

Noble work by noble women : sketches of the lives of Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lady Henry Somerset, Miss Sarah Robinson, Mrs. Fawcett, and Mrs. Gladstone / by Jennie Chappell.

Contributors

Chappell, Jennie.

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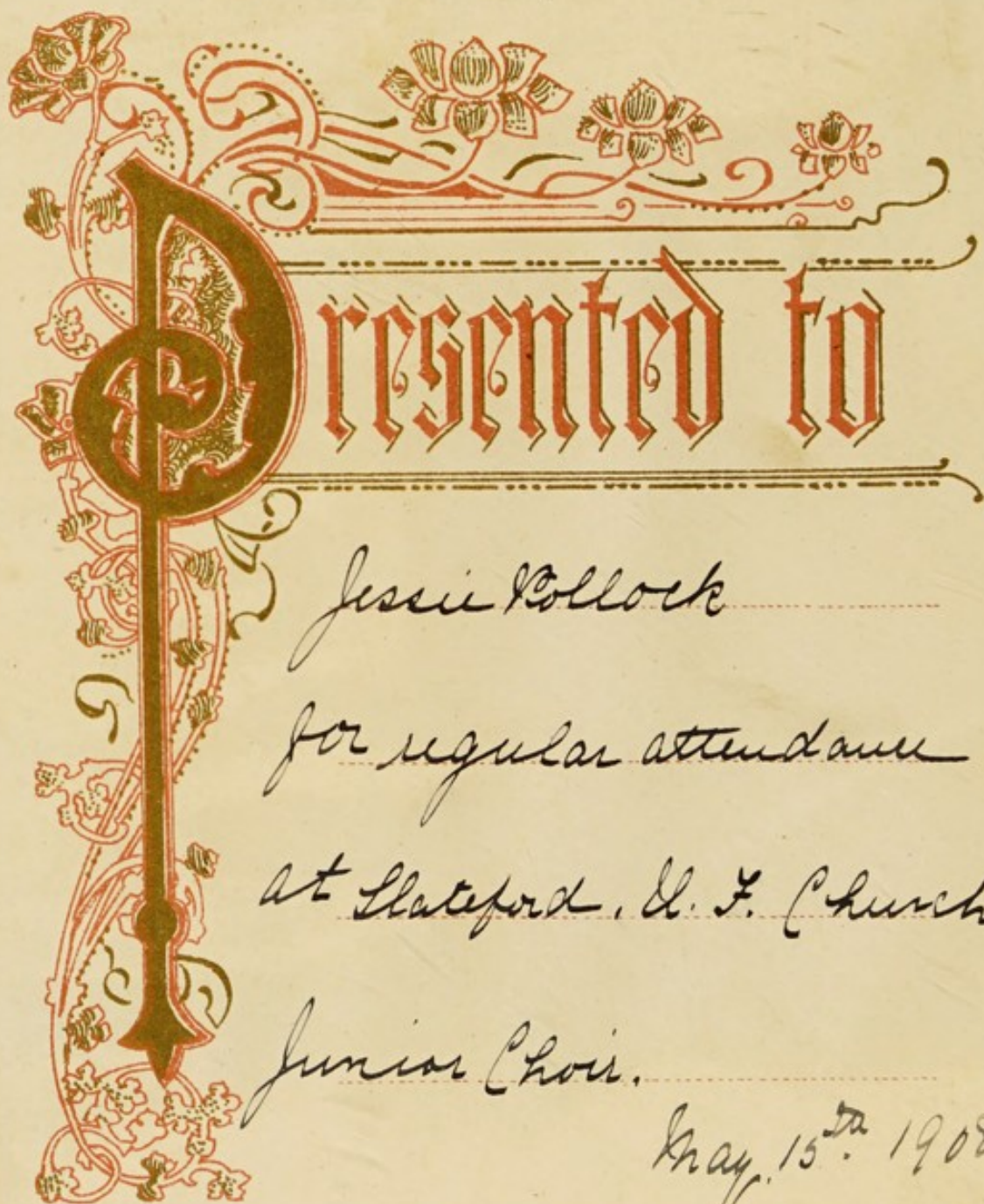


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Noble Work by Noble Women



JENNIE
CHAPPELL.



Tract Society, 99 George Street, Edinburgh.

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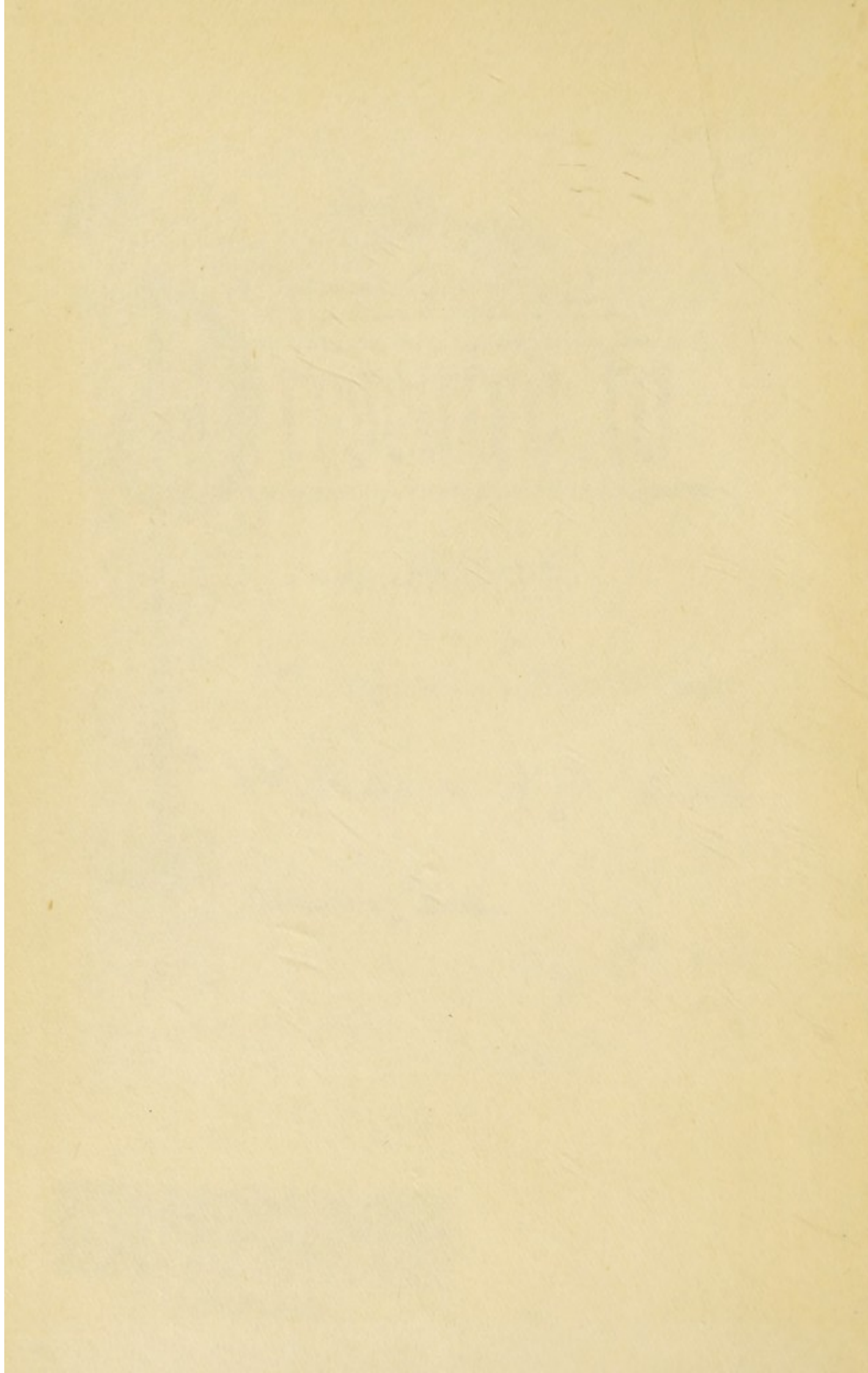


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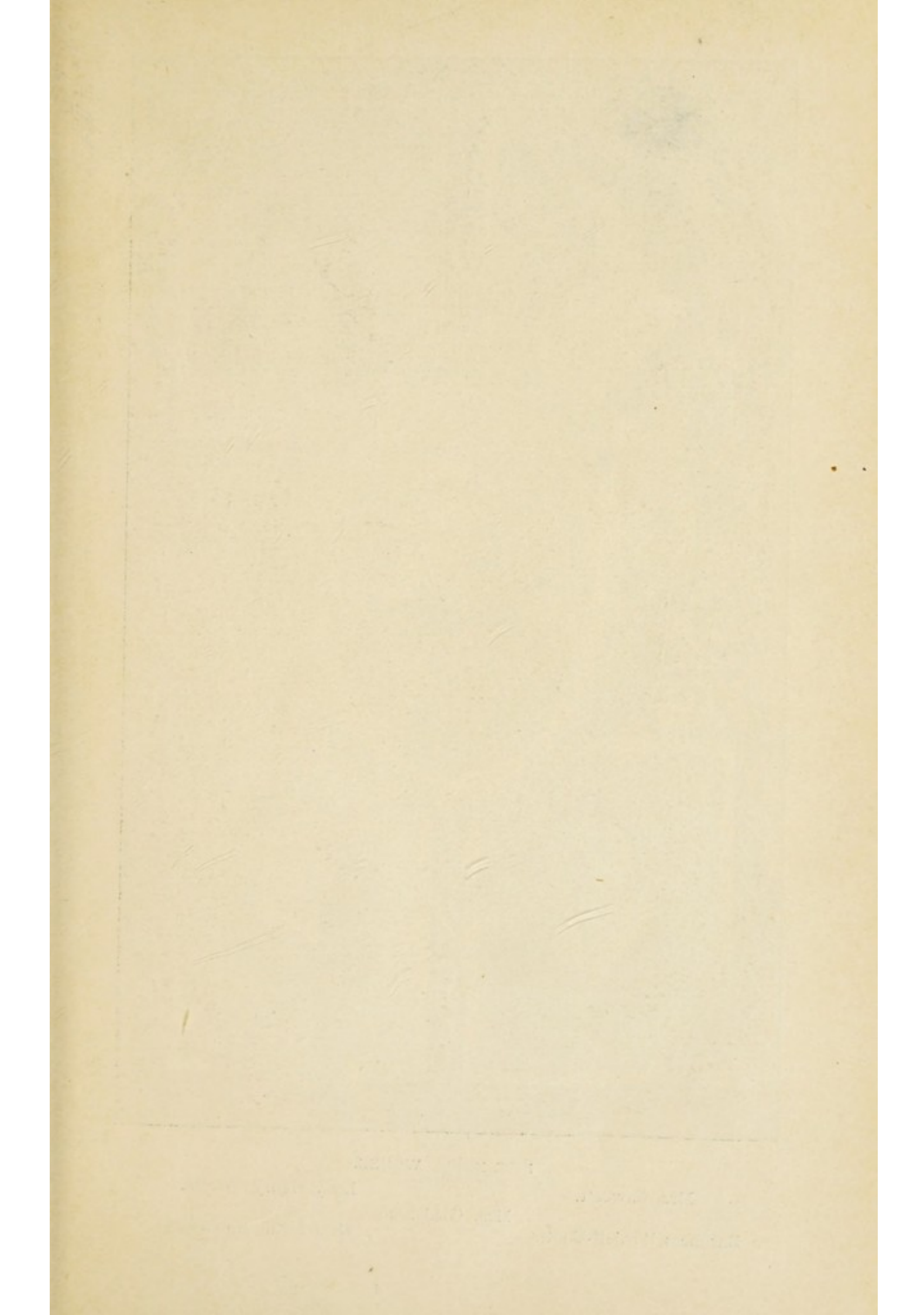
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NOBLE WORK BY NOBLE WOMEN

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FIVE NOBLE WOMEN.

Mrs. Fawcett.		Lady Henry Somerset.
	Mrs. Gladstone.	
Baroness Burdett-Coutts.		Miss Sarah Robinson.

NOBLE WORK BY
NOBLE WOMEN

SKETCHES OF THE LIVES

OF

BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS

LADY HENRY SOMERSET, MISS SARAH ROBINSON

MRS. FAWCETT, AND MRS. GLADSTONE

BY

JENNIE CHAPPELL

AUTHOR OF "FOUR NOBLE WOMEN"; "HER SADDEST BLESSING";
ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

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PREFACE.



IN the accompanying volume we present to our readers brief biographies of five of the most useful women of the nineteenth century. All, with one exception, are still living, and although, in the case of some of them, age and infirmities have lessened that activity for which they were notable in their prime, their influence is still invaluable and widely felt.

It is a mere truism to say that no two natures are alike, and that gifts and opportunities are as diverse as the various kinds of work which we are called upon to perform. We are so often reminded of this that there is small excuse for any one of us to fancy that because we cannot do good in precisely the same way as someone else whom we know or have heard about, that therefore there is no service we can render to God and our fellow-creatures, no niche for us to fill. St. Paul has already argued out this question far more effectively than any subsequent writer can hope to do. "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members, every one of them, in the body, as it hath pleased Him." And the different lives sketched in the following pages afford a striking modern illustration of the same truth.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts and the late Mrs. Gladstone, as beautiful examples of ladies of the old school, of whom very few are nowadays to be met,

compared with Mrs. Fawcett, one of the best specimens of the "new woman" recently come among us, are probably on some points as far as the poles asunder. Nevertheless, each of them has earnestly worked for the good of the community in the manner most in harmony with her convictions of what was right, all have been eminently useful, all honoured and blessed.

The contrast is in many respects equally great between the stately peeress, Lady Henry Somerset, with her gracious courtliness, her winning persuasiveness of manner and speech, and the blunt, unadorned downrightness of the "soldier's friend," who, if we may accept her own estimate of herself, is as shy and uncomfortable when in polished society as she feels happy and at her ease when in the company of a score or two of rough-and-ready "Tommies." But the public to whom Lady Henry's graceful appeals prove so irresistible is a totally different one from that which Miss Robinson loved to address; while the latter has been welcomed and her efforts crowned with wondrous success, where it is more than probable that the former lady would have met with scant appreciation. There is no room for mutual envy or for self-dispraise; there is no superiority or inferiority; there is only the *difference*, which God has made.

As for the brevity of our sketches, where so much more might have been recorded, we can only say that it was intentional, because in this busy age people more easily find time to read a short biography than a long one, and it has rendered possible that striking juxtaposition of five varying types of noble women, whose diversity of character and similarity of usefulness it has been one of the chief objects of our work to set forth.

J. C.

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NOBLE WORK BY NOBLE WOMEN.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

CHAPTER I.

THE RICHEST WOMAN IN ENGLAND.

THERE are few of us, I suppose, who have not at some time or other, generally in early youth, dreamed a pretty dream of what we would do were we suddenly to find ourselves possessed of great wealth; and thanks to the noble ideal and unselfish instincts with which, owing to centuries of Christianity, most of us begin life, this dream is usually full of the happiness and blessing we would scatter around us by means of our money. What sadness we would cheer, what suffering we would relieve, what good we would do wherever we went—if only we were rich!

To very few, however, comes any fulfilment of these bright imaginings; so it is never proved whether or not we should be the angels of comfort we have pictured to ourselves. On some, as history shows, the possession of

wealth exerts a baleful influence, hardening the heart and strangely drying up the springs of sympathy; so perhaps it is safest that only a very small minority are ever subjected to its temptations. Meanwhile, we can go on building our luxurious *chateaux d'Espagne* for the poor and needy, and rejoice that our ideal has been realised at least once in actual life, and to the utmost, by a lady of our own day—the universally honoured Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

Angela Georgina Burdett was born on April 21st, 1814, and was the youngest daughter of Sir Francis Burdett, a leading Liberal politician of the reign of George the Third, and Sophia, his wife, the latter being a daughter of Mr. Thomas Coutts, the rich banker, who was founder of the well-known banking-house in the Strand.

From both her parents the subject of our present sketch appears to have inherited largeness of heart and kindness of disposition towards the poor and oppressed. Sir Francis was the friend of the people and the champion of the Reform Bill, his zeal in fighting for the rights of his fellow-countrymen resulting at one time in his arrest for "breach of privilege" and subsequent imprisonment in the Tower of London—the last captive that gloomy old pile ever held.

A room is still shown at the Baroness's town residence in Stratton Street, the windows of which were broken in by the military, Sir Francis having protected the house with barricades. When at length he surrendered, his captors were pelted with stones by an angry crowd outside, who shouted "Burdett for ever!"

Sir Francis died on January 23rd, 1844, and Lady Burdett only a few days later. They were buried together at Ramsbury, in Wiltshire, the roads on the

day of the double funeral being lined with sorrowing peasantry, to whom Sir Francis had been a good and generous landlord. He had been the idol of the people in London, and the memory of the kindness of both him and his wife is, we are told, still cherished and spoken of in the two counties where the large family estates are situated.

Meanwhile, Miss Burdett's grandmother, the first Mrs. Coutts, had died, and the venerable banker, at the age of 84, was married a second time, to the handsome and fascinating actress, Miss Mellon.

Notwithstanding his advanced years, the old gentleman must have been deeply in love with his charming young bride, for on his death it was discovered that he had left her the whole of his vast wealth, to the exclusion of his descendants by his first wife.

Doubtless much disappointment was felt by the younger branches of the family, whose chagrin must have been intensified when the widow subsequently married the Duke of St. Albans. Tradition has it—though we cannot say with what foundation of truth—that many were the attempts made at ingratiating with the wealthy Duchess, attempts in which one grandchild, Angela Burdett, was too proud or too noble-minded to share.

However that may be, when, in 1837, the Duchess died, the surviving members of the Coutts family experienced another surprise, for the bulk of the old banker's property, supposed to be lost to the family for ever, was found to have been bequeathed to Miss Angela Burdett.

Thus, at the age of twenty-three, our heroine found herself, on the simple condition of taking the surname of Coutts, heiress of upwards of two million pounds

sterling, or thirteen tons of English sovereigns. She was, the newly crowned Queen herself not excepted, the richest woman in England.

At once began to pour in upon the young millionairess congratulations, letters of good advice, begging petitions, and offers of marriage from all parts of the world.

One would-be suitor was not content with expressing his love (for the sovereigns!) in writing, but he personally followed her about, pestering her with his unwelcome attentions for no less than *fourteen years*.

Wherever Miss Coutts went, this man—Dunn by name—pursued her; to the seaside, or the country, when she was walking or driving in town, says Miss Belloc in her interesting character sketch, he followed her like a shadow. The law in those days was not framed to interfere in such a case, and Miss Coutts's friends and relations, notwithstanding their efforts, proved powerless to put a stop to what must have been a truly painful persecution.

The climax was reached when Dunn, who was undoubtedly insane, walked one day into Coutts's bank and handed to a cashier a demand couched in doggerel verse for the modest sum of one hundred thousand pounds! This extraordinary behaviour resulted in an action being brought against him, in the course of which he committed perjury, was convicted, and sent to prison for five years. Then must have been a period of most welcome relief to the victimised heiress, and probably she hoped that during Mr. Dunn's enforced seclusion the ardour of his affection for herself might have time to cool.

But no such desirable effect ensued. As soon as the poor lunatic regained his liberty his pursuit of Miss Coutts commenced again with renewed vigour. She

was only released from the torment when, fortunately for her, Dunn transferred his unappreciated attentions to a royal princess, when, his insanity being no longer doubted, he was placed under proper restraint.

So much for one of the inconveniences incidental to being known as the richest woman in England.

It is somewhat remarkable that our Queen's ascension to the throne and Miss Coutts's accession to her truly regal fortune should have occurred in the same year, the ever-famous eighteen hundred and thirty-seven. At the coronation of the girlish sovereign the young millionairess was a sufficiently conspicuous figure to be mentioned in the Ingoldsby ballad which describes that brilliant scene, and where she is quaintly alluded to as the

"Famale heiress, Miss Anjaley Coutts,"

And many a festivity in connection with that time of national rejoicing was graced by the presence of the tall, stately young lady, with her sweetly grave and refined face and jewels of fabulous worth.

The poet Tom Moore has related in his diary that, having seen Miss Coutts in her splendour at the Queen's ball one night, he called upon her the next day, and found her preparing to send back her diamonds to the bank for safe keeping.

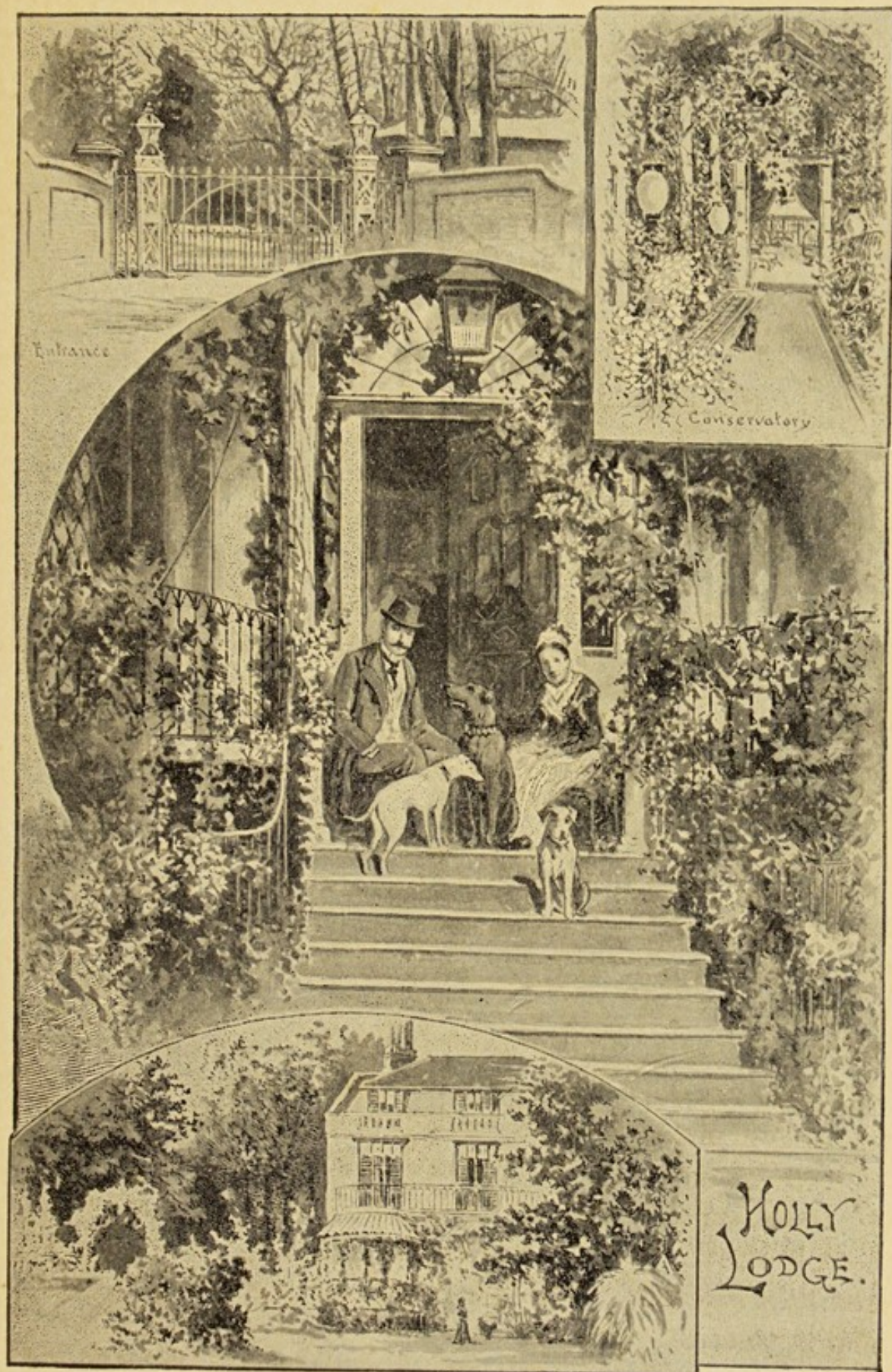
With girlish simplicity she asked him if he would like to see her ornaments by daylight. On his replying in the affirmative, she conducted him to a room upstairs where the treasures were deposited. Among them was the famous tiara which had once belonged to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette. Moore ventured to ask Miss Coutts what might be the value of the gems, when she answered, "in her quiet way," "I think about a hundred thousand pounds."

The Duchess of St. Albans in her will left to her husband the Duke, who survived her some years, an annual income of ten thousand pounds, the life-rent of the town house, No. 1, Stratton Street, and of the lovely suburban estate, Holly Lodge—a small but beautifully situated bungalow-like residence, secluded amid fifty-two acres of well-wooded park upon the picturesque slopes of Highgate—all of which reverted on his death to Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts, who thus became even more wealthy than she was before.

These two houses she has made her home ever since, being chaperoned during her youthful years by an affectionate old friend named Mrs. Brown, who had at one time been her governess.

In the year 1844, as we have already mentioned, the well-beloved Sir Francis Burdett went to his rest, but although Miss Burdett-Coutts lost both father and mother by almost one stroke, she possessed the friendship of some of the noblest and most honoured in the land, among whom may be numbered Her Royal Highness the late lamented Duchess of Teck, the venerable Duke of Wellington—who, we are told, was her confidential adviser, “taking a fatherly interest in the young girl with her millions of money and her large heart”—Garrick the actor, and the then rising novelist, Charles Dickens. Miss Coutts was one of the first to recognise the genius of the latter, and he in his turn arousing the sympathy of the heiress in the sorrows and privations of the poor, was thus the means of directing her wealth into a channel of incalculable good.

Together they visited some of the worst dens of misery the Metropolis contained, but this is a topic which belongs to another chapter.



Entrance

Conservatory

HOLLY
LODGE.

CHAPTER II.

LONDON'S GREAT BENEFACTRESS.

WE have already alluded to the inspiring influence of the great novelist, Charles Dickens, upon Miss Burdett-Coutts, an influence which she gratefully acknowledges, still cherishing the remembrance of his companionship and help in her work among the East End poor.

One of the most notable of the lady's schemes of public benevolence was the transformation of a spot once known as Nova Scotia Gardens, in the neighbourhood of Bethnal Green. Here scores of families of the lowest class were huddled together in surroundings of indescribable squalor. Dust and refuse, shot there with impunity, had been left to rot and fill the air with foul stenches and the germs of fever; while the moral condition of the inhabitants was quite on a par with their physical pollution.

Nova Scotia Gardens, we are told, was "a resort of murderers, thieves, disreputable, and abandoned," a haunt of terror even to the police, a hot-bed of vice and disease.

This locality Miss Burdett-Coutts bought up wholesale, and having possessed herself of the freehold, she proceeded to have the wretched houses, one and all, razed to the ground. In their place she erected four blocks of model dwellings, designed to accommodate about two hundred families, fitted with laundry accommodation, baths, etc., and with such excellently planned sanitary arrangements, ventilation, and windows, that, though built long before such subjects had come to be

matters of legislation, Columbia Square, as the spot was renamed, holds its own even to-day.

Another philanthropic work in which Charles Dickens was specially interested was a Home for women of the criminal class who were willing to try and lead a reformed life. This was the Urania College at Shepherd's Bush.

"The novelist," says a writer in *The Young Woman*, "drew up the rules, superintended the purchase of land and buildings, and attended personally to the furnishing. He visited the prisons, interviewed magistrates and governors, and wrote letters, such as only he could write, to many an unhappy woman in need of a helping hand."

These letters, which were sent anonymously, and addressed "To a Woman," were models of simplicity, tenderness, and most winning sympathy. "Do not think I write to you as if I felt very much above you," said the great-hearted man, "or wished to hurt your feelings by reminding you of the situation in which you are placed. God forbid! I mean nothing but kindness to you, and I write to you as if you were my sister."

The letter goes on to invite the recipient to start a new life in a pleasant country home, which has been opened by "a lady in this town, who, from the windows of her house, has seen such as you going past at night, and has felt her heart bleed at the sight."

In this home, they were told, there would be no harsh or arbitrary rules, no distinctive dress, and no reference to the past.

And, furthermore, "because it is not the lady's wish that these young women should be shut out from the world after they have repented and have learned to do their duty there, and because it *is* her wish and

object that they may be restored to society, they will be supplied with every means, when some time shall have elapsed and their conduct shall have proved their earnestness and reformation, to go abroad, where in a distant country they may become the faithful wives of honest men, and live and die in peace."

Although Dickens was the actual writer of these beautiful letters, we think we may safely assume that many of the sentiments expressed were those of the benevolent lady to whose tender sympathy the helpful scheme was originally due, for, as has been remarked, they are "instinct with the love such as only one woman can feel for another."

