitting herself practically for the great task that lay before her in the not very distant future.

On her return to England, Miss Nightingale found a patient that required all her time and help of every kind. This patient was none other than the Sanatorium in Harley Street for gentlewomen of limited means. Into the saving of this valuable institution Miss Nightingale threw all her energy, and for two or three years, hidden away from the outside world, she was working day and night for her poor suffering ladies, until at length she was able to feel that the Sanatorium was not only in good health but on the high road to permanent success.

Florence Nightingale's own health, however, gave way under the long-continued strain of anxiety and fatigue; she was obliged to leave the invalids for whom she had done so much, and go home for the rest and change she so sorely needed.

Now, while Miss Nightingale had been quietly getting "Harley Street" into working order, the gravest and most

terrible changes had taken place in the affairs of the nation, and not only in those of England, but in those of the whole of Europe.

In 1851, when the first Great Exhibition was opened, all was peace—the long peace of forty years was still unbroken, people said it never was to be broken again, and that wars and rumors of wars had come to an end. So much for human foreknowledge. By the autumn of 1854, the horrors of the Crimean War had reached their climax. The *Times* was full, day by day, of the most thrilling and appalling descriptions of the hideous sufferings of our brave men, sufferings caused quite as much by the utter breakdown of the sanitary administration as by even the deadly battles and trench-work; while every post was bringing agonizing private letters appealing for help.

Men were wounded in the Crimea, the hospitals were far off at Scutari, the wide and stormy Black Sea had to be crossed to reach them; the stores of food, clothing, and medicine that might have saved many a life were at Varna, or lost in the *Black Prince;* the state of the great Barrack Hospital at Scutari was indescribably horrible; everybody was frantic to rush to the relief; no one knew what best to do; public feeling was at fever-heat. How could it be otherwise when William Howard Russell, the *Times* correspondent, was constantly writing such true but heartrending letters as this?—

"The commonest accessories of a hospital are wanting; there is not the least attention paid to decency or cleanliness; the stench is appalling; the fœtid air can barely struggle out to taint the atmosphere, save through the chinks in the walls and roofs; and, for all I can observe, these men die without the least effort being made to save them. There they lie, just as they were let gently down on the ground by the poor fellows, their comrades, who brought them on their backs from the camp with the greatest tenderness, but who are not allowed to remain

with them. The sick appear to be tended by the sick, and the dying by the dying."

Miss Nightingale, who was then recovering from her Harley Street nursing, deeply felt the intensity of the crisis that was moving the whole nation; but, whereas the panic had driven most of the kind people who were so eager to help the army nearly "off their heads," it only made hers the cooler and clearer. She wrote offering her services to Mr. Sidney Herbert, afterwards Lord Herbert, the Minister for War, who, together with his wife, had long known her, and had recognised her wonderful organizing faculties, and her great practical experience.

It was on the 15th of October that she wrote to Mr. Herbert. On the very same day the Minister had written to her. Their letters crossed. Mr. Herbert, who had himself given much attention to military hospitals, laid before Miss Nightingale, in his now historical letter, a plan for nursing the sick and wounded at Scutari.

"There is, as far as I know," he wrote, "only one person in England capable of organizing and directing such a plan, and I have been several times on the point of asking you if you would be disposed to make the attempt. That it will be difficult to form a corps of nurses, no one knows better than yourself."

After specifying the difficulty in finding not only good nurses, but good nurses who *would be willing to submit to authority,* he goes on, "I have this simple question to put to you. Could you go out yourself and take charge of everything? It is, of course, understood that you will have absolute authority over all the nurses, unlimited power to draw on the Government for all you judge necessary to the success of your mission; and I think I may assure you of the coöperation of the medical staff. Your personal qualities, your knowledge, and your authority in administrative affairs all fit you for this position."

Miss Nightingale at once concurred in Mr. Herbert's

proposal. The materials for a staff of good nurses did not exist, and she had to put up with the best that could be gathered on such short notice.

On the 21st, a letter by Mr. Herbert from the War Office told the world that "Miss Nightingale, accompanied by thirty-four nurses, will leave this evening. Miss Nightingale, who has, I believe, greater practical experience of hospital administration and treatment than any other lady in this country, has, with a self-devotion for which I have no words to express my gratitude, undertaken this noble but arduous work."