It is good to know that the affectionate invitation was in many cases accepted. The poor fallen creatures were tempted by the prospect of the "active, cheerful, healthy life" promised them, and the hope held out to them of being able to "win a good name and character," and came to Urania College, whence in due course they were equipped for emigration and started in life afresh. The record of the college, we are told, "has been more than gratifying to its benefactress."

Hard by Columbia Square stands that wonderful erection known as Columbia Market, a building of its kind without rival in the whole world.

Impressed with the fact that our sea-girt land is surrounded by supplies of delicious food, which, seeing that nothing is ever spent upon its rearing or cultivation, ought to be cheaper than any other kind of meat, Miss Burdett-Coutts resolved to found a fish market in one of the poorest parts of London, that working people might be able to procure as an article of daily sustenance that which, owing to the prohibitive prices imposed by the then only existing market of Billings-

gate, was, except in the form of the common red herring, almost a delicacy unknown.

The grandeur and beauty of the building erected near Hackney Road with this end in view is the marvel of all who see it. With its stately marble columns, handsome ornamentation, and suitable inscriptions from the Bible (made more elaborate than otherwise might have been from a wish to give employment to the stone-cutters and carvers at that time out of work) the spacious pile is more like a cathedral or some such grand public building than an ordinary market. And, indeed, a high dignitary of the Church declared that nothing was wanting but a pulpit there to make him feel perfectly at home.

However, notwithstanding the fact that Columbia Market was opened impressively in the presence of Royalty in the year 1869, it has never from that time to the present been used for the purpose intended, except for a short period at the outset, when a brave struggle was made to survive the opposition of the Billingsgate "ring" in vain. And it now stands a lasting monument to the munificence and kind feeling of the foundress and the selfish greed of those in whose grasp the fish trade lay.

More successful has been another erection of Miss Coutts's generosity of a different kind. We allude to the church and schools of St. Stephen, Westminster. These handsome buildings, the initial cost of which is said to have been nearly £100,000, are the Baroness's memorial to her father, who was educated at Westminster School and was parliamentary representative of that district for thirty years.

Besides building and providing for the larger part of the endowment of this splendid edifice, the Baroness

has maintained the whole work, including the expenses of the Technical Institute and the numberless social and benevolent agencies connected with it, from the opening in 1850 until the present time. St. Stephen's is a church well worth a visit, both on account of the beauty of its architecture and the interesting relics which it contains, the Duke of Wellington having presented the altar cloth, as well as the silk curtain which hangs over the pulpit. This latter, which is of sixteenth-century manufacture, was taken from the tent of Tippoo Sahib at the storming of Seringapatam. There is also a wonderful carpet to be seen here, worked by some of the most famous ladies in the land, depicting the arms of the Baroness, and of the various bishoprics, churches, etc., with which her name is inseparably connected.

Clubs, guilds, classes, and a thriving self-help society are all flourishing offshoots of St. Stephen's; and in the schools, embracing a complete curriculum of education for the youth of the working classes, and said to be the most efficient in London, upwards of fifteen thousand boys and girls have already been trained; while hundreds of aspiring lads are receiving at the institute instruction in various arts and crafts which will be beneficial to them all their lives.

To pass from visible and tangible monuments of the Baroness's generosity to the not less enduring memories in thousands of grateful hearts, we will speak first of the assistance rendered to the "hand weavers," when, between thirty and forty years ago, they were brought to destitution by the importation of foreign silks, and existing attempts to relieve their sufferings had proved unequal to the stupendous task.

Then Miss Coutts took the matter up, and the

resources of her purse were unstintingly drawn upon. "Some of the people," says the *Strand Magazine*, "were sent out of the country as emigrants; others were given the means of starting in little businesses; girls were suitably trained for respectable situations; and work was found for women in a sort of sewing-room, where, after 1.30 in the day, they could earn from 8s. to 15s. per week, thus helping very materially to keep things going. The work consisted of shirt-making for the police and soldiers, and one very good feature of the plan was that each woman as she came in was given a good hearty meal to commence with. Some, who on account of their families could not leave home, were allowed to have their work out; thus large numbers were benefited."

The men and boys were also helped with work, while to the sick and needy clothing, blankets, and nourishing food were freely given; hundreds were assisted to emigrate to the colonies, in most cases by the loan of passage money, which, we are glad to say, was nearly all faithfully repaid; and "nothing that money or care could do was left undone."

In 1867 an epidemic of cholera broke out in East London, and again the Baroness was foremost among those who rendered aid to the sufferers. Eight trained nurses were paid by her to tend the sick in their own homes, while two sanitary inspectors, with four men to give out disinfectants, were constantly employed, all being under the direction of a qualified medical man.

A summary of one week's distribution of invalid necessities at that terrible time has been given as follows: "1,850 tickets for meat, of the value of one shilling each, 250 pounds of arrowroot, 500 pounds of rice, 50 pounds each of sago and tapioca, 30 pounds

of black-currant jelly, 50 gallons of port wine, 25 gallons of brandy, 20 gallons of beef tea, 560 quarts of milk, 100 blankets, 400 yards of flannel, and 400 garments." And all at the Baroness Burdett-Coutts's sole expense!

The distressed tanners are another class who will long remember our heroine's name with gratitude, as will also the shoeblacks and flower-girls of the great city. The latter class, as well as the former, have been organised into a "brigade," the object of which is not only to help them in various ways in their present occupation, but also to fit such of them as may desire it for domestic service, and to teach artificial flower-making to those disposed to learn. In this way upwards of 1,000 girls have been assisted into more sheltered and less precarious modes of earning their living.

Children, of course, have always had a warm place in the large heart of the Baroness, and at one time thousands of little Londoners were given a glimpse into fairyland by annual visits to the lovely grounds of Holly Lodge. It was largely owing to her endeavours, her pity being roused by one shocking case of brutality and neglect, that the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children first came into existence, and she helped greatly in the passing of what is known as the "Children's Charter" through Parliament in the year 1889. The first committee meeting was held in the Baroness's own drawing-room, and now, to the relief of maltreated little ones (and the disgrace of English civilisation!) an average of 10,000 heartless parents are dealt with every year.

Food for the underfed is another necessary for growing bodies, and the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, which annually provides 300,000 good nourishing meals

at a halfpenny or a penny each, has always met with her bountiful support. Nor are the softer amenities of life ignored by the refined and gentle lady, for she generously assists the movement for promoting a love of flowers among the poor. Every summer hundreds of plants are distributed to brighten dull and sordid homes, prizes being awarded at the end of the season for those that are brought for exhibition showing signs of most careful cultivation.

The hardships of costermongers, also, have called forth her ladyship's sympathy, and when not so very long ago they were in danger of being altogether extinguished by their calling being rendered illegal, she sent her own solicitor to defend their cause and bring them off triumphant.

Many a street-hawker has cause to bless the Baroness for this valuable aid, as well as in many cases for assistance in becoming the owner of his own barrow, clubs having been promoted by her with this end in view.

From the coster to his donkey the transition is natural, a small silver model of that most honourable of beasts, presented to her by one of the coster clubs, being a valued ornament of Holly Lodge. Like the late Earl of Shaftesbury, the Baroness has done much to encourage kindness on the part of the men to their faithful little "mokes" by giving prizes for those animals which could be shown in the best condition.

It goes without saying that one so tender-hearted towards all forms of suffering is warmly sympathetic to dumb and defenceless creatures of every kind. From the beginning the name of Miss Burdett-Coutts has been associated with the work of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Many of us still remember the prizes she offered to the schools, both public



THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS DISTRIBUTING PRIZES FOR ESSAYS
ON KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

and private, throughout the kingdom for the best essays on the subject of kindness to animals, and the grand occasions when the same were distributed, often by Royalty, and once by Her Majesty herself in person.

These essays and prizes, which must have done much to spread an intelligent appreciation of the dumb creation and its needs, were the result of a visit to the Baroness of an American gentleman, a Mr. Angell, of Boston, who had given up a lucrative profession to devote himself to the cause of animals, and on coming to England at once sought the lady whose tender-heartedness and generosity were already of world-wide fame, to ask her help in the endeavour to teach mercy and kindness to the rising generation.

In cart-horses and their masters the Baroness has shown her practical interest, taking much pleasure in those annual "parades" to which on May Day or Whit-Monday one sees the noble beasts wending their way, amusingly decked out in rosettes, tassels, and other trappings of every gaudy hue.

She has also been touched by the sufferings of tram and 'bus horses, and done what she could to ameliorate their lot. As for birds, it is needless to say that no aigrette or plume ever decks her bonnet. She stigmatises a bird used for millinery purposes as "a mode of ornamentation which must suggest a bloodstain on the delicate hat or cap." As President of the Ladies' Committee of the R.S.P.C.A., the Baroness has spoken at meetings all over the country; but to touch upon her ladyship's more extended schemes of benevolence we must needs commence another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

A WORLD-WIDE MUNIFICENCE.

AS we have already hinted, it is not to London or even to England that the benefactions of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts have been confined. There is scarcely a spot on the civilised globe where her name is not a synonym for benevolence on an absolutely regal scale.

Ever since the terrible famine of 1848 first aroused her sympathy for the wretched condition of thousands of the Irish people, the Green Isle and its sorrows has appealed eloquently to her heart. And when, between twenty and thirty years ago, she became acquainted with the destitute condition of the peasantry in the fishing villages of Skibbereen, Baltimore, and others on the south coast of Ireland, she promptly placed the sum of £10,000 in the hands of Father Davis, the people's trusted friend, to be lent out to the fishermen in sums large enough to provide them with new boats.

When we read that their only means of livelihood was at such a low ebb, through famine and misfortune, that Scots were fishing in the Irish waters and selling the fish to those of the Irish who could afford to buy them, we can realise the poor people's joy and gratitude on being given, as it were, a fresh start in life.

The money, which was apportioned to deserving men in sums of from £150 to £300, in loans to be repaid by small yearly instalments, has, we rejoice to say, all been refunded, a fact which reflects great credit on the thrift and honour of those Cork fishermen, and is a just cause of pride to them and their friends.

Another practical scheme by which the Baroness has

greatly aided the same people has been by the founding in 1887 of a kind of college of fishery, in which boys could be thoroughly taught boat-building, net-making, carpentering, coopering, repairs of all kinds, and the art of fish-curing. About four hundred students can be accommodated in this school at once, and it is hoped that the technical knowledge here obtained will be security against the recurrence of so deplorable a state of things as that from which by Lady Burdett-Coutts's generosity the fishermen of Skibbereen were saved.

During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, thousands of the inhabitants of the villages on the Danube fled in panic from the approach of the Russians. The sufferings of these poor people—innocent victims to the horrors of war—are terrible to read about; famine, sickness, cold, rain and snow killed hundreds of them upon the roads, and when they at length reached Constantinople they were homeless, until the authorities took pity on them and allowed them to shelter in the mosques. Some of the rich townspeople also threw open their houses, and the Sultan permitted many of them to take refuge in the royal palace itself.

No sooner did the Baroness hear of the miseries of these poor wanderers than she wrote an eloquent letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, entreating the public to "stanch their life-blood" and "bind up their wounds, if not by our money, by our sympathy," and hoping that their anguish would soon "begin to be soothed through that real Christianity which is still, in God's providence, the appointed means by which hunger and thirst are assuaged, sickness alleviated, and consolation given."

The result of this appeal was the institution of the Turkish Compassionate Fund, by means of which the sum of £30,000 was raised in the course of a

few days, which, with an immense quantity of food and clothing, was sent out to be distributed under the direction of the gentleman now known as Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Sir Francis de Winton, and other discreet almoners. By this means the sufferings of thousands of families were alleviated and the lives of numbers saved.

In the comfort and well-being of soldiers on foreign service Lady Burdett-Coutts has shown special interest. In the Crimean War she sent out a number of patent drying-sheds for the men to be able to dry their wet clothing. She was actively interested in the welfare of our soldiers in Zululand. During the Soudan Campaign she provided homes for the wives and children of the Coldstream Guards when the latter were ordered abroad.

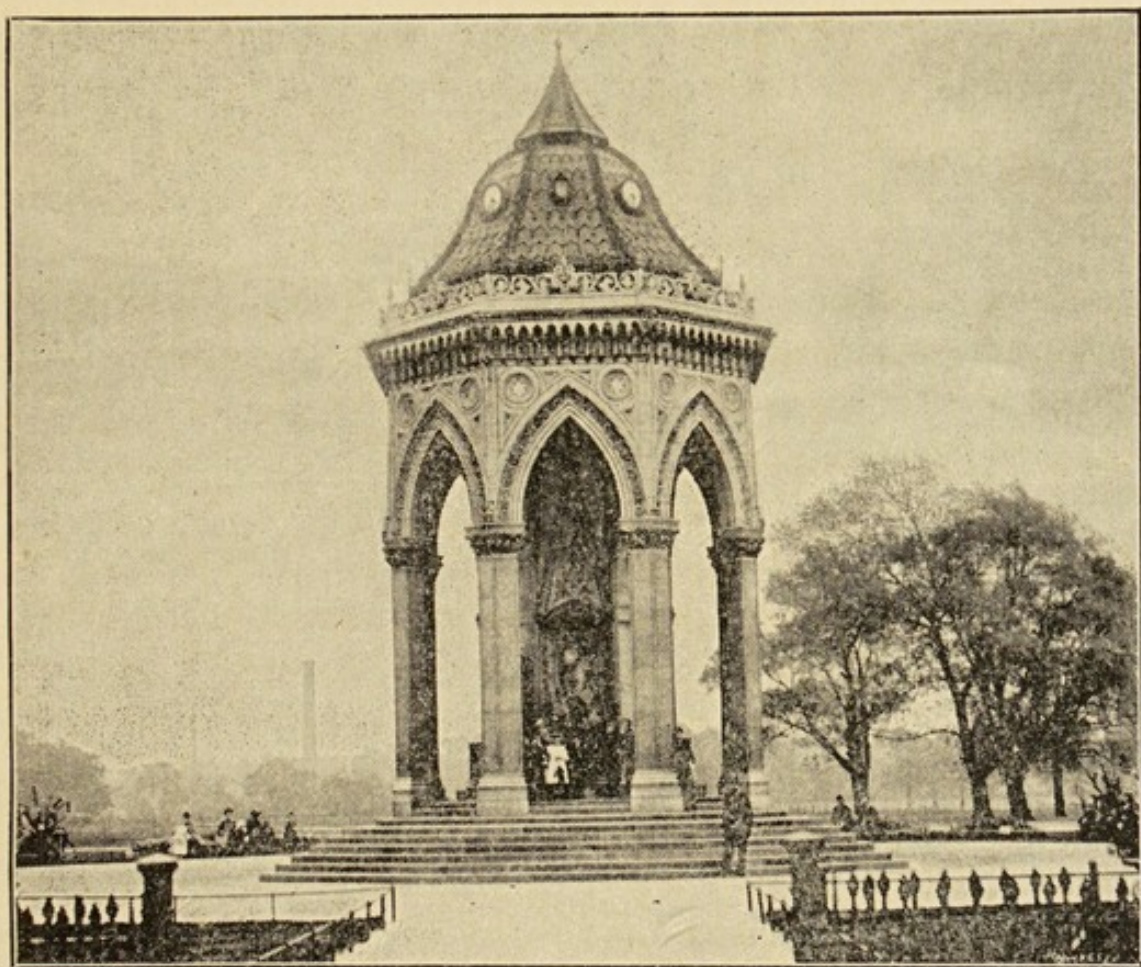
The inhabitants of Abeokeuta, in Africa, have to thank Heaven for the wealthy English lady who presented them with their first cotton-gin, thus giving a lasting impetus to the trade which is their chief means of subsistence. And the bishopric of Cape Town, as well as those of British Columbia and Adelaide, was founded by the same lady. Some idea of the cost of these may be formed when it is known that for one only, including endowment of church, of bishopric, and partial cost of clergy, the Baroness expended no less than £50,000.

It was the Baroness, too, who provided the necessary funds for a complete topographical survey of Jerusalem; and if the Holy City is not at the present moment enjoying a constant supply of pure water it is not because that boon has not been offered, for her ladyship actually proposed to reinstate the ancient aqueducts of Solomon, though for some reason her munificent scheme was never carried out.

But volumes might be filled did one attempt to give anything like an exhaustive account of the benefactions

of this queenly woman to the generation in which she has lived. There is scarcely a good work extant in either hemisphere which has not at some time or other been cheered by her practical sympathy and help.

To pass from the greater to the smaller, though perhaps not less important, of the monuments to the



THE DRINKING-FOUNTAIN IN VICTORIA PARK, LONDON.

all-embracing charity of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, we may mention that she has presented lifeboats to two English towns, and one to St. Malo, on the coast of France. Many have been the churches restored by her aid, many the peals of bells—provided by her—that ring out a perpetual reminder of her generosity. Of the preservation of commons and open spaces for the

people she has been one of the foremost supporters; she helped to retain for public health and enjoyment the sylvan beauty of Hampstead Heath, that wide playground in the north of London; and several churchyards by her instrumentality have been turned into quiet gardens of greenness, rest, and shade for the tired dwellers in hot city streets.

As to drinking-fountains for man and beast, they are dotted all over the country, the most notable being those in Victoria Park (a magnificent structure), the Columbia Market, the Zoological Gardens, and at Ancoats, Manchester. There is also a handsome fountain erected by the Baroness at the corner of the George the Fourth Bridge in Edinburgh, with which so touching a story is connected that we cannot refrain from telling it ere we pass to the final and more personal chapter of our sketch.

In the year 1858 a man named Grey died in Edinburgh, and was buried in Greyfriars churchyard. He had few friends, and his chief mourner was his little dog "Bobby." Day after day the faithful creature returned to the grave, and though driven away, always came back again, until the caretaker, taking pity, got into the habit of feeding him. The grave was unmarked by any headstone, and in course of time became levelled with the surrounding sod and undistinguishable. But Bobby never forgot the spot. Year after year he continued to visit the place where he had seen his dear master laid, until he became well known by compassionate residents, and was regularly fed by them.

When the dog-tax was instituted, in 1867, many persons came forward to pay for Bobby, but the Lord Provost, hearing his story, decreed that he should be exempt, and, moreover, presented the animal with a

handsome collar. The little creature continued to visit the grave constantly until his death in 1872, and then, on the Baroness Burdett-Coutts becoming acquainted with this wonderful instance of canine faithfulness, she decided to commemorate it in a characteristic and suitable way.

To-day a bronze figure of Bobby may be seen surmounting a handsome red marble column, which also supports a drinking-fountain, and has at its base a water-trough for dogs. On the column the late Professor Blackie recorded the virtues of Bobby and the generosity of the donor of his monument in an inscription in both English and Greek.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE SECOND LADY IN THE LAND."

WE have left to the last an account of the various honours and evidences of appreciation with which the almost fabulous generosity of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts has been marked, and also what slight account of her private life during her later years her ladyship's naturally retiring disposition has rendered accessible to the public.

To begin with, the elevation of Miss Burdett-Coutts to the peerage in 1871 was unquestionably a token of Her Majesty's approbation of her many noble deeds, and a distinction, unique in itself as thus merited, which was followed throughout the country by acclamations of delight. It was the Prince of Wales who bestowed upon the Baroness the illustrious epithet which heads our present chapter.

The subject of our sketch also wears the Turkish Orders of the Medjidieh and the Shafakat—the former never before conferred upon a woman—in recognition by the Sultan of her efforts on behalf of the Turkish refugees.

Long, however, before Miss Coutts received a legal title she was known by the warm-hearted and thankful people of County Cork as "Lady Coutts," and occasionally as "*Your Lordship*, Lady Coutts"! And at the time of her visit with her husband, in 1884, to the district her generosity had saved from ruin, she was hailed with the flying of flags, tablecloths, and pocket-handkerchiefs from every available point, with bonfires by night, and with cheering crowds who rapturously welcomed her as "Queen of Baltimore."

As a mark of public gratitude for the benefits the Baroness has lavished upon the Metropolis, the presentation of the freedom of the city of London—a very rare distinction for women—is among the many honours that have been shown her. The official ceremony, which was performed at the Guildhall, in July, 1872, was a very brilliant and imposing spectacle. The freedom of several provincial cities has also been conferred upon her.

On May Day, 1882, when the Baroness visited Newcastle to award the prizes in the cart-horse parade in that town, a hundred thousand people were assembled in the streets to see her, and flowers were strewn in her path. Noisy demonstrations of joy were prohibited for fear of frightening the nervous animals, but the enthusiasm of the crowds could not be repressed. The driver whose horse took the first prize doffed his cap, and seizing the Baroness's hand shook it heartily, this action evoking uproarious cheers. Each prize-winner in succession followed suit, then her ladyship made a speech, which, amid loud cheers and cries of "God bless you!" ended with the words, that "in this life man and beast are held together by God's own chain under one law."

Another evidence of the immense popularity of the

Baroness with the masses was afforded during the Reform Bill agitation of recent years. A great procession organised at that time was conducted past her house in Stratton Street, and her ladyship being seen at the window, the crowd, probably remembering the notable occurrence at the self-same house during a similar agitation many years before, stood vociferously cheering her for two, or, as some accounts have it, for *three* hours!

Of the private friendships with the good, the famous, and the great, which the subject of our sketch has during her long life enjoyed we may only briefly speak. The character of the Baroness has always been appreciated by Royalty. The late Duchess of Teck, in a letter to the President of the Board of Lady Managers of the World's Columbian Exhibition, wrote: "I have known intimately the Baroness all my life, have valued her friendship, and have often participated in some of her work." And members of our reigning family have frequently been guests at Holly Lodge.

The grandest general of the day, as we have seen, was the trusted friend and adviser of Miss Coutts's girlhood, the greatest novelist her companion in charitable work; and a plain little inkstand, to be seen among the Baroness's cherished keepsakes, commemorates the regard of one of our sweetest singers, Thomas Moore.

Of the heroes of Christianity, Dr. Moffat, Dr. Livingstone, and in more recent years the soldier saint, General Gordon, have been numbered among her friends. The latter loved to talk over with the Baroness his enthusiastic desires for the betterment of the Soudanese, and one of his last hours in England prior to his hurried departure for Africa—never, alas! to return—were spent with her.

On this never-to-be-forgotten occasion Gordon begged

of his true and valued friend a small letter-case as a keepsake. And the Baroness has received indisputable proof that he carried this gift in his breast-pocket until his death.

It must have given her ladyship keen pleasure to devote some of her all-commanding wealth to alleviating the dreary exile of that noble man; for through her bold and rather romantic scheme of employing a Morocco merchant in disguise to obtain admission to Khartoum, Gordon received the last packet of letters and papers that ever reached him from home.

In the year 1881 the Baroness somewhat startled her intimates, as well as the world at large, by marrying Mr. William Ashmead-Bartlett, she being at that time sixty-seven years of age and the gentleman but thirty; the bridegroom on that occasion taking the bride's name instead of the contrary, as usual, being the case.

However, whatever misgivings the public may have felt at the outset as to the wisdom of this one act in the lady's well-ordered life, the sequel has proved that her good sense and clear judgment did not err. An intimate personal friend of the Baroness assured a writer in *The Young Woman* that "happy as her life has always been, the last years have been by far the happiest part of it."

The description of Holly Lodge given by the only interviewer ever privileged to pass its threshold, Miss Mary Spencer-Warren—to whose most interesting article in the *Strand Magazine* we are already largely indebted—is fascinating. A house filled with gems of art, mementoes of good works, and souvenirs of notable people, stands in rural seclusion amid lovely flowers and spreading trees that cast cool woodland shadows upon the greenest of grass. A home where,

as one might expect, pets are everywhere in evidence both indoors and out, from the valuable horses of which Mr. Burdett-Coutts is a connoisseur, and the white donkey which was the gift of a number of grateful costermongers, to the goats, the cows, the pigs, the chickens, the birds, and last, but by no means least, the numerous members of the canine race which the Baroness numbers among her household. A peaceful, beautiful home, where one rejoices to think that the latter days of one who has done so much to promote the happiness of others are calmly and pleasantly gliding past.

So stupendous have been the charitable deeds of Lady Burdett-Coutts, and so tangibly do they appeal to the world, that one is in some danger of overlooking the good that must have been done by her wise and persuasive words. The Baroness has spoken a great deal in public, both in the cause of the defenceless and suffering, and by way of giving good advice, especially to the young of her own sex.

One or two specimens only of the latter must suffice. Speaking at Whitelands Training College, where for many years she awarded prizes for various practical accomplishments, such as household work, needlework, and household management, the Baroness gave expression to the following sentiments on the subject of "The Influence of the Head of the Family."

After remarking that "whom a woman appoints to that position lies entirely within her own choice," her ladyship proceeded to say that "teachers would be doing a kindness to point out this to the elder girls when they leave school, and to advise them before marrying to observe carefully the habits and conduct towards others of those who wish them to enter into so serious and responsible an engagement."

On another occasion the Baroness, in an address to the pupils of the same college, said, "A woman rules her family after her husband's spirit. His influence is unavoidably felt, and he is either her mainstay in the trials of life, or a weight which crushes her. If she have linked herself either to a man of careless habits, or to an irreligious man, or to one simply idle and self-indulgent, she will have a hard fight in life's battle; and when she strives to train her children and implant good seed in their minds, though she can indeed preserve herself personally blameless, she must feel lonely, doubtful, and depressed, if, side by side with the good wheat of religious precept and commandment, she has sown the tares of her husband's silent but all-powerful example."

Of the acknowledged weight and influence of Lady Burdett-Coutts's public utterances a rather amusing proof was on one occasion afforded. She had been urging the desirability of neatness and simplicity in female dress, and suggested that her hearers might help to check the unfortunate habit "which is widely spread among us of not seeming to brush the hair any more, or of wearing other people's."

This speech aroused a considerable amount of attention, and one person wrote and protested against it. "With her ladyship's remarks concerning hair," he said, after paving the way by commending other portions of the address, "I cannot coincide." He assumed that the Baroness's knowledge of hairdressing was "only theoretic," though "practical knowledge is the only way by which anyone can be an authority upon so important a subject." "If the above remarks," he concluded, "remain uncontradicted, they will be injurious to the public."

It subsequently turned out that the objector was a

hairdresser, who, like the famous silversmith of Ephesus, feared that his craft was "in danger to be set at naught" by the teaching of a lady so widely respected as the Baroness.

A few years ago Lady Burdett-Coutts added to her other useful works a not unimportant contribution to literature.

This was the compilation, at the urgent desire of H.R.H. the Princess Christian, of a volume in connection with the Chicago Exhibition, entitled *Woman's Mission*.

In this volume, which the Baroness edited with considerable skill and taste, are gathered together thirty-five able essays on the various phases of woman's special work for the betterment of the world, each written by some lady of practical experience, who could speak from her own personal knowledge of the subject allotted to her. Lady Coutts herself has contributed two of these, and the preface and appendix are also from her pen.

It was owing to the interest aroused in America by this book that an account of the Baroness's public work was published, from which much of the information contained in our present sketch is drawn. And it is in a letter on the subject from H.R.H. the late Duchess of Teck to the President of the Board of Lady Managers of the World's Columbian Exhibition already quoted that these appreciative words occur: "Great as have been the intrinsic benefits which the Baroness has conferred on others, the most signal of all has been the power of example—an incalculable quantity, which no record of events can measure."

This summing up of the character and work of one intimately and affectionately known to the royal writer cannot well be improved upon, and with it our monograph shall close.

Lady Henry Somerset.



CHAPTER I.

OF NOBLE BIRTH.

THE famous saying that "some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them," is a truism. Those that come under the head of the second order of nobility are the most truly, because the most meritoriously, eminent, and to it most of the world's notable workers belong. But the subject of the present sketch enjoys the distinction of having possessed the first kind of greatness by inheritance before her moral worth and intellectual gifts won for her the second. This is an advantage which, though not indispensable, is by no means to be despised. A titled name, used as a talent entrusted by God, may be made a powerful influence for good.

Lady Isabel Somers-Cocks was the elder of the two children of Earl and Countess Somers. Her sister Adeline is now the Duchess of Bedford. Both inherited no small share of the beauty of their mother, who was one of the celebrated beauties of her day.

Lord Somers belonged to a family whose nobility was more than five hundred years old. Among his ancestors

is numbered Lord Chancellor Somers, celebrated as successfully defending the seven bishops who were imprisoned in the Tower by James II. on a charge of seditious libel, and afterwards as the chief counsellor of William III. Another ancestor was the Honourable Major Cocks, who fought with Wellington in the Peninsular campaign, and was one of the great general's most trusted officers.

A female ancestor, renowned for her virtues, was Mary Cocks, in whose person the two families named above were first united. It is said of her, "No one throughout life was more beloved; her heart was soon touched with the hearing of distress, and her hand as immediately stretched out to relieve it."

Earl Somers himself is described as "a man of unalterable fidelity, of sound judgment, who inherited something of the spirit of adventure which has constantly reasserted itself in his family." He was also possessed of æsthetic tastes, a friend of both Ruskin and Turner, taking an equal delight in exploring the ruins of Asia Minor with the great archæologist, Sir Henry Layard, or in rummaging Italian palaces or old curiosity shops for forgotten treasures of modern art. The result of the former kind of expedition now enriches the British Museum, while the spoils of the latter grace Eastnor Castle, Lady Henry's stately Herefordshire home.

The Countess Somers, Lady Isabel's mother, was a Miss Virginia Pattle, daughter of a director of the East India Company, and his charming French wife, who was descended from the Chevalier de L'Etang, a victim of the Revolution. It is thought by some that much of Lady Henry's cleverness and vivacity, with her dark, animated style of beauty, may be owing to her share of French blood.

Concerning the union of the late Earl and Countess a romantic story is told. When Mr. Watts, the celebrated Royal Academician, was quite young, he painted a portrait of the beautiful Miss Virginia Pattle, which adorned the walls of the Academy, and became one of the most popular pictures of the year.

Among the thousands who crowded to Burlington House and lingered before the fascinating portrait was young Viscount Eastnor, who was much attracted by the beauty of the picture.

Strange to say, on the very next day the young nobleman was introduced at a fashionable reception to the original of the picture which had charmed him, and so far from being disenchanted by a vision of the reality he fell deeply in love with her. His eager suit was successful; within a few months Miss Virginia Pattle had become Viscountess Eastnor. A year later the subject of our sketch was born.

Lord Somers took great interest in the education of his two daughters. From childhood Lady Isabel spoke fluently the language of her maternal ancestors, and was also familiar with Italian and German. Both she and her sister, Lady Adeline, were uncommonly intellectual and independent-minded girls. Lady Isabel was a great reader. She was very fond of history and essays, and learned Macaulay almost by heart, which may have done much to mould her own graceful and eloquent style of diction. She also devoured the writings of John Stuart Mill, carrying such works as the *Subjection of Women* and the *Essay on Liberty* to read in the privacy of the woods, fearing that, if discovered, they might be forbidden. But her favourite book, she told a recent interviewer, was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and so strong an impression had the sorrows of the slaves

there depicted made upon both Lady Isabel and her sister that they divided the book into two halves, in order that both might devour at once this classic of reform.

For the rest, Lady Isabel was always fond as now of healthful out-of-door exercise. Bicycles were not dreamed of for ladies in her girlhood, but she loved to be on horseback, and joined, we are told, "in all active country pursuits, excepting one—she could never bear to kill beast or bird."

One year after her presentation at Court, Lady Isabel married Lord Henry Somerset, second son of the Duke of Beaufort. On the wedding day Alfred Tennyson sent the bride a basket of snowdrops which he had gathered for her with his own hands.

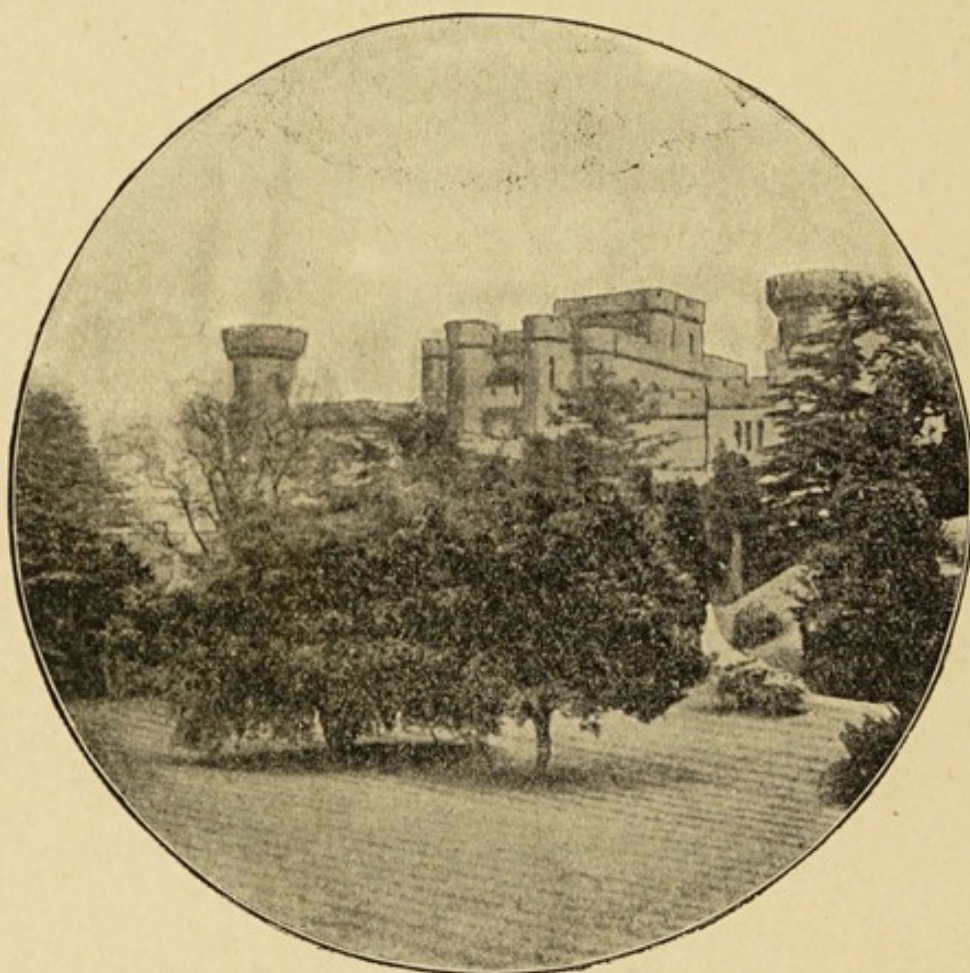
In 1874 Lady Henry's only child was born, and after a few sorrowful years events separated her from her husband, and the law courts gave the mother the custody of her son.

CHAPTER II.

WIDENING SYMPATHIES.

SORROW and suffering brought with them a quickened sympathy for others' needs. One of the servants declares that she first saw Lady Henry "lighting a fire in my mother's empty hearth in a London slum," and there are many ready to relate how day after day Lady Henry would visit in her district carrying food and clothing at all hours, and herself nursing cases of sickness in the very poorest streets of London. But with the great trouble of her life came the change of abode. For some years before her father's death she lived at the

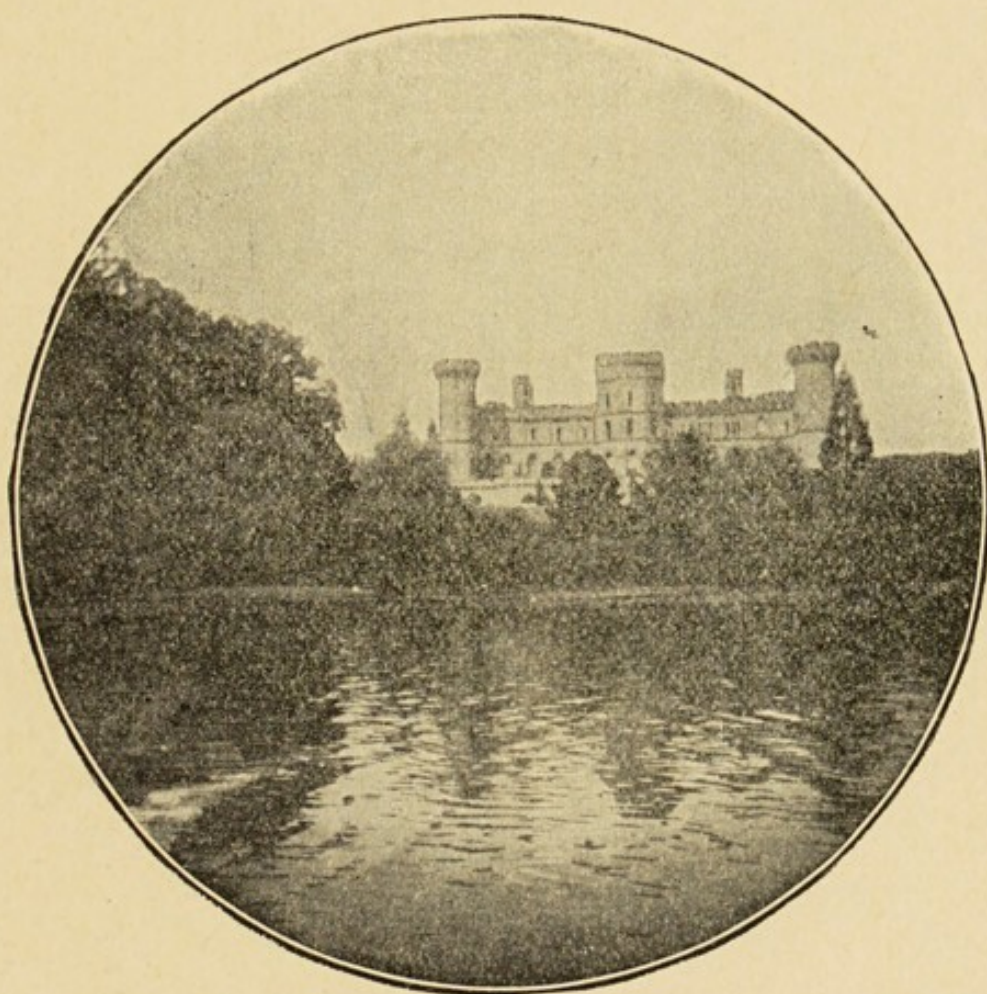
Priory, Reigate, where the deepest religious convictions of her life came to her with such force that she determined from that hour to dedicate her time to the service of humanity. On the death of Lord Somers she took up her residence with her boy, still a young child, at Eastnor Castle.



EASTNOR CASTLE, FRONT VIEW.

This stately and magnificent, though not ancient pile, stands in the midst of beautiful scenery at the foot of the Malvern Hills. It is bosomed in trees, and overlooks a lovely miniature lake. "The view from the terrace . . . is like a scene in fairyland. As the swan sails stately across the mere, making long ripples across the glassy water in which the foliage of a hundred

trees is reflected as in a burnished mirror, you seem to be transported to the region which the bards of chivalry have made their own. Ariosto dreamed of nothing more lovely than this combination of wood and water, of the great green slope of the mountain on which the



EASTNOR CASTLE, FROM THE LAKE.

deer are browsing, and the lofty turrets and loftier keep which form the background to a perfect picture."

The late Frances Willard said that her friend's beautiful home often reminded her of Byron's lines—

"More wondrous spots may rise, more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attracting maze
The splendid, fair, and soft, the glory of old days."

But, alas! even this earthly paradise was not free from the "trail of the serpent." Situated in a cider district, Lady Henry soon found that the villagers believed the fermented juice of the apple to be a harmless drink, and that the effects of this error were disastrous.

Being very anxious that her tenantry should join a temperance society that was formed soon after she had taken up her abode at Eastnor, she herself spoke at one of the meetings, and, what was possibly still more effective, personally signed the pledge in the presence of the audience. Many more signatures were the result of her good example. This was Lady Henry's first essay at public speaking, and her earliest effort at temperance work.

It may be here remarked that she has never since had cause to regret, for her own health's sake, the step she then took. After over ten years' trial she expressed herself more than ever thankful that she was an abstainer. "The tax on the nerves" (of public speaking), she told an interviewer, "is very great, and I can fully understand what a temptation it must be to women who are engaged in severe mental labour to give themselves a false strength by means of stimulants. It is infinitely better to depend upon rest and recreation, and that is why it is so important to encourage women to take up active amusements."

Having thus made a start, Lady Henry followed it up by giving Bible-readings in the kitchen of a farm near the Castle, and holding a mothers' meeting in her own dining-room. She also erected iron mission halls in several neglected villages in the neighbourhood, and provided for resident and visiting evangelists.

By degrees Lady Henry's fame as an earnest

advocate of temperance and an effective speaker began to spread. She was invited to give addresses in the towns and villages round about. Possessed of a naturally rich and sweet voice, she trained herself to making it distinctly heard in every part of halls of varying size by stationing her maid in the gallery, or the back seats of the body of the building, with instructions to raise her handkerchief whenever her mistress's speech became inaudible. But like many another successful orator, especially among women, Lady Henry had to conquer much natural shrinking and shyness, and she has said that in the earlier days of her public work the effort to stand before an audience amounted to acute physical suffering.

As Lady Henry's sphere of work and popularity widened, she became more and more convinced that the dissemination of the principles of total abstinence was her mission, and eagerly gave herself up to it, adopting the most modern basis for her arguments.

"Until ten years ago," she lately told a writer for *The Sunday Magazine*, "this was thought to be a question only for the uneducated. . . . The aim of the earlier reformers was simply to reduce drunkenness, but now this object has been combined with something wider. . . . Scientific study has proved that alcohol has a deleterious effect upon the brain; and as in these days of competition the value of the brain is more and more recognised by every individual worker, we begin to understand more clearly the danger of poisoning the brain with alcohol or narcotics. The abstainer no longer denies himself merely for the sake of example, he recognises that the question is one of vital importance for his own physical and moral well-being. I have never followed in the line of some temperance advocates

that the moderate drinker is doing a deliberate wrong. The question, to my mind, takes a much higher significance. How are we to keep ourselves most fit for the work of life? Must it not be by avoiding anything and everything that would lessen our efficiency?"

In the course of a few years Lady Henry had travelled nearly 15,000 miles, and visited and worked in not fewer than two hundred villages and cities of Great Britain. On these tours she not infrequently found herself lodgings with some working man's family, and lived as one of themselves. By this means she gained much knowledge of the privations and temptations of the toiling classes, and became convinced that insufficient food, bad air, and dreary surroundings are among the chief causes that lie at the root of drunkenness, especially in the case of women. In this respect she considers that the lot of our working man's wife compares unfavourably with that of the same class in France, Germany, Belgium, or Switzerland. Healthful recreation, especially out-of-door amusements, she believes to be a great preventive of that desire for the relief of dulness and monotony which tempts to the temporary excitement afforded by drink.

Nowhere was Lady Henry more cordially received than in the grimy coaling districts of Wales. She went down into the pits and held meetings with the men in their dinner hour. We are not surprised to read that the tears would often run down their faces as she spoke, and that the men "seemed as little children in their gentle eagerness to show their appreciation and love in return for her intense desire for their betterment morally and spiritually."

In 1890 Lady Henry was persuaded to accept the position of President of the British Women's Temper-

ance Association, as the successor of Mrs. Margaret Bright Lucas, the sister of John Bright. This has since become the largest and most influential society of its kind in England.

It was not very long after Lady Henry Somerset heard and responded to the Divine Voice that she began to feel her heart drawn to her national kinsfolk across the Atlantic, and to one individual in particular.

It was her ladyship's custom at that time to go down to her housekeeper's room at the Castle for tea and a chat on Sunday afternoons. This good woman conducted a mothers' meeting for Lady Henry in the village, and they would discuss together the affairs and needs of the people.

One rainy Sunday, when the usual visit was paid, Lady Henry's attention was attracted to a little blue book lying on the housekeeper's table, with the fascinating title of *Nineteen Beautiful Years*. This, as most of our readers know, was Frances Willard's charming memoir of her sweet young sister Mary, who died in her girlhood. Lady Henry sat down by the fire with this book, and never laid it aside till she had finished it. An intense interest in the writer had taken possession of her; to quote her own words, "The simplicity, the quaint candour, and the delicate touches of humour and pathos were a revelation to me of a character that remained on my mind as belonging to one whom I placed in a niche among the ideal lives of whom I hoped to know more, and at whose shrines I worshipped."

Lady Henry had already become acquainted with the American Quaker preacher, Mrs. Hannah Whitall-Smith, who was a great friend of Miss Willard, and she was indebted for help in her time of perplexity to

the former lady's popular little book, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*; and when, in 1891, she was invited to America by the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, she went, she confesses, "as much to see and know Miss Willard as for any other purpose."

They were introduced to one another by Mrs. Whitall-Smith. The Englishwoman paid a delightful visit to Miss Willard's simple little home at Evanston, and won from the aged mother the spontaneous tribute that "Lady Henry has the unobtrusiveness of perfect culture; she shall be loved always for her sweet ways."

The close and tender friendship then begun grew and flourished, a joy and mutual help, until it was ended for this world all too soon by the death of Frances Willard early in 1898.

Lady Henry's visit to America was a brilliant success. "No one born outside the United States since the days of Lafayette ever received so enthusiastic a welcome." She attended the W.W.C.T.U. Convention in Boston, which represented through its delegates more than ten thousand local societies, and half a million women from all parts of Christendom, and she was made its vice-president. She also spoke in Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington. She went to Minneapolis to help Mr. John Woolley establish the Rest Island Mission for intemperate men. In four days' work at the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul she spoke seven times, the public Press of that locality and the people uniting in the warmest expressions of appreciation.

An ardent English admirer has declared that "our American kinsfolk were the first to discover her genius, capacity, and charm, and their recognition did much to pave the way for her success in this country on her return." No doubt Lady Henry's simplicity, and that

same "utter absence of self-consciousness or pride" which she declares to have been the secret of her father's popularity, was what took democratic America by storm.

Lady Henry spoke for the White Ribboners in all the leading cities of the United States, the white ribbon there being the temperance badge as the blue has been with us; the colour was emblematic of purity and peace, on the principle of "first pure, then peaceable." The greatest halls were crowded wherever she was announced to speak, and the overflow of those unable to get in blocked the streets and stopped the tramcars. The newspapers all over America were unanimous in her praise; not one dissentient voice was raised. "What with public meetings, private receptions, interviews, journalism, and studying, Lady Henry may be said to have succeeded in acclimatising herself as an American more completely and more rapidly than any other English noble has ever done before."

She visited Chicago, living unobtrusively in lodgings, and while there took the opportunity of attending Mr. Moody's Training School for Christian Workers. She also gained valuable journalistic experience by helping Miss Willard to edit *The Union Signal* during the temporary absence on vacation of Miss Mary Allen West. *The Union Signal* was said by Miss Willard to be "the most notable journal ever owned, edited, and published by womankind."

Lady Henry also made the acquaintance of America's two greatest poets at that time living—John Greenleaf Whittier and Oliver Wendell Holmes—as well as other notable folk, and had her task been less arduous or her earnestness not so great, she might easily have spent her whole time in enjoying and being *fêted* by the

best American society. But she was there chiefly to work and to learn, which she zealously did.

In April, 1892, Lady Henry returned to England, having spent six months on the other side of the Atlantic. Her work was awaiting her at home in connection with the Liberal Election Campaign, with which the interests of temperance had become identified. In this cause she gave thirty-six addresses in fourteen days.

Lady Henry is in the front rank on the question of Woman's Suffrage. In a recent interview with Mr. Raymond Blathwayt she said, "I would wish to see women as voters, as doctors, and lawyers. . . . I would wish to see women as guardians of the poor, police matrons, ladies' doctors. The County Council, in eliminating the feminine element, have excluded the most valuable element they could possibly have had. Who could deal better with the homes of the poor than women? Who could so thoroughly cleanse the slums? I would ever maintain that women in Parliament, if such a time should ever come, would deal with these questions from the mother's point of view, the point of view from which every right-minded woman, married or single, regards the whole of life."

In the autumn of that year Lady Henry again went to America, visiting Denver and Colorado and participating in the annual meeting of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union. She was much struck with the universal education of American women, and considers them a long way ahead of the majority of our countrywomen. She also approves of the American plan of educating boys and girls together. She thinks that it encourages more mutual trust between the sexes. She holds that it is bad for a lad to be

separated from women's influence, as he is at a big public school, during the most formative period of his growth; moreover, that "a woman with a high standard of life proves that standard better in liberty than in captivity."

Returning to England immediately after the N.W. C.T.U. meeting, Lady Henry settled down once more to home work. Writing of her at this time, a visitor to her home says: "She gathered a pleasant circle about her for her son's sake, . . . always the leader in that bright, piquant conversation so delightful to the young," driving, cycling, tending the wants of the cottagers round Eastnor, and "when night falls, and the Castle bell is heard summoning the family to the chapel, Lady Henry is always in her place at the evening devotions."

In 1893 Lady Henry undertook the part editorship of *The Woman's Herald*, as one of the organs of the W.W.C.T.U., and later on established and for two years edited *The Woman's Signal*; she has also written leaflets on women's work, magazine articles, and a volume of short stories, entitled *Studies in Black and White*. She is, in addition, remarkably gifted as a water-colourist, her father and her father's cousin, the Marchioness of Waterford, being among the finest amateur artists England has ever produced.

CHAPTER III.

SISTERS OF CHARITY.

FOR several years, from 1893 onwards, Lady Henry enjoyed an annual visit from Frances Willard, to whom she showed herself a charming hostess. The two

women formed "a very strong combination, as remarkable for its contrasts as its resemblances," and they loved one another as sisters.

In the autumn of 1896, during one of Miss Willard's brief visits to Europe, she and Lady Henry planned a bicycling tour in Normandy. They started on their expedition, but at Rouen they came across a copy of the English *Daily News*, and in that paper there was an appeal made by their French correspondent to the sympathies of the English for the pitiful condition of the Armenians, who were arriving by shiploads at Marseilles, starving, destitute, and homeless. Miss Willard and Lady Henry Somerset determined to abandon their expedition, and to start at once to endeavour in some measure to alleviate the sufferings of that persecuted race, who were seeking protection on Christian shores. Reaching Marseilles, they found that the description had not been exaggerated. Before nightfall on the day of their arrival they had gone to the *asile des pauvres*, and there they saw for themselves the sad sight of groups of Armenians—men, women, and children—huddled together, waiting for the morning, without food, and with just the roof over their heads accorded to them by the charity of the nation to whom they had fled for refuge. That very night the American and Englishwoman went out into the streets of the town with two dark-faced Armenians, and bought baskets-full of bread and grapes and figs, and carried them back to the hungry folk, with interpreted assurances that before morning they should be better housed. The next day found them going from *sous préfet* to *préfet* appealing to all the powers of the city government, and at last Lady Henry obtained permission to shelter the Armenians in a great disused hospital,

an abandoned monastery, which had not been inhabited since the time of the great outbreak of cholera in Marseilles, some thirty or forty years before. This building was in fair order, although the weeds grew rank in the cloisters. The shutters had not been unclosed for years, and the dust of ages had settled on the floors; but by the help of a few strong and athletic young men, and sundry pails of water and brooms, the orders given by signs were carried out, and some of the rooms were made habitable. Into these the starving folk poured, eagerly gathering themselves in the corners according to families, spreading out a few rugs they had brought with them, and settling themselves with that patient submission which characterises the Oriental races. The good old Armenian priest arranged one of the rooms in the monastery as a chapel, and Lady Henry has often said that she has never witnessed a more touching sight than when these persecuted people assembled there to pray, for there seemed to be a reality, that we rarely find in this nineteenth century, in the worship of those who had been ready to sacrifice all for the cross of Christ. Sad indeed were the tales that they gathered: the mothers who had seen their children killed before their eyes, the women who had been made widows and had fled with their little ones, the men who, under their breath, told the story of the terrible end of the wives they loved. By degrees money was collected, for Miss Willard spent many hours every day writing and cabling to rich American friends, and to many benevolent people in England, until a sufficient sum was collected to send all the poor outcasts to the hospitable shores of the New World. For several days Lady Henry and Miss Willard sat at tables, at "the receipt of custom" as they laughingly

called it, doling out the money for the tickets and the necessary sums which, by the laws of the United States, each emigrant was required to possess on landing. After a while all was ready, and between three and four hundred people were prepared to start. Many difficulties attended their arrival; but, finally, by dint of perseverance and a dogged determination that these persecuted Christians should not be baulked of a home, they were allowed to land upon the shores of America; and Lady Henry has assured those who have repeatedly asked her for news of the emigrants that on all hands she has heard that most of them are doing well, and have proved intelligent, capable, and industrious citizens. The strain, however, of the work was so great that Miss Willard completely broke down in health, and this was the last visit she paid to Europe, as she returned to America in November, 1896, overworn and overtaxed by the work she had undertaken.

Lady Henry has often stated that the hours of the last night in the old convent at Marseilles were some of the most affecting that she has ever experienced in her work. "They stood," she said, "in rows in the gathering gloom in the little chapel, and the tears poured down the cheeks of men and women as, one by one, they first kissed the cross held aloft by the priest and then came and kissed our hands and blessed us, and we felt that that blessing was not only the expression of the gratitude of homeless Christians, but it was the benediction of God Himself, and humbly and gratefully we received it gladly."

As the outcome of this work Miss Willard gathered sufficient money on her return to America to provide, for three years, for a hundred orphans in an Armenian school which had been established there.

It was a great blow to Lady Henry, and one from which she was long in recovering, when, in the beginning of 1898, she lost her new-found friend, and we are sure that it was to her a most sorrowful distinction when she was called upon to succeed Miss Willard as President of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union.

CHAPTER IV.

A HOME OF HOPE.

PROBABLY the work which will be most memorably connected with the name of Lady Henry Somerset is the founding of the Home for Inebriates at Duxhurst.

Among the chief causes of female drunkenness she, as we have already noted, believes to be "insufficient food, bad air, and dreary surroundings"; and she considers that temperance workers too often ignore those facts.

In 1895 the British Women's Temperance Association undertook, with Lady Henry's superintendence, the founding of a Home for Female Inebriates, where their vice would be regarded as a physical as much as a moral disease, and treated accordingly.

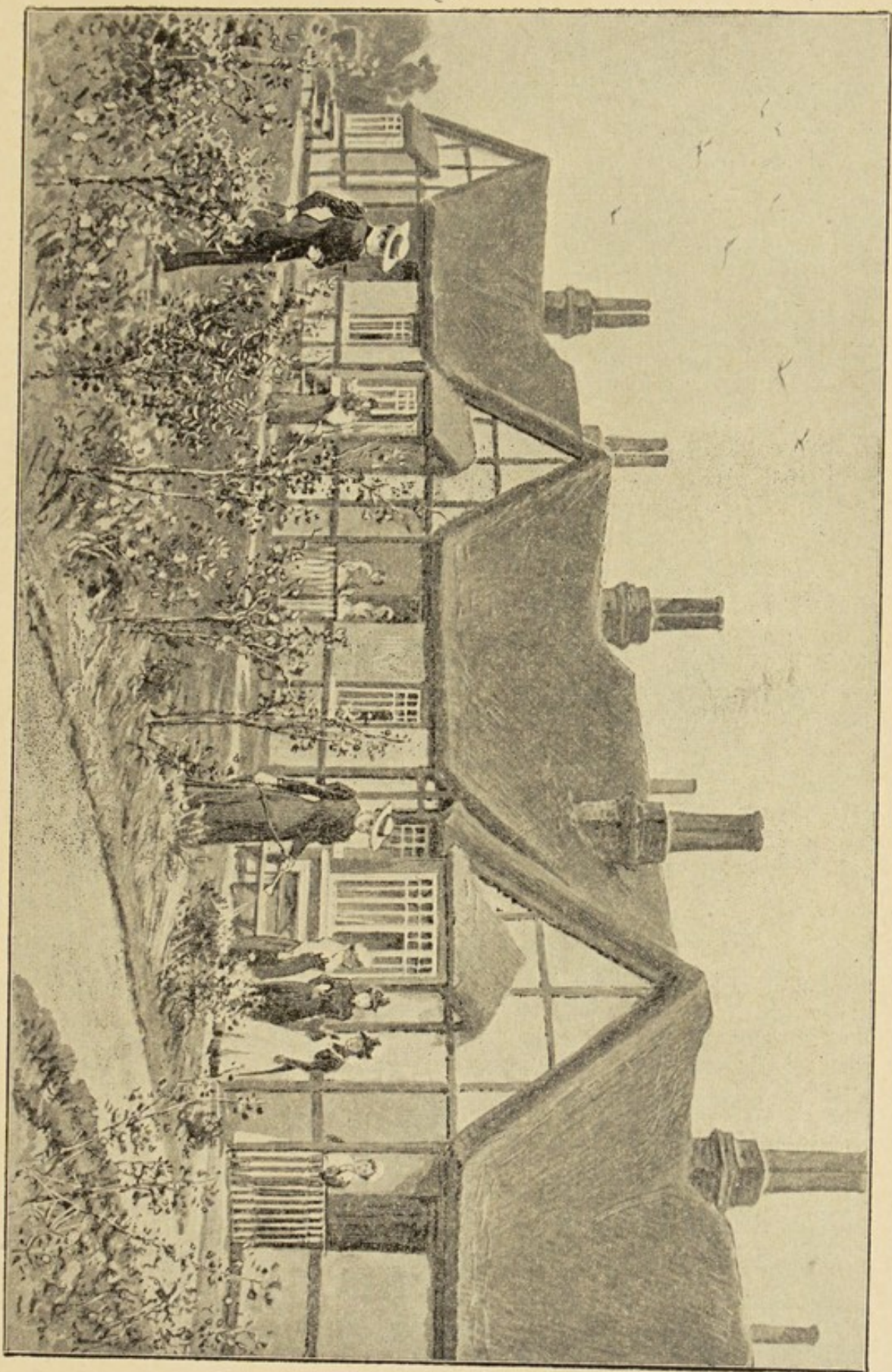
"The Duxhurst Home," to quote her ladyship's own description of the institution when conversing on the subject with Miss Jane T. Stoddart, a representative of *The Sunday Magazine*, "is about five miles from Reigate, and is charmingly situated among the hills and woods of Surrey. The model village consists of a group of six pretty cottages; a larger house contains a dining-hall, recreation-hall, general kitchens, bathrooms, chapel, and hospital, all grouped together. By the cottage system we have endeavoured to preserve in these

women a love of home, and we find that the little routine of everyday labour, as well as the outdoor work provided for them, has a beneficial effect on both body and mind.