A couple of days later there was a paragraph in the *Times* from Miss Nightingale herself, referring to the gifts for the soldiers that had been offered so lavishly: "Miss Nightingale neither invites nor refuses the generous offers. Her banking account is open at Messrs. Coutts'." On the 30th of October, the *Times* republished from the *Examiner* a letter headed "Who is Miss Nightingale?" and signed "One who has known her." Then was made known to the British public for the first time who the woman that had gone to the aid of the sick and wounded really was; then it was shown that she was no hospital matron, but a young and singularly graceful and accomplished gentlewoman of wealth and position, who had, not in a moment of national enthusiasm, but as the set purpose of her life from girlhood up, devoted herself to the studying of God's great and good laws of health, and to trying to apply them to the help of her suffering fellow-creatures.

From that 30th of October, 1854, the heroine of the Crimean War was Florence Nightingale, and the heroine of that war will she be while the English tongue exists, and English history is read. The national enthusiasm for her was at once intense; and it grew deeper and more intense as week by week revealed her powers. "Less talent and energy of character, less singleness of purpose and devotion, could never have combined the hetero-

geneous elements which she gathered together in one common work and labour of love."

I met, the other day, a lady who saw something of Miss Nightingale just before she went out to the East. This lady tells me that Miss Nightingale was then most graceful in appearance, tall and slight, very quiet and still. At first sight her earnest face struck one as cold; but when she began to speak she grew very animated, and her dark eyes shone out with a peculiarly star-like brightness.

This was the woman whose starting for the East was at once felt to be the beginning of better things; but so prejudiced were many good English people against women-nurses for soldiers that Mrs. Jameson, writing at the time, calls the scheme "an undertaking wholly new to our English customs, much at variance with the usual education given to women in this country." She, sensible woman, one in advance of her day, hoped it would succeed, but hoped rather faintly. "If it succeeds," she goes on, "it will be the true, the lasting glory of Florence Nightingale, and her band of devoted assistants, that they have broken down a 'Chinese wall of prejudices,' religious, social, professional, and have established a precedent which will, indeed, multiply the good to all time."

The little band of nurses crossed the channel to Boulogne, where they found the fisherwomen eager for the honor of carrying their luggage to the railway. This display, however, seemed to Miss Nightingale to be so out of keeping with the deep gravity of her mission, that, at her wish, it was not repeated at any of the stopping-places during the route. The *Vectis* took the nurses across the Mediterranean, and a terribly rough passage they had. On November 5th, the very day on which the battle of Inkermann was fought, the ship arrived at Scutari.

Miss Nightingale and her nurses landed during the afternoon, and it was remarked at the time that their neat black dresses formed a strong contrast to those of the

usual hospital attendants. A large number of men, wounded at Balaclava, had been landed the day before.

The great Barrack Hospital at Scutari, which had been lent to the British by the Turkish Government, was an enormous quadrangular building, a quarter of a mile each way, with square towers at each angle. It stood on the Asiatic shore a hundred feet above the Bosphorus. Another large hospital stood near; the whole, at times, containing as many as four thousand men. The whole were placed under Miss Nightingale's care. The nurses were lodged in the south-east tower.

The extent of corridors in the great hospital, story above story, in which the sick and wounded were at first laid on wretched paillasses as close together as they could be placed, made her inspection and care most difficult. There were two rows of mattresses in the corridors, where two persons could hardly pass abreast between foot and foot. The mortality, when the *Times* first took up the cause of the sick and wounded, was enormous.

In the Crimea itself there was not half the mortality in the tents, horrible as were the sufferings and privations of the men there.

"The whole of yesterday," writes one of the nurses a few days after they had arrived, "one could only forget one's own existence, for it was spent, first in sewing the men's mattresses together, and then in washing them and assisting the surgeons, when we could, in dressing their ghastly wounds after their five days' confinement on board ship, during which space their wounds had not been dressed. Hundreds of men with fever, dysentery, and cholera (the wounded were the smaller portion) filled the wards in succession, from the overcrowded transports."