"The first aim of our work is to restore the lost feeling of self-respect, and we can do this better in cottage life than in any institution. Each cottage contains six patients, and is supervised by a nurse-sister, who is under the nurse-superintendent, in whose charge the whole colony is placed."

The cottages, named respectively the "Massingberd," the "Agnes Weston," the "Margaret Bright Lucas," the "Isabel," the "Birmingham," and the "Derby," after individual or collective donors, are neat in design, with gable ends, and a bay-window in each; they are cosily thatched, and stand around the tiny, three-cornered village-green—"a breezy, upland farm," on a hill-slope, and "overlooking beautiful plains that stretch away for miles on either side." Lady Henry has great faith in the fresh, bracing air and the scent of the pine-woods as remedial agents.

Out-of-door occupations are encouraged as much as possible; standing behind a wash-tub is not supposed to be the only work appropriate to the reclaiming of women. The patients cultivate flowers, both in pots and open beds, they care for the vegetable garden and the forcing-houses, and keep in order the lawns, about an acre in extent, with light, hand-mowing machines. Fruit is also grown, and the women do a large share of the picking and packing of it; in a 300-foot glass-house good crops of tomatoes are raised, all the pruning and picking of which is done by the women; smilax, so much used for table decorations, is also cultivated, and this needs careful training and watching; there is also



SOME OF THE COTTAGES AT DUXHURST, REIGATE.



dairy work to do, and poultry to tend, and the beehives have proved the most successful venture of all. Lady Henry testifies that she has known cases in which, after six weeks of these healthful and pleasant occupations, a woman has improved so wonderfully that no one would have believed she was a patient.

Of course the inmates are not all strong enough for labour of this kind, and for such as are not able to undertake the gardening, indoor work is provided. Needlework and all kinds of mending are of course taught; a loom has also been started, in which fancy aprons, dress materials, etc., can be produced, and a knitting machine, from which many warm articles are constantly being turned out. Needless to say, each patient keeps her own little lodging bright and clean, and they take great pride in doing so. Jam-making in the fruit season also provides another variety of occupation, and each inmate is expected to do her share of the necessary laundry work of the colony.

In a meadow facing the village stands a long building called "The Nest." Here children from the slums come for holidays of a fortnight long all through the summer, and even young babies are received in the hope that the fresh air and healthy surroundings may do something to counteract any inherited taint.

From an interesting article in *The Churchwoman*, whence we have obtained a good deal of the information given above, we also glean the satisfactory assurance that of the women who have spent a year in the colony—Lady Henry having little faith in the efficacy of short periods of abstinence—about 67 per cent. are doing well. The sisters in charge often receive most touching letters from former patients, in which they speak thankfully of temptations resisted, while husbands write

to express their joy and gratitude at all that has been done, and done so successfully, to restore their wives to their former and better selves. Those who have experienced the benefits of the Home will also bring friends, afflicted as they once were, down to Duxhurst at their own expense, and beg for their admittance into the colony.

As each cottage accommodates six patients in addition to those for whom hospital treatment is necessary, it will be seen that from forty to fifty inmates can be received at a time. There is also, some little distance from the colony, a superior residence, called the Manor House, where patients of a different social standing can be received on payment of higher fees, varying according to their circumstances and the treatment required. This house has a large garden and private grounds, with tennis courts and facilities for bicycling.

In conclusion, we may observe that the lady about whom we have been writing is as attractive in her appearance as in her manners, and is always well-dressed. She says, "Women cannot be too careful in this respect. If they" (public women) "wear ugly clothes, they are positively hindering the cause they wish to help. How often one has heard a young girl say, 'If I must look like so-and-so, I would rather keep out of the work altogether!' The beautiful is a part of life, and should enter into our homes, our persons, and our surroundings. By giving due care to these outward things, we provide a real pleasure for others."

The late Frances Willard thus described her friend for the benefit of *The Young Woman*: "A lady in the early prime of life, of figure inclined to *embonpoint*, clad in a becoming but unpretentious gown, on which she wears the little bow of white ribbon, emblem

of the Women's Temperance movement to which she is devoted. A noble, well-set head, carried with gentle dignity, dark hair that turns to chestnut in the sunshine, simply coiled and waved above a low, broad, thoughtful forehead; arching brows that betoken great sensibility and genuineness of character; eyes sometimes dark brown, at others chestnut, roguish, pathetic, eloquent, according to the impulse or situation of the hour; cheeks with the English flush of health or exercise; a nose not Roman, but determined; lips whose smile is a reflection of the bright kindness of her eyes—a face, indeed, full of the charm of intellect, culture, and goodwill—this is ‘Lady Henry Somerset at home.’”

To this we may add the testimony of a lady interviewer, that “as one watches her at work in the garden, with her faithful collie by her side, or riding merrily along the avenue on her bicycle, it is difficult to realise that she is one of the most eloquent of English public speakers, an orator who can hold the attention of an audience as well as any statesman or preacher of them all. Her manners are perfectly simple and unaffected, and her forgetfulness of self must be apparent to anyone who converses with her.”

With the finishing touch from yet another hand, that Lady Henry is gifted with “a sweet voice and a ringing laugh,” we think the portrait is complete, and we are ready to agree with the latter writer that she is “a person altogether calculated to win the hearts of her audience to the many and somewhat advanced theories which she delights to enunciate from the many platforms on which she is ever a welcome and favourite speaker.”

Mr. Somers-Somerset, to whom Lady Henry, notwithstanding her many public duties, has always been a

most devoted and affectionate mother, is a tall, manly young Englishman who has travelled more miles than most young men of his years, and written an excellent book on his adventures in the far West. He has just returned from South Africa, where he held the post of despatch rider at the front.

Mr. Somerset, in 1896, married the Lady Katherine Beauclerk, daughter of the Duke of St. Albans, and we are sure that all who read these lines will join the writer in the earnest wish that the years may bring to Lady Henry the fullest joy in their happiness, and the fruition of every other hope.

Sarah Robinson.



CHAPTER I.

A CLOUDED CHILDHOOD.

IT is surely worth something to be born on an auspicious day! Sarah Robinson, the "Soldiers' Friend," first saw the light upon August 1st, 1834, a date for ever glorious as that on which England freed thousands of her West Indian subjects from slavery and herself from the stain of countenancing that grievous wrong. Although laying no claim to be a sentimental person, Miss Robinson says she has always felt glad that she was born on such a day.

Her father, John James Robinson, though of London origin, was for many years the "Squire" of a village in Sussex, nine miles from Lewes, and here the early life of the subject of our sketch was chiefly passed.

She was the fourth child in a family of six, but the third having died in infancy, a gap was created which caused the elder pair to seem a good way removed from the younger ones, and Sarah's chief companions were her two small brothers.

She describes herself as "a pale, big-nosed, dark-haired" little girl, who was always asking questions.

She was delicate in health, reserved, sensitive, and timid, not given to making friends or showing much affectionateness of disposition, though it is plain to those who read the record of her early years that there was a fund of undeveloped tenderness in her heart for which the stern training of her Calvinistic father provided no natural outlet.

The type of Christian (!) who could have each successive kitten of which his children made a pet systematically slaughtered, and ruthlessly in their absence made away with the brood of rabbits which were their chief delight, lest they should be tempted to *idolatry*, is, we hope, wholly extinct; but we are not surprised to learn that such training only tended to confirm little Sarah's "dread and hatred of God our Father in heaven," judging Him to be like her earthly father, only infinitely more terrible.

The mother of these children, though described as a "timid, spiritually minded believer . . . with an adoring love to the Lord Jesus Christ," does not appear to have had much to spare for her little ones, for they were kissed only as a good-night and good-morning formality, never comforted when they hurt themselves, and never caressed. A weak heart, however, released Mrs. Robinson from most of her maternal duties, and the actual freedom the children enjoyed beneath the slight supervision of servants compensated in some measure for the moral strictness of their bringing up.

The summer days at Heasmonds, as the Robinsons' estate was called, seem to have been happy enough, for Sarah and her two younger brothers wandered about at their own sweet will, often with no sterner guardian than a big, good-natured Newfoundland dog, almost living out-of-doors, eating fruit as they pleased from

the orchard and strawberry beds, and making themselves very much at home with the cottagers.

The ignorance and superstition rife among servants and villagers in those days was appalling. After having been well stuffed with tales of ghosts, "warnings," and the fearful judgments overtaking naughty children, poor little Sarah suffered from bad dreams, and was afraid of the dark. But this is not astonishing at a period when a man better educated than many of his contemporaries—the Robinsons' bailiff, in fact—nearly killed himself by swallowing "two big hairy spiders" *alive* as a cure for ague!

But, after all, as we have said, freedom makes up for much. The three children, who do not appear to have been troubled by a great deal of lesson-learning, romped to their hearts' content in wood or field, garden or shrubbery; they had swings and shady arbours for the hottest days; they were allowed feasts of plain cake and home-made ginger-beer out-of-doors; they visited oast, flour-mill, and village pottery, watching every process and learning what everything was made of and how it was made, in much pleasanter fashion than by the dull "*Q.*" and "*A.*" of the town child's "Guide to Knowledge." They had a gentle, fat pony to ride by turns in their longer walks, but also delighted in bush-harrows, hay-carts, and "the broad, cushiony backs" of the farm horses. And on wet days they played lovely games at being "persecuted Waldenses" in the barns, cattle-sheds, or wood-store.

From an early age Sarah, or Rah, as she best liked to be called, had loved soldiers, as depicted in tales, pictures, and poetry, and her first acquaintance with a live specimen, though calculated to shatter her ideal, does not seem to have affected her rather strange predilection in the least.

This individual appeared before her in the guise of a suffering hero, wounded in war, and neglected by the country in whose cause he had fought and bled. He presented himself at the back door of the Robinsons' wealthy abode; he smelt unheroically of drink, baccy, and dirt, but nothing could divest him of the halo of glory which he wore in little "Missarah's" imaginative eyes.

The adults of the household were not favourably impressed with this "old soldier," but in consequence of the child's persistent pleadings he was at length dismissed with a parcel of food, a little money, and two cast-off shirts.

This, however, was not enough for Sarah, and she ran after the man all down the long drive to bestow upon him a precious new shilling of her very own. But imagine her chagrin when, next morning, the landlady of the village inn brought back the two shirts, saying that "a drunken tramp" had sold them to her ostler for beer, and seeing them marked with Mr. Robinson's name, she feared they were not honestly obtained!

"Rah's old soldier" was a joke against her for some time, but the child's notion of the heroism of her country's defenders was not lessened.

The next warrior with whom our future "Soldier's Friend" became acquainted was of a very different type. This man had some time previously "gone for a sodger in the Ingees," which, in the neighbourhood of Heasmonds, was held to be much the same thing as "going to the devil" at once. Therefore the report that he had returned on furlough, and had actually been seen taking his sister to church, where she had never been except to get married, seemed almost incredible. And wonder was not lessened when it was also stated

that out in those same "Ingees" he had been converted to God.

The next sensation in the village was the starting, by this converted soldier, of a prayer and Bible-reading meeting in his sister's cottage, and the sister herself was the first fruit of his efforts. The elder Miss Robinson and a friend attended this meeting on one occasion, rather to the dismay of the earnest-minded but uneducated young man, and it was kept up after he had rejoined his regiment.

From that time forward Sarah's ideal hero was a *Christian* soldier, and she read with eager interest every story relating to such which she could find. This was the more remarkable, because religious literature for the young of the then popular kind was abhorrent to her. The only pleasure she ever obtained from the priggish lives and premature deaths of the juvenile saints whose memoirs were presented to her, was the assurance that she personally was wicked enough to be secure from such early decay!

But our heavenly Father ever leads "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Sarah's spontaneous enthusiasm for military characters induced her to peruse with sympathy and delight the biographies of Christian heroes of the Peninsular War—Sampson Staniforth, John Haime, John Evans, and others whose names are even less familiar to the present generation; also the lives of Cromwell and his Ironsides. So that, as she tells us, "the impression that soldiers could be and should be 'for God, for Queen, for Country,' deepened within me while as yet I was not on the Lord's side myself."

At the age of ten little Sarah was sent to the boarding-school at Brighton of which her elder sister was already an ornament.

Schools of fifty years ago were very different from those of to-day, and it is evident that the child was physically too delicate and mentally too "peculiar" to thrive under the hard-and-fast régime to which the pupils were subjected. She grieved constantly at being torn from her home, and cried herself to sleep night after night with the misery of it.

At the same time, she plainly depicts herself as a thorn in the side of teachers and scholars alike. She spoiled one girl's dress by throwing an ink-bottle at her; she disfigured the spelling-book of another with sketches of imps; she got out upon the school roof to see how the pupils were to escape in case of fire, and scaled the garden wall to find out what was on the other side; she endangered the limbs of her room-mates by introducing the art of casting figures in molten lead, and disgraced the whole Noah's Ark procession in public by slapping the face and smashing the bonnet of one of the elder girls who had annoyed her when walking on Kemp Town Parade!

Sarah Robinson was decidedly *not* angelic; perhaps if she had been, she would have been early endowed with wings to fly heavenwards, like the anæmic darlings for whom she felt such contempt. And it would have made worlds of difference to "Tommy"!

Yet between the lines at this stormy time one still finds evidences of tenderness that make one sorry that the child, whom nobody seemed to take the trouble to understand, could not have been reared in a more genial atmosphere.

The only girl to whom she made advances of friendship at this school was a poor orphan, who "never had nice dresses, pocket-money, or 'hampers'"; who was, moreover, "ungainly, ill-favoured, shabby, and too

stupid to do her lessons; her eyelids always red from many silent tears, scorned by ungenerous rich girls, snubbed by the teachers, lonely and dull."

Such was the girl whom the unsociable Sarah—"that Sarah Robinson," as she was expressively termed—made her companion, shared with her her own cakes and goodies, and fought her battles, even to the tearing of a large lock of *false* hair from the head of a vain young miss who had been rude to her.

Among the teachers, too, the only one whom Sarah really took pains to please was the young lady who taught French. A serious attack of small-pox had disfigured poor "Ma'amselle's" complexion and hair, and some of the elder girls were unfeeling enough to annoy her because of this misfortune. This again aroused Sarah's championship, and though she hated French she applied herself to it most assiduously as a practical means of comforting the poor teacher, and "even undertook the extra task of translating La Fontaine's *Fables* into English *verse*," which, she says, was much more comic than the original, and often had "morals" of her own appended. She was wont to "hover round Ma'amselle to show goodwill in every possible way," and as the young French teacher was an earnest Christian she breathed many a secret prayer for her turbulent, tender-hearted little friend.

About this time Mrs. Robinson died quite suddenly of the heart affection which had troubled her for so many years. Although no instances of her motherly affection for her children are related, Sarah and her brother next in age to herself appear to have felt their bereavement keenly. The little girl "fairly *ached* with the woe of it every night in bed." She longed for "cats and home" with a longing that could not be satisfied.

She even painted the word "Home" on a bit of card, and hung it round her neck by a ribbon under her clothes.

An older girl, having teased the child into revealing what charm or treasure was thus concealed, turned very red, called Sarah "*a good little thing*," and walked rather shamefacedly away. The unusual epithet stuck fast in the little one's mind, and she pondered over it until she "almost wished it were true."

However, even school-life was, after this, not without its alleviations, for Sarah and her brother, who was also at school near that ladies' seminary at Brighton, were allowed to meet once a week, and spend a half-holiday together how and where they chose.

Nevertheless, Sarah's health, never very robust, was decidedly growing worse. She had always felt wretchedly cold and depressed in winter, and suffered greatly from chilblains and earache, which all parental attempts to make her hardy by going out in bitter weather, washing in cold water, and sleeping in an unwarmed bedroom, had failed to cure. Now a feeling of incessant tiredness was added to her other ailments, and after a time release from the trying confinement and monotony of school-life and the still greater affliction of home-sickness, was brought about unexpectedly by the discovery that Sarah was developing a spinal complaint.

This disease she attributes to the hardships of scholastic discipline, one feature of which—prevalent, as many of us remember, until long after the date of Miss Robinson's education—was the sitting all day long on seats without backs.

In her case, unhappily, the resulting curvature of the spine had taken a sharp *inward* turn, thus seriously

affecting the internal organs and causing life-long suffering.

At first Sarah's delight at being at home and free once more was keen, but it soon became damped by the horrors of surgical treatment which she was forced to undergo. To surgeon after surgeon she was taken, and various kinds of treatment were tried, all more or less painful, but without any good result.

For fifteen months the poor girl lay stretched flat upon a hard couch; for another twelve months she "made a weekly pilgrimage to Brighton, in order to be pickled, pummelled, and plastered by a great quack"; for yet another dreary year later on she lodged alone in London for the purpose of being frequently examined by a specialist, who screwed her up more and more tightly in an instrument of torture called a "support." But all to no purpose. Her deformity steadily increased, and hope of alleviation was gradually abandoned.

Nevertheless, Sarah Robinson had plenty of spirit, and those years at home after the abrupt termination of her unfinished education, when, except for surgical treatment, she was left to her own devices, seem on the whole to have been tolerably enjoyable. She cultivated her garden and made an arbour; she collected to herself a small library of second-hand poets, which she read assiduously, and arranged uniformly, bound by herself with green glazed cambric, in a book-case painted sky-blue.

In the holidays her two younger brothers were her companions as of yore, and the three revelled in pranks, many of which were played upon a much-enduring relative, known as "Coz," who since some years before the death of Mrs. Robinson had assisted in the care of the children.

Owing probably to her military tastes, firearms and gunpowder at this time exercised a great fascination over Sarah as well as the boys. On one occasion her youngest brother had his hair and eyebrows blown off by the "firing of a train" laid along the nursery carpet; and on another the youngsters marvellously escaped being killed on the spot by the explosion of the coachman's huge horse-pistol, with which they were about to experiment. Finally, Sarah bought herself a proper revolver, which she possessed and used for many years.

The attraction that peril of all kinds seemed to possess for the subject of our sketch seems oddly at variance with her constitutional timidity. But, as she says, she perceived within herself *two Sarahs*, "and the one thought the other a fool." She therefore deliberately set herself to do everything of which she was afraid, and she records the belief that this habit of self-conquest was of the greatest possible service to her in after-life.

CHAPTER II.

SUNSHINE ADDED TO DAYLIGHT.

UNTIL Sarah Robinson was seventeen years of age she had no glimmering of a notion of the love of God.

She, with her sister and brothers, had been taken Sunday by Sunday in the family coach to Jireh Chapel, Lewes, an offshoot of one belonging to the Countess of Huntingdon's connection, where her parents worshipped, and this journey, with the "two hours of unintelligible service" at the end of it, was a weekly penance to her. She had been taught to say her

prayers night and morning, and did it "as a kind of ceremony that it might be unlucky to omit."

From her father she had heard that "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child," and that "childhood and youth are vanity"; while from a nurse she had learned that God "wouldn't love her" if she was naughty, to which latter information she had replied with characteristic independence, "Well, He needn't, then!" The doctrine of Predestination in its crudest form was believed in at Heasmonds, but such was Sarah's idea of an eternity in heaven with the God she imagined, that to be "saved" seemed as horrible as to be "lost," and she drove such subjects from her mind as long as she could.

Meanwhile, the attendance of the young people at Jireh ceased after their mother's death, for Mr. Robinson had grown too deaf and nervous to enjoy the services. He built for himself a small chapel in the village, but on Sunday mornings the children were allowed to go where they pleased.

After trying all the places of worship within driving distance, they finally settled down at Chiddingly Church, attracted by the shortness of the sermons preached there. The Rev. James Vidal, a "gentle, humble, and Christlike" man, was the clergyman, and he in course of time became a valued friend of the family.

It was from the lips of this gentleman that, on one memorable August Sunday in 1851, Sarah Robinson heard the words which were destined to bring the glory of divine love into her hitherto sunless life.

The text of the sermon was "Abide in me," and from it the preacher showed "how that everything must begin with Christ, and how He undertook to complete and keep up the life He gave; how He would take

us now, just as we were, if we desired it, and that the very desire was given by Him to draw us to Himself." He ended by saying twice over, "*Go to Christ to-day, and abide in Him ever after.*"

A feeling of hope and a desire for salvation thrilled through the heart of the young girl as she listened, and inwardly she said to the Lord Jesus that she did come to Him.

In the evening Sarah, as usual, attended her father's little chapel, there to hear doctrines which seemed to shatter her new-found faith, and for several weeks she thus listened to conflicting statements, until in desperation she resolved to read the Bible for herself, with prayer, and not be harassed by anyone's interpretation of it. At length, after months of patient searching, she gained the assurance of eternal life, which she was never afterwards allowed to doubt.

Strange to say, Mr. Robinson at first decidedly threw cold water upon his daughter's aspirations. She and her sister, whom she discovered had long been a Christian, became communicants at Mr. Vidal's church only with their father's reluctant consent, he warning them against the danger of "eating and drinking damnation" to themselves.

But in this trial Sarah's independence of spirit came to her aid. She refused to be discouraged, but went on in the way she felt to be right, constantly strengthened and guided by her now beloved Bible.

It is Miss Robinson's opinion that natures which are converted with difficulty possess one advantage over those who are naturally more devout—when they are converted they *know it*.

And certainly the joy she herself experienced at this time was in strong contrast to the years of spiritual

gloom which went before. She says, "I laughed and danced for lightheartedness. Is it I? Really myself? I thought, How wonderful to love the God I had hated, and to know that *He* loves *me*." No wonder her heart was glad.

It was very soon after Miss Robinson discovered for herself the marvellous truth which "adds sunshine to daylight, makes the sad happy, and the happy happier," that she eagerly sought to share her joy with others.

She spoke to her brothers, to various young people of her acquaintance, and to the servants; and a distinct blessing was upon her efforts. She also wrote letters to persons at a distance, and among these some of her former school-fellows, *five* of whom she believes to have been truly converted to God by this means.

She would also visit and read the Bible to many of the cottagers who were unable to read for themselves, and she and her sister, at the urgent persuasion of the young French teacher before mentioned, who was still their correspondent and friend, started a Sunday-school in connection with their father's little chapel. Most of these ministrations seem to have been greatly appreciated and blessed.

When Miss Robinson was about twenty she was forced to give up all hope of ever being strong or well in this life. A surgeon told her plainly that it was only putting her to needless pain and expense to attempt a cure. He could only advise her to take care of her general health, and in particular *never to marry*.

With the charming candour which everywhere characterises the autobiography from which this sketch is chiefly taken, the lady confesses that thereupon the idea of marriage appeared desirable as it never had

done before, and for a few days she really fretted over her hard fate.

She was ashamed to take this trouble to anyone but God; as she beautifully and scripturally says, "He pities as a father, comforts as a mother, understands our thoughts afar off, knows our foolishness, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities." So she told Him everything. And this message was sent into her mind, "*The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord.*"

Then, with tears of joy, she promised the Lord Jesus that if her life might be to care for the things of the Lord this should satisfy her. "*And,*" she adds, "*it has satisfied.*" Moreover, she besought that she might never have the least desire to marry. And this request also has been granted.

Notwithstanding the verdict of the surgeon mentioned above, Mr. Robinson, two or three years later, persuaded his daughter to make one more effort after a cure, with the result that, as already recorded, she spent twelve months alone in London.

During this period Miss Robinson devoted much time to studying her Bible, and joined the Presbyterian Church in Regent Square, of which Dr. James Hamilton was pastor. She attempted to teach a Bible-class of elder girls, but this was a signal failure. The girls seemed to her "heartless, soulless, and brainless," and as vain, pert, and flippant as they well could be.

Amongst other things, Miss Robinson became while in London a helper at the Mission in Somers Town, which was supported by the members of Dr. Hamilton's church. Here she felt in her element, visiting, talking to, and doctoring the poor; though after a while she very unexpectedly found herself in sore disgrace with

the powers ecclesiastical for having organised cottage meetings and *spoken at them!*

She was called to account at a "church meeting," and forbidden, because of her sex, to speak in public any more. Having pleaded in vain, she flatly refused to obey the deterrent injunction. Thereupon discipline was administered in the form of a prohibition from coming to the communion table, but this was calmly disregarded by the spirited rebel, and after a while was no longer enforced.

Returning home at the end of the stipulated time, physically none the better for all she had endured, but rather the worse, Miss Robinson made up her mind that, God helping her, she would never sink into the condition of helpless invalidism which some people seemed to think would be her unavoidable fate.

She made to her heavenly Father the definite request that her cross might never hinder work. She promised that by His grace she would not repine at pain and deformity if only she might *work*. And she says, "All who know me will bear witness that this request has been fully granted."

Early in 1858 a trouble came upon the family at Heasmonds, which proved the first step in the direction of that great life-work which, all undreamed of by Miss Robinson, was awaiting her.

A great loss of property compelled Mr. Robinson to sell his country estate, give up his carriages and horses, and remove elsewhere.

This was a terrible grief to all concerned, and to Sarah, the home-lover, in particular. Her work among the village people must be ended, her cottager friends bidden farewell to, her animal pets given away. On the last day she went to all her favourite haunts,

gathering a few flowers as mementoes from each, and nailing them down in a little *coffin*, which she cherished in secret for *thirty years*.

The family removed at first to Brighton, and although Sarah "detested" the place and they only stayed there a few months, she contrived to do some good work, teaching a class of boys in the Presbyterian Sunday-school with as much success and pleasure as her former attempt with the girls had been marked by the reverse, and visiting, as she ever loved to do, among the sick and poor.

While at Brighton, Sarah enjoyed some companionship with her youngest brother, who was articled to a solicitor in that town. He had a boat of his own, and the irrepressible invalid was wont to rise at two, three, or four of a summer morning and row out with him on a fishing expedition. Being naturally afraid of the sea, as she remarks, made her all the more eager to go. They also had excursions and Bible-readings together, and practised shooting with their pistols.

In the autumn of that same year came the *second* step towards our heroine's destiny. This was the removal of the family and all their belongings to Boxgrove, near Guildford, in Surrey, on the high road to London, and within ten miles of *Aldershot*.

CHAPTER III.

IN BARRACKS AND CAMP.

MISS ROBINSON, in her vivacious way, gives us some amusing pictures of life in the quaint old town of Guildford fifty years ago. But these, as well as those of many phases of work unconsciously preparatory for her great mission, we must reluctantly

pass over, and hasten forward to her first acquaintance with the hero Thomas Atkins, who was fated to be the love of her life.

Miss Robinson's interest in soldiers, first aroused in her early childhood, was reawakened in the month of April, 1860, when, in company with a small party of Scottish friends, she paid a three days' visit to Aldershot Camp. This was her first sight of soldiers and camp life; and it stirred her heart to hear the Scottish Psalms sung by two regiments of Highlanders.

The Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny were at that time fresh in everyone's mind. Miss Robinson had been specially interested in the work of Florence Nightingale, and in the testimony of the latter to the marvellous patience, heroism, and self-sacrifice of our men on service. Therefore it was quite a shock to her to find on coming to Guildford that soldiers were excessively unpopular among the civilian population. This was partly owing to the evil influences connected with Aldershot, and partly to the fact that the men knew themselves to be disliked, and acted up to the bad character gratuitously bestowed upon them.

It was in that same year, 1860, that a working-man friend of Miss Robinson's begged her to pray for the 69th Regiment at Burmah, as three of his wife's brothers belonged to it, and said in their letters that many of the men were teetotalers and Christians. This led to a correspondence being established between the lady and that regiment, which was kept up until its return to England.

In 1862 Miss Robinson attended the Conference at Barnet, where she became acquainted with a Mrs. Daniell, an officer's widow, who, having inaugurated some Village Missions, had been urged to extend her

labours to Aldershot. Delighted at this prospect, Miss Robinson added her persuasions to those of others, with the result that Mrs. Daniell decided to take up her residence for a time at the camp.

A house was rented at Aldershot to serve as a temporary Soldiers' Home until the new Institute and Mission Hall, for which a valuable site and £1,000 in money had already been given, could be erected. Here meetings were held, with the help of both officers and privates, and Mrs. Daniell's missionary, and much good was done.

Miss Robinson threw herself heart and soul into this congenial work, and saw Mrs. Daniell frequently. She also organised meetings at Guildford for the latter to give addresses and arouse sympathy.

Another way in which Miss Robinson proved of great assistance to the older lady and at the same time gained training and experience for herself, was by acting at the Home as a sort of go-between for the soldiers downstairs and Mrs. Daniell upstairs, the latter being so deaf as to be compelled to use an ear-trumpet, which was a great hindrance to her in gaining the men's confidence.

The new Institute was opened in October, 1863. The saintly Mr. Pennefather gave the first address, and several conversions occurred during the first week. Among well-known Christian workers who helped at that interesting time may be mentioned Mr. Denham Smith, Dr. Elwin, Captain Fishbourne, R.N., Lord Radstock, Hon. Captain Hobart, Captain Hawes, Mr. Stevenson Blackwood, Mr. Haslam, Mr. Richard Weaver, Hon. Arthur Kinnaid, Mr. Henry Varley, and others.

During that opening week Miss Robinson sold nearly 600 hymn-books used in the meetings, and received

more than £200 in donations to the Institute from visitors. As a wind-up she got up a public tea, when 350 people were entertained and a Gospel meeting held.

Throughout the first year of the Institute's existence Miss Robinson was a great deal there, living in the building, with only occasional visits home. She acted as Mrs. Daniell's deputy when that lady was absent, and became more and more attached to the men and the work.

"At that time," she writes, "there were many old soldiers unable to read. When such became converted they were, of course, anxious to learn. Manfully teachers and scholars would toil on in all sorts of places—guard-room, stables, hospital, and barracks, besides the Institute, the lesson-book being always the New Testament. Passages of Scripture and hymns would also be taught and learned by heart."

Various evangelists would come and take the large Sunday meetings, and sometimes for a few consecutive days' preaching, but the other helpers often had to manage this work between them.

Miss Robinson was selected to address a weekly mothers' meeting of 150 or 200 women, but she does not appear to have been so well adapted for that kind of thing as for dealing with lads or men, and the *babies*, inevitably present, disturbed her dreadfully. She declared once that she believed the mothers must be *pinching* them to make them squall so! "It was like a poultry show, with a large contingent of Cochin-China fowls and little pigs."

At first, strange as it may seem nowadays, there was *no temperance work* in connection with the Institute, though drink then, as ever, was acknowledged to be the soldier's chief curse. Miss Robinson, however, had now

for several years been a total abstainer, having given up the wine, so long considered essential to her delicate health, from conscientious convictions, and after much suffering and patient perseverance, found herself at length able to do quite as well, or better, without it. Notwithstanding some opposition from Mrs. Daniell, who was not a teetotaler, and at one time declared she "would not have anything" at the Institute "but the Gospel," a Total Abstinence Society was formed, with Christian officers to take the lead.

A great part of Miss Robinson's work at this period consisted in correspondence. In 1864 she wrote 630 letters to Christian soldiers who had been removed to other stations, and—like Miss Weston among the sailors—she found this kind of help so much appreciated that by 1872 the number had increased to 2,200, in addition to 685 parcels sent abroad.

Wherever these converted soldiers went they planted what they called a *twig* of the Aldershot Mission, and branches were thus established in many towns of England and at foreign stations in various parts of the world.

An officer once said, "When anything queer is going on you'll find Miss Robinson in the thick of it." "Not a very desirable character," she comments, but owing to "a lack of caution, plunging into things without thought of results." Indeed, no locality was too vile or too dangerous for her to invade if there were the slightest chance of bringing a light into its darkness; no man or woman was too wicked or too desperate for her to talk to, visit, and befriend.

On one occasion Miss Robinson, in searching for a sick woman in a low lodging-house, wandered accidentally into a thieves' kitchen. One of the desperadoes inside at once shut the door and *stood against it*.

But our heroine's presence of mind and readiness of resource never forsook her. She at once apologised for intruding, and offered to sing them a song they had never heard before. Without waiting for permission she struck up with one of Richard Weaver's hymns—

“We're bound for the land of the pure and the holy,
The home of the happy, the kingdom of love.”

The people listened quietly, both to the hymn and to a few simple, kindly words which followed it, and gave their uninvited visitor permission to go and see them again. Of this Miss Robinson joyfully availed herself. Many visits followed, at which Bible stories were told and hymns sung, always including, by special request, the one they had first heard; and four definite conversions were the result.

Before leaving Aldershot Miss Robinson held a tea-party in that same kitchen. She took the provisions, but the inmates supplied the tea-service, “consisting chiefly of old jam-pots, clothes-pegs to stir with, publicans' *borrowed* beer cans to ‘mash’ the tea in, and pieces of newspaper for plates.” At parting they paid the lady the compliment of saying they reckoned her quite *one of themselves!*

It was a great grief to Miss Robinson when Mrs. Daniell decided to put the Mission Hall under the charge of a gentleman. She appears to have been not quite satisfied with her enthusiastic helper, notwithstanding the signal blessing with which the labours of the latter had been crowned. She was a timid woman, extremely sensitive to public opinion, and seemed terribly afraid lest the daring enterprise and deep-diving of Miss Robinson might bring *her* work into disrepute. But she afterwards confessed that she wished that their union had continued.

On returning to her home at Guildford Miss Robinson was not long ere she found fresh work to do, this time in connection with a night school for big boys. Their conduct was most unruly, and more than once, in her capacity of superintendent, she sent for a policeman or closed the school.

At last the happy inspiration to *drill* them seized her, and she found, as Professor Henry Drummond and the leaders of the Boys' Brigade afterwards did, that *military* discipline acted like a charm when all ordinary authority was powerless. She learned and taught the various exercises so correctly that some of the lads who afterwards joined the militia and volunteers passed through their preliminary drill at once as competent.

A Band of Hope and a drum and fife band were also organised in connection with this school.

When the 69th Regiment, with which Miss Robinson and her Guildford men had all this time been corresponding, returned to England, they were quartered at Gosport, and soon invited their friend over to a big tea-meeting, which was to be held in rooms that their colonel allowed them to use for religious and temperance purposes. This was her first visit to the Portsmouth garrison. During the meeting after the tea she spoke a few words to the men, which delighted them so much that they at once planned another tea, at which she was to address a larger audience.

This was a great success, hardened men weeping outright at what they heard from Miss Robinson of the love of God and the claims of Christ, and souls, it is believed, were saved. Further meetings were resolved upon, but, incredible as it may seem, the matter was officially inquired into, and such arrangements forbidden, as being "subversive of military discipline"! Not even

the Regimental Temperance Society was allowed, though before the 69th left Portsmouth £6,000 of their Indian savings and 500 stripes and good-conduct badges were lost through drink and dissipation.

At home once more, Miss Robinson continued to see all she could of the soldiers and speak to them whenever possible. Small parties from the Camp continually shared her hospitality at Guildford, and she would go over to Aldershot Mission Hall for any special meetings there.

In 1865 she paid a visit to Brighton, and curiously enough was asked to give a lecture at the same Young Ladies' Academy where she had so unmeritoriously distinguished herself some twenty years before, but only one teacher was left who remembered her. A bit of the old mischievous Sarah peeped out as she suggested to the Principal that she must have been invited for the same reason the people got "Converted Prize-fighters" and "Hallelujah Pickpockets" to address their meetings! At this the poor lady was so shocked that Miss Robinson hastened to assure her that she would be *quite proper* during the lecture, which subsequently went off with success.

It was during this sojourn at Brighton that Miss Robinson began visiting the soldiers in barracks, and distributing copies of the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *British Workman*, and other suitable literature. She also lectured in a small chapel lent her for the purpose. She got to know the men's wives and little ones, and as she carried illuminated text-cards and packets of sweets in her bag she was welcomed wherever she went.

By-and-by the regiment in which Miss Robinson had become interested at Brighton was removed to Hounslow, and there, on three several occasions, she

spent a fortnight with them by special invitation, and occupied a spare hospital ward. These were grand times for work. In the mornings she talked with the men who happened to be about, in the afternoons she visited the troop-rooms and married quarters, and in the evenings she held meetings in the largest hospital ward.

Other garrisons and camps were subsequently visited in the same way, and when at length Miss Robinson, through the reports of army schoolmasters, succeeded in getting her name into the Parliamentary Blue Book as *Lecturer*, under the head of "Military Education," she felt that her position was secure.

Everywhere her work was attended with marked success. She says she grew to quite "*love* the men, such big, simple, affectionate, grateful fellows, and so easily interested in what one told them," while her power over them, and their willingness to listen to her addresses, filled the officers with amazement. One man remarked, and it was evidently intended as the highest compliment, "You can't gammon Miss Robinson; she might have been a soldier herself."

For eight years, from 1865, the "Soldier's Friend," as she now came to be called, spent her time in itinerating. She visited Aldershot, Brighton, Bristol, Colchester, Chatham, Canterbury, Dover, Deal, Dorchester, Exeter, Hythe, Hounslow, Leeds, London, Maidstone, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Parkhurst, Sheerness, Shorncliffe, Trowbridge, Weymouth, Winchester, Woolwich, Warley, Windsor, and York; and most of these places not once only, but several times. During those eight years Miss Robinson paid 190 visits to different military stations, and spent a total of 1130 days at them, besides her visits and lectures for civilians. To

provide the necessary funds for this work she spent most of the dress allowance she received with her sister from their mother's property, and also disposed of all her own share of Mrs. Robinson's valuable jewels—all, at least, except one emerald and diamond ring, from which she could not make up her mind to part. Strange to say, she soon after had the misfortune to lose this ring when far from home, so, as she says, she "might just as well have given it to the Lord with the rest."

All this time the undaunted woman was suffering more or less acutely from the spinal complaint which was her lifelong cross. The pain was sometimes almost agonising, but she dared not say anything about it lest her father should absolutely forbid those expeditions, of which already he tacitly disapproved, and from which she generally returned home worn out and ill, only to somewhat recuperate and start afresh.

It was not only among the regular troops that Miss Robinson carried on her work; the generally despised "militiamen" also appealed to her sympathies, and had reason to bless her for her ever-ready friendship and aid.

Her first acquaintance with this class was when she undertook three weeks' work among the 700 men of the Wilts Militia, who were billeted in the twenty-eight public-houses of the town of Devizes. This was at the solicitation of an Independent minister, who was much grieved at their neglected condition. With the co-operation of this gentleman's sisters, a temporary reading-room was opened and supplied with books, papers, pictures, and games. Here, of an evening, the ladies would be ready to receive any who might come—to read, sing, or talk to them, or to help them write letters to their friends. Coffee and cake could be

bought cheaply, and each evening closed with family prayers.

In order to reach the men, however, Miss Robinson had to go to them with her invitation. This meant penetrating to the coach-houses, stables, and even cow-sheds of the public-houses where they were lodged. These places were often dirty and wretched to a degree, sometimes without window or fireplace, and with only a damp earthen floor. Sometimes the "room" was reached only by a step-ladder, and was boarded with planks so perilously thin that they threatened to give way as people moved about upon them. Often she would have readings in a tap-room. But wherever she went, so great was her tact, so perfect her *adaptedness* for the peculiar mission she had chosen, that her Bible storytelling and hymn-singing were almost invariably listened to with respectful attention, and she was generally asked to go again.

Also, the chief aim of Miss Robinson and her helpers was frequently attained, and many of the men were induced to attend both prayer-meetings and Sunday-evening services. Some came for private interviews and counsel. Twenty-seven conversions were believed to have taken place during those three weeks, and there were numbers still seeking the light when the time came for them to leave. In addition, more than a hundred men had signed the temperance pledge, and 600 letters had been written, with more or less assistance, in the reading-rooms. (Miss Robinson was "great at *love letters*," she says.)

The following year the "Soldier's Friend" was invited to the same town again, but owing, as she believed, to the intentional opposition of the publicans, she had much more difficulty in getting a hearing. However,

better arrangements were eventually made for the accommodation of the militia, and they were no longer billeted in public-houses.

The teaching of total abstinence has been a prominent feature of Miss Robinson's work. She considers it a "physical remedy for a physical evil," but her ultimate object is always nothing less than to "bring men into touch with the Lord Jesus Christ. All kindness shown, all pleasant things provided, are simply as adjuncts to that. 'Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.'" It disgusted her to see people who had been getting up total abstinence meetings sit down afterwards to a supper with wine and beer; she considered it "a mean, sneaking thing to ask others to abstain without doing it oneself."

When fashionable folks condescended to patronise the soldiers and their friend, and invited Miss Robinson to their houses, she felt far less comfortable than among her men in a troop-room. Indeed, she owns that even among quite nice people she was not happy, on account of her "wretched shyness." Yet she does not seem to have ever felt shy with the men themselves. Wherever she saw a soldier, sober or drunk, she was able to go up to him and say the right word, and send him on his way the better for having met her. Her name soon became known, not only all over England, but in India also, and it was synonymous everywhere with a cheery friendliness to which poor Tommy Atkins had heretofore been a stranger.

In those early days the cognomen of "Miss Robinson" stood, she tells us, rather for a species than an individual, and among those who had never seen her face any kind-mannered lady who was not above speaking to a soldier was likely to get called by that name.

The contempt and dislike in which the defenders of our country were at that time popularly held was always a source of amazement to their friend, especially as it was coupled with a good deal of empty sentiment about them in paintings or poetry. On one occasion she had ordered dinner for herself and three sergeants who were to travel with her, in the second-class refreshment-room of one of our great railway stations. But after they had sat down, a waitress came and told them she was very sorry, but people did not like soldiers in the room. So they had to go, leaving their dinner uneaten and unpaid for. Another time, when piloting a newly married sergeant and his bride around the sights of London, the former was rudely refused admittance to what was known as "The London Crystal Palace," in Oxford Street, simply because he was wearing Her Majesty's uniform! The difficulty Miss Robinson always experienced in finding lodgings for the men whom she brought to London to speak at temperance meetings, or for herself, when itinerating, to secure rooms which might be used as a little temporary soldiers' home, was immense, and thoroughly roused her indignation. "Really one would think that soldiers were lepers to see the way they are treated!" she angrily comments in her diary. This, by the way, was in 1869.

It was, indeed, this fact as much as anything which attracted Miss Robinson towards poor Tommy, for she was the same Sarah Robinson who years before championed the ill-used teacher, and made a friend of the most neglected girl in the school. She says, "The isolation, the contempt, the unkindness, the cruel temptations of his lot . . . drew out all the *motherliness* of my heart. . . . It is a small thing to say I could have died for them. I *lived* for them; to seek their welfare became my very life."

She, however, thinks that soldiers of the present day are somewhat spoiled. "They take all their advantages, and friends in every garrison, as a matter of course, and can form no idea of the insult and neglect their predecessors too often had to bear."

CHAPTER IV.

A TOWN TRANSFORMED.

SPACE would fail us to tell a tenth part of Miss Robinson's work among the soldiers in town and country, in troop-rooms, in hospitals, in camp. To any who are interested in this brief sketch of her busy life we would warmly recommend the perusal of her autobiography, *A Life Record*, from the bright, graphic pages of which the facts narrated here are chiefly taken.

Passing over, therefore, much that we would gladly relate of the joys and sorrows of our heroine's self-chosen mission, of her encounters with the officers, some of whom were courteous and helpful, others strangely opposed to her work, of her almost invariable success in winning the friendship and confidence of the men in every regiment with which she came in contact, of her happiness in often seeing the fruits of her labours in genuinely reformed lives, of her sadness over those who relapsed—generally through drink—and the encouragement afforded by the hundreds of simple, touching letters, full of love and gratitude, which reached her from her men in various parts of the world, we must hasten on to speak of the founding of her famous Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth.

Thirty years ago Portsmouth was, to use Miss Robinson's own words, "Satan's very seat," as regards

the soldiers and sailors who were constantly being landed there. Regiments generally arrived with a good character and left with a bad one. They would return from years of service abroad, with all their savings and prize-money in their pockets, often amounting to £5,000 or £6,000, and sometimes more, to find over a thousand public-houses and gin-shops, dancing saloons, music-halls, and still viler temptations awaiting them; and there they would "have their fling and spend their money, and lose health and character and their very souls."

Miss Robinson's description of the streets, when on one occasion she went seeking several men whose relatives had begged her to see them, is as vivid as it is shocking. "Soldiers were drinking spirits out of pewter-pots, and almost forcing passers-by to partake; cabs were driving from one public-house to another loaded inside and out with drunken, shouting men and women; girls caught hold of me and waltzed me round to the strains of a fiddle, and when I had found any man I was seeking I had to take him by the arm, to coax and plead, and almost drag him away."

The first means of bringing the "Soldier's Friend" within touch of this sink of iniquity was a little Temperance Coffee and Reading-room for Royal Marines, Soldiers, and Sailors, opened at Gosport by some Christian teetotalers belonging to the Royal Marines of the Gosport Division, in consequence of meetings in barracks having been forbidden. Gosport, as most of my readers know, lies opposite to Portsmouth on the other side of the harbour.

From here, somewhere about the year 1866, Miss Robinson made occasional excursions to the Portsmouth side to address meetings of other regiments

and to promote the cause of temperance. It was in connection with one of these visits that she had an unpleasant adventure, for though morally and spiritually her experiences were generally bright, the physical discomforts she often had to undergo were sufficient to have completely daunted most women, not to speak of *invalids*.

The weather had turned out too rough for floating-bridge or boats to cross between the two towns, and Miss Robinson found herself stranded *alone in Portsmouth*, near ten o'clock, on a wet, windy night, very tired, and with only sixpence in her pocket.

Strange to say, it never occurred to her to apply to any of the officers resident in the place, nor to any Christian minister, who doubtless would have been delighted to help her, nor even to the police. But she wandered from one public-house (!) to another seeking a night's lodging, until she at length found a place where they would give her a little room to herself for her solitary sixpence. Here, supperless, she obtained at least a shelter, but, the lock on the door proving insecure, she lay on the floor against it all night, and in the early morning, aching and starved, she made her way to the floating-bridge, and *begged* a penny for her fare to cross by it and get home.

Repeated disappointments in her work at Portsmouth forced the belief upon Miss Robinson's mind that no lasting good would ever be done until a Soldiers' Home with earnest Christian workers could be established there. But still, for a while, she did not quite see her way to attempting it.

In 1872 about 10,000 men were ordered out to the wilds of Dorsetshire for Autumn Manœuvres. Nothing whatever was done on this occasion for their

comfort, or to keep them sober. There were no means of writing to their friends, or of sending money to mothers or wives; there was no recreation; often there was nothing to drink but beer, in which most of the men's pay was spent; over 1,000 pledges were broken, and the staunch abstainers suffered greatly for want of water.

On hearing of all this, Miss Robinson for the time abandoned her schemes with regard to Portsmouth, and turned her energies towards alleviating this still more pressing need.

She accordingly, in view of the next year's manœuvres, which were to take place on Dartmoor, secured permission from the Horse Guards and co-operation from the National Temperance League. The latter society was willing to find all necessary funds if Miss Robinson would undertake to personally carry the work through. This she promised, and having got two strong horses and a waggoner, two large marquees and some smaller tents, an old gipsy-van, cleaned and done up, for her own private accommodation, and ten men to help her, she started on her new campaign.

For the next *nine weeks* this truly heroic woman lived in the midst of the soldiers in open camp, her only lodging the gipsy-van, her bed a short bunk, in which she could only lie with knees drawn up, her food chiefly biscuits and tea, having no time to prepare anything else, and the rain falling in torrents a great part of the time.

All day long the men kept them going. One day's sale of refreshments on an average would be 150 gallons of coffee, 6 gallons of tea, 20 gallons of lemonade, 80 loaves, 500 buns, 20 lbs. of ham and German sausage, 50 lbs. of cake and biscuits, and *all in pennyworths!*

The men on the one side could come to the big marquee to be served, but the waggon had to traverse the moors to supply the needs of the "enemy."

When the sham fight at Dartmoor was over other regiments had their turn at Cannock Chase; hither Miss Robinson's caravan and tents followed, and similar experiences to those already recorded were passed through. The arrangements made for the transaction of postal business were greatly appreciated. Over 7,000 penny stamps were sold to the men during the campaign, and more than £1,100, in 342 separate sums of money, were transmitted to relatives at home. The gratitude of the whole army, officers and men alike, was quite overwhelming; twenty-three written testimonials were forwarded to the National Temperance League, and appreciative notices of the work appeared in all the leading newspapers.

It is sad to relate that Miss Robinson's health was entirely ruined by the hardships she at that time went through, and she never regained her power of walking. Nevertheless, she rejoiced in the good accomplished and the evil prevented, and also felt that, though the founding of a Soldiers' Institute had been somewhat delayed by this other work, the ultimate result was really assisted by the confidence and popularity she had thus gained.

On her return from the Autumn Manœuvres, Miss Robinson proceeded vigorously with her former project, and the first thing to be done was to find a house suitable for transformation into an Institute.

This proved a difficult task, and incredible as it may seem, there was much opposition in Portsmouth to Miss Robinson's scheme, not only from publicans and such interested persons, but from those who might have been

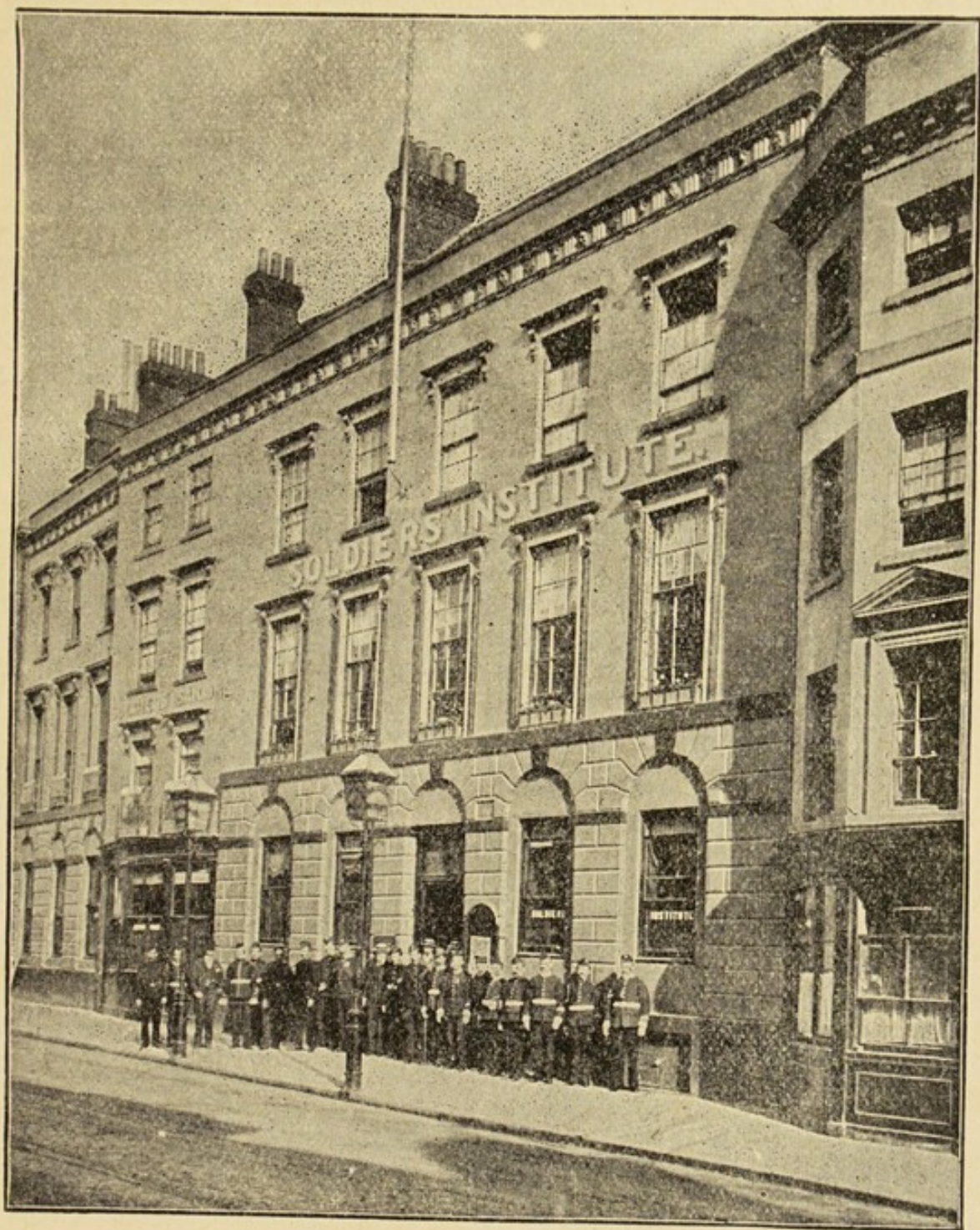
expected to be friendly ; and the bitterest enemy of all was Archdeacon Wright, the principal military chaplain in the place. The grounds of objection were the teetotalism and Bible-teaching that were to form indispensable items in the Institute programme, and more than once Miss Robinson received tempting offers of influential help if she would only waive these points ; but she firmly refused.

There was only one building in Portsmouth which seemed at all suitable for the purpose required, and that was the old "Fountain Inn," in High Street, at that time shut up and disused. But it seemed too large, and Miss Robinson felt she could not dare undertake it.

Meanwhile, having applied for a Government grant of land for a site to build an Institute should no existing house be found suitable, a certain piece, after sundry negotiations, was given, situated near the Gymnasium, and Miss Robinson set to work, travelling from place to place, speaking at meetings in the hope of interesting people in the project, and begging money wherewith to build.

Naturally she mentioned frequently, as an incentive to help, the great need of such an institution as that planned, and the shocking condition of the town. Though keeping well within the bounds of truth, these disclosures aroused the ire of many of the townspeople, who seemed desirous to conceal rather than to remedy the evil.

Archdeacon Wright was also busy ; he had threatened to "annihilate" the concern, and was doing his best to make good his words. And so successfully did he use the influence of his position that the grant of land was presently revoked, except on condition that the Bible should not be introduced. This Miss Robinson and her



THE SOLDIERS' INSTITUTE, PORTSMOUTH.

committee were agreed in refusing to concede, and the site was accordingly relinquished.

Then Miss Robinson resolved to take "The Fountain," and worked harder than ever to collect funds. She secured the old inn, by a deposit of £100 to the owner, in December, 1873; and by visiting numbers of individuals and speaking at most of the large towns in England had, by the end of 1874, collected over £7,000. Of this sum she reckoned that £1,500 was due to the indignation evoked by the bitter letters on the subject which had been addressed to the *Standard* by Archdeacon Wright, and of this fact she subsequently had the pleasure of personally informing him. Part was also traceable to the helpful influence of a little book called *Active Service*, written by Miss Ellice Hopkins, and descriptive of Miss Robinson's work, with which that lady keenly sympathised.

Alterations and improvements were pushed forward as rapidly as possible at "The Fountain," and on September 10th, 1874, it was formally opened in its new capacity of Soldiers' Institute. Sir J. Hope Grant, Sir Arthur Lawrence, and other military officers and friends from a distance were present, as well as crowds of soldiers, but the one who had done most of all towards bringing the scheme to a successful issue was unable to share in the pleasant excitement of the occasion. Miss Robinson, prostrated, as she had been so many times before, by her noble efforts, was too ill to attend. An illuminated address, however, from two hundred non-commissioned officers of the garrison, expressive of the sincere congratulations and highest esteem of the entire army, was handed to Sir Arthur Lawrence for her.