Miss Nightingale's position was a most difficult one. Everything was in disorder, and every official was extremely jealous of interference. Miss Nightingale, how-

ever, at once impressed upon her staff the duty of obeying the doctors' orders, as she did herself. An invalid's kitchen was established immediately by her to supplement the rations; a laundry was added; the nursing itself was, however, the most difficult and important part of the work.

But it would take far too much space to give all the details of that kind but strict administration which brought comparative comfort and a low death-rate into the Scutari hospitals. During a year and a-half the labor of getting the hospitals into working order was enormous, but before the Peace arrived they were models of what such institutions may be.

Speaking of Miss Nightingale in the Hospital at Scutari, the *Times* correspondent wrote: "Wherever there is disease in its most dangerous form, and the hand of the spoiler distressingly nigh, there is that incomparable woman sure to be seen; her benignant presence is an influence for good comfort even amid the struggles of expiring nature. She is a 'ministering angel,' without any exaggeration, in these hospitals, and as her slender form glides quietly along each corridor, every poor fellow's face softens with gratitude at the sight of her. When all the medical officers have retired for the night, and silence and darkness have settled down upon these miles of prostrate sick, she may be observed, alone, with a little lamp in her hand, making her solitary rounds. With the heart of a true woman and the manner of a lady accomplished and refined beyond most of her sex, she combines a surprising calmness of judgment and promptitude and decision of character. The popular instinct was not mistaken, which when she set out from England on her mission of mercy, hailed her as a heroine; I trust that she may not earn her title to a higher, though sadder, appellation. No one who has observed her fragile figure and delicate health can avoid misgivings lest these should fail."

Public feeling bubbled up into poetry. Even doggerel ballads sung about the streets praised

"The Nightingale of the East,
For her heart it means good."

Among many others, the American poet, Longfellow, wrote the charming poem, *The Lady with the Lamp,* so beautifully illustrated by the statuette of Florence Nightingale at St. Thomas's Hospital, suggested by the well-known incident recorded in a soldier's letter:

"She would speak to one and another, and nod and smile to many more; but she could not do it to all, you know, for we lay there by hundreds; but we could kiss her shadow as it fell, and lay our heads on our pillows again content."

"Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

"And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

"On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
A light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

"A lady with a lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood."

In the following spring Miss Nightingale crossed the Black Sea and visited Balaclava, where the state of the hospitals in huts was extremely distressing, as help of all kinds was even more difficult to obtain there than at Scutari. Here Miss Nigthingale spent some weeks, until she was prostrated by a severe attack of the Crimean fever, of which she very nearly died.

The characteristic little extract following will show at once her power of observation, and how readily she turns every scrap of personal experience to advantage for other sufferers:

"I have seen in fevers (and felt when I was a fever patient myself in the Crimea) the most acute suffering produced from the patient (in a hut) not being able to see out of window, and the knots in the wood being the only view. I shall never forget the rapture of fever patients over a bunch of bright-coloured flowers: I remember (in my own case) a nosegay of wild flowers being sent me, and from that moment recovery becoming more rapid."

But at length the Crimean War came to an end. The nation was prepared to welcome its heroine with the most passionate enthusiasm. But Florence Nightingale quietly slipped back unnoticed to her Derbyshire home, without its being known that she had passed through London.

Worn out with ill-health and fatigue, and naturally shrinking from publicity, the public at large has scarcely ever seen her; she has been a great invalid ever since the war, and for many years hardly ever left her house.

But her energy has been untiring. She was one of the founders of the Red Cross Society for the relief of the sick and wounded in war. When the Civil War broke out in America she was consulted as to all the details of the military nursing there. "Her name is almost more known amongst us than even in Europe," wrote an American. During the Franco-German War she gave advice for the chief hospitals under the Crown Princess, the Princess Alice, and others. The Children's Hospital at Lisbon was erected from her plans. The hospitals in Australia, India, and other places, have received her care. A large proportion of the plans for the building and organization of the hospitals erected during the last twenty-five years in England have passed through her hands.

The Queen, who had followed her work with constant interest, presented her with a beautiful and costly decoration. The nation gave £50,000 to found the Nightingale Home.