Miss Robinson now, with her father's sanction and

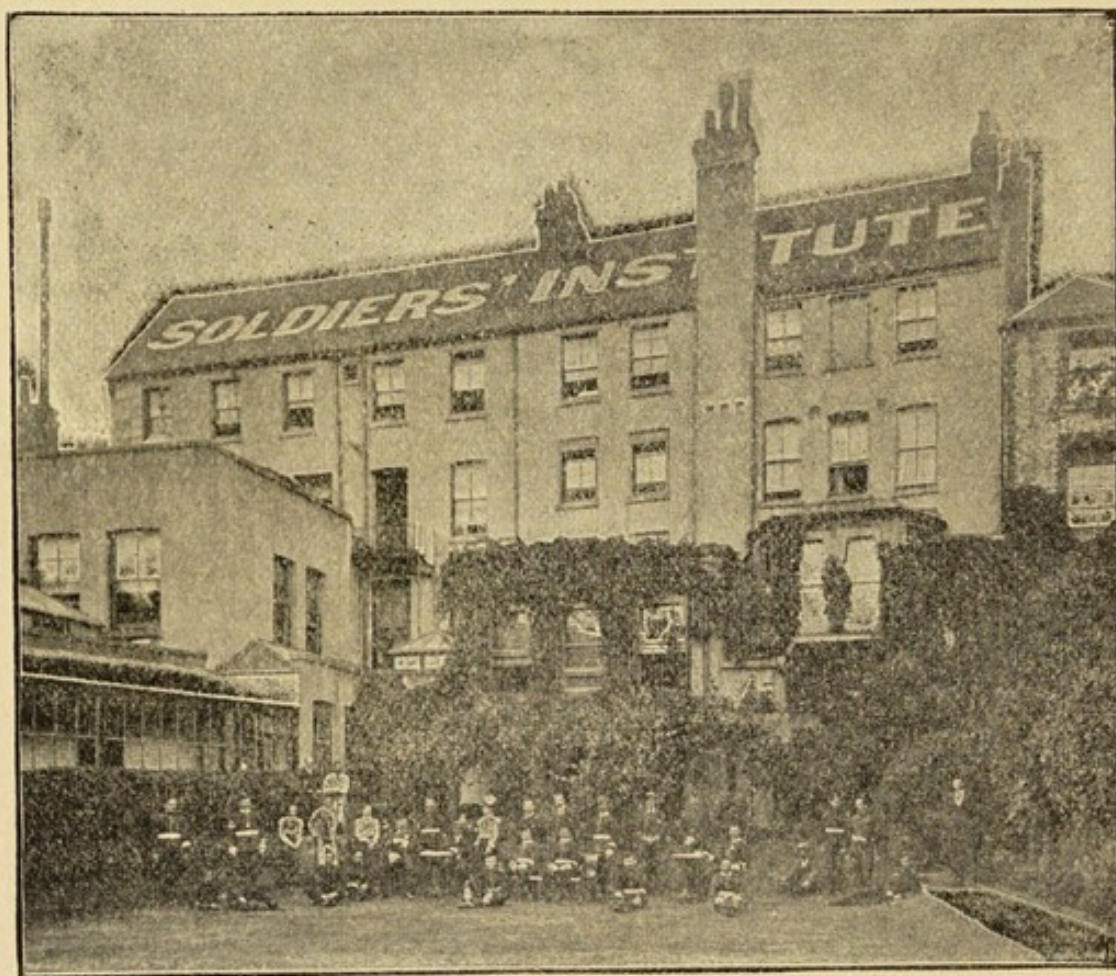
assisted by a sufficient income from him, bade a final good-bye to Guildford, and took up her abode at the Portsmouth Institute, where she lived until her retirement twenty years later.

From the first the new Institute was gratefully made use of by the class for whom it was intended, though the opposition had by no means ceased. Archdeacon Wright having tried both persuasions and "bullying" in vain to get Miss Robinson to give up holding Institute Bible-classes, took the course of starting a number of new religious and philanthropic agencies of his own, to draw support away from the hated Soldiers' Institute by rivalry. This did not trouble his opponent in the least; she was glad for good to be done by any means, and was decidedly amused to find she had provoked him "to good works, if not to love"! When, a couple of years later, he left the place, she commented in her diary that she was "really rather sorry, as his perpetually running about telling people *not* to visit us was a continual advertisement, and brought many out of curiosity."

That year, 1876, was also noteworthy on account of a visit to the Institute from H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge with a brilliant staff, who went all over the Institute, and expressed very great surprise and pleasure. H.R.H. said he had no idea it was such a place, and wrote in the visitors' book: "I have this day visited and inspected this excellent Institute, and am gratified by all I have seen in it, and by the admirable order in which I found every portion of the premises.—George."

Some years later the Institute was again visited by the Duke of Cambridge in company with the Prince of Wales. On this occasion Miss Robinson had been

compelled to deny herself to all visitors; but on being specially asked for by the Prince himself, was taken downstairs in her carrying-chair, when His Royal Highness very kindly shook hands with her, and thanked her for her services to the army.



THE SOLDIERS' INSTITUTE, PORTSMOUTH, FROM THE GARDEN.

The new Institute was an inestimable boon when the troopships came in, as at that time every regiment in turn embarked or disembarked at Portsmouth, and there was no provision made for the comfort or even decent shelter of the wives and children until they could be forwarded to their destinations. The poor things were often half-clad, ill, and in every way

destitute. Many found kindness and nursing, as well as food, lodging, and warm clothing at the Institute; and Miss Robinson also started a refreshment-cart on the jetty, afterwards improved into a shed, where hot coffee, buns, and biscuits were sold to the men and *given* to the women and children. This incited the authorities to also put up a waiting-room, where the travellers could sit by a good fire in the interval—often two hours and more—between the arrival of the ship and the starting of the train to take them on their journey.

But as our space is almost filled we will here pause to give a complete list of the various institutions for the benefit of soldiers, sailors, and their families, which, by degrees, Miss Robinson founded, in addition to the headquarters of operations at the transformed "Fountain."

1. *Two new Recreation-rooms*, a Bible-class-room, and additional bedrooms, obtained by purchasing and pulling down an objectionable house next door to the Institute.

2. *The providing of Furnished Lodgings* in different parts of the town for the families of soldiers who had married without leave, and who, in those days, found it difficult to obtain apartments anywhere but in public-houses.

3. *A large Lecture Hall*, built on one side of the garden of the "Fountain," where formerly the old tap and stabling stood.

4. *A separate House for Officers*, where they could be lodged in apartments and at a tariff suitable to their position.

5. *A Recreation Room for Sailor Boys*, who would often swarm all over the Institute and drive people

nearly out of their wits. This was built at the end of the long garden, with a flat roof reached by outside stairs, and facing Southsea Common and Spithead.

6. *A small Institute at Newport, Isle of Wight.*

7. *A House for Sailors at Portsea.* This "Sailors' Welcome," with its 250 beds, was a boon to the blue-jackets for some years before Miss Weston opened her splendid "Sailors' Rest." There is still room for the good work done by both.

8. *A Mission Room at Eastney.* This has since passed into Miss Weston's hands.

9. *An Early Coffee House and Mission Room* on the Camber, for fisherfolk and waterside people. This was afterwards superseded by the opening of

10. *A Coffee Tavern and Mission Hall* on the site of a public-house and two courts, consisting of seventeen houses in all, the vilest in a vile neighbourhood. This work has since been taken over by the Salvation Army.

11. *An Institute at Alexandria, Egypt.* This was founded a year or two after the bombardment, under the supervision of Thomas Tufnell, for many years Miss Robinson's right-hand man in every undertaking. He was formerly in the Queen's Bays, 2nd Dragoon Guards, but sold out of the army at the time of the Autumn Manœuvres in order to devote himself to Miss Robinson, and was of invaluable service to her.

12. *A small Institute at Gosport.*

13. *A Coffee Palace at Landport.*

This latter was a grand enterprise. A plot of land measuring 123 feet by 90 feet was secured in the very best situation in Landport, and on it was erected that magnificent pile of buildings, named "The Speedwell," which can scarcely fail to strike the eye of everybody who comes into Portsmouth by rail. The management

of this place, however, only remained in the foundress's hands two years, though she has since, notwithstanding its continued success, been often sorry she was persuaded to give it up.

From many other of these institutions Miss Robinson has also been compelled, owing to increasing age and infirmities, to withdraw her personal connection; but all are going on well under their respective Boards of Direction, quite independently of the Portsmouth Soldiers' Institute.

In the year 1889 Miss Robinson travelled more than a thousand miles throughout twenty-six English counties to speak on the subject of her life-work, to collect money, and to distribute text-cards and books.

This extraordinary expedition, not the least wonderful of Miss Robinson's many marvellous achievements, was undertaken with the hope of obtaining funds for the Speedwell Coffee Palace and Gospel Hall mentioned above. Let no reader suppose that any latent desire for change or adventure was at the bottom of the scheme, for it involved, as had so much of our heroine's former work, a tremendous conflict between *fear* and *courage*.

The dread she felt of the physical suffering which was sure to be caused by the travelling itself was only exceeded by her horror, which years of practice had never overcome, of addressing meetings, more particularly meetings of fashionable and well-to-do people, which of course was the class she now specially intended to seek.

People so little guessed the truth, however, that they would often say to her, "This must be quite a nice change to you after Portsmouth," or, "I expect you enjoy getting about in this way," when the poor lady

was enduring such acute neuralgic pain, partly from the jolting of conveyances and partly from the effort of overcoming her own incurable shyness when in company, that "even a handshake would jar her with a thrill of new agony."

The following, however, is General H. D. Taylor's description of Miss Robinson when he listened to her in 1879:—

"When Miss Robinson was introduced to us I saw one whose face was marked with those unmistakable lines which tell of protracted suffering. At first sight of her most people would have thought, 'Surely this is not a person who can have done any great work, or sustained any special exertion either of mind or body'! But the light in her eye when she stood up to speak, giving token of an enthusiasm burning within, would probably have caused them to change their opinion. I do not think I ever heard anything more interesting, more affecting, and more instructive than her speech."

Miss Robinson's earlier journeys were performed by rail, but before 1889 she had become such a confirmed invalid that she could only travel lying down. A coach, however, was constructed that would accommodate six inside passengers in addition to the principal occupant and her bed, though practically her nerves were in such a state that she could bear no one in it beside herself.

In this conveyance Miss Robinson journeyed up hill and down, through good roads and bad, for 103 days, from June 11th to September 21st, 1889. And the result was sixty-three addresses delivered, 12,000 small books, etc., distributed, £43 worth of books sold, and £1,402 collected.

In the summer of 1891 a second tour was carried through in the same way, this time embracing many towns in Scotland. Nearly 2,000 miles were traversed, and 102 addresses given, but only £1,043 collected, besides £213 in private donations; so, proportionately, this second tour was far less successful from a pecuniary point of view than the first.

Miss Robinson's third and last itinerary was accomplished in 1893, when, the management of the Soldiers' Institute having been placed in the hands of the Rev. J. Gelson Gregson, the foundress and her lady-helpers thought it advisable to withdraw from the work.

On this occasion the primary object of the journey was to collect money to clear off the debt remaining on the Institute at Alexandria. The towns visited were in Wilts, Dorset, and Devonshire, and on Miss Robinson's return she settled down at length to the life of rest and quiet which she had denied herself in the interests of the soldiers for so many long years. "The Hut," at Burley, in the New Forest, a building of primitive simplicity, erected for her and after her own design, was now to be the home of the tired-out "Soldier's Friend."

Quite crippled by the spinal complaint which had ever been growing worse, often causing hours of agony even when the heroic sufferer was most active in her labours, racked with pains in the head caused by protracted overwork, deaf, and a martyr to nervous irritability, the subject of this sketch, the reader doubtless imagines, thenceforward devoted the autumn of her life to well-earned repose.

But our narrative closes with the unexpected. After nearly six years' experience of masculine management, the Portsmouth Soldiers' Institute was brought to such

a low ebb, both as regards finance and popularity, that Miss Robinson felt strongly impelled to return to her former post, if only to re-organise the band of ladies under whose care alone the place seemed likely to be really prosperous.

Therefore, to everyone's astonishment and delight, on November 1st, 1898, the "Soldiers' Friend" with two lady-helpers returned to Portsmouth, and, needless to say, they received a warm welcome.

Twelve months later Miss Robinson was able to record in her Report that "to-day . . . through the loving labours of my dear helpers, the House is more happy and homelike than ever it was."

Since then Miss Robinson, though too infirm to live at the Institute, has in her home at Burley been able as Hon. Superintendent to keep in close touch with all that is being done there. The various agencies are carried on by five ladies, all of whom laboured under her in former years, and a good trustworthy staff of paid helpers.

In conclusion, with the sad war in South Africa testing the resources of the work and the workers both at Portsmouth and Southampton to the utmost, we can only join in the earnest prayer of thousands that the "Soldier's Friend" may yet be long spared to direct, as she only knows how, the labours which are fraught with so inestimable a blessing to our noble troops in every part of the world.

Mrs. Fawcett.



CHAPTER I.

A GIRL WITH A MIND.

THERE seems, to most of those who are able to wield a facile pen, peculiar charm in the endeavour to describe their own personality and experiences under the thin guise of fiction. *David Copperfield*, *Jane Eyre*, and *The Mill on the Floss*, at once occur to us as examples of autobiography more or less veiled in the garb of a novel, and indeed there seem to be few story-writers, past or present, who have not drawn for us their own portraits and surroundings in those of some favourite hero or heroine.

Only once has the gifted champion of "Woman's Rights"—in the best sense of a much-abused term—indulged in writing fiction; but in this solitary work, *Janet Doncaster*, written by Mrs. Fawcett during the early years of her wedded life, and to beguile the tedium of long confinement within doors as the result of a riding accident, we are assured may be found a tolerably accurate picture of her girlish home and life.

It was at Aldeburgh, on the coast of Suffolk, also celebrated as the birthplace of the poet Crabbe, that Millicent Garrett, on June 11th, 1847, first saw the light.

Nowadays the quiet fishing village is realising its possibilities as a health resort and rousing itself to compete, not unsuccessfully, with the ever-increasing number of watering-places around the east and south of England, which year by year provide holiday homes for the millions of workers who stream out of London in the summer months for their few weeks of rest. But forty or fifty years ago "its distinctive features were its situation on the sea-coast, its mayor and corporation, and its charter dating from James I. . . . Its non-distinctive features were its long, rambling street of nearly a mile from end to end, breaking out fitfully now and then into little dreary patches of common, ornamented with clothes-lines and fishermen's nets; its two thousand inhabitants, of whom about ten families were prosperous, twenty on the verge between poverty and prosperity, and the rest belonging to the adventurous and improvident seafaring population. . . . Norborough" (*i.e.* Aldeburgh, for thus in "Janet's" story is the town slightly disguised) "was not a lively place. The principal source of interest was derived from watching the struggle for existence of the second doctor, and reporting the scandalous doings of the lieutenant of the coastguard. . . . Of the general course of foreign and domestic politics the Norborians took no heed. They knew that the Duke of Wellington was dead; they had been aware of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. . . . Of politics in the ordinary sense they were entirely innocent. . . . The extravagance of Miss Spence in the matter of Sunday bonnets excited more interest in Norborough than the Orissa famine; the misdoings of kings, emperors, and prime ministers sank into insignificance in comparison with the dissipations of Lieutenant Smalley."

Not promising soil, one would say, from which to look for such a production as a young woman keenly alive to the wider interests of the country to which she belonged, and especially to the needs, the claims, and disabilities of her sisters and their children throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Nevertheless, Mr. Newson Garrett, Mayor of Aldeburgh, if we may trust his portraiture as "Mr. Ralph, of Norborough," was one of the few wide-awake members of that drowsy little community. He "attended the London Corn Market on the first and third Monday in each month. He was therefore regarded by his neighbours as a prodigy of activity and business capacity." And he and his wife brought up their family of girls and boys on lines which in those days must have seemed quite shocking to their old-fashioned and slow-going neighbours.

Millicent and her sisters—the eldest of whom is now Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., one of the first of women doctors, while another was the late Mrs. Cowell, for several years a member of the London School Board—were not restricted to the piano-tinkling, water-colour dabbling, and crewel and embroidery working, which were by many considered the only feminine and proper recreations for young ladies of that day. For they were permitted and encouraged to talk freely on political and social subjects, to have opinions and to express them, and to generally interest themselves in the wide world outside Aldeburgh as well as in the new ideas which were even then beginning to stir the hearts of many to a consideration of the individuality, powers, and wrongs of women.

"I cannot remember a time," said Mrs. Fawcett to that indefatigable interviewer, Miss Sarah Tooley, "when

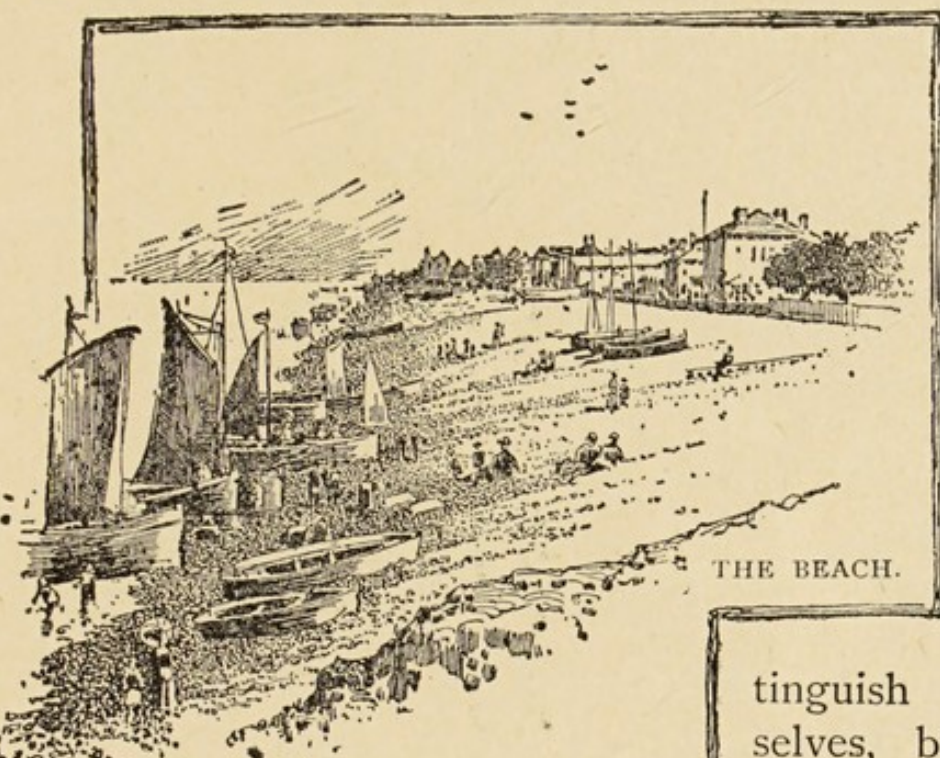
I was not interested in political questions, for my parents encouraged family discussion on topics of the day, and my father liked my sisters and me to read the newspapers. I was reared in an atmosphere saturated with progressive ideas. I read Buckle and Mill, and the standard poets, novelists and historians, not, however, to the neglect of domestic matters, for in such my mother most thoroughly trained her daughters."

That Mr. Newson Garrett was himself one of the pioneers of the emancipation of women is proved by his warm sympathy with the aspirations of his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, who, soon after she passed out of her teens, resolved on the, at that time extraordinary, course of choosing for herself a profession; and, what must have seemed still more startling to the sleepy good folk of Aldeburgh in the fifties, selected for that purpose the study of medicine.

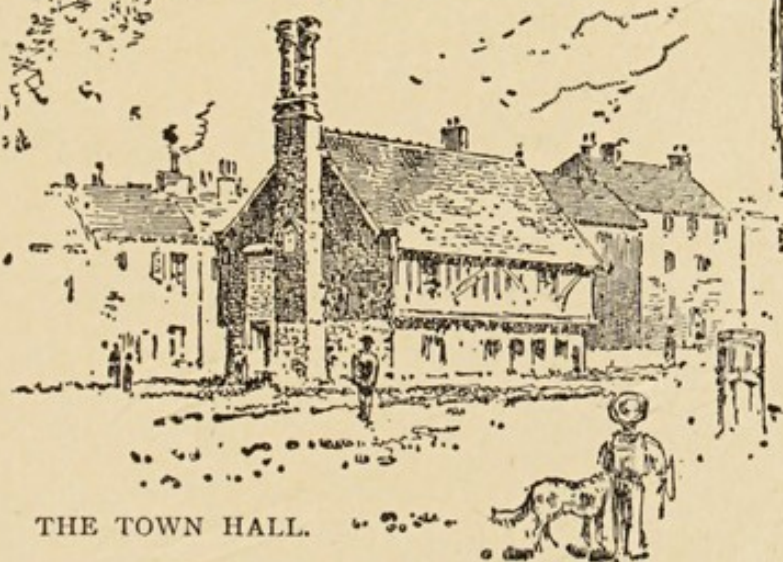
From 1860 to 1865, while Millicent Garrett was in the most impressionable years of her girlhood, was her sister perseveringly but vainly seeking admission at nearly a score of colleges and halls in Great Britain which had the power of giving medical degrees and conferring the licence to practise. Gifted, earnest, well prepared by a good education in other branches of a university training, Miss Garrett was everywhere refused admittance simply because she was a woman!

We can imagine how the injustice of the thing burnt itself in upon the soul of the enthusiastic younger girl, and we can also picture her triumph when at last it was legally decided that the Apothecaries' Hall could not reject Miss Garrett's application, as there was a clause in the Apothecaries Act providing that "all persons" should be received to examination who were properly prepared for it.

It had probably never entered the minds of the framers of that Act that any but male "persons" would ever have the temerity to desire thus to dis-



THE BEACH.



THE TOWN HALL.

ALDEBURGH, THE BIRTHPLACE OF MRS. FAWCETT.

tinguish themselves, but no mention of sex being made, this enterprising young lady must needs have her way; and, accordingly, Elizabeth Garrett entered for the full course of medical study.

The broad-mindedness and chivalry of the medical students of the "nobler sex" at that time may be judged from the fact that they objected to sitting with a woman at some of the classes,

thus compelling her to go to the expense of receiving these lectures privately.

Having, through Miss Garrett's persistence and the grand success in the public examination by which she won for herself the position of a legally qualified English practitioner, realised the awful possibilities of that one weak place in their fence, the Apothecaries' Hall took immediate steps to make sure, by the enactment of a clever by-law, that no other female invader should disturb the exclusiveness of their lecture rooms, and for some years afterwards all women wishing to emulate the victory of Elizabeth Garrett, L.S.A., were compelled to seek their training abroad.

All of which facts, no doubt, greatly helped to mould the convictions of the future fervent defender of the principle that women are entitled to equal educational and professional facilities with men.

For herself, however, Millicent Garrett had to be content with such advantages as the period offered. "A governess of the old-fashioned type, who swore by *Mangnall's Questions*," and two years' finishing at a suburban boarding-school, made up, we are told, her scholastic opportunities. But the development of mind is not a question of classes and teachers merely; the best and surest growth is from the inside. The fruits of self-cultivation are incomparably preferable to the hothouse productions of the cramming system, or the artificial "accomplishments" that used to be hung upon young persons, like toys upon a Christmas-tree, during the latter years of their school-life. Millicent Garrett was highly educated in the best meaning of the term. And that she had received precisely the kind of training which was specially adapted to fit her for the part she was destined to play in public as well as private life was soon to be proved.

CHAPTER II.

EYES TO THE BLIND.

WHEN still under twenty years of age the subject of our sketch became acquainted with a most powerful and interesting personality—that of Henry Fawcett, a young Cambridge professor who was visiting in the neighbourhood.

This young man, physically almost a giant, for he stood six feet three inches in height, with corresponding muscular development, was also possessed of that marvellous strength of character which enabled him to triumph grandly over one of the greatest disabilities which a human being can suffer.

Having become totally blind as the result of a gun accident at the age of twenty-five, Henry Fawcett determined on nothing short of a perfect victory over his affliction. He held that “a blind man should act and be treated as far as possible like a seeing man,” and his biographer, Leslie Stephen, tells us that, in accordance with this conviction, he perseveringly kept up those recreations to which before his misfortune he had been devoted. He was very fond of both walking and skating; he cultivated a memory of the paths he had known, and enjoyed unfamiliar ones if his companions would describe to him the scenery they passed through. He was also skilled in horsemanship, and so great were his nerve and his confidence in both himself and the animal he rode that he would join in a gallop with the harriers over Newmarket Heath.

Professor Fawcett's favourite sport, however, was fishing, which, we are told, he pursued “with remarkable

skill and unflagging interest, both in the salmon rivers of the North and the trout streams of Hampshire."

We have mentioned the bodily achievements of this remarkable man before his mental endowments, because in one so heavily handicapped as he they are the more striking, and indicative by their rarity under such circumstances of the spirit which fortified him. But at the time of Henry Fawcett's memorable visit to Aldeburgh he was already Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge and Member of Parliament for Brighton in the Liberal interest.

Such, then, was the man who was one day quite unexpectedly introduced to the Misses Garrett. He came upon them characteristically employed, that is to say, their occupations were fairly representative of their culture and capabilities, for the reading of Shakespeare and the darning of stockings was the entertainment going forward at the time, suggesting that though the minds of these young ladies were cultivated beyond the average it had not been at the expense of what some might consider more useful and feminine accomplishments.

What first drew Professor Fawcett towards Millicent Garrett we are not informed. It was, alas! not her beauty, though of that she possessed more than a common share, for, as a north country mill-girl once said, after seeing young Mrs. Fawcett and hearing her speak, "To think she's so bonny, and . . . *he never see her!*"

On her side, we can well imagine, it was an innate womanliness of nature that the most progressive of theories might not chill or check which inclined her to a life of helpful devotion to the brave blind man. This one fact, that Millicent Garrett was willing to give

herself, in her bright, attractive girlhood, to be the life-companion of one so afflicted, should for ever close the mouths of the few who, irritated by the force of her pleas for the down-trodden of her sex, have at times stigmatised her as a "noisy virago," or ignorantly assumed her to be a kind of man-hating Amazon in "bloomer" costume.

It was in 1867 that Professor Henry Fawcett and Millicent Garrett were married, and very soon after, the young bride began to take an active part in those social movements for which, in the quiet but intellectual home-life at Aldeburgh, she had been unconsciously preparing.

The cause of Women's Suffrage was among the first to appeal to the sympathies of young Mrs. Fawcett, as it has ever been dearest to her heart.

It was during the early days of her married life that she first spoke publicly on behalf of granting the parliamentary vote to women. This was at a meeting convened by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Taylor and John Stuart Mill, and her appearance and manner on that occasion, as well as the quiet reasonableness of her arguments, produced an excellent impression upon her audience.

Notwithstanding the fact that her speech was much less approvingly regarded by certain members of Parliament who came to hear of it, she followed it up by reading an address in favour of the same measure at a public meeting in Brighton.

It was considered by many that Professor Fawcett seriously endangered his prospects in that constituency by allowing his wife's name to be thus openly associated with such unpopular views. But to him, as to her, it was a question of right rather than of popularity. They

risked all for the sake of what they felt to be true justice, and lost nothing.

Truly domesticated, both by tastes and training, it was indeed not in contempt for the home as woman's proper sphere, but in honour of it, and in the endeavour to raise it to its highest ideal, that Mrs. Fawcett left the shade of domestic privacy and mounted the public platform. "It is the home which she wishes to see more considered in our political life." But not until both sexes have their rights equally studied does she believe it possible for women to do their absolute best for their husbands and children.

Mrs. Fawcett's own life as wife and mother has been exemplary. She was most truly her husband's right hand, assisting him and furthering his interests in every possible way, both in public and private; and the Professor, we are assured, "invariably acknowledged with due gratitude the assistance he received from his wife's revision and suggestions." Theirs seems to have been an ideal marriage.

On the occasion already referred to, when Mrs. Fawcett was thrown from her horse at Brighton, her husband's grief, his biographer tells us, was most pathetic to witness. In his blindness, unable to prove for himself how much she was injured, his great love made him even fear and suspect that the worst was being concealed from him, and that when they told him she was unconscious it was only to prepare him for the terrible truth that she was actually dead. Strong, courageous, and self-controlled as we know he was, we are told that he wept passionately.

The next day, when hope was at last assured, he met a large gathering in the Dome, and in thanking his constituency for past support, said that if he had over-

come obstacles, it was because of assistance given him by others, and because he had had "a helpmate whose political judgment was much less frequently at fault than his own." And this, those who knew him best have testified, was no empty phrase, but the expression of his genuine feeling.

"There were times," says a writer in *Great Thoughts*, commenting on the singularly harmonious domestic relations of this gifted pair, "when she being temporarily absent, he would put off a decision of great moment in his career until he was able to obtain her opinion, and on all occasions he was acutely sensible of the value of her advice and encouragement."