In this home Miss Nightingale takes the deepest interest, constantly having the nurses and sisters to visit her, and learning from them the most minute details of its working. Great is evidently her rejoicing when one of her "Nightingales" proves to be a really fine nurse, such a one, for instance, as Agnes Jones, the reformer of workhouse nursing.

When Agnes Jones died in 1868, Miss Nightingale broke through her retirement in an article in a monthly magazine, called "Una and her Lions," a sketch, indeed, of her friend's taming the paupers, but far more is it a portrait of Florence Nightingale by herself. This article now forms the introduction of the well-known memorials of Agnes Jones. It is a noble tribute from one great worker to another. It throws so much light on the true character of Florence Nightingale herself; it brings you closely into contact with her own heart and brain, that you feel as you read it she must be writing her own experience. A true portrait of herself by herself comes out when we look at that record as a whole. You see how Florence Nightingale herself had to fight, first against the people who thought nursing as a profession unfit for decent women, then with those who admitted it might be followed by "the lower middle-class," and lastly with those who considered it a natural gift, for which no training at all was necessary.

Just notice the strong terseness, the business-like pointedness, as well as the beautiful earnestness, both religious and artistic, of the following. After telling us of the wonders wrought by Una on her paupers, more hard to tame than lions, she goes on: "In less than three years she did this. And how did she do all this?"

"Agnes had trained herself to the utmost; she was always training herself; for nursing is no holiday work. Nursing is an art; and, if it is to be made an art, requires as exclusive a devotion, as hard a preparation, as any painter's or sculptor's work; for what is the having to do with dead canvas or cold marble compared with having to do with the living body, the temple of God's Spirit? Nursing is one of the Fine Arts; I had almost said, the finest of the Fine Arts."

"Fid-fadding" was one of the besetting sins of most women in the days when Florence Nightingale was young. It was certainly one of the sins most abhorrent to her energetic nature. "How can any undervalue business habits? As if anything could be done without them!" she exclaims.

This was the high position Florence Nightingale conquered for her fellow-women. Hundreds have occupied, and are still occupying, the ground she won for them.

"And I give a quarter of a century's European experience," she goes on, "when I say that the happiest people, the fondest of their occupation, the most thankful for their lives, are in my opinion those engaged in sick nursing."

I will quote no more, but if you really want to know Florence Nightingale, read the Introduction to "Agnes Jones," which shows that Miss Nightingale has as great a power of administrating pen and ink as hospitals. Her invalid life since the war has been full of business; the amount of work of all kinds, at home and abroad, she has done since the war is enormous. "Notes on Nursing," an invaluable book which the *Medical Times* declared no one else could have written, has entirely conquered the bad old ideas, and has shown what an art and science nursing can become; better still, it has "vindicated the ways of God with man." "Notes on Hospitals," less well known to the general public, contains a perfect mine of information, the gist of which she has reduced, in a

most marvellous appendix, under five simple headings. A few remarks from the preface of the third edition will show with what patient care she had thought out the subject.

"It may seem a strange principle to enunciate as the very first requirement in a hospital, that it should do the sick no harm. It is quite necessary, nevertheless, to lay down such a principle, because the actual mortality *in* hospitals, especially in those of large crowded cities, is very much higher than any calculation founded on the mortality of the same class of diseases among patients treated out of hospital would lead us to expect. *The knowledge of this fact first induced me to examine into the influence exercised by hospital construction on the duration and death-rate of cases received into the wards.*"

Officials in high places, ever since the Crimean War, have sent Miss Nightingale piles, mountains, one might say, of Reports and Blue Books for her advice. She seems to be able to condense any number of them into half-a-dozen telling sentences; for instance, the mortality in Indian regiments during times of peace became exceedingly alarming. Reports on the subject were poured in upon her.

"The men are simply treated like Strasbourg geese," she said in effect. "They eat, sleep, frizzle in the sun, and eat and sleep again. Treat them reasonably, and they will be well."

She has written much valuable advice on "How to live and not die in India."

Children's Hospitals have also engaged much of her attention. You cannot open one of her books at hazard without being struck with some shrewd remark that tells how far-reaching is her observation; as in this, on the playgrounds of Children's Hospitals: "A large garden-ground, laid out in sward and grass hillocks, and such ways as children like (not too pretty, or the children will be scolded for spoiling it) must be provided."

Here, I am sorry to find, my space comes to an end, but not, I hope, before I have been able to sketch in some slight way what great results will assuredly follow when Faith and Science are united in one person. In the days which we may hope are now dawning, when these gifts will be united, not in an individual here and there, but in a large portion of our race, there will doubtless be many a devoted woman whose knowledge may equal her practical skill and her love for God and her fellow-creatures, who will understand, even more thoroughly than most of us now can (most of us being still so ignorant), how deep a debt of gratitude is due to her who first opened for women so many paths of duty, and raised nursing from a menial employment to the dignity of an "Art of Charity"—to England's first great nurse, the wise, beloved, and far-seeing heroine of the Crimean War, the Lady of the Lamp, Florence Nightingale.

Notes on These Splendid Women

NOTE 1.—CLEOPATRA, daughter of Ptolemy XI (Auletes), King of Egypt, was born in 68 B. C., of pure Macedonian Greek origin. At the death of her father in 51 B. C., she and her brother, Ptolemy, were associated in royal power. Later, her brother expelled her from the throne, but Julius Cæsar, arriving just then in Alexandria (48 B. C.), re-instated her and when Ptolemy died that same year, Cleopatra was made Queen of Egypt. She was a woman of great ability and ambition, who for twenty years kept her country from entire subjugation to the Roman Empire, through her feminine appeal to her conquerors. When she failed to subjugate Augustus Cæsar with her charms, and her participation in his triumph at Rome was imminent, she committed suicide by applying the poisonous asp to her arm, dying in the thirty-eighth year of her life (30 B. C.).

NOTE 2.—ZENOBIA was another woman who held at bay the Roman Emperors, though by the force of arms, a few years after Cleopatra. Zenobia was the wife of Odenathus, Prince—afterwards styled King—of Palmyra, so honored for his signal services against the Persians on behalf of the Emperor Gallienus. After the death of her husband in 266 A. D., Zenobia assumed the throne of the East in the territory conquered by him, and moreover subjugated Egypt. For six years thereafter she fought off the Roman generals sent to reduce her power, aiming at complete independence of Palmyra from the Roman yoke. But finally, in a disastrous battle, following the treachery of her allies, she was defeated by Aurelian in 272, and was herself captured. Zenobia, a woman of more balanced character, did not try to make away with herself because of the approaching triumph of Aurelian. She accepted the ignominy as valiantly as a pitched battle, was taken to Rome, and figured in Aurelian's triumph in golden chains, among his other trophies. That over, she was permitted to live the rest of her life in a villa near Tivoli, in all the comfort of a Roman noble-woman. Zenobia was as strenuous and sagacious a fighter as any man of her day, as Gibbon has told in his detailed and vivid manner.

NOTE 3.—JOAN OF ARC was born in Domrémy in Upper Lorraine, some miles southwest of Nancy, in 1412. From the age of thirteen she had constantly heard mysterious voices, calling her to be the deliverer of France from the English who then overran the country. After the dramatic hearing with the Dauphin at Chinon, where she recognized the heir of France who scarcely recognized himself, she secured the confidence of soldiers like Dunois and Aleçon, and Charles allowed her to lead an expedition for the relief of the sorely invested Orleans. Starting April 29, 1429, within two days a victory was won, and by May 8 the siege of Orleans was raised and the English were in full retreat. On July 17 Charles VII was formally crowned and anointed King of France at Rheims. Her mission now ended, the Maid of Orleans sought to return to her native village, but she was at length persuaded that she must go on other military expeditions to expel the English completely from the soil of France. Finally, when she was attempting the relief of Compiegne, she was captured by the Burgundians, May 24, 1430, and sold to the English. She was imprisoned at Rouen, where, after much brutality, she was brought to a mockery of a trial on January 9, 1431. Pierre Couchon, bishop of Beauvais, engineered her condemnation as a sorceress and heretic, by infamous trickery, and on May 30, 1431, she was burned at the stake, so high that all the world might see. And the world saw and has for these centuries stood at horror at this unjust end of the slip of a girl who saved France, and her heavenly appointment could not but be recognized. At last, in 1909, the Roman Catholic Church came forward to make some recompense to the memory of the simple messenger of heaven, and on April 18, in the basilica of St. Peter's at Rome, Joan of Arc was beatified by the Pope, in the presence of a multitude, including 40,000 pilgrims from France.