Of the benefits which Professor Fawcett himself conferred on the country, we may only speak in passing. Best known to many people as "the blind Postmaster-General," he will always be gratefully remembered as the inaugurator of the useful Parcel Post which came into operation in 1882, and of the cheapened telegrams instituted a few years later. Always an earnest advocate of thrift, he encouraged small depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank by the introduction of "stamp-slip deposits," whereby the poorest labourer or the smallest schoolboy may save up a penny at a time by buying postage stamps and sticking them one by one on a form provided for the purpose, until the number of twelve being reached, they will be entered as a shilling deposit in the Savings Bank.

Professor Fawcett, inspired and assisted by his wife, also took especial pleasure in the extension of Post Office appointments to women, and hundreds of girl-clerks and sorters now so pleasantly and lucratively employed at St. Martin's-le-Grand and Queen Victoria Street have him to thank in great measure for their present position.

It is sad to think that so useful a life should have been cut short in its prime, but so it was. Professor Fawcett died in November, 1884, after a brief illness, from pleurisy and congestion of the lungs, during which he was attended by his wife's sister, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, and Sir Andrew Clark.

Very touching letters Mrs. Fawcett received from her husband's working-men admirers at this time, proving the gratitude with which his efforts and advice had been regarded.

One epistle, signed by four carpenters, two bricklayers, a blacksmith, a postmaster, and a clerk, expressed the feeling that they had "lost a personal friend, and that a great man had gone from us." Another, with singular straightforwardness and simplicity, says that "several of his old friends at Brighton Railway Works has wished me to ask you privately how you are situated in a pecuniary sense," and goes on to beg her to accept a "penny subscription" from the working classes of this country "for the public and striking services rendered by one of the best men since Edmund Burke."

Happily, the widow, while deeply affected by the kind and generous feeling which prompted this offer, was able to reply that "her husband's forethought and prudence had left her in a position to make it improper for her to accept either a pension or a subscription."

To this the writer of the letter responded, "Our men at the Railway Works say that you are entitled to all honour for refusing a pension or subscription from the working men; also that your dear husband and our best friend has practised what he always preached to us—private thrift."

It would be well if all moralists and teachers could win a like tribute to the consistency of their maxims with their own rule of life.

CHAPTER III.

THE MOTHER OF A SENIOR WRANGLER

ANY record of the life and work of Mrs. Fawcett would be signally incomplete without something beyond a casual reference to her proudest achievement, namely, the successful rearing of that *rara avis*, a lady senior wrangler.

The union of Professor Fawcett and his wife was blessed with but one child, a girl, who received the name of Philippa.

When this little maiden was still only a baby her mother had already begun to take keen interest in the higher education of women; and the first meeting for the purpose of organising lectures for ladies in connection with the University of Cambridge was held in Mrs. Fawcett's drawing-room.

The result of this meeting was, first, a course of lectures, which were so appreciated that no less than eighty ladies availed themselves of the privilege of attending it; next, the establishment of a residence near Cambridge for women students; and, lastly, in 1875, the founding of Newnham College itself, of which Miss Philippa Fawcett, as "a case"—to again quote Miss Tooley—"of poetic justice not often met with in real life," was destined to become the most distinguished student.

Little Philippa was from her earliest years encouraged in that self-reliance and independence which her mother so highly values as a basis of human character. While quite young she was allowed to go out unattended, and

guarded only by the maternal admonition that "Nobody ever gets run over except foolish people."

Later on, when, making her daily journeys to Clapham High School and back, the child was annoyed by certain rude specimens of the rougher sex, she had spirit enough to turn and send them flying with an onslaught from her stout umbrella. Indeed, it was one article in Miss Philippa's social creed that a girl was as good as a boy any day, if not better. "She had never learned to rest content as a woman with the second rate and second best deemed proper for women"; and she measured her own attainments, not with those of other girls, but with the performances of the youths with whom she competed in examinations.

As to physical culture, we may be sure that Mrs. Fawcett's daughter was not trammelled by antiquated proprieties, or hindered in the development of limb and muscle by the ridiculous prohibitions as to this and that which a "young lady" might not attempt to do, prevailing in Millicent Garrett's own girlhood, and, as some of us remember to our cost, even a few years later.

A pretty water-colour portrait of Miss Fawcett at the age of twelve seems to us fairly characteristic of the child and her up-bringing. Perched in a most unconventionally comfortable attitude in the fork of a cherry tree, clad in a loose blouse, a shady hat, and tennis shoes, the little maiden sits absorbed in a book. We are quite prepared to imagine that this is a treatise on Latin grammar or mathematics, in both of which she signally excelled, but it may have been a book of fairy tales, which would certainly seem more in harmony with the reader's sylvan surroundings. For the Senior Wrangler, in her childhood, "romped and ran wild in field and garden like a young colt," played

with dolls, and listened to silly stories as most ordinary little girls will do if allowed the chance. Simple feminine accomplishments were not meanwhile neglected. Mrs. Fawcett is an expert needlewoman herself, and her daughter, we are assured, "can make everything she wears except her boots."

Mrs. Fawcett was, however, one of those wise parents who do not expect perfection in every branch of learning from every child, and she was among the first to recognise the fact, now pretty generally acknowledged, that for a girl without special musical taste to spend hours upon hours practising on the piano is waste of energy that might be turned to better account.

Philippa did not "take to" music, as the phrase goes, and she was not forced to study it. Languages were her delight, and her progress in Latin, we are told, "soon taxed the teaching resources of a girls' 'High School,' and nearly determined her upon a classical course of study." From thence she went to University College, and there was "neck-and-neck in successive trials with the two or three men who fell just behind her in the final test of the Tripos."

But it was Newnham College, in June, 1890, which beheld Miss Fawcett's most brilliant success. In that year scholastic circles were thrilled, and the advocates of the higher education of women were enthusiastically triumphant at the news that Miss Philippa Fawcett had been placed "above the Senior Wrangler" in the great contest of the mathematical year at Cambridge. "On the same day," to quote once more from an able article on Mrs. Fawcett and her daughter in *The Review of Reviews*, to which we are already considerably indebted, "a party of processionists returning from Hyde Park went round by Mrs. Fawcett's house in Gower Street

and mingled with hearty cheers the cries of 'Mrs. Fawcett!' and 'Senior Wrangler!'"

A proud moment, truly, for both mother and daughter, and a unique event in the annals of education. A less sensible mother, a less humble-minded, simple-hearted student might well have had their heads turned by it. But great honours, unlike great riches, seldom come to those who are unfit to carry them, and the intellects of this remarkable pair are too well trained, too thoroughly ballasted with common-sense, for them to be unbalanced even by a victory which brought their names into nearly every newspaper, and sent them echoing half over the English-speaking world.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHAMPION OF HER SEX.

IT was when reading aloud to her blind husband, for the purpose of assisting him in his duties as Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge, that young Mrs. Fawcett became most deeply interested in that subject herself.

The result was that, in conjunction with the Professor, she produced a volume of *Essays and Lectures*; she also wrote *Political Economy for Beginners* in 1870, and *Tales in Political Economy* a few years later.

The question of Women's Suffrage, as we have seen, also evoked the sympathy and support of the youthful matron at an age when many girls have barely outgrown the limited ideas of the schoolroom.

We may here briefly state for the benefit of those

who may as yet be not quite clear on the subject, a few of the reasons which have led Mrs. Fawcett and the



Photo by Owen,]

MISS PHILIPPA FAWCETT.

[Salisbury.

SENIOR WRANGLER, 1890.

many who agree with her, to their firm conviction that the hitherto silent sex should have a voice in the framing of the statutes which they are called upon to obey.

In the first place, it is notorious that the laws dealing with the relationship of the sexes, with morality, with divorce, and with many of the questions affecting the welfare of children which arise out of these, are not just and equal. The advantage is greatly on the man's side. Nay, more; a good woman has often a poor chance against a bad man. In some circumstances an immoral father may claim and enforce the control of his children instead of his virtuous wife. And in cases where both parents have done wrong the disgrace and responsibility fall far more heavily on the woman than on the man, though she is generally much less able to bear it.

Mr. Gladstone himself, when speaking on the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill in 1871, admitted that the Divorce Act introduced a "new and gross inequality against women, and in favour of men," and that in other matters connected with the question of matrimonial infidelity "the English law does women much less than justice." In conclusion, although unable to give his full support to the Bill under consideration, the great Liberal leader besought all those "who wished well to their country" to devise some means by which women could exercise political influence "through a safe and well-adjusted alteration in the law as to political power."

One M.P., however, opposed the above measure so violently and in such coarse terms that, as is the case with all excessive and intolerant opposition, he really did the cause more good than harm, for in many cases his speech aroused the sympathy of those who were previously indifferent. "If that is how men speak of women," said some, "it is not fit that they should have the uncontrolled power of making laws for them."

Nevertheless, the Women's Suffrage societies, to quote from Mrs. Fawcett's own able article on "The Woman Question in Europe," "seek for the suffrage on behalf of those women, and those women only, who fulfil all the qualifications which the law demands of the male elector; that is, for householders in boroughs, the owners of freeholds, and the renters of land and houses above a certain value in counties. . . . Whether these conditions are in themselves expedient . . . is another matter which it concerns the community very seriously to consider; it is, however, the principle on which Women's Suffrage societies have always acted not to enter in any way into the general question of the conditions imposed on electors, but to say to Parliament and to the English people, 'You have fixed these conditions as you believe to be for the best; you have spent years in considering what they shall be; we accept your decision, and only ask that all who fulfil these conditions shall be admitted to the privileges they confer.'"

That most avenues of remunerative employment were wholly closed to women at the time Mrs. Fawcett commenced her campaign, and that this constituted another serious grievance is indisputable, the experiences of her own sister furnishing a fair example of the treatment an enterprising woman was likely to receive from the sex which was in possession of nearly every post worth having. And, worse still, before the passing of the Married Women's Property Act in 1882 a husband had complete control over all possessions given or left to his wife, as well as all moneys earned by her personal labour, and might sell, spend, or make away with them in any manner he pleased.

All these things considered, it seemed to Mrs. Fawcett

that for women householders, contributing to the revenues of the country in equal proportion to the men, to still be debarred from representation in the making of the laws and from having any control over the national expenditure, was an injustice not to be passively endured. To again quote her own words, the granting of the vote to women seemed "the only means of cleansing the Statute Book from the laws that are oppressive to their sex."

So she arose to use her voice, her gift of clear exposition, her persuasiveness of address, and the advantages of her social position, on behalf of her dumb sisters. She spoke to the masses in school-houses and halls all over the country, and to the classes in their own drawing-rooms. The latter gatherings, we are told, were often attended by ladies who could not be induced to go to a public Suffrage meeting, and Miss Tooley relates that she heard one lady, "who was evidently a rabid opponent of Women's Suffrage, and had come under protest to a friend's house to hear Mrs. Fawcett speak, say, 'Well, I do think Mrs. Fawcett ought to have the vote,' though," adds Miss Tooley, "she seemed doubtful whether it would be safe to extend female Suffrage further."

Mrs. Fawcett also feels and speaks warmly of the duties and responsibilities of parents and others having the care of children. Liberal and advanced as are her views on the subject of education, she is by no means in favour of relieving the thriftless father of all concern about his children's schooling by making it free to all and unbranded by the stigma of pauperism. Indeed, she advocates no system, however merciful and beautiful it may seem to amiable people who do not go very deeply into things, that may tend to weaken individual

character and the sense of personal responsibility. She would have every human being trained to stand up bravely upon his or her own feet, to be nobly independent, and to resist temptation to sin.

To the moral dangers which beset young women and girls Mrs. Fawcett is keenly alive. She was among the, in some quarters, much misrepresented band who espoused the cause of the overworked children employed in Christmas pantomimes, and sought to bring them under the protection of the Factory Acts, while the National Vigilance Association has ever found in her a warm and practical supporter.

Thirty years ago, when Mrs. Fawcett commenced her efforts for the good of her fellow-women, it was so remarkable a thing for a female voice to be heard in public that she and her friends ventured only to read papers, instead of making speeches in the ordinary way.

From the first, however, this pioneer among lady lecturers had the countenance and support of the majority of the most intellectual women of the time. At the earliest meetings at which she spoke, at the Assembly Rooms, Manchester, in 1868, in Birmingham in the same year, and in London in 1869, she had the sympathy if not the personal presence of such women as Mrs. Somerville, Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, Mrs. Browning, Miss Anna Swanwick, Miss Cobbe, Mrs. Grote, Mrs. Ritchie (Miss Thackeray), Miss Mary Carpenter, and Mrs. Jameson.

At a gathering of women held in St. James's Hall, London, some ten years later, Mrs. Fawcett found herself in the company of quite an imposing array of lady speakers, which included Lady Harberton, Mrs. Scatcherd, Mrs. Shearer, Miss Becker, Miss Tod (of Belfast), Miss Biggs, Mrs. Alfred Osler, Mrs. MacLaren

and her sister, Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. Helen Clark (eldest daughter of John Bright), Miss Jessie Craigen, Miss Jane Cobden, Mrs. Fawcett's cousin, Miss Rhoda Garrett (of architectural and house-decorating fame), and many others.

At this and similar meetings held in the chief towns of England about that time, we are told that there were "overwhelming crowds and great enthusiasm, accompanied by perfect order and good temper."

As to the propriety of a woman standing upon a public platform to say anything she may have to say that is worth saying, there is nowadays very little inimical opinion; but for the conversion of any who may yet have doubts on the subject, as well as to afford a fair specimen of Mrs. Fawcett's style of oratory, we cannot do better than quote part of her reply, uttered at Bristol, in March, 1871, to those who at that time considered that if women had votes they would lose all refinement and delicacy, and in fact cease to be women in the truest sense.

"How can a reasonable being," she asked, "for one moment believe that any act which is not shameful and disgraceful in itself can deprive a woman of her womanliness? Women have stood on the battlefield, with blood and carnage on every side of them and the air heavy with the groans of the dying. Have they been less true to womanhood and to humanity because they have cast aside the fear of danger to themselves and endured sickening sights and sounds for the sake of relieving the sufferings of others? Shakespeare makes many of his heroines do things which would be considered very strange in these days. In one of his plays he speaks of a woman being unsexed. Who is it? Not Portia, who donned the doctor's robe and pleaded

as an advocate in a court of law ; not the quick-witted Beatrice, who longed to be a man to avenge the wrongs done to her cousin ; not Helena, the physician. None of these, but Lady Macbeth, the perpetrator, for the sake of ambition, of the most revolting crimes. She was unsexed by actions which would transform anyone—man or woman—who committed them into a fiend. No act which is itself innocent can deprive a woman of her womanhood."

As to the effect of Mrs. Fawcett's speeches upon her hearers, a critic has said : "The first test of a speaker's success is popularity. . . . Judged by this criterion alone, Mrs. Fawcett's power is most remarkable ; for whether she is announced to speak at an East End People's Palace or in a fashionable drawing-room, an overflowing audience is invariably gathered to hear her. . . . Her attitude to those who differ from her is marked by a spirit of conciliation, and her endeavour always is first to understand the difficulties which they feel, and then to meet and explain them. Her speeches afford not only a keen intellectual pleasure, but are pervaded by a fine literary sense and enlivened by abundant flashes of humour."

Concerning the progress made by the cause of Women's Suffrage during all these years of toil and struggle, Mrs. Fawcett has lately expressed herself as feeling great satisfaction. "The most important advance," she remarked to an interviewer, "has been the second reading of the Suffrage Bill (in 1897), and the most encouraging feature of the spread of Suffrage views amongst all classes of women was the response made to the canvass in 1894-5. More than a quarter of a million of women signed the Suffrage petition."

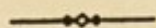
In addition to the works on political economy already

mentioned and her one novel, *Janet Doncaster*, Mrs. Fawcett has written a volume of female biography, entitled, *Some Eminent Women of our Time*, and a *Life of Queen Victoria*, which was published in 1895. The article on Professor Henry Fawcett in the 1888 edition of *Chambers's Encyclopædia* is also from her pen.

To sum up our brief sketch of the life and work of Millicent Garrett Fawcett, we may say, in the words of an admiring but in no sense extravagantly partial reviewer, that "whether as the author of the standard textbook of political economy, whether pleading in sweet tones the cause of the weak and helpless, or whether labouring to promote the cause of female Suffrage, she stands distinguished alike for purity of motive, for logical common-sense and for gentle, womanly sympathy."

To which another adds a dictum in which most people will agree, that "to the advocates of women's enfranchisement it has been an incalculable advantage to have the support of one upon whose ability, taste, and discretion they can at all times rely."

Mrs. Gladstone.



CHAPTER I.

“HIGH HOPES ARE THINE, O ELDEST FLOWER!”

IT has been said that children are the greatest discovery of the nineteenth century, and it is certainly true that during the past fifty years people's eyes have been opened and their interest awakened to both the charm and the importance of childhood in a manner undreamed of when our grandparents were little ones. This is probably one reason why, while so much has been noticed and recorded respecting the infancy of most of our famous contemporaries, scarcely anything seems to be known of the juvenile days of those who were born early in the century.

Though there is a possibility of our being overdone with the bright sayings and clever doings of youngsters of the present generation, we feel that the interest of a biography is greatly enhanced by some account of the budding years of its subject, in which may perhaps be traced a forecast of gifted maturity, or at least a hint as to how a notable character commenced its development. We are, therefore, the more regretful that scarcely any record appears to be extant of the childhood of the heroine of our latest sketch.

Mrs. Gladstone, *née* Catherine Glynne, was born on January 5th, 1812, and was the daughter of Sir Stephen Glynne, whose wife was the Hon. Mary Neville. She was named after her grandmother, the latter being sister to the first Marquis of Buckingham.

The little one first saw the light at Hawarden Castle, in Flintshire, where also, eighty-eight years later, her last breath expired.

The village of Hawarden is six miles from Chester, and, perched at a height of 250 feet from sea-level, overlooks a considerable portion of Cheshire and the estuary of the Dee. It boasts but a single winding street, about half a mile in length.

The old castle of Hawarden is a picturesque ruin. From the flower-garden of the new castle, which stands beneath its shadow, "a wide sweep of lawn, flanked by majestic oaks and beeches, carries the eye up to the foot-bridge crossing the moat, thence to the ivy-mantled walls which overhang it, and upward again to the flag-topped tower which crowns the height. Clustering ivy and foliage here and there intervening serve to soften and beautify the mouldering remains. The scene brings to mind the words of the poet—

"'The old order changeth, giving place to new.'

All around us former scenes of rapine and violence are changed to fertility and peace. The old castle well serves to illustrate the contrast. Its hugely solid walls, reared six hundred years ago with so much pains and skill to repel invaders and overawe the lawless, are themselves abandoned to solitude and decay. Within arches which once echoed to the clang of arms the owls have their home, while rooks from the tree-tops around seem to chant the requiem of the past."

And, as the writer of the above might have added, the beautiful church, the orphanage, and the free library further emphasise the difference between the ideas of feudal times and those of the enlightened present.

This interesting relic of olden days was visited in 1819 by the King of the Belgians, and one of the doors has ever since been called after him, in memory of the event. Some years later the Duchess of Kent and the young Princess Victoria were guests at Hawarden Castle, and the visitors' book contains their signatures in autograph. The little royal lady could scarcely then have dreamed that she and the other young girl, a few years her senior, who doubtless had the honour of presentation to the Princess on that occasion, would be ranked among the most famous good and noble women of the century and the very few who should live to see that century's close.

While still in the heyday of her youth and beauty Lady Glynne was left a widow, with an important estate to manage for her eight-year-old son, little Sir Stephen, and three other young children to bring up—Henry, who was afterwards for many years Rector of Hawarden, Catherine, then aged about three, and her tiny sister Mary. One of Mrs. Gladstone's earliest and most lasting recollections was the intense fear and horror with which she regarded the "mutes," then indispensable to grand funerals, who stood about the castle while her dead father lay in state.

Fortunately for Lady Glynne, her brother, shortly before this unhappy event, had been made Rector of Hawarden. The Hon. and Rev. George Neville Grenville was a man of considerable force of character, and assisted the bereaved lady greatly in her responsible task. Hawarden was in those days on the mail coach

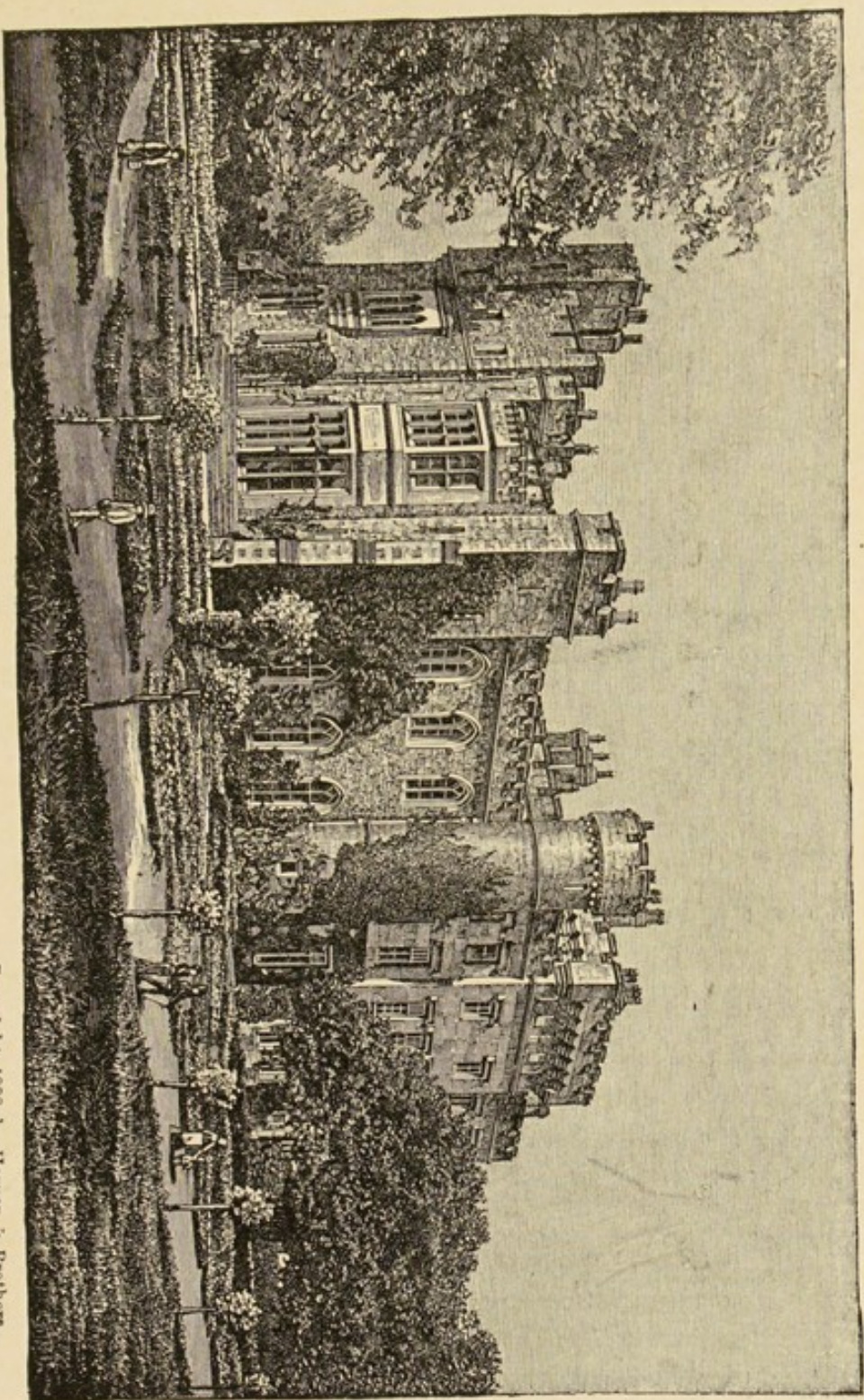
route from London to Holyhead, and had earned a somewhat undesirable reputation on the score of orderliness and sobriety. One of the first steps which Mr. Glynne took towards the reformation of the village was, with his sister's concurrence, to close the worst of the public-houses on the estate, leaving but two, the "Glynne Arms" and another.

He next began to consider the best means for educating the hitherto neglected villagers' children, and has been called the pioneer of popular elementary education in this remote corner of the country. A good deal of indifference, if not prejudice, had to be overcome at the outset. Parents required bribing to dispense with their children's services and the pence earned by them in field work, in order to let them spend their time in school. And in this work the rector found his sister and young nieces able and willing coadjutors. They prepared and gave gifts of warm and attractive clothing every Christmas to the boys and girls who had attended school regularly during the year.

Apparently, to get the youngsters inside the school walls was the great thing to be attained; what they learned, if anything, was of minor importance, for a visitor to Hawarden was lately talking to a very old inhabitant, who boasted that she was, as a child, the recipient of one of these coveted prizes many years in succession, and yet she had remained utterly illiterate.

"How was it, then, Mrs. C——," asked the visitor, "that you never learned to read or write?"

"Oh," replied the old dame unblushingly, "I never wanted to; I never tried. But I liked the pretty frock or warm cloak the Miss Glynnes always gave us for prizes at Christmas-time if we went to school regular."



From Harper's Magazine.

HAWARDEN CASTLE, THE BIRTHPLACE AND HOME OF MRS. GLADSTONE.

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Adding, "Bless you! you should have seen the prizes in those days! They were worth looking at. None of your books and rubbish like what children get in these days."

The new castle of Hawarden, which, though brick-built, was cased in stone and castellated, that it might not seem incongruous beside the grand old ruin already described, stands in a lovely park of 250 acres in extent, which is well stocked with deer. "Its banks and glades," to borrow again from the picturesque writer quoted before, "richly timbered and overgrown with bracken, afford from various points beautiful views over the plain of Chester, with the bold projections of the Frodshams and Peckforton Hills." Thus amid scenes of great natural beauty, grand trees, grassy slopes, and romantic waterfalls, did little Catherine Glynne pass her earliest and most impressionable years.

The children of the Castle were simply and quietly brought up. Their mother devoted herself entirely to them, entering but little into society. There is no doubt that a benevolent care for her poorer neighbours and a love for philanthropic work generally was implanted in Mrs. Gladstone's heart from her childish days. As the Miss Glynnes grew up, regular visits were paid to the Metropolis, and occasional journeys taken to other parts of the country. During a winter sojourn at Hastings the young ladies and their mother stayed at a house next door to that occupied by the Princes George of Cambridge and George of Hanover with their tutor. An acquaintance was formed which "ripened into mutual regard," and we are told that "to the end of her life Mrs. Gladstone had no warmer friend and admirer than the Duke of Cambridge."

The sisters were by this time known as "the beautiful

Miss Glynnnes," and "the twin flowers of North Wales." The salubrious air of their native place, and the out-of-door exercises of riding, rowing, walking, and archery, in which, rather than in studious pursuits, Catherine specially delighted, had enhanced their hereditary beauty with the bloom of health. A portrait of the charming pair which hangs on the walls of Hawarden Castle depicts them in falling ringlets, long sashes, and skirts full from the waist. The arm of the elder encircles the shoulders of the younger, and the features of our heroine are described as "regular; the nose, though well shaped, a little long; the mouth like a rosebud; the chin soft and round"; and even the engravings of this picture indicate that "the cheeks had not only the soft roundness, but the dazzling colour of the young English girl's complexion." The sisters had also a reputation for great pride of race—of which, however, they are said to have been wholly devoid—that served to discourage too self-confident suitors who might otherwise have been tempted by their beauty and wealth.

It was about the year 1834 that Miss Catherine Glynnne, at a West End dinner party, met a young Oxford friend of her brother, named William Gladstone. This individual was gifted with a remarkably handsome person, and a voice, in speaking or singing, equally beautiful. He had in his Eton days been the life and soul of the *Eton Miscellany*, which he edited, and now already for two years had represented Newark in the House of Commons. It was either on this occasion, or on one of the many subsequent dinner or musical parties in London at which the two young people were fellow-guests, that a mutual friend bade Miss Glynnne "mark that young man," adding, "he will one day be Prime Minister of England."

In 1835 Sir Stephen Glynne invited his old chum to Hawarden, but notwithstanding a reciprocity of admiration between the pair who were destined to subsequently spend a long and happy life together, either the modesty of the gentleman or the coyness of the lady prevented any understanding coming to pass at that time between them.

They parted, and three years passed away. This period was partly occupied by Mr. Gladstone in writing his first book, *The State in its Relations with the Church*; and on its completion his eyesight was found to be so much overstrained by the continuous application that an oculist prescribed a winter in Italy, with complete rest. And Mr. Gladstone, for the close of 1838 and beginning of 1839, repaired to Rome.