NOTE 4.—VITTORIA COLONNA was born on the family estate of Marino in 1492. She was one of the leading spirits among the reform party of the Roman Catholic Church, and her verses, which may be divided into two sections, were first, those inspired by her dead husband, and second, those on religious themes. She was a beautiful woman, of beautiful character and brilliant intellect, admired by many great men and celebrated by Michelangelo in poems, alone sufficient to insure her immortality. Thomas Adolphus Trollope has given in his biography a romantic picture of the greatest woman poet of her age and one of the most outstanding of all ages. When Vittoria Colonna died in 1547, Michelangelo was at her bedside.

NOTE 5.—CATHERINE DE' MEDICI, Queen of France, was born in Florence in 1519. She married Henry, Duc d'Orleans, afterward Henry II of France, in 1538, but played no great part

in French politics until 1559, when the first of her three sons ascended the throne as Francis II. Against her she found two parties, each as strong as the crown—the Guises and the ultra-Catholics on the one hand, and the Protestants, under Henry of Navarre, on the other. She was not in favor of the Protestants, but nevertheless entered into an alliance with them against the Guises until 1563, when she transferred her favor to the opposite side, allying herself with Spain and the Guise party, to exterminate the Huguenots, resulting in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. This cruel and heartless woman, dominating her sons, Charles IX and Henry III, was virtually ruler of France, subtle and shifty in policy, which none the less served to carry France over a difficult period of time.

NOTE 6.—MARY, Queen of Scots, only daughter of James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise, was born in Linlithgow Palace, while her father was on his deathbed, thus becoming queen when only a week old. All the more important years of her earlier life were spent in France, where she was educated with the royal children under the direction of Margaret, sister of Henry II. In 1558 she was married to the Dauphin, son of Catherine de' Medici, who came to the throne as Francis II, but who died two years later. Upon his death Mary returned to Scotland, where she married Lord Darnley in 1565. Soon, however, she became estranged from Darnley, and, coming under the influence of Bothwell, is said to have consented to the murder of her husband and the same year married his murderer, Bothwell, May 15, 1567. She was imprisoned and forced to abdicate, but finally escaped into England, where she was received by Queen Elizabeth with the hospitality of imprisonment. For Elizabeth remembered that upon the death of Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart had laid claim to the English crown, with sufficient justification. Fully nineteen years were spent by the unfortunate Mary as prisoner in various castles, until at last, in the spring of 1586, she was charged with having given her support to the Babington conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth, and was finally beheaded at Fotheringay, February 8, 1587. "The Casket Letters," according to a declaration made by the Earl of Morton, afterward regent of Scotland, were found by him on June 20, 1567, in a silver casket taken from a servant of Bothwell and examined before witnesses. The documents were: (1) an undated promise (in French) by Mary of marriage to Bothwell; (2) a marriage contract in Scotch, subscribed by Mary and Bothwell; (3) eight letters (in French) supposed to have been written by Mary to Bothwell; and (4) a series of French sonnets. The letters and sonnets, if genuine, implicate Mary in the murder of Darnley. Recent investigations, however, seem to prove that these

letters were forgeries of her secretary, and the world is still left with a feeling of fond pity for the picturesque but unfortunate queen, and inclined to applaud the remarkable defense of her good name by Algernon Swinburne.

NOTE 7.—MARIA THERESA was the daughter of the German Emperor Charles VI and was born in Vienna in 1717. She married Francis of Lorraine, whom, when crowned herself at Presburg in 1741, she nominated joint regent. Her succession, however, was challenged by Charles Albert of Bavaria, who, supported by the Elector of Saxony and the King of Prussia, as well as other European rulers, was proclaimed Emperor in 1742 as Charles VII. Then Maria Theresa threw herself upon the generosity of the Magyars, who supported her in the Wars of the Austrian Succession which followed, winning back her throne in 1748. She was also involved, later, in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) with Frederick the Great, over Silesia. In 1772 she took part, with Frederick the Great and Catherine II of Russia, in the partition of Poland, acquiring Galicia. A woman feminine but capable, Maria Theresa was responsible for the institution of many reforms in the army, in justice and education; she opened the ports of Trieste and Fiume to trade: she expelled the Jesuits and confiscated much church property; and she also abolished legal torture. She was the mother of Joseph II and Leopold II, and of Marie Antoinette. She died in 1780.

NOTE 8.—MADAME DE POMPADOUR was born in Paris in 1721. She was the mistress of Louis XV of France, who met her at a "bal masque" in 1745 and was captivated by her charms and established her at Versailles. He ennobled her that same year. "La Pompadour" became the center of a brilliant, intellectual and artistic circle, including Voltaire, Quesney, Boucher and Greuze. Louis, a mere puppet, gave her tremendous power. She made and unmade ministers, diplomats and generals. During the Seven Years' War France supported her hereditary enemy, Austria, merely because Maria Theresa had written a courteous letter to the Marquise de Pompadour, while Frederick the Great composed scandalous verses about her. There was one thing that is not so incidental: to Madame de Pompadour the credit has been given of starting the first "Little Theatre" movement. This she did with the worthy or unworthy purpose of keeping his royal highness's attention upon her ability as a woman of rare intellectual powers. She died in 1763.

NOTE 9.—CHARLOTTE CORDAY, a descendant of Pierre Corneille, was born in 1768. Though of noble birth, she adopted with enthusiasm the principles of the revolution; but its bloody excesses so filled her with horror that she determined to save her country from the monsters in power. The worst

of these was Marat, whom Charlotte Corday sought out with utmost tenacity and assassinated in his bathtub, July 3, 1793. Four days later she paid the penalty, composedly, by the guillotine. She has been celebrated in verse and prose by André Chenier, Lamartine, Michelet and Ponsard, and in paintings by Scheffer and Baudry. Charlotte Corday had the courage of her convictions, a courage that made her commit a sin that must be, if her beloved France would be relieved of the monstrosities which the French revolution bore forth.

NOTE 10.—CATHERINE II, Empress of Russia, daughter of a Prussian field marshal, was born at Stettin in 1729. She was selected by the Empress Elizabeth in 1745 as wife of the heir to the throne, whom she married. But when, upon his accession in 1762, Peter III attempted to divorce her, she had the army and the clergy with her, and the Emperor was imprisoned and secretly murdered. Catherine succeeded to the throne (1762) and became sole ruler of all Russia. This remarkable woman governed her empire with great energy, instituting far-reaching reforms, acquiring new territory, and her reign is second only to that of Peter the Great in importance. Though a Prussian in origin, she was all for Russia, for Great Russia. But she was human to the extreme, and every bit a woman. Here are some interesting commandments she made which have recently been discovered in Leningrad: "(1) Leave your rank outside, as well as your hat, and especially your sword. (2) Leave your right of precedence, your pride, and similar feeling, outside the door. (3) Be gay, but do not spoil anything; do not break or gnaw anything. (4) Sit, stand, walk as you will, without reference to anybody. (4) Talk moderately and not very loud, so as not to make the ears and heads of others ache. (6) Argue without anger and without excitement. (7) Neither sigh nor yawn, nor make anybody dull or heavy. (8) In all innocent games, whatever one proposes, let all join. (9) Eat whatever is sweet and savory, but drink with moderation, so that each may find his legs upon leaving the room. (10) Tell no tales out of school; whatever goes in at one ear must go out at the other before leaving the room."

NOTE 11.—FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, the pioneer of trained army nursing, was born in 1820 and, after a quietly forceful life, died in 1910. When reports of the sufferings of the troops in Crimea reached England, she sailed, in October, 1854, with a staff of thirty-eight volunteer nurses for Scutari, where she toiled until the English troops left the region in July, 1856. The feeling of the nation found expression in a gift of £50,000, with which Miss Nightingale founded a training home for nurses. The childhood story of her pity and care for an injured sheep-dog is the keynote of her kindly life, as brought out in this very intimate biography by Elizabeth Aldridge.

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