We can imagine how his eager spirit, bounding with the energy of youth and voracious for study, must have chafed against this enforced idleness, and indeed, a failure of the most precious sense thus early in a promising career was a seemingly sad augury. Yet this dark cloud was lined with even more than silver, for its sunny side was glorified with the brightest gold of joy.

Lady Glynne, with her son Sir Stephen and her lovely daughters, still unmarried, were also wintering in Rome, and once more Catherine and Mr. Gladstone were thrown into each other's society. The publication of the above-named book by the latter, which had met with very favourable criticisms from the most capable reviewers, had greatly enhanced his political and social prestige, and he waxed bold to pay Miss Glynne open and unmistakable attention. Soon followed the announcement that they were engaged.

It is said that the actual proposal took place one

night when the young couple joined in a torchlight visit to the Coliseum, and that the lover led up to his crucial declaration by an apt quotation from Lord Byron's *Manfred*, commencing

"Upon such a night I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome."

However that may be, Mrs. Gladstone was wont to confess that it was the extraordinary beauty, eloquence, and poetry of Mr. Gladstone's conversation on that memorable evening which finally won her heart.

Meanwhile, another love affair had been satisfactorily progressing between the younger Miss Glynne and Lord Lyttelton, so that both Catherine and Mary were betrothed about the same time; and the double wedding took place at Hawarden Church on July 25th, 1839, the officiating clergyman being uncle of the sister-brides, the Hon. and Rev. George Neville Grenville, Rector of Hawarden.

To those who are amused by the style and diction of newspaper reporters of more than half a century ago, the following extract from *The Chester Chronicle* of July 26th, 1839, may not be uninteresting:—

"The procession slowly proceeded through the town, every window being filled with elegantly attired females, all sporting bridal favours, and the happy principals of the day's festivities were greeted with loud cheers and the waving of handkerchiefs. On arriving at the avenue leading to the parish church the good feeling of the inhabitants had induced them to cover the carriage road with rich carpeting, and school children were ranged on each side. The footsteps of the brides expectant were strewn with flowers by beautiful children. The parish church was crammed with females to suffocation. The

service was read in a most imposing manner by the Hon. and Rev. Neville Grenville, and at the close of the ceremony the brace of happy couples were warmly greeted by their friends and connections. The bridesmaids on this happy occasion were Miss Wynne, the Hon. Miss Lawley, Miss Gladstone, and the three Miss Nevilles.

"Immediately after the ceremony, Lord and Lady Lyttelton set off in their travelling carriage to spend the honeymoon at his lordship's splendid mansion, Hagley, near Stourbridge, Worcestershire, and Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone to Norton Priory, the hospitable seat of Sir Richard Brooke, Bart."

It is related that one of the villagers of Hawarden, seeing the two bridegrooms together for the first time without knowing one from the other, was so much struck by the "aristocratic pallor" of Mr. Gladstone's face that he exclaimed, "Well, there's no mistaking which is the lord!"

Sir Francis Doyle, one of the most famous of Mr. Gladstone's gifted contemporaries at Eton, officiated as best man, and celebrated the occasion in a poem, entitled "The Sister-Brides." The lines devoted to Mrs. Gladstone were as follows:—

"High hopes are thine, O eldest flower!
Great duties to be greatly done;
To soothe, in many a toil-worn hour,
The noble heart which thou hast won.

"Covet not, then, the rest of those
Who sleep through life unknown to fame;
Fate grants not passionless repose
To her who weds a glorious name.

"He presses on, through calm and storm,
Unshaken, let what will betide;
Thou hast an office to perform,
To be his answering spirit-bride.

"The path appointed for his feet
Through desert wilds and rocks may go,
Where the eye looks in vain to greet
The gales that from the waters blow.

"Be thou a balmy breeze to him,
A fountain singing at his side;
A star whose light is never dim,
A pillar through the waste to guide."

CHAPTER II.

"TWO CHERRIES UPON ONE STALK."

THE phrase with which we have headed this chapter was the appellation bestowed by Bishop Wilberforce upon young Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone before they had been married three months, so impressed was he by the ready assimilation of the bride's mind and character to the stronger nature of her husband.

It is said that at the outset of their wedded life Mr. Gladstone, "forecasting his probable career," gave his wife her choice between two alternatives: she might be content to know nothing of his political plans and secrets, and be free from responsibility, or she might know everything on condition of being pledged to inviolable secrecy. She chose, as most wives would, the latter alternative, and throughout the sixty years that she enjoyed the complete confidence of her statesman husband she behaved with an amount of discretion and self-control that won from him the testimony that "my wife has known every political secret I ever had, and has never betrayed my confidence."

On one occasion, indeed, soon after their marriage, Mrs. Gladstone *almost* let slip a hint as to some important fact of which she was in possession, but checking

herself in time, she hurried from the room and at once penned a note of apology to her husband, which she sent in by a servant. Almost immediately the young wife's perturbed mind was relieved by an answer in some such words as these: "Dearest C.,—Don't blame yourself. I don't blame you. It is the only little mistake you ever made.—Your affectionate W. E. G."

In later years Mrs. Gladstone acquired a knack of parrying without offence the ventures of the inquisitive, which was a source of amusement and admiration to her friends. To the common question, "What is Mr. Gladstone going to do about—this, or that?" she would reply, with a smile of childlike innocence, "Well, I wonder, don't you? What do you think he ought to do?"

It was during the first winter after their marriage that an accident occurred which might have robbed the happy bride of her husband and altered the destinies of the world. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were staying at Hawarden Castle, which had not yet become their home, and the former had gone out shooting with his brother-in-law, the Rev. Henry Glynne.

It was some hours before they returned, and Mrs. Gladstone was at the window watching for them when they approached the house. With a thrill of horror she noticed that her husband's left arm was carried in a sling, while the ashen pallor of her brother's face told that something serious had occurred. The fact was that Mr. Gladstone, having set down his gun among some brambles, a trail had somehow caught the trigger and discharged the loaded barrel into his left hand, the first finger of which was completely blown away. He ever afterwards wore a black finger-stall to conceal the disfigured stump.

This calls to mind a somewhat similar, though less alarming, disaster that happened to Mrs. Gladstone herself many years later, which serves to illustrate the self-effacing devotion to her husband and his interests which was the keynote of her whole life.

Driving with him one evening to the House of Commons, Mrs. Gladstone had the misfortune to get one of her fingers smashed in the carriage door, and twisting the injured member into her handkerchief, she bore the pain in heroic silence rather than disturb the current of his thoughts by the knowledge of her accident and risk spoiling by possible uneasiness on her behalf the power of his intended speech.

In care for her husband's health Mrs. Gladstone seems to have combined the solicitude of a mother and a doctor with that of a wife. Like many another who has lived to an advanced age, the great statesman's youth scarcely gave promise of the robustness of his later life, and her skill and judgment won from him the testimony that "my wife is no inconsiderable physician." Most people who saw and heard Mr. Gladstone speak were familiar with the yellowish mixture in a bottle—irreverently nicknamed "the pomatum-pot"—where-with he was wont to sustain his vocal strength during any special effort. This cordial, compounded of egg and other ingredients, was prepared by Mrs. Gladstone's own hands, and she often, upon a public platform, would hand it to him herself. In the home she constantly acted as a buffer between her husband's sensitive, highly strung temperament and the commoner worries of life, shielding him from everything that might arouse "the vulnerable temper and impetuous moods" which were a characteristic of him in his prime. In his speech-making tours she accompanied him, attending with

nurselike vigilance to his every want; in visits to friends' houses her tender watchfulness and even gentle tyranny sometimes gave rise to some amusement among those who witnessed it, while her loving persistence in accompanying her idolised husband, no matter what the weather, in his walks and drives greatly tended to strengthen her own constitution and fortify her health. There were even those who said that as years went on Mrs. Gladstone grew to resemble in feature the dear one whom she so adored, until her face "became the mild counterpart of her great husband's, with all the womanly sweetness that replaced his expression of aquiline energy and stern decision." At the House of Commons Mrs. Gladstone was a constant attendant, sitting for hours in the Ladies' Gallery listening to his longest speeches with rapt admiration and delight.

Theirs was indeed an ideal union, a perfect home. The Countess of Aberdeen, an intimate and devoted friend of both Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, has said that "as you crossed that threshold you felt that you came into no ordinary atmosphere. . . . It has all been so often described. Mr. Gladstone's morning walk, by the woodland path he had made, to the daily eight o'clock service at the parish church; Mrs. Gladstone gathering her household together for family prayers; the rich and varied conversation at meal times, or during walks and drives; the instant and regular resumption of work at the appointed hours; the consideration shown to every member of the household, each of whom seemed to be an object of solicitous interest; the wide sympathies flowing out from that home to all who were in trouble and sorrow, whether the sufferers dwelt in palaces or in lowly cottages; the orphanage at the Castle gates; and the innumerable agencies for good in which

a personal share was taken by the family ; the sense of duty first and pleasure afterwards which pervaded all the daily routine ; the personal devotion to the Queen and her service, shown whenever her name was mentioned. These are but a few of the memories which are left with us of surroundings which must have been lived amongst to be understood."

It was, we should have observed, only a few years after the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone that the birthplace of the latter became their permanent home.

Sir Stephen Glynne, being still a bachelor, was, owing to serious financial losses, glad for his sister and her husband to share Hawarden Castle with him and bear part of the expense of maintaining it. He remained the head of the house, while Mrs. Gladstone assumed the position of its mistress, and Mr. Gladstone himself "held something like the place of an honoured guest, an admirable arrangement which relieved him from responsibility, and left him free for his own pursuits.

Eight children in all were born to Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. The eldest, William Henry, in June, 1840, and the youngest, Herbert, in 1854. One daughter, Catherine, died in childhood ; another married the Rev. Edward Wickham, now Dean of Lincoln ; another, wife of the Rev. Harry Drew, is the mother of Mr. Gladstone's pet grandchild, Dorothy.

The only unmarried daughter, Miss Helen Gladstone, became Vice-Principal of Newnham College ; while the remaining two sons are Mr. Stephen and Mr. Henry Gladstone. The eldest son died in recent years, but with the exception of this bereavement and that of the little girl above-mentioned, the family circle was unbroken.

When Sir Stephen Glynne died, in 1874, Hawarden

Castle estate passed, according to his will, to his sister's eldest son, but the Castle was to remain the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone to the close of their lives.

Mr. Gladstone fully appreciated the value of his wife's loving devotion and the preciousness of that ideal home-life which, as he himself testified, was "a source of unclouded and unvarying consolation, without a break, without a shadow, without a change." When, nine years after the celebration of their golden wedding, the Grand Old Man was called to his rest, she—of whom he half a century before had said, "If anything happens to Catherine, I should close the volume and close it for ever"—she, tender and true to the last, was at his side, and with her hand in his and the words "Kindness! nothing but kindness!" on his lips, he peacefully passed away.

CHAPTER III.

AN IDEAL WOMAN.

NO one, it has been said, would have called Mrs. Gladstone an intellectual woman; some even, deceived by the at times almost childlike simplicity of her manner and the worshipful admiration with which she looked up to her gifted husband, might have fancied her rather the reverse, but this would have been a great mistake.

Nevertheless, though Mrs. Gladstone was essentially a womanly rather than a bookish woman, and it was as wife, mother, nurse, and sympathetic friend of the poor and suffering that she especially shone, it is possible, had she belonged to a later generation, that among the recent developments of her sex that of the lady

doctor might have exercised a fascination over her, as she really possessed some practical knowledge of medicine, and had even dared to differ from her husband on the subject of vaccination. It may not be generally known, too, that as recently as four years before her death, at the earnest solicitation of an enterprising American editor, she wrote an article on the bringing up of children for the *Philadelphia Ladies' Home Journal*, and is said to have received for this contribution the highest rate of remuneration ever paid for an article on a purely domestic subject by the editor of a ladies' paper.

Mrs. Gladstone was also the author of one of the official handbooks published by William Clowes and Son, at the time when the International Health Exhibition was being held in London; it was entitled *Healthy Nurseries and Bedrooms*, a pamphlet of fifty pages in length. This book has been described as "well arranged, and singularly clear in its phraseology. Every sentence and every quotation seem to point to an author who had not only practical experience in the tending of her own children or grandchildren, but who had also a keen sympathy for the children of less fortunately situated parents."

Mrs. Gladstone was, moreover, an indefatigable writer of letters, and during her long life she had numbered among her correspondence "letters of the highest interest from the most famous personages, royal, political, and ecclesiastical, of the present reign." She was constant in writing to her children when away from home, and her son-in-law, the Rev. Harry Drew, has uttered his belief that when the full story of Mrs. Gladstone's life is made public and her "wonderful letters" see the light of day, the world at large will realise that in her

we have lost from our midst one of the greatest and most remarkable women of this century.

But the love and tenderness lavished upon our heroine's husband and innermost home circle was not confined to them; her abounding kindness of heart flowed out to all with whom she came in contact. A few instances of this sweet geniality of disposition will suffice as illustrations, before we pass on to speak of Mrs. Gladstone's greater and more public acts of charity.

A clergyman records the following in the *Daily News*:—

"I was due to preach at Hawarden Church on the evening of a week-day festival. It was before there was a station in the village, and train connection was missed at Chester. A wire informed the rector that the next fast train would be stopped at the nearest station, and that the preacher, though late, would be in time for the sermon. Driving up to the church, I was about to enter, but was met by old Mrs. Gladstone, who was waiting about to take me into the rectory, insisting that I must first have a basin of soup, which she brought me with her own hands."

A journalist also tells a story showing that Mrs. Gladstone was not only willing to take trouble in order to give pleasure to an insignificant stranger, but would charge her memory with a promise to that effect until able to carry it out.

"Attending a meeting in Latimer Hall, Bridge Street, Mile End (on the occasion of the General Election in 1886), to support the Liberal candidate, Mr. Arnold White, Mrs. Gladstone read a message from her husband. A reporter borrowed the document to copy it, and with the audacity of some of his tribe asked Mrs. Gladstone whether the writing was her own, his intention being to

ask that he might keep it if the answer were in the affirmative. She replied that it was, whereupon a gentleman sitting beside her forestalled the petition, and secured the document. Mrs. Gladstone, seeing the reporter's disappointment and guessing what was in his mind, said, with a sweet smile, 'Never mind. I will send you the same thing.' The message covered both sides of a sheet of notepaper, but two days later another copy of it, in Mrs. Gladstone's writing, reached the reporter from Downing Street."

Many stories have been told of Mrs. Gladstone's amusing liability to small social blunders, but they are all good-humoured stories, and those who knew her well say that she never in her life said or did anything which gave unmerited pain. Mr. Gladstone once remarked to a friend, with evident pride, "My wife has a marvellous faculty for getting into scrapes, but an even more marvellous faculty for getting out of them."

It is said that in the smaller matters of daily life she was untidy and unmethodical, and spent but little time or care over her dress, which was rarely as costly or fashionable as some ladies in her position would have deemed essential. It is related that on one occasion a whole house was turned inside out to find the bodice belonging to a certain dress, and that the missing article was ultimately discovered slipped by accident underneath the skirt! It sometimes happened that in her anxiety to hear a speech of her husband's in the House of Commons, and also to be ready in time to accompany him out to dinner afterwards, she would perform her evening toilette in the little dressing-room behind the Ladies' Gallery, doing this "with a frankness and simplicity which made all women at once laugh a little at her and love her a great deal."

Mrs. Gladstone's sweet smile and sunny disposition were remarked by all who knew her, as were also her natural shrewdness and quaint humour. She won the cordial esteem and affection of many who were her husband's political opponents. On her part she regarded them with no rancour or personal resentment. Of course, they were in the wrong; they must be if they differed from *him*; but, poor things! such blindness was their misfortune rather than their fault. In this respect she set a noble example to the many who, in the realm of religion as well as politics, are too prone to credit everyone who is unable to see eye to eye as they do with pig-headedness, prejudice, and even viler reasons for opposing what they themselves believe to be the only truth.

It was during Mrs. Gladstone's quite early married days that she was actively associated with the House of Charity for Distressed Persons, established in Soho. The primary object of this institution, to use Mr. Gladstone's own words, was "the care of the convalescent and finding employment for them; but its efforts were never confined within these limits, and out of it were developed in course of time the Newport Market Refuge and Newport Market School."

While the House of Charity was designed to assist unfortunate persons a little higher in the social scale than the working classes, the Newport Market Refuge was started by Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone to aid the very poor. The idea originated, it is said, with Mr. Gladstone, whose heart was often touched by the sight of friendless wanderers as he went late at night or in the small hours of the morning from the House of Commons to his own home. Begun in 1863, this refuge in the course of a single year has given as many as 13,000

night's lodgings and 30,000 free meals, while employment or a return to their home and friends was secured for over 300 persons of both sexes. Originally established in some disused slaughter-houses at the back of Leicester Square, it is said to have been "the prototype of the Salvation Army doss-house and the parent of the Rowton Homes." In aid of this work Mrs. Gladstone collected among her friends the sum of £1,200.

Later on a Boys' Industrial School was added to the Refuge, and the combined work continued to enjoy Mrs. Gladstone's sympathy and practical aid to the last days of her life. As recently as 1897 she told the Committee that though the charity was "very near her heart," yet "at her great age and Mr. Gladstone's" it was impossible for them to continue their public efforts on its behalf. We are assured, however, by *The Times* that "a work of great practical value is still carried on by the institution, which is well deserving of practical sympathy and support. One of the most interesting phases of this work, perhaps, is the 'rescue' and conversion into army bandsmen of poor boys who might otherwise go to the bad."

It was during the terrible cholera epidemic of 1866 that Mrs. Gladstone became the pioneer of the free convalescent home movement. As the disease raged principally at the East End a great number of the sufferers were admitted to the London Hospital, where special wards were set apart to accommodate them. Mrs. Gladstone had already been in the habit of visiting the patients in this hospital, and did not allow fear of infection or natural shrinking from the sight of such distressing suffering to deter her from continuing her ministrations. She was seen at the

hospital almost daily during that awful time, and was "known to enter an enormous ward full of dead and dying men, with screens drawn round many of the beds, indicating that each of them held a corpse which had not yet been removed, and with her own hands to assist the nurses in rubbing the feet of patients in whom the lamp of life burnt low."

The Secretary of the London Hospital, speaking of Mrs. Gladstone's help at this period, says, "Ah, she was a good woman, a brave woman! She faced all the difficulties at a time when people outside seemed to be panic-stricken. . . . Her sympathy, her flowers, her very presence in the wards, were, in that terrible crisis, a blessing such as you can scarcely realise now."

The great need soon became apparent for a convalescent home in which patients could be promptly received without the many restrictions surrounding admittance into most existing institutions of the kind. This led Mrs. Gladstone to establish a convalescent home of her own at Snaresbrook, a healthy locality near Epping Forest, and not difficult of access from the East End of London. Later on the work was transferred to Woodford Hall, Essex, also close to the Forest, and beautifully surrounded by lawns, trees, and flowers.

When in town Mrs. Gladstone, for nearly twenty-five years, attended regularly every Monday morning at the London Hospital to personally inquire into the needs and circumstances of those patients who had applied for admission to Woodford Hall. Clergymen and ministers of all denominations were allowed to send their sick poor to her with a letter of recommendation; but when accommodation was limited, preference was

always given to patients from the London Hospital. Every year more than 1,000 men, women, and children enjoyed the benefits of a week or two at this delightful spot, spending most of their time out of doors in the sweet woodland air, while their restoration to health was also hastened by the nourishing food and kind care they received while at Woodford Hall. In 1899, however, owing to the increasing population of the neighbourhood, it was deemed advisable to seek a suitable site for the home further out in the country.

Miss Simmons, the lady-superintendent of the Convalescent Home, thus describes the pleasure which a visit from the beloved foundress would give the inmates :—

“She would make kindly inquiries about them, and address to them some cheering words, while above all she never failed to sit down at the piano (presented by Lord Cowper) in the women’s living-room (used for concerts in the winter) and play for them, so that they could have a dance, country dances and Sir Roger de Coverley being the established favourites.”

It was the cholera epidemic, too, which was the means of setting on foot Mrs. Gladstone’s Orphan Homes. Many poor fathers and mothers died in the hospital, leaving their children destitute and literally naked, for their clothing had all to be burned. Mrs. Gladstone found cloaks and blankets to wrap these little ones in, and took them with her to lodgings she had provided for them, or in some cases even to her own home. Then she begged fresh clothing of her friends, rented an empty house at Clapton, and wrote a letter of appeal to *The Times*, which resulted in donations to the extent of £5,000. One who went with her to visit the cholera orphans at Clapton will never forget

the sight: "As soon as the door was opened Mrs. Gladstone was surrounded by little ones, who clung to her and almost overwhelmed her in their eagerness to obtain a caress."

The orphanage at Hawarden was the outcome, indirectly, of the Lancashire cotton famine, consequent upon the American War that raged during the early sixties. Touched by the sad destitution of many young girls who had formerly been employed in the cotton mills, and assisted by her brother, Sir Stephen Glynne, who offered the use of a nice old house that had once been the dower house of the family, Mrs. Gladstone started a training home for them, under the care of a suitable person, who had for some years been nurse to her own children and had lately married. Here the girls were kept and prepared for domestic service, and, when fit, Mrs. Gladstone found situations for them among her friends, thus making room in the home for more.

In the autumn of 1867 Mrs. Gladstone brought down to Hawarden about a dozen of her little orphans from Clapton, and lodged them under the care of a respectable widow in another small house which her brother had lent her. When the famine trouble was quite over and the dower house was no longer needed for distressed mill-girls, she transferred all the Clapton orphans there, adding to them from time to time the destitute children of other poor patients who died in the London Hospital. The larger house accommodates about thirty children, and has for some time been devoted to boys only, as there appears to be much greater difficulty in providing for them than for girls. These attend the parish school until old enough to be apprenticed to a trade; and there is now a whole

army of promising young men doing well in the world who owe their present position to their bringing up at Hawarden Orphanage.

About the year 1880, a Home for training young women for domestic service was opened at Notting Hill. The object of this Home was to take under its protection young girls who had bad homes, and were likely in consequence to drift into a life of uselessness or vice. It was under the direction of a committee of ladies, and Mrs. Gladstone consented to become its President. Not more than fifteen girls are kept here at a time, and as a few lady boarders are also taken in, the inmates are well and carefully trained for various positions in domestic service. "The proud characteristic of this school is its determination never to despair of any pupil, however discouraging she may be in her first trial of service." Chances of reformation are offered the girls again and again, and many have come to be deeply thankful for the patience and forbearance which they have here received.

Every year the girls from this Home who are in service are treated to a day's outing to Woodford Hall. A few summers ago, when they had luncheon and tea under the shadow of a rare kind of sycamore which Mrs. Gladstone had long ago brought from Hawarden as a seedling in a flower-pot, their kind friend told them that she had "never thought to live so long as to see that little tree large enough to shelter a party of forty people under the shadow of its foliage"—fit emblem of the growth of many a good work, which from a small beginning has developed into a means of wide and far-reaching beneficence.

CHAPTER IV.

A PEACEFUL EVENTIDE.

FOR far beyond the limit of years assigned by the Psalmist was Mrs. Gladstone permitted to retain the health and activity of her prime, as well as the almost youthful grace of her figure and carriage, and no small trace of the beauty of her early days.

On the return of Mr. Gladstone and his wife from a visit to Naples, when she was past seventy-five, the former remarked that Mrs. Gladstone had walked up a steep flight of steps at Posilippo, "which," he added, "she could not have touched in her youth." It is said that no married couple in London so frequently returned on foot after dining out as Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone; and although the latter was not able to keep up to the last her habit of walking with her husband before breakfast to the daily morning service at church, she regularly drove thither in her pony carriage, "notwithstanding the remonstrances of her children, who in vain entreated her to abstain on foggy or rainy days from exposing herself to the raw atmosphere of North Wales at that early hour." Indeed, it is believed that it was greatly owing to her persistent sharing of the activity and Spartan vigour of her husband's life that she became even more hardy and vigorous in old age than she had been in her youth.

But when, after nearly sixty happy years together, the life-companion was called away, the spring of Mrs. Gladstone's own existence seemed broken. It was indeed with heroic calm and Christian faith that

the grand old lady bore her loss, sweetly replying to one near and dear to her, when asked just as the funeral procession was starting if she could bear it, "Yes. God is so good; He took him from me on Ascension Day, and to-day is the eve of the festival of the Comforter"; yet none who had known them could believe, or scarcely hope, that the separation of those two hearts that for so great a while had beat as one could be for long. It was a beautiful action on the part of the heir of the British Empire when, on that sorrowful day at Westminster Abbey, he bent the knee to gently kiss the hand of the venerable widow, silently expressing his deep sympathy with one who in noble womanliness and conjugal devotion more closely resembled his own royal mother than perhaps did any other lady in the land.

Still the bereaved one bore up, not allowing her own great sorrow to make her indifferent to the griefs of others. Very soon after the death of Mr. Gladstone the Aston Hall colliery accident occurred, and she found leisure at once to visit and comfort the widows and friends of the two miners who were killed.

As the months wore on, however, it was noticed by tender watchers that the dear old lady's memory and mental faculties were beginning to fail, and she lived less in the present and more and more in the happy past. But her devotion to her husband was as strong as ever. Every day she was read aloud to by some member of her family, and next to chapters from the Book of books, nothing gave her so much pleasure as to hear extracts from Mr. Gladstone's writings, or passages referring to him written by others. Her interest in his long-past sayings and doings never seemed to flag.

A short time before the end one of her elder grandchildren was reading to her from the *Life of Gladstone*, by Sir Wemyss Reid, which was published early in 1899. When that part was reached which related to Sir Robert Peel's great Budget of 1842 the old lady became quite roused, and asked for the chapter dealing with the same matter to be read to her from the *Life of Peel*, in the "Queen's Prime Ministers" series.

Then, turning to the young girl, scarcely emerged from childhood, Mrs. Gladstone betrayed how her sense of the flight of time was fading by the remark, "Why, my dear, you must surely remember how he talked that first time he breakfasted with us!"

In the early part of 1900 Mrs. Gladstone's bodily health failed more and more, though it was not until the middle or end of May that her relatives began to feel seriously alarmed. She was then in so weak a state that Dr. Dobie was called in; yet even at that time it was not believed that her condition was really dangerous. Her debility, however, of both mind and body increased, and much of the venerable patient's time was passed in a dozing or half-conscious condition.

After a week or so there was a slight rally, but it was not maintained, and it became evident that Mrs. Gladstone was sinking. For several days and nights she slept continuously, and "as tranquilly as a child," until on the afternoon of June 14th, without regaining consciousness, she passed peacefully away.

Years before, Mr. Gladstone had expressed the wish that wherever he might be buried his beloved wife should share the same grave. Therefore, when in 1898 the remains of the great statesman were interred among his peers in the honoured precincts of Westminster

Abbey, it was arranged that a place should be reserved for Mrs. Gladstone when her call came to follow him. So, lying beneath the same gold-embroidered, white silk pall, worked by the grateful hands of the Armenians whose cause he had championed, that two years before had covered the coffin of her husband, all that was mortal of this good woman was carried to its rest in the grey old pile, and with tears of genuine love and reverence was laid by his side.

The people of Hawarden were gratified by the distinction justly awarded to their noble friends, even while they regretted that the village churchyard could not have been the last resting-place of the pair who had lived and loved among them for so many years. "Not one belonging to the village have I met to-day," wrote the correspondent of one of our great dailies, visiting the historic spot while the funeral was pending, "who has not related some little act of kindness of Mrs. Gladstone personal to themselves. They speak of her, not as the great one from the Castle, but as a near and dear friend, who was ever ready with acts of kindly helpfulness and womanly sympathy; of one who earnestly strove to live the Christlike life of self-forgetfulness and unconscious personal sacrifice. The memory of Catherine Gladstone will shine forth like a religious light, giving spiritual guidance in the darkness of a selfish world."

At the funeral the Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales were represented, in addition to a crowd of Mr. Gladstone's friends and former colleagues. Our gracious sovereign, with ever-ready sympathy, had already sent the following telegram to Mrs. Wickham:—

"Pray accept my sincerest expression of sympathy and regret at your dear mother's death, whose invariable kindness to me for so many years I shall ever gratefully

remember. Pray express my feelings to your brothers and sisters.—V.R.I.”

Among the wreaths sent were tributes from the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke of York; the Princess adding to hers the following inscription:—

“In memory of dear Mrs. Gladstone.

“‘It is but crossing, with a bated breath,
A white, set face! a little strip of sea—
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious than before.’

“ALEXANDRA.”

THE END.

